

Design & Access Statement

for the new Clubhouse at **Falcon Rowing and Canoeing Club**,
Meadow Lane, Oxford OX4 4RS.

February 2019

rev	date	note
P1	08.02.2019	Draft issue to client
P2	11.02.19	Amended draft issue to client

Original Field of Architecture Ltd
Standingford House
26 Cave Street
Oxford OX4 1BA

telephone: +44 (0)1865 723 083
email: mail@originalfield.com
website: originalfield.com

Contents

1.0	Introduction	1
2.0	Purpose of the Report	1
3.0	History of Falcon Rowing & Canoeing Club	2
4.0	Clients Statement of Need	4
5.0	Scope of Works	6
6.0	Flood Risk	8
7.0	Planning History & Consultation	8
8.0	Design	10
8.1	Use	10
8.2	Siting and layout	10
8.3	Scale	11
8.4	Appearance	11
8.5	Landscaping	12
9.0	Access	12
10.0	Transport	13
11.0	Sustainability	13
12.0	Summary	14

Appendices

Appendix 01	History of Falcon Rowing & Canoe Club	FRCC
Appendix 02	Flood Risk Assessment	Monson Engineering
Appendix 03	Ecological Assessment	ECOSA
Appendix 04	Arboricultural Report	Venners Arboriculture & Addn
Appendix 05	Transport Assessment	JPPC

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Original Field of Architecture was approached by Falcon Rowing and Canoeing Club (FRCC) in October 2018 to prepare a design and planning submission for the replacement of their existing single storey boat shed and ancillary structures with a new two storey clubhouse on their existing site on Meadow Lane, Oxford.

The site is to the north of Donnington Bridge in south east Oxford on a large open riverside plot set in a small woodland. It is leased to Falcon RCC on a long term lease by Oxford City Council. A popular and well used section of the Thames Path runs along the opposite side of the river between Iffley and Folly Bridge.

This Design and Access Statement should be read in conjunction with the following drawings:

- PA-01 Location and site plan
- PA-02 Existing plan and elevations
- PA-03 Proposed site plan
- PA-04 Proposed plans
- PA-05 Proposed elevations
- PA-06 Proposed view from riverbank
- PA-07 Proposed view from Donnington Bridge
- PA-08 Proposed view of main entrance

Also the following documents that are attached as appendices:

Appendix 01	History of Falcon Rowing & Canoe Club	FRCC
Appendix 02	Flood Risk Assessment	Monson Engineering
Appendix 03	Ecological Assessment	ECOSA
Appendix 04	Arboricultural Report	VennersArboriculture & Addendum
Appendix 05	Transport Assessment	JPPC



Fig 1. Aerial view of the Site.

2.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of this report is to set out the design parameters and justification for the replacement building. The current clubhouse is a 75 year old double pitched timber clad shed which houses storage for rowing boats, sculls, canoes and kayaks, changing, fitness room and a limited welfare area. There are a number of containers and compounds surrounding the main shed which house other boats that cannot be accommodated within the boat shed. The current facilities are no longer fit for purpose due to the age and now dilapidated condition of the building. The changing rooms and toilet facilities and lack of social space are particularly sub standard.

3.0 HISTORY OF FALCON ROWING & CANOEING CLUB

Below is a summary of the club history written by Nick Barnett, the current kayak captain. The full document is attached in Appendix 01. This document serves to illustrate the importance Falcon RCC has within the community in Oxford, both in terms of its long history but also the broad and varied services it successfully offers to a large number of diverse groups. The mission to champion the benefits of river activities to a broader community is embedded within the club ethos.

The Falcon Boat Club as it was first called, was formed in the spring of 1869 by a group of young men who primarily wanted to form a social club for pleasure rowing for residents of Oxford. At the time there were several other town rowing clubs including Isis, Rose, Ariel and Neptune. All were familiar names at the time but none of these exist any longer. City of Oxford Rowing Club was formed in 1968 by the amalgamation of Neptune RC and Hannington RC. Falcon is the oldest surviving city rowing club.

Falcon originally had strong connections with St Cross Church, Holywell. The founders were N. Harrison, whose father was the miller at Holywell Mill and a Church warden at St Cross, and G W Norton of 149 Woodstock Road, a young lawyer. A meeting was called on the 7th April 1869 at the Mill house and it was decided to form a Boat Club; a committee was formed which consisted of N Harrison, G W Norton, secretary and treasurer, W R Simms, F J Gadney, J H Castell, R Richmond, J Lumley, C Batchelor and A E Lockwood. The first general meeting of the Falcon Boat Club was held on the 1st June 1869.

Remarkably for the era, Falcon admitted active women members. Some of them were the daughters of watermen and could handle an oar with great skill although they were somewhat hampered by their tight lacing and long skirts.

In those early years, the rowing clubs owned very little. Headquarters were in a pub and the boats and oars were hired by arrangement with the boat hirers, the main one being Salters. As the rowing clubs owned little property, they paid no rent or rates, no electricity or gas bills, no boat licences and perhaps best of all had no costly boats to buy and maintain.

One of the first things the committee had to do was to choose the club colours. W R Simms drew up some designs and from these turquoise, blue, black and amber were chosen.

