



Horsemen's Pony Club

PO Box 3550, Midland WA 6056
Whiteman Equestrian Centre, Gnangara Road, Whiteman Park
www.horsemens.org.au

The Hon John Day
Minister for Planning; Culture and the Arts
Address: 13th Floor, Dumas House, 2 Havelock Street,
WEST PERTH WA 6005
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e-Mail: Minister.Day@dpc.wa.gov.au
cc. Frank Alban MLA, Charlie Zannino (City of Swan)
Dianne Bennet – Horse Council WA, Murray Britza - PCAWA
Joanne Bastian – EFA WA

24 / 3 / 2009

Re: Horsemen's Pony Club Lease via Whiteman Park.

Mr Day,

I thank you for the time you have previously considered the position of Horsemen's Pony Club (HPC) in discussions with Frank Alban and others over the recent months.

It now appears that we have exhausted our avenues of correspondence with the Whiteman Park Board (WPB) as they have resolved to uphold the decision to not extend our lease beyond 2012 due to a perceived clash with the Planning Policy 2.2 ; in particular;

- Referring to “the Landowners will be encouraged by the DoE to progressively adopt best management practices to minimise contamination of groundwater and environment.”, taking precedence over “This policy does not interfere with the right of existing land uses to be continued at their existing approved levels of activity” (PP2.2 – 7 Existing uses)
- WPB advise “The board has the delegated authority not to extend leases if it feels the lease will contravene any environmental recommendations with regard to the protection of P1”

In particular the board refer to Appendix 1 “Land Use Table” (Animal establishments) equestrian centres being incompatible with P1, however the general intent of the table refers to establishments of a permanent nature. Where HPC except and agree that this could have potential detrimental impact on a long term permanent basis, we believe the WPB have not taken into account the following.

- The club is utilised for 3 – 8 hours, 1-3 times a month.
- HPC already operate a policy that includes removal of manure from stables.
- Waste / refuse is contracted for removal via dedicated skip each month or as required.
- No environmental impact study has been conducted to show any harm or risk whatsoever is caused by our activities. We welcome such a report being conducted as it will no doubt vindicate our position environmentally.
- It is a known fact by the equestrian world that horses rarely urinate when visiting a venue, preferring to wait until safely back in the home environment.

The policy 2.2 clearly states in 2. Introduction and background Paragraph 2

“The main purpose of the policy is to prevent, control, or manage, **development and land use changes** in the policy area that are likely to cause detrimental effects to the ground water resource” where HPC are not looking to develop or expand.

As the Minister for Planning I ask that you consider the above in light of the following impacts this decision will have for the negligible gains that are yet to be proven.

BACKGROUND

Horsemen’s Pony Club is the oldest established pony club in Western Australia and has enjoyed the location of the Northern Boundary of Whitemen Park, adjacent to Gnangara Road since 1984, as part of the understandings between the State Government and the Whiteman Family at the time of purchase. Upon formation of the Whiteman Park Board (WPB), park users were put into an official lease arrangement . HPC has for many years participated fully in all financial and custodian terms with our ongoing lease.

ACTIVITIES

- | | | |
|------------------------------------------|-----------|----------------|
| ▪ Monthly rallies 2 nd Sunday | – qty 10 | 50-80 riders |
| ▪ Club events | - qty 5-6 | 40 – 80 riders |
| ▪ Training and group sessions | - qty 5-6 | 5 – 20 riders |

PONY CLUB MOVEMENT

The Pony Club Movement instils an ethos of animal care, team work, sport and recreation, education and training. It provides a structured environment where riders can not only develop their riding skills to the benefit of the ongoing equestrian industry, but prepare themselves with a set of life skills that should be encouraged and are very hard to come by in today’s society.

HPC

Our riders are well regarded within the sport and regularly compete at local, state, interstate and international competitions.

Our club is also a major contributor to the sport, providing a number of events each year to which the greater equestrian population have access to, and is known to provide some of the best facilities in the metropolitan region. Loosing the club would impact a great many people.

COSTS

We have estimated that it would cost in excess of **\$700, 000 - \$850,000** to relocate the club, including; Club house (160m2 building), arena fencing (1200m), stable block (40 stables – covered), sheds (qty 3 total 70m2), dig up and relocate river sand (13200m3), top dress new sand (4000m3), build new cross country course (24 solid obstacles and track), civil works (roads car park).

These facilities have been built up over 24 years. To ask the current members to replace it in 3 years would be impossible. As such, State and Local Government grants would be required if the club is to survive.

SUMMARY

The decision of WPB not to renew our lease does not take into account;

- The policy is set to control changes to the areas – we are not asking to change.
- The policy sets out the rights of existing usage – ours have been ignored.
- A pony club cannot be deemed an “equestrian centre” as it is not permanent.
- Cost of relocation is prohibitive.
- Best Practice is not being adopted in the decision process.

CONCLUSION

- The environmental impact the club has on the P1 is minimal or negligible and have not been able to establish any harm or risk caused by our activities.
- We believe that the WPB has not taken into full consideration the “**main purpose**” of Planning Policy 2.2 and the decision to cancel our lease is not justified under it.
- The WPB are negligent in their use of the term “best practice” as no correspondence in terms of assessment or harm mitigation has been entered into.

REQUEST

The WPB decision be reviewed by the Planning Minister and that a determination be made;

- To show exemption on the grounds of existing usage.
- A clarification between permanent “equestrian centre” and occasional use “pony club”.
- Assessment of activities and harm mitigation plan adoption being introduced as “best practice”, rather than the arbitrary eviction that is currently proposed by the board.

If there are any further details you require, please do not hesitate to contact me, and thank you again for your interest and assistance in this matter.

Tim Wright – President

Tim Wright

Horsemen’s Pony Club.

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