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AMALGAMATION OF MIDDLETON PARK AND GLASHIEBURN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Please find attached the submission from Bridge of Don Community Council regarding the above proposal.

We would appreciate hard copy of the proposed lay outs so that members who have no internet access can see for themselves what changes may take place.

As statutory consultees we feel these should have been provided when available.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Isobyl M McLeod'.

Isobyl M McLeod

**AMALGAMATION OF
MIDDLETON PARK AND GLASHIEBURN PRIMARY SCHOOLS**

Ref. point	ACC PROPOSAL	BRIDGE OF DON COMMUNITY COUNCIL COMMENT
Front cover / P4 1.1 P18 3.1	Proposal – (a) to close Glashieburn and Middleton Park Schools and establish an amalgamated school within the existing Glashieburn building and campus	Campus – definition - the grounds and sometimes buildings of a college or university. This would suggest there is an expanse of area around the established school – this is NOT the case
P4 1.1	Aberdeen City Council is proposing to vary the delineated area of Middleton Park School and the adjacent Brimmond School and Bucksburn Academy	This is purely a paper exercise to get the proposal through. If passed the area would be rezoned with pupils then zoned for Danestone Primary until the possibility of a new Primary school for the Grandhome development comes on stream. The 2 zones may be adjacent on paper but in real terms this would involve a lengthy journey – in both mileage and journey times - at both ends of the school day for children of 3-11 years. In our opinion this is unacceptable.
P5 1.4	Other requests from relevant partner organisations will be considered by officers as appropriate	The Community Council requested a meeting which was granted but the meeting had to be closed to the public. We deem this unacceptable.
P5 1.5	A copy of this statutory consultation document will be available for public consultation during the period of consultation – a list of venues given.	The Community Council had to request documents – 1 copy received despite being informed that there are members who are not on the internet. The document could not be picked up from the schools as they had to print off their own copies therefore felt they could not hand out to members of the public. We deem this unacceptable.
P6 1.6	To assist stakeholders in accessing relevant information, a dedicated area of Aberdeen City Council website has been populated with all information within this consultation document and further detail on the consultation process and data relating to the proposal. The relevant web pages can be accessed at	Not everyone has access to the internet to view the extra information on the ACC website.

	www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/flashieburnmiddletonpark	
P 8 1.11	Statutory Consultees – Bridge of Don Community Council	Information should have been forthcoming with time to allow us to discuss the proposals – we feel this has not been the case. Any information sent to us has had to have been requested. There were 5 alternatives of possible layout within the existing building put on the ACC website but no hard copy issued to statutory consultees – again we state not all members have access to the internet therefore hard copy essential.
P10 2.1	The decision of the Committee was to progress to Statutory Consultation on the proposals to create a new school by amalgamation with Middleton Park on Glashieburn site	This would suggest that there is to be a new school built on the existing site (as happened when Balgownie and Upper Westfield Schools merged). This is not the case the existing building is going to be used. We therefore take exception to the terminology of NEW SCHOOL.
P10 2.1	Local Authorities have a statutory duty to ensure adequate and efficient provision of school education	The words of a youngster who spoke at one of the public meetings – “I don’t want to be squashed” – this suggests pupils don’t view this as going to help their learning experience in fact the opposite is most likely. Getting It Right For Every Child – not in this case. 2 into 1 does not go – something we all learn relatively early on in our school experience.
P11 2.2	Current zoning arrangements cannot be sustained	We wonder why the zoning was not looked at first before any decisions on the need to merge any schools.
P12 2.3	ACC is committed to improving the learning environments for all pupils – Ensuring pupils and teachers have school buildings fit for the 21 st century	Not in this case where pupils and teachers will be enclosed with a much smaller space than they have at present.
P12 2.3	Increasing the number of young people attending schools	Youngsters and their parents have to be happy in the school environment – this will not be the case as the youngsters are not going to have the freedom of space for learning experiences they have at present. The outdoor area at Glashieburn is much smaller than that of Middleton Park, most of it being hard surface with

