

# **Section 2**

## **Options for Birkenhead South**

### **Introduction**

The Council is required to keep its school places under review and to plan for change to ensure that overall surplus places are maintained below 10%. It also has a duty to consider what action to take when a school exceeds 25% surplus places.

There should be some surplus places for parental choice. The surplus, however, must be controlled. In Wirral the number of primary age children is reducing. This means that in some areas of the borough schools are reducing in size, creating a significant surplus of places.

In addition, every school has to budget within its means. To stay viable a school needs sufficient pupils to pay its costs in full. When pupil numbers dip below a minimum for sustainability that school becomes financially vulnerable and provision for pupils suffers.

Where high surplus has developed and numbers continue to fall, no change is not an acceptable option. The purpose of this consultation is to help decide what changes should be implemented to secure continued high quality education at all Wirral's schools.

It is important to remember that any revenue savings that may occur as a result of any of these options would be recirculated to the remaining schools, resulting in increased funding for real children, rather than supporting empty space.

### **Why is the Review necessary?**

The number of primary age children in Wirral is reducing because of the falling birth rate. It is clear that new families coming to live in Wirral and new housing developments do not counter the overall effect of this reduction. This is supported by discussion with colleagues involved with the Housing Market Renewal Initiative in this Primary Places Review area.

There are currently around 10% surplus places in the primary system. These places are not spread evenly but are concentrated within some areas and in some schools. The overall primary roll in Wirral has fallen for a number of years and is predicted to fall further from 26,030 in January 2004 to 23,958 by 2009. This would result in nearly 17% surplus places if no action is taken. The birth rate trend indicates that the surplus will continue to grow for some time.

### **Smaller schools versus larger schools**

Where school rolls are falling, schools potentially face the following problems:

- They have to spend an increasing proportion of their budget on staffing in order to maintain reasonable class organisation. Small schools spend in excess of 90% on staffing, leaving far less for learning resources, maintenance and so on. If no action is taken, then within a few years, assuming numbers fall as predicted, some schools could be in difficulties financially.
- teachers have to take on a greater range of management responsibilities to cover all the subjects of the National Curriculum and whole schools issues such as SEN and assessment. This will impose an increased workload on staff at a time when the workload agreement is being implemented.
- the success of smaller schools is highly dependent on the stability and quality of the staffing. In smaller schools staff turnover can have a greater impact on stability and

quality, as proportionally each staff member accounts for a higher proportion of the total school staff.

Larger schools:

- have more budget flexibility;
- spend less overall in percentage terms on staffing, and therefore have more to invest in learning resources and in the creation of additional roles such as non-class based deputies, or special education needs (SEN) co-ordinators, or support teachers;
- Share the same range of responsibilities that a smaller school would need to cover amongst more staff. This gives teachers more time to develop subject knowledge and leadership in depth, and provides them with more reasonable workloads;
- Provide greater opportunity for staff development and progression enabling it to develop and 'grow' the next generation of leaders. This helps explain why larger schools are more stable and robust, and can better manage staff turnover.
- Maintain high levels of expertise in each key stage and each year group
- Provide flexibility for specialist teaching within each key stage and across the school
- Have more flexibility to deploy support staff to meet children's needs
- Combine the dual advantages of the children being part of smaller key stage groups with the broad range of resources and expertise which a larger school can offer;
- Have well-resourced pastoral care to create a caring ethos.

## **The case for a reduction in school places in Birkenhead South**

The current capacity of all schools in this area is 1852. The current number of children in those schools is 1584. There are 268 surplus places. That represents 14.5% surplus places or almost 9 empty 30 place school classes across primary ages 4 -11. Our target is to manage surplus places at below 10%.

Over the next 5 years the numbers of pupils entering Birkenhead South schools will continue at a lower rate than was the case in the past. This simply reflects the fall in birth and other trends relating to the local population, including the current choices being made by local families. The net impact of that will be that larger group sizes will leave primary schools and be replaced with smaller numbers of pupils joining schools. It is projected that the total school population will fall by 2009 from its present total of 1584 to 1555 pupils.

If no action were to be taken to address this trend, the number of surplus places would rise to 297, increasing the number of surplus places to 16%, more than 50% above our 10% or less target. This would represent almost 10 empty 30 place classes, equivalent to almost one and a half single form of entry primary schools. The options we propose as possible responses to this position are set out in the final section.

In the Options section, pupil numbers are those from the Annual Pupil Census in January 2004 unless stated otherwise.

## Questions to be asked of all Options

In considering options for this area, there are many factors to bear in mind. Here are some suggestions.

### Demographics

- Population predictions for 2009 – how many children will there be?
- Surplus places at the Wirral and local level predicted for 2009 – is this within the recommended 5 to 10%?

### Pattern of choice

- Current parental preferences – where do the children live, and where do they go to school now?
- Pupil mobility – do children move school during their primary education?
- Allocation of school zones – Do schools receive an appropriate zone?
- Are there enough places for all parents who want a Denominational education for their child?

### Traffic and housing

- Traffic implications – How will children travel to school?
- Housing Market Renewal Initiative – Has the option taken into account the HMRI consultation process?
- How many schools are there within a 2 mile radius? – The LEA must provide transport for under-8s if there is no school within two miles of their home. For 8's and older, this distance is 3 miles.

### Building and site

- Will internal changes be required to return classrooms into use?
- Alternative uses of the buildings and site – would it be practical/cost-effective to reuse the building for another purpose?
- Effect on other users of the building – what happens to existing preschools, nurture groups etc?
- Is any new building work required?

### School organisation

- How is it likely to effect class sizes overall?
- Can infant class sizes be maintained under the statutory limit of 30 pupils without unacceptable impact on other classes or budget requirements?
- What are the implications for staff? Are there opportunities for redeployment or early retirement?
- Will changes in admission number be required? This is the number of children that a school can take in Reception each year.
- What effect might there be on nursery education and Early Years/ Nurture groups?
- Has SEN provision been taken into account?

### Financial

- What will happen to any financial savings made?

- What capital expenditure is needed? For example, for new buildings or refurbishment of existing buildings, purchase of sites.
- If a school closes, what will happen to the site? Can it be sold or leased?
- Where will the money received from site sales or leases go?

### **Definition of terms**

Closure means ceasing to maintain a school.

Amalgamating or merging two schools involves closing both schools, then opening a single school with one budget, governing body and headteacher.

Federation can only be proposed by governing bodies. Federated schools keep their separate budgets, but have one governing body, and often a single headteacher.

## **Option A. Closure of The Dell Primary**

It is proposed to cease to maintain The Dell Primary School at the end of Summer Term 2006. There are two main reasons for this decision:

- to remove surplus places;
- to provide a more cost-effective education.

### **Consideration of Factors**

The Dell is a primary school of 135 pupils serving the southern part of Rock Ferry.

The proposal to close the school is based on considerable spare capacity at the school with little likelihood of the situation being significantly reversed.

The Dell Primary has surplus places of 27% (51 places), the second highest percentage of any school in the Birkenhead South small planning area (Highest was Well Lane at 31%, 89 places). This is predicted to fall slightly to 24% (44 places) by 2009.

If the school is closed, all pupils currently and projected to attend the school could be accommodated within existing accommodation at local schools. No new build classrooms or changes to existing classroom uses would be required at the receiving schools.

Additional improvements would be made in order to ensure that accommodation at the schools to which the pupils transfer is of a high standard.

The schools existing zone would be reallocated to neighbouring schools. Example map A is attached showing how this could be accomplished.

This option would remove 186 surplus places.

This option will reduce projected surplus capacity in the Birkenhead South area in 2009 from 16% to 12%. It is also likely to reduce surplus capacity in the Bebington area in 2009 from 15% to 12%.

