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Clean energy initiatives a boost for region's renewables reputation

Business Hunter has welcomed today's release of the final design for the Port of Newcastle's Clean Energy Precinct and the Federal Government's \$432 million funding commitment for Orica's Hunter Valley Hydrogen Hub.

Business Hunter CEO Bob Hawes said the two projects would boost the Hunter's growing reputation as a renewable energy powerhouse and support the region's economic growth and diversification.

"The Hunter is taking huge steps in the development of renewables and these two announcements show the strength of government confidence in our green economy future," Mr Hawes said.

"This support sends a message to the world that the Hunter leads the nation in the advancement of renewable energy technology and capability."

Minister for Climate Change and Energy, Chris Bowen, unveiled the final masterplan for the Port's Clean Energy Precinct, which will support its development as a production, storage and export hub for clean energy technologies and products, including hydrogen and ammonia.

"Industry and our community have been hearing about the Clean Energy Precinct for some time so it is great to see the release of this final design, which brings the project and the region's potential a big step closer to being realised," Mr Hawes said.

"The precinct will be a major boost to the Hunter's global connectivity and economic diversification."

The Federal Government's \$432 million commitment to Orica's hydrogen hub was made under ARENA's Hydrogen Headstart program and provides partial revenue support in the form of production credits once the project is operational. Phase One of the project, which is subject to a Final Investment Decision, will produce renewable hydrogen to reduce Orica's demand for natural gas for feedstock in manufacturing ammonia.

"Developing the capability to produce energy from hydrogen will support Orica's manufacturing process and its decarbonisation efforts," Mr Hawes said.

"There is also potential to commercialise the technology in future if successful, which will further help to build and solidify the region's reputation as a renewables hub.

"Business Hunter has advocated strongly for both the Clean Energy Precinct and Hunter Valley Hydrogen Hub and it is pleasing to see the region's voice being heard and acted upon by government decision-makers."

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