

4. FOWLER STEAM ENGINE

(File No. 07.028)

Introduction

The purpose of this report is to advise Council of the offer received for the restoration of the Fowler Steam Engine and obtain approval from Council for the allocation of funds towards the project.

Background

"Timbrebongie (now Narromine) Shire Council's B6 Fowler Road Locomotive is quite a rare artefact from the period 1925 to the present, and the parts of the Clyde Traction Wagon are also rare dating from c1907."

"The B6 Fowler Road Locomotive 16163 was specifically ordered from Fowlers in the UK in 1925 and delivered the same year via Austral Engineering, Sydney. It was used in association with six of the Clyde Traction Wagons by Council for land clearing, road construction and heavy haulage. In 1934 it was sold to Mr Hamblin from Tottenham who used it as a farm power source. In the 1950's it was dormant and Mr Hamblin donated it back to the Shire in 1974 on condition it was not sold. It languished in the Shire depot until 1984 when it was placed under cover and on display at Mr Stickland's Kulai Caravan Park. In 1997 it was towed to the airport hangar where it remains today." (extract from the *Conservation Management Plan for the Fowler B6 Steam Road Locomotive and Clyde Traction Wagon* p7).

In 2008, Council applied for Heritage funding for a Conservation Management Plan to determine its significance and rarity as well as recommended options for restoring the engine and its future potential uses. The Conservation Management Plan states in part -

"A detailed investigation of the fabric of the engine, and the wagon parts, indicate that these items possess a very high degree of integrity and provenance to the shire. The Fowler B6 road locomotive is almost complete, and it is accompanied with a number of parts that were replaced as part of its on-going maintenance when in-service. Not only is the engine almost complete, an initial inspection by a qualified boiler inspector has indicated that the boiler is potentially able to be repaired to a point where it could be certified for operation. It is also true that this engine is very rare. Of nearly 1000 steam portable or road engines existing in Australia at this time only this one and one other made by Fowler meet almost identical specifications" (Burke & Norris, p15-17).

"Assessing the fabric against the NSW Heritage Office criteria for cultural significance indicates that the engine meets all criteria, except "...demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of places or environments." In fact, the authors believe that the engine possesses a very high grading of significance on most of the criterion. It is strongly recommended that the Council list the Engine on their local LEP and make a submission to the Heritage Council for listing on the State Heritage Register".

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"The remains of the Traction Wagon are determined to have a low-moderate grading of heritage significance, however, they should at least be properly preserved."

The Scope of works, a document accompanying the Conservation Management Plan gave options for full restoration, part restoration or mothballing it. The matter was reported to Council on three occasions and Council resolved as follows –

15 April 2008

"RESOLVED Crs Lambert/Wilson that Council adopt the Conservation Management Plan for the Fowler B6 Steam Road Locomotive and Clyde Traction Wagon and place the document on public exhibition for 28 days." 2008/146 (See copy of Report and Minutes attached). **Attachment No. 2.**

The report noted an estimate to proceed with principal recommendation 1 was between \$50,000 and \$80,000 and the long term asset value of the engine is expected to be \$500,000 or more if the restorative work is carried out. (Note this was estimated in 2008).

21 October 2008

"RESOLVED Crs Lambert/Collins that Council:

1. Adopt the amended Conservation Management Plan and Scope of Works for the Fowler B6 Steam Road Locomotive and Traction Wagon, and
2. Enquire as to the cost for a qualified boiler inspector to inspect the engine and clarify the potential for the requirements in recommendation 1 of the report to be carried out; that is, for a boiler inspector to inspect the boiler and advise Council whether it could be repaired" 2008/430 (See copy of Report and Minutes attached). **Attachment No. 3.**

NOTE: Recommendation 1 stated –

"That the engine be restored/reconstructed to a state commensurate with the first few years of working life. That is, restored to working order, with some parts reconstructed to operating condition, with particular care taken to the retention of as much original fabric as possible and most of the existing paint and lining out. That is, to present the Engine, not in 'showroom' condition, but as it would have been in its working life.