### **Finance**

The LEA must provide education in a cost-effective manner. This school is relatively expensive to maintain, in large measure because it has such a surplus of places. Expressed as total expenditure per pupil, in 2003/2004:

- The Dell Primary School spent £5,324 per pupil

This is the highest expenditure per pupil of any Wirral primary school. The average for Wirral primary schools in this period was £2,691 per pupil.

Closure of the school would result in some revenue savings in the education budget which would be recycled through the Budget Formula to increased funding for pupils at Wirral schools.

The Council would determine the future of The Dell site.

### **Effect on Standards**

The following paragraphs are OFSTED judgements from the 2004 PANDA. Judgements are based on comparing average pupil performance over the last 3 years with National median pupil performance over the last 3 years.

### The Dell Primary

- At Key Stage 1, the performance of pupils in Reading was close to the National median. In Mathematics, their performance was below the National median, and in Writing it was well below the National Median.
- At Key Stage 2, the performance of pupils in English was very low in comparison to the National median. Their performance in Mathematics and Science is well below the National median.

### Special Educational Needs

The following paragraph is the OFSTED judgement from the 2004 PANDA.

### The Dell Primary

The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs, including statements, (38.7%) is well above the national average. The percentage of pupils with statements of special educational needs (2.6%) is above the national average.

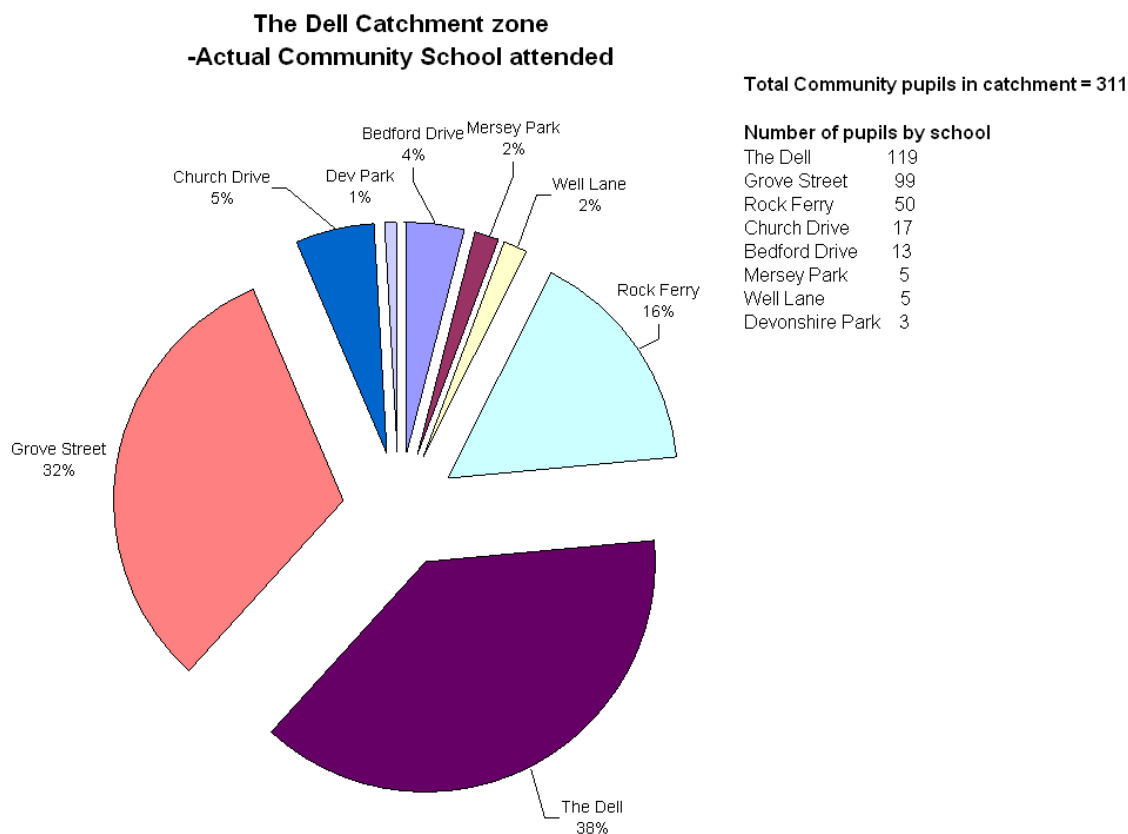
The particular needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, will continue to be met in any school to which they are transferred.

### Parental choice

#### Catchment zone analysis (including Nursery pupils)

Excluding Catholic provision, around 62% of pupils (192 pupils) who live in The Dell's zone do not attend the zone school, the highest migration to alternative schools from any community school in Birkenhead South.

Almost as many pupils from the Dell's zone attend Grove Street Primary (32%, 99 pupils), as The Dell itself (38%, 119 pupils). Rock Ferry Primary receives 16% of pupils from The Dell zone (50 pupils).



### *Pupil mobility*

This is a measure of pupil movement between local primary schools after initial registration. Local means the Birkenhead South small planning area. We looked at where pupils were first registered, either in January 2000 or at first registration in Reception, and compared this to where pupils were registered in January 2004. As would be expected, all schools showed pupil mobility within the local area.

For example, if 10 pupils left, and 20 pupils arrived, this would be a net gain of 10 pupils. If 20 pupils left and 10 pupils arrived, this would be a net loss of 10 pupils. For a school with a total of 200 first registered pupils, a net loss of 10 pupils is equivalent to 5% net loss.

In this period The Dell Primary had a net loss of pupils to alternative local schools (6%, 11 pupils). Only Well Lane Primary had a higher net loss (12%, 37 pupils). All other schools in this area had a local net gain during this period.

If Grove Street Primary is included alongside the Birkenhead South schools, the net loss at The Dell Primary climbs to 11% (20 pupils).

Closure of The Dell Primary would have implications for class sizes at other schools, principally Grove Street Primary and Rock Ferry Primary. In the event of closure, pupils would undoubtedly transfer to one of several local schools.

### **Community cohesion**

The Dell has a Breakfast and Afterschool club, a Nurture room and a SureStart room. A Behavioural Improvement Programme (BIP) BEST team was recently located within the school.

The SureStart unit, Nurture group and BIP BEST team will need to be relocated at appropriate school sites within the area. Some of these facilities could, for example, be relocated to Well Lane Primary, which would have the effect of reducing surplus places at this site.

The Dell has an LEA designated Nursery class, which in January 2004 had 20 pupils.

