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Media Release

KEEP AUSTRALIA BEAUTIFUL 2005 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AWARDS ANNOUNCED

And the Winner is – North Sydney!

2 September 2005

North Sydney Council has won the Keep Australia Beautiful (NSW) Overall 2005 Sustainable Cities Awards in the Council Category and The Blue Mountains Food Co-op is the Overall winner in the Landcom Community Award Category.

The Minister for Local Government, the Hon Kerry Hickey MP, announced the Awards at the Keep Australia Beautiful Sustainable Cities Awards dinner last night at the Fairmont Resort, Leura, which was hosted by the Blue Mountains City Council.

The annual Keep Australia Beautiful Sustainable Cities Awards program recognises environmental endeavours and initiatives carried out by the metropolitan councils of Sydney, Newcastle, the Blue Mountains and Wollongong. The Landcom sponsored Overall Community Award recognises an individual or community that has embraced the principles of sustainable development through one or more projects.

North Sydney Council, which faces specific challenges created by the influx of commuters, students and visitors who more than double the population each day, adopt a fearless approach to solving sustainability issues and this impressed the Awards judges.

"It was not just one aspect but the diversity of actions and solutions – big and small - adopted by North Sydney Council to address the social, cultural and economic aspects of a viable sustainability plan that gave their submission the edge," the Chair of Keep Australia Beautiful, the Hon Pam Allan, MP, said.

"For example, their controversial initiative to penalise high energy use vehicles (including 4WDs) by charging different fees for resident parking permits thus encouraging the use of smaller, low fuel consumption vehicles, was a bench mark subsequently adopted by other metropolitan councils.

"Participation in the 'GoGet' car sharing scheme, with hubs at Kirribilli and McMahons Point, has the potential to reduce the numbers of private cars on the road and lead to reduced vehicular emissions, too. Plus, by not providing any form of car parking for Council employees' cars, these workers are encouraged to use public transport.

"I am impressed to see that North Sydney Council has formed working partnerships with the City of Sydney and Parramatta Council to launch the *3CBDs Greenhouse Initiative* which, to date, has 17 major companies covering 31 tenancies in the three areas making commitments in their greenhouse performance estimated to have the potential to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by over 153 000 tonnes and annually reducing combined energy bills by over \$17 million.

"North Sydney Council's '2020 Vision for North Sydney' and 'North Sydney Towards Sustainability Plan' look well beyond environmental issues facing councils today and show forward thinking and a clear direction for future actions.

"In meeting the challenges created by a community where dwelling density is one of the highest in Sydney, North Sydney Council has carefully and collaboratively addressed the issues of sustainability through consultation, participation, partnering and planning.

"This Council proved it was not afraid to stretch the boundaries by putting forward sometimes unpopular policies and solutions to achieve it's sustainability goals and to protect and enhance the places where the Council residents, visitors, workers and ratepayers live, work and play.

"I congratulate North Sydney Council for showing long-term commitment to delivering a sustainable urban environment", Ms Allan said.

Thirty-two different local government areas participated in this year's Sustainable Cities Awards, including very welcome participation by six councils who have not entered previously. The outstanding focus for all councils has been on environmental education, which augers well for the future.

While the actions taken by local governments make substantial differences to our quality of place, so, too, can the small-scale environmental actions of community groups, schools and individuals.

"**The Blue Mountains Food Co-op in Katoomba**, which has been encouraging sustainable food growing and eco-friendly packaging, purchasing and selling practices for 20 years, is a worthy Overall Winner of the Landcom Community Award," the Chief Executive of Keep Australia Beautiful (NSW), Matthew Taylor said.

"This community owned and managed organisation, now the largest such co-op in Australia, provides the

residents of the Blue Mountains with high quality food and environmentally friendly products, purchases Australian goods wherever practical, encourages the re-use of bottles, jars, paper and plastic bags, recycles wherever re-use is not possible and encourages the local production and distribution of organically grown fruit and vegetables.

