

Taranaki Pioneer Village

Stratford District Council

Appendix B of LTCCP

DECISION REPORT



TO: District Mayor and Councillors
FROM: Chief Executive
DATE: 18 January 2006
SUBJECT: TARANAKI PIONEER VILLAGE

File Ref 20008

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present the series of reports concerning the potential future of the Taranaki Pioneer Village, and recommend their inclusion in the 2006 Long Term Council Community Plan as an item for public consultation.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The series of reports suggests that the Taranaki Pioneer Village has a potentially brighter future under a different ownership structure, and with major redevelopment. This report provides Council endorsement of these plans and seeks to include this within the LTCCP for public consultation.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In 2004 the Stratford District Council requested the Stratford District Economic Development Trust to have prepared a study into the Taranaki Pioneer Village. This report was to help Council in its considerations with funding applications from the Village by giving a view on the possible future of the village and its benefit to the District.
- 3.2 The report was prepared by Mr Geoff Burns, a tourism expert, who was also involved in preparing the Taranaki Tourism Strategy.
- 3.3 Council received the report in May 2005 and decided to pass it to the management of Taranaki Pioneer Village for their consideration. The report posed some questions for the Village to consider on its long term sustainability under its current operating and financing model.
- 3.4 The Taranaki Pioneer Village considered the report, and prepared a report dated October 2005, which it presented to Council. This report concluded that the best option was for the Village to be handed over as a going concern to the community, represented by the Stratford District Council, and for the Council to embark on the redevelopment required.
- 3.5 Council requested of the Village that, before Council can give consideration to this idea, that the Village management board seek endorsement of its ideas from its members, and that the redevelopment required be further quantified. A further report on these matters has been prepared, dated January 2006. This report details the redevelopment ideas and costs, and indicates the almost total support of the Village membership who responded to the membership poll.

4. **CONSULTATIVE PROCESS**

4.1 **Public Consultation**

Should the plans outlined in this report progress, then the recommendation is to include the matter within the next LTCCP for public consultation.

4.2 **Maori Consultation**

There are no tangata whenua issues separate from the recommended public consultation processes.

5. **RISK ANALYSIS**

Please refer to the Consequence and Impact Guidelines at the front of the reports in this agenda.

6. **DECISION MAKING PROCESS**

Category	Factors to Consider
Direction	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is there a strong link to Council's strategic direction, LTCCP/District Plan.• Is there a strong link to identified community outcomes.
Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do we have complete data on the proposal(s).• Do we have reasonably reliable data on the proposals.• What assumptions have had to be built in.
Significance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Significance policy.• Whether this affects a strategic asset.
Choices	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What options or choices are available.• Are the choices fully costed.• What interdependencies exist.• What are the disadvantages and advantages of each option?• Any legal/policy issues.
Prioritisation & Trade-Off	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Impact on funding and debt levels.• Council's capacity to deliver.• Contractor capacity to deliver.• Consequence of deferral.• Impact on community (four well beings).
Specify nature of decision required	

6.1 **Direction**

The Taranaki Pioneer Village is linked to the community outcome of having comprehensive social, recreational and cultural facilities accessible to all.

It provides both employment and tourism opportunities to the District. It also provides a cultural link to the past of the District.

6.2 **Data**

The three reports that have been prepared to date provide a good summary of the history, current state, and possible options for moving forward.

The initial report suggested that the status quo of the Taranaki Pioneer Village is probably not viable into the future. The second report states *“The overwhelming conclusion that the Management Committee has come to, stemming from these discussions and the desire for the Village to survive into the future, is that the Village be handed over to the Community as a going concern now”*.

Whilst it will still be a matter of opinion, Council needs to make an assumption that the Village will not survive into the long term if the current operational and financial model continues.

6.3 **Significance**

Embarking upon the acquisition and development of the Taranaki Pioneer Village is a significant decision. It is of such monetary value, and public interest value to trigger thresholds within the policy.

Therefore, the consultation requirements of the Local Government Act are required and are being recommended to be followed.

6.4 **Choices**

Council has five choices at this point in time.

The first choice is, having carefully considered the three reports, the financial, economic, social, and cultural benefits and risks involved, that Council decline the opportunity to progress further.

This choice would be based on a belief that the financial risks are too great in comparison to the benefits to the community and/or a belief that this is a activity that Council should not be involved with, and is better carried out by a different group within the community.

The second choice is for Council to agree to continue with the current separate management of the village, and provide a more substantial grant to allow the Village to continue to operate but on a more financial footing. This grant could be in the vicinity of \$40,000 per annum based on current financial information available.

The third choice is that Council agree in principle with the idea of Council assuming ownership of the Village regardless of the outcome of redevelopment proposals, and seek public consultation on this choice. This choice could be in the vicinity of \$75,000 per annum, based on current financial information available, the additional management costs of Council, the likely loss of some volunteer labour over time, and additional finance/audit costs.

The fourth choice is that Council agree in principle with the idea of Council assuming ownership of the Village for a defined period (say two years) and attempts to progress the redevelopment proposals, with an understanding that if the external funding cannot be found, the Village is closed. This choice could be in the vicinity of \$75,000 per annum, totally directed towards pursuing the redevelopment option, whilst the Village continues to operate on existing budgets and sources of funds in the short term.

The end difference between choices three and four is the ongoing commitment of Council, and therefore ratepayers, if the redevelopment proposal cannot proceed.

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The fifth choice is for Council to fund the proper investigation over the next two years of the redevelopment options at \$75,000 per annum. If this study provides an economically viable solution and secures all the required external funding, then Council will commit to taking over the Village, funding it for another two years at \$75,000 per annum whilst the redevelopment occurs, and then expecting it to run as a self-funding activity thereafter. If the study fails to deliver a viable solution, the Village is left with the existing incorporated society to determine their own future. During the two years allowed for the study the existing Village governance and management would continue.

This choice provides that Council will only take over ownership of the Village once the redevelopment plans and funding is locked into place. Therefore, Council does not have to take the final decisions on the Village future if the redevelopment proposition is not viable. It also provides that Council is not making a decision to acquire the Village without a full proper study being carried out; however, Council is providing funding for the study to be done.

6.5 **Prioritisation & Trade-off**

In analysing the choices, various facts/assumptions need to be established.

- (a) The Village will not survive into the long term if the current operational and financial model continues.
- (b) Council governance and management have no better experience in running a museum than the current Village governance and management. Therefore, Council will need to seek and employ expertise at the management level in this new activity. The activity would become another Council activity in the same way as roads, information centre and such like. A “friends of the village” group could be established to interact with the community interests, but would have no management or financial say in things.
- (c) The Village in its current legal form have little opportunity to raise the required redevelopment finance, but Council does have that opportunity.
- (d) Any successful redevelopment must be financed by external grants, and provide a self-sustaining operation at the completion of the redevelopment.
- (e) The Village, as an incorporated society, would need to meet its rules for transfer of the assets, should the final LTCCP decision include an offer to the Village to assume control.

6.6 **Specify Nature of Decision Required**

Council needs to decide which of the five choices presented is in the best interests of the community as a whole.

Section 97 of the Local Government Act provides that certain decisions cannot be made unless they are provided for in the LTCCP. This includes decisions to undertake a significant new activity, and to acquire or dispose of a strategic asset. Whilst the Village is not a “strategic asset”, it is a new activity to Council.

7. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 7.1 **THAT** in accordance with Section 97 of the Local Government Act 2002, Council include in its 2006 LTCCP the intention of Council funding the proper investigation over the next two years of the redevelopment options at \$75,000 per annum from rates. If this study provides an economically viable solution and secures all the required external funding, then Council will commit to taking over the Village, funding it for another two years at \$75,000 per annum from rates whilst the redevelopment occurs, and then expecting it to run as a self-funding activity thereafter. If the study fails to deliver a viable solution, the Village is left with the existing incorporated society to determine their own future and the funding ceases at the end of the first two years. During the two years allowed for the study the existing Village governance and management would continue.
- 7.2 **THAT** Council include in its 2006 LTCCP the other four choices as non-preferred options.

Recommended Reason

The preferred option provides an opportunity for the redevelopment of the Taranaki Pioneer Village whilst not providing for a long term burden upon ratepayers. Inclusion of the other options gives the public an opportunity to submit on all choices.

M R Freeman

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

DATE

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Taranaki Pioneer Village Study

Final Draft

Prepared for Venture Stratford

May 2005



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1.0 Introduction

Fernmade Limited has prepared this report for Venture Stratford between February and April 2005.

The terms of reference of this report relate to exploring the relationship between the Taranaki Pioneer Village and the Stratford District Council.

Key areas the Council wishes the Venture Stratford Trust to consider are:

- 1.1 Examine the linkage between the Taranaki Pioneer Village and the strategic planning of the Central Taranaki Tourism Network group as well as the fit with the overall regional tourism strategy.
- 1.2 Identify an appropriate level of funding from the Stratford District Council in comparison to the Village's own income through gate revenue etc.
- 1.3 What are the benefits to the Region / District for the Pioneer Village to exist and what the implications are if they cease to operate. What may be the impact on the economy if they fold?
- 1.4 Is there an appropriate level of influence that the Council should have on the committee if funding is increased?
- 1.5 Can the present situation continue as it is given the demand on cash reserves?
- 1.6 Can the Village continue to rely on volunteers both in management and governance roles?

In completing this report, interviews were conducted with a number of people¹ and information sourced primarily from the Taranaki Pioneer Village.

¹ Please refer to Appendix 1 for a list of those interviewed.

2.0 Background

Taranaki Pioneer Village (TPV) was established with the purchase of the current site in 1976. The village covers 15 acres and has 50 buildings on site featuring the heritage of Taranaki and its Pioneers. TPV is open 7 days a week and attracts just fewer than 7,000 paying visitors annually. A café leases space in the main admissions area and facilities are sometimes hired for functions e.g. weddings in Mangatoki Church.

