



3rd March 2016

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Dear Parents/Guardians

Over the last four years we have been developing our Estate Strategy and Phase One, The Sir Adrian Cadbury Building, which opened in September 2015, was completed. This has meant that we have at last enough teaching space on our site and this has been very well received and appreciated by staff and students. Phase Two is a much longer term vision in which we wish to create a school with the very best facilities possible. Sadly, despite our new teaching block, much of the rest of the site is over 50 years old and it is just not possible to rejuvenate and renovate any more. A good example is the school hall and dining area which is largely as it was when it was built and no longer fit for purpose. The energy efficiency of the building is poor and the facilities for wider community use are also poor. The investment needed to update our present site has been estimated at some £18M. These sums of money for investment from the public purse are, as you are aware, no longer available and even if they were we would probably see Arden becoming a building site for over 10 years.

We therefore established the vision to develop a new school, 'The Arden Centre for Community Learning' (ACCL) which many of you will have heard me speak about over the last couple of years. This vision could incorporate a new Arden with a new Primary School attached (0 -19 all through provision) with a 600 seat Performing Arts Theatre, Swimming Pool, Sports Centre, a 4G Floodlit pitch and MUGA (Multi User Games Area), Gymnastics Centre, Community Library, Day Nursery and Youth Centre. There would be full community use hoping to engage young and old alike within a unique centre for community learning.

Our community deserves the very best and has suffered somewhat over recent years in not having modern purpose built facilities of high quality with the majority of investment being in North Solihull; largely every Secondary and Primary School in North Solihull has either been rebuilt or totally renovated over the last 10 years.

With the increasing need for housing in our area (at least 4,000 houses short in Solihull) linked to major developments such as HS2, UK Central, the airport and the NEC, the pressure for sites locally will increase. We believe that by developing a dynamic 'land swap' agreement our community could get a fantastic new facility largely funded by house building.

You will also, I am sure, know that SMBC have begun the process of a Solihull Local Plan Review; part of this will look at what land is available for new development. The land from the present school site across to the Warwick Road could become a potential site for houses despite it being Green Belt.

I feel it is very important to share our vision with you as we will need to work very closely together if we are going to create the best for our local community. You, as parents and members of our local community, may see this vision as either a threat or a fantastic opportunity. We do, however, over the next 6 months need to get an understanding on where we all stand. If we can work closely together I am sure we can create a much needed facility. The community benefits for sport, health, leisure and all age learning are very evident indeed. The associated benefits resulting from much less traffic on Station Road and safer routes to school for children will also have major impact for our many neighbours and students.



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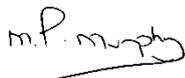
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Please see the attached draft plan of our vision: '*The Arden Triangle – A Strategic Opportunity for Major Community Benefit and Growth*' which has now been submitted to SMBC in response to their Solihull Local Plan Review.

We are obviously at the very early stages of realising the vision of 'The Arden Triangle' and there will be many feasibility surveys and consultation events taking place over the year ahead.

I feel it is very important to let you know about our plans and we will, therefore, be holding information sessions on **Friday 18th March between 10.30am and 6.00pm** and on **Monday 21st March between 6.30pm and 8.00pm** in the Conference Room at Arden. Parents and our neighbours are welcome to come in and meet me in order to discuss our vision and plans.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "m.p. murphy". The signature is written in a cursive, lowercase style with a horizontal line underneath.

Martin P Murphy
Executive Principal