Minutes of the Tourist Attraction Signposting Assessment Committee
Western Region meeting

Thursday 19 February 2015 at the offices Forbes Shire Council, 2 Court Street, Forbes

Members
David Douglas  Regional Coordinator TASAC and Drive, Destination NSW
Phil Oliver  Guidance and Delineation Manager, Roads & Maritime Services (RMS)
Maria Zannetides  TASAC Secretariat

Also present
Sarah White  Marketing Manager, Forbes Council
Sharon Grierson  RMS Western Region
Bruce Adams  Forbes Historical Museum
Susan Stewart  Forbes Historical Museum
Donna Wilson  Technical Officer Roads, Cowra Council
Tracy Ellery  Tourism Officer, Parkes Council
Jeff Stien  Senior Economic Development Tourism Advisor, Bland Shire Council

Apologies
Marty Cassell  RMS Western Region
Lucy White  Central NSW Tourism

AGENDA ITEMS

1.  DELEGATIONS / PRESENTATIONS & REGIONAL SIGNPOSTING ISSUES

1.1  Forbes tourist signposting issues

Sarah inquired about road signage for caravan parks and the Committee provided the following advice:

i.  TASAC has no role in relation to signage for any accommodation facilities such as caravan parks, motels, hotels etc. as they are not eligible for “white on brown” tourist signposting that gives the name of the business.

ii.  Under a separate program, RMS may be able to provide small “white on blue” road signs for eligible accommodation providers in non-urban areas. The signs do not have any text. Instead, symbols representing a caravan, bed or tent are used on the signs as a service to visitors to direct them to such facilities. The “white on blue” signs are provided in accordance with Australian Standards relating to road signs. Given the large numbers of accommodation providers throughout NSW (and the country as a whole) it is not feasible to include business names on the signs and any attempts to do so would quickly become unmanageable. The Australian Standards for road signs were recently reviewed by a national committee and there was no change to the provisions regarding accommodation signs. Further information regarding these signs is available from RMS.
1.2 Signposting for Forbes Historical Museum

Susan Stewart and Bruce Adams addressed the meeting regarding tourist signposting for the Forbes Historical Museum, which is located at 11 Cross Street in Forbes and the following points were noted:

- The museum has small blade signs at the intersections of the Newell Highway and Cross Street (south east of the museum) and Lachlan and Cross Street (north west of the museum). The signs were provided by Forbes Council.

- The museum has a variety of local history items including a Ben Hall exhibit and numerous items of farm machinery.

- The museum is staffed by volunteers and its official opening hours are 2 pm to 4 pm daily and at other times by appointment. Several phone numbers are listed on the museum’s door so visitors who arrive out of hours can call to arrange for the museum to be opened.

- The museum is in a side street and tourist signs on the Newell Highway would assist to increase its visitation, which is currently estimated to be 1,500 persons per annum.

The Committee provided the following advice:

i. While TASAC has not received a formal signposting application on behalf of the museum David Tinlin, Council’s Manager Technical Services, contacted Maria in December 2014 to inquire about the possibility of tourist signposting for the museum. She explained that the museum would not be eligible for tourist signs because its hours were less than required and no useful purpose would be served in submitting an application to TASAC. It is understood that Council wrote to the museum’s operators and passed on this advice. Sharon indicated that RMS provided similar advice in writing to Council following inquiries it had received.

ii. The NSW Tourist Signposting Manual requires eligible major tourist attractions to be open for a minimum of six hours per day for five days per week including both Saturday and Sunday during 11 months of the year. These are minimum standards and attractions that do not meet these hours are not able to be signposted.

iii. Visitors have a legitimate expectation that a major tourist attraction will be open when they see a tourist sign and decide to visit. Visitor dissatisfaction reflects badly not only on the credibility of the particular attraction but also on the tourism industry in general and the credibility of the NSW signposting system.

iv. The opportunity to call a staff member to make arrangements for the museum to be opened outside the official hours is a good service to those visitors who choose to take it up but it does not overcome the non-compliance with the Manual’s opening hour requirements. When motorists find the museum to be closed many may not stop let alone go to the trouble of parking their vehicle, alighting and phoning a staff member.

v. Museums and other types of tourist attractions are not eligible for white on blue signs as these are only available for major services such as hospitals and airports.
vi. The museum may care to liaise with Council about any opportunities for advertising
signs. Such signs are located on private property adjacent to but outside the road
reserve and they may be subject to Council’s development application process.

