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**Report 02.688**

31 October 2002

File: R/08/02/02

fk-#144396

Report to Landcare Committee  
from Victoria Owen and Ross Jackson, Parks and Forests

## **Proposal to Reinstate the Rimutaka Railway**

### **1. Purpose**

To respond to Council's request for a paper addressing the proposal to reinstate the Rimutaka Railway.

### **2. Background**

At the Landcare Committee Meeting of 27 August 2002 Mr Hugh McCracken and Mr Stephen Porter gave a presentation on the Rimutaka Incline Heritage Railway Development Proposal. Messrs Porter and McCracken suggested that the Council could assist the working party with a feasibility study and help to facilitate the resolution of resource management and heritage issues.

At that meeting, Councillor Laidlaw requested that officers undertake an informal in-house consultation on the broad parameters of the proposal. He also noted that until Messrs McCracken and Porter had presented a formal request Council was unable to determine the degree of support that might be provided.

Councillor Yardley noted that in order to facilitate the proper consideration of the project within the review of the Forest Lands Management Plan, Officers would need to prepare a paper on the proposal and report back to the Committee as soon as possible. This paper responds to those requests.

### 3. **Process to Date**

We have since undertaken consultation within the Council about the proposal. These discussions have included Parks and Forests staff, civil engineers, Environment Division planners, Utilities Services staff, and the Council's property consultant. The Chair of the Heritage Rail Trust (Mr Euan McQueen) also attended a meeting with staff. These meetings highlighted a number of concerns about the proposal (**Attachment 1**). A summary of these issues was sent to Messrs McCracken and Porter, for their consideration and response (**Attachment 2**).

We met with Messrs McCracken and Porter, along with staff from the Department of Conservation to discuss the proposal and issues which have been raised. Messrs McCracken and Porter presented their response to those issues which were then further discussed at the meeting.

### 4. **What Does the Group Want from the Council?**

Messrs McCracken and Porter have both immediate and long-term requests for the Council's contribution to the project.

In the short term they would like the Council to:

- Contribute to a feasibility study (financially and with human resources).
- Provide a representative on the proposed Railway Trust.

In the longer term they are asking Council to:

- Make Council land available for the railway from Maymorn to Summit.
- Change the Forest Lands Management Plan for the area to provide for the railway.
- Provide a walkway / cycleway to replace the existing Rimutaka Rail Trail.
- Provide possible alternative access to the Kart track and rifle range as well as the airstrip at Kaitoke.
- Provide public amenities at station areas, including the Summit.
- Make changes to the Regional Plan and the Regional Transport plan.
- Manage the riparian strip on the Pakuratahi river and tributaries.
- Assist in providing ballast from rivers.

The group indicated a belief that Councillors had already directed staff to contribute to a feasibility study.

### 5. **Response to the Proposal**

At this stage we have limited information on the proposal, which makes it difficult to come to a fully informed judgement. Until a comprehensive business plan is completed, many of the implications are open to debate. Our response is made on the basis of the limited information available to date.

While the idea of re-establishing the railway holds considerable appeal, we have some significant concerns about the implications of the project. We have discussed these concerns with the group and they have responded, nevertheless some concerns remain outstanding:

