## SPECTRUM COMMS.

NEWCASTLE OCEAN BATHS

Community Reference Group Meeting #1

City of Newcastle March 2020

#### City of Newcastle Workshop report from Ocean Baths Community Reference Group – Monday 16 March 2020







#### 1.0 Introduction and Objective

The first meeting of the Newcastle Ocean Baths (the Baths) Community Reference Group (CRG) was held on Monday 16 March 2020 at Newcastle Town Hall from 4.30pm. The CRG was selected via an Expression of Interest process and by invitation from the City of Newcastle (CN) to provide a 50–50 split of community members to stakeholder members. CN received over 100 expressions of interest to be a part of the CRG. Due to the high-level of interest in the project, CN chose to live stream the first meeting of the CRG for interested members of the community.

The first meeting of the CRG coincided with the start of the COVID-19 health pandemic and therefore required a change to the rooms and planned workshop activities. Social distancing requirements required all those in attendance to be 1.5 metres apart, therefore seating arrangements were individually spaced and this prevented planned small group discussions at tables.

Representatives from CN also attended the meeting and were previously planning to take part in group discussions. Final attendee and apology list is included as **Table 1.0**.

Name	Organisations/Representative Group	Attendance
Cr Nuatali Nelmes	Lord Mayor, CN	$\sqrt{}$
Cr Emma White	CN Infrastructure Advisory Committee Representative CN	$\checkmark$
Cr John MacKenzie	CN Liveable Cities Advisory Committee Representative CN	$\checkmark$
Joseph Popov	CN Access Advisory Committee Representative	√
Donna McGovern	Aquatic Services Manager, CN	$\checkmark$
Joanne Rigby	Manager Assets and Project, CN	$\checkmark$
Nathan Burford	CN Access Advisory Committee Representative	Apology
Lynn Duffy	Manager Parks and Recreation, CN	√
Kristy Simpson	Senior Project Planner, CN	√
Matthew Blandford	Senior Project Planner, CN	$\checkmark$
Nick Kaiser	Media & Stakeholder Relations Manager, CN	√
Oceana Kovacs	Community Engagement Specialist, CN	√
Sarah Horan	Project Planning Coordinator, CN	√
Ross Taggart	Pirates Swimming Club	
Penny Maxwell	Friends of Newcastle Ocean Baths	<b>√</b>
Karen Read	Newcastle East Residents Group	$\sqrt{}$

Mark Metrikas	National Trust	<b>√</b>
Robert Faraday	Local business representative	√
Paul Scott	Community member	√
Tiahna Goldbird	Community member	<b>√</b>
Jeremy Landers	Community member	√
David Compton	Community member	√
David Henderson	Community member	√
Paula Thistleton	Community member	√
Roderick See	Community member	√
Peter Shields	Community member	√
Simon Francis	Community member	V
Angela Felton	Spectrum Comms / Facilitator	√
Peter Sherlock	Hunter Living Histories (Coal River Working Party)	Apology
Rob Russell	CN Guraki Aboriginal Advisory Committee Representative	Apology
	and Awabakal Local Aboriginal Land Council	

Table 1.0 – Community Reference Group attendees and apologies

The objective of the meeting and workshop was to bring the newly formed Newcastle Ocean Baths CRG and CN team together to share information, provide input and seek feedback on the proposed Newcastle Ocean Baths revitalisation. As the CRG is just one component of a wider CN engagement program, CN also wanted to share the preliminary community feedback received from 22 November 2019 to 1 March 2020 via the online 'Ideas Wall'. This and other community engagement results including face-to-face and telephone surveys will be reported on at the end of March. A run sheet for the Workshop is provided as **Appendix A**.

The CRG's terms of reference articulate that the objective of the group is to:

- Contribute to the planning of facilities that balance the needs of all users of the Baths.
- Inform the broader community of project objectives, status and outcomes of specific projects.

#### **Functions of CRG**

- Provide information on current usage and areas for improvement of the Baths.
- Provide feedback and information to the community.
- Represent your user group.
- Provide feedback to CN on proposals.

