

The Broadmoor Lane Residents' Association in Weston represents not just those who live in Broadmoor Lane but also the wider area. Cabinet is being asked to approve the Primary and Secondary School Organisation Plan. This includes the proposed expansion of Weston All Saints Primary School and it is this which is causing much concern locally.

We feel that the case has not been properly made, as there is no increasing local need for school places, and expanding WASPS is not the only or best option – especially given the existing traffic safety concerns around the school. Only last week at the Core Strategy Hearing we were told that Newbridge School could expand; a new school is also planned to be built at Ensleigh and that could potentially accommodate some of these pupils. None of these options are properly set out or considered in the plan before you.

I should emphasise that we absolutely support the school which is properly rated as outstanding by Ofsted and is led by an excellent Headteacher. Also that we support the Council in its aim to provide places for children in their local school.

A planning application for six new classrooms was recently withdrawn because of our concern. Broadmoor Lane is a narrow country lane which is already beyond capacity. There is no footpath or pavement along much of it. It is not a safe route to school. The Council's own Highways Officer recommended that the application should be refused. She maintained her objection despite the extensive mitigation measures that were proposed.

The traffic safety issue should be the limiting factor that prevents the school being expanded any further.

The Council has a paramount statutory duty to ensure roads are safe. Who would be held accountable if a child is killed or seriously injured trying to get to or from school?

You are told that the school needs to expand to accommodate population growth in north west Bath, but this claim is not backed up by data. There is no evidence of a sustained baby boom or future growth in resident population for the north west area of Bath, and there is no explicit evidence given for a future need for extra pupil places at WASPS, beyond the popularity of the school. In the School Plan data, it is shown that demand peaked in 2010-2012, and resident population in north west Bath now levelling out. In spite of this, pupil places are proposed to expand by 13%. Where is the evidence to demonstrate the local need to expand this school?

As we said, WASPS is an outstanding school with a fantastic reputation and understandably parents from across the City want their children to come here. We met the School Governors recently, and one of them commented that if a parent of a child living in Timbuktu applied to come to the school and it had a place for them, they would be obliged to accept them. How can it be sustainable and safe to encourage parents to drive across the City past their local school to come to WASPS?

We would like to thank the Cabinet Member and Officers for listening to our concerns.