

Millom Cemetery – Land Options

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: Councillor Allan Holiday
LEAD OFFICER: Keith Parker
REPORT AUTHOR: Toni Magean

WHAT BENEFITS WILL THESE PROPOSALS BRING TO COPELAND RESIDENTS?

This will lead to the development of a New Cemetery that will serve the residents of Millom and the surrounding area.

WHY HAS THIS REPORT COME TO THE EXECUTIVE?

Procedural Requirement - Executive to agree the Project Initiation Document (PID)

RECOMMENDATIONS:

A) That the Project Initiation Document (PID) for undertaking site identification, preliminary site appraisal, securing options to purchase land and detailed site investigations be approved for the purpose of identifying land suitable for developing a new cemetery to serve Millom and the surrounding areas;

And

B) To approve £50k of the £148k Capital approved budget to finance the land options and detailed site investigations.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In the 2011/12 Capital Programme, a budget of £148,000 is provisionally approved to purchase land in the Millom area to develop a new Cemetery.
- 1.2 This Project Initiation Document (PID) seeks to provide detailed information to Members on the scope of the project, the deliverables, the associated costs, the estimated timescales, and how the work will be resourced and managed should the Executive approve the

commencement of the scheme.

2. PROPOSALS

- 2.1 Based on current figure of 15 interments per year, Millom cemetery will be full within the next 3 years. The current cemetery is unable to expand due to surrounding developments and a public park. The Council has looked at land it owns within Millom and the surrounding areas to ascertain if this land could be suitable for cemetery use, unfortunately none were found to be suitable for the purpose of burial. Other land has however now been provisionally identified as being suitable in terms of location, but we now need to undertake site investigations to understand if the land is technically suitable for this use. If burials are to continue in the Millom area then land needs to be identified and purchased to provide burials for at least 20 years.
- 2.2 A capital budget of £148,000 has been provisionally agreed by the Council to identify and purchase land. This PID sets out the process and budget required to find and purchase land suitable to develop into a new cemetery for Millom. A further PID will be required to seek approval to release further funding to actually create the cemetery, following the successful conclusion of this phase in the project.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS TO BE CONSIDERED

- 3.1 The Council has power to provide for the burial of the dead.. The council has one cemetery in Millom, if the Council decides not to support the development of a new cemetery for Millom, then at the current burial rate Millom cemetery will be full by 2014.
- 3.2 The alternative within Copeland Borough for Millom and South Copeland residents is Thornhill, which currently has 300 burial spaces left. In addition to adding a capacity pressure to the Thornhill cemetery, family members will be required to undertake a 51 mile round trip to visit this cemetery, alternatively Barrow Council provide a burial service, the nearest cemetery is Barrow main cemetery, this would incur or a 42 mile round trip.

4. CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 Local authorities have the powers to provide cemeteries, and to ensure there is sufficient capacity for burials.

- 4.2 It is recommended that Executive support the attached Project Initiation Document (PID) and that £50k is released from the 2011/12 Capital Programme to support this phase of the project.

5. STATUTORY OFFICER COMMENTS

- 5.1 The Monitoring Officer's comments are: The legal issues are addressed in the report and PID. Powers to provide cemeteries derive from section 214 and schedule 26 of the Local Government Act 1972.
- 5.2 The Section 151 Officer's comments are: Council approved a budget of £150,000 in February 2009 for the extension of Millom cemetery. £148,000 of this remains with £38,000 on this year capital programme and the remainder on 2012/13. This funding can be used for eligible capital spend only i.e. expenditure that acquires or enhances assets. Works detailed in this report and supporting PID will involve spend that may not result in the acquisition or enhancement of an asset i.e. if we look at four plots then the most we will acquire and subsequent enhance will be one plot so all monies spent on the other three plots will not be eligible for capital funding and this will need to be met from revenue. It is not possible to say at this stage how much will need to be met from revenue, but it is anticipated that this could be done within existing resources.
- 5.3 EIA Comments: Whilst this process signposts the Council's commitment to meeting both its statutory commitment and in doing so meeting the religious beliefs of much the community, whilst also providing for Ethnic, Non-Religious, Humanist, Civil and Green burials. It is through further reports that the actual commitment will be made, subject to the site suitability and an acceptable purchase price.

6. HOW WILL THE PROPOSALS BE PROJECT MANAGED AND HOW ARE THE RISKS GOING TO BE MANAGED?

- 6.1 The Project Initiation Document (PID) describes the scope of the project, the deliverables, the associated costs, the estimated timescales, and how the work will be resourced and managed.

7. WHAT MEASURABLE OUTCOMES OR OUTPUTS WILL ARISE FROM THIS REPORT?

- 7.1 Land that is suitable and is acquired to develop a new cemetery for the residents of Millom and the surrounding area

List of Appendices

Appendix A - The Project Initiation Document (PID) for undertaking the land options, and investigation to identify land suitable for developing a new cemetery to serve Millom and the surrounding areas.

List of Background Documents:

None



COPELAND BOROUGH COUNCIL

MILLOM CEMETERY LAND OPTIONS

PROJECT INITIATION DOCUMENT (PID)

ID: 003
Version: 1.5
Author: Toni Magean
Date: 1 September 2011

Project Initiation Document

1. Background

Millom cemetery will be full within the next 3 years, based on current figure of 15 interments per year.