Volume 2 of the Conservation Management Plan (Scope of Works) indicates the above work to be at a minimum cost of \$10,000 and a maximum cost of around \$35,000 depending on the use of volunteer labour and the condition of the boiler. If contractors were used for the entirety of this work, the cost would be between \$50,000 and \$80,000".

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(Note: This was an estimate costing 8 years ago).

21 April 2009

'RESOLVED Crs Lambert/Wilson that Council direct the Manager Planning to advise Clyde Harrison that his quote of \$302.50 (including travel and GST) to inspect the boiler has been approved". (See copy of Report and Minutes attached).

Attachment No. 4.

Mr Ian Larcher, the author of the scope of work, removed the boiler tubes to allow inspection by the boiler inspector Mr Clyde Harrison. Mr Harrison inspected the boiler however after many follow ups from Council staff over a period of months, (and presumably due to ill health at the time) did not make a written report to Council. There were staff changes in the Planning Department at this time and it was very difficult to find someone else with the technical expertise to carry out the boiler inspection. No further action was taken.

Council has now received an offer from Mr Tony Walsh (Head Teacher Engineering New England TAFE, Tamworth) and Mr Ron Jackson, both members of the New England Heritage Traction Club to restore the engine for Council free of labour cost with Council providing the funds for the parts needed and the cost of transporting the steam engine to Yarrowyck and transporting it back to Narromine after restoration. **(See Attachment No. 5).**

Issues

The Inspection Report from Mr Walsh and Mr Jackson outlines the estimated costs of materials needed to restore the Engine at \$13,800. These costings are a guide only based on their initial inspection and current prices and the value of \$AUS. Many of the parts will need to be sourced overseas. It is possible once work commences that other parts that have not been identified from their initial inspection may need to be replaced or repaired.

From their report, Messrs Walsh and Jackson state as follows –

Returning 16163 to Steam

"This engine is of significant heritage interest, not only for its local history but also because of its original condition. There are quite a few Fowler engines that have survived in the preservation era, but very few are in as original condition as this engine. This, combined with the facts that it has had only two owners and its provenance is completely known, makes it important for Council to carefully consider its custodianship and future management of the engine."

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Proposal from New England Heritage Traction Club Inc

"As members of the above club, we would like to put the following proposal to Council for its consideration.

- Members of NEHTC be authorised by Council to carry out the work needed to return 16163 to operating condition.
- The extent of the work to be agreed by Council and Council to fund the cost of materials and any specialised services required.
- Labour involved in carrying out the work to be supplied by NEHTC members without cost to Council.
- Council agrees to transport the engine to G&C Foundry at Yarrowyck, where the engine will be housed whilst the work is completed (Our member, Geoff Swilks, has agreed to supply space in his foundry to work on the engine. Geoff has restored several steam engines and has been a heritage steam operator since 1980).
- NEHTC will provide quarterly updates on progress with the restoration and will make every endeavour to complete the project within a four year period.
- Once completed Council will pick up the engine from Yarrowyck.
- NEHTC members be allowed to display the engine at some local antique machinery rallies before it is returned to Narromine.
- Council is to organise a secure facility in which to house and display the engine, before it is returned. Something similar to the display of the Garfield fire engine in Trangie would be ideal.
- Ongoing maintenance costs will be met by Council.
- NEHTC members will be happy to travel to Narromine to steam the engine on special occasions. Interested local people could be given training on running the engine."

The offer by the New England Heritage Traction Club Inc is a very generous one and as they would be using all volunteer labour and have work commitments, it is understandable that they may need up to 4 years to complete the work. It has been sitting idle for the last 42 years since it was donated back to Council in 1974 so another four years to wait while it is being restored back to operational condition and at cost of parts only is a wonderful opportunity for Council and the community.