During the discussion other ways to increase visitor awareness of the museum were mentioned
such as improving its website and brochure, greater use of digital media such as Facebook and
increasing its presence in local and regional visitor guides such as the Forbes Visitor Guide and
the Newell Highway Guide. Sarah offered to meet with Susan and Bruce to discuss advertising
signs and other ways to improve promotion of the museum.

1.3 Cowra tourist signposting issues

In December 2014 RMS Western Region sent Maria some photos of existing tourist signs in
Cowra that depict a number of non-standard and unauthorised signs, as well as several faded
or otherwise unserviceable signs. Phil drove through Cowra the day prior to the meeting and
confirmed the concerns illustrated by the photos. It was agreed that an audit of signs in Cowra
was overdue and Donna indicated that Council would undertake the necessary work in
consultation with RMS.

At the same time Cowra Tourism is interested in ascertaining the potential of gaining signs for
tourism products in the town which are not currently signposted, e.g. the prisoner of war
hologram at the visitor centre and the Peace Bell. As tourist signs for these destinations may
need to be placed at locations already occupied by existing poor quality or faded signs, the
Committee members advised that existing signs needed to be reviewed and rationalised as a
first priority and applications for any additional signs should follow at a later time.

Action: Secretariat to review TASAC records to ascertain the eligibility of destinations in
Cowra for tourist signs and advise Council and RMS Western Region of the
outcome.

1.4 Members’ report on site inspections

David made the following observations arising from site inspections in the Forbes area and
environs the day before the meeting.

i. McFeeters Motor Museum has white on brown tourist signage. TASAC found the
museum to be eligible for tourist signs in August 2009 and, as eligibility remains current
for five years, its eligibility lapsed in September 2014. David noted that the museum,
which is also a Level 3 accredited Visitor Information Centre, has advertising signs on
the building that include a yellow italic “i” symbol. The symbol is trademarked and the
use of the symbol on the building is consistent with the terms of the trademark whereby
Level 3 centres may only display the symbol at their property.

ii. Unauthorised tourist signs were observed on the Newell Highway for Gum Swamp Bird
Hide, which is about 4 km south of Forbes. During the discussion Sarah indicated that
there are no toilets at the destination and there may be some safety concerns regarding
the turning manoeuvre from the highway to the gravel road that leads to the hide. Only
short stay non-commercial attractions (e.g. lookouts or monuments) seeking tourist signs
may be exempted from the need to provide public toilets. The bird hide could not be
regarded as a short stay attraction and the lack of public toilets means that an application for tourist signposting for it would not succeed.

Action: Secretariat to request Council to remove the unauthorised signs. Alternatively, if Council wishes to retain the signs, an application to TASAC demonstrating that the bird hide is eligible for tourist signposting would be required.

2. NEW TOURIST SIGNPOSTING APPLICATIONS

2.1 Cherry Tree Hill Wines, Sutton Forest

Cherry Tree Hill Wines, which is accessed directly from the Hume Highway at Sutton Forest, is open Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 10 am to 4 pm and on Saturday, Sunday and public holidays from 10 am to 5 pm during all months. A Cabernet Sauvignon vineyard is adjacent to the driveway entry and a Sauvignon Blanc vineyard is next to the building that houses the cellar door. The vineyards were planted in 2000 but the cellar door only opened in early February 2015.

Detailed tasting notes are available as is a wine library with more than 20 volumes. As well, two colour posters are displayed on barrels in the cellar door. One panel describes the aromas of wine by comparing them to common fruits and vegetables and the other describes wine colours.

Izabella Lane at Destination Southern Highlands has been asked to provide a site inspection report.

Decision: The written application appears to satisfy the eligibility requirements.

Action: Secretariat to inform the applicant as above and complete the assessment process if appropriate after receipt of the site inspection report.