Falcon's first headquarters were in the King's Arms hotel at the corner of Parks Road and Holywell Street, even in those days a well-known University watering hole. Over the years, various other pubs were used as headquarters including the New Inn in St Aldate's, the Maidenhead on Turl Street, the Clarendon on Cornmarket, the old Whitehouse Abingdon Road, the Old Anchor St Aldate's and the Fox and Hounds Abingdon Road.



Fig 2. Falcon Rowing & Canoeing Club

One of the first things to be done after Falcon's first AGM in June 1869 was to hire a college barge for July and August complete with waterman. The waterman, who was a college servant, looked after the barge keeping it clean and tidy, pumped out the bilge water, fetched the coal and drinking water and moved the barge when required. Having acquired a barge, a piano was installed, and the barge was moored along the Christchurch Meadow bank. The barge was used as a grandstand for viewing the various regattas during the season. It was also used as a changing room. They were quite spacious and a coal burning stove kept it warm inside. It was not unusual for over two hundred visitors to be entertained on board during a regatta.



Fig 3. College barges moored along Christchurch Meadow during a summer regatta

During its 150 years of existence Falcon has had its highs and lows, but for sustained success the decade 1888-1897 was one of the most remarkable in its history. During these years it won the Grand Challenge Cup once, the District Cup twice, The Town Cup five times, the "Never-Won" Cup five times, the Prince of Wales Cup twice, the Gigs Pairs four times, the Senior Sculls six times, and the Whiffs three times, besides going Head of the River in the bumping races of 1894.

In 1958 Falcon became the first Oxford club to own their own boathouse, which they built themselves near Donnington Bridge. This long felt ambition was achieved on the 23rd August 1958, when it was opened by the City Architect, Mr E. G. Chandler.

Peter Travis joined Falcon and by 1994 he was elected as club President. Peter worked tirelessly to strengthen Falcon's links with the local community.

Peter helped to establish strong links with OXSRAD (Oxford & District Sports and Recreation Association for the Disabled) and organised rowing and kayaking for disabled groups. He was also pivotal in inviting members of Oxford's Asian Community to Falcon's boathouse and meadow to picnic and try boating. Over time this led to the formation of the Oxfordshire Bangladeshi Boat Club and the Annual Bangladeshi Boat Race which was held on the river at Donnington Bridge using traditional Bangladeshi Nowka Bais boats and supported by members of Falcon.

In 2008 Peter led another initiative, this time to form satellite clubs with local schools. The strongest link was with Cheney School with the foundation of Cheney Falcon Rowing Club, the county's only state school rowing club at the time, and Cheney Falcon kayaking club. Links with other local schools have also been made with various levels of success.

As well as having racing success Falcon is a very inclusive community club. Links with local schools, Scout troops, Sea Cadets, disability groups such as KEEN Oxford, the Dyspraxia Foundation and Oxfordshire Association for the Blind are an important part of the club. Over the years, the club has also managed to keep links to Oxford Brookes University and to establish new links with Oxford University.

Meanwhile the rowing membership at Falcon has also increased to over 150 members with a large proportion of juniors. The club has active rowing groups at all levels including sculling and rowing both casual and competitive. The Cheney Falcon rowing club continues to be strong.

In 2012 the work by Falcon members was recognised by the club being presented with the Queen's Award for Volunteering Groups by the Lord Lieutenant of Oxfordshire, Tim Stevenson.

Looking back over the 150-year history it's clear to see the importance of Falcon in the boating life of Oxford. It has been a place for thousands of Oxford residents to access and enjoy the river whether for recreation or competition. The future of the club looks very promising. Membership numbers are at an all time high with over 400 club members including a large proportion of juniors. Our plans are to build a new boathouse offering better facilities to our members and visitors such as disability and school groups. Larger changing rooms, with better toilet and shower facilities, a larger gym area and a social space will all enable the club to continue to inspire more people to be active outdoors; connecting people with their environment and promoting the benefits on mental and physical well-being.

4.0 CLIENT STATEMENT OF NEED

The need for a new club house is outlined in the Statement of Need from FRCC written by kayak captain Nick Barnett, below and opposite. Photographs to illustrate this are on the following page.



Statement of need for the development of a new boathouse

Falcon Rowing & Canoeing Club is based on the banks of the Isis river in Oxford adjacent to Donnington Bridge. The club currently operates from an old wooden boathouse that has served the club for many years but is no longer fit for purpose. The club is planning to replace the boathouse with a new building that will provide additional space and facilities for the growing membership. Planning permission was previously granted in 2010 following earlier approved outline applications, and renewed in 2013. At that time, the club was unable to raise sufficient funds and the planning lapsed. The financial situation is now much stronger, so a new application has been prepared.

Background

There are many University rowing clubs along the river in Oxford, but Falcon is the oldest surviving rowing club for the residents of city. The club was founded in 1869 by members of Holywell Church for the purpose of pleasure-boating. Over its 150-year history Falcon has evolved and now provides the sole base in Oxford for flat-water racing kayaking, as well as providing open canoeing and rowing.

Recently the club membership has grown significantly from 180 members from the time of the last planning application approved in 2010 to 410 in 2018. There are strong junior and adult sections in both rowing and kayaking with approximately 45% of the members being under the age of eighteen. Several juniors from the kayak club have represented GB internationally and the club has recently been awarded Talent Club Partnership funding by British Canoeing to train coaches and increase the number of junior paddlers training regularly.