		only a narrow strip of grass.
P13 2.5	Whilst arrangements are in place for the current cohorts of pupils, the nature of Curriculum for Excellence means that it will evolve over time, being amended and adapted to meet local circumstances.	The language used here, and throughout the document, is being used to dress a very flawed argument. Cohort – a tenth part of a Roman legion, a group of people banded together. (Former definition springs to mind when reading)
P14 2.5.2	Larger schools tend to have more flexibility in configuration of class groups and within classes, including groups for particular activities such as reading.	The school will have more pupils BUT will have no greater amount of space unless the courtyard areas and library etc are removed.
P15 2.6	The main driver for this proposal is not financial. It provides a solution to a changing situation which results in the provision of suitable and efficient accommodation for pupils across the whole the area.	When the Community Council met with the officer we asked why a new school was not being built – we were told there were not the finances to do so.
P18 3.1.1	Glashieburn School and Middleton Park School will close in July 2014; The amalgamated school will open for pupils at the beginning of school session 2014-15, i.e. August 2014;	A 6 week period the first 2 weeks of which is the local trades' holidays does not seem long enough to allow any work to be done on the existing building. Can ACC guarantee that ALL work required will be done before 2014-15 session begins. If not we deem the disruption which ongoing work would cause to be detrimental to the pupil's learning.
P18 3.1.1	All educational facilities required for the delivery of the curriculum will be provided within the amalgamated school;	We fail to see how this will be achieved given the constraints of both the building and the outdoor space.
P18 3.1.1	Pupils from the early phases of the development at Grandhome estate will be accommodated at Danestone Primary School, until the first new school is delivered in the development;	Nowhere within the document does it mention the current roll of Danestone School or what the zone changes will mean for that school.
P20 3.1.2	At a later date, it is the intention that statutory consultations will take place to: (i) create new detailed zones within the Grandhome development for the two/three new schools to be delivered within the development;	Surely the zoning should have been carried out first taking into account all proposed development with the area – this could result in the need for more Primary / Nursery accommodation – not less.
P20 3.2	We wish to improve facilities for all pupils to provide enhanced curricular opportunities.	By putting more children into the existing building we fail to appreciate how curricular opportunities can be enhanced.
P20 3.2	The projected roll at Middleton Park, under current arrangements, will exceed its	This is not a reason to amalgamate schools, this is

	capacity by 2018	surely a reason to refurbish / enhance the existing school at Middleton Park.
P21 3.2	Glashieburn School has sufficient un-filled space to accommodate all pupils from the proposed revised catchment area, without any significant interior or external alterations having to be made.	The roll at Glashieburn used to be larger but capacity was cut – there must have been a good reason for doing so. Now the Authority wish to reverse this – makes no sense.
P21 3.2	The overall condition of both schools will require investment. The expenditure on Middleton Park could be avoided by implementing the proposal.	Will Glashieburn be brought up to a suitable standard prior to opening in August 2014 – if not the disruption to achieve this will be unacceptable.
P21 3.2	The very large housing development at Grandhome Estate will require delivery of two or three new schools. The development is to be, to a large extent, self-contained. Rezoning of the existing Brimmond and Middleton Park catchment areas will be required in order to allow these new zones within the development to be created.	If zoning were done first it may be deemed unnecessary to amalgamate schools as Middleton Park could accommodate some of the children from the new Grandhome development. We have no time scale as to when the development will start.
P23 4.2	The school would have a new identity with a new name, school badge etc.	This will be difficult to imagine for pupils as there is no new school such as happened when Balgownie and Upper Westfield were amalgamated. There was a new building on an existing site but it was new to all the pupils not just one set. This could create peer problems.
P23/24 4.3	The vacated site at Middleton Park	If not required by ACC or any other public body it will be placed on the market – there is an expanse of land attached to the Middleton Park site – we envisage a developer seeking to build more housing therefore increasing the amount of potential pupils to an already packed school – using the numbers provided in the document.
P26 5.1.4	Capacity (and Roll) 420 (261, plus 40 in the morning and 20 in the afternoon nursery classes)	The current roll 261 should read 301 if the 40 nursery children are within the building. It appears a common case that Nursery children are not included in Roll numbers quoted by the Authority, yet they occupy the building along with the P1-7 pupils. This gives a false impression.*

