

TRAINER IN STOUSH OVER DOGS



Kennel operator Anthony Bullock

Neighbour claims 'desperate howling', faeces problem

Amber Wilson

One of Tasmania's best-known greyhound trainers has again found himself the centre of controversy, this time for keeping nearly 100 dogs at his Exeter kennel under a 16 dog permit and allegedly slaughtering horses on-site to feed them.

A legal battle waged against Anthony Bullock by Independent MP Kristie Johnston and one of the trainer's rural neighbors has now drawn to a close -- with the trainer awarded a new, expanded permit, albeit with a number of strict conditions.

According to a newly-published Tasmanian Civil and Administrative Tribunal decision, Mr. Bullock was first issued a permit in 1995 to develop his 3.616ha West Tamar Highway property for a maximum of 16 dogs.

But since that time, the use had "intensified" with the number of greyhounds reaching 96, despite Mr Bullock not having a permit for that many dogs.

In October last year, the West Tamar Council granted the trainer "retrospective planning

approval" for his increase in dogs along with the additional development he'd undertaken.

But Ms Johnson and one of Mr Bullock's neighbors, **Exeter resident Ann Montague, appealed against the permit grant**, arguing the number of dogs was "excessive".

The pair argued the kennels were too small and not appropriately designed to minimise barking, and that there was a history of excessive barking at the site, in part caused by "poor animal welfare practices".

They said the permit didn't adequately cover odour concerns, claiming Mr Bullock's management of faeces and urine was not adequate, noting a proposal that kennels without a septic system be swept out manually.

They argued his composting facility was insufficient for dealing with the faeces of so many dogs, and also said Mr Bullock had a history of non-compliance with rules and regulations.

Ms Montague also argued her amenity would be impacted by distress "at seeing

animal cruelty", and said she was very upset about horses being slaughtered on the site for dog food.

She complained of "desperate howling and whining and anxious-sounding barking", and that when the dogs returned from races at night, "they can howl for up to half an hour".

The tribunal upheld the decision to grant a permit, but imposed a number of extra conditions, including the preparation of an odour assessment report and the completion of noise-mitigation works.

The trainer must keep no more than 96 dogs, excluding his personal dogs, cannot slaughter animals for the primary purpose of food production at his property, and must abide by waste management rules.

In April last year, Mr Bullock was cleared of animal cruelty allegations, after his 18-month-old race dog Tah Bernard died following a club trial at Mowbray.