In discussions with the Director of Infrastructure and Engineering, it is estimated the cost of hiring Council's low loader and truck to transport the Engine to and from Yarrowyck would be around \$4,000 for a return trip.

Assessment

a) *Legal Implications Including Directives and Guidelines*

It would be essential to have Council's Solicitor prepare a suitable legal agreement to be signed by the New England Heritage Traction Club Inc and Council, outlining the agreed terms of this arrangement.

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b) *Financial/Social and Environmental Impacts*

The Club have advised an estimated cost of parts so far determined, is \$13,800. This could increase if they find other parts that need replacing once they get into the restoration.

The cost of transporting the Engine to and from Yarrowyck ie two trips is estimated at \$8,000 (presumably Council staff would take the Council low loader and truck for the transportation).

There is also the cost (in four years time) of having a secure and purpose built housing for the Engine, something similar to the construction of the housing over the Garfield fire engine in Trangie.

The initial costs would be the \$13,800 plus \$4,000 for transportation of the Engine to Yarrowyck ie \$17,800. It may be possible to attract some Government grant to assist with the housing of the Engine and there will be plenty of time to make an application during the 4 year period of its restoration.

Immediate Funds can be sourced as follows –

1. There is \$9,725 in the Fowler Engine Restoration Fund Reserve
2. There is currently \$60,622 in the RFS Tanker Replacement Reserve which could be set aside for the Fowler Steam Engine restoration.

There was originally \$70,000 set aside for the RFS Tanker Replacement however there is no need for this to now occur as the RFS fund replacement tankers. These funds were used towards the renovation of the former Guide Hall at Trangie to make it useable by Challenge Disability Services for their activities and the funds have been paid back into the Reserve from rental paid on the building. By June 2016, \$60,622 of these funds will be replaced, with the remaining funds to make up the \$70,000 to be paid back in the next financial year.

If these funds were re-allocated and added to the Fowler Engine Restoration Reserve fund then there would be a total of \$70,347 available currently with \$9,378 to be added next financial year to bring the total available funds to \$79,725.

This should be sufficient funding to pay for the parts for the Engine and would also at least partially fund the construction of a suitable secure housing for the Engine once it is returned to Narromine following its restoration. There is also the possibility of applying for grant funding to supplement these funds over the next four years.

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c) *Strategic Implications*

There is nothing specific in the Strategic Plan for the Fowler Steam Engine however funds were placed in Reserve for its restoration.

Summary

There is no doubt that the Fowler Steam Engine owned by Council is rare because of its original condition and is of significant heritage interest and well worth restoring. Once restored it can be used for special functions and will be of great community and tourist interest into the future. It is now 91 years old and once restored and looked after, should be on display for the next century and beyond and will be a wonderful movable heritage item for the Shire. The appropriate and secure housing for the Engine once restored is also very important. The housing needs to allow for the Engine to be viewed through a glass panel but also allow it to be driven out when needed.

Council has a wonderful opportunity to have this heritage Steam Engine restored at the cost of materials with all labour donated by the New England Heritage Traction Club Inc. With Council using its own staff and equipment to transport the Engine to and from Yarrowyck, and a suitable legal agreement documenting the arrangement between the New England Heritage Traction Club and Council, there should be sufficient security for Council with releasing the Steam Engine into their care for the duration of the restoration which could be up to 4 years. If the Reserve funds from the RFS Tanker Replacement are also reallocated to the Fowler Steam Engine, there should be sufficient funds to cover what is needed for its restoration and possibly the housing on its return. Grant opportunities will also be looked into to assist with the housing project which won't be needed until the Engine is returned in 2019-2020.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council –

- 1) Thank the New England Heritage Traction Club Inc for their very generous offer to provide free labour and expertise to restore the Fowler Road Locomotive 16163 with Council funding the parts needed.
- 2) Advise the Club that Council will accept their offer as follows –
 - Members of NEHTC be authorised by Council to carry out the work needed to return 16163 to operating condition.
 - The extent of the work to be agreed by Council and Council to fund the cost of materials and any specialised services required.
 - Labour involved in carrying out the work to be supplied by NEHTC members without cost to Council.

