

Public Art Reference Group

Annual Report

2024



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City of
Newcastle

Acknowledgment of Country

City of Newcastle (CN) acknowledges its Local Government Area (LGA) sits within the Country of the Awabakal and Worimi peoples. We acknowledge that Country for Aboriginal peoples is an interconnected set of ancient relationships. We acknowledge the custodianship of the Awabakal and Worimi peoples and the care and stewardship they have performed in this place since time immemorial. We recognise the history of truth that acknowledges the impact of invasion and colonisation on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and how this still resonates today.

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Cover image: Newcastle Beach
Nickolas Stuart - Olas One

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Foreword from the Chair



As Chair of City of Newcastle's Public Art Reference Group - now the Public Art Standing Committee - I am honoured to reflect on the significant achievements our city has witnessed over the past two terms of the council. The evolution of Newcastle's public art scene has been nothing short of transformative, with public art emerging as a vital force in shaping the character and vibrancy of our city. In recent years, Newcastle has seen unprecedented growth in public art, with contributions from both private developers and community-driven initiatives. Developers have played a crucial role in integrating public art into new developments, creating visually striking spaces that enhance the urban landscape and contribute to the city's cultural richness.

These contributions have been complemented by innovative programs like Big Picture Fest and Small Walls, which have breathed new life into our streets, turning ordinary spaces into extraordinary canvases for creativity.

The success of these programs is evident in the way they have changed and beautified Newcastle's visual landscape. Big Picture Fest, with its large-scale murals, has turned entire buildings into works of art, while Small Walls has empowered local artists to create intimate, community-focused pieces that resonate with residents and visitors alike. Together, these initiatives have not only enhanced the aesthetic appeal of our city but have also fostered a deeper sense of community pride and engagement.

I am incredibly proud to have worked alongside brilliant subject matter experts, enthusiastic and genuine development teams, talented artists and advisers, the city's Business Improvement Associations, and the dedicated staff of City of Newcastle. Their collective passion, creativity, and commitment have been instrumental in bringing these projects to life. Public art is more than just a decorative element; it is an essential part of our community's amenity and well-being. It reflects our city's identity, tells our stories, and provides spaces where people can connect, reflect, and feel inspired.

The growth of public art in Newcastle is a testament to the power of creativity, collaboration, and the shared commitment to making our city a more vibrant and welcoming place for all. As we look to the future, I am confident that public art will continue to play a central role in Newcastle's ongoing transformation, enriching the lives of all who live, work, and visit our city.

Councillor Carol Duncan

Chair

Public Art Reference Group



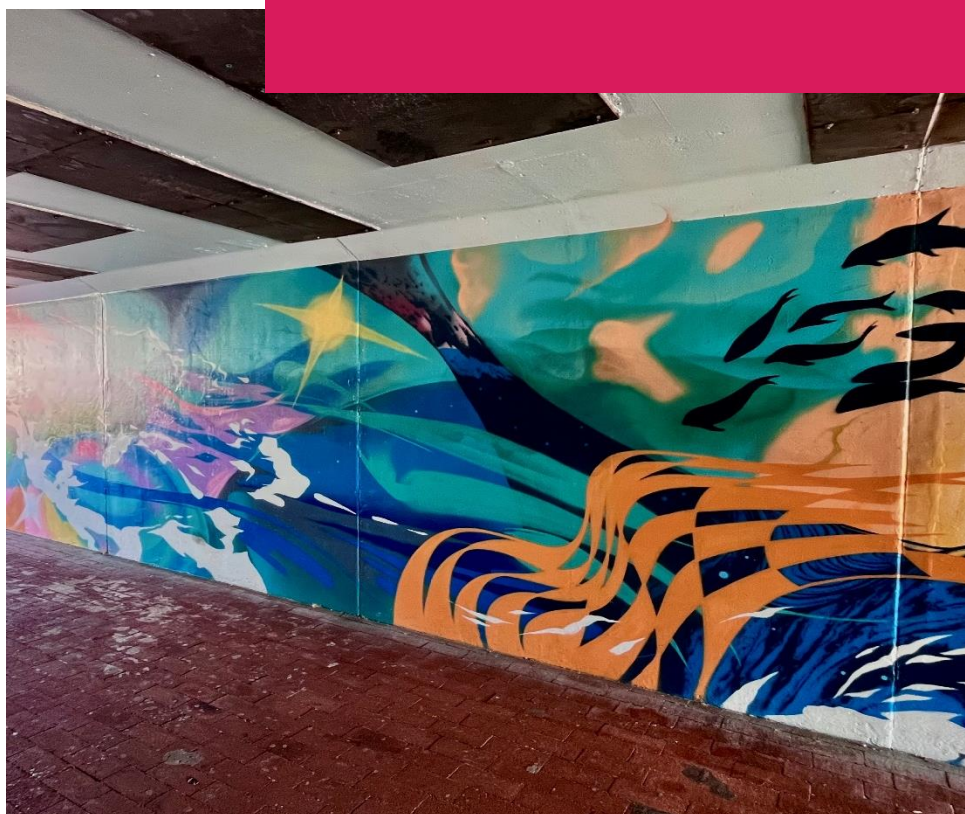
Newcastle Beach

City of Newcastle sought proposals from local and emerging artists to develop a new mural artwork installation in the Newcastle Beach pedestrian Subway.