#### **CRG** Reporting Structure

The CRG is part of CN's review process and is not a decision-making body. Outcomes of CRG
meetings will be reported to the CN Coastal Revitalisation Project Control Group.

#### 2.0 Workshop Agenda and Activities

CN's Senior Project Planner Kristy Simpson shared a presentation to the CRG and to those viewing the live stream which provided a project overview and encompassed the relevant documents the group can access for background and legislative context, a project timeline, and an overview of the site itself. The site overview included detail on issues relating to:

- 1. the western façade remediation
- 2. the ocean pools
- 3. budget impacts
- 4. planning and staging options
- 5. degrading structures

#### 6. site investigations

Kristy also provided the Group with a brief outline of other feedback that CN has received as part of the wider current engagement program for the Baths. A copy of the CN presentation is available as **Appendix B**.

#### 2.1 – Defining success (Activity 1 Group discussion)

As the first meeting of the CRG, it was important for Members to get to know who will be on the journey with them and what success looks like for each member. On their chairs, members were provided with a sheet of paper (Figure 1), inviting them to complete the following sentence, "If we work well together we can....". The original plan for members to "Pair, Square, and Share" their responses along with CN representatives was amended and members each came to the microphone, introduced themselves and spoke about their idea of success. Their relationship to the Baths was also discussed by each member. Three members also chose to provide their feedback in writing which is presented with Figure 1.



Figure 1: Feedback sheet provided to CRG members at start of first meeting

...develop and agree on a simple staged plan of maintenance and conservation which does not compromise the site's heritage and cultural significance

...come together as a community and have an impact on the council that will impact future generations.

Newcastle Baths can be a world-class location for community and international visitors, accessibility for all. Multi-purpose space for all to use, bring diverse groups together.

Other comments captured during this introduction activity have been themed and included as **Table 1** below:

Theme	Feedback
	Is the heritage of the facade going to be kept? i.e. ladies change rooms
	and men's change rooms.
Heritage	Canoe Pool; National Trust stakeholder says it has more heritage than the
	Baths and wants to know why it isn't included within the Ocean Baths
	precinct area.
	Mississipping the property of the control of the co
	Misrepresentation towards the precinct – everything that is at the Baths is
	heritage listed
	Structure needs to be remediated while still maintaining the heritage value
	of the western façade
	or me weeren rayade
	Want community access, and the community facilities to be improved, i.e.
Community	swimming clubs
	The physical aspects and changes – whatever is done physically improves
	the social aspect and identity to the community.
	It is a community asset; iconic and social point to the community – such a
	fantastic site.
	Everyone in Newcostle has a strong eninion of what should and shouldn't
	Everyone in Newcastle has a strong opinion of what should and shouldn't happen to the Baths.
	happen to the bants.
	Baths serves multi-generations; children learning to swim, people on their
	daily fitness regimes. What makes the baths socially important,
	environmentally important, what's its value to the city and how does it
	symbolise Newcastle?
	Significance of the Baths weaves through the fabric of families for multi-
	generations
	People have a real connection to the site
	Ease of access; the flat location allows for all swimmers including those with
	disabilities
Accessibility	Access Advisory Committee wants to make sure it's accessible for people
,	with disabilities, impairments. There is a need to ensure everyone has
	access to the Baths.
	Accessibility is important
	The western façade is important to everyone. There is a commercialisation
	of the area and they don't want the site to be a restaurant but one for
	relaxation.
Commercialisation/	Is it going to be economically viable to keep these facilities?
Economic	There is some space there for commercial development but not a lot. There needs to be some return on the expenditure, and notes that it won't be
	cheap.
	l oneup.

	If the Baths are to be commercially developed; the community want to be a
	part the process.
	The site must 'step up' economically - improve the economic values of the
	site.
	Concerned about sea level rise.
	What are the negotiables and non-negotiables for the Baths CRG to
	consider?
	Restoration is an important aspect of any redevelopment.
Design and amenity	The area can be improved and be made 'grander' while still maintaining the
	charm of the place.
	The amenities need to be improved; they are very basic now.
	Wants to be able to use the tap water in the bathrooms
	Changerooms with ventilation and open plan aspects to it as well.
Parking	Free parking needs to be maintained but timed.
Safety	Cleanliness, safety of area is important.

