

Botanic Gardens Precinct Renewal project reaches milestone with completion of Lord Baden Powell Drive Upgrade

The Botanic Gardens Precinct Renewal Project has reached a significant milestone with the completion of Stage Two – the upgrade to Lord Baden Powell Drive.

The overall Precinct Renewal project, comprised of three stages, aimed to create a dynamic and engaging precinct that improves spatial connections and accessibility.

Stage 1, completed in February 2023, involved the redevelopment of the Museum of the Riverina: a cultural facility of the Wagga Wagga City Council located within the Botanic Gardens Precinct.

This redevelopment was merged with Stage 3 of the project; Entwine, which co-delivered the installation of low maintenance trails, gardens and additional community leisure areas to the precinct, plus an upgrade to zoo exhibits that share stories with museum displays.

The final stage required for project completion centred upon revitalising a 300-metre section at the western end of Lord Baden Powell Drive. Upgrades included both a resealing of the road, and improvements to surrounding infrastructure including the addition of new pedestrian crossings, median islands, safety features, and landscaping.

This revitalised infrastructure is now open to the public and is already delivering greater connectivity, safety, and accessibility for motorists and pedestrians alike within the precinct.

The Botanic Gardens Precinct Renewal Project was jointly funded by the Australian Government, NSW State Government and Wagga Wagga City Council.

The Australian Government allocated \$4.3 million from the Building Better Regions Fund, with \$1.7 million for the Museum redevelopment and \$2.6 million for the Lord Baden Powell Drive upgrade.

The NSW State Government provided funding through a Create NSW grant of \$3.188 million via the Regional Cultural Fund, and Infrastructure NSW who provided \$739,466 through a Restart NSW grant.

Additionally, Wagga Wagga City Council contributed a sum of \$309,156.

Mayor of the City of Wagga Wagga Councillor Dallas Tout remarked that the successfully delivered project represents a meaningful commitment from government at all levels, to enrich this valued community space in more important ways than one.

“At the heart of this Precinct Renewal has always been the goal of enhancing both the physical and cultural heritage experience for anyone visiting this truly special part of our city,” Cr Tout said.

Regarding the now-complete upgrade of Lord Baden Powell Drive, Cr Tout added that “these upgrades now play a key role in fostering improved long-term connectivity between the Museum and the Botanic Gardens, while also contributing to greater safety for motorists and pedestrians accessing the area.”

Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government, the Hon Catherine King noted that the Australian Government is committed to enhancing local infrastructure in regional areas.

“These improvements to the Botanic Gardens Precinct in Wagga Wagga will not only enhance the road condition and visibility for vehicular traffic and pedestrians but also provide better connectivity and accessibility for the community,” Minister King said.

These sentiments were echoed by Senator Deborah O’Neill, who represented Minister King at the event.

“Wagga Wagga is a key hub for national agriculture, trade, military, sport, tourism and culture, and it is important that the Australian Government continues to support the development of its infrastructure,” Senator O’Neill said.

“This upgrade is vital for all who live in and drive through the region in terms of safety and boosting the local economy during the project, through job creation.”

The project also involved the guidance and input of Wiradjuri Elders and cultural knowledge holders, who were key to enhancing the precinct's cultural fabric in a way that meaningfully centres and celebrates the spirit of the land, placing a regular spotlight on commissioned, loaned, or acquired work from Wiradjuri and other First Nations creative practitioners.

The Botanic Gardens Precinct Renewal Project continues to demonstrate its commitment to creating a vibrant, inclusive, and culturally rich public space for the community of Wagga Wagga and visitors alike.

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Media Opportunity Details

Time: 10:00AM - 11:00AM

Location: Museum of the Riverina, 127 Lord Baden Powell Drive, Wagga Wagga NSW 2650

Description: This event is to mark the overall completion of the Botanic Gardens Precinct Renewal Project, and the final deliverable stage of the project, which is the Lord Baden Powell Drive upgrade. The project was designed to enhance connectivity, safety, and accessibility in Wagga Wagga's Botanic Gardens precinct.

Event MC: Director Community Janice Summerhayes

Key Attendees: Aunty Mary Atkinson (Wiradjuri Elder); Senator Deborah O’Neill (attending for the Hon Catherine King); Mayor of Wagga Wagga, Councillor Dallas Tout; Director Community Janice Summerhayes; Director Strategy & Projects Phil McMurray; representatives for contractors related to the project.

Contact 6926 9190 or media@wagga.nsw.gov.au

About Wagga Wagga City Council

Wagga Wagga City Council serves more than 68,000 residents across an area of 4825 square kilometres with an overall budget of more than \$236M.

The organisation manages more than \$2.48 billion in assets, including a 2300km road network, Wagga Wagga Airport, Livestock Marketing Centre and the Oasis Aquatic Centre.

Council also provides important community facilities such as Wagga Wagga Art Gallery, Wagga Wagga City Library, Museum of the Riverina and Civic Theatre, as well as maintaining countless parks, playgrounds and sporting facilities to ensure Wagga maintains its reputation as 'the City of Good Sports'.

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