



**NEWS RELEASE**  
**The Hon. Kristina Keneally MP**  
Member for Heffron  
Minister for Planning  
Minister for Redfern Waterloo

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*Sunday 31 May, 2009*

**HISTORICAL CONVICT ROAD GETS STATE HERITAGE PROTECTION**

NSW Planning Minister, Kristina Keneally, today announced a further 30 kilometres of the 180-year old Great North Road would be listed on the State Heritage Register.

Ms Keneally said this section of the Great North Road, built by convicts using hand tools in the 1820's and 1830's, was the first heritage listing under NSW's Thematic Listings Program initiative.

"This 30 kilometre section of the Great North Road was built by convicts in the 1800's and epitomises the contribution that convicts made during the early part of Australia's colonial history," Ms Keneally said.

"Listing this 30 kilometre section between Mount Manning and Wollombi means a total of 64 kilometres of the convict built road is now listed on the State Heritage Register.

"The newly listed section features several unique structures including the Ramsey's Leap culvert and stone wall, St Alban's Road ramp and the timber Thompson's Bridge.

"In 1999 a 34 kilometre section of the road between Wiseman's Ferry to Mount Manning was listed on the State's Heritage register."

Ms Keneally said the listing would provide protection for the sites magnificent sandstone.

"Unfortunately there have been some people in recent years who have taken it upon themselves to take samples or souvenirs of sandstone from the road," Ms Keneally said.

"This listing will protect the site's sandstone walls and mean anyone found wilfully damaging the road or sandstone could face penalties of up to \$1.1 million and or up to six months' imprisonment.

"In 2007 protective measures were placed on a 700 metre section of the road as part of an Interim Heritage Order after several sandstone blocks were stolen from the St Alban's Road Ramp."

Ms Keneally said in addition to the heritage listing the community-based advocacy group Convict Trail Project Inc. would receive a \$135,000 heritage grant to provide further protection to the site.

"Under the 2009-2011 NSW Heritage Grants Program the Convict Trail Project Inc. will receive \$135,000 for conservation and interpretation works along the newly listed section of the road," Ms Keneally said.

"\$75,000 of the grant will be used to carry out urgent repairs to the Ramsay's Leap culvert and stone wall and clear invasive vegetation to make the site more accessible.



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“The Convict Trail Project Inc. will also receive a further \$60,000 to manage and promote the entire length of the road from Sydney to Newcastle as an open museum.”

A 7.5km section, known as the Old Great North Road, is one of the 11 sites included in the serial nomination of Australian Convict sites for World Heritage listing.

This nomination is currently under assessment by the United Nations Educational Scientific Cultural Organisation - International Council on Monuments and Sites.

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