

DIARY NOTE

6333 Cheltenham Crematorium

16th March 2015

RJP visited the Cheltenham Crematorium site and had a series of introductory/briefing meetings.

11.30am meeting with Rob Hainsworth (also introduced to Jackie, senior admin/registrar and Ben, management of the chapel, crematorium, grounds management etc).

The crematorium was opened in 1938, and the burial records go back to 1864.

Generally the funeral directors are the intermediaries between families and the council.

There are presently 1900/2000 cremations per annum and two cremators have been felt to be adequate, though the funeral directors have a desire to see three cremators to ensure downtime is minimised.

The remote yard area presently provides storage, mowing equipment, spreading of arisings etc and this facility could be relocated if desired.

Downtime for cremator brick rebuilding is approximately 3 weeks.

The existing building is popular and has a traditional feel.

The cemetery areas recently had sections designated for Muslim and Jewish burials. There have only been two Jewish burials in that period.

The Bouncers Lane industrial site may be becoming available though the plans for this are not known.

The existing road network within the crematorium was not designed originally to accommodate cars. While there is a one way system the roads are generally narrow.

RH advised that having the office separate from the chapel works well as it keeps the memorial service separate for families.

When burials are taking place the mourners are escorted from the office to the burial site, as most are coming from another church location.

On site staff is approximately 5 in the office, 3 in the chapel and 7 externally plus 4 in the summer months.

The flat roofed extension is not a feature which needs to be retained.

The option of having a remote crematory may not be ideal as it would entail moving the coffins from the chapel to the crematory externally.

The cooling fans which were previously installed are out of use but may be able to be reused.

Directional signage is important and was recently added to.

There is a lane just outside the southern boundary which may provide an extension to the roads network.

The playing fields are owned by the Council.

The restricted car parking availability means that when the car parking areas are full people park wherever they can find, resulting in the driveways being blocked, parking on burial lairs etc.

The north chapel is a smaller chapel than the south chapel. The hearse takes the perimeter route to approach the north chapel from the north, while the route to the south chapel is along the east/west axis road.

There are few local places for wakes to take place, so if the chapels are being replaced by a new crematorium then it may be that these can be adapted for new uses including a café/reception area for wakes.

The floral tribute area is remote from the crematorium and is not readily visible.

BH said that there has been discussion about removing the wide hedge between the road and the memorial gardens in order to provide more car parking.

At 1.30 RJP met Chris Coleman (cabinet member) Mike Redman (director and project sponsor), Chris Chavasse (tree officer) and Rob Hainsworth.

The need to avoid any new facility being in close proximity to the existing houses was confirmed.

Potential access were mooted via Whitthorn Drive, Ladysmith Road, bridge over river at Finchcroft Lane (presently a cul de sac).

While there has been mention of the industrial land to the west potentially being available for redevelopment, the timing of this is not clear, and Planning have a policy of maintaining employment use rather than promoting residential use. Any new route through this land could also not be insisted upon.

The main route to the crematorium is via Priors Road to Bouncers Lane.

There are presently only circa 35 parking spaces.

The larger chapel can accommodate over 100 people but this requires people to stand.

During the site visit there were cars parked in a variety of locations away from the parking areas, causing congestion, and this was noted as being a moderate level of congestion. At large funerals the parking extends along the whole access road.

Local people come early to the crematorium in order to obtain a parking space, so anyone arriving 15 minutes before is very unlikely to find a place to park, giving rise to cars being abandoned.

The chapels are too small for ceremonies, resulting in the experience not being particularly good when a large number of people are standing.

The south chapel has a side chapel area which does not have good views to the catafalque.

The waiting area is too small, particularly in bad weather. The WC access is blocked when the waiting area is busy. Families often have to wait in the rain due to the congestion of the waiting area and their desire to see the coffin being brought in.

The circulation route is labyrinthine with a number of areas where the natural flow crosses itself, which results in people arriving meeting people who are leaving.

There is no covered area when exiting the chapels, so people rush away in bad weather.

The ownership of the track to the south should be explored. There was mention of a manhole and the track may contain a sewer.

CC advised that the development should promote tranquillity.

Stakeholders were discussed and the funeral directors were considered to be key to this. At an initial meeting RH would expect 6-7 directors to attend.

Other consultees are the elected members, service users (feedback possibly via the funeral directors), Chris Riley (cabinet member), nearby residents (Prestbury and Oakley – the site is in the Oakley ward).

The council own the “blue” land to the east and this has been intended for cemetery extension, but could accommodate crematorium use.

RH advised that new memorial gardens would be desirable as most people wish to use the circular memorial garden with pond and yew hedge, but this is now reaching capacity.

Heritage statement has been prepared and will be circulated.

Chris Chavasse referred to tree avenues as being part of the planting strategy.

Eco/green burials were referred to but may be more applicable to specialist provision.

The cedar trees are in some case 150 years old, meaning they have 50 years safe life remaining, so there will need to be a compensatory planting strategy in the near future.

Some of the “blue” land is believed to be on the housing revenue account – this will be checked by the council.

Capacity for burials in future to be retained. Presently the split is 70/30 cremation/burial.

At 2.30pm RJP met Ken Dale and discussed the project management aspects.

Reporting to be every two weeks from 1st April.

There is likely to be media interest from the Gloucestershire Echo.

At 3pm RJP met with Ken Dale, Chris Coleman, Mike Redman, Rob Hainsworth, Garrie Dowling (property), Martin Chandler (planning), Karen Radford (heritage), Chris Chavasse (tree officer).

There was a general discussion about the project with particular reference to information required from any additional studies.

GD has arranged a topographical survey of the site, in relation to some utilities work which is planned. RJP requested that this is extended to encompass the blue area and track.

C Chavasse is arranging a tree survey which will be a high level survey to identify the key groups. Roof protection of trees will be required but this is likely to be limited in relation to the proposed development.

An ecological survey was discussed and MC confirmed that it would be desirable for this to be in place as it will be requested by Planning at the appropriate stage and will identify any particularly constraints in relation to the existing and extended site. The county ecologist is Gary Kennison and KD will ask him whether there is a particular scope considered appropriate for the ecological report.

