

Honey slams North Freo infill

By BONNIE CHRISTIAN



Hundreds of houses are slated for a large pocket of the North Fremantle foreshore without any consideration for increased traffic, Cottesloe MP David Honey, pictured, says.

Plans for the industrial zone south of Leighton beach and opposite Port Beach were tabled in parliament this week.

Dr Honey said the published plans presaged a significant increase in housing density without any improvements to local roads to reduce the current "terrible traffic congestion" in the area.

"We do need more housing in Perth, but increases in

density shouldn't occur in isolation of broader planning around supporting infrastructure, especially to reduce traffic congestion," he said.

The WA Planning Commission has signed off on rezoning the area, owned by two landholders North Fremantle Joint Venture and Viva Energy, to "urban deferred", which means that the land is conditionally approved for urban development.

The rezoning was put out for public comment late last year and the City of Fremantle mayor and activist groups, including Save Leighton, say much more of the area should be rezoned as parks and recreation.

Mayor Hannah Fitzhardinge told a recent information meeting that the city's beaches were already heavily congested.

"The redevelopment is something that the council has taken a very strong position on, to say we think that through to Bracks Street should remain recreation reserve," she said.

"We're not anti-infill or development (but it should not be) to the detriment of open spaces or public areas."

Paul Gamblin of the Leighton Action Coalition said the area has had another stay of execution.

He said erosion and the popularity of the area means more of the land needed



The green areas are zoned Parks and Recreation. Left is the government decision and right is the LAC recommendation

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rezoned for public use.

"A sliver of land between the industrial area and Port Beach Road has now been zoned Parks and Recreation, which is welcome and a win for common sense but is only the bare minimum starting-point for a meaningful coastal park," he said this week.

"So it's a mixed bag for tens of thousands of Port-Leighton beach lovers - we live to fight another day for a wide, natural beach and access for all, for generations to come.

"We have another chance to advocate for restored dunes and much-needed public open space over groynes and seawalls."

Mr Gamblin told the information meeting last month that "report after report have shown this is one of the most vulnerable coastlines (to sea level rise and erosion) in WA."

He urged the WAPC to plan for the next 100 years.

He said the benefit of hindsight showed that although getting a wider reserve at Leighton was a good outcome, it was now clear it should have been even wider to accommodate parking and access.