


GREENS PLAINS WEST CEMETERY

MANAGEMENT PLAN

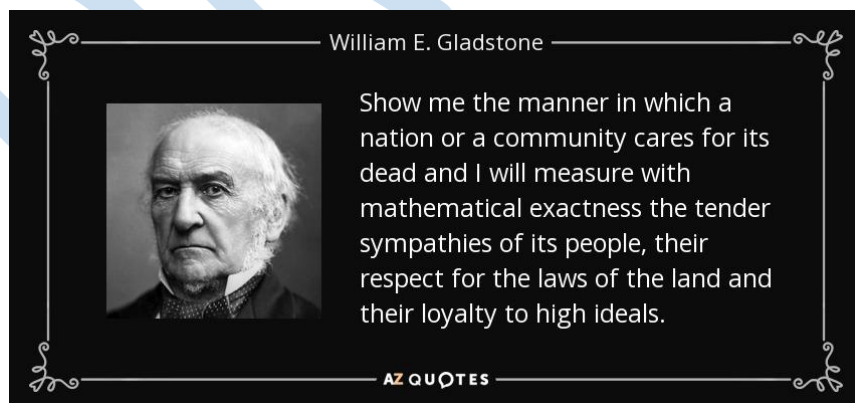


changing
P L A C E S

report prepared for:  COPPER COAST
COUNCIL

April 2021

DRAFT



William Ewart Gladstone served as Prime Minister of Great Britain on four separate occasions, starting in December of 1868, during the reign of Queen Victoria.

Greens Plains West Cemetery Management Plan

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Scope

Being mindful of the need to balance its community service obligations with appropriately conducting the business of supplying services related to the disposition of bodily remains and related memorialisation, the Copper Coast Council (CCC) engaged Changing Places to develop individual Cemetery Management Plans for each of its four cemeteries.

Commentary on amenity, landscaping and the condition of the cemetery, graves, monuments and other buildings, was to include a general description along with more detail in relation to the key factors in need of attention, along with suggested rectification actions. Related costings will be developed with CCC staff, rather than by engaging third party consultants.

Each of the four individual site reports plans should be read in conjunction with the fifth report... the Cemetery Management Plan for the Copper Coast. That plan would address overall issues, rather than repeating specific site details.

The engagement was awarded in February 2020. Implementation was delayed until 2021 by COVID travel restrictions.

References

In addition to stakeholder responses to inquiries, key references were

- Cemetery Management Policy (5 May 2020)
- Copper Brought Them Here Volume One (April 2017 Revision)
- Dressing the Graves 2019
- The Copper Coast Council web site
- Yorke Peninsula Heritage Survey 1997

Process

Prior to preparing this report, consultations took place with a variety of stakeholders (see **Appendix A**). Some related council records and documents were reviewed. The desk top review material was considered in conjunction with observations made during the site visit and the responses received in relation to subsequent inquiries.

Since its appointment to conduct this review, Changing Places has

- visited the area for three days in February 2021
- attended a meeting of the Cemeteries Working Party
- conducted face to face interviews with a variety of internal stakeholders
- discussed matters with CCC's two main client funeral directors and a local monumental mason
- gained general insight into SA cemetery operating environments from representatives of the Adelaide Cemeteries Authority and CCASA
- clarified matters as necessary with internal and external stakeholders
- prepared and submitted a draft of this report and responded to feedback.

All the stakeholders were most helpful. Significant assistance was received from Andrea Thomas, Katrina Borlace and Matthew Rose. Substantial insights into local history were provided by Robyn Knight and Liz Coole. Whilst all their input was appreciated, Changing Places remains responsible for the content of this report.

1 Introduction

The goal that is being addressed within this management plan is: *“To provide dignified, functional interment facilities, whilst acknowledging the cemeteries heritage, that are compatible with their environment and capable of meeting the evolving needs of the community.”*

This management plan concisely identifies existing issues, sets out potential rectification strategies and the means by which the CCC can appropriately enhance the provision of cemetery facilities. It considers the needs of the community and the expectations for arrangements to be conducted with dignity and accuracy, within settings that are aesthetic and affordable.

The management plan is:

- intended to be understood by all stakeholders including clients, the general community, the funeral industry and government authorities
- flexible to enable it to be used as a contemporary management tool, reflecting community trends and the need to tailor projects to budgets within an achievable time frame.
- a concise and succinct statement of the strategic direction of the Council, which identifies the means of achieving goals and objectives.

This plan has been prepared in consultation with community representatives, Copper Coast Council staff and councillors, local funeral directors and monumental masons.