Note: A site inspection report in support of the application was received on 27 February and the application will be finalised accordingly.

2.2 C1 Speed Indoor Karting, Albion Park Rail

C1 Speed Indoor Karting has an address from the Princes Highway but its vehicular access is from Hargraves Avenue at the rear. The premises are open from 10 am to 10 pm daily.

A covering letter submitted with the application indicates that the business employs 6 full time and 65 casual staff. The business is an electric karting venue where visitors can hire karts to drive in an indoor arena. The venue hosts large corporate groups, sporting teams, children’s parties and other functions. The operator considers his business to be a tourist attraction in that travellers stop at the premises to purchase coffee and food and use the toilets. He also advised that he is involved in a matter before the Land and Environment Court regarding a digital sign that he has installed on the highway.

The application was submitted in the “Other” attractions category. However, Section C of the application form was not completed. This section requires attractions that do not clearly fit within any of the listed TASAC categories to present a strong case to be signposted as a major tourist attraction.
The Tourist Signposting Manual states that it does not apply to the signposting of a range of businesses including sporting facilities such as swimming pools and golf courses. While the Manual recognises that tourists use such businesses, they are not eligible for tourist signposting as major tourist attractions. The Committee considers karting venues (and indeed all motor racing venues) to be sporting facilities and as such they are not eligible for tourist signposting.

Decision: C1 Speed Indoor Karting is considered to be a sporting facility and as such is not eligible for tourist signposting under the provisions of the Tourist Signposting Manual.

Action: Secretariat to inform the applicant as above.

2.3 HARS Aircraft Museum, Albion Park Rail

TASAC found the Historical Aircraft Restoration Society (HARS) Aircraft Museum to be eligible for signposting in April 2009 and signs for “HARS Aircraft Museum” were installed at the intersection of Princes Highway and Airport Road and in advance of the intersection on the Princes Highway. Following advice to TASAC in September 2014 that the museum had closed indefinitely due to issues relating to its occupancy certificate, RMS made arrangements for the tourist signs to be covered over. It is understood that the museum has recently reopened and an application was submitted to reinstate the signs.

The museum’s theme is general aviation with a specific focus on the restoration of aircraft that are of historical significance to Australia. Its collection includes the first CAC Avon Sabre built in Australia, a replica of Kingsford Smith’s Southern Cross plane and the world’s last operational F-111C.

The application indicates that the museum is open daily from 9.30 am to 3.30 pm during all months. It is staffed by volunteers with an interest in aviation, the majority of whom were previously employed in the aviation industry or military air forces. HARS hosts an annual air show (Wings over Illawarra) and monthly open weekends where specific exhibits are showcased outdoors. One open weekend is planned for each month from February to April. The weekends comprise three days each, generally from Friday to Sunday inclusive on the second weekend of the month.

The following issues require clarification in order to determine the application:

i. The museum’s brochure indicates that it is open to the public from 9.30 am to 3.30 pm daily. However, its website states that HARS has “received permission to conduct limited group tours” through its museum and that “Guided tours start at 10 am with the last tour of the day starting at 2:30pm”. The application makes no reference to entry being via guided tour, nor does it explain the frequency of tours or what experience is available to those who arrive at 9.30 am until the first guided tour commences at 10 am. The reference to “limited group tours” on the website, which may relate to the terms of its occupancy certificate, also needs to be clarified.

ii. The museum’s brochure includes phone, website details and a location map but no street address. Instead, the brochure gives a post box address and the location map indicates that the museum is in a terminal building at the Illawarra Regional Airport off Airport Road. Street addresses should be included on all promotional information for signposted attractions to assist visitors trying to locate them.
iii. It is understood that each display in the museum is supported by an interpretive plaque but only one photo was provided to illustrate this. Some additional images would assist to better demonstrate the variety of the museum’s displays and their quality.

iv. The application requests signs for “HARS Aircraft Museum”, which is the same as the text on the existing covered tourist signs. However:

   o The brochure is titled “Australian Historical Flying Museum”
   o The sign at the museum’s entry refers to “HARS Museum” and
   o The listing on visitnsw refers to “Historical Aircraft Restoration Society (HARS Aviation Museum)”.

