

Canberra Cemeteries

— ACT Public Cemeteries Authority —



PROPOSED SOUTHERN CEMETERY IN THE ACT

Consultation Report

ACT Public Cemeteries Authority

27 August 2009



Comments on the Consultation Report are welcome and may be submitted for two (2) weeks after the date of publication to:

Re: Proposed Southern Cemetery Consultation Report
Community Engagement and Communications
Department of Territory and Municipal Services
GPO Box 158
Canberra City ACT 2601

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Enquiries about this publication can be directed to Canberra Connect by phoning **13 22 81**

Website: **www.canberracemeteries.com.au**

Table of Contents

FOREWORD FROM THE ACT PUBLIC CEMETERIES AUTHORITY	1
INTRODUCTION	2
The ACT Public Cemeteries Authority	2
Background	2
The Purpose of this Report	6
The Community Response	6
THE CONSULTATION PROGRAM	8
Consultation tools	8
Key Findings	9
Issues raised during the consultation program	14
NEXT STEPS	16
APPENDIX A – FACT SHEETS USED TO SUPPORT CONSULTATION	17
APPENDIX B – COMMUNITY SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE	27
APPENDIX C – CONSULTATION LIST	29

Foreword from the ACT Public Cemeteries Authority

The ACT Public Cemeteries Authority is responsible for all earth burials in the ACT. It maintains three cemeteries in the Canberra region, located at Woden, Gungahlin and Hall. The Authority takes great pride in its ability to deliver to the community well cared for burial grounds and high quality services.

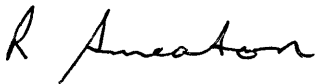
It is with this in mind, that we have identified the need for a new cemetery to service the needs of the community in Canberra and the Capital Region well into the future. Based on our estimations, the Woden Cemetery, located in the south of Canberra, is likely to reach capacity within eight years. At this time a new cemetery will be needed to service southern Canberra.

As a new cemetery takes a significant amount of time to plan and construct, it is important that discussions begin now so that decisions can be made well ahead of the time when a new cemetery for the ACT is needed. It is important that as a community we address the need for a new cemetery in the ACT.

On 6 February 2009, the ACT Government agreed to a proposal from the Authority to explore the options in determining a site for a new cemetery in the ACT. The Authority engaged project consultants to undertake a community consultation program to gauge public opinion on the development of a new southern cemetery, its location and the services the community would want a cemetery to provide.

This Consultation Report details the outcomes of the consultation that was conducted over the nine week period from 30 March to 29 May 2009. Consequently, this report is intended to be a record of the issues that the community would like addressed in future consultations on this proposed development. We greatly appreciate the consideration and input given to this proposal so far. We will now proceed with investigating and resolving as many of the issues raised as is possible at this stage of development to ensure the community and the government can make informed decisions. We intend releasing additional information in a forthcoming discussion paper for public comment.

Thank you for your consideration of this Consultation Report and we look forward to receiving your feedback.



Mr Robert Smeaton
Chairman
ACT Public Cemeteries Authority

Introduction

The ACT Public Cemeteries Authority

The ACT Public Cemeteries Authority (the Authority) is responsible for all earth burials in the ACT. It maintains three cemeteries in the Canberra region, located in Woden, Gungahlin and Hall.

The Authority's stated mission is:

To provide a caring and sensitive service to the community, catering for the needs of the community.

The Authority is governed by a Board of Directors. The daily operations are managed by a Chief Executive Officer, supported by enthusiastic and well qualified staff. Together they provide the community of Canberra and the Capital Region with high quality earth burial services.

Background

There are currently three operating cemeteries in the ACT – Gungahlin Cemetery, Woden Cemetery and a smaller cemetery in Hall. The Woden Cemetery, located in the south of Canberra, is filling up. There are approximately 1500 burial allotments remaining at Woden and the average number of allotments occupied each year is 200. Once the Woden Cemetery is at capacity, a new cemetery will be needed to provide services for south Canberra.

Based on this information, the ACT Public Cemeteries Authority has identified the need for a new cemetery to cater for the future needs of the ACT. As a new cemetery takes a significant amount of time to plan and construct, it is important that discussions begin now so that decisions can be made well ahead of the time when a new cemetery for the ACT is needed.

Cemeteries in the ACT currently offer the community a range of options. There is growing interest in natural burials. The possibility that a new cemetery would include a crematorium was also canvassed with the community. All of these options are open for discussion for potential inclusion in a new southern cemetery.

Location of a new cemetery

The ACT Public Cemeteries Authority and the ACT Government have considered a number of potential cemetery sites for a southern cemetery. The sites that have been previously considered include:

- Part of Block 1677 (corner of Monaro Highway and Isabella Drive) - Map site A
- Part of Block 154 Jerrabomberra (on the western side of Mugga Lane, midway between Hindmarsh Drive and Long Gully Road) – map site B
- Greenway (west of Rowland Crescent between the Murrumbidgee River and the Town Centre) – map site C
- Block 1676 and parts of Block 1677 Tuggeranong District (southern side of the intersection of Mugga Lane and Long Gully Road) – map site D

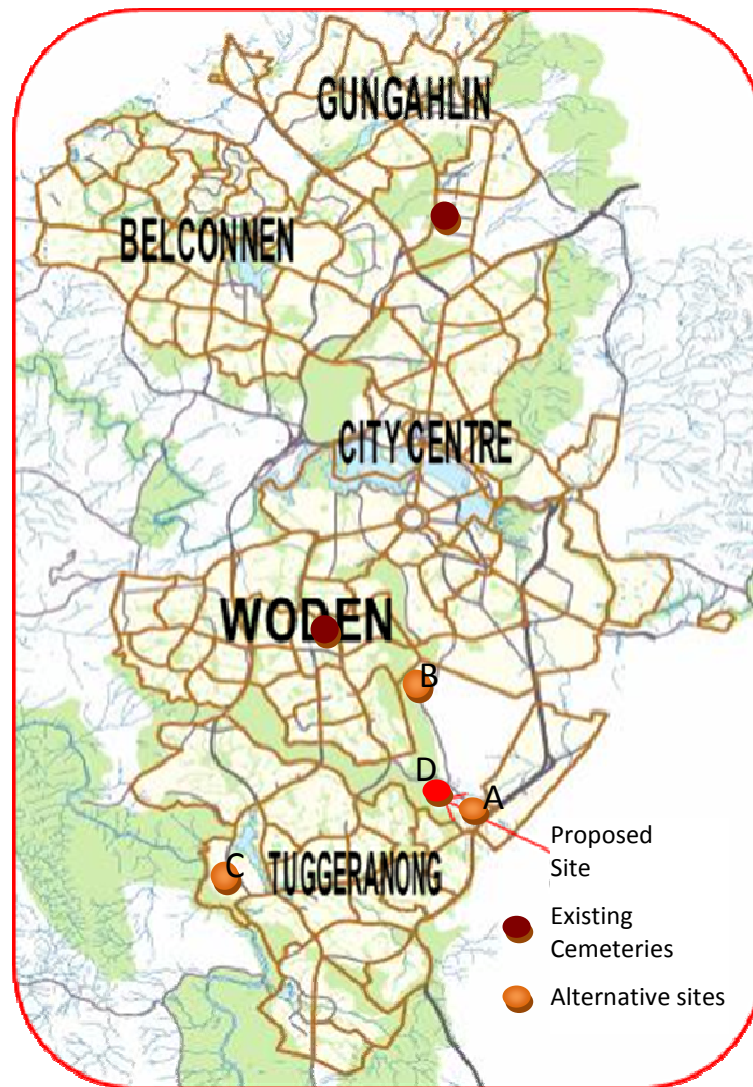
The site located near Mugga Lane and Long Gully Road has been identified by the ACT Public Cemeteries Authority as the most suitable, as assessed against siting criteria, to proceed with further evaluation.