The current cemetery is unable to expand due to surrounding developments and a public park. The Council has looked at land it owns within Millom and the surrounding areas to ascertain if this land could be suitable for cemetery use. Of the land that the Council owns, unfortunately none were found to be suitable for the purpose of burial.

If burials are to continue in the Millom area then land needs to be identified and purchased to provide burials for at least 20 years.

A capital budget of £148,000 has been agreed by the Council to identify and purchase land.

This PID describes how the Council intends to find and purchase land suitable to develop into a new cemetery for Millom

2. Business Case

The Council is statutorily obliged to provide for the burial of the dead and thus this is an underpinning service for the Council.

The council has one cemetery in Millom, if the Council decides not to support the development of a new cemetery for Millom, then at the current burial rate Millom cemetery will be full by 2014

The Councils next nearest cemetery to Millom is Nether Wasdale which is limited to burials for local residents.

Within Copeland the Council provides for burials at:

- Millom - currently 45 spaces left.
- Nether Wasdale - limited to use by local residents, 31spaces left
- Thornhill - currently 300 spaces left
- Hensingham - currently 217 spaces left
- Whitehaven - currently 60 spaces left

The development of a new cemetery for Millom will also allow for local residents to continue to be buried in Millom. The nearest Council cemetery for Millom residents to be buried is Thornhill Cemetery

Project Initiation Document

3. Project Objectives and Scope

3.1 Project Objectives

Stage 1 - Site identification

To identify land in the Millom area that may be suitable for a burial ground and internally assess the land to narrow the selection to four potentially suitable sites.

Stage 2 – Preliminary Site Appraisal

To appoint a consultant to carry out a preliminary appraisal of the 4 sites identified as potentially suitable sites for the new cemetery. The Appraisal will consider the geology and topography of the sites along with suitability in terms of access. The appraisal will then narrow the suitable sites down.

Stage 3 – Option to purchase

To negotiate with the owners an option to purchase the land within a two year period should further in depth testing of the land show it is suitable for its proposed use.

Stage 4 – Site Investigation

To appoint a consultant to carry out further intrusive investigation of the site(s) which have been selected during phase 2. The investigation will involve ground water monitoring and a detailed topographic survey of the site. A report will then be produced to support the eventual planning application for the site and final confirmation as to the suitability will be provided.

3.2 Project Scope

To identify and purchase land within the Millom area that can be developed as a new cemetery.

Once land has been identified as a potential site for a cemetery, a 12 month period will be required to undertake site investigations to comply with Environment Agency requirements for suitability of ground and to prove that there will be no pollution of any watercourses caused by the development.

There are no dependencies on other projects or parts of the business for project completion, though the survey outcome of ground water may cause problems for the project by making identified land unsuitable for a cemetery.

4. Project Deliverables

The project will establish the most suitable area of land for the new Millom Cemetery and secure the acquisition.

The main deliverables are listed in Appendix A.

Project Initiation Document

5. Project Approach

Stage 1 - Site identification

The Councils Valuation Services have undertaken a search of land on the outskirts of Millom town. Several areas of land were highlighted as potentially suitable areas for use as a cemetery. The owners of the land were contacted to ascertain whether they would be willing, in principle, to transfer land to the Council for the proposed use. Several positive responses were received whereupon an internal assessment of the areas of land was undertaken (flooding, surface water and access assessments). Of these potential sites this has been narrowed down to four.

Stage 2 – Preliminary Site Appraisal

The Councils Contracts and Property team will look to appoint a consultant with a suitable background and evidence of similar completed projects. The consultant will review the 4 sites that have been identified as potentially suitable and an appraisal of the areas will be undertaken.

The appraisal will consist of a desktop study which will involve research into the geology of the site and potential for ground water contamination. The Appraisal will also consider the topography of the site and the suitability in respect of the area, access to the site and the surrounding.

An initial survey of the sites will be carried out which will also provide an indication of service infrastructure.

Stage 3 – Option to purchase

Negotiations will commence soon with the owners of the four potential sites to agree an option to purchase each of the sites within a two year period. Whether the option on any of the areas is operated will depend upon more in-depth testing confirming or otherwise the suitability of the site.

The Option agreement will agree what capital monies will be paid to the owner of the site should the option be exercised. An 'option payment', being a percentage of the ultimate capital payment, will be paid to the owner upon signing of the option. Should the option be exercised, the 'option payment' will be deducted from the capital payment sum upon completion. However, should the option not be exercised the 'option payment' will be retained by the owner of the land concerned. Legal arrangements will also be required to be put in place.

Stage 4 – Site Investigation

The Contracts and Property team will look to appoint a consultant with a suitable background and evidence of similar completed projects. The consultant will review the information from Stage 2 and carry out further investigation of the site which may include ground water monitoring, a detailed topographic survey of the site and other investigative works as deemed necessary by Stage 2 of the work.

A report is to be produced by the consultant with the detailed site investigation to accompany the planning application. Upon completion of Stage 4 a single site will be identified which will enable the purchase of the land.

