

SE News
HD **Push to restore old attraction gathers steam**

BY Terry Collins
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Three years ago social activist Jake Cassar determined to launch a campaign to see Old Sydney Town at Somersby restored.

At the time, many said it was a futile plan, but the Bring Back Old Sydney Town Facebook **group** started by Mr Cassar has now attracted more than 9500 signatures to its petition.

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Once it has collected 10,000 signatures, the **group** will approach Gosford state Liberal MP Chris Holstein to table it in parliament.

"Our hope there is that the Government will take a serious look at buying or leasing the **property** from its owner and looking at restoration possibilities," Mr Cassar said. "We are collecting feasibility studies and business plans.

"If I didn't think it could really happen, I would not be working so hard for it. We have already had countless offers from local tradesmen – electricians and builders – volunteering not only their time but also materials to restore some of the buildings." Mr Cassar said the **group** had some ideas for the exterior of the **park** as a starting point towards sustainability.

These include a grey nomad caravan **park**, perhaps a camping ground and a drive-in movie theatre to show old Australian films.

Mr Cassar said a partnership with the owners of the **Chinese** theme **park** mooted for Warnervale could work well.

THE HISTORY 1969: Architect Frank Fox buys the land January 1975: Old Sydney Town is officially opened on Australia Day by Gough Whitlam December 1975: Funding pledged by the Labor federal government is withdrawn by new Liberal government 1979: Fox family sells the land to the state government 1983: Government sells lease to Warwick Amusements 2003: Old Sydney Town is closed due to non-viability

THE BACKGROUND The OST **site** is owned by overseas businessman Richard Chiu, who has given Michael and Peter Fox the job of looking into the viability of reopening it.

The Fox brothers are the sons of Frank Fox, who founded the well known Somersby tourist attraction.

It is unknown if Mr Chiu would be receptive to an offer to **buy** or lease the **site**. The Express Advocate was unable to contact the Fox brothers for comment.

Do you have happy memories of Old Sydney Town? Share them with us at expressadvocate.com.au

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