

News release



NSW GOVERNMENT
Department of Planning

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Penrith's Great River Walk wins Greenspace Award

A scenic walk over rugged bushland along the Hawkesbury-Nepean River system has taken out the 2008 NSW Planning Minister's Sydney Greenspace Award.

The honour was presented to Penrith City Council on Thursday night for its innovative work on the first two stages of the Great River Walk at the NSW Australian Institute of Landscape Architects (AILA) Awards.

"The Great River Walk has opened up beautiful views of the Nepean River and Blue Mountains across an otherwise inaccessible area," said Sam Haddad, Director-General of the NSW Department Planning, who presented the award on behalf of Planning Minister Kristina Keneally.

The award recognises the design and construction of the first two stages of the walk, from Penrith Weir to Cassola Place, Mr Haddad said.

"This 1.5 kilometre stretch includes a pedestrian and cycle path, a boardwalk and a bridge over a bushland creek section.

"Penrith City Council is to be commended for allowing Sydneysiders to experience the Nepean River's beauty from such a spectacular vantage point.

"Its landscape architects deserve praise for combining traditional engineering practices with bushland revegetation, and increasing access while respecting the river's heritage, cultural features and environmental sensitivity."

Mr Haddad said the NSW Government awarded the project partly because it implemented the Government's Metropolitan Strategy and its associated actions from the Parks & Public Spaces Strategies.

"The Great River Walk highlights the importance of regional recreational space.

"Its connection to water and its opportunities to celebrate cultural, natural and Aboriginal heritage make this trail significant in Western Sydney.

"It's also an excellent example of successful State and Local government, community and industry partnership.

"Stages 1 and 2 are the first of the Walk's development in the Penrith area. The Walk links with other regional trails in Sydney and is therefore part of a network of existing and proposed open spaces of regional significance."

The NSW Government has provided over \$700,000 towards design and development of several stages of the walk in the Penrith area including signage, branding and promotion.

Penrith City Council and local businesses have matched the Government's grants with funding and construction work.

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