Boathouse to rise again

By Reg Little

SIX years after its historic boathouse was destroyed in a blaze, University College. Oxford, has submitted plans for a strikingly modern £1.8m replacement

The new boathouse could hardly look less like the Victorian grade II listed structure, which dominated the banks of the River Thames beyond Folly Bridge for more than a century.

The college has opted for a minimalist contemporary design, with glass walls and a roof in the shape of a hovering blade.

University College initially thought about trying to recreate the 1881 boathouse, before concluding that it was impractical to salvage the structure after the 1999 blaze. which also destroyed historic +boat race records and photographs.

An informal competition was held to find the best designs for a new boathouse, close to where the River Thames and River Cherwell meet and surrounded by water meadows

The winning building, designed by Belsize Architects, will stand in the footprint of the existing remains, with a ground floor comprising of three boat bays, a repair bay, changing facilities and a gym. To mitigate the impact of the floodplain, the building will sit on stilts, allowing water to pass freely underneath at times of flood-

The first floor will house two warden flats and six student study bedrooms, with a club room in the centre of the riverside elevation.

A spokesman for the architects said: "The horizontal and transparent design reflects the landscape and nautical tradition, creating an elegant backdrop for the rowing on the water.'

University College has submitted a Listed Building consent and planning application with the existing boathouse at Eastwyke Farm to be demolished.

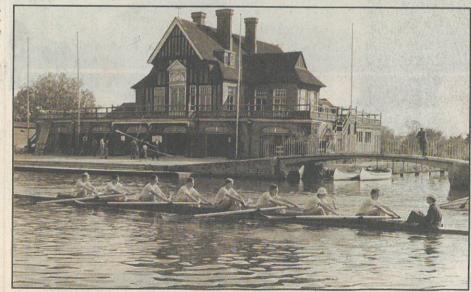
But Oxford architect Jack McNaney said he was astonished by the modern design.

He said: "The boathouse is a grade II listed building and sity College as a consultant normally you would be obliged to replace it as it was. Instead the proposal is for a radical example of minimalist architecture that almost resembles something from

with buildings on the other Oxford University.



■ Above: what the new boathouse will look like. Right: the original building after the blaze. Below: the original building in its heyday





wonder why a building like this is listed in the first

Mr McNaney, who has premany people in Oxford have a great deal of affection for the old building.

buildings closed to the pub- pastiche.' lic, this boathouse really was "It has more in common part of the public face of

Concerns over modern design of building viously worked for Univer-sity College as a consultant beautiful piece of architec-why the college decided that ing building work can begin would not want to see is a

surveyor, added: "I know ture, but I think I would have what is now needed is a connext year with the boathouse public opinion will come "With so many college down on the side of Victorian would better serve the techni-

versity College's estates burany attempt to recreate an the original boathouse has Assessment was carried out been opposed by Wallingford

preferred a more old fash- temporary building, which opening in 2007. It would be ioned boathouse. I believe will be a worthy successor."

He said the new building colleges

used by a number of Oxford

Debbie Dance, secretary of cal and health and safety Oxford Preservation Trust, ings here.' But Frank Marshall, Uni- requirements of rowers than said: "It is disappointing that

pastiche of the original, and University College have put forward some interesting between 12.30 and 8pm. designs where thought has the river and its surround-

state-of-the-art warning sys tem has been incorporated within the building design.

A public exhibition of the proposals will be held at Oxford Spires Four Pillars Hotel, on Friday, May 20,

Work is soon to begin on been given to the impact on Oxford University's Boat Club headquarters at Wallingford Marina. The plans for A detailed Flood Risk the £3.6m development had sar, said: "The existing structure out-dated Victorian been lost and will not be following discussions with Town Council because of its licence to the college at a cer-

Policing method makes its points

ROADS policing chiefs in Oxfordshire are expecting positive results from the first month of a new point scoring system for officers.

Points could mean promotion for roads policing officers who must score 200 each month under the scheme.

Now Supt Mick Doyle, Thames Valley Police head of roads policing, is gathering the results to evaluate whether the new scheme has been a success.

Supt Doyle said: "We are collating the information, then we will send it to officers to check we have got it all right. It will be analysed in two or three weeks time.

"Officers in the department think it is brilliant because the previous system for them didn't recognise the things they did. Their priorities are about reducing the number of people killed and injured on our roads.

"Our performance system recognises the work they do as family liaison officers which is very important, and the work they do in terms of enforcement.

Different points are allo-cated to different offences, with 50 awarded for taking the lead at a fatal accident. ten for burglary, drink driving, drugs offences, rape and assault, and two to three for illegal immigrants, shoplifters, pedestrians on motorways and minor traffic

The system was criticised by Thames Valley Police Federation chairman Martin Elliott, who feared that if the limit was raised, it could take away discretion from officers when deciding whether to make arrests for minor

Wedding licence for **Teddy Hall**

ST EDMUND Hall is set to become the first Oxford University college to be granted a civil ceremonies licence.

Couples can already book college function rooms for wedding receptions, but will now be able to take their marriage vows at the university's oldest surviving educational hall

The chairman of Oxfordshire County Council, Shereen Karmali, will grant the