



Cemeteries & Crematoria NSW

OUT18/3622

06MAR'18 07:52 RCUD

Ms Lindy Deitz
General Manager
Campbelltown City Council
PO Box 57
CAMPBELLTOWN NSW 2560

By email: 28 February 2018

Dear Ms Deitz

Application Number 3293/2017/DA-C, Construction and use of a new cemetery and parklands, 176 St Andrews Road Varroville

This letter is issued to Campbelltown City Council by Cemeteries and Crematoria NSW (CCNSW) in respect of the Development Application lodged by the Catholic Metropolitan Cemeteries Trust for the site at 176 St Andrews Road Varroville.

The management and operation of the more than 50 crematoria and over 800 cemeteries in NSW are governed by the *Cemeteries and Crematoria Act 2013*. CCNSW is the independent agency established by the Act, which supports and oversees the interment industry, plays a lead role in the coordination of cemeteries and crematoria land acquisition, and provides information to the community. The agency works closely with cemeteries and crematoria operators, including Crown trusts, local councils, private operators and community operators, to identify and respond to capacity and demand through strategic land acquisition that focuses on priority areas of need.

Metropolitan Sydney Cemetery Capacity Report

In November 2017 CCNSW published a research report on remaining burial land capacity in the Sydney metropolitan area. The Metropolitan Sydney Cemetery Capacity Report is accessible at https://www.crownland.nsw.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0010/746947/CCNSW-Metropolitan-Sydney-Cemetery-Capacity-Report.pdf. The report is intended to be of value to industry and government in planning for future community needs, particularly in relation to potential cemetery developments.

The report found that

- capacity for around 301,000 grave plots was available in metropolitan Sydney cemeteries as at 1 January 2015; with a prevailing cremation rate around 66%, and a grave occupancy rate around 1.4
- over 1.5 million persons are projected to require burial or cremation between 2015 and 2056, with over 355,000 grave plots projected to be required from 2015 to 2056
- by 2056, around 11,800 new grave plots would be consumed in metropolitan Sydney per annum, requiring around 4 hectares of cemetery burial land
- if there is no change to existing cremation and grave occupancy rates, cemetery capacity in metropolitan Sydney would be exhausted by 2051 if not before
- pre-sale of grave plots may mean that graves may become unavailable for 'at-need' purchasers; unavailability can be anticipated in some regions from around 2026, and generally from around 2036

- unavailability of grave plots in 'at-need' circumstances will particularly disadvantage :
 - families with insufficient resources to pre-purchase, and
 - communities with cultural and religious commitments to burial rather than cremation
- under any scenario of apprehended exhaustion, perverse outcomes may be expected well in advance, with community awareness of shortages driving demand for the pre-purchase of available stock, and negative effects to equitable, timely, proximate, or affordable access for many communities
- urgent action is required to provide for the future burial needs of the Sydney community.

Catholic Metropolitan Cemeteries Trust

The Catholic Metropolitan Cemeteries Trust (CMCT) was established in 2009 under the *Crown Lands Act 1989* to manage Catholic Crown cemetery reserves in the metropolitan area. The affairs of the Trust are managed by the Catholic Cemeteries Board.

In 2015 the Minister for Lands approved the acquisition of the site at 176 St Andrews Road Varroville using Trust funds, for development as a future Crown cemetery reserve. Conditions applicable to the approval include a requirement that at least 55% of the land area for burials be committed for use by non-Catholic communities.

CCNSW analysis identifies that over 70% of metropolitan Sydney burials are undertaken by Crown cemetery trusts. There is a continuing expectation from Sydney communities with religious and cultural commitment to burial, including many Christian, as well as Jewish, Muslim and other communities, that low cost burials should be provided by the Crown sector.

DA Number3293/2017/DA-C, Construction and use of a new cemetery and parklands

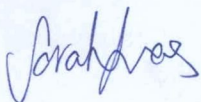
CCNSW notes exhibition by Council of Development Application Number3293/2017/DA-C and associated documentation, for the proposed Macarthur Memorial Park. The DA takes forward CMCT's initiative to develop 136,000 burial places for the future Crown cemetery reserve.

Given the projected exhaustion of burial capacity, CCNSW considers the Macarthur Memorial Park development as a positive and necessary contribution to provision of strategic burial capacity for the Sydney community.

CCNSW notes the inclusion of a Plan of Management for the development as Appendix M to the Development Application, for the purposes of the DA and the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*. Council should be aware that a Plan of Management for the purposes of the *Cemeteries and Crematoria Act 2013* and potentially the *Crown Land Management Act 2016* will also be required as part of the establishment of the site a Crown reserve, at the appropriate time in the course of development.

CCNSW supports the development of new cemeteries such as this to enable the provision of affordable and accessible interment options for the people of NSW. In the case further information is required in relation to the above, please do not hesitate to contact me on by phone 0428 338 934, or email: sarah.lees@cemeteries.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely



Sarah Lees
Chief Executive Officer
Cemeteries and Crematoria NSW