



Community Consultation Feedback for the proposed water sports centre for Exmouth



Executive Summary

- During October 2017, Grenadier held three well attended public consultation events at Ocean in Exmouth. In addition, a bespoke consultation website was created to allow for online feedback, to maximise opportunities for community engagement.
- Feedback received in the consultation process has helped Grenadier refine the plans for the proposed water sports centre responding to a number of environmental and social feedback points.
- This report provides an overview of all the feedback received, key themes which emerged and the actions Grenadier will take in response.
- Grenadier had originally intended to submit the planning application at the end of November, however following the feedback review process, additional work was required leading to a revised target date of 15th January 2018.
- A number of questions raised at the consultation events concerned Phase 3 of the Queens Drive Development. We have collated all of these and passed them onto East Devon District Council (EDDC).
- Grenadier is delighted with the number of people in the community who have taken time to engage in the consultation process, providing well considered and useful comments. We would like to thank you for your input.



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2. Consultation feedback – key themes
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Feedback in Numbers



Feedback in Numbers

- Total consultation session attendance: 1,330
 - First consultation: 600
 - Second consultation: 450
 - Third consultation: 280
- Total completed consultation forms: 346
 - Feedback forms received: 284
 - Emails and online form submissions: 62

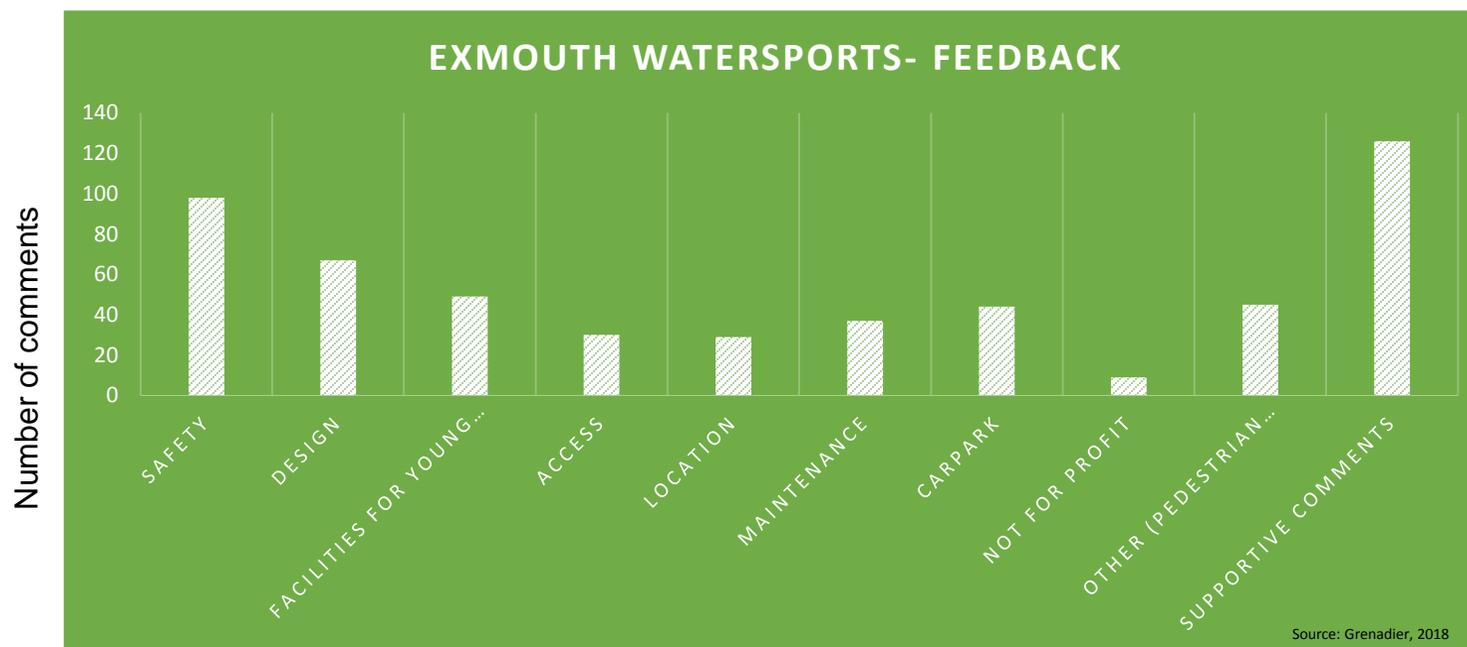


Key Themes



Key Themes

- A number of key themes were identified from all feedback received throughout the consultation process
- Grenadier has summarised these into 10 key themes which are shown on the chart below



Note: Where more than one issue has been raised in a feedback form, it has been extracted and counted individually in the graph above.



