



Photo: An aerial view of the former Katoomba Golf Clubhouse site, situated alongside the former Katoomba golf course.

## Council makes strategic investment to create future benefits and opportunities for the City

**Blue Mountains City Council has purchased the former Katoomba Golf Clubhouse site – with a view to establishing a global Planetary Health Leadership Centre, to help create future benefits and opportunities for the Blue Mountains community.**

The elected Council endorsed, at the Council Meeting on 29 September, the purchase of the strategic site that sits alongside the former Katoomba golf course – Council's largest operational land holding, at 29.66 hectares.

Council is working with Western Sydney University and the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (via Monash University) to finalise a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). The MoU sets out a commitment to explore opportunities to establish a leadership centre of national and international significance, in the field of Planetary Health.

Mayor Mark Greenhill said: *"The site is a strategic investment opportunity with significant potential benefits for the City in the short, medium and long term. Council will explore, with the community, the best strategic options for future uses of the precinct through the upcoming master plan process for Katoomba."*

*"What's exciting is that this opportunity gives us our first real*

*chance to work with universities to establish a leadership centre in the Blue Mountains, that would provide jobs, as well as income that comes from sources other than rates."*

In the short term, the income generated from the site will help cover the costs associated with the facility and maintain the former golf course site. In the medium to long term, Council will explore a range of options aligned with Council's community-endorsed strategic direction for a sustainable Blue Mountains.

The centre could be used to research and promote sustainable living, environmental science and other initiatives relating to how human practices can better support a healthy planet for current and future generations. This would also include research into climate change and bushfire management, and their impact on the Blue Mountains World Heritage Area and its unique biodiversity.

Discussions between the strategic partners have canvassed the potential to link a Planetary Health Leadership Centre at the former Katoomba Golf Course site, with a hub in Katoomba Town Centre and connect the two with an interpretative trail. It is believed that the development would attract school children, scientists and researchers to the City.

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# A brand new viewing experience at Echo Point

**After almost 12 months of construction, the spectacular new development at Echo Point has been completed and is open to the community.**

The project has significantly enhanced the viewing experience at the site and includes:

- a gathering place (community amphitheatre)
- a new Prince of Wales Lookout providing a closer view of The Three Sisters, and
- a 140-metre accessible, elevated, night-lit boardwalk connecting the lookouts, amphitheatre and Visitor Information Centre.

The concept for the 150m<sup>2</sup> gathering place arose from consultation with the Dharug and Gundungurra Peoples, which began in 2016. It now provides a place for the community and visitors to sit and experience Echo Point and the Jamison Valley. It is also to be used for cultural presentations (including dance, talk, drama and song) and scientific presentations.

Mayor Mark Greenhill said Council was thankful to have

received matched funding from the Federal Government's *National Stronger Regions* grant program for this major project.

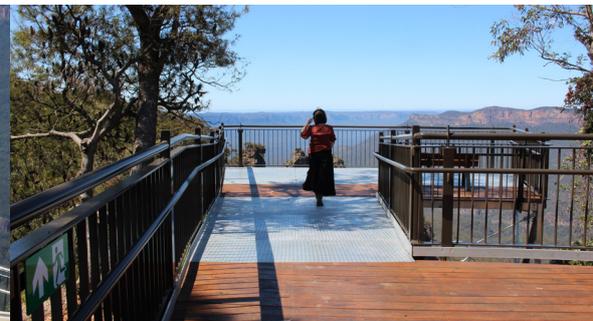
*"In consultation with Traditional Owners, we wanted this upgrade to enable a new, memorable and unique experience for all who visit this special place,"* he said.

One of most impressive features of the new gathering place is its stylised "Map of Country" which is etched into the concrete floor of the stage area. This represents the significant waterways within Dharug and Gundungurra Ngurra (Country), in the Blue Mountains.

Other stunning new features at the site include LED lights, which have been placed in the stage to mirror four constellations of the night sky, including within the Seven Sisters (Pleiades). These are programed to display and assist in sharing cultural stories connected with the night sky (sky Country).

