

Racetrack debate getting 'grubby'

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The State's environmental watchdog has defied almost 1000 public submissions and opted not to investigate the controversial Burswood racetrack project.

Deputy Premier Rita Saffioti said she was "not surprised" by the independent Environment Protection Authority's decision, and accused the project's critics of launching "grubby" personal attacks against her.

But the Opposition accused the Government of hiding from scrutiny, while residents opposed to the project called the decision "outrageous".

"Our trust in government is at rock bottom," Save Burswood Park Alliance co-chairwoman Robin Harvey said.

"The EPA has not met its obligations, which are to protect the environment and to prevent, control and abate pollution and environmental harm."

The EPA said 877 out of the 953 comments received during a seven-day period supported a formal assessment, but it determined the potential noise impact was likely to be "localised, intermittent and short".

"We recognise the community's concerns but are comfortable that there are other regulatory mechanisms in place to address potential issues," EPA chairman Darren Walsh said.

He also found the proximity to existing entertainment venues reduced the issue of noise, and said environmental concerns

over the removal of three artificial ponds could be safely managed.

The \$217 million plan for a racetrack and amphitheatre was a key election promise, but has been divisive with the Opposition, Greens and the Town of Victoria Park vehemently opposed to the current plan.

Ms Saffioti said the Government was still "finalising" when it would release a summary of the business case for the sport and entertainment precinct, and accused critics of getting too personal.

"I'm happy to have a debate about the facts of matters, and always happy to have that debate," she said.

"But when people, to be honest, make some extraordinary claims, use AI images to try and portray something and have personal attacks to local members and to ministers, (and) grubby personal attacks that are sent late at night, attacking people's family, I'm sorry that is just not a debate that I'm wanting to engage in."

Outside Parliament, Opposition Leader Basil Zempilas repeated his demands for the full business case to be released.

Greens leader Brad Pettitt said the community was right to feel aggrieved by the EPA's decision.

"The community must be feeling really frustrated and disappointed when you've got 1000 people putting in submissions that are thoughtful, actually highlighting important environmental issues," he said.