

HAVE YOU SEEN THE NEW UPGRADES AT BLACKBUTT RESERVE?

With 182 hectares of natural bushland, Blackbutt is an urban oasis providing access to nature trails, wildlife exhibits, children's playgrounds and picnic space.



Improvements to existing facilities at Blackbutt Reserve as well as new infrastructure have provided more recreational opportunities.

The Carnley Avenue section has experienced several significant changes with the construction of a wildlife arena, a new amenities block, more shade shelters, better pathways, larger grassed areas and an upgraded viewing deck at Black Duck Pond. Improvements have also been made at Richley Reserve with new shade shelters and pathways.

Still to come is the transformation of the

Richley Reserve playground to a small adventure playground to better cater for older, as well as younger children.

Future plans also include a new amenities building and additional picnic facilities, to make both sides of the Reserve even more appealing to visitors.

A BUSY 2015

- 38 school excursions
- 90 *Bringing Blackbutt to you* events
- 64 *Critter Encounters*
- 14 vacation care programs
- 12 weddings
- 4 *Junior Ranger Fun Days*



New platform overlooking Black Duck Pond



More recreational areas, new shelters and BBQ facilities

ENJOY A UNIQUE EXPERIENCE OR EVENT TODAY

- Reptile shows* at 11am every weekend in the wildlife arena (every day during school holidays)
- 1.30pm Nocturnals feeding time
- 2pm Koala talk and feeding time
- 11 shelters available to hire*

*Fees apply. For more information call 4904 3344



Wednesday 13 April

NEWCASTLE PERMANENT JUNIOR RANGER FUN DAY

Richley Reserve, Blackbutt

The theme for our next free environmental fun day is Nature Venture. Come along for art and craft, face painting, pot a plant, critter encounters and jumping castles.



Thursday 14 & Wednesday 20 April CREATE THE DESERT City Library

Join illustrator Liz Anelli to explore the current exhibition of her illustrations from *Desert Lake: the story of Kati Thanda-Lake Eyre*, then use a range of art techniques to create a desert creature to add to the exhibition mural.



Tuesday to Friday, 19-22 April SMUDGE AND SPATTER PRINTING Newcastle Art Gallery

Children will get to design and create their own unique stamps, and use them to smudge and spatter onto paper and fabric. Aprons are provided.



Tuesday 12 & 19, Thursday 14 & 21 April SCIENCE SHOWS Newcastle Museum

Join us on a journey of scientific discovery, as we explore exciting experiments and some surprising science you can do at home.

WHAT'S ON

YOU'LL FIND A RANGE OF ACTIVITIES IN THE SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

For more information, bookings and costs, visit www.newcastle.nsw.gov.au



Wednesday 13 & 20 April THE GREAT DRAWING ADVENTURE Newcastle Museum

Explore Newcastle Museum with a sketch pad and pencil. See our exhibitions in a new light as you work with artists to draw your own adventure.



11-27 April OUT OF THIS WORLD Wallsend, Adamstown, Lambton, Stockton, Hamilton, New Lambton Mayfield, City and Beresfield libraries

An extensive program catering for all ages, across all locations to celebrate Star Wars, aliens and all things cosmic. From Recycled Aliens to the Lego Master Builder's Challenge.



