

TITLE:- EXTENSION TO EXISTING CEMETERY AT ACHNABA, N. CONNEL**1. SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report seeks approval for the further development of Achnaba Cemetery, North Connel, to allow the continued provision of the burial service at this location.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The committee approve the proposed development of the land to the North of the existing "1950's" extension at Achnaba. Development costs estimated at £8k in total, including legal fees, land purchase, boundary fencing and land preparation.

3. DETAIL

- 3.1 Further to an enquiry from the previous area chair and the parallel review of all cemetery capacity of 2007, a need was identified to extend the existing cemetery within a period of 5 years.
- 3.2 Negotiations with the land owner, Mr W Buchanan of Lag na Fiodhain, commenced in late 2006, with an initial proposal to obtain all of the remaining land to the North of the existing extension. However Mr Buchanan wished to retain a proportion of this land to allow wider access to his property beyond the Eastern boundary. A final agreed alignment for the new extension was determined onsite, in August 2007, enclosing an area of 663 sq.m. from the existing boundary fence. This will allow for a further 140 lair spaces and associated footpath network.
- 3.3 Further negotiations took place to agree a purchase price and other services to compensate Mr Buchanan for the loss of this land. A value for the land and the provision of two lair spaces, supplied free of charge, were agreed as full and final recompense. The two lairs in the North East corner are to be allocated thus.
- 3.4 The total estimated costs to obtain and develop the new extension are:-

Legal Services fees :- Purchase & Planning	£2000.00
Land Purchase Price	£2000.00
Landscaping and soiling	£1000.00
Boundary Treatment : - 100lin.m. Fencing	£ 900.00
Extension to footway network :- 157lin.m	£1400.00
Provision of Headstone footings :- 66 lin.m.	<u>£ 750.00</u>
Total	<u>£8050.00</u>

The cost per unit to extend the site will be approximately £57.50 / lair

- 3.5 The existing “1950’s” extension, which is presently providing the burial space at Achnaba, was gifted to the local authority by the Buchanan family free of charge on the understanding that lair spaces would be restricted to parishioners of Ardchattan Parish Church. As this land was “free”, at present there is no charge for the “sale” of a lair space for right of burial in Achnaba but this is restricted to parishioners or those with a family connection to the area only. These lairs are only released at point of need with no “pre-sale” of right of burial allowed.
- 3.6 At the release of the final lair in the existing extension, all future lairs will be let on land which has been “purchased” as opposed to “gifted”. There will therefore be a need to reinstate the lair sale charge on all future applications, at the rate current at the time. The policy of restricting to parishioners would also cease, as this would be contrary to the policy at all other sites. To preserve the spaces, the policy of release at time of first need, with no pre-sale of lairs, would continue as is the case with several other sites within the Lorn and Lomond districts.
- 3.7 At the present rate of application for new right of burial and uptake of lair spaces, the existing land will be exhausted in approximately 7 years, the proposed extension will preserve the burial service at Achnaba for a further 25 years beyond this, to approximately year 2040. There is unlikely to be any adjacent land available in the vicinity to allow the continuation of the service beyond this date.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 The committee approve the development of all available land to the North of Achnaba Cemetery to retain the burial service at this site.
- 4.2 The committee approve the completion of arrangements by Legal Services, Estates section, to purchase the land, to the North of the existing cemetery, amounting to 663 sq.m. for the agreed sum of £2000.00
- 4.3 On completion of the last lair sale in the present extension, the right of burial sale charge should be re-introduced to all future applications.

5. IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Policy – Fulfils the Council’s statutory duty to facilitate the burial service at this site, until all available land is exhausted around year 2040.
- 5.2 Financial – Land purchase and development costs funded through a combination of Capital and the Revenue maintenance budget.
- 5.3 Personnel – None.
- 5.4 Equal Opportunities – None.
- 5.5 Legal – None

For further information, please contact Neil Brown. (Tel: 01631 562125).

Andrew R Law
Director of Operational Services
Date :- 20th March 2008

Enc. Appendix 1 – Site Plan