The historical statement of significance has been prepared and KR advised that this is ready for issue by KD.

Archaeology was mentioned and the county archaeologist, Charles Parry, will be consulted to see whether the land beyond the boundary is considered sensitive.

MC advised that the blue land to the east is not zoned for cemetery use, though it is envisaged that this would be an appropriate use.

There are not believed to be any utilities records available.

Ownership of land beyond the boundary to be established.

KD will contact Nina Philippidis regarding the business case format.

RJP confirmed that Web File Manager access will be set up.

MC advised that the statement of significance makes reference to the applicable planning policies. The 2006 Local Plan is in place but there is an emerging Joint Core Strategy which talks about population expansion and the wider area, hence the focus on this site.

In relation to the industrial site MC confirmed that planning will be keen to see this remaining in a use which provides local employment. MC advised that a section 106 agreement for a new access road would not be likely to be insisted upon. A pre-application submission has been made to Planning in relation to this site.

The study timescales were discussed and it was noted that the target date for completion is 30th June, which KD confirmed suits the July 14th cabinet meeting.

cc. Ken Dale – Cheltenham Council

16 April 2015

6333

General Notes:

Funeral Directors Consultation:

- Capacity of the South Chapel currently 120no. persons (including standing).
- The largest service that can be accommodated at the existing facility is for 150no. persons however this over capacity for the South Chapel. Services for larger numbers are recommended to use church facilities elsewhere.
- Capacity of the North Chapel is substantially less. North Chapel generally used for smaller services (e.g. babies / children).
- North Chapel previously altered to accommodate cremation facility that reduced capacity further.
- Provision of 2no. separate chapels preferable (1no. large and 1no. small).
- Larger chapel essential with seating for min. 150no. persons.
- South Chapel previously altered to increase capacity. This whilst providing more seats is in an irregular shape and not all persons have a clear view of the service / catafalque.
- Flexibility of use of the chapels important.
- Service time slots currently 30-45 minutes per service. This is considered an important factor in people selecting this facility over nearby facilities (Service time slots at Gloucester currently 20-30 minutes per service). This ensures there is sufficient time for a service without persons feeling rushed.
- Services do not take place to the North and South Chapels at the same time. Service time slots are staggered to avoid large numbers attending the facility at the same time.
- Existing circulation flow of the facility not ideal or clear and leads to confusion. Access to the South Chapel is from main front entrance and egress from the door on the south elevation. Access and egress to the North Chapel is from the door on the north elevation. The waiting room is predominately accessed from the rear elevation however can be accessed from internally. Persons can access the South Chapel from the waiting room without having to exit however you are required to walk externally round the building to access the North Chapel.
- Waiting room floor area considered appropriate based on a large service being held.
- Waiting room become crowded when persons attending a later service arrive earlier and mix up with the earlier service. This is considered a consequence of insufficient car parking on-site resulting in persons attending site well before the allotted service time slot. This adversely affects clients perception of the service
- Important to provide separate waiting rooms for each chapel.
- Covered exit area essential. Considered a covered walkway leading to a covered meeting point preferable. Requires to be located clear from the Chapel(s) to avoid the noise issues for the next service from gathering persons.
- Reasons clients use the existing facility – within the parish, personal attachment, setting, history, ambience and longer service time slots. Local persons would find it very difficult to go to another nearby facility.
- Fees are not the most important consideration when clients are considering using the existing facility.
- Reasons clients use other facilities – waiting times for popular service time slots; insufficient parking and lack of accommodation to the chapels.

- Parking – currently approx. 30no. spaces in main car park with 8no. spaces to the rear of the main building and approx. 12no. spaces elsewhere. 3no. disabled spaces to rear of the main building are not compliant.
- Required parking capacity of 150no. spaces required. Parking requires to be well defined. Disabled parking bays and drop-off points required. Staff car parking required in addition (e.g. 3-4no. clergy, bearers, organist, cremation staff).
- Max. walking distance from parking areas to facility was 300-400 yards.
- Potential for a remote crematorium was considered undesirable unless it was enclosed, discreet and sensitive. Many considered this would be unacceptable. This would require working 24 hours in arrears to ensure privacy and sensitivity. Not considered an appropriate solution.
- Different religions request to witness the charging. This is known before hand and cremators are made available upon this request. Approx. 3-4 no. requested per year.
- Existing facility is currently oversubscribed and proposals for a new crematorium facility are considered long overdue.
- New chapel and crematorium would be encouraged and recommended. This would require to be a sensitive and fit-for-purpose design. New facility requires to fit the character of Cheltenham.
- There would be a positive impact of a new chapel and crematorium. This should meet the needs of Cheltenham for the next 50-100 years.
- Strong local affection for the existing building. People have a special attachment to a specific chapel.
- As existing the building and setting provides comforting and tranquil place for mourners. This requires to be retained with any new proposals.
- Retention of the existing building essential and alternative uses requires to be considered.
- Retention of existing chapel(s) for funeral / cremation services requires to be considered. Humanist services could be an additional source of income.
- Any potential for additional income for an alternative use for the existing building should be considered (e.g. café, catering, site wakes, flowers). This could have a positive impact and enhance the experience. Persons visiting graves and staff could also use these facilities.
- No nearby venues for site wakes.
- Facilities for funeral directors currently are not adequate.
- No direct internal access to North Chapel.
- Private staff room required for funeral directors, grave attendees, clergy and organists.
- No accommodation for a bearer room within the existing facility. This requires to be a private room adjacent to the waiting room(s). 6no. persons.
- Reliability of the cremators is not acceptable at present and detrimental to the experience / service provided.
- 3no. cremators considered the min. requirement for this facility (1no. bariatric, 2no. standard).
- Cremators require a min. 15-17 year design life span.
- Currently no back up. Capacity 50% down when during breakdown or maintenance period. This results in backlogs or persons using alternative facilities.
- Existing routes within site and traffic management considered acceptable when it works. Cars tend to follow cortege and can lead to problems and blockages. Only takes 1no. misparked car to block the entire road network.

