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## Tender awarded for Newcastle Ocean Baths pool upgrade

Concept designs for Stage 1 of the Newcastle Ocean Baths upgrade will soon get underway, with GHD named as the principal design consultant.

The Baths upgrade is a staged project that will begin with the restoration of the pool and its promenades, while consultation and assessments continue for the upper concourse and pavilion.

City of Newcastle will fully fund the renewal of the Baths, with the \$9.5 million proceeds from the sale of three City of Newcastle-owned buildings including the Frederick Ash Building, directed towards the project, while any additional funds will come from City of Newcastle.

Newcastle Lord Mayor Nuatali Nelmes said the Stage 1 design contract had been awarded to GHD following an official tender process, with the firm set to complete final site investigations before developing initial options and concept designs for the pools and promenade for community feedback.

“Engagement with the Newcastle Ocean Baths Community Reference Group and broader public is an important aspect of revitalising this iconic community asset,” Cr Nelmes said.

“Our discussions to date have provided an insight into what the community values most about the pools, such as retaining the iconic boardwalk and improving accessibility.

“This feedback will help inform the upcoming design process, with initial concepts to be provided to the Newcastle Ocean Baths community reference group for feedback.

“This will be followed by a detailed design process, which is expected to be completed by April 2021, with construction works scheduled to begin in the new financial year following further community consultation.”

Stage 2 of the project will address the renewal of the pavilions and surrounding upper level public domain space. A multi-criteria needs analysis will be undertaken on the site to guide conversations with the community and ensure the upgrade meets the needs of future generations.

“Newcastle Ocean Baths is treasured by our community, which is why we are moving ahead with the upgrades to the pools while continuing conversations with the community to ensure they have input into the improvements to the iconic pavilions,” Cr Nelmes said.

“Prioritising a refurbishment of the pools and their surrounds will allow us to improve the site’s safety and accessibility while ensuring adequate time to work with the community on a plan for the pavilion that respects the heritage and integrity of the site.”