TPV is operated as an incorporated society with a Board of Management working on a voluntary basis supported by a dedicated manager. The society also has 70 members who pay \$15 per annum to belong to the society.

TPV makes under half of its total income (\$78,179 for the year ended 30 June 2004) from admissions. Rental revenue, grants and interest are the next most significant sources of income followed by miscellaneous revenue e.g. livestock sales, memberships, fundraising events and train rides. Even with grants from the Stratford District Council (\$11,000) and the Taranaki Electricity Trust (\$5,020) the Taranaki Pioneer Village Society made a net loss for the year ending 30 June 2004 of \$40,868.

The Taranaki Pioneer Village Society has a reasonably strong asset base with investments of \$92,500 and land and buildings valued at \$390,000². However term deposits of the society have reduced from \$130,000 as at 30 June 2001 to \$75,000 as at 30 June 2004 largely as a result of ongoing trading losses.

TPV has a number of stakeholders including:

- Stratford District Council
- The TPV Board of Management
- TPV staff
- TPV members
- TPV volunteers
- Artefact donors
- The Taranaki heritage community
- Public funding organisations including the Taranaki Electricity Trust and the Lotteries Grants Board.

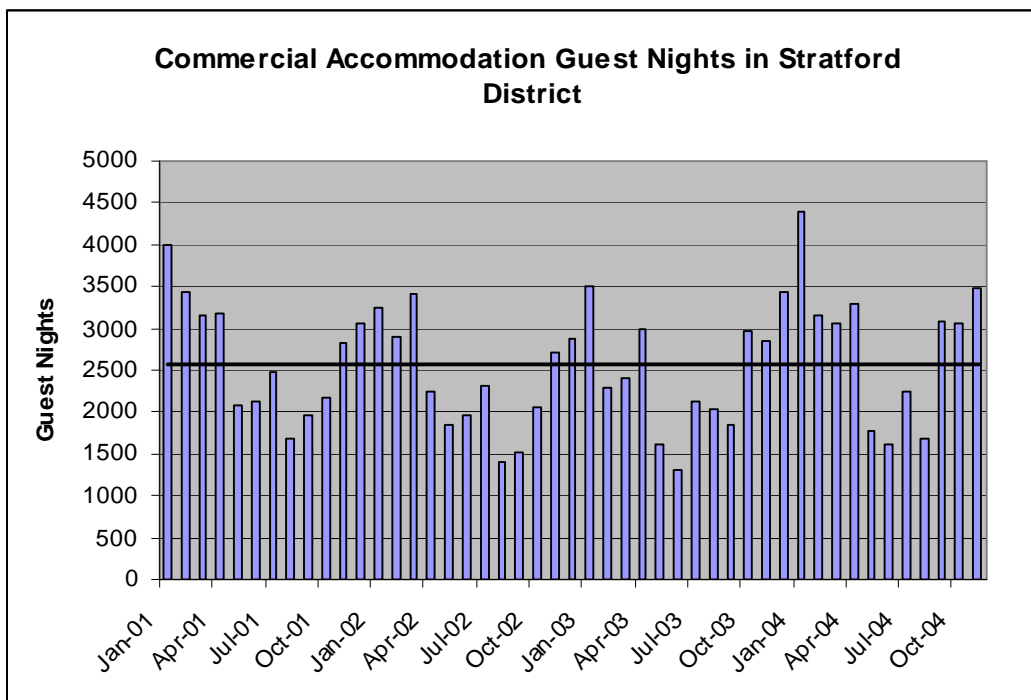
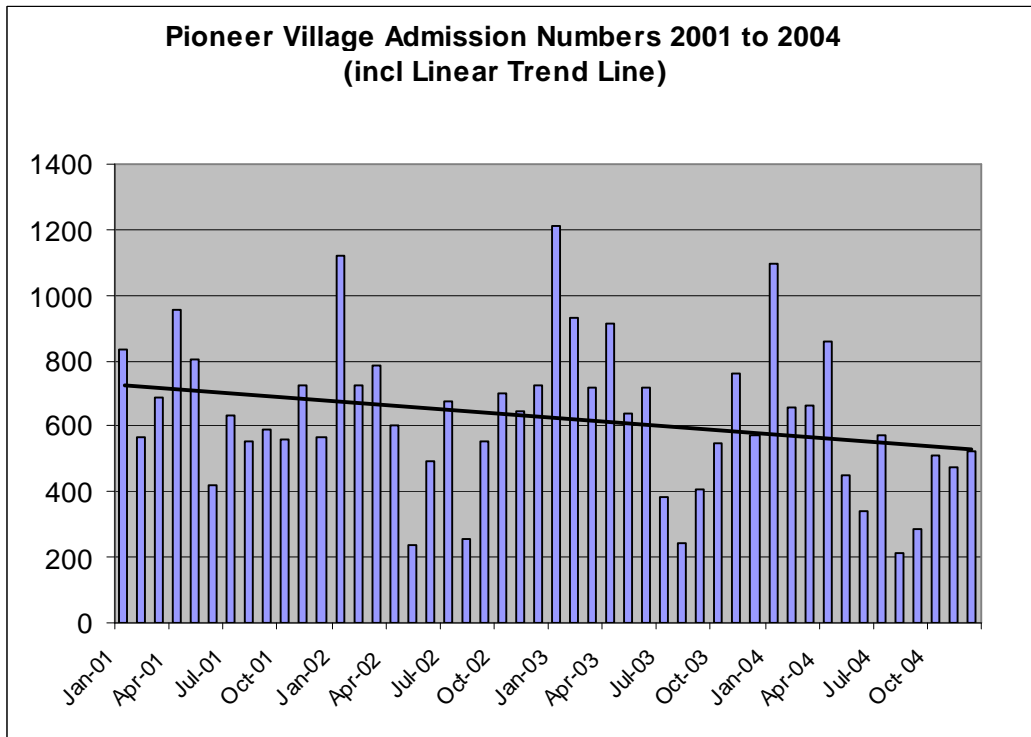
A Plan of Strategic Intent for TPV outlined the development of an Electricity Museum on the site. A concept was presented to potential funding organisations but did not succeed as it was not seen as sustainable from an ongoing operational perspective.

² Quotable Value New Zealand assessment as at 1 September 1999.

3.0 Situation Analysis

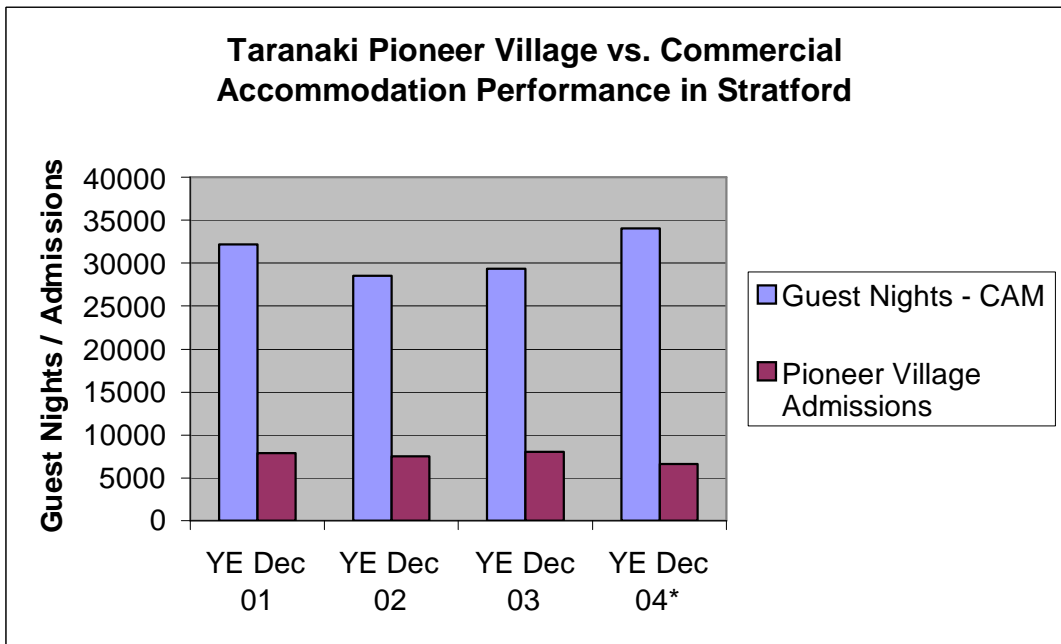
3.1 Visitor Trends

The trend line on the following graphs clearly shows the steady decline in visitors coming to the Taranaki Pioneer Village each month compared to a relatively steady trend in people staying in commercial accommodation. A decline such as this suggests that the Village has not been able to compete with other attractions in the area due to more alternatives being available, alternative attractions presenting more compelling reasons to visit or more barriers to visit exist in relation to the Village.



