

Mr Alan Stoneham  
General Manager  
Penrith City Council  
601 High St  
PENRITH NSW 2750



By email: 28 February 2018

Dear Mr Stoneham

**DA17/1092 Staged Construction of Wallacia Memorial Park including Cemetery for 88,000 Burial Plots and related facilities**

This letter is issued to Penrith City Council [REDACTED] respect of the Development Application lodged by the Catholic Metropolitan Cemetery Trust for the site at 13 - 15 Park Road and 512 Mulgoa Road Wallacia.

The management and operation of the more than 40 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 [REDACTED] published a research report on remaining burial land capacity in the Sydney metropolitan area. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] 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 2017 the Minister for Lands approved the acquisition of the Wallacia site using Trust funds, for development as a future Crown cemetery reserve. Conditions applicable to the approval include requirements that at the appropriate time the land becomes Crown land reserved for cemetery use; space at the site being provided for use as a non-denominational cemetery

### **DA 17/1092, Construction of Wallacia Memorial Park including Cemetery for 88,000 Burial Plots and related facilities**

notes exhibition by Council of DA17/1092 and associated documentation, for the proposed Wallacia Memorial Park. The DA takes forward CMCT's initiative to develop 88,000 burial places for the future Crown cemetery reserve.

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

notes the inclusion of a Plan of Management for the development as Appendix J 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* will also be required as part of the establishment of the site a Crown reserve, at the appropriate time in the course of development.

supports the development of new cemeteries such as this to enable the provision of affordable and accessible interment options for the people of NSW

Yours sincerely