



POBL

Llanbedr Impact Report

20/6/2022

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Introduction

Llanbedr is a small village in rural Northwest Wales blighted by congestion and road safety issues throughout the year, never more so in the summer months where traffic from ever increasing tourism dominates village life causing a barrier to essential community cohesion. This also poses a major threat to life as emergency vehicles can struggle to get to life threatening situations on time.

After the 1.5mile relief road (bypass) was granted by the Senedd, even fast tracked as not to lose funding from the EU, the Deputy Minister for Climate Change and the Senedd deemed that due to the current Climate Change crises that the world faces, no new roads were to go ahead in Wales. All proposed roads were put to a roads review panel chaired by Dr Lyn Slowman and Llanbedr Relief Road (Bypass) was then cancelled.

This now leaves the local villagers & tourists alike in a perilous situation. Children are unable to walk/cycle to and from school safely, their freedoms reduced as parents are too scared to let them go out and play with their friends, walk to the shop. The elderly are too frightened to venture out in case they get clipped or get a mouthful of abuse for being in the way.

The people of Llanbedr need a solution to the congestion and road safety issues. So far the only plausible solution proposed has been a relief road.

The community of Llanbedr wants to preserve and protect the historic integrity of the village and its surrounding areas as much as possible

Green solutions offered instead of the relief road need to be investigated now and either actioned or dismissed to ensure a swift conclusion to the issues at hand.

We need action now.



POBL

**Save Our Village
Protect our Universal
Rights for Road Safety**

www.savellanbedr.com

Summary

Llanbedr, an 18th Century village hosting the main coastal road (A496) from Barmouth to Porthmadog, has suffered from congestion and road safety issues for the past 70 years.

The infrastructure is unique, with a grade II listed 17th Century bridge being a pinch point in the center of the village, and road intersections on either side leading to busy campsites (Shell Island, etc), historic sites, walking routes, Llanbedr Airfield (Snowdonia Enterprise Zone) and a possible Space Academy.

A bypass scheme was granted and part of European funding was awarded (£7.5M), after extensive reports by the Welsh Government, Gwynedd Council, and various expert bodies in the field of road design, infrastructure, and environmental issues. The road would be a 1.5mile 'A' road. ([View road Layout](#)).

In June 2021 Welsh Government announced that all-new road-building projects would be put on hold and an external panel set up to review all road schemes. The intention was to shift spending towards, better maintaining existing roads or alternative greener solutions. The panel was chaired by Dr. Lynn Sloman MBE, a transport specialist in Wales.

Llanbedr bypass was one of two roads to be reviewed by the panel and had specific target questions, requested by the Deputy Climate Minister. The panel was focused mainly on the airfield/ enterprise zone and its traffic influx, rather than the village as a whole. In November 2021 Llanbedr Bypass was canceled at COP26. Lee Waters, Deputy Minister for Climate Change cited that it did not align well with the new Welsh Government transport & climate policy, and added the report provided by Lynn Sloman gave proposed greener alternatives. (see report)

Lee Waters explaining why Llanbedr Relief Road (Bypass) was cancelled and what are the next steps can be seen here
https://youtu.be/u_yfT98I3WO

The report and cancellation have been opposed by:

- Gwynedd Council
- Mabon ap Gwynfor MS
- Liz Saville Roberts MP
- Natasha Asghar MS
- Annwen Hughes Councillor
- Dyfrig Siencyn Councillor
- Local Labour Councillors

Although the chair of the panel did come to Llanbedr to see the location of the road scheme and met with Gwynedd Council, Aerospace Wales, and Welsh Government Officials, no panel members met with and communicated with the village and its community to understand the long-standing issues within Llanbedr itself ([Read it here](#))

The solution given by the panel is not specific to Llanbedr and has been issued to other sites such as Dublin in Ireland. All suggestions had already been assessed by experts in their field and concluded that they were short-term solutions to a longstanding problem and not valid alternatives.

