

**Good evening, thank you for inviting me here this evening to talk about the Save Burswood Park Alliance. My name is Sue Quinn and I am co-chair of the group alongside Dr Robin Harvey, an East Perth resident whom many of you will know. Robin was unable to come tonight so it is my pleasure to fill in for her and tell you about the cause we are so passionate about, and that is to Stop the Motorplex and Save Burswood Park.**

**I myself am a long-time resident of the Burswood Peninsula, and along with my husband Chris, have lived in high-rise apartments there for over 16 years now. We absolutely love the area and although we originally bought there for the privilege of overlooking the Burswood Park Golf Course, we have embraced the gradual changes that have occurred following closure of the golf course and developments including Crown Towers and Optus Stadium.**

**The building of Matagarup Bridge connecting East Perth with Burswood Park was embraced by residents on both sides of the river, and we know many residents here enjoy walking across the bridge to the foreshore and parklands of Burswood Park. But all that is likely to change very soon, if our State Government have their way and build a V8 Supercars Racetrack on the site. It seems to be their number one priority since winning the election in March, and this is what I'd like to talk to you about today, as it's an important and concerning issue that will affect us all.**

**The first most residents heard of this plan was on 12<sup>th</sup> January this year, when a segment on Channel Seven News reported that the Government, if re-elected, would build a Motorsport Street Circuit at Burswood Park. There was the Premier, alongside local member Hannah Beazley and representatives from the Supercars community, proudly posing in front of a race car in the park, saying that this was pretty exciting and that it would be huge for Perth. Roger Cook said, "Just like in Townsville and the Gold Coast, the street circuit will turn the roads around Burswood Park into a racetrack, allowing around 50,000 visitors to turn out each day for a multi-day race event".**

**Needless to say, residents of the Burswood Peninsula were shocked, as it was the first we'd heard of these plans, and according to Hannah Beazley, it was also news to her! It seems the Premier was happy to blindside the community with this announcement with no prior notice to anyone other than a select few in his government. Even our local council, the Town of Victoria Park, was not consulted, nor was the Burswood Park Board who are responsible for control and management of the park.**

**Some of you may be aware of Burswood Park's Masterplan and 20 Year Vision documents that were released a few years ago following extensive community consultation and a lengthy approval process. This is the plan that Burswood residents have been anticipating, and many bought homes on the Peninsula with confidence that future plans for the park were clear and transparent. Nowhere in those plans was there talk or even a hint of it including a Supercars racetrack or street circuit!**

**Within days of the announcement, residents were rallying together to see what they could do to object to this plan. Even though it was just an election commitment, people were angry that there had been no public or community consultation whatsoever before this bombshell was dropped. It certainly sounded like a done deal!**

**One of our first actions was to launch an e-petition through [change.org](https://change.org) objecting to the proposal. That went live on 21<sup>st</sup> January and now has 8,000 signatures on it, and it continues to increase daily.**

**It was around that time that I was approached by a member of the East Perth Community Group, expressing concerns about the racetrack proposal and the significant effect it would also have on residents across the river, particularly with noise, traffic congestion and pollution impacts. Subsequent discussions resulted in the formation of our joint action group, the Save Burswood Park Alliance, and the setting up of a Facebook page to enable interested parties to comment and follow developments and the actions the group was taking. That page now has almost 750 followers.**

**As mentioned earlier, the Town of Victoria Park was also taken by surprise by the announcement of the racetrack plans, as at no time was the proposal discussed with them, or their opinion sought on how this development might impact the local community. Subsequently, at their Council meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> February, Mayor Karen Vernon successfully moved a motion to not support Labor's election promise to build the racetrack at Burswood Park and we have been very appreciative of the Town's commitment to stand with the community in opposing these plans.**

**Recognising that the group needed to do more to get publicity and media attention to the plans the government had for Burswood Park, focusing particularly on the lack of transparency and public consultation, it was decided that a Parliamentary Petition was needed to ensure the proposal received the close scrutiny it deserved. The petition was launched on 7<sup>th</sup> April by Dr Robin Harvey from East Perth, facilitated by Greens MLC Dr Brad Pettitt, asking the Legislative Council to support an inquiry into all aspects of the project. This petition, which now has over 2,200 signatures and hundreds more on paper versions, will be tabled in Parliament on 28<sup>th</sup> May and a public rally at Parliament House has just been organised for 10am that day to show how strong public sentiment is against the racetrack proposal.**

