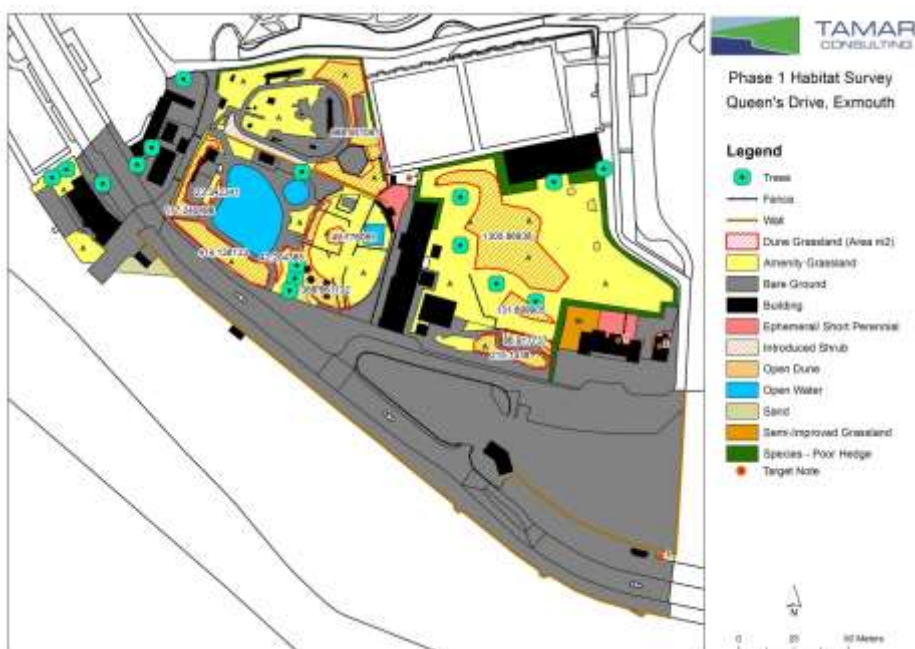


Project Name:
 Queen's Drive Leisure Area (Exmouth Splash)

Client:
 Stride Treglown Ltd

Commencement: May 2012

Keywords: Preliminary Ecological Assessment, Phase 1 habitat survey, bat survey, botanical survey, Ecological Mitigation Strategy, Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA), Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)



Summary:

Tamar Ecology (then Tamar Consulting) were commissioned by architects and town planners Stride Treglown Ltd to provide ecological input and advice into a proposal for the Queen's Drive Leisure Area (Exmouth Splash) in Exmouth. Exmouth Splash is one of a number of projects identified by East Devon District Council (EDDC) in the Exmouth Town Centre and Seafront Masterplan (2011) to aid the economic regeneration of the town and to contribute towards the Vision for Exmouth.

The Queens Drive Masterplan which underpins the outline planning application comprises the following main elements:

- Watersports Hub
- Public and Private Water "Splash" Zones
- Outdoor active play park
- Holiday Accommodation
- Restaurants/Cafes
- Retail
- Gallery/Studios
- Parking

Tamar Ecology undertook a number of ecological surveys and assessments at the site from May 2012, including habitat and protected species surveys. A botanical survey of the site found that areas of dune grassland support nationally scarce and locally uncommon plant species. Alongside the ecological survey, a desktop study and consultation with various local and national bodies was undertaken. The results were used to inform the indicative masterplan, minimise any ecological impacts from the development and design ecological enhancements into the project.

An Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA) was compiled to form part of the Environmental Statement supporting the outline planning application for the site. This outlined the baseline conditions at the site, likely impacts from the proposals, proposed mitigation and compensation measures, and proposed enhancement measures.

The site lies immediately adjacent to the Exe Estuary Special Protection Area/Ramsar site, an area of European importance. Through discussion with Natural England, concerns were raised that the proposed development could impact upon the site, particularly with regards to the promotion of watersport activities, including wind surfing, kite surfing and kayaking. These activities have potential to disturb wintering waterbirds that use the nearshore / subtidal waters within the Exe Estuary. Tamar Ecology undertook further studies and produced an appendix to the Environmental Statement with the necessary information to inform a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA). This document assessed the effects of the development proposals on the conservation objectives of the SPA, as required under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended), and proposed appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures where impacts were assessed to be significant.

The team secured outline planning permission for the development, which was granted by East Devon District Council on 10 December 2013.