

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 30 January 2020 15:03
To: _WEB_Local Plan
Subject: FW: Kingswood housing allocation consultation

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From: Kingswood Chair [mailto:chair@kingswood.gloucs.sch.uk]
Sent: 24 January 2020 14:44
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: Headteacher Kingswood; clerk at Kingswood
Subject: Kingswood housing allocation consultation

Dear [REDACTED],

I write with reference to the current consultation period for the revised Stroud District Local Plan and the draft housing allocations.

The Kingswood School Governing Body (KSGB) has reviewed the draft allocation at Wickwar Road and the other proposed sites at Walkmill Lane, Charfield Road and Wotton Road.

Kingswood Primary School currently has a capacity of 119 pupils; 17 in each year group and the school currently has 119 pupils. The school (currently) comprises four classrooms with split year groups. There is no availability of additional space on site to expand further. Due to a recent unplanned development in the village, the school is now over-subscribed in some classes, resulting in the necessity of an additional group room being erected. This group room is essential to accommodate the volume of children who will continue to progress through the school for the next 4 years, it is not a formal classroom; it is a space for group work, a library and a space for teaching specialist subjects such as music lessons. It is a vital in our quest to facilitate our high expectations as a school to achieve the full potential of all our children within our school environment.

It is important to stress that the school is already over-subscribed on the basis of *previous* housing development and that the flow of school-age pupils from those houses has not yet reached its peak. *Any* further housing development—including the smaller scale Cloverlea Barn development—will add to this, probably as soon as the houses are occupied.

The KSGB will always aspire for the school to be fully subscribed to as the schools funding is calculated on the number of pupils attending. Demand for places at the school is constant with five families being turned away since September 2019. The school is forecast to continue to be full for the next 4 years.

Whilst the school appreciates that growth is somewhat inevitable taking into account the Governments housing targets, the KSGB has to view matters pragmatically; the school is full and will continue to fill without any new housing development. Once our families attend Kingswood Primary their mobility away from the area is minimal. Once they're here, they tend to remain so we have no reason to believe our numbers on roll will naturally reduce over the coming years.

The KSGB questions the logic of allowing new housing within Kingswood boundaries that will only seek to benefit the schools in Wotton-under-Edge. In the event that families cannot achieve school places at Kingswood Primary School, should they decide to walk their children to Wotton schools, they will be walking against the flow of the secondary school children along an increasingly busy main road; if they choose to drive they will add to the already exhausted highway network. This would seem to contradict the Council's commitment to its sustainability agenda. Traffic speed is already being regularly monitored by Camera vehicles on the road between the BMX track and Wotton-under-Edge. The KSGB would ask Stroud District Council to review its policy on allowing housing allocations around Wotton-under-Edge, a second tier, highly sustainable location.

In the event that housing must be allocated to Kingswood, the KSGB would ask that any planning gain be identified and provided. Any site that proposes additional benefits to just residential development must be of significant benefit to the school, such as formal pedestrian crossing points across Charfield Road and Rectory Road to allow for the safe movement of children to both the primary and secondary school. Any highway improvement works along Wotton Road would be of significant benefit, such as increasing the width of pavements. The provision of open space for the school to use would also be of benefit as the school does not have a playing field and has to currently utilise the recreational space at the village hall, the tennis courts at Tubbs Turf, or the facilities at KLB, all of which result in challenges in terms of road safety when the children are walked to and from the facilities.

The provision of a new school comes at a significant cost with the requirement of a significant amount of housing to fund it. The KSGB is very mindful that Kingswood Primary School is a village school, it is located in the heart of the village and has an historic connection to the community. The KSGB feels that it in isolation cannot comment on the merits or otherwise of the provision of a new school and we would defer to the considerations, views and opinions of the residents of the village in this regard.

Kind regards,

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Chair of Governors, Kingswood Primary School

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