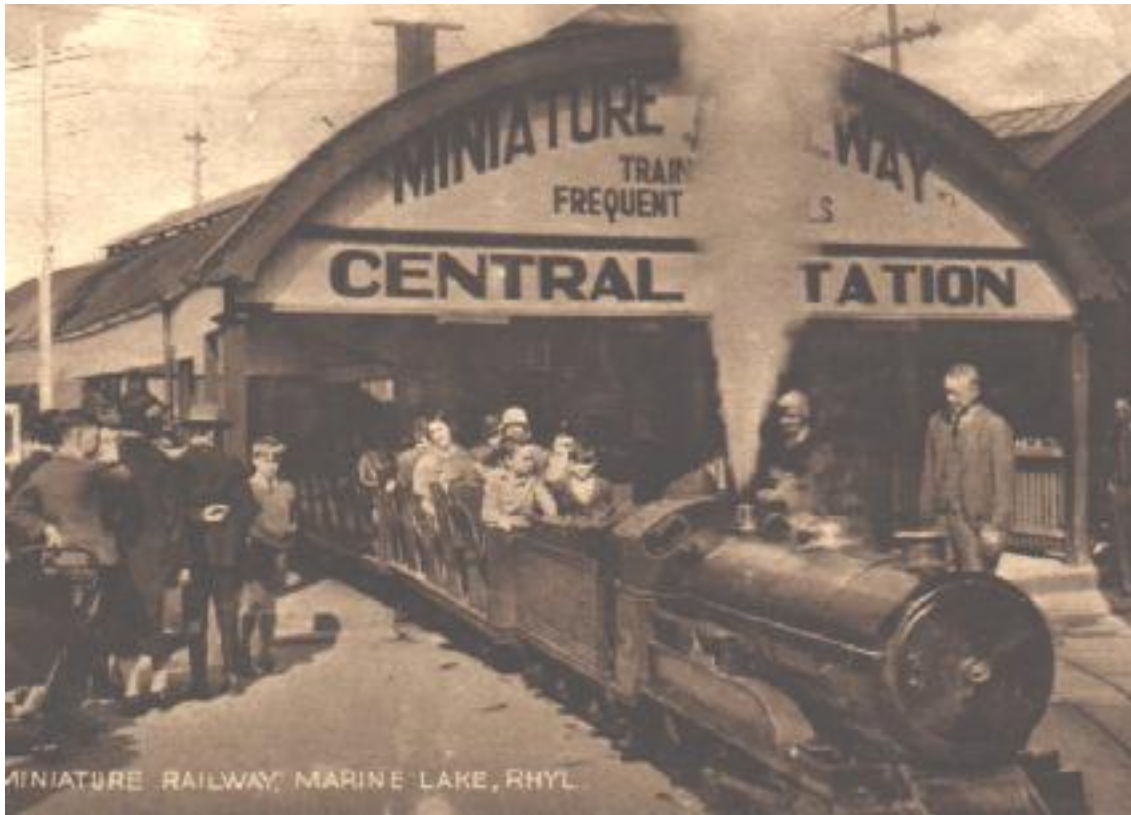


RHYL STEAM PRESERVATION TRUST

NEW STATION BUILDING AND MUSEUM FOR RHYL MINIATURE RAILWAY



BUSINESS PLAN

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Crynodeb

Prif nod y prosiect yw adeiladu gorsaf ac adeilad amgueddfa newydd, a fydd

- Yn diogelu'r casgliad rheilffordd treftadaeth, sy'n cael ei gadw ar hyn o bryd mewn sied nad yw naill ai'n ddiddos nac yn ddiogel
- Yn golygu bod modd gwarchod y casgliad
- Yn caniatáu iddo gael ei gyflwyno'n effeithiol i ymwelwyr

Wedi'i hadeiladu'n wreiddiol yn 1911, y rheilffordd pymtheng modfedd o led yn Marine Lake y Rhyl yw'r lein fechan fach hynaf ym Mhrydain, ac mae'i threnau stêm yn dyddio o'r 1920au. Fe'u hadeiladwyd yn y Rhyl ac maent yn dal i weithio yn eu lleoliad gwreiddiol ac ar gyfer eu pwrpas gwreiddiol. Mae'r prosiect hefyd yn cynnwys rhoi locomotifau a choetsis treftadaeth y rheilffordd yn rhodd i berchenogaeth yr Ymddiriedolaeth.

Mae'r prosiect yn bwysig oherwydd y bydd yn diogelu ein casgliad ar gyfer y tymor hir, ac oherwydd y manteision cyhoeddus a fydd yn llifo ohono:

- Creu atyniad treftadaeth o ansawdd, mae ein rheilffordd yn un o eiconau'r Rhyl, yn ein hatgoffa o oes aur y dref. Rydym eisiau rhoi i bobl yr un profiad ag y byddai eu hen deidiau a'u hen neiniau wedi'i fwynhau yn 1920.
- Bydd ein hadeilad yn dod yn ffocws cyfleusterau ymwelwyr yn y Marine Lake a bydd yn ein galluogi i ddehongli ein casgliad yn iawn ac i wella ein niferoedd ymwelwyr.
- Mae ein rheilffordd mewn man tra gweladwy a hygyrch yn y ward fwyaf ddfreintiedig yng Nghymru a bydd ein prosiect yn dod â llawer agwedd ar adfywio cymdeithasol ac economaidd at ei gilydd.

Bydd y prosiect yn galluogi'r Ymddiriedolaeth i weithio'r rheilffordd ar fwy o ddiwrnodau y flwyddyn; disgwylir y bydd staff cyflogedig yn ychwanegu at y tîm presennol o wirfoddolwyr.



1 Summary

The principal aim of the project is to construct a new station and museum building, which

- Will secure the heritage railway collection, which is presently housed in a shed that is neither weatherproof nor secure
- Will enable conservation of the collection
- Will allow its effective presentation to visitors

Built originally in 1911, the fifteen inch gauge railway at Rhyl Marine Lake is the oldest miniature railway in the UK, and its steam trains date from the 1920s. They were built in Rhyl and are still operating in their original location and for their original purpose. The project also includes gift of the railway's heritage locomotives and coaches into the ownership of the Trust.

The project is important because it will our secure our collection for the long term, and because of the public benefits that will flow from it:

- Enhancement of a quality heritage attraction, our railway is one of the icons of Rhyl, a reminder of the town's heyday. We want to bring to people the same experience that their great grandparents would have enjoyed in 1920.
- Our building will become the focus of visitor facilities at Marine Lake and will enable us to properly interpret our collection and to improve our visitor numbers.
- Our railway is in a highly visible and accessible location in the most deprived ward in Wales and our project will bring together many aspects of social and economic regeneration.

The project will enable the Trust to operate the railway on more days per year; it is expected that paid staff will supplement the existing volunteer team.



2 About our Organisation

Rhyl Steam Preservation Trust was formed in July 2000 and took over operation of Rhyl Miniature Railway in 2001. Its objectives are *To preserve and operate the historic miniature steam trains on the Rhyl Miniature Railway, at Rhyl Marine Lake in the County of Denbighshire, for the benefit and education of future generations.* The Trust has applied for charitable status and is hopeful that this will be granted before commencement of the building project.

A second organisation 'Friends of Rhyl Miniature Railway' was formed in May 2001 to enable enthusiasts and others to support the Trust. 'Friends' keep in touch with developments via a newsletter, which is also published on our web pages at www.rhylminiaturerailway.co.uk.

