



Jon Stanhope MLA
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MINISTER FOR BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MINISTER FOR LAND AND PROPERTY SERVICES
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MINISTER FOR THE ARTS AND HERITAGE
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SPACE OBSERVATORY PLAN TO DRIVE ACT TOURISM INTO THE STRATOSPHERE

Plans by the Australian National University (ANU) and the Smithsonian Institute to build a space science museum at the Mount Stromlo Observatory will help drive ACT tourism into the stratosphere and build on the ACT Labor Government's plans to further develop Stromlo Forest Park, Chief Minister Jon Stanhope said today.

"I warmly welcome the news that the ANU and the Smithsonian will join forces to build a national space science museum at Canberra's Mount Stromlo Observatory," Mr Stanhope said.

"It is highly appropriate given the role Canberra and Canberrans have played in the US space program, especially the role of Tidbinbilla Tracking Station in beaming the images of man's first walk on the moon to the world.

"This announcement compliments the work the ACT Government is already doing through a master planning process to build on the investments we've already made in Stromlo Forest Park. Our plan is to make it even better able to support local jobs in the tourism industry and to be an even better place for Canberrans to enjoy.

"We are exploring ways to attract more investment into Stromlo Forest Park, to increase the amount of low-cost tourism accommodation, to provide retail and events spaces, improve the equine and mountain biking tracks and to build a gondola that would scale Mount Stromlo, taking visitors and bike riders to the top.

"The gondola and retail facilities would help bring visitors to the new space museum, which would in turn provide even more reasons for people to visit Stromlo Forest Park and stay in Canberra. The space museum coupled with new facilities at Stromlo Forest Park would be a particular drawcard for visitors from the highly lucrative US market."

"I congratulate Professor Chubb, the ANU and the Smithsonian Institute on this visionary agreement. The ACT Government looks forward to working with them to ensure Stromlo Forest Park reaches the heights of its potential as a tourism destination and a recreational asset for Canberrans."

The Stromlo Forest Park Master Plan was developed with extensive input from community members and user groups. The ACT Government will consider the plan and approaches to attract investors later this year with a view to developing accommodation, retail space and the gondola in the coming years.

Statement Ends

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