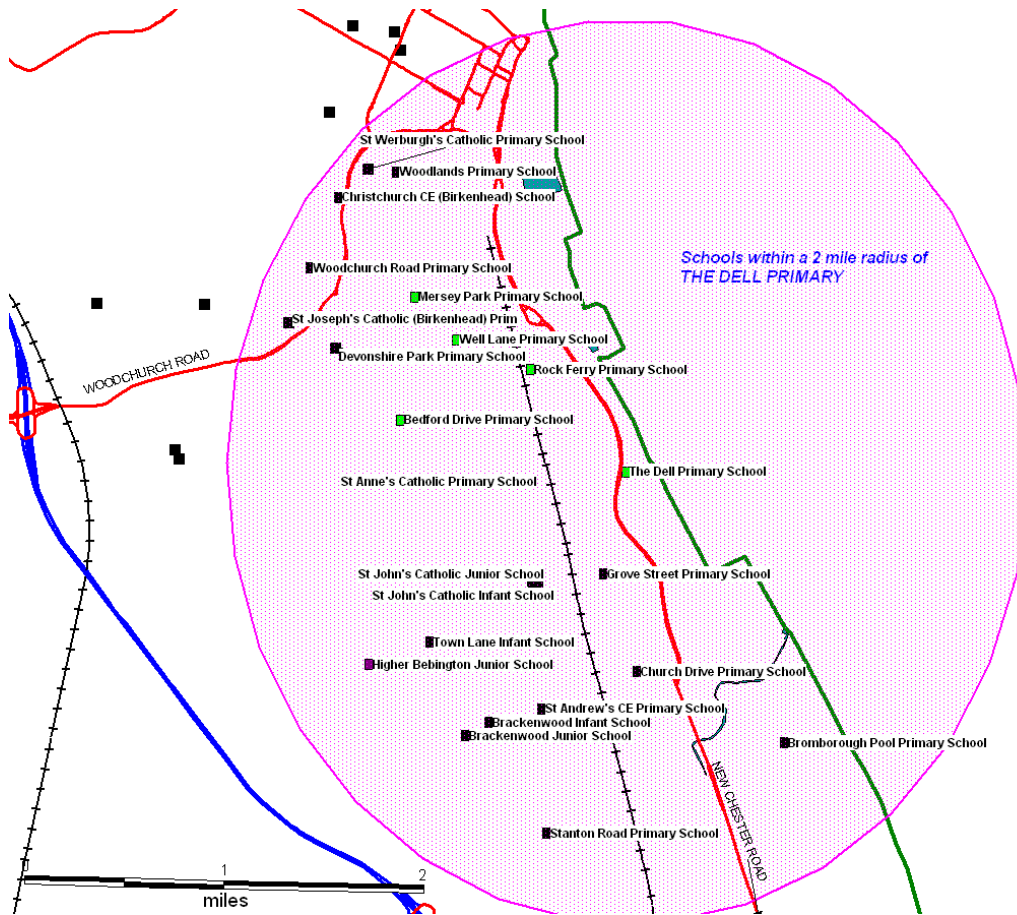
### **Travel and traffic**

Inevitably, the closure of a local school means that some parents and pupils, though not all, will have to travel further to the next nearest alternative. However, additional journeys are not likely to be too great and a significant proportion of parents already take their children to one or other of the alternative schools.

The distance between The Dell Primary and Grove Street Primary is 0.7 miles, while the distance between The Dell and Rock Ferry Primary is 0.9 miles.

There are 21 schools within a 2 mile radius of The Dell Primary School.

(see overleaf)



## Conclusion

The degree of surplus places at The Dell, and the inefficient use of resources this creates, is our reason for proposing this closure.

The closure of the school means that some pupils will have to transfer to a larger primary school at a greater distance. A significant proportion of parents in the area have already made that choice. Closure would allow the LEA to use its resources better for the benefit of all pupils.

## **Option B: Closure of The Dell Primary and Well Lane Primary**

It is proposed to close Well Lane Primary and The Dell Primary at the end of summer term 2006. There are two main reasons for this decision:

- to remove surplus places;
- to provide a more cost-effective education.

### **Consideration of Factors**

Well Lane is a primary school of 200 pupils located “between the parks”, serving Tranmere and Rock Ferry. The Dell is a primary school of 135 pupils serving the southern part of Rock Ferry.

The proposal to close these schools is based on considerable spare capacity at the schools with little likelihood of the situation being significantly reversed.

Well Lane Primary has surplus places of 31% (89 places), the highest percentage of any school in the Birkenhead South small planning area. This is predicted to fall to 23% (66 places) by 2009.

The Dell Primary has surplus places of 27% (51 places), the second highest percentage of any school in the Birkenhead South small planning area. This is predicted to fall to 24% (44 places) by 2009.

All children currently and projected to attend these two schools could be accommodated by the remaining local schools without building any new classrooms.

However, dependant on the pattern of parental choice, Mersey Park may need to revert three existing resource rooms into classrooms, while Bedford Drive Primary may need to revert one existing resource room into a classroom. No changes to existing rooms should be required at either Rock Ferry Primary or Grove Street Primary.

The catchment zones of The Dell and Well Lane would be reallocated to the surrounding schools: Mersey Park, Bedford Drive, Rock Ferry Primary and Grove Street Primary. Example map B is attached showing how this could be accomplished.

This option would remove 324 surplus places.

This option will reduce projected surplus capacity in the Birkenhead South area in 2009 from 16% to 4%, and in the Bebington area from 15% to 12%.

### **Finance**

The LEA must provide education in a cost-effective manner. These schools are relatively expensive to maintain. Expressed as total expenditure per pupil, in 2003/2004:

- The Dell Primary School spent £5,324
- Well Lane Primary School spent £2,975

For comparison, the Wirral average for the same period was £2,691 per pupil.

The closure of these schools would result in some revenue savings in the education budget which would be recycled through the Budget Formula into increased funding for pupils at Wirral schools.

The Council would determine the future of the Well Lane and The Dell sites.

### **Effect on Standards**

The following paragraphs are OFSTED judgements from the 2004 PANDA. Judgements are based on comparing average pupil performance over the last 3 years with National median pupil performance over the last 3 years.

#### *The Dell Primary*

- At Key Stage 1, the performance of pupils in Reading was close to the National median. In Mathematics, their performance was below the National median, and in Writing it was well below the National Median.
- At Key Stage 2, the performance of pupils in English was very low in comparison to the National median. Their performance in Mathematics and Science was well below the National median.

#### *Well Lane Primary*

- At Key Stage 1, the performance of pupils in Reading was below the National median. In Writing and Mathematics, their performance was very low in comparison to the National median.
- At Key Stage 2, the performance of pupils in English and Mathematics was very low in comparison to the National median. Their performance in Science was well below the National median.

#### *Special Educational Needs*

The next two paragraphs are OFSTED judgements from the 2004 PANDA.

#### *The Dell Primary*

The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs, including statements, (38.7%) is well above the national average. The percentage of pupils with statements of special educational needs (2.6%) is above the national average.

#### *Well Lane Primary*

The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs, including statements, (37.1%) is well above the national average. The percentage of pupils with statements of special educational needs (1.3%) is broadly in line with the national average.

The particular needs of all pupils, including those with Special Educational Needs, will continue to be met in the schools to which they are transferred.

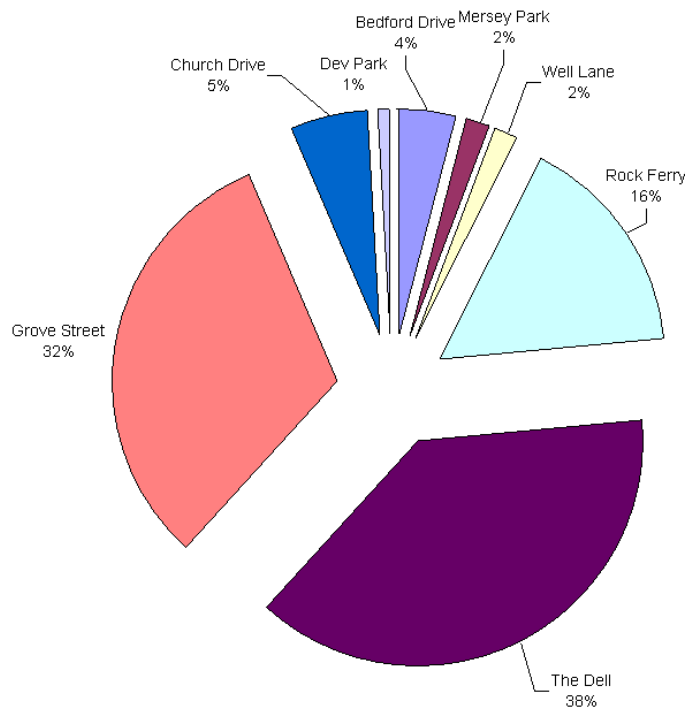
### **Parental choice**

#### *Catchment zone analysis (including Nursery pupils)*

Excluding Catholic provision, around 57% of pupils (219 pupils) who live in Well Lane's zone do not attend the zone school, while around 62% of pupils (192 pupils) who live in The Dell's zone do not attend their zone school. These are the highest migrations to alternative schools in Birkenhead South.

