

## Notes from school review workshops

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### Dean Park Primary School: Workshop held on Monday 29th January 2018

The following notes are separated by discussion group and have been categorised by subject discussed. The discussion group notes were taken by different council officers and in some cases by group members. The representations below are as faithful to the original notes as possible. Accordingly, the written approach of the notes taken at each discussion group will vary. None of the notes taken are verbatim. We have not included comments which may identify an individual who is not a Council Officer.

#### Discussion Group One

Item	Discussion / Comments
<b>Published Proposals</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Support in principle for a high school capacity c. 1200 due to more subject choices.</li><li>• Need a high school in Balerno to provide community facilities because it doesn't have a GP, bank. Without the high school the area would be a large housing estate.</li><li>• Concerns the projection data has not taken account of the ageing population in Balerno and likely change to its demographic in the future – will a 1200 be big enough?</li><li>• Selling the Currie Community High School site for housing development is a big concern – additional traffic, loss of sports facilities</li><li>• Concern about the decant and how that will be managed. Need assurance school will be properly staffed and resourced during any transition. Extra support during exam period.</li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concern about how pupils with additional support needs will cope in a large school – extra support?</li> <li>• Balerno is more integrated with Currie than Ratho (geographically, better links, public transport, social media groups).</li> </ul>
<b>Summary of Published Proposals:</b>	
<p>Pupils from the Cherry Tree area of Currie Primary School would go to Dean Park Primary and then to Balerno Community High from August 2019.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support in principle</li> <li>• Long Dalmahoy Road should also be realigned to Dean Park Primary School and Balerno Community High School</li> <li>• Balerno pupils should go to Balerno schools</li> <li>• Easier to walk to Currie Primary School and the realignment may create traffic issues, though there are already good walking links to Dean Park Primary School <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Any issues would be similar to that already experienced by people who live in the Ravelrig area or north of the traffic lights on Lanark Road West</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Need more information about how the schools would be extended to accommodate extra pupils <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Do not want to lose valuable community facilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Clinic used by the community: thrift shop, music groups, dementia group</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Do not want to lose playground space</li> <li>○ School is already overcrowded – hall, dining, general purpose space</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What condition is Dean Park Primary School in?</li> <li>• What is its lifespan?</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Should it not be rebuilt as a purpose built three stream school?</li> </ul>
Balerno Community High would be expanded and refurbished on its existing school site. Capacity would increase from 850 to 1200 pupils.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More subject choices</li> </ul>
<b>Alternative Proposals</b>	
Amalgamate Currie Community High School and Balerno Community High School in a new building on the existing Currie Community High School site.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Currie Community High School site is not in a good location because of traffic heading east along Lanark Road West.</li> <li>• Would result in Balerno having no community facilities to serve it.</li> <li>• Balerno Community High School will always be needed – likely to be future pressure on the greenbelt for housing growth.</li> </ul>
Amalgamate Currie Community High School and WHEC on the Currie Community High School site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Too far for all of WHEC to travel?</li> <li>• Can WHEC be a dual feeder to Currie and Forrester High School?</li> </ul>
Campus HUB School on Balerno Community High School Site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 0-18 school serving the whole community with improved sports facilities all in the one place at Balerno Community High School site and on Malleny Park. Move rugby club to Currie Community High School site? Include GP services in the HUB. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Would this be more cost effective than a refurb at Dean Park Primary School and Balerno Community High School in the long term?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## Discussion Group Two

