



A new home for The Heights

Welcome to our exhibition

Thank you for coming to our exhibition. We are sharing our proposals for The Heights Primary School which will be presented for consideration by the charitable trust that owns Mapledurham Playing Fields.

The proposals are for a non-selective, highly inclusive primary school for the Caversham Heights / Mapledurham area serving the needs of the local community. Following a thorough review of Mapledurham Playing Fields, the north corner of the playing fields has been identified as the most suitable location.

This area of the site was selected following extensive surveying work undertaken to determine where the school can best be placed to minimise impact on users whilst maximising the benefits to the local community.

Summary of Proposals

- A purpose built school which meets the needs of the local community and addresses a rising demand for primary school places.
- A two-storey design which aims to minimise the footprint area.
- Enhancement of existing facilities.
- Improved access to playing fields.
- Using less than five per cent of Mapledurham Playing Fields. The new site will include a multi-use games area for the school and the community to share.
- Site chosen with strong support from the local community as seen from the results of the council consultation.



About us

The Heights Primary

The Heights is a Government funded, non-selective, highly inclusive primary school for the Caversham Heights / Mapledurham area. The school opened in September 2014 with two reception classes and a Year 1 class in response to an increasing need for primary school places in West Caversham. The Heights is growing organically with two new reception classes of 25 children per class joining every year and will reach its full capacity of 350 children across reception to Year 6 in 2020.

The school is currently located on a temporary site on Gosbrook Road. Due to the expected expansion of the school, and the increasing demand for primary school places in the area, The Heights needs to find a permanent home.



The Heights' Motto

Achieving
Success
Promoting
Individual
Responsibility and
Excellence



Education
Funding
Agency

The Education Funding Agency

The Education Funding Agency (EFA) manages funding to support all state-provided education for eight million children aged three to 16, and 1.6 million young people aged 16 to 19. The EFA is funding the development of The Heights in accordance with standard free school funding policies.

Why Mapledurham?

Following a Council led consultation on the behalf of the EFA on potential sites for the new school, the Mapledurham Playing Fields emerged as the strongly preferred option.

Of the 4,376 people who responded to the consultation, 3,042 (70%) said they supported the use of Mapledurham Playing Fields for the school's permanent home.

The site and how we got here



- ① Existing access from Upper Woodcote Road
- ② Existing pavilion building
- ③ Existing tennis courts
- ④ Existing football pitches
- ⑤ Existing informal footpath training/kickabout area
- ⑥ Existing play area
- ⑦ Existing basketball court
- ⑧ Existing community orchard and wildflower area
- ⑨ Existing broad-leaved woodland
- ⑩ Existing boundary vegetation and trees

Following a thorough review of Mapledurham Playing Fields, the north corner of the playing fields has been identified as the most suitable location. This site arches the corner between Hewitt Avenue and Hewitt Close, and the school boundary line represents under five per cent of Mapledurham Playing Fields. The new site will include a multi-use games area for the school and the community to share. To minimise the amount of land required the school will also make use of the existing pitch facilities during school hours. No additional fencing or alterations will be necessary and the pitches will still be available for booking by other organisations.

This location for the school was informed by a range of surveys and is based on minimising any impact on the local environment alongside maximising opportunities to enhance the playing facilities through shared usage and improvement.

The proposed layout of the school building has been designed to be two storeys, with the aim of minimising the footprint area.

Site Constraints

These plans consider where the most appropriate location for the school could be. This is based on the playing fields in their present form, existing play features, community facilities and conclusions of the surveys undertaken.

Indicated in red on the map below are areas where it is considered that any potential for development is limited by an existing constraint. These include archaeology, ecology and flood risk constraints. Areas shown in blue are available space but limited by access.



Free space, but inaccessible



Existing constraints limit possible locations for school



- ① Existing access and car park
- ② Existing building form
- ③ Existing organised sports areas
- ④ Existing kick about / training area
- ⑤ Existing play and recreational areas
- ⑥ Existing basketball court
- ⑦ Existing community orchard
- ⑧ Existing broad-leaved woodland
- ⑨ Existing informal pedestrian entrances
- ⑩ Filtered views into playing fields



Community Benefits

Extensive surveying work has been undertaken to determine how the school can best be placed to minimise impact on users. These surveys have also sought to determine possible improvements that a new permanent home for The Heights could bring to Mapledurham Playing Fields and its regular users. Mapledurham Playing Fields is held in charitable trust for sports and leisure use and therefore we want to talk to the community about what we can do to address this whilst developing our plans.

The main improvements that we are currently suggesting are:

- The school will seek to work with users of the park to further develop ongoing community involvement and organised activities within the playing fields.
- The range of activities in the park could be enhanced through shared use, at evenings and weekends, of the school hall and external sports provision e.g. through community groups meeting in the school hall or use of the Multi-Use Games Area for activities such as five-a-side football or 'quick' cricket.
- Access points into the park could be improved through better entrance treatments and surfacing including improved car park surfacing.
- Opportunities to improve the drainage of the existing football pitches.
- A joint management committee that oversees the use of the shared areas within the park could be established to ensure that fair access for all users is maintained.

We would also like to hear your ideas about other potential improvements. For example:

- Would users welcome the provision of some hard surfaced footpaths and, if so, where?
- Is there more that can be done to improve the use of the woodland area or biodiversity of the site?
- These proposals leave the Pavilion untouched. Given that is currently closed and in need of extensive refurbishment, what are the views of users around community space provision / adult changing areas etc.?

Transport and Highways

Following a Highways and Transport survey, it has been concluded that vehicular and pedestrian access via the existing access to the tennis courts and pavilion from Upper Woodcote Road is the best option for the proposed primary school.

It has been determined due to land constraints and existing residential dwellings that access via Chazey Road would not be suitable for the provision of a vehicular access to the site and that a pedestrian access, with the occasional informal vehicular access remaining as is.

Access from the north of Hewett Avenue is deemed a viable option in terms of highway design and accessibility, given that the access point would still be within close proximity of Upper Woodcote Road and the fact that no residential properties face onto Hewett Avenue.

The Heights Primary is committed to encouraging sustainable travel to school through the development of a Travel Plan, encouraging families to walk and cycle wherever possible.

Many pupils and parents currently walk, scooter or cycle part or all of the way to and from their homes to the school's temporary site on Gosbrook Road.



Proposal Overview

Under five percent of the playing field area is being proposed for the boundary of the school. This also includes a new multi-use games area for the school and the community to share. The key aspects of the proposal are:

- A purpose built school which meets the needs of the local community and addresses a rising demand for primary school places.
- A two-storey design which aims to minimise the footprint area.
- Improved access to playing fields.
- Using under five per cent of Mapledurham Playing Fields, the new site will include a multi-use games area for the school and the community to share.
- A site chosen with the strong support of the local community as seen from results of council consultation.



What do you think?

We want to hear your thoughts. Please provide your comments on the response forms provided, or alternatively you can fill out the response forms online at www.anewhomefortheheights.com



Next Steps

All the feedback received will be reviewed by the project team and taken into consideration when preparing our final proposal for the Mapledurham Playing Fields Charitable Trust. Following the exhibition, the materials we present will be available on our website for those who are unable to attend.

Thank you for coming to our exhibition.