

**PROPOSAL TO CLOSE RIVERSIDE PRIMARY SCHOOL AND LETHAM
PRIMARY SCHOOL AND REPLACE THEM WITH A NEW SCHOOL ON THE
RIVERSIDE SITE.**

FINAL REPORT OF THE STATUTORY CONSULTATION

MONDAY 22 JANUARY TO FRIDAY 15 MARCH 2024

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of this report is to give information on:

- West Lothian Council's proposal to establish a new non-denominational primary school at the Riverside Site, Craigshill and associated proposals;
- the Consultation Process;
- Consultee Responses;
- Notes of Public Meeting.

1.2 SUMMARY OF PROPOSAL

West Lothian Council, Education Services propose to:

- Establish a new non-denominational primary school in Craigshill, Livingston Review the catchment area for the new school
- Close Riverside Primary School and Letham Primary School

The principal aim of the proposal is to ensure the delivery of a new Craigshill primary school for the replacement of Riverside and Letham schools which will enable the continued provision of the highest quality facilities for the pupils, parents, stakeholders and the wider West Lothian community.

Education Services

TIMELINE

The following timeline was established and incorporates the organisation of public meetings, Education Scotland involvement, the preparation and publication of the report on the outcomes of the consultation, submission to West Lothian Council Education Executive for its decision in June 2024 and notification of a school closure to Scottish Ministers.

Date	Event	Description
05 December 2023	Education Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel	Meeting to note content of report and agree that the report be forwarded to a future meeting of the Education Executive for approval
16 January 2024	Education Executive Meeting	Meeting to discuss proposal and agree continuation to statutory consultation phase
22 January 2024	Start of Consultation	Beginning of formal public consultation (min 6 continuous weeks consultation period including min of 30 school days)
04 March 2024	Public Meetings	Public Meetings to discuss proposal
15 March 2024	End of Consultation	End of Public Consultation
18 March 2024	Submit report to Education Scotland*Dates to be agreed in advance with Education Scotland	West Lothian Council Education Services relays report on proposal and consultation findings to Education Scotland
03 April 2024	Deadline for Education Scotland three-week period for reporting back to Education Services	Education Scotland response to West Lothian Council submission
27 May 2024	Give Education Scotland at least 5 days' notice prior to publishing final report	Upon receipt of response from Education Scotland authority will prepare and publish final consultation report
03 June 2024	Publication of final consultation report	A minimum of three weeks after publication of consultation report Authority will make final decision
25 June 2024	Education Executive Meeting	Decision made
Before 3 July 2024	Notify Scottish Ministers of school closures	Following the Council's final decision, there are three weeks for stakeholders to make representations to Scottish Ministers either against or in support of the closure.

The Consultation Timeline encompasses statutory legislative requirements detailed as per Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

1.3 CONSULTEES

In terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, any proposal to make amendments to the school estate in this case, establishment of a new school, a catchment alteration and school closures requires a formal consultation.

The Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, as amended by the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, sets out the statutory consultation requirements.

The statutory consultees for a proposal to relocate an education establishment are prescribed as follows:

- the Parent Council or Combined Parent Council of any affected school
- the parents of the pupils at any affected school
- the parents of any children expected by the education authority to attend any affected school within two years of the date of publication of the proposal paper
- the pupils at any affected school (in so far as the education authority considers them to be of a suitable age and maturity)
- the staff (teaching and other) at any affected school
- any trade union which appears to the education authority to be representative of the persons mentioned in bullet point above
- the community council (if any)
- the Community Planning Partnership (within the meaning of section 4(5) of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 for the area of the local authority in which affected school is situated.
- any other community planning partnerships considered relevant by the Authority.
- any other education authority that the education authority considers relevant
- any other users of any affected school that the education authority considers relevant
- in relation to any relevant proposal which affects a denominational school, the Church, Denominational Body or Scottish Hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church

1.4 CONSULTATION PROCESS

The consultation period incorporated a period of 30 school days (excluding any school holiday) from Monday 22nd January 2024 until Friday 15th March 2024. This timescale adheres to the statutory consultation period for such circumstances which is a minimum of 6 consecutive weeks and include at least 30 school days.

To communicate, the Education Service proposal information was delivered through the undernoted media avenues:

- West Lothian Council Website: <https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/new-school-riverside>
- West Lothian Council digital media products
- Local Press
- Available in hard copy via the schools or West Lothian Council Civic Centre
- Hard copy available for postal distribution on request

In order to ensure all parties had the same opportunity to access the consultation information, facilities were put in place to communicate the proposal in a manner best suited to the needs of the individual. To this regard, the Consultation Document was made available through the following means as and when requested:

- Translation Services
- Provision for deaf and hearing impaired, blind and visually impaired

A copy of the Consultation Document is attached as Appendix B.

Separate public meetings were held at Letham Primary School and Riverside Primary School on Monday 4th March 2024.

Minutes of the public meetings are detailed in **Section 3** of this report.

During the consultation period views on the proposal were welcomed in writing to the address given below:

Catherine Campbell, Education Services, Civic Centre, Howden Road South, EH54 6FF
Responses by e-mail were directed to Education.Consultation@westlothian.gov.uk
All interested parties were invited to submit their comments by close of business Friday 15th March 2024.

Notification and notices

When an authority takes a decision to approve a school closure proposal, section 15(2) and (2A) requires it to notify Scottish Ministers, within 6 days of making the decision, and place a notice on its website of this fact and of the opportunity to make representations to the Scottish Ministers.

Following the Council's final decision, there are three weeks for stakeholders to make representations either against or in support of the closure. Contact details for submitting representations:

schoolclosure@scotland.gsi.gov.uk or post to The Scottish Government, School Infrastructure Unit, 2A (South), Victoria Quay, Edinburgh, EH6 6QQ.

The deadline for making representations is Monday, 15 July 2024

2. CONSULTEE RESPONSES TO PROPOSAL

West Lothian Council Education Services noted comments made through a variety of means however only those official representations submitted in the terms of the **Consultation Document SECTION 5: Consultation Process and How To Have Your Say (Appendix B)** have been recorded for reporting purposes.

No hard copy written representations were received during the consultation period. All responses from consultees were received either in electronic format (email) or by oral representation at the statutory public meetings.

2.1 RESPONSES RECEIVED

One email response was received during the consultation period from Craigshill community Council.