The call out was open to all artists and collectives with a connection to Newcastle.

After careful consideration, City of Newcastle engaged artist Nickolas Stuart - Olas One to complete the mural artwork 'The Dive' in April 2024.

Nickolas wanted the subway to be inviting, light and invigorating. The completed mural tells a story of refreshment - shaped by the dividing palettes that represent 'the dive' are micro sensations that all happen within moments. The ecstatic entry into the water, through to the lucid and tantalising movement underneath the surface, eventually resurfacing into a state of elevated spirits, tranquillity and bliss with the sun radiating through closed eyes.



Artist - Nickolas Stuart - Olas One

Membership



Councillor Carol Duncan

Chair



Councillor Dr. John Mackenzie

Member



Councillor Peta Winney-Baartz

Member

Dr. Nikolas Orr

Member

Edwardo Milan

Member

Andrew Smith

Member

Julieanne Rose

Member



Artist - Koan Cashman

Hamilton Station Park, Hamilton



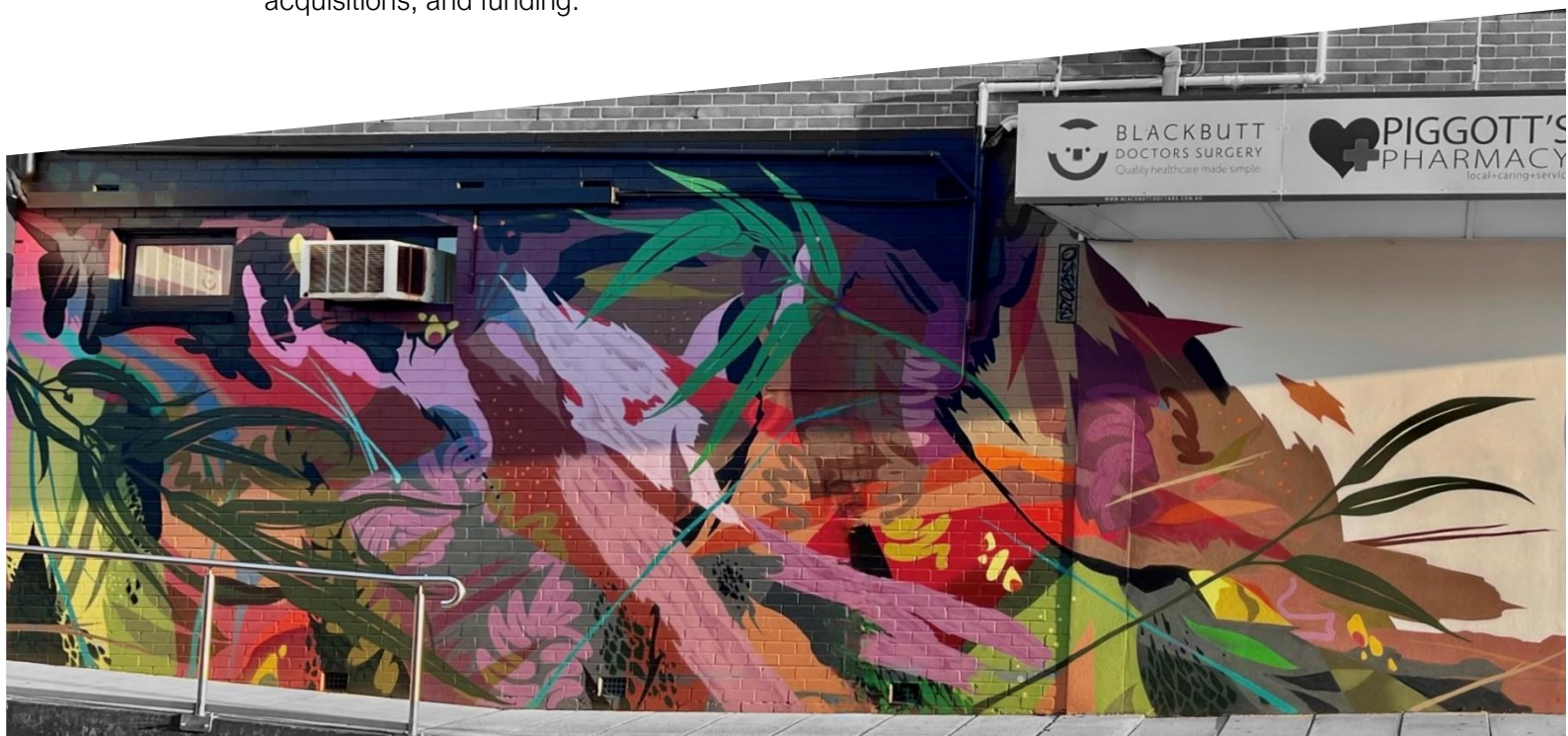
Orchardtown Road Local Centre, New Lambton

