

What is a masterplan and why do we need one?

What is a masterplan

A masterplan is a document that guides the management and future development of an area. It is a process that defines what is important about a place and how its character and quality can be conserved, improved and enhanced. In the case of the Newcastle Harbour Foreshore, the masterplan will include key information such as historical context, background information, values, principles and objectives, and concept designs that will be used as a blueprint to progress the revitalisation of the site.

Why is the Newcastle Harbour Foreshore Masterplan being developed?

City of Newcastle (CN) adopted the Foreshore Plan of Management (PoM) in October 2015. The PoM provided guidance on key management objectives for the space, including maintaining visual amenity and views, providing appropriate facilities and services and creating flexible spaces to meet community needs. It also identified improvements to pedestrian and cycleway access and better activation of dormant spaces. The PoM identified the need to develop a masterplan to guide the future development of the Newcastle Harbour Foreshore including the development of a regional-level inclusive playspace. Recognition of the establishment of the parkland and historical uses will form a crucial part of the plan.

Why is it important to revitalise Newcastle Harbour Foreshore?

The Harbour Foreshore is an important recreation and cultural space for the inner city and the wider Newcastle community. Given its soaring popularity, consideration must be given as to how it can be enhanced to help complement the City's ongoing revitalisation and meet the growing needs of the community. There are significant opportunities to improve the use and functionality of the Foreshore through;

- the provision of an inclusive playscape with potential of a water-themed playspace. at Foreshore Park.
- providing better cycleway and pedestrian linkages between the Bathers Way to the Honeysuckle and Civic precincts;
- improving the layout and integration of event spaces throughout the foreshore
- greater recognition to the historical influences and cultural elements celebrated along the foreshore;
- exploring opportunities to increase night-time activation;
- exploring opportunities to provide an integrated community building to host minor functions; and
- investigating opportunities to conserve and protect significant trees, which contribute to the foreshore's significant visual amenity.

- improving the pedestrian and cycle amenity.
- Revitalising the streetscape and public domain along Wharf Road and Argyle St.

What is the scope of the Harbour Foreshore Masterplan?

Newcastle Harbour Foreshore was identified as a priority project within the 2015 PoM. The site includes the area east of Merewether Street, along Wharf Road and the Joy Cummings Promenade, to Foreshore Park. CN will run community engagement throughout the key phases of the project and the feedback received will help inform development of the masterplan.

The masterplan seeks to retain the natural aspects of the Foreshore and preserve its uniqueness while advancing short, medium and long-term improvements within the area. The scope includes opportunities for an inclusive playground and options for a water-themed play space.

Consideration will also be given to a range of recreational, accessibility and landscaping improvements as well as opportunities for future events spaces. This could include, but is limited to, pathways, playspaces, fitness stations, picnic tables, barbecues, park benches, public art, or structures to improve dining and entertainment options such as a café, restaurant or infrastructure for festivals and events.

Who will designing the Harbour Foreshore Masterplan?

The City of Newcastle has partnered with Variety – the Children Charity to deliver the Harbour Foreshore Masterplan. Together we have engaged Landscape Architects Taylor Cullity Lethlean Pty Ltd (TCL) who have partnered with local firm Bosque Studio Landscape Architects. TCL are a multi award winning firm responsible for several iconic landscape and playspaces throughout Australia and around the world including Geelong Waterfront, Auckland Waterfront and Cairns Waterfront. TCL has set the standard other firms benchmark themselves against and they provide a tailored design approach to each project. TCL and Bosque Studio will will work with the community to provide high quality and unique landscape design for Newcastle foreshore.

How will the community be involved?

How will the community be involved in masterplan planning?

Through all major stages of the design process, CN will be seeking community feedback to ensure the masterplan meets the needs of the community. CN will provide multiple options for the community to provide feedback including online tools, information sessions and workshops and will form a Community Reference Group and Inclusive Playspace Design Reference Group.

The creation of the masterplan is the first phase in the planning process for the Harbour Foreshore. It will continue to develop and evolve as the City sets out to achieve an agreed vision that involves a high level of community and stakeholder involvement and support.

Phase 1 initial consultation open from 9 June to 12 July 2020

During the phase one engagement, CN will seek to understand what people value about the foreshore, how they use it, and what additional elements they would like to see there. This important information will inform concepts for the foreshore and ultimately the masterplan.

Phase 2 – Concept plans will be presented to the community

Phase 3 – The Draft Masterplan will be placed on public exhibition.

The project team will continue to update the community as the project progresses.

What is the Harbour Foreshore Community Reference Group?

