

KILKERRAN CEMETERY UPDATE REPORT

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report provides a short update on the works carried out to increase the lair availability at Kilkerran Cemetery and identifying another site to build a new Cemetery for Kintyre.
- 1.2 It was previously reported to the MAKI Area Committee in March 2023 that there were no Cemeteries with less than 5 years capacity in the Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Islands Area. This has been checked again in October 2023 and it remains the same with Kilkerran Cemetery having 8 years of availability according to current calculations based on lairs being sold at their requirement.
- 1.3 It was also reported that, in the land immediately adjacent to the current Kilkerran cemetery, the sub-soil at lair depth was non-compliant within the terms of the groundwater requirements and a planning application would not be supported by SEPA. This means officers are required to identify new land for another Kintyre Cemetery. There are two areas which have been looked at, B836 Moy and off of the A83 almost adjacent to the Machrahanish junction. The preferred option at this time by officers is the B836 as there are good footways and a bus route to this location, as well as it being of similar distance from the Town Centre to that of Kilkerran.
- 1.4 We have identified a total 180 lair spaces which are in the process of being developed within the current Kilkerran site by re-purposing parts of existing roads, footways and shrubbery, converting into grassed areas for lair development where practicable, this gave 8 years capacity, at the current restricted rate of sale. Any removal of this restricted sale of lairs will seriously reduce the cemetery capacity.
- 1.5 Further works to carry out trial excavations were carried out in June 2023 at an alternative site at Moy on the B836 to confirm soil suitability and depth to Water Table / Rock head – which was essential prior to proceeding any further with discussions on land purchase and planning applications. This confirmed the subsoil in trial pits met with SEPA approval. However historical water supplies within the 250 m distance to the site have still to be investigated, to determine if these are now inactive, before all parts of the groundwater requirements can be met, allowing support of an application. This has still to be carried out and the

officer managing this is pursuing this in conjunction with colleagues in Estates and Environmental Services, however, there still requires planning applications as well as further land purchase as we do not own the field.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 The MAKI Area Committee are asked to:

- Read, consider and note the remaining availability and current works to repurpose Kilkerran Cemetery which officers estimate will extend the cemetery lair availability by 8 years.
- Read, consider and note the updated comments relevant to Cemetery Development at Kilkerran in the Moy Holdings area.

3.0 CONCLUSION

3.1 The cemetery portfolio has sufficient overall capacity for the next 30 years operation but locally, restrictions are in place to preserve remaining lair space.

3.2 The Cemetery Development programme is currently focused on providing additional cemetery space, based on the most urgent need, subject to the measure above. However, the site selection and development programme is now a much longer process than may have been the case historically.

4.0 IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Policy – The Management Rules for Burials revised policy 2023, provides a process where lair sales can be restricted when cemeteries have less than 10 years remaining capacity.

4.2 Financial – Cemetery extensions and new developments require additional Capital funding, to provide “ready to use” infrastructure to sustain the burial service at local levels.

4.3 Legal – The Council, as Burial Authority, must provide at least one cemetery.

4.4 HR – None known.

4.5 Fairer Scotland Duty: None known.

4.5.1 Equalities - protected characteristics – none known.

4.5.2 Socio-economic Duty – Provision of the burial service at local level sustains the business models of both the Council and private providers and reduces the overall cost to customers.

- 4.5.3 Islands – The programme of cemetery development locations, highlights the desire for the retention of a local burial service, including at least one “active” cemetery on main inhabited islands, wherever practicable.
- 4.6. Climate Change – Due regard will be given to climate change with a view to minimising any climate change impact and these will be considered as and when they arise.
- 4.7 Risk – Land suitability, availability and development costs, may affect the viability of retaining a local burial service.
- 4.8 Customer Service – Cemetery development programme aims to provide and maintain the burial service at local level where ever practicable.

**Executive Director with responsibility for Roads and Infrastructure Services
Kirsty Flanagan**

**Policy Lead for Climate Change and Environment Services,
Councillor Ross Moreland**

December 2023

For further information contact:

Jim Smith, Head of Roads and Infrastructure Services