Item	Discussion / Comments
<p><b>Published Proposals</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Currie Community High School is in a state of disrepair</li> <li>• Perception that Currie Primary School is 'tightly squeezed' already</li> <li>• Shouldn't the review be looking beyond 2027? The group felt that a longer term vision was needed.</li> <li>• How would the council use the money from selling the land following the closure of Currie Community High School?</li> <li>• What are the plans for the secondary school in the Garden District?</li> <li>• How realistic are the timescales?</li> <li>• Is it not better to have two bigger schools in Balerno and Currie?</li> <li>• What impact assessments have been carried out on social impact?</li> <li>• How many schools are being closed?</li> <li>• How many schools are in scope of the review?</li> <li>• What percentage of pupils are being decanted and from what streets? (the group asked to know this for Newmills and Ravelrigg roads)</li> <li>• What temporary solutions will be put in place during refurbishment?</li> <li>• Will there be a new swimming pool and will the 2G pitch be maintained?</li> <li>• What happens to residents in existing catchment areas and pupils who have already started in the schools?</li> <li>• What are the proposed spends on each school?</li> <li>• Wellbeing of teaching staff during the review</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to attract high calibre teachers if quality of the school suffers</li> <li>• Perceived anxiety amongst ‘all parents’ to move pupils especially regarding travel arrangements</li> <li>• Also felt anxious about pupils going through exams and for pupils with support needs</li> </ul>
<b>Comments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safe routes to school need to be introduced. Encourage walking.</li> <li>• Pedestrian crossings and lollypop person are needed</li> <li>• What regional transport arrangements will be put in place especially if the catchments cross the transport Lothian boundaries?</li> <li>• Traffic around Dean Park Primary School limited spaces to park, no public transport or lollypop person.</li> <li>• If children have to travel by bus would this be provided?</li> <li>• Make the Water of Leith an attractive cycle route</li> <li>• What’s the developer’s commitment to investment for safe routes to school?</li> <li>• Lanark Road West is dangerous</li> </ul>
<b>Suggestions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build additional floors to extend Balerno Community High and save the outdoor space</li> <li>• Accommodate the community with open access the school facilities e.g. swimming pool. The perception was that the resources at Balerno Community High were unused.</li> <li>• Make all schools in area community hubs</li> </ul>

## Discussion Group Three

Item	Discussion / Comments
<p><b>Published Proposals</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The table was generally against the main proposal</li> <li>• How will the Dean Park site footprint look after a change to 21 classrooms? Will it be all new classrooms or will the existing building transform?</li> <li>• Worries about travel implications in expanding Dean Park and Balerno – the roads are already clogged – it will be messy and frustrating for locals.</li> <li>• Currently there is poor access to Dean Park Primary School, with bad traffic. Could there be a zoning solution for pick-up/drop-off?</li> <li>• There needs to be at least two new crossing points (Bavelaw Road/Co-Op and Mansfield Road). This could lead to a return to walking to school and thus help with the traffic reduction and healthier outcomes.</li> <li>• It could be good for pupils if they have to travel further to new schools too.</li> <li>• Better bus services, like there use to be, in and around Balerno would be useful.</li> <li>• Some sections of Lanark Road are more dangerous for pupils as there are no alternative options but the main road.</li> <li>• Expanding either of the two high schools would increase traffic problems around either school.</li> <li>• Balerno Community High School expansion would not be simple – the canteen is already struggling – the village would be swamped.</li> <li>• If Currie Community High School expands or rebuilds will Balerno Community High School be back of the queue in terms of improvement as the money will have gone elsewhere?</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concern that changes implemented by the proposal would affect exams etc.</li> <li>• A phased approach could be used to minimise any disruption.</li> <li>• The 1200 figures have pit schools/communities against each other.</li> <li>• Is size of school related to educational benefits?</li> <li>• 1000 may be better – but evidence is needed.</li> <li>• What if more developments come through than expected?</li> <li>• Mortality may be a factor – could CEC have underestimated the number of families moving to existing Balerno housing stock in the next 10 years – is 1200 actually big enough?</li> <li>• Can we look at the pupil generation ratios for developments with larger houses again?</li> <li>• Balerno Community High School parents could be okay with the proposal – provided it makes economic, educational and community sense.</li> <li>• If Balerno Community High School does expand it should increase choices</li> </ul>
<p><b>Summary of Published Proposals:</b></p>	
<p>Pupils from the Cherry Tree area of Currie Primary School would go to Dean Park Primary and then to Balerno Community High from August 2019.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cherry Tree area joining Dean Park Primary School catchment made logical sense – provided it did not lead to the closure of one of the high schools.</li> <li>• Cherry Tree area would not be enough to increase Balerno on its own – but would with Currie Primary School catchment.</li> <li>• Concern that Currie parents may be against Cherry Tree area moving.</li> </ul>