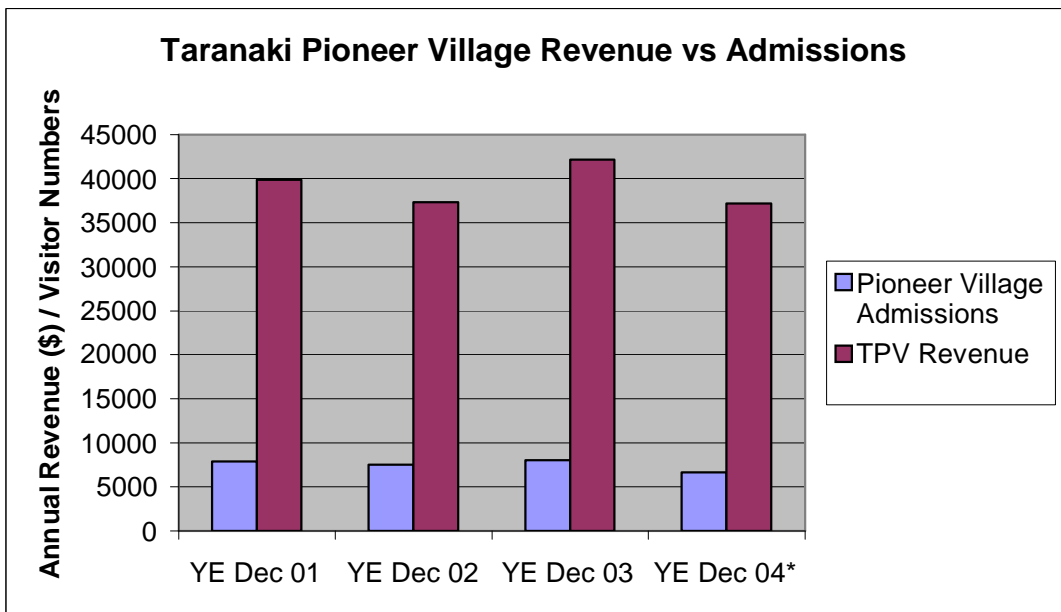
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A comparison with overall visitor activity in the Stratford District (using guest nights in commercial accommodation as a measure for tourism sector growth) shows the Village has also under performing in terms of visitor numbers compared to the tourism sector particularly in the year ended December 2004.



Guest nights estimated for the month of December 2004.

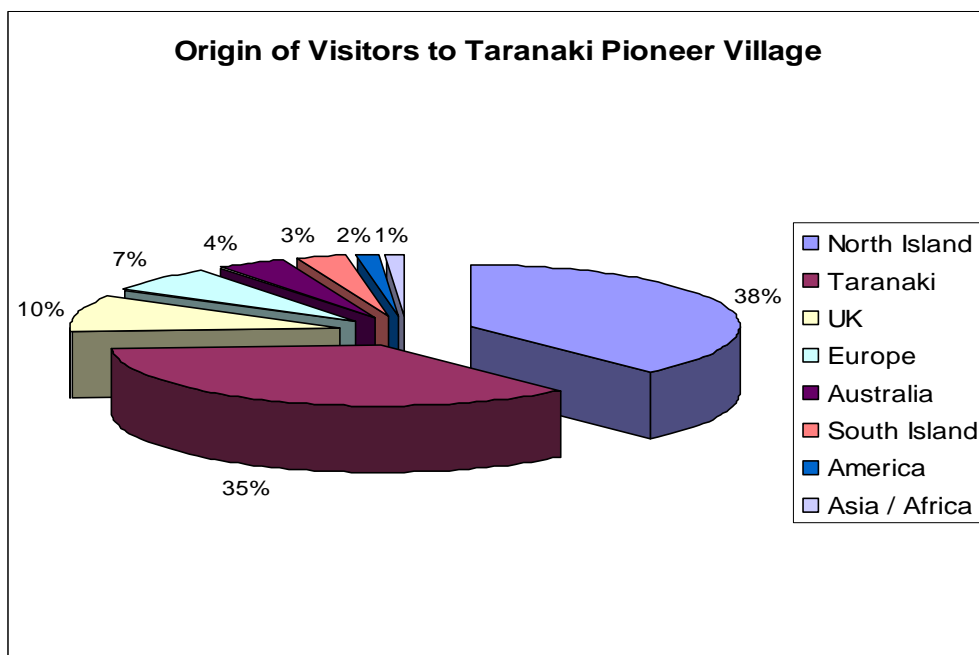
TPV admissions revenue is also showing signs of decline:



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3.2 Origin of Visitors

The North Island (excluding Taranaki) is the largest source of visitors to Taranaki Pioneer Village with Taranaki residents visiting making up a slightly lower proportion. Taranaki residents comprise nearly 50% of all visitors in winter months as international visitors drop. The North Island (excluding Taranaki) is still a key source of visitors in winter months.



Based on an analysis of customer surveys in five separate months during 2004 (January, February, March, July and September).

These origin statistics are similar to the overall composition of visitors nights spent in Taranaki in terms of the split between domestic and international visitors³.

Comparison to Overnight Visitors to Taranaki (Total Visitor Nights)

Origin	Visitor Nights 2003 (000s)	Visitor Nights (%)	TPV (%)
<i>Domestic:</i>			
North Island (excl Taranaki)	1,158	60%	38%
Taranaki	164	8%	35%
South Island	106	5%	3%
<i>International:</i>			
UK	101	5%	10%
Europe	56	3%	7%
Australia	167	9%	4%
North America	42	2%	2%
Asia / Africa	75	4%	1%
Other	74	4%	
TOTAL	1,941	100%	100%

However there is a significant under-representation of visitors to TPV from the North Island outside Taranaki i.e. TPV attracts 38% of its visitors from the North Island compared to 60% of all visitor nights in the region. The high number of commercial travellers to the region may account for some of this variance but there would still appear to be an opportunity for TPV to attract a higher number of visitors from the North Island (excluding Taranaki).

In terms of international visitors, there is a significant over-representation of visitors to the Village from UK / Europe and an under-representation from Australia when compared to the overall visitor night proportions for the region.

³ Tourism Research Council Forecasts to 2004 to 2010

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3.3 SWOT Analysis

This list was completed after the initial interviews were conducted:

Strengths

List:

- Available land
- Picturesque location
- Space to grow
- Some interesting artefacts and buildings
- Good café operation
- Relatively high passing traffic on SH3
- Diversity of buildings and artefacts
- Dedicated volunteers
- Distance from Stratford – provides a unique location and offers potential to include heritage transport options from the town centre

Weaknesses

List:

- No clear customer proposition or overall theme
- Lack of financial resources
- Only one full time paid staff member (excl the café operation)
- Low awareness of the Village as an Attraction
- Reducing local support, continuing following recent price rise (from \$8 to \$10 incl GST)
- Large area of land with many parts (open to public) appearing unfinished or untidy
- Lack of clear / consistent and high quality signage
- Inconsistent levels of interpretation offered – and with no uniform information layout
- Restricted visibility of roadside signage
- Distance from the centre of Stratford
- Not visitor friendly in bad weather
- Not enough interactive displays
- Many varied heritage perspectives involved
- The site itself has no strong historic relevance
- Aging volunteers
- Level of customer satisfaction not being measured

Opportunities

- Refine the visitor proposition to focus on key points of interest and points of difference
- Improve the focus (strengthening the proposition) on the above by reducing the area open to the public and increasing the quality and interactivity within this area
- Build on strong and identifiable themes such as the tension between the classes – utilise independent advice perhaps with Tawhiti Museum so themes are complementary
- “Complete” the village by including a general store and a hotel (the café / admissions area could become a hotel. Both these operations present more revenue generating opportunities e.g. merchandise and liquor sales
- Develop more interactive displays
- Offer consistent signage interpreting the artefacts, personalities and buildings
- Offer more regular rides such as trains, horse and carriage etc and potentially link a paid ride with the centre of Stratford as both a revenue generating and awareness building opportunity

- Attract group business e.g. meetings and convention attendees from New Plymouth
- Offer guided walks for groups
- Develop new revenue streams e.g. quality retail items, social club themed evenings etc
- Develop wet weather options or attractions
- Develop an introductory film to help direct visitors to the highlights of the Village
- Relaunch the Village as a new and more interactive experience
- Improve road side signage
- Conduct co-operative marketing campaigns with other museums / attractions
- Ensure local accommodation is aware of, and can sell the Village e.g. run familiarisation visits
- Involve documentary or reality TV in the redesign and relaunch of the Village (in order to build immediate public profile and interest)
- Linking, and co-promoting, with other attractions e.g. Tawhiti and the Fun Ho Museums or walking tour operators

Threats

- Lack of operational funding
- Perception by local residents (and funding organisations) that the attraction is no longer relevant – resulting in lower funding and fewer referrals
- Other paid attractions offering more interactive experiences that offer higher perceived value
- Safety related incidents e.g. visitor tripping over or falling from train
- Declining number of volunteers
- Downturn in international visitor arrivals
- Major road closures

4.0 The Village's Linkage with Central Taranaki Tourism Network

Like all destinations it is essential that a region offers visitors compelling reasons to visit. The Central Taranaki Tourism Strategy to 2010 outlines the need for more paid attractions in the area including the need for attractions that will appeal to visitors as wet weather options. TPV has the potential to become an iconic attraction open 7 days a week and could also provide more wet weather options for visitors.

TPV has the potential also to play a valuable role in supporting the Taranaki Tourism Strategy 2010 in particular recommendations 34 and 35 of this strategy i.e. new product development around relevant regional themes and a new "Round the Mountain" touring route. Encouraging visitors to journey around Mt Taranaki will require the construction of meaningful itineraries based on activities that are relatively evenly spread around the mountain. TPV is well placed as an essential attraction given its location on State Highway 3 and the fact its approximately half way between other heritage attractions – Fun Ho! National Toy Museum to the North, and Tawhiti Museum to the South.

5.0 Identifying an Appropriate Level of Funding from Stratford District Council

The current grant from Stratford District Council (\$11,000) is of assistance in off-setting operating losses but it is insufficient to bring about any marked change or improvement to the Village.

Many heritage attractions around the country require substantial financial support from local or central government. A sample of relevant museums around the country is shown below. It is apparent that public sector funding of these heritage attractions exceeds, or at least matches, the admissions revenue being generated.

Museum	Annual Admissions Revenue	Annual Council Funding	Council Funding Ratio
Rotorua	50%	50%	1:1
Wairoa	\$5,000	\$75,000	15:1
Oamaru	Donations only	\$290,000	20:1

In order to provide an improved experience at TPV, the Stratford District Council may investigate increasing its funding to a level similar to the examples above. Increasing annual funding of TPV to \$50,000 (assuming this is about the same level / ratio of the above examples) would effectively cover the recent trading losses (around \$40,000 p.a.). However this level of funding alone is not likely to be sufficient to ensure the long term survival of TPV. Additional resources would still be required enhance the visitor experience in order to ensure a sustainable operation in the long term.