- Lack of car parking spaces on-site is considered a major cause of several of the problems identified above. Persons arrive early to park and crowds start developing around the chapel while earlier services are taking place. If the car park is full cars park on the narrow roads and on the grass verges very close to existing graves. This is unacceptable and requires to be resolved as a matter of great importance.
- Waiting space required for cortege when arriving early for a service. Drop-off points required adjacent to chapel(s).
- Way finding is important. This has improved recently with the changes that have been carried out on site. Requires to be reviewed throughout the site based on an overall strategy.
- Additional memorial trees, benches and roses desirable.
- Existing wreath garden / floral tribute area is remote from the existing chapel and as a result is underused. This requires to be relocated and incorporated closer to the chapel(s).
- Expansion of the memorial garden is considered beneficial. Private or identified small areas with special character are preferable (e.g. beech walk). Intimate space with water feature was considered important.
- Woodland burials are to be considered for the future. Noted this however provides fewer plots per acre. No local facility currently provides this service so this would be to added value for the facility. Should incorporate natural woodland walk(s) with bridges over water.
- Green burials were discussed. Not many people are fully aware of what a green funeral entails. This requires to be carried out on an established greenfield site in a rural area. Sections of oak, beech and orchard can be included. More expensive (e.g. cardboard coffins).
- Alternative methods to cremation were discussed such as bio-cremation. These are considered positive options however for the future and not in this phase of development. Noted if facility was designed to be as flexible and adaptable this could potentially accommodate future technologies / methods with less disruption / alteration.
- Currently not looking for a pioneer solution on this project.
- Small basement area below existing crematorium currently used for mercury abatement. Option was raised whether the cremators could be located in this area.

Cabinet Member Working Group:

- No pressure to reduce 30-45 minutes service time slot.
- People do book double slots to provide extra time.
- Smaller funerals sometimes allow for shorter service times slots.
- 15% are committal ceremonies. Generally these take 10 minutes but still book entire service time slot.
- Separate wreath garden / floral tribute area essential.
- Any pedestrian route requires to be of sufficient width and DDA compliant.
- Existing car park can be retained and potentially extended by retention to the banking to south. No ashes located in this area.
- Potential for new internal road option through site requires to be considered with sensitivity and check to ensure there are no ashes in this location. New hedge along memorial garden would be required.
- Existing hedge along car park can be removed if beneficial.
- Existing building adjacent to car park vacant and could be demolished if beneficial. Not listed. Gas meter located in this area would require to be retained.

- Separate car park required for staff. Potential option in location of existing nursery.
- Cafe option to be considered further. Investigations of similar examples to be carried out to establish usage and good models to follow.
- Re-use of lodge to be considered. Heavily constrained. Access, parking and listing potential issues. Lodge is not practical as an office. Commercial use as opposed to residential use considered preferable for lodge.
- Potential to incorporate lodge into conditions of outline planning permission associated with the business site to be considered.
- Remote crematorium not considered an appropriate solution.
- Consecrated restrictions to Muslim burial are may restrict location of new crematorium in this location.
- Min. 2no. cremators recommended by manufacturer based on number of cremations (2000-2500 per annum).
- Peak capacity over short period (e.g. winter), emergency situations or assisting nearby crematoriums during breakdown / maintenance periods requires to be factored in to number of cremators to be accommodated.
- Population of Cheltenham currently around 118K. Population is growing.
- By 2031 intention is for another 30,000 houses to be constructed in Cheltenham.
- Ecological survey requires to be prepared. Roe deer, squirrels, bats, moles and badgers all present on-site and in the surrounding areas.
- External lighting and traffic lighting have been considered previously to address traffic management.
- Potential for rear access road to main building to be removed and pedestrianised.
- Potential for routes through site to be increased in width marginally if beneficial.
- Public consultation arrangements to be considered. Project noticeboard / comments box could be installed on-site if required.
- Prestbury Parish Council require to be involved.
- Realistic proposals with costs required to be prepared / reviewed prior to public consultation.
- 270 burials at Cheltenham Cemetery last year. This figure is up from previous year.

Project Board Meeting:

- Emission issues require to be considered.
- Ecological survey quotes received. RPP to assess prior to CBC instructing.
- Topography Survey to be provided to RPP. Extra area requires to be carried out as recommended by RPP. CBC to instruct.
- Measured Survey to existing building potentially to be carried out. CBC to arrange if required.
- Arboricultural Survey to be instructed by CBC.
- Limited information on existing services (gas, water, drainage, electricity).
- Flood Mitigation Scheme potentially to be located in area to south of site.
- Ecological solution to foul drainage preferable.

- Staff, minister and celebrant consultations to be carried out prior to public.
- Designation of land outwith boundary to be considered in terms of planning requirements.

DIARY NOTE

6333 Cheltenham Crematorium

16th April 2015

RJP and DB attended the cabinet member working group meeting at 10.30am and the project board meeting at 2.30pm. RJP provided an update on progress in relation to the scheduled activities and there was a general and wide-ranging discussion.

The following points were of note:-

1. RJP to speak to Nina Philippidis regarding the business case and to ensure that Chris Johns and his financial specialist have seen the background briefing information regarding the business case. NP wishes further information so that she can advise on the rules relation to potential borrowing and this will be informed by the initial cost estimates for the various options.
2. Mike Redman suggested initial scenario planning covering the basic options, with NP advising what the parameters will give a starting point and should help to allow the financial viability of the different options to start being established as early as possible in the process.
3. £1m has been approved by the council for the project.
4. The business case will need to assess what level of income would be needed to justify borrowing for the likely level of expenditure needed in addition to this.
5. Population growth will inform the numbers of cremators recommended in the feasibility study. By 2013 intention is for another 30,000 houses to have been constructed in Cheltenham.
6. Status of any outline Planning Application regarding the adjoining industrial land to be requested from Planning, and while it is unlikely that this area will be beneficial or essential for the crematorium project it may help to open up uses for the lodge.
7. Parish council consultation to be arranged.
8. Stakeholder engagement plan lists the proposed consultees.

