

18 / 0376/MFUL

**Statement of Community  
Involvement**

**Exmouth Watersports Centre**

*Prepared For*  
**Grenadier Exmouth Limited**

**7210**  
**15<sup>th</sup> January 2017**

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL ECONOMY			
15 JAN 2018			
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General Correspondence - 18/0376/MFUL



Statement of Community Involve -



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## CONTENTS

<b>1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>COUNCIL ENGAGEMENT</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>PUBLIC CONSULTATION</b>	<b>3</b>
	Feedback	4
	Summary of responses to the community feedback	7
	<b>APPENDIX 1 – MEDIA COVERAGE</b>	<b>9</b>
	<b>APPENDIX 2 – COPY OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION BOARDS</b>	<b>10</b>
	<b>APPENDIX 3 – COPY OF FEEDBACK FORM</b>	<b>11</b>



## 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report identifies and summarises the public consultation that has taken place for Grenadier Exmouth Limited's Queens Drive, Exmouth Waterfront development.



## 2 COUNCIL ENGAGEMENT

- 2.1 In addition to formal application discussion with officers at East Devon District Council (details of which are set out in the Planning Statement), the applicant and its agents also presented an earlier version of the proposals to members of Exmouth Town Council, East Devon District Council and Devon County Council on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2015. This was an opportunity to set out the background to the scheme and secure detailed observation.
- 2.2 The feedback on the presentation demonstrated that there was a broad level of support for the proposals, but some concerns were expressed by certain parties in respect of the relationship of Grenadier Exmouth Limited's proposals with wider plans for the regeneration of Queen's Drive.



### 3 PUBLIC CONSULTATION

3.1 The Applicant has hosted three public events throughout the development of the scheme to share information on the emerging proposals. In terms of advertising, two press releases were made from the beginning of October announcing the consultation dates and venue (please refer to **Appendix 1** for copies of media coverage).

3.2 The events were held at different times of day to allow for maximum engagement with the local community. The dates and times of the events were as follows:

- Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> October 2017 – 9:00am – 5:00pm
- Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> October 2017 – 9:00am – 5:00pm (October half term, to ensure that parents were given the opportunity to comment)
- Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> November; 5:00pm – 9:00 pm

3.3 All three events were held at 'Ocean' in Exmouth. Copies of the consultation boards are included at **Appendix 2**.

3.4 Each event provided the opportunity for members of the public to speak to a member of the project team directly. Feedback forms (copy included as **Appendix 3**) were available for members of the public to give their opinions of the emerging design ideas and raise any concerns. Members of the public were also able to take away with them a booklet providing information on the Applicant and the proposed development.

3.5 The consultation attendance was as follows:

- First consultation event – 600
- Second consultation event – 450
- Third consultation event – 280

3.6 In addition to the public consultation events, the Applicant launched a website and created an online feedback form so that those unable to attend the events could still



have their say. The website also provided details of the consultation dates and how to access the venue. 8,986 people were reached via social media outreach campaigns and 987 website visits were made during the live consultation period.

## **FEEDBACK**

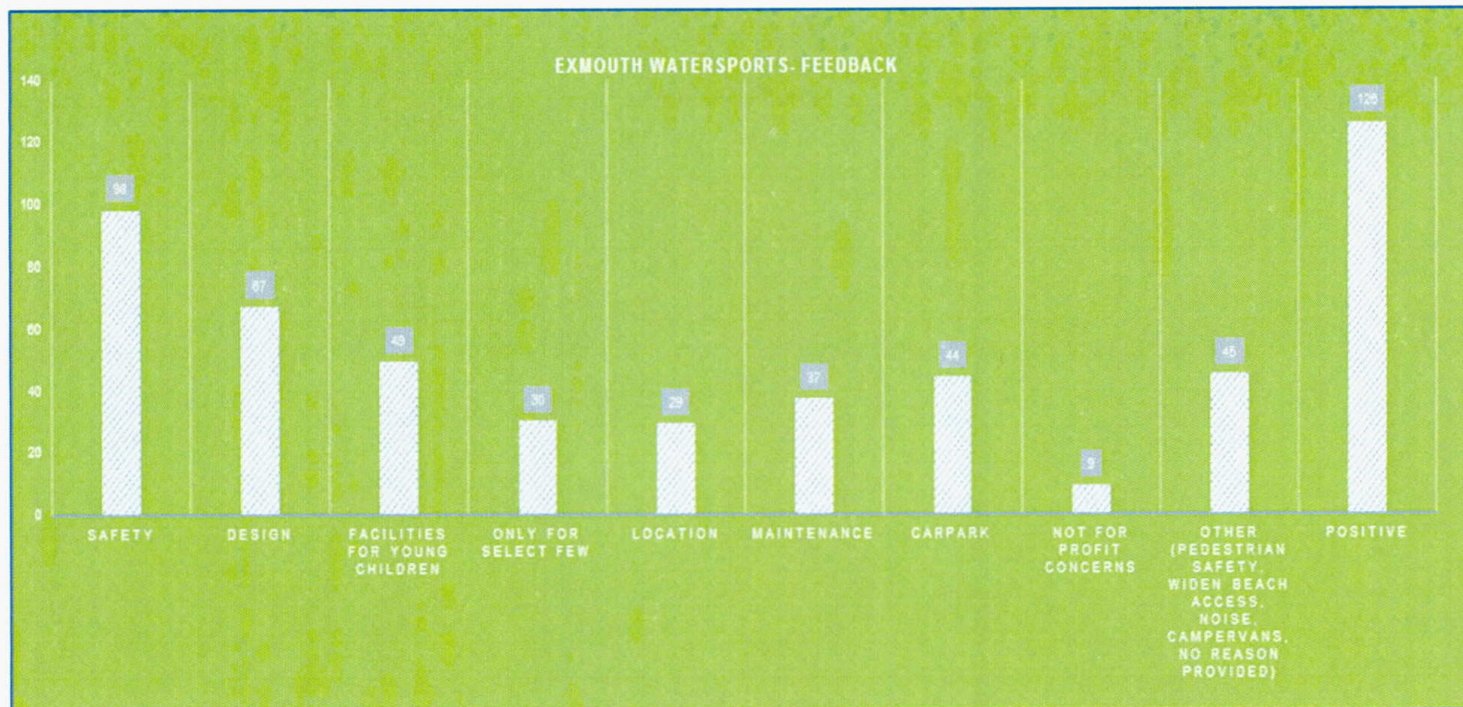
- 3.7 The total number of completed feedback forms received was 346: 284 feedback forms completed at the events and 62 further forms received via emails and online form submissions. A summary is provided at **Appendix 4**.