Chairman of the Trust is Les Hughes, a local businessman who owns most of the railway's equipment, steam locomotives *Joan*, *Railway Queen* and *Michael*, together with diesel locomotive *Clara* and four RMR coaches. Les has supported operation of the railway in this way since 1980. His wife Carol is also a Trustee.

The railway is operated by a volunteer team led by Simon Townsend, who is Secretary of the Trust and Chairman of the 'Friends'. Simon has attended the railway regularly since 1991 and has been its manager since 1997. He is assisted in operation and restoration by Justin Bell, who has particular responsibility for coach restoration work, and is also a Trustee

Councillor Joan Butterfield J.P. is our fifth Trustee. She has been very helpful to us in strategic matters, particularly in guiding our building project forward.

In its first three years of trading the Trust has been self-sufficient financially; its financial results are shown in the Appendices.

The railway's stability and prosperity for the last few years has been hard won. Until 2003 there had only been one working steam locomotive, *Joan*, and it was an act of faith when in 1997 she was fitted with a new boiler. In 1998 the railway was closed all season because Marine Lake had been handed over to Welsh Water for construction of an enormous storm relief tank on the site. This scheme did result in half of the railway track being relaid, but long sections of the old track were held together by rotten sleepers, and the diesel locomotive was inoperable due to vandalism. At this point it was mainly determination that prevented the railway from closing indefinitely.



New and old track, 1998



RMR Ninetieth Anniversary Celebration, 5th May 2001

From these beginnings achievements of the Trust since 2001 have been:

- Operation of regular steam trains, publicised latterly by leaflets, advertising and our web site
- Organisation of two highly successful gala weekends – the first, in May 2001, celebrated the ninetieth anniversary of the opening of the railway
- In accordance with our acquisition policy non-heritage equipment has been sold and historically significant equipment has arrived in its place
- A ‘Cagney’ locomotive has been restored to working order, having been acquired as an incomplete pallet of parts; two rare Cagney coaches have also joined the collection
- Three more traditional RMR coaches have been restored
- Our train has been equipped with continuous air brakes
- Much of our track has been re-laid with new sleepers
- Growth of our ‘Friends’ organization, which now has fifty members
- We have taken our locomotives to other UK railways from Kent to Lincolnshire, and locomotives from other railways have visited us.

Our **Mission Statement** is:

To advance education of the public about the history of Rhyl Miniature Railway, through the continued operation of heritage steam trains, and in its context of:

§ Other similar miniature railways.

§ Marine Lake fairground and other local fairgrounds.

§ Main line railways to Rhyl.

To achieve this through promoting greater access to our collection, that involves adults, children, families and schools of all cultures, genders and abilities.

Details of latest developments can be found on our web pages at

www.rhylminiaturerailway.co.uk



Relaying track, 2003



Rhyl Miniature Railway Est. 1911

2004 TIMETABLE: BANK HOL Sats and Mons,
EVERY SUNDAY from Mid June to Mid Sept,
THURSDAYS & SATURDAYS in summer school hols
All weather permitting. Find us at Marine Lake, Flegginia T4 01352 799106

3 Development of our Project

The proposed station building and museum has been a central objective of Rhyl Steam Preservation Trust since its formation. The first step was to produce a brief summary of the project together with highlights of the railway's history. An exploratory meeting was then held, on 26th January 2001, which was attended by Chris Ruane MP and Ann Jones AM, together with representatives of the WDA and various departments of Denbighshire County Council.

Feedback being favourable, contact was made with the Heritage Lottery Fund (as likely principal funder) in February 2001. This led to a meeting with HLF Grants officer Martin Buckridge in June 2001, following which Martin advised that 'the railway proposal appears to meet the HLF's funding priorities and potentially to meet our assessment criteria'.

Details of the scheme were then circulated to a short list of local architects selected by recommendation and from the RIBA's web pages. We were flattered when four firms expressed interest and were prepared to act at risk for the initial design stages. Representatives from these firms were interviewed by the Trustees on 13th September 2001, when we learnt a lot about the likely building design and costs.

Following our interviews the Trustees invited Denbighshire Design Services to act for us, the reasons being:

- Previous experience of Design Services in HLF funded projects (e.g. Ruthin Gaol project)
- Good technical facilities for computer aided design, quantity surveying etc., all 'in house'
- Previous experience at the Marine Lake site, having designed and overseen construction of Rhyl Sea Cadets' boat house
- Value for money as good as any we interviewed from the private sector. All four firms offered some discounts from the RIBA scale charges, but one quoted 15% of construction costs over £100,000. We subsequently reached agreement with Design Services that the basis of their engagement on the project would be development costs at their risk, thereafter fees to total 13% of construction costs, to include all engineering consultants, project management and site supervision during the implementation phase.

Thoughts about the detailed design followed, and briefing documents were produced in December 2001. These were issued to TACP, architects for site improvements sponsored by the WDA, who wanted to be sure that none of their proposals for hard works conflicted with our scheme.

In April 2002 an initial very ornate design was produced. When the cost of this was estimated at £920,000 we reviewed the funding criteria and some doubts were raised about affordability. In December 2002 we received an independent report commissioned from Alan Keef Ltd concerning the valuation of our railway assets for partnership funding purposes. We also researched the likely situation concerning VAT costs of the project, in conjunction with the Cardiff VAT enquiry office. This enabled us to reach definite conclusions about the affordability of the latest design proposals produced by our architects.

Being now satisfied that the current design looks attractive, can perform all the diverse functions required of the building, and satisfies criteria for potential funding, we applied for full planning permission for the building in April 2003, which was granted in August 2003.

Cash costs of the project paid by the Trust to date have been a valuation fee (£411 incl. VAT in January 2003) and the planning permission application fee (£1,320 in May 2003).

4 Strategic background

Rhyl Marine Lake was opened in June 1895. In 1908 to entertain the crowds a showman set up a novelty ride in the form of a large water chute. Various funfair stalls followed and in 1911 Rhyl Miniature Railway was built. It was designed by Henry Greenly and its first locomotives and stock were built by the famous Northampton firm of Bassett-Lowke.



Above: RMR in 1911
Right: Advertisement of 1922

THE FINEST MODEL LOCOMOTIVES
and ROLLING STOCK are BUILT by



ALBERT BARNES & CO.
ALBION WORKS, RHYL.
TOY RAILWAYS BUILT AND EQUIPPED COMPLETE.

Manager of Rhyl Amusements Limited was a young man named Albert Barnes; the company purchased Rhyl Miniature Railway in 1912 and under Barnes's direction the funfair and railway quickly prospered. After the 1914-1918 War larger locomotives were required and were built in Barnes's workshops half a mile from the site – these included *Joan* (1920), *Railway Queen* (1921), and *Michael* (c1926) which all form part of the present project.



Postcard from the 1930s



Marine Lake station in 1962

Many present day visitors to the railway recall to us how in the 1960s they would walk into the Marine Lake funfair and see two steam trains ready to carry passengers around the Lake. It is that atmosphere which Rhyl Steam Preservation Trust aims to recapture.

In 1969 the Marine Lake funfair closed for good and Rhyl Miniature Railway was lifted. Rhyl Amusements found that it was more profitable to just operate the Ocean Beach funfair, opposite us. The Marine Lake site reverted to its freehold owner, Rhuddlan Borough Council. However, railway tracks were re-laid around the Marine Lake in 1978 and trains have again operated since then in each season except for 1986 and 1997. Latterly the site itself has been managed by Denbighshire County Council Leisure Services.

