



Swimming in the Parramatta River - Translating the Vision Into Opportunities

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The Parramatta River Catchment Group (PRCG) is a regional organisation of local councils, state agencies and community representatives, whose aim is to work together to improve the health of the Parramatta River and its catchment. The PRCG seeks to encourage strategic coordination of regional efforts, and have greater impact on policies and decisions affecting the catchment than could be achieved through each member working separately. The PRCG includes local councils of the Parramatta River catchment as well as NSW Environment Protection Agency, Sydney Water, and Department of Planning and Environment.

Until about 50 years ago, there were many popular swimming locations and events along the Parramatta River, but pollution from a range of sources has made much of the river too polluted for human contact. More recently, advances in regulation and technology have led to improvements in the river's condition. The PRCG's mission is to make Parramatta River swimmable again and as part of this mission the PRCG is developing a swimming activation framework. This framework is a strategic step in translating the high level concepts and ideas of swimming in the River into specific "on the ground" projects.

The framework has developed two key outcomes. The first outcome is a framework which is used to assist in the assessment of the river activation opportunities. This framework considers a range of factors ranging from social criteria, technical scientific criteria, and servicing and engineering criteria. The assessment framework has been developed in a highly visual way to allow for both technical and non-technical stakeholders to gain an understanding of the framework process. The framework addresses both place based activation assessment criteria and more traditional technical criteria to assess the potential for suitability with river contact.

The second outcome of the project is the application of the framework to approximately 17 sites which have been identified as potential sites for river activation and swimming in the Parramatta. From this assessment, three sites have been selected to develop as case studies to display the potential of three of the potential swim sites to help capture the imagination of the idea of swimming in Parramatta River for a range of stakeholders including the community. We have developed an initial concept sketch plan for each of the three sites and from this sketch plan developed a visualisation of for the site to evocatively illustrate what river activation at the three sites could potentially be.