

5th January 2018



ARDEN
MULTI ACADEMY TRUST

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Dear Parents/Guardians of children at Arden and local Primary schools

We wanted to make you aware of an issue regarding the recently published KDBH Draft Neighbourhood Plan which is currently out for consultation.

Whilst we are delighted to see that continued high-quality education, access to schools of choice, opportunities for life-long learning and community facilities are given a high-profile, we have significant concerns regarding one specific proposal in the plan. Section 6.5 designates the grassed area at the front of the school as a 'Local Green Space'. If granted, this could severely restrict our ability to continue to provide a high-quality, safe and secure educational environment. Designating an area as Local Green Space practically rules out any new development from happening on the site unless in very special circumstances.

You will be very aware of our Arden 2020 vision and our plans to provide a new, state-of-the-art school for the community <http://www.arden.solihull.sch.uk/arden-2020/> which has been specifically developed to help address the vast majority of the issues identified in the draft plan and we look forward to working closely with KDBH to turn our vision into reality for the good of the whole community.

However should this new build not be possible, we would need to find ways of replacing and/or renovating the oldest buildings. This would require use of existing school land to accommodate new and/or temporary buildings whilst renovation work was undertaken. Given the limited space available on the site, this would likely include the area to the front of the current school. At present there are no plans to do so but as this may be the only viable way that we can continue to deliver a high-quality, safe and secure learning environment going forward it is important that we retain this option. Designation of this area as Local Green Space would practically eliminate this possibility and jeopardise our ability to renovate and/or replace the oldest parts of the school.

To be clear, we remain totally committed to the Arden 2020 vision and continue to work hard to turn this into a reality, but it would be remiss of us as Governors if we did not plan for every eventuality; the proposal to designate this area as Local Green Space would severely restrict our ability to do so.

We believe that this proposal is unnecessary and not in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and we have written to the KDBHNF detailing our objections. You can read a copy of our full letter here <http://www.arden.solihull.sch.uk/arden-2020/>

However, this document is only a draft and is out for consultation to all KDBH residents, all of who have the opportunity to comment on the entire document at <https://www.kdbh-np.org/copy-of-draft-np>. We would of course welcome your support in this specific matter given its potential to impact the effective, and safe operation of the school; more importantly, however, we would encourage you to read and comment on the Draft plan as you feel appropriate as this is an important document, owned by the whole community, that will have a significant impact on the development of KDBH over the next 20 years.

Yours sincerely

Geoff Harley-Mason
Chair of Governors