

NEWS

Rehab change sparks alarm

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AN application before the Department of Planning to make a minor change to one boundary line in the development plans for the Royal Rehabilitation Centre has led to an outcry from some Ryde councillors.

Royal Rehab management noticed a discrepancy between zoning maps and made an application to modify part of a single boundary line to bring the differing documents in line.

The boundary change would result in an increase to the size of the parkland for Ryde Council.

Ryde liberal councillors Sarkis Yedelian and Bill Pickering said the application to change the boundary showed a lack of community consultation and a disrespect for residents.

"They've had ample opportunity over the past four years to make changes to the boundaries," Cr Pickering said.

The application for boundary modification is listed on the Department of Planning website, but Cr Pickering said the proposal should have been listed on the website earlier and that residents were not informed about the modification.

Labor Cr Gabrielle O'Donnell criticised councillors for turning the application into a debate about the site, and said the concept plan had not changed.

"This is only a minor boundary readjustment, it has nothing to do with the concept plan which has already been approved," she said.

Independent Cr Terry Perram said the boundary change did not alarm him.

"All this is doing is making the boundaries consistent," he said.

Royal Rehab chief executive officer Stephen Lowndes described comments from councillors that Royal Rehab was misleading the community or trying to sneak through major changes as opportunistic and scaremongering.

"The boundary change is an absolute technical drafting inconsistency, it is a state-approved deviation and it is frustrating that council is dealing with a procedural matter in this way," he said.

He said management and prospective developers Frasers Property Group would be obliged to abide by state planning approval, and there was not a great deal of requirement for them to go back to council on most minor matters. He said the change was brought up because "we want to be collaborative with council".

The council will write to the Planning Department requesting further community consultation about the change.