



News Release

Date: Tuesday, 27th September 2011

Council keeping all options open on new Madras site

ALL potential sites for a new build Madras College will be given equal consideration in the bid to find the best location - that's the promise made by Fife Council today.

At present there are 11 options on the table (see below) including a new build and refurbishment at Kilrymont, a new build on Station Park playing fields and the new option of Craigtoun Park. Each of these sites will be assessed fully and marked against a set of criteria which should determine the best option. This process has been applied in many previous situations to determine the best site from a given list of options.

The first meeting with members of the Local Development Group has been scheduled for today in Kilrymont.

This will be followed by a wider consultation at two community engagement events. One in the upper hall of Blyth Hall on 4th October, from 6.30 to 8pm and a similar event held in the assembly hall of Kilrymont on 5th October from 6.30 to 8pm.

Thereafter, all of the original sites and Craigtoun Park will be re-scored based on the agreed weightings.

Cllr..Douglas Chapman, Chair of Education and Children's Services Committee, said: "I would not want to pre-empt the engagement sessions the council has arranged with parents and as we have stated before no prior decisions have been made and all options will be looked at using the same criteria.

"A group led by Lindsay Mathieson, the former headteacher of Madras, are promoting a new build at Station Park and there is not a lot in the statement they have made with which I could disagree. However, the huge elephant in the room would be around deliverability for this site. Most people are well aware of how controversial any proposal to build on playing fields and green space would be. Whether we could make fast enough progress, without an objector taking us through a lengthy public enquiry, to deliver a school on this site by 2015 would be a real issue. We need to bear this in mind when weighing up a decision

"We are currently taking further planning and legal advice on this matter and all this advice will be shared with parents during the engagement process."

While many people will have their own opinions as to the best site for the new Madras College, the objective nature of this process removes sentiment or prejudice from the equation.

Ian Jones, Headteacher of Madras College who has been closely involved in the project since the beginning, said: "In any project such as this there is no perfect site. None of the proposed sites for the New Madras College are perfect, nor would they be expected to be. The work that is being undertaken currently, with engagement of parents and the community, will determine the best site from those available.

“The site for the new Madras College is stimulating much debate in the community and there are many conflicting views about where the school should be located. My prime concern is to ensure the best possible education for present and future pupils. We owe it to both groups to make sure that we choose the best site and ensure that the new school is built without undue delay. We need to meet the earliest date for completion of 2015.”

Possible sites

Kilrymont; South Street; Station Park Playing Fields; three university sites; Langlands, North Haugh and the playing fields; Pipelands Road; Strathkiness High Road; Strathtyrum Estate; Craigtoun Road and Craigtoun Park

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