

Director Urban Renewal
Department of Planning & Environment
GPO Box 39
Sydney NSW 2001

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Submission in relation to the future use of the Castle Hill Showground and the Showground Station Precinct.

The Showground has been a community facility since the late 1800's, with an annual Agriculture Show, being held for the local farming communities to display their produce. This activity continues today the locals as well as several of the local schools competing with their produce perpetuating this long term tradition.

The grounds have been used by many equine pursuits over the years and these activities continue today with over 200 horses competing at the recent horse section of the Annual Show.

In recent years Harness Racing has returned to the Castle Hill Show since Harness Racing NSW changed their policy, to allow and encourage Show Harness Racing at all Local Shows that have the facilities.

With the loss of many of the Equine facilities in Metro Sydney, Castle Hill Showground is now ideally situated for the area to be developed to include equine facilities for permanent housing and training in all disciplines of horse activities. Facilities could be developed on a small-scale similar to Centennial Park, providing a riding track around the perimeter of the grounds. This would provide for many of the local Children to have facilities at their back door to be involved in horse activities which could lead to Olympic representation.

The Hills area has always been a strong horse area and as more housing developments take place the demand for the use of the Showground will increase. In the semi-rural areas surrounding the residential areas of Castle Hill there would be several thousand horses, stabled and kept in small paddocks.

The Show ring could be enlarged and upgraded with improvements to the track and the grass surface with improved drainage.

The buildings on the grounds are steep in history and several have been constructed by local community volunteer's with these people giving of their services free of charge. This has been the basis of most activities on the Showground, which needs to be encouraged and fostered.

The Showground is used by a wide variety of the community members on a daily basis including:

1. Local residents using the area for personal exercise with walking and running around the roads within the Showground.
2. Parents allow there small children to learn to ride pushbikes.
3. Local residence walking their dogs in the area.
4. An Amateur Theatre Group uses the theatre on a weekly bases.
5. Several dog training group use the grounds most nights in the week.
6. There is a weekend Farmers Market which allows local produce to be sold to locals.
7. The Centre ring is used by Circuses, and many local sporting bodies for participants training.

Planning for the future use of the Showground should not be left in the hands of the Department of Planning or even Councils Planning Department, these people do not reflect the true opinion of the residents and rate payers of the Hills Shire when it comes to planning of the Showground.

It is strongly recommended that a Committee be formed of local people who have the enthusiasm and drive to develop the Showground into a real community asset with consideration of its past and the needs for its future.

Peter Boyce