



WATT STREET RECONSTRUCTION

SUPERCARS NEWCASTLE 500

JULY 2017

Reconstruction of Watt St is under way as part of a major asset renewal program for the city's east end.

This vital project is being undertaken to coincide with preparations for the inaugural Newcastle 500 event in November 2017. Prior to work commencing, sections of roadway, footpaths, kerbs, drainage and other infrastructure were already long overdue for improvement.

The overhaul is being completed within a single compressed timeframe, rather than over several years, minimising long-term disruption to residents and businesses.

We are creating a street that will be safer and better for motorists and pedestrians, helping reinvigorate the CBD of one of Australia's great regional cities.

- New footpaths
- Kerbs and gutters renewed/replaced
- Smart city underground cabling
- New water mains
- Smart lighting
- Roundabout alterations



Road to renewal

1 New footpaths

Sections of Watt Street's footpath were in poor condition prior to work, displaying cracking and an uneven surface for pedestrians. New footpath will be laid on both sides of the street.

2 Kerbs and gutters renewed and/or replaced

Kerbs and gutters will be replaced along Watt St from Scott St to Church St. Historic sandstone kerbing will be reinstated between Church St and King St on Watt St's western side.

3 Smart city underground cabling

Underground cabling will future-proof the street, providing cabling needed for high-speed internet and other technology outlined in Council's draft Smart City Strategy.

4 New water mains

Water mains running under Watt St are more than 100 years old in parts and require frequent maintenance. New mains will serve the CBD for many years to come.

5 Smart lighting

Smart poles will replace traditional street lighting along Watt St, with WiFi transmitters, traffic monitoring cameras, remotely controlled lighting and the capacity for other high-tech upgrades.

6 Roundabout alterations

The roundabout at the intersection of Wharf Rd and Watt St will become a removable roundabout, enabling it to be cleared temporarily for the Newcastle 500.

Other improvements:

Safer road and path cross-gradients

New work will reduce the building-to-kerb slope of Watt St footpaths. Sections of these are currently difficult for people with restricted mobility. The road's camber will also be reduced to improve parking and driving conditions.

Tree planting

Several small trees removed during construction will be replaced using Council's street tree selection criteria. Location and final numbers will depend on the position of utilities and other new infrastructure.



Rebuilding Newcastle's oldest street

Watt St has been at the heart of Newcastle's CBD since the earliest days of European settlement. It is recognised as the city's oldest street, with historical records indicating it once led down to a jetty where ships would dock to unload cargo and passengers. Over the years the street has undergone significant repairs and alterations, mostly done in sections. This has created a patchwork of footpath and road surfaces of varying age and condition. Significant sections of the street and its underground infrastructure are long overdue for refurbishment. Subterranean water mains are more than 100 years old in parts, while other infrastructure owned by utilities providers also needs replacing.



Why now?

Reconstruction of Watt St has been in Newcastle City Council's forward renewal program for more than a decade. Preparations for the inaugural Newcastle 500 in November created an opportunity for this work to be completed in a single, compressed timeframe, condensing eight years of work into less than 12 months. This means a higher intensity of work along Watt St during construction, but overall less interruption to traffic, residents and businesses than if the work were to be undertaken in stages.



Closure to through traffic

Watt St closed to through traffic on Monday 17 July to expedite the road's reconstruction. The move followed feedback from residents and businesses about the duration of the works program. Diversions to through-traffic will remain in place until the project's completion, however access remains available for pedestrians, residents and businesses. As well as bringing forward the completion date by an expected eight weeks, the closure will reduce the duration of disruptions to electricity supply and other utilities in the area. To help offset the loss of on-street parking during construction, free one-hour parking at Council's King St car park is available to customers of affected businesses.

WORKS PROGRAM

June to end of August:
Watt St closed to through traffic for reconstruction works

The Watt St works program will cause disruption for residents, businesses and others who use the Newcastle CBD and we are grateful for your patience during this period. We will do everything possible to minimise disruption. Our ultimate aim is to create a better streetscape to benefit everyone for many years to come.



Parking

Reconstruction work requires the restriction of on-street parking along Watt St from Shortland Esplanade to Scott St. Restrictions will be in place until December, 2017, when temporary race infrastructure is removed. Nearby parking options include undercover parking stations on Bolton St (170m away) and King St (320m away).

Pedestrian access

Pedestrians will be able to use Watt St and access businesses and homes along the street throughout construction.

Vehicle traffic

Traffic controls will be in place during construction. Local traffic movements only will be permitted on Watt St while the street is closed for reconstruction.

Businesses

Businesses will be able to remain open throughout construction. Every effort will be made to minimise disruption, however businesses will be affected by the works program.

Access to homes and driveways

The reconstruction program will be scheduled to ensure access to homes along Watt St is maintained at all times. Driveway access will be restricted for short periods of time while sections of road and footpath are replaced.

Noise and vibration

Construction machinery is noisy and may cause vibration for nearby residents and businesses. Measures will be taken where possible to minimise these impacts, including scheduling the noisiest work during the day.

Work hours

Construction work will be 7am-5pm weekdays and 8am-2pm Saturdays. Work outside these hours may be required in exceptional circumstances. Residents and businesses will be notified in advanced should this occur.

Build notices

Regular build notices are being issued to local residents and businesses, providing details of upcoming work. These are posted online on Newcastle City Council's Newcastle 500 information hub: newcastle.nsw.gov.au/Supercars.