**The Dell Catchment zone  
-Actual Community School attended**

Total Community pupils in catchment = 311



**Number of pupils by school**

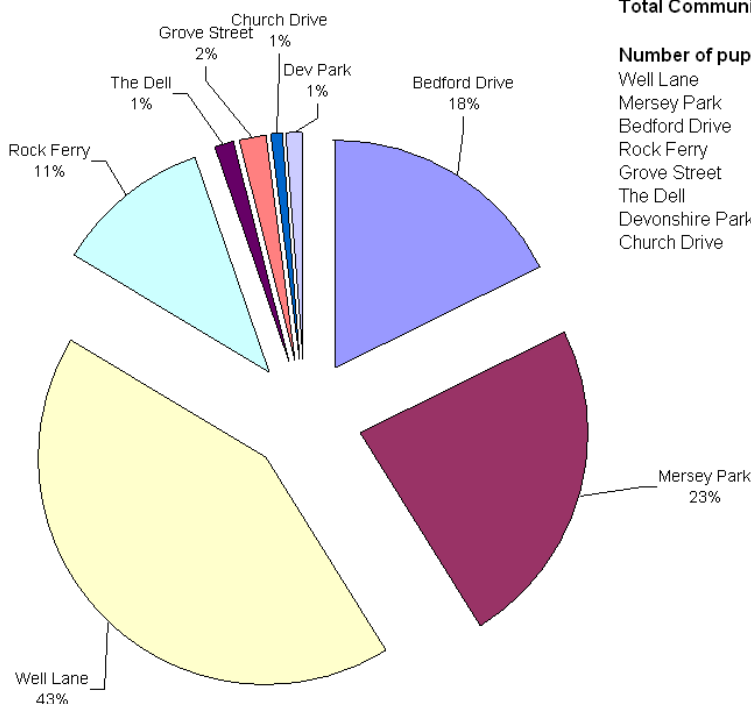
The Dell	119
Grove Street	99
Rock Ferry	50
Church Drive	17
Bedford Drive	13
Mersey Park	5
Well Lane	5
Devonshire Park	3

Almost as many pupils who live in the Dell's zone attend Grove Street Primary (32%, 99 pupils), as The Dell itself (38%, 119 pupils). Rock Ferry Primary receives 16% of pupils from The Dell zone (50 pupils).

Significant numbers of pupils who reside in Well Lane's zone attend Mersey Park Primary (23%, 89 pupils), Bedford Drive Primary (18%, 68 pupils) and Rock Ferry Primary (11%, 42 pupils).

**Well Lane Catchment zone  
-Actual Community School attended**

Total Community pupils in catchment = 381



**Number of pupils by school**

Well Lane	162
Mersey Park	89
Bedford Drive	68
Rock Ferry	42
Grove Street	8
The Dell	5
Devonshire Park	4
Church Drive	3

### *Pupil mobility*

This is a measure of pupil movement between local primary schools after initial registration. Local means the Birkenhead South small planning area. We looked at where pupils were first registered, either in January 2000 or at first registration in Reception, and compared this to where pupils were registered in January 2004. As would be expected, all schools showed pupil mobility within the local area.

For example, if 10 pupils left, and 20 pupils arrived, this would be a net gain of 10 pupils. If 20 pupils left and 10 pupils arrived, this would be a net loss of 10 pupils. For a school with a total of 200 first registered pupils, a net loss of 10 pupils is equivalent to 5% net loss.

In this period The Dell Primary had a net loss of pupils to alternative local schools (6%, 11 pupils). Only Well Lane Primary had a higher net loss (12%, 37 pupils). All other schools in this area had a local net gain during this period.

If Grove Street is included with the Birkenhead South schools, the net loss at The Dell Primary climbs to 11% (20 pupils).

The closure of The Dell Primary would have implications for class sizes at other schools, principally Grove Street Primary and Rock Ferry Primary.

The closure of Well Lane Primary would have implications for class sizes at other schools, principally Mersey Park Primary, Bedford Drive Primary and Rock Ferry Primary.

### **Community cohesion**

The Dell has a Breakfast and Afterschool club, a Nurture room and a SureStart room. A Behavioural Improvement Programme (BIP) unit was recently located within the school.

The SureStart unit, Nurture group and BIP unit will need to be relocated at appropriate school sites within the area.

Well Lane has an LEA designated Nursery class, which in January 2004 had 29 pupils.

The Dell also has an LEA designated Nursery class, which in January 2004 had 20 pupils.

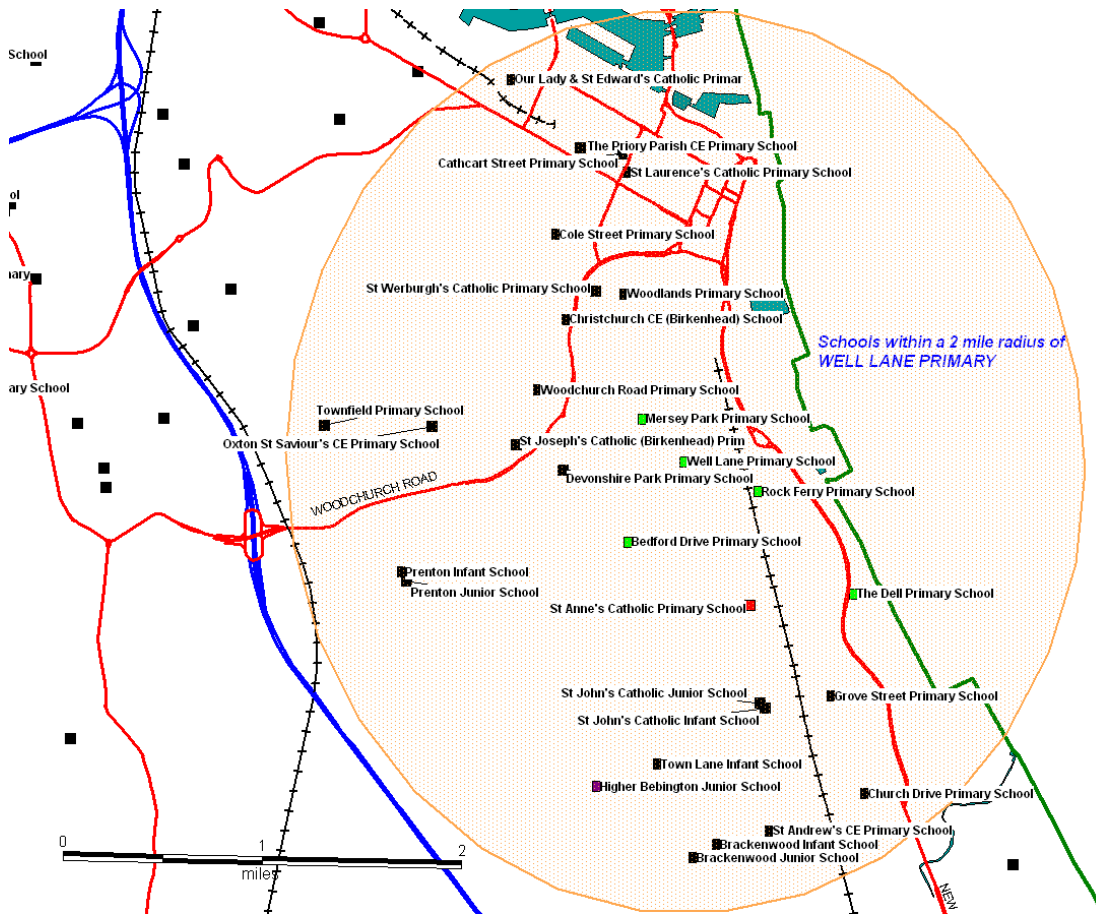
### **Travel and traffic**

Inevitably, closing these schools means that some parents and pupils, though not all, will have to travel further. However, additional journeys are not likely to be too great and a significant proportion of parents already take their children to one or other of the alternative schools.