Siting criteria for a cemetery development includes:

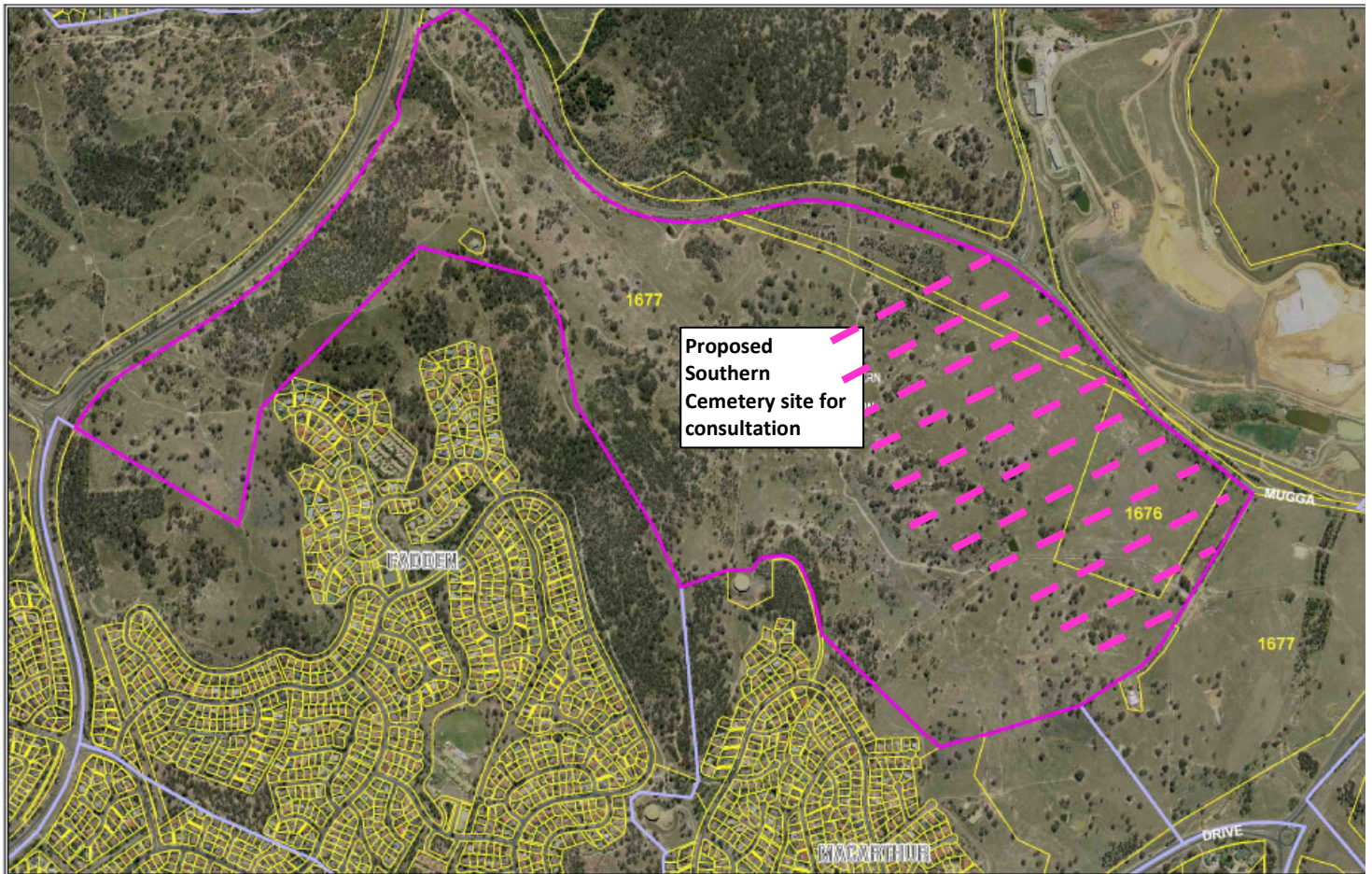
- Suitable land classification under the Territory Plan (Broad acre)
- Proximity to main roads
- Able to accommodate separate or large exit/entrance
- Minimum site of 40 hectares
- Topography (predominately flat)
- Buffer zone (minimum 20 metre buffer around burial areas)
- Large traffic capacity/access to accommodate large cortege
- Consistent subsoil not containing large areas of rock
- Able to withstand rigorous mass soil movement
- Outside 100 year flood zone
- Low water tables desirable (ideally minimum three metres)
- Access to services (water, electricity and gas)
- Access to public transport
- Access to water and potential for capturing runoff in dams

Map 1 below identifies where the proposed site is situated in southern Canberra and in relation to the existing cemeteries. Map 2 outlines the boundaries on the proposed site (Block 1676 and parts of Block 1677 Tuggeranong District) and the area that is most suitable for a cemetery development.

MAP 1



MAP 2: Block 1676 and parts of Block 1677 Tuggeranong District (southern side of the intersection of Mugga Lane and Long Gully Road)



Planning processes for a cemetery

All proposed developments are assessed by the ACT Planning and Land Authority (ACTPLA) in accordance with the *Planning and Development Act 2007* and the Territory Plan. The Authority will explore the requirements of these processes further if the community supports proceeding with the proposed southern cemetery development. For more information on the development assessment process visit www.actpla.act.gov.au.

A series of fact sheets was developed to support the consultation program. For further information, please refer to Fact Sheets titled *Frequently Asked Questions*, *Natural Burials*, *Crematoria Services* and *Alternative Sites* at Appendix A.

The Purpose of this Report

This report has been prepared by the ACT Public Cemeteries Authority to contribute to public discussion about a proposal put forward to develop a new southern cemetery in the ACT. Under the guidance of the Minister for Territory and Municipal Services, the Authority seeks to engage our community in the many decisions that will need to be made prior to any development beginning.

The Authority listened carefully through the consultation. The Consultation Report outlines the issues raised, which represent community views on the proposal, and those issues which may need further investigation. Broadly speaking, the outcome of the consultation shows that the community understands why a new cemetery in a southern location is under consideration. The services that will be offered in any new cemetery, such as natural burial and cremation, are matters on which the community would like further input. The location of a new cemetery and the site selection process are also of great interest to the community.

The comments received during the consultation period will assist the Authority in making recommendations to the ACT Government on whether and how to proceed with the proposed southern cemetery development.

The Community Response

The Authority and the government take seriously the need to engage the community on issues of important civic infrastructure. Consequently, the Authority commissioned a program of community consultation, which included:

- A three phase community survey (conducted via a telephone survey of 1,000 ACT residents and made available online and in hard copy)
- Numerous stakeholder and community meetings

During the initial consultation phase, the Authority aimed to:

- inform the Canberra community, and particularly residents in the south of Canberra, about the proposal to develop a new southern cemetery in the ACT;
- provide appropriate information about issues that relate to the development of a new cemetery;
- facilitate initial public discussion; and
- identify issues and concerns that the community felt needed further consideration or investigation.

The Proposed Southern Cemetery community consultation program ran for nine weeks, from 30 March to 29 May 2009.

There is general support for a new cemetery in southern Canberra. Only a small proportion of those consulted indicated that they did not support the development of a new cemetery (see Key Findings page 13).