Today Rhyl Marine Lake is a very different place to the funfair environment of the 1960s, but the Trust has developed its proposals in conjunction with the other Lake users, who all want our project to succeed. Marine Lake has a wide and varied user group not only in the local community but also in a regional context due to its leisure and recreational capabilities:

Recreational users: Visitors to our railway, families using the play area, kick wall and picnic areas.

Sporting users: Members of Rhyl Sea Cadets, who have a large boat house on the site; members of Ocean Beach Water Ski Club; those using the lake perimeter for cycling or jogging.

Environmentally aware interest groups: Those with an interest in managing and developing the lake as a habitat for wildlife; one of few saline lagoons in Wales.

Passive users: Those who have an interest in gentle recreational activities such as walking, exercising dogs, and observing other activities on the lake.

During the Welsh Water scheme of 1997 there was some lack of harmony between the different users' visions for the lake's future, coupled with unrest about poor maintenance of the site, and about the environmental works that formed part of the construction project. This led to creation of a Users' Forum, which meets at least twice annually to discuss matters of common interest. As a result relations between the different groups have greatly improved.



In 2001 officers of the Economic Development department of Denbighshire County Council secured funding from the Welsh Development Agency for environmental improvements at the Marine Lake. TACP architects were appointed consultants to this initiative and they produced a Strategy and Management Plan covering all aspects of the site, including our Trust's proposals. The TACP proposals were adopted by Denbighshire County Council in January 2002, and have been supported by the Countryside Council for Wales.

The TACP Management Plan reinforced experience at the Users Forum, that Marine Lake could be developed in a way that would enhance the site for all its users, the different groups being essentially complementary to one another. It supported development of a site wide high quality public realm, improved footpath and cycleway links, ease of access for disabled and community groups, expanding leisure and sporting facilities, developing a signage and interpretation strategy, expanding opportunities as an educational and community resource, and implementing a site wide landscape development and management strategy.

The TACP study divided Marine Lake into three different zones, a gateway zone (leisure and visitor facilities), active zone (sporting facilities, mainly water-based), and a passive zone (west and south shores of the lake). The action plan for the gateway zone recommended:

Proposal	Priority	Comments
Relocation of RSPT station to key location on Wellington Road and expansion as a purpose built museum, engine shed and ticket area.	High/ Moderate.	The construction and relocation of this development will be of primary significance within this zone. Properly sited, it will create a focus to draw visitors to the lake and restore in large part some of the historical importance of the site.

Over Winter 2002-2003 the first phase of improvements recommended by the management plan were implemented, funded by the WDA. These included replacement and improvement of the wall between the site and Wellington Road, provision of seating areas and construction of a cycleway. All of these works will enhance our project by making Marine Lake a more attractive environment. Specifically also, an additional entrance has been provided to enable disabled access to our station site, and several of the seating areas are conveniently situated between our station site and the lake shore.

Currently phase two of the programme is about to be implemented, funded by the WDA together with Denbighshire County Council. This includes construction of a new gateway feature at the main entrance to the site, together with signage and environmental improvements to the west and south shores. This emphasis on bringing more visitors to the site is bound to be helpful, and will directly complement our project.

Looking to the future, the Ocean Beach Water Ski Club together with Denbighshire County Council wish to develop sporting facilities and maybe to appoint a full time water sport development officer. Rhyl Sea Cadets hope to fund further buildings adjacent to their existing boathouse. Environmentalists hope that the rare species of wildlife present will be protected, and this may hopefully be addressed by the construction of an 'environmental trail', which will also interpret the unique nature of the lake for casual visitors.

In organising gala weekends that have taken place in 2001 and 2003 all the groups at the Marine Lake have worked together to provide all-round attractions. We are all united in wishing to improve our facilities and to bring people to the site in greater numbers, which is a primary objective of the Trust's project.