Alternative Proposals	
Retain all schools on their existing sites refurbishing or rebuilding as required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The table was generally for the status quo.</li> <li>• Neither community (Balerno or Currie) wants to lose its high school.</li> <li>• They are both community high schools – hubs.</li> <li>• It is not logical to divide the two communities – Currie and Balerno are close – they rely and depend on each other – so we have now been put in a position that by speaking for your own community you are against the other.</li> <li>• WHEC should also not be shut – but there is an acknowledgement that WHEC’s very low roll issue needs to be fixed.</li> <li>• Acknowledgement that the council has got limited money and schools need replacing.</li> <li>• Currie and Balerno are two successful high schools at or near the top of league tables – there is a strong case to do nothing.</li> <li>• Why is there a dogmatic push to go for 1200 schools?</li> </ul>
Amalgamate Currie and Balerno Community High schools in a new building on the existing Currie Community High School site.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The table was wholly against this option.</li> <li>• Concern that feedback is leading ideas (Currie’s amalgamation alternative) which is dangerous.</li> </ul>
<b>Other comments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Could WHEC just move to a rebuilt Currie Community High School?</li> <li>• At the Balerno workshop whole room questions were ‘allowed’ during the presentation. Questions were not allowed (or ignored) at this workshop</li> <li>• Why is Currie Primary School catchment changing when the council is already addressing its catchment by building eight new classrooms?</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Currievale may require another primary school to be built.</li><li>• Could Balerno Community High School expand to the rugby club?</li><li>• It's important that Dean Park Primary School does not lose its new 2G pitch.</li><li>• It would be crazy to rebuild Currie Community High School and then have Currie Primary School area pupils walking passed on the way to Balerno Community High School.</li><li>• Does Forrester High School have room for Sighthill? Is Firrhill High School expandable?</li></ul>
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## Discussion Group Four

Item	Discussion / Comments
<p><b>Published Proposals</b></p>	<p><b>Primary Catchment Change</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Table for the proposed changes, however would like the following considered:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ A long-term plan rather than a series of short term solutions is needed</li> <li>○ Condition report for current Dean Park Primary School needs to be taken into account</li> <li>○ Extra general purpose space</li> <li>○ New Gym/Hall – which would take entire school population together</li> <li>○ Enhanced staff facilities (for larger staff)</li> <li>○ Any “pods” dropped into playground (like Ratho) should be 2 storey to take up less space (rather than 2 x 2 classrooms)</li> <li>○ Outdoor space loss should be minimised</li> <li>○ Early Years provision should be considered</li> <li>○ Long Dalmahoy Road should be included in catchment review</li> <li>○ Think about the amount of land owned by developers and the planning applications and types of housing proposed</li> <li>○ The demographic change of ownership – older residents leaving Balerno and families with younger children moving into the area – this will go on for foreseeable future</li> <li>○ Have CEC thought about a 3 – 18 facility on High School site or rebuilding a new Dean Park Primary School opposite the High School (Walled Garden – field opposite)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<p><b>High School Proposal</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tables preference is for Dean Park Primary School pupils to move on to a High School in Balerno.</li> <li>• Feel that Currie and Balerno are communities and both need their own High Schools</li> <li>• Balerno is a community and the schools are the hub – especially the High School as clubs run there later in the day.</li> <li>• Effect on local economy – pupils = purchase power.</li> <li>• Need more clarity on what “upgrade” means – clear rationale must be shared if a statutory consultation goes ahead.</li> <li>• Money must be ring fenced, as Balerno Community High School would be the last school to be redeveloped, so money cannot be sucked into the South West High School leaving nothing for Balerno.</li> <li>• How viable will Currie Community High School be by the time they move out? must be maintained if Balerno students are expected to have a positive learning experience during a decant.</li> <li>• Support for pupils and staff during a decant – extra support required during these transition years – consider health and wellbeing of pupils and staff.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Alternative Proposals</b></p>	
<p>Retain all schools on their existing sites refurbishing or rebuilding as required</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not CEC proposals and therefore group would need more information</li> <li>• Agree that all 3 areas need their own schools – all children, including those at WHEC deserve 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools</li> </ul>
<p>Amalgamate Currie and Balerno Community High schools in a new</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not CEC proposals and therefore group would need more information</li> <li>• Resounding NO!</li> </ul>