Table 1: Feedback from member introductions

#### 2.2 Opportunities and constraints (Activity 2 Card storming)

A group activity to discuss the opportunities and constraints that CN may have during the Baths revitalisation project was 're-jigged' in favour of an individual exercise to allow members to maintain the social distancing requirements. Members were provided with three A5 green cards and three A5 blue cards and invited to offer feedback on what they believed were the opportunities and constraints of the redevelopment. Feedback from this workshop activity is presented the Table 2 below.

Constraints	Opportunities
The façade and its weakening	Enhance facilities for current and future users
Cars/free car parking expectations	Provide Newcastle with the best version of the Baths
	that people with broad interests feel welcome to utilise
Not knowing overall budget and non-	Aesthetically appealing and functionally useful for
negotiables yet	seniors, school kids, families, people with disabilities,
	sporting groups
The sand bottoms of pool	Restore and improve once very piecemeal historic
	development
Climate change	Opportunity to meet and share a valuable and
	affordable community resource
Financial reality	CN and us have an opportunity to show the wider
	community that their wellbeing is important to use
	irrespective of their social or economic class
Having a clear understanding of cost to restore	New technology
and ongoing maintenance	
The site's exposure to the elements and the time	Improve visitor experiences
it will take to put infrastructure to secure site	
before remediation	
Only hearing or understanding what the	To provide improved seating, shade and landscaping
problems are and not hearing from emerging	

Constraints	Opportunities
groups i.e. new multicultural group who don't	
know how to use facilities	
Heritage constraints	Opportunity to make the facilities sustainable for future
	energy requirements
Cost \$\$	To fix up and keep the open air changerooms
Changing community behaviour	Open to something new and novel with changeroom
	space. Must be enduring, quality and sit comfortably
	with surrounds
Engineering to make accessible	Consider all sections of the community especially key
	user groups (e.g. swimmers and families)
Need to make right choices now for future –	Restore basic amenity – pool surrounds
recognising and respecting but not constrained	, ,
by the past	
Financial	Public community space to allow not for profit groups
	to access space close to beach and baths
Weather and access	DIAP – Disability Inclusion Action Plan
Size of site and poor condition of northern	Inclusion
pavilion facade	
Vehicle access to site and limited parking	Multi-functionality- interaction with water (sprayers,
options	mini-water park)
Financial application for state and federal	Maintain and improve asset for current and future
funding assistance	generations
Heritage structure – compromise/balance	Equal access
between heritage law and disability needs/laws	
Continued use throughout the "revitalisation"	Protection of this great low-cost day out for Newcastle
process	residents, other area visitors and tourists
Retain facade	Adapt for future sea water inundation
Free access	NDIS opportunity to highlight for businesses and
	communities to access funding to make improvements
	that tie in with the DIAP
Easy access	Lot of space behind the façade – best uses? Active?
	Income stream for maintenance?
Preserve and enhance heritage and character	Conserve cultural significance for future generations
Balancing public opinion/needs/values with	Increased usage if facilities are brought up to basic
commercial drivers	community standard
Lack of facilities	Create facility that can be used by greater number of
	users
Cost v return	Preserve an iconic facility and facade
Heritage Conservation Management Plan	Some economic return for Council
Cost to provide appropriate equipment for	Expansion of the kiosk for more people to eat and
people with disability and access	better access for prams, wheelchairs, etc.
Equal access to the pools	Change rooms – consider disabilities, parents with
	children
Funding and costing	Replacement of the grounds towards the ocean and
	added surface cover to make it less slippery
Developing greater % of users	Restoration of this loved national icon with small
	changes for inclusion
Lack of commercial return	Right time with Newcastle's evolution as a city
The environment – getting climate resilience	Continue CN's vision and architectural public use
	theme
Tides	Community will and support for CN expenditure

