

Logan greyhound track put 'on hold', but blocked off Cronulla Park leaves residents confused

The World Today By Nance Haxton

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The ramifications from the New South Wales decision to ban greyhound racing are being felt interstate, where the development of a new greyhound track at Logan in south-east Queensland has been put on hold.

The Queensland Government had previously refused to rule out building the facility, despite opposition from local residents.

Racing Queensland issued a statement stating that "The Cronulla Park project is currently on hold. Future infrastructure projects will be considered as part of the usual project approval process."

But the park remains fenced off and development signs are still clearly visible, leaving local residents confused as to what could happen to the land.

It was the previous Liberal National Party state government that approved the multimillion dollar transformation of Cronulla Park into a state-of-the-art greyhound track, saying it would revitalise the racing industry.

But more than 10,000 concerned Logan residents have signed petitions since, to bring that development to a halt.

Queensland's Labor Government put all racing infrastructure projects under review and instigated a Commission of Inquiry in the wake of the Four Corners expose of the live-baiting scandal that rocked the industry.

Queensland Racing Minister Grace Grace was not available for interview but in a statement said the state Government had no plans to fund the development of any standalone greyhound tracks in the state.

Racing Queensland's new CEO Dr Elliot Forbes will have the final say on whether a greyhound track could still potentially be built as planned at Cronulla Park.

But he does not start in the position until August 22.

Community wants to use park differently: mayor

Logan Mayor Luke Smith said it was time the people of Logan were heard.

"At the moment it's sitting idle. We're yet to get a firm or definitive response from the state government on what they're doing in regards to any greyhound track," he said.

"We know it's on hold but we're yet to receive that actual letter that says it's not progressing."



PHOTO: But more than 10,000 concerned Logan residents have signed petitions to bring the development to a halt. (ABC News: Richard Baines)

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Key points:

- Previous LNP state government approved the multimillion dollar transformation of Cronulla Park
- Despite being put on hold, Cronulla Park remains fenced off to the public
- Labor Government put all racing infrastructure projects under review and instigated a Commission of Inquiry



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But Cr Smith said they would wait to see what the new minister would do.

"The overwhelming voice of the city was telling us they did not want a greyhound track at that spot or in Logan at all," he said.

"The focus of this council is that we did not want a greyhound track there.

"We did not want it in our city. It is not a sport that we identify as something we'd like to encourage and nor did we want to be lift the perception that greyhound tracks offer areas that they bring in.

"So we would love a multi-sports complex there, we would love something that we can offer our teenagers, our families, something to get people out, get training.

"There's a lot of opportunities we can utilise that field for and that's what we'd prefer."

Fencing seen as "physical statement" of Government

Janet Scott was one of the Logan residents who signed the petition and said she would like to hear a "proper final statement as to exactly what's going on."

Ms Scott said she was shocked to see that Cronulla Park had been blocked off to the public.

"Particularly noticing the fencing. We used to be able to go in there and have a look around and now it's all totally blocked off with very tall wire fencing," she said.

Ms Scott said despite the statement from Racing Queensland saying they would not proceed, blocking off the park to the public "was kind of a physical statement of what the government and what Racing Queensland are doing".

"There's no comment, we're blocked off. We can't get access to information," she said.

"The track, it's just sitting there and it's just wasted — the community could be benefitting every week from this."

Topics: community-and-society, sport, animals, animal-welfare, logan-city-dc-4114