In 2013 Falcon received the prestigious Queen's Award for Volunteers. The club actively partners with several local community and disability groups to provide opportunities for all to enjoy being on the river. Both the rowing and kayaking sections have strong links with local schools and the satellite club structure enables school groups to use the boathouse facilities.

The club also has a significant number of members who are "masters": those in their 40s, 50s, 60s and beyond. Some of these are beginners, new to the sport; others are returners. Amongst them are keen competitors and those who find different challenges and enjoyment from rowing, kayaking and canoeing. All enjoy Falcon's open welcome to those of all abilities and ambitions. It is notable that this masters group is one that the government is particularly keen should exercise more.

The management team at Falcon are committed to inspire more people to be active outdoors; connecting people with their environment and promoting the benefits on mental and physical well-being. This is not solely connected to racing as the club welcomes members who just wish to exercise in their own way and enjoy doing so as part of a group; this includes touring members who visit waterways further afield.

Improved facilities

The old wooden shed that forms the boathouse was bought second hand from a local firm and erected in the 1970's. Its facilities are inadequate in a number of ways, but it is also well past its design life, leaky and difficult and expensive to maintain. A new modern boathouse is

therefore essential to meet the needs of the existing club members and users, and to give scope for increasing the diversity of membership and activities in the future.

The current changing facilities are completely inadequate for the increased number of members. There are two tiny changing rooms with poor shower and toilet facilities that are not fit for purpose. The ladies is especially small with two showers and changing for about five. The plans for the new boathouse provide much larger changing room space with more showers and toilets. There will also be provision of toilets and changing areas for disabled users and a lift for wheelchair users to access the first-floor facilities. They would include improved provision for juniors too.

The current boathouse has no social space or kitchen facilities. The plans for the new boathouse include a canteen and seating area where club members can meet, for instance before and after training sessions. This social space will support club activities and provide a warm and inviting environment for users.

The current gym facilities comprise of a small room housing 4 or 5 rowing ergs (rowing machines). There is no internal space for kayaking ergs, nor any space for group training. As a result, many members do their on-land training, often separately, at other sports halls and gyms away from Falcon. A larger, modern gym in the new boathouse will help to keep members training together. It will also help meet the goal of increasing the number of juniors training regularly and importantly it will maintain training over the winter evenings and other times when the river is dark or unusable. This way a modern boathouse will extend the active season, providing opportunities all year round for participation, volunteering and learning.

Boat racking space is currently inadequate with multiple kayaks being housed in the rafters and outside in multiple unsightly containers and rowing boats being stored on outside racks. Storing kayaks and rowing boats within the same space also creates access problems. The new boathouse design will provide more racking space and will have separate space for kayaks and rowing boats to make access easier.



Fig 4. Club members gathered outside the existing club house.



Fig 5. Existing clubhouse. The roof has been repaired repeatedly to address leaks



Fig 6. Shipping containers used to store kayaks & external sculls racking



Fig 7. Ad hoc boat storage arrangements to cope with increased club membership



Fig 8. Showers & changing rooms are too small for current membership numbers & are in poor condition



Fig 9. Restricted internal space leading to ergs room & fire escape



Fig 10. Ergs room for 5 machines in restricted space with very little room for movement. There is an end mirror which makes the room look larger

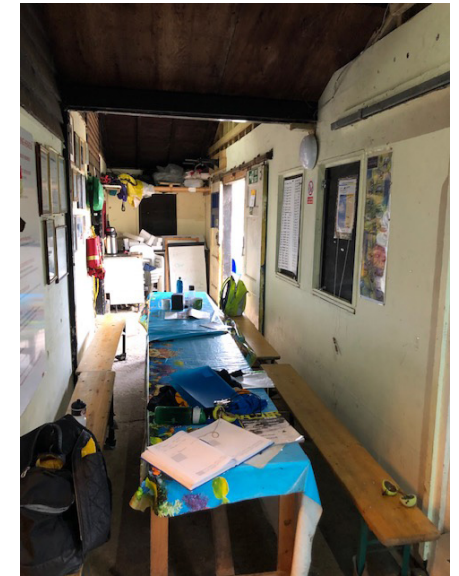


Fig 11. Narrow social space for meetings & refreshment, kitchenette can be seen on the far wall

5.0 SCOPE OF WORKS

The proposal involves the demolition of the old timber boat shed and erection of a new two storey clubhouse including boat storage, change rooms, social space and gym facilities on the north side of the site. Rowing sculls, boats and kayaks will be stored on the ground floor along with an equal access changing room, toilet, lift and stair providing access to the upper level. The first floor includes changing rooms, showers, social space and training gyms.

The old boat shed will be demolished and the resulting area will revert to open turfed meadow acting as informal social space for events, boat maintenance, picnics etc. replacing the adjacent land now allocated to the new clubhouse.

Oxford City Council owns the recently resurfaced car park adjacent to the site. The car park provides much needed parking for the club members generally in the evenings and at weekends.

The city council retains an access and maintenance strip of 2m along the water edge. Therefore the boat launch edge and soft river banking is not part of this application.



