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# Thames lido architects in fresh approach

## Baths at Victoria Embankment to be 'wild and safe'

Lizzie Edmonds

PROPOSALS for a fresh-water swimming pool that would float on the Thames were revealed today.

Architectural drawings for Temple Steps urban baths – a series of three pools off Victoria Embankment – were shown exclusively to the Standard.

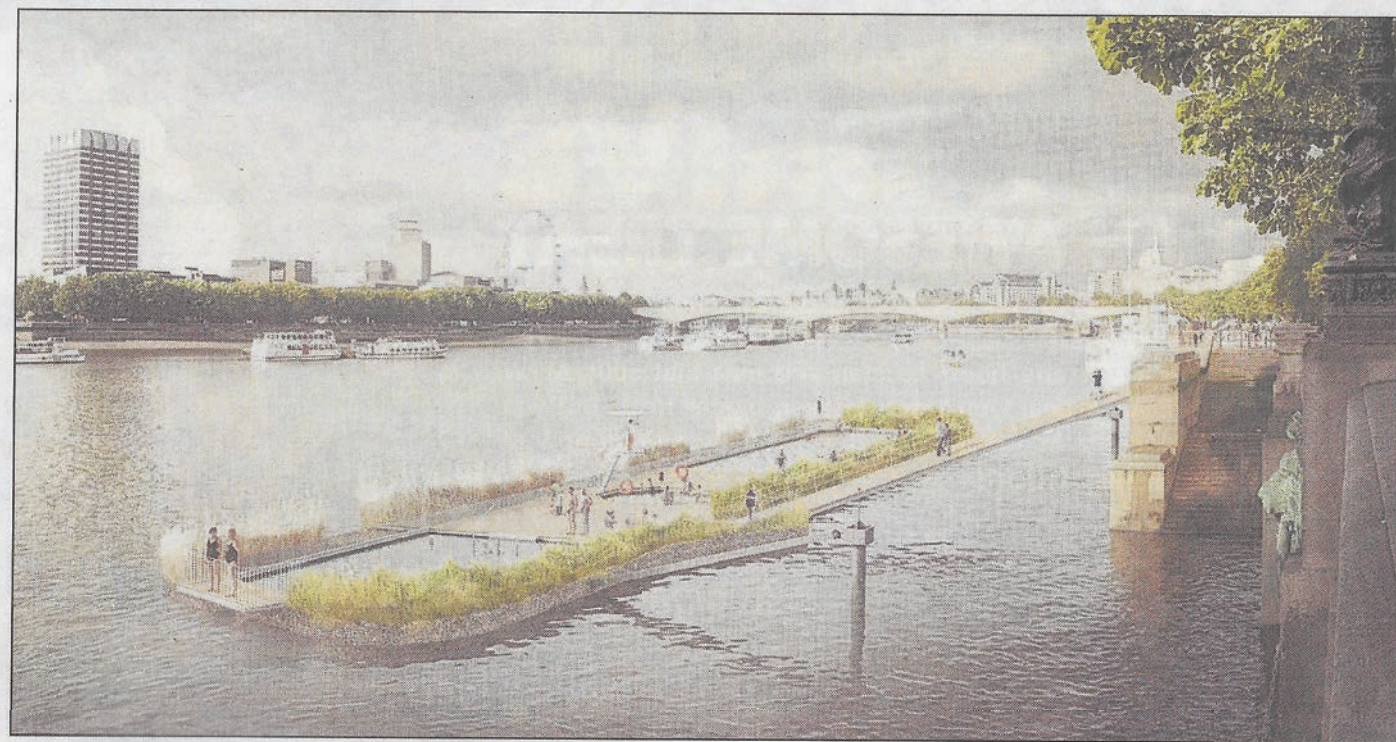
Included in the plans, by architects at Studio Octopi, are a 25x8 metre lap pool, a 5x5 metre octagonal paddling pool and a 12x8 metre plunge pool.

The baths would be secured to the north bank using two arm-like structures developed by marine engineers Beckett Rankine.

It is estimated that the lido would cost about £5.5 million and take around six months to build. The proposals are part of a wider Studio Octopi project called the Thames Baths.

In October, the firm revealed drawings for a £10 million Thames lido in Blackfriars, with four connected river-water pools.

Although the Thames is arguably the cleanest it has been for decades, these baths could not go ahead because when



**Three pools:** the £5.5 million lido would use fresh water. Studio Octopi also has plans for river-water baths at Blackfriars

the capital's sewers overflow they leave tonnes of waste in the river. The Blackfriars pools would have to wait for the proposed £4.2 billion super sewer – which, if construction goes ahead, could be finished by 2023. Although both lidos are in the planning stages,

in February Boris Johnson approved a £40,000 feasibility study “scoping for a major new initiative on the River Thames – a London Lido”.

Today, Studio Octopi's co-director Chris Romer-Lee said the Temple Baths could be built by next summer with

investment and planning approval. He added: “Swimming in them would feel like you were swimming in the Thames without any of the danger of doing so. We want to create a controlled environment where it is safe to wild swim.” Plans for both sets of baths will be at

the Urban Plunge: New Designs for Natural Swimming in Our Cities exhibition at the Roca London Gallery from September 11.

Elsewhere, developer Argent is soon to install a pond-like pool at its 54-hectare building site in King's Cross.

**Editorial  
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**Cleaning up the  
Northbank**

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