

**Submission
No 26**

INQUIRY INTO SYDENHAM-BANKSTOWN LINE CONVERSION

Organisation: Canterbury Racecourse Action Group

Date Received: 20 September 2019



The Canterbury Racecourse Action group formed in 2017 in response to media reports that the Australian Turf Club were considering subdividing and rezoning the land for high density residential. This decision was probably based on the huge potential land value increase which would have occurred had the proposed blanket Zoning upgrades under the proposed State Planning Sydenham to Bankstown Urban renewal Strategy which would see all areas within an 800m radius of a Metro station be automatically upZoned to Medium and within 400m to High Density had it gone ahead.

We suspect that Metro project funding still relies on the successful implementation land Zoning upgrades for high density housing along the Metro line and particularly near the proposed Metro stations. We note that Canterbury Racecourse falls within 200m of Canterbury train/Metro Station, so we believe the Metro project will put immense pressure on the area to accommodate even more High Density housing as a result. Ironically public open and recreation space will be in even greater demand and more necessary after a Metro implementation and when the new high density housing precincts along the corridor come into being.

We understand that the Metro construction phase could last up to 12 months resulting in full closure of the Bankstown train line during this time. We fear the impact on our commuting residents in general but will also result in many more cars used to bring people to Race meetings at the Canterbury Racecourse. Surrounding suburbs like Ashbury already suffer with residents parked out during race meetings especially when overflow parking is full to capacity as is the case already, this now happens most Race meetings so the closure of the line will greatly exacerbate this problem for local residents at Canterbury and Ashbury.

We also understand the cost of construction of the Sydenham to Bankstown Metro will be over \$8 Billion dollars. As local residents we know and use the existing rail line and believe it works well, albeit could accommodate more services than is the case currently. We question the justification to spend this extraordinary amount of money to replace what is already in place and working just fine when simply adding more services, at least for a trial period, will achieve much the same thing at negligible extra cost. As the Canterbury Racecourse Action Group, our primary quest is to work to help save the Canterbury racecourse open-space from future large scale ill-considered housing development. If the existing owners, the Australian Turf Club, choose to subdivide and sell the land after the no-sale moratorium is lifted in 2021 (STC and AJC Merger ACT 2010), this may be a real possibility as the club has already released plans to do this (ATC Annual Report 2017). Our biggest hurdle in this cause will simply be the value of the land itself if we were to make a case to the State Govt to purchase it from the Turf club in order to give back to the people of NSW if and when the Turf club no longer requires it. The \$8 Billion earmarked for the Metro replacement project is many times more than enough to do that and would provide much needed open green space and possible new sporting amenities for all the local residents and their children of the corridor, this we regard, is a much better use of those funds than replacing an existing and working commuter rail-line.