April 2016

CENTENARY OF ANZAC

Sunset Service, Memorial Walk
5pm, Friday 22 April

Lighting ANZAC flame, Nobbys Beach
5pm, Saturday 23 April

Candlelight vigil, Civic Park
6pm, Sunday 24 April

Dawn service, Nobbys Beach
5am, Monday 25 April

ANZAC March, Hunter St to Civic Park
9.15am, Monday 25 April

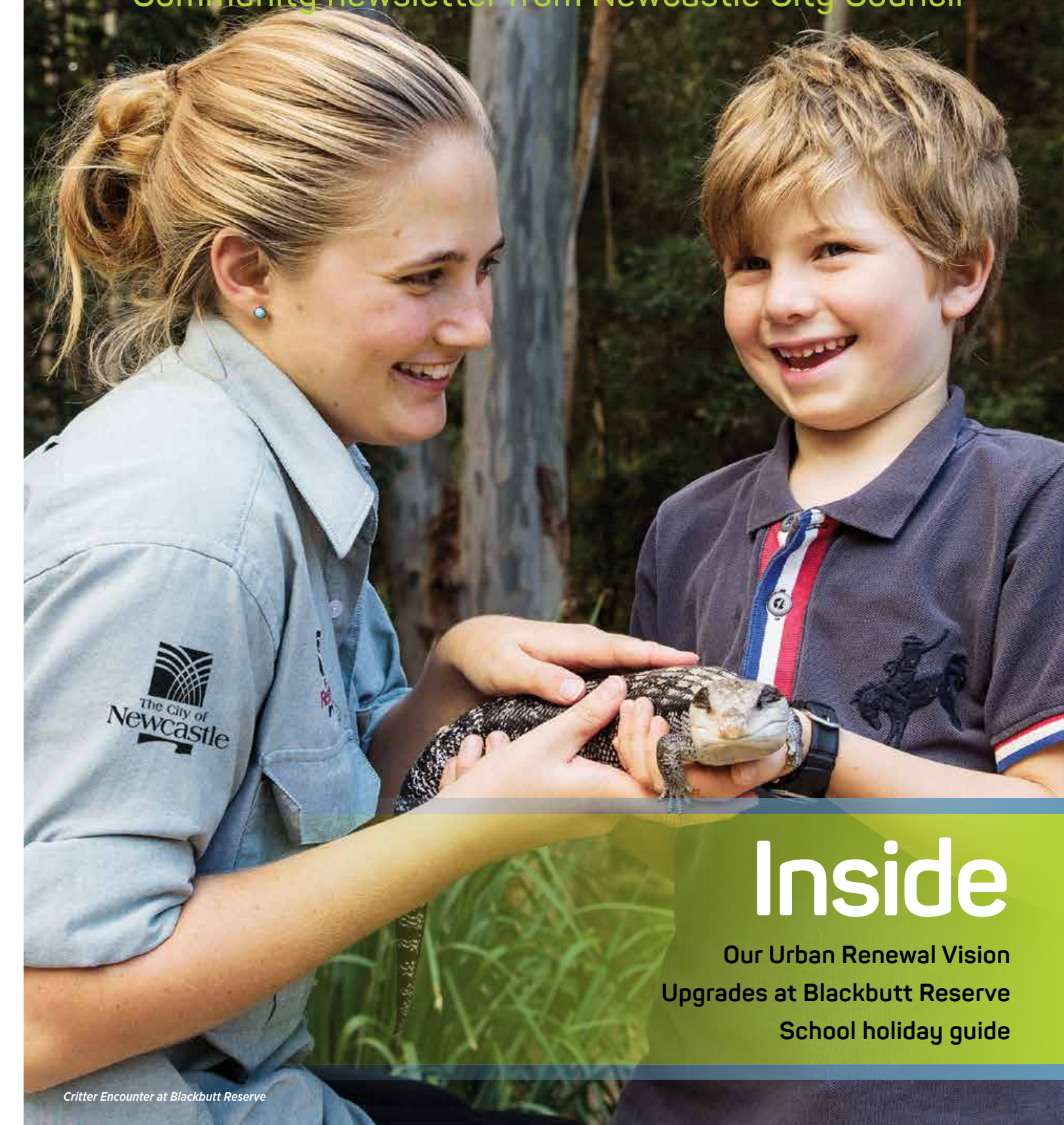
United Commemoration Service, Civic Park
10am, Monday 25 April

Firing of guns, Fort Scratchley
1pm and 3pm, Monday 25 April

AUTUMN
2016

Council News

Community newsletter from Newcastle City Council



Critter Encounter at Blackbutt Reserve

Inside

Our Urban Renewal Vision
Upgrades at Blackbutt Reserve
School holiday guide



We recently launched our vision for an integrated transport network to shape Newcastle's urban renewal, improve connectivity and liveability.

An integrated transport network is the cornerstone of a thriving global city. Now more than ever before, Newcastle deserves a network where seamless multimodal public transport co-exists with pedestrians, cyclists, cars, skateboarders and scooters.

Our plans for light rail include reinstating the historic tram loop through Pacific Park in the city centre and providing for future links to key locations like Hunter Stadium, the University of Newcastle, Newcastle Airport, John Hunter Hospital, Bathers Way and Glendale Interchange.

A link to Hunter Stadium is a logical first step due to existing road infrastructure.

We have launched this vision for the region as we await a decision on the NSW Government's proposal that Newcastle

City Council merge with Port Stephens Council. In February, Council lodged its submission to a public inquiry into the proposed merger.

As our submission demonstrates, we are in a strong financial position and we are looking to the future. Newcastle City Council will post an operating surplus for a second consecutive year, while at the same time delivering quality regional infrastructure. Our capital works program has grown from \$58 million last financial year to more than \$70 million this year.

A major program of upgrades that I have championed for many years at Blackbutt Reserve is one of council's four priority projects. Visitors will have noticed a raft of improvements, including a new wildlife arena and BBQ shelters, making Blackbutt an even more user friendly and popular local attraction.

Nuatali Nelmes
Lord Mayor of Newcastle

Artist's impression of mixed running in Hunter Street, Newcastle



Capital works update
CITY HALL

City Hall clock tower is chiming again after an 18-month restoration project that saw 900 sandstone blocks replaced, overhaul of the clock and bell striking mechanism and lighting and electrical replacements. The project was completed on time and on budget and will be followed by further work on City Hall.



Capital works update
BATHERS WAY

Record numbers of people enjoyed the improved amenity of Council's Bathers Way project at Merewether during Surfest 2016. The 6km coastal revitalisation project is now half complete, with work set to begin on stabilising the South Newcastle Seawall to accommodate widened pathways.