Fig 12. Extent of Falcon RCC site. A 2m strip along the river edge is retained by the EA and is not part of this application

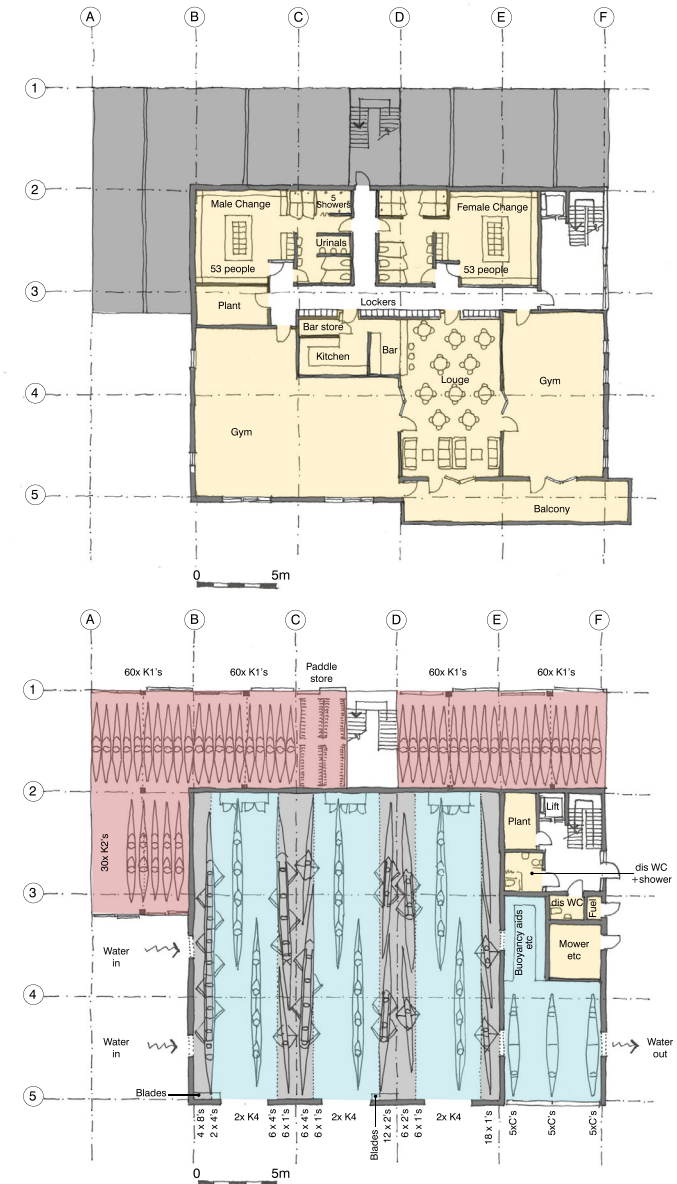


Fig 13. Sketch plans showing layout during design process

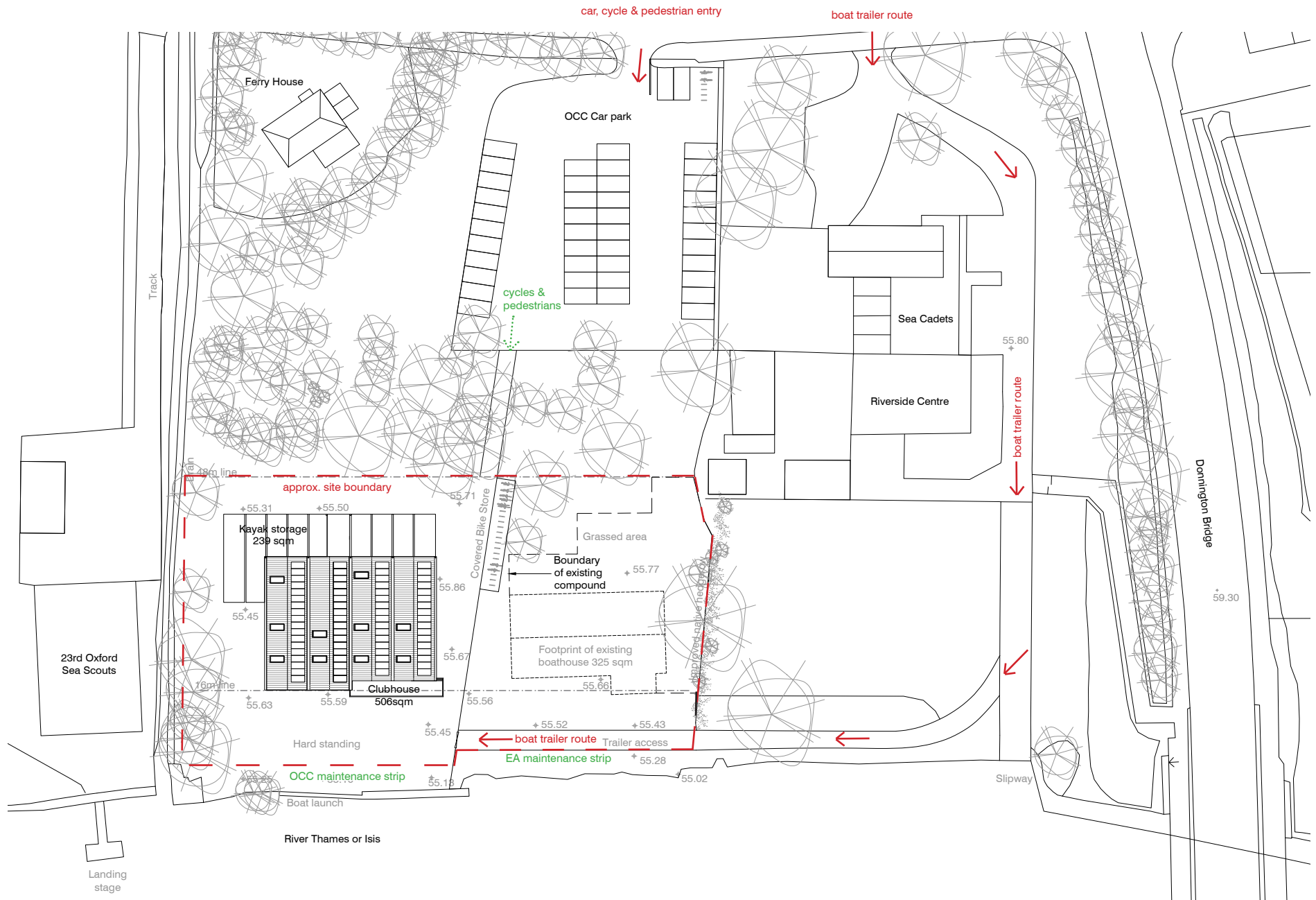


Fig 14. Site plan showing movement around the site

6.0 FLOOD RISK

The site sits within Flood Zone 3b, i.e. Effective floodplain. A detailed Flood Risk Assessment has been completed by Monson Engineering Consultancy, Refer to Appendix 02. The proposed building is classed as Water Compatible as it is a sports club catering for water-based activities. It is designed to be floodable with large openings in ground floor walls allowing flood water to flow freely in upstream and downstream directions. In line with the recommendations of the FRA, full port non-return valves will be installed in the ground floor accessible toilets and where gullies are located to prevent back flow. Electrical circuitry will be set at 1.2m above slab level and the main switchboard will be housed on the first floor. The main entrance door into the lobby will be flood resilient to ensure that area is sealed in the event of flooding.

The building sits on a plinth of robust material which extends to a height of 1.8m with sheet metal cladding above. Both materials can withstand flooding but the intention is that the plinth will serve as a flood resilient base to the building.

