Police sign deal to move horses to Concord

Sydney Local Health District is pleased to announce NSW Police horses will be agisted within the historic Yaralla Estate after both parties signed an agreement last night.

The lease, to start following completion of remediation work to the site, will give the NSW Police Force Mounted Police Unit access to 13 hectares of land and some small outbuildings, situated off Nullawarra Avenue in Concord West.

Sydney Local Health District’s Chief Executive, Dr Teresa Anderson, said the District was committed to ensuring land on the Yaralla Estate, also known at the Dame Eadith Walker and Thomas Walker Estates, continued to be used for horse agistment purposes, in keeping with The Walker Trust Act of 1938.

There will be no development on the site and public access to the site will not change.

“I want to assure the public that they will still be able to access the estate to walk their dogs or visit the horses – no appointment necessary,” Dr Anderson said.

“The Yaralla Estate is one of Sydney’s most beautiful open spaces – and it will remain that way.”

The decision to cancel the previous tenant’s lease was taken after Sydney Local Health District received complaints regarding the care of horses on the estate, including complaints that two horses were found on the helipad at Concord Hospital and another in a resident’s backyard, posing a serious risk.

An independent audit of the site found the land and fencing to be in such a poor condition that the safety of the public, and horses agisted on the site, was at risk. Requests by the District to remedy these breaches were not addressed.

It is part of the lease agreement that the site be maintained to an acceptable standard to ensure the horses and land are cared for appropriately.

Rectification works on the land are expected to take three months and it would not be possible to complete this work safely with horses on site.

This work will include a bush regeneration area for the badly eroded western section, maintenance and pasture improvement to ensure sustainable future use of the agistment paddocks, as well as a program of weed eradication, including the removal of fireweed, and replacement of the existing post and rail fencing, which in many areas, is not suitable to contain horses.

Dr Anderson said the community would benefit from having the NSW Mounted Police Unit on site regularly.
“The NSW unit is the oldest continuous operational mounted unit in the world, and its officers are recognised experts in the field of horse care. They will provide much needed professional oversight of the paddocks,” she said.

“The Mounted Police Unit has also indicated it will hold open days where families will be able to learn more about their prestigious work, and I encourage all local residents to go along and meet their new neighbours.

“Please be assured that Yaralla Estate will remain open to be enjoyed as a public space of great state heritage significance, and you will continue to be free to visit horses agisted within its boundaries,” Dr Anderson said.

For more information please call Kate Benson
Sydney Local Health District Media Unit, 9515 9607.