

**Submission
No 60**

INQUIRY INTO PROPOSAL TO DEVELOP ROSEHILL RACECOURSE

Name: Mr Christopher Waller

Date Received: 18 July 2024

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

My name is Chris Waller, and I am writing in favour of the retention of Rosehill racecourse.

I was born in New Zealand, raised on a dairy farm, and moved to Australia in 2000 with no money, but I was given the opportunity to train at Rosehill by the then privately owned Sydney Turf Club.

I am still training there today and have been fortunate to establish Sydney's leading stable. I now employ approximately 100 people, the majority of whom do not have any tertiary education, but they all love working with animals, and they enjoy the satisfaction of what this brings to their life.

I also appreciate the huge challenge of young people needing to buy their own homes and the challenges this provides to the NSW Government.

My wife Stephanie and I have faced this challenge and that is the reason we moved to Sydney's west. We were excited when we bought our first home, an apartment in North Parramatta in 2010.

I do not think giving up the Rosehill racecourse for housing is the right way to go when you consider the great loss this would be to the entertainment and life of so many who live in Western Sydney.

Once Rosehill is gone Western Sydney has lost one of its greatest community attractions. To suggest it can be replaced or another satisfactory sight can be found to build a racetrack is fanciful.

Although I am totally in favour of the retention of Rosehill, I am open to suggestions of alternative proposals such as the selling off of part of the Rosehill precinct for housing, areas such as not regularly used car parks, and also for Rosehill to be used by the community during non-racing and training hours.

There are several parts of Rosehill that could be transformed into public parkland and sporting fields to be utilised for many hours of almost every day.

A study of Sha Tin racetrack in Hong Kong, Flemington in Melbourne or Doomben in Brisbane would show how high-rise apartment blocks can exist on previously racing owned land. A rebuilt Caulfield racetrack in Melbourne is going to have parkland in the centre of the track open for community use.

Horse racing has to move with the times, but it has to be remembered what the horse and horse racing has done for the communities of Australia and New Zealand since it was first introduced at Hyde Park in Sydney in the mid 19th century.

It has provided so much entertainment to so many and indeed the history of horse racing flows so freely through the history of Australia.

Horse racing, besides being a great part of so many people's lives, has had to move with the times and it has.

Racing stables have a great responsibility to care for the thoroughbred horses in the best possible way.

I am grateful the RSPCA has taken up the offer of stable visits to see how well these horses are looked after and cared for. I welcome these visits.

Through good administration and government leadership strict rules are in place for those that mistreat horses and I feel that is a large part of the reason why racing in Sydney continues and continues to be accepted by so many people.

If racing closes at Rosehill the enjoyment of racing will be lost to the people of the greater part of the Sydney metropolitan area as it is not practical for these people to have to travel to the Eastern suburbs to get their enjoyment and entertainment.

Racing lovers are just as vital a part of the community as football fans or patrons of the Arts.

To repeat, I am fully aware of the housing shortage, but to have homes but limited entertainment for those that live in these homes seems to me to defeat the idea of a good community.

Despite being born in New Zealand, I am now a proud New South Welshman and a resident of Western Sydney.

I respect all parties that have a presence in this hearing, and I hope we can find the right balance in having a major racetrack in the West, affordable housing and responsible green areas for all to enjoy.

In closing I acknowledge the indigenous community and their elders as the original owners of this land.

Chris Waller.