Consultee Enquiry

Thank you for your enquiry on behalf of Craigshill Community Council. Please find a response to each of your questions below:

1. We note that there will be two meetings of one-hour duration, one in either school, on the evening of 4th March. The feeling was that one meeting lasting two hours in the old Beatlie school would have been more convenient. Having to go from one school to the other where a number of points will no doubt be duplicated does not seem to be a productive use of time.
Meeting times were arranged in consultation with the school communities and agreed by Education Executive.
2. Both Riverside and Letham schools traditionally had community wings which were used by local people. We note that the consultation document makes mention of relocating existing community groups. Given that there is no alternative existing community facility available in the area, can you outline what you mean by this. Our preference would be for a new community wing to be built into the new school, preferably designed in such a way that it could be used separately from a locked classroom area after and during school hours.
West Lothian Council Property Services have supported the permanent relocation of The West Lothian Youth Action Project, to two locations within Craigshill. Their office and administrative functions are being delivered out of accommodation at Almond Housing Association's head offices in Etive Walk, Craigshill. Their foodbank and street-work functions are now being delivered from part of the former Almondbank Library building in Craigshill.

Education Services

3. Will there be the same ratio of teachers to pupils in the new school and will all the teachers currently employed be kept? Further, what cutbacks on promoted posts will arise? What savings will be made in this event?
 Please refer to **SECTION 6: FINANCE IMPACT REPORT** of the consultation document link here https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/media/59912/Proposal-to-Close-Riverside-PS-and-Letham-PS-and-Replace-with-a-New-School/pdf/Proposal_to_Close_Riverside_PS_and_Letham_PS_and_Replace_with_a_New_School.pdf
4. Can we be assured that under projected figures for population growth any rise in the school role can be accommodated? How many years ahead does any projection cover?
 The 10 year School Roll Forecasts are based on the published 2021 900 House School Roll Forecasts Link to report here Coins Committee Document 26.10.2021 <https://coins.westlothian.gov.uk/coins/viewDoc.asp?c=e%97%9Di%91oy%88>
5. It is hoped that adequate storage facilities outwith classroom areas will be incorporated into the building. What plans are there for this?
 The Design Team will take cognisance of the needs of the school in consultation with Education and the School Premises (General Requirements and Standards) Regulations 1967, Scotland Act.
6. Is the building likely to be multi-storey and if so has consideration been given to disabled access?
 All new educational facilities are required to follow statutory regulations within Building Standards, The Equality Act, 2010 and School Premises (General Requirements and Standards) Regulations 1967, Scotland Act.
7. What plans are there for classroom size and design? Will the size be comparable to existing classrooms in Riverside and Letham? Will they be stand alone rooms or multifunctional capable of being adapted for different purposes. Can we be assured that the rooms will be sound proofed for times when quiet is needed?
 All new educational facilities are required to follow the area metrics within the School Premises (General Requirements and Standards) Regulations 1967, Scotland Act and meet Building Standards which include building acoustics.
8. What consideration has been given to play areas and sport facilities both within the building and outside? Will there be adequate space for individual and team sports?
 Yes, including Sports Scotland Design Guidance for gym and PE facilities.
9. Questions were asked regarding the routes to the school. Will they be upgraded to ensure that there are no safety concerns and that prams/pushchairs/wheelchairs can navigate the surfaces without problems.
 Safe walking routes will comply with West Lothian Council School Transport Policy link here <https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/article/32237/School-Transport-Policy>
10. Since two schools will be made one, what savings will be made on energy costs?
 Please refer to **SECTION 6: FINANCE IMPACT REPORT** within the consultation document link here <https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/media/59912/Proposal-to-Close->

Education Services

[Riverside-PS-and-Letham-PS-and-Replace-with-a-New-School/pdf/Proposal to Close Riverside PS and Letham PS and Replace with a New School.pdf](#)

11. It is reported that it will cost £107k a year to mothball Letham Primary. Can this be confirmed? How soon will it be disposed of? Will the building be made vandal proof? What plans are there for the cleared ground?

A plan cannot be made regarding the future use of Letham PS until the proposals to Close Riverside and Letham Schools have been approved at Education Executive on conclusion of the consultation.

3. NOTE OF PUBLIC MEETING

Separate public meetings were held at Letham Primary School and Riverside Primary School on Monday 4th March 2024.

Meeting attendees:

In total approximately 70 consultees attended the two public meetings with 53 choosing to sign the meeting register. This included one representative from Education Scotland and Angela Downie, Head Teacher of both Letham Primary School and Riverside Primary School.

MINUTE OF PUBLIC MEETING HELD AT
LETHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL ON MONDAY 4th MARCH 2024
TO DISCUSS PUBLIC CONSULTATION DOCUMENT: "PROPOSAL TO CLOSE
RIVERSIDE PRIMARY SCHOOL AND LETHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL AND REPLACE
THEM WITH A NEW SCHOOL ON THE RIVERSIDE SITE."

In attendance from West Lothian Council:

Cllr Andrew McGuire	Executive Councillor for Education
Greg Welsh	Head of Education (Early Years, Primary and Resources)
Catherine Campbell	Quality Improvement Officer (School Estate)
Andrew Cotton	Senior Education Planning Officer
Dawn Roden	Craigshill Regeneration Officer

Presentation

Cllr Maguire opened the meeting with introductions and purpose of the meeting. Greg Welsh, Head of Education presented the proposals and rationale for change. Andrew Cotton presented the site location and proposed new school catchment information. Catherine Campbell presented next steps in the consultation process and shared architect external and interior design ideas. The meeting was then opened up to allow questions to be taken.

Link to PowerPoint presentation here



Craigshill
Consultation Presen

Discussion Opportunity:

The Head of Education started the discussion around the name of the new school. The suggestion Craigshill Primary School was proposed by officers. The attendees were asked if they were agreeable to this suggestion with a show of hands. Twenty-six attendees raised their hands with no one indicating opposition to the proposal. Two additional suggestions were made including Lethside Primary School a blend amalgamation of Letham and Riverside and Craigshill Community Primary School although neither suggestion had much traction with the attendees.