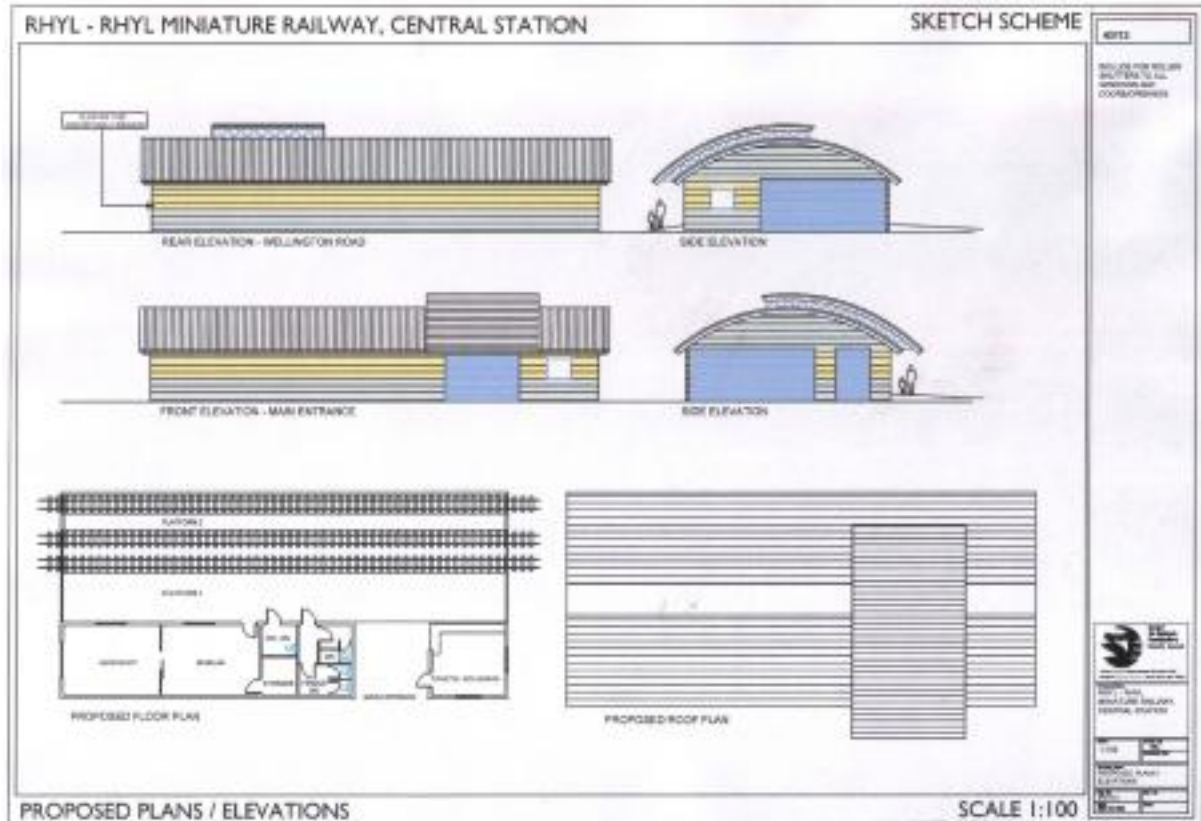


Gala poster, August 2003

5. Project details

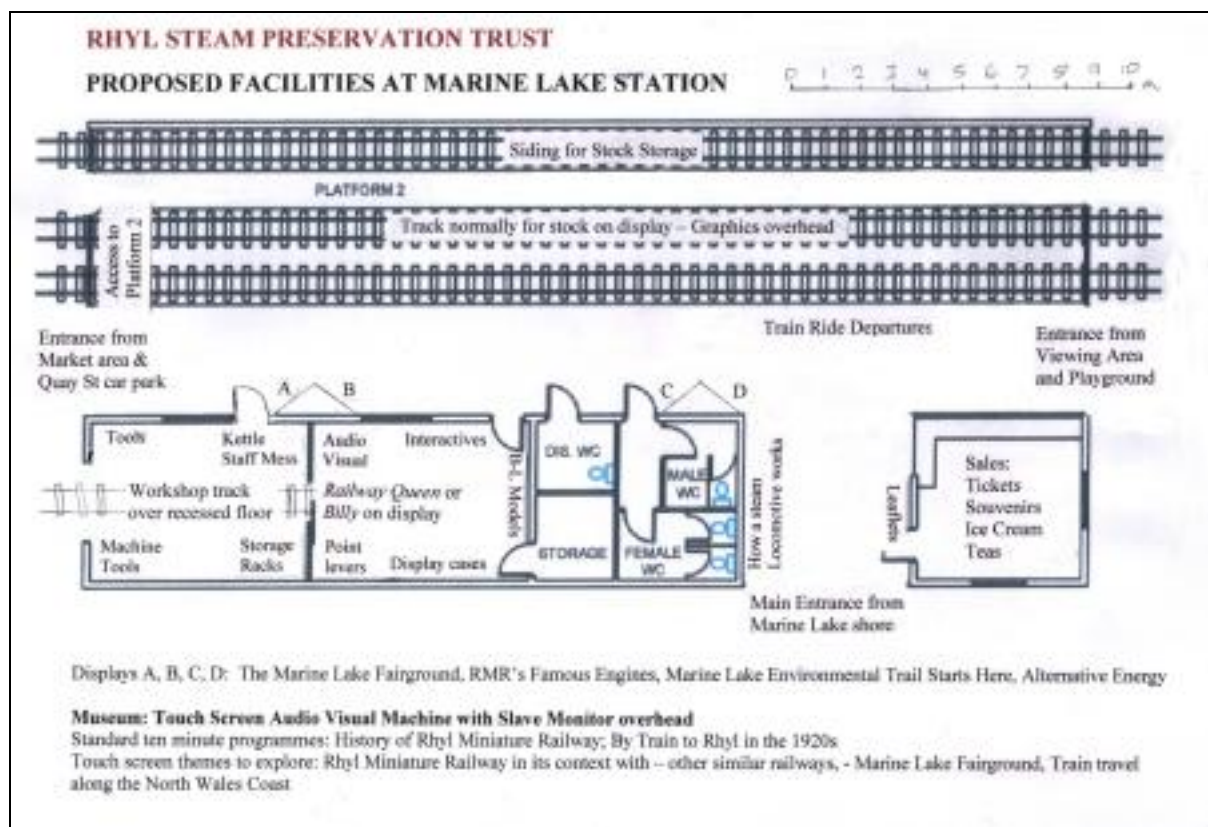
The project comprises firstly construction of a new station building and museum, secondly donation of the railway's collection of heritage assets into the ownership of Rhyl Steam Preservation Trust. Much thought has been applied to the appearance and functionality of the building, which has been designed by our architects Denbighshire Design Services. The building has already gained full planning permission, which was granted on 1st August 2003 for construction within five years of that date.

Building design



The focal point of the building will be at its south west corner, nearest to the gateway entrance to the site. Here, on main operating days, a steam locomotive will stand just outside with its train in the main platform behind. The end perspective of the building will be reminiscent of the railway's 1930s 'Central Station'. Families will be able to view the scene from the existing seating areas and watch every so often as the train sets off for its clockwise journey around the Marine Lake. The existing play area entrance is immediately adjacent, to occupy younger family members in between trains.

Those who wish to travel can visit the ticket office at this corner of the building. There will also be the opportunity to purchase souvenirs at the counter here, and probably a small range of teas and snacks, to eat overlooking Marine Lake. Entering the building past the ticket office, the main platform offers a large covered area which will be free of access from the east entrance (Gateway and play area), south entrance (Marine Lake with views of distant Welsh hills), or west entrance (from the market opposite via the new site entrance, also from the improved Quay Street car park at the west end of Rhyl Promenade).



This large main platform will be key to visitor facilities inside the building.

- § It will be the boarding point for train rides.
- § There will be interpretative panels, describing the history of Rhyl Miniature Railway, Marine Lake fairground, and train travel to Rhyl.
- § These three themes will be amplified in the museum room, free of access from the platform, inside which one of the railway's locomotives will be displayed.
- § There will be a viewing window into the workshop.
- § The starting point for the Marine Lake Environmental Trail will be here.
- § There will be scope to mount special events and displays, for instance trains at Christmas.
- § The whole area will be open to visitors at all times of railway operation, providing sheltered seating in the event of rain.
- § There will be public toilet facilities, including for the disabled.

From the point of view of operation and conservation:

- § With the shutters closed, the building will allow our collection to be stored securely, under weatherproof cover.
- § Facilities for restoration work will be greatly enhanced, with a dedicated workshop area. This will have a recessed floor and a lifting gantry – in the medium term machines will be installed to make us self-sufficient in most engineering work.
- § With all the focal point activities (trains, ticket office, displays) concentrated in one small area it will be possible for all facilities to operate on quieter days with only one or two staff in attendance.
- § On peak days two train operation will be possible, just as it was in the 1920s.
- § The workshop track will continue via a sliding door into the museum, making it possible to swap over the locomotive on static display, if required. Outside the workshop there will also be a siding making it easier for railway equipment to arrive and depart by road.

Dimensions of the building will be as follows:

Main platform, including interpretation, displays etc.	29.1m x 3.2m + 6.4m x 5m (south entrance)	124 m ²	33%
Platform 2	29.1m x 1.1m	32 m ²	8%
Museum	6.4m x 4.6m	29 m ²	8%
Workshop	6.4m x 4.6m	29 m ²	8%
Ticket office	5m x 4.6m	23 m ²	6%
Toilets and storage	6m x 4.6m	28 m ²	7%
Railway tracks, operation & storage, roads 1, 2 and 3	29.1m x 2.8m (roads 1&2) 29.1m x 1.2m (road 3)	81 + 35 = 116 m ²	30%
Outside walls		17 m ²	
Overall dimensions	29.3m x 13.6m	398 m ²	100%

In producing the building design we have had to balance all the different functions that it will perform, to try to recreate the past, to produce perspectives attractive to visitors, and to give value for money in terms of construction costs. We decided that the site of the 1960s station is now too constrained for our purposes, and none of the railway's previous structures (four station designs since 1911) have had to fulfill as many different functions as the building now proposed. We also had to consider the number of vehicles in our railway collection and our acquisitions policy in order to demonstrate to ourselves that space within the building will be adequate in the long term.

We are determined to recreate the atmosphere of the railway's heyday, and instructed our architects that we must have the elegant semi circular frontage of RMR's 1930s station (see right) - as it happens this type of roof section has also been used on two modern buildings on the site. The perspective of our station facing Wellington Road will be architecturally enhanced using sculptures, in order to encourage passers by to visit us.



Rhyl Miniature Railway in a National Context

It is worth remembering at this point that the core product of Rhyl Miniature Railway is not its building or its heritage assets, but the train ride, and this experience has been fundamentally unchanged since the railway opened in 1911. As soon as Henry Greenly first saw the site he pronounced it as ideal for a miniature railway, and his judgment has been proven by the RMR's longevity.