Constraints	Opportunities		
Rising oceans and global changes in	Community awareness and social inclusion (approx.		
environment patterns	20% of Australians identify as having disability)		
Space	To use the uniqueness of the baths to promote and develop:  Passive recreation Social camaraderie/interaction Historic context Environmental responsibility Physical/social/generational inclusiveness Best practice for public/community space Health and wellbeing advantages (free and open all year) Educational opportunities (geography, geology, history, architecture) Improved landscaping and shady vegetation Opportunity for historic timeline installation		
Maintaining the free, accessible and natural characteristics	Provide better parking		
Sea/coastal environment	To protect, promote and preserve the baths for now and for the future		
Crown Land implications	Re-establish a public icon		
Gazetted use under the Crown Lands Act	Adapt/re-use empty northern enclosure		
Wind/wave/weather exposure	Consider ebbs and flows of use including seasonality and promote use to provide greater access to different groups		
Local heritage constraints	Opportunity to provide greater visibility for gender and binary groups to feel comfortable using design/reconfiguration of change rooms		
The cost of closure of the site to restore it could	Opportunity to resurface areas as community open		
put social groups at risk of dissolving	and can see unsafe and limited accessibility		
Reserve Trust Fund constraints	Opportunity to introduce renewable energy to support changes rooms (hot water) and kiosk		
Costs already expended			
Ongoing maintenance costs			
Structural constraints			
Façade limitations			
Cathodic protection limitations			
Remaining unique			
Incorporation into the existing coastal plan			

Table 2: Feedback provided on opportunities and constraints.



Figure 1: Result of card storming exercise placed on a divided sticky wall

Due to social distancing requirements, the process to have a close group discussion and gain greater clarity on the A5 comment cards with CN representatives was instead replaced with a commitment from the CN team to provide the group with results from the exercise and offer opportunity online to discuss further.

#### 2.3 Question time (Activity 3)

A planned discussion on 'what should be in scope' and 'what should not be in scope' in the Baths revitalisation was amended in favour of a more open question and answer session with CRG members and CN representatives. CRG members requested that they required further clarity on the following areas:

- 1. What is the budget? What is the baseline so we can have feasible discussions, and how much will this be covered by rate payers?
- 2. What has been spent in recent years and on what?
- 3. Is the diving block in scope?
- 4. Are the cement seats, chairs and shelters near the canoe pool in scope?
- 5. Can the group help secure grant funding?
- 6. What are the implications for reserve trust funds/grants?
- 7. Are there impactions for any public private partnerships and what you can plan for as a result of sea level rise?
- 8. Air space what about drones flying over the change rooms areas?
- 9. What are the negotiables and non-negotiables? From that what are the key things that can be prioritised to facilitate a potential staged redevelopment. i.e. Do leaks in pool need to be fixed first? What are the immediate, short-term and long-term priorities?
- 10. Are there options to have external business providers who do not have permanent facilities? i.e can mobile vendors like food trucks be considered?
- 11. Who are the user groups for the Baths and what are some of the reasons that may deter people from using the Baths currently?

(Post meeting note: CN will respond to questions in a FAQs Sheet which includes other community FAQs)

#### 3.0 Summary and next steps

The above questions and card storming feedback is to be provided to CRG members and included in a final workshop report.

The first meeting of the Baths CRG reiterated that the future of the Baths redevelopment is a passionate topic for members and the community's they represent. The iconic nature of the site, its heritage

significance and what it represents to the people of Newcastle and surrounding LGAs cannot be underestimated. A genuine commitment from members to keep being engaged and informed (including being provided information ahead of meetings) was communicated. While CRG members expressed a desire to be kept up to date on progress in face-to-face workshops, the escalation of the COVID-19 health pandemic has put a temporary hold on CRG meetings in this format. CN will investigate online options for future virtual CRG meetings, or other ways to progress the input from the CRG moving forward.

