

Port Royal Reference Group to discuss consultation findings

Chairman praises residents and organisations for excellent response

Responses by local organisations and hundreds of people to the public consultations around the future of Sidmouth's Port Royal will be discussed by the Port Royal Reference Group at its meeting this month.

Almost 250 responses were received during a five-week consultation about the Port Royal area during the summer. Additionally a Sid Valley Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group survey which included questions about Port Royal was completed by more than 1,800 households and these responses will be included in the overall consultation.

The reference group will be taking a close look at all the responses when it meets next week (Sept 21) and will examine the different themes and areas of common ground that have been put forward. The group will share these themes with the independent consultants who are jointly commissioned by Sidmouth Town and East Devon District councils to carry out a scoping study of Port Royal to assess the feasibility of redeveloping the area. Both councils are major land owners of Port Royal. This important step will ensure that all consultation comments and outcomes are incorporated in to the final report.

In October, the reference group will examine a draft of the scoping study and will assist in developing key recommendations for the area in a report due to be discussed in November by both councils.

Councillor Jeff Turner, Chairman of the Reference Group, said: "We know how much the Port Royal area means to our residents which is why we have an excellent number of responses to the consultation. We want to ensure that these responses are reflected appropriately so that the councils can make informed decisions on the future of the area, taking these views in to account.

"Thank you to all the residents that have taken the time to complete the consultations and assist us at this crucial stage."

The Reference Group is made up of representatives of Sidmouth town organisations including the Sid Valley Neighbourhood Plan Group, the Sid Vale Association, Sidmouth Vision Group and the Sidmouth Chamber of Commerce along with Sidmouth Town, East Devon District and Devon County Councils.

Ends

disruption