



DOLGELLAU BUS INTERCHANGE

PUBLIC CONSULTATION REPORT

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1) Introduction

Public and stakeholder engagement is an important aspect of local authority decision-making, since it enables interested parties to be involved with the decision-making process and helps to ensure that the issues most relevant to the study area are considered.

In order to obtain the views of the local public about proposals to change the existing bus interchange provision at Eldon Square, Dolgellau consultation events were held in the Free Library, Dolgellau on the following dates:

- 1) Wednesday 25th October 2017, 13:00 – 19:00
- 2) Thursday 26th October 2017, 13:00 – 18:00

These consultation events aimed to establish opinion on the need to improve the existing bus interchange, the preferred option for the location of the bus interchange and any other comments relating to the issue.

In addition to the public events held in Dolgellau, an opportunity to provide online feedback was also given, with a feedback receipt deadline of 22nd November 2017.

Feedback was recorded via completed bilingual questionnaires, which asked the following:

- *Question 1: Do you think there is a need to improve the existing bus interchange in Dolgellau?*
Answer: Yes or No
- *Question 2: Which site would you prefer the bus interchange to be located?*
Answer: A box ticked against Option 1 (Eldon Square), Option 2 (Coleg Meirion-Dwyfor), Option 3 (Marian Mawr Car Park), Option 4 (Dolgellau Bus Interchange) or Option 5 (Near the A494 Roundabout).
- *Any other comments*

Interpretive materials were provided to help explain each of the five options under consideration. A total of 252 completed questionnaires were received. The results of the responses received are provided in Section 3 of this report, with a summary of the results provided in Section 4.

In addition to the formal consultation organised by Gwynedd Council, three separate petitions relating to the proposals have been received. These are summarised as follows:

- A petition supporting the town council's proposal to move the terminus elsewhere, but retaining a single bus stop in Eldon Square, received a total of 74 signatures.
- A petition against the proposal to move the buses from Eldon Square to another location received 316 signatures.
- A petition to improve the existing facilities in Eldon Square received a total of 364 signatures.

2) Aims of the Report

This report aims to provide an impartial and objective analysis of the feedback received following the public consultation events regarding possible improvements to the Dolgellau bus interchange. The results should be used to inform the options appraisal exercise regarding the views of the public on the existing Dolgellau bus interchange facility and proposals to improve it.

3) Results of the public feedback responses

Of the 252 completed forms received, 107 were completed via the public exhibitions and 145 were completed online.

Question 1) Do you think there is a need to improve the existing bus interchange in Dolgellau?

Table 1.1: Total number and percentage of responses to Question 1 from each participation format

<i>Answer</i>	<i>No. of Online responses</i>	<i>No. of Public Event responses</i>	<i>Total Number of responses</i>	<i>Percentage of total responses</i>
Yes	121	74	195	78%
No	21	25	46	18%
No answer	3	8	11	4%

Table 1.1 shows the total number and percentage of responses to Question 1 from each participation format. The majority of total respondents (195 / 78%) were of the opinion that there is a need to improve the existing bus interchange in Dolgellau, as opposed to the 46 (18%) that disagreed with this. A small minority (11 / 4%) declined to answer the question.

Table 1.2: Distribution of responses to Question 1 from each participation event format

<i>Answer</i>	<i>% of Online responses</i>	<i>% of Public Event responses</i>
Yes	83%	69%
No	15%	23%
No answer	2%	8%

Table 1.2 shows the percentage of total responses for 'Yes', 'No' or 'No Answer' for Question 1 from each participation format. A higher percentage of online respondents (83%) voted positively for improvements than public event respondents (69%), but both participation formats revealed a higher proportion of respondents believing that there is a need to improve the existing bus interchange in Dolgellau than those opposed to this.

Conversely, a lower number of online respondents voted (15%) against the need for improvements, while a higher proportion of public event respondents (23%) voted against the need for improvements. A higher percentage of public event respondents declined to answer this question (8%) than online respondents (2%).

Question 2) Which site would you prefer the bus interchange to be located?

Table 2.1: Total number of public preferences for each option

<i>Option</i>	<i>Number of preferences</i>
1) Eldon Square	96
2) Coleg Meirion-Dwyfor	3
3) Marian Mawr car park	69
4) Dolgellau bus depot	76
5) Near the A494 roundabout	4
6) No answer	4

Table 2.1 shows the total number of public preferences for each option. The site most preferred by public respondents was Option 1 at Eldon Square (site of the existing bus interchange) with 96 votes received. The second most popular site was Option 4 at Dolgellau bus depot (76 votes), followed by Option 3 at Marian Mawr car park (69 votes).

Much lower in terms of preference were the site near the A494 roundabout (Option 5) and Coleg Meirion-Dwyfor (Option 2) and with 4 and 3 votes received respectively.