The distance between The Dell Primary and Grove Street Primary is 0.7 miles, while the distance between The Dell and Rock Ferry Primary is 0.9 miles.

The distance between Well Lane Primary and Mersey Park Primary is 0.4 miles, between Well Lane and Bedford Drive Primary is 0.6 miles, and between Well Lane and Rock Ferry Primary is 0.6 miles.

There are 28 schools within a 2 mile radius of Well Lane Primary and 21 within 2 miles of The Dell Primary.



## Conclusion

The degree of surplus places at these two schools, and the inefficient use of resources this creates, is our reason for this proposal.

Closing the schools means that some pupils will have to transfer to a larger primary school at a greater distance. A significant proportion of parents in the area have already made that choice. This option will allow the LEA to use its resources more effectively for the benefit of all pupils.

**Option C. Closure of The Dell Primary and Well Lane Primary  
and  
Establishing a new school**

It is proposed to close Well Lane Primary and The Dell Primary at the end of summer term 2006. A new single form of entry primary school would be built on a site south of Bedford Road. There are two main reasons for this decision:

- to remove surplus places;
- to provide a more cost-effective education

**Consideration of Factors**

Well Lane is a primary school of 200 pupils located “between the parks”, serving Tranmere and Rock Ferry. The Dell is a primary school of 135 pupils serving the southern part of Rock Ferry.

The proposal to close these schools and open a new establishment is based on considerable spare capacity at the schools with little likelihood of the situation being significantly reversed. Establishing a new school is dependant on a suitable site becoming available, and the financial arrangements to build the school being in place.

Preliminary investigations have been made regarding the status of the Conway Playing Fields on Knowsley Road, which adjoin the Woodward Road estate. This estate is part of the area under consultation for redevelopment under the Housing Market Renewal Initiative. The Conway Playing Fields are designated Urban Greenspace (GR2) under the Unitary Development Plan.

Well Lane Primary has surplus places of 31% (89 places), the highest percentage of any school in the Birkenhead South small planning area. This is predicted to fall to 23% (66 places) by 2009.

The Dell Primary has surplus places of 27% (51 places), the second highest percentage of any school in the Birkenhead South small planning area. This is predicted to fall to 24% (44 places) by 2009.

In this option, Well Lane Primary and The Dell Primary would be closed, and their pupils re-distributed to surrounding schools, including the new school. A new single form of entry primary school would be built on a suitable site south of Bedford Road.

Other than the new primary school, this would not require building any new classrooms. However, dependant on the pattern of parental choice, Mersey Park may need to revert two or three existing resource rooms into classrooms, while Bedford Drive Primary may need to revert one existing resource room into a classroom. No changes in existing room use would be required at either Rock Ferry Primary or Grove Street Primary.

The Well Lane and Dell zones would be allocated to surrounding schools, including creating a zone for the new community school. Example map C is attached showing how this could be accomplished.

A new build school is always attractive to parents, and it is also likely to draw not only former Dell pupils, but also those from the surrounding schools, particularly effecting Grove Street Primary and Rock Ferry Primary.

This option will remove 143 surplus places.

The effect of closing Well Lane Primary and The Dell Primary and building a 210 place community primary school south of Bedford Road is likely to reduce projected surplus capacity in the Birkenhead South area in 2009 from 16% to 8%, but increase projected surplus capacity in the Bebington area in 2009 from 15% to 16%.

## **Finance**

The LEA must provide education in a cost-effective manner. These schools are relatively expensive to maintain. Expressed as total expenditure per pupil, in 2003/2004:

- The Dell Primary School spent £5,324
- Well Lane Primary School spent £2,975

For comparison, the Wirral average spend was £2,691 per pupil for the same period.

Closure of the two schools would result in some revenue savings in the education budget which would be recycled through the Budget Formula to increased funding for pupils at Wirral schools.

The Council would determine the future of the Well Lane and Dell sites.

There may be purchase and planning issues surrounding the acquisition of a site. The cost of building a new primary school of this size is likely to be in the region of £3 to £4 million pounds.

## **Effect on Standards**

The following paragraphs are OFSTED judgements from the 2004 PANDA. Judgements are based on comparing average pupil performance over the last 3 years with National median pupil performance over the last 3 years.

### *The Dell Primary*

- At Key Stage 1, the performance of pupils in Reading was close to the National median. In Mathematics, their performance was below the National median, and in Writing it was well below the National Median.
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### *Well Lane Primary*

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## *Special Educational Needs*

The next two paragraphs are OFSTED judgements from the 2004 PANDA.

### *Well Lane Primary*

The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs, including statements, (37.1%) is well above the national average. The percentage of pupils with statements of special educational needs (1.3%) is broadly in line with the national average.

## The Dell Primary

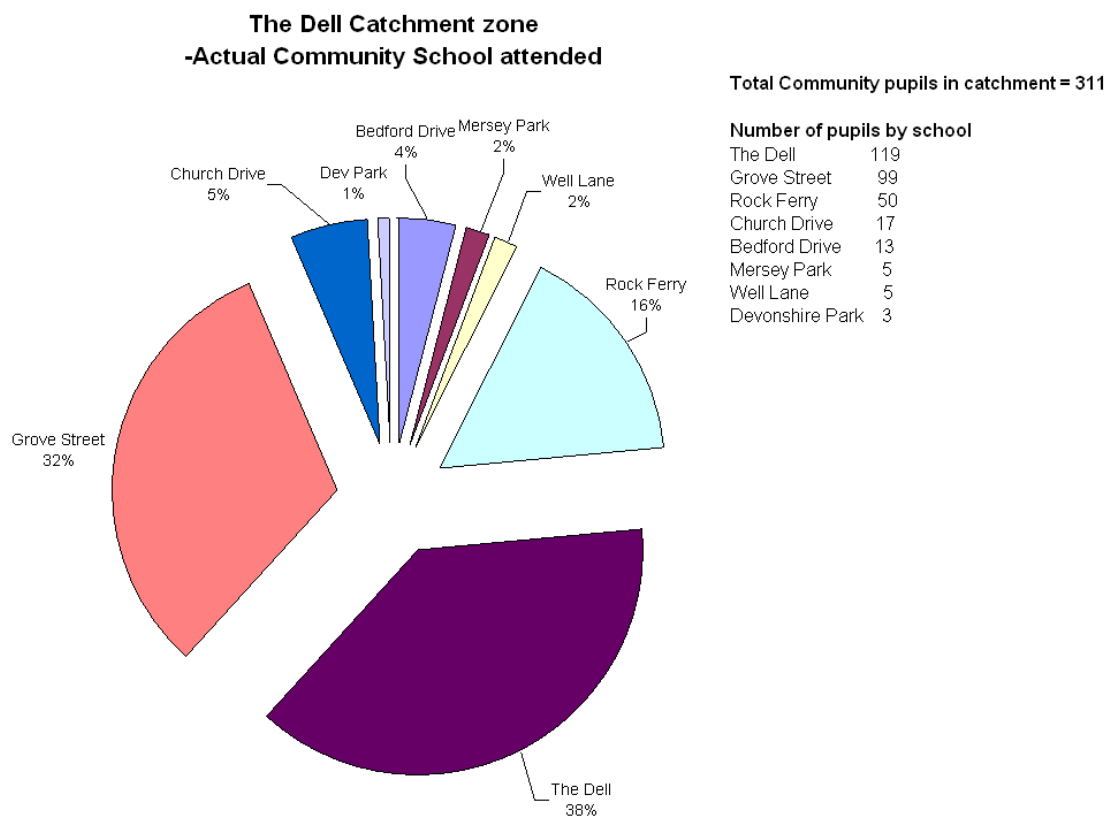
The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs, including statements, (38.7%) is well above the national average. The percentage of pupils with statements of special educational needs (2.6%) is above the national average.