Grenadier Response to Feedback

1. Safety

Health and safety is priority issue for Grenadier which is taken seriously. A key objective is for the proposed water sports centre to provide a positive, safe and long lasting legacy for Exmouth.

As discussed at the consultation, Grenadier had already considered a number of safety issues in consultation with local water sports users including the benefit of segregation of water sports users and swimmers.

However, due to the volume of feedback given on the proposed location and potential conflict between pedestrians and water sports users, Grenadier took the opportunity to reflect on the issues raised and seek further input. This has resulted in the planning application submission being delayed from November 2017 to January 2018.

During this time Grenadier has worked with EDDC (who have a beach and water responsibility), to produce a new, bespoke risk assessment for the section of beach in front of the proposed water sports centre. The risk assessment has subsequently been peer reviewed by Grenadier who have employed the services of a highly experienced water safety consultant, Dr Cliff Nelson of Wave Crest.

Grenadier's review has concluded that EDDC has considered all the main risk factors with sensible and proportionate controls recommended.

The implemented measures will also provide for enhanced educational resources to support long term safe enjoyment of the beach space by all beach users of all experience levels.

The key recommendations from Wave Crest's review of EDDC's risk assessment are:

1. Create and maintain a small working group with relevant marine related organisations to consult on water safety issues pertinent to the project



Grenadier Response to Feedback

1. Safety (Continued)

2. Water safety is considered in the detailed design phase of the proposed water sports centre
3. The risk assessment produced by EDDC is implemented fully
4. A risk assessment is undertaken by the operator of the water sports centre
5. The risk assessment informs a comprehensive water safety management plan, standard operating procedures and emergency action procedures
6. The proposed water sports operator fully manages the launch and landing area, including safety of the general public
7. Support water safety campaigns to educate all beach users
8. Involvement with national water sports governing bodies, to ensure competence of water sports users
9. Ensure quality and maintenance of hired equipment
10. Implement management safety procedures for hiring equipment
11. Provide new safety signage
12. Addition of a lifeguard in front of the water sports centre between April to September or during the peak season
13. Active management of bathers to ensure they stay out of the no bathing zone



Grenadier Response to Feedback

1. Safety (Continued)

Whilst risk can never be fully removed from a marine environment or a water sports activity, Grenadier is satisfied that a full and comprehensive risk assessment has been undertaken by EDDC and that suitable safety measures have been identified. Safety will remain a top priority throughout the duration of the project, in particular the appointment of a suitably experienced operator.



Grenadier Response to Feedback

2. Design

A number of comments were raised regarding the general appearance of the building and its siting relative to the sea wall, with particular reference to potential overcrowding and conflict between users of the proposed water sports centre and pedestrians/cyclists.

Grenadier has reviewed these comments and agrees that the building should to be moved back into the site to create a more substantial space between the sea wall and front of the building. The planning application will show the building position moved back into the site by 4 metres. We have also increased the size of the rigging up areas to accommodate additional water sports equipment, again to reduce potential conflict with pedestrians.

We have also included additional stone cladding to the east and west gable ends of the building and incorporated additional tree planting to the western approach for added visual appeal.

Sufficient space within the site boundary has been provided for safety signage and other educational material which may be required.

In respect of wind blown sand and wave overtopping, the building sits on a platform 800 mm above existing footpath levels to encourage movement around the building rather than through it. The same principle applies to any wave overtopping during spring tides.



Grenadier Response to Feedback

3. Facilities for Young Children

A number of respondents commented on the loss of children's play equipment associated with the closure of the former Fun Park in preparation for Phase 3 of the wider development. As presented at the consultation events, Grenadier's site is entirely separate from the Fun Park.

To ensure these important observations are not lost, Grenadier has relayed them to EDDC who have advised that budget has been set aside to deliver new temporary uses including free to use play equipment on the vacant phase 3 site.

Grenadier understands that EDDC have submitted a planning application for these uses and the public consultation is now extended until the 17th January 2018. In addition, EDDC have provided Grenadier with a direct link to their Cabinet report which sets out the proposals in more detail.

<http://eastdevon.gov.uk/media/2281552/291117combinedcabinetagenda.pdf>

In summary, EDDC are proposing to install new play equipment during the Spring of 2018. Any further enquiries for additional information should be directed to the Case Officer, Alison Hayward accordingly.



Grenadier Response to Feedback

4. Access

Exmouth has natural attributes which combine to create a world class destination for water sports.