Looking at the many postcards that survive, together with the reminiscences heard from visitors, it seems certain that the pre-1969 railway must have carried in the order of 80,000 passengers per year, which would mean that there have been approximately four million carried since the railway was built.

It is this legacy which has created such goodwill among the railway's visitors, which the project will build upon, in order to guarantee that the railway will continue for many more years.

Heritage Assets to be acquired

The project will also include donation of the railway's collection of heritage locomotives and coaches into the ownership of Rhyl Steam Preservation Trust. These include 4-4-2 locomotives *Joan* (1920), *Railway Queen* (1921), and *Michael* (c1926), three of the railway's



Joan, when new in 1920.

original locomotives which were built by Albert Barnes only half a mile from Marine Lake. There are also six of the railway's coaches, dating from the 1910s (originally termed 'cars deluxe'), together with parts for two more. The bogies of some of these were made by the Liverpool firm of Milnes Voss, who were tramcar manufacturers during that era.

The project will safeguard this collection of railway equipment, still operating in its original location and for its original purpose, at the oldest fifteen inch gauge railway at the UK. Currently all the locomotives and stock are owned privately by the Trustees, and whilst they have supported the railway over a long period, should circumstances change the collection could be dispersed. Currently *Railway Queen* and *Michael* are on display in Anglesey, but it is anticipated that they will be back at Rhyl before the project commences, although without a new building there will then be few opportunities for the public to see them.



Above, from a catalogue of 1904
Right, Our Cagney train at Rhyl in 2003



Also included in the collection is a 'Cagney' locomotive of c1910 and two Cagney coaches. These are also historically significant – a similar train featured at the Liverpool Exhibition in 1913. This train has been invited to operate at the National Railway Museum in 2004.



In July 2000 a collection of fifteen inch gauge railway equipment was sold by auction to the highest bidder, who turned out to be a wealthy show business personality. In consequence the complete railway was exported to his location in California, these included two Bassett-Lowke locomotives, one of which had worked at Rhyl from 1912 to 1921. These artifacts, including two survivors of only a dozen or so 15in gauge engines built by Bassett-Lowke, have now been lost to the UK scene indefinitely. It is the earnest intention of Rhyl Steam Preservation Trust that such a thing must never be allowed to happen to our collection. Our Acquisitions and Disposals policy shows this.

Further details of the heritage assets, their condition and values for partnership funding, are included in the annexed valuation report prepared independently by Alan Keef Ltd. The project also includes an element of volunteer hours to be spent on restoration time.

Also included in an Annex is a full list of railway equipment (heritage and non-heritage) based at the railway, together with dimensions, to show how it all will fit inside the building.

Vision for Cultural Tourism in Denbighshire

We believe that our project fits in well with this vision:

To celebrate and promote cultural tourism in Denbighshire, creating an environment in which cultural tourism can flourish, enhancing visitors' enjoyment and experience of the county's cultural treasures.

The aim of the strategy is to address four main objectives:

- § regeneration of the leisure and recreational experience provided by seaside and coastal resorts of Rhyl and Prestatyn.
- § develop the activity holiday market in both coastal areas (watersports etc.) and rural (walking etc.)
- § realise the potential for niche marketing to visitors interested in specialist issues such as the environment, heritage, history, and archaeology
- § build upon the county's strengths and talent within the arts sector

To achieve this vision the strategy has three priority development areas:

- § branding and promotion
- § extending the stay, extending the season
- § providing the quality of visitor experience

Museum - Educational Benefit, and other key Policies

In accordance with the Trust's mission statement, we intend that the building will include displays on three themes:

- § History of Rhyl Miniature Railway, and our collection in its historical context among other 15in gauge railways.
- § Rhyl fairground heritage, particularly that of Marine Lake.
- § Main line train travel to Rhyl.

Inside the museum room a locomotive will be on static display. This could be Barnes 4-4-2 *Railway Queen*, or possibly *Billy*, which is owned by Rhyl Town Council and is presently in private storage. In one corner there will be a touch screen audio visual display unit with programmes based on the above themes.

Information and displays will not be confined to the museum room but will also be set up in the foyer and along the back of the main platform, where a window will also allow visitors to view activities in the workshop. We will develop specific proposals in conjunction with Denbighshire's museum service, but present ideas place emphasis upon hands-on exhibits for

children. These could include a signal box lever connected to a signal, signalling ‘block bells’, and ‘how a steam engine works’ incorporating a dummy locomotive cab.

In accordance with the Trust’s education policy we intend to develop worksheets and activities suitable for visiting school parties, for whom other facilities at Marine Lake such as the ‘environmental trail’ will also be suitable. There will also be opportunities for lifelong learning of restoration skills being practiced in the workshop.

In accordance with our disabled access policy the building will be wheelchair accessible and incorporate DIPTAC features. We have it in mind to adapt a railway vehicle to be suitable for wheelchairs.

In accordance with our policy on bilingualism, signage and interpretation will all be in Welsh and English. The only exceptions will be the end faces of the building, which will be signed ‘Central Station’, reminiscent of the railway’s 1930s building.

Alternative Energy aspects

It is intended that the roof of the building will be coated with photo voltaic cells – an aspect of the project which will receive its own ring-fenced funding. This will bring the following benefits:

- It should make the Trust self sufficient for its power requirements.
- There will be an additional income stream for power sold into the National Grid.
- In the future there will be the prospect of linking up with alternative energy themes at other visitor attractions in Rhyl.

Timetable and Critical Path

February 2004	Submission of revised application for charitable status
March 2004	Submission of Application for Stage One funding by the Heritage Lottery Fund
March 2004	Submission of Business Plan to obtain 30 year property lease.
	Applications for partnership funding: Rhyl Town Council ?Others
September 2004	HLF Stage One approval, development funding released.
January 2005	Submission of Stage Two application with detailed costings.
July 2005	HLF Stage Two approval, full funding package assembled.
September 2005	Commencement of site work.
Easter 2006	Grand opening of station building and museum.

Cost breakdown

Construction costs	368,180
Inflation	<u>1,500</u>
	369,680
Contingency costs at 12%	40,547
Design Services' architects costs at 13%	52,888
Museum equipment	22,000
Track materials	<u>15,000</u>
	500,115
Irrecoverable VAT at 17.5%	<u>87,250</u>
	587,635
Solar panels	50,000
Donation of railway assets	143,075
Voluntary time (£150/h skilled, £50/h unskilled)	
Project management	
Tracklaying	
Restoration	15,000
	<u>795,710</u>
TOTAL PROJECT COSTS	<u>795,710</u>
HLF funding at 70%	556,997
Donation of railway assets	143,075
Voluntary time	15,000
Solar panels funding	50,000
Partnership funding sources	30,638
EC Key Funds	
Rhyl Town Council	
Own fund raising	<u>795,710</u>

As shown in the timetable it is intended to make a two stage application to the Heritage Lottery Fund. An analysis of the estimated construction costs has been included among the appendices.

At Stage One the sum we need to raise represents architects' fees to prepare detailed designs and to administer the project through to the stage at which tenders will be received from potential building contractors. This is expected to be 78% of total architects fees, in this case $78\% \times £52,888 + \text{VAT} = £48,472$. Of this if the Heritage Lottery Fund contributes 70%, £14,542 will be required as cash partnership funding.

