

Collections Access Team: Museums Disposal Panel Report

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Date: August 2012

Ref. No.: DPR 070912 0003

SECTION 1

(to be completed by Collections Access Officer)

1.1 Description of Object/Objects

LCNLL 1974/952 Caravan/Showman's Wagon.

Late 1940's early 1950's design and manufacture, featuring early sheet aluminium body with wooden components and fittings, it is also fitted with metal wheels and inflated rubber tyres. Look and manufacture is inspired by wartime aircraft construction and design.





There is no formal transfer of ownership for the caravan but there is a formal letter of thanks from the Keeper of the collection dated October 1974, to the donor.

Non specialist assessment of Condition is assessed as poor. There is considerable woodworm damage and window frames coming away, the wooden framework and roof needs work as it has not received any treatment since it was accessioned. This condition could be recovered with appropriate intervention and it would make a good restoration/conservation project in the right hands.

It is an example of the introduction and cross fertilisation of new technology, developed during wartime aircraft production, into the design and development of the mobile home/caravan/showman's wagon.

Size: 6.2 metres long (without towing bar) by 2.2 metres wide 2.7 metres high

1.2 Reason For Disposal

This is an object with a large storage footprint. While the object was displayed when initially accessioned, having enquired of past staff, it has not been on display for more than 20 years.

The emerging Butterworth's Development project, with its need to re-consider what can be stored inside, has highlighted that there are higher priority objects that should be stored inside. Also, the draft *Disposal Strategy* has identified this project and large items within the building to be a key focus for possible rationalisation in 2012/13.

This Caravan, although interesting does not fit tightly with the re-focussed Collections Development Strategy. While much other material under consideration for internal storage can be classed as strongly associated with local agriculture or local industry, this caravan does not, and it is very likely that it will have to be stored outside. Having to store this caravan outside will have a detrimental effect on its condition and exacerbate its rate of decay.

As an interesting example of its type and as an acknowledgement of its increasing rarity, collectability and financial value on the open market, rather than risk its ultimate demise because we cannot provide adequate care for it by storing it inside, it is proposed that it

should be considered for disposal to another accredited museum as a conservation project.

It is not in a condition where it could be displayed or interpreted at present. It was not assessed as a significant object when the *Working Collections Strategy* was generated and while it needs considerable work to stabilise, there is no capacity now or within the foreseeable future to care or improve its condition. Resources are being focused on items identified within the *Working Collections Strategy* as being priority, so it is unlikely to receive financial investment too.

1.3 Suggested Means of Disposal & Reason

It is suggested that this caravan be advertised in the Museums Journal and considered for disposal in line with Museum Association *Disposal Guidelines* as a conservation project for another accredited museum.

It is considered that this object would fit better with another museum's mission, collecting policy and capability for stabilisation/restoration. It is envisaged that it could be cared for and displayed in a more appropriate manner, in line with MA re-interpreting collections guidelines (*Revisiting Collections*).

Having been discussed with other Collections Care Team staff, the opinion was that because of its potential financial value, this disposal be restricted to Accredited Museums only and if this was not possible, then the Service should retain the object and care for it in line with current policy.

1.4 Impact Statement

Potential Risks:

- Possible local disappointment that, as a Service, we have not been able to look after this item to the degree that we would ideally have wished to and that we are (likely to be) moving it out of the County.

Potential Benefits:

- Have an object that is currently unused and (other than being stored inside) 'uncared' for, stabilised, potentially re-interpreted and put into use thereby enhancing care, access and the visitor experience at another Accredited Institution.
- Relieve an amount of pressure on space in and around Butterworth's by reducing the number of oversized objects that the Service has to store.
- Tangible demonstration of action planning/strategy in practice.

1.5 Other Considerations

We have all the donor details but at present they have not been contacted because it is now more than 35 years since donation.

1.6 Recommendation

As outlined above, it is recommended that the Service pursue disposal to another accredited Museum.

(to be completed by Disposal Panel)

2.1 Panel Decision

Fully agree with Disposal Report Section 1 recommendation

Agree with Disposal Report Section 1 recommendation, with additional requirements/
comment (section 2.2)

Disagree with Disposal Report recommendation for reasons given below (section 2.2)

2.2 Additional Comments

*Caveats/questions regarding disposal; reasons for disagreeing with recommendation;
raise points requiring further clarification, for inclusion in Exec. Cllr. Report or resolution
prior to submitting this report.*

Re. Section 1.2 of DPR – don't describe as 'oversize'.

Nb. Not made in Lincolnshire

Re. Section 1.3 of DPR / Recommendation – Advertise to Rural Museum Network and
alternatively consider auction route if recommendation is ratified.

Signed: Jonathan Platt (Chair of Disposal Panel)

Date: 7/9/12

SECTION 3

(to be completed by Collections Access Officer)

3.1 Exec Report No _____

3.2 Exec Decision No _____

3.3 Action / Date Completed _____

Ensure a copy of the Authority de-accession/disposal form is attached to this sheet

3.4 Name, Contact Details & Status of Recipient

Accredited museum, private museum etc.

3.5 New Location and Number of Object

For future access, should enquiries come in.

3.6 Benefits Achieved for the Service/Object:

Short summary tying back to section 1.4