

26th February 2010

Dear Parents and Neighbours

At Prize Giving I promised to keep you informed of our proposed building plans for the Senior School, and I'm pleased to say that I am now in a position to write to you with news of potential progress; thank you for being so patient over recent months.

It became clear in the extensive discussions we held in the Autumn of 2009 – with planners, elected politicians, local amenity groups, as well as many interested individuals – that the difficulties over the Gryffe Road site were such that we should make a renewed attempt to look at possibilities on the other side of Gryffe Road. This, in the past, had been seen as an excellent prospect by the Governors for the School's future, and following our expression of renewed interest in early 2009, the Trustees of Duchal Estate were prepared to consider our proposals. Since then complex but productive negotiations have taken place. I should explain that we were bound by a promise of confidentiality and certain aspects are still confidential as encapsulated within a Confidentiality Agreement, which has prevented me from explaining the position before now and, I know, has given risen to some frustration amongst parents. I am sorry for this.

The Heads of Terms entered into with the Trustees of the Duchal Estate concern the acquisition of land adjacent to Gryffe Road and opposite the School. This agreement (concerning the acquisition of the land, subject to certain provisions being met, notably the granting of planning permission) will allow us to commence detailed site investigations.

This site allows – what we have previously explained is financially essential – a phased development plan, building on the Senior School core as it is, (the advantage of the previously proposed Gryffe Road site). However, it also has the huge advantage over the previously proposed Gryffe Road site of offering sporting and parking facilities, both of which we need and, in the latter case, something the local community has asked us to attempt to provide. The disadvantage is that it is a more expensive option as no services currently exist which we can use. If the development proceeds the Senior School will operate from both the existing site and from the new facilities.

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For those of you who live in Kilmacolm and therefore will be interested in our proposals as residents as well as parents I would like to add three further points. First, our proposals will not impact on the continued access to the Duchal Avenue which is enjoyed by many. Secondly, we intend to include the provision of some parking for local residents in our plans, something we know is in very short supply in Kilmacolm. Thirdly, although the playing fields we wish to create are primarily for the use of the School, we would be happy to examine how these might also benefit the Community.

I am delighted that we seem to have found a most promising route forward which we hope will allow us the long term opportunity to create all the facilities which the School both needs and deserves. I will keep you closely informed as to the next stage but wanted to communicate with you at once about this most important news.

Yours sincerely

David R Ward
Chairman, Board of Directors

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