The particular needs of all pupils, including those with Special Educational Needs, will continue to be met in the schools to which they are transferred.

## Parental choice

### Catchment zone analysis (including Nursery pupils)

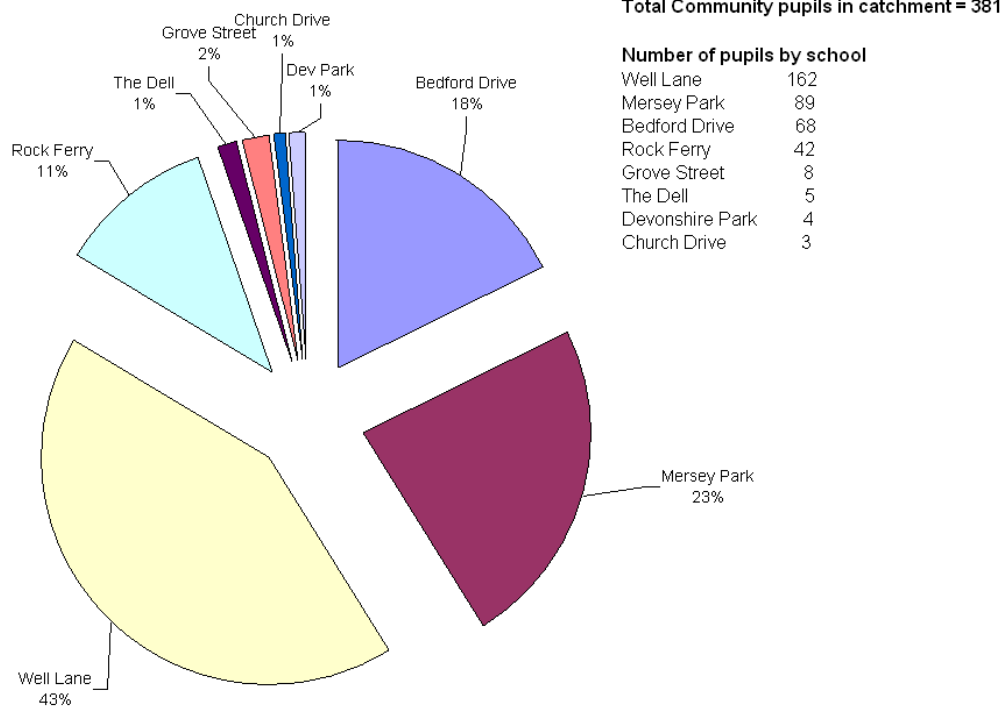
Excluding Catholic provision, around 57% of pupils (219 pupils) who live in Well Lane's zone do not attend the zone school, while around 62% of pupils (192 pupils) who live in The Dell's zone do not attend their zone school. These are the highest migrations to alternative schools in Birkenhead South.



Almost as many pupils who live in the Dell's zone attend Grove Street Primary (32%, 99 pupils), as The Dell itself (38%, 119 pupils). Rock Ferry Primary receives 16% of pupils from The Dell zone (50 pupils).

Significant numbers of pupils who reside in Well Lane's zone attend Mersey Park Primary (23%, 89 pupils), Bedford Drive Primary (18%, 68 pupils) and Rock Ferry Primary (11%, 42 pupils).

**Well Lane Catchment zone  
-Actual Community School attended**



*Pupil mobility*

This is a measure of pupil movement between local primary schools after initial registration. Local means the Birkenhead South small planning area. We looked at where pupils were first registered, either in January 2000 or at first registration in Reception, and compared this to where pupils were registered in January 2004. As would be expected, all schools showed pupil mobility within the local area.

For example, if 10 pupils left, and 20 pupils arrived, this would be a net gain of 10 pupils. If 20 pupils left and 10 pupils arrived, this would be a net loss of 10 pupils. For a school with a total of 200 first registered pupils, a net loss of 10 pupils is equivalent to 5% net loss.

In this period The Dell Primary had a net loss of pupils to alternative local schools (6%, 11 pupils). Only Well Lane Primary had a higher net loss (12%, 37 pupils). All other schools in this area had a local net gain during this period.

If Grove Street is included with the Birkenhead South schools, the net loss at The Dell Primary climbs to 11% (20 pupils).

Closure of The Dell Primary would have implications for class sizes at other schools, principally the New school, Grove Street Primary and Rock Ferry Primary.

The closure of Well Lane Primary would have implications for class sizes at other schools, principally Mersey Park Primary, Bedford Drive Primary and Rock Ferry Primary.

Creation of a new school with modern facilities in the Housing Market Renewal Initiative area could provide a positive element in the redevelopment of the area. A new school is always attractive to parents. The zone designated to the new school will therefore become vital.

## **Community cohesion**

The Dell has a Breakfast and Afterschool club, a Nurture group and a SureStart room. A Behavioural Improvement Programme (BIP) BEST team was recently located within the school.

The BIP/BEST, Nurture group and SureStart currently located at The Dell will need to be relocated – either as part of the new building, or to one of the other local schools.

Well Lane has an LEA designated Nursery class, which in January 2004 had 29 pupils.

The Dell also has an LEA designated Nursery class, which in January 2004 had 20 pupils.

## **Travel and traffic**

Inevitably, this option means that some parents and pupils, though not all, will have to travel further. However, additional journeys are not likely to be too great and a significant proportion of parents already take their children to one or other of the alternative schools.

The distance between The Dell Primary and Grove Street Primary is 0.7 miles, while the distance between The Dell and Rock Ferry Primary is 0.9 miles.

The distance between Well Lane Primary and Mersey Park Primary is 0.4 miles, between Well Lane and Bedford Drive Primary is 0.6 miles, and between Well Lane and Rock Ferry Primary is 0.6 miles.

There are 28 schools within a 2 mile radius of Well Lane Primary and 21 within 2 miles of The Dell Primary.

## **Conclusion**

The degree of surplus places at these two schools, and the inefficient use of resources this creates, is our reason for this proposal.

This option means that some pupils will have to transfer to a larger primary school at a greater distance. A significant proportion of parents in the area have already made that choice. This option does not resolve the surplus places issue in this area, but will allow the Council to provide a modern school built to current specifications to enable curriculum delivery and positive experience for pupils and staff. There will be ramifications for pupil provision at neighbouring schools which may create unacceptable levels of surplus.

### Number of pupils on roll projected to 2009

	Bedford Drive	Mersey Park	Well Lane	The Dell	Rock Ferry	Grove Street	New School
<b>2004 Number on Roll</b>	394	370	200	135	258	296	-
<b>Status quo 2009</b>	361	378	223	142	234	228	-
<b>Option A: Close Dell</b>	372	382	223	-	276	312	-
<b>Option B: Close Well Lane and Dell</b>	445	478	-	-	322	321	-
<b>Option C: Close Well Lane and Dell, New Build</b>	432	452	-	-	262	209	210

