

### NEW PARRAMATTA AQUATIC CENTRE BY GRIMSHAW, ABA AND MCGREGOR COXALL OPEN FOR 2023 SWIMMING SEASON

For Release: 25 September 2023



The new Parramatta Aquatic Centre (PAC) is located at Mays Hill, the traditional lands of the Burrumattagal, an inland group of the Dharug people. The Centre is in Parramatta Park, which is inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List, and is situated in a distinct landscape concept which acknowledges the site's historical vocation as a gathering place. The pool reinvents the traditional aquatic centre typology, creating a new place where the quality of outdoor landscape and recreational space defines the experience. This is a new, inclusive community hub centred around the pleasure of swimming in a park setting. This park is minimally disrupted by locating the building footprint within the topography – retaining and celebrating heritage landscaping and vistas.

The design comprises swimming areas arranged around the ring, carved into the topography with the health and wellness facilities acting as the buffer to Park Parade. The centre features a 50-metre, 10-lane outdoor pool with seating; a 25-metre, indoor recreational pool; an indoor Learn-to-Swim pool; an indoor water playground; multipurpose community rooms; steam, spa and sauna facilities; a health and wellness centre, including a modern gym and program rooms; a cafe; and car parking. All of the facilities are predominantly organised into a single level for ease of access and use by Parramatta's growing and diverse community.

The rooftop covering the sunken pools upholds the open space requirements of the precinct Master Plan, retaining community access and heritage views to Old Government House. Connectivity has been designed to minimise impacts on the traffic in the area and effectively link to existing public transport. The car parking is also integrated to the topography of the park.

The centre features 360 rooftop solar panels powering a 193KW capacity solar system. Automated natural ventilation is used in the fitness centre instead of air conditioning to maximise energy saving. Skylights that filter harmful UV, maintain temperature, and absorb sounds, are set around the centre to provide soft natural light to indoor areas.

Grimshaw leads the design partnership with Andrew Burges Architects (ABA) and McGregor Coxall as landscape architect. The design team's submission was selected as the winning scheme from a Design Excellence Competition in 2018, at which time the jury commended the response to exceptional operational aspects, the generosity of space contributing to the user experience and the integration of the scheme into the park. Grimshaw have previously collaborated with ABA on Gunyama Park Aquatic & Recreation Centre at Sydney's Green Square, which was jointly awarded the 2021 Lord Mayor's Prize in the 2021 Australian Institute of Architecture Awards (NSW Chapter) and received the award for public architecture at the 2021 Australian Institute of Architects National Awards.



The circular form surrounding the outdoor pool, named the Memorial Pool in recognition of the former Parramatta War Memorial Swimming Centre, is complemented by two linear pathways forming the spine of the site. These pathways unite routes to, from, and around the Centre, connecting the CBD-facing park, entry plaza, main pool space, ring walk, and verandah. Clarity was central to the outcome, ensuring active transport and wayfinding were increased throughout the site. A series of interconnected bike and walking paths unite plaza spaces and parklands to enhance pedestrian activity. Open lawns and landscaped berms complement the active transport networks that link the Centre with Parramatta CBD.