Transport for Wales has been commissioned directly by WG to undertake a review in line with the WelTag framework to assess the practicalities and impact of the list as outlined within the roads review panel's report (and any other suggestions) that could help to solve the identified problems/opportunities. This is being split into a proportionate WelTag to assess any short-term options ('quick wins') and a route forwards to appraising any larger-scale interventions through a standard WelTag route (whilst being mindful of the need not to repeat the significant amount of work already undertaken to date).

Summary cont..

Llanbedr as a community has serious concerns, first and foremost regarding road safety in the village. The congestion that day to day affects all our lives progressively gets worse during the busy holiday seasons and more seriously puts our emergency services at risk of not getting to life-threatening callouts on time. Ambulances have often been stuck for 10 minutes or more trying to reach their destination.

As we see an increase in traffic flow and the size of vehicles, the issues with road safety and congestion will only worsen. Add to the mix a possible spaceport, Aries scheme by Gwynedd Council (encouraging Motorhomes into the area), and tourism expansion due to TV advertising initiatives and shows that have been filmed in and around the area, such as 'Celebrity Get Me Out of Here', this is inevitable.

Public transport at this moment is currently insufficient in the area forcing many tourists and locals to use their own transport, compounding the issue of congestion and road safety.

As a community, we are aware that our situation is becoming more perilous every day and our fear is that a fatality could be just around the corner and the heart and soul of our village will be lost.

We are asking Lord Harlech and all Ministers to put our case to the House of Lords and the UK Government to help Llanbedr achieve our Universal Human Rights to Road Safety.

**There are more than
1000 listed bridges in
Wales.**

**These bridges are
essential for local
communities and their
closure can have
devastating effects on
local residents and
businesses.**

[*Read the Full Article Here](#) (Pg7)

POBL – action so far

Our Mission

POBL is a community group who were brought about to help give a voice to Llanbedr community and to keep the narrative alive regarding the ongoing issues of the village. Pobl has and will always aim to support all parties (e.g. Gwynedd Council, Llanbedr Community Council, the Deputy Minister for Climate Change, The Senedd, Transport for Wales to name just a few), to become a united front in the ongoing mission to resolve the two main health and safety issues in Llanbedr.

- Road Safety – Our Universal Human Right
- Congestion

Around 3000 vehicles pass through Llanbedr everyday **out of season** causing congestion when larger vehicles such as HGVs and articulated lorries try to navigate the narrow 17C bridge and road infrastructure that has not changed since the 1800's. In the summer months due to the ever-growing tourism trade in this area (an Aries scheme encouraging more Motor-homes to the area etc), the congestion is a daily occurrence. This means cars each end of the village with idling engines hardly moving from 10 minutes to over an hour at a time. Idling engines that are pumping out harmful CO2 and NOx emissions and causing dense pollution that takes a lot longer to disperse. This in itself is not conducive with our village cohesion forcing residents to stay in their homes with windows and doors shut, and those from surrounding neighborhoods avoiding coming into the village.

Action taken

POBL has contacted many people for help including our Lord Lieutenant for Gwynedd, MP's MS's, members of the Royal Family, and those in the public and emergency services with varying degrees of response. Many people have responded positively and given their support and guidance, others whilst unable to help for reasons of their own have wished us well. We have also conducted a number of meetings gathering information & expert advice with Gwynedd Council, Transport for Wales, and other Government bodies.

Our Purpose

ROAD SAFETY

To ensure that Llanbedr has its Universal Human Rights to Road Safety.

CONGESTION

Decrease congestion in Llanbedr.

Increased traffic during the summer season stops emergency vehicles from getting to incidents and risking lives.

COMMUNITY

Keep the historic integrity of the village and help our community thrive.

“Road safety must be taken extremely seriously since it is a complex development issue, affecting multiple areas such as health, labour, education and above all human rights. We must fight for road safety and accessible mobility to be considered as a fundamental human right for everyone, most of all our children.”

FIA President Jean Todt

[*Read the Full Article Here](#)

Roads Review Panel

In June 2021 the Welsh Government announced that all-new road-building projects would be put on hold and an external panel set up to review all road schemes.