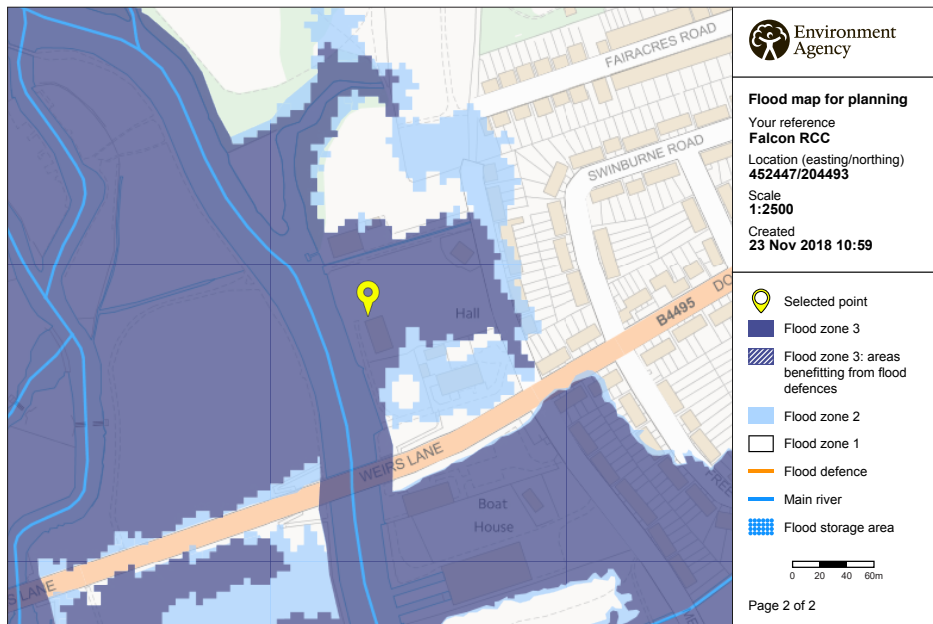


Fig 15. Environment Agency Flood map for planning showing site centred on yellow pin. Most of the site is in Flood Zone 3. Refer to the full Flood Risk Assessment in Appendix 02 for full analysis.

7.0 PLANNING HISTORY & CONSULTATION

The Falcon RCC site has a long planning history. A number of applications for a new clubhouse have been submitted and granted approval, however they have not been realised due to lack of adequate funding. Presently seed funding is available to commence the project and there is momentum from within the club membership to realise the project.

Below is a summary of applications dating from 1995:

94/00817/NO Aug 1995. Berman Guedes Partnership. Demolition of boathouse & outline planning for Siting & Means of Access of new 2 storey replacement boathouse with ancillary facilities. Permission granted.

01/01279/NF Sept 2001. Erection of racking and two containers for storage of boats and ancillary equipment for temporary period. Permission granted.

03/01574/FUL Oct 2003. Permanent permission for temporary boat racking, storage containers & metal fencing. Permission refused due to absence of a flood risk assessment & retention of containers being in contravention of CS26. The proposal was deemed as being in direct risk of flooding, likely to increase flooding elsewhere & reduce flood water storage.

