

## **Public forum speech – Parramatta Council Meeting – 11 March 2024 – re retention of Rosehill Gardens**

I am a member of the ATC, I live in Lidcombe, which is in the neighbouring LGA.

The former STC, prior to the amalgamation, intended to have an entertainment precinct in the Rosehill area. It was a way of uplifting the area, and wider community interests within the site. The amalgamation, resulted in redirected interests, with a strong focus on the Randwick site and considerably less on the Rosehill site.

The Rosehill Gardens (racecourse), in its current form, is critical for western Sydney. It is a major site. Obviously, horse racing and the training industry is the major part, but it is far wider than that.

There is nowhere else in Western Sydney that can accommodate large events – the camping and caravan show, the pool and spa expo as examples. Even the local government conference held in November last year. The site comfortably accommodates such events and it is such a beautiful, relaxing and spacious open environment for such events.

Turning this site into housing development is dumping again on western Sydney, which is dumped upon time, and time, and time again. Decisions such as this is just looking after the 'eastern' side of Sydney – for their ease of access to Randwick and financial comfort. Rosehill is the ATC's major asset – Randwick is crown land, it is not owned by the ATC.

Just selling off this site is ignorant of the members and attendees from this area and the wider western Sydney surrounds. The passion for Rosehill is unwavering.

As an aside, any alleged 'consideration' that retention of the racecourse supports gambling is a nonsense, as there is less 'bookies' than before, and online gambling is easily available.

The history of Rosehill racecourse adds enormously to the amenity of the area. Many people – attendees and members have referenced long personal attachment, or historic knowledge of the site, and have expressed great concern to me regarding the potential loss of this racecourse.

Parramatta has vibrancy, and the proximity of Rosehill to Parramatta is important (it is far closer than Randwick to Sydney). The Gardens add to the economy and significance of Parramatta – with socialisation for people and plenty of accommodation for racing, or non-racing events.

If it is sold out, it's just looking after those from the 'Eastern Suburbs', and it's just a cash grab.

Councillors need to support the notice of motion - *Unsolicited Proposal by the Australian Turf Club - Proposed Sale and Redevelopment of Rosehill Racecourse.*

Western Sydney people deserve better. Retention of Rosehill Racecourse is imperative and the Camillia / Rosehill Strategy needs to be pursued. Anyone who doesn't support this notice of motion is taking away from the amenity of the area, and dumping on the mainstream residents within Parramatta and the wider western Sydney area.

Don't forget that song – 'you don't know what you've got, till it's gone'.