**Our joint communities have achieved a lot in the last few months, with more than 13,000 signatures obtained through both petitions and awareness of the motorplex project growing daily. But we need to do more.**

**We also need to understand exactly what is being planned. Is it a temporary street circuit as was first announced, or is it a permanent motorplex facility as indicated in the artist impressions that are being promoted? So far, we haven't been able to get clear answers on this.**

**Opposition from locals is not just about losing views and negative impacts on property values. We are not whinging NIMBY's as Rita Saffioti has unkindly called us, the privileged "Not In My Backyard"**

**brigade that don't embrace change. There's a much bigger picture here and that is the loss of a well-utilised and much-loved green space that is valued for its natural beauty and prime riverside location. In last week's Sunday Times, Rita dismissively called it a tip; well we know it was once a rubbish tip that opened in 1946 and closed in the early 1980's, but over the last 40 years, it has evolved into a vital green corridor for inner-city Perth that is filled with an abundance of birds and native wildlife, as well as hundreds of trees and shrubs that will all have to be ripped up to accommodate the 3.5kms of tarmac needed for the racetrack.**

**Of course, we also fear for the environmental impacts, in particular the excessive noise that V8 Supercars will generate. Some of our residents who live in the Fairways apartments are only 40 metres from the proposed track! You can understand their anxiety and anger. I'm sure many of you can hear the jet boats racing on the river on a Sunday morning – last week the noise from just two boats racing was recorded from our balcony at 90 decibels, can you imagine that noise multiplied by 25 V8 Supercars?**

**It will be unbearable and, from studies we have seen over East, is almost guaranteed to result in damage to hearing from those exposed to the noise without protection. This of course includes children and who knows how it will affect pets and wildlife who cannot be protected? The answer we received from the Government when this was raised was “well, residents can leave their homes when the racing is on, or just wear earplugs!”. A flippant and dismissive response and not exactly in keeping with the noise mitigation strategy we've been promised!**

**A few weeks ago, geo-technical testing commenced in the park and the results of this could be very interesting. People that live in the area are aware of the park's drainage issues. After heavy rain, the park quickly floods, and it takes weeks to restore the parklands.**

**I'm sure you remember the WA Day Festival that was cancelled last year due to excessive flooding after a downpour that saw trucks trying to set up get bogged and the ground severely damaged as a result. So how will that work for the massive trucks that need to bring the supercars and supporting infrastructure to an event? The site works and cost of preparing the land for this type of development will be massive, and I'm sure that's not been factored in to the \$217 million budget that's been allocated for this project.**

**As mentioned earlier, there was no community consultation, no business case and no environmental impact assessment undertaken before the announcement was made in January, and only this week have a few people, including Robin and myself, been invited to have a conversation with the Main Roads Project Team as part of their concept development phase. We are told this will be followed by a thorough consultation process but we are unsure what form this will take. Some are saying it will just be a tick-box exercise done via an online survey, but we are assured everyone will have the opportunity to have their say on the project. It will also be interesting to see if they extend the survey to the East Perth side of the river.**

**So, in summary, we are doing all we can to uncover the truth about the motorplex and to make the government accountable and transparent about their plans, and we believe a parliamentary inquiry can help with that. We are not against motor racing, many in our community actually love the sport, but it belongs in a more remote area like Wanneroo, Kwinana or Keysbrook where existing facilities could be improved for significantly less than the \$217 million they plan to invest in the Burswood racetrack.**

**We don't have any issue with the amphitheatre or any of the other sporting events they are planning, but the introduction of a motor racing circuit takes things to a whole new level. They want this track to be operational in time for the 2027 season so work needs to start later this year – why is it such a priority? Surely there are more pressing issues in our state that deserve an investment of this size?**

**If you agree that Burswood Park isn't the right location for a motorplex and haven't had the opportunity to sign the petition yet, I have a paper copy here tonight that you can sign. And of course, if you'd like to rally against the proposal, please join the group at Parliament House on 28<sup>th</sup> May at 10am.**

**I appreciate the opportunity to talk to you tonight about the proposed motorplex, and the devastating impacts the destruction of Burswood Park will have on its wildlife, our communities and all park users, and invite you to help us STOP THE MOTORPLEX and SAVE BURSWOOD PARK!**

**Thank you.....**