Balerno Local Place Plan

Summary of Proposals based on the community engagement

Agenda

Balerno Community Council

- **Introduction and Welcome**
- **Community Engagement**
- **Proposals**
  - **1. Green Belt – Development - Housing**
  - **2. Infrastructure - Green Spaces**
  - **3. Infrastructure – Digital**
  - **4. Infrastructure - Social**
  - **5. Education**
  - **6. Transport and Movement**
  - **7. Pentland Hills**
  - **8. Ravelrig Quarry**

What to Expect

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- Each of proposals will be detailed
- Time for questions/ comments/ discussion
- The sheet you have on the table:
  - We ask you to prioritise your top 3 proposals in each Theme
  - There is space on the reverse to add any amendments you would want considered
- Please hand the sheets in at the end of the meeting
- The Working Group will review these to amend the proposals

1. Green Belt – Development - Housing

Summary

- There is overwhelming support for maintenance of the Green Belt around Balerno.
- There is a prevailing view that regeneration should not extend to any expansion of the built environment.
- Having said that there is also serious concern about the absence of necessary infrastructure (e.g. schools, medical facilities).

1. Green Belt – Development - Housing

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Ref	Proposal
	Strategic Direction: “Improve, Don’t Expand”
GRNB1	Adopt a “Regeneration First, Expansion Last” Policy ◦ Prioritise: ▪ Upgrading existing assets ▪ Brownfield redevelopment ◦ Explicitly limit outward growth into Green Belt
	B. Green Belt Policy (Strengthened)
GRNB2	Formal Presumption Against Development to protect Green Belt ◦ Reinforce “no development” stance
	C. Regeneration Priorities (Community-Led)
GRNB3	Focus Investment on Existing Infrastructure Priority areas: ◦ High school redevelopment ◦ Healthcare (GP/dental facilities) ◦ Transport improvements ◦ Roads and congestion mitigation

Ref	Proposal
	E. Housing Strategy (Targeted, Not Volume-Based)
GRNB8	Brownfield-Only Housing Policy (Preferred)
	G. Public Realm Improvements
GRNB10	Invest in Everyday Environment • Paths and walkability • Play parks • Streetscape and public furniture • Maintenance of woodland and open spaces
	H. Infrastructure-First Rule (Reinforced)

GRNB11	No Development Without Capacity
	• Schools, roads, healthcare must:
	  ○ Exist first, or
	  ○ Be delivered upfront

Ref	Proposal
	J. Governance & Trust
GRNB14	Transparent, Inclusive Engagement • Widely communicated consultation • Offline + online engagement Clear explanation of decisions
GRNB15	Balerno Conservation Area Appraisal • The Conservation Area was last appraised in August 2000. Proposal is to request a reappraisal of the Conservation Area. • The Balerno Conservation Area Character Appraisal emphasises the predominance of vernacular buildings within the conservation area, the consistency in the use of traditional building materials, the substantial green setting giving a rural appearance, and the wide range of uses which result in a self-contained village character.

2. Infrastructure - Green Spaces

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- **Summary of Proposal**
- **These proposals focuses on improving the green infrastructure for all members of the community of Balerno, including the green spaces themselves, the amenities that people can enjoy within the spaces (playparks, youth facilities, seating, bins) and the paths that people use within the village to access both these spaces and other parts of the village**

Ref	Proposal
INFGN1	Improve path between Ravelrig/Walled Garden and Bridge Road and develop the Ravelrig Walled Garden as a community garden/park.
INFGN2	Improvement of the Water of Leith Path and extension further upstream into the village
INFGN3	Improvement of paths in woodland area between Harlaw Road and BHS and gate access to Malleny Estate and Gardens.
INFGN4	Improvement of path by creation of a bridge in the shelterbelt by Cockburn Crescent by the bus shelter.
INFGN5	Path improved between the park at the back of Malleny Avenue to Harlaw Road.
INFGN6	Improvements in Marchbank Park; • Clearer signage of paths • More Benches • Outdoor Gym Equipment • BBQ facility • Structure for carers to sit under • Playpark improvements

Ref	Proposal
INFGN7	Improvements to the park between Deanpark Gardens and Dean Park avenue: • Benches • Fruit Trees • Playpark
INFGN8	New playpark or bike track on Harlaw Road Bing
INFGN9	Roundabout at the foot of Johnsburn Road/ Bridge Road - Remove the concrete and add additional greenery
INFGN10	New Playpark near the Rugby Club

3. Infrastructure - Digital

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Ref	Proposals
INFD1	Universal Full Fibre Programme • Ensure 100% fibre coverage across Balerno • Prioritise currently underserved streets and outskirts • Require providers to publish clear rollout timelines

