Media Release

Peter Chandler, Member for Brennan
Minister for Education

Community to benefit from new Stella Maris plan

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The historic Stella Maris site has been pried from the hands of Labor’s Union mates with the National Trust NT being selected as the preferred proponent to lease the site after an open and accountable Expressions of Interest process.

As the preferred proponent, negotiations will commence this week with National Trust NT to finalise arrangements prior to the issuing of a lease over the site.

National Trust NT flagged their interest in the site to the former Labor Government before it was handed over on the eve of the 2012 election through a rent-free lease to Unions NT.

Minister for Lands, Planning and the Environment said National Trust NT’s plans for the site include benefits for the whole community, unlike Union NT’s plans to create a fund raising venture for the Labor Party.

“Green space, gardens, a timeline of Darwin’s history, a café and a potential function space are some of the community benefits expected to flow from the National Trust’s vision for this Stella Maris site,” Mr Chandler said.

“This is what can be achieved when the community is given a say, innovative ideas that benefit everyone while also maintaining the site’s heritage.

“However Labor still believe Stella Maris would better serve as a clubhouse for their union mates, closed off to the public.

“What’s interesting is Unions NT didn’t even bother to submit an application.

“During the Inquiry into Labor’s dodgy Stella Maris deal, union heavy weights and Labor MPs lined up to cry crocodile tears about the Union’s ‘strong links’ to the site, however now they seem uninterested.
“This is the first time those supposed strong links have been put to the test, through an open and competitive process, and they’ve failed.”

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