Design & Access Statement
Bury Lake Young Mariners,
The Aquadrome, Rickmansworth

Introduction
The existing sailing club site on Bury Lake, at the Aquadrome in Rickmansworth is home to Bury Lake Young Mariners, Nomad Kayak Club and Colne Valley Special Sailors, who will be collectively named as BLYM for ease of reference. The clubs co-operate closely together to share and run the existing lakeside facilities. BLYM is a charity run wholly by volunteers. Their specific aims include the development of young people and those with disabilities.

BLYM has occupied the site for over 30 years. The main clubhouse and boat store building on the site is over 80 years old and is showing signs of deterioration. It can no longer cope with the spatial demands of the club and urgently needs to be replaced with larger and more appropriate facilities.

BLYM already has planning permission to replace the facilities with a much larger clubhouse and new boat house, though unfortunately the design was found to be too complex and beyond the funding capabilities of BLYM and TRDC. It also presented operational problems in trying to vacate the existing building before the new boat house could be erected. Therefore a new proposal has been prepared for a far simpler set of buildings of a similar scale, which can be more easily phased and occupied.

BLYM now seek initial feedback from the TRDC planning team on these new proposals.

Site analysis and evaluation
Location and character

The site is located within the Rickmansworth Aquadrome, on the south-west corner of Bury Lake. The lake is one of two former gravel pits which have been flooded for leisure use. They have also become a wildlife site and nature reserve due to the wide variety of species that have settled there.

There are mature trees within and surrounding the existing site. A portion of the proposed new site to the NE of the existing clubhouse is largely open grassland.
The existing facilities

The existing site area is 6,380sqm (0.638 ha/ 1.576 acres). The properties on the site comprise the following buildings:

- BLYM club and boat house and ancillary equipment storage building
- BLYM storage containers and fuel store block
- BLYM boat park storage sheds
- Jetty/landing stage
- Slip way
- Two floating jetties

Nomad Kayak club storage sheds located off site within the Aquadrome Works Compound opposite the café that will be moved to BLYM to form part of the scheme

The proposal

The proposal is to demolish the existing clubhouse buildings, erect a pair of new clubhouse buildings on land to the NE and a new boat store building to the SW. There would be new hard and soft landscaping to provide boat store, boat rigging and access paths. The two existing floating jetties would be relocated and a new slipway added.
The Nomad shed will provide temporary accommodation and be placed to the south of the boat store building and demolished at phase 4. Four steel storage containers will be permanently placed to the south of the Nomad shed within the polo site and used for boat storage only.

The Local Plan

The established use on the site is leisure use, for the current sailing club. It is located within Green Belt.

Extract from Three Rivers map

Relevant Three Rivers Policies

The relevant policies are as follows:

- Green Belt GB1
- County Wildlife Site & Local Nature Reserve, N1-5,
- General design GEN 1, 3
- Design, D1-3, D6-9
- Sport & Leisure facilities, L1, 3, 8
- Appendix 1: Making Development More Sustainable

Planning History

There is an existing planning permission, ref 13/0935/FUL granted on 18.10.2013, for a new clubhouse building of 680sqm and new boat store building of 312sqm on an application site area of 0.92ha.

The proposed clubhouse was located on land to the NE of the existing building. The current proposal for the new clubhouse buildings (the Wet & Dry Zones) shows a similar site location, building height and overall footprint size to the approved scheme. The form of the buildings has been considerably simplified.

The current proposal for the new boat store building is located to the SW of the existing clubhouse, allowing it to be erected and occupied before demolishing the old club and boat house. It is a similar footprint to the approved scheme, though it is slightly higher, to accommodate the current BLYM brief requirements for storage.

The approved scheme included the removal of some trees from the site. Whilst some tree removal is still anticipated, this has been reduced in comparison to the approved scheme. It is proposed to replace those trees removed with new specimens in a location to be agreed with TRDC: BLYM would welcome TRDC feedback on this.

Consultation

The applicant has sought pre-application advice from the Three Rivers planning team. The pre-application response was generally positive - ref 15/0967/PREAPP, dated 18.06.15. The main issue raised was the proposed removal of the crack willow trees, though in subsequent discussion it was identified that the
removal of these trees had already been approved in the previous planning consent for BLYM, therefore this objection was withdrawn. Indeed it was clarified that the existing willow tree in the middle of the site had also been proposed to be removed in the previous application, however it is now proposed to keep this tree by careful placement of the new building layout.

It was advised that the proposal to form a new boardwalk along the lakeside would affect existing lakeside planting and proposals would be required for new planting in another location to compensate. The latest proposal uses a pontoon boardwalk set 15m from the lakeside and therefore would not affect the existing lakeside plants.

It was recommended that the EA be consulted on the flood risk assessment. An application has been made to the EA and BLYM are awaiting a response.

