




Speech By
Shane Knuth

MEMBER FOR HILL

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PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENT

Castor Park Sporting Facilities

 **Mr KNUTH** (Hill—KAP) (2.49 pm): Castor Park at Mourilyan, Innisfail, is the central sporting hub in the region, used for junior and senior soccer, Little Athletics and used by various schools. However, the usage has grown well beyond what the current facilities can provide and it requires an urgent upgrade. The Castor Park Users Group comprises the Innisfail United Football Club, the Boogan Stars Junior Football Club and the Cassowary Coast Little Athletics Centre. The users group is seeking funding of \$705,000 to upgrade car parking and floodlighting and provide a covered area to meet the current demand and future patronage as these clubs continue to grow quickly.

Over 500 players use the venue during the off-season for the summer sixers competitions. This is on top of the 80-plus members of the Little Athletics club, the thousands of school kids and the junior and senior soccer club players, parents and spectators from Mission Beach, Tully, Innisfail and surrounds who use the venue during the soccer season. The funding will greatly relieve the pressure on the current facilities and allow for increased use through the paving of the car park and better lighting to play fixtures at night. The car park will allow people to park closer to the complex. I have personally witnessed the traffic chaos, having to park over 400 metres away from the venue. The proposed all-weather car park will eliminate safety risks and traffic congestion during training and playing days. The outdoor covered area would also be a great asset and seat approximately 150 people, sheltering them from the severe Far North Queensland heat, sun and rain.

There is overwhelming support for the project in the Innisfail and wider Cassowary Coast region. The project will promote recreational and social opportunities which play an important role in the sustainability and resilience of rural communities. Sport is often regarded as an important part of life in rural Australia, contributing to community identity, sense of place, social interaction and good health. The activities at Castor Park will provide all these benefits and more to the Cassowary Coast community.

I am aware of the state government's commitment to upgrading facilities in regional Queensland ahead of the 2032 Olympics. I cannot think of a more worthy project and urge support and approval of funding towards the Castor Park project.