

## Media Release

**EMBARGOED until Tuesday 29 May 2018**

### ROAD BUILT WITH PLASTIC BAGS AND GLASS IN AUSTRALIAN-FIRST

Soft plastics from approximately 200,000 plastic bags and packaging, and 63,000 glass bottle equivalents will be diverted from landfill to construct a Victorian road in an Australian-first trial.

Downer and Hume City Council have partnered with resource recovery and recycling companies Close the Loop and RED Group to set this new benchmark in sustainability.

Along with soft plastics and glass, toner from more than 4,500 used printer cartridges and 50 tonnes of recycled asphalt were also repurposed to create 250 tonnes of asphalt that will be used to construct a road in and around Rayfield Avenue, Craigieburn, located in Melbourne's north.

Downer's Executive General Manager Road Services, Dante Cremasco, said the milestone event showed that partnerships with other thought leaders can create economic, social and environmental value for products that would more than likely end up in landfill, stockpiled, or as a pollutant in our natural environments.

"Together with our customer Hume City Council and our partners, we have proven that with thought leadership and a determined effort to make a positive difference, we have set a new benchmark in our industry when it comes to sustainability by creating new avenues to recycle and repurpose waste materials into new streams of use. It's all about pulling product, not pushing waste," Mr Cremasco said.

"What is also pleasing to see is that this sustainable, cost competitive road has a 65 per cent improvement in fatigue life and a superior resistance to deformation making the road last longer, and allowing it to better handle heavy vehicle traffic," Mr Cremasco added.

Hume Mayor Geoff Porter said Council was proud to join Downer and its partners in the Australian-first trial.

"Hume City Council is very proud to be home to Australia's first road which sees soft plastics and glass diverted from landfills and repurposed to create local roads," Cr Porter said.

"We look forward to monitoring the trial of this recycled asphalt and how the new surface performs over time."

"Sustainability is a key priority for our Council and community. This is just one way we are working in partnership to respond to recycling industry concerns and highlights the importance of residents and businesses recycling materials, particularly soft plastics and glass, properly."

Downer partnered very closely with Close the Loop and RED Group to innovatively tailor waste products such as soft plastics to suit a road construction application.

"Our close partnership with Downer and RED Group has allowed us to work collaboratively to improve the way we design and manufacture sustainable outcomes for waste that has meaningful uses. We are very pleased to set yet another industry benchmark, seeing soft plastics used for the first time in an Australian road," said Nerida Mortlock, General Manager of Close the Loop Australia.

“RED Group is delighted to partner with Downer, Hume City Council and Close the Loop on this exciting milestone,” said Elizabeth Kasell, Director, RED Group.

“It demonstrates a great step toward a circular system, where soft plastic packaging recovered through the REDcycle Program, and other materials previously destined for landfill, can be used as a resource for Australian roads.”

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**About Downer**

Downer is the leading provider of integrated services in Australia and New Zealand and customers are at the heart of everything it does. It exists to create and sustain the modern environment and its promise is to work closely with its customers to help them succeed, using world-leading insights and solutions to design, build and sustain assets, infrastructure and facilities. Downer employs approximately 56,000 people across more than 300 sites, primarily in Australia and New Zealand, but also in the Asia-Pacific region, South America and Southern Africa. It also owns 88 per cent of Spotless Group Holdings Limited. For more information visit [downergroup.com](http://downergroup.com).

**About Hume City Council**

Hume City Council is one of Australia's fastest-growing and culturally-diverse communities and is home to more than 223,000 residents. Spanning a total area of 504 square kilometres, the City is located in Melbourne's northern fringe, just 15 kilometres from the centre of Melbourne. Hume City Council seeks to be recognised as a leader in achieving social, environmental and economic outcomes with a common goal of connecting our proud community and celebrating the diversity of Hume. For more, visit [www.hume.vic.gov.au](http://www.hume.vic.gov.au)

**About Close the Loop**

Close the Loop (CtL) is an Australian owned resource recovery and sustainability solutions provider with locations in Australia, Europe and the US. CtL has established a global reputation for providing creative end of life product management services. Specialising in post-consumer recycling (PCR), CtL provides its services to leading global manufacturers of consumer and business to business products. In partnership with 15 major printer manufacturers CtL has established a network of over 35,000 collection points around Australia. For more, visit [www.closestheoopworldwide.com](http://www.closestheoopworldwide.com) or [www.closestheoop.com.au](http://www.closestheoop.com.au)

**About RED Group**

RED Group, a Melbourne-based consulting and recycling organisation, has developed and implemented the REDcycle Program; a recovery initiative for post-consumer soft plastic. RED Group has teamed up with Coles, Woolworths and some of Australia's most-loved brands to make it easy for you to keep your plastic bags and soft plastic packaging out of landfill. For more, visit [www.redcycle.net.au/](http://www.redcycle.net.au/)