Table 2.2: Total number of preferences for each option from the Public Event feedback by answers to Question 1

<i>Option</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>No Answer</i>
1) Eldon Square	26	23	1
2) Coleg Meirion-Dwyfor	1	0	0
3) Marian Mawr car park	16	0	3
4) Dolgellau bus depot	30	2	3
5) Near the A494 roundabout	0	0	0
6) No answer	0	0	1

Table 2.2 shows the total number of preferences for each option in the context of how the Dolgellau public event participants voted for Question 1 (*Do you think there is a need to improve the existing bus interchange in Dolgellau?*).

The favoured option by those voting 'Yes' to Question 1 during the Public Events is Option 4 (30 votes), with Eldon Square second (26 votes) and Marian Mawr car park third (16 votes). Coleg Meirion Dwyfor received only 1 vote and no votes were received from this group for the option located near to the A494 roundabout.

Of those voting 'No' to Question 1 Eldon Square was the preferred option (23 votes) with just 2 votes received for the Dolgellau Bus Depot option and none for the other options.

Of those that provided no answer to Question 1 there was no single preferred option, with both Options 3 (Marian Mawr car park) and 4 (Dolgellau bus depot) receiving 3 votes each. Option 1 (Eldon Square) received 1 vote and no votes were given for Options 2 or 5.

Table 2.3: Total number of preferences for each option from the Online feedback by answers to Question 1

<i>Option</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>No Answer</i>
1) Eldon Square	37	8	1
2) Coleg Meirion-Dwyfor	2	0	0

3) Marian Mawr car park	42	6	2
4) Dolgellau bus depot	35	6	0
5) Near the A494 roundabout	3	1	0
6) No answer	0	0	0

Table 2.3 shows the total number of public preferences for each option in the context of how the online participants voted for Question 1 (*Do you think there is a need to improve the existing bus interchange in Dolgellau?*).

The favoured option by those voting 'Yes' to Question 1 via the online feedback format is Option 3 (Marian Mawr car park) with 42 votes, with Option 1 (Eldon Square) second with 37 votes and Option 4 (Dolgellau Bus Depot) third with 35 votes. Option 5 (near the A494 roundabout) and Option 2 (Coleg Meirion Dwyfor) received only 3 and 2 votes respectively.

Of those voting 'No' to Question 1 Option 1 (Eldon Square) was the preferred option with 8 votes, with 6 votes each received for Options 3 Marian Mawr Car Park) and 4 (Dolgellau Bus Depot), just 1 vote received for Option 5 (near to the A494 roundabout) and none for Option 2 (Coleg Meirion-Dwyfor).

Of those that provided no answer to Question 1 Option 3 (Marian Mawr car park) was most popular with 2 votes and Option 1 (Eldon Square) received 1 vote. No votes were given to the remaining Options 2, 4 or 5 from this group.

Table 2.4: Total number of preferences for each option from the combined feedback by answers to

Question 1

<i>Option</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>No Answer</i>
1) Eldon Square	63	31	2
2) Coleg Meirion-Dwyfor	3	0	0
3) Marian Mawr car park	58	6	5
4) Dolgellau bus depot	65	8	3
5) Near the A494 roundabout	3	1	0
6) No answer	0	0	1

Table 2.4 shows the total number of public preferences for each option in the context of how all participants voted for Question 1 (*Do you think there is a need to improve the existing bus interchange in Dolgellau?*).

The preferred option by those voting 'Yes' to Question 1 during the Public Event and Online is Option 4 (Dolgellau Bus Depot) with 65 votes, Option 1 (Eldon Square) was second with 63 votes and Option 3 (Marian Mawr car park) third with 58 votes. Option 2 (Coleg Meirion Dwyfor) and Option 5 (near the A494 roundabout) received only 3 votes each from those in favour of improvements to the existing Dolgellau bus interchange.

Of those voting 'No' to Question 1 Option 1 (Eldon Square) was the preferred option (31 votes) with 8 votes received for Option 4 (Dolgellau Bus Depot), 6 votes for Option 3 (Marian Mawr car park) and 1 vote for Option 5 (near the A494 roundabout). No votes were received for Option 2 (Coleg Meirion-Dwyfor) from those against improvements to the existing bus interchange in Dolgellau.

Of those that provided no answer to Question 1 the preferred option was Option 3 (Marian Mawr car park) with 5 votes, followed by Option 4 (Dolgellau bus depot) receiving 3 votes, then Option 1 (Eldon Square) with 2 votes. No votes were given to Options 2 or 5 from this group.

Any other comments

Table 3.1 shows the summarised common themes emerging from 'any other comments' that were provided on the public feedback forms.