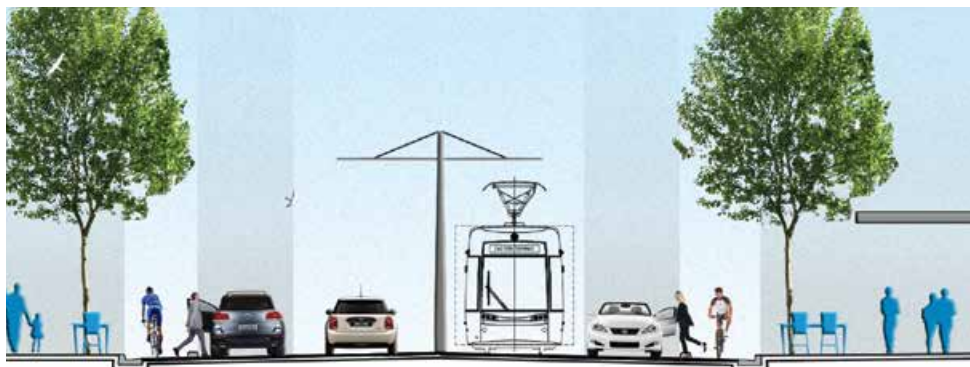


Artist's impression near the former Newcastle Post Office

CONNECTING NEWCASTLE:
OUR URBAN RENEWAL VISION

Our vision is a key part of achieving our goal of being a smart, liveable and sustainable city. Transport networks and services will be well connected and convenient. Walking, cycling and public transport will be viable options for getting into and around the city. Newcastle deserves an integrated transport network that makes sense and delivers on broader urban renewal goals.

Diagram showing mixed-running concept



Our vision uses light rail as a catalyst for urban renewal as well as a transport option. Light rail cars will share transit lanes with motor vehicles to leave room for parking, cycleways and wider footpaths allowing for kerbside dining.

Cycleways and footpaths will be separated from traffic by parked cars to keep people safe and help activate Hunter and Scott streets.

REINSTATING THE HISTORIC LOOP

Our preferred route loops back from Hunter and Scott streets via Hunter Street Mall along the original tramline, in a design that truly encompasses Newcastle's urban renewal goals. The reinstatement of this unique loop will provide optimal urban renewal outcomes and reflect the city's character and heritage.

FUTURE LINKS

This would mark the start of an integrated public transport network with the potential to link our city centre with our beaches, suburbs, education and medical facilities as well as major transport nodes including Newcastle Airport and the Lake Macquarie Transport Interchange.



MERGER PROPOSAL:
NEWCASTLE AND PORT STEPHENS COUNCILS

The NSW Government has proposed 35 Council amalgamations with a decision expected later this year.

Newcastle City Council's preference is to remain a standalone council. However, in a forced merger scenario, our preferred partner is Port Stephens Council. Our submission to a public inquiry into the proposed merger included the following key points:



Newcastle is Australia's second oldest city. The title of any proposed new entity should maintain the historic name Newcastle



Newcastle City Council maintains a \$1.6 billion asset portfolio and provides regional infrastructure including cultural and sporting facilities



Our strong financial outlook. Newcastle has produced the 8th largest operating surplus in NSW and is forecasting a surplus for the second consecutive year



Our surpluses and the 2015 special rate variation mean we will have funded Newcastle's infrastructure backlog within four years

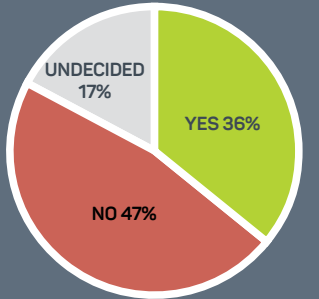


The merger benefits are small and the costs are significantly understated

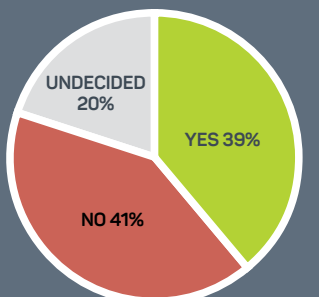
WHAT YOU TOLD US ABOUT THE PROPOSED MERGER

In a Newcastle Voice survey we asked:

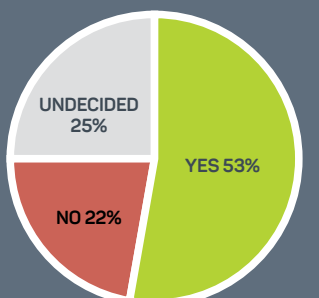
Should Newcastle City Council remain a standalone Council?



Do you support the proposal to merge Newcastle and Port Stephens Councils?



Should we still have a ward-based system if the merger goes ahead?



In the local government reform process Fit for the Future, Newcastle City Council met all the financial criteria and was found to be financially fit.