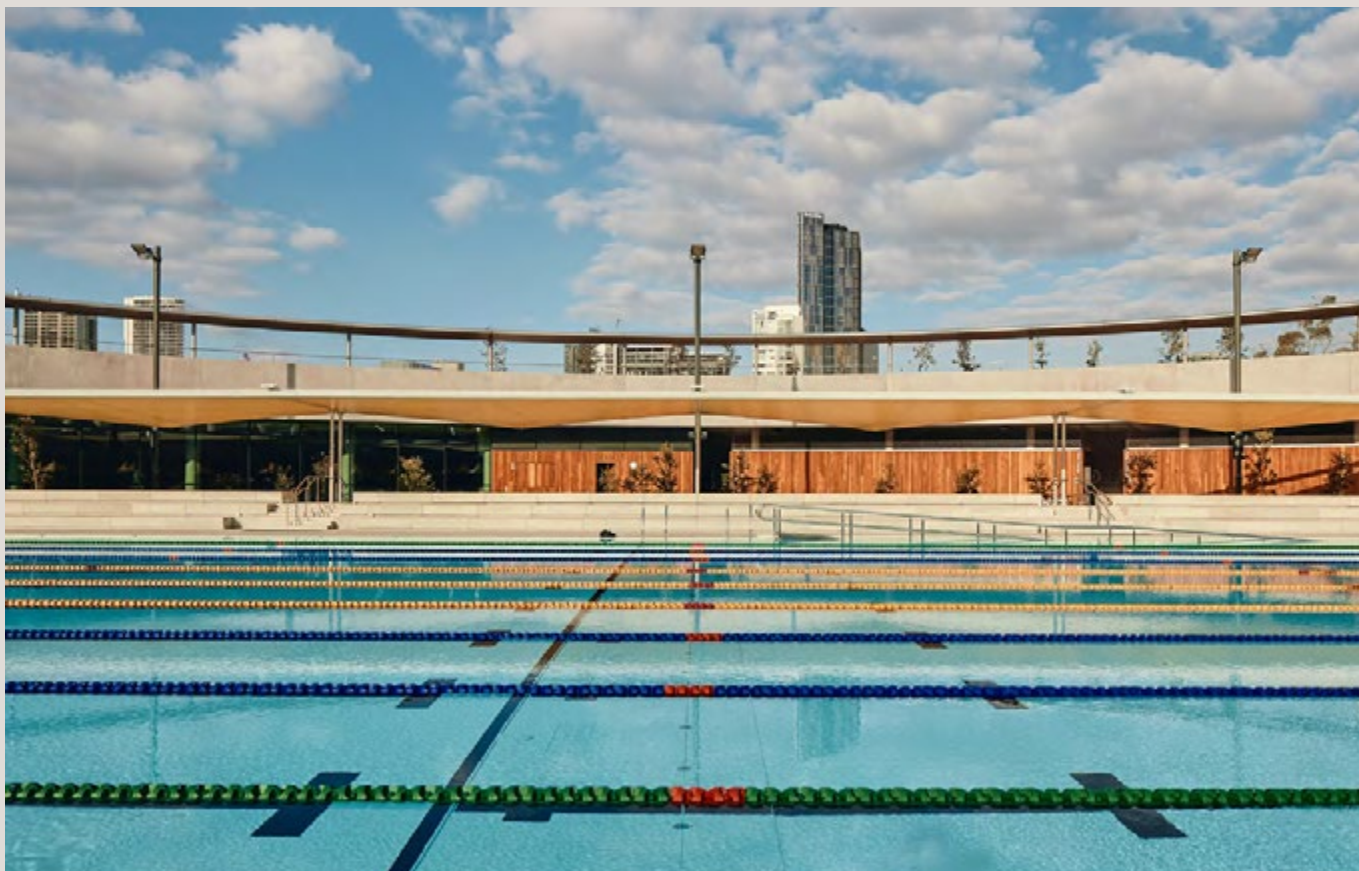
The precinct's habitat and biodiversity values are extended with the addition of 562 new native trees planted across 30,000 square metres of landscape to enhance the existing urban forest. Tree plantings are strategically incorporated with seating and gathering spaces wherever possible to increase the shading paramount to the site's functionality. Heightened ecological values and soil reconditioning will influence the sites microclimate, maximizing shaded areas for play and relaxation. The pool itself is surrounded by dense urban forest, which will play a major role in mitigating urban heat impacts.

City of Parramatta Lord Mayor Cr Sameer Pandey said: "Parramatta Aquatic Centre has been thoughtfully designed with the community in mind. The architects have done a wonderful job creating a space that the people of Parramatta, and greater Sydney, can enjoy for generations to come. This is more than just a pool – it's a place where the community can swim laps in the pool, work out in the gym, relax in the spa, steam and sauna or simply enjoy a coffee in the café. A lot of memories will be made here – of local kids swimming their first lap, of families splashing around together on a long, hot summer day. I can't wait to open the doors, I think the community will be really impressed when they see and experience Parramatta Aquatic Centre."

Josh Henderson, Grimshaw's Project Director said: "The new Parramatta Aquatic Centre will provide a much-needed destination for swimming, fitness, and leisure in Western Sydney. The design team, City of Parramatta and builder have all collaborated to create a valuable community asset that is enjoyable to experience, well made, highly functional and accessible. As a new home to many community groups, the opening of the facility will provide vibrant landscaped public spaces for fitness, sport, learn to swim classes and for time with friends and family."

Andrew Burges of ABA said: “Our goal was to provide a completely new vision of what an Aquatic Centre could be – we wanted to create a destination for the community, one that provides opportunity for many forms of recreation in a safe and inspiring facility that feels more like a landscape setting than a building.”

A transformative endeavor for the geographical centre of Sydney, the new Centre extends the surrounding Parramatta Park and forms connections between Parramatta and Cumberland Councils. With more than a million visitors expected to use this facility each year, PAC will be a year-round destination for the people of Parramatta and beyond.



