

Date: Tuesday 30 July 2024	Time: 5.30 – 7pm	Venue: Lord Mayor's Reception Room, City Administration Centre
Meeting No: 16	Meeting Objective: To provide advice and guidance on the development of strategies, and identification of challenges and opportunities, in relation to built and natural facilities and systems within the LGA.	

1. Welcome

Councillor Winney - Baartz acknowledged that the meeting is being held on the traditional country of the Awabakal and Worimi Peoples, and paid respect to Elders past and present.

1.1 Attendees:

Members

Cr Peta Winney-Baartz	Councillor Member
Robert Main	Acting Group Manager Planning & Engineering, Hunter Water
John Merrell	Community Representative
Corinne Thompson	Senior Manager, Community and Place Partner, Transport NSW
Emmanuel Genlot	General Manager, Keolis Downer

Guests

Clint Thomson	Executive Director City Infrastructure and Committee Facilitator
Elisha Buckingham	Committee Secretary (Minutes)
Robert Dudgeon	Executive Manager Project Management Office, City of Newcastle
Ryan Tranter	Interim Executive Manager Traffic and Transport
Peter McMurray	Acting Executive Manager Assets and Facilities

Apologies

Cr Nuatali Nelmes	Councillor Member
Cr Katrina Wark	Councillor Member
Bryn Hernandez	Network Planning & Operations Council Management, Ausgrid

1.2 Declaration and Conflicts of Interest

1.2.1 Nil.

2. Minutes and Actions Arising

- 2.1 Minutes of the meeting held Tuesday 6 February were endorsed as circulated.
- 2.2 The Committee unanimously resolved to reduce the number of meetings in 2024 from four (4) to three (3). The April meeting content was combined with the July agenda due to unavailability of Committee members for the April meeting.
- 2.3 The Committee unanimously resolved that the Annual Report would be endorsed out-of-sessions, prior to 13 September 2024.
- 2.4 There were no outstanding actions from the previous meeting.

3. Sports Infrastructure Working Party Update

3.1 Councillor Winney-Baartz provided an update:

3.1.1 Noted there has been some great work done recently in upgrading sporting facilities to encourage greater participation in sport, particularly for women and girls, and people from diverse backgrounds. There are upcoming projects to provide further upgrades to modernise and make existing facilities more accessible, such as works to sportsgrounds at Tarro and New Lambton.

Action: It was requested that Lynn Duffy, Executive Manager Community and Recreation present on the future program for Sporting Facilities at the next meeting.

4. City of Newcastle Updates

4.1 Robert Dudgeon provided an update from the Project Management Office:

4.1.1 Sporting Facilities: CN delivered a record program in improving local sporting facilities in the 2023/24 financial year. Darling Street Oval has modern facilities with gender inclusive change rooms and a new canteen amongst the new and improved features. The works demonstrated how old facilities can be repurposed and modernised. The project was a demonstration of levels of governments working together with the sporting clubs to successfully manage grants and achieve the best outcomes.

It was also noted that Passmore Oval Grandstand now has a new lift, accessible change rooms and function room. The new facilities at both locations are being well used by the local sporting clubs, who have provided positive feedback.

4.1.2 Parks and Playspaces: It was noted that CN owns and manages 116 playgrounds across the LGA. Works at Gregson Park, Hamilton are currently underway with upgrade of amenities, and will also include accessible play equipment indigenous features. The playspace will also include a water play section and traditional and new-style play equipment.

CN are currently completing upgrades to Smith Park field, Hamilton North. Improvements include new drainage, irrigation and field alignment, with works to be completed in late 2024.

Works have also commenced at Foreshore Park, Newcastle East, with the construction of the new amenities block currently underway, and scheduled completion in the first half of 2025. There is also a new playspace proposed, that will become the largest playground in the LGA, and Newcastle's first 'regional facility'. The playground will be fully inclusive and accessible with water playspace, nature-based features and elevated climbing facilities. Construction of the playspace will continue through the 2025/26 financial year.

4.1.3 Newcastle Ocean Baths: Stage 1 (renewal of the pool) was completed in December 2023, and the preliminary works for Stage 2 have now commenced. Stage 2 will focus on the upper pavilion changerooms and a café/kiosk, with an emphasis on creating a safe, inclusive, improved accessibility facility, whilst maintaining the character and heritage façade. The initial design is currently open for community consultation following the Community Reference Group (CRG). Detailed design works will continue through 2024/25. It was noted that the valuable input from the CRG has helped drive the process and decisions.

Action: Robert Dudgeon and Robert Main to discuss sustainable water usage in CN buildings when new/renewed.

4.1.4 Bathers Way - King Edward Park: Bathers Way consists of a 4m wide, 6km shared pathway, with one of the final main sections to open up shortly, passing through King Edward Park and linking to the coastline. The new section will include viewing platforms, shelters, formalised parking spaces, enhanced accessibility and has utilised crime prevention through design (CPTED) principles. Ryan Tranter noted that CN's Traffic & Transport team has funding under the 'Get Active' grant to connect pathways to a nearby road to improve connectivity.

4.1.5 Newcastle 500 Remediation: Works are underway to remediate roads within Newcastle East that were respecified in support of the Newcastle 500 Supercars event. Zaara Street and Shortland Esplanade intersection works are complete. Wharf Road and Watt Street roundabout are 50% complete, with works soon to begin on a raised pedestrian crossing. Remediation will continue to be implemented over the coming years, as part of masterplans and other projects.

4.2 Ryan Tranter provided an update from Traffic and Transport:

4.2.1 The Walking and Mobility plan is a key facet of CN's overarching Transport Strategy, and the plan has been aligned with other CN and other government strategies. The plan provides guidance on prioritising footpaths based on pedestrian activity.

