

Assessment matrix

Issue	Objective	Assessment criteria	Comment	Score	Maximum score = +10
Size of site	To ensure that the site is of a sufficient scale to accommodate burial needs for the foreseeable future as part of the social infrastructure serving the area	Reject any site under 2 ha.	Proposed minimum size requirement for site	Reject	+1
		Preference for site with potential to expand from 2 to 4.00 ha +.	Preference is for site that will accommodate borough's burial needs for around 50 years as strategic infrastructure serving growth area.	+ 1	
Flood Risk	To ensure that any burial site is secure from flooding.	Reject any sites in Environment Agency Flood Zones 2, 3a & 3b or where there is evidence of surface water flooding.	The flooding of a cemetery would both impede its use during times of an emergency and may result in contamination of surface waters.	Reject	N/A
Impact of use on nature/ geological conservation or heritage/ archaeological interests.	To ensure that important nature/geological or heritage/ archaeological resources are protected as a non-renewable resource.	Reject any nature conservation/geological site subject to international or national, designation.	Preference is for such sites to be preserved for their own sake as a non-renewable resource.	Reject	+1
		Reject any heritage/ archaeological site subject to international or national designation or where use as burial ground would adversely affect the setting of such a resource.	Preference is for such sites and their settings to be preserved for their own sake as a non-renewable resource.	Reject	
		Avoid any nature conservation/geological/ heritage/archaeological sites of local importance or where use of burial ground would adversely affect the setting/value of such a resource.	Preference is for such sites and their settings to be preserved for their own sake as a non-renewable resource	Reject where less sensitive site is available	

		Favour sites where the proposal would lead to an enhancement of such interests and/or the setting of the assets.	Preference is for development to enhance such resources and their settings in the interests of sustainability.	+1	
Proximity to main urban area and accessibility by differing transport modes.	To ensure convenient access to the site from the urban area by a choice of sustainable transport options.	Site within or immediately adjoining main urban area, with good access to services.	Preference for site within or adjacent to main urban area or within walking distance of its periphery. Sites must have good access to services or the cost of providing services should not be prohibitive.	+2	+2
		Site within 400m of main urban area, with good access to services .		+1	
		Site more than 400m from main urban area, with good access to services.		-1	
		Site within 100m of bus route with 30 min or better frequency Mon – Saturday or 1 hr or better frequency on Sundays.	Good public transport accessibility seen as an essential prerequisite to allow relatives of the bereaved to visit site and tend graves etc. Criteria used here is distance to bus route as stop could be provided to serve cemetery where one does not currently exist. 100m cut off walking distance reflects fact that high proportion of visitors to cemetery may be elderly and/or disabled.	+2	+2
		Site within 100m of bus route with 30 min or better frequency Mon – Saturday but with no Sunday service.		+1	
		Site more than 100m from bus route and not likely that one will be provided.		Reject	

		Reject sites where access from the public highway would be more than 100m from Primary, District or Local Distributor Road.	Good road access to district level cemetery required because of traffic generated by funeral processions + need to access by plant etc.	Reject	+1
		Access to site is achievable direct from a Primary or District Distributor Road.		+1	
		Access road to site constrained by the presence of traffic calming using road humps.	Preference for access to site not to have road humps as this may cause disturbance to mourners.	-1	
Ability to create safe highway access.	To ensure site may be operated safely from public highway.	Reject sites where safe highway access cannot be achieved.		Reject	N/A
Groundwater resources & site drainage	To minimise risk of pollution to groundwater environment and to ensure site is fit for purpose.	Reject any sites in Source Protection Zones (SPZs) 1 + 2 for purposes of initial assessment.	Whilst the Environment Agency may permit burials on sites within some Source Protection Zones (SPZs), risk to water resources is minimised by prioritising sites outside these areas.	Reject	N/A
		Avoid, where possible, any sites in Source Protection Zone (SPZ) 3 or on major aquifers of high vulnerability with high leaching potential.	Recognises that water resources are important to protect in the interests of sustainability but that option should not be precluded where it is not possible to identify alternative and constraint can be overcome.	Reject where less sensitive site is available	
		Avoid any sites with known drainage problems (unless underlain by clay and this protects sensitive aquifers) or where the use of site may be affected by presence of land drains and constraint is not easily overcome at reasonable cost.	Poor drainage or presence of land drains may result in burials contaminating surface water and cause operational difficulties. Such sites would only be acceptable where constraints can be overcome at reasonable cost. Environment Agency will normally refuse applications for burials within 10m of field drains; 30m of a spring, ditch or watercourse; and	Reject where less sensitive site is available and constraint cannot be easily addressed	