Table 3.1: Common themes arising from public comments

<i>Theme</i>	<i>Number of related comments</i>
Eldon Square is too small for the current provision at the moment / improve management and provision of parking	26
Maintain ease of access to the town centre for vulnerable groups (e.g. elderly, disabled, children) if the current provision is removed	20
Improve bus timetables so that fewer buses are waiting in Eldon Square	20
Negative effects on local businesses associated with the removal of the current provision	17
Health and safety concerns about the current provision	16

Improvements to the amenity value of the town centre associated with the removal of the current provision	15
Maintain a bus stop in Eldon Square if the current provision is removed	13
Request bus drivers to switch off their engines when waiting in Eldon Square	10
Positive effects on local businesses associated with the removal of the current provision	2

The most popular theme involves the restricted size of Eldon Square to accommodate buses and parked cars, with at least 26 suggestions made about this, especially regarding the need to improve the current parking provisions. Maintaining ease of access to bus facilities (especially for the elderly and students) as well as improving bus timetables both received at least 20 suggestions each.

Potential negative effects on local businesses if the bus interchange is relocated were raised in at least 17 comments, while health and safety concerns about the existing provision received at least 16 comments. The potential for the amenity value of Dolgellau town centre to be improved by moving the existing facility received at least 15 comments. Maintaining a bus stop service in Eldon Square if the current provision is moved was raised by at least 13 respondents.

At least 10 respondents requested bus drivers to switch off their engines when waiting in Eldon Square, and so reduce the amount of noise and air pollution, while at least 2 respondents commented on the potential positive effects to local businesses should the existing facility be moved.

4) Summary

The outcomes of the responses received following the Public Consultation about the Dolgellau Bus Interchange will be considered in the options appraisal. The key points arising from the public feedback organised by Gwynedd Council are summarised as follows:

A total of 252 completed questionnaires were received from both the online (145) and public open day events (107).

Question 1: Do you think there is a need to improve the existing bus interchange in Dolgellau?

- The majority of respondents (78%) believed that there is a need to improve the existing Dolgellau bus interchange, as opposed to 18% that did not. 4% of the respondents declined to answer the question.
- A higher percentage of online respondents (83%) voted for improvements than public event respondents (69%).
- A lower percentage of online respondents (15%) voted for no improvements than public event respondents (23%).
- A higher percentage of public event respondents declined to answer Question 1 (8%) than online respondents (2%).

Question 2: Which site would you prefer the bus interchange to be located?

- Overall, the option most preferred by the public was Option 1 (Eldon Square), the site of the existing bus interchange, with 96 votes. The second most preferred site was Option 4 (Dolgellau bus depot) with 76 votes, followed by Option 3 (Marian Mawr car park) with 69 votes. The Coleg Meirion-Dwyfor site (Option 2) and the site near the A494 roundabout (Option 5) were the least preferred sites with 3 and 4 votes received respectively.
- The most preferred option by those voting 'Yes' to Question 1 (*that think there is a need to improve the existing bus interchange in Dolgellau*) was Option 4 (Dolgellau Bus Station) with 65 votes, with Option 1 (Eldon Square) second with 63 votes and Option 3 (Marian Mawr car park) third with 58 votes. Coleg Meirion Dwyfor (Option 2) and the site located near to the A494 roundabout (Option 5) received only 3 votes each from this group.
- The most preferred option by those voting 'No' to Question 1 (*that do not think there is a need to improve the existing bus interchange in Dolgellau*) is Option 1 (Eldon Square) with 31 votes, 8 votes were received for Option 4 (Dolgellau Bus Depot), 6 votes for Option 3 (Marian Mawr car park) and 1 vote for Option 5 (near the A494 roundabout). No votes were received from this group for Option 2 (Coleg Meirion-Dwyfor).

Question 3: Any other comments

- The most comments involved the restricted size of Eldon Square to accommodate buses and parked cars, with at least 26 suggestions regarding this and particularly the need to improve the current parking provisions. Maintaining ease of access to bus facilities (especially for the elderly and students) and improving bus timetables each received at least 20 suggestions.
- Other popular comments in descending order were as follows: potential negative effects on local businesses if the bus interchange is relocated (17 comments), health and safety concerns about

the existing provision (16 comments), the potential for the amenity value of Dolgellau town centre to be improved by moving the existing facility (15 comments), maintaining a bus stop service in Eldon Square if the current provision is moved (13 comments), bus drivers to switch off their engines when waiting in Eldon Square (10 comments) and potential positive effects to local businesses should the existing facility be moved (2 comments).

In addition to the formal consultation arranged by Gwynedd Council and discussed above, a total of three separate petitions have been received regarding the proposals; one with 74 signatures supporting moving the terminus elsewhere (but retaining a single bus stop in Eldon Square), one with 316 signatures against moving buses from Eldon Square and one with 364 signatures supporting improvements to the existing facilities within Eldon Square.