- *Impacts on current users* – there would be major implications for current users. Even if an alternative walking/cycling track could be developed along the entire route, it would be likely to be of a different character to the current wide, low incline track used by cyclists and walkers (particularly families and young children). Current users would be displaced to some extent.
- *Land use and infrastructure* – we have concerns about the capacity of the bridges and tunnels to carry trains and about the difficulties of providing an alternative cycle/walkway where the formation goes through tunnels or over bridges. There may also be constraints in obtaining access or title to private land at Maymorn end.
- *Access difficulties* – The proposed route could affect access to Upper Tunnel Gully and Mt Climie (including logging access for plantation forestry). This issue also has implications for the legal rights of access to transmitters held by BCL, Police etc. Difficulties would arise in providing alternative access to the Kart Club, Rifle Range and airstrip.
- *Viability of the proposed scheme* – We have concerns about the technical and financial viability of the proposal, which would require significant financial resources to develop and maintain.
- *Possible insurance implications* – there would be an increased fire risk for the Council's commercial plantation forestry.
- *Broader implications for the Regional Council* – there are potential liabilities for the Council should the railway fail. A legal Trust is being established and the proposal is that the wind-up clause could transfer assets to the Regional Council. However these assets could in fact become a liability to the Council.
- *Subway Link* - The Council has recently agreed to spend \$80,000 on a subway link between Kaitoke Regional Park and the Rimutaka Rail Trail. This link is part of a proposed regional walk/cycle way from Wellington to Wairarapa. An alternative track (with a potentially steeper grade) could impact on the viability of this walk/cycle way.
- *Cost to the Regional Council* – A rough estimate of the cost to Council of meeting the group's requests would be at least \$1.2 million – \$1.4 million. This would include:
  - ▶ 20km of 4m wide track at \$15/m<sup>2</sup> = \$1,200,000.
  - ▶ Toilet block = between \$50,000 to \$100,000 each.
  - ▶ Unsealed carpark for 50 cars @\$15/m<sup>2</sup> = \$27,000.
  - ▶ Alternative access for Kart Club, etc. = yet to determine and would require further investigation.

Our response to the specific requests made are outlined below:

### ***Short Term***

- *Contribute to a feasibility study* – A contribution is possible, but would have both financial, and human resource and work programme implications. There is no current budget or spare staff resources to provide for a meaningful contribution to any such study.
- *Provide a representative on the proposed railway Trust* – this is possible but could raise expectations about a Council financial contribution to the project.

### ***Long Term***

- *Make Council land available for the railway from Maymorn to Summit* – possible, however there would be implications for existing users and full consultation would be necessary.
- *Change the Forest Lands Management Plan for the area to provide for the railway* – possible, would be subject to public consultation. Officials consider that the current plan would not provide for the railway and a plan change would be required to enable the development. Under the current *Interim Forest Lands Management Plan*, the Pakuratahi Forest is held primarily for conservation and water supply. The plan provides for the protection of ecological and heritage values of the Incline (and vehicles are not generally permitted). The Incline is recognised as a key recreation area within the forest. Officials consider that the reinstatement of the railway, would represent a major change in the current use of the Incline, and a plan change would therefore be required. If Councillors wish to provide for the railway proposal within the plan, the proposed change should be included in the new Forest Lands Management Plan and be subject to public consultation.
- *Provide a replacement walkway/cycleway* – technically difficult, potential environmental and heritage effects, approximate cost to Council \$1.2million - \$1.4million.
- *Providing possible alternative access to kart track, rifle range and airstrip at Kaitoke* – technically possible for kart club and gliding club but costly and may involve acquisition of private land. May not be possible for rifle range. Alternative access to these sites may require going over Goat Rock and a very steep track.
- *Provide public amenities at station areas, including Summit* – possible, cost implications.
- *Changes to Regional Plan and Regional Transport plan* – Environment Division advises that there would be no reason to change the Regional Policy Statement or Regional Plans to accommodate a rail corridor from Kaitoke to Featherston. Any such proposed activity would have to be assessed according to the current resource management planning framework or regional and district plans and the resource consent process. The Transport Division advises that it is unlikely that a change to the Regional Land Transport Strategy would be made to recognise the railway. The proposal falls outside the scope of the strategy, as it is not a regional transport priority.
- *Riparian strip on the Pakuratahi River and tributaries managed to consider impact on railway and views* – possible.

- *Assist in providing ballast from rivers* – advice from Flood Protection that no suitable material is currently available or likely to be available in the next three years. It is possible that following the regular five yearly survey suitable material could become available, however this would depend entirely on the gravel balance (height) of the river bed.

## 6. Feedback from other Agencies and Groups

*The Friends of the Fell Society* – The Society runs the Fell Museum in Featherston and looks after the remaining Fell engine. At their AGM of 3 November 2002 they resolved that:

*This Society states its opposition as policy to the reinstatement of a railway on the old Rimutaka railway route between Featherston and Upper Hutt.*

The Society has concerns about:

- Use of Fell engine – the Society would not support the use the Fell on the railway.
- Possible detrimental effects on heritage, landscape and environment.
- Impacts on current and future recreational users.