Based on the information collected throughout the consultation process, key outcomes were:

- The majority of people consulted were supportive of the need for a cemetery in south Canberra but there is a need to present further data to confirm the demand for a new development.
- The types of burial services that would be offered at a new cemetery raised considerable interest, especially from particular community groups.
- An increasing interest in natural burials, as is evident in other parts of Australia and internationally.
- The community expressed a preference for a comprehensive service to be offered at a new cemetery. This means that cremation services would be considered as part of a new development. However, issues to do with environmental impact will need to be further explored and communicated. The co-location of a crematorium on the same site as a new cemetery development was a contentious issue for some community groups. Further, the demand for cremation services in this market requires further examination, including the impact on the existing privately owned crematorium.
- There was a wide variety of views expressed about the site that has been identified as the preferred location. In particular, people living close to the identified site have requested more detailed information on the impact of the development on residents, the environment, the existing natural wildlife corridor, the horses currently under agistment on the site and also the impact of being in close proximity to the Mugga Lane Resource Management Centre.
- The preferred site will have to be subjected to detailed assessment for Aboriginal sites
- More detailed information was requested on the other sites that have been considered and the siting assessment process. During the consultations, the community took the opportunity to make suggestions as to other areas in Canberra that could be considered for a southern cemetery.

The Consultation Program

Consultation tools

The objectives of the initial consultation phase were to:

- inform the Canberra community, and particularly residents in the south of Canberra, about the proposal to develop a new southern cemetery in the ACT;
- provide appropriate information about the issues that may relate to the development of a new cemetery;
- facilitate initial public discussion; and
- identify any issues and concerns that the community felt needed further consideration or investigation.

The Proposed Southern Cemetery community consultation program ran for nine weeks, from 30 March to 29 May 2009.

A variety of consultation tools were used to ensure the Canberra community had multiple opportunities to input into the consultation process. This initial consultation phase included:

- An independently run random telephone survey of 1,000 Canberra residents.
- Community survey completed by 1196 people – this survey was available online and in hard copy from all ACT Government Canberra Connect Shopfronts and ACT Public Libraries.
- A letterbox drop to every resident in six suburbs and the majority of residents in another two suburbs in southern Canberra, which comprised a letter outlining the consultation program, a fact sheet and the hard copy survey.
- Community information displays and drop-in consultation sessions – held at Tuggeranong, Woden and Dickson Libraries.
- Community information meeting held on 13 May 2009 at the Southern Cross Club Tuggeranong.
- Targeted stakeholder briefings and meetings held from February and throughout the entire consultation period. Approximately 30 groups participated in these briefings. Various stakeholder groups also distributed information in their newsletters. A consultation list is available at Appendix C.
- A focus group with representatives of the funeral industry.
- Canberra Connect provided an immediate contact point for anyone requiring further information about the proposal or consultation program.
- Advertising, media releases and editorial in local media to promote consultation opportunities, including in the ACT Government's Community Noticeboard and

Public Notice advertisement in The Canberra Times (Saturday editions), as well as radio grabs on Canberra's two leading FM radio stations.

- Websites – the Department of Territory and Municipal Services (TAMS) website (www.tams.act.gov.au) provided up to date information on the consultation opportunities. Links to that site were also posted on the Canberra Cemeteries website (www.canberracemeteries.com.au), the ACT Government portal in the 'Hot Topics' section and the Community Noticeboard (www.act.gov.au), and the Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services' website in the Engagement section (www.dhcs.act.gov.au/engagement).

Key Findings

Community Survey – via telephone

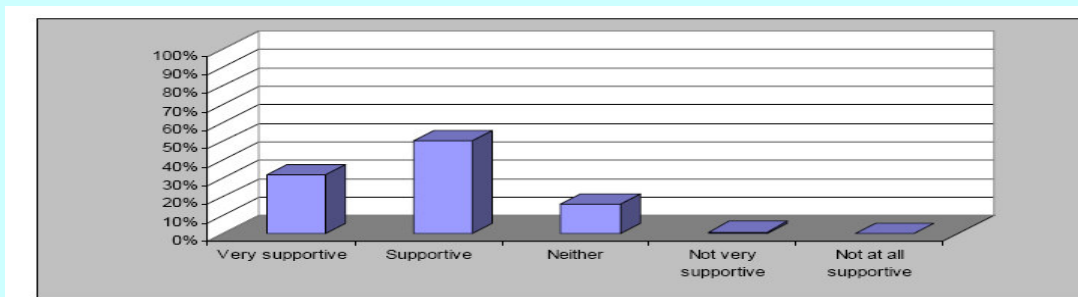
The telephone survey was conducted during May. One thousand Canberra residents were interviewed. This sample size and the random selection of respondents, is considered to be statistically valid and provides a sound basis for gauging community opinion. The questionnaire used is at Appendix B.

Overall, the research has highlighted a very high level of support for the development of a new southern cemetery. The survey confirmed community interest in the inclusion of a crematorium in a new cemetery development.

Support for the development of the new southern cemetery

- Over 80 percent of respondents expressed support for the development of the cemetery. Only 1 percent of respondents indicated that they did not support the development of a new southern cemetery.

Results Table 1: How supportive would you say you are of a new southern cemetery being developed?



Knowledge of suitable sites for a new southern cemetery

- 11 percent of respondents were able to suggest sites that they felt were suitable for the development of the new cemetery. Suggested sites included Mugga Lane (53 percent), Hume (29 percent) and Tuggeranong (18 percent).

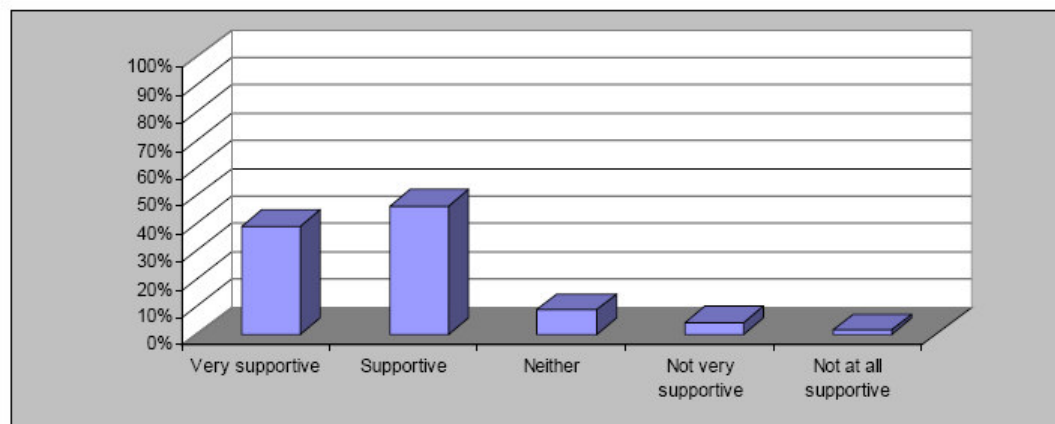
Specific types of burial that the cemetery should cater for

- 32 percent of respondents indicated that there were specific types of burial that the new southern cemetery should cater for. Of those respondents, 45 percent suggested that the cemetery should cater for 'cremation', whilst 29 percent suggested 'natural/eco burial' options.

Support for the development of a new crematorium

- Support for the development of a new crematorium was also very high – 85 percent of respondents expressed support for a new crematorium and 92 percent stated that the proposed crematorium should be placed on the same site as the new cemetery.
- 6 percent of respondents indicated they were not supportive of a new crematorium. The primary reasons given related to not believing in cremation (2 percent of the total sample), environmental concerns (1 percent of the total sample) and a belief that the existing facilities should be adequate (1 percent of the total sample).

Results Table 2: How supportive would you say you are of a new crematorium being developed?



Support of Fadden, Gowrie, Macarthur and Monash residents (Postcode 2904)

These suburbs are within close proximity to the proposed site. Overall, respondents from the postcode area 2904 were supportive of the proposed cemetery.