INFD2	Mobile Coverage Improvement Plan
	• Work with telecom providers to:
	  ○ Identify signal “black spots”
	  ○ Install targeted small-scale masts or boosters
	Encourage infrastructure sharing between networks

INFD3	“Dig Once” Infrastructure Policy Introduce a local policy requiring: • Coordination between providers • Shared trenching and ducts • Alignment with road resurfacing schedules • Stronger standards for road/pavement reinstatement

Ref	Proposals

INFD4	Reliability & Resilience Standards
	• Encourage/require providers to:
	  ○ Improve network redundancy
	  ○ Harden infrastructure against weather disruptions
	• Explore backup solutions for vulnerable areas

INFD5	Increase Market Competition • Support infrastructure like open-access fibre networks • Make it easier for multiple ISPs to operate locally

INFD6	Targeted Public WiFi Zones
	• Introduce free public WiFi in:
	  ○ Village centre
	  ○ Community hubs

INFD7	Environmentally Sensitive Rollout Guidelines • Underground cabling where possible • Careful placement of masts • Avoid large-scale developments like data centres
INFD8	Ongoing Upgrade Commitment • Ensure infrastructure keeps pace with future tech (5G → 6G → beyond). • Regular review every 5 years

4. Infrastructure -Social

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- **Social infrastructure: This refers to the network of physical spaces, facilities and services (like schools, parks, libraries, community centres) that improve social well-being.**
- **Balerno Main Street: The proposal focuses on the village centre, primarily the Main Street and addresses issues relation to traffic and pedestrian, safety in what is designated as a pedestrian precinct.**

Ref	Proposal

INFS1	Create a Multi-Use Community Hub
	• Develop (or upgrade) a central hub that includes:
	  ○ Gym + fitness classes
	  ○ Youth space (dedicated teen area)
	  ○ Café/social space
	  ○ Workshop rooms

INFS2	Youth Strategy (High Priority)
	• Establish:
	  ○ Youth club + drop-in centre
	  ○ Outdoor facilities (skate park, bike track, MUGA court)
	Partner with schools and community groups

INFS5	Library Transformation
	• Expand or relocate to larger space
	• Add:
	  ○ Co-working / study areas
	  ○ Workshops (skills, crafts, digital)
	Community programming

Ref	Proposal

INFS6	Health & Wellbeing Improvements
	• Deliver:
	  ○ Community gym (standalone or within hub)
	  ○ Outdoor fitness equipment in parks
	Improve access to swimming facilities

INFS7	Access & Safety Improvements
	• Implement:
	  ○ Safe school travel plan (cycling, walking routes)
	  ○ Parking redesign near schools
	  ○ Better disabled access to key sites : Balerno Community Centre; Balerno High School; Library

Ref	Proposal
INFS12	Balerno Main Street: Install Controlled Access Access allowed only for: • Disabled badge holders • Deliveries (time-restricted) • Emergency services
INFS13	Balerno Main Street: Access & Safety Improvements • Clarify Layout & Signage to Main Street area
INFS14	Balerno Main Street - Enhance Public Space Add Seating / planters / café space

5. Education

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- **Summary of Proposal**
- **Balerno High School**
- This proposal focuses on the strong demand for a rebuild or major refurbishment. There is a call for greater specialist care provision and improved sustainable action. In addition, responses wanted greater community access.

- **Deanpark Primary School**
- This proposal focuses on improving the experience and safety of pupils, parents, and staff at Dean Park Primary School. It addresses significant concerns around unsafe and congested parking during drop-off and pick-up times. The proposal combines traffic management solutions with longer-term considerations such as expanded play spaces.

5. Education - Balerno High Sc

Ref	Description of the Proposal
BHS 1	Strategic Option: New Build vs Major Refurbishment Conduct a feasibility study comparing: Full rebuild (preferred by majority) Deep retrofit/modernisation
BHS 2	Transform into a “Community Hub School” Design or retrofit to include: • Public-access gym + fitness suite • Upgraded swimming pool • Multi-use sports halls available to community use

Ref	Description of the Proposal
BHS 3	Transport & Safety Redesign Introduce: Safer drop-off zones • Enforced parking controls Pedestrian crossings / lights Expand: Walking & cycling infrastructure
BHS 5	Sports & Wellbeing Investment New or upgraded: • Swimming pool • Gym (dual school/community use) Multi-sport facilities beyond rugby/football Add: Outdoor learning spaces Wellbeing/mental health areas
BHS 6	Accessibility & Inclusion Improvements • Fully accessible campus design • Dedicated ASN/specialist support facilities • Inclusive changing and learning environments

