

Garff Parish District Commissioners

Petition to the Local Government Unit under Section 25 of the Local Government Act 1985 for the Purchase of the Snaefell/Lady Evelyn Wheel in Laxey Valley Gardens from the Laxey & Lonan Heritage Trust.

Context

The Snaefell/Lady Evelyn Wheel was installed by the Laxey & Lonan Heritage Trust on land owned by the Commissioners in 2006 in a location that had previously been the site of a similar wheel. The Wheel had been purchased by L&LHT for a nominal fee from the Trevithick Society. Since its installation the wheel has become a very popular attraction and a significant element of the rich industrial heritage of Laxey Valley.

It is the intention of the Commissioners to become the custodians of the wheel and in doing so secure its future as a notable amenity for the enjoyment of the general public in Laxey Village.

Resolution of the Board

At a meeting held on Wednesday 17th of July 2019, the Garff Parish District Commissioners Resolved to purchase the Wheel for a nominal fee and subsequently at a meeting on the 15th of October Resolved to submit a Petition for the purchase of the wheel at a cost of One Pound under the terms of Section 25 of the Local Government Act 1985. Confirmation of this decision was minuted at a statutory meeting of the Commissioners on the 2nd of December 2020. At the latter meeting the Board Resolved to write to the Department giving their consent that the transaction be progressed and requesting that an enabling Order be made by Tynwald.

The Recreation and Leisure (Garff) Order 2020

Preparations had been made to submit a petition to the Department in 2020. During initial discussions, however, it was established that there was no enabling legislation to permit the transfer/sale of the asset from the Trust to the Local Authority. Subsequently a new Order was drafted to provide the required enabling powers culminating in the enactment of the Recreation and Leisure (Garff) Order 2020. The Commissioners thank the Department for their advice in these matters and for the arrangements they made to have a suitable Order drafted and enabled.

The Purchase Cost

The Commissioners have agreed to purchase the Snaefell/Lady Evelyn Wheel from the Laxey & Lonan Heritage Trust for a nominal fee of £1.00.

The proposed purchase does not involve any application for the borrowing of funds.

Maintenance Arrangements and Cost Projection

It is anticipated that the principal cost that will be incurred over the next ten years will be for repainting the wheel. The wheel was painted in 2019 at a cost of £12,700 + VAT. It is

anticipated that the wheel will require painting again in 2024/2025, and then at regular frequencies of 5/6 years.

The Laxey Mines Research Group has indicated that it will continue to maintain and service the physical and dynamic structure of the wheel.

Laxey & Lonan Heritage Trust have submitted a report which asserts that since the wheel was restored there has been little requirement for repairs and maintenance and that the structure remains in good condition. Under their ownership, one of the legs supporting the aqueduct adjacent to the wheel has been renewed and repairs have been carried out to the wooden deck and sides of the aqueduct. They report that it is likely that some further repairs will be needed to the aqueduct in the next 2/3 years, and at regular intervals thereafter as this area has constant immersion in water. The cost to the Trust of this work in the past has been minimal as labour has been provided by the Laxey Mines Research Group. There will be a cost for suitable timber and sealant etc, but this should not exceed £500.

Most of the recent expenditure incurred has been the "one-off" provision of the display signs etc.

The waterwheel requires greasing every week or so. The cost of grease would be no more than £25 per month Easter to October. Greasing will be carried out by volunteers from either the Mines Railway or Mines Group.

At the start of the season, the intake will require clearing and the supply pipe will require bleeding; the Mines Research Group will carry out this work. The intake requires cleaning approximately monthly during the season, especially after flooding. Volunteers from the Mine Railway can carry out this task.

The wheel will be insured, including public liability cover, within the terms and conditions of the Commissioners' Insurance Policy.

The above information indicates that maintenance costs for the wheel over the next ten-year period will be in the region of £32,000. This averages to a figure of £3,200 per annum for the period, this approximately equates to an additional charge of 1p in the £.

The Commissioners have taken these projections into account and will be budgeting an annual amount of £4,000 per annum to maintain the facility (this equates to approximately 1.25p in the £).

The Board of Garff Parish District Commissioners are satisfied that their purchase of, and commitment to maintain, the Snaefell/Lady Evelyn Wheel will be in the interest of the ratepayer. The facility provides a unique attraction for the Village and Sheading which complements and strengthens the presentation of the area's industrial heritage, attracts visitors and increases the footfall through local businesses.



Martin Royle

Deputy Clerk

Garff Parish District Commissioners

11th August 2021