#### Appendix A – Workshop run sheet

Session	Activity	Output	Who	Resource
Sign in	CRG members briefed on social distancing requirements and seating set out		CN team	Sheets on seats for CRG to use throughout the meeting. Name tags.
Welcome and introduction 4:30pm (10 mins)	Quick welcome and introductions – who is in the room.	Participants feel welcome and know who is in the room.	Angela to manage intros	
Agenda and housekeeping 4.40pm (5 mins)	Run through agenda and get buy in on the process ahead.	We know what we are doing together today. Gets everyone on the same page about why they are here and why it's important and what they can expect.	Angela	Slides
Presentation from CN - Kristy Simpson 4.45pm (20 minutes)	Terms of reference outlined. Presentation on Newcastle Ocean Baths project. Provide the context for the project within the Coastal Revitalisation Program & list relevant documents. Provide a recent timeline of the project, site plan and aerial view. List current key issues with the site, leading to where we are now in renewal of the site. Includes community feedback from the recent consultations.	Participants understand the role of the CRG and that they have a role in representing their user group and provide feedback back to the community. Participants understand everyone's expectations, what is important to them and why. Participants are up to date on the project and how CN are responding to community feedback so far.	Kristy	Slides
Check in 5.05pm (20 minutes)	CRG members introduce themselves, who they represent, what they hope to achieve  If we work well together we can	Participants articulate what the Baths mean to them, how they are currently used.	Angela	
5.25pm (15 mins)	Activity: Opportunities and Constraints What could these opportunities and constraints look like, with participants invited to write 3x comments on green and blue cards and stick on	Two columns of responses that everyone can see. CN gains a further understanding of expectations and concerns of the group.	Angela to facilitate as required.	Sticky Wall (Angela to provide) A5 cards (Angela to provide) Photograph wall and note by Spectrum

F (O	wall. Use the ideas wall headings as prompts if required	Table and the state of the stat	An and a sad Kristo	Discussion also maked by
5.40pm (15 mins)	Activity: Project Scope Discussion on what could these opportunities and constraints look like, with participants invited to discuss. Use the ideas wall headings as prompts if required:  1. What should be in the scope?  2. What should not be in scope?	Team can openly discuss their opinions.	Angela and Kristy to facilitate team discussion as required.	Discussion also noted by Spectrum.
General business and wrap up 5.55pm (5 mins)	<ol> <li>Next steps in the process and next meeting</li> <li>Is there any information that you would like to see before the next meeting?</li> <li>In thinking about the timeframes, how often do you want to meet? CN would like to meet within the month to develop the project scope through co-design processes prior to developing architectural concept designs.</li> <li>Does this style of meeting work for you?</li> </ol>	Team are comfortable that they are going to get the information they may seek going forward and that their time has been valued.	Angela	
Total: 1:30 hours		•	•	•

Appendix B – CRG Presentation

# Welcome to the Newcastle Ocean Baths Community Reference Group

16 March 2020



## Introductions





## Agenda

- Introductions
- Terms of Reference
- Presentation The Baths Overview & Site Analysis
- Check in Introductions; Questions
- Activity: Opportunities and Constraints
- Activity: Project Scope
- General Business Next steps in the process and next meeting





## Terms of Reference

## **Objectives**

- Contribute to the planning of facilities that balance the needs of all users of the Baths
- Inform the broader community of project objectives, status and outcomes of the project

## **Functions of Community Reference Group (CRG)**

- Provide information on current usage and areas for improvement of the Baths
- Provide feedback and information to the community
- Represent your user group
- Provide feedback to City of Newcastle (CN) on proposals

## **CRG Reporting Structure**

- The CRG is part of CN's review process and is not a decision-making body. Outcomes of CRG meetings will be reported to the Coastal Revitalisation Project Control Group



## The Baths Overview

- Relevant Documents
- Recent Timeline
- Site Plan
- Current Issues
- Community Feedback
- Site Analysis





## **Relevant Documents**

Crown Land Manager	Newcastle Coastal Plan of Management 2015
Community	Newcastle 2030 Community Strategic Plan
<b>Priority Projects</b>	Coastal Revitalisation Strategy Masterplan 2010
	Bathers Way Public Domain Plan 2012
Heritage Value	Conservation Management Plan 2002
	Heritage Places Strategic Plan and Plan of Management 2012
	Newcastle Local Environmental Plan 2012
Environment	Newcastle Coastal Zone Management Plan 2018
	Newcastle Coastal Zone Hazards Study 2014

