

# Upton Water Sports Lake



Image courtesy of Upton Rowing Club

## Project name:

Upton Water Sports Lake

## Location:

Upton-upon-Severn

## Services:

Masterplanning

Landscape Architecture

## The Brief

Upton Rowing Club (URC) is an active and friendly recreational/competitive member club in the town of Upton-upon-Severn which is looking to expand. Affiliated to British Rowing, it teaches rowing through the national recommended initiatives.

The club is currently constrained by its present location at the nearby marina. With the realistic opportunity to relocate the boathouse to a riverside location, One Creative Environments Ltd. (One) was appointed to prepare a concept masterplan for URC's wider ambitions.

In addition to a new club facility, an approved sand and gravel extraction project in the nearby floodplain presented an opportunity, upon restoration of the site, to provide the rowing club with a purpose-built water sports lake. This posed an exciting prospect for URC to grow and provide a local community amenity and water sports facility for local and regional competitive events.

One prepared a conceptual masterplan of the rowing lake and surrounding area to outline the feasibility, to illustrate the vision and facilitate stakeholder support with the landowners, gravel extractor, local planning authorities and the community.

## Project Overview

The agreement in principle for the gravel extraction on land, within the floodplain north of Upton-upon-Severn, was fundamental in providing an exciting opportunity for URC to develop a long-term plan for an open water rowing course. This would make way for the first rowing lake of its kind in the West Midlands and provide an active, local facility for the community.



Image courtesy of Upton Rowing Club

The conceptual masterplan designed by One illustrated the lakeside landscape of some 51 hectares, with a 1000m six lane competition course at the heart of the plan. Wildlife habitats were integrated into the sympathetic formation of headlands and lagoons, with greatly enhanced wetland habitats and a net increase in biodiversity value.

The lake not only offers a safe year-round training facility, but will enable other water sports to be held such as dragon boat racing, canoeing, team building exercises and also for educational use. With the inclusion of a triathlon route in the plan, this adds an additional interest, versatility and income for the project, and potentially increases the possibility of securing Sports England funding.

As a phased scheme, the client is prioritising the relocation of a new boathouse to improve their outgrown facilities and is currently seeking funding to realise the first phase. The intent is to develop a contemporary building that responds to the floodplain constraints next to the River Severn, is iconic in its design and complements its picturesque location next to the town of Upton-upon-Severn.

The proposal will address many of the previous constraints and provides a new centre with direct access onto the river, increased storage space for boats, provision of toilets, showers, changing facilities, gymnasium, catering and social areas and the provision of additional parking spaces. Additionally, it will also offer the opportunity for the club to hold regattas and time trial Head Race competitions.



“ One helped visualise and create a vision of a water sports centre beyond our original idea of a rowing lake. ”

Peter Barker, Chairman - Upton Rowing Club

## The Benefits

- **Masterplanning provides a clear vision** – enabling stakeholders to visualise the concept and bring together collaborative support for an exciting new sporting facility. This masterplan provided a clear blueprint of a unique water sports provision and dissolved many potential objections.
- **In-house visionary design working outside the box** – One’s design team went beyond just a rowing lake, highlighting the multi-functionality of the facility for both sports users and also as a tourist destination in its own right. The broad internal resource capacity and insight of the company ensures each project reaches its maximum potential.
- **Bringing major benefits to the local economy and community** – the project not only provides a unique regional water facility for people to enjoy, but also a significant boost to the local economy. The scheme has brought together the local community and decision makers to help support funding that adds substantial value to the project. Once realised, the centre will most certainly raise the town’s and County’s profile and provide a first-class water sports facility for generations to come.



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