

## **Newcastle Ocean Baths Community Reference Group**

### **1. Introduction**

This document outlines the objectives and structure of the Newcastle Ocean Baths Community Reference Group (CRG), which will help City of Newcastle (CN) develop concept plans to guide upgrades to the Newcastle Ocean Baths site. CN has committed to funding the restoration of the Baths and is determined to see the facility become an asset that the broader community can be proud of, while also ensuring they remain a public asset with free entry to swim all year round.

Developed responsibly and with respect to its local heritage, CN is dedicated to delivering an upgraded public Baths that remain appealing to people throughout our city and remain one of our key tourism drawcards. This renewal project falls under the scope of priority projects work defined within the overall Coastal Revitalisation program.

CN recognises the critical role the site plays in the wider community and its regional significance.

The Newcastle Ocean Baths CRG has been established to provide feedback on the renewal project, acting as a consultative body that provides advice to the project team on the preparation of concepts for the Baths. The CRG is one element of a broader engagement program required to ensure comprehensive feedback is considered in delivering the project.

### **2. Purpose and Objectives**

The purpose of the CRG is to enable two-way communication and engagement between CN and community representatives as CN develops concept plans for the Newcastle Ocean Baths' upgrade.

The CRG will:

- contribute to the planning of facilities that balance the needs of present and future Baths users,
- provide a conduit between the project and the broader community, facilitating the sharing of information between their formal and informal networks and the project team.

The CRG will provide a platform for sharing different viewpoints, considering technical information and exploring opportunities to help the project team renew the site.

Concept design(s) will be finalised with input from the CRG. The final design will be shared with the elected Council prior to project proceeding into detailed design. The CRG will be maintained throughout the development of the concept plan(s) for the NOB and dissolved at the point of public exhibition.

### **3. Facilitator**

The CRG will be facilitated by an independent external facilitator who will prepare a report following each meeting for distribution to members for review. Meeting reports will also be available on CN's website and CRG members will be notified when these are available.

## **4. Membership**

The CRG includes members representing pre-identified stakeholder/user groups along with individuals selected via an expressions of interest (EOI) process.

All EOIs were reviewed by a panel of three CN officers representing Community Engagement and Project Planning.

CRG membership is aimed to provide coverage of community organisations, user groups, the business community, interest areas, gender, ages and abilities from across the local government area. Membership is voluntary. The CRG is comprised of a mix of interested stakeholder or community groups (directly invited) and individual community members (EOI selected).

Members of stakeholder or community groups may nominate an alternate delegate, if the principal member is unavailable or unable to continue participation in the CRG. The stakeholder or community group will advise CN of any changes to a nominated representative in writing to [oceanbaths@ncc.nsw.gov.au](mailto:oceanbaths@ncc.nsw.gov.au).

CN may appoint additional members, being individuals via expression of interest, or stakeholder group representatives, to the CRG to help ensure a diverse and LGA-representative membership.

CRG members will be notified, with reasonable notice, if CN anticipates the need to appoint an additional member, including reasons for the appointment and an overview of the selection process.

The overall number of members will be limited to an amount that ensures the CRG remains workable and effective. Members are appointed for the duration of the CRG.

As well as nominated members, meetings will be attended by CN representatives and appointed specialists and contractors.

Members may be invited to participate in smaller groups focusing on specific program themes. From time to time, individual members of the CRG may be called upon to provide advice regarding specific issues, concerns or interests and comment on issues as they arise between scheduled meetings.

A Community Chairperson may be selected by CN from community representative members of the CRG by way of an EOI. The Chairperson may be called upon to speak on behalf of the CRG publicly and channel feedback from the CRG to CN outside of the meeting process.

## **5. Community Reference Group Member Responsibilities**

- Provide information on current usage and areas for improvement of the Baths
- Provide feedback and information to the community
- Represent your user group and provide feedback from formal or informal networks
- Provide feedback to City of Newcastle (CN) on proposals
- Refrain from speaking on behalf of the CRG.

## **6. Community Reference Group Meetings**

The CRG will convene as required by the project team. CRG members may also be invited to attend other discussions, focus groups or other activities about specific program themes.

Meetings may be held online via video conferencing (i.e. Zoom) or face-to-face, as appropriate. For face-to-face meetings, the CRG may be divided into several smaller groups to aid in achieving social distancing requirements.

Meeting agendas will be issued at least five days prior to each meeting. A Meeting Summary will be circulated within two weeks of the meeting.

Meetings are to be conducted constructively, and with respect towards and between all participants. CN will provide secretariat support.

## 7. Community Reference Group Correspondence

All correspondence from CRG members associated with the function or business of the CRG should be directed to [oceanbaths@ncc.nsw.gov.au](mailto:oceanbaths@ncc.nsw.gov.au). If the correspondence includes questions regarding the project requiring an official response then [mail@ncc.nsw.gov.au](mailto:mail@ncc.nsw.gov.au) should be copied in.

Target turnarounds for correspondence requiring a response received via [oceanbaths@ncc.nsw.gov.au](mailto:oceanbaths@ncc.nsw.gov.au) includes acknowledgement within two business days, and a response provided within 14 days of receipt of the correspondence.

Please note factors including the volume of correspondence received and project delivery resourcing requirements may affect turnaround times.

## 8. Conduct of meetings and confidentiality

CRG members must comply with [City of Newcastle's Code of Conduct for Council Committee Members, Delegates of Council and Council Advisors, June 2019](http://www.newcastle.nsw.gov.au/council/our-responsibilities/code-of-conduct). See additional information at: [www.newcastle.nsw.gov.au/council/our-responsibilities/code-of-conduct](http://www.newcastle.nsw.gov.au/council/our-responsibilities/code-of-conduct)

CRG members must sign a Community Representative Authority form provided by City of Newcastle. Copy provided at **Attachment A**.

## 9. 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 Program Project Control Group. CN will present how items and ideas have influenced the project at the next available meeting until the conclusion of the project.