Such inconsistencies could be confusing for visitors and it is important for the promotional material and entry signs for signposted tourist attractions to use the same name as any tourist signs in order to reassure visitors that they have reached the destination they are seeking.

v. The application does not indicate how frequently exhibits are changed, though it does refer to exchange arrangements with other similar aviation museums.

vi. The application indicates that the museum has a collection policy and mission statement but only a mission statement has been provided. The museum was asked to develop a collection policy following the 2009 application but it appears that this may be still outstanding.

When the above matters have been satisfactorily addressed arrangements will be made for a site inspection report and consultation with Museums and Galleries NSW.

Action: Secretariat to request additional information from the operator to address the above matters.

3. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF 14 January 2015

The minutes of TASAC’s meeting of Wednesday 14 January 2015 in Parramatta were confirmed. The Committee members and Secretariat advised that they had completed all the actions attributed to them from the meeting except that Phil has not yet liaised with RMS Southern Region about the signage audit for proposed Tourist Drive 9 in Bega and Eurobodalla LGAs.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

4.1 Treetops, Abbotsbury

In response to a request from the Committee, the applicant has provided additional information demonstrating that:

   i. Art work for a new brochure has been designed to state “Bookings Recommended” rather than “Bookings Essential”. Submission of a copy of the printed brochure will be required prior to the installation of any signage. Changes have also been made such
that callers who phone the business are informed that bookings are recommended rather than essential and similar advice is communicated via the business' website.

ii. Twelve interpretive signs are located along the main walking path within the junior and adult courses in the TreeTop Adventure Park (adequate information had already been submitted regarding interpretive signs within the TreeTop Safari portion of the site). Most of the signs relate to native flora such as Kangaroo Grass and Blackthorn, one sign addresses the Cumberland Plain Land Snail, another describes Wianamatta Soils and another relates to the African Olive, a noxious weed that is being removed from the site.

The applicant has reiterated a preference for “TreeTops” to be the text on any tourist signs. While the legend on tourist signs is a matter for RMS to determine, the Committee expressed the view that a sign stating “TreeTops” would not best describe the tourism experience offered and visitors who were unfamiliar with the venue would not know what to expect. Therefore, TASAC’s preferred name for signposting is “TreeTops Adventure Park”.

Phil undertook to prepare a site inspection report.

Decision: TreeTops Adventure Park is potentially eligible for signposting in the Theme Parks category, subject to the provision of evidence to demonstrate that the new brochure has been printed and receipt of a satisfactory site inspection report.

Action: Secretariat to advise the applicant as above and finalise the application if appropriate after receipt of a site inspection report.

4.2 Ross Hill Wines, Orange

The operator of Ross Hill Wines responded to TASAC’s request for additional information by providing the following:

- A photo of an opening hours sign fixed to a building (the original application showed a free-standing “A” frame sign).
- Photo of the car parking area at the cellar door.
- Art work for a brochure that includes its street address and opening hours. A copy of the printed brochure will be required prior to the installation of any signage.
- A photo of books and journals about wine that are displayed at the cellar door for visitors to peruse.

On 17 February a site inspection report in support of the application was received from Glenn Mickle, Tourism Manager at Orange City Council.

Decision: Ross Hill Wines is eligible for tourist signposting in the Wineries category subject to the provision of evidence to demonstrate that the new brochure has been printed.

Action: Secretariat to advise the applicant as above.

4.3 Historic Armidale

Advice in support of an application for tourist signposting for Historic Armidale was received from Michael Ellis, Heritage Officer at the Office of Environment and Heritage on 9 February.
Michael is TASAC’s new contact at the agency following a change of role for Rajeev Maini. A letter informing the applicant of the town’s eligibility for tourist signposting was issued on 12 February and RMS Western Region was similarly informed.

Decision: TASAC noted that Historic Armidale is eligible for tourist signposting in the *Historic Towns and Villages* category.

### 4.4 Historic Hillgrove

It was noted that the application for Historic Hillgrove was referred to the Office of Environment Heritage for comment on 11 February.

