

EXCITING, CHALLENGING AND URGENT. AN OPPORTUNITY TOO SPECIAL TO IGNORE!



There exists a privileged opportunity for Rathkeale College to purchase an additional 6.2 hectares of land on the southern boundary of the College campus.

The parcel of land that has been offered to the College for sale includes the residual land of the original Maunsell Family's Rathkeale property and includes several paddocks, farm buildings and a small cottage just outside the school gates along with a significant area of native bush often referred to as the School House Bush.

It is an opportunity which encapsulates a wealth of educational, environmental, historical, cultural, and strategic components.

An Agreement for Sale and Purchase has been signed by the vendors and the Trinity Trust Board. Fundraising is now essential to complete the purchase.

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE WIDER RATHKEALE COMMUNITY

Few people would challenge the assertion that the Rathkeale campus is one of the finest and most beautiful in the country. Its setting is greatly enhanced by the natural ambience of bush, rivers and the fine fields, trees and gardens which encompass the College's buildings and facilities. Despite the steady encroachment of lifestyle properties on Willow Park Drive and Southey Road, Rathkeale retains the feeling of being a rural institution.

Anyone who knows the school will appreciate the positive impact the campus environment has had on successive generations of young people who have passed through the College. Old Boys tell plentiful stories of their time spent exploring the bush, relaxing, fishing, kayaking, and swimming at the river or discovering the hinterland. More recently, time spent on the school farm/land lab has been important for many.

This access to the outdoors has been what has made time at school both memorable, and even tolerable, for many students and particularly for the boarders. It has, on occasion, been heralded as a great place for boys to be boys.

A highly exciting opportunity has arisen for the School to add a further 6.2 hectares of farmland and native bush to the College campus. It is too special an opportunity to ignore or let slip by and it is our fervent hope that the College community will once again join forces and make a wonderful and enduring contribution to the well-being of the College and of future generations of its students.

WHAT WILL SUPPORTING THIS APPEAL ACHIEVE?

Purchase of the land will ensure that the College retains a buffer zone between the campus and the ongoing residential development and subdivision that is rapidly moving north from Masterton .It will provide privacy and security to the school community.

In tandem with the Ruamahanga Restoration Trust and the QE2 Trust, the purchase will enable the restoration and preservation of a rare and precious remnant of the forest that once clothed much of the upper Wairarapa valley. The bush on the property which currently has no protection status, would become a sustainability site and the bush would enhance teaching and research into native species.

The purchase will enable an extension of the popular Eco/Fitness trail and the small cottage could be utilised as staff accommodation or as a resource centre for conservation work and for showcasing the significant history of the Opaki region in which the College is located. It is envisaged that the bushed area will become an educational facility for the wider community

The acquisition of the additional pastureland will greatly enhance the school farm/Land Lab and be a valuable enhancement of the Agricultural Department's resources. At least two other classes of stock(cattle and pigs) could be introduced and the land could sustain a contrasting sheep flock i.e. dual purpose breed(Romney)and meat breed(Southdown).The waterway provides an ideal site to develop riparian planting examples and trials The farm buildings which include a barn, stables and dairy will readily adapt to educational use.

The purchase will further enhance and future proof the special place that is Rathkeale.



HOW CAN YOU HELP?

This exciting addition to the College will only be possible if the wider School Community of Friends, Old Boys, Parents and Trustees unite to back the idea financially. This is an urgent need to avoid the property slipping out of our hands onto the open market shortly.



WHY IS THIS PURCHASE SO COMPELLING?

The rapid growth of residential land subdivision surrounding Masterton suggests that pockets such as this are increasingly rare and unlikely to be available in the future. This is the only opportunity of this ilk that the College is ever likely to encounter in the future.

For a College situated in Provincial New Zealand the value of Agriculture and Agri Business within the College curriculum is significant. The purchase of the additional land will help to ensure that the College provides enhanced high-grade teaching facilities for land-based learning in the future.

The pocket of native forest which survived the fires that swept across the Opaki plains in the 1600s is both rare and somewhat unique. As such it has special value for ecological and scientific study and for conservation endeavour and awareness. This has already been utilised by the wider community including Schools and Iwi.

Historic sites within the block include meteorite holes, colonial saw pits and significant trees which all add special interest to the property.

Purchase of the block will enable the extension of the very popular Eco Fitness trail and offer further opportunities for Physical Education, Sport, Cross Country, and recreation.

Purchase of the block will offer both security and attractive seclusion to the College. It will keep advancing suburbia at arms -length and assist in maintaining the well-being of the student body and campus residents.

When added to the three land purchases that comprise the College campus it will future proof the growing needs of Rathkeale, The Senior College and the Trinity System for many years to come.