

SUBJECT	Extension of Great Missenden cemetery.
RELEVANT MEMBER	Environment Portfolio Holder Caroline Jones
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Head of Environment
REPORT AUTHOR	Simon Gray / David Stowe
WARD/S AFFECTED	Great Missenden

1. Purpose of Report

The Council has identified a need to provide more space for burials at Great Missenden cemetery.

The Council owns some additional land at Great Missenden cemetery. It is proposed to use this land, currently an open grass field, as additional areas for burials and interment of cremated remains. This report is to request Members approval for the proposals and to request Capital funds to achieve the project.

The report was considered by the Environment PAG on 14 November 2019.

RECOMMENDATION TO CABINET:

- That the plans (attached as appendix 1) for the extension to the Great Missenden cemetery, and the requested capital funding be approved, and the Head of Environment be authorised to progress the project.**

2. Reasons for Recommendations

The Council has an obligation to provide spaces for burials. The burial space at the existing cemetery at Great Missenden is nearing capacity so there is a need to provide more space for burials.

Without providing additional burial spaces, the current annual income of approximately £20,000 from the existing cemetery will cease.

Land is available adjacent to the existing cemetery, having been purchased a number of years ago for the future extension of the cemetery. Due to its location, the land doesn't have any real alternative use other than as grazing land.

Approval is sought for the project and for the funds to achieve this.

Members are requested to approve the proposed plan (attached as Appendix 1) and the funding of £80,000.

3. Content of Report

3.1. A planning application will be required for Change of Use for the site from agriculture land to cemetery land. This will depend on the consultations below.

3.2. Plans and specifications will be prepared so the project can be progressed in stages.

3.3. The general layout of the project will be undertaken first, with the following:

- Plough, level and reseed the field

- Repair of existing fence lines
- Grassland to be planted with hedgerows and structural trees to outline areas for burials.
- Track to allow vehicular access for cemetery and maintenance vehicles.
- Paths to allow access to burial areas.
- Extension of existing water supply and provision of a standing tap

4. Consultation

As part of the planning application process, consultation will need to be undertaken with the Environment Agency, Ecologists and the Local Flood Authority at Bucks County Council.

It is likely that the following will be required:

- An Ecology report to show the ecological value of the area, the ecological impact of the proposals; and appropriate enhancement measures and mitigation required.
- A Flood Risk Assessment and a Hydrogeological Risk Assessment
- Reports to the Environment Agency to show the proposals for minimising the risk of contamination from the proposed burials.

Once these consultations have concluded, planning permission will be obtained and commencement of the project in 2020.

It is anticipated that the new area would be ready for use by Summer 2021.

In the meantime the Portfolio Holder Cllr Jones, the Local Member Cllr V Martin and Great Missenden Parish Council have been advised of the proposal to extend the cemetery.

5. Options

The whole field will be prepared at the same time as this will be more cost efficient. Whilst the main area (hatched on Appendix 1) is intended to be marked out for burials, accommodating in the region of 500 plots, the smaller section (cross-hatched) to the north-east of the access road will be left unmarked. It is intended that this area will be for the interment of cremated remains (with the potential of around 945 cremated remains plots), to provide a continuation of the existing cremated remains above the current lawn cemetery. However, depending on demand and customers wishes in the future it could be that this area is instead used for full burials (potential additional 215 plots).

6. Corporate Implications

6.1 Financial The cost of the construction project will be in the region of £80,000 which is requested from Capital budgets.

6.2 Legal No implications.

7. Links to Council Policy Objectives

This project aims to promote the well-being of residents, and to meet the Key Council objectives of:

- Delivering cost- effective, customer- focused services
- Striving to conserve the environment and promote sustainability.

8. Next Steps

Officers will discuss the proposals with the Environment Agency, to reach agreement. Following this a planning application will be submitted obtained and the landscaping and construction of the site will commence in 2020.

Background Papers:	None, other than those referred to in this report.
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