

Katoomba Revitalisation Charrette

Blue Mountains, New South Wales

Project Type

Town centre revitalisation

Date

1998

ESD Role

Charrette leader

Project Size

Approximately 80 ha, population 12,000

Client

Blue Mountains City Council

Implementation Status

Charrette approved in 1999, and implemented under Four-Year Katoomba Revitalisation Project. Many key initiatives have been completed. The Katoomba Cultural Centre Project was agreed in early 2006, and is due for completion by 2011

Further information

The Katoomba Charrette Report can be downloaded at www.bmcc.nsw.gov.au/yourcouncil/katoombacharrette



In the centre of the scenic Blue Mountains World Heritage Area, small historic Katoomba flourished for a century as a mecca for tourists arriving by train from Sydney. However, several inter-locking problems gradually had dragged Katoomba down. The upgraded Great Western Highway and other road changes to expedite traffic flows induced tourist dollars to bypass Katoomba. Several properties became derelict. Fast food chain stores located along the Highway, draining custom from local shops in the town centre. A vicious cycle gripped Katoomba, and locals began to lose hope. In 1998 ESD led the Katoomba Revitalisation Charrette, commissioned by the Blue Mountains City Council (BMCC) and State Government. The concluding presentation received twenty-six standing ovations. Quickly approved in principle, a Charrette Outcomes Report was produced.

By 2003 the State Government and the Council injected \$18m to revitalize the Katoomba Town Centre and the Echo Point Tourist Precinct south of town, including a new lookout, a revamped Visitor Information Centre, new National Park paths and streetscape improvements.

In the Town Centre, Council has constructed a new town square in front of the recently restored Carrington Hotel, along with streetscape improvements to the main shopping precinct in the heart of town, including street furniture, planting, tourist bus facilities, lighting, murals, and traffic-calming works. The town entry has been enhanced and the historic Katoomba Station upgraded. A facade improvement scheme has spruced up local businesses. A new Cultural Centre in the heart of town is nearing completion.