Education Services

Consultee Question
An attendee asked if the new school design could consider a swimming pool while explaining the importance of swimming as a life skill.
WLC Officer Response
Although the design had not yet been finalised the new school would need to be delivered within the agreed affordability cap of approximately £21 million. Officers explained that a swimming pool currently exists at the catchment secondary school Inveralmond Community High School within 1 mile of the proposed school location which the Head Teacher was exploring access for Letham and Riverside pupils.
Consultee Question
A question was raised regarding the community wing that existed within Riverside Primary School and whether there would be a similar community facility within the new school building. Another consultee added their concerns about the lack of affordable community facilities and accommodation within Craigshill.
WLC Officer Response
All existing services have been relocated to accommodation within Craigshill and supported by the Community Regeneration team. Dawn Roden, Craigshill Community Regeneration Officer was introduced to the attendees. Going forward all community accommodation requirements will be assessed by the Community Regeneration team to identify long term solutions. Further discussion took place with attendees offering other examples of community group successes within Craigshill. Some parents and the Head Teacher mentioned the success of the Craigshill Community Cocoons and something the organising parent group would like to extend. Dawn will liaise with the group to discuss accommodation requirements for the medium to long term.
Consultee Question
Another attendee asked if there would be opportunities for lifelong learning in the new school?
WLC Officer Response
Officers responded that the Head Teacher and Education officers have met with the Adult Learning Service to discuss the impact of Adult Learning in schools and the result of these discussions will inform the new school development at Craigshill.
Consultee Question
A consultee asked for clarification regarding the catchment secondary school for the new school.
WLC Officer Response
The catchment secondary school will remain Inveralmond Community High School. No changes to this arrangement are proposed.
Consultation Question
An attendee asked what will happen to the old Beatlie School building and could this be retained for swim and other community activities.
WLC Officer Response
Any future use of the old Beatlie building or Letham School will be consulted on by Property Services after education have moved out of the buildings in 2027.
Consultation Question
Will there be any job losses as a result of bringing the two schools into one?
WLC Officer Response
The Head of Education explained that the Financial Impact report included within the consultation document show similar sizes of school in West Lothian have similar teacher numbers. Every year the council assess the requirement for teachers across all schools and any surplus or shortfall will be dealt with through the council's internal staffing process.

Education Services

Consultee Comment
A consultee commented on the consultation process with regard to a school closure. The attendee referred to the final decision by Scottish ministers.
WLC Officer Response
The Head of Education explained that the consultation process was there to gather the views of consultees before any decisions were made and that the statutory consultation process would be followed in line with the Act. If West Lothian Council Education Executive approve the proposals all school closure proposals are notified to Scottish ministers who can choose to call in the decision if any deficiency in the consultation process is identified.
Consultee Question
An attendee asked about Community Council engagement going forward.
WLC Officer Response
Officers explained that design teams on other school projects have made presentation to community councils illustrating the school design. Although not a statutory requirement and once the design has been more developed officers would be happy arrange this at a later date.
Consultee Question
An attendee shared their knowledge of the area and concerns that there may be a gas pipe running through the proposed site.
WLC Officer Response
The Head of Education noted the attendee's comments and indicated that he would pick this up with colleagues in Property Services. He went on to explain that the project will be governed by a project board which meets monthly brings together a wide range of experts. Initial stages will involve extensive site investigations before any construction works start.
Consultee Question
An attendee asked if the school would be built to expand.
WLC Officer Response
The Planning Officer explained that the new school's 462 pupil capacity was well within Letham and Riverside schools current and projected school rolls over the next 10 years. No second phase is planned or required.
Consultee Question
An attendee asked why the authority had got it wrong at Calderwood Primary School – which opened in 2021 and was already being extended.
WLC Officer Response
It was explained that officers didn't get the numbers wrong at Calderwood. There was always a planned extension to the school at Calderwood due to the housing development in that area. The extension was required sooner due to the rate of primary aged children in the newly occupied houses. If at some point in the future the Letham Primary School site was developed for housing the number of houses and children the area would generate could be accommodated within the new school capacity.
Consultee Question
An attendee asked if there would be appropriate spaces for neurodivergent learners within the new school. They went on to explain that the needs of many children are changing and some were benefitting from quiet spaces created within their schools and the attendee didn't want to see these being lost.
WLC Officer Response
Officers explained that there would be sensory and quiet nurture spaces within the new school. These would be developed through engagement sessions with the design team, education including the Head Teacher and children from both schools. There was already a series of planned meetings with Letham and Riverside children next week to discuss the types of learning spaces they would like to see in their new school.

Education Services

Consultee Question
<p>A representative from Craigshill Community Council was not satisfied with the response to question 9 of their email enquiry shown in Section 2.1 and below. They went on to explain that a fuller answer and not a link to authority policy was expected.</p> <p>9. Questions were asked regarding the routes to the school. Will they be upgraded to ensure that there are no safety concerns and that prams/pushchairs/wheelchairs can navigate the surfaces without problems.</p> <p>Safe walking routes will comply with West Lothian Council School Transport Policy link here https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/article/32237/School-Transport-Policy</p>
WLC Officer Response
<p>The Head of Education explained that if the answer to a question was contained within a link to authority policy then we would not rewrite the policy in the response.</p> <p>Discussion took place around the state of the paths to school and their potential impact on active travel. Officers went on to explain that all the walking routes to school are assessed by a qualified transportation engineer. If parents or carers have a concern about the condition of a walking route to school they can report any defects with the West Lothian Council Roads Maintenance Department.</p>
Consultee Question/Comment
<p>A consultee raised the ‘footprints to school’ initiative and if there was a possibility of reviving this. They went on to mention that this strategy had been very affective in the past.</p>
WLC Officer Response
<p>Noted by officers.</p>
Consultee Question
<p>One consultee had concerns about the walking distance from the Courts area in Craigshill to the new school location. They felt it was too far with small children.</p>
WLC Officer Response
<p>Officers acknowledged the attendees concerns but explained that the distance from the Courts to the new school is within 1 mile and therefore less than council policy and Scottish Government statutory distances walking to primary school.</p>
Consultee Question/Comment
<p>One attendee asked for it to be recorded that the community needs an affordable facility within Craigshill.</p>
WLC Officer Response
<p>The Head of Education reiterated that the Regeneration Team will lead on this and assess what’s required. There will be opportunities for community lets in the new school including the 7 a side pitch and games hall.</p>

The meeting was ended.

MINUTE OF PUBLIC MEETING HELD AT
RIVERSIDE PRIMARY SCHOOL MONDAY 4th MARCH 2024
 TO DISCUSS PUBLIC CONSULTATION DOCUMENT: “PROPOSAL TO CLOSE RIVERSIDE
 PRIMARY SCHOOL AND LETHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL AND REPLACE THEM WITH A NEW
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In attendance from West Lothian Council:

Cllr Andrew McGuire	Executive Councillor for Education
Greg Welsh	Head of Education (Early Years, Primary and Resources)
Catherine Campbell	Quality Improvement Officer (School Estate)
Andrew Cotton	Senior Education Planning Officer
Dawn Roden	Craigshill Regeneration Officer

Presentation

Cllr Maguire opened the meeting with introductions and purpose of the meeting. Greg Welsh, Head of Education presented the proposals and rationale for change. Andrew Cotton presented the site location and proposed new school catchment information. Catherine Campbell presented next steps in the consultation process and shared architect external and interior design ideas. The meeting was then opened up to allow questions to be taken.