04/00257/OUT May 2004. Berman Guedes Stretton. Outline planning for demolition of existing single storey boathouse and erection of 2 storey boatclub building. Matters approved siting, design, external appearance & access. Permission granted.

04/00441/FUL April 2004. Permanent retention of racking and 3 containers for the storage of boats and ancillary equipment. Permission granted

09/01918/FUL July 2010. CWD Architects. Planning submission for demolition of existing boathouse & redevelopment of boathouse with club facilities, associated storage & landscaping. Permission granted.

13/01655/EXT August 2013. Application to extend planning permission 09/01918/FUL. Permission granted.

The submitted proposal considers and addresses current local and national planning policies including the following:

Oxford Local Plan 2001 - 2016 :

CP1 - Development Proposals

CP8 - Design Development to Relate to its Context

CP9 - Creating Successful New Places

CP10 - Siting Development to Meet Functional Needs

CP11 - Landscape Design

CP20 - Lighting

TR1 - Transport Assessment

TR2 - Travel Plans

TR3 - Car Parking Standards

TR4 - Pedestrian & Cycle Facilities

NE6 - Oxford's Watercourses

SR12 - Protection of Water-Bases Recreation Facilities

SR13 - New Water-Based Recreation Facilities

HE10 - View Cones of Oxford

Core Strategy

CS2 - Previously developed and greenfield land.

CS18 - Urban Design, town character, historic environment

CS19 - Community safety

CS4 - Green Belt.

CS11 - Flooding.

CS12_ - Biodiversity

CS21_ - Green spaces, leisure and sport

Other Material Considerations:

National Planning Policy Framework

A consultation meeting was held on site with Paul Backman, OCC Sports Development Officer and Robert Fowler, Planning Team Leader in October 2018 and a scheme in development was presented by club members which showed a two storey building with three monopitches in the same location as this application, ie the north end of the site. Summary of feedback was as follows:

- Council officers were supportive of the project
- Planner preferred one building which would accommodate all boats. They did not like two buildings as it 'urbanised' the plot.

- Spreading the building across the river frontage and losing the meadow was not looked upon favourably
- Any design should include bike & refuse storage, external lighting and planting.
- Design should look like a boat house and reflect some of aspects of the existing boat houses on the Isis while acknowledging the rich variety that already exists.



Fig 16. Existing view from Donnington Bridge.

8.0 DESIGN

8.1 Use

The proposal is to replace the existing boat shed with a new two-storey clubhouse for Falcon Rowing and Canoeing Club. In the proposal the ground floor of the main building element will be mostly boat storage, accommodating a mixture of rowing boats, sculls and K4 kayaks. Single storey K1, K2 kayaks and C2 canoes are to be housed in 'wine rack' type storage located around the east and part of the north facades.

A small lobby with stairs, lift and accessible facilities forms the main entrance on the south east corner of the new building giving access to the first floor which accommodates male, female and coaches changing and WC facilities. In addition to this, two large gym spaces will allow the club to organise a full training programme on its premises rather than having to rent other community facilities elsewhere. There is also social space with service kitchen and associated storage and plantroom. The social and gym space will open out onto a long balcony overlooking the boat landing and river.



Fig 17. Proposed view from Donnington Bridge.

8.2 Siting and layout

The existing boat shed building has a footprint of 325 sqm combined with the numerous storage sheds and containers around the site the footprint of the existing facility increases to approx. 740 sqm. The new building has a footprint of 506sqm with the building set out on a 6.2m grid to facilitate boat and kayak storage. The aim is to consolidate all activities into one clearly defined building which will accommodate all boats, whether rowing boats, sculls, canoes or kayaks in a covered and secure environment. Currently a large number of boats are stored outside in enclosures and storage containers with ad hoc cover and security arrangements. The overall appearance of the current facility is very "Heath Robinson" and testimony to the endurance of the club. Many kayaks are stored in shipping containers which whilst secure and weatherproof, have been brought onto site to respond to demand and not as part of a planned expansion. The resulting area after the removal of the existing buildings will be reinstated as a turfed area.

The brief requirement is to accommodate 4 rowing eights; 14 rowing fours; 18 rowing doubles/pairs; 36 single sculls; 6 K4 kayaks; 30 K2 kayaks; 240 K1 kayaks and 15 C2 canoes. There is space for around 45 people in each changing room plus the ability for adults to change separately if a junior session is scheduled. The two gyms will allow for circuit training/studio-based training and machine-based training to take place simultaneously.

Internally the first floor layout keeps more discrete uses such as changing rooms & WC's on the east side with the large social and activity spaces on the west side overlooking the river. A good sized balcony on the west side turns the south corner giving a good vantage point to watch racing and enjoy afternoon and evening sun.

The social and welfare aspect of the club is very important and is currently successful despite the obvious lack of adequate facilities. The lounge in the new proposal will enable formal gatherings, eg. club nights, talks and activities which the club cannot accommodate at present, but it will also provide informal gathering space at the end of training sessions. A kitchen and servery mean light refreshment can be served.