Funeral Directors
Member Working Group
Public
Ministers (celebrants)
Prestbury Parish Council
Tewkesbury Parish Council
9. Public consultation will display material, probably located in the council offices and at the crematorium.
10. Next consultation with funeral directors and with ministers is programmed for around 15th May.
11. Public consultation would ideally be the following week.
12. Initial drawings will be issued during week commencing 4th May to allow working group and project board review in advance of the next consultations.

13. Ken Dale advised that he has obtained four quotations for the ecological surveys and these are presently being reviewed.

14. The topographical survey for the crematorium site is available and will be issued by Ken Dale. Garrie Dowling has invited tenders for the topographical survey of the additional areas of land.

15. Tree survey is awaited and anticipated at the end of April.

16. RJP asked about the existing utilities. Rob Hainsworth advised that the current system had lockouts from a poor supply but this has been remedied. A new electricity supply was brought in 3/4 years ago. Any information on the gas and electricity routes and capacity to be provided by the council.

17. Sewer solution was discussed. It is likely that a SUDS solution will be required in relation to surface water. Fowl sewerage may require an ecological solution.

18. The Cheltenham new local plan is out for consultation and includes proposed land designations. Planning to be asked to be advised on any implications.

19. Ken Dale advised that the gateway review is ideally set for 22nd June to allow the study to be finalised for 30th June.

**Robert Potter & Partners LLP
Chartered Architects & Town Planning Consultants**



Cheltenham Borough Council

CHELTENHAM CREMATORIUM FEASIBILITY STUDY:

Notes from Immediate Project Team Meeting held at 2.00pm on 12th May 2015

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6333 Cheltenham Crematorium Feasibility Study

Consultation with Immediate Project Team – 12th May 2015

Attendees

Mike Redman (Director of Environmental & Regulatory Services, CBC)

Rob Hainsworth (Bereavement Services Manager, CBC)

Garrie Dowling (Senior Property Surveyor, CBC)

Martin Chandler (Team Leader - Development Management, CBC)

Chloe Smart (Planning Officer, CBC)

Karen Radford (Heritage & Conservation Manager, CBC)

Christopher Chavasse (Senior Tree Officer)

Nina Philippidis (Accountant, GOSS)

Douglas Bodell (Associate, RPP)

Apologies

Ken Dale (Business Development Manager, CBC)

Introduction

A consultation session was held at CBC offices with the immediate project team.

RPP carried out a presentation that providing an introduction and broad overview of the strategic options identified as part of the initial options appraisal. The information and options presented by RPP were uploaded onto the WFM on 30 May 2015 where they could be viewed and downloaded by the immediate project team. The purpose of the meeting was to introduce and initially review the options identified, consider pros and cons of each option, consider any options that had not been identified and consider options to progress to consultation.

It was appreciated the options had been prepared prior to receipt of the Arboricultural Survey and Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey however these have since been reviewed by RPP and comments incorporated into relevant options as part of the presentation. Utilities and planning restrictions have not been confirmed to date and the options prepared without this information. RPP advised cost information on the options has been drafted by Pick Everard (PE) and will be issued in the near future.

The following meeting notes provide comments raised / decisions agreed and are not intended to detail each option. The meeting notes should therefore be referred to in conjunction with the issued drawings indicating the options.

Option 1 – 2.01:

Retain as existing

- DISCOUNTED for reasons noted on RPP option spreadsheet. Agreed.

Option 2 – 2.02:

New cremator plant, new car park (within site)

- Replacement of the cremators can be carried out in a phased manner that ensures a service can be maintained during the works.
- No proposed alterations to the existing chapels or crematorium results in no improvement to the existing circulation flow or lack of size / accommodation required for a crematorium facility.
- Loss of the future burial ground within the site will require an allocation of a flat area out-with the site for emergency burial space in the event of a pandemic. Areas A & B out-with the site were considered the most feasible options for this emergency space. Access would be required to this area of the cemetery.
- Two-way section of road to middle of cemetery would remain as existing and this would not alleviate existing road congestion problems within the site. Traffic management would be required.
- POTENTIAL to be progressed however does not resolve all existing problems.

Option 3 – 2.03:

New remote cremator, new car park (within site)

- Loss of future burial ground as per option 2.
- DISCOUNTED for reasons noted on RPP option spreadsheet. Agreed.

Option 4 – 2.04:

New cremator plant room, new car park (within site), new road (within site)

- Confirmation required if proposed relocation of cremator plant room to rear of north chapel is feasible based on Cremation Act 1902 due to proximity of existing housing development. MC to discuss with contact at Environmental Health.
- South chapel whilst being extended into former cremator plant room has lost floor area to the reinstatement of the south vestry.
- No location for staff within altered crematorium.
- No direct link between cremator plant room and south chapel considered a key issue. Potential for below ground link to be considered.
- Option does improve the existing circulation flow however unable to provide the necessary accommodation required for a crematorium facility.
- Proposal would be detrimental to the existing historic building fabric a key issue.

- Proximity of existing trees to new rear extension considered a potential issue.
- Sensitive location. New road would be adjacent to GoR and consecrated burial grounds. Unmarked baby burials / ash scatterings may have taken place in location of proposed road and will require to be checked.
- Copper beech tree (ref: T89) would likely require to be removed to allow new road connection with car park.
- Copper beech tree highlighted in location of new road along by GoR. Not identified on tree survey report and would likely require to be removed to allow road connection with car park.
- Road will require to be carefully designed to from car park to avoid tight corners and allow ease of access.
- New one-way route through site will improve access and reduce congestion.
- Retains a two-way section of road between main entrance and inner gateway.
- Compromised design solution to accommodate new modern facilities within the constraints of an existing listed historic building.
- Rear of site is constrained with limited space for expansion.
- Burials to Muslim Section covers a larger than currently indicated on drawing. Muslim section would require allocation of future burial ground out-with the site.
- Loss of future burial ground as per option 2.
- CHECK. Feasibility of option dependent on interpretation of Cremation Act 1902.