The design solution

![Proposed site plan](image)

Site layout
The proposed site layout will comprise the following:
- **Dry Zone**: reception, training, catering, chandlery
- **Wet Zone**: changing rooms, wet suit and buoyancy aid stores
- **Boat store**: storage of power boats, sail hanging and drying, maintenance workshop and storage
- 4 no. steel containers and shed to serve the kayak club boat storage
- An existing container relocated at the edge of the existing hardstanding to hold additional sail storage
- The existing fuel store, kept in its current location
- The existing boat park timber shed and two containers for additional equipment storage
- One existing and one additional new slipway
- One existing jetty
- Two existing floating jetties relocated on a pontoon to serve the lake more directly adjacent new wet and dry zone buildings

The existing clubhouse/ storage building and the timber shed to the north of the boat storage building will be demolished along with the temporarily placed Nomad Shed (see phasing below).

Proposed gross external floor area of wet and dry zone buildings: 690sqm

Proposed site area: 8,548sqm (0.855ha; 2.112 acres)

It is essential for safe supervision of the lake and sailing activities that the reception and training suite overlook the lake. The best location for this is the land to the NE of the existing clubhouse. Therefore the new Wet & Dry Zone buildings (which are closely linked operationally) are proposed to be located there.

Members and visitors arrive between the Wet & Dry Zone buildings at the new reception. Here they are registered and told where their activities and supervisors will be.

The reception is placed to allow a member (the volunteer in charge that day) to view the lake, brief members, supervise the catering and training areas and staff the chandlery. They can also supervise the Wet Zone stores and changing areas.

There would be a paved patio between the Dry Zone and the lake for gathering members, briefing and equipping them before they go out onto the lake via the relocated floating jetties.

The new boat house would be located to the SW on land already used for boat storage. The location is partly screened by existing trees and set back from view from the main part of the lake.

Aerial view from NW (sketch impression - refer to scale drawings for accurate landscape details)

**Wet & Dry Zone buildings**

The Dry Zone building has been placed at an angle to the Wet Zone so that the reception can have an uninterrupted view of the lake and waterside frontage. Both buildings are linked by their roofs to form a covered entrance space next to reception.
The eaves height of the Wet & Dry Zones is similar to that of the approved clubhouse scheme, and they will have a similar footprint size and location. The main difference is that they are designed as two simple rectangular blocks with a straight forward dual pitch roof over each. The approach is more consistent with simple rural and lakeside buildings and is more economical to realise.

It is proposed to clad the sides of the buildings with ship-lap boarding and the gables with white render. This will keep the visual impact low, whilst reflecting light into the covered area between them. A red facing brick plinth will visually link both blocks together. They will be surrounded by a raised non-slip decking board zone to keep the floors and access above the predicted flood level. The roofs facing the lake will have a sedum finish to help blend the buildings with their surroundings and provide additional habitat. The roofs facing away from the lake would have a more economical dark grey metal cladding and rooflights are positioned near the ridge to allow daylight deep into the middle of the buildings, as well as helping to keep them naturally ventilated.

**Boat store building**
The proposed new boat store building is higher than the approved scheme in order to accommodate the revised assessment of BLYM storage requirements. It would be located away from the main lakeside frontage to minimise its visual impact on the lake. The cladding approach would be very similar to the Wet & Dry Zone buildings: brick plinth, and dark grey metal roofing with translucent panels for daylight. The upper wall panels would have a similar texture and colour to the ship-lap boarding on the Wet and Dry Zones.

*Sketch impressions - refer to scale drawings for accurate landscape details:*

- View from access road looking SW
- View of new dry & wet zone clubhouse buildings
- View of dry & wet zone buildings from the lake
- View of whole site from across lake (from W)

**Phasing**
It is essential that BLYM are able to continue operations whilst the construction work is going on. The phasing strategy is to erect all of the new buildings (wet and dry zone clubhouse buildings and boat store building) before emptying and demolishing the existing clubhouse building. The existing building actually houses all of the activities which will be split across the three new buildings, so it will need to stay in operation until they are completed and fitted out.

There will also be two additional temporary storage containers, in addition to their existing storage provisions, to serve the Nomad Kayak club located to the south of the new boat house. They will be put in
place during the construction works to house the expanding kayak club equipment and changing facilities until the new buildings are ready.

The boat park and existing boat storage and rigging areas near the existing clubhouse will remain operational throughout the building construction works. There will only be temporary clearance of the current boat storage area to allow new hardstanding to be laid around the new boat store building.

The phased construction plan:
- Phase 1 - move Nomad sheds up to main site, this includes placement of 4no. shipping containers and temporary timber shed
- Phase 2 - erect Wet & Dry Zones (may be preceded by dredging, the new bank works across the front of these buildings, and ditch re-alignment)
- Phase 3 - New boat house
- Phase 4 - demolition of existing boat house, wind surfers hut and Nomad timber shed.

Ecology
The application will be accompanied by a completed Biodiversity Checklist and a full Habitat Survey prepared by Arbtech Consulting Ltd.

The roofs of the wet and dry zone buildings are finished in sedum to increase the habitat for wildlife.

Landscape design
The application will be accompanied by a tree survey.

