

Experts invited to tender for Port Royal Scoping Study

Study expected to begin in the New Year

Sidmouth Town Council is inviting professional experts to tender for the opportunity to carry out a scoping study of the Port Royal area of the town.

Five firms have been invited to tender for the work and the successful company will be selected at the end of this month. The study will start in the New Year and is expected to take around four months to complete.

The council is working in partnership with East Devon District Council and, as key landowners in the area, they are commissioning the study to assist them in understanding whether the renewal of Port Royal is viable, and what the potential development could include.

The study is the first step in the potential renewal of the area and it will provide expert opinion on the opportunities and constraints of any development. The study will also identify the boundaries, ownership and the needs of existing occupants.

The consultants selected to carry out the study will work with both councils and the Port Royal Scoping Study Reference Group who are made up of representatives of Sidmouth town organisations, the councils and Devon County Council.

The Reference Group will play a key role in the future of Port Royal, acting as a bridge between the consultants, the stakeholders and the wider public. Consultation, communication and engagement with the local community will be at the forefront of every stage of the project and the consultants who are selected to carry out the study will be asked specifically about how they will consult with the community.

Cllr Jeff Turner, Chairman of Sidmouth Town Council, who chaired the first meeting of the Reference Group last month, said that the study was the start of a process that will involve detailed visioning for the area and will inform decisions in the future. He said: "Consultants will carry out consultation both with tenants and members of various clubs as well as our residents and businesses. Wherever possible, we will work together with Sidmouth's organisations to ensure that consultation is carried out in a co-ordinated way."

Sidmouth Town Council is taking the lead in the Port Royal process while East Devon District Council is providing professional support. Jointly, the two councils have agreed to set aside £10,000 for the study.

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