

The Parklands Recreational Bridge Connection

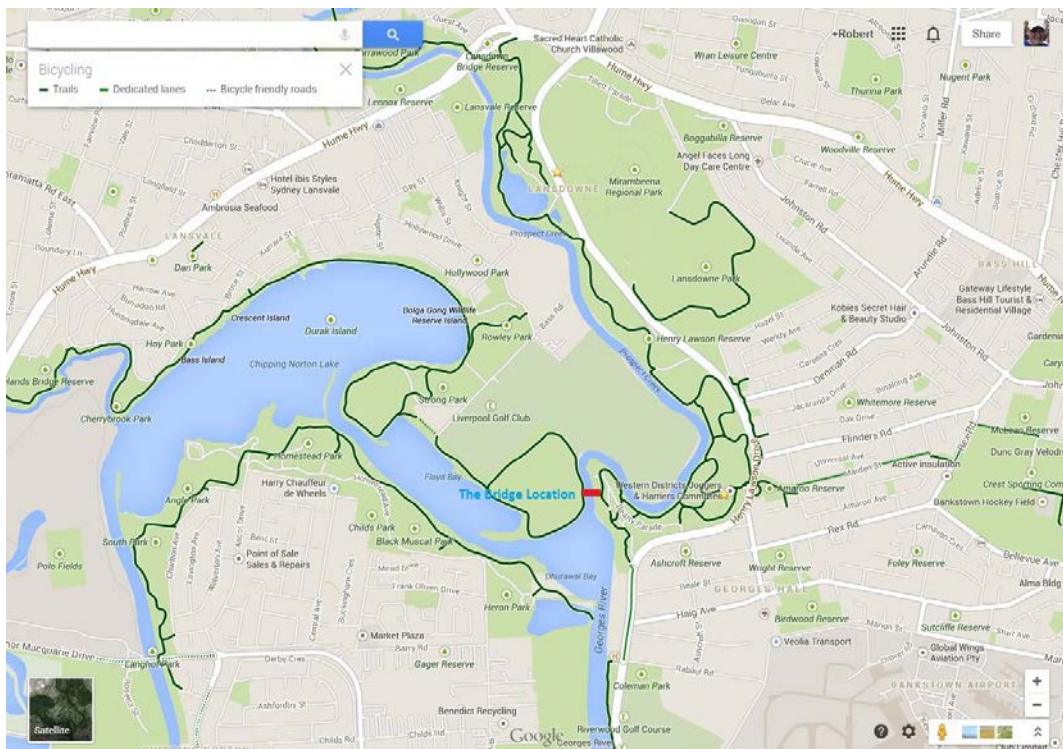
The Mirambeena Regional Park and the Chipping Norton Lakes area are regionally significant Recreation areas in the Liverpool and Bankstown City areas that are enjoyed by a huge number of people with Picnicking, Kayaking, Bike riding, walking, running, fishing being the main uses. Popularity on the weekend can be clearly seen with people getting there very early to "book a picnic shelter" for family occasions. It is increasingly the venue of choice for many people who live in Multi dwelling complexes because it is affordable and very user friendly.

Combined these two areas serve a very big catchment. To their credit the two Councils of Bankstown City and Liverpool City have invested millions of dollars into making these areas the showpieces they are today. This financial commitment continues with improvements and maintenance of significant proportions. Certainly regionally significant but not connected, the areas are in two parts. There are benefits to both Councils to connect these two recreational areas and also to integrate them with other regionally Sydney wide systems.

There is an opportunity to connect these two areas so that the residents of both areas can enjoy a wider choice and it will encourage and give greater access for cycling, walking, running which has health benefits for the whole community.

THE CONNECTION

Connecting these two regional parklands and lake systems can be done by providing a bridge over Prospect Creek where it joins the Georges River at Garrison Point or in this vicinity; there are pathways on both sides of the Creek at this point that connect up with the pathway systems in both City areas.



The bike/walking track on the Bankstown City side starts about 10kms away at Kelso Park East Hills and using this path in its cycleway capacity riders can ride to the M7 and beyond on a dedicated Bikeways passing through Prospect Reservoir Park, the Olympic equestrian course and extensive metropolitan cycling network of pathways. Certainly this will open up a big opportunity for thousands of Liverpool residents where benefits to Bankstown residents will be in the way of access to other recreational areas.

A good example of how a simple connection can make a difference and maximise an investment in community recreational infrastructure was when Bankstown Council provided an underpass under the very busy intersection of Milperra Rd and Henry Lawson Drive. This single connection led to the use of the pathway increasing exponentially and this is very apparent on weekends where the cycle traffic and pedestrian usage has provided a popular recreational corridor. The Cafes and Restaurants at Georges Hall Boat Ramp benefit from this increase in traffic. Both directly and indirectly, people see the cafes on their ride and revisit at a later time. Economic benefits on a commercial level and community level by maximizing the investment in an existing pathway system.

WHAT TO DO

The two Councils need to take the lead on this, to make the integration of the two major areas happen, but as it is of Regional significance there needs to be State Government involvement also.

The two councils should investigate the opportunity, its feasibility, and practicability. There is a pedestrian bridge further up stream in Prospect Creek that already provides a vital connection in the pathway network. Recreational opportunities on the water should not be lessened by this bridge. The bridge would therefore have to provide clearances equal to the upstream bridge as a minimum we would think.

As the bridge will have Regional implications it would be appropriate that a proportional funding responsibility exists for the State Government but the initiate would be with the two councils to investigate and make an integrated and well supported funding application. It is clear that a case can be put for this bridge we just need to will to take the first step.

We ask that this be put to the respective Councils to take these steps.