



The purpose of this report is to register the concerns of the Upper Ventnor Community Associations about the impact on their area and community of the new Island Free School.

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**No.    DETAIL**

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**1)    BACKGROUND**

- a) The Mayor, Deputy Mayor and the Clerks are holding regular 6-weekly meetings with the Committee of the Upper Ventnor Community Association (UVCA) for shared discussions of issues and possibilities on which we can usefully work together.
  - b) The development of the Island Free School has featured highly in recent meetings following its announcement that: *Our Year 7 students will start here (St Boniface Primary School) in September 2014 and remain here for a year while a new state of the art school is constructed for us, at a nearby location, to be confirmed in the near future.*
  - c) It is widely believed that the 'nearby' location will be the site of the old St Margaret's Primary School on Newport Road.
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**2)    CONCERNS**

- a) It is that road that is central to the concerns of the Committee and the area it represents: a narrow yet main road with flow restricted by parked vehicles that have nowhere else to go in the area and presenting hazards for drivers and dangers for pedestrians, already struggling with the additional traffic of the new St Francis Primary School.
  - b) The Island Free School will add 125 pupils each year to fill its 11-16 age range and the UVCA is worried about how the road, and the surrounding area will cope with the traffic generated by another more than 600 pupils and their teaching and support staff.
  - c) There are also concerns about the size of the footprint of the new building and its attendant facilities as it appears to the Committee that it will need to be significantly bigger than the present one with a potential loss of important footpaths.
  - d) Concerns about the impact on the community and its residents are exacerbated by the absence to date of either consultation or communication with either UVCA or the community by the new school about these matters.
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**3)    RECOMMENDATION**

- a) Clearly the new school will bring very significant benefits to Ventnor as a whole and the Town Council is keen to work with them as they develop.
  - b) It also understands the difficulties of arranging open consultation when important negotiations have to be concluded both with local landowners and the Department for Education.
  - c) The Town Council is recommended to invite representatives of The Island New School to attend a meeting of the Town Council as soon as it is able to do so and to work with it in arranging appropriate consultation events with UCVA and the wider Lowtherville community as a matter of urgency.
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