An elevated and night-lit accessible boardwalk has also allowed renewed access to the Prince of Wales Lookout that has been closed for 10 years.

**For more information go to [bmcc.nsw.gov.au/echo-point](http://bmcc.nsw.gov.au/echo-point).**



## Continued from Page 1... Creating future benefits and opportunities for the City

**Blue Mountains City Council Chief Executive Officer Dr Rosemary Dillon said: "As we celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Greater Blue Mountains region being granted World Heritage status, it is a fitting gift to the City – and the world – that we look to establish a Planetary Health Learning Centre."**

*"This site has significant potential to support appropriate development of this precinct that enables sustainable economic and social development, as well as job creation."*

*"By purchasing the clubhouse site, it remains in Council's ownership and leverages opportunities for the future."*

The purchase has been funded by Council's Property Investment Fund and internal sources, to avoid the long-term cost of borrowing. This project will not take

away from Council's core, critical infrastructure projects.

*"Rather it has potential to generate revenue and to ease future financial burden on our ratepayers,"* Dr Dillon said. *"It will help position our City – that sits within a World Heritage Area – to become a leader in the field of Planetary Health."*

*"This is in line with the Vision of the Blue Mountains Community Strategic Plan."*

Establishing a planetary health leadership centre with universities is an action of the Local Strategic Planning Statement, endorsed by Council in March 2020.

It is also envisaged that an external donor funded UNESCO Chair in Planetary Health could be attached to the learning centre.

# Celebrating 20 years as a City within a World Heritage Area

This year marks the 20th Anniversary of the Greater Blue Mountains region being granted World Heritage status by the United Nations.

We are marking this important milestone, by celebrating the unique privilege of managing a City within a World Heritage Area (WHA).

For more information go to: [bmcc.nsw.gov.au/WHA](http://bmcc.nsw.gov.au/WHA).

## How do we contribute to the health of our planet?

In 2016 Blue Mountains City Council endorsed its [Carbon Abatement Action Plan](#) with a target of achieving net zero emissions by 2025.

Key projects include:

- Replacing 2,781 old, inefficient streetlights with LEDs.
- Installing a 289 kW solar panel system on the top of five large, Council-run facilities.
- Trialing the use of electric vehicles in the Council's Fleet of over 300 vehicles and trucks.

## Council is also partnering with other leaders on a number of sustainability initiatives.

- We're partnering with Western Sydney University and the Monash Sustainable Development Institute for **initiatives relating to Planetary Health**.
- We have joined nine Western Sydney councils to launch the **Western Sydney Energy Program** which aims to reduce Western Sydney's emissions by 200,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e per year.
- We are one of 33 councils involved in developing **Resilient Sydney** – the first resilience strategy for metropolitan Sydney.
- We joined **The Cities Power Partnership** in 2018 - a free, national program created by the Australian Climate Council that brings together towns and cities making the switch to clean energy.

## How do we protect and restore biodiversity?

Council is involved in a number of initiatives to protect our native rare and threatened species. We understand that part of threatened species management includes preventing species from becoming threatened, as well as caring for those that already are.

Our current conservation and restoration projects, delivered in partnership with our community, include:

- Bushcare
- Remote Bushcare
- Swampcare
- Bush Backyards program
- Wildlife Recovery Mayoral Reference Group
- The Blue Mountains Fauna Project
- Weed management

## Planetary Health

Sustainability lies at the heart of our Community Vision. At this critical moment in global history, Blue Mountains City Council embraces its responsibility to not only ensure environmental, social and economic sustainability at a local level, but to also play an important role in contributing to the overall health of the planet.

## How do we protect our waterways?

Council is enacting the award-winning **Water Sensitive Blue Mountains Strategic Plan** which will be our blueprint for water management for the next 10 years.

This plan has four main components: water efficiency, water reuse, best practice stormwater management and a water-literate community. Council is monitoring the health of our waterways, at over 50 sites from Lapstone to Mount Wilson.