6.0 Benefits to the Region / District

Personnel Involved

There are 29 people who have an ongoing and direct involvement in the operation of the TPV. 20 of these people are volunteers, only two are completely full time (in the café) with the manager of TPV working 35 hours per week. The remaining part time paid staff work approximately 8 hours per week (with a WINZ subsidy of a further 21 hours for the part time paid groundsman).

If the TPV were to cease trading the majority of the 9 paid personnel would be directly impacted through loss of income. The two full time and one part time people involved in the café operation could potentially continue although the long term viability would likely be negatively impacted by an absence of passing visitors entering or exiting the Village.

Total full time equivalent⁴ (FTE) employment supported by the TPV is estimated to be 5 FTEs.

Financial Impact of Potential Closure

The economic impact to the Stratford District of the TPV is estimated to be between \$320,000 and \$1,200,000 per annum. Please see the calculations below:

Taranaki Pioneer Village - Estimated Economic Impact

Activity	Conservative	Optimistic
Direct Expenditure at TPV (excl grants)	\$33,000	\$50,000
Other non-grant income	\$30,000	\$45,000
Café income (estimated)	\$67,000	\$100,500
Accommodation impact in the district	\$64,500	\$96,750
Food and beverage impact	\$30,100	\$45,150
Retail impact (incl services e.g. petrol)	\$43,000	\$64,500
Estimated Total Output (before Multipliers)	\$267,600	\$401,900
Multiplier ⁵ (for subsequent flows to the government sector)	1.20	3.00
Estimated Total Annual Economic Impact	\$321,120	\$1,205,700

Social Impacts

In addition to the employment and economic benefits provided by the TPV there are intangible benefits which result in a sense of pride for local residents when they know that there's a place that contains stories relevant to the heritage of the district and even their family. This sense of pride is perhaps evidenced by the large number of volunteers involved with TPV.

⁴ One full time equivalent (FTE) is based on a 37 hour week for 48 weeks of the year.

⁵ Source: Butcher Partners Ltd, 2001 Taranaki Multipliers (as used in the World of Music and Dance Economic Impact Study 2003)

7.0 Appropriate Level of Influence if Stratford District Council Increases Funding

TPV has the potential to be a more engaging visitor attraction and could become an iconic attraction in the District in the same way that Shantytown has on the West Coast. Stratford District Council has the ability to influence a more sustainable and iconic development at the TPV and in so doing, protecting the area against a product failure and preserving the District's valuable heritage.

The Stratford District Council could expect to have greater influence over the management of the Village should its funding increase. But the current incorporated society structure may need to be modified in order to facilitate a major development of the Village. A more independent governance model, with appropriately skilled board directors, would be required if TPV is to undergo major re-development.

8.0 Can the Present Situation Continue?

The Village, in its current form, can continue to operate in the short to medium term but probably with greater reliance on volunteers, bequests and grants. However this could result in a deteriorating visitor experience that is less able to compete with other attractions in the area and potentially even reflect poorly on the district.

Longer term survival of the Village may even be compromised the longer the Village was left to struggle with ongoing trading losses i.e. brand / visitor perceptions being tarnished rather than enhanced by the quality of the visitor experience.

It is clear from the admissions performance of the TPV that the current situation is not sustainable in the long term. Significant additional funding is likely to be required to improve the quality of the visitor experience appreciably. There are cash reserves available to the TPV Society but these are not likely to be sufficient to enter into a development of the scale required to turn the village's performance around in the medium to long term.

In order to survive in the long term the Village must develop into a more compelling visitor attraction that is able to support full time management either by operating as a more commercial model or by receiving more funding support on an ongoing basis.

9.0 Can the Village Continue to Rely on Volunteers?

Many, if not most, organisations face difficulties in attracting sufficient volunteers. The result is often too much work for too few people which leads to even fewer volunteers due to excessive workload or “volunteer burnout.”

TPV appears to have relatively strong volunteer support although many of these people are focused on a particular area of interest within the Village e.g. the hospital, the agricultural equipment or vintage vehicles. This “departmental” approach, although representative of volunteers’ interest, may not be optimal in terms of providing an integrated visitor experience – essentially the focus is on the sometimes disparate artefacts or buildings rather than on a high quality overall visitor experience.

The Village cannot rely solely on its current volunteer base in Management and Governance roles given the need for significantly different skills in order to improve the quality of the visitor experience. However volunteers are an integral part of the TPV and present a valuable opportunity for visitors to meet local people – which is increasingly important to the growing number of Interactive Travellers⁶ visiting New Zealand.

TPV may face reduced volunteer support if the future viability of the village is uncertain. However, any additional funding support, which suggests confidence in the Village, should also ensure positive ongoing volunteer support.

It will be necessary to balance the interests and energies of the volunteers with the demands of visitors i.e. wanting an engaging and interesting experience. Improving the quality of the visitor experience at TPV will require re-focusing around relevant themes and icons to provide a more valuable experience. Focusing on a narrower visitor offering and adopting a more professional approach may result in some staff and volunteers feeling left out. A clear vision, strong leadership and stakeholder buy-in will be required to make necessary changes to what should become one of Taranaki’s leading attractions.

⁶ Interactive Travellers are defined by Tourism New Zealand as being “a regular international traveller who consumes a wide range of tourism products and services and who seeks out new experiences that involve engagement and interaction, and demonstrates respect for natural, social and cultural environments.”

10.0 Observations and Options for Taranaki Pioneer Village

In compiling this report, the writers have made the following observations of TPV:

Unsustainable Operation in the Long Term

- Admissions numbers have been reducing steadily from a relatively low base.
- Low admissions revenue and rising costs mean that Taranaki Pioneer Village cannot survive in the long term in its current form without ongoing support.
- Ongoing funding difficulties may result in staff and volunteer dissatisfaction (and turnover) e.g. as more time is spent on funding applications than running a successful enterprise.

Unclear Customer Proposition

- TPV offers a broad set of heritage experiences in a largely passive way i.e. visitors must read various pieces of information to gain meaning and relevance with each building or artefact.
- The lack of shelter and inability to spend time in one indoor space (e.g. a presentation in a theatre or large building with lots to see and do makes the attraction very weather dependent.

Insufficient Resources

- There is a lack of financial resource to make major improvements to the Village so it is reliant on volunteer effort which, due to various interests of volunteers, has resulted in a piecemeal (rather than strategic) approach to development.
- There is no full time manager dedicated to the development and promotion of the Village. As a result TPV cannot compete with other activities and attractions that have full time owners or managers.
- Insufficient funds also impacts TPV's ability to generate new visitor demand by advertising.
- Investments are being used up to support operational shortfalls.

Potential Enhancements

- There is a need to move from a "product centric approach" (i.e. volunteers developing things that interest them) to a "customer centric approach" (focusing in the type and style of experience customers can expect to receive and endeavouring to surpass visitor expectations in order to generate word of mouth referral).
- Partnerships with a significant national organisation such as the Plunket Society presents potential to attract more visitors both in terms of an added attraction and a database of potential visitors (i.e. Plunket members).
- Co-operative marketing opportunities need to be pursued e.g. by working with complementary activities such as Tawhiti and with new regional themed product developments.
- Any developments will need to be carefully managed so as not to alienate any volunteers – especially if major areas of the village are no longer the focus of a revised customer experience.
- More group business e.g. schools, conferences and functions can generate good revenue but will probably require additional resource.

Based on these observations, it appears that TPV has two alternatives for the future:

1. The status quo, or
2. A more proactive approach in developing a highly valued visitor experience

10.1 The Status Quo

The current operation of the Village could continue with ongoing additional funding but this would not result in any major improvement to the visitor experience. Minor improvements would still be possible over time e.g. as expertise and/or resources become available.

Increasing operating / compliance costs (e.g. the cost of insurance or additional staff costs) could present major issues for the Board of Management given TPV's inability to significantly improve its operating income.

This alternative would likely be the continuation of the type of experience currently being provided that would, in turn, be unlikely to result in TPV becoming a key attraction in the district / region.

10.2 Proactive Development

There is, in our opinion, potential to make the Village a more enticing visitor attraction. However, this would require a feasibility study including the scale of the investment, potential funding sources, how a redeveloped Village would fit within a regional and national context and an audit of the items and stories of regional and national significance that could be portrayed in order to create a more distinctive visitor experience.

Proactive development would be likely to include enhancements to the entrance, key exhibits and signage throughout the Village which would require funding as would a re-launch of the Village along with necessary operating expenditure to manage the development.

Further areas of investigation (listed below) are recommended in order to arrive at a sustainable solution for Taranaki Pioneer Village in future.

10.2.1 Reduce the Area to Increase Experience Quality

TPV houses a lot of material – some historically significant and some not. By concentrating the key visitor interaction on the town area (i.e. everything east of the barn, waterwheel and pond) it will be possible to make a greater impact on the visitor experience. The remaining area could then become a maintenance area – still part of the Village but more as a backdrop for train rides and for storing items that are “work in progress.”

10.2.2 Develop Compelling Themes

Rather than trying to develop every heritage story of Taranaki there are some key themes that are relevant both as a potential point of difference for the Village and for generating more interest / visitation. Themes such as medical development / Plunket hospital museum, heritage or colonial gardens and demonstrating the history of the tension and differences between the “classes,” present new reasons for people to visit TPV.

10.2.3 Improve Interpretation

There is a need to improve the signage and messaging around the Village so that visitors know the important signs to look for and gain enjoyment from learning something new. Stories being told should also feature people rather than just artefacts so that visitors can relate more easily to the information being presented.