## **Recent Timeline**

Mid 2014 Community surveys undertaken on the use and importance of the Baths **Late 2014** CN invited EOIs for a private partner to financially contribute to redevelop the Baths, required by POM. However this process was unsuccessful Mid 2015 Pools remediation works undertaken to rectify storm damage 2017 Northern pavilion demolition and remediation works undertaken to address safety concerns 2018 Site investigations and reviews undertaken Nov 2019 EOI submissions called, required by POM. No partner was identified Community engagement commenced to inform future works



#### Newcastle Ocean Baths Site Plan

#### LEGEND

- 1 North Pavilion
- 2 Main Pavilion
- 3 South Pavilion
- **4** Raised platform covered eating area
- **5** Covered tables
- **6** Cowrie Hole Beach access
- 7 Grandstand
- 8 Ocean Pool
- **9** Lap Pool
- 10 Canoe Pool
- 11 Rockpools
- 12 Ocean
- 13 Carparking
- 14 Site vehicular access
- 15 Newcastle Beach



## **Current Issues**

- Funding and budget allocation
- Planning and staging options
- Degrading structures
- Coastal environment
- Project scope community input







## OCEAN BATHS



1094 ideas wall entries



218 face-to-face surveys



898 telephone surveys



9000+ visits to our Have Your Say page "expand kiosk with more undercover seating and keep it casual" "separate family change/baby change, family shower and children's toilet area would be wonderful"

"consider better access to change areas"

"spaces should be a community hub which is available and accessible" "be great to have additional seating and lots of shade added"

To have your say, visit: newcastle.nsw.gov.au

- Community comments are being analysed, with emerging findings noted below.
- Full report to be issued end-March.

## **Improved Safety**

- Improved parking
- Increase parking spaces
- Timed parking required















#### Improve access

- Support to improve public transport
- Support to improve disability access and ramps

## Improved amenities

- Upgraded change rooms
- Support for more change facilities (family/ baby change facilities)







#### **Facilities and activities**

- Support for more shade/ shelters
- Support for provision of lockers

#### Look and feel

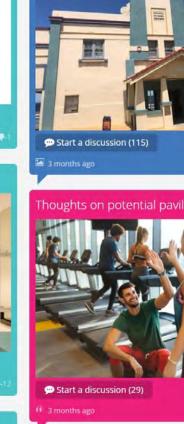
- Don't alter/ change the façade
- Renovations to maintain the iconic art deco look











Look and feel of the pavilion



## Other emerging themes

- Support to keep the baths for public use
- No privatisation or commercialisation
- Continue free access