Recent analysis of our waterways has revealed that:

- 20% of our waterways are in excellent health
- 31% of our waterways are in good health
- 42% of our waterways are in fair health

Find out more about the health of our waterways in our Waterways Health Snapshot 2020 at [bmcc.nsw.gov.au/waterways](http://bmcc.nsw.gov.au/waterways).

## How do we recognise Traditional Owners?

Planetary Health includes learning from the more sustainable resource management practices that have been used by traditional peoples from around the world for millennia.

The City of the Blue Mountains within the WHA is in the Ngurra (Country) of the Dharug and Gundungurra Traditional Owners, who have a continuous and deep relationship with Ngurra since the time of creation. One key way in which the Council works with Gundungurra Traditional Owners to Care for Country is through the Gundungurra Indigenous Land Use Agreement (ILUA). The Council will continue its leadership in working through the Gundungurra ILUA, and other similar agreements with Dharug Traditional Owners, to Care for Country to support the ongoing values of the WHA.

The **critical mass: the art of planetary health** exhibition, is on show at Blue Mountains Cultural Centre until 6 December. Monash Sustainable Development Institute Director Tony Capon will also present, along with other leading academics from Western Sydney and Monash Universities, at *The Art of Planetary Health Symposium* to be held at the Blue Mountains City Art Gallery on 21 November, to celebrate the anniversary of the Greater Blue Mountains region being granted World Heritage status by the United Nations. For more information go to: [bluemountainculturalcentre.com.au/](http://bluemountainculturalcentre.com.au/).



# Councillors

## Ward 1

### Bell to Leura, Megalong Valley & The Mounts

#### Cr Don McGregor

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## Ward 2

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## Ward 4

### Warrimoo to Lapstone

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#### Cr Brendan Christie

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#### Cr Darryl Bowling

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# WHAT'S ON BLUE MOUNTAINS



## Blackheath Pool Opening

Blackheath Pool will re-open for the summer season, from Saturday November 7 to early March. Opening times are Monday-Friday, 7am-6.30pm, Weekend & Public Holidays 9.30am-6.30pm. Outdoor pools at Glenbrook, Lawson, Springwood and Katoomba are also open.

[bmcc.nsw.gov.au/LeisureCentres](http://bmcc.nsw.gov.au/LeisureCentres)



## William Crighton

### Your Country Tour

30 October, 8pm

Folk-blues singer-songwriter William Crighton is one of Australia's foremost contemporary songsmiths with a string of accolades and international touring experience to his name.

Bookings: [bluemountainstheatre.com.au](http://bluemountainstheatre.com.au) or 4723 5050.



## Storytime Online

Blue Mountains Library continues with a selection of Storytime fun for all ages and special themed events, including Food and Cooking, NAIDOC celebration, Clothes, the Body, the Beach and the Summer Reading Challenge.

For dates and times, visit [library.bmcc.nsw.gov.au](http://library.bmcc.nsw.gov.au) or catch Online Storytime at 11am on Facebook each week, during school terms.



## Regenerate: Blue Mountains

3 October – 6 December

Regenerate: Blue Mountains, displayed in the Cultural Centre foyer, is a collaborative artwork made by the Blue Mountains community from thousands of leaves decorated to represent the burning and regeneration of local resilient plant species during and after bushfires.

[bluemountainculturalcentre.com.au](http://bluemountainculturalcentre.com.au)



## NAIDOC Community Day

Saturday 7 November

A celebration of Indigenous history and culture featuring Storytelling with Uncle Lex Dadd; Wagana Aboriginal Dancers; Darug artist and educator Chris Tobin on his ochre painting practice; and Gundungurra man David King leading a Yarning Circle.

[bluemountainculturalcentre.com.au](http://bluemountainculturalcentre.com.au)



## Love Local Live

We are live on Council's Facebook page every Thursday night from 7.30 - 8.30pm until 12 November. Tune in and enjoy some of our best local musicians.

[bmcc.nsw.gov.au/love-local-live](http://bmcc.nsw.gov.au/love-local-live)

## Blue Mountains City Council

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