2 Applicable legislation, regulations and charters

In the management of its cemeteries CCC will comply with the

- SA Burial and Cremation Act 2013
- SA Burial and Cremation Regulations 2014
- SA Heritage Places Act 1993
- SA Heritage Places Regulations 2020
- SA Local Government (General) Regulations 2013
- SA Local Government Act 1999
- Standards Australia - Headstones and cemetery monuments AS 4204:2019
- The Burra Charter (for Places of Cultural Significance) 1999

3 Site overview

a) Cemetery history

The cemetery is a part of Narungga Land and CCC recognises the Narungga people as the traditional and continuing custodians of the land.

Greens Plains Cemetery Trust was formed in 1870. The cemetery was entrusted to the care of the District Council of Kadina between 1891 and 1984. Subsequently District amalgamations saw it become part of the District Council of Northern Yorke Peninsula. In turn when that Council merged with the Corporation of the Town of Wallaroo in May 1997, it became the responsibility of the District Council of the Copper Coast. That Council changed its name in 2017 to Copper Coast Council (CCC).

b) Location & title details

The site is located on Paskeville Rd, in Paskeville SA. It is set well back, but visible from the road. The site is set amongst farmlands and perceived by the locals as being remote from the main townships of Kadina, Moonta and Wallaroo.



View of the site from Paskeville Rd. Access and egress from site via an unsealed road.

VALUER GENERAL - 3410179596 - ASSESSMENT A2086

CR or Title	Owner	Custodian	Section	Schedule of Interests/Conditions
CR 5755 937	The Crown	Copper Coast Council	726	Land Dedicate for Cemetery Purposes -GG 12/11/1891
CT 6196 952	Copper Coast Council		725	In trust to be used at all times as public cemetery



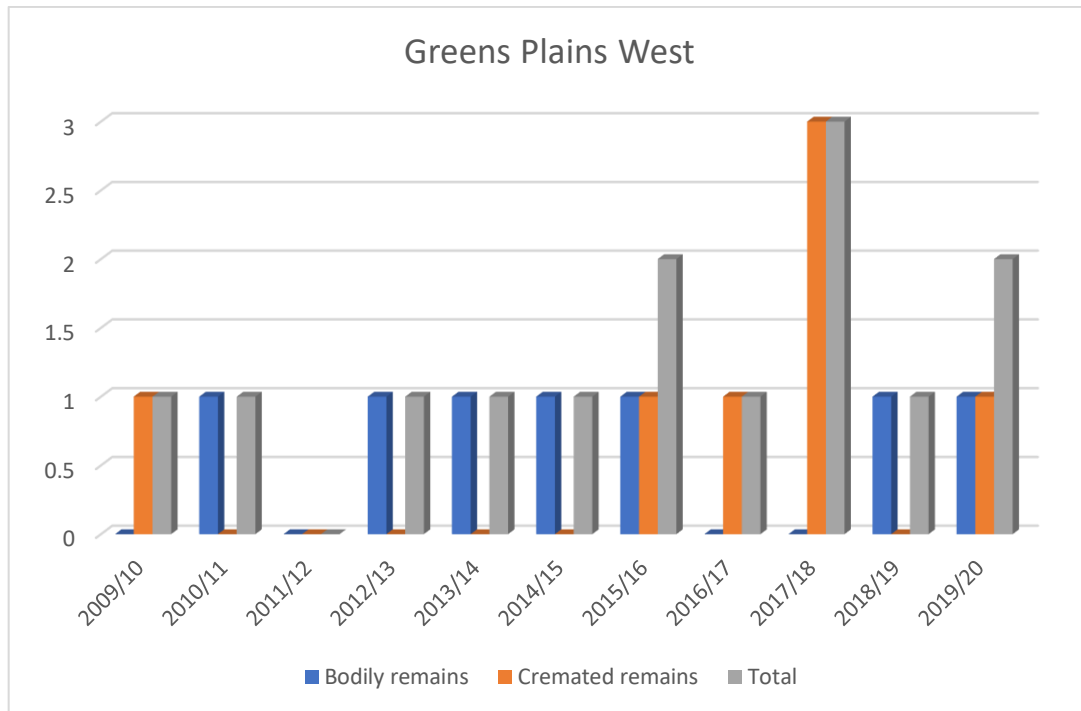
Image supplied by CCC, enhanced by Florence Jaquet Landscape Architects

The scope for cemetery activity is red lined. Some title boundaries are yellow.

c) Capacity and activity

Given the low volume of interments and extent of available space within the property, this site has significant capacity. If the community was prepared to travel to the site, it could cater for all Copper Coast bodily interments (not just the surrounding area) for decades.

Year Opened	Site area		Ave. interments last 11 years		Available graves	Site life Years
	Ha	M2	Bodily	Ash		
Opened mid/late 1800s	8.7	87,411	1	1	lots	300+
Council records start 1905						



If required, its potential capacity could be gauged by graphically overlaying a grave grid upon the site map.

d) General description

The site is relatively flat, vegetated predominantly with low level eucalypts and various pines. Boundary trees are spaced irregularly and are more reflective of natural growth rather than a landscape planting programme.



