

DECISION NOTICE OF AN INDIVIDUAL MEMBER OF GWYNEDD COUNCIL CABINET

DATE OF DECISION	2/06/2026
DATE DECISION PUBLISHED	3/06/2026
DATE DECISION WILL COME INTO FORCE and implemented, unless the decision is called in, in accordance with section 7.25.1 of the Gwynedd Council Constitution.	10/06/2026

NAME AND TITLE OF THE CABINET MEMBER:

Councillor Paul Rowlinson (Cabinet Member for Housing and Property)

SUBJECT – Disposal of the freehold interest of the land adjoining Neuadd Buddug, Bala directly to Bala Lake Railway.

DECISION

To permit the disposal of the Council's freehold interest in a parcel of land adjoining Neuadd Buddug, Bala on terms and conditions to be determined by the Head of Housing and Property Department.

REASON WHY THE DECISION IS NEEDED

Please see attached Officer Report.

DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST AND ANY RELEVANT DISPENSATIONS APPROVED BY THE COUNCIL'S STANDARDS COMMITTEE

None.

ANY CONSULTATIONS UNDERTAKEN PRIOR TO MAKING THE DECISION

Consultation with
Cyngor Gwynedd Statutory Officers and Local Member.

The results of the consultations are reported upon in the attached report.

DECISION NOTICE OF AN INDIVIDUAL MEMBER OF GWYNEDD COUNCIL CABINET – OFFICER REPORT

Name and title of Cabinet Member/s:

Councillor Paul Rowlinson

Cabinet Member for Housing and Property

Name and title of Report Author:

Efan Thomas MRICS

Senior Estates Surveyor

Date of Decision:

2/6/2026

Signature of Cabinet Member/s:



Subject:

Disposal of the freehold interest of the land adjoining Neuadd Buddug, Bala directly to Bala Lake Railway.

Recommendation for the Decision:

To permit the disposal of the Council's freehold interest in a parcel of land adjoining Neuadd Buddug, Bala on terms and conditions to be determined by the Head of Housing and Property Department.

Reason why Decision is needed:

To enable the Council to dispose of the freehold interest in a parcel of land, shown edged in red on the attached plan, which is surplus to the Council's requirements direct to an adjoining owner.

Reason and justification behind the Decision:

Bala Lake Railway has expressed interest in acquiring a parcel of land measuring approximately 0.43 acres, located adjacent to Neuadd Buddug, Bala, which is currently owned by the Council. Although this land forms part of the same registered title as Neuadd Buddug, the Council has resolved to split the title and dispose of both assets separately rather than as a combined sale.

The land is currently mostly vacant and was previously utilised for agricultural grazing. Upon inspection, the land is in poor condition, with certain areas exhibiting boggy characteristics. This significantly reduces its suitability for livestock grazing and, consequently, its Market Value. Furthermore, the site lies within a designated flood zone and is situated outside of the development boundary, which effectively precludes any potential for development. This constraint further diminishes its value and market appeal.

Additionally, a portion of the land has been appropriated by adjoining property owners for the extension of their gardens. As part of this transaction, the Bala Lake Railway will assume responsibility for rectifying the title position and, where necessary, disposing of the relevant areas

following completion of the purchase. This approach will effectively resolve the title irregularities currently affecting the Council.

Should Neuadd Buddug be sold to a third party, the subject land would become landlocked, creating a potential liability for the Council. Conversely, disposing of the land in conjunction with Neuadd Buddug would likely enhance the combined value of both properties. It should also be noted that, if the land were disposed of by way of a leasehold, there is a potential risk that the Railway, as tenant, may choose not to renew the lease upon expiry. This would leave the Council with a land parcel that has no practical means of access.

As part of its proposed development, Bala Lake Railway has indicated a willingness to incorporate public conveniences within the new station facility. These would be accessible to the general public and would enable the Council to decommission the existing public conveniences at Aran Street carpark, this would reduce significant ongoing expenditure and would subsequently enable the creation of additional car parking spaces, generating increased revenue over the longer term.

Bala Lake Railway has also expressed willingness to place restrictive covenants or overage clauses within any transfer, which would ultimately benefit the Council financially should the land be sold on.

The most advantageous approach would have been to dispose of this parcel of land alongside Neuadd Buddug, as a combined sale would likely have secured a materially higher capital receipt for the Council. Notwithstanding this, it is understood that the Council's preferred strategy is to separate the titles and pursue individual disposals of both the building and the land. The land would be sold to Bala Lake Railway with the following conditions implemented:-

- **Buy-Back Provision:** The Council shall retain the right to repurchase the land at the original sale price should Bala Lake Railway subsequently wish to dispose of it.
- **Restrictive Covenants:** Appropriate covenants shall be imposed to ensure the continued operation of public conveniences and full compliance with all associated planning requirements.
- **Overage Clause:** An overage provision shall be included to protect the Council's financial interests in the event of any future uplift in land value.

Subject to the implementation of the above conditions, the proposed transaction represents best value for money in accordance with section 123 of the Local Government Act 1973.

