



Site history

New School

Blacon High School was rebuilt under the Priority Schools Building Programme and opened to pupils in September 2016.

The new school includes state-of-the-art science labs, interactive whiteboards in all classrooms, better IT provision, a new sports hall and a climbing wall. The new school and sports hall was built on what was the tennis courts of the-then high school.

Old School

The old school buildings were demolished in 2017. The site was cleared to create car parking, a new grass pitch, an all weather sports pitch and five new tennis courts.

At the time of the new build, school staff, governors and key stakeholders lauded the project, with one stating: "Young people and the young people on this estate deserve the very best life chances we can give them."

Sports Hub

In 2019 a crowd-funding appeal was launched to raise funds for a sports hub in Blacon with a mission to promote healthy activities for young and old. It is the brainchild of Blacon Boxing Club and Blacon Youth FC, in partnership with Blacon High School, whose pupils would use the hub during the day along with local primary schools.



Aside from promoting sport, there is an agenda to provide meaningful activities for girls and boys, including addressing childhood obesity and steering youngsters away from drugs and crime.

Expansion Consultation

In February 2019, the council launched a statutory consultation on the educational merits of a proposal to expand the new school. The proposed expansion would allow the council to meet its legal duty to provide enough school places for local children.

Blacon High School currently has a shortfall of spaces because more parents are expressing a preference for the school, and because there are a larger number of primary pupils moving through from the feeder schools.

The council's proposal allowed for an additional 150 school places by expanding each year group from 120 places to 150. At the time, it was expected that the new accommodation would be provided in a newly constructed building, with options being explored as to how best to achieve the expansion.

The consultation found:

- The majority of consultees who provided feedback were in favour of the proposal, although some sought reassurance that existing infrastructure would not be

- compromised by increased pupil numbers
- Common themes were that the proposal would be good for the community, and would give local children a greater opportunity to access secondary education within the locality instead of being displaced elsewhere
- Some consultees felt Upton by Chester High School should be improved instead; the funding arrangements for expanding Blacon High School are different to those which would fund infrastructure improvements elsewhere
- Historical patterns of preference in favour of secondary schools outside the local area are diminishing as confidence in the educational offer in Blacon has risen
- Consultees were concerned about the impact of the expansion on highways, particularly increased car-parking on neighbouring streets
- Consultees were concerned about the location of the newly constructed building, with the emergent option favoured by the school aligning with that of consultees and the planning officers at the council.

The Council's decision on the educational merits of the proposal is due to be published in early September; the Council will make a separate decision about the merits of the planning application. It is intended that today's consultation will help inform that planning application and the subsequent decision as to whether to approve it. A positive educational decision cannot be implemented without a successful planning application being made.

Image sources: Cheshire Live
<https://www.cheshire-live.co.uk/news/chester-cheshire-news/new-12m-blacon-high-school-11866791> and
<https://www.cheshire-live.co.uk/news/chester-cheshire-news/old-blacon-high-school-consigned-12614178>