

## COUNCIL POLICY: COUNCIL CONTROLLED CEMETERIES

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Date Amended:	<i>Corporate and Community Services Committee Meeting; 19 November 2013; Item Number 4.3</i>
Contact officer:	<i>Coordinator Parks, Gardens and Cemeteries</i>
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Related Policies/Local Laws/Legislation:	<i>Local Law No 1 (Administration) 2011 Local Law No 4 (Local Government Controlled Areas) 2011 Subordinate Local Law No 1 (Local Government Controlled Areas) 2011 Subordinate Local Law No 1.9 (Operation of Cemeteries) 2011 Land Act 1994 Land Regulations 1995 Cremations Act 2003 Cremations Regulations 2003 Criminal Practice Rules 1999</i>
Related Documents:	<i>Council Controlled Cemeteries Guidelines</i>

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### OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this policy are:

- To ensure Council controlled cemeteries are provided and maintained for the use of residents of the Scenic Rim Region;
- To ensure provision of cemeteries that are safe, pleasant and neat;
- To define the management and administration of Council controlled cemeteries; and
- To ensure that adequate and accurate records of interments are kept.

<b>Corporate Plan:</b>	
Priority Area	<i>Infrastructure and Asset Management Infrastructure is planned, delivered and managed in accordance with the prioritised needs of our growing community and contemporary asset management principles.</i>
Strategy	<i>Facilitate equitable access to adequate, well managed and maintained community facilities and land through implementation of a consistent needs-based planning approach.</i>

## POLICY STATEMENT

Council is committed to providing effective and efficient services for Council controlled Cemeteries. The aim is to create safe, pleasant, neat cemeteries that are places of peace, tranquillity and contemplation.

### Interments & Reservations

Permission for interments and all reservations in new graves in Council controlled cemeteries will be given only in respect of persons who meet one or more of the following criteria. The person:

- Is or has been an established resident of the Scenic Rim Region or its predecessor Councils; or
- Has first degree kinship with established residents of the Scenic Rim Region; or
- Has first degree kinship with a person previously buried in the Council controlled cemetery.

Pre-need reservations will not be accepted unless the person has first degree kinship with a person previously buried in that Council controlled cemetery.

Interments in Council controlled Cemeteries may only be undertaken with the permission of Council. All grave openings and closures at these cemeteries will be undertaken by Council staff or Council authorised contractors.

Milbong and Coulson Cemeteries are closed for all future interments due to the unknown location of existing human remains at these sites. Any previously Council approved reservations at these sites will be honoured at an alternate Council controlled Cemetery. New memorial installations are not permitted at either of these locations unless Council is able to absolutely confirm the exact location of the interment. At Coulson cemetery, plaques for unmarked graves may be installed on the sandstone plinth erected for this purpose.

### Burial Rights

The purchaser or reserver of a new grave acquires the burial right to that grave.

Burial rights may not be sold and are not transmissible by death.

Burial rights may be surrendered to Council. Upon surrender, Council will pay the purchaser or reserver, 80% of the original purchase price of the grave/niche.

The Burial Right Holder has the authority to make application to Council for the erection or installation of an appropriate memorial on that gravesite/niche. The authority to make application may be delegated to an approved monumental mason. All monumental masonry work within the cemetery must be conducted either by Council or an approved monumental mason.

On the death of the Burial Right Holder, the authority to consent to burials and monumental installations in a grave reverts to Council. Council will permit, in its absolute discretion, a spouse, child, partner, relative, direct descendant or friend of

the Burial Right Holder to be buried in the grave or apply for a monumental installation, provided however, that it has no reason to believe that the Burial Right Holder would have objected. Unless legal documentation exists, the applicant must demonstrate that they have consulted all living next of kin as to the burial rights and produce a document of authorisation signed by all parties.