#### **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION AND INTERVIEWS:**

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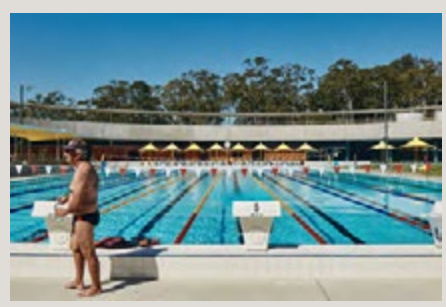
[Images Here](#)

#### **ABOUT GRIMSHAW**

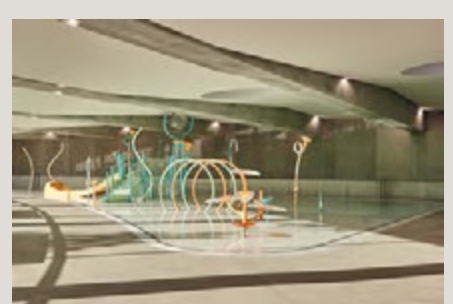
Grimshaw is an international architectural practice delivering buildings, infrastructure and places that are underpinned by the principles of humane, enduring, sustainable design. With offices in New York, Los Angeles, London, Paris, Dubai, Melbourne, Sydney, and now Auckland. Grimshaw employs over 600 staff. The practice’s international portfolio covers all major sectors and has been honoured with over 200 international design awards.

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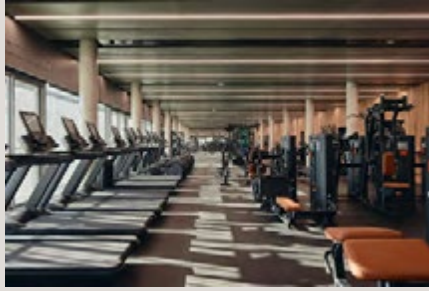
# PARRAMATTA AQUATIC CENTRE CONTACT SHEET



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## PROJECT

Parramatta Aquatic Centre  
7A Park Parade  
Parramatta NSW 2150  
Australia

## OWNER

Facility: City of Parramatta  
Mays Hill Site: Parramatta Parks Trust

## OPERATOR

City of Parramatta

## DESIGN TEAM

Grimshaw with ABA and McGregor Coxall

## FACILITIES

- Overall 14,330 sq m approx. building size excluding landscape.
- Accessible 50 metre, 10 lane outdoor pool with flips wall for alternative training and water polo configurations.
- Lawn, rain garden and decks adjacencies to outdoor pool.
- Shaded tiered seating for 330 people adjacent to the 50m pool, 26 outdoor umbrellas for shade to lawn areas.
- Accessible 25-metre, 8 lane indoor pool.
- Accessible 15-metre indoor learn-to-swim pool.
- Splash water play area with 'beach' entry.
- Spa, sauna and steam rooms.
- Health and wellness centre, including a gym, two program rooms, a multipurpose community space, amenities and consultation rooms totalling 1,380 sq m.
- Café with wet and dry seating for 130 patrons.
- Car parking for 186 cars, minibus set down and bus way off park parade.
- Indoor and outdoor male/female, accessible, adult and family change rooms.
- Birthday party room, swim club room, retail and multipurpose community rooms.
- Office support and administration areas.
- Integrated landscape public domain and pedestrian and cycle links to the surrounding paths, park and streets.

## SUSTAINABILITY

- Onsite water management assisted by rain gardens and osd.
- 1009 sq m of roof area dedicated to rain water collection
- 195 Kw capacity solar, 360 pv panels
- Natural ventilation to health and wellness facility
- Pefc Australian hardwood timbers

## TECHNICAL FEATURES

- Myrtha Pools (Stainless steel)
- ETFE skylights to Indoor Pool Halls

## FIRST NATIONS DESIGN PROGRAM

- Naming and Interpretive elements program directed by City of Parramatta and coordinated by design team.

## SUBCONSULTANTS

Builder: Lipman  
Landscape: McGregor Coxall  
Structural: Stantec / Tonkin  
Civil: Stantec / Tonkin  
Façade: WSP  
ESD: Stantec / WSP  
Mechanical: Stantec  
Electrical: Stantec / Pro  
Hydraulic: Harris Page  
BCA: Design Confidence  
DDA: Jensen Hughes  
Fire: Stantec  
Wayfinding: Extra Black  
Aquatic: SCP Consulting  
Planning: Urbis  
Traffic: Traffix  
Leisure: Warren Green Consulting  
Heritage: Trigger