The panel was chaired by Dr. Lynn Sloman MBE, a transport specialist in Wales, the report regarding Llanbedr was written & the bypass was canceled.

Please read the full report [here](#).

The review is separate from the remainder of the roads review and it is primarily focused on two questions specific to the Llanbedr scheme;

- Question 1: Has sufficient consideration been given to non-transport solutions and solutions other than those increasing private car capacity on the road network?
- Question 2: Has sufficient consideration been given to whether the road proposal will lead to increased CO2 emissions on the road network, or cause significant impediments to the achievement of the Senedd decarbonisation targets?

The review of the Llanbedr scheme also took into account:

- Wales' Well-being Goals
- the new Wales Transport Strategy Llwybr Newydd
- Future Wales
- Planning Policy Wales
- the forthcoming Net Zero Wales low carbon delivery plan
- and the current review of the WelTAG transport approach

The proposed scheme was a 1.5km north-south single-lane bypass, to the west of Llanbedr, with two junctions with the A496 to the north and south of the village, and a grade-separated junction at Mochras Road to provide access from the bypass to the Airfield.

The road scheme, dated 2017, suggests that it should be considered as a part of a broader intervention to develop the Airfield. The EIA identifies a wide range of future uses for the Airfield including aerospace-related activities such as testing of remotely piloted aircraft systems (drones), and maintenance, repair, and overhaul of aircraft; but also general uses, such as a business park for research and development and light industry, and a hotel.

The proposed road scheme is therefore catering for a scale and type of development of the Airfield that is difficult to justify in the context of the question posed in Future Wales "Is this the right development in the right place?" Although Llanbedr Airfield has been identified as part of a Snowdonia Enterprise Zone, this designation is for its potential development for aerospace activities, not for more general uses. Llanbedr is in a rural location and lies outside the North Wales Regional Growth Areas identified in Future Wales. Development of a fairly large business park, with very significant parking provision, therefore appears incompatible with national policy, as set out in Future Wales and Planning Policy Wales.

The review was mainly focused on the airfield and ignored the needs and safety of the community.

Alternative Options for Llanbedr by the Roads Review Panel

Alternative options can be seen in full in Appendix 1. [View here](#)

1

INTERVENTIONS TO REDUCE TRAFFIC DURING THE HOLIDAY SEASON.

Fflecsi buses, free park and ride hubs in Barmouth and Porthmadog, a toll for non-residents, "last mile" bus from the station to Shell Island campsite.

2

TRAFFIC CALMING AND LOWER SPEEDS IN LLANBEDR

20mile an hour through the village, restructure of the road environment for cyclists and pedestrians. traffic lights, yellow box road markings, yellow lines.

3

INFRASTRUCTURE TO ENCOURAGE MODE SHIFT FROM CAR TO ACTIVE TRAVEL

Safe walking and cycle path from Harlech to Barmouth.

4

IMPROVEMENTS IN THE FREQUENCY OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT SERVICES ALONG THE A496 CORRIDOR

More buses and trains available more frequently.

5

DEVELOPMENT OF REMOTE WORKING HUBS TO REDUCE THE NEED FOR OFFICE- BASED WORKERS TO TRAVEL TO THEIR WORKPLACE EVERY DAY

Development of remote working hubs in Harlech, Porthmadog and Barmouth

6

MANAGEMENT OF FREIGHT TRAFFIC TO AND FROM THE AIRFIELD

Moving freight by rail or sea. (construction of a harbour to receive freight by sea)

7

MODESTLY-SET ROAD USER CHARGE

Carbon Charge for visitors and residents

8

"MOVING THE ROAD SIDWAYS": CLOSURE OF THE A496 THROUGH LLANBEDR AND CONSTRUCTION OF A LOW SPEED BYPASS

Alternative Options Discussed

Many of these suggestions are considered to be ill-informed, unrealistic, and unworkable. For example,.....

Free Park and Ride Hubs in Barmouth and Porthmadog will not be effective because car parks in both towns are invariably already full during the holiday periods before you add parkers and riders.

