

21 October 2021

Residents and visitors set for one more summer splash before Newcastle Ocean Baths' upgrade

City of Newcastle Councillors will vote on Tuesday to award the Newcastle Ocean Baths upgrade contract with the site to close early next year and be off limits for just one summer.

Six companies submitted tenders for the Stage 1 works which were assessed against a range of criteria and a recommended construction program that would limit disruption and impact on baths users.

Lord Mayor Nuatali Nelmes said having Newcastle Ocean Baths open through the upcoming holiday period would allow locals and returning tourists to enjoy the iconic pools with COVID-19 restrictions lifted.

"Newcastle Ocean Baths turns 100 next year and while this upgrade is well-needed, starting construction after this coming summer means locals who have been staying home and visitors itching to get back to Newcastle can enjoy the space over the holidays," Cr Nelmes said.

"The upgrade to Newcastle Ocean Baths' pools, lower promenades and pumping system is significant, which means that shutting after this coming summer it's expected construction will continue through to Autumn 2023.

"This summer I encourage everyone to visit Newcastle Ocean Baths and enjoy this iconic local facility before it undergoes a generational upgrade and is returned improved for the community in 2023."

City of Newcastle Acting Director of Infrastructure and Property, Joanne Rigby, said the preferred tenderer was determined after a thorough tender process involving an independent external probity advisor.

"The preferred tenderer has significant experience in large construction projects and their response to the tender demonstrated a thorough understanding of the construction requirements," Ms Rigby said.

The City of Newcastle is committed to funding the renewal of Newcastle Ocean Baths in full and will direct the \$9.5 million recovered from the sale of the Frederick Ash Building to the project. Stage 1 of the Newcastle Ocean Baths upgrade received \$3 million in funding from the NSW Government's Public Spaces Legacy Program.