(The full text of the resolution is included as **Attachment 3**).

*Upper Hutt City Council* – while there have been informal discussions with the Mayor, the proposal has not been formally considered by the Council

*South Wairarapa District Council* – there has been a meeting with the Mayor, but the proposal has not been formally considered by the Council

*Department of Conservation* – the proposal has not been formally presented to the Department, and prior to our joint meeting there had been no discussion with DOC staff.

*Chair of Rail Heritage Trust* – noted that there is not sufficient information to make an informed judgement at this stage and would need to see a thorough business plan to assess the viability and implications of the proposal. The Chair did raise some issues about the scale and viability of the project.

*The Historic Places Trust* has been contacted informally in regard to the proposal. Their consent would be required for any modification of the historic area.

## 7. Council's Role in Supporting Activities

At the same meeting of 27 August 2002, the Landcare Committee considered Council's role in achieving wider use of the parks and forests and resolved:

*That the Council's role in developing activities in regional parks and recreation areas in order to widen use be through enhanced facilitation and encouragement be endorsed.*

This option was chosen in preference to Council implementing initiatives (i.e. active involvement in running or financing enterprises).

The decision by Council would indicate that while Council could provide some assistance for groups to establish activities, the Council itself would take a limited role in contributing to feasibility studies and implementation of activities.

## 8. Where To From Here?

The immediate requests to be addressed include the request to contribute to a feasibility study and to provide a representative to participate on the proposed Trust.

There is no funding or staff resource available from current budgets to contribute financially to a feasibility study. Staff time is also fully accounted for, and any major contribution by staff would require amendments to work programs and additional funding for a specialist consultant. Unless Councillors wish to dedicate further resources to this project, we consider that we cannot effectively contribute to a feasibility study. Officers consider allocating resources to this proposal is not a priority in the context of regional parks and forests management.

Further, while Council could provide a representative on the proposed Railway Trust this could potentially raise expectations about Council contribution to the project in the future. If Council was to include a representative on the Trust, a terms of reference and clear statement of position would be required to guide that representative's participation in the Trust.

## 9. Recommendations

*That the Committee:*

- (1) *Note the proposal from Messrs McCracken and Porter to re-establish the Rimutaka Railway from Maymorn to Summit on Regional Council land.*
- (2) *Note the specific requests from Messrs McCracken and Porter to Council, including, that to contribute to a feasibility study and provide a representative to a Rimutaka Railway Trust.*
- (3) *Note that there is currently limited information on the proposal, making it difficult to come to a fully informed judgement on the proposal.*
- (4) *Note that while the idea of re-establishing the railway holds considerable appeal, there are some significant practical implications of the project.*
- (5) *Note that contribution to a feasibility study would have financial work programme implications as it is not currently budgeted for.*
- (6) *Note that allocating resources to this proposal is not considered a priority in the context of regional parks and forests management.*
- (7) *Agree that the Council is unable to contribute financial or significant human resources to a feasibility study at this time.*

- (8) *Note that while Council could provide a representative to participate in the proposed Rimutaka Rail Trust, this could raise expectations about Council contribution to, the proposed project.*
- (9) *Decline the invitation to provide a representative on the Trust.*
- (10) *Note that should Messers McCracken and Porter provide the Council with a fully formed proposal (including costings) then the WRC will at that time consider supporting the proposal.*

Report prepared by:

Approved for submission:

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**Attachment 1:** Notes from Officer Meetings to Discuss the Proposed Re-establishment of Rimutaka Incline

**Attachment 2:** Response by Messrs McCracken and Porter to Issues Raised

**Attachment 3:** Friends of the Fell Society AGM Resolution

## **PROPOSED RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF RIMUTAKA RAILWAY SUMMARY NOTES FROM MEETINGS WITH OFFICERS**

### **1. Background**

*The Area is Currently Used for Recreation and Forestry:*

- The incline walkway has been developed as a walkway and bike lane.
- Important area for families – provides low incline off road biking opportunities (Hutt River and Pencarrow Road other comparable options)
- 30 – 40,000 visitors per year, roughly 50/50 walkers and cyclists
- Area also used for commercial forestry activities
- Area held for future water collection purposes

### **2. Concerns**

Concerns focus on a lack of full information about the proposal, land and infrastructural issues, financial viability of the scheme, impacts on current uses, operational safety issues, and broad concerns for the Council.