CN has engaged with the community to assist writing the plan, with over 1500 interactions received through the various consultation channels with the community. The draft plan is out until the 8 August 2024 for community consultation. A Key theme identified was the need for better connections to public facilities such as libraries and playgrounds.

The Principal Pedestrian Network (PPN) mapped how people behave and move around in their local area, and helped identify how we can encourage more walkability. The Traffic & Transport team are undertaking a gap analysis project to identify improvements, looking at factors such as topography, bus stop location and footpaths that are not in the road reserve. Emmanuel Genlot advised that Keolis Downer completed an audit around schools for pedestrian safety in Newcastle/Lake Macquarie.

Ryan noted Success is measured by delivering equity across the city, and will be supported by 3-year pedestrian surveys, and 5-year external data review (ABS and Schools).

Action: Keolis Downer to share their pedestrian safety around schools report with CN's Traffic & Transport team

4.3 Peter McMurray provided an update from Assets & Facilities:

4.3.1 Works are currently underway to stabilise the embankment at Memorial Drive, The Hill. Previous condition inspection reports revealed the topography had been impacted by heavy rain events, causing instability and land slips. The site presents significant challenges given the steep slope, as well as being a narrow site with other assets including powerlines. Works will continue throughout 2024 with completion in 2025. Once completed, the embankment will be stabilised and will also include upgrades to the stormwater assets and road pavements.

The Western Corridor upgrade in Wallsend is one of CN's biggest road upgrade projects. It was noted there will be traffic impacts during works, however traffic improving mitigations will be in place, and major benefits are expected upon completion, including streamlined traffic flows and congestion easing. Construction is scheduled to commence early 2025.

- 4.3.2 An update on CN's fleet transition was presented, including the transition to hybrid, low emission, and electric vehicles (EV). The scope includes heavy plant, trucks, passenger fleet, and small plant and equipment. CN is awaiting delivery of a hydrogen waste collection vehicle, and is currently trialling a range of hybrid and electric vehicles.

5 Stakeholder Updates

5.1 TfNSW - Corinne Thompson provided an update:

- 5.1.1 Major works are currently underway on the M1 to Raymond Terrace project, including vegetation, tree clearing, and utility relocation. As part of the project there will also be 2.6km viaduct constructed over the Hunter River. Consultation is underway, and 3 community drop-in sessions were held. The project is scheduled for completion in 2028.
- 5.1.2 Construction on the Hexham straight is continuing, with works over the next 3 months including work on the abutments and headstocks, as well as ongoing relocation of water, electrical, and telecommunications utility services, and traffic signals and bus stop locations. Construction is scheduled for completion in 2026.
- 5.1.3 Earthworks are continuing, and bridgeworks have commenced on the Rankin Park to Jesmond bypass. The project is scheduled for completion in 2025.
- 5.1.4 TfNSW are investigating options for the Newcastle Future Transit Corridor (light rail) To extend from the Newcastle Interchange to Broadmeadow. Public consultation on the preferred corridor is scheduled to take place from late 2024.
- 5.1.5 Works on Tarro bridge will be carried out between 3 - 6 August 2024, and will deliver long term repairs to the bridge pylons. The works will coincide with a planned 3-day train closure for trackwork.
- 5.1.6 The mural on the corner of Hunter and Stewart Avenue, Newcastle West has been completed, and the area has been tidied up, including graffiti clean-up from the signal boxes.

5.2 Hunter Water - Robert Main provided an update:

- 5.2.1 Latest business strategy has been released, and the sustainability strategy is expected to be released shortly.
- 5.2.2 HW received wooden logs from TfNSW from the M1 to Raymond Terrace works, which will be used for a river rehabilitation project.
- 5.2.3 The Road relocations program is expanding, driven by input from Councils and TfNSW.
- 5.2.4 There are upcoming upgrades to wastewater systems in Georgetown which will improve system performance.
- 5.2.5 The new Hunter Water IPART pricing proposal is currently undergoing community engagement.
- 5.2.6 While HW routinely achieves IPART Operating Licence Targets, they are implementing a 'hot spots' program which will target improvements for customers who receive a less-than-ideal standard of service, within Newcastle suburbs as well as the wider Hunter region.

5.2.7 HW are working with CN on stormwater works within Macquarie Street, Mayfield.

Action: Ryan Tranter and Robert Main to discuss improvements to pathways to access Hunter Water assets.

6.3 Keolis Downer - Emmanuel Genlot provided an update:

6.3.1 KD continue to successfully increase driver numbers, with 160 new bus drivers onboarded over an 18-month period. The increase in drivers allows KD to meet optimised service levels.

6.3.2 KD have a number of recent or upcoming community engagement initiatives, including the family day held in May 2024, celebrating the Hamilton depot's 100-year anniversary. There are several upcoming community initiatives, such as the annual light rail safety week campaign, which will provide education for community to be vigilant around light rail. KD will also be participating in the Sunflower campaign which acknowledges users of public transport may have hidden disabilities. Staff training around this initiative will be rolled out to increase staff awareness.

6.3.3 Work is in progress for a fleet transition to more electric vehicles. KD has been making progress in Sydney, with a view to increase implementation in Newcastle. Further investigations on technology including fast charging options are underway.

6.3.4 KD are currently collaborating with TfNSW to create a new bus timetable meeting the new rail timetable.

7.1 Ausgrid - Bryn Hernandez was an apology.

6. General Business

6.1 Nil

7. Closing

7.1 Time and date of next meeting is pending a committee framework review by the newly elected Council in late 2024.