

# Rosalie carpark fury swells

By LLOYD GORMAN

**An alliance of disparate interest groups has come out in opposition to the state government proposal to turn a section of Rosalie Park into a temporary carpark for 876 cars.**

According to an advertising notice by the North Metropolitan Area Health Service in this edition of the POST, "the proposed staff carpark is required to enable construction to start on a new multi-deck carpark and the new children's hospital, which is scheduled to open in 2015 and will be built on the site of an existing carpark."

"The temporary car parking would provide approximately 800 bays and would operate from early 2011 to December 2012.

"It would be used primarily by frontline staff, including doctors, nurses and emergency staff working at the medical centre."

But a light rail expert, who has worked on the Knowledge Arc Light Rail proposal that would see electric trams running from the CBD through the University of WA and service the QEII medical centre, has refuted claims the new multi-storey carpark will make a difference.

Diana Ryan said: "The situation over car parking at QEII will only worsen as the replacements for Princess Margaret and King Edward Memorial hospitals are built there," she said.

"It is my understanding that the number of bays that will ultimately be provided at the site is capped at current levels and will not change.

"So changing the form of parking, from surface to multi-storey, will not relieve the pressure."

Ms Ryan added that even if the

state got Rosalie Park it would still have a "giant problem" with parking.

"Rosalie Perth, on the other hand, has been considerably more successful offsetting people on to public transport, because it is serviced directly by the train system," she said.

The Health Services Union, which represents many of the workers for whom the temporary carpark is being mooted, said not enough appropriate action was being taken to address the problems created by the QEII complex.

"While the union sees a number of benefits in the co-location of the new children's hospital at the QEII Medical Centre, the state government needs to provide greater public transport and parking infrastructure," said assistant secretary Chris Panizza.

"There are not enough on-site car bays at QEII and health workers are forced to park elsewhere. Once the new children's hospital is built, the QEII workforce will increase significantly and the new multi-storey carpark will not provide enough capacity to meet the increased demand for parking."

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Light rail passing UWA is illustrated in this electronic mock-up.



**Sit-in at Subi council ...** young sports enthusiasts mixed with adult residents overflowed from the public gallery on to the floor of the council chamber as they made their strong feelings heard during their Rosalie Park parking protest on Tuesday night. **Photo: Lloyd Gorman.**

## Fat fighters add their weight

**Residents and sporting groups battling to keep Rosalie Park from being turned into a carpark have found new allies in groups waging a war on obesity and diabetes.**

Two Subiaco-based health agencies - the Heart Foundation and Diabetes WA - have joined forces with locals and park users in calling on Subiaco council to reject the government's request for a temporary carpark on the site.

Heart Foundation CEO Maurice Swanson said the plan would be a "retrograde step" in the fight against obesity.

"WA faces an epidemic of obesity in both adults and children, and we should not be removing opportunities for people to be physically active," he said.

"Australia-wide more than 60% of adults and 25% of children are overweight or obese, and if present trends continue, the life expectancy of children will be reduced because of this.

"This epidemic, if unaddressed, will result in many more preventable deaths from heart disease, stroke, diabetes and certain cancers.

"It is a retrograde step to turn playing fields into carparks, doubly so because it will encourage more people to rely on private vehicles and make it less likely for commuters to combine exercise and public transport to get to work."

According to Diabetes WA, Subiaco mayor Heather Henderson and other mayors

signed a declaration two years ago to keep diabetes at the forefront of its policy formulation and decision making.

"We urge Subiaco to consider the impact of this decision on the health and wellbeing of the community," CEO Andrew Wagstaff said in a letter to councillors.

"It would be a poor decision to turn public recreational space into a carpark, given the push to encourage physical activity to combat the rising rate of obesity."

Mr Wagstaff said some 90,000 adults in WA had been diagnosed with type 2 diabetes. "It is also predicted that for every case diagnosed there remains one undiagnosed," he said.

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