It will be then be possible to proceed to stage two, at which point construction tenders will have been received and the amount of allowance for 'contingency' in the capital budget will be reduced. The analysis of partnership funding allowed for voluntary time will also be clarified at stage two.

6. The Market

Passenger numbers at Rhyl Miniature Railway, actual and *predicted*, are:

Season	Days of operation	No. passengers	
1999	27	2,260	
2000	28	2,408	
2001	43	5,576	First year of Trust, Railway Gala Weekend, Steam Rally
2002	30	3,865	
2003	30	5,128	Railway Gala Weekend
2004	35	4,500	Marine Lake Gala Weekend
2005	35	6,500	Railway Gala Weekend
2006	100	9,000	First year of new building
2007	100	12,000	
2008	100	13,000	

Different types of visitors to Marine Lake and Rhyl Miniature Railway can be summarised as follows:

Staying visitors to Rhyl and Kinnel Bay. The vast majority of staying visitors are in static caravan sites in and around Rhyl, including Towyn and Kinnel Bay. A limited number also stay in hotels and bed and breakfast accommodation, others may be visiting friends and relations.

Day visitors to Rhyl as a tourist destination. These may park on the promenade underneath the Childrens' Village, or around us either at the new Quay Street car park or in Rhyl Amusements' open air car park directly opposite Marine Lake.

Rhyl's main visitor attractions are the sea life centre, sun centre and amusement arcades, all of which are situated on the central promenade, a good half mile walk away from Marine Lake. Some who have parked their cars in this area also find their way westwards, mostly to visit the Ocean Beach Funfair and the open air market across Wellington Road from Marine Lake. We hope that the signposts being erected in the current phase of improvements (both fingerpost signs and white on brown highway signs) will bring greater numbers of first time visitors directly to Marine Lake and Rhyl Miniature Railway.

Local people. The railway sees a good number of locals who ride on the railway regularly to recapture memories of earlier times, or to amuse their children or grandchildren. Marine Lake is used all year round as a location for exercising dogs or just taking a stroll.

Education market. This has great potential to develop once our project has been implemented. The proposed environmental trail and development of watersport training should add complementary structured activities for school groups on the site.

Specialist interest visitors. We have raised our profile in the specialist press during the last few years and consequently we see regularly see railway enthusiast visitors. Marine Lake also plays host to Ocean Beach Water Ski Club and Rhyl Ski Club, and sometimes their members or friends who may be with them ride on the train also. The proposed new environmental trail should attract those who are environmentally aware in greater numbers. All of the Marine Lake users agree that greater activity at the site brings benefits all round.

The Visitor market



According to the Rhyl Visitor Survey (1998) the town is seen as a good place to visit for day trips and holidays because:

- § it is a resort with a good atmosphere
- § it is close and convenient to the main catchment area of the North West and West Midlands
- § there is lots for children to do
- § it has good facilities for food and drink
- § it has good access to the beach

Other key findings from the survey included:

- § the majority of visitors come by car
- § the most usual duration of staying away from home is 7 days
- § day visit travel time from home is up to 2 hours (and one hour for those staying away from home)
- § average length of time spent in the town is 6 hours (day trippers) or 5 hours (those staying away from home)
- § there is a high level of repeat visits
- § 56% of respondents had children in their party
- § most visitors came in groups (mainly family groups) with an average party size of four
- § visitor profile is heavily skewed towards C2DE groups at the expense of AB and, to some extent, C1
- § age profile was primarily 35 – 54.

The 1995 Tourism Accommodation Survey indicated that there were 92 serviced accommodation establishments offering 1,858 bedspaces. There were also 1,180 self-catering bedspaces. However, in the 15 camping and caravan sites there were 11,547 bedspaces in static caravans, 432 chalets, 356 touring caravan and 80 tent spaces. This proportion is borne out by the 1999 Tourism Statistics, which show that of the total staying visitors of around 3.5m nearly 90% were in non-serviced accommodation.

Denbighshire's tourism strategy identified that in 1999 tourism brought £167.4 million into the county making it fifth highest in Wales, attracting five million visitors and supporting 4,000 jobs (Denbighshire Draft Tourism Strategy). The World Tourism Organisation has estimated that 37% of all trips have a cultural element and that the growth rate in trips of this kind was estimated at 15% annually during the nineties. Research commissioned by the Wales Tourist Board in 2000 identified that reasons for recommending Wales as a visitor destination related to the country's scenery and culture, peace and quiet, and nature and wildlife. Clearly, then, a desire to experience the culture and heritage of Wales is one of its main attractions.

Annual returns submitted to the Wales Tourist Board reveal the following visitor numbers for local attractions:

	1999	2000	2001	2002	Entry fee £
Suncentre, Rhyl	143,000	-	139,399	137,435	4.75
Sky Tower, Rhyl (Estimated nos)	67,000	65,000	52,000	48,000	1.50
Brickfield Pond, Rhyl (Estimated nos)	12,000	16,000	16,500	47,106	Free
Rhuddlan Castle, Rhuddlan	14,844	19,314	16,326	18,874	2.00

And the following from some other railways

Bala Lake Railway	18,674	17,473	16,354	18,919	6.70
Fairbourne & Barmouth Steam Rly	18,162	16,780	17,686	15,506	6.20

Since 1995 Rhyl has declined in popularity as a tourist destination, and the number of serviced accommodation establishments has reduced. In response to this some £25-30m of investment has taken place in tourism infrastructure and environmental improvement in the town through the WDA, WTB and local authority over the past 10 years. However, the loss of eligibility for European funding, together with the impact of a substantial debt burden inherited from the predecessor authority has meant that Denbighshire County Council has been unable to complete the environmental upgrading of the promenade and Western Parade. The consequent poor image of parts of the west end promenade must deter some visitors from walking the half mile to Ocean Beach funfair, and Marine Lake behind it.

We see all these trends reflected in the nature and number of passengers at Rhyl Miniature Railway. On the one hand the area still has a loyal group of regular visitors, who come by car for the day or to stay in local caravan parks or guest houses. On the other hand the numbers who find us at Marine Lake are clearly disproportionately low in comparison to those around the Central Promenade or even the funfair opposite us. This effect has not been helped by poor signposting to our site (currently being addressed) and the limited open air facilities currently on offer.

The station building and museum will transform our facilities and this makes us confident that we will be able to attract a higher proportion of the visitors already being seen at other local attractions.

Local people

The 2001 census of population estimated that the population of Rhyl was around 24,900 of which 57% are economically active and 5% are unemployed. 35% of households have no car and there are significant social deprivation indices in relation to single parent families and residents with limiting long term illness.

Rhyl West (the neighbourhood adjacent to Marine Lake) has a population of 4,200. 54% are economically active and 17% are unemployed. 53% of households have no car and there are significant social deprivation indices.

Rhyl West is identified as the most deprived community in Wales against a combination of factors including:

- § receipt of low income
- § 'employment deprived' reflects those who want to work but are unable to do so through unemployment or sickness
- § health reflecting risk to death and the extent to which chronic illness or disability impair people's quality of life
- § education reflects the educational characteristics of the area
- § housing reflects the level of unsatisfactory housing
- § access to services and amenities to enable communities to participate fully in society.

Against this background the benefits that our project will bring are particularly valuable.

