

Experts meet Port Royal Reference Group as work begins on Scoping Study

Study expected to be completed in 16 weeks

On Wednesday February 15 the Port Royal Reference Group convened at Sidmouth Town Council for their first meeting with the appointed independent consultants who have been selected to carry out the scoping study for Port Royal.

Ed Heynes of Jillings Heynes said that he “was delighted to be appointed to such a high profile project” and that he “recognised clearly the tremendous interest and work already done in connection with Port Royal.”

As part of their work, which is estimated to take around 16 weeks, Jillings Heynes will set about a significant data gathering exercise which will include consideration of all relevant historical studies as well as all the ideas and thoughts that have come forward from the community through the extensive consultation which has already taken place. This includes previous consultations such as the Vision Group’s Community Engagement Brief 2012 and the more recent consultation which is being carried out through the Neighbourhood Plan.

As part of the 16 week project, Mr Heynes outlined that there would also be a meeting with key stakeholders and a wider, public session in which people could further express their views, thoughts and ideas directly to the consultants.

Once all the data has been gathered and considered the consultants will then look at producing a set of recommendations which will balance community expectations with what is commercially viable and possible in the area. These recommendations will then be considered by Sidmouth Town Council and East Devon District Council.

Jeff Turner, Chairman of Sidmouth Town Council and Chairman of the Port Royal Reference Group said: “Everyone agrees that this is one of the finest sites on the South Coast which has never fulfilled its potential and that this presents a great challenge as well as an enormous opportunity.

“We very much look forward to hearing the recommendations of the independent consultants who have the expertise to look at all the options, hear what the community has to say and then make some recommendations which can deliver the right outcome for the town.”