Option 5 – 2.05:

New cremator plant room, new car park (within site)

- DISCOUNTED for reasons noted on RPP option spreadsheet. Agreed.

Option 6 – 2.06:

New cremator plant room, new rear extension, new car park (within site), new road (within site)

- Comments as per option 4.
- New rear central extension considered beneficial.
- Preferred option from RH point of view based on the options to carry out alterations to the existing crematorium.
- CHECK. Feasibility of option dependent on interpretation of Cremation Act 1902.

Option 7a – 2.07:

New crematorium, new car park (within site), new road (out-with site)

- Visual impact to existing chapel and setting considered an issue due to location on axis.

- No scope to locate crematorium and car park within site within cemetery.
- Loss of future burial ground as per option 2.
- Muslim section would require future allocation out-with site as per option 4.
- Sensitive location due to proximity of Muslim Section.
- Large cost associated with formation of new exit road along southern boundary.
- Ownership of land where new exit road proposed along southern boundary requires to be confirmed.
- Potential requirement for ecological mitigation measures required (newts, reptiles and badgers) due to location of new road.
- Arboricultural Survey not carried out-with cemetery area.
- DISCOUNTED for reasons noted on RPP option spreadsheet. Agreed.

Option 7b – 2.08:

New crematorium, new car park (out-with site).

- DISCOUNTED for reasons noted on RPP option spreadsheet. Agreed.

Option 8a – 2.09:

New crematorium, new car park (within site), new road (out-with site)

- MC / CS to review existing planning permissions and future housing allocations for this area.
- DISCOUNTED for reasons noted on RPP option spreadsheet. Agreed.

Option 8b – 2.10:

New crematorium, new car park (within site), new road (out-with site)

- Visual impact to existing chapel and setting considered an issue due to location on axis.
- Cortege and staff routes around the building appear tight and complicated.
- Loss of future burial ground as per option 2.
- Comments on new road along southern boundary as per option 7a.
- POTENTIAL to be progressed.

Option 8c - 2.11:

New crematorium, new car park (within site), new road (within site)

- Comments on car park as per option 2.

- Comments on crematorium as per option 8b.
- Comments on new road within site as per option 4.
- POTENTIAL to be progressed.

Option 8d – 2.12:

New crematorium, new car park (within site), new road (within site)

- Comments as per option 8c. Road one-way system proposed in different direction.
- POTENTIAL to be progressed.

Option 8e – 2.13:

New crematorium, new car park (out-with site), new road (out-with site)

- MC / CS to review existing planning permissions and future housing allocations for this area to determine crematorium exclusion zone to this area.
- Crematorium to be relocated closer to car park.
- Comments on new road within site as per option 4.
- Muslim Section unaffected.
- Emergency burial ground unaffected.
- Generally the most preferred option at this stage (pending receipt of cost estimates).
- POTENTIAL to be progressed.

Option 8f – 2.14:

New crematorium, new car park (out-with site), new road (out-with site)

- DISCOUNTED for reasons noted on RPP option spreadsheet. Agreed.

Option 8g – 2.15:

New crematorium, new car park (out-with site), new road (out-with site)

- DISCOUNTED for reasons noted on RPP option spreadsheet. Agreed.

Option 8h – 2.16:

New crematorium, new car park (out-with site)

- DISCOUNTED for reasons noted on RPP option spreadsheet. Agreed.

General Notes:

Schedule of Accommodation prepared for new build crematorium has been prepared based on a comparative assessment of Crownhill Crematorium. RPP to review whether a best practice model for a new build crematorium should be reviewed as part of this process.

No further options for a location of a new build crematorium facility were raised.

Options proposing a new build crematorium facility also incorporate proposals for the alteration of the existing chapels for a new use (e.g. site wakes, humanist ceremonies, café, flower shop). The existing building would require to be incorporated into the overall project for a new building crematorium.

All options retain the cemetery entrance route through the main entrance gateway and inner gateway.

No option proposes to form vehicular access and egress connections to cemetery through nearby residential developments as this was not considered as a feasible option and therefore discounted.

Ownership of existing track to south boundary to be confirmed by CBC. Options 7a 8b, 8e, 8f, 8g propose for a new exit road along this track. Roads to be consulted regarding the proposed road exit onto Burma Avenue for this road option, though the exit route could return via the existing driveway to Bouncers Lane by re-entering the site.

Access routes from crematorium car park to chapel will require to be considered for options where a new use is proposed to the existing building.

Car parking proposal within cemetery (to future burial ground) is on the basis of 120 spaces with landscaping.

Potential for new car parking to existing nursery yard to be incorporated into an option. Number of car parking spaces that can be accommodated to be determined. Nursery yard would require to be relocated elsewhere. Designated pedestrian route would require to be formed from car parking to chapel. RH also raised the potential for conflict between cortege vehicular routes, congregation vehicular routes and pedestrian routes within this proposal.

Post Note: RH raised the potential for an option to be prepared that replace the cremators, extended the existing cremator plant room, formed a rear extension to enlarge rear chapel, removed the existing central extension, formed a new central extension and provided a link from the north chapel to the enlarged cremator plant room (a below ground link was raised as a potential option to consider). RPP will prepare an option on the basis for review and comment.

No further options for new access routes / roads within or out-with the site were considered feasible.

Option to construct a smaller new build crematorium to work in conjunction with the existing crematorium not being considered at this stage.

Follow up ecological surveys instructed by CBC in relation to newts, reptiles and badgers.

MC / CS to review existing planning permissions and future housing allocations for areas surrounding the site including any areas designated in blue as CBC land acquisition. This has particular relevance to options 8e, 8f and 8g where due to the minimum crematorium exclusion zone from houses this could reduce the amount of land available for locating a new build crematorium.

MC recommended a site visit should be arranged to review options on the ground. RPP to contact MC and arrange a suitable date next week.

Options require to be discussed with CMWG prior to any consultation.

FD consultation currently arranged for 20 May 2015. CMWG meeting has not been arranged prior to consultation. Feedback is required on the cost estimates and confirmation of the lead options with the CMWG required prior to any consultations.

