

**Submission  
No 47**

## **INQUIRY INTO PROPOSAL TO DEVELOP ROSEHILL RACECOURSE**

**Name:** Mr Paul Lamphee

**Date Received:** 17 July 2024

---

Chair  
Rosehill Racecourse Committee  
Legislative Council  
New South Wales

16 July 2024

Dear Mr Farlow,

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the Terms of Reference for your Inquiry into the proposal to develop Rosehill Racecourse. I write to you as a concerned Australian Turf Club (ATC) member, racehorse part-owner, punter, racing enthusiast and former ATC employee (senior finance role which I held for six years between 2012-2018).

I'd like to make comment on four of the Terms of Reference:

**b) the involvement of the Government prior to the unsolicited proposal being made**

The ATC is a membership-based Club. I value the entitlement to a vote on matters impacting ATC members. I was concerned when the sale of Rosehill Racecourse was first announced in the media, as the Premier of NSW and Chairman of ATC appeared to present a case that this was a done deal. It was only after negative publicity and views of key industry figures were aired, that both publicly stated that it would ultimately be up to ATC members to decide the fate of Rosehill Racecourse. So why then has Racing NSW (regulatory body) taken over the due diligence for the sale of Rosehill? Give the ATC members a chance to vote I say. I am contemplating handing my ATC membership in should the sale of Rosehill Racecourse proceed such is my stance on this issue.

**c) the role of the proposal in meeting housing targets**

The sale proposal smacks of being a 'quick win' for the NSW State Government given their highly ambitious housing targets. To make sufficient inroads on its 5-year / 375k target, it seems to me the Government were in need of a large deposit of land that could be developed into significant quantities of new homes – and one that would bring significant media coverage to advise of their plight and to appease any voters who would otherwise be critical of not meeting such lofty targets.

**f) impacts on the racing industry in New South Wales**

I have fond childhood memories of attending Rosehill Racecourse with my family which sparked a lifelong passion for the thoroughbred racing industry. The 1996 Rosehill Guineas won by Octagonal and 2000 Golden Slipper won by Belle du Jour were highlights for me. Not to mention

the exploits of Australia's best-ever racehorse, Winx in more recent times scoring a handful of Group 1 wins at Rosehill and she was trained at the track. Rosehill Racecourse should be heritage-protected for this reason alone, and not sold off to developers to build high-rise apartment buildings. It's easy to say we can build a new racecourse with the proceeds from the sale of Rosehill Racecourse. But it takes years and generations to build up the reputation, grandeur and memories of a racecourse. Sydney metropolitan racing without Rosehill Gardens will in my opinion lead to a more expeditious decline in the thoroughbred racing industry (the industry is already in decline with falling gambling revenue and low regular crowds). Canterbury and Warwick Farm Racecourses are nowhere near in the same class as Rosehill and are certainly not up to sustaining Saturday metropolitan and carnival racing – the lifeblood of the industry.

I have part owned racehorses with Australia's leading trainer Chris Waller for over a decade, predominantly trained out of his Rosehill Racecourse training base. There is no better racing ownership experience than being up close to the action at Rosehill. I am concerned about investing further in shares in racehorses given the uncertainty that now clouds the future of Rosehill. I also fear that both Chris and many of his loyal staff may be lost to the NSW racing industry should plans proceed with developing a training centre at Horsley Park, where I assume the stables will be relocated to if Rosehill is sold.

#### **h) any other related matters**

It was concerning to me to learn that the Racing NSW then-Chair and CEO met with Cabinet office officials in November 2023 to confirm their support for the sale of Rosehill Racecourse and to lobby for sale proceeds to be directed from ATC control. So effectively, an ATC core asset to be disposed of with funds given to the regulatory body and not the ATC to future-proof their existence for the benefits of members in years to come. The ATC has for a long while been cash-strapped so one must question the funding framework and ongoing relationship with Racing NSW. A number of other racing clubs within NSW are experiencing similar financial difficulties however Racing NSW's Balance Sheet continues to grow exponentially (see [RNSW-Annual-Report\\_2023-FINAL.pdf \(racingnsw.com.au\)](#)). The rhetoric of ATC being in desperate need of stimulus yet to host the world's richest race on turf (in terms of prizemoney) in The Everest at Randwick each year seems a little more than ironic to me.

To that end, I would like to see the following outcomes:

- ATC members to be given the opportunity to vote on any proposal to sell Rosehill Racecourse; and
- Further investigation to be conducted into Racing NSW's role as regulator of the NSW thoroughbred racing industry.

Thank you again for allowing me the opportunity to contribute.

Paul Lamphee