The approved scheme included the removal of some trees from the site. Some tree removal is still anticipated due to the operational requirement to have a clear view of Bury Lake from the reception area. This requirement is to ensure supervision of safe sailing activities. The number of trees proposed to be removed has been reduced from the approved scheme: key specimens including a large weeping willow will be kept because of the careful positioning of the new clubhouse buildings. It is proposed to replace those trees removed with new specimens in a location to be agreed with TRDC.

Wherever possible it is proposed to keep grassed areas within the BLYM site and reinforce them locally with recycled nylon matting where required for moving boats across them.

The existing lakeside boardwalks would be resurfaced with new non-slip decking boards and extended along the new frontage adjacent to the new clubhouse buildings using a pontoon board-walk access for sailing. It is intended that existing lakeside plants should be retained by using the pontoon, set 15m from the existing lake edge.

The existing concrete slab for the current club house would be kept and re-used as hard standing for boat storage. The existing hardstanding around this area would be kept and extended only as far as required to allow for manoeuvring of boats to and from the new boat house.

The paved patio area by the Dry Zone building would use a porous block paver finish.

Sustainable design
BLYM are keen to achieve a sustainable design. Oakley M&E Design have been engaged to develop a comprehensive approach to the energy provision and use. The following passive design principles have been followed:
- Simplify building footprints and minimise area of envelope in relation to area served;
- The Boat House building is not heated but it is naturally day-lit from the rooflights and windows/doors; it also has natural ventilation via high level louvres to allow natural drying of sails;
- The Wet & Dry Zone buildings have been orientated to allow for the potential to fit solar panels on the south facing roofs (facing away from the lake);
• The current energy strategy for the Wet & Dry Zone buildings uses EITHER air source heat pumps OR a water source heat pump. The positions of the proposed air source heat pumps (ashp’s) have been identified on the drawings, should this route be chosen. If used, the water source heat pump would be located in the plant room with concealed pipes laid out into the lake. It is possible that a gas supply may be required and a suitable location for the gas cylinder has been identified within the existing boat park enclosure.

• The Wet & Dry Zone buildings will be naturally day lit from a central top-lit corridor, which will also encourage natural ventilation and dispersion of steam from showers: mechanical ventilation will be avoided but there may be an opportunity for heat recovery at high level;

• Building materials are being selected on the basis of being durable, reasonably resilient against vandalism and having either low embodied energy or being recyclable or both.

Flood risk assessment
A key operational requirement for BLYM is that the reception area and training rooms should have a clear view of the whole of Bury Lake so that members can be supervised and safety ensured at all times. Therefore the only logical position for the new clubhouse buildings is on the land to the NE of the existing building, where such a view can be achieved.

It is known that this site falls below the predicted 1 in 5 year flood level of 44.0m (AOD). The average level is about 43.8m. Therefore it is proposed to raise the floor level of the new Wet & Dry zone buildings to 44.325m: above the 1 in 5 year flood level and also above the 1 in 100 year flood level of 44.25m.

Generally the site levels will remain as they are, but the construction of the new clubhouse buildings would consist of a suspended concrete slab over dwarf walls, precast ground beams and piles. The dwarf walls would be ventilated and would allow the sub-floor void to flood, minimising the effect of displacement during any future floods.

The new boathouse will be located on a portion of the site to the SW of the existing clubhouse which is known to be above any likely floods. The internal floor level will also be set at 44.325m, which is close to the existing ground levels there.

An application has been made to the EA seeking comments on this strategy.
Access

The site is accessed via a weight limited bridge, over 600m away, at the end of Frogmoor Lane, off the Harefield Road. There is a public car park about 300m from the site which is the main parking area serving club members. The Rickmansworth Metropolitan Line station is approximately 1.4km walk from the site and there are bus routes along the perimeter of the Aquadrome.

There are 10 marked car bays adjacent to the club entrance, off the access road/path, for club members carrying equipment to and from the site and for disabled members/visitors. There is also informal overflow parking under the trees, adjacent to the site.

The proposals seek to retain 8 of these marked spaces and continue to make use of the informal parking.

A key operational requirement for BLYM is that the facilities should be accessible to disabled members and visitors. The current club house is all accessible on one level, but there are no disabled access toilet or changing facilities. It is also very cramped and does not allow good manoeuvring for wheelchair users.

Given the requirement to avoid flooding and satisfy Environment Agency requirements, the new Wet & Dry zone buildings will be raised up above the existing ground levels and therefore ramped access with balustrading and handrails will be provided to comply with Part M of the Building Regulations. Once up at this level all clubhouse facilities will be accessed on one level, without internal steps or ramps. Specific provisions are:

- wide doors and corridors for easy access and manoeuvring;
- simple linear internal access routes which minimise travel distances and are easier for members who are blind or partially sighted to remember and negotiate;
- purpose designed disabled toilets and changing areas to comply with Part M and Changing Places Consortium guidelines

Across the site the aim is to improve access paths to make them easier to negotiate. The existing harnesses will be relocated on the new jetties to help disabled members into the sailing boats.

Summary

The applicant has sought pre-application advice from the Three Rivers planning team and responded to the issues raised.