

10.6. Arts and Cultural Pop-Up Activation of Berrys Bay Quarantine Depot

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ATTACHMENTS	Nil
CSP LINK	1. Our Living Environment 1.4 Well utilised open space and recreational facilities 2. Our Built Infrastructure 2.1 Infrastructure and assets meet diverse community needs 4. Our Social Vitality 4.1 North Sydney is connected, inclusive, healthy and safe 4.2 A centre for creativity and learning 4.3 North Sydney’s history is preserved and recognised

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to update Council on the desired temporary activation of the Quarantine Depot cottages at Berrys Bay, with a focus on arts and cultural-type uses.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

- At its meeting of 28 August 2023, Council resolved to call for ‘Expressions of Interest’ from organisations or groups to apply to lease Cottage One, Cottage Two, or both for the purpose of arts and cultural “pop-up” activation between February and September 2024.
- Given that the use of the cottages requires development consent, the investigations into addressing the various requirements of the development assessment process have revealed access issues that need to be addressed prior to consent being able to be issued.
- The cottages currently lack Disability Discrimination Act-compliance in terms of their public access arrangements. Council is currently in the process of designing various upgrade works to the cottages and their surroundings, and it is likely that access works will not be completed until late 2024. Given that access to the properties will be required for members of the public, internal advice has indicated that consent can only be granted when such universal access has been satisfactorily created.
- Preparation of a development application cannot occur whilst the critical issue of public access is unresolved.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. THAT Council note that the preparation of a development application to activate the Quarantine Depot cottages has been delayed with issues associated with the investigation and design relating to universal access that complies with the Disability Discrimination Act to and around the Quarantine Depot cottages.

Background

There are two presently unused four-bedroom (circa 1912) cottages at the Quarantine Depot site in Berrys Bay. Whilst a strategy is prepared to guide the long-term use of the site, there is an opportunity to reactivate the cottages for “pop-up” community uses which will draw visitors to this prominent foreshore site. This initiative would support and promote artists, artisans, and /or cultural practitioners by offering a platform to showcase their talents and creativity to the North Sydney community and beyond.

At its meeting on 28 August 2023, Council resolved that it calls for ‘Expressions of Interest’ from organisations or groups to apply to lease Cottage One, Cottage Two, or both for the purpose of arts and cultural “pop-up” activation, between February and September 2024.

Report

As was previously reported, the site is zoned W4 Working Waterfront under the North Sydney Local Environmental Plan (NSLEP) 2013. The planning controls have a narrow range of permissible uses but include *community facilities* and *information and educational facilities*. The definitions of these are broad enough to enable a wide range of appropriate activation uses. Unfortunately, the temporary use of the cottages cannot be carried out without development consent. Council was previously advised that a development application for a generic community facility or information and educational-type use will need to be lodged and assessed prior to a use being established.

Unfortunately, during the preliminary discussions to prepare the development application, concerns were highlighted that universal access to a site that would welcome members of the public, is currently deficient and requires significant upgrading works in order to achieve Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) requirements. This work is currently being considered and designed, with various access-related design challenges that are being worked through. It is unlikely that access to the cottages will be delivered before late 2024. The specific arrangements with this will need to be resolved before a development application can be prepared considered and approved.

Council is also currently working through issues relating to sewer and services anomalies/issues including power and water. These were tied to the previous subdivision of the land from one lot into two, as whilst the lots were subdivided, the services remained structured as per it being one lot. These issues will require further consideration and action.

Consultation requirements

Community engagement is not required at this stage.

Financial/Resource Implications

A budget of approximately \$1.2M has been allocated for the 2023/24 year comprising the balance of a State Government Grant of \$4.1M which was for purchase and upgrading works to the site.

Legislation

The legislative requirements associated with this process are the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act and the Crown Lands Act (applying to adjacent land).