

## **Kerosene Creek Tramway Hartley Vale**

**Matthew Hyde  
General Manager  
Snowy Valleys Council  
TUMBARUMBA**

For the attention of Wayne Bennett

Dear Mr Hyde,  
Kerosene Creek Tramway (KCT) is an incorporated, not for profit group of ex tourist railway volunteers who are building a demonstration shale tramway in Hartley Vale (near Lithgow). Our incorporation number is INC1701684 in the name of "Kerosene Creek Tramway Incorporated" and dated 8th December 2017. The Tramway will be two-foot gauge (595 mm actually), "powered" by steam or diesel locomotives, or occasionally a hay burner (horse). Although we intended to use skip rail, i.e. 20lb yard rail, there is none available in NSW and we must look for a heavier substitute.

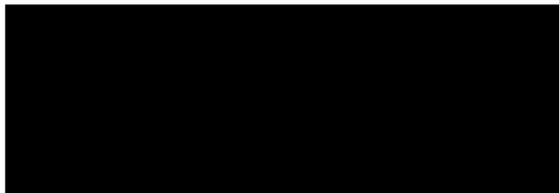
Following the decommissioning of the Tumbarumba to Rosewood section of the branch from Tumbarumba to Wagga Wagga, there is a large quantity of redundant 60lb/yard railway which I believe is surplus to your requirements.

Could you please consider allowing KCT to recover, at our expense, approximately 1 km of 60 lb/yard rail for use on the Tramway. We have a qualified Protection Officer to supervise the loading.

Should you require any further information re the Kerosene Creek Tramway proposal please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Michael Forbes OAM FCILT (Ret'd)  
Secretary and Public Officer  
Kerosene Creek Tramway



[Sent as attachment to an email to [info@svc.nsw.gov.au](mailto:info@svc.nsw.gov.au) – not sent in paper post]

## **Background on the potential re-use for the materials**

### **HARTLEY VALE TRAMWAY**

Shale mined in the Hartley Valley in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was transported by horse drawn dray from Hartley Vale to the railway station at Mount Victoria. This cumbersome method of transport also meant that the quantity of shale delivered to Waterloo was only enough to keep half of the retorts in operation. Norman Selfe designed a horse drawn tramway that would connect the mines directly to the railway at a point three and a half miles north of Mount Victoria Railway Station and it was expected that using the tramway would reduce the cost of transporting the shale by over eighty per cent. The most significant feature of this tramway was a 600 feet high cable worked incline that had a gradient of one in two. Tenders for the construction of the tramway were called in March 1869, and the contract was awarded to William Corneille, who had been Patrick Higgins' overseer during the construction of the Lithgow Zig Zag. The tramway and incline were completed in December 1869.

A significant change during the late 1870s and early 1880s was the mechanization of the tramway system. In January 1879, the Shale and Oil Company ordered a locomotive from Mort's Dock & Engineering Company at Balmain in Sydney. This locomotive "had to be capable of working on a curve of not more than 200 feet radius, and of hauling 10 tons up a gradient of one in twenty." This narrow gauge 2-4-0 locomotive, the thirty-second locomotive built by Mort's Dock, was completed in July 1879 and was trialed at Balmain, where it exceeded the specified requirements. This locomotive originally operated between the top of the incline and Hartley Vale siding, as it was reported in 1879 that "the level portion of the tramway is worked by a small locomotive, which takes about six full trucks from the top of the incline to the railway siding."

In 1881 a second locomotive was purchased to replace the Mort's Dock locomotive working on the tramway from the top of the incline to Hartley Vale siding. On this occasion, the locomotive was ordered from a Scottish locomotive builder, Dubbs & Co. Allocated builder's number 1442, this locomotive was a 2-4-0, which weighed just over 14½ tons in working order. In future, the Shale and Oil Company would refer to the two locomotives, rather unimaginatively, as the 'small locomotive' and 'the large locomotive', respectively. The Mort's Dock locomotive was then used on the tramway at the bottom of the incline.

In the late 1880s, the operations of the New South Wales Shale and Oil Company underwent a significant change, when the company relocated its refining operations from Waterloo to Hartley Vale. The new refinery at Hartley Vale was completed by April 1887. The tramway was also extended to the new refinery: "About a mile of tramway has been laid down, connecting with the existing lines, and having a branch to the coal supply and upon this a locomotive draws the necessary materials to the refinery works." A branch was also laid to the building containing the tin making plant and case factory, allowing "the finished article to be conveyed to the railway station." The "residuum oils" were also "pumped into tanks for transmission to Sydney."

Extensive changes to the tramway system also occurred during the early 1890s. In October 1891, it was reported that "what was a wilderness formerly is a network of tramways now." In late 1889, a "tip" was erected adjacent to the new shale Tunnel and a "tramline laid down from it to the foot of the incline, so that the export shale is taken from the tunnel direct up the incline.

The tramway was an integral part of the mining and refining operations at Hartley Vale. It connected the mines and retorts to the refinery and allowed the refined products to be delivered economically to the New South Wales railways at Hartley Vale siding. The higher-grade shales were not used in the retorts at Hartley Vale, but were exported overseas and

the tramway enabled this shale to be transported to Hartley Vale siding for transport to the wharves at Darling Harbour.

The Kerosene Creek Tramway Group intends to relay a one kilometre section of light tramway in Hartley Vale. This group of volunteers have financed purchase of three light diesel locomotives in 2-foot gauge and one Fowler steam locomotive in poor condition (for later restoration). We have been given a complete Hudswell Clarke which is being prepared for assessment by an accredited boiler inspector.