Link to PowerPoint presentation here



Craigshill
 Consultation Presen

The Head of Education started the discussion around the name of the new school. The suggestion Craigshill Primary School was proposed by officers. The attendees were asked if they were agreeable to this suggestion. None of the attendees voiced any opposition to the proposal and no other suggestions were offered at the time. At the end of the meeting an attendee asked if Craigshill Community Primary School had been suggested. Officers confirmed it had been raised at the previous meeting.
Consultee Question
One consultee asked if the children would be asked for their views on the name of the school.
WLC Response
Officers confirmed that the Head Teacher would take this forward with children across both schools.
Consultee Question

Education Services

A question regarding the capacity of the ELC was raised. The presentation stated an 80 capacity ELC and the consultee enquired whether this was sufficient for the demand.
WLC Response
It was clarified that the capacity refers to the total number of children that the ELC could hold at one time. The total number of child places across the ELC offer taking into account attendance patterns would total 160 child places including 40 eligible 2-year-old places.
Consultee Question/Discussion
Discussion took place around the type of support that would be made available to children during the transition to the new school in August 2027.
WLC Response
The Head Teacher explained that there was already lots of joint working and collaboration across the two schools which will help prepare children and staff with the move. As time goes on this will evolve and will be mindful of children's age and pace. Children, parents and carers will be help choose the new school uniform and badge.
Consultee Question
A consultee asked if Inveralmond Community High School would remain the catchment secondary for the new school.
WLC Response
Yes, no changes to this arrangement are proposed.
Consultee Question
A consultee asked if there would be ASN considerations in the new school design including sensory areas.
WLC Response
The design team will work with education and the Headteacher to develop sensory and nurture spaces. Lessons learnt from other schools recently built will be considered.
Consultee Question
An attendee asked if there would be a community wing in the new school for the services that previously occupied that space?
WLC Response
All existing services have been relocated to permanent accommodation within Craigshill and supported by the Community Regeneration team. The Head of Education explained that there would be opportunities for lifelong learning, including adult learners.
Consultee Question/Comment
One attendee commented on the plans for the outdoor space and if the Gala Day could still be held there.
WLC Response
Cllr Maguire asked if the Gala Day committee is still active and if this event still happens. Attendees confirmed that none had taken place recently. It was suggested that once re-established the Regeneration Officer could work with the Gala Day committee to support future events.
Consultee Comment
An attendee commented that a group of parents had been successful in canvassing for a secure fence line around Riverside School playing fields to stop dog walkers and members of the public walking through this area during the school day. They stressed that in their opinion the outdoor space should be kept for education use.
WLC Response
Comment noted.
Consultee Question

Education Services

A consultee asked what will happen to the closed school buildings.
WLC Response
No decision regarding the future use of the school buildings has been made. Property Services will follow their approved policy and procedures on this after education hand them over in 2027.
Consultee Question
One attendee sought assurance that the school buildings in particular Letham will last until 2027.
WLC Response
The Head of Education indicated that Letham doesn't have the same issues as the old Riverside school. Letham doesn't have RAAC but is in poor condition. The current school buildings will be kept secure, safe and water tight but won't have any major investment before everyone moves into the new school building.

Officers reissued the consultation contact email address for any follow up questions.

The meeting was ended.

9. ANALYSIS OF CONSULTATION RESPONSES

One email response from Craigshill Community Council was received during the consultation period and included a number of questions regarding aspects of the proposal and the school design. Officers responded to each question and were able to direct the consultee to council policy, 10-year School Roll Forecasts and the Finance Impact Report all of which are in the public domain. No follow up questions or expressions of opposition were received.

Approximately 70 consultees in total attended the two public meetings with 53 choosing to sign the meeting register. This included one representative from Education Scotland and Angela Downie, Head Teacher of both Letham Primary School and Riverside Primary School. All were supportive of the proposal to establish a new non-denominational primary school within Craigshill. There were no expressions of opposition to the proposals.

Questions raised at both meetings included those around school design, potential community use, the catchment secondary school and plans for the closed school buildings. Responses are given in Section 3 Note of Public Meeting. No follow up questions were raised during the consultation period.

Although not part of the statutory consultation officers sought consultee views on the name of the new school. The suggestion Craigshill Primary School was supported by the majority of attendees.

Appendix A – Letter to Consultees

22 January 2024

Dear Consultee

West Lothian Council Education Services Proposal to Close Riverside Primary School and Letham Primary School and Replace them with a New School on the Riverside Site.

West Lothian Council's Education Executive at its meeting on 16 January 2024 authorised West Lothian Council's Education Services to commence statutory consultation on the proposals to:

- Establish a new non - denominational primary school at the Riverside site, Craighill
- Establish a catchment area for the new school;
- Close Riverside Primary School and Letham Primary School on completion of the new school.

The consultation document outlining the proposal is available online from 22 January 2024 on the following webpage:

<https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/article/49192/Schools-and-Education-Open-Consultations>

Hard copies of the consultation document are also available for uplift from the Civic Centre, Howden South Road, Livingston, EH54 6FF or can be requested in writing from:

Catherine Campbell, Quality Improvement Officer (School Estate), West Lothian Council Education Services, Civic Centre, Howden South Road, Livingston, EH54 6FF.

The consultation period is from **Monday 22nd January 2024 until Friday 15th March 2024.**

A public meeting to discuss the consultation document will be held at:

- **Letham Primary School on Monday 4th March 2024 6.00pm-7.00pm**
- **Riverside Primary School on Monday 4th March 2024 7.15pm-8.15pm**

You are also invited to submit your comments on the consultation in writing to Catherine Campbell at the above address or by e-mail to Education.Consultation@westlothian.gov.uk

For written representations to be considered they must be received no later than 5pm on Friday 15 March 2024.

A decision on the proposal is planned to be made in June 2024 by the Council's Education Executive. This decision will be based on feedback received from all stakeholders through written responses and information gathered from public meetings. Feedback received from Education Scotland will also be offered due regard.