Whilst the sample size of the random telephone survey was only 64 responses, the results still indicate high levels of support for the development of a new southern cemetery as well as the development of a new crematorium. This is reflected in the following outcomes:

- 79 percent of respondents from within the postcode area 2904 were 'very supportive' or 'supportive' of a new southern cemetery being developed.
- Only 3 percent of respondents indicated that they did not support the development of a new southern cemetery.

- 78 percent of respondents 'very supportive' and 'supportive' of a new crematorium being developed. 11 percent of respondents indicated that they did not support the development of a new crematorium.
- 89 percent of respondents from the postcode area 2904 were supportive of the proposed crematorium being placed on the same site as the new cemetery, 6 percent were unsure and 5 percent stated that it should not be on the same site.

The full report on the telephone survey is available online at www.tams.gov.au.

Community survey - online and hard copy

The Community Survey was available online and in hard copy from 31 March to 29 May 2009. A total of 1196 people responded to the survey.

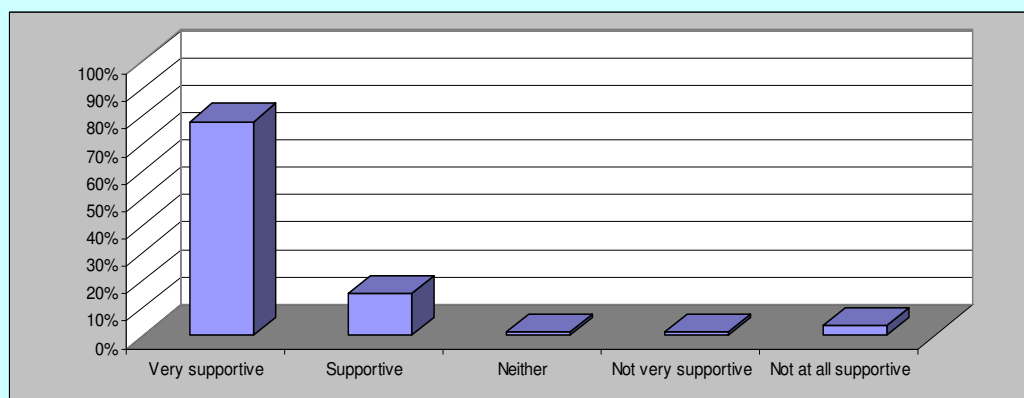
The samples of both the online and hard copy surveys were 'self selected', meaning that the results are open to selection bias, and therefore not necessarily statistically valid. A review of the individual responses indicates that the sample for this research is strongly weighted to the Islamic Community within the ACT. This bias should be recognised when reviewing the outcomes of this research.

Overall, the research has highlighted a very high level of support for the development of a new southern cemetery and moderately high support for the crematorium.

Support for the development of the new southern cemetery

- 78 percent of respondents stated that they were 'very supportive', 15 percent 'supportive' and 1 percent were 'neutral - neither supportive nor unsupportive'.
- Only 5 percent of respondents indicated that they did not support the development of a new southern cemetery.

Results Table 3: How supportive would you say you are of a new southern cemetery being developed?



Knowledge of suitable sites for a new cemetery

- 18 percent of respondents were able to suggest sites that they felt were suitable for the development of the new cemetery. Suggested sites were 'Hume, Monaro

Highway and Long Gully/Mugga Lane area' (65 percent) and Tuggeranong (16 percent).

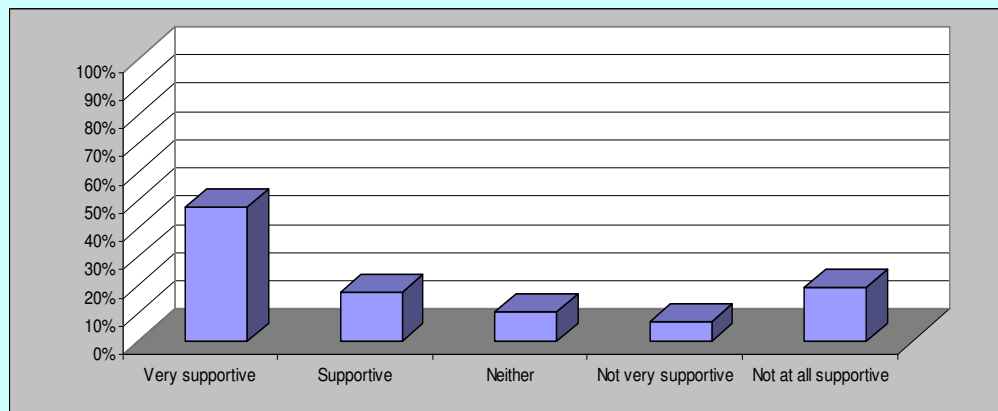
Specific types of burial that the cemetery should cater for

- 81 percent of respondents indicated that there were specific types of burial that the new southern cemetery should cater for. Of those that indicated specific burial types, 62 percent suggested that the cemetery should cater for 'Islamic/Muslim burials' and 20 percent suggested 'natural burials'.

Support for the development of a new crematorium

- Support for the development of a new crematorium was moderately high - 64 percent of respondents expressed support, whilst 26 percent indicated that they were not supportive of a new crematorium.

Results Table 4: How supportive would you say you are of a new crematorium being developed?



- Of the respondents who were unsupportive of the development, the primary reasons given related to it being 'against my religion/beliefs' and 'energy use/environmental concerns'.
- Respondents' attitudes to the location of the crematorium were mixed, with 35 percent stating that the crematorium should be placed on the same site as the new cemetery, 43 percent disagreed and 22 percent were unsure.

Importantly, of the respondents who stated that the cemetery and crematorium should not be on the same site, over half (54 percent) stated that this was because 'there should be separate and distinct areas for cremations and burial, as is the case in Gungahlin'.

Support of Fadden, Gowrie, Macarthur and Monash residents (Postcode 2904)

These suburbs are the closest suburbs to the proposed site. Overall, respondents from the postcode area 2904 were supportive of the proposed cemetery.

- 81 percent of respondents from within the postcode area 2904 supported the proposal and 15 percent of respondents indicated that they did not support the development of a new southern cemetery.

Results Table 5: How supportive would you say you are of a new southern cemetery being developed?

Overall

	Count	Column N %
Very supportive	924	78.0%
Supportive	181	15.3%
Neither	17	1.4%
Not very supportive	17	1.4%
Not at all supportive	45	3.8%
Total	1184	100.0%

Fadden, Gowrie, Macarthur and Monash residents

	Count	Column N %
Very supportive	54	52.4%
Supportive	30	29.1%
Neither	4	3.9%
Not very supportive	4	3.9%
Not at all supportive	11	10.7%
Total	103	100.0%

- 54 percent of respondents from within the postcode area 2904 were supportive of a new crematorium being developed, 13 percent were neutral and 33 percent indicated that they were not supportive of a new crematorium.
- 52 percent of respondents from the postcode area 2904 stated that the proposed crematorium should be placed on the same site as the new cemetery, 19 percent were unsure and 30 percent stated that it should not be on the same site. Importantly, of the respondents who stated that the cemetery and crematorium should not be on the same site, 60 percent stated that this was because 'there should be separate and distinct areas for cremations and burial, as is the case in Gungahlin'.

Results Table 6: How supportive would you say you are of a new crematorium being developed?

Overall

	Count	Column N %
Very supportive	460	47.3%
Supportive	168	17.3%
Neither	97	10.0%
Not very supportive	64	6.6%
Not at all supportive	183	18.8%
Total	972	100.0%

Fadden, Gowrie, Macarthur and Monash residents

	Count	Column N %
Very supportive	31	33.7%
Supportive	19	20.7%
Neither	12	13.0%
Not very supportive	6	6.5%
Not at all supportive	24	26.1%
Total	92	100.0%

The full report for the community surveys completed online and in hard copy are available online at www.tams.gov.au.