## **Site Analysis**











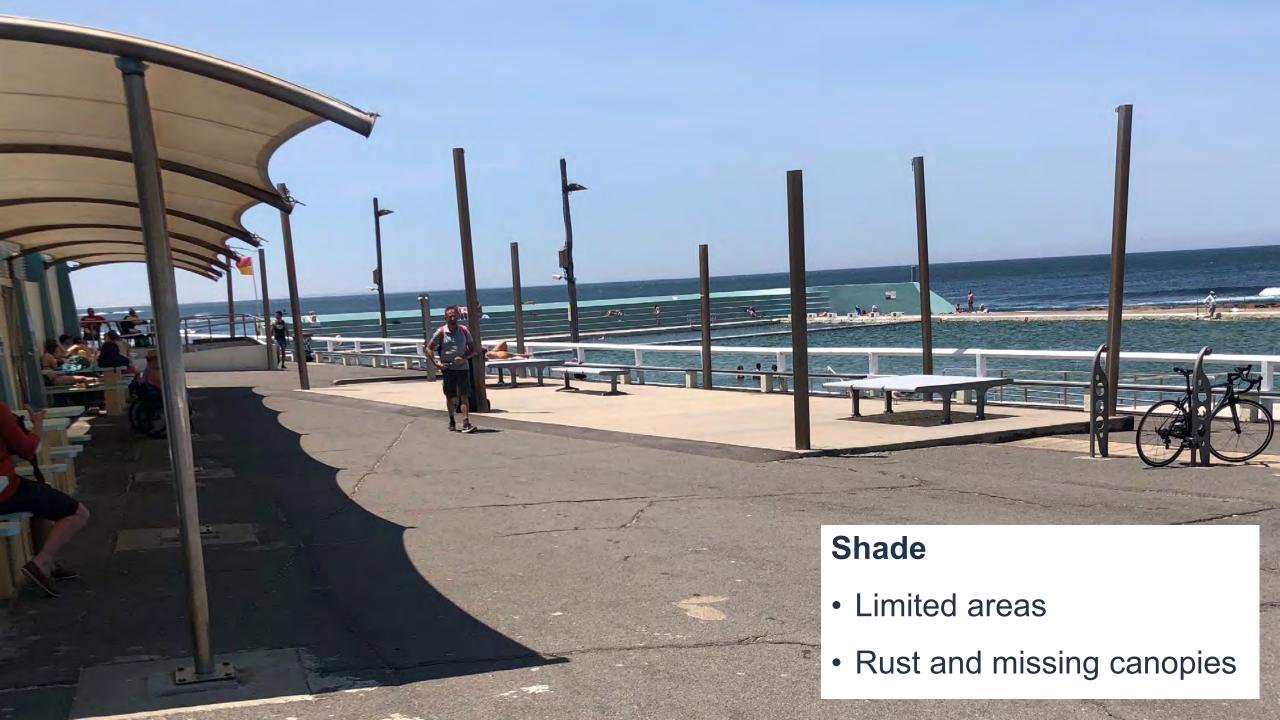














Despite all the issues it is a much-loved community asset used by many for:

- Swimming in the pool
- Meeting friends over coffee
- Taking time out to relax
- Playing with family
- Widely photographed
- Fashion shows, and more

As part of the CRG you are here to ensure the Baths are a place to be enjoyed for the next 50+ years

## Check in

- Introduce yourself and who you represent
- Any questions?





## Activity: Opportunities and Constraints

• Thinking about your user group, what are the opportunities and constraints on the site?





## Activity: Project Scope

- What should be in the scope?
- What should not be in the scope?





## Project Scope: Pavilions

 Minimum scope requirements

Space Description	Comments	
Patrol room	Change room with toilet, hot & cold showers; lockers; sink with hot water; secure storage; fridge, clear access to baths; equipment; must have clear view of entire ocean baths and surrounding walkways; must comply with Workcover Guidelines.	
Patrol storage		
First aid		
Men's toilet	Toilets, urinals, handbasins, hand dryers	
Women's toilet	Toilets, handbasins, hand dryers	
Accessible toilet, shower, change	To meet 'Changing Places'	
Change facilities	Separate male and female change benches, cubicles, hot & cold showers, lockers and baby change area, power points	
Beach cleaner space	To be located at the northern end	
Pool cleaner space	To be located at the northern end	
Bin store		
Kiosk / café		
Community space /	Potentially the upper floor	
meeting space / hall		
Electrical room	For cathodic protection (if required) and building electricity	
Pump room / plant room		



## Project Scope: Pools, Promenades & External Areas

 Minimum scope requirements

Space Description	Comments
Pools	Size, floor bottom – sand, boardwalk, access, maintenance
Outdoor Showers	Hot and cold showers
Promenade	Level access, ramps, stairs
Bleaches	
Access	Ramps and stairs into the pool, maintenance, users
Public seating	Shade, tables, chairs, bleaches
General	Lighting, water points for drinking, taps for cleaning
Shade to the baths side of the building	Significant shade required
Car park access	Consider access from northern part of car park to promenade in front of pavilion
Bicycle racks	



# Next steps in the process and next meeting

- Is there any information that you would like to see before the next meeting?
- In thinking about the timeframes, how often do you want to meet?
- Does this style of meeting work for you?





## Thank you



