

WORLD HERITAGE JURASSIC COAST IN EAST DEVON PRESENTS A WORLD CLASS LEISURE AND TOURISM OPPORTUNITY

Expressions of Interest invited
by 16 January 2012

A new and unique opportunity to operate the **Seaton Jurassic Coast Discovery Centre**, providing an interpretation centre together with café, restaurant, and retail operation – a fabulous and purpose-built centre on the Jurassic Coast, in the beautiful seaside resort of Seaton.

Set in a prime location on the World Heritage Jurassic Coast, surrounded by an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the nearby attractions of the Axe Wetlands, Seaton Tramway, the South West Coast Path National Trail.





Seaton showcases and offers many ways to discover some of East Devon's highlights, including beautiful countryside and coastline

ABOUT THE SITE

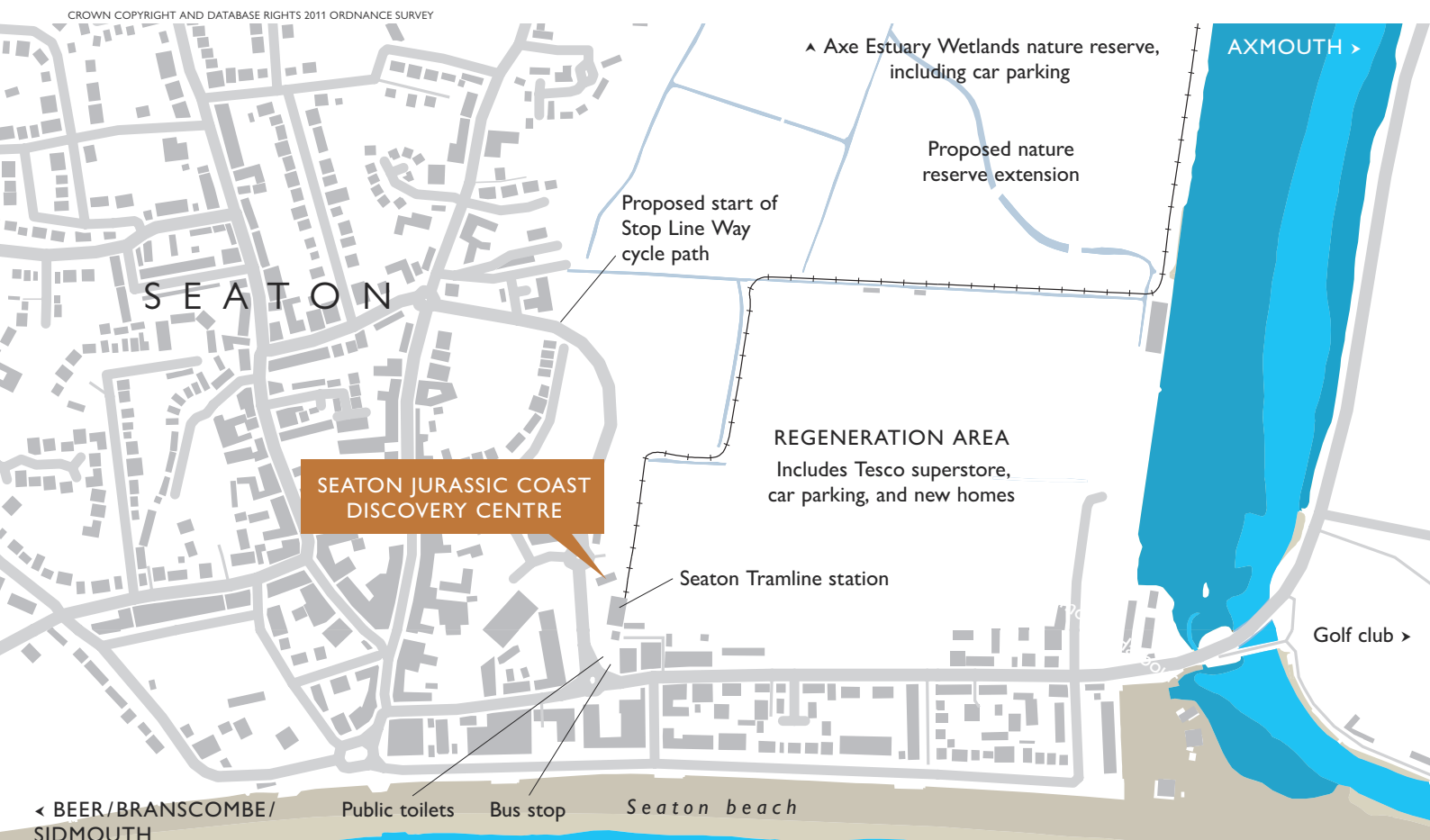
The proposed centre is 250 metres from the beach, close to Seaton Tramway, and has easy access to the South West Coast Path. The Tramway is Seaton's most famous attraction, carrying over 100,000 visitors a year. In addition, the South West Coast Path attracts an estimated visitor spend of £222 m, particularly relevant when research shows that 68 per cent of visitors to the South West region take a walk during their visit. The new Discovery Centre will be set in a prime location for capturing this visitor market.