Issues raised during the consultation program

During the community consultation program, significant issues were raised that require further examination and ongoing community engagement. The issues raised were centred around four key themes:

1. Services to be offered at a new cemetery
2. Crematorium services
3. Location and site criteria
4. The proposed site
5. Aboriginal community

The following table provides a summary of all the issues raised grouped against the five key themes that have emerged.

Services to be offered
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The community would like an indicative timeframe for when natural burial would become an option• Education is needed about natural burial as a burial option• Some faith groups have specific needs, such as the provision of preparation/wash room facilities in any new development• The provision of a non denominational chapel and after service reception area was a high priority for many people, as was an outdoor service area• Maintaining a variety of choices of burial services and areas, as is the case at the existing cemetery, was another high priority for many people• A new development is expected to be a well maintained and manicured environment with a natural look. However, issues concerning water requirements were expressed• More detailed data is required to confirm the demand and need for another cemetery in Canberra. Other options were raised to address demand (such as introducing limited tenure and investigating any new methods or technologies that are being used around the world). The viability of a new cemetery and confirmation of who would manage the facilities was also raised.
Crematorium services
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Several concerns have been raised concerning the development of a new crematorium, and particularly if developed on a site close to residential areas. The main issues raised were:<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ confirmation that appropriate environmental studies will be done to satisfy concerns and ensure informed decisions are made as to the level of cremation pollution (atmospheric and ground), the cumulative effect and dispersion of emissions presented comparative to other emitters, the smell and visual impact◦ clarification of the operating hours – i.e. confirmation that it would not

<p>operate 24 hours a day and over weekends</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o confirmation of the demand for another crematorium in the current market and that other options were considered to address need o cremation is prohibited in some faiths
<p>Location and site criteria</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More detailed information was requested on the four sites considered and the assessment process that was undertaken. • Confirmation that any new development would be subject to the full planning provisions (i.e. a Development Application and an independent Environmental Impact Statement)? • Access to public transport and accessibility for disabled people was a priority for the site selected • Clarification sought over whether other sites could be considered as natural burial grounds • Concern was expressed about the water levels that would be required to maintain a new development and if that was sustainable in the future
<p>The Proposed Site</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several concerns were raised in relation to the site that has been identified as the preferred location for a new southern cemetery. These issues include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o the visual impacts, particularly for neighbouring suburbs o the impact of transport options to ensure accessibility and usability to the site o clarification was sought over the amount of land that is required, and that adequate buffer zones have been factored in to cater for future needs. The impact of future industrial build-up in the area on both a new cemetery and residents was also of concern o the appropriate treatment and protection of the natural wildlife corridor was a priority for the community o the proposed site will result in the potential loss of 21 hectares of horse agistment paddocks and horse riding trails o clarification was sought over the number of roads that will be needed to service users and the impact to the land o confirmation was sought that a full examination would be conducted of the suitability and sustainability of the proposed site, particularly with regards to heritage and conservation, flooding, wind direction, plume, soil quality and the impact of being located adjacent to the Mugga Way Resource Management Centre o clarification sought over timeframes if development proceeds o clarification was sought of the process of consultation (linked into the Government's published engagement policy)
<p>Aboriginal community</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The preferred site will have to be subjected to detailed assessment of Aboriginal sites • Consultation with Aboriginal organisations is continuing

Next Steps

It is important to remember that no decisions have been made regarding a proposed new southern cemetery development in south Canberra.

The ACT Public Cemeteries Authority encourages the Canberra community to submit comments in relation to the proposed cemetery development in southern Canberra and this Consultation Report. All comments can be submitted in writing to:

Re: Proposed Southern Cemetery Consultation Report
Community Engagement and Communications
Department of Territory and Municipal Services
GPO Box 158
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Inquiries can be made by telephoning Canberra Connect on 13 22 81.

Written comments on the preliminary consultation report close **Friday 11 September 2009**. A discussion paper covering community feedback, the suitability of the proposed site on Mugga Lane, and an environmental assessment of proposed facilities will be released for public comment in late 2009.

Thank you for your consideration of this issue and we welcome your comments.

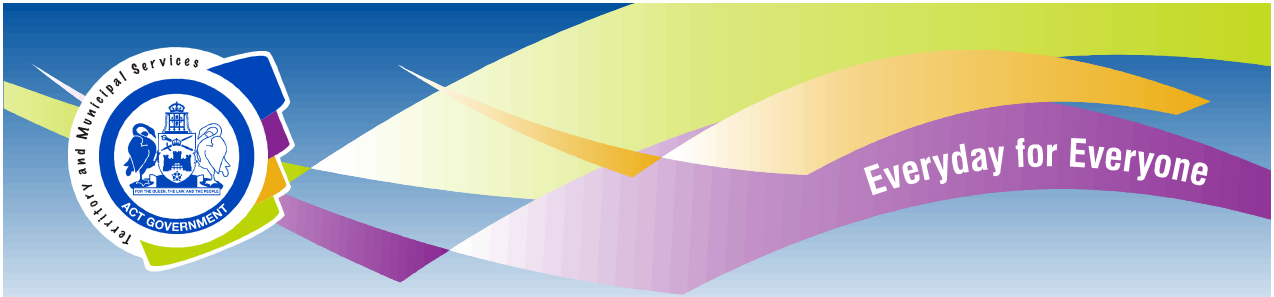
Appendix A – Fact Sheets used to support consultation

Fact Sheet 1: Frequently Asked Questions

Fact Sheet 2: Frequently Asked Questions – Natural Burials

Fact Sheet 3: Frequently Asked Questions – Crematoria Services

Fact Sheet 4: Frequently Asked Questions – Alternative Sites



Proposal for a new southern cemetery in the ACT Frequently Asked Questions

The ACT Public Cemeteries Authority has identified the need for a new cemetery to cater for the future needs of the ACT. On 6 February 2009, the ACT Government agreed to a proposal from the Authority to explore the options in determining a site for a new cemetery in the ACT. The ACT Government and project consultants are now undertaking a community consultation program to gauge public opinion on the development of a new cemetery, its location and the services the community would want a cemetery to provide.

Why is there a need for a new cemetery in the ACT?

A new cemetery takes a significant amount of time to plan and construct. It is important that discussions begin now so that decisions can be made well ahead of the time when a new cemetery for the ACT is needed.

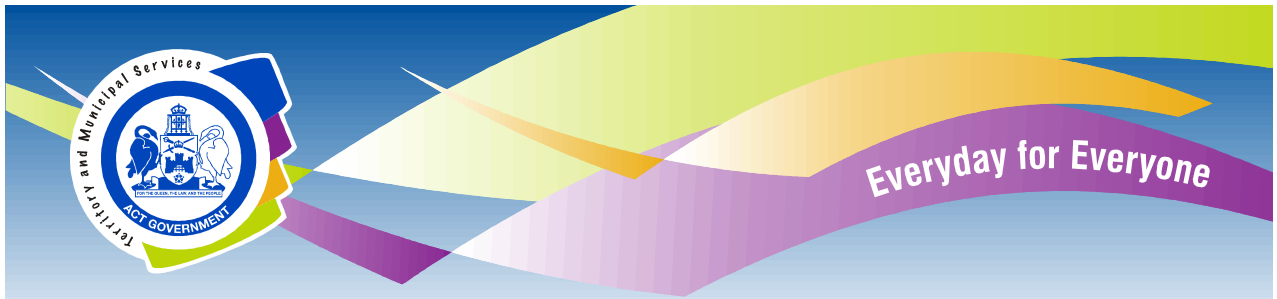
There are currently three cemeteries in the ACT – Gungahlin Cemetery, Woden Cemetery and a smaller cemetery in Hall. The Woden Cemetery, located in the south of Canberra, is filling up. There are approximately 1500 burial allotments remaining and the average number of allotments occupied each year is 200. This means all available allotments are likely to be filled within eight years. Once the Woden Cemetery is at capacity, a new cemetery will be needed to service southern Canberra.

