

Media Release

The Hon Dan Andrews MP
Premier



**DELIVERING
FOR ALL VICTORIANS**

Thursday, 25 July 2019

HAPPY FEET AS NEW PENGUIN PARADE VISITOR CENTRE OPENS

The Andrews Labor Government has secured the future of one of Australia's most popular tourist attractions, the iconic Phillip Island Penguin Parade, with a new \$58.2 million visitor centre opening today.

Premier Daniel Andrews joined Minister for Environment, Energy and Climate Change Lily D'Ambrosio to launch the award-winning facility, which replaces the existing centre built more than 30 years ago.

The Labor Government invested \$48.2 million through the *Regional Tourism Infrastructure Fund* in the project, which created 200 construction jobs and is expected to create more than 600 new jobs in the local tourism sector.

The centre will deliver a world-class visitor experience for the more than 700,000 tourists who come to see the much-loved penguin parade every year and cater for the 840,000 people that are expected to visit the centre annually by 2030.

Featuring a spectacular architectural design, the visitor centre offers fun and interactive activities for the whole family, a state-of-the-art theatre and a range of dining and retail options, as well as allowing Philip Island Nature Parks to continue to carry out its globally recognised penguin research.

Australia's largest colony of Little Penguins will benefit from a key aspect of the development with the restoration of more than six hectares of penguin habitat on the site of the old visitor centre and coach parking areas, creating homes for an additional 1,400 breeding penguins.

The Penguin Parade visitor centre will also eliminate all single-use plastics throughout its food outlets, building on the Labor Government's ongoing work to reduce the amount of plastic entering our waterways and environment.

The development is one of 126 projects the Labor Government has backed as part of the *Local Jobs First* program, supporting 35,000 local jobs. Nature Parks contribute just under \$500 million to the state's economy every year.

Quote attributable to Premier Daniel Andrews

"The new centre will create hundreds of Victorians jobs and ensure this world-class centre continues providing a wonderful experience for more local families, and visitors from across Australia and the world."

Quote attributable to Minister for Environment, Energy and Climate Change Lily D'Ambrosio

"The restoration of vital habitat is a critical component of this development, creating homes for thousands of penguins and helping to secure the future of Australia's largest Little Penguin colony."

Quote attributable to Minister for Regional Development Jaclyn Symes

"This is great boost for the Bass Coast, delivering 200 jobs during construction and hundreds more ongoing."

Quote attributable to Member for Bass Jordan Crugnale

"We're creating a world class visitor experience for the tens of thousands of people who travel from all over to see the penguin colony at our very own Phillip Island."

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