

**Planning application 16/05744/AMC
Ravelrig Road; Balerno.**



Balerno Village Trust (BVT) comment on planning application 16/05744/AMC – Ravelrig Road; Balerno.

Balerno is a close knit community, with a strong community spirit. BVT believes it is essential that any new developments in the village are properly and fully integrated into existing community networks. To this end, we believe it is imperative that physical links from and to the development should positively contribute and enhance the local community networks and ensure new residents are given every opportunity to integrate into the community.

Safe Links to the heart of Balerno

All new developments should facilitate walking and cycling to the village centre, schools and bus stops as well as facilitating linkages to existing cycle path and walkways. We are a diverse community and it is important that all such routes are available for use by both fully mobile and less mobile members of our community. The routes must be barrier free and surfaces suitable for use by pushchairs and wheelchairs. Integrating the development footpaths and linking them to existing footpaths and routes into the village will not only encourage exercise and social interaction but will reduce pollution and car use.

There is a network of historic paths south of Ravelrig Drive that could provide safe accessible routes for walking and cycling from the development site to Bridge Road opposite the High School.

In order to achieve this route a pedestrian footpath is required on the western edge of Ravelrig Drive to provide a safe route and link to the existing roadside footpath network. A pedestrian crossing would be required at Lanark Road West / Ravelrig Drive / Ravelrig Road junction to facilitate links to safer routes to schools. The paths beyond Ravelrig Drive require to be upgraded to meet a suitable standard and ensure accessibility for all. These paths are constructed to a very poor standard and surfaces are unsuitable for effective use; BVT believe that in order to provide occupiers (particularly children and the elderly) of the new development with safe routes to school and other amenities in the village these footways require to be upgraded to an adoptable standard being properly surfaced and lit.

BVT consider that developers of the Ravelrig Drive development should be required to provide this upgraded footpath or provide sufficient funds to enable the Council to undertake the required works and that the granting of planning permission should be conditional on this need.

Due to the inaccessibility of parts of the original historic footpath the current informal route crosses the Ravelrig Walled Garden (the walls are Category B listed by Historic Scotland). BVT consider that the historic original line of the path around the historic walled garden should be reinstated in order to provide the essential safe route to the village centre.

The BVT are supportive of future re-use of the garden as a community garden and consider it essential that the integrity of the garden is capable of reinstatement and that foot/cycle ways follow the historic route around its walled edge.

Ravelrig Road and Lanark Road West Junction

This junction is already awkward and is set to get busier. If walking and cycling are to be encouraged, then a safe crossing is essential. A pedestrian crossing is needed particularly for those crossing south to north as visibility along Lanark Road West is poor.

The BVT request that the Council require that the developer provide this crossing as a condition of the granting of planning permission

Ravelrig Road

The new development will bring an increase in traffic, putting more pressure on Lanark Road West and on parking facilities in Balerno. Inevitably an increasing number of drivers will seek

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to avoid congestion on Lanark Road West by turning in a northerly direction along Ravelrig Road.

At present, not only is this road in very poor condition but there are 2 dangerously narrow bridges before Long Dalmahoy Road. The bridge over the railway is barely wide enough for two cars to pass in opposite directions, and drivers are not able to see approaching traffic from opposite directions. This is closely followed by a single track bridge over a burn where oncoming car drivers are completely unsighted. Widening these two bridges and improving visibility at corners, would improve safety and help mitigate the increase in traffic on Lanark Road West.

The BVT request that the Council seek an appropriate proportional financial contribution from the developers to address the deficiencies and safety issues highlighted above.

Car Parking at 3G pitch / Malleny Park

The Impact of circa 200 additional cars is likely to put increased pressure on car parking at local facilities, the High School and newly improved facilities at Malleny Park. These car parks are already at capacity during evening and weekends when community use is at its highest. To alleviate the impact of the development it is considered reasonable that the car parks at Malleny Park are enhanced / resurfaced to increase capacity and provide safer movement of traffic and segregation of pedestrians (particularly younger children) from vehicles, and improved amenity for those using the facilities.

The BVT request that the Council seek a financial contribution of an appropriate level to enable works required to the issues of safety and capacity which this development will inevitably contribute too.

Play Facilities

The introduction of the new development will necessitate additional play capacity and as there is no provision for formal play areas on site children will use existing facilities elsewhere in the village. BVT consider that the most sustainable location for this is to enhance the capacity of the only play park in the village which is adjacent to Dean Park Primary School. This playpark does not have any swings, and BVT consider that contribution of £25,000 is sought from the Developers to enable the purchase and installation of swings to address increased levels of play park usage arising from the influx of further children to the village.

Case officer **Eileen McCormack**

Gareth Davies and Martin Petty for Balerno Village Trust

Monday, 16 January 2017