Declarations of personal interest by any Cabinet Member consulted with and any relevant dispensations approved by the Standards Committee:

None.

Any consultations undertaken prior to making the decision:

Head of Finance – Dewi Morgan – “I am satisfied that the recommended disposal method is the most suitable from the perspective of financial propriety, since other methods would create unnecessary risks for the authority.”

Monitoring Officer – Iwan Evans – “What is proposed represents a pragmatic disposal of the land. The proposed conditions reinforce the perception that the proposal meets the requirements of Section 123 of the 1972 Act”

Local Members:

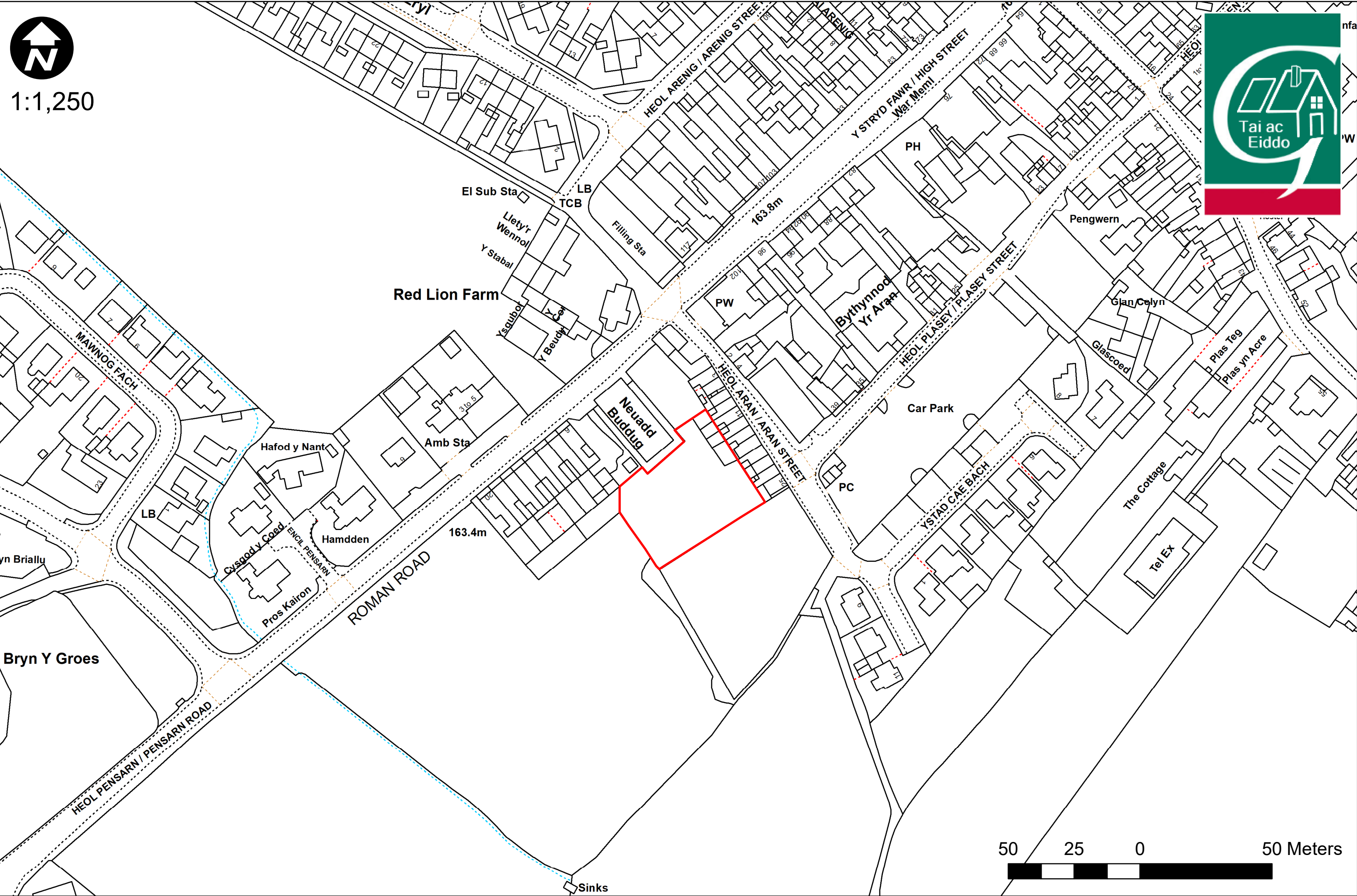
Councillor Dilwyn Morgan –

“This land has been part of the long-term development plans of the Bala Lake Railway from the outset, and it is hoped that the scheme will be able to move forward to the next stage if this transfer takes place. Historically, parts of the field have been used by local residents to extend their gardens. Responsibility for discussing and addressing this will pass to the Railway through this transfer. I believe this work could be costly and difficult if the Council were to undertake it, in addition to potentially creating local ill-feeling.

Therefore, I note that I am 100% in support of transferring this land to the Bala Lake Railway in order to move the scheme forward and bring significant investment to the economy of the Bala and Penllyn area.”



1:1,250



Plan - Bala Railway