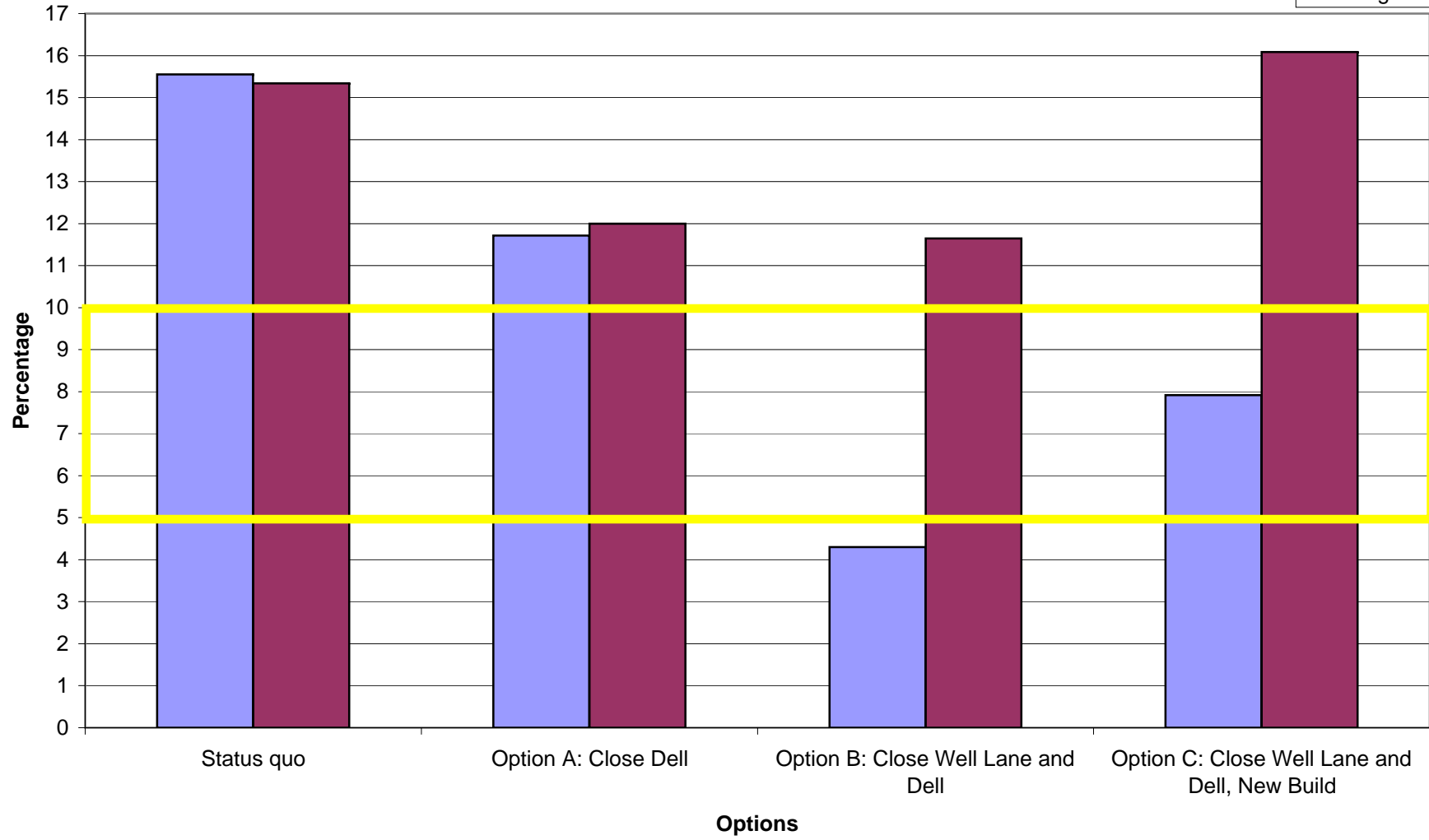
### Classroom use changes and new build requirements

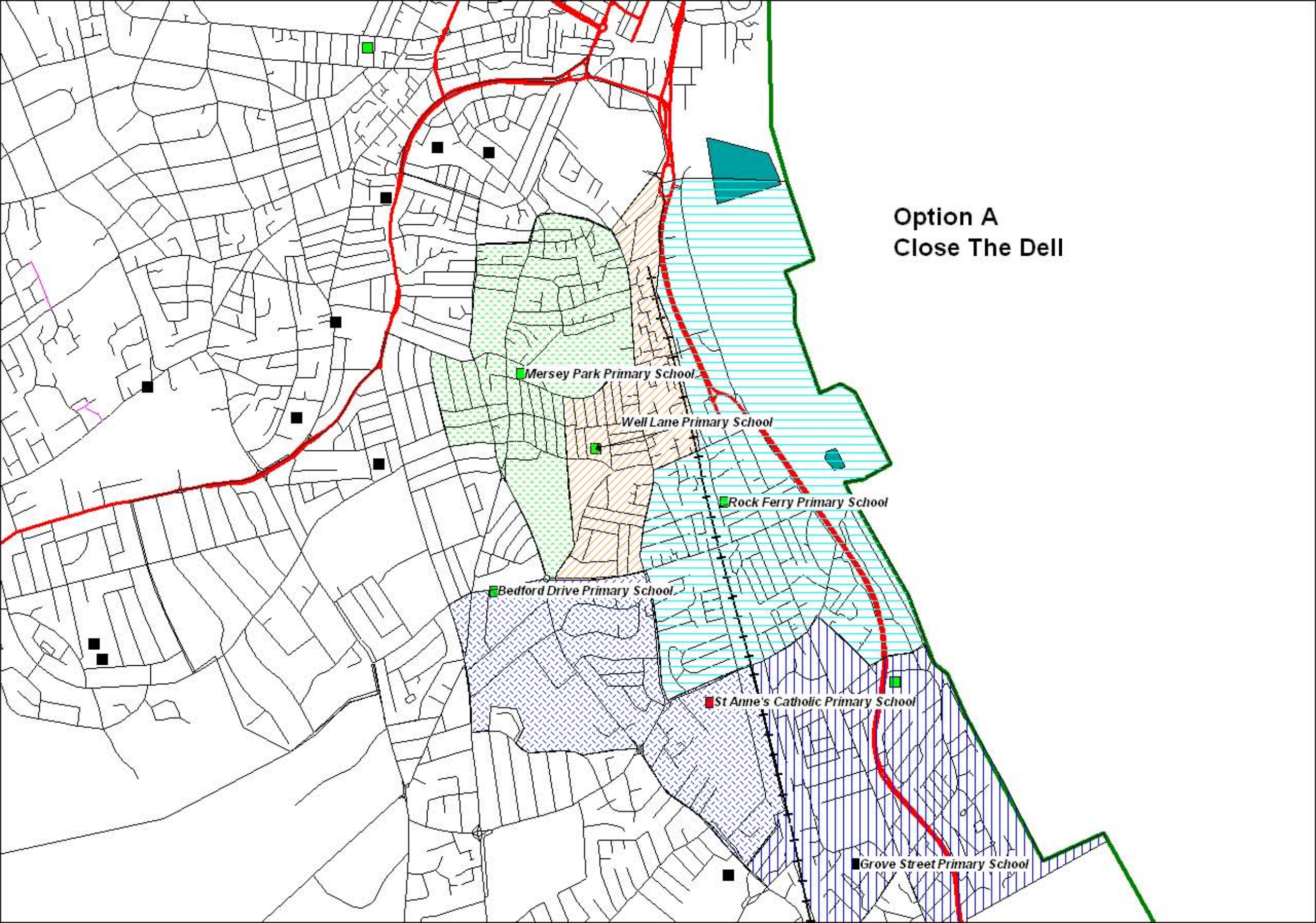
	Bedford Drive	Mersey Park	Well Lane	The Dell	Rock Ferry	Grove Street	New School
<b>Option A: Close Dell</b>	none	none	none	-	none	none	-
<b>Option B: Close Well Lane and Dell</b>	One classroom	Three classrooms	-	-	none	none	-
<b>Option C: Close Well Lane and Dell, New Build</b>	One classroom	Two classrooms	-	-	none	none	New Build 210 Primary

Changes in yellow require new build. Those in green involve internal changes to existing rooms.