Ref	Description of the Proposal
BHS 7	Sustainability Plan Replace single glazing with efficient systems Introduce: • Renewable heating (e.g., heat pumps) • Energy-efficient lighting • Embed sustainability into learning spaces
BHS 8	Maintenance & Management Reform Implement: Planned preventative maintenance programme Regular condition audits Improve: Responsiveness to infrastructure issues
BHS 9	Capacity & Future-Proofing Ensure school is: Large enough for future population growth Flexible for evolving curriculum (vocational + digital + practical skills)

5. Education - Deanpark Primary School

Ref	Description of the Proposal
DPPS1	• Edinburgh School Safe Streets – Consult on the introduction of designated drop-off and pick-up zones away from the school gates. In conjunction with Parent Council Traffic survey
DPPS2	• Explore implementation of a temporary car-free zone during peak school times
DPPS3	• New crossing at Deanpark Gardens and Deanpark Place
DPPS4	• Increase signage and road markings to improve awareness and compliance

5. Education - Deanpark Primary School

Ref	Description of the Proposal
DPPS5	• Consider a one-way traffic system around the school on Deanpark Way. If instigated then a crossing is essential
DPPS6	• Provide an assisted pedestrian crossing or school crossing patrol
DPPS7	• Investigate the role of a safety officer or traffic warden during peak times
DPPS8	• Assess the feasibility of a second primary school in the lower Balerno area to accommodate population growth
DPPS10	• Improve and expand play areas in and around the school to support children's wellbeing and throughout Balerno

6. Transport & Movement

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Summary of Proposal for Transport policy for Balerno

- **Balerno should prioritise safer walking, better-managed traffic, reliable public transport, and targeted parking management.**

  The Local Place Plan aims to support safer school travel, improved village-centre pedestrian priority, better connections to rail and regional destinations, and targeted interventions on roads where speed, crossing safety, and pavement quality are recurring concerns.

Ref	Proposal
Improved crossing points and pedestrian priority on routes to schools	
Tr&M 4	Undertake road pedestrian crossing survey for installation of zebra crossing on ● Bridge Road for the crossing islands ● Bavelaw Green/ Bridge Road junction
Safer walking and cycling access to schools from surrounding residential areas.	
Tr&M 7	Proposal to review traffic flow at junction of Lanark Road/ Ravelrig Road with view to installation of pedestrian crossing
Tr&M 8	Propose upgrade of path from Ravelrig Wynd to Bridge Road, past Walled garden
Tr&M 9	Review and new markings on cycle lane on Bridge Road

Ref	Proposal
Main Street movement plan	
Tr&M 10	A Local Place Plan could support a Main Street access and public realm strategy. Possible measures: • clearer pedestrian priority enforcement • short-stay loading bays at defined locations • improved disabled parking access nearby • removal of informal stopping in pedestrian-sensitive areas • better street design to reduce conflict between people and vehicles
Local traffic calming and speed management	
Tr&M 11	20mph-plus safety package focused on problem routes: Johnsburn Road; Cockburn Crescent. 30mph speed limit along: Glenbrook Road; Cockburn farm Road Possible measures: • targeted speed reduction on roads raised repeatedly by residents • raised crossings near schools and community facilities

Ref	Proposal
Walking, wheeling and local accessibility	
Tr&M 12	The Local Place Plan supports: • improved pavement condition, maintenance and accessibility; • widening of pavements where feasible in locations with high pedestrian use;
Public transport and regional connectivity	
Tr&M 14	The Local Place Plan supports: • Propose the review of a potential bus service to Livingston, serving Balerno, Kirknewton, and East Calder
Tr&M 16	The commencement of a review into a new Railway station at Balerno
Targeted parking management	
Tr&M 17	The Local Place Plan supports: • evidence-led parking management around schools, local facilities and visitor pressure points; • management measures that improve turnover, reduce obstruction and protect residential amenity; • parking solutions that are proportionate and sensitive to village character

7. Pentlands

Summary of Proposal

To deliver a safe, well-connected and low-impact active access corridor between Balerno and the Pentlands, while safeguarding the landscape, biodiversity and rural character that make the area distinctive.

Ref	Proposals
Pent 1	Create a formal proposal for a **safe off-road walking and cycling route** linking Balerno with **Harlaw Reservoir** and **Threipmuir Reservoir**.
Pent 2	Support a programme of **incremental path upgrades** rather than major new infrastructure
Pent 3	Install a coordinated network of: (1) route markers from Balerno to the hills; (2) walking-time signage; (3) low-key interpretation on ecology, heritage and responsible access
Pent 4	Low-impact visitor facilities at gateway locations. Facilities such as toilets; bike parking; seating; modest seasonal refreshment provision
Pent 5	Resist any development that would urbanise, visually intrude upon or cumulatively erode the Landscape, biodiversity and rural character qualities.
Pent 6	Recreational use of the Pentlands should be managed to minimise damage to landscape and habitats.

