



MEDIA RELEASE

17 May 2022

KAP blast Bridle Track Tunnel onto the agenda

KENNEDY MP, Bob Katter, and Leichhardt Candidate, Rod Jensen, have done a mock blast signifying their support for the immediate planning and construction of the Bridle Track Tunnel between Cairns and Mareeba/Atherton.

The ALP has promised \$200m upgrades for the existing Kuranda Road which means an hour commute from Mareeba to Cairns, the LNP are doing an \$11m study into alternatives, but only the KAP are committed to building a new tunnel and highway from the Tablelands to Cairns.

The KAP including Hill MP, Shane Knuth, Bob Katter and Leichhardt Candidate, Rod Jensen, have been campaigning for the construction of the Bridle Track Tunnel, a new highway between Cairns and Mareeba/Atherton, for the last two years.

The Bridle Track Tunnel is an alternate to the current Kuranda Range Road, with a State Government report finding that route closes more than 44 times a year, for an average of nearly seven hours per closure.¹

The Bridle Track involves 16 kilometres of road from the Davies Creek turn off on the Kennedy Highway, to the tunnel entrance, and a 1-2km tunnel through Lamb Range. Coming out of the tunnel on the Cairns southern suburbs side there will be an overpass onto the Bruce Highway (see diagram attached). Mr Katter estimates the total project will cost between \$1.5b and \$1.7b.

Bob Katter called out the State and Federal Governments for being incapable of building a weir, a dam, or any 'damn' thing.

"Everyone knows that they have no trouble building tunnels in Brisbane," Mr Katter said.

"They have more than 30km of road tunnels. The Brisbane City Council area has a population of 1.3 million. North Queensland has nearly one million people, but we have no tunnels at all.

"They can build tunnels in Brisbane but not in North Queensland. The major parties serve Brisbane but have neglected North Queensland. Again, we see it in this election with politicians promises weeks out from polling day, but what have they been doing for the last four and a half years?

"If we can get two or three KAP MPs on the crossbench, then North Queensland and Far North Queensland will be in a powerful position. Far North Queensland will be in power, and we will set a deadline on the Federal Government for construction of the Bridle Track Tunnel."

¹ <https://www.tmr.qld.gov.au/projects/cairns-to-northern-tablelands-access-strategy>

BOB KATTER

Katter's Australian Party
Federal Member for Kennedy



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KAP Leichhardt candidate, Rod Jensen said the Bridle Track Tunnel was critical for opening new housing availability in Far North Queensland, as well as access to a port for farmers and miners on the Tablelands, Cape and Gulf.

"It's all about economic development for our industries and our people," he said.

"Announcing a study on the eve of an election as the LNP has done is a politicians promise and merely upgrading the Kuranda Road access, as Labor is proposing, is ludicrous. To do so would place further undue strain on an access road that is already dangerous and often un-usable for drivers.

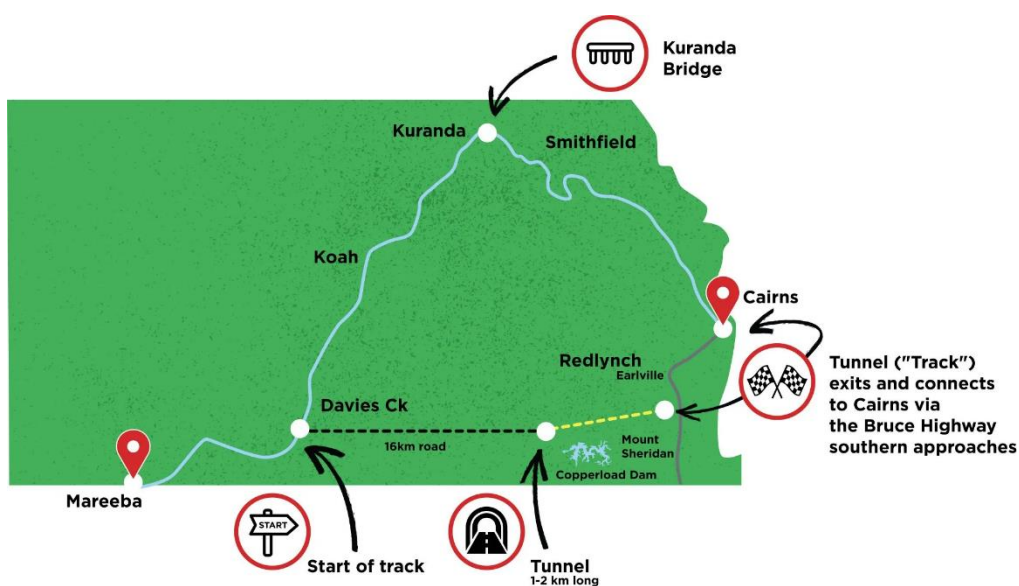
"What Labor are pushing for with upgrading the Kuranda Road will subject users to years of perpetual road works and stop-start traffic lasting into the foreseeable future."

Hill MP, Shane Knuth, said he had exhausted all options with the State Government, including multiple meetings with the Transport Minister, and said it was up to the Federal Government to lead the building of the Bridle Track Tunnel.

"Everyone knows we have a problem with the road going out 44 times a year on average," he said.

"Only the KAP is presenting an option to solve that problem. It's time to get on with it and built it."

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For more information or a comment from Bob Katter, please contact the media phone: 0418 840 243