## SCOPE

This Policy relates to:

1. the following Council controlled cemeteries:
  - (i) Beaudesert Cemetery, Boundary Street, Beaudesert;
  - (ii) Boonah Cemetery, Elliot Road, Boonah;
  - (iii) Canungra Cemetery, Beaudesert-Nerang Road, Canungra;
  - (iv) Coulson Cemetery, Boonah-Ipswich Road, Coulson;
  - (v) Kalbar Cemetery, Munbilla Road, Kalbar;
  - (vi) Maroon Cemetery, Rathdowney Road, Maroon;
  - (vii) Milbong Cemetery, Ipswich-Boonah Road, Milbong;
  - (viii) Mt Tamborine Cemetery, Main Western Road, North Tamborine;
  - (ix) Wonglepong Cemetery, Beaudesert-Nerang Road, Wonglepong.

## DEFINITIONS

*Approved Monumental Mason:* A business that trades as a Monumental Mason that has a supervising staff member with a Cert III Stonemasonry or equivalent experience and that has received an annual Council approval to conduct work based on their capacity to meet Work Place Health and Safety requirements, provide insurance details, adhere to Australian Standards and meet other specific criteria.

*Burial Right:* the right to be buried in a nominated grave and the right to authorise the burial of others in that grave.

*Burial Right Holder:* the purchaser or reserver of a new grave site/niche.

*Established resident:* A person who has resided permanently within the Scenic Rim Region for a period of at least 12 months

*First degree kinship:* A person demonstrates first degree kinship where they are the spouse, parent, sibling or child of the deceased person.

*Pre-need reservation:* The applicant's purchase of a burial right adjacent to a deceased person of first degree kinship.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

Policy Author	Manager Property and Operations
Policy Owner	Manager Property and Operations
Guidelines and procedures - <i>Attachment A: Council Controlled Cemeteries Guidelines</i>	Manager Property and Operations

Approved By:

**SCENIC RIM REGIONAL COUNCIL**  
**26 November 2013**

# ATTACHMENT A: COUNCIL CONTROLLED Cemeteries GUIDELINES

## 1. ADMINISTRATION

- 1.1. Applications for monumental work and placement of ashes require a minimum of five working days' notice to be processed. Until they are processed and the approval notice is issued, no monumental work or ashes placement is to be progressed.
- 1.2. By the installation of signage, Council may restrict usage or activities within certain areas of the cemetery.
- 1.3. Ashes are to be provided in a fully sealed box to the dimensions specified by Council consistent with the location of the interment. Ashes are to be labelled by the crematorium as per the *Cremations Regulation 2003*.
- 1.4. When making an application with Council's Cemetery Administration staff, funeral directors are to use the following process:
  - 1.4.1. When organising an interment, funeral directors should contact Council's cemetery administrative staff via telephone to confirm the preferred day and time is available;
  - 1.4.2. Confirmation of the interment date and time must be received by Council at least 48 hours prior to the interment to provide adequate time to process the documentation and to arrange contractors;
  - 1.4.3. The 'Application for Grave Site Form' must be submitted to Council within two hours from the time of verbal confirmation from Council's cemetery administrative staff; and
  - 1.4.4. On receipt of documentation from Council, the Funeral Director should check that all the information is correct and notify Council immediately of any incorrect data.

## 2. INTERMENTS

- 2.1. Interments will occur between 8.00am and 2.30pm Monday to Friday (and Saturday subject to surcharge) excluding Public Holidays. Interments outside these times are not permitted. All graveside ceremonies are to be timed to ensure they finish by 3.30pm at the latest to enable adequate time to backfill the grave and tidy the site. It is the obligation of the funeral director in charge of the site to ensure these times are clearly communicated and adhered to.
- 2.2. Interments at Maroon Cemetery will be by direct arrangement between the Funeral Director and the Cemetery controller/caretaker.
- 2.3. For Work Place Health and Safety reasons, Council does not provide pall bearers, this is the responsibility of the funeral director or those organising the funeral.
- 2.4. A resting place intended to accommodate a prescribed container (a container intended to hold a dead human body for funeral, cremation or interment purposes) will not be less than 1.8 metres deep, or 1.5 metres deep if the only human remains to be interred in the resting place are those of a child not more than eight years of age.

