

MEDIA RELEASE FROM SKYLINE QUEENSTOWN, NEW ZEALAND

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Skyline Queenstown announces major development plans

Skyline Queenstown has today announced an estimated \$60 million redevelopment of its iconic facility, one of the most significant investments Skyline has made since the current gondola system was installed in 1987.

The proposed development includes the replacement of its gondola and Luge chairlift, as well as a major expansion of its upper complex and a brand new lower terminal building in order to accommodate the anticipated growth in visitor numbers over the next 30 years.

As the tourism company prepares to mark its 50th year of operation in 2017, Skyline is proposing to: replace its existing four-seat gondola system with a state-of-the-art 10-seat gondola; expand the capacity of its restaurant, Stratosfare, from 330 seats to 650 in a flexible configuration for multiple dining options; replace the existing two-seater chairlift that services the Skyline Luge with a four-seat chair; expand the panoramic viewing deck from 68m² to 430m² and almost double its capacity for conferences and events to cater for up to 770 delegates in purpose-built facilities.

With more than 787,000 people using the gondola each year, the current system is, at times, reaching its capacity of 1100 guests per hour. A new 10-seat gondola is expected to take up to 3000 guests per hour, with the number of gondola users projected to nearly double by 2030.

Skyline Enterprises chairman Mark Quickfall says the development is an important investment for the future tourism landscape as it will accommodate ongoing growth for many years to come.

“This development is about future-proofing Skyline Queenstown as a premium tourist attraction and ensuring it delivers to a world-class standard. As well as accommodating higher visitor numbers, it will feature one of the most technologically advanced gondola systems available, cutting down wait times at the base terminal and improving the overall guest experience. It’s going to benefit every gondola user – whether they’re coming up to enjoy the incredible scenery from our viewing deck, access world-class mountain biking trails and other tourism businesses or experience Skyline Queenstown’s famous Luge, great hospitality and star-gazing.”

Tourism New Zealand chief executive Kevin Bowler says: “Queenstown already offers visitors some of the most spectacular views and scenery in the world. The state-of-the-art Skyline Queenstown Development Project is about providing a built environment that does justice to its magnificent setting. This development represents the kind of vision and thinking we need to see more of to ensure our visitors continue to have an exceptional visitor experience in New Zealand.”

The Skyline facilities are being designed by award-winning architect Michael Wyatt. “The new base terminal building, which houses the gondola cabins when they’re not in use, will be a striking sculptural machine hall with a transparent ground floor. The movement of gondolas will be seen as coming and going through the glass and up the hill. The building will become a landmark by virtue of its function and importance to Queenstown,” he says.

“The extension of the existing Skyline complex must remain sympathetic to the landscape. This building, when viewed from town, will give a similar impression to the current complex on Bob’s Peak, but it will be adjusted to make it more interesting,” Wyatt adds.

In order to complete the gondola replacement, Skyline Queenstown must close for 8-12 weeks – proposed for autumn 2018. Skyline Queenstown general manager Lyndon Thomas says about 80% of construction work will occur either side of the temporary closure, however every effort will be made to ensure the day-to-day running of the gondola, Luge or dining options, mountain biking, and other tourism businesses won’t be affected. All neighboring businesses and affected parties are currently being – and will continue to be – consulted about the project in an effort to mitigate any potential issues.

“This is an exciting project for Skyline Queenstown; it is a one-in-30-year development so it is very important to us that we get it right,” Thomas says. “This development represents our passion and our vision for Skyline continuing to be a world-class leisure experience that adds to the amenity of Queenstown, for both locals and visitors. Most importantly, we’re dedicated to creating something that the community, local businesses and shareholders will be proud of.”

A resource consent application for the development is expected be lodged with Queenstown Lakes District Council later this month. All going well, it is hoped the project will commence in March 2017.

Skyline Queenstown is inviting locals to find out more about the project over two public information sessions onsite this month. Residents pre-registering at www.skylinedevelopment.co.nz and providing proof of their local address will get a free gondola ride to the Skyline Queenstown complex and will be able to view information panels and speak to management about the project. The sessions will be held on Wednesday, June 15 from 5-6pm and Thursday, June 16 from 10-11am.

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For further information, please refer to the attached media kit or contact:

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About Skyline Queenstown

With 220-degree panoramic views spanning from Coronet Peak to the Remarkables mountain range and across Lake Wakatipu to Walter Peak and Cecil Peak, there is no better place to experience the beauty of Queenstown than Skyline Queenstown at the top of Bob's Peak. Skyline Queenstown is a fun park for all ages and stages and all levels of adrenalin. Skyline Queenstown offers unforgettable family fun – whether it be lugging, mountain biking, or walking as well as a range of dining and relaxing options amongst some of the world's greatest scenery.

Skyline Queenstown opening hours:

Complex: 9:00am until late

Luge: Open from 10:00am daily

Stratosfare Restaurant & Bar: Lunch – 12.00pm – 2.00pm, Dinner – First sitting from 5:45pm, second sitting from 8:15pm.

Stargazing: Tour times vary with sunset

www.skyline.co.nz/queenstown