

Purcell on racing industry: Hansard

Description

Hansard:

15 September 2016

COUNCIL

Adjournment

JAMES PURCELL

Mr PURCELL (Western Victoria) — The adjournment matter I raise tonight is for the Minister for Racing, Mr Pakula. As members know, I am a dedicated supporter of horseracing and not shy of showing my support in this chamber. I have continually raised the importance of the racing industry to Victoria and particularly to my part of Victoria, western Victoria, in the Warrnambool area. I will continue to use my position in this place to support the racing industry, including getting the dunes at Levy's Point reopened for training. It has been used for the training of many racehorses, including last year's Melbourne Cup winner, Prince of Penzance. I will work to get these reopened; they were closed this week. But I cannot support the most stupid idea of using the East Beach in Port Fairy as a training track.

If the proposal to build a horse truck park at the foot of the dunes near the Port Fairy golf course came to fruition, we would see the visitors and local residents of Port Fairy excluded from using this section of the beach, as up to 120 horses per day would be using East Beach. My community and the tourism industry are too important to allow this to happen to Port Fairy East Beach, which is one of the loveliest beaches in this country.

With the promise to have the Killarney Beach closed during Christmas — it is halfway between Warrnambool and Port Fairy — and with the Warrnambool beach also closed during that summer period we could see over 200 horses per day on East Beach, with many members of the public not happy to share the space with galloping horses. What happens to the people fishing or taking their dogs for a walk?

For too long the Warrnambool Racing Club has been too easy a ride, with so many of the horses being trained off the racecourse. To solve this problem and keep the industry alive the Warrnambool racetrack must provide the facilities, including a usable synthetic training track and an uphill gallop. If the Warrnambool Racing Club had provided the necessary training facilities in the beginning, we would not be facing these problems.

I therefore urge the minister to intervene in this issue and work with the Warrnambool Racing Club to fund the upgrading of the synthetic training track and to provide an uphill gallop at the Warrnambool racecourse.

Ends

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