The proposed building occupies the north side of the current site allowing the new building to be built before the old clubhouse and ancillary storage is demolished. It is set back from the river by 16m which is the minimum possible to turn rowing eights and launch them safely into the river. Large doors on the west façade open onto the hardstanding which gives a robust surface for boat traffic. The main entrance is on the south east corner aligned with a path from the OCC car park which forms the main arrival point for users arriving by car, foot or cycle. The path from the car park to the main entrance bisects the site with the boat activity hardstanding to the north and a large area of meadow

to the south.

A secondary external stair on the east façade gives access to the first floor and acts as a secondary means of escape and 'dirty' route direct to changing rooms for kayakers who often get wet and muddy.

The existing concrete boat launch pontoon and a 2m strip along the river bank for the full length of the west boundary are to be retained as existing for Oxford City Council access and maintenance.

The ground floor is largely boat storage with access and egress for rowing boats through west facing doors directly onto the hardstanding by the boat launch area. Kayaks being lighter, will be carried to the storage racks at the east side of the building; canoes will be stored in the racks on the north side with access directly onto the river.

There are no changes proposed to the current vehicle access to the site. The existing arrangement for loading trailers for away events is via a track from Meadow Lane past the Riverside Centre and through the existing gate on the south boundary. The intention is to retain this arrangement.

8.3 Scale

The scale of building is considered appropriate to its location. It sits between the Sea Scout HQ to the north and the Riverside Centre for Outside Learning to the south. The Sea Scouts HQ is partially 2 storey with a deep pitched roof with the gable facing the river; Riverside is a mainly flat roofed building block shared with the Sea Cadets and has two areas where the roof pops up reflecting large single volumes beneath. From the towpath on the west side of the river these three buildings are read together split by open lawn areas with a continuous green backdrop behind. Riverside is set

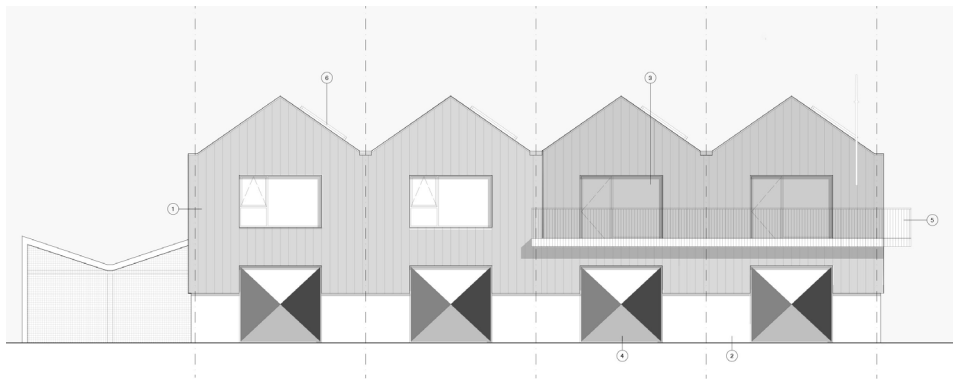


Fig 18. Proposed front elevation from the river.

back reflecting a slightly more detached relationship with the water. Donnington Bridge forms a visual 'fullstop' to the river bank to the south.

The proposal although larger in volume than the existing, sits comfortably next to the Scout HQ with a similar height to the ridge of 8.9m. The proposed eaves height is 6.8m and the ground to first floor measures 3.8m which allows for six boat high racked storage. The repeated pitched roof module reduces the bulk of the building and reinforces the boatshed typology.

8.4 Appearance

The building design references traditional riverside boathouse typology and reinterprets it in contemporary language. Such a reference also echoes the previous boat shed which has become an iconic reference for club when compared with other club and boathouses on the river. Small pitched repetitive gables offer a dynamic and animated building presence to the river. The building mass is split with an obvious material change. Reflecting the different uses between the 2 levels the base is solid and robust with a blockwork plinth and the upper level is prefinished metal cladding. The cladding will be crisply detailed, providing a robust, low maintenance material which will retain the quality of its appearance for many years.

The boat storage entry doors are painted with the club colours and represent another carry over from the existing boat shed.

Another distinct feature of the design is the kayak storage. The racking has been arranged so the boats are seen end on when approaching the building. The metal grillage secures the kayaks but allows the often brightly coloured shells to be seen through the perforated screening in a playful manner.



Fig 19. Proposed rear elevation.

8.5 Landscaping

The existing clubhouse sits within a large riverside plot with a combination of mown open pasture and mixed deciduous woodland around the boundaries. North and south boundaries are largely native hedgerow with small trees and some fencing. A path and open concrete culvert on the northern boundary indicate where the old ferry used to run between east and west sides of the Isis River before Donnington Bridge was opened in 1962; to the west is the river bank with some riparian planting; to the east is a woodland strip of mixed deciduous trees.

The meadow on the site provides a multifunctional outside space for the club to carry out boat maintenance and cleaning and acts as an informal picnic and social space. A pop-up café operates from spring to autumn in a small tent offering refreshments to members and parents at club training sessions at the weekend.

The guiding principles behind the approach to the proposed landscape has been to retain where possible the existing nature of the site, ie. a semi-natural wooded waterside environment; and improve it in a considered way so the river-based leisure activities are further enriched by a carefully managed natural environment around it. The surface surrounding the building needs to be robust enough to withstand heavy foot traffic and some vehicle traffic when boat trailers are in use; but is intended to not detract from the appearance of a semi-natural environment. Hardstanding is proposed to be resin bound stone which is SUDs compliant, and will offer a robust but permeable surface which is also suitable for vehicle traffic.

