

Substation in activists' firing line

By **NICOLE HEINRICH**

A NEWLY formed group of Hills climate activists will fight the proposed construction of the eastern terminal electricity substation.

The Hills Climate Action Group recently held its first business meeting after forming at a public forum during May.

It now plans to organise local forums and possible rallies about the substation.

Meeting convenor Annolies Truman said the group had an agenda of "real action".

"Our local group is committed to working from the grass roots to make a real difference on climate change. We can't leave it to those in power to do the right thing," she said.

Hills resident Toni Warden told the meeting she believed the substation project was wrong on many levels and highlighted two major concerns.

"Western Power intend to use the substation to reinforce the power grid connecting the metropolitan area with Collie where two new coal-fired power stations are under construction and two more are on the drawing board," she said.

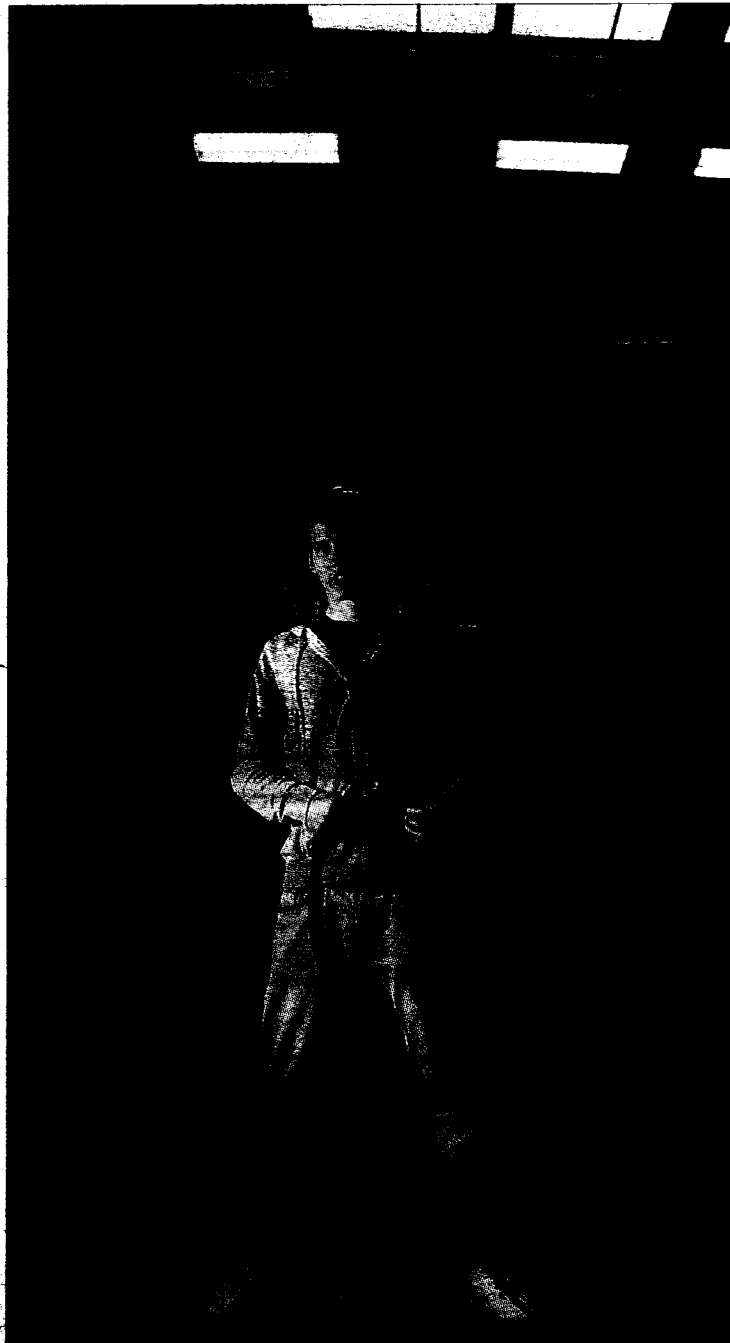
"Coal-fired power stations produce more greenhouse gases than any other form of electricity production and it is appalling that we continue to build new coal-fired power stations in Western Australia.

"Considering the State and Federal governments have now acknowledged the climate crisis we are facing, building new coal-fired power stations should be put on hold until coal sequestration technology is proven."

Mrs Warden highlighted the destruction of up to 400ha of state forest as the second major concern with the electricity substation.

"In selecting the proposed area for the project, centred on the Hackett's Gully state forest, Western Power gave no consideration to the environmental or social impacts of the project," she said.

The meeting also discussed research into solar voltaic panels with the hope of securing a bulk discount for local homes, bulk purchase of water tanks, lobbying local councils on building regulations, waste reduction, footpaths and campaigning to reverse the Federal Government decision on means testing the solar electricity rebate.



Metal fabrication apprentice Sean Coffey is off to Germany and Austria to learn more about his trade after winning a national award. Picture: Matthew Poon

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