- 2.5. Multiple burials in single plots are permitted and encouraged and all graves, where possible, will be dug to a depth to accommodate multiple burials. Multiple burials entail the interment of the human remains of not more than two adults (and one infant of not more than three years old and approved by an authorised person). Additionally up to three ash containers may be interred where the monument construction allows for this to be done without preventing further full burials.
- 2.6. Gravedigging (interment) fees only will be levied for subsequent burials.
- 2.7. All graves plots will be single width plots (1.2m x 2.4m), there being no provision for double sized plots.
- 2.8. The placement of ashes into grave plots is only permitted into pre-existing reserved or occupied graves or grave plots which cannot accommodate a prescribed container, for example, due to subsurface rock.
- 2.9. Council requires ashes to be placed in a non-biodegradable container when placed in association with a plaque. Ash containers are not to be emptied into the interment area. Council does not provide a service to place ashes or install plaques with the bereaved in attendance. Should the bereaved person(s) wish to place the ashes they need to do so in a Council pre-prepared and marked location. The plaque will be placed by Council once the bereaved person(s) have left the site.
- 2.10. Where a memorial is not required, ashes can be scattered. Only Council staff are permitted to scatter ashes and this will not be done with the bereaved in attendance. Council cannot guarantee that the area where the ashes are placed will not be disturbed at some future time.
- 2.11. Backfilling of graves by hand is not permitted due to Workplace Health and Safety issues and associated insufficient compaction levels. Therefore shovels and other equipment will not be provided by Council.
- 2.12. If a temporary safety grave surround fence and or grave cover is provided on site, then it is the responsibility of the funeral director in charge to place these back around/over the grave before leaving the site (unless advised otherwise by Council or Council contractors on site).

### **3. MONUMENTAL WORK**

- 3.1. Monumental work must meet the Australian Standards AS4204-1994 and be of good trade practice.
- 3.2. The lawn plaques and/or concrete base shall be at or above ground level but no higher than grass level.
- 3.3. The dimensions of the lawn plaque and/or concrete base shall not exceed the sizes specified in Council's Guidelines/Style Form.
- 3.4. Grave numbers will be embossed on all plaques/monuments.
- 3.5. Other than Council installed fences, no other type of fences are permitted to be installed within or around or near graves within any of the cemetery areas.
- 3.6. All materials used for memorials are to be of a robust, lasting quality and of a permanent nature, with due consideration of the location in which the material is to be placed. Any material that Council believes does not meet these specifications will not be permitted.

- 3.7. No glass materials or structures are to be utilised as part or whole of any cemetery monument or memorial.
- 3.8. Semi-lawn plaques will be placed on either the Council supplied concrete desk or a robust stone desk of the same measurements.
- 3.9. Plaques in the lawn, semi lawn or monumental areas may be either granite, terrazzo, marble or bronze fixed to a concrete base or other material approved by Council. All bronze plaques are to have a minimum thickness of 6mm (excluding base) and plaques of any other material are to be of a minimum thickness of 40mm with a minimum chamfer of 10mmx10mm to the top edge on all sides.
- 3.10. The reconstituted sandstone boxes in the garden apron of Tamborine Mountain Cemetery's reconstituted sandstone columbarium cannot be exchanged for any other material.
- 3.11. All plaques provided for installation on columbarium walls or in ashes gardens are to be of bronze (not any other material) of a minimum thickness of 6mm. These plaques are to be exclusively installed by Council staff.
- 3.12. All lawn plaques/bases or monumental area structures must have two 12mm (minimum) flower receptacle holes provided at least 50mm from the outer edge. These holes can be in the plaque or in the base if there is sufficient space.
- 3.13. All materials used in performing monumental work need to be sufficiently set after 48 hours, to enable checks to be made for adherence to required standards.
- 3.14. Subsequent inscriptions to plaques (eg for additional interments in the same plot) are to be made by either replacing the plaque (especially if made of stone or non-bronze material) or by adding a smaller plaque within the perimeter of the existing plaque. Additional plaques are not to be placed on concrete surrounds or in other areas or be within 75mm from the outer edge of the plaque/base combination. If the applicant wishes to perform multiple interments then it is advisable that space(s) for additional details be left on the plaque when a design is chosen. Additional plaques are to be of sufficiently low profile as approved by Council.
- 3.15. The erection of vaults and other similar forms of above ground interment are not permitted.