Yours sincerely

Greg Welsh

Head of Education (Primary, Early Learning and Resources)

WEST LOTHIAN COUNCIL
EDUCATION SERVICES CONSULTATION

**PROPOSAL TO CLOSE RIVERSIDE PRIMARY SCHOOL AND
LETHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL AND REPLACE THEM WITH A
NEW SCHOOL ON THE RIVERSIDE SITE.**

CONSULTATION DOCUMENT

January 2024

SECTION 1: Purpose of this Document

SECTION 2: The Proposal

SECTION 3: The Educational Benefit Statement

SECTION 4: Integrated Impact Assessment

SECTION 5: Consultation Process and How to Have Your Say

SECTION 6: Finance Impact Report

SECTION 1: PURPOSE OF THE DOCUMENT

The purpose of this document is to give information on:

- West Lothian Council's proposals to establish a new non-denominational primary school in Craigshill, Livingston, review the catchment area for the new Craigshill school to include both Riverside Primary School and Letham Primary School catchments, close Riverside Primary School and Letham Primary School.
- The educational benefits to be gained through the implementation of this proposal; and
- How you can give your views and take part in the consultation process.

West Lothian Council believes that thorough and effective consultation will support better outcomes for pupils and their families.

Public consultations are necessary when a local authority is proposing to make a significant change to its school estate, in this case the establishment of a new school, catchment review and closure of a school. To carry out a public consultation West Lothian Council requires to follow the statutory guidance outlined in the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010. With this in mind, this document is further organised into the following sections:

Section 2 details the proposal and gives the background and rationale.

Section 3 contains the educational benefits statement in relation to the proposal and provides an assessment of the effects of this proposal on the children/young people and their families of the affected schools.

Section 4 provides information on the Integrated Impact Assessment undertaken in reference to the proposal. An Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) is undertaken to ensure that the Council meets its statutory requirement to assess policies and practices and ensure that they meet the legislative requirements in relation to its equality, human rights and socioeconomic obligations.

Section 5 details how West Lothian Council has organised the consultation process to meet the requirements of the legislation and how you can take part and give your views.

SECTION 2: PROPOSAL AND BACKGROUND TO THE PROPOSAL

2.1. THE PROPOSALS TO: -

- ESTABLISH A NEW NON-DENOMINATIONAL PRIMARY SCHOOL IN CRAIGSHILL, LIVINGSTON
- REVIEW THE CATCHMENT AREA FOR THE NEW SCHOOL
- CLOSE RIVERSIDE PRIMARY SCHOOL AND LETHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL

West Lothian Council proposes to build a new non-denominational primary school on the grounds of Riverside Primary School for pupils in the Letham and Riverside Primary Schools' catchment areas. The council proposes to close and demolish Riverside Primary School in preparation for construction and close and relocate Letham Primary School into the new facility. The new school would have a capacity of 462 pupils and 80 nursery aged children. Should the proposal go ahead, the new building would be scheduled for completion in August 2027.

2.2 BACKGROUND TO THE PROPOSAL

Both Riverside and Letham Primary schools were constructed in the 1960s, with Riverside Primary School being the first school to be built in the new Livingston town. They are at the end of their life in most components with significant investment required to bring these buildings up to current day standards. The schools are located less than half a mile from each other.

In terms of school rolls, both schools are currently operating under capacity. The current roll of Riverside Primary School is 216 with a capacity of 306. It is therefore operating at 71% of its capacity. Letham Primary School has a current roll of 190 and a capacity of 273. Therefore, it is operating at 69% of its capacity. School roll projections indicate that there will be no significant change to the overall school rolls.

School Roll Forecasts

	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31
Letham PS	164	163	163	161	156
Riverside PS	229	232	231	232	222
Combined Roll	393	395	394	393	378

* based on the 2021 900 House School Roll Forecasts

Link to report here [Coins Committee Document 26.10.2021](#)

It is proposed that the new Craigshill primary school will have a school capacity of 462 and a nursery capacity of 80, which include provision for eligible 2-year olds.

The vision for this project is two-fold. Firstly, this project would provide the opportunity to bring together two existing schools in a well-established community. The project would act as a catalyst for regeneration of the Craigshill community and provide a central, focal point for children and families. Secondly, the delivery of a state-of-the-art, well managed, designed and constructed school would support national and local priorities and inspire the children, young people and community of Craigshill.

2.3 SITE LOCATION

Although the final choice of site is still to be confirmed the most suitable and preferred site given the current RAAC roof and access issues is the Riverside site. Moreover, the Letham site would require a major utility diversion adding a considerable cost of around £2m to the construction costs. Site options will be reported to a future Council Executive for approval via Finance & Property Services.

Intended delivery of the proposed new school in Craigshill is August 2027.

2.4 ADMISSION CRITERIA

Criteria for admission will be in accordance with West Lothian Council's current admission arrangements [West Lothian Council School Admission Policy](#)

2.5 SCHOOL CATCHMENT AREA

The proposed catchment of the new school is proposed to consist of the combined existing catchments of Letham Primary School and Riverside Primary School which corresponds to the community of Craigshill (Appendix 2).

2.6 OTHER FACTORS CONSIDERED

Although not part of this consultation the views of stakeholders on the name of the new primary school at Craigshill will be considered. A final decision will be made at Education Executive on conclusion of the Statutory Consultation.

SECTION 3: THE EDUCATIONAL BENEFIT STATEMENT

The specific educational benefits of the proposal are outlined below in terms of the following:

- 3.1 Curriculum for Excellence
- 3.2 Transition
- 3.3 Transport
- 3.4 School Management and Staff Teams
- 3.5 Accommodation
- 3.6 School Grounds/ Outdoor Learning
- 3.7 Other Factors Considered

3.1 CURRICULUM FOR EXCELLENCE

The new Craigshill Primary School will be fully equipped to deliver the full breadth of Curriculum for Excellence and fit for purpose in the foreseeable future. A key focus of the design is that it is flexible, to support collaborative working and active learning.

Continued engagement of creative teaching and learning approaches in viable and sustainable school establishments broadens scope for attainment and achievement and builds a positive ethos for staff and pupils alike.

3.2 TRANSITION

The proposed new primary school in Craigshill will be an associated primary school and aligned to Inveralmond Community High School. Existing P7-S1 transition arrangements between Riverside and Letham Primary Schools and Inveralmond Community High School will be unaffected by the proposed amendment to the catchment area of the new primary school.