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- Council agree to transport the engine to G&C Foundry at Yarrowyck, where the engine will be housed whilst the work is completed (Their member, Geoff Swilks, has agreed to supply space in his foundry to work on the engine. Geoff has restored several steam engines and has been a heritage steam operator since 1980).
- NEHTC will provide quarterly updates on progress with the restoration and will make every endeavour to complete the project within a four year period.
- Once completed Council will pick up the engine from Yarrowyck.
- NEHTC members be allowed to display the engine at some local antique machinery rallies before it is returned to Narromine.
- Council is to organise a secure facility in which to house and display the engine, before it is returned. Something similar to the display of the Garfield fire engine in Trangie.
- Ongoing maintenance costs to be met by Council
- NEHTC members will be happy to travel to Narromine to steam the engine on special occasions. Interested local people to be given training on running the engine.

Additional terms of agreement to include the signing of a suitable legal document to protect Council's interests and ensure the return of the Steam Engine to Narromine, and suitable arrangements for WH&S issues with the members of NEHTC and insurance for the steam engine in transit.

3. That Council reallocate the \$70,000 RFS Tanker Replacement Reserve to the Fowler Engine Restoration Fund Reserve with these funds to be used for the transport of the Steam Engine to and from Yarrowyck and the parts necessary to complete the restoration. FURTHER that the left over funds be used towards the construction of a suitable secure housing structure.
4. That approval be granted to affix the common seal to the legal agreement between the parties.
5. That grant funding opportunities be sought to house the Steam Engine once it is returned to Narromine.
6. That Council list the Fowler Steam Engine as a movable Heritage Item in the Local Environmental Plan and make a submission to the Heritage Council for listing on the State Heritage Register.

4A. CLYDE TRACTION WAGONS

(File No. 07.028)

The Conservation Management Plan prepared for the Fowler Steam Engine also made mention of the Clyde Traction Wagon from circa 1907 which was used behind the Steam Engine.

4A. CLYDE TRACTION WAGONS (Cont'd)

(File No. 07.028)

The wheels of one of these wagons are at the Narromine Aerodrome and Messrs Walsh and Jackson felt the wagon could be restored and suggested the Men's Shed may wish to take this on as a project. They suggested the only materials missing was some timber. There could be sufficient funds in the Fowler Steam Engine Reserve (if Council allocates the additional funds) to provide the materials for the restoration of the wagon as well.

RECOMMENDED

1. That Council approach the Narromine Men's Shed to see whether or not they are interested in taking on the restoration of the Clyde Traction Wagon as a project with Council funding any materials needed.
2. Following discussions with the Men's Shed, a costing for materials needed to restore the Clyde Traction Wagon be reported to Council for approval.

5. NARROMINE AERODROME STRATEGIC AND MASTER PLAN REVIEW (File 91.001)

Introduction

The purpose of this report is for Council to adopt the Narromine Aerodrome Strategic and Master Plan following its public exhibition (**see Attachment No. 6**)

Background

Council considered the Review of the Narromine Aerodrome Strategic and Master Plan at its meeting on 11 November 2015 and resolved to place the Plan on public exhibition and report back for final adoption.

The Plan was placed on public exhibition and one submission was received amending and adding to the brief historical notes on page 10 of the document. Also it was noted there was an error in the date the 40 year Lease with CASA expires and the information relating to the automatic transfer of the additional land to the Narromine Tourist Park has been corrected. Clarification has been made on page 24 regarding the community and commercial land excluding the parade ground.

Issues

The corrections have been made to the document and shown as track changes in red. The remainder of the Plan is unchanged.