10.2.4 Bring the Experience to Life for Visitors

In addition to placing a personality at the centre of the stories surrounding buildings and artefacts it is possible to bring certain parts of the Village alive through real people in period costume (e.g. serving at the hotel / bar / general store) and audio visual presentations (e.g. a film showing every hour in the courthouse). Even basic signage in a building could refer to local people more often so that the stories are about people rather than objects – the doctor's surgery is a good example of this. Finally, people dressed in period costume don't need to just be acting – they can be interacting and selling relevant products from a general store etc.

10.2.5 Use Events to Build Awareness and Reinforce Key Themes

Starting with a "re-opening" event, there is potential for regular events, particularly around key themes (related to the Village and relevant regional themes) to gain valuable publicity and provide people with more reasons to visit or refer visitors to TPV.

10.2.6 Carefully Managing Any Development

Focusing on a narrower visitor offering and adopting a more professional approach may result in some staff and volunteers feeling left out. A clear vision, strong leadership and stakeholder buy-in will be required to make necessary changes to what should become one of Taranaki's leading attractions.

Stratford District Council, either as part of a Major Regional Initiative supporting cultural tourism development in Taranaki (via New Zealand Trade and Enterprise) or together with other relevant agencies such as National Services Te Pairangi (Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa), the Lotteries Commission, the Plunket Society, Venture Taranaki and other appropriate Taranaki trusts may choose to support a major redevelopment of the TPV.

Any major development project at TPV would require additional management expertise and appropriate stakeholder influence at a governance level in addition to new funding.

There is potential for the Village to grow. TPV currently sees only 0.4% of the 1.5 million visitors to the Taranaki region. Visitors to the region are estimated to increase to 1.76 million in 2010 and by targeting 1% of visitors to the region the Village could expect approximately 17,500 visitors per year – nearly three times the current level of admissions.

Establishing TPV as a more appealing attraction will generate greater confidence in the Village and should stimulate renewed interest from locals, co-promotional opportunities with other key attractions in the region and increased focus by key destination marketing agencies such as Venture Taranaki and Tourism New Zealand. The result would not only be increased visitors to the Village but also increased visitors (and expenditure) to other activities and accommodation in the Stratford District.

10.3 Indicative Implementation Outline

During the course of compiling this study, the board of management of TPV has indicated their interest in pursuing a more sustainable future through proactive development of the Village. TPV have appointed a sub-committee to focus on the recommendations highlighted in this pro-active strategy.

We have suggested some key steps required to implement a potential major re-development of the Village to assist with future planning should the TPV board of management then decide to adopt this approach.

<p>10.3.1 Define Local, Regional and National Stakeholders</p> <p>Gather the names and contact details of key individuals in the following organisations in order to facilitate ongoing structured stakeholder communications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current and past volunteers, trustees and benefactors • Local body politicians from Stratford District, Taranaki Regional and neighbouring district councils • Regional agencies including Venture Taranaki, Central Taranaki Tourism Network and key trusts • Tourism operators outside Central Taranaki • National tourism and heritage agencies e.g. Tourism New Zealand, Te Papa Tongarewa Museum of New Zealand and the Historic Places Trust • Local, regional and selected national media. 	<p>Who:</p> <p>TPV sub-committee, SDC communications manager, and Venture Stratford</p>
<p>10.3.2 Agree Appropriate Governance Structure for the Development</p> <p>Confirms the TPV Board sub-committee and involve necessary external resource to enable the development of a high-level project plan. This might involve assistance by / from the local and regional economic development agencies and regional / national funding organisations such as trusts.</p>	<p>Who:</p> <p>Venture Stratford and potentially Venture Taranaki</p>

<p>10.3.3 Develop a Detailed Project Plan Including the Feasibility of Leading Options</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define the new product / experience (expanding on the Proactive Development options in 10.2 above) • Decide on the scale, layout and product themes or content (considering alignment with other products and any new regional development as per the Taranaki Tourism Strategy 2005 to 2010) • Gather information on appropriate agencies / companies to provide the required expertise • Design the new experience and brand identity • Assess the economic impact of a new TPV product / experience including district wide benefits⁷ • Benchmark with other relevant operations • Determine funding options including national agencies offering support • Complete a stakeholder communications plan. 	<p>Who:</p> <p>TPV sub-committee / Consultant</p>
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Given that the focus of the above implementation is on accelerated growth, a target date for completing this work could be 31 December 2005 so that construction work might commence at the end of the next summer (peak) season. This would then allow the development work to take place during the off-peak season next autumn and winter.

The resulting benefits of a major re-development of the TPV should be seen economically (in the form of longer stays in the district / region), socially (through greater local awareness and participation) and ultimately in local pride as residents view the TPV as a “must see” attraction for their own friends and family when they visit.

⁷ It should be noted that a re-development of the TPV presents opportunities to influence visitor travel patterns resulting in longer stays in Stratford District and the Taranaki Region. Consequently any economic impact studies must consider the direct expenditure in the TPV and in the wider community

APPENDIX 1: Interviewees in the Production of This Report

Anne-Marie Rocard: President of the Taranaki Pioneer Village Board of Management. Board member for 18 years; 10 years president

Barrie Smith: Vice president of the Taranaki Pioneer Village Board of Management

Helen O'Neill: Office Manager the Taranaki Pioneer Village

Bruce Ellis: Chairman of the Central Taranaki tourism Network

Jenni Button: Venture Stratford

Various local and regional Tourism stakeholders as part of the concurrent development of the Central Taranaki Tourism Strategy 2010.

A presentation and workshop was also held with the Taranaki Pioneer Village board of management during April 2005.

APPENDIX 2: Relevant Research – Demand for Cultural Tourism (July 2003)

Tourism New Zealand has conducted specific research into Cultural Tourism products offered in New Zealand and what visitors see as improvement opportunities. To follow are some relevant excerpts from this research relating, at a nationwide level, to Museums, Exhibitions of 'Other' New Zealand History and Historic Buildings.

Museums

Areas for improvement that would better satisfy domestic and international visitors are:

- Providing an emotionally enriching experience
- The range and quality of items sold.

International visitors have also highlighted the availability and variety of food as a key improvement area.

Exhibition of 'Other' New Zealand History

Some visitors complained that our exhibits did not provide much beyond a static display of artefacts that failed to excite an understanding and appreciation of what this element of history meant to us as a people. Improvements could involve 'working exhibitions', interactivity, films or even mood music to engender an appropriate sense of what it means.

Historic Buildings

Both international and domestic visitors made comments about having a mechanism to explain the significance of the building in New Zealand's development. This was often seen as being best delivered by a person – perhaps dressed in period costume to reflect another element in the experience. Some people desire a keepsake or memento from the historic buildings e.g. locally crafted miniatures, a model kit to assemble at home, or a three-dimensional popup card (all visitor suggestions) as a permanent reminder of their experience.

The above potential areas for improvement are also directly relevant to TPV although the range and quality of food is already very good at the Café Deborah May.

20 A

Taranaki Pioneer Village

Long Term Sustainability
Presentation to Stratford District
Council

Prepared for
**Taranaki Pioneer Village
Society Inc.**

Prepared by
Watts Projections
Limited
October 2005



Projecting energy reliance into the future...

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2 HISTORY

Taranaki Pioneer Village on Mountain Road, just south of Stratford has developed into a significant tourist attraction over nearly three decades, with the large collection of historic buildings and displays now visited by thousands of visitors annually.

At a public meeting in the Ngaere Hall in 1973, Ian Harrison, president of the Stratford Antique and Collectors Club, proposed the establishment of a pioneer village. Ngaere Gardens Pioneer Village Society was formed, and obtained a lease agreement on the grounds of the historic Ngaere Gardens. Initial acquisitions were the Tariki Railway Station, a one cylinder diesel road roller and two boats. However, an initial possibility of purchasing the site did not come to fruition, so in 1976 the society brought ten acres from George Dinnan further north across the highway, and was renamed Taranaki Pioneer Village Society Inc. in October 1976.

At first, the initial work on the new property at Stratford South was not very evident as underground drainage and services progressed. The only structure was the original house, a lake was a natural asset and Mount Egmont provided a scenic backdrop. With one building and the initial plan on hand for the projected development of "the village" it was an exciting concept that became a challenge beyond immediate appreciation. The enormity of the project became evident as work progressed developing the property. A master-plan was drawn up, but amended many times as opportunities arose. Sub-committees were formed for various development projects.

The Harrison family from Climie Road were among those that typified the voluntary enthusiasm. Len was prominent in public life, chairing both the Stratford County Council and Taranaki Electric Power Board. He was largely instrumental in attracting an amenities grant from New Zealand Electricity Department that funded the Harrison Memorial Electrical Museum opened in 1982. His son Ian had his own extensive collection of old tractors and farm machinery, and became a long-serving committee member. Another son Colin, who worked in broadcasting technical services, acquired the first television camera used in New Zealand for permanent display in the village.

An initial appeal raised \$66,000 through a combination of donations and debentures, and together with a bank overdraft funded the first development stage, which entailed a car park, band stand, boat shed and renovation of the house. The next decade saw many buildings transported to the site, and a 'main street' gradually emerged, flanked by a police station, library and printing works. An original Okato cottage, a prefabricated Pembroke school classroom, and the 1905 Mangatoki Union church followed. Other structures included an agricultural museum, fire station and blacksmith shop and the old Stratford courthouse. The village also displayed and distributed local tourist information for visitors.

The Tariki Railway station was shifted from Ngaere and was subsequently restored. It now flanks the rear of the railway circuit as a railway exhibit.

Around 1984 Keith Anderson was appointed the society's first director; his efforts were largely responsible for the planning and construction of the initial village main street buildings. Thelma Mackie was then appointed the next director two years later, and set up the extensive recording of historical data relating to both the village and local history.

During the 1980's extensive use was made of various temporary employment schemes (e.g Access), with participants working on building projects and acquiring permanent skills. One volunteer supervisor heavily involved during this period was the society's first life member Eric Rogers, who gave countless hours of his time. In total around 50 buildings depicting a wide variety of businesses, professions and functions were established and refurbished over these development years.