### Surplus place percentage for Birkenhead South and Bebington, projected to 2009

Yellow zone = 5-10% surplus





**Option A  
Close The Dell**

Mersey Park Primary School

Well Lane Primary School

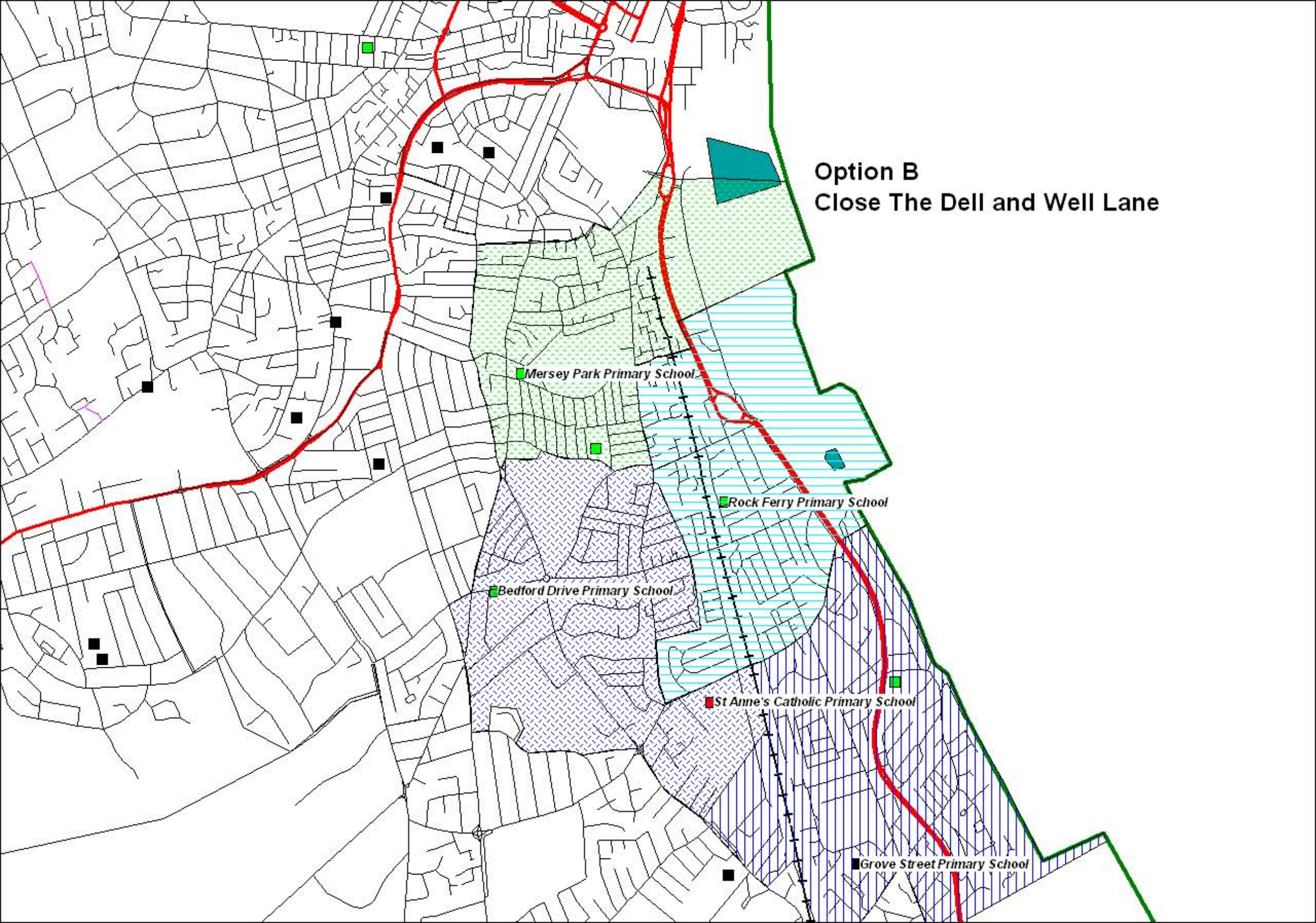
Rock Ferry Primary School

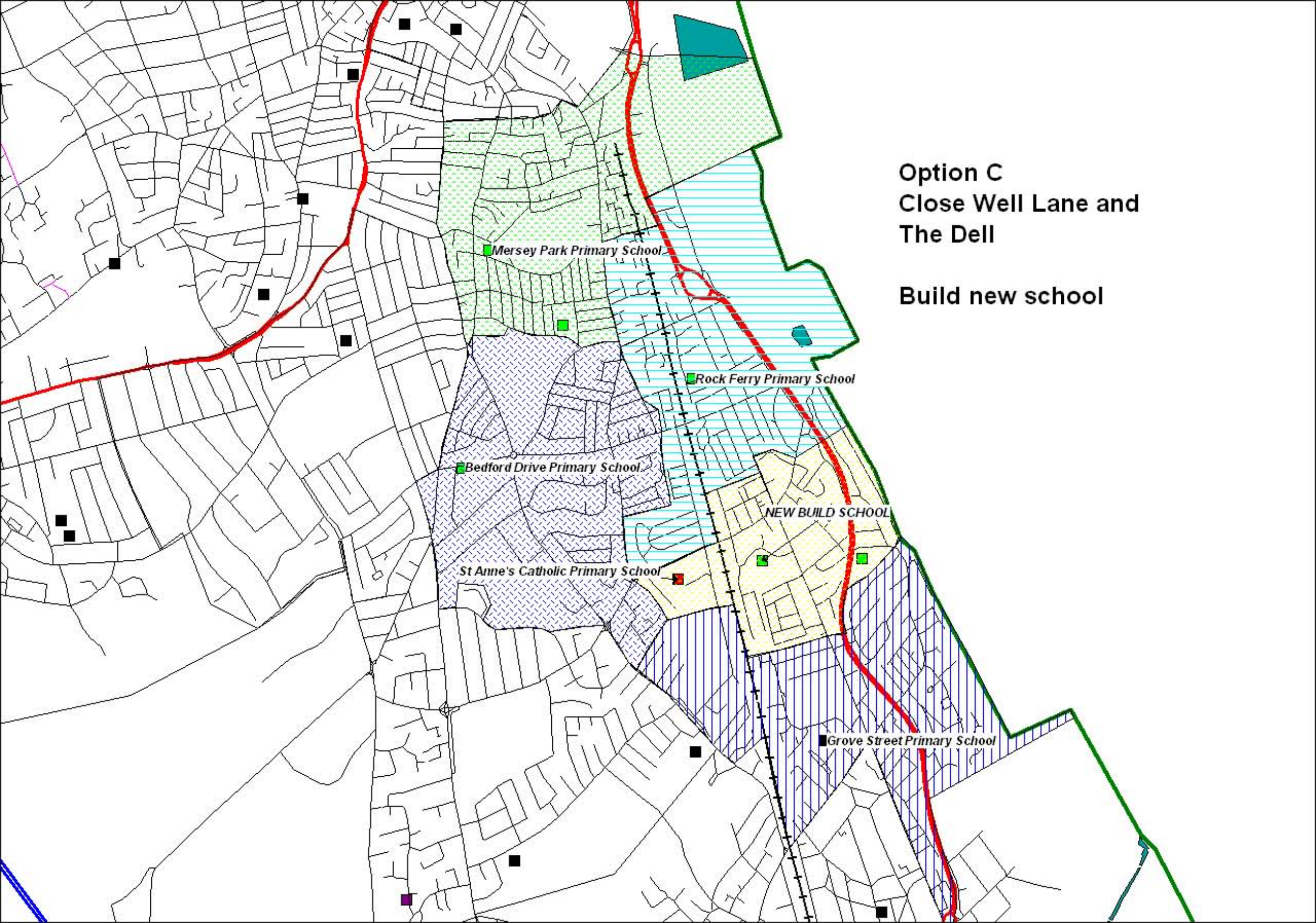
Bedford Drive Primary School

St Anne's Catholic Primary School

Grove Street Primary School

**Option B**  
**Close The Dell and Well Lane**





Option C  
Close Well Lane and  
The Dell

Build new school

Mersey Park Primary School

Rock Ferry Primary School

Bedford Drive Primary School

NEW BUILD SCHOOL

St Anne's Catholic Primary School

Grove Street Primary School