## Devonport Landing Craft Co-Location Project (DLCCP)

### Key Issues
The DLCCP was located in a sensitive estuarine environment and was partly within the Plymouth Sound and Estuaries Special Area of Conservation (SAC), was in close proximity to residential properties to the northern site boundary and had Listed Buildings within the vicinity. Due to the works’ proximity to the SAC, a Judgement of Likely Significant Effects (JLSE) was undertaken as part of the required Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA).

Key elements of the work included:
- Consulting with a range of statutory and non-statutory organisations;
- Phase 1 habitat survey and bat survey;
- Noise assessment to assess operational noise levels to nearby residents;
- Environmental input on design and layout to minimise environmental effects, e.g. avoiding Listed Buildings and amending the design to reduce impacts on sub-tidal and intertidal habitats; and
- Environmental input on design and layout to ensure effective mitigation strategies and improve biodiversity.

### Purpose of the project
In order to realise long-term savings on operating costs and site maintenance for the Royal Marines Estate, it was decided that the co-location of the Royal Marines’ specialist landing craft units in Her Majesty’s Naval Base (HMBN) Devonport would be the best option.

The requirements of such a project were to establish a waterfront base for 1 Assault Group Royal Marines (1 AGRM), including 10 (Landing Craft Training) Squadron, and 539 Assault Squadron Royal Marines from Poole in Dorset and Turnchapel near Plymouth respectively.

### Description of the project
New facilities were to be provided for use by the co-located Royal Marines at the naval base in Devonport, Plymouth. The project comprised a small marina, boat yard, slipway, jetty, engineering facility, accommodation block and an area of rock revetment along the training beach.
Lessons learnt
Early consultation with statutory consultees was essential on this project as it enabled early identification of the key environmental issues and allowed sufficient time to develop suitable mitigation, in particular relating to intertidal and sub-tidal habitat loss.

Early consultation between the Black & Veatch EIA team and the project design team led to alterations in the design of the scheme to reduce the impacts on sub-tidal and intertidal habitats, including:

- The location of the slipway was moved further inland. This meant that less intertidal mudflat was covered by the slipway.
- Reno-mattresses were introduced into the design and selected above other options for erosion control because of the ability for intertidal mud to accumulate over the top of the mattresses over time.

It was not possible to avoid all impacts and the DLCCP encroached on an area of intertidal mudflat that does not form part of the SAC but that is protected by the Local Development Framework.

Lessons learnt cont.
The EIA team’s pro-active engagement with the client meant it was possible to identify existing Ministry of Defence (MoD) structures within the estuary which were no longer in use. A commitment to remove these structures, for example a disused careening grid, means that previously disturbed areas will be able to return to good quality intertidal habitat.

Consultation with statutory organisations led to an agreement that the removal of redundant structures, and the associated restoration of intertidal habitats, means that the scheme will not result in a net reduction in intertidal habitat and is therefore acceptable.

The knowledge of redundant MoD assets was something that could only be acquired through working closely with the client. The final solution avoided potentially expensive, and controversial, habitat creation projects.

Contact details
Nicola Meakins
Black & Veatch Ltd
meakinsn@bv.com
01737 856282

For access to more EIA case studies and hundreds of non-technical summaries of Environmental Statements visit:
www.iema.net/qmark