Attempts have been made to establish an energy museum on the site – several attempts at this concept have been made since the late 1980's. The restored Stratford court house housing the Jensen chopping and sawing exhibits and the Jordan doll collection was opened in 1996, adding to a significant former town landmark built to an Edwardian design early in the 20th century.

Jim Best was a long serving President of the village. His term included an inaugural presidential term, and his vision, passion and constant dedication made him respected for achieving important progress with administration structures, policy and on-site projects. Once a farrier by trade, his appreciation of local history and pioneering spirit together with his leadership, was a significant factor during the development years. He originated the village's theme 'preserving yesterday today, for tomorrow.

Other successful new visitor attractions over the past decade have included the miniature 'big-little' railway display in an old guard's van, a Stratford Hospital Museum and the restored century-old Tariki railway station. A new steam-train engine replica is currently being built for the popular train circuit laid down in 1990 around the village perimeter.

Gala and picnic days at the village have been popular, while an education programme and storyteller for school groups have also proved successful. Taranaki Pioneer Village is now used regularly for weddings and other social gatherings, and is visited by increasing numbers of coach tours.

As with most volunteer groups, the village has experienced periods of fluctuation in enthusiasm and staff, but has still grown in authenticity and profile. Visitor takings for the village are augmented by an annual grant from Stratford District Council as well as assistance from TSB Community Trust, Taranaki Electricity Trust and various other sources including donations and bequests.

Mindful that the product required an improved level of presentation, high on the priority list was the condition of buildings and landscaping. A five year maintenance programme was introduced following an audit of all buildings; a landscape committee to improve walkways and horticultural settings was established.

Today in 2005, Taranaki Pioneer Village reflects almost three decades of voluntary enthusiasm, tenacity and foresight in largely achieving the original stated objectives of the society:

- *To promote the collection, restoration, preservation and display of buildings and articles of historical and pioneering interest, particularly of Taranaki origin;*
- *To promote and provide facilities for educational and cultural activities;*
- *To construct amenities associated with tourism.*

During this period the Board developed a very subjective viewpoint and took stock of achievements to date, with an appraisal of a clear direction for the future towards achieving the consistent long term aim – to be a unique major tourist attraction in Taranaki.

The Board recognised that an important milestone had been reached. The Society now has a pioneer village that, at long last, is a recognised visitor attraction.

3 STAKEHOLDER RECOGNITION

The achievement of the Taranaki Pioneer Village Society's objectives must be credited to its members, management committee members, volunteers, staff, and contributors of funding, artefacts, exhibits, and in kind. All these stakeholders have contributed in various ways and each deserves high recognition for their contribution. Over the years the Society has been fortunate in having received assistance from community-minded contractors and enthusiasts in their field, who have given their time and efforts, often freely.

The Society is indebted to each of those who assisted in the establishment and operation of this largely voluntary-based Society.

Support from society members over the years has been the back-bone of this society, for which it cannot exist. Contributors of artefacts, memorabilia, and exhibits have created the Pioneer Village the way we see it now.

Members of the management committee's over these three decades deserve recognition also for unselfishly volunteering their time and efforts to this common course. Each have provided expertise in different areas and worked on the many projects that have developed the visitor attraction we can now present to the community.

A huge amount of work has been provided by our volunteers over the years. The dedication of these volunteers is typified by our current volunteers, namely:

- Barbara Cook
- David Cook
- Bev Chittenden
- Val Meier
- Ruth Cross
- Joanne Percy
- Trish Old
- Bev Old
- Robyn Fredrickson
- Aureen Andrews
- Dawn Dresser
- Mangatoki Women's Institute
- Central Taranaki Rural Woman's Group
- Hospital Museum Committee, comprising:
 - Jill O'Neill
 - Rose Secker
 - Margaret Dey
 - Maureen Green
 - Pauline Todd
 - Dan Todd

Working alongside these volunteers over the years have been loyal and dedicated staff. The current staff comprise of:

- Helen O'Neil, Office Manager
- Yvonne Rosewarne, Part-time Office and Administrative Assistant
- Carol Reynolds, Part-time Office and Administrative Assistant
- Lisa Minhinnick, Part-time Office and Administrative Assistant
- Ray Taylor, Handyman and Access Contractor
- Dave Robertson, Groundsman work (under Activity in the Community) and Access Contractor

NOTE: Access Contractors work in shifts to open and close exhibit buildings daily and carry out ablution maintenance.

The development of projects, exhibits and the renovation of buildings cannot be carried out without funding. The Taranaki Pioneer Village Society wish to express their gratitude to the following financial contributors;

- Stratford District Council
- Taranaki Electricity Trust
- TSB Community Trust
- Lotteries Commission
- Heritage Lotteries Fund
- Pub Charity Inc.
- NZ Post-Community Post

4 CURRENT STATUS

From its early beginnings 30 years ago, the Taranaki Pioneer Village has developed into a significant community asset. Its ongoing drive for enhancement over these years through funded projects has produced a visitor attraction worth experiencing. Comments within the visitor book attest to the impression that our visitors have had.

The following show a few of the excellent comments written over the last year in the Taranaki Pioneer Village visitor's book, found in the reception area.

Date	Name	From	Comments
02/10/04	George & Ingrid Watson	Russia	What CAN I say "excellent"
13/10/04	Sandra Panckhurst	60's Up Movement	Excellent worth seeing more
13/10/04	Fleur Toesley	President 60's Up Movement (Philippines)	One of the best we've seen
18/10/04	Char Dockary	Taupo (bus driver)	Absolutely wonderful
12/11/04	Lisa McCall	Squamish B.C Canada	This place is amazing!
17/12/04	Blamphin Family	Hollywood, Northern Ireland	Friendly staff, great food and interesting history
17/12/04	Aniton Goto	Kent, UK	Wow!! Congratulations to all concerned. A wonderful museum
18/12/04	Claurd Family	Plymouth, UK	Very interesting. A wonderful museum
23/12/04	Jane, Robert & Andrew Boot	New Plymouth	Most enjoyable - we'll be back again!
26/12/04	Imig Riridne	France	I like very much old stuff (houses, history,) so it was very nice, interesting visit for me. Thanks.
09/01/05	Julian, Tracy, Gabriel & Eliza Wilson; Jackie Young	England	Superb look back in time!!
15/01/05	The Hilluf Jones Family	England & Tauranga	What a lovely place
31/01/05	Tom & Janice Jarrati	St John B.C. Canada	Very interesting, enjoyed it very much
03/02/05	K.M Thomas	Ipswich, England	So interesting - so many memories (I am so yrs old!!)
09/02/05	Jean & Francis McKinlay	Woodville	Very well displayed, most interesting
15/02/05	Anne Toalster	Bath, England	Very, very good - stayed & looked & enjoyed for two - three hours
21/02/05	Sally & Simon Roff	Buckinghamshire, UK	Very enjoyable way to spend a morning!
21/02/05	Bill & Margaret Johnston	Lancashire, UK	Brilliant

24/02/05	R. Reade	Whitianga	RETURN VISIT!
25/02/05	Syliva & George Kelson	Havelock North	Absolutely amazing
25/02/05	Catrona & Mark Pattison	UK	Excellent - esp. the hospital
04/03/05	Ludwig Jirgen & Helgen Rodeubach	Germany	Great !!!
19/03/05	Liz & Ray Lewis	Minehead, UK	Very comprehensive. Triggered memories
25/03/05	Peter Wood	Wellington	OUTSTANDING!
07/07/05	Suzanne Arthur	Gisbourne	A credit to the district
15/07/05	Sue & Caleb Vaughan Dave & Chianna Chittenden	Whangarei	Well thought out - fabulous!
17/07/05	Dell & David	Whanganui	Always fabulous to come here
23/09/05	Mark & Margie	England & Ireland	Excellent one of the best old settlements we have seen
20/08/05	Jo Couchman, Peter Hogan & Family		Fantastic & very nice food. Keep up the good work
28/08/05	Monica Altena	Tauranga	What a great place
04/09/05	Diane & Maurice Checklin	Upper Hutt	Excellent facility. More publicity needed so others can enjoy
25/09/05	Maria Inger		The best Pioneer Village I've ever been in
26/08/05	Vance Family		Great! Nice piece of history

4.1 Current Taranaki Pioneer Village Projects

Current projects being undertaken or with applications for funding in progress are:

1. Upgrade of original Homestead
 - Funding application currently with Lotteries Commission
 - Yet to be commenced
2. Development of Saddlery
 - Funded by Taranaki Pioneer Village
 - 99% complete
3. Bank renovation
 - Funded by TSB Bank
 - 100% complete
4. Main Street Streetlighting
 - Funding approved by TET Trust
 - Yet to commence
5. Plunket Museum development, using the ex. Caretakers house
 - Funding to be obtained by Plunket Society Inc.
 - Yet to be commenced

6. Train Project – new locomotive and upgraded carriages
 - Funded by Taranaki Pioneer Village
 - 99% complete
7. Lake walkway
 - Funding to be applied for
 - Planning commenced with Richard Bain
 - Old workshop block to be removed shortly in preparation for ground works
8. Storage areas for delicate clothing and valuable items
 - Funding to be applied for
 - Planning commenced

4.2 Taranaki Pioneer Village Assets

There are currently 53 buildings onsite and 15 acres of land with an established lake and perfect views of Mt Taranaki. The current total asset value provided within the Society's Statement of Financial Position for the year ended 30 June 2005 is \$537,600.

Peter McDonald of McDonald Real Estate has placed the current market value of the 4 hectare (10 acre) property and improvements of Taranaki Pioneer Village as \$1,000,000 excl. GST (refer Appendix 1).

