

Paget precinct powers ahead

Within a decade, Paget's industrial precinct has been transformed from a sprinkling of workshops surrounded by cane farms and the nearby Mackay Airport into the epicentre of the mining services sector.

Mackay Mayor Deirdre Comerford said Paget was integral to the growth of the resources sector and continued to provide a place for innovation and design.

"It is the hub for industrial and commercial business and has a reputation for best practice when establishing strong industrial centres," she said.

"We have seen the growth of many businesses and attracted some big players who now call Paget their Australian base."

Former Brisbane-based real estate agent and property developer Clinton Arentz is among a number of investors with a strong belief in the city's future.

He first took an interest in Mackay in the early 2000s and by 2007 made the move with wife Rhondda to the Central Queensland city. "There was a massive coal mining boom (in the Bowen Basin) and Mackay had a good transport hub and a port," he said.

Mr Arentz rolled the dice and invested \$30 million in the Terminus Business Park, a development he described as being "ahead of its time in Mackay". Such was his faith in the potential of the city that he built without even one tenant signed up.

Stages one and two of Terminus Business Park are now fully occupied.

Mackay Regional Council has invested more than \$70 million in roads and drainage infrastructure in Paget. The



Clinton Arentz
Property developer

centrepiece was redeveloping Connors Rd into four lanes to ease congestion and improve access for all vehicles.

"It was the largest single road construction project ever undertaken by council and has enhanced connectivity and accessibility within the industrial estate," Cr Comerford said.

There are more than 520 commercial rateable properties in the Paget industrial estate and the number is growing every year. Mr Arentz's positive approach is infectious and he remains convinced Mackay will emerge from the "classic cyclical pattern" when coal prices rise again.

"Capital is abundant for good projects and interest rates are at an historical low," he said.

Not content with his first venture into the Paget business park, the Winston Group director has formed an alliance with a group of prominent local businessmen to open the \$15 million Evo Business Centre at Paget.

He also has a second parcel of 10ha behind the business centre



The proposed Evolution Industrial Estate site at Paget.

which will also be developed as Evolution Industrial Estate when market conditions dictate.

"Investment in Stage Two will be as much, if not more than the business centre," he said.

Mr Arentz and his alliance members have placed their collective faith in the resilience of the Mackay business community. He applauded the council for having the vision and faith to sow the seeds for business development in the Paget business park.

"I commend the council for the work they do to promote business opportunities," he said.

The entrepreneur with a passion for motorsport knows only one way to go and that's full throttle.

He took third place outright and won his class in Australia's most celebrated tarmac rally, the Targa Tasmania, this year driving his Mitsubishi Evo 10.

ADVERTORIAL

Turning negatives into positives

by Clint Arentz

The Winston Group

I don't do "downturn". It is one of the most counterproductive words in business.

The mining sector has moved from a capital expenditure phase to one of extraction and export. It's a predictable and positive part of the mining industry cycle. All indications are that future demand for coal remains strong and long lived.

The signs are good and the Mackay region is in a position to strengthen itself now, to make the most of this coming period of recovery and growth.

The markets which rely on our coal, such as China and India, are all still growing at a phenomenal rate.

This month, Chinese Premier Li Keqiang confirmed a

minimum expected growth rate for China this year of 7.5 per cent. The Chinese minister for housing estimates that 300 million more Chinese will move from rural living to new and existing cities before 2025.

The steel and energy required to sustain this growth is beyond comprehension, setting our mineral industry in high demand for the foreseeable future.

The reality is that business cycles are a fact of life. Since 1945, at least 12 major cycles have occurred. These cycles are influenced by interest rates and currency cycles, production and demand cycles, and most importantly, confidence cycles.

Business cycles always bounce back. Some take longer than others, and the adjustment we are currently

experiencing locally is part of a normal business cycle.

Winston Group developed the \$30 million Terminus Business Park, because I saw the potential in both Paget and Mackay for future growth and diversity. When construction commenced during the GFC, we did not have one tenant. Yet today, Terminus is a vibrant business hub. Our investment in the next generation Evo Business Centre as well as plans to develop an additional 10ha of adjacent industrial land is a reflection of the confidence our business has in the ongoing growth of Mackay.

It's time to think positively and realise that the Mackay region's best years are ahead of it. It's what you do today, that will set you up for future success.

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