CORPORATE, COMMUNITY AND REGULATORY SERVICES REPORT

**1. TOWARDS NEW LOCAL GOVERNMENT LEGISLATION EXPLANATORY PAPER:
PROPOSED PHASE 1 AMENDMENTS (File No. 01.013)**

The Director advised the two main issues of concern were the proposed amendment that it be compulsory for councillors to vote in a mayoral election and that voting may be by proxy if not present at a meeting; however in the case of an even number of Councillors voting, then another councillor be excluded by means of a draw from a hat.

It was felt that the exclusion of a Councillor from voting was not acceptable.

The other issue raised was regarding Councillor Expenses and Facilities and the proposal to change sections 252 – 254 to replace the requirement to adopt a Policy annually, to adopt once during the term of office, and remove the requirement to provide the Policy to the Office of Local Government.

It was considered that annual review of the Policy would be more appropriate.

The Mayor requested Councillors to raise any other issues with the Director prior to the end of February, 2016.

RESOLVED Crs Lambert/McCutcheon that the above two matters and any others raised by individual Councillors be queried with the Office of Local Government.

2016/24**2. LEASE HANGAR SITE NO. 16 AND OFFICE SITE NO. 12, NARROMINE AERODROME
(File No. 91.015)**

RESOLVED Crs Lambert/Collins that approval be given to renew the lease of Hangar Site No. 16 and Office Site No. 12 at the Narromine Aerodrome to Soar Narromine Pty Ltd for the period 29 February 2016 to 28 February 2017 at a commencing rental of \$146.39 per month (including GST) for the hangar site and \$138.71 per month (including GST) for the office site, payable by monthly instalments in advance; further that approval be given to affix the common seal to the lease agreement.

2016/25**3. LEP AMENDMENTS 5 AND 6 FINALISED (File No. 15.001)**

RESOLVED Crs McCutcheon/Lambert that the information be noted.

2016/26**4. FOWLER STEAM ENGINE (File No. 07.028)**

RESOLVED Crs Lambert/Ellis that Council –

1. Thank the New England Heritage Traction Club Inc for their very generous offer to provide free labour and expertise to restore the Fowler Road Locomotive 16163 with Council funding the parts needed;

CORPORATE, COMMUNITY AND REGULATORY SERVICES REPORT (Cont)**4. FOWLER STEAM ENGINE (Cont) (File No. 07.028)**

2. Advise the Club that Council will accept their offer as follows:

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- The extent of the work to be agreed by Council and Council to fund the cost of materials and any specialized services required;
- Labour involved in carrying out the work to be supplied by NEHTC members without cost to Council;
- Council agree to transport the engine to G&C Foundry at Yarrowyck, where the engine will be housed whilst the work is completed (their member, Geoff Swilks, has agreed to supply space in his foundry to work on the engine. Geoff has restored several steam engines and has been a heritage steam operator since 1980);
- NEHTC will provide quarterly updates on progress with the restoration and will make every endeavour to complete the project within a four year period;
- Once completed, Council will pick up the engine from Yarrowyck;
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3. That Council reallocate the \$70,000 RFS Tanker Replacement Reserve to the Fowler Engine Restoration Fund Reserve with these funds to be used for the transport of the Steam Engine to and from Yarrowyck and the parts necessary to complete the restoration. FURTHER that the left over funds be used towards the construction of a suitable secure housing structure.
4. That approval be granted to affix the common seal to the legal agreement between the parties.
5. That grant funding opportunities be sought to house the Fowler Steam Engine once it is returned to Narromine.
6. That Council list the Fowler Steam Engine as a movable Heritage Item in the Local Environmental Plan and make a submission to the Heritage Council for listing on the State Heritage Register.

2016/27

Cr Collins requested her vote against the motion be recorded and her reasons being that Council has not consulted with the community, she believes there are more pressing issues for funding, including having meetings taped, and she did not believe it was the right time to be spending money in this way.