			within 250m of a spring, well or borehole used for potable supply		
		Reject sites anywhere there is evidence of a high or perched water table that may affect the use of site for burials.	Burial should not be permitted into standing water caused by high or perched water tables due to risk of contamination of groundwater etc. Base of burial should be at least 1m above the highest natural groundwater level.	Reject	
Suitability of ground conditions	To ensure that the site is fit for purpose and will not expose employees, public or environment to unacceptable risk.	Reject any sites where there is known contamination or previous land use that make it unsuitable or where soil conditions are such that grave cuts would be unstable.	Existing on-site contamination likely to make land unsuitable for burial purposes, whilst inappropriate soil conditions may make it difficult or dangerous to make grave cuts. Wooded sites also likely to be expensive to clear, whilst tree roots may lead to operational difficulties.	Reject	N/A
Access to services	To ensure that adequate power, sewerage and water is available for the site	Give preference to sites where there are already services such as power, water and sewerage	It is important that services are available or can be made available with little disruption to surrounding facilities.	0	0
		Avoid sites where new services need to be installed		-1	
Impact of cemetery on adjoining land uses / impact of use of adjoining land on proposed cemetery use	To ensure that the use of the site and its operation is acceptable in terms of impact of adjoining residential or other uses and vice versa.	Reject sites where impact from / on adjoining sites is likely to be unacceptable or incapable of mitigation.	Basic planning constraint on development of site for cemetery use plus impact noise from adjoining land including railways, roads, and schools etc. plus proximity of industrial/waste type uses. Give consideration to potential social, cultural or religious factors which may have an impact on site suitability.	Reject	N/A

Visual impact of use on landscape/townscape.	To ensure that the impact of the use on landscape/ townscape assets is minimised or where possible provides visual enhancement	Reject sites where impact on landscape/townscape would be highly or moderately adverse	The use of land for burials and the creation of a cemetery is likely to have an impact on landscape and/or townscape and it is important that this is taken into account in the decision making process. The preference is that any such development should have a beneficial effect on landscape/townscape assets. Where this is not possible, the need for burial facilities is likely to outweigh landscape/ townscape considerations where the impact is only minor adverse. In undertaking such an assessment, it is noted that 1995 PPG2 - <i>Green Belts</i> accepts that cemeteries are an appropriate land use within the Green Belt provided that they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including the land within it.	Reject	+2
		Avoid sites where impact on landscape/ townscape would be minor adverse		-1	
		Impact on landscape/ townscape is likely to be negligible although it may result in change.		0	
		Give preference to sites where impact on landscape/ townscape would be moderately or minor beneficial.		+1	
		Give increased preference to sites where impact on landscape/ townscape would be highly beneficial and/or result in restoration of previously developed land.		+2	
Security and site safety issues	To ensure that the use of the site is acceptable in terms of the safety of users and can be made secure.	Reject sites where the safety of users or security may be compromised by the character or location of the site and where these issues cannot be dealt with through management or mitigation.	It is important that the safety and security of visitors to sites and those working on site is acceptable if a burial ground is to be fit for purpose. Natural surveillance can add to the sense of security of those on site and ensure that inappropriate or anti-social behaviour is monitored.	Reject	+1
		Give preference to sites where there is natural surveillance from adjoining uses and/or on site management can be linked to other activities to provide increased presence during out of hours.		+1	

Site availability	To ensure there is a reasonable expectation that the site will be available for burial purposes within a reasonable timescale and that competing uses will not preclude its use for that purpose.	Reject sites where it is unlikely that they will be available for burial use due to existing continuing into the future or where there is likely to be a preferred alternative use of the site which would outweigh burial use.	It is necessary to make judgements as to whether a site is likely to become available for the intended purpose within the necessary time-frame required. In addition, competition for the use of land may mean that an alternative use is preferable. No approaches to individual landowners made at this stage.	Reject	N/A
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