3.3 TRANSPORT

The school transport provisions currently in place for pupils attending Riverside Primary School and Letham Primary School will remain. No alterations to existing entitlements and schedule of provisions are anticipated as a result of the proposed catchment alterations.

Any requests for school transport provisions will be considered in accordance with West Lothian Council's School Transport Policy. [West Lothian Council School Transport Policy](#)

3.4 SCHOOL MANAGEMENT AND STAFF TEAMS

West Lothian Council, adhering to statutory recruitment processes, will appoint management and staff to the proposed new primary school. The appointment of Head Teacher will be confirmed well in advance of the opening of the new school. This allows opportunity for the Head Teacher to be involved in the final specifications and occupation of the new building and take a key role in developing relationships within the new school community. All staff will take a pro-active approach to ensure the new primary school operates efficiently and effectively.

Where staffing adjustments are required all actions will be carried out and adhere to existing West Lothian Council Human Resources Policies. This would be managed under the Council's Organisational Change process, see link below

<https://intranet.westlothian.gov.uk/article/33226/Managing-Organisational-Change>

3.5 ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation at the new Craigshill primary school will deliver a modern, accessible learning establishment with internal and external provisions fully equipped to deliver a purposeful and resourceful education facility and include:

- Formal learning areas for each class, which break out into informal project space. Both spaces together considered to be the classroom
- Direct access to the outdoors
- Areas ideal for science, art and design
- Small group (nurture) teaching areas
- A separate dining area which acts as a learning space
- A large modern gym hall with changing facilities and storage
- A reading resource area
- Access to digital learning throughout the facility
- Up to date nursery facilities that meet Care Inspectorate regulations

The new school will be fully compliant in terms of the Equality Act, will be more energy and carbon efficient, and will have lower running costs. Sustainability will be a key factor in the design and construction of the new primary school and will be incorporated into every element of the development process. Due regard will be offered to the materials used for construction, fixtures and fittings, heating systems and lighting provisions.

Initial design intention is that the new Craigshill primary school will be constructed as a double stream capacity school to accommodate 462 pupils. It will have a flexible design that will allow future expansion. An 80-place nursery will be a component of the proposed new development.

In relation to development schedules, current planning intention is to commence construction on site in 2026 with an intimated delivery of August 2027.

3.6 OUTDOOR LEARNING

The school grounds at the new Craigshill primary school will offer scope for development of the outdoor classroom, having a positive impact on the learning environment for all pupils. Playground areas will be spacious and support the development of good relationships and positive behaviour. This will include an outdoor dining area, covered play area and 7 a side pitch.

Sufficient space will be allocated on the grounds for staff and visitor car parking and for the safe and efficient drop off/uplift of pupils. Appropriate car park protocols and risk assessments will be initiated and maintained.

3.7 OTHER FACTORS CONSIDERED

Breakfast Club

A Breakfast Club at the proposed new Craigshill primary school will provide pupils with a healthy breakfast and offer opportunity to sample and develop preferences for healthy options.

Parental Involvement

Parent Forums will be established to ensure parents and carers of pupils attending the new Craigshill primary school have opportunity to shape the strategic direction of the school. A key focus is the delivery of a welcoming school that is inclusive for all parents, carers, pupils and staff. West Lothian Council do not foresee any impact to existing opportunities for parental involvement and engagement at Riverside Primary School and Letham Primary School as a result of the proposals.

Community Groups

West Lothian Council is working with existing community groups currently located within Riverside Primary School to support their relocation to suitable alternative accommodation.

SECTION 4: INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

To meet statutory equality duties, the Council conducts an Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) to critically assess policies and practices and ensure compliance with all legislative requirements.

The aim of an IIA is to examine policies and practices in a structured way taking account of equality, human rights and socioeconomic disadvantage (poverty) implications when making decisions, ensuring the impact within the community is recognised and addressed accordingly.

IIA screening is completed using the Council's Integrated Impact Assessment Toolkit and allows the Authority to recognise positive steps it can take to promote fairness and equality of opportunity for all.

As part of the consultation process the Council will consult with a wide range of stakeholders, staff, parents/carers and young people and will welcome and address comments on the IIA process.

The outcome of the Integrated Impact Assessment will inform the Final Consultation Report and the Council's consideration of the proposed changes prior to reaching a decision on whether they should be implemented.

If the proposal concerns a school closure, the council must notify Scottish Ministers within the period of six working days after taking its final decision.

SECTION 5: CONSULTATIONPROCESS: HAVE YOUR SAY

This section provides information on how West Lothian Council has organised the consultation process for the proposal contained within this document. It also provides information on how you can take part and give your views

In terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, any proposal to establish a new school, close a school and undertake a catchment review requires a formal consultation process.

The Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, as amended by the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, sets out the statutory consultation requirements.

The statutory consultees for a proposal to relocate a school are prescribed as follows:

- the Parent Council or Combined Parent Council of any affected school
- the parents of the pupils at any affected school
- the parents of any children expected by the education authority to attend any affected school within two years of the date of publication of the proposal paper
- the pupils at any affected school (in so far as the education authority considers them to be of a suitable age and maturity)
- the staff (teaching and other) at any affected school
- any trade union which appears to the education authority to be representative of the persons mentioned in bullet point above
- the community council (if any)
- the Community Planning Partnership (within the meaning of section 4(5) of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 for the area of the local authority in which affected school is situated.
- any other community planning partnerships considered relevant by the Authority.
- any other education authority that the education authority considers relevant
- any other users of any affected school that the education authority considers relevant
- in relation to any relevant proposal which affects a denominational school, the Church, Denominational Body or Scottish Hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church

Council officers will be present at the public meetings to outline the proposals, facilitate discussions and answer questions.

The Consultation meetings will give interested parties a formal opportunity to express their views.

The consultation period will incorporate a period of 30 school days (excluding any school holiday) from Monday 22 January 2024 until Friday 15 March 2024. This timescale adheres to the statutory consultation period for such circumstances which is a minimum of 6 consecutive weeks and include at least 30 school days.

The consultation paper will be made available electronically and in paper format.

Public Meeting

A formal public meeting will be held to discuss the proposal. Anyone wishing to attend the public meeting is invited to do so. The public meeting, which will be convened by West Lothian Council will be addressed by the Head of Education, and other senior officers of the Council, and chaired by an independent person.

The public meeting will be an opportunity to:

- Hear more about the proposal
- Ask questions about the proposal
- Have your views recorded so that they can be considered as part of the consultation process.