What services could be offered if a new cemetery is developed?

Cemeteries in the ACT offer the community a range of options. These include:

- Conventional headstone burials – a traditional option featuring granite, marble or concrete headstones and bases
- Lawn burials – feature bronze plaques on granite or concrete bases on the grave at ground level and raised headstones
- Garden burials (family estates) – allotments sold in pairs - up to four around a central garden
- Mausoleum (above ground crypts) – Mausoleums are buildings with spaces or burial chambers for coffins, usually above ground
- Memorials for cremated remains – Ashes can be placed in family graves, specially designed walls, under and around trees or in specially designated garden beds.

Community Engagement



While there is a strong need for the services that cemeteries in the ACT have traditionally offered, there is also growing interest in alternate services such as natural burial (see 'Frequently Asked Questions – Natural Burials' fact sheet).

Many modern-day cemeteries, nationally and internationally, also include crematoria services. There are approximately 90 crematoria in Australia, one for every 245,000 population, but only one in the ACT.

All of these options are open for discussion and for potential inclusion in a new southern cemetery.

Where would a new cemetery be located?

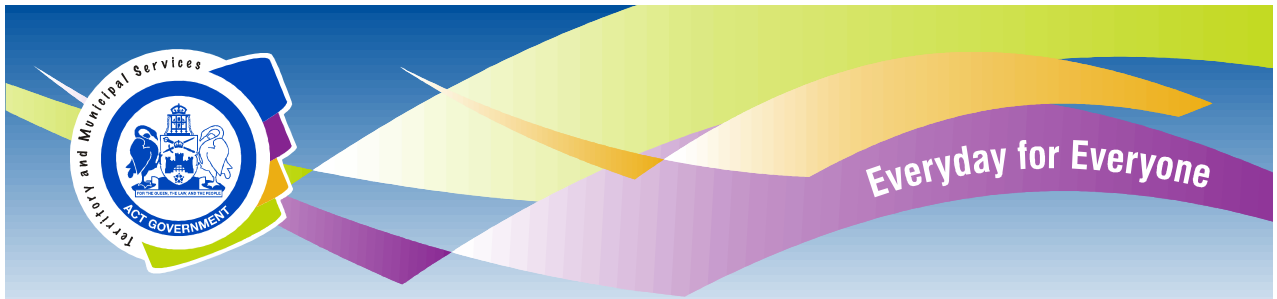
As Woden Cemetery is soon to reach full capacity a new cemetery would ideally be located in southern Canberra. While a number of sites in southern Canberra have been considered for a new cemetery in the ACT, one site has been assessed as the most suitable. This site is located on the southern side of the intersection of Mugga Lane and Long Gully Road (encompassing Block 1676 and parts of Block 1677 Tuggeranong District).

Why was the current site chosen as the preferred option?

According to the ACT Public Cemeteries Authority this preferred site meets many of the siting criteria for a cemetery. Siting criteria include:

- Suitable land classification under the Territory Plan (Broad acre)
- Proximity to main roads
- Able to accommodate separate or large exit/entrance
- Minimum site of 40 hectares
- Topography (predominately flat)
- Buffer zone (minimum 20 metre buffer around burial areas)
- Large traffic capacity/access to accommodate large cortege
- Consistent subsoil not containing large areas of rock
- Able to withstand rigorous mass soil movement
- Outside 100 year flood zone
- Low water tables desirable (ideally minimum three metres)
- Access to services (water, electricity and gas)
- Access to public transport
- Access to water and potential for capturing runoff in dams

Community Engagement



How can I be involved with the consultation process?

The ACT Public Cemeteries Authority and ACT Government held meetings with representatives from key stakeholder groups to seek input to the consultation process during March 2009. A comprehensive community consultation program commenced on 30 March 2009 with a random telephone survey of 1,000 residents.

There are a variety of ways that the community can contribute to the consultation. These include:

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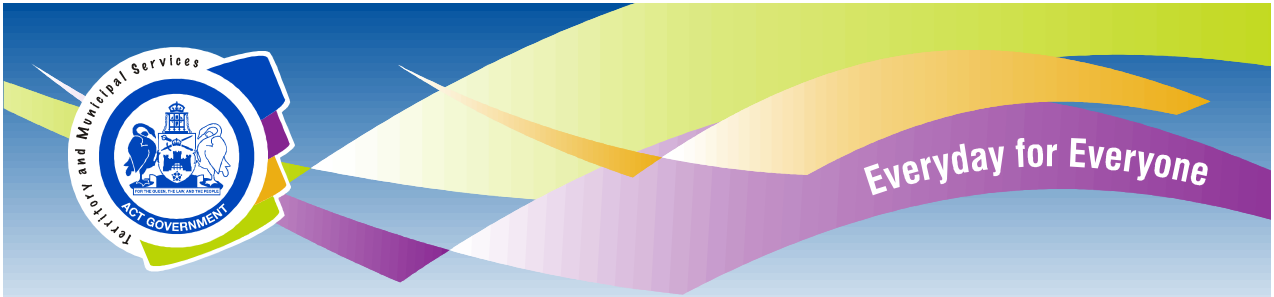
To complete the survey or for more information visit www.tams.act.gov.au, or drop into a Canberra Connect Shopfront or your nearest ACT Public Library.

Submissions for the community survey close on Friday 22 May 2009.

After the first round of public consultation a discussion paper will be produced and released for further comment.

For more information on ACT Cemeteries please visit www.canberracemeteries.com.au.

Community Engagement



Proposed Southern Cemetery Frequently Asked Questions – Natural Burials

What is a natural burial?

The Australasian Cemeteries and Crematoria Association define a natural burial as the act of returning the body as naturally as possible to the earth. The body is not embalmed or cremated but instead buried in a simple casket or shroud in a protected green space. Only biodegradable and non-toxic materials may be buried with the body as part of a natural burial.

How are natural burials different from standard burials?

By choosing a natural burial, people are choosing a burial method which has a lower environmental impact. A natural burial reduces the energy and resource consumption associated with traditional practices in the longer term.

Are there markers to identify where the body was buried?

Natural burial grounds only contain natural markers that blend with the landscape. These markers can include shrubs and trees, or rocks or stones which may be engraved.

How can people find their deceased family member?

As in all cemeteries, careful records are kept of every interment and sites are mapped with a Geographic Information System (GIS).

Are there any natural burial grounds in Australia?

