



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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MEDIA RELEASE

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Ashford Agriculture & Aquaculture Project to get national exposure

A project waiting to get up and running in Ashford is about to get some national exposure thanks to a visit by Everal Compton – Chairman of the Australian Transport & Energy Corridor (ATEC) the developers of the Inland Rail link from Melbourne to Darwin.

Mr Compton is visiting the New England and North West for a few days early next week and is bringing with him the features writer for the Australian Financial Review, Mr Adam Shand.

Independent Member for New England, Tony Windsor is delighted that Mr Compton and Mr Shand are able to visit Ashford to have a look at the Ashford Integrated Agribusiness proposal.

“The Ashford Integrated Agribusiness proposal has secured support from Country Energy through access to a very valuable water licence as well as support from the Inverell Shire Council to assist provided that other assistance is found through other levels of Government and the private sector.

Mr Compton and Mr Shand’s visit and meeting with Mr Mick Lewis – Chair of the Ashford Business Council and other members of the Council is a step forward in trying to re-establish Ashford’s industry base, lost with the closure of their power station and tobacco growing industry,” Mr Windsor said.

If enthusiasm is any guide to getting the project operational, then Mr Windsor believes it should be very successful.

“The Ashford Business Council has embraced this project’s development and continues to leave no stone unturned in pursuit of finding a way to generate growth back into their town.

They have a successful track record in getting things happening and already operate a very successful Rural Transaction Centre (RTC) in the town. If any organisation in the region can make things happen, the Ashford Business Council can,” Mr Windsor said.

Mr Windsor believes that there is a very real attraction for someone like Mr Compton to assist Ashford.

“Whilst Mr Compton is a great supporter of growing inland Australia and believes in a strong future for inland Australia, he is also pursuing his goal of the Inland Rail link.

Mr Compton wants people to develop industries and businesses along the route and make use of high quality access to the ports to get their produce and other freight to market as quickly as possible on his Inland Rail link, to ensure freshness and price for that produce.

Getting the Ashford project up and operational and feeding into the Inland Rail link at Inglewood just over the Queensland border will encourage development of other opportunities along the line and therefore increase the success of the Inland Rail Link – a real win-win situation,” Mr Windsor said.

The meeting will take place at the Ashford Bowling Club at 5.30pm following a site inspection.

Further information from Tony Windsor - Mob 0427 66 8868 or 02 6761 3080