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Dear *Andrew,*

Thank you for your letter. I am delighted that it would appear we now have a way forward to build a new secondary education system for the Isle of Sheppey and resume the feasibility stage.

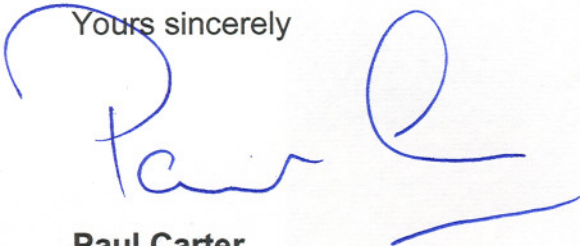
I see little point in a detailed critique of former HMI Maurice Smith's report. Like you, I accept that with the additional capital you have made available, a two site option is now possible. In that regard, I am pleased to confirm that KCC will increase its sponsorship to £4m, making a total capital amount of £50m. As sponsor, on behalf of Kent County Council, I accept the responsibility to value engineer the project, control capital expenditure and therefore take financial responsibility for cost over-runs above that amount.

We shall, of course, seek to maximise the benefits of current assets not required for the academy project either to defray such expenditure or add to the total value of the project.

I am pleased that Dulwich College is assuming a more prominent role and agree the need to offer the Sheppey community greater surety about the development of this project and the enormous opportunity offered by the creation of the academy.

Finally, may I in turn thank you both for your own personal interest and the exemplary work of your officers within the Department.

Yours sincerely



Paul Carter