Artist - Nickolas Stuart - Olas One

Objectives of the Public Art Reference Group

The Public Art Reference Group (PARG) acts as an Advisory Committee to City of Newcastle (CN) for public art. Over the last year the key objectives were to:

- Ensure public art reflects the local identity, diversity, and community of Newcastle.
- Ensure high standards of public art are delivered in the private domain, by outlining requirements regarding artistic excellence, local character, heritage and culture, invigoration of the public domain, sustainability and materiality, and maintenance
- Ensure that public art processes including commissioning, acquisitions, gifting, loans, deaccession, and relocation are managed with planned, methodical, and professional procedures reflecting best practice.
- Increase the number of high-quality public art works being commissioned in Newcastle.
- Provide guidance and advice to developers, artists, curators, CN staff and the community, regarding public art in the private domain as part of development applications in CN.
- Report to Council annually on public art processes and procedures, including the annual financial contributions of new public art commissioned in private development.
- Review processes and procedures for public art and make recommendations for improvements and revisions of all documents, procedural or policy based, pertaining to public art.
- Review and assist CN officers with an audit of all existing public art in CN to provide a basis to assess public art condition and maintenance, ongoing public art management, disposals, acquisitions, and funding.



Summary of Key Items of Business Considered

Date of Meeting	Business Item
13 February 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Public art proposal</u>: 10 Dangar Street Wickham - MA2023/00397 - <i>Waterline</i> • <u>Public art proposal</u>: Newcastle Beach Subway - Tunnel mural • <u>General business discussion</u>: 88 Darby Street Cooks Hill - Mural Re-Design • <u>General business discussion</u>: Little Festival Mayfield - mural for Farrar & Son's Bakehouse window
14 May 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>General business discussion</u>: Repair of the Wind sculpture by Michio Ihara on the Foreshore
11 June 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Public art proposal</u>: 1 King Street Newcastle - <i>Novotel Newcastle</i> • <u>Public art proposal</u>: 72 Orchardtown Road New Lambton - Orchardtown Road Local Centre Upgrade project • <u>Public art proposal</u>: 643 Hunter Street Newcastle West - DA2022/00538 - <i>Watervue</i> • <u>Public art proposal</u>: Hamilton Station Park - Artwork on Ausgrid Kiosk
9 July 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Public art proposal</u>: 58-62 Orchardtown Road New Lambton - Orchardtown Road Local Centre Upgrade project • <u>Public art proposal</u>: 990 Hunter Street Newcastle West - MA2021/00339 - <i>Aurora</i>
13 August 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PARG Terms of Reference • PARG 2024 Annual Report

Public Art considered by PARG

In 2024, three public art proposals relevant to Development Applications were presented and reviewed. These included:

- MA2021/00339 - 990 Hunter Street Newcastle West
- MA2023/00397 - 10 Dangar Street Wickham
- DA2022/00538 - 643 Hunter Street Newcastle West

The map below shows the locations of these proposals



New Lambton



Orchardtown Road Local Centre Upgrade Project

City of Newcastle's Orchardtown Road Local Centre Upgrade Project is underway and public art is one of the final elements of the upgrade. Newcastle social and artistic enterprise UP&UP Inspirations have been commissioned to produce the murals at three locations in Blackbutt Village following consultation with the New Lambton community and local businesses.

The feedback from the community expressed a desire for a contemporary mural celebrating the native flora and fauna found in Blackbutt Reserve in a unique way.

Two of the three murals have been presented to PARG. The two proposed and endorsed murals will aid in uplifting Orchardtown road and have been designed to add colour and deepen character in the Local Centre whilst capturing the essence of Blackbutt Reserve's natural beauty in a fresh, modern light.

The murals celebrate the relationship between urban spaces and nature, inviting viewers to reconnect with the natural world in an engaging matter.

Summary of Performance and Governance

Date of meeting	Quorum achieved	Members in attendance	Agenda circulated to members	Declaration of conflicts of interest listed as agenda item	Minutes circulated to members and adopted by the Committee
13 February 2024	Quorate	Councillor Carol Duncan (Chair), Councillor Peta Winney-Baartz, Councillor John Mackenzie, Edwardo Milan, Priscilla Emmett (CN), Amy Ryan (CN)	Yes	Yes	Yes
14 May 2024	Quorate	Councillor Carol Duncan (Chair), Councillor Peta Winney-Baartz, Edwardo Milan, Amy Ryan (CN)	Yes	Yes	Yes
11 June 2024	Quorate	Councillor John Mackenzie, Dr. Nikolas Orr, Edwardo Milan. Amy Ryan (CN)	Yes	Yes	Yes
9 July 2024	Quorate	Councillor Carol Duncan (Chair), Councillor John Mackenzie, Councillor Peta Winney-Baartz, Amy Ryan (CN)	Yes	Yes	Yes
13 August 2024	Quorate	Councillor Carol Duncan, Dr. Nikolas Orr	Yes	Yes	Yes