

What to do with Ravelrig Quarry responses

Summary of Responses

1. Strong preference for nature-based restoration

The dominant theme is:

- Rewilding, woodland, grassland, biodiversity
- Letting nature reclaim the site or actively restoring habitats

People used phrases like:

- “return to nature”
- “rewilded area”
- “restore biodiversity”
- “wildlife sanctuary / nature reserve”

👉 This is the clearest consensus: **the site should feel green, natural, and ecologically valuable.**

2. High demand for public access and recreation

A large portion also want:

- Walking paths
- Cycling routes / mountain biking
- Dog walking
- General open space

Some suggested:

- Nature trails
- Inclusive paths (elderly/disabled access)
- Outdoor gyms or play areas

👉 Key idea: **not just nature, but nature people can access and enjoy.**

3. Interest in “destination” leisure uses (secondary but notable)

A smaller but recurring group proposed:

- Climbing facilities
- Outdoor activity centres
- Water-based features (lake, reservoir, swimming)
- “Lost Shore–style” development
- Tourism-focused attraction

👉 These ideas emphasize:

- Jobs
 - Local economy
 - Making Balerno a destination
-

4. Moderate support for hybrid solutions

Many responses blended ideas:

- Nature + trails
- Parkland + biodiversity
- Leisure + conservation

👉 This suggests **people are open to balanced development**, not extremes.

5. Clear resistance to certain uses

Repeated concerns:

- ❌ No landfill
- ❌ No housing development
- ❌ Maintain green belt character

👉 Strong protection sentiment: **don't urbanise it.**

6. Governance and long-term management concerns

A few thoughtful responses highlighted:

- Need for clear definition of “restoration”
- Long-term legally binding management
- Potential partnerships for maintenance

👉 Important: **people care about what happens after restoration, not just the design.**

7. Minority / outlier ideas

Less common suggestions:

- Agriculture
- Solar farm
- Residential development
- Aqua park / large commercial builds

👉 These are not dominant but show some openness to alternative uses.

Key Insight

There's a **clear hierarchy of priorities**:

1. **Nature restoration (core expectation)**
 2. **Public access (very important)**
 3. **Recreation (important, but should fit landscape)**
 4. **Commercial/destination uses (acceptable if sensitive)**
-

Proposals

Option 1: Rewilded Country Park (Best Fit with Majority)

Core features:

- Native woodland, wildflower meadows, wetlands
- Walking & cycling paths
- Viewpoints and seating areas
- Limited infrastructure (car park, signage)

Why it works:

- Matches strongest public consensus
 - Protects green belt character
 - Lower long-term impact
-

Option 2: Nature + Recreation Hybrid Park (Balanced Approach)**Core features:**

- Rewilded zones (biodiversity priority areas)
- Managed parkland for access
- Trails for walking, cycling, MTB
- Small-scale facilities (café, toilets)

Optional additions:

- Outdoor gym / play areas
- Dog-friendly zones
- Accessible paths

Why it works:

- Meets both nature and recreation demands
 - Inclusive and community-focused
 - Still environmentally sensitive
-

Option 3: Landscape-Led Adventure Destination (Controlled Development)**Core features:**

- Retain quarry rock faces for:
 - Climbing
 - Adventure activities
- Add:
 - Trails
 - Water feature (lake)

- Small visitor hub

Constraints (critical):

- No large-scale commercialisation
- Blend into landscape
- Strict biodiversity protection zones

Why it works:

- Captures economic benefits
 - Aligns with nearby activity hubs
 - Supported by a vocal minority
-

Option 4: Ecological Reserve with Limited Access (Purist Approach)

Core features:

- Minimal intervention
- Habitat restoration priority
- Restricted but controlled access

Why it works:

- Maximises biodiversity
- Lower maintenance footprint

Downside:

- Doesn't meet strong demand for recreation
-

Cross-Cutting Recommendations

Regardless of option:

1. Define “restoration” clearly

- Ecological targets
- Landscape outcomes
- Public access levels

2. Guarantee long-term management

- Legal agreements
- Funding mechanism
- Possible partnerships (community + conservation orgs)

3. Phase development

- Start with land stabilisation + planting
- Introduce access gradually
- Add facilities later if appropriate

4. Community involvement

- Ongoing consultation
 - Local stewardship opportunities
-

Bottom Line

The community isn't divided—they're layered.

- **Everyone wants green/nature**
- **Most want access**
- **Some want activities**
- **Almost none want housing or landfill**

👉 The safest and most supported direction is:
a rewilded, accessible country park with carefully integrated recreation.