Shell Island caters only to motor homes and tents. A family camping there has to take a tent, awning, beds and bedding, cooking, lighting, and heating equipment, chairs and table, food, clothes, bikes, buckets, spades, balls, and pets. Encouraging holidaymakers camping at Shell Island or anywhere else in the area to use the railway or "sustainable" modes is unrealistic. However, there may be scope to encourage shorter 'day trip' journeys to use more sustainable transport modes.

Introducing visitor and road user charges is more likely to be a negative impact on the vital tourist economy rather than a positive one.

Whilst there is merit in the proposal to encourage more active travel by providing more footpaths and cycle tracks, it is unlikely that this will reduce the traffic congestion in Llanbedr to any significant extent.

A 20mph speed limit will not decrease traffic flow but would aid road safety in the village when congestion is not apparent.

Double yellow lines, along the main thoroughfare of the village, will take away the natural traffic calming and safe haven for pedestrians, that parked cars provide.

A 4-way traffic light system and use of yellow boxes are far more likely to increase the delays, with or without congestion, on account of the need to keep a 300-yard stretch of single-track road clear through the center of the village. Longer delays will further increase CO2 emissions.

Whilst desirable, increasing the frequency of public transport, will not singularly prevent the congestion in Llanbedr. Visitors to the area would not see using public transport as a feasible option due to the cost, length & duration of the journey, and infrequency of service. Most of the visitors to Snowdonia stay for 2- 3 days, and a train journey from Manchester to Llanbedr takes a minimum of 5hrs costing around £60.

The modal shift from commuting in private cars to public transport, in dense urban communities, is not the answer in remote rural villages. The congestion is not caused by daily commuting, so the provision of remote working hubs will not be a solution to the congestion either. It should be noted that the majority of work in and around the Llanbedr area is in the agricultural, care, tourism, retail, hospitality, and building sectors.

The only solution offered by the Chair to improve access to the Airfield Enterprise Zone is to schedule large freight lorries at times when the traffic is light. This ignores the fact that access for such vehicles is extremely difficult and dangerous, irrespective of the traffic conditions.

Solutions involving rail and sea options were explored when the bypass was being planned and rejected. The rail infrastructure would need to be drastically improved at a cost of millions as it is currently a single-track line.

Alternative Options Discussed

Building a harbour to accommodate freight by sea would have a devastating effect on all sea life. The Cambrian Coast is home to the rare Angel Shark, one of only 5 dolphin breeding sites in the UK., and has been designated a Special Area of Conservation, under European Union law to protect a variety of important species and habitats.

The final option, to build a different smaller scale bypass is described as "the last resort". This will take several more years to plan, approve and construct, further delaying the Airfield development and consigning the residents to continued road safety issues, congestion and high CO2 emissions.

Emissions have not been tested in Llanbedr since 2010 when they were below the means average.

The busiest roads in Gwynedd are tested to date and are still below the means average for CO2 and NOx

[*Read the Full Report Here \(Pg10\).](#)

Successful New Roads near Llanbedr



Porthmadog Bypass (Opened in October 2011)
Official figures show that in 2010, almost 10,000 cars and lorries passed through Porthmadog every day. At the same spot at Minffordd, on the old road out of the town in 2020 it was down to just under 5,000 vehicles. Perhaps even more telling is the number of HGVs: 500 a day through the town in 2010, down to just under 100 in 2020.

Llanfair is a village and community in the Arduwy area of Gwynedd, with a population of 453.

Llanfair is situated to the east of the A496 coastal road between Llanbedr and Harlech. In 1994 the village was bypassed due to the amount of traffic travelling through a single track road in most parts of the village.



The Llanbedr Access Road and Bypass is predicted to reduce the traffic passing through Village by about 90%.

Images of Congestion



More videos and pictures can be found online, click on your preferred social media channel.