Public meetings will be held in Letham Primary School and Riverside PS on

Monday 4th March 2024 at the following times:

- 6.00pm-7.00pm venue Letham PS, 52 Forth Dr, Livingston EH54 5LT

Then,

- 7.15pm-8.15pm venue Riverside PS, 14 The Mall, Livingston EH54 5ED

During the consultation period any views on this proposal should be sent in writing to the address given below:

Catherine Campbell, Quality Improvement Officer (School Estate), Education Services, Civic Centre, Howden Road South, EH54 6FF

Responses can also be made by e-mail to Education.Consultation@westlothian.gov.uk

All interested parties are invited to submit their comments by close of business on Friday 15 March 2024.

An on-line version of this document and other items related to the consultation can be found on the West Lothian Council website using this link:

<https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/article/49192/Schools-and-Education-Open-Consultations>

Consultation Timeline:

Following the end of the Consultation period West Lothian Council must provide Education Scotland with a report detailing all findings pertaining to the Consultation period.

All written and oral comments received during the Consultation process are recorded and represented in said report, along with the Council's response to those comments.

Education Scotland will consider the Council submission and advise their response accordingly.

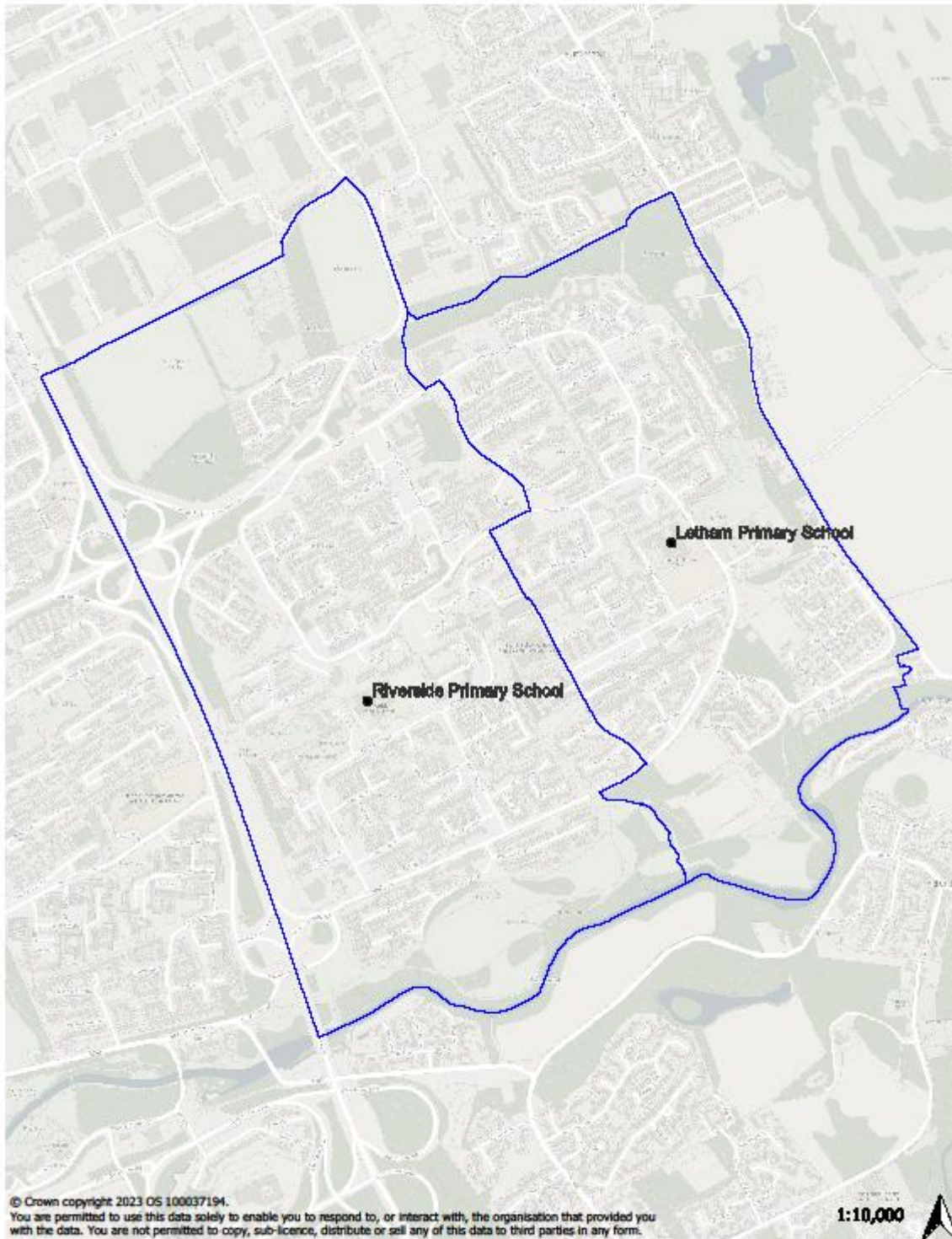
West Lothian Council will ensure that considerations received from Education Scotland are included in the Final Consultation Report. This Final Report will be made available and notification will be given to those individuals or groups that have made representations during the consultation period.

West Lothian Council will not make any decision, or put any changes into effect, until the Final Consultation Report has been concluded, published and subsequently presented to the Education Executive.

Statutory Consultation Timeline

Date	Event	Description
05 December 2023	PDSP	
16 January 2024	Education Executive Meeting	Meeting to discuss proposal and agree continuation to statutory consultation phase
22 January 2024	Start of Consultation	Beginning of formal public consultation (min 6 continuous weeks consultation period including min of 30 school days)
04 March 2024	Public Meeting	Public Meetings to discuss proposal
15 March 2024	End of Consultation	End of Public Consultation
18 March 2024	Submit report to Education Scotland*Dates to be agreed in advance with Education Scotland	West Lothian Council Education Services relays report on proposal and consultation findings to Education Scotland
03 April 2024	Deadline for Education Scotland three-week period for reporting back to Education Services **Education Scotland do not include any schools holiday periods within their 3-week timeframe	Education Scotland response to West Lothian Council submission
27 May 2024	Give Education Scotland at least 5 days' notice prior to publishing final report	Upon receipt of response from Education Scotland and on consideration of previous consultation period representations, Authority will prepare and publish final consultation report
03 June 2024	Publication of final consultation report	A minimum of three weeks after publication of consultation report Authority will make final decision
25 June 2024	Education Executive Meeting	Decision made

The Consultation Timeline encompasses statutory legislative requirements detailed as per Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.



