



Jon Stanhope MLA

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FIRST CLASS ARTS CENTRE FOR BELCONNEN

If Mrs Dunne and the Canberra Liberals had their way the Belconnen community would have a sub-standard cultural facility rather than the purpose built, multi-function Belconnen Arts and Cultural Centre which will open in August 2009.

At the 2004 election, the Canberra Liberals committed to build a \$3 million arts centre but included no detail of any consultations with the Belconnen community or any indication of the facilities that the centre would have.

When the first stage of the \$9 million Belconnen Arts Centre opens, it will include a visual art gallery, outdoor sculpture gallery, dance studio/rehearsal room and change rooms, wet/dry creative workshops, a large foyer for community gatherings, a community meeting room, an arts lounge, studio and office areas for artists and arts organisations, a café/kiosk, a reception and administrative areas.

Prior to commencing work on the Belconnen Arts Centre, the ACT Government undertook a comprehensive consultation process to scope, design and develop the centre which will meet the needs of the Belconnen community for many years to come.

This work included a detailed needs assessment and an options paper, two advisory groups that have including community and arts sector representatives, a number of community meetings, and detailed exploration of the site resulting in a complex that will meet the current and medium-term needs of the Belconnen community.

Stage two of the Belconnen Arts Centre, a 260 seat theatre, will be built when justified by demand.

As an interim measure, the Belconnen Theatre at the Belconnen Community Centre has also seen its lighting upgraded; new seating installed and access improved for people with a disability.

“The people of Belconnen deserve to have a quality arts facility and I am pleased that the ACT Government has taken the time to consult with the community to ensure that the facility is the best that it can possibly be.

“If Mrs Dunne had had her way I dread to think what the result may have been,” Mr Stanhope said

Statement Ends

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