

**Minister for Environment, Local Government, Planning and Women
The Honourable Desley Boyle**

Tuesday, May 16, 2006

World leading Ecovillage takes top gong in sustainability awards

Gold Coast based eco-development company Landmatters Currumbin Valley Pty Ltd has taken out the top prize in the inaugural Environmental Protection Agency Sustainable Industries Awards.

Winners were announced at a gala dinner ceremony at the Brisbane Sofitel last night (Monday, May 15).

Environment Minister Desley Boyle said Landmatters took out the *Sustainability in Urban Development or the Built Environment* category and managing director Chris Walton won the top accolade *Minister's Award for Leadership in Business Sustainability*.

"Landmatters have won for their residential development "The Ecovillage" and managing director Chris Walton has been recognised for his vision in making it a reality," Ms Boyle said.

"The Ecovillage is an ecologically-sustainable village with 144 homes built on a 110 hectare site in the Gold Coast hinterland.

"It has been planned to be self-sustaining in water, energy and waste and provides a high degree of self-sufficiency by creating edible landscapes and streetscapes and household farming.

"All of this has been achieved while retaining 80 per cent of the site as open space and more than 50 per cent as environmental reserve.

"The natural vegetation has been largely preserved and the site improved with extensive native plant revegetation and extensive wildlife corridors.

"At the same time, waste minimisation and recycling strategies have helped to reduce the human impact on the site.

"Landmatters is a leader in sustainable and eco-efficient property development, and is a great example of integrated sustainable urban development," Ms Boyle said.

"Mr Walton is a pioneer of sustainability in Queensland and his passion has enthused the community to follow his vision of development that mimics nature and enhances the natural environment," Ms Boyle said.

Landmatters Managing Director Chris Walton said he was excited to receive both awards, with the Ecovillage inspiring awareness of sustainable living and development practices.

"We are honoured to win these awards, as the Ecovillage is set to be a world-leading, ecologically-sustainable and conscious community where people and nature flourish in harmony and integrity," Mr Walton said.

Ms Boyle said the winners across six different categories had been selected from a total of 115 entries and showcased Queensland's "champions of sustainability".

"The state's first industry sustainability awards highlight the effort being made by many businesses to implement sustainable practices that are good for the environment and the balance sheet," Ms Boyle said.

"Sustainable industries are about smart strategies like eco-efficiency, socially-responsible investment and building competitiveness through sustainability."

The Sustainability in Urban Development or the Built Environment Award, sponsored by Stewart Silver Burns and King, was awarded to Landmatters for leadership in design and development for sustainability and efficiency.

Finalists were judged by a panel of industry representatives. The other finalists for this award were the Centre for Subtropical Design and Timber Queensland Limited, Midell Developments, and SALA Homes.

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