"It links directly to the *25 Year City Strategy for the Blue Mountains* and is an example of the people of the Blue Mountains living sustainably and in harmony with the environment. It raises community awareness of the responsibilities residents have especially in fragile and irreplaceable World Heritage areas.

"A well-deserved Award and congratulations to all 1750 members and customers of the Blue Mountains Food Co-op," Matthew Taylor said.

For further media information please contact: Matthew Taylor on 02 9633 3380, m 0409 463 227, or Darill Clements on 02 9451 9961, m 0402 832 971.

Editors' Notes: In addition to the Overall Council Award and the Overall Community Award Keep Australia Beautiful (NSW) 2005 Sustainable Cities Awards also recognises the following outstanding efforts:

Overall Council Award

- **Runner Up – Penrith City Council**
- **Highly Commended – Wollongong City Council**

Landcom Overall Community Award

- **Runner Up – Michael Street, Cardiff (Newcastle) Landcare project**
- **Berowra Waters Progress Association – 'From Wonderful to Superb'**

Department of Commerce – Metropolitan Schools Award – **Loftus Public School 'Kids of Loftus Making a Difference'**

- **Runner Up – Wyndham College, Quakers Hill – Enviro-friendly Zone**
- **Highly Commended – William Rose School, Seven Hills – Edible Garden**
- **Highly Commended – St Mary's North Public School – Awareness Project**

Ashbins Australia – Community Facilities Award – **Canterbury Council – 'Canterbury City Gardens – It's a Living Thing!'**

- **Runner Up – Strathfield Municipal Council – Cooks River Foreshore Restoration Program, Freshwater Park**
- **Highly Commended – Upper Parramatta River Catchment Trust – Redbank Track Rehabilitation Project**
- **Highly Commended – Auburn Council – Building Bridges: Western Overbridge Upgrade Project**

Alcoa Rolled Products – Western Sydney Individual/Group Community Action

- **Award – Blue Mountains Food Co-op**
- **Runner Up – Blacktown City Council – Edmund Rice Community Pride Nursery**
- **Highly Commended – Earth Partners Incorporated – Earth Journeys Environmental**

Education Program

Beverage Industry Environment Council – Waste Minimisation Award – **Penrith City Council – 'Waste Minimisation Strategy'**

- **Runner Up – Parramatta City Council – 'Creating a Diversion' – Diverting Illegal Dumped Recyclables from Landfill**
- **Highly Commended – Kogarah Council – 'Retail Your Rubbish'**
- **Highly Commended – Marrickville Council – Domestic Recycling Service and Education Program**

NSW Heritage Office – Best Heritage Management by a Metropolitan Council – **Hornsby Shire Council**

- **Highly Commended – Mosman Municipal Council**

NPWS Urban Wildlife Habitat Restoration and Renewal Award – **Mosman Municipal Council – 'Millett Road/Reid Park Bushcare Restoration and Habitat Restoration Project'**

- **Runner Up – Kogarah Municipal Council – Claydon Reserve: Sustainable Foreshore Restoration – not just seawall.**
- **Highly Commended – Parramatta City Council – Corridor Enhancement and Restoration of Moxhams Park**
- **Highly Commended – Willoughby City Council – Environmental Restoration Program**

Raine & Horne Young Legends Award – **17 year old, Zac Gazzard, of North Rocks – For excellence in conservation actions in his local environment**

- **Runner Up – Chris McLean of Newcastle – For his contribution to Landcare projects and youth environmental education endeavours**

Keep Australia Beautiful Environmental Education Award – **Mosman Municipal Council – 'Living Within the Means of Nature – Ecological Footprinting in Mosman'**

- Runner Up – **Canterbury City Council** – **Youth Environment Day** – *Facilitating Youth Action*
- Highly Commended – **Penrith City Council** – *Sustainability Street, Focus on Greenhouse*
- Highly Commended – **Willoughby Council** – *Towering Towards Sustainability*
- Highly Commended – **Blacktown City Council** – *Blacktown Environmental Expo 2005*

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