- § The project will provide affordable accessible leisure.
- § It will provide volunteering opportunities to enable the long term unemployed to develop workplace skills.
- § Activities at Marine Lake should provide a stimulant for local people to come and see.
- § There is a strong education element in the proposed development.
- § Improved visitor numbers should result in a spin off to local businesses, thus enhancing sustainability for the benefit of local residents.
- § This is a flagship project in an area of unsatisfactory housing. Flagship projects in similar areas elsewhere have been shown to act as catalysts for other environmental regeneration including improvements to housing.

Local people are an important market for the railway. We have been raising our profile in the local press and are confident of a good level of participation, particularly in special events. The project will improve our capacity to put on different kinds of events, such as Christmas trains.



7. Financial Appraisal

BUSINESS PLAN FOR THE FIVE YEARS FROM 1ST JANUARY 2004

CASH FLOW FORECAST

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
	£	£	£	£	£
Receipts					
Earned Income					
Fares	4,000	5,000	12,000	15,000	18,000
Fares - Special events	500	1,500	1,500	3,000	1,500
Sales	0	0	6,000	7,500	8,000
Unearned Income					
Donations	200	3,300	3,300	1,300	200
Capital Grant Receipts	0	198,400	433,000	0	0
	<u>4,700</u>	<u>208,200</u>	<u>455,800</u>	<u>26,800</u>	<u>27,700</u>
Payments					
Cost of goods sold	0	300	4,740	5,975	6,200
Stock		0	3,000	0	0
Coal, oil, inspection, operating	1,000	1,150	1,265	1,455	1,600
Wages and salaries	0	0	0	1,500	2,500
Public liability insurance	900	1,000	1,500	1,600	1,700
Property and water rates	150	200	250	400	400
Property maint & insurance	0	0	4,000	4,500	5,000
Railway maintenance costs	1,300	1,440	2,160	2,520	2,600
Special event costs	0	800	800	900	500
Marketing	900	1,000	1,600	2,400	3,000
Administration costs	0	0	0	0	0
Building costs	0	202,000	433,000	0	
	<u>4,250</u>	<u>207,890</u>	<u>452,315</u>	<u>21,250</u>	<u>23,500</u>
Inflow (Outflow)	<u>450</u>	<u>310</u>	<u>3,485</u>	<u>5,550</u>	<u>4,200</u>
Balance brought forward	4,310	4,760	5,070	8,555	14,105
Bank interest costs	0	0	0	0	0
Balance carried forward	<u>4,760</u>	<u>5,070</u>	<u>8,555</u>	<u>14,105</u>	<u>18,305</u>
<i>Number of passengers - normal days</i>	<i>4,000</i>	<i>5,000</i>	<i>8,000</i>	<i>10,000</i>	<i>12,000</i>
<i>- special days</i>	<i>500</i>	<i>1,500</i>	<i>1,000</i>	<i>2,000</i>	<i>1,000</i>
	<u><i>4,500</i></u>	<u><i>6,500</i></u>	<u><i>9,000</i></u>	<u><i>12,000</i></u>	<u><i>13,000</i></u>
<i>Number of operating days</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>35</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>
<i>Shop sales % of fares</i>			<i>50%</i>	<i>50%</i>	<i>50%</i>
<i>Cost of sales % of shop sales</i>			<i>70%</i>	<i>70%</i>	<i>70%</i>

Forecast income and expenditure

The financial appraisal envisages an increase in visitor numbers from 5,100 in 2003 to 8,000 in the first year after the project, then to 10,000 and 12,000 as the quality of the new facilities becomes better known. A substantial increase in the marketing spend has been included in order to promote what we will have to offer. During the summer of 2005 there will be a major gala event as part of a nationwide tour being planned to mark the centenary of seaside miniature railways in the UK. Further railway – themed events will follow every other year, with a more modest celebration when the new building is opened.

These anticipated numbers are still modest compared with the local visitor market as a whole (see above) and the Trustees consider that they represent a cautious estimate. It would be possible for the railway to carry much greater numbers of visitors with negligible additional operating costs – simply less empty seats on the trains. Some allowance has been made for the employment of seasonal staff and if visitor numbers are good then employment opportunities will be increased correspondingly.

It is anticipated that the train fare will be increased to £1.50 all classes, and shop income has been estimated at half train fares with cost of souvenirs being 70% of selling prices. Few visitors could consider £1.50 for a train ride and museum entry to be expensive – this low fare policy represents part of our strategy to increase participation through recommendation and repeat visits, even if it means the margin of the Trust's financial reserves being lower.

Railways are not cheap to maintain. More operating days mean more wear and tear; steam locomotives tend to require heavy expenditure on a cyclical basis; invisible costs such as public liability insurance have also tended to rise over the last few years. Again every effort has been made to produce realistic estimates of costs, including post project buildings insurance based on our current broker's rates of £6.90 per £1,000 insured. In practice net funds raised by 'Friends of Rhyl Miniature Railway' are also used to help fund specific conservation projects at the railway, and this income is additional to that of the Trust.

Sensitivity analysis

Over the last five years Rhyl Miniature Railway has never owed any money to anyone other than the Trustees. The forecasts envisage that this will continue. In assessing financial viability after the project it is worth bearing in mind that the Trustees will be contributing as partnership funding assets valued at over £130,000, and a fair proportion of that represents recent private investment. It is not long ago that we had one working steam engine, which was thoroughly worn out, the diesel locomotive had been vandalised, sections of track were disintegrating and only three coaches were operational. Currently there are two working steam locomotives both with recently made boilers, two diesel locomotives and ten coaches are available for service, and much of the track has been re-laid with new sleepers.

The Trustees have carefully considered the planned maintenance that will be required leading up to, and after the project. The figures take account of further expenditure that will be required, for instance on track repairs. It will be part of our plan during this period to restore locomotive *Michael* to operation, but the funding required for this (at its maximum possible level) should be obtainable through donations and fund raising by the 'Friends' organisation. All of the improvements of the last three years have been brought about without any form of grant aid, and the Trustees are confident that the railway will continue to be self sufficient financially after the project has been completed.

8 Management and Personnel

Trustees

Simon Townsend LLB FCCA is Secretary of Rhyl Steam Preservation Trust, and will be responsible for management of the project before, during, and after implementation.

Simon is Audit Manager for a local firm of Chartered Accountants. Working in accountancy practice since 1984 has given him a wide experience of financial management in different types of businesses, including construction. He has been a volunteer at Rhyl Miniature Railway since 1991 and railway manager from 1997. He has contributed to books about miniature railways and was editor of 'The Heywood Society Journal' for ten years. His organisation skills are also currently used as an Entertainments Secretary for the Heywood Society.

Les Hughes, Chairman of the Trust, is proprietor of a series of clubs, pubs and hotels in Rhyl and along the North Wales Coast. Since 1980 he has supported the operation of Rhyl Miniature Railway and owns the majority of its heritage locomotives and coaches, which will be donated to the Trust as part of the project. His wife Carol Hughes is also a Trustee.

Joan Butterfield JP is Labour Councillor for Rhyl West, and also sits on Rhyl Town Council. During her long service as a Councillor she has participated in numerous civic projects, including construction of the Wellington Road Community Centre, where the Town Council is now based.

Justin Bell acts as deputy manager of the railway. His energy and commitment has been central to the operation and restoration achievements of the last few years. He has particular responsibilities for operation, carriage restoration and volunteering, where his experience as a Scout leader comes in very useful.