The centre will showcase the natural assets of this beautiful part of East Devon – particularly Seaton's unique location as gateway to the Jurassic Coast – and will be a key point in the story of the World Heritage site.

The location of the Discovery Centre will be prime for capturing Seaton's visitor market

The Discovery Centre element (exhibition and display) of the site will be designed and installed to the highest specification standards and accuracy of information and detail. This will also be supported by an information point.

The potential operators must support the ethical, sustainable theme, and ensure that their offer complements the wider ethos of the Discovery Centre and its unique location.



ABOUT THE PROPOSAL

East Devon District Council is offering the grant of a full repairing and insuring long leasehold interest in the site and are inviting Expressions of Interest. Shortlisted expressions of interest will then be invited to interview.

The successful bidder will enter into a conditional operational lease agreement for the completed development. A three-month period will then be provided to finalise the internal layout and fit-out of the Centre (with the expectation that an agreement for a lease will be signed at this time.) The lease will be initiated on the completion of the satisfactory delivery of the development.

East Devon District Council and Devon County Council propose to construct the Discovery Centre to a fixed budget that will be approximately 880 m² in size providing the base building, all mechanical, electrical, and other essential services including flooring, fitted toilet/washroom facilities, the exhibits, and counter entry desk. The operator will be expected to supply and fit-out the remaining space to their own requirements.

Plans for the proposed Discovery Centre have been approved in principle subject to certain conditions being met. Plans and planning documents have been provided with the Tender Pack information on the website.



EAST DEVON AONB



Seaton, with its stunning vistas over sea and the unique geology of the Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site, is also an ideal base for visitors to explore the beautiful surrounding area

Seaton's iconic Tramway with views over the Axe Estuary Wetlands attracts thousands of visitors each year



PENGANNEL

The picturesque nearby harbour at Axmouth

ABOUT THE AREA

Seaton, located in the centre of the East Devon part of the Jurassic Coast, is well known for its heritage tram railway and is the perfect place from which to explore the South West Coast Path National Trail and East Devon Way, an inland footpath travelling through the East Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

Seaton's mile-long sand and shingle beach is bordered by a broad promenade perfect for taking the sea air and a great spot for admiring the stunning views of the Jurassic Coast. Seaton's history began in Roman times and still boasts impressive remains, including a major Roman villa site at Honeyditches and displays at the Axe Valley Heritage Museum.

The Seaton Tramway is one of Seaton's main attractions, the lovingly restored heritage trams take visitors through the beautiful Axe Valley, stopping at Colyford and Colyton – which was, ▶

SEATON AND EAST DEVON KEY VISITOR FACTS

East Devon attracts nearly three million day visitors per year, with the World Heritage site also attracting a vast number of visitors. With the development of the Discovery Centre, the number of visitors to Seaton is set to rise.

- 757,000 trips by staying visitors
- 3,333,000 staying visitor nights
- £157,171,000 spend by staying visitors
- 2,686,000 day visits
- £118,923,000 spend by day visitors
- £11,112,000 other tourism-related spend
- 8,077 jobs related to tourism spending
- 14 per cent of employment is supported by the tourism industry



EAST DEVON AONB

The popular South West Coast Path National Trail is easily accessed from Seaton



The area has strong voluntary and community activity in support of events

in medieval times, the most rebellious town in Devon! The Stop Line Way, part of the National Cycle Network, is currently being developed – the start of its route will be close to the Discovery Centre.

The Axe Estuary Wetlands nature reserve is within a short walk of the proposed centre, and is one of the best sites for bird watching in Devon. The Wetlands has a busy programme of events, which are set to expand and complement the wide event and festival attractors in the area, and means that the wetlands bring economic, environmental, and social benefits to the area.



On the popular Seaton Tramway



EVENTS, ACTIVITIES, AND FESTIVALS

East Devon has a rich heritage of regular cultural events and a wide range of events and festivals are staged East Devon and Seaton throughout the year, from rock pool rambles and bird watching, to steam driving experiences and jungle experiences in the Undercliffs.

The annual Carnival in Exmouth, the Colyford Goose Fayre, the Seaton Grizzly Run, the Ottery St Mary Tar Barrels, and the Lyme Regis Fossil Festival have local, regional, and international profile, and coupled with regular craft and art fairs, live music festivals, and club activities, the area has a buzz of activity and vibrant atmosphere.

TRANSPORT ROUTES

BY CAR

East Devon is easily reached from the M5 (J 29/30). Visitors from London and the South East travel via the M4/M5 or A303 and A30.

BY COACH AND BUS

There are National Express Services from all parts of the country to Exeter; this then links with Jurassic CoastLinX53 Service, which run every two hours from Exeter to Weymouth. A further x53 Service then carries on along the coast as far as Bournemouth.

BY AIR

Exeter Airport is eighteen miles west of Seaton.

BY RAIL

Fast trains from the Midlands/North to Exeter and from London Paddington and Waterloo stations go to Exeter St Davids station. There is also a slower train service from London Waterloo to Exeter Central stopping at Axminster, Honiton, Feniton and Whimple. The local train station at Axminster is seven miles from Seaton.



There's lots going on for visitors in and around Seaton, such as the Seaton Festival of Cycling and the popular Sidmouth Folk Festival

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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