Resources & Links

YGC A496 LLANBEDR CONSULTATION

To read the full A496 Llanbedr consultation from YGC, with a full list of reports please [click here](#)

UNIVERSAL HUMAN RIGHTS TO ROAD SAFETY

The United Nations Road Safety announcement - [Read More Here](#)

LISTED BRIDGES - Understanding & Assessing Risk

Page 7 of the 'Historic Environment & Climate Change in Wales Sector Adaptation Plan. Read the full plan [here](#)

Reports

The majority of reports can be found on the Save Llanbedr website [accessed here](#):

To read the full A496 Llanbedr consultation from YGC, with a full list of reports please [click here](#)

Roads Review Panel - Llanbedr Access Road & Bypass 2021 - [Read Full Report](#)

2009 Air Quality updating & screening assessment for Gwynedd Council.
[Co2 emissions re Llanbedr Page 10](#)

Appendix

This appendix highlights the Road Review Panel Options and the Llanbedr Bypass Objectives both can be found in the full 'Roads Review Panel Report'

Scheme objectives

The WelTAG Stage 1 report lists the transport planning objectives of the Llanbedr scheme as follows:

- reduce traffic congestion at the Mochras Road/A496 junction
- reduce the negative impact of traffic on the community of Llanbedr
- improve transport connectivity to and from Llanbedr Airfield
- improve the efficiency and reliability of all transport to and from Llanbedr Airfield
- improve the actual and perceived safety of travel for all travellers within Llanbedr and along Mochras Road
- improve freight transport access to and from Llanbedr Airfield
- improve travel opportunities for pedestrians and cyclists within Llanbedr and along Mochras Road
- minimise the impact of transport improvements on local environmental and heritage features
- be resilient to local effects of climate change, particularly future increases in flood events.

Options that could address transport issues in Llanbedr

Interventions to reduce traffic during the holiday season

Seasonal traffic flows might be addressed through an area-wide sustainable tourism strategy (as is currently being considered in the northern area of Snowdonia National Park). This would benefit not only Llanbedr, but also other villages along the A496. Drawing on initiatives elsewhere in Wales and the UK, the sort of options that could form part of such a strategy include Fflecsi buses serving primary tourist destinations such as Shell Island (similar to those now being offered by Transport for Wales in the Llŷn Peninsula and Pembrokeshire); free park and ride hubs in key regional towns such as Barmouth and Porthmadog; greater use of visitor charges to provide a revenue stream for improved public transport (e.g. a toll for non-residents using Mochras Road in the summer); rebranding of Llanbedr railway station (e.g. "Llanbedr for Shell Island") to establish a greater sense of geographic understanding; provision of a shared use segregated path next to Mochras Road, to provide a better link from the station to Shell Island for pedestrians and cyclists; a "last mile" bus from the station to Shell Island campsite, timed to connect with trains; and incentives or discounts for those travelling to Shell Island by sustainable modes. By encouraging visitor travel by sustainable modes, this type of strategy would benefit the local economy, as visitors travelling by public transport or active travel would be more likely to shop locally than visitors arriving by car. This type of strategy for managing visitor travel is common (and effective) in many European visitor destinations; it has also been used to good effect in the UK in the New Forest National Park and elsewhere.

Traffic calming and lower speeds in Llanbedr

Traffic calming and speed restrictions could reduce the adverse impact of traffic in Llanbedr. Changes that could be considered include a default 20mph speed limit along the A496 within Llanbedr village and along the residential sections of Mochras Road; design of the road environment to prioritise and give space to the needs of people who are shopping, walking, cycling or accessing premises, and to send a visual signal to drivers that they are a "guest"; traffic lights to manage alternating one-way traffic flow through the village, or use of "yellow box" road markings to manage the junction between Mochras Road and the A496; and extension of existing on-street parking restrictions further away from the Afon Artro bridge and junction with Mochras Road.