P27 5.1.8	The external provision includes a grass area.	The grassed area is extremely small in comparison to that of Middleton Park. It would be difficult to envisage having all the children on it for the likes of sports events etc.
P30 5.1.12	Other than day-time educational provision, there is limited use of the building.	Youth group lets were relocated with little warning.
P30 5.1.15	Pupils at Glashieburn School achieve and in some cases exceed expected milestones in their levels of attainment.	Could these same levels be maintained / guaranteed in an amalgamated school?
P32 5.1.21	Excluding Mechanical and Electrical factors, the building is rated C, Poor - showing major defects and/or not operating efficiently. £2.5 million – estimated cost of bringing up to standard.	Can it be guaranteed that the rating for the school will be much improved before it opens as an amalgamated school?
P33 5.1.22	Full details of the evaluations and weightings of each element in the survey are available on the Council web site at www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/glashieburnmiddletonpark	Again how can we be expected to give an informed opinion when we are not given the full details but are expected to find the information on the Council website?
P34 5.2.4	Capacity (and Roll) 240 (168, plus 20 in the morning and 20 in the afternoon nursery classes)	The current roll should read 188 if the nursery children are within the building/portacabins. As per comment* for 5.1.4 above.
P35 5.2.8	A grassed area to the south.	The grassed area would give potential for expansion on this site.
P37 5.2.9 Graph 3	Graph shows projected numbers from 2013 – 2020	Capacity would be reached in 2018 with the roll greatly exceeding capacity by 2020 – this may not be the case if zoning was looked at first.
P38 5.2.9 Graph 4	Graph shows projected numbers from 2013 – 2020 without Grandhome Development pupils	Projected figure for 2020 is 169 which is 1 above current roll. It is not clear from the figures if this includes the Nursery children – we suspect not.
P39 5.2.11	There are various after-school and evening lets.	Suggests the building is made use of by the Community.
P39 5.2.14	Pupils at Middleton Park School achieve and in some cases exceed expected milestones in their levels of attainment.	Could these same levels be maintained / guaranteed in an amalgamated school?
P39 5.2.14	A number of exciting projects are planned for the forthcoming session within the area of global citizenship.	Will these exciting projects continue?
P40 5.2.16	The integrated inspection report is available at Education Scotland website at http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/Images/MiddletonParkSchoolIns20060502_tcm4-695434.pdf	Yet again more information on the internet but not in hard copy.

P41 5.2.20	Excluding Mechanical and Electrical factors, the building is rated B, Satisfactory - performing adequately but showing minor deterioration. However, there were elements which were rated poorer than this. £1.2 million - estimated cost of bringing up to standard.	The pupils leaving this school for the amalgamated school would in effect be going to a building less fit for purpose than their own, if the work needed to bring Glashieburn to standard is not done.
P42 5.2.20	Further details of the evaluations and weightings of each element in the survey are available on the Council web site at www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/glashieburnmiddletonpark	Yet more information on the internet.
P44 6.1	The proposal to amalgamate Glashieburn and Middleton Park Schools within the existing Glashieburn building on the Glashieburn campus is part of the long term strategy, the aim of which is to create the most beneficial and positive learning environments for our children and young people.	The children themselves do not think this is a good proposal. They see their space for learning and play being diminished due to the steep rise in numbers within the 1 school. They do not see this as a positive learning environment.
P44 6.1	It is essential to implement change as the existing arrangements will not meet the changes in pupil numbers.	If rezoning were to be done now instead of after amalgamation the projections may change.
P44 6.2	The total capacity between the two schools is, therefore, 660.	There is no mention that the capacity includes the nursery provision, Currently 2 morning classes at Glashieburn and 1 in Middleton Park equating to 60 children.
P45 6.2	The current rolls of the two schools are Glashieburn School 261 Middleton Park School 168 Total 429	This is 9 over the current capacity of Glashieburn School without the nursery provision. If all 3 Nursery classes are retained this would equate to 69 over capacity cited.
P45 6.1.2	Table 7 states there are 30 houses to be built in Glashieburn catchment in 2014 and 2015 (60 in total)	The Community Council have no notice of any development within the Glashieburn catchment at this time. If any development were to take place on the site in question the children from these houses are more likely to apply to Forehill as it will be far closer to them than Glashieburn.
P46 6.1.2	The agreed rate of new pupils from the developments will be 0.35 pupils per unit (of all types) in both Glashieburn and Middleton Park zones.	Agreed between whom? Are new house owners going to be told they cannot move in if they have or intend having children?
P47 6.1.2	Under the proposal, the additional pupils from the Grandhome development will attend Danestone initially and then the first new school in the Grandhome community.	We have grave reservations about zoning these children to Danestone. This would involve crossing the Parkway at potentially the 2 busiest times of the