The Society's Statement of Financial Performance for the year ended 30 June 2005 also provides that the total income for the annual period is \$93,200, the total expenses (incl. depreciation on building, plant and equipment) is \$123,800; giving a net loss for the annual period to 30 June 2005 of \$30,600.

4.3 Taranaki Pioneer Village Admissions

The following table provides a summary of admissions over the past two financial years, 2003/04 and 2004/05.

	\$ 2003/04	Number of Visitors 2003/04	\$ 2004/05	Number of Visitors 2004/05
JULY	2,680	446	2,313	570
AUGUST	1,548	244	1,665	294
SEPTEMBER	1,854	407	1,906	359
OCTOBER	3,000	548	2,292	514
NOVEMBER	3,349	763	3,256	477
DECEMBER	3,615	574	3,520	526
JANUARY	5,764	1,093	7,735	1,064
FEBRUARY	4,238	660	4,214	492
MARCH	3,743	663	4,624	649
APRIL	4,509	857	4,214	657
MAY	1,690	448	1,345	219
JUNE	2,280	342	1,782	236
ANNUAL ADMISSIONS	\$38,270	7,055	\$38,866	6,057

4.4 Taranaki Pioneer Village Recognitions & Awards

Taranaki Pioneer Village have over the years received many awards and recognitions. More recently, the Village was awarded a Highly Commended Tourism Award from the Taranaki Chamber of Commerce, two years running, in 2002 and 2003. In 2002/03 the Village received a certificate in recognition of their undertaking a self and peer review using the following modules of the New Zealand Museums Standards Scheme:

1. Governance, management and planning
2. Care of collections and taonga
3. Public programmes (including exhibitions)
4. Customer service
5. Relationships with communities

Both the Taranaki Chamber of Commerce and New Zealand Museums commented on the excellent systems in place at the Village.

Copies of these awards and recognitions can be found in Appendix 2.

4.5 SWOT Analysis

The following SWOT analysis indicates the internal strengths and weaknesses, and external opportunities and threats to the Taranaki Pioneer Village:

Strengths

- Available land
- Picturesque location
- Space to grow or consolidate as desired
- Some interesting artefacts and buildings
- Good café operation
- Relatively high passing traffic on SH3
- Diversity of buildings and artefacts
- Dedicated volunteers
- Distance from Stratford – provides a unique location and offers potential to include heritage transport options from the town centre

Weaknesses

- No clear customer proposition or overall theme
- Lack of financial resources
- Only one full time paid staff member (excluding the café operation, which is leased out)
- Low awareness of the Village as an Attraction
- Reducing local support, continuing following recent price rise (from \$8 to \$10 including GST)
- Large area of land with many parts (open to publics) appearing unfinished or untidy
- Lack of clear/consistent and high quality signage
- Inconsistent levels of interpretation offered – and with no uniform information layout
- Restricted visibility of roadside signage
- Distance from the centre of Stratford
- Not visitor friendly in bad weather
- Not enough interactive displays
- Many varied heritage perspectives involved
- The site itself has no strong historic relevance
- Aging volunteers
- Level of customer satisfaction not being measured

Opportunities

- Refine the visitor proposition to focus on key points of interest and points of difference
- Improve the focus (strengthening the proposition) on the above by reducing the area open to the public and increasing the quality and interactivity within this area
- Build on strong and identifiable themes such as the tension between the classes – utilise independent advice perhaps with Tawhiti Museum so themes are complementary
- “Complete” the village by including a general store and a hostel (the café/admissions area could become a hotel. Both these operations present more revenue generating opportunities e.g merchandise and liquor sales
- Develop more interactive displays
- Offer consistent signage interpreting the artefacts, personalities and buildings
- Offer more regular rides such as trains, horse and carriage etc. and potentially link a paid ride with the centre of Stratford as both a revenue generating and awareness building opportunity
- Attract group business e.g. meetings and convention attendees from New Plymouth
- Offer Guided walks for groups
- Develop new revenue streams e.g. quality retail items, social club themed evenings etc.
- Develop wet weather options or attractions
- Develop an introductory film to help direct visitors to the highlights of the Village
- Relaunch the Village as a new and more interactive experience
- Improve road side signage
- Conduct co-operative marketing campaigns with other museums/attractions
- Ensure local accommodation is aware of, and can sell the Village e.g. run familiarisation visits
- Involve documentary or reality TV in the redesign and relaunch of the Village (in order to build immediate public profile and interest)
- Linking, and co-promoting with other attractions e.g. Tawhiti and the Fun Ho Museums or walking tour operators.
- Set up mini theatre with old film excerpts of Taranaki.

Threats

- Lack of operational funding
- Perception by local residents (and funding organisations) that the attraction is no longer relevant – resulting in lower funding and fewer referrals
- Other paid attractions offering more interactive experiences that offer higher perceived value
- Safety related incidents e.g. visitor tripping over or falling from train
- Declining number of volunteers
- Downturn in international visitor arrivals
- Major road closures

5 ECONOMIC & SOCIAL IMPACT

If Central Taranaki wishes to have visitors and the consequential economic impacts that result from these visitors, it needs to offer compelling reasons to visit. This has been recognised within the Central Taranaki Tourism Strategy to 2010. This strategy also outlines the need for more paid attractions in the district including wet weather options. The review report from Geoff Burns refers to this and highlights that the Taranaki Pioneer Village has the potential to become an iconic attraction open 7 days a week and could also provide more wet weather options for visitors. Furthermore, the Taranaki Pioneer Village has the potential to play a valuable role in supporting the Taranaki Tourism Strategy 2010 by providing product development around relevant regional themes and a new “Round the Mountain” touring route. The Village is well positioned as an essential attraction given its location on State Highway 3 and the even spread of other similar attractions such as Puke Ariki, the Fun Ho! National Toy Museum, and the Tawhiti Museum.

Economic impact to the district is manifested in a number of ways. These include accommodation, food, beverage, the visiting of attractions etc. Apart from this direct visitor spending, the economic impact of having a visitor is also directly felt by the secondary spending of those businesses that received the income from the visitor.

Visitors do not generally visit one attraction, but while here they will be interested in seeing other attractions if they are available. So economic impact is due to a collective contribution. Furthermore, the contribution of any one reason for economic impact is often difficult to determine unless there is a specific event that is directly responsible for an upsurge in the economy (e.g 125th Jubilee or Baldrick's Big Day Out).

Although it is difficult to isolate individual contributions to economic impact, it is certain that each attraction does contribute. This is so because admissions prove this, and as a consequence of this income, spending within the district to other businesses is made possible. Thus it is certain that the Taranaki Pioneer Village does have an economic impact on the Stratford district.

There are a number of reports providing estimates of the economic impacts of Taranaki Pioneer Village to the Stratford district. The latest report showing this impact is the report by Geoff Burns commissioned by the Stratford District Council in May 2005. This report demonstrates a conservative impact of \$320,000 to the area. Another study on the economic impact of the Taranaki Pioneer Village was carried out during the recent planning for an electricity museum at the Village. This study was carried out by Bryan Spondre, of Goodwin Design, and indicated current community benefits of \$150,000 increasing to \$310,000 after increases in admissions due to completion of the electricity project.

The economic impact of a similar pioneer village named Shantytown on the West Coast of the South Island, has also been carried out in July 2004. This assessment of economic performance for Shantytown was reviewed and supported by the Ministry of Tourism's Research Manager in August 2004. This report indicates a direct economic impact of \$74.30 per visitor and a multiplier for subsequent flows to Government of 1.4.

This assessment needs adjustment if applied to the Taranaki Pioneer Village, because it accounts for income of Shantytown which is larger than the Village. The economic impact on the community through visitor spending at accommodation, cafes, restaurants, and other attractions would be the equivalent per visitor.

To calculate this adjustment is a matter simply of allowing for the difference in admission price per visitor. The yield per visitor from the café for both the Shantytown tearooms and the Taranaki Pioneer Village café has been taken as the same, although it is probable that the yield per visitor for the Taranaki Pioneer Village café would be more than for the Shantytown tearooms. Shantytown does have other functions that contribute to their gross turnover also that must be adjusted out of the Taranaki Pioneer Village economic impact. These are for functions, weddings, conferences, retail purchases etc. Therefore, taking the gate takings and café contributions only on a per visitor basis results in a reduction in the Shantytown economic impact to \$53.55. The gate charge at Shantytown is larger than at the Taranaki Pioneer Village averages ($\$38,866 / \$6,057 =$) \$6.42 per visitor for 2004/05. Therefore the economic impact per visitor must be reduced by ($\$20 - \$6.42 =$) \$13.58. This provides a realistic total economic impact per visitor of ($\$53.55 - \$13.58 =$) \$39.97... say \$40 per visitor, that would be directly contributed to the economy of the Stratford district.

Applying this contribution to the district economy to the visitor numbers for the 2004/05 period provides an economic impact of:

$$6,000 \text{ visitors} \times \$40 = \$240,000$$

These reports and assessments show a wide variance in results, which provides evidence of the difficulty of isolating individual contribution to economic impact. However, they all indicate a contribution attributable to the Taranaki Pioneer Village in the hundreds of thousands of dollars annually. This is evidence of the economic value of the Taranaki Pioneer Village to the community.

There are also intangible benefits of the Taranaki Pioneer Village which result in a sense of pride for local residents when stories relevant to the heritage of the district, and perhaps even their own family, are held at the Village. Furthermore, the Village provides families with an additional local entertainment resource, and a source of inspiration for children to pursue further research for projects or study. It is also an outlet for the talents of students to have input into the Village.

Therefore in terms of economic and social impact, the Taranaki Pioneer Village is a valuable asset to the community and it raises both Taranaki and Stratford's profile nationally.

6 LONG TERM SUSTAINABILITY

The long term sustainability of the Taranaki Pioneer Village is of interest in the last two questions in the terms of reference for the report from Geoff Burns, commissioned by Stratford District Council for Venture Stratford (dated May 2005).

