

**INQUIRY INTO PROPOSAL TO DEVELOP ROSEHILL
RACECOURSE**

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially
Confidential

We welcome this much needed inquiry into the unsolicited proposal to sell off Rosehill Racecourse, owned by the Australian Turf Club, i.e the members of the ATC.

There are so many questions to be asked, as to how this questionable proposal came about.

Firstly, does this unsolicited proposal meet the NSW Government's Unsolicited Proposal Guide for Submissions or Assessment?

Whose idea was it to redevelop Rosehill Racecourse and how impartial was the government in this proposal?

There seems to be a cloak around getting any real facts about this unsolicited proposal, but, it is our understanding, that due diligence for the sale of Rosehill Racecourse is being conducted by Racing NSW, rather than the owner of the racetrack, the Australian Turf Club. Is the committee aware of this?

If this is the case, should Racing NSW have spent tens of millions of dollars on due diligence for the privatisation of Rosehill Racecourse, which is currently a community owned asset, into private land?

Unsubstantiated rumours abound that some Board Members of the ATC are receiving kickbacks for this deal and that the Government was not impartial. We would urge the committee to compel everyone involved in the proposal to answer all questions about the sale of this premier racecourse. All Board Members and Executives of the ATC, Government Ministers and public servants, and Racing NSW need to be queried extensively. We need complete transparency on how this proposal came about, and who was involved and if there are any kickbacks.

Whilst we all understand that housing is a major issue, we must query this proposed sale. A few kilometres further north on James Ruse Drive, lies the old Rydalmere Hospital site and the old Macquarie Boys High site, at the top end of the Rydalmere site. The school was closed in 2010 and the land and buildings remain unused to this day. The buildings are completely vandalised and covered in graffiti and there have been squatters and buildings have been set on fire. There is no reason a developer could not purchase this land and build apartments. It would perhaps require a small, secondary road onto the site, so that not all the residents emptied out onto James Ruse Drive or Victoria Road, but, the land would be worth millions/billions of dollars and a goldmine for any developer. The adjoining old Rydalmere Hospital site on the northern side of Victoria Road, has been abandoned since 2018, with the buildings, simply left to the elements to rot. It already has roads built within the precinct and has two inroads – one from James Ruse Drive and one from Victoria Road, once again, a developer's goldmine. Can the committee look in to why the NSW Government has not sold these unused and abandoned sites for housing. There is no reasonable explanation for acquiring the Rosehill Racecourse site for housing, when these abandoned sites remain unused.

Is the fire sale of Rosehill Racecourse simply to get the Australian Turf Club out of debt? Is the government, Racing NSW and the ATC dressing the sale up as a great answer to the housing crisis, despite the fact that they have unused land, just up the road that they could sell?

Rosehill is currently serviced by James Ruse Drive and other secondary roads. It is easy for people to get to and easy to park there. The proposed site of a new racecourse being built at the Brickpit within Bicentennial Park is ridiculous. It is an urban nature park that serves as water storage and frog habitat, and home to the endangered Green and Gold Bell frog. It is entirely unsuitable for a racecourse.

To build a new premier racecourse anywhere in Sydney would cost billions and possibly the bulk of the \$5 billion that the sale of Rosehill Racecourse would fetch. It makes no sense to sell a community asset, which is still used extensively. It has been a racecourse for 139 years, since 1885, with the first race meeting in April 1885, which, should give it some historic value in Sydney's history. To take a wonderful community asset, like Rosehill Racecourse from the western suburbs, just shows the contempt the government has for this area and the racing industry.

3rd July, 2024