Project Initiation Document

6. Project Plan

Timescales

Task	Time to Complete
identification of four sites	now identified
complete initial in-house investigations	2 weeks
Preliminary Site Investigation	12 weeks
Dixon Webb instructed to begin negotiations	1 week
Completion of negotiations	16 weeks
Legal work on option agreement	6 weeks
Site Investigation (Including ongoing monitoring)	12 Months

7. Organisation – Roles and Responsibilities

The Project Manager will be the Open Spaces Manager, who will be responsible for the overall delivery of the project and ensuring the project is kept with the timeframe and budget.

The Development Surveyor will be responsible for the collation of data to identify potentially suitable sites and will oversee the negotiation of the Option to Purchase Agreement

The Contracts and Projects Manager will be responsible for the Site Appraisal and Site Investigation works which will include an assessment of the lands potential to be used as a cemetery.

The Legal Services Manager will act on behalf of any land sale and legality issues.

The Head of Neighbourhood Services will act as Project Sponsor

The Senior Communications Officer will support in the communication of the project with the local media.

8. Communications

Project Manager and the Development Surveyor

Will meet every 3 weeks to review progress of the project; this will be supported by telephone and email communication.

The Contract & Project Manager

Project Initiation Document

Will meet every 2 weeks with the selected consultant to review progress of the project; this will be supported by telephone and email communication.

The Development Surveyor and the Contract & project Manager

Will be supplied 3 weekly updates of site development and to communicate impact on service delivery.

To communicate throughout the development work to update and identify impacts.

Senior Communications Officer

To support in the communication of the project with the local media.

Capital Monitoring Group

To attend monthly and communicate the projects progress to the group

9. Resource Requirements

The project will be managed by the Project Manager, Toni Magean and the options work will be led by the Development Surveyor, Barbara Green. The site investigations will be managed by, the Councils Property Surveyor, Matthew McCarry.

The Open Spaces Manager, Toni Magean will act as 'client' for the project
The Head of Neighbourhood Services, Keith Parker is the Project Sponsor

10. Project Costs

Stage 2	-	£6,500	Initial Site Survey
Stage 3	-	£15,000	Options Payment
	-	£4,000	Legal Fee
Stage 4	-	£20,000	Further Detailed Investigation
Contract & project Fees		£4,500	

11. Project Quality

All information produced by Copeland Borough Council for this scheme will be subject to peer checking.

All documentation provided to the council will be provided to the project manager and will be distributed accordingly.

Project Initiation Document

All documentation relating to the project will be stored on the council's network server.

12. Project Controls

An exception report will be raised if this project is predicted to cost more than £55k, and/or take 8 weeks longer to deliver than scheduled?

At least 6 Client/Contract recorded meetings will take place.

A least 4 management update reports will be produce as the project progresses

A specific review point will take place at the completion of each of the 4 stages within this project process.

Progress reports to the Capital Programme Monitoring Group

13. Risk Management

Id.	Description of Risk	Impact	Probability
R2	Stage 2 – None of the sites identified as possible sites are suitable for burials.	MEDIUM	LOW
R3	Stage 4 – Of the sites selected in Stage 3 for further investigation none are deemed to be suitable.	MEDIUM	LOW
R4	The final site identified is not accepted by the planning department.	MEDIUM	LOW
R5	Local Residents oppose the new cemetery.	MEDIUM	LOW

Project Initiation Document

Appendix A – Project Deliverables

Product Number	Product Name	Product Description	Derivation	Format	Supplier	Quality	Quality Tolerance	Checked by
1.	Site Identification	Undertake a search of the Millom area to highlight areas of land that may be suitable for the proposed use. Ascertain the owners of the relevant areas and enquire whether they would be willing to transfer land to the Council for the proposed use. Assess and identify in-house four areas of land that may be suitable for the proposed use.		Various documents and correspondence with external clients	In-house	Identify potentially suitable land with agreement of the owners to transfer	Review	Project Manager/ Development Surveyor
2.	Preliminary Site Investigation	Initial site Appraisal of the 4 sites identified in Stages 1 & 2	Site Investigation; Option to Purchase	Written Report	3 rd Party Consultant to be advised.	Identify the 4 potential sites and advise of the suitability of each site and highlight any concerns/ issues with the land	Review	Project Manager
3.	Option to purchase	Negotiate with the owners of the land leading to an option to purchase the relevant area within a two year period should the final in depth testing prove successful.		Correspondence with external clients leading to legal documentation	Dixon Webb, Property Management consultant	Secure potentially suitable sites for a period of up to two years until in depth testing conclusively proves suitability	Review	Project Manager/Development Surveyor
4.	Site Investigation	Further investigation of the most suitable site(s) identified in Stage 2	Preliminary Site Investigation.	2 Written Reports	3 rd Party Consultant to be	Confirm that the land is suitable and produce 2	Review	Project Manager

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Project Initiation Document

Appendix A – Project Deliverables

Product Number	Product Name	Product Description	Derivation	Format	Supplier	Quality	Quality Tolerance	Checked by
					advised.	reports. Identify any risk with using the land.		

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