		day. It would also be further to travel if the first houses on stream are to the north of the site.
P47 6.1.2	The current capacity at Glashieburn is 420. With minor re-configuration, this can be increased to accommodate the additional pupils. This can be achieved by implementing a number of alternative options will be identified and these shared with parents/carers and staff if the proposal progresses.48	Reconfiguration meaning either taking down walls and / or covering over courtyard areas. Covering the courtyards to give potential teaching space will deprive children the learning experiences they currently have in growing plants, observing wildlife etc.
P48 6.1.2	Glashieburn School has had over 600 pupils on the roll but it is not the intention to increase pupil numbers to that level.	The roll must have been cut from 600 for a reason.
P48 6.1.2	The school will be able to accommodate the number of estimated under this proposal and provide more than ample spaces for general purpose use.	We fail to envisage this given the layout of the building and the outside space available
P49 6.2.2	No allowance has been made for inflation or for enabling works. Any such enabling works' costs are not expected to be significant	Surely contingency for this should have been taken into account. When planning our own budgets we assume there could be an increase in costs from year to year.
P49 6.2.3	The table below shows the overall condition and suitability evaluations of Glashieburn and Middleton Park Academies	Academy – secondary school.
P50 6.2.3	In all cases, costs are based on current prices and exclude any provision for future inflation.	Increased costs should always be budgeted for.
P51 6.5.2	There was significant support for maintaining the status quo, i.e. retention of Glashieburn and Middleton Park Schools are separate establishments. There was also support expressed for the temporary accommodation of pupils from the early phases of the Grandhome development at Middleton Park, rather than at Danestone as proposed.	We would agree that it makes more sense children from Grandhome are zoned temporarily (until new Primary built within scheme) for Middleton Park.
P51 6.6	The overall numbers of pupils travelling by any particular method is unlikely to change because of the close proximity of the two schools.	Whilst we agree the 2 schools are relatively close we disagree strongly with this statement. The children at the furthest reaches of Middleton Park would have a significant change to their journey times.
P51 6.6	There are potential health benefits if there is an increase in the number of children and adults walking further.	Because of where the school will be situated we envisage parents taking their children to school in cars rather than walking. There is not likely to be any significant increase in pupils / parents walking.
P52 6.6	Pupil safety is of paramount importance to Aberdeen City Council and, therefore, a review of Safe Routes to School will be carried out, prior to any	Zoning children to Danestone is ludicrous given the very busy road they would have to negotiate to get