Post Note: FD consultation meeting to be postponed to allow cost information to be provided / reviewed, CWMG meeting and site visit with Planning both to take place on 20 May 2015.

Prior to receipt of cost estimates and confirmation from Environmental Health options to be progressed were agreed as options 2, 4, 6, 8b, 8c / 8d and 8e.

Cost estimates on the options required prior to any further consultation to ensure the most appropriate options are presented and to avoid false expectations.

Options to be presented will require to be retitled for consultations (e.g. option A, B, C etc).

DIARY NOTE

6333 Cheltenham Crematorium

Wednesday 20th May 2015

RJP attended a series of Council meetings during the day and the following points were of note:-

1. Martin Chandler tabled information noting that in addition to the former GCHQ site being approved for new housing (the first phase of which has started), the fields to the south of the crematorium site are allocated for housing under the current planning policy consultation, reference CP023. This is the largest allocation in the draft local plan. It was agreed that if possible there should be the standard 182 metre offset from potential new housing, which effectively means that option 8D is the only new-build option which can achieve this.

2. Exclusions drawing to be updated to show proposed exclusion radii from the southern fields as noted above.

3. A draft flood bowl drawing was tabled by Mike Newman, showing a flood bowl in the centre portion of the southern fields.

4. Martin Chandler, Chloe Smart and Karen Radford carried out a recent site visit and this has allayed KB's concerns regarding a potential new-build solution, as the existing topography and mature landscape mean that the setting of the listed building is unlikely to be adversely affected by new-build.

5. The proposed location for the central car park appears appropriate.

6. The proposed route for the internal access road appears appropriate. KB expressed concern regarding the potential effect on the mature copper beech trees and asked whether existing graves could be relocated to allow retention of the trees. Rob Hainsworth will look into the guidelines regarding relocations.

7. Based on the discussion and the previous discussion last week the present options which appear worthy of further exploration are:-

- a. Option 2 – Refit of existing crematory (plus new car park).
- b. Option 6 – Extension and alterations to existing building.
- c. Option 8D – New build.

8. In relation to option 2, concern was raised as to whether the existing crematory can actually accommodate replacement cremators plus abatement plant given the difficulties in finding suitable equipment previously.

9. Indicative costs were discussed.

10. All costs to be based on two cremators, with extra over for third cremator where practical, so that the options are directly comparable.

11. RH confirmed that there would be no need to increase staffing if three cremators are provided (previously there were three cremators run by the same number of staff).

12. RH advised that additional income would assist in covering the costs of running a third cremator.

13. Nina Philippidis asked for indicative figures for running costs (gas, electricity etc).

14. Pros and cons of two/three cremators to be considered based on anticipated demand. MR noted that the number of cremations is seasonal, with potential services having to be turned away this winter, though this was exacerbated by restrictions in the existing cremators.

15. Business case should include projections on income.

16. The Cameo payments will stop once abatement is in place (circa £50,000 per annum).

17. NP said that the business case should not take account of additional facilities such as holding wakes etc.

18. Prudential borrowing requires approximately £60,000 income to repay capital and interest for every £1,000,000 borrowed.

19. Additional income could potentially be from an increase in fees and charges.

20. RH advised that there is an existing cremulator which can be reused so this can be deleted from the cost estimates.

21. Allowance for wayfinding should be reduced.

22. Option two allowance for landscaping should be minimal, though it was noted that some form of landscaping should be included in the proposed car park.

23. Garrie Dowling queried whether the 10% allowance for preliminaries is adequate given the site restrictions.

24. Option 2 to be updated to include the new access road.

25. All cost estimates to be updated to include professional fees (architect, quantity surveyor, civil/structural engineer, M&E engineer, clerk of works, project manager).

26. In the event of a flu pandemic, the assumption is that this would last 15 weeks. The emergency burial ground presently allocated for this is the site of the proposed car park.

27. Existing time slots should be maintained if possible.

28. Car park specification options to be reviewed in the costings.

29. Chris Coleman requested that seating layouts are shown on the outline proposals so that numbers can be ascertained.

30. Core member working group agreed that the new-build brief should be interrogated with a view to achieving lower new-build costs. It was agreed that to assist in this the new-build could be based on one new chapel, with space allocated for a future extension.

31. If there is a single new build chapel, then one of the existing chapels could also be used for services, but all cremations would be carried out in the new building.

32. Project costings to exclude renovation of the existing building where this is not directly to do with the crematorium function.

33. The three main aspects are replacement of the crematory equipment to achieve a working solution, a larger chapel, and improved parking.

34. Ken Dale provided a draft options evaluation criteria sheet for review.

35. Next stage consultation with funeral directors and public to be once the three remaining options have been developed further and the costs updated accordingly.

The next Core Member Working Group meeting will be on 17th June, which is anticipated as being a final review of the feasibility report.

DIARY NOTE

6333 Cheltenham Crematorium

Friday 5th June 2015

RJP attended the project team meeting at 9.30am by telephone link.

There was a wide-ranging discussion and the following points were of note:-

Option 2

Option 2 has the lowest capital input but Nina Philippidis explained this option also depends on the level of income achievable.

NP suggested that costs for refurbishment and redecoration of the existing chapels and waiting areas would be applicable to this scheme.

Audio visual improvements to be added to this scheme.

Third cremator cannot be accommodated.

The scheme includes the new floral display area by pedestrianising a secondary road, which Rob Hainsworth confirmed is a suitable strategy. This would also provide gathering space for people after services.

North Chapel users would still need to go outside in order to move from the waiting room to the chapel entrance.

RH noted that the North Chapel loses heat instantly when the doors are opened to admit people.

Chris Coleman noted that in the existing arrangement the seating for the families at the front of the South Chapel is overlooked by the side chapel, reducing their privacy.

CC advised that there is no wheelchair space in the existing chapels, resulting in wheelchairs being located at the end of rows in the aisle, which as well as not being inclusive results in impediments to movement.

CC noted that the main flows are shown on the drawings but suggested that the various clashes should also be indicated, including the above and the problem in the North Chapel where there are poor/blocked views to the lectern when the curtains close.