These two questions are:

(1.5) Can the present situation continue as it is given demand on cash reserves?

(1.6) Can the village continue to rely on volunteers both in management and governance roles?

Clearly this report indicates admission numbers between 2001 and 2004 are trending downwards and that the current situation is not sustainable in the long term. What's more, the report shows that the village in its current form can continue to operate in the short to medium term but probably with greater reliance on volunteers, bequests and grants. However, remaining in its current form could potentially reflect poorly on the district. The longer term survival of the village may even be compromised, the longer the village is left to struggle with ongoing trading losses. In order to survive in the long term, the village must develop into a more compelling visitor attraction that is able to support full time management either by operating as a more commercial model or by receiving more funding support on an ongoing basis.

The management committee, whilst recognising the significant achievements of the volunteers and contributors in the past and currently, are realistic in their perception of the future direction of the village. They recognise that the current "volunteer" model embraced by the society up until now is not the model to see the village into the future, and that the Stratford District Council also perceives this and have therefore commissioned this report to address this sustainability issue.

The Taranaki Pioneer Village management committee recognises the need for change in the current model to achieve long term sustainability for the benefit of future generations to enjoy what has been created here.

With this in mind, the management committee has prepared this proposal for a change in the management operations model of the village.

7 PROPOSAL TO STRATFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

The report dated May 2005 by Geoff Burns, commissioned by the Stratford District Council indicates that the Taranaki Pioneer Village has the potential to be a more engaging visitor attraction in the district in the same way that Shantytown has on the West Coast.

The Management Committee of the Taranaki Pioneer Village Society Inc. has given full consideration to this report and discussions have been carried out with Bill Macnaught, Manager of Puke Ariki Museum; Stuart Trundle, CEO of Venture Taranaki and Regional Tourism Organisation; John Young, Chairman of Venture Taranaki; Bruce Ellis, Chairman of Central Taranaki Tourism Network; and Jenni Button, Economic Development Leader of Stratford District Council. Further discussions have also been held with Jenni regarding Taranaki Pioneer Village's long-term sustainability. Refer to Appendix 3 for a copy of a letter received from Bruce Ellis, Chairman of Central Taranaki Tourism Network.

The overwhelming conclusion that the Management Committee has come to, stemming from these discussions and the desire for the Village to survive into the future, is that the Village be handed over to the Community as a going concern now, having been provided the opportunity initiated by the Stratford District Council through the commissioning of the report by Geoff Burns.

The Taranaki Pioneer Village Society Inc. has achieved all its objectives and goals that were set 30 years ago and the Village is indeed something to be proud of for the district.

This is a generous offer that the Taranaki Pioneer Village is proposing, in that the Stratford District will gain a community asset, independently valued at \$1,000,000 market value. Immense time and effort has gone into this Pioneer Village by members of this community and now it is timely to provide this community asset back to the community to take it to the next stage in its life cycle. The village now has the potential to become an internationally acknowledged open-air museum.

In order to realise this potential the Management Committee recognise that the current "volunteer" model is not appropriate and that a more appropriate model is that of Local Government management and operation, with help and input from community volunteers "Friends of the Village". Therefore, to realise the handing over of the Village to the community it is proposed that the Stratford District Council take over the running of the Taranaki Pioneer Village including the management and operations. The Council has an infrastructure that can include the Village in its operations, promotions, presentations and themes. It is timely that the Council are also considering its identity and the Pioneer Village fits well into the heritage component of "Taranaki – Like No Other" branding.

The Stratford District Council has the ability to influence a more sustainable and iconic development in line with this identity drive and in doing so will protect the district against a "product" failure as has been experienced in the South Taranaki District recently with the closure of Dairylands. It is essential that the Stratford District's valuable heritage be preserved and the Taranaki Pioneer Village Management Committee believes this next step for the Taranaki Pioneer Village will achieve just that.

The Taranaki Pioneer Village realises that this action is a "significant activity" for the Council under the Local Government Act, that will require full public consultation for the Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP) and the Taranaki Pioneer Village would like to work with the Stratford District Council in its case presentation under this process. The presentation of this report is the first step towards this hand-over process.

The next step for the Taranaki Pioneer Village should be the consultation with its members prior to public consultation by the Stratford District Council. The Taranaki Pioneer Village Society Inc. will need to follow its rules for disbandment under its constitution, and these rules require a majority vote in two sequential general meetings. The Management Committee of the Taranaki Pioneer Village ask that these general meetings of the Taranaki Pioneer Village members be held prior to any announcement of the public consultation under the LTCCP process of this hand-over.

The Taranaki Pioneer Village is proud of its achievements and independent tradition as an incorporated society of 30 years. It is now ready to take the next step to lift the Village to become an important visitor attraction for Taranaki and respected repository for this district's special treasures and memorabilia.

When it moves under the District Council's management umbrella, the Village believes there should be immediate efficiencies. The assistance from existing Council resources with long term financial planning, property management, communication to the community, marketing and promotion are all part of the infrastructural support to be gained. The district is then set to gain a visitor attraction which will provide even further economic and social impact.

8 SUPPORTING EXAMPLES

8.1 NZ Museums with Local Government Ownership

The following is an overview of some New Zealand museums owned by local government authorities:

Southland Museum and Art Gallery has been taken over by the Invercargill City Council. This was a key feature of Venture Southlands museum funding review and regional heritage strategy. Invercargill City Council had committed \$600,000 to the museum for 2003-04 plus a one-off payment of \$80,000 to cover costs. Costs of \$3 – 4M is to be spent on it.

Christchurch Art Gallery owned by Christchurch City Council.

Lake Taupo Museum & Art Gallery's operation and management has been taken over by Taupo District Council. The Lake Taupo Museum & Art Gallery was on a very tight budget with volunteer reliance, but had a \$30,000 shortfall in their budget 2004-05. It becomes Taupo District Council owned and operated effective Saturday 15 October 2005. Management of the Lake Taupo Museum & Art Gallery become Taupo District Council staff from Monday 17 October 2005. Expenses were met by Taupo District Council over the past year.

Wairoa Museum is currently 93% funded by the Wairoa District Council.

Forrester Gallery (Oamaru) is currently 95% funded and administered by the Waitaki District Council.

Otago Museum is funded by four contributing local authorities: Dunedin City Council, Clutha District Council; Waitaki District Council; and Central Otago District Council.

Otago Settlers Museum was gifted by the Otago Settlers Museum Association to Dunedin City Council in 1991.

Waikato Museum is Hamilton City Council owned.

Dowse Art Museum and **Petone Settlers Museum** is owned by Hutt City Council.

Puke Ariki is owned by New Plymouth District Council.

Govett Brewster Art Gallery is principally financially supported by New Plymouth District Council.

Rotorua Museum is owned by the Rotorua District Council, where 50% of funds come from rate demands and the other 50% from museum-earned revenue.

8.2 NZ Museums with Local Government Funding/Assistance

The following is an overview of some New Zealand museums that receive substantial funding from local government authorities:

Nelson's Provincial Museum has allocated funding of an extra \$600,000 from both Nelson City Council and Tasman District Council on top of \$600,000 provided earlier. This is for a new museum development. Also received \$100,000 tourism facilities grant from Government for interactive displays on top of \$1.17M project funding from Ministry of Culture and Heritage last year.

Rotorua Museum of Art & History has received \$200,000 from Rotorua District Council toward the restoration of the Rotorua Bath House.

Te Manawa Museum is funded by the Palmerston North City Council. It has recently had a cut in funding from the Palmerston North City Council of \$250,000 (from \$2.4M to \$2.15M (2004), then to \$1.9M in 2005).

Te Papa receives financial support from founding partner Wellington City Council.

Sarjeant Gallery receives financial support from their partnership with Wanganui District Council.

Golden Bay Museum & Gallery receives support from the Tasman District Council.

9 REFERENCES

Taranaki Pioneer Village Study by Geoff Burns, Fernmade Ltd, May 2005.

Taranaki Pioneer Village Electricity Museum Cost Benefit Analysis by Bryan Spondre, Goodwin Design, July 2002.

Exploring the Heart of the Nation: The New Shantytown Experience, by Shantytown Society Inc. 2005.

10 APPENDICES

Appendix 1: McDonald Real Estate Valuation

Appendix 2: Awards and Recognitions

Appendix 3: Letter from Bruce Ellis, Chairman of Central Taranaki Tourism Network

APPENDIX 1: MCDONALD REAL ESTATE VALUATION

Please refer overleaf for a copy of the McDonald Real Estate Valuation.

APPENDIX 2: AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS





This is to certify that

Taranaki Pioneer Village

completed a self and peer review using the following modules of the

**New Zealand Museums Standards Scheme
Ngā Kaupapa Whaimana a Ngā Whare Taonga o Aotearoa
in 2002/03**

- 1 Governance, management and planning Mana Whakahaere, Mahi Whakahaere, Hanga Tikanga
- 2 Care of collections and taonga Tiaki Kohinga, Tiaki Taonga
- 3 Public programmes (including exhibitions) Kaupapa Tūmanui (me ngā whakaaturanga)
- 4 Customer service Wāhanga Awhina Tangata
- 5 Relationships with communities Te Mahi Tahī me ngā Huihuinga Tangata

New Zealand Museums *Standards Scheme*
Ngā Kaupapa Whaimana a Ngā Whare Taonga o Aotearoa

Jennie Haré Hindmarsh
Dr Jennie Haré Hindmarsh
Director National Services Te Paeorangi



Te Papa
National Service
Te Paeorangi

**APPENDIX 3: LETTER FROM BRUCE ELLIS, CHAIRMAN OF CENTRAL
TARANAKI TOURISM NETWORK**

Please refer overleaf for a copy of the letter received from Bruce Ellis, Chairman of the Central Taranaki Tourism Network.