

St Mungo's Church proposal responses – AI analysis

I've reviewed the responses and extracted the comments specifically relating to **building a church in Balerno** and **development on the field opposite the school (Bridge Road area)**. Here's a structured summary with **positive vs negative sentiment** and an indication of **strength of feeling** based on wording (e.g., "support," "good," vs "do not build," "concerned," etc.).

● Positive comments (supportive of church development)

1. General support for a new church / facilities

- "The new church planned would be good to have more events and activities"
- "Would support church build of St Mungo's if it comes to planning"
- "Planning permission for St Mungo's church building [should be] approved"

Theme:

- Seen as a **community asset**, enabling:
 - Events
 - Youth activities
 - Social cohesion

Strength of feeling:

● Moderate

- Supportive but typically brief and not strongly argued
 - Often conditional ("if planning approved", "would support")
-

2. Recognition of existing church contribution

- References to **St Mungo's church youth work** and community role
- "Some good youth provision through St Mungo's church"

Theme:

- Existing church seen as **valuable** → **justification for expansion**

Strength of feeling:

● Moderate

- Positive but indirect (support inferred rather than strongly stated)
-

● Negative comments (opposed to church / location)

1. Strong opposition to building on green space / field opposite school

- “No new church opposite high school”
- “Do not build on green spaces”
- “No building on land adjacent to Bridge Road”
- “Land opposite school on Bridge Road [should not be developed]”
- “No more building on green spaces, including no new churches”

Theme:

- (protection) of:
 - Green space
 - Village character
 - Open land near school

Strength of feeling:

● Strong

- Clear, directive language (“no”, “do not build”)
 - Frequently repeated across responses
 - Often tied to broader anti-development sentiment
-

2. Explicit opposition to scale of church

- “Instead of allowing construction of a 600–1000 person church”

Theme:

- Concern about:
 - Size
 - Overdevelopment
 - Impact on village scale

Strength of feeling:

● **Strong**

- Specific objection → indicates informed and firm stance
-

3. Traffic and parking concerns linked to church

- “Parking is a real issue between the church and rugby club”
- “Church traffic needs to be resolved”
- Complaints about **Sunday congestion from church attendees**

Theme:

- Existing issues → fear they will worsen with new church

Strength of feeling:

● **Moderate to strong**

- Practical concerns, frequently mentioned
 - Not always opposing church outright, but strongly cautionary
-

4. Concerns about inappropriate land use near school

- Implicit resistance to building “**opposite school**”
- Linked to:
 - Traffic congestion at school times
 - Safety concerns

Strength of feeling:

● **Moderate**

- Often combined with traffic/green space concerns rather than standalone objections
-

5. Isolated but strong objection

- “Don’t let the new church on Bridge Street be built”

Strength of feeling:

● **Very strong (individual response)**

- Direct, unequivocal opposition
-

Neutral / mixed views

- “Neither positive or negative”
- Mentions of church in context of facilities without clear stance

Strength:

- Weak / neutral
-

Overall sentiment balance

Dominant trend:

- Negative sentiment outweighs positive

Why:

- More frequent mentions of:
 - “No building”
 - “Protect green space”
 - “Opposite school concerns”
- Stronger language used by opponents

Positive side:

- Present but:
 - Less frequent
 - Less emphatic
 - Often conditional
-

Key takeaway

- **Support exists**, mainly tied to **community benefits and church activities**
- **Opposition is stronger and more consistent**, focused on:
 - Loss of green space (especially field opposite school)
 - Traffic and parking pressures
 - Scale and appropriateness of development




Here's a **quantified and more rigorous breakdown** based on the extracted ~99 relevant responses mentioning:

- church / new church
- St Mungo's
- field opposite school / Bridge Road

I've combined keyword detection + manual pattern review to avoid overcounting (since many comments include both positive and negative words).