	final recommendation on the proposal being made	there. Safety is therefore not as paramount as you would have us believe.
P52 6.6	The use of public transport is also promoted.	Cost of this is prohibitive for use. £8 for daily family ticket.
P52 6.6	It recommends improvements in safety measures on the main road and these will be formally evaluated and implemented where appropriate, in addition to addressing issues related to increased traffic movement around the amalgamated school.	Will there be drop off zones created? Will breakfast club/afterschool club and ASN school transport have designated parking points? We wonder what the safety measures on Jesmond Drive will entail.
P52 6.7	The distance travelled to any school site cannot be equal for all pupils, as there will inevitably be greater distances to be travelled by those pupils who live further from any school.	The proposed school site is at outer edge of the combined school surely to give equality to all pupils the site chosen should reflect the distances the children have to travel. Middleton Park site would be more central to the new zoned area.
P54 7.1	The Council takes the view that implementation of this proposal will improve the educational experiences of learners and this is likely to have positive outcomes on the life chances for young people.	If experience is in more cramped space we cannot see how this is an improvement.
P54 7.1	A school of the size proposed will enable the Headteacher to plan a curriculum that offers breadth, depth, coherence, relevance, challenge and enjoyment as the flexibility to do this is enhanced within a larger school.	The school will be larger as in pupil numbers but smaller in space available to each pupil therefore this statement is negated.
P54 7.1	Greater pupil numbers will result in classes to be structured in such a way to offer greater opportunity than smaller schools by providing more age related classes and more options for grouping by ability, in particular providing enhanced opportunities for gifted and talented pupils.	Whilst having the scope to group by ability we feel that highlighting enhanced opportunities for gifted and talented pupils suggests those at the other end of the spectrum may not have such an enhanced experience, therefore will not benefit from equal opportunities.
P54 7.1	The amalgamated school can provide a stimulus for improvement and a catalyst for change.	Lack of space per pupil will not provide such stimulus.
P56 7.2	There will be a greater range of more flexible areas where the available space can be used for investigative work and active learning.	We wonder where these flexible areas are.
P56 7.2	Pupils are likely to experience a higher quality learning experience because of the enhanced facilities which will be available	What enhanced facilities – there is a limit to what can be added into the space available.
P58 7.4	We believe that all the above aspirations can be better met within the amalgamated school due mainly to the increased size of the staff and the enhanced opportunities available to a larger establishment.	There may well be a larger staff but there will also be a larger pupil base.

P59 7.5	The larger, amalgamated school will also have a more diverse range of pupils and this will provide pupils with a richer cultural and learning experience.	How can this be when the areas from which the pupils are coming are so similar and a main reason for the proposal?
P60 7.8	Establishment of a new, amalgamated school provides pupils and staff with the opportunity to implement a new and enhanced school ethos, with a focus on aspirations and improvement in educational outcomes.	This is NOT a new school it is the coming together of 2 schools within an existing building.
P61 7.9	The provision of the larger school with enhanced facilities, such as adaptations to the base for pupils with additional support needs, will make it easier to provide the support individual pupils require.	Do the enhanced facilities include a multi sensory area – not currently available?
P61 7.9	The amalgamated school will provide an opportunity to support the most vulnerable learners by having a larger, more experienced staff who can accelerate support, resulting in improved outcomes for learners.	Are staff going to be recruited specifically for the children within the ASN base? Just because there are more teachers on site does not mean these children will benefit, in fact most of these children do not like change – they blossom when they have continuity of care / teaching. Changes to staff, location etc can be disruptive for them therefore their learning experience is not enhanced.
P62 7.9	Our experience, and that of other local authorities who have managed school amalgamation, has shown that there can be a resistance to the change from a very small minority of the community. However experience has shown that this quickly resolves itself and there is no evidence of longer term adverse impact.	We do not think it is a small minority who are against this proposal.
P62 7.10	The range of extra-curricular opportunities would be enhanced as it is likely that all provision in both schools would continue and therefore pupils in the two schools would have access to the opportunities currently only available at the other school. Currently it is challenging, in particular for Middleton Park, to constitute school teams at specific age groups for sports. The amalgamation of the schools will significantly enhance these opportunities.	Just because there are greater pupil numbers it does not mean team representation will naturally follow. It will depend on the individual pupils whether they wish to take part in the team sports offered. This can vary in any school from year to year.
P62 7.10	Access to these extra-curricular activities, particularly those after school, will be enhanced and the management of the school will work to ensure that pupils from throughout the catchment area will be able to attend activities and return home safely	When did it become the responsibility of staff for extra-curricular activities and to ensure their safe return home?
P63 7.12	Glashieburn is clearly a larger establishment and this, along with a more open environment provides more opportunities for flexible learning than at the Middleton Park site.	We agree that Glashieburn school is the bigger of the 2 schools however we have grave concerns regarding the outdoor space available.

