

**Submission
No 83**

INQUIRY INTO PROPOSAL TO DEVELOP ROSEHILL RACECOURSE

Name: Mr Laurence Bennett

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Submission to NSW Parliament Upper House Regarding the Rosehill Racecourse
TO the SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE PROPOSAL TO DEVELOP ROSEHILL RACECOURSE

Submission of Objection:

Dear Mr Farlow, and Committee Members,

I would like to make a submission regarding the important issue under your consideration, namely the potential redevelopment of the Rosehill Racecourse at Parramatta and other items under the terms of reference.

My name is **Mr Laurence Bennett**, my family and I have been long term residents in the nearby by area. I have been a former Councillor on the Parramatta City Council and an active contributor to various committees of the Council and other community groups.

I and my family have operated several businesses in the Parramatta area for over 70 years.

- This proposal completely ignores the community vision for Parramatta to be the Second City of the Sydney area. Parramatta has undergone continuous change since the establishment of Australia. If the area of Rosehill had not be established, it can be strongly argued that the would be No Sydney and NSW as we know it. It was the centre of the agricultural industry that provided sustenance for the early Colony, it confirmed that there was sufficient fresh water for the establishing Sydney and the surrounding areas. Many industries surrounding the Rosehill / Camelia area have allowed us to develop many important industries that have allowed Australia to develop into a Modern and prosperous economy during times of economic problems and war.
- The area of Parramatta and Western Sydney have constantly been taking more than its **fair share** of new residents to Sydney and NSW. It is forecast (without the addition of this suggested area) **to grow by over 60% in population soon**. Therefore, **it is NOT** required to accommodate additional residents to the area.
- The change in usage of this site would be an unnecessary and unwarranted change that would severely impact the Parramatta City's development into a **world class city**, what World class city does not have significant Entertainment and Sporting facilities of its own? It complements other key facilities for Western Sydney such as the Homebush and Olympic Sporting zone and the CommBank Stadium in Parramatta.
- The Rosehill racecourse provides **some unique capabilities** (other than being a racecourse) that are not duplicated in the Parramatta CBD area mainly being a large, modern entertainment, Dining and Convention facilities. This in itself supports many nearby businesses that supply accommodation and

transportation and ancillary resources. The racecourse also requires input from many support activities in conducting its sporting / entertainment roles such as Veterinary and animal husbandry services, catering and gambling support staff etc. The Welfare of the horses housed and raced at the Rosehill facilities has rarely been questioned in the public mind and it could be said that they are often better treated than their human carers.

The racecourse provides a relaxing vista that the many residents of Western Sydney and Parramatta enjoy, have you not been in the stand, and looked to the East? You will see the green expanse of the course and that of Sydney beyond. The **open space of the course should be retained for the communities use** and it would be hoped that access could be more accessible rather than be locked up by the Racing Organisation that controls the operation of the site.

- The people of Parramatta urgently **require more public open space and gardens** in which to have a break from a busy lifestyle, able to access sunlight and to have clear uninterrupted vista of the sky that the course provides today.
- The area surrounding the Rosehill racecourse is **generally well serviced** by numerous modes to transportation including road access via James Ruse Drive, Victoria Rd and the M4 expressway, the soon to be opened Parramatta Light Railway with very frequent services and River ferries nearby. As to the question of a Metro Station and its funding. Should be considered as extraneous to the matter being considered as there is a Metro Station under-construction very close by in Parramatta and close by to the light rail station. However there is one constraint being the over-bridge on Grande Avenue that services the majority of road users in the area and the cost of upgrading it.
- The Parramatta region including Homebush area has a long and distinguished history in thoroughbred horse and racing and agricultural shows and it is important that we keep this link to the past.

The quietly covered up and ignored concern about allowing high rise development over this racecourse perimeter would likely cause **disturbance of many significant and dangerous pollutants** that have been absorbed within and under the sites area. Many of the surrounding industries for over 100 years (when knowledge and standards were different) have been leaking and expelling many chemicals and materials that would increase the communities' concerns. An examination of the businesses and industries over this time will clearly highlight the items (chemicals etc) that have been manufactured. The cost of reclamation could be extremely high and would no doubt transfer the problem to another community to address, Who will pay for this clean-up and monitoring?

In its current state it would appear to be relatively **consolidated as a threat** to the local area.

The proponent of this submission would appear to be little more than another developer trying to do a land grab (by incorporating the STC into another body) and when in control trying to exploit the local community through getting an up-lift in zoning for the site that has been used basically for racing and entertainment purposes for well over 140 plus years.

If the proponent is so keen on resolving the housing shortage that they want to exploit, I can make a suggestion!

There is another Racecourse with even better services and nearby facilities at **Randwick that would make an IDEAL site** for a similar number of accommodation sites. For example, it is close to Universities, Shopping and Transport services, a nearby major airport. Closer to the Sydney CBD precinct and the wonderful beaches of eastern Sydney including Bondi etc.

In addition, it would alleviate the State Government of the Costs involved in a replacement for the Rosehill course (I believe that a business should pay its own way, they should not depend upon the taxpayer) there are more than enough critical services to be financed.

It would also alleviate the need of the residents of Western Sydney and Parramatta having to travel to the Randwick Track for a day out racing. One would have thought that if this is good enough for the people of the West to do it should be NO problem for the residents in the Eastern suburbs to experience the same.

Thankyou for your time in considering my submission on the Rosehill Racecourse.

Regards,

Mr Laurie Bennett