12 February 2011

$170 MILLION UPGRADE APPROVED FOR ROYAL RANDWICK

Royal Randwick Racecourse will undergo almost $170 million worth of upgrades following planning approval for extensive new spectator and stabling facilities.

Minister for Planning, Tony Kelly, said the projects put forward by the Australian Jockey Club (AJC) would transform Royal Randwick into a state-of-the-art world class racecourse.

"Once complete, the racecourse will boast new and significantly improved grandstand facilities, an additional parade ring, a new conference facility and six new stable buildings," the Minister said.

"On top of that, up to 900 jobs are expected to be created throughout construction and operation of the facility.

"Royal Randwick is an iconic landmark, not just for racegoers and industry professionals, but for Sydney as a whole.

"These upgrades will ensure it continues to play an important, and expanded, role in the city’s cultural landscape, with new facilities vastly improving the comfort and enjoyment of spectators."

The $131 million refurbishment of the spectator precinct includes:
- Substantial alterations and additions to the existing Queen Elizabeth (QE) II and demolition of the existing Paddock Stand and construction of a new stand to increase grandstand capacity;
- Construction of a new ‘link building’ structure between the QEII and Paddock stands;
- Demolition of the Randwick Pavilion, the Tea House building and the escalator structures to the rear of the grandstands to make way for a parade ring with associated amphitheatre-style seating;
- Construction of a three-storey building adjacent to the parade ring, known as the Owners and Trainers Pavilion; and
- The historic Swab Building to be restored and used as a racing museum, members sign-up area, conference facility for a maximum of 100 people, and a café.

The new $37 million stables precinct will include:
- Six two-storey stable buildings each with capacity for 100 horses and accommodation for 10 strappers/stable hands;
- 12 two-storey mechanical horse walkers;
- Tie-up stalls for 50 visiting horses;
- Enclosures for up to 25 ponies;
- Exercise facilities including a ‘Bull Ring’, ‘Parade Rings’ and ‘Exercise Equipment’;
- Parking for 110 vehicles (assessment concluded existing transport strategies for the area could accommodate the racecourse’s increased capacity); and
- Associated infrastructure, including relocation of the access road.

Assessment of the proposals was delegated to Randwick City Council by the Department of Planning and the projects were then determined by the independent Planning Assessment Commission (PAC).