

Positive discussions continue around Port Royal

Work continues on scoping study for key Sidmouth site

Positive discussions around the future of Port Royal have been held between the major leaseholders including Sidmouth Lifeboat and the Sailing Club, the key landowners Sidmouth Town and East Devon District Councils and Jillings Heynes, the consultant carrying out a study into the viability of the area.

The meetings have been taking place over the last few weeks and were very constructive with the tenant representatives having the opportunity to set out their aspirations for the future. It was also explained to the tenants what the next steps of the scoping project would be and how there would be further opportunity for more consultation to involve the wider public in the near future in which people could further express their views, thoughts and ideas directly to the consultants.

The councils have commissioned a study to assist them in understanding whether the renewal of Port Royal is achievable, and what any potential development might include.

The study is the very first step in exploring renewal options for 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. An officer from East Devon District Council visited the Lifeboat and spent time with the organisation to watch and learn more about their activities to understand the important work they carry out which included the logistics of manoeuvring boats and trailers. Consultants and officers will also be visiting the Sailing Club on site in the future.

Once all the data has been gathered and considered the consultants will look at producing a set of recommendations which will balance community expectations with what is achievable 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: "Talking with and listening to the current leaseholders and allowing them to have a dialogue with the consultants is a vital part of the scoping study process. It will assist the consultants and the councils in understanding what is achievable on the important Port Royal site."

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