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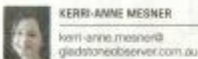


Oil spill rescue

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PM eyeing Gladstone

Rudd identifies growth challenges



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PRIME Minister Kevin Rudd has been keeping a watchful eye on Gladstone since he first visited the region 20 years ago.

In an exclusive interview with *The Gladstone Observer* last night, Mr Rudd said he noticed then the region had a huge appreciation and opportunity for industry and growth.

"I've been a huge fan of this community for 20 years, since I first came here," he said.

Mr Rudd said Gladstone, like many communities across Australia, would have different needs for infrastructure as it grew.

"The challenge for growth is to have balance and planned growth," he said.

Mr Rudd said Gladstone's future was not just about attract-

EXCLUSIVE



ON THE RADAR: Prime Minister Kevin Rudd in the city yesterday.

Picture: CHRISSY HARRIS rudd080410

ing the big LNG projects, but also about ensuring the right infrastructure was supplied to meet the growing demands.

He said high-speed broadband was one of the big items that would be needed in the region, and it would tie in with education, health and the private sector as they grew.

Mr Rudd said classical education infrastructure was also a high priority, with \$150 million invested into 139 local schools for 202 separate projects.

He said investing through these projects would accommodate the population growth as well as creating jobs and supporting small businesses in the short term.

The Prime Minister assured the health and hospital systems across Australia would be looked at from an infrastructure, employment, provision of services and funding view at local levels.

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