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KAP's Herbert candidate says party backs Lansdown

KATTER'S Australian Party (KAP) candidate for Herbert, Clynton Hawks, says his support for Townsville City Council's Lansdown Eco-Industrial Precinct is conditional on Flinders Highway upgrades to safely carry the estimated 20,000 extra vehicle movements each day between Townsville and the proposed site, 40 km west of the city.

"The Lansdown project is ambitious and visionary, but we've got to make sure we don't neglect the route connecting it to tide water.

"I have been very critical of this project because of questions around the foundational infrastructure, like road, rail and water. With the water component taken care of I still have concerns about the Flinders Highway piece."

Mr Hawks said his statement pledging conditional support for one of TCC's flagship projects comes following an approach by the mayor Townsville, Cr Jenny Hill, at a public forum.

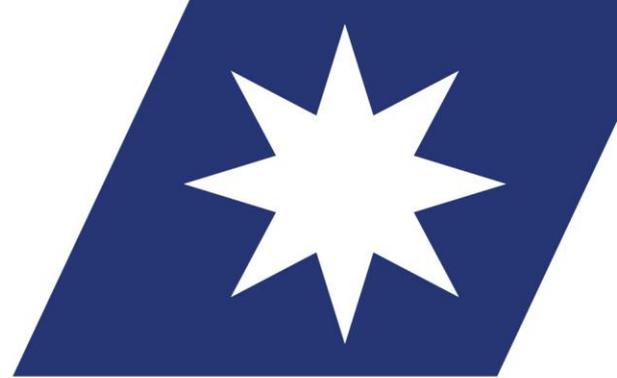
"I was bailed-up by the Mayor of Townsville to publicly declare my position on the Lansdown project, and so that's what I'm doing."

Mr Hawks said initiatives like Lansdown are critically important if Australia wants to see more manufacturers exporting locally-made products.

"Our national identity is tied to what we make so I think this is a strong nation-building project in every sense of that term.

"Queensland Pacific Metals nickel refinery would start laying their foundations tomorrow if the infrastructure was in place to support them at Lansdown, so there's no question in my mind that there's demand for this development.

"But the federal government needs to come to the table so that's why what I'm saying, in effect, is that if elected I will lobby the cross-bench to support funding for the necessary road infrastructure, including Flinders Highway upgrades.



"The electorate needs someone who can get things done and can work with State, federal and local governments to make developments like Lansdown get up.

"The federal member for Herbert has been given his chance and has shown he cannot work with all levels of government. Witness his relationship with the Mayor and State MPs. The Federal member cannot deliver big money projects, having made a mess of the Houghton pipeline deal, and is yet to deliver a project out of his bungled \$195m city deal of any significance."

Kennedy MP, Bob Katter, said ever since his time as Mines and Energy Minister in the Queensland Government, he had always believed Townsville should be the world's number one location for minerals refining.

"I strongly support the Lansdown precinct, especially if we can get a nickel refinery back to Townsville," he said.

"We already have a copper refinery and a zinc refinery in Townsville and there's no reason why we can't do more.

"If we want to mine and refine more minerals then we need to build the Copper String Transmission line that will open up the North West Minerals Province, as we will have competitively priced power.

"Neither of the federal ALP or LNP has committed the necessary funding for Copper String 2.0 and we are still waiting on the State Government to pass the necessary regulations and legislation for construction to begin."

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For media inquiries, please call 0429622882