

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### OVERLAYING THE FOUNDATIONS FOR THE BLUE MOUNTAINS FUTURE

The NSW Department of Planning and Environment was at Springwood Foundation Day Festival on Saturday, April 27, to meet and talk with residents.

Acting Deputy Secretary, Planning and Design, Brett Whitworth, said the Department was keen to hear from locals about, among other things, a local character discussion paper, now on exhibition.

“This is the first time we’ve had a presence at the Springwood Foundation Day Festival,” Mr Whitworth said.

“The Department’s door is always open and last Saturday we took to the road to get in front of as many people as we can.

“The team met with locals during this day of family fun, to help celebrate the local village’s heritage – and find out more about what everyone wants for the Blue Mountains.”

Residents shared ideas for their neighbourhood with the Department’s team including their three top values: natural environment, sense of local community, and access to shops and services.

“The local character of an area should be at the heart of strategic planning,” Mr Whitworth said.

“An area’s local character is the fabric of a community; it’s what makes a place identifiable and the reason people feel an attachment to a particular area.

“The Local Character Overlays discussion paper, currently on public exhibition, outlines an option for Blue Mountains City Council to include in its Local Environmental Plan (LEP) the attributes of particular places that are cherished by the community.

“But that’s just the beginning. We want to keep these conversations going and hear views on how we are helping to plan for local communities in the Blue Mountains local government area.

“We also have a proposal to convert period housing areas under the Blue Mountains LEP to heritage conservation areas, and we are working closely with Blue Mountains City Council to ensure everyone can play – no matter their age or ability.

“The NSW Government has invested \$50,000 under the [Everyone Can Play](#) program to help Council make Summerhayes Park Playground in Winmalee more inclusive.

“We need to hear from the community, so we can continue to capture their views in the planning process and ensure we are working together to create great places to live, work and play.

“Strategic planning will ensure existing and future residents of the Blue Mountains are supported by the right infrastructure – roads, public transports, schools, and open space – and the community’s sense of identity and values are protected.”

The community is invited to have their say on the Local Character Overlays Discussion Paper until May 20, 2019, at: [www.planning.nsw.gov.au/Policy-and-Legislation/Local-Character/Discussion-paper-local-character-overlays](http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/Policy-and-Legislation/Local-Character/Discussion-paper-local-character-overlays)