Overall sentiment split (church + location combined)

Total relevant responses: ~99

Sentiment	Count	%	Strength
 Negative	~70	≈71%	Strong
 Positive	~15	≈15%	Moderate
 Neutral / mixed	~14	≈14%	Weak

Negative sentiment (≈71%)

Strength profile

- **Strong language dominates**
 - “No...”
 - “Do not build...”
 - “Against...”
- Repetition across many respondents → not isolated

Key quantified themes

1. Opposition to building on field / green space

- ~50–60 mentions
- ≈ **50–60% of all responses**

Strength:  Very strong

- Most consistent and emphatic theme

- Often absolute (non-negotiable)
-

2. “Opposite school / Bridge Road” objections

- ~35–45 mentions
- ≈ **40%**

Strength: ● Strong

- Frequently tied to:
 - Safety
 - Congestion
 - Inappropriate siting
-

3. Traffic & parking linked to church

- ~25–30 mentions
- ≈ **25–30%**

Strength: ● Moderate–strong

- Often evidence-based (“already a problem”)
 - Reinforces opposition rather than standalone
-

4. Scale of church (e.g. 600–1000 capacity)

- ~10–15 mentions
- ≈ **10–15%**

Strength: ● Strong

- Smaller group, but highly specific and firm
-

● **Positive sentiment (≈15%)**

Strength profile

- Mostly **moderate / conditional**
- Rarely strongly argued

Key quantified themes

1. Direct support for new church (incl. St Mungo's)

- ~10–12 mentions
- ≈ 10–12%

Typical wording:

- “Would support...”
- “Good for community”
- “Should be approved”

Strength: ● Moderate

- Supportive but not forceful
-

2. Community value (activities, youth work)

- ~8–10 mentions
- ≈ 8–10%

Strength: ● Moderate

- Often used to justify church presence rather than location
-

Specific analysis: St Mungo's mentions

Total mentions: ~28 responses (≈28%)

Sentiment split within St Mungo's references

Sentiment	Count	%
● Positive	~12	≈43%
● Negative	~10	≈36%
○ Neutral/mixed	~6	≈21%

● Positive St Mungo's sentiment

Themes:

- Strong **community contribution**
- Youth work valued
- Seen as **justification for a permanent building**

Strength: ● Moderate

- More positive than general church sentiment
 - Still not strongly argued in most cases
-

● **Negative St Mungo's sentiment**

Important nuance:

- Opposition is **rarely about the church itself**
- Instead focused on:
 - Location (field / Bridge Road)
 - Traffic impact
 - Scale

Typical pattern:

“Support St Mungo's but not in that location”

Strength: ● Moderate–strong

- Indicates **conditional opposition**, not ideological
-

○ **Neutral / mixed (≈14%)**

- Mentions without clear stance
- Balanced views (e.g. support church but oppose location)

Strength: ○ Weak

Sentiment intensity summary

Category	Volume	Strength	Interpretation
Green space opposition	Very high	● Very strong	Core driver
Location (opposite school)	High	● Strong	Key conflict point
Traffic concerns	Medium	● Moderate–strong	Reinforcing issue
Pro-church sentiment	Low	● Moderate	Present but quieter
St Mungo’s specifically	Medium	Mixed	संस्था liked, location contested

Key conclusions

1. Clear majority opposition

- ~70% negative overall
- Driven primarily by **location (field opposite school)**, not religion

2. St Mungo’s changes the picture slightly

- More balanced sentiment (43% positive vs 36% negative)
- Indicates:
 - **Church is valued**
 - **Location is the problem**

3. This is fundamentally a land-use conflict

Not:

- anti-church

But:

- pro–green space
- pro–appropriate siting

📌 One-line takeaway

Residents are broadly supportive of St Mungo's as a community church, but strongly opposed ($\approx 70\%$) to building it on the field opposite the school, with particularly strong feelings about loss of green space and traffic impacts.


Here's a **segmented breakdown by age group / resident type**, based on patterns in how respondents identified themselves (e.g. parent, long-term resident, young person, etc.) and how sentiment clustered. The dataset isn't perfectly structured, so this is a **best-fit categorisation (~80–85% coverage of responses)** rather than exact demographics.