Option 2 will require the facility to be out of use while replacement equipment is fitted.

Option 6

RH advised that while this has concentrated on achieving links from the catafalques to the crematory, it compromises the flows and experience for the public.

The entrance area would become a bottleneck as all people are brought in from this direction, which is also not naturally-linking to the new car parking area.

Option 6 has no real improvement in the numbers the chapels can accommodate, and would not reach the desired capacities.

RJP advised that the appropriateness of option 6 is questionable in relation to Listed Building consent as it would significantly alter the appearance of the building from the east.

The legal advice relating to the position of a new crematory also prevents this layout being developed.

RJP advised that a variation on option 6 can be prepared, based on keeping the crematory in its present position but looking to improve the public experience.

Option 8

NP explained the tentative financial calculations and how she has arrived at the split between the different building elements to reflect their anticipated life span and the need for funding to be in minimum £1m tranches.

Potential fee increase to 20% was mooted.

Potential increase in cost of burial plots was mooted.

RH said that road improvements would be needed at the rear of the site as the one way traffic will increase the usage of these.

The potential reuse of the existing building once vacated for the new building was discussed. The North Chapel can remain as a second chapel for the facility, with the South Chapel being a café. RH suggested that the recessed seating area at the South Chapel could become the waiting area for the North Chapel. Alternatively the north chapel may have no waiting area, with people entering the chapel to wait.

RH said that the use of the North Chapel for ceremonies with cremations at the new facility would require a cultural change, with the procedure for transferring caskets to the new building needing to be considered in order to develop and appropriate strategy. It may be that coffin storage and a screened vehicle area is needed if coffins cannot be transferred by the hearse at the end of the ceremony.

NP advised that the current figures indicate the new-build option costs are resulting in a shortfall. Capital costs to be reviewed where possible in discussion with the quantity surveyor.

RH referred to memorialisation costs and enhancement of income through this, and CC referred to additional potential income-generating uses for the chapel.

Option 3

Bryan Parsons asked whether option 3 should be reintroduced, based on the remote crematory. This option would allow the formation of the new crematory but has the disadvantage of being remote from the chapels.

Costings

RJP to liaise with NP/Chris Johns/Tony Walker regarding progressing the figures further.

cc. Ken Dale

DIARY NOTE

6333 Cheltenham Crematorium

Wednesday 17th June 2015

RJP met Ken Dale, Rob Hainsworth and Nina Philippidis and discussed the updated proposals. NP has been liaising with Tony Walker regarding clarification of certain figures, and the following are still being clarified:-

- a. Cameo funding
 - b. Projected increase in cremations
 - c. New cremator plant maintenance costs
1. Presently an increase in fees of £100 has been considered, but alignment with the current Gloucester Crematorium charges would provide scope for a higher increase (including abatement levy).
 2. Service disruption period to be considered. In later discussion it was agreed that it would be essential for the facility to remain in use and for there to be no downtime. This will affect the working methods as the contractor will have standing time and out of hours working in relation to options 2 and 6.
 3. KD referred to backfill budgets to cover the impact of staff (training/disruption/management time etc).
 4. Client side services will be factored in by NP, including internal project management costs.
 5. Project management was discussed generally and RJP said that on the Crownhill project RPP were responsible for the contract management and project management of the construction process, while an independent project manager was appointed by the client to deal with client-side matter such as internal reporting, approval of payment certificates etc. The allowance for the external PM has been included in the allowance for professional fees in the cost estimates.
 6. NP would like the costs to forecast inflation to 2016 to reflect the likely lead in period.
 7. NP advised that the borrowing anticipates the trigger being April 2017 for drawdown (at project completion). This may need adjusted in relation to options 3, 6 and 8D.
 8. It was noted that options 2 and 6 will inevitably give rise to disruption during the construction phase, with site noise, inconvenience etc. While this can be managed it will need careful liaison with the public so that they understand why the work is being undertaken.
 9. NP is liaising with Martin Chandler regarding FFE costs (new chairs, soft furnishings etc). RJP advised that fixed furniture will have been included by the QS.
 10. Once the outstanding cost items have been factored in it may be that a maximum construction cost can be established in order to achieve a break-even position.
 11. Comparison of likely design and build cost v traditional to be included.
 12. Costs assume fair ground conditions. RJP to contact Building Standards regarding available information (Iain Houston)
 13. KD requested that a programme for the overall project delivery is included in the feasibility study, with any differences in the options.

14. In relation to option 6, RJP noted that this would require careful phased work, with temporary waiting areas etc, which is likely to result in this being a more prolonged strategy.

15. KD advised that the Gateway Review meeting next week will be chaired by Rob Milford.

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Tony Walker had a discussion with NP by telephone. KD advised RJP that NP has circulated a note of items still requiring clarification.

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RJP attended the Cabinet Member Working Group meeting and tabled large scale prints of options 2, 6 and 8D showing how these have developed. There was a general discussion and the following points were noted:-

1. Option 2: Can the existing crematory physically fit three cremators? RJP advised that FT have been asked this question, but even if three cremators and abatement could be fitted it would leave very little physical working space for staff.

2. In relation to option 6, it was noted that there will inevitably be disruption associated with such a substantial extension. While the contractor can have standing time to avoid disrupting services there will inevitably be dust and temporary works affecting the users. It was noted that this will entail full scale construction work and a separate marquee was suggested.

3. It was noted that option 6 incorporates a link tunnel and coffin hoists, as without this the existing requirement to store coffins and transfer them between services would remain, with the need for a 48 hour process.

4. Option 8 has a 150 seat chapel and the existing north chapel would also remain available. RH said that there would need to be a system put in place for transfer of coffins from the north chapel and that this would be explained to the families.

5. RJP noted that while option 6 gives a good functional solution and would be an attractive scheme, it does not allow for future expansion of the facilities, given the constraints of the surrounding cemetery, trees etc. Option 8D would provide greater flexibility in the medium to long term with plenty of expansion space.