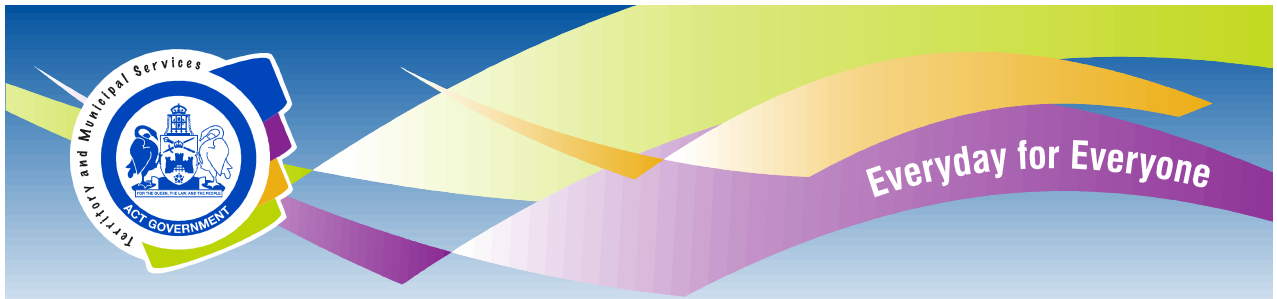
Natural burials grounds are located in Lismore (NSW), Kingston (Tasmania), Pinnaroo Valley Memorial Park (Western Australia) and the Lilydale Cemeteries Trust (Victoria). Queanbeyan Cemetery also has a 'bush' section. The South Australian Government announced in October 2008 that their first natural burial ground will be opened at Enfield Memorial Park. In a number of jurisdictions natural cemeteries are being used to establish or restore forests or woodlands with native plant species.

Internationally, natural burial grounds are the fastest growing environmental movement in the United Kingdom. The first woodland burial ground was opened in 1993 and there are now approximately 200 in the UK. ACT legislation will need to be reviewed should demand for natural burial in the ACT grow. At present natural burial is only open to members of the Muslim community because of an established practice of allowing burial in a shroud.

Would a new southern cemetery allow for natural burial?

Natural burial is being considered as an option for the proposed southern cemetery. Feedback from consultation with the community and a further feasibility study will inform the decision on whether to proceed with natural burial as a part of the southern cemetery.

Community Engagement



Proposed Southern Cemetery Frequently Asked Questions - Crematoria Services

Cremation is chosen by more than 50% of Australians as an alternative to conventional burial. In metropolitan areas this figure is often much higher with 60-80% of Australians choosing to be cremated. As such, cremation is one service that is being considered for inclusion at a new cemetery in the ACT.

There are approximately 90 crematoria in Australia. This means that there is one crematorium for every 250,000 people in Australia. The existing crematorium at Mitchell provides the sole cremation service across the Capital Region. The nearest other crematoria are located in Wagga Wagga, Bega and Broulee.

About 70% of Canberrans now choose to be cremated and any new cemetery would need to recognise that cremation is an important option. A new crematorium, and associated memorial areas, for southern Canberra would be more convenient for southern residents.

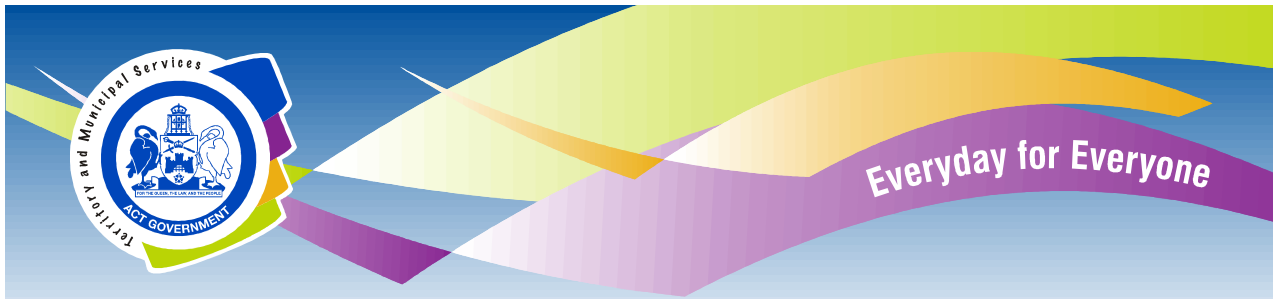
What is the environmental impact of a crematorium?

Generally the volume and type of emissions from a crematorium are considered relatively insignificant compared to other gas-fired facilities.

Should community feedback support further consideration of the proposal to build a crematorium as a part of a new southern cemetery, a detailed assessment of emissions in the immediate and surrounding areas would be undertaken. This would inform a broader assessment of the environmental, social and economic impact of a crematorium.

Modern crematoria are constructed and landscaped to complement the surrounding environment. Some crematoria are constructed as part of a memorial hall while others are stand-alone buildings. Cremation interment and memorials, and the common practice of 'scattering ashes' uses significantly less, or negligible, space compared to other popular forms of burial.

Community Engagement



What environmental approvals are required?

The crematorium would need to meet or exceed all of the environmental standards set by the ACT Government's Environment Protection Authority (EPA).

In assessing the facility, the EPA would take into account the social, economic and environmental aspects of the crematorium. The ACT Heritage Unit and Parks, Conservation and Lands would also need to assess the proposal with regard to heritage and land use matters.

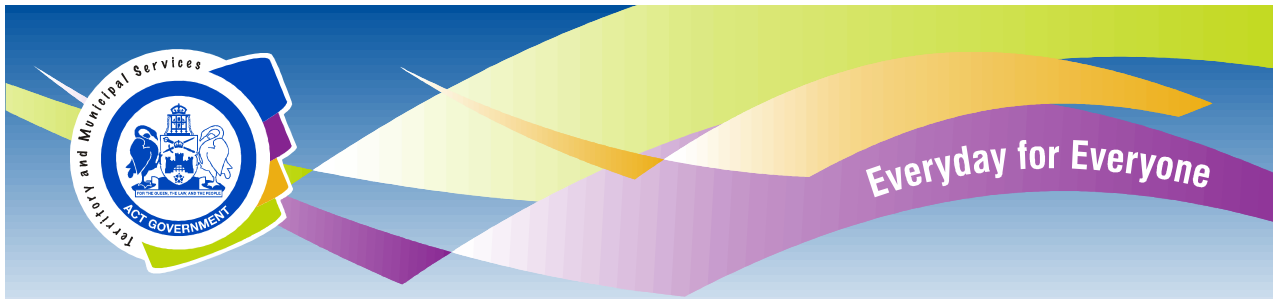
The operation of a crematorium is a Class A activity under the *Environment Protection Act 1997*, therefore the operator must obtain an Environmental Authorisation to operate the facility.

Where would a crematorium be located?

The Australasian Cemeteries and Crematoria Association Guidelines for a Crematorium recommend that cremators be located at least 200 metres from residences.

If a crematorium was located on the same site as the proposed cemetery it would be considerably further away than the recommended minimum distance.

Community Engagement



Proposal for a new southern cemetery in the ACT Frequently Asked Questions – Alternative Sites

The ACT Public Cemeteries Authority has identified the need for a new cemetery to cater for the future needs of the ACT. On 6 February 2009, the ACT Government agreed to a proposal from the Authority to explore the options in determining a site for a new cemetery in the ACT. The ACT Government and project consultants are now undertaking a community consultation program to gauge public opinion on the development of a new cemetery, its location and the services it could provide.

Has a site been identified for a new cemetery?

As Woden Cemetery is soon to reach full capacity a new cemetery would ideally be located in southern Canberra.