The Community Reference Group (CRG) is being formed to facilitate community and stakeholder input into the development of the masterplan. It will consist of a mix of community members and stakeholders.

The purpose of the CRG is to enable two-way communication and engagement between CN and representatives of the Newcastle community as we develop a masterplan for the Harbour Foreshore. Members will contribute to the masterplan planning process by providing valuable input on the current and future needs and expectations of the community.

Community members are invited to participate in the CRG via an Expressions of Interest process visit www.newcastle.nsw.gov.au/CRG. Members will be selected by a panel consisting of project members from City of Newcastle tasked with developing the masterplan. It is expected the CRG will meet a minimum of three times as agreed to in the [CRG Terms of Reference](#).

Will I have the opportunity for further input into the design process?

Once developed, concept designs will be put to the community for further feedback. A Design Reference Group will also be developed to provide input into the design of an inclusive playspace within Foreshore Park. This will be done in partnership with Variety – the Children’s Charity, who are responsible for the implementation of a Variety Livvi’s Place, as part of their national network of inclusive playspaces. Further information about consultation on the designs will be available later this year. In the meantime, you can stay in touch with the project by joining the Friends of Variety Livvi’s Place Newcastle Facebook page, which is run by Variety.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/varietylivvisplacenewcastle/>

Inclusive play

What is an inclusive playspace?

An inclusive playspace invites people of all ages, abilities and cultures to come together to socialise and play. Inclusive playspaces are easy to access, navigate, provide a range of play types and challenges, and are equipped with appropriate facilities in a comfortable environment – allowing people to stay and play as long as they choose.

More information on inclusive playspaces can be found at

<https://everyonecanplay.nsw.gov.au/>

What is a Variety’s Livvi’s Place?

The Touched by Olivia Foundation (TBO) was founded by Justine and John Perkins in 2007 after the death of their daughter Olivia. Since then, TBO has built over 30 inclusive playspaces across Australia. In 2018 Touched By Olivia Foundation partnered with Variety – the Children’s Charity to ensure more inclusive playspaces will continue to be built nationally. Variety Livvi’s Place at Foreshore Park is a collaborative project of Variety – the Children’s Charity NSW/ACT, City of Newcastle and the Newcastle community.

A [Variety Livvi’s Place](#) is an inclusive playspace for kids of all ages and all abilities to play side by side. Variety believes all kids deserve a fair go, including the ability to play. Kids of all abilities should be able to experience the joy and benefits of playing together and Variety are proud to partner with communities on these very important projects.

Will Indigenous and non-indigenous heritage be considered?

Will the Aboriginal community be consulted on the proposal?

Yes, the traditional owners of the land have been consulted as part of the preliminary investigations and will continue to have input into the City's plans for the area.

Will any historical or traditional heritage elements be considered in the masterplan process?

Newcastle's Heritas Architecture form part of the design consultant team.

They will carry out a comprehensive assessment of the site's heritage that will help inform the direction of the design. The designers will look for every opportunity to enhance the heritage of the site and incorporate it into the masterplan.

What else is in scope?

Will there be a water-themed playspace at Foreshore Park?

CN will seek feedback on the inclusion of a water-themed playspace within Foreshore Park during pre-design community engagement activities.

What is the future of the Frog Pond?

CN will be asking the community on the future use of the Frog Pond in line with the PoM. The options are to retain, partially remove for more open space, or replace the frog pond with a waterplay element incorporated into the inclusive playspace.

Why isn't Camp Shortland included in the design?

The design of Camp Shortland is currently under contract with Local Firm Terras Landscape Architects. The design of the Harbour Foreshore Masterplan will be coordinated with the those works to ensure a harmonious landscape between the two spaces.

What is happening with Tugbirth Lane?

Tugbirth Lane will be incorporated into the public domain landscape, enhancing Joy Cummings Promenade and the communities experience of the harbour.

Is Joy Cumming's Promenade including in the work?

Yes. A review of Joy Cummings Promenade will be carried out as a part of masterplan. The Promenade will be retained and enhanced to meet the needs of the community.

How will cycling be incorporated within the Masterplan?

Cycling infrastructure will be a key element to improve connectivity throughout the Harbour Foreshore. CN has committed to improving cycleways throughout the city

centre. The masterplan will look for opportunities to strengthen connections to Bathers Way, and Honeysuckle and the Civic precincts. The resolution of conflicts between cyclists and Queens Wharf patrons will be addressed as a part of this masterplan. Concepts will be developed with input by the Newcastle Cycling Committee.