Western boundary

There are some natural grassed areas adjacent to the rear interment areas and between the front fence and the main road. All are periodically mown.

The soil at Greens Plains West has a higher clay content than the other three CCC sites. It is more reactive. Fortunately there do not appear to be any issues with the water table.

The site is neat and tidy. 3mm crushed rock is extensively used within pathways and interment area surrounds.

Whilst there is only a small cemetery name sign adjacent to the entrance gate, the visible monumentation enables passers-by to identify the site from the road. As the front fence is mainly low level prefabricated wire mesh, supported by star pickets, it does not impede visibility.



Grassed space, used for parking, between Paskeville Rd and the cemetery entrance.

The standard CCC signage indicating that a permit is required for monuments is adjacent to the front gate. Just inside the entrance, a galvanised post and single chain barrier separate traffic from unmarked graves. The delineation of some of those graves is highlighted with crushed rock. A similar approach has been used in other parts of the site.

Given the inconsistencies in historic records and the potential number of unmarked graves, it is not practical to expect CCC to mark and memorialise every unmarked grave.



Unmarked graves, delineated with crushed rock mounds



Entrance gate viewed from within the site

The interment areas are laid out in a grid pattern, with monumental graves predominantly in dual rows i.e. head to head, in a regular pattern. Whilst the memorialisation indicates religious differentiation within the grids, regrettably there are no markers or displayed site maps to assist visitors with plot identification.



Crushed rock and soil heaps at the rear of the interment area



Tree stumps need removal

Spoil from grave excavation is stored discretely towards the back of the area. To enhance visual amenity and diminish risk, tree stumps should be removed. Trees and shrubs should not be allowed to be planted within or on top of interment spaces, without written authorisation of CCC. Unauthorised plantings should be removed. Where trees or their roots are impacting or are likely to impact memorials, they should either be removed or root barriers installed.

There are no buildings, toilets, shelters, seats or bins on the site. A tap is available. There are no visible signs to delineate religious sections, rows or plots. Whilst neat, tidy and well presented, the cemetery is less than optimal for the conduct of funerals or commemorative reflection activities.

4 Aspects of interments

The site is not site heritage listed. It contains a variety of monuments in varying states of 'ageing'. Whilst the soils at Green Plains are predominantly clay, sand and limestone, they appear to be more reactive than those at other CCC cemeteries. Consequently where monuments have minimal foundations, movement is likely to occur.



Francis Woodward 1886



George Norris 1900 and family



Reactive soils/inadequate foundations



Recent interments

More recent monuments appear to have a lower profile and less elaborate style.

Whilst the deterioration of monuments is of concern, it is not the Council's responsibility to repair them. That lies with the descendants of the historic holders of the burial licences. Where a repair is to be undertaken it should be in accordance with the Burra Charter. It *"advocates a cautious approach to change: do as much as necessary to care for the place and make it useable, but otherwise do as little as possible to ensure that its cultural significance is retained"*.

A memorial wall, carrying a Lions Club insignia, provides for placement of commemorative plaques. The wall positions only accommodate partial cremated remains. That diminishes their appeal as an interment location.

A memorial rock was created as part of the 2015 Dressing the Graves commemorative activity. It was placed in recognition of all those lives lost in the 1914-18 war.



Nowadays it is unusual to only offer cremated remains niche interment positions that do not accommodate a complete set of remains. Rather than create a new wall, a practical way forward would be to create ash interment positions on the end of rows, like those at Moonta. Care should be taken to ensure that the end of row positions created do not impede access to the adjoining grave for additional interments.

Given the low volume of bodily interments it is likely that positioning of new graves is done without reference to a landscape master plan. Notwithstanding the inherent capacity of the site, land is a scarce resource and retaining the visual amenity of the site i.e. straight rows and consistent pathways, is paramount. It would be prudent to

- mark up a site plan to delineate the next available graves
- masterplan the site to ensure a consistent approach to progressive development

Potentially Greens Plains West might offer some natural burial sites. This needs to be done as part of a co-ordinated approach across all sites i.e. part of the usual interment options package. Similarly it is likely that if a headstone lawn beam was installed at Greens Plains in the future, it would make the overall cost of interment less expensive i.e. no full monument.

This would also help promote uniformity of offerings across CCC sites. A site plan should be marked up showing the specific placement of available plots and those planned for new interment positions within the next decade years.

5 Plot mapping

Green Plains West is blessed with what now seems like infinite capacity for interments. In reality, perpetuity is a long time and land is a scarce resource.

One of the risks associated with site utilisation where there is an abundance of space, is that not enough attention is paid to efficiently utilising that space. Cemeteries are there in perpetuity. Consequently when planning new rows and sections, care should be taken to ensure that pathways and roads are not overly wide. Space unnecessarily devoted to paths and roads cannot always be reclaimed for future interments.