The club commissioned an Ecological Assessment, refer to Appendix 03. Although the biodiversity of the current site is not significant the club is keen to improve habitats by planting trees and shrubs that will encourage a greater range of fauna and flora. The site is bounded by native hedgerows some of which is patchy and in poor condition. The proposal is to infill where hedgerow has been lost with native hedging, replace trees that will be removed as part of the planned development and provide supplementary native tree planting to strengthen the woodland edge to the east of the site. Once the existing clubhouse is demolished the resulting space will be landscaped to replace the open pasture lost with the building of the new clubhouse. Edges will be left to grow thus providing valuable habitat for insects, birds and butterflies. Any dead wood will be set aside in piles to encourage greater biodiversity.

A tree survey was commissioned for the previously approved application. To reduce project costs the same report has been re-used with an amended layout indicating the proposed tree removal. Refer to Appendix 04.

Artificial lighting will be kept to the minimum to provide for safety and security and will be designed to prevent as much light leakage to the river as possible thus reducing the impact on roosting birds



Fig 20. Proposed site plan.

and bat feeding routes which are likely to be along the river. External lights will be fitted with daylight sensors so they switch off when sufficient daylight levels are reached. Movement sensors will trigger lighting along paths and on the building; fittings will have filters to direct light onto path surfaces or angled down above entrance doors reducing light spread.

9.0 ACCESS

Falcon RCC has strong links with KEEN Oxford and OXSRAD (Oxford & District Sports and Recreation Association for the Disabled) and would like to expand participation subject to the land-based facilities to support this. The proposal provides 2 accessible ground floor WC's including a dedicated change and shower room. A lift will enable mobility impaired users to access the upper floor facilities with ease.

Access to and around the current boat shed was across a deeply potholed car park via a rough path and across often muddy turf. The car park has since been asphalted by OCC so provides a sealed and more even surface. There are no indoor facilities for disabled users in the current clubhouse. This will be addressed in the new proposal, access to which will be via a Part M compliant access

path from the car park. Hard standing around the building will provide access to all boat related areas. Lighting levels will be improved to help provide a safe and secure route around the clubhouse.

The clubhouse is close to a major route east or west across the river joining Iffley Road in the east or Abingdon Road to the west both of which are main arterial roads into and out of Oxford city centre. There is an excellent bus service along both roads.

Access for refuse collection will remain as per the existing arrangement, with trucks picking up from the car park on Meadow Lane. There will be a dedicated and secure refuse compound located on the east side of the building with separate recycling facilities.

10.0 TRANSPORT

The club commissioned a Transport Assessment from JPPC in 2009. Much of this is still relevant to this submission and is re-presented along with the statement below.

Falcon RCC carried out a survey of members in March 2017. One area of the survey asked for all methods of transport used by each member. Of the 169 respondents about 40% currently travel only by car. This will include juniors who may need to be dropped off and collected by parents, partly due to the lack of facilities for changing from wet clothes, and space for groups to await shared transport. The lack of changing and storage facilities will similarly affect adults. 115 drove to the club, 76 cycled, 27 walked and 9 took public transport. Of these 66 classed themselves as very frequent users; 29

as frequent users (several times a week) 62 as infrequent recreational users (once or twice a week) and 12 as non-participants or supporter only. Although this does not indicate how many people are using the club at any one time it does indicate that there is a large group of people who use the club most days of the week and of those a significant number are likely to cycle. The proposal includes increasing current bike racks from the current 12 to 20 in line with Oxford Local Plan requirements.

Use of the OCC car park by Falcon RCC members which is highest at weekends and seasonally during the evenings, complements use by daytime workers.

11.0 SUSTAINABILITY

The primary approach to sustainable building design will be to make the envelope work hard to passively reduce the burden of energy running costs for the club, this will be achieved with high levels of insulation in the wall, floor and roof build ups. Services systems and controls will be efficient and where possible heat recovery systems specified. All light fittings will be low energy LED with new double glazed aluminium framed windows with high level thermal performance. Large opening windows orientated towards the west and south with opening rooflights in the north facing slopes of the roof will help prevent overheating in the height of the summer by creating a stack effect thereby ventilating the first floor by passive means.

The club is committed to providing and operating a sustainability facility. To support this an alternative



Fig 21. Proposed view from the river bank.

energy source is proposed with PV on the south facing roof slopes. The club is currently investigating grant funding to support this.

Rainwater will be collected in a large tank and used for boat washing. At present hosepipes are connected to the mains water supply. The hardstanding around the building is proposed as SUDs compliant resin bound stone.

There is strong support within the club for sustainable building design and environmental issues, with a number of members employed in these areas.

12.0 SUMMARY

The information in this statement demonstrates that the proposal represents a well-balanced and sensitive replacement to a facility for a thriving and important community sports and recreation club. The statement for need is clearly presented and provides a compelling argument supporting the proposal. The proposal is consistent with the local and national planning policies and incorporates the appropriate response to the setting. For the reasons outlined in the submission we are seeking Planning Approval for the proposed new clubhouse for Falcon Rowing and Canoeing Club.