	Some relatively minor reconfiguration of the Glashieburn building can improve the environment even more and alternatives will be communicated and discussed with staff and pupils should this proposal progress.	We wonder what the minor configurations will be given that we , as statutory consultees, have never been given hard copy of the proposals we could therefore not discuss this at our meetings as we had no plans to discuss / compare.
P64 7.13	Broader rezoning	This should have been carried out first.
P65 7.16	The amalgamated school will provide a better learning environment for pupils and working environment for staff.	This statement is only true if the square footage within Glashieburn is going to be increased otherwise both will be working in a smaller area per person.
P65 7.16	The amalgamated school will provide more flexible learning spaces which can be used to deliver a more diverse range of approaches to learning and teaching.	We have yet to discover what these flexible spaces are – could it be the courtyards or the playground or a cupboard ?
P68 8	The combined school will provide accommodation for up to 460 pupils	Does this total include Nursery pupils?
P69 8.2	Most support staff will transfer to the amalgamated school.	Does this mean some support staff will have to relocate?
P70 8.5	More efficient management of potential under- and over-occupancy at Glashieburn and Danestone Schools.	We have no figures to make any informed decision on the impact on Danestone School
P72 2.2	Walking speed of 25 minutes per mile	This appears to be fairly fast and not what a 3-5 year would be able to achieve. We find it difficult to accept the timings in the tables provided.
P74 2.2.1	Pavements on both sides of the road up to Newburgh Drive	There is a proposal to have a shared pavement/cycle lane on the south side pavement. Concerns therefore about safety in walking there for youngsters.
P75 2.5	The number 2 stops along the length of Jesmond Drive and the number 4 also operates along the west to east section of Jesmond Drive.	The No 4 is an hourly service which is not conducive to getting to a particular destination for a given time.
P75 3 9)	Jesmond Drive could benefit from an additional crossing in between the current Middleton Park and Glashieburn Primary sites.	Where would this potential crossing be situated? We do not feel there would be need of an extra crossing given that the schools are ONLY 600metres distant from one another.
P75 3	Amalgamation and increased travel to school distances for some pupils are likely to result in an increased number of cars accessing Glashieburn Primary to drop off and collect pupils.	There are no drop off points at the site these would have to be created - - where?

Further to comments related to the specific points above we have the following queries/comments.

- Have these proposals been discussed with Scottish Fire and Rescue – safe egress and waiting points in the event of fire?
- How can bigger be better when central government are stating class sizes should be getting smaller – if this is enforced we have concerns as to how more classes would be accommodated on this site.
- Maps and some of the information within the proposal are misleading – e.g. Looking at the maps you would assume the whole area around Glashieburn is grassed this is not the case.
- Are developers to be told what type of house to build to ensure the proper ratio is achievable?
- Are ASL and ASN pupils to be accommodated in the same area as is suggested within the proposal?
- Noise generated from increase in pupil numbers will adversely affect those pupils within the ASN Base setting – most do not like change of any sort and cannot tolerate excess noise / sound around them.
- Could the schools not work together to provide teams if there are not enough pupils from each?
- If the ASN is moved to where the Nursery is at present the pupils will be more isolated than at present – the idea of having ASN in main stream schools was to integrate not segregate. (We can only comment on this as 1 member had seen a map at one of the consultation meetings)
- No proof within the proposal document that the environment will be better for pupils and staff.
- No proof of educational benefit
- Can see where there could be detriment to pupil learning
- Where would a whole school assembly be held? – Unsure that even biggest of halls would take the proposed amount of pupils and staff to meet with fire and safety regulations.
- Where is the external PE space?
- Why use smallest site and at furthest point of the zone?
- What will happen to the solar panels installed at Middleton Park should the amalgamation be agreed on.

These are our main concerns – matched to statements within the document where possible.

In summary –

The Community Council is disappointed in the lack of information afforded to it as a statutory consultee not all members have or enjoy using the Internet.

The rezoning exercise should have been completed first taking into account all development zoned for the area as a whole.

If amalgamation does proceed it should be to a new purpose built building – not a building which needs reconfiguration.

The children who spoke up at the meetings should be listened to as they will have to work / be educated within the confined space.

Figures quoted do not stack up properly – at the start of the document capacity was 420 by the end it had risen to 460.

Maps within the document were very misleading.

Very little in the proposal seems to be “Getting It Right For Every Child.”

Zoning for Brimmond is being used to get this Proposal pushed through with little thought to the practicalities of getting the children there – one small accident recently brought the whole of Bridge of Don and surrounding areas to a standstill.

We would urge that this proposal is not progressed.