

9 September 2016

Former Waratah Gasworks Site

In June 2016, Newcastle City Council (**Council**) received advice from the New South Wales Environment Protection Authority (**EPA**) that a gasworks may have operated on land bounded by High Road, Turton Road and Georgetown Road in Waratah.

The site was not listed in Council's contaminated land records or in the list of known gasworks sites maintained by EPA.

A subsequent review of external historical sources confirmed that Waratah Municipal Council (**WMC**) operated a gasworks in Waratah in the late 19th and early 20th century.

The review further confirmed that:

- The WMC gasworks was opened in July 1889 on part of the Newcastle Pasturage Reserve administered by the New South Wales Department of Lands. The site of the works was bounded by Turton Road and Georgetown Road.
- The works were operated by WMC until 1922 after which it was leased to the City of Newcastle Gas and Coke Company.
- The works closed sometime between 1922 and 1928.
- In 1928 WMC sought tenders for the dismantling of the retort house and coal sheds. The Council also approached the Minister for Lands regarding the vesting of the freehold of the land in the Council.
- WMC was incorporated into the Council of Greater Newcastle under the *Greater Newcastle Act 1937*.

The area in Waratah, along with an overlay of the historic map showing the location of the former gasworks (**the site**), is included in the figure below.



Overlay of an historic map showing the approximate location of the former gasworks site in Waratah. The grey shaded rectangle is the historic map overlay on the current satellite image. The red broken line triangle within the grey shaded rectangle identifies the boundary of the former Waratah gasworks.

Initial Investigation

Council has engaged an independent environmental consultant to undertake an initial investigation of the area.

The initial investigation will:

- review information regarding history of the site
- review the condition of the site through a site inspection
- undertake initial sampling of the site
- identify potential contaminant locations and types
- assess the need for and provide guidance to undertake further investigations.

The independent environmental consultant will provide Council with an initial investigation report.

The initial investigation will take up to three months to complete.

Environmental Sampling

Council's environmental consultant will work with local residents in the area to obtain samples from private properties, public footpaths and roadways and identify subsurface structures associated with the former Waratah Gasworks. The initial investigative works will include:

- resident interviews
- soil samples
- ground penetrating radar survey.

The environmental sampling is designed to provide Council with a clearer understanding of the former gasworks site in order to better plan any future action.

More Information

Newcastle City Council is working closely with NSW EPA to investigate the site. More information is available on gasworks contamination on the NSW EPA website at: www.epa.nsw.gov.au/clm/gasworks.htm

If you have any questions related to the investigation, please contact Newcastle City Council's Regulatory Services between 8.30am and 5pm, Monday to Friday, on 4974 2522.

Local Contacts

- Request specific health advice: Your doctor
- Request general health information: Hunter New England Local Health District 1300 066 055
- Request other contamination information: NSW EPA Environment Line 131555