Each of the CCC cemeteries have maintained their individual but different historic approaches to site mapping.

At Green Plains West, site maps reference the plots each side of a numbered path. Numbers are repeated. Regrettably, there is no path number delineation at the end of pathways and no site plan displayed. As a consequence, even if a family knows the grave number it is going to be difficult to find the grave.

The plot map on the CCC website does not appear to show either a compass direction or Path 17 (which appears in the Kernewek Lowender Dressing the Graves map, **Appendix B**). No insight is provided into denominational sections.

PATH 15															
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32

PATH 4															
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32

PATH 16															
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32

PATH 5															
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32

Having a simpler map available on the web site and within the cemetery, would assist the community and visitors during the Kernewek Lowender Festival.

It is not practical to retrospectively re number plots. Moving forward, interpretative signage is needed at the entrance and within new rows. A uniform CCC approach to plot numbering should be adopted.

6 Indicative action programme

The recommended actions derived from this Cemetery Management Plan are summarised in the following table. Time periods and indicative costs are to be discussed with CCC staff as part of the feedback on this draft report.

Activity	Maintenance		Budget Allocation	
	As Req.	Annual	0-2 years	2 years +
Annual site inspection		√		
Cemetery Policy revision		√	√	TBD
Creating Ash positions		√		
Entrance naming			TBD	
Fence maintenance	√	√		
Gate - pedestrian and road	√			
Grass cutting		√		
Grave identification	√			
Grave top up after burial	√			
Interpretive entrance sign			TBD	
Landscape masterplan the site				TBD
Monument completion inspection	√			
Monument foundation inspection	√			
Natural burial positions				TBD
Pathway top ups	√			
Plot map upgrade	√			
Plot next available graves		√		
Plot numbers - consistent method		√	TBD	
Plot prospective site expansion		√		
Road - internal		√		
Rubbish removal	√			
Seats		√		
Seats - progressive installation			TBD	
Shelter				TBD
Signage re points of interest			TBD	
Signage re section/row/plot			TBD	
Tap installation			TBD	
Toilet			TBD	
Token memorial			TBD	
Tree inspections		√		TBD
Tree removal (if roots near graves)	√			
Tree stump removal	√			
Unmarked grave barriers			TBD	
Unmarked grave crushed rock		√		
Vermin remediation	√			
Weed remediation	√			

7 Limitation of our Work

General use restriction:

This report is prepared solely for the internal use of the Copper Coast Council. It is not intended to and should not be used or relied upon by anyone else and we accept no duty of care to any other person or entity.

In conducting our work we have relied on the information provided to us by Council and representations made by the Council and management. We have not performed an audit or verification of the information that we have been provided.

The report has been prepared for the purpose set out in the Scope of this document. You should not refer to or use our name or the advice for any other purpose.

DRAFT

Appendix A... Contributors

Assistance with provision of information and insights pertaining to this report was received from a variety of sources. Their direct input and co-operation was appreciated.

a) Internal

Andrea Thomas	Records Management Governance Officer
Cathy Vluggen	Copper Coast Councillor
Katrina Borlace	Director Corporate and Community Services
Matthew Rose	Parks and Operations Coordinator
Peter Oswald	Copper Coast Councillor
Roylene Schild	Personal Assistant to CEO
Russell Peate	Chief Executive Officer
Steve Edwards	Maintenance Team Leader.
Tim Neuman	Director Infrastructure Services
Wanita Gregory	Executive Assistant to CEO

b) External

Andrew Skinner	Director: Skinner Family Funerals, Seeley Funerals and Central Region Crematorium
Barbara Schilling	Cemeteries Working Party
Claire Skinner	Manager - Skinner Family Funerals
Clayton Scott	Copper Coast Funerals
Colin Boase	Wallaroo Museum
David Cook	Cook Memorials
Glenys Blacker	Moonta National Trust
Graham Hancock	National Trust representative - Cemeteries Working Party
Iain McQueen	McQueen Funeral Services Pty Ltd
Jim Wheeler	Newtown Bobcats
Liz Coole	Cemeteries Working Party
Marilyn Philbey	Moonta Family History and Resource Centre
Maxine Tulley	President - YP Family History Group
Mike Rusby	President – CCASA, Centennial Park Operations Manager
Robyn Knight	Dressing the Graves Convenor, Vice Chair - Moonta National Trust
Rowley Woods	Cemetery Working Party, cemetery wall restoration volunteer
Robert Pitt	CEO – Adelaide Cemeteries Authority
Shaun Mercer	Goerecke Memorials and Pearse Memorials

Appendix B... CBTH Plot map

8 Copper Brought Them Here Volume One