Grenadier is committed to creating a facility which leaves a positive legacy for the local community by offering opportunities for water sports participation which currently do not exist, provide a place to learn and encourage active lifestyles.

The structure of the proposed water sports centre will be such to offer wide ranging access from day rates through to annual membership. Free facilities will be made available such as hot showers and an equipment wash down area for people who do not wish to use the water sports centre itself.

The proposed water sports centre will also provide a range of high-quality local food and drink establishments as well as new public open space immediately adjacent to the beach for use by all. Although Exmouth is an established tourist destination and enjoys a strong tourist trade, the centre hopes that its complementary offering will attract a larger number of visitors. It also hopes to retain visitors and secure spending in the town, as opposed to them travelling elsewhere in the local area. Grenadier is committed to offering space to local businesses, including the beach retail units with more flexible rental options, for small organisations.



Grenadier Response to Feedback

5. Location

These comments align with the safety element of the location.

Grenadier is satisfied that with a robust risk assessment and with suitable safety measures in place, the safety of water sports and beach users will be improved from the current position.

The proposed site has historically been the most used and most suitable site for windsurfing and more recently kitesurfing due to good access across a range of tides, access to open expanses of flat water and access across a wide range of wind directions. A number of learners are taught from Pole Sands which sits immediately in front of the proposed water sports centre site.

With the safety measures in place, there will be:

- a fully coordinated approach to safety with all key stakeholders
- improved access to expert knowledge from the proposed water sports centre operator
- improved observation on the water and beach
- rescue equipment located in close proximity
- provision of a dedicated landing zone for water sports users. Please note that a dedicated landing zone will in no way prevent pedestrians or general beach users from accessing this part of the beach.



Grenadier Response to Feedback

6. Maintenance

Grenadier has employed the services of a specialist coastal architect who has delivered projects in extreme coastal environments around the south west.

We have assembled a materials palette which is specifically chosen to withstand the elements and minimise the carbon footprint with a focus on natural products. These include:

- Timber (Red Cedar) cladding and decking
- Granite stone cladding
- All drains and gully's are over sized and designed to have sand traps which can be easily emptied
- High quality anti-glare glazing

There will be no render or painted surfaces exposed to the elements which would otherwise rapidly deteriorate. Any stainless steel will be specified to marine grade. We have also specified manually installed storm shutters to protect the ground floor glazing in storm events.

In addition to the selection of appropriate materials, a suitable maintenance budget will be set aside for regular cleaning, removal of wind blown sand and replacements when required.



Grenadier Response to Feedback

7. Car Parking

There was a balance of comments between those wanting a general pay and display car park accessible to all and a dedicated private car park water sports users.

Firstly, the number of parking bays has decreased from 60 to 44 (16 no.) due to the building being moved back into the site by 4 metres. All car parking income generated from the car park will be passed back to Grenadier to repay the capital investment. Once this has been repaid, all future car parking income will go to fund community projects through the Community Interest Company (CIC).

Initially, we have opted to run a publicly available pay and display car park with reserved parking for tenants and members. We will continually monitor this to ensure the car park fulfils its primary role of providing spaces for water sports users.

EDDC will providing a new 124 space car park immediately to the north of the proposed water sports centre which will be delivered at the same time as the road diversion (phase 1). At the consultation, Grenadier advised that EDDC were delivering 150 new spaces and to our understanding the balance of 26 spaces will now be delivered in phase 3.

Grenadier has provided a link to this plan on the proposed water sports centre website.



Grenadier Response to Feedback

8. Not for Profit

We received a number of positive comments regarding the not for profit nature of the project. There were however some queries around the commercial model as to what was meant by not for profit and how sustainable it would be over the longer term. Grenadier were happy to share this information and included an additional information board at the second consultation event detailing the structure of the deal with EDDC including a detailed overview of the not for profit structure.

In summary, the cost of the development will be funded by Grenadier, which will be repaid over time through the rental income. Once the capital has been repaid (with no profit included but retail prices index linked), the entire facility will be handed over to a Community Interest Company (CIC) who will use all future income entirely for the benefit of community based projects. The projects will be linked with the CIC's objectives.

All of the tenants which occupy the building will operate on a commercial basis, paying rent to Grenadier (and subsequently the CIC) and making profit in the normal way. It is the payment of rent which makes the operation sustainable over the long term, which is driven by a group of successful operators working within.

Typically, a developer constructing this type of project would expect to see a 15-20% return on the cost of the development after a period of 2-3 years. By forgoing this profit or return, Grenadier is in effect making a long term contribution to the regeneration of Exmouth.