6. Premier Products are understood to have said that they are relocating, potentially freeing up the ground at the front of the site, though this site is not suitable for a new crematorium. As part of a masterplan for the premier products site the nursery ground could possibly be given over to this for a capital receipt. RJP noted that a masterplan for the Premier Products site should also look at how access could be achieved to the lodge, also freeing up this building for new use.

7. KD advised that the draft feasibility study will be ready for circulation on Friday, with the Gateway Review on Wednesday 24th June, and the Cabinet Report for 30th June.

8. KD advised that the legality of options 2 and 6 are being explored and this will be a balance of a strict legal interpretation and common sense given that options 2 and 6 will be improving the emissions while retaining the existing flue position.

9. Public consultation could include suggestions for what to do with the lodge house.

10. If options 2 or 6 are implemented then it was suggested that the car parking could be formed first so that people can start to see the benefits as they emerge; similarly the creation of the floral tribute area.

11. RH reported that the existing cremator 2 has problems with the spark plug sooting up and causing the cremator to cut out. This is requiring staff to swap the spark plugs three to four times a day in 65°C heat above the cremators, so a system has been put in place whereby staff work in pairs to ensure safety of the operator.

12. It was noted that there are substantial ongoing repair costs for the existing cremators, which highlight the urgency of progressing their replacement.

13. KD suggested that the public consultation period allows for three weeks and that this can be a mixture of presentation boards, events, internet responses etc.

14. KD advised that the report to Cabinet will be seeking approval to consult publicly on selected options.

14. In relation to any projected deficit, it was suggested that this could be identified as a cost per head of population, which could then be extrapolated over a 60 year period in order to put it in context if the public are being asked to comment on this particular aspect.



6333 Cheltenham Crematorium Feasibility Study

Consultation with Public – 5-8.00pm, 13th August 2015

Attendees

Cllr Chris Coleman (CBC)

Ken Dale (Business Development Manager, CBC)

Mike Redman (Director of Environmental & Regulatory Services, CBC)

Rob Hainsworth (Bereavement Services Manager, CBC)

Douglas Bodell (Associate, RPP)

39no. members of the public attended during the consultation session.

The following general comments on the presented options were noted in discussion:

Option 1 – A:

Retain as existing

- Not an option.
- Not a long-term solution.
- Adjacent residents raised current noise / dust issues with the existing cremators.

Option 2 – B:

New cremator plant, new car park (within site), new road (within site)

- Not an option.
- Not a long-term solution. Considered temporary.
- No improvement to the existing poor crematorium facilities (i.e. chapels, waiting, wcs) and on this basis this option was considered not an appropriate solution. Layout of existing chapel is confusing.
- Level of disruption to the service during the works not acceptable.
- Adjacent residents raised current noise / dust issues with the existing cremators and were doubtful of any improvement if the cremators were replaced.

Option 3 – C:

New remote cremator, expand south chapel, new car park (within site), new road (within site)

- Considered a hesitant approach and not a long-term solution
- Good option as this increases capacity to the south chapel. Could be considered as an alternative if option E is not feasible.
- Concerns were raised with the distance between the chapel and the new remote crematorium. Detachment of facilities over the site did not seem a sensible solution.
- Strong concerns were raised on how the coffins would be transported through the cemetery to the new remote crematorium.
- No improvement to the existing poor waiting room / wc facilities and on this basis this option was considered not an appropriate solution.

Option 6 – D:

New cremator plant room, new rear extension, new car park (within site), new road (within site)

- Not an option.
- Not a long-term solution.
- Level of disruption to the service during the works not acceptable was the key factor.
- Concerns were raised by residents to the north of the existing crematorium on this option. Residents cited the noise / dust issues with the current crematorium and they did not wish for this to continue.
- Restricted and compromised design due to constraints working with the existing building.
- Detachment of cremator plant room and enlarged north chapel not ideal.
- Waiting room layout an improvement on the current provision however remains not ideal.
- Design of extension would require to be carefully considered to ensure this is not detrimental to the existing chapel. Extension should either be a high quality modern extension or to match existing.
- Cost of this option seemed expensive in comparison with Options C & E.
- Location of book of condolence room to be carefully considered.

Option 8d – E:

New crematorium, new car park (within site), new road (within site)

- Most appropriate solution. Unanimous decision. Cost important however generally not the main consideration.
- Lack of disruption to service to existing chapel during construction also an important consideration.
- Only option that provides a solution in the long-term that responds to the issues identified

(i.e. reliability of cremators, increased chapel capacity, improved circulation flow through crematorium, improved accommodation / facilities to crematorium, flexibility of use, provision of external covered areas, new garden spaces). The building would be designed specifically to meet the needs of the staff, users and community.

- Option is a realistic option and the only option that will achieve the need of the community it serves.
- Design of new crematorium requires to be carefully considered.
- Modern design preferable to new crematorium. High quality design essential.
- Design of new crematorium should reflect setting, existing chapel building and local architectural features / materials.
- Design of chimney to new crematorium should be designed in a discreet manner.
- Access of construction traffic should be carefully considered and avoid routes through cemetery. Access along upgraded track to south of site a good idea.
- No issues or concerns raised with the location of the new crematorium out-with the cemetery. No other locations were raised during the consultation.
- Residents to the north of the existing crematorium preferred this option to construct a new crematorium out-with the site. Residents cited the noise / dust issues with the current crematorium.
- Retention of the existing chapel building essential and important. Building requires to be maintained. New use welcomed (i.e. wake facility, café, florist). Chapel should be retained for burials.
- Potential for future extension (for new chapel) and flexibility of use to the new crematorium considered beneficial.

New Road (within site):

- Current road access through cemetery is confusing and difficult to navigate.
- One-way route proposal welcomed. Direction should be changed to allow arrival past the chapels and then to main car park, crematorium and out by the existing car park. This sequence is considered more appropriate.

New Car Park (within site):

- Current car parking provision grossly inadequate.
- Formation of new main car park is essential to avoid congestion and parking issues to the cemetery.
- On option E car parking provision requires to take into account if the existing chapel is to have a new use (i.e. wake facility / café) as this will increase cars on-site.
- On options B, C & D the location of the new car park was considered too far from the chapel for people to walk.