In recent years, the ACT Public Cemeteries Authority and the ACT Government have investigated a number of potential cemetery sites. These include:

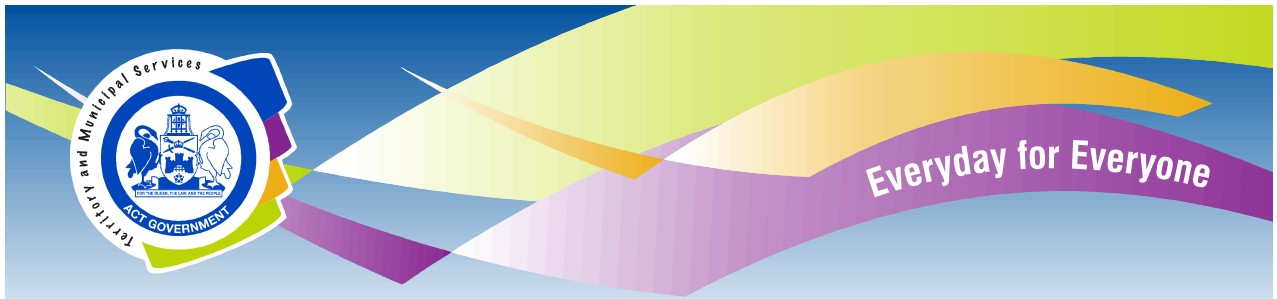
- Part of Block 1677 (corner of Monaro Highway and Isabella Drive)
- Part of Block 154 Jerrabomberra
- Greenway (west of Rowland Crescent between the Murrumbidgee River and the Town Centre)
- Block 1676 and parts of Block 1677 Tuggeranong District (southern side of the intersection of Mugga Lane and Long Gully Road)

The site located near Mugga Lane and Long Gully Road has been identified by the ACT Public Cemeteries Authority as the most suitable, as assessed against siting criteria, to proceed with further evaluation.

Why was the current site identified as the preferred option?

The site, located on the southern side of the intersection of Mugga Lane and Long Gully Road (Block 1676 and parts of Block 1677 Tuggeranong District), has been identified by the ACT Public Cemeteries Authority as the preferred site for a new cemetery in the ACT. A preliminary assessment has indicated that this site is the 'best fit' with the siting criteria.

Community Engagement



Siting criteria include:

- Suitable land classification under the Territory Plan (Broad acre)
- Proximity to main roads
- Able to accommodate separate or large exit/entrance
- Minimum site of 40 hectares
- Topography (predominately flat)
- Buffer zone (minimum 20 metre buffer around burial areas)
- Large traffic capacity/access to accommodate a large cortege
- Consistent subsoil not containing large areas of rock
- Able to withstand rigorous mass soil movement
- Outside 100 year flood zone
- Low water tables desirable (ideally minimum three metres)
- Access to services (water, electricity and gas)
- Potential for to public transport
- Access to water and potential for capturing runoff in dams

A full feasibility study will be undertaken on the establishment of a cemetery, and possibly a crematorium, if the concept is supported by the community.

What is the planning process for a cemetery?

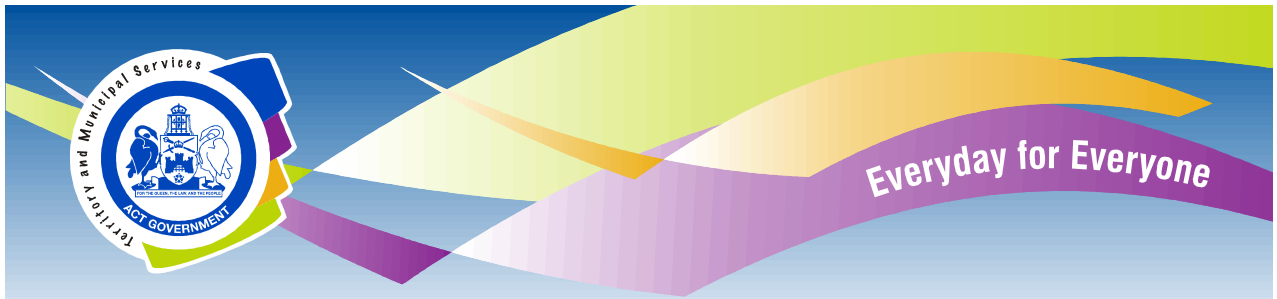
All proposed developments are assessed by the ACT Planning and Land Authority (ACTPLA) in accordance with the *Planning and Development Act 2007* and the Territory Plan.

For more information on the development assessment process visit www.actpla.act.gov.au

How can I be involved with the consultation process?

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Community Engagement



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To complete the survey or for more information visit www.tams.act.gov.au, or drop into a Canberra Connect Shopfront or your nearest ACT Public Library.

Submissions for the community survey close on Friday 22 May 2009.

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For more information on ACT Cemeteries please visit www.canberracemeteries.com.au.

Community Engagement

Appendix B – Community Survey Questionnaire

Attitudes of ACT residents towards the development of a new southern cemetery

Community Survey - 2009

In response to a recommendation from the ACT Public Cemeteries Authority, the ACT Government made an announcement on 6 February of this year that it would consult with the Canberra community about the development of a new southern cemetery. This survey is one part of that consultation process and will only take five minutes of your time.

Q1. Previous to this phone call, were you aware of the new proposal to develop a southern cemetery?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Q2a. How supportive would you say you are of a new southern cemetery being developed?

Very supportive	Supportive	Neither	Not very supportive	Not at all supportive	D/K
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q2b. (If not very supportive or not at all supportive), please explain why.

.....

Q3a. Are you aware of any sites that you feel may be suitable for a new southern cemetery?

Yes ☐ No ☐ (If no, go to Q4a)

Q3b. (If yes), please specify the site.

Q3c. Why do you believe that this site is suitable?

.....

Q4a. If the new cemetery development was to go ahead, are there any specific types of burial that you believe the cemetery should cater for?

Yes ☐ No ☐ (If no, go to Q5a)

Q4b. (If yes), please specify what types?

.....

Q5a. Assuming that a suitable location was identified, how supportive would you say you are of a new crematorium being developed?

Very supportive	Supportive	Neither	Not very supportive	Not at all supportive	D/K
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q5b. (If not very supportive or not at all supportive), please explain why.

.....

Q5c. If a new crematorium was developed, do you believe that this crematorium should be placed on the same site as the new cemetery?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't know ☐ (If yes or don't know, go to Q6)

Q5d. (If no), why do you say that?

.....

Q6. Do you have any comments you wish to make regarding the development of a new southern cemetery?

.....

DEMOGRAPHICS

Q7. What is your residential postcode?

Q8. For how many years have you lived in the ACT?

Q9. Please indicate your age group.

18 – 24	25 – 34	35 – 44	45 – 54	55 – 64	65+
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q10. Gender. Male ☐ Female ☐

That completes the survey. As this is market research you can be assured that it is carried out in full compliance with the Privacy Act and the information you provided is only used for research purposes.

The closing date for submissions is Friday 22 May 2009.

Please return to:

Re: Proposed Cemetery Survey
Community Engagement and Communications
Department of Territory and Municipal Services
GPO Box 158
Canberra City ACT 2601

Further information on the proposed southern cemetery is available from the Territory and Municipal Services website www.tams.act.gov.au or phone Canberra Connect on 13 22 81.



Appendix C – Consultation List

The following list of individuals and groups were consulted with about the proposed cemetery development:

Members of the Legislative Assembly

- Ms Joy Burch
- Mr John Hargreaves
- Ms Caroline Le Couteur

Leader of the Opposition Zed Seselja

Tuggeranong Community Council

Woden Valley Community Council

Weston Creek Community Council

Gungahlin Community Council

Belconnen Community Council

North Canberra Community Council

Horse Paddock User Group

CPR (Canberrans for Power Station Relocation)

United Ngunnawal Elders Council

Indigenous Elected Body

Ngambri Inc.

No Waste / Revolve

Symonston Respite Facility (Department of Disability, Housing & Community Services)

Council of the Aged

Queanbeyan Cemetery Management

Roads ACT

ACT Planning and Land Authority

ACT Parks, Conservation and Lands

Multicultural and Community Affairs, Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services

Symonston Respite Facility, DisabilityACT, Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services

Environmental Protection Agency, DECW

ActewAGL (Electricity and Water)

ACT Public Service

ACT Muslim Advisory Council

Funeral Industry Representatives

War Graves, Dept of Veterans Affairs

Multicultural Community

Nature and Society Forum

ACT Greens Public Forum on Natural Cemeteries