



## Mayor Jenny Hill demands North Queensland be treated fairly on environmental approvals

MADURA MCCORMACK, Townsville Bulletin

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Cr Hill said the rejection of Adani's black-throated finch environmental management plan by the State Government last week throws into doubt any project that needs to clear trees of endangered habitat.



Townsville Mayor Jenny Hill questioned the Department of Environment and Science's treatment of North Queensland. Picture: Zak Simmonds

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"The concerns we have is, in regards to the black-throated finch, if this is what the Department of Environment and Science wants then are they going to implement this in southern Queensland as well as North Queensland?" Cr Hill said.

"If this is what they expect from a mining company then what are they going to do with property developers and all things that occur in the southeast corner?"

"If you're going to set a standard shouldn't the standard be the same for everyone?"

Mining giant Adani was last week dealt another blow when the Department of Environment and Science rejected its plan to manage the endangered black-throated finch. The project could now be delayed five years.

According to the Department Adani had not established an understanding of the bird's population among other issues.

Adani chief executive Lucas Dow has criticised the State Government for delaying the process "well beyond" what is required of them after 18 months of work and seven iterations of the environmental plan.

Cr Hill's call for "fair and equitable" treatment comes after the peak body of Queensland's infrastructure sector found delayed environmental approvals for mining and rail projects are expected to contribute to a significant downturn in major infrastructure projects in the state.

The Infrastructure Association of Queensland's chief executive Steve Abson said investors were turning away because of perceived "red and green tape". State Development Minister Cameron Dick, in Townsville yesterday, said every mining project needed to "stack up".

"There's nothing new in that, since we've been in government we've facilitated, authorised or otherwise supported \$20 billion investment into the resources sector," he said.

State deputy opposition leader Tim Mander, also in Townsville yesterday, accused the State Government of putting "unreasonable obstacles" in front of Adani.

"They have jumped every hurdle that's got before them and just before they get to the finish line, this government changes the goalposts.

"It's total hypocrisy, (Premier) Annastacia Palaszczuk in this town shook hands with the leaders of Adani to settle this deal a number of years ago and now she refuses to meet with them."