Kaimarama Cemetery - Revised Cemetery Concept Plan

TO                          Mercury Bay Community Board
FROM                        Derek Thompson - Community Facilities Manager
DATE                        1 February 2019
SUBJECT                     Kaimarama Cemetery - Revised Cemetery Concept Plan

1 Purpose of report
To present a revised concept plan to the Mercury Bay Community Board for the development of the plot areas at the new cemetery at Kaimarama for consideration and approval prior to detailed design plans being commissioned.

2 Background
The following works have been completed at the new cemetery site, vehicle access, intersection establishment, landscape tree and boundary planting, re-fencing the boundary fences, installation of a 30,000 litre water tank, car parking areas, entrance gates, establishment of WW1 Memorial planting areas and provision of seating and litter bins.

At the 11 August 2015 Mercury Bay Community Board meeting in response to presentation of a concept plan (Attachment A) for the new cemetery, the Mercury Bay Community Board resolved as follows:

2. Approve the updated New Cemetery Concept Plan.
3. Approve development of detailed design and cost estimates.
4. Authorise the Area Manager and Board Chair to consult with the Mercury Bay RSA in relation to the new cemetery.
5. Report back to the Community Board when the detailed design is complete or if as a result of the detailed design investigations any significant changes are required from the concept plan.

It was also noted in the minutes of the 11 August 2015 Board meeting that it was proposed to start the burial process from the top of the cemetery.

Patrick Corfe Landscape Architects Ltd was engaged to commence detailed plot plan design investigations and subsequently provided a detailed draft plot plan design. (Attachment B)

In looking at the draft plan on site, staff and cemetery contractors, noted some operational issues which would occur from implementing the draft plan as provided.

3 Issue
The Mercury Bay Community Board are asked to consider the implications of implementing the draft plan and consider approval for an amended concept plan, followed by the development of detailed plot drawings suited to the site and operational best practise considerations.

4 Discussion
The on-site discussion with Council staff and contractors, noted the following areas of concern if the draft plan was to be implemented:
• Draft plot plan does not take into account the topography of the site, with plots drawn on slopes which are too steep for casket burial purposes.
• Draft plot plan does not cater for alternative burial methods within the proposed Stage 1 area of development – i.e