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THE NEW HEART OF RYDE TO HONOUR EDNA WILDE OAM

Long-serving Ryde Eisteddfod Chairman and former City of Ryde Councillor, Edna Wilde OAM, will be recognised for her service to the community with The New Heart of Ryde's performance centre to be named in her honour.

Council resolved to name the venue after Ms Wilde OAM due to her long contribution to the City of Ryde, the community and the local arts.

The performance centre is one of the key components of The New Heart of Ryde, which will redevelop the current Ryde Civic Centre site to deliver a four-fold increase in community space for local residents.

Ms Wilde OAM served as a City of Ryde Councillor for 34 years. In 1980, Ms Wilde OAM became the City of Ryde's first female Mayor and held that role on three separate occasions between 1980-1982, 1999-2000 and 2002-2004.

Throughout her civic life, Ms Wilde OAM has also been a dedicated supporter of the local arts scene in the City of Ryde, both through her role as Chairman of the Ryde Eisteddfod and volunteering her time to serve in senior roles for a large number of community organisations.

In 2000, Ms Wilde OAM was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia for service to local government and to the community of Ryde. A year later, she was awarded the Centenary Medal for her service as the first female Mayor of the City of Ryde.

City of Ryde Mayor, Cllr Jerome Laxale, said Ms Wilde OAM epitomises the community spirit that Ryde is famous for.

"Edna is a legend of the City of Ryde, having dedicated so many years to serving the community and representing our talented artistic community. Once built, The New Heart of the Ryde will be the focal point for the community and civic life in the City of Ryde, so it is only fitting that Edna is honoured as part of the project," Cllr Laxale said.

Ms Wilde OAM said she was deeply humbled to be recognised as part of such a significant project for the City of Ryde.

"The New Heart of Ryde ticks all the boxes. It will resolve the chronic shortage of community space that Ryde currently suffers from and will also provide groups like the Ryde Eisteddfod with new and modern facilities," Ms Wilde OAM said.

In addition to the performance centre, The New Heart of Ryde will also include contemporary office accommodation, commercial floor space, a public plaza, on-site parking and better access to the Top Ryde Shopping Centre and its surrounds.

Council's decision to proceed with The New Heart of Ryde follows a comprehensive community consultation process undertaken through 2019, which found there was overwhelming support for the project, with 85 percent of respondents in favour.

The New Heart of Ryde will be financially sustainable, it will not result in increased rates or a reduction in any services. Council will also retain complete ownership of the site.