

WEST OF WATERLOOVILLE FORUM

31 March 2010

WEST OF WATERLOOVILLE MAJOR DEVELOPMENT AREA - PROPOSALS FOR
NEW CEMETERY

REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS (WCC) & HEAD OF DEVELOPMENT &
TECHNICAL SERVICES (HBC)

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RECENT REFERENCES:

WW49 – Minutes of the previous meeting 30 October 2009

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This report reports back on the outcome of the meeting requested at the previous Forum meeting on the location of the proposed cemetery at West of Waterlooville

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Forum supports the principle of the revised location for the Cemetery and officers are instructed to work with Grainger to develop the detailed proposals.

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 At the last meeting of the Forum, officers were asked to arrange a workshop with local residents, councillors and representatives of the Rowans Hospice to consider proposals to locate the proposed cemetery on land north of the Hospice and the outcome be reported to the next meeting of the Forum.
- 1.2 The meeting was held on the 21 December 2009 and was attended by local residents; representatives from the Rowans Hospice; councillors from Havant Borough Council; officers from both Councils and representatives from Grainger. The meeting was chaired by Margaret Newbigin, Chair of WCC Local Strategic Partnership Housing Board and Managing Director (South) for A2Dominion Housing Group.
- 1.3 Following a visit to the proposed site for the new cemetery the meeting received technical presentations from consultants acting on behalf of Grainger and from Cemetery Officers at Havant Borough Council. All attendees were encouraged to contribute to the discussion that followed and comments which were mixed were recorded by Grainger and can be summarised as follows:
 - some residents felt that the Council should look elsewhere (outside the MDA) for a cemetery to serve Borough residents
 - others accepted that the proposed site could be sensitively designed and be an acceptable neighbour to the Hospice
 - a number of residents also felt that the existing housing site within the MDA fronting London Road should be reallocated as a cemetery.
- 1.4 At the meeting, the Hospice reaffirmed their position that they did not object subject to adequate screening, separate access arrangements and a sensitive signing strategy for the Cemetery. They also confirmed that they had displayed the new plans at the Hospice for a number of weeks and had not received any adverse comments from staff, visitors or volunteers.
- 1.5 During the site visit, which preceded the meeting, it was noted that the Rowans building was well screened by substantial trees from the farmland to the north and that it was only from the Rowans extended car park and from the adjacent public footpath to the west of the farmland that tree screen was relatively young and currently afforded views of the south west part of the farmland.

2. Need for Cemetery

2.1 Havant Borough Council operates three sites within the Borough:

- Havant - descendents & common graves only
- Waterlooville – 2 -3 years left
- Warblington - 10 years left

2.2 Unless an alternative site is identified once Waterlooville is full, all burials will have to be at Warblington, and the 10 year capacity will reduce significantly.

The other options available to Borough residents are:

- Churches on Hayling Island for parishioners only:- St Peter's; St Mary's; St Patrick's
- Out of Borough (double charges apply) – Catherington; Denmead Parish; Milton Road, Portsmouth

2.3 Whilst some 70% of people currently choose to be cremated, the number wishing to be buried has increased over recent years and over the past three years demand has been in the region of 100 per year.

	Waterlooville	Warblington
2007/08	39	53
2008/09	44	57
2009/10	32	67

3. Criteria for new Sites

3.1 Havant Borough Council Officers have undertaken a number of desk top studies over the years to identify a site for a new Cemetery.

3.2 The key criteria identified to assess site suitability are:

- Good accessibility (by car, on foot, public transport)
- Proximity of utilities for onsite use e.g. water & electricity
- Geology and topography
- Hydrology ~ avoidance of high water tables, underground streams etc
- Avoidance of significant nature designations
- Avoidance of other constraints e.g. high power gas pipelines, flood risk areas and aquifer protection areas
- Avoidance of Mineral Extraction Safeguarding areas
- Minimum site area = 4 hectares

3.3 Given the built up nature of the Borough, the complex constraints that exist in areas adjacent to the coast and within the Emsworth & Havant Gaps, identification of a site for a cemetery has proved extremely difficult and resulted in the identification of an extension of the Warblington Cemetery to serve

residents east of the A3M and the West of Waterlooville MDA for those west of the A3M [including non Havant Borough Council residents living in the MDA].

4. Cemetery proposals for West of Waterlooville

(a) Original Proposals

4.1 The original masterplanning led to the identification of the cemetery site at Plant Farm. The details were negotiated through the planning process and the Local Planning Authority secured by way of the S106 the provision of a cemetery for HBC as follows:

- Phased construction of cemetery of no less than 4.07 hectares to include car parking, access, landscaping, fencing & water
- 1st phase (30%) to be completed prior to occupation of 350 dwelling units
- 2nd phase (remainder) by 1250 units

4.2 The grant of planning permission was subject to a planning condition, which required monitoring of the groundwater conditions at the proposed cemetery site. This was a specific requirement of the Environment Agency. The outcome of one year's monitoring identified a high perched water table on the site which would mean that its use for a cemetery would be technically impossible to (cost effectively) de-water and that there would be a continuing risk of contamination of the water courses in the locality.

(b) Current Proposals

4.3 The current masterplanning has, having undertaken a similar site search within the land controlled by the developer Grainger, identified the land to the north of the Hospice as being more suitable subject to completion of 12 months ground monitoring.

4.4 Key features of the proposal are:

- The site would be accessed from the main spine road which runs through the MDA and not the access adjacent to the Hospice
- Retention of existing 40m+ depth woodland screen on southern boundary
- Planting of additional tree screen along the southern boundary with the Hospice - reinstatement of screen removed to extend Hospice Car Park - see plan
- Combination of natural, woodland and formal burial areas
- Phasing of burials from the north east to enable trees to grow before activity close to the boundary with Hospice
- Network of walkways linking to adjacent countryside & woodland
- Sensitive signing strategy to encourage vehicular access from the north
- Ability to access Cemetery from the north via Milk Lane



5. Community Consultation

5.1 Community consultation undertaken by Grainger in developing their master plan has clearly identified the sensitivities of the new site relative to the Hospice. Although resident views expressed to date have been mixed, the Rowans Hospice has confirmed that they do not object to the new site subject to adequate screening and no access from Purbrook Heath Road.

6. Conclusion

6.1 Subject to the outcome of the detailed groundwater monitoring of the site north of the Hospice this option remains in officers' views the only suitable site within the MDA and within the Havant Borough capable of satisfying the demand for burial space west of the A3M for the foreseeable future.

6.2 Additionally officers are confident that the proposed cemetery can be sensitively designed and screened to ensure it fits well in its landscape and not be visible from occupants and visitors to the Hospice. Albeit in order to ensure that no signage is visible from the junction to the Rowans Hospice it is suggested that the entrance and car park is located on the northern boundary. The current proposal also offers a peaceful greenspace in contrast its previously proposed location in a built up area on the A3 Bus Priority Corridor.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY AND CORPORATE BUSINESS PLAN
(RELEVANCE TO):

Successful delivery of a cemetery at West of Waterlooville underpins the vision for this Major Development Area in both the Winchester & Havant Sustainable Community Strategies & Corporate Business Plans for a sustainable community of up to 5,000 residents supported by employment provision and associated physical and social infrastructure.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

Planning permissions 06/02538/000 & 06/4000/000 dated 4 January 2008

S106 Agreement relating to Grainger land at West of Waterlooville MDA dated 20 December 2007

APPENDICES:

None