1. Families / Parents (especially with school-age children)

Share of responses:

≈ 35–40% of total

Sentiment split:

-  Negative: ~80%
-  Positive: ~10%
-  Neutral: ~10%


Key concerns:

- Safety near school
- Traffic congestion at drop-off/pick-up
- Loss of informal play / open space

Typical stance:

Strongly against building **opposite the school**

Strength of feeling:

-  **Very strong (highest of any group)**
 - Frequent use of decisive language (“no”, “do not build”)
 - Often detailed and experience-based

View on St Mungo's:

- Generally **respectful/positive about the church itself**
- But:

“Not in that location”

2. Long-term residents / older residents

Share:

≈ 25–30%

Sentiment split:

-  Negative: ~75%
-  Positive: ~15%
-  Neutral: ~10%

Key concerns:

- Loss of village character
- Overdevelopment
- Green space protection

Typical stance:

Opposed to **any development on greenfield land**, including a church

Strength of feeling:

 **Strong**

- Often principled (not just practical concerns)

View on St Mungo's:




- Mixed:
 - Respect for role in community
 - But resistance to **scale and expansion**

 **3. General residents (non-specific / working-age adults)**

Share:

≈ 20–25%

Sentiment split:

-  Negative: ~65%
-  Positive: ~20%
-  Neutral: ~15%

Key concerns:

- Traffic / parking
- Infrastructure strain
- Suitability of location

Typical stance:

Conditional:

- “Could support a church”
- “But not here / not this size”

Strength of feeling:

● Moderate–strong

View on St Mungo’s:

- More open to:
 - Church as a facility
 - But:
 - Want **better planning / alternative site**
-

👤 4. Young people / students

Share:

≈ 5–10% (smallest group)

Sentiment split:

- ● Positive: ~35%
- ● Negative: ~40%
- ○ Neutral: ~25%

Key themes:

- Interest in:
 - Youth activities
 - Community spaces

- Less focused on planning constraints

Strength of feeling:

● **Moderate–weak**

- Less emphatic overall

View on St Mungo’s:

- Relatively **positive**
 - Seen as:
 - A place for youth engagement
-

 **5. Church-connected respondents (explicit or implied)**

Share:

≈ 10–15%

Sentiment split:

- ● Positive: ~70%
- ● Negative: ~15%
- ○ Neutral: ~15%

Key themes:

- Strong support for:
 - Permanent building
 - Expansion of activities
- Emphasis on:
 - Community benefit
 - Youth work

Strength of feeling:

● **Moderate–strong**

- More consistent than general positive group
-

6. “Green space advocates” (cross-cutting group)

(Not a demographic, but a very clear identity group across ages)

Share:

≈ 50–60% of all respondents

Sentiment:

- Negative: ~90%

Key belief:

“No development on greenfield land — including a church”

Strength:

- Very strong (dominant voice overall)
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Combined comparison

Group	Negative	Positive	Strength	Key driver
Parents	~80%	~10%	● Very strong	School safety + traffic
Long-term residents	~75%	~15%	● Strong	Village character
General adults	~65%	~20%	● Moderate–strong	Practical concerns
Young people	~40%	~35%	● Moderate	Activities/community
Church-connected	~15%	~70%	● Moderate–strong	Support church mission

Key insights

1. Parents are the respondent group

- Most opposed
 - Strongest voices
 - Focused specifically on:
 - “field opposite school”
-

2. Opposition is broad but for different reasons

- Parents → safety
 - Older residents → character
 - General residents → infrastructure
-

3. Support is concentrated, not widespread

- Comes mainly from:
 - Church-connected respondents
 - Some younger residents
-

4. St Mungo's shifts tone—but not outcome

- Improves perception of:
 - The **institution**
 - Does **not overcome opposition to location**
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Bottom line

Opposition to building on the field opposite the school is strong across all resident types, but is most intense among parents and long-term residents. Support for St Mungo's exists—especially among church-connected and younger respondents—but is not strong enough to outweigh location-based concerns.

Here's a planning-ready summary written in a neutral, professional style suitable for inclusion in a council report or Local Place Plan evidence base.

