



Barnett promises to keep beach land

By **DAVID HUDLESTON**

The 10ha of prime land comprising the Leighton marshalling yards will never be sold or redeveloped, according to Cottesloe MP and Premier Colin Barnett.

He made the comment when he announced a \$40 million plan to realign Curtin Avenue along the railway line from just north of the Marine Parade roundabout in Cottesloe to make beach access safer.

But while the Leighton Action Coalition (LAC) welcomed the announcement, spokeswoman Sue Harrington said Mr Barnett did not say whether funds were available to rehabilitate the dunes or landscape the site to allow better access to the beach.

"The government now needs to commit to funding and a timeline for the other essential rehabilitation works to turn the marshalling yards into parkland,"

she said.

The Department of Transport is expected to start planning the project later this year with initial site works and then full construction to roll out from next year through to 2016.

Mr Barnett said the Save Leighton Beach campaign had been a big issue in the 90s.

"That was resolved in the late 90s and what we have seen has been some development of apartments down toward the Fremantle end, a new surf life saving club built and some rehabilitation and some landscaping in that area," he said.

"However, over a decade on the vast area of the old Leighton marshalling yards is a vacant, barren wasteland.

"It has not been touched and yet it is prime property along the ocean side.

"Under the agreements that were reached in the late 90s, that will remain as a conservation area and recreation space.

"It will not be sold or developed as such."

He said there was scope for recreational facilities but that was up to the planners.

Mr Barnett said heavy traffic, up to 25,000 vehicles a day, using Curtin Avenue and Port Beach Road hindered the beach's use.

"The realignment of Curtin Avenue south of the Marine Parade roundabout will completely open up the area and bring back families and beachgoers to a revitalised beachfront," Mr Barnett said.

Ms Harrington said the realignment was also an opportunity to develop the historic Cable Station Building (McCall Centre) for community use, with a garden in front of it instead of a road.

"LAC wants the government to divert the beach access road behind the Cable Station at the time of constructing Curtin Avenue," she said.

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"A rare opportunity exists to create a very special coastal node at the Cable Station, something akin to the glory days of Caves House at Yallingup."

Ms Harrington said industrial land behind Port Beach was likely to be developed for urban uses, and rising sea levels should be considered.

"Buildings and carparks are perilously close to the ocean, and rising sea levels will see the end of these in fairly quick time," she said.

"The road needs to be relocated at least 150m inland from the fore dunes while the opportunity still exists."



Subiaco Post
Saturday 2/2/2013
Page: 11
Section: General News
Region: Perth
Type: Suburban
Size: 354.25 sq.cms.
Frequency: ----F--

Brief: PARLWA-WA1
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The yellow line shows the proposed realignment of Curtin Avenue and the dotted line shows future construction.