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REGIONWIDE

# Businesses lead push to put west on tourist map



Sydney Zoo is being created on a 16.5ha site at Bungarabee and (below) Cables Wake Park.

## Panthers part of \$100,000 bid to market high-energy appeal

### Isabell Petrinc

PENRITH Panthers has united with other western Sydney leaders to fund the first business-led plan for a stronger visitor economy. Western Sydney Business Connection's new \$100,000 Western Sydney Visitor Project aims to produce a region-specific visitor marketing strategy to put western Sydney on the map. The man behind the hugely successful 100% Pure New Zealand tourism campaign, Ian Macfarlane, has been recruited to help with this. "Up to 1998 NZ had suffered market share decline

in its major markets and that campaign actually allowed NZ to increase its market share in all its major markets in the seven years that followed," said Mr Macfarlane, who has also developed marketing strategies for Abu Dhabi, Cape Town, Adelaide and San Diego. "I think western Sydney has made a giant leap forward ... to realise it does take local initiative," Mr Macfarlane, Strategic Consultants' managing consultant, said. He says the challenge for the west is around "getting local activation ... (and) achieving a far greater appeal to interstate travellers".

This includes making local businesses "accountable" for the activity they can generate with the right government support, he said. "In Penrith and the Blue Mountains what it seems to me is you're more into higher energy stuff ... hiking, walking, doing things. That's the type of audience we need to attract." Deloitte data shows in 2015 western Sydney welcomed 9,681,183 visitors, who spent over 15 million nights in the region, injecting more than \$2.5 billion to its economy. Western Sydney is now NSW's fourth largest visitor

region, and Badgerys Creek airport will be a big part of its future market. The new visitor project strategy will be launched at a Western Sydney Business Connection forum on June 8 and be enacted from July. It comes on the back of Deloitte's first business-led plan for jobs creation in western Sydney, launched in December 2015, to create 200,000 "great new" jobs in western Sydney by 2020. Recommendations include investment in cultural infrastructure, such as arts spaces in disused facilities in the Penrith CBD.



### Local attractions

- » Cables Wake Park
- » Great River Walk
- » Featherdale
- » Western Sydney Parklands
- » Nepean Gorge
- » iFLY skydiving
- » Jetpack Adventures
- » Penrith Whitewater Stadium
- » Wet N Wild
- » Treetops

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