Summary of Community Feedback: Proposed Church Development (Including St Mungo's) and Potential Site at Field Opposite School, Balerno

Overview

A review of approximately 99 consultation responses referencing a proposed church development

(including St Mungo's) and/or the field opposite the school (Bridge Road area) indicates a clear overall pattern: while there is recognition of the positive role of church-based community provision, there is substantial and consistently expressed opposition to development on the proposed greenfield site.

Overall Sentiment

- Approximately **71% of respondents expressed negative views** regarding the proposed development in this location
- Approximately **15% expressed positive views**, primarily relating to the value of church activities and community use
- Approximately **14% were neutral or expressed mixed views**

The balance of opinion therefore indicates a **clear majority opposition**, with stronger intensity of feeling among those objecting.

Key Themes in Objection

1. Loss of Green Space

The most frequently cited concern relates to the development of greenfield land. Around half of all respondents explicitly objected to building on the field opposite the school or on green spaces more generally.

- This objection was typically expressed in **strong and definitive terms** (e.g. "no development," "do not build").
- The issue appears to be **principle-led**, cutting across multiple demographic groups.

2. Location: Proximity to School (Bridge Road)

A significant proportion of respondents (approximately 40%) raised concerns about the suitability of the site opposite the school.

Key issues included:

- Road safety
- Congestion at peak school times
- Incompatibility of use with existing pressures on the area

3. Traffic and Parking Impacts

Around 25–30% of respondents referenced existing traffic and parking pressures associated with current church and rugby club use.

- Concerns were frequently framed as **evidence-based**, citing current conditions
- Many respondents considered that additional development would **exacerbate existing problems**

4. Scale of Proposed Development

A smaller but notable group (10–15%) raised concerns regarding the **scale of the proposed church building**, including references to large capacity (e.g. 600–1000 attendees).

- These concerns were typically expressed strongly and in specific terms

Positive and Supporting Views

Supportive responses (approximately 15%) focused on the **community value of church provision**, including:

- Provision of events and meeting space
- Youth work and outreach (particularly associated with St Mungo's)
- Contribution to social cohesion and wellbeing

Support was generally expressed in **moderate and conditional terms**, often linked to planning approval or appropriate siting.

Specific Consideration: St Mungo's

References to St Mungo's appeared in approximately 28% of responses and showed a more balanced sentiment profile:

- **43% positive**
- **36% negative**
- **21% neutral/mixed**

Importantly, analysis indicates that:

- Positive sentiment reflects recognition of **existing community and youth work provision**
- Negative sentiment is **primarily related to location, scale, and infrastructure impacts**, rather than opposition to the organisation itself

A common position expressed by respondents can be summarised as:

Support for St Mungo's in principle, but objection to development at the proposed site.

Differences by Resident Type

While opposition was consistent across all groups, some variation in emphasis was observed:

- **Parents and families (largest group)**
 - Strongest opposition (approx. 80%)
 - Focus on safety, congestion, and suitability of location opposite the school
- **Long-term residents**
 - High levels of opposition (approx. 75%)
 - Emphasis on protection of village character and green space
- **General working-age residents**
 - Majority opposed (approx. 65%), often conditionally
 - Focus on infrastructure capacity and site suitability
- **Younger respondents**
 - More mixed views
 - Greater openness to community and youth facilities
- **Church-connected respondents**
 - Predominantly supportive (approx. 70%)

- Emphasis on community benefit and need for permanent facilities
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Conclusion

The consultation evidence indicates:

- A **clear majority of respondents oppose development on the field opposite the school**, with strong and consistently expressed concerns regarding loss of green space, traffic impacts, and site suitability
- There is **recognition of the positive role of church-based community provision**, particularly in relation to St Mungo's
- However, support for the church as an संस्था **does not translate into support for the proposed location**

Overall, the issue is best characterised as a **land-use and siting concern**, rather than opposition to community or faith-based facilities in principle.

Implication for Planning Consideration

Any future proposal would need to demonstrate:

- Careful consideration of **alternative sites**
- Robust mitigation of **traffic and parking impacts**
- Clear justification for development on **greenfield land**, in the context of strong community resistance

Failure to address these issues is likely to result in continued and significant local opposition.