Infrastructure to encourage mode shift from car to active travel

Like other local authorities, Gwynedd Council has recently consulted on its Active Travel Network Maps for the main settlements in the county. It is apparent from the consultation that there is also a desire for safe active travel routes between smaller settlements along the A496. A safe walking and cycling path between Harlech and Barmouth (and connecting across Barmouth Bridge with the Mawddach Trail to Dolgellau) would meet this need. To be suitable for all users, it would need to be physically separated from traffic. This would benefit both residents and visitors. It would align with the commitment in the Welsh Government Rural Transport Offer to give every village safe cycling access to the nearest town

Improvements in the frequency of public transport services along the A496 corridor

Current bus services are infrequent, with seven buses per day from Llanbedr northwards to Harlech, and seven buses per day southwards to Dolgellau. Bus times do not align well with commuting times. Train services on the Cambrian Rail Line are timed for the needs of school pupils (although the line is currently closed for major works on Barmouth Bridge), but provide only very limited options for commuter travel. This means that people living in Llanbedr do not have good public transport options for travel to work, or for shopping and other purposes. Transport for Wales is currently undertaking analysis to develop improved, more frequent bus services on networks in other areas of North Wales (initially Ynys Môn and northern Snowdonia), and a similar exercise would be beneficial for the corridor between Barmouth and Porthmadog. This would help meet the commitment in the Welsh Government Rural Transport Offer to develop public transport service frequency standards for every village and town, based on population. It is worth noting that in similar rural areas in some other European countries, services for villages like Llanbedr would be more frequent, would start earlier and finish later, and would run to the same frequency on Sundays as on Monday – Saturday

Development of remote working hubs to reduce the need for office-based workers to travel to their workplace every day

Welsh Government has set a target for 30% of all employees to work from home, or a hub close to home, on a regular basis, and is trialling remote working hubs. Development of remote working hubs in Harlech, Porthmadog and Barmouth (and potentially also 'micro-hubs' in villages along the A496) could reduce the number of people travelling to work by car along the A496.

Management of freight traffic to and from the Airfield

If there is a need for occasional delivery of large freight loads to the Airfield these could be scheduled to avoid using the A496 / Mochras Road at times of day / week / month when there will be heavy holiday traffic. More thorough investigation of non-road (i.e. rail, sea) options for freight deliveries to the Airfield should also take place, once the freight requirements (frequency and size of load) for future uses of the Airfield are more fully defined.

Modestly-set road user charge

In the medium term, after progress has been made on the solutions noted above so that residents and visitors have better alternatives to driving, a modestly-set road user charge, or "Carbon Charge" could be introduced. This would need to be implemented in the context of the wider Llwybr Newydd commitment to establish a framework for fair and equitable road user charging. It might involve differential charges for residents and visitors, with the money raised being used to provide benefits such as better public transport services, and potentially also to support important community services, such as village schools.

Like the plastic bag levy, which has significantly reduced the number of single-use plastic bags sold by supermarkets while also raising money for good causes, this would encourage people to think about their travel options, and to use alternatives where possible.

"Moving the road sideways": closure of the A496 through Llanbedr and construction of a low speed bypass

The layout and width of the proposed bypass is designed to allow vehicles to travel at speeds of 100kph (roughly 60mph). In discussion, Gwynedd Council suggested it would be possible to redesign the Access Road and Bypass, with a lower "design speed" (that is, a different layout and width), that would result in drivers travelling at speeds more like those on the A496 north and south of Llanbedr, where the average speed is 39mph. This might enable a design that was more in keeping with the existing landscape, without a cutting, embankment and grade-separated junction. To ensure that there was no increase in overall road capacity, it would be combined with closure of the A496 through Llanbedr for general traffic (except for vehicle access, and with a through-route for cyclists and buses). This would avoid generating additional or "induced" traffic. Keeping vehicle speeds to around 40mph instead of 60mph would also avoid increased carbon emissions. Gwynedd Council suggested that the cost of such a scheme would be significant, and so it should be thought of as a last resort once other solutions have been tried.

We thank you for your ongoing support to make Llanbedr safe.

Acknowledgments

We would like to acknowledge the people who have worked tirelessly to keep the narrative going and who continue to do so.

The Community of Llanbedr

All members of Pobl

All those who have taken time to read and reply to our correspondence

Lee Robinson from TFW

Llanbedr Nightmares

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