

## Update on Station Yard redevelopment – 4<sup>th</sup> November 2019

On 28 October 2019, the Town Council discussed whether to accept the £995,000 Coastal Communities Fund for the Southwold Enterprise Hub Project. This one Grant provides £186,000 for three Southwold Development Team Members and £809,000 towards rebuilding Station Yard (which consists of a convenience store, two garages including a converted paint spray workshop, and a cycle shop) as office space and with a significantly upgraded convenience store in its present location.

The motion that Council considered was “to confirm that the Grant will be spent as required - £186,000 Revenue for Southwold Development Team roles, £809,000 Capital for Southwold Enterprise Hub”. It was not a discussion of a business plan but whether to accept the Grant. An amendment was proposed that the Town Council conduct another round of consultation. This amendment was allowed and was put to a vote but was defeated. In a recorded vote, the Town Council then agreed to use the Grant money, as above. 10 Councillors were in favour and 2 abstained. There were no votes against the proposal.

It was also agreed that, the Town Council would hold a public meeting at the Southwold Arts’ Centre, on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> November at 6pm, to present the business plan developed by an independent expert, Sheila Moss-King, who has delivered major community regeneration projects in Suffolk and Norfolk. This will give members of the community the chance to understand why the Town Council made its decision and to ask any questions. The business plan is available on-line at: <https://southwoldtown.com/station-yard-development/>

The business plan includes a timeline, which shows that Town Councils have, over the years, been discussing the demolition and options for the Station Yard site (since at least the year 2000).

The Town Council has a dedicated webpage just for Station Yard, which contains much more information on the history of this project: <https://southwoldtown.com/station-yard-development/> This webpage includes details of all public consultations held, including Town Plan and Neighbourhood Plan surveys.

One of the Town Council’s concerns over the past 19 years has been its tenants’ future. Without getting into detail that is personal to the current tenants, following the expiry of the lease the owner of the cycle shop has decided not to continue the business. Engagement has taken place with the owners of both garages, and the Town Council will continue to work with them over the next few months in respect of future plans.

The Station Yard buildings are in poor condition and include asbestos roofs. The Town Council was advised at an early stage that it would also be unlikely to be given permission to rebuild a garage on the existing site, and the 2014 concepts, presented by Ingleton Wood, reflect premises with a landscaped courtyard. The decision to redevelop Station Yard was taken after extensive public consultation, research and advice from experts. It was a collective decision that looks to improve the future prospects of this Town and its community.

Please come along to Southwold Arts’ Centre on 11<sup>th</sup> November at 6pm to find out more.