



# NORTH SYDNEY COUNCIL

# MEDIA RELEASE

31 December 2020

## BUILDER APPOINTED FOR NORTH SYDNEY OLYMPIC POOL REDEVELOPMENT



The world's most beautiful pool is set to become Sydney's best aquatic centre with construction scheduled to begin in late March. North Sydney Council has appointed Icon SI (Aust) Pty Ltd to redevelop the North Sydney Olympic Pool, improving and expanding the range of recreational facilities at the centre.

North Sydney Mayor Jilly Gibson said this was the best New Year present she could give residents.

"The North Sydney Olympic Pool has served our community splendidly for 84 years. Sadly, age has taken its toll and the 50m pool, concourse and grandstand have deteriorated to the point that we can only operate with load restrictions. This redevelopment will mean our regular swimmers will be able to enjoy their harbourside swim for many decades to come.

"The redevelopment will also open the complex to new customers. We'll have better swimming and play options for families, older people will be able to enjoy gentle exercise in warm water pools and we'll be able to offer more aquatic and fitness classes and an expanded gymnasium. This will be a centre that meets the needs of future generations, not just a fortunate few."

Mayor Gibson said it took conviction, courage and hard work to get a project of this scale to the construction stage. "I would like to thank the councillors who have the vision to build for the future and the staff who have worked hard for several years to get us to construction. I'm already looking forward to my first swim and aqua aerobics class in the new facility."

The pool will remain open until the end of February with booked swims in the 50m pool, unless closed by a COVID-19 public health order. Council will then spend two to three weeks decommissioning the pool, including removing equipment and memorabilia, before handing the site to Icon SI to start construction.



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General Manager Ken Gouldthorp said the rumours spreading about cost blow-outs for the project were unfounded. “The entire budget allocation, including the design phase, consultation, DA preparation, construction and an allowance for contingencies has increased from \$57.9M to \$63.9M.

“The cost of construction is within 5% of the estimate provided by Council’s quantity surveyors. This project has been well managed to this point and I am confident that Council has struck the right balance between maintaining the essential character of the pool and upgrading to 21<sup>st</sup> century standards that meet the needs and expectations of the community.”

Icon SI is one of Australia’s largest construction companies with more than 80 projects ranging up to \$400M in value. It is part of the Japanese Kajima Corporation which operates across 20 countries.

Icon SI’s portfolio includes a number of aquatic and sports projects including:

- \$15M Lane Cove Aquatic Centre (2020)
- \$26M Ruth Everess Aquatic Centre in Auburn (2017)
- \$45M Camberwell Grammar Sports Centre (2016)

Icon SI NSW Director Edward Whiting said: “We recognise the importance of the heritage aspects associated with one of the nation’s most historic swimming pools. We have a wealth of experience successfully completing world-class aquatic projects and are confident the redevelopment will more than live up to the high standards expected for a facility in this iconic location.”

### Highlights of the project

The new state of the art fitness and leisure centre will significantly improve and expand the aquatic and recreational facilities available. This includes:

- Existing 50m and 25m pools will be upgraded and art deco features will be maintained, including the harbourside wall, sundeck and heritage stair tower.
- Exciting kids waterplay area with a splash pad and water spray feature.
- New warm water pool suitable for gentle exercise and other programs.
- Expanded gym with harbour views, separate spin and exercise rooms.
- Larger creche with private indoor and outdoor spaces.
- New 970 person grandstand with permanent shade for sun-safe swimming carnivals.
- Ramp access to pools and accessible change rooms

### History of North Sydney Olympic Pool

The North Sydney Olympic Pool was built on the Dorman Long construction site for the Sydney Harbour Bridge. The Pool opened in 1936 and in 1938 it hosted the Empire Games (later known as the Commonwealth Games).

During the 1950s, ‘60s and ‘70s there were 86 world records set in the Pool by some of Australia’s best-known swimming legends including Jon Konrads, Murray Rose, Lorraine Crapp, Shane Gould and Dawn Fraser.



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The North Sydney Olympic Pool was used for school and regional swimming carnivals throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century and many Sydneysiders can recall competing in the Pool. The Pool still hosts school carnivals and in recent years has also hosted events such as the NYE family fun night, fashion parades and a viewing of an international football match.

The Pool is regularly listed as one of the world's top 10 outdoor pools by international media outlets. In recent years it has also been named as one of the most Instagrammed sites in Sydney.

**ENDS**