



Otago Settlers Association, PO Box 74, Dunedin 9054.

**Submission to the Dunedin City Council
on the 2023-2024 draft Annual Plan
by
The Otago Settlers Association**

Introduction

The Otago Settlers Association (OSA) is pleased to have this opportunity to make a submission on the Dunedin City Council's 2023-24 draft Annual Plan on matters relating directly to the future operation of Toitū Otago Settlers Museum (TOSM).

The OSA established the Otago Early Settlers Museum in 1908 and managed it until 1991 when the OSA gifted the buildings and the collection to the Dunedin City Council. The Council has since managed the Museum to high professional standards and developed the Museum to the World-class institution it is today. The Museum is now one of the City's strategic assets and an important contributor to making Dunedin a destination for both domestic and international visitors. The Museum also provides a wonderful community space for the citizens of Dunedin where they can meet, relax and be informed.

The OSA now operates as "Friends of Toitū Otago Settlers Museum" supporting the Museum in material ways. The OSA was a major contributor in the fundraising effort for the redevelopment of the Museum and continues to support many individual projects within the Museum such as the Roslyn No. 1 Tram, the Settlers Cottage and the filming of the "Journey to New Edinburgh". The OSA is engaged with the Museum staff, supporting events and providing volunteer assistance whenever possible.

The OSA recognises the commitment the Dunedin City Council (DCC) has made to address the previous lack of protection for our cultural heritage and the shortage of suitable heritage display areas. The investment in our heritage will not only provide

benefits for current and future generations directly but also for tourism and thereby, economic development.

The Dunedin City Council has a difficult role in balancing expenditure with income. Debt is appropriate to pay for long-run and intergenerational assets but rates are essential to fund operations (and to service debt). The Council continues to look for other funding sources and to find ways of delivering improved services with existing resources. The huge investment made in TOSM is delivering results much greater than anyone expected and without significant further capital it can deliver more. Optimisation of the asset can be achieved with good management and innovation which is already evident in the present management.

Consultation documents

The draft Annual Plan for 2023-2024 is an update of year three of the 10-year plan 2021-2031. However, as the draft Annual Plan contains no significant changes to the 10-year Plan the Council is not required to consult under the Local Government Act. Accordingly, limited information is provided in the consultation documents and it is all at the highest level which makes it difficult to provide a meaningful and specific response.

The more detailed information in the draft Annual Plans of previous years did provide information on which it was possible to provide meaningful comment to assist the Council with its deliberations. The Association wishes to see the expected income and expenditure for TOSM, especially capital expenditure. In addition, operational imperatives, performance measures and tracking against the 10-year plan.

Fees and Charges

The OSA strongly supports free entry to the TOSM which gives Dunedin residents and visitors easy access to Otago's social history. The charges for Archives and Research are considered appropriate as they require staff input for a private good and are, therefore, supported. No change in fees for the 2023-2024 is also supported.

Museum Cluster

The Museum contributes to a Vibrant and Creative City also to a City of Learning. It is also important to remember the role of the Museum in the Thriving and Diverse Economy which is not highlighted in the LTP. The Museum Cluster provides a draw-card for the City. The history of the City is manifested in its historic buildings, museums, art galleries, and archives. It is also good to see the Otago Museum making its plans for future growth in visitor numbers. The two top Museums in the City are strongly supported by the Dunedin Public Art Gallery, the Hocken Collections, the Dunedin Public Library, National Archives, stately homes and a number of smaller museums including the Dunedin Gasworks Museum. For those interested in history and culture the City provides many days of diverse places to visit. Local, national and international treasures are all to be found in Dunedin.

The Museum cluster concept should sit alongside the Unesco City of Literature. It is all right here in Dunedin.

Gas Works Museum

For many years the OSA has promoted and supported the Gas Works Museum as an extremely valuable part of Dunedin's social and engineering heritage. The band of enthusiastic amateurs continue to struggle to manage the collection and conserve it for future generations. The Museum is regularly open to the public and organises activities such as the boiler generating steam and the forge working. Unfortunately, it seems that the Museum is very likely to be unsustainable in the long term in relation to the professional and management skills required and adequate funding. The OSA requests that the Council consider pulling the Gas Works Museum into its fold and managing it as part of TOSM and Lan Yuan.

Otago Anniversary Day Events

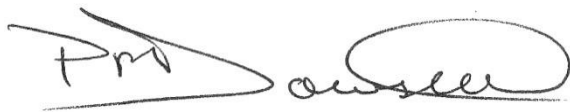
Every year the OSA has promoted and supported the Otago Anniversary Day Dinner on 23rd March marking the day the province of Otago was founded. Additionally, supports the Otago Anniversary Day service at First Church on the closest Sunday. The

OSA requests that the Council supports Otago Anniversary with complimentary events each year recognising Tangata Whenua who settled prior to 1848 and settlers from around the World over the years that followed.

Hearings

Most years recently, the OSA provided a verbal submission in support of the written submission on the draft Annual Plan and 10-year Plan. This is an opportunity for the Council to hear the view from the community and to ask questions. Whilst time consuming for the Councillors and staff, it is an important part of democracy in Dunedin and the Association urges that hearings continue to be held each year whether or not there are significant changes to the 10-year Plan.

21st April 2023

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Phil R Dowsett', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Phil R Dowsett (Past President OSA)