### 4.5 Flyfaire Wines, Woomargama

A site inspection report was received from Jessica Sevil of the Albury Visitor Information Centre, which supported the Flyfaire Wines signposting application.

Decision: Flyfaire Wines is eligible for tourist signposting in the *Wineries* category.

Action: Secretariat to advise the applicant as above.

### 4.6 Rouse Hill House & Farm and Elizabeth Farm

Maria contacted Julie Turpie of Sydney Living Museums on 6 December and 15 January regarding existing signage for Rouse Hill House & Farm and Elizabeth Farm. Both museums are open on Saturday and Sunday and daily during school holidays from 10.30 am - 3.30 pm, which is less than required by the Tourist Signposting Manual. Ms Turpie indicated that her organisation wished to write to TASAC about the non-compliances and Maria asked that a letter be provided by 13 February. However, no correspondence has been received.

Action: Secretariat to write to the operator to allow a further six weeks for the submission of an application for each property to demonstrate their eligibility for tourist signposting.

### 4.7 Sydney Tramway Museum, Loftus

The operator of Sydney Tramway Museum has not responded to TASAC’s requests to submit an application to demonstrate that the museum is eligible for existing signposting on the Princes Highway. An application was initially requested by 14 November 2014 and an extension to 13 February was subsequently granted.

Decision: Sydney Tramway Museum is not eligible for existing signposting.

Action: Phil to arrange for the museum’s existing tourist signs to be removed and inform the Secretariat when this has occurred.
4.8 Monte Cristo Homestead, Junee

Monte Cristo Homestead’s opening hours (Friday to Monday from 10 am to 4 pm) do not meet the requirements of the Tourist Signposting Manual. The operator was asked to submit an application by 26 September 2014 to demonstrate that the business is eligible to retain its existing signage and a further extension to 5 February 2015 was subsequently granted. The operator advised the Secretariat on 7 November 2014 that Monte Cristo will not be opening on an additional day to meet the requirements and no application has been received.

Decision: Monte Cristo Homestead is not eligible for tourist signposting.

Action: Phil to liaise with RMS South West region to remove the existing tourist signposting and inform the Secretariat when this has occurred.

4.9 Mongrel Vineyard, Mudgee

Mongrel Vineyard’s opening hours (weekends and public holidays 10 am to 4 pm) do not meet the requirements of the Tourist Signposting Manual and its existing signs on the Castlereagh Highway were not authorised by TASAC. Destination NSW is in the process of replying to representations from the business owner.

5. INQUIRIES RECEIVED SINCE LAST MEETING

The following inquiries received in the period since the last meeting were noted:

- Port Stephens Barramundi Farm
- Cocoparra National Park, near Griffith
- The Farm, Byron Bay
- Ferret’s Run Winery, Gilgai
- Green Valley Farm, Tingha
- Inverell Pioneer Village
- New England Woodturning Supplies, Gilgai
- C1 Speed Indoor Karting, Albion Park Rail
- Splitters Creek Vineyard, near Albury
- Ettamogah Pub, Table Top near Albury
- Bodalla Cheese Factory, Bodalla
- Artesian Aquatic Centre, Moree
- Hawkesbury Regional Gallery
- Berowra Valley National Park

6. POLICY ISSUES

6.1 Western Region Numbered Tourist Drives

The position with respect to the review of numbered tourist drives in Western Region was discussed and is summarised in the table at Attachment 2. It was noted that updates of signage and promotional material have been completed for Tourist Drive 1 (Tooraweenah to Coonabarabran via the Warrumbungles) shared by Warrumbungle and Gilgandra LGAs.
7. OTHER BUSINESS

7.1 TASAC Meeting Schedule

Please refer to Attachment 1 for the schedule of meetings for the next six months. The next Western Region meeting will be held on 19 August 2015 in Broken Hill.

8. NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 18 March 2015 in Moss Vale (Southern Region).

The meeting concluded at 12.20 pm
### Attachment 1 – TASAC Meeting Schedule

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<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tr>
<td>2015</td>
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<tr>
<td>Southern</td>
<td>Moss Vale</td>
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<td>Northern</td>
<td>Port Macquarie</td>
<td>22 April 2015</td>
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<td>Narrandera</td>
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