#### **4. MAINTENANCE ARRANGEMENTS**

- 4.1. Council will maintain lawn areas in the Council controlled Cemeteries, with the exception of Maroon and Milbong Cemeteries, in a park-like condition and carry out such ongoing maintenance and improvements as are necessary to ensure the grounds are kept in a dignified and pleasant state.
- 4.2. Council will undertake periodic slashing of the grounds of the Milbong Cemetery.
- 4.3. Maroon Cemetery is maintained by a local caretaker without Council assistance.
- 4.4. The maintenance of graves, headstones and monuments remains the responsibility of the deceased's descendants. The public is permitted to

assist in the maintenance of graves provided it does not interfere with maintenance operations or alter the appearance of the area. A Council Permit must be obtained for the repair, removal and restoration of headstones.

- 4.5. Council reserves the right to remove any monument after due notice to family members or descendants (where possible), if, in Council's opinion, the condition of the monument renders it dangerous to cemetery staff, contractors or visitors.
- 4.6. Temporary graves markers will only remain in place for a maximum of 12 months in the case of lawn areas or 18 months in monumental sections. If the wording fades or the surface becomes deteriorated, markers will be removed prior to this time. Missing markers will not be reinstalled.
- 4.7. If no monument/plaque is installed in association with a burial site within 12 months of the burial date in lawn areas or 18 months of the burial date in monumental sections, then Council will utilise the refundable bond (commensurate with the cost of materials and installation) placed on the applicant to install a standard plaque (to Council's specifications) with the plot number, the deceased's name, date of birth, date of death, space for two additional small plaques (these will need to be installed at the applicant's expense if required in the future) and no additional detail. If the applicant arranges placement of a monument/plaque within the specified timeframes, the bond will be refunded.

## **5. DONATED ITEMS**

- 5.1. Council may accept items donated for use or inclusion in cemeteries, subject to approval.
- 5.2. Council retains the right to determine in what location items donated to the cemetery may be placed.
- 5.3. The donor may be responsible for all costs incurred in the erection or fixing of the item donated.

## **6. GENERAL**

- 6.1. The planting of trees, shrubs or flowers within Council controlled Cemeteries is the exclusive right of the Council. Council staff will remove any plantings not performed or authorised by Council.
- 6.2. All flowers (real and artificial) are to be placed in Council's flower receptacles (where provided) within the perimeter of the memorial. No more than two flower receptacles are to be placed in association with any plot, at any time.
- 6.3. Glass, ceramic and terracotta containers, pot plants, figurines, fencing, pebbles/rocks, toys, candles, solar lights, ornaments on wires, photo frames, food and drink are all examples of objects not permitted on graves or memorials.
- 6.4. To keep the cemetery neat and tidy, Council will remove flowers and receptacles where the flowers are starting to deteriorate or fade or if flowers are blown over. Items other than flowers in a Council provided receptacle (where provided), will at some time be removed. Council accepts no responsibility for the care of non-compliant items placed in the cemetery.

- 6.5. Where the applicant requires a picture incorporated into a plaque/memorial, such pictures are to be laser etched/engraved into the surface of the plaque or monument. The installation of ceramic or other photographs on plaques is not permitted as they fade quickly and become brittle and crack. Therefore if installed, Council accepts no responsibility for their repair or replacement under any circumstances.
- 6.6. Council reserves the right to close cemeteries, or part thereof, to interments where conditions do not allow the safe or effective digging of a grave and/or where vehicle access may not be possible.

## **7. COMPLIANCE**

- 7.1. Should monumental or memorial work occur that has not been approved or that is not consistent with Council's specifications, a notice to remove and replace or rectify within ten working days will be issued. Failure to comply within that time frame will result in the removal of any structures and/or a fine as specified under the local law or reimbursement of Council's costs to rectify the problem.
- 7.2. Until a monumental mason rectifies any unsatisfactory work then no further permit for other installations will be issued to that mason.
- 7.3. For minor breaches of Council's policy or Local Law, a first warning will be issued, should the persons or organisation continue to fail to adhere to Council's requirements then permission to provide services in Council's cemetery will not be provided.

**Approved by:**

**SCENIC RIM REGIONAL COUNCIL  
26 November 2013**