Volunteer Team Leaders – Railway Operation

Dave Bell is Secretary of 'Friends of Rhyl Miniature Railway' and our leading steam locomotive driver. He has previously participated in a number of railway preservation projects and is also qualified as footplate crew at the Welsh Highland Railway (Porthmadog).

Vernon Aynscough is also a driver at the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway, and has a wide experience of steam, from small models to traction engines and large standard gauge locomotives. His career was in civil engineering construction projects.

Frank Humphreys and Arthur Jones are our principal engineers. Frank was a full time steam locomotive driver at a steelworks, whilst Arthur is a retired farmer with an extremely wide experience of engineering solutions.

Building Project Advisors

Andrew Rainsford is Project Manager for the EU funded 'Rhyl Athy Regeneration Project'. He has participated in numerous successful grant aided projects, including some financed by the Heritage Lottery Fund. He is particularly responsible for the alternative energy aspects to our proposals.

Rev Alan Cliff is President of 'Friends of Rhyl Miniature Railway' and has been helping us to develop the educational side of our proposals. He has lived in North Wales for thirty years and is a former governor of Grove Park School in Wrexham. Recently, in retirement, he has been applying himself to writing an award winning series of books for children.

Susan Dalloe is Museums Development Officer for Denbighshire County Council. She is directly responsible for five local authority museum/heritage sites and advises a number of independent museums around the country. Susan is a Fellow of the Museums Association and a member of the Chartered Institute of Management. Throughout her fourteen year career in the museum sector she has been involved in collections management, education, customer care, facilities management, training issues and a vast number of grant-awarded and sponsorship projects.

Peter van Zeller is a member of the Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway's permanent staff. He was principally responsible for setting up the museum at Ravenglass, the only registered museum yet established in the miniature railway sector. As Chairman of the Cumbrian Railways Association he was closely involved in the project to restore the Furness Railway No 20 locomotive. This successful scheme captured the imagination of local people to such an extent that it is featured in the Heritage Lottery Fund's Guide to Heritage Grants.

Chris Shaw is Manager of Cleethorpes Coast Light Railway and a member of North East Lincolnshire Council. In 2001 the CCLR Supporters Association acquired the 'Sutton Collection' of 15in gauge railway equipment, supported by a substantial grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Other 15in Gauge Railways

We value our links with other 15in gauge railways, and feel that they form part of our own 'team', in particular the following:

Cleethorpes Coast Light Railway, Lincolnshire: We have worked closely with CCLR during 2003 and expect this to continue, with both railways contributing to operations at the National Railway Museum in 2004, and to the Centenary of Seaside Miniature Railways celebrations in 2005.

Windmill Farm Railway, Lancashire: One of the most dynamic miniature railways in the UK, our steam locomotive *Joan* received a heavy mechanical overhaul at the WFR in 1998. They have helped us in other ways, to lay track and store rolling stock. Occasionally, when we can think of something, we also help them.

Evesham Vale Light Railway, Worcestershire: The newest and one of the best-constructed 15in gauge railways in the UK, EVLR is home to *John*, another of the six 4-4-2 locomotives built by Albert Barnes & Co. Much hard work took place behind the scenes to bring *John* to our gala event in 2001, and EVLR volunteers have also assisted us in some of our own restoration projects.

9. Assessing Risk

SWOT analysis for Rhyl Miniature Railway	
Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> § Historical significance – the oldest miniature railway in the United Kingdom. § 1920s trains, built in Rhyl and still in steam there today. § Strong sense of nostalgia among our older visitors, who want to pass on their own childhood experiences to the younger generation. § Complementary visitors’ attractions, the play area and (hopefully in the future) an environmental trail. § Good volunteer base to support railway operation and conservation activities. § ‘Friends of Rhyl Miniature Railway’ supporters’ group. § Recent investment in the site sponsored by the WDA – new boundary wall and ‘gateway’ feature. § Marine Lake is located within easy access of the town centre and is accessible from the regional road and rail network. § There is already plentiful car parking near at hand. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> § Lack of public knowledge of RMR and Marine Lake as a visitor destination. § Poor or non-existent signposting (currently being addressed). § Lack of links between Marine Lake and surrounding places of interest in Rhyl. § Dependence on good weather for visitor numbers – complete absence of wet weather facilities. § Short peak season – existing trains often run with only 20% of seats taken, or less. § No advertised public toilet facilities on site. § Dog fouling around Marine Lake creates a poor public image for visitors. § Poor landscaping in certain areas creates the impression of under-investment and lack of maintenance. § Visitors regularly tell us that the site has ‘gone downhill’ since their memories of it in the 1960s. § Present facilities for restoration and conservation of railway equipment at the site are extremely limited.
Opportunities created by the Project	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> § Improved penetration of the visitor market through better facilities and increased marketing. § Developed museum facilities to properly explain our collection to visitors. § Improved educational aspects with an audio-visual display programme, and hands-on museum exhibits. § Potential for Marine Lake to become a destination for school trips. § Promote links with other museum and alternative energy locations in Rhyl. § Special events to become more frequent, for instance Santa trains in December. § Improved workshop facilities for railway restoration work to take place on site, enabling training of staff and volunteers in conservation skills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> § The existing train shed is not weatherproof, and is subject to periodic phases of vandalism. § The ‘heritage’ railway equipment is all privately owned, and could become dispersed should circumstances change. § Present poor public perception of Marine Lake can tend to deter visitors. § There is little point in trying to increase operating days whilst the railway’s visitor facilities are so limited – we need a building in order to explain to passengers what makes our railway special. § The railway is self sufficient on an income and expenditure basis, but is wholly unable to finance the project without a package of grant aid approaching 100% of the building costs.

10. Monitoring and Evaluating the Project

Intended milestones:

March 2004	Submission of Application for Stage One funding by the Heritage Lottery Fund
February 2004	Submission of Business Plan to obtain 30 year property lease.
February 2004	Submission of revised application for charitable status
	Applications for partnership funding: Rhyl Town Council ?Others
September 2004	HLF Stage One approval, development funding released.
January 2005	Submission of Stage Two application with detailed costings.
July 2005	HLF Stage Two approval, full funding package assembled.
September 2005	Commencement of site work.
Easter 2006	Grand opening of station building and museum.

Financial targets

The principal financial targets are that incoming resources of the Trust should exceed outgoing resources in any calendar year. Before the project goes ahead finance will be arranged to cover the delay between project expenditure and receipt of grant funding.

Project evaluation

The project should be evaluated against the intended benefits:

- § Whether it will secure our heritage railway collection under weatherproof cover.
- § Whether it will safeguard against risk of the collection becoming dispersed.
- § Whether it will enhance opportunities for interpretation and education.
- § Whether it will improve facilities and enable us to attract visitors in greater numbers.
- § Whether facilities for conservation of the collection will be enhanced.

Rhyl Miniature Railway, Site Address:
Marine Lake, Wellington Road, Rhyl, Denbighshire LL18 1LR

Rhyl Steam Preservation Trust, Administrative Address:
10 Cilnant, Mold, Flintshire CH7 1GG, Tel 01352 759019, Fax 01352 751198

Business Plan v15 prepared in March 2004

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- M Estimate of Building Construction Costs prepared by Denbighshire Design Services
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- O Summary of Heritage Asset Valuations
Independent Valuation Report prepared by Alan Keef Ltd
Independent Valuation Report prepared by The Miniature Railway Supply Co Ltd
- P Statement of how people will be appointed to work on our project

Other Information

- R Deed of Trust
- S Trust Minute authorising the Grant Application to be made
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