



NORTH SYDNEY COUNCIL

MEDIA RELEASE



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MITCHELL STREET PLAZA BREATHES NEW LIFE

The world's first outdoor Breathing Wall comes to life as a new 'pocket park' opens in the heart of St Leonards on Thursday 28 June.

Mitchell Street Plaza – set between the Pacific Highway and Atchison Street – has been transformed with a 161 square metre plant wall, new seating, trees and bike racks.

The Junglefy Breathing Wall is next to the Pacific Highway, screening traffic and reducing sound. Its doubled-walled structure is filled with nearly 6000 plants that filter out vehicle exhaust and VOCs (Volatile Organic Compounds) to produce cleaner air.

The key difference between a standard green wall and a Breathing Wall is that the Breathing Wall has fans inside, which draw air in and push it out through the plants. This increases circulation and speeds up the air cleaning process.

The wall will be the subject of ongoing air quality testing by the Plants and Environmental Quality Research Group at the University of Technology Sydney (UTS). Testing starts at the end of July and initial results are expected this year.

"It's exciting to have a world first at St Leonards," North Sydney Mayor Jilly Gibson said. "We look forward to learning the effects of the Breathing Wall from UTS's research."

Mitchell Street Plaza was created by extending the former plaza into a pedestrian and vehicle Shared Zone with speed limits of 10 km/h.

Cr Gibson said the rejuvenation is part of Council's ongoing strategy to support St Leonards' growing CBD.

"The sixth largest employment area in metropolitan Sydney is St Leonards. It has an abundance of job opportunities, key transport links and several new mixed-use developments being built.

"Mitchell Street Plaza is timely. It symbolises St Leonards' transformation with its chic, sustainable design, and a nod to the future."



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The plaza was upgraded using a mix of Council funding and \$3.3 million of contributions from the developers of 6-16 Atchison Street under the Voluntary Planning Agreement (VPA).

The UTS research group includes Dr Fraser Torpy, who has an environmental biotechnology background, and Dr Peter Irga, who has an environmental engineering background.

Breathing Wall inventor, Jock Gammon, is Junglefy's co-founder and managing director.

"From our perspective it's really exciting," Mr Gammon said. "This is the first application of the Junglefy Breathing Wall into an outside location and we'll be working with UTS to monitor its impact on surrounding air quality.

"It shows great leadership from North Sydney who are the first Council to do this."

The plaza's concepts were guided and developed through consultation with a working group, which included adjacent land owners and tenants, Council staff, Roads and Maritime Services and design professionals.

Quick facts:

- More than 10,000 plants in 300m² of garden beds and green walls
- 11 new Chinese elms and five new spotted gums
- 60m of overhead power lines re-routed underground
- Three new zebra crossings
- 1644m² paving with infrastructure for events use
- Five bike racks
- A drinking fountain
- 'St Leonards' sign built by a 3D-lenticular technique which shows the words 'St Leonards' in two different typefaces from two different angles, creating an optical illusion with a sense of movement.

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For more information, contact Communications on 9936 8196 or 9936 8319.