Ref	Proposals
Pent 7	Parking management measures at **Harlaw Reservoir** and **Threipmuir Reservoir** should prioritise managing congestion and protecting local access rather than maximising revenue.
Pent 8 – Manage camping	Support a local management approach for the Pentlands based on: designated camping areas only (if any) ; no fires / no disposable barbecues ; seasonal ranger enforcement ; clearer visitor information
Pent 9 – Ban camping	Camping to be restricted in the Pentland Regional Park

8. Ravelrig Quarry proposals

Balerno residents showed strong support for nature-based restoration through rewilding, woodland and grassland, with high demand for public access with some interest in destination leisure uses

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)

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)

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
-

Option 4: Ecological Reserve with Limited Access

(Purist Approach)

- **Core features:**
- Minimal intervention
- Habitat restoration priority
- Restricted but controlled access

Constraints (critical):

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

As a bit of fun?

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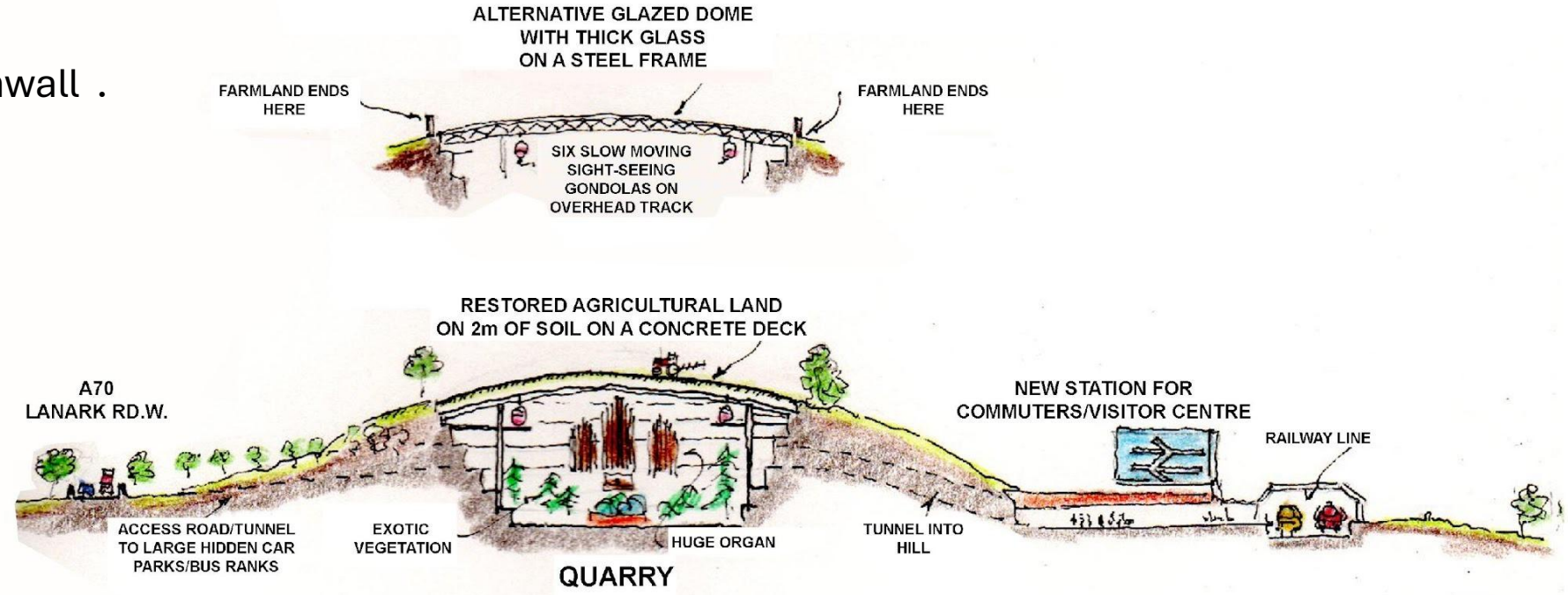
8. Ravelrig Quarry

"Balerno Blasted Bunker" Proposal?

Something quite exceptional that could be used as a means of enhancing Balerno's edge-of-town status in a unique way?

Consider the Eden Project, Cornwall .



SKETCH DESIGN FOR THE BALERNO BLASTED BUNKER INSIDE RAVELRIG QUARRY

MAY 2026