Current Riverside Primary School and Letham Primary School Catchment Areas



Proposed New Non Denominational Primary School Catchment Area

Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010

Report by Education Scotland addressing educational aspects of the proposal by West Lothian Council to close Riverside Primary School and Letham Primary School and replace them with a new school on the Riverside site.

March 2024

1. Introduction

1.1 This report from Education Scotland has been prepared by His Majesty's Inspectors of Education (HM Inspectors) in accordance with the terms of the [Schools \(Consultation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2010](#) ("the 2010 Act"). The purpose of the report is to provide an independent and impartial consideration of a proposal from West Lothian Council to close Riverside Primary School and Letham Primary School and replace them with a new school on the Riverside site. Section 2 of the report sets out brief details of the consultation process. Section 3 of the report sets out HM Inspectors' consideration of the educational aspects of the proposal, including significant views expressed by consultees. Section 4 summarises HM Inspectors' overall view of the proposal. Upon receipt of this report, the Act requires the council to consider it and then prepare its final consultation report. The council's final consultation report should include this report and must contain an explanation of how, in finalising the proposal, it has reviewed the initial proposal, including a summary of points raised during the consultation process and the council's response to them. The council has to publish its final consultation report three weeks before it takes its final decision. Where a council is proposing to close a school, it needs to follow all statutory obligations set out in the 2010 Act, including notifying Ministers within six working days of making its final decision and explaining to consultees the opportunity they have to make representations to Ministers.

1.2 HM Inspectors considered:

- the likely effects of the proposal for children of the schools; any other users; children likely to become pupils within two years of the date of publication of the proposal paper; and other children in the council area
- any other likely effects of the proposal;
- how the council intends to minimise or avoid any adverse effects that may arise from the proposal; and
- the educational benefits the council believes will result from implementation of the proposal, and the council's reasons for coming to these beliefs.

1.3 In preparing this report, HM Inspectors undertook the following activities:

- attendance at the public meeting held on 4 March 2024 in connection with the council's proposals;
- consideration of all relevant documentation provided by the council in relation to the proposal, specifically the educational benefits statement and related consultation documents, written and oral submissions from parents and others; and
- visits to the site of Letham Primary School and Riverside Primary School, including discussion with relevant consultees.

2. Consultation process

2.1 West Lothian Council undertook the consultation on its proposal(s) with reference to the [Schools \(Consultation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2010](#).

2.2 The council undertook the consultation between 22 January and 15 March 2024. The proposal was communicated to stakeholders via the council website, through social media and local press. The consultation paper was made available in the affected schools and other council buildings, and formal notice was given to a wide range of consultees. The headteacher of the two affected schools shared information with young people and parents. West Lothian Council

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held public meetings at Riverside Primary School and Letham Primary School on 4 March 2024. These were attended by around 70 members of the community including parents and staff of the affected schools. Also present were members of the Craigshill Community Council and other members of the local community.

2.3 West Lothian Council received one response to their online consultation, from Craigshill Community Council. They raised a number of questions such as the surface condition of the walking routes to school and the capacity of the proposed new school. This response was not an objection to the proposal.

2.4 A few members of the local community expressed their hope that the new school should be able to cope with any further or currently unexpected local increases in population. The proposed new building is intended to be adaptable and can be extended if future needs arise. Almost all stakeholders who met with HM Inspectors identified important benefits to the local community in combining the two school populations into one new facility.

3. Educational aspects of proposal

3.1 HM Inspectors agree that there are significant potential benefits to the proposal. In their proposal, West Lothian Council set out a broad range of educational benefits for children, including children with additional support needs (ASN), and for other users of the school's facilities. These benefits include a blend of formal and informal learning spaces for each class, areas designed for science, art and design, access to digital learning and nurture areas designed for small group teaching approaches.

3.2 Almost all stakeholders who met with HM Inspectors strongly support the proposal to close Letham and Riverside Primary Schools and open a single new primary school, including a nursery. Riverside Primary School has already had to move to another building due to its original building having been constructed with reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC). Both school buildings are now several decades old. Children, their parents, school staff and members of the wider community are strongly of the opinion that children deserve to have a modern school building that will better meet their needs. All stakeholders are very keen for the new school's facilities and resources to be the best possible.

3.3 Children in both primary schools are enthusiastic about their proposed new school. They are particularly keen to influence the design, resourcing and decoration of the new school. They would like a welcoming, colourful environment which is well resourced with digital technology. Children from both schools would welcome successful features of their current schools being replicated in their new school, such as 'house' areas and a sensory area. Almost all children would like interesting and engaging facilities to allow them to learn and play outdoors. A few children highlighted the importance of areas in which they could be encouraged to be calm. Children felt that combining the two schools together would give them a wider friend group.

3.4 Parents of children in both primary schools, who met with HM Inspectors, welcome the proposed new school. Almost all parents who met with HM Inspectors are keen to ensure that the new school is well-designed and well-equipped to meet the needs of children with an additional support need. A few parents would like further information about how school and community access to shared facilities will be operated safely.

3.5 All staff who met with HM Inspectors are strongly in favour of the proposed new school. Nursery staff think that a purpose-built space for nursery children would give them greater opportunities for learning and play. All staff are particularly keen for the new school building to be

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designed to support children with additional support needs support for children with ASN. Staff are enthusiastic about opportunities to access purpose-built areas for practical learning in science and other facilities such as a kitchen for children to use in their learning.

3.6 Senior leaders highlighted to HM Inspectors the importance of including community facilities to engage and support local families in learning. Older children who will be attending secondary school by the time the new school opens are also enthusiastic about the possibility of a greater range of local facilities available for community use in the new school.

4. Summary

HM Inspectors agree that there are significant potential benefits from the proposal to close Riverside Primary School and Letham Primary School and replace them with a new school on the Riverside site. The current facilities for both primary schools and their associated nursery are outdated. One school has already had to move to temporary premises due to RAAC. Children's learning would benefit from a more appropriate, flexible and modern learning environment. If implemented, the new school should offer well-equipped and adaptable learning spaces which meet the needs of children. Proposed community facilities should also support family learning and learning of the wider community. Almost all stakeholders who met with HM Inspectors very strongly support this proposal. As planned, it will continue to be important for the council to listen to and work closely with children, school staff, parents and members of the local community to develop the design of the new school. This will support West Lothian Council to fulfil their aspirational vision for a new primary school for the Craigshill community.

HM Inspectors

March 2024