building on the existing Currie Community High School site.

- If schools merge on either site, land would be sold and redeveloped and immediately the new school would be too small.
- This idea does not future proof the south west schools.
- Both schools needed in local area for whole communities of Currie and Balerno to be served.
- Could two schools share staff to offer full curriculum in both schools?
- High schools are centres of communities
  - If high school is moved out of Balerno – many families will go private
  - If high school merges with Currie on Currie site – cost to parents – transport rather than children being able to walk to local school at the moment.
  - Proposal does not take into account the existing traffic/travel issues (don't even have a lollipop person in Balerno)
    - Safer Routes to School – additional traffic and buses going through Currie would be massive challenge
    - Too far for some children to walk and routes not safe
  - If this had to go ahead then the new school should be on Balerno site.

## Discussion Group Five

Item	Discussion / Comments
<p><b>Published Proposals</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Balerno               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Has the aging population of the community been considered?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Long term               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Housing development – population will increase to 7000-8000</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Facilities required</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Doctors</li> <li>• Banks</li> <li>• Library is too small</li> <li>• Sports centre – multi gym               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Edinburgh Leisure – out of hours, not user friendly, kids classes</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Play parks</li> <li>• Youth club</li> <li>• Community space</li> </ul>
<p><b>Summary of Published Proposals:</b></p>	
<p>Pupils from the Cherry Tree area of Currie Primary School would go to Dean Park Primary and then to Balerno Community High from August 2019.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The group agreed this should happen.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Knock on effect                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ dining hall</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Library</li> <li>▪ General purpose space / community space</li> <li>▪ Outdoor facilities</li> </ul>
<p>Dean Park Primary would be expanded to 21 classes to provide space for extra pupils from new developments and the Cherry Tree area of Currie Primary's catchment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early years <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Current provision not fit for purpose / old / refurbishment</li> <li>○ Links to expansion of school?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>Balerno Community High would be expanded and refurbished on its existing school site. Capacity would increase from 850 to 1,200 pupils.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Balerno Community High School <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Potential to increase subject choice</li> <li>○ Traffic implications of increase in students</li> <li>○ Walkable for Balerno residents</li> <li>○ Will Currie Primary pupils walk to Balerno Community High School?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Decant <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The group had concerns about how the decant would impact on exams.</li> <li>○ Timeframe</li> <li>○ Travel to Currie Community High School?</li> <li>○ is there a workable on-site option?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Safe route from Ravelrigg?</li> <li>• Crossing points</li> </ul>

Alternative Proposals	
<p>Retain all schools on their existing sites refurbishing or rebuilding as required.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This was the overall preference but with improved school buildings.</li> <li>• School still needs to be refurbished</li> <li>• Will there have to be a decant? This would not be required if the school is not being expanded.</li> <li>• Both schools are required and may need to be expanded.</li> <li>• Balerno children already go to Currie Community High School and WHEC for classes etc and could continue to do so.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Other comments</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bus access to Currie Community High School needs to be improved</li> <li>• Bypass</li> <li>• Sports centre and rugby club on the Currie Community High School site, suggestion to build the new school on this space.</li> </ul>