

**Morgan GR Tourism Management**

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Clive Geddes  
Otago Forward

Dear Clive

The attached proposal to develop an Otago wide Chinese Gold mining Heritage Trail as a Tourism ready product has been forwarded to you by Jim Ng.

The idea came from a discussion with Jim after an introduction from Richard Parata some time ago but it could not be developed just then. However, the timing is now appropriate with the current various initiatives to build relationships with China at a national and regional level coinciding.

Otago has excellent knowledge of its Chinese heritage, and the appropriate Heritage infrastructure is available to be developed. What is in my view needed, from my background in Tourism, is to draw all that together, and provide it to the Tourism market, in its various levels, as a Tourism ready product. This is a significant long-term commercial opportunity for Otago, and one that would allow it to take a market lead in China.

Jim Ng will brief you on his perspective and I would be happy to meet with you if you wished to take this further. The most recent major project I have done has been for Fiona Luhrs (NZ Tourism Industry Assn) and if you wished to reference my background you would be welcome to contact her.

If I was to be invited to put forward a Feasibility study proposal then that could be put together within the next couple of weeks. In undertaking a feasibility study I would expect to work with Robin Charteris, former Editor ODT, and I would expect the full support of Tourism NZ and Air NZ. I have also discussed the idea with Damian O'Neill at NZ Trade and Enterprise who would I believe be enthusiastic.

I will look forward to your views.

Sincerely

**Ray Grubb**  
26/06/08

# CHINESE OTAGO GOLD MINING HERITAGE

## TOURISM PROJECT PROPOSAL

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The history of the Chinese gold miners in Otago is reasonably well documented, with Dr Jim Ng of Dunedin the leading historian. Most locations at which there was Chinese mining activity are identified, as are artefacts and relics, both on-site and in museums, and Chinese graves are catalogued where they have been identified. The names and families of the miners are catalogued, and their places of origin in the province of Canton. This is a rich history, and there has been a consequent inter-weaving of Chinese descendants and Chinese culture into the fabric of Otago society.

The Government has recognised the influence and history of the Chinese in the goldfields in recent times. It has formally apologised for the Poll Tax imposed on the miners, and has created a small fund for the on-going preservation of Chinese heritage and culture. The Prime Minister Rt Hon Helen Clark in particular and Minister of Conservation have taken a significant interest in the work of the Chinese people in Otago in endeavouring to identify and preserve this special heritage.

Dunedin, as well as being the historic gateway to the Otago goldfields, has further and particular links to modern day China. It has a strong and developing sister city relationship with Shanghai, the recent building of the authentic Chinese Garden, and of course the Mayor is Peter Chin.

Further afield the Lawrence Chinese encampment has seen archaeological excavation in recent times and there is a considerable project underway to re-create the Chinese camp. A significant milestone will be the Lawrence sesqui-centenary in 2011.

The Chinese presence reaches across Otago region and has notable historic relics within all of the Region's Territorial Local Authorities; Queenstown, Central, Clutha, and Dunedin.

### 2. CURRENT TOURISM INFLUENCES

A number of factors combine to suggest that Chinese Tourism to NZ has significant potential for the Otago Region at this time. These include:

- the signal of a closer China/NZ relationship through the recent Free Trade Agreement;
- Air NZ's long term strategy into the Chinese market through its Shanghai flights;
- Tourism NZ has adopted China as its primary growth market target;
- adoption of appropriate expectations for Chinese tour operators;
- Dunedin's sister city relationship with Shanghai and the Chinese Gardens.

Recent discussions with the CEO and Senior Management of Tourism NZ have indicated that there is a dearth of Chinese specific Tourism product which can lead the development of Chinese Tourism to NZ over the next 10 years. The conjunction of the Chinese history in Otago, current relationships between the Otago community and China, a milestone in the Lawrence sesqui-centenary in 2011, the presence of NZ's leading Tourism resort in Otago, and the macro signals in the closer trading relationship between the two countries, suggest the time is right for a (Tourism) project to develop a Chinese Heritage trail in the Otago region.

The concurrence of all the above factors at this time create the environment and timing for the development of the proposed project. It would allow the drawing together of the Chinese Gardens, Tuapeka/Lawrence, and the Cromwell Mining Centre as a core attraction base further developed as an Otago wide circuit with the addition of other Heritage sites suitably prepared for the Tourism experience.

Such a Trail would not, of course, solely focus on the Chinese Tourism market, but that market gives the primary motivation.

### **3. THE CHINESE HERITAGE GOLD TRAIL IN OTAGO - OBJECTIVE**

The overall Objective for the project is recommended to be:

**"To have identified and then commenced implementation, by the time of the Lawrence sesqui-centenary in 2011, of a Tourism ready Chinese Heritage Gold mining Trail through the Otago region which will:**

- **provide a specific focus for the development of Chinese Tourism to NZ;**
- **provide an economic return to the Region and its Communities;**
- **enhance the identification, protection, and interpretation of Chinese history in the Region."**

There are three steps to the project:

- i) Project proposal (this document)
- ii) Feasibility study
- iii) Implementation

The commercial imperative of a Tourism ready project that provides an economic return to the Region will provide the driving force that will allow this project to accomplish Heritage, Cultural, and Social objectives associated with the preservation of Chinese identity and heritage, and the development of communities.

### **4. RECOMMENDATION**

We recommend to Otago Forward that it endorses in principle the Objective in 3 above. We will then prepare a feasibility study proposal and detailed costings.

Ray Grubb