*More Information is Required*

- A comprehensive business plan is lacking for the proposal.
- Need more information to assess impacts on signature values – length of rail route, potential visitor numbers etc.
- Figures presented are for only part of the rail route.
- From Maymorn to Featherston total cost likely to be around \$20million for the project as a working railway (plus additional ongoing maintenance costs).
- Infrastructure (such as parking, stations and shelters) and visitor facilities (such as toilets) would also be required and are not included in the current proposal.
- The rate of return on a \$20m investment would require some 50,000 people travelling at a cost of \$50 per ticket, which would still leave them short of other income required for maintenance.
- The scheme is beyond the scope of volunteers and would need to be run as a commercial enterprise.



*There are Concerns About Land Use and Infrastructure*

- Bridges, in their present form, may not be able to carry the trains.
- Tunnels are too narrow for a train and a walking route.
- The swamp at Ladle Bend may be compromised by the need to improve drainage for the track.
- There are difficulties associated with private land at Kaitoke end:
  - Chance of buying private land at Kaitoke end is remote.
  - The Council has access rights at Station Drive, but it is unlikely that owners would allow for access for the railway, nor is there a legal basis, as building a track on the right of way excludes other users.
  - If wanted to connect to Maymorn, there are many lifestyle blocks and owners who may not grant an easement.
  - Estimated cost of around \$1million to buy the Station Drive properties, and they would have to be bought on the open market by the group (or Trust) – there is no basis for use of the Public Works Act or Council to be involved in private land acquisition.
- There is a general lack of space for marshalling areas, depots etc. Areas which could potentially be used include:
  - The carpark at the Council end of the formation could possibly provide a terminus for the train.
  - Summit yard where there is room for facilities.

*Is the Proposed Scheme Viable?*

- View that the scheme is beyond the likely market, and unless operated on a small scale would not be viable.
- The re-establishment of this railway is a major exercise – other comparative railway projects required much less capital funding.
- Taieri Gorge Railway provided as a comparative example (of a heritage railway operating in rough terrain):
  - In contrast to the Rimutaka, the rail tracks were already in place and in good condition, and trains had operated relatively recently.
  - Used ex-NZ Rail locomotives and carriages, refurbished second hand (replacement cost of stock now is around \$10million new).
  - Run 19 carriages and 5 locomotives plus support vehicles.
  - The first 16km of the rail is owned by Tranz Rail.
  - The total route length is 64km with many bridges and tunnels, so Taieri Gorge Railway is a bigger venture in distance terms.
  - Taieri Gorge Railway requires an average of 2000 new sleepers a year plus ongoing maintenance.
  - There is a balance of paid workers and volunteers (around 30 volunteers, 18 full-time staff).

- Despite this, it took ten years to build a successful business and deliver a cash surplus.
- Cruise ships are a major market (and the voluntary labour aspect is an important selling point in this respect).
- Railway is owned by a LATE (72% owned by the Local Authority, 28% by the rail trust).
- Operational challenges in linking the proposed line with Tranz Rail line.
- The Fell Museum is doing a lot of work interpreting the heritage values of the Incline for the public, and are developing an audio-visual set up which will provide a “virtual” ride on the Fell Locomotive (complete with sound and movement).
- Parks and Forests ran a summer programme event to the Incline which may give some guidance about likely interest/market for the train restoration:
  - Comprised of a bus trip from Upper Hutt to Kaitoke, guided walk up to Summit and down other side (with railway historian guide), followed by trip to Fell Museum.
  - In the Visitor Survey 20% of people said that they would have preferred not to have gone to the Fell Museum. Observation made that about ½ the group did not watch the video.
  - Staff who attended have concerns about the interest levels of the general public in the railway heritage of the area, particularly when there was limited interest with a group who specifically registered and paid (\$10) to attend a ‘railway heritage’ event in the summer programme.
- Weather in the mountains can be very bad, may not be the best for tourists.