### **Feedback – general overview**

- Grenadier was praised for the quality and availability of the information, providing clear answers and for being transparent. Grenadier was praised for its approach to consultation both in terms of detail, content and overall approach.
- The consultation events were well attended and dominated by an older demographic.
- The first consultation was challenging, providing the community's (including Save Exmouth Seafront) first opportunity to provide direct feedback. The overall messaging and public commentary shifted positively in favour of the proposed water sports centre over the course of the public consultation events, with the third event being significantly more positive.
- A number of respondents expressed continuing concerns about the proposals.
- Attention has turned to the council in terms of the manner in which developments such as the road re-routing and Phase 3 have been communicated.

### **Feedback – key themes**

- 3.8 Several themes were identified throughout the consultation events and through the online feedback forms; including safety and location, design considerations, facilities, usage and maintenance.
- 3.9 A summary of key messages under each identified theme is provided below.



### ***Safety and location***

- Positioned by a dangerous part of the beach in terms of tides and currents.
- Public need to be made aware of tides.

### ***Design***

- Proposed materials and design would be a good addition to the town and will enhance the seaside environment.
- Scale/low rise design is generally supported – do not want large, obtrusive buildings.
- Design could be more inspiring/iconic.
- Supportive of the 'beach hut' theme.

### ***Facilities for the young***

- Regret loss of children's activities and would like to see new facilities for younger children.

### ***For the select few only***

- Scheme would only cater for a minority of the general public.



### ***Maintenance***

- Concerns about level of maintenance required with the proposed buildings being located on an exposed section of the seafront.
- Details of materials and finishes need to be given careful consideration.

### ***Car park***

- Questions were raised about how the car park would be managed and what the charges would be.
- More than a couple of electric charging points should be provided.
- Questions raised over whether the car park would only be for users of the water sports centre.

### ***Not for profit***

- Some scepticism about 'not for profit' and this should be properly explained within the application submission.

### ***Other points raised***

- Could the centre be set back slightly to allow for more open space to the front?
- Strong preference for local rather than national operators.
- Retail pods are viewed positively as a way to help small businesses to establish themselves.
- Careful thought should be given to cycle lanes.

### ***Positive concluding comments***

- Great design concept.
- Brilliant addition to Exmouth seafront.





- Will encourage children to use the water more and create a new generation of water users.
- Huge improvement on previous designs tabled.
- Improvement of this area of Exmouth as a seaside resort has been needed for a long time.
- Very supportive of the eco-friendly elements.

### **SUMMARY OF RESPONSES TO THE COMMUNITY FEEDBACK**

3.10 Responses relating to the operation and use of the buildings are provided as part of the supporting Planning Statement.

#### **Water safety**

3.11 A key issue highlighted at the events was water safety. East Devon District Council has produced a bespoke risk assessment of the beach area in front of the proposed water sports centre. The purpose of the assessment is to provide the applicant with an analysis of the risks to inform decisions about the scheme and the establishment of the centre. The assessment is based on the proposed scheme and on beach conditions etc as at November 2017.

3.12 The applicant has commissioned an RNLI approved expert peer to review the document and the conclusion of the audit was that all main risk factors have been covered and sensible and proportionate controls have been recommended.

#### **Design**

3.13 Comments that had a key impact on the design of the scheme and the actions that have been taken to address them are set out below.

#### ***Building position***



- 3.14 Concern was raised about the proximity of the building to the promenade and the potential conflict between cyclists, pedestrians and water sports users. Comments were also made about the visual impact of the development so close to the water's edge.
- 3.15 To address these concerns, the building has been moved northwards by 2-3 metres, creating a wider space in front of the building next to the promenade. This also serves to better protect the views along the promenade towards Orcombe Point.

### ***Car parking***

- 3.16 Concerns were raised about all the car parking being positioned towards the eastern side of the site due to the congestion this could cause in the 'water sports zone' and the restriction this could put on people with physical disabilities accessing the beach/promenade.
- 3.17 In response to these concerns, some parking has been moved to the western side of the building next to the large open space. This allows people with equipment or physical difficulties two points of access onto the promenade. This also helps to improve access onto the open space for events and activities.



## APPENDIX 1 – MEDIA COVERAGE



## APPENDIX 2 – COPY OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION BOARDS



## APPENDIX 3 – COPY OF FEEDBACK FORM