*There are Major Impacts on Current Uses*

- Potential conflict of use between railway and recreational users and Plantation Forestry.
- The change in use would have implications for the current use of the area (mainly recreational) – would we have to recreate these opportunities elsewhere? What are the ‘flow on’ effects of displaced recreational users? There are plenty of similar walking tracks but only a few other easy, off-road cycle tracks (Hutt River Trail, Pencarrow Road).
- There are not many options for alternative walkways/cycleways – as the track is very narrow in places and it would be very difficult to provide a continuous alternative track.
- Building an alternative walking track parallel to the formation would destroy its heritage values unless the track was reasonably remote from the rail route.

*Potential Safety Problems Exist*

- There are potential safety problems with having co-existent railway and recreation.
- People have been using the formation for recreation for at least 20 years, may be difficult to get them off it.
- The train tracks could not be available for walkers even when the trains are not operating, as it would be too difficult to manage the safety issues.

*Plantation Forestry Related Issues*

- Fire risk is the main concern.
- Would have to insist on oil fired locomotives – which may affect attractiveness of the railway.
- Insurance implications – insurance policy asks about railways in vicinity – likely to be a cost penalty (and higher for steam than oil).
- Lesser issues of access to Lower Pakuratahi Block – currently use formation to access the area. Particularly difficult from River turn off to Commission Road, where there is no turn off. This could be partially addressed by providing a right angle crossing.
- To what extent would forestry roads be required – for alternative recreations, access to maintain railway, and emergency operations? Would this impact on forestry activities?

*Water Collection Issues*

- There are no plans for development of the area at this stage.
- Potential issues are contamination of the water intake at Te Marua – although the risks would be minimal and no greater than the current risks from the road.

*There are a Range of Broader Implications for the Council to Consider*

- Concerns about the Council providing funding or resources for the project, when it is not core Council business.
- Council needs to think about how this activity would be classified, i.e. commercial? Would Council establish a lease arrangement and charge?
- People have attempted to run motorised tours up the formation in the past and not lasted a long time, e.g. Council provided a trial licence for someone to run a mini-bus up there, but it was not successful.
- The Council has to be clear about what liabilities it would be left with if the volunteer group disappeared or pulled out.

*Some Possibilities for the Scheme*

- Interesting concept, worthy of consideration.
- Could look at establishing part of the railway or parts at a time.
- It is a regional issue, and Council needs to consider its level of involvement.
- They should be encouraged, but WRC is not a funding agency.
- The internationally unique part is actually the Incline, not the WRC owned side – would require DoC permission.
- Another option is to restore part of Cross Creek, provide good interpretation and perhaps develop a part of the line at the foot of the Incline.
- Possible, but limited market in cruise liners (although if they are already having a “train experience” in Dunedin may be duplicating that).
- Schools are a likely market.
- A more realistic option might be good interpretation with static displays along the route with people finishing at the Fell Museum for their planned “virtual” train ride.

## **RESPONSE BY MESSRS MCCRACKEN AND PORTER TO ISSUES RAISED**

### **1. Background**

The area is currently used for recreation and forestry.

- The Incline Walkway has been developed as a walkway and bike lane.
  - The proposal would return the Incline to its previous state – i.e. a railway.
  - It would be appropriate to develop a heritage railway on the site whereas construction of a walkway or cycle path can be developed wherever topography or scenery is suitable.
  
- Important area for families – provides low incline off-road biking opportunities (Hutt River and Pencarrow Road other comparable options).
  - Will give family entertainment that will not require same level of fitness or ability.
  - Enhanced heritage interpretation experience for families.
  - Train travel is all weather, whereas walking/biking is weather dependent.
  - Current users who choose not to ride the train, might take to forest roads or use parallel path (where provided), and have other options for low-incline walking and biking, e.g. Hutt River, Pencarrow Road.
  
- 30 – 40 000 visitors per year, roughly 50/50 walkers and cyclists.
  - 30,000 passengers per year on the proposed railway – this number will be drawn from new users plus a proportion of existing walkers and bikers.
  - New users are expected to include regional, national and international visitors.
  - It is anticipated that some of the existing visitors will choose to walk or bike in alternative regional facilities.
  
- Area also used for commercial forestry activities.
  - The proposed railway will present opportunities for forestry activities to have less impact on other activities in the park, through use of the railway for some of the forestry activities.
  
- Area held for future water collection purposes.
  - It is not anticipated that operation of a railway would detract from future water collection.

## 2. Areas that Require Further Discussion

The issues focus on information requirements, land use and infrastructure, viability of the proposed scheme, impacts on current uses, health and safety and broader implications for the Regional Council.

## 3. Information Requirements

- A comprehensive business plan is required for the proposal, including proposed infrastructure.
  - The business plan will follow on from the feasibility study.
  - The infrastructure required to provide a railway and alternatives for existing users will consist of:
    - Railway
    - Route
    - Precincts
    - Depots
    - Mainline connection
    - Public access to stations
    - Car
    - Bus
    - Train
    - Alternative walkway to existing railway formation
    - Parallel walkway
    - Forest roads
- More information is required to assess impacts on signature values – length of rail route, potential visitor numbers etc.
  - To be established in the feasibility study.
- Would the scheme be beyond the scope of volunteers and be required to run as a commercial enterprise.
  - Management by full time staff with support of volunteers is anticipated.

#### 4. Land Use and Infrastructure

- Ability of current infrastructure to sustain the enterprise – bridges, drainage, tunnels.
  - Work required to restore railway structures and civil works to appropriate operational condition will be determined in the feasibility study.
- Difficulties associated with private land at Kaitoke end (*Maymorn and Kaitoke precinct should both be considered in this context*).

Maymorn:

- Requirement for a connection between the old route and the Tranz Metro station.
- Lease or purchase of land currently in the custody of Tranz Rail will be required for the depot.

Kaitoke:

- To enable the railway to remain on the heritage corridor up to six properties will need to be traversed. In some cases easements may be negotiable, others may require outright purchase or lease.
  - Existing users of the formation for access to their leasehold land are the speedway, glider club and rifle range. Propose that access to these users be provided via existing forest road that runs from south of Kaitoke through to the Pakuratahi valley.
- Parking and marshalling areas, depots etc.
    - Parking required at Parks Line Road, Maymorn.
    - Parking required in the vicinity of Kaitoke railway station. Fare structures could be designed to discourage Kaitoke passengers.
    - Station precincts will be designed to cater for expected passenger numbers.
    - Depots will be established at Maymorn, and at a later date, Cross Creek.

#### 5. Viability of the Proposed Scheme

- Possible operational challenges in linking the proposed line with Tranz Rail line.
  - Anticipated that establishing a link at Maymorn will not pose a problem.
  - Operation on mainline would require running rights on the Wellington to Masterton main line.

- The Fell Museum is doing a lot of work interpreting the heritage values of the Incline for the public, and are developing an audio-visual set-up which will provide a “virtual” ride on the Fell Locomotive (complete with sound and movement).
  - The proposed railway, the audio-visual set-up and the enhanced interpretation would complimentary enterprises.
- Weather in the mountains can be changeable.
  - The proposed railway by its nature will provide an all weather activity within the park.
  - The proposed railway could be used to assist other park users to exit the park quickly and safely in the event of serious weather change or emergency.
  - Summit station precinct could provide a safe haven for other park users.

## 6. Impacts on Current Uses

- The change in use would have implications for the current use of the area, what are the alternatives for the displaced recreational users?
  - Current users who choose not to either ride the train, take to forest roads or use parallel path (where provided) have other options for low-incline walking and biking, e.g. Hutt River, Pencarrow Road.
- Options for alternative walkways/cycleways
  - Walkers and cyclists should be able to use forest roads most of the time, many of which parallel the route.
- Building an alternative walking track parallel to the formation
  - In the few locations where there is no parallel route a pathway suitable for walkers and cyclists would need to be provided.

## 7. Health and Safety

- Potential safety problems with having co-existent railway and recreation
  - To ensure the safety of walkers and cyclists areas their access must be clear of the railway.
- Train tracks may not be available for walkers
  - Absolute separation of walkers and railway must be maintained.
  - Level crossings should be provided with suitable signage.



## 8. Plantation Forestry Related Issues

- Potential fire risk.
  - Anticipate that the existing fire hazard management plan could be extended to include the potential risks implied by a railway.
- Insurance implications
  - The proposed railway organisation will become a member group of the Federation of Rail Organisations of New Zealand (FRONZ). Insurance policies are available to member groups for third party risk, fire, accident and other risks.
- Lesser issues of access to Lower Pakuratahi Block – currently use formation to access the area.
  - Alternative arrangements would be arranged as below.
- To what extent would forestry roads be required?
  - Forestry roads required to feed loading points along the railway.
  - Benefits of moving logs by rail include:
    - Reduced impact on park users and forestry roads.
    - Log shipment out of the park possible at night.
    - Elimination of log movements on State Highway.
  - Planting, thinning, pruning access via hi-rail vehicles, trains or existing forest roads.

## 9. Water Collection Issues

- Potential issues with contamination of the water intake at Te Marua
  - Provision of a railway falls into three distinct phases: planning, construction and operation.
  - At the planning stage hazards to water collection will be identified and mitigated, in conjunction with the existing forestry management plan.
  - Potential impact to the environment will be managed during the construction and operation phases.

## 10. Broader Implications for the Regional Council

- How is this activity to be classified, i.e. commercial? Would Council establish a lease arrangement and charge?
  - Anticipate that the commercial activity would be non-profit, any surplus being used to enhance and extend the heritage railway, to ensure that it continues and improves.
  
- Motorised tours up the formation.
  - Existing use would be replaced by rail tours on the railway.
  
- What would happen if the volunteer group disappeared or pulled out?
  - A not-for-profit organisation is being established to cater for the operational needs of the railway.
  - In the event that the Trust is unable to continue it is anticipated that a winding-up clause in the deed would ensure that the asset reverted to a suitable organisation e.g. the Wellington Regional Council.

## RESOLUTION OF THE FRIENDS OF THE FELL SOCIETY

At the 22nd Annual General Meeting of the Friends of the Fell Society Incorporated, held at the Fell Locomotive Museum on Sunday 3 November 2002, the following motion was carried:

**MOVED** by Brian Pearce and **SECONDED** by Graeme Jupp.

**THAT** “This Society states its opposition as policy to the reinstatement of a railway on the old Rimutaka railway route between Featherston and Upper Hutt”.

The following points were discussed and agreed upon by all members present.

The reasons for this policy are:

- The Society will NEVER entertain the idea of "Fell" locomotive H199 and "Fell brake-van F210 being reactivated for use on a railway across the Rimutakas. H199 is the property of the residents of Featherston and it is unlikely they would wish for such a drawcard to be removed from the town.
- The Society deplors the fact that significant damage would inevitably occur to the formation if a railway was reinstated. Embankments would have to be widened, cuttings opened out, bridges replaced and other structural and safety modifications introduced to permit joint usage of rail and pedestrian/cycle traffic. Other "necessary" features, such as a platform and railway station/cafe at Summit, would forever remove the authenticity of the area.
- The Society believes that the development of the Rimutaka Rail Trail, now a nationally significant historic area, is of paramount importance. Fell Society members wholeheartedly support the Wellington Regional Council's plans for improving the area and for the installation of increased signage and interpretation.
- The Society believes that the 30,000 present users of the Rimutaka Rail Trail will steadily increase as the area becomes more widely known and its history appreciated. Many thousands of people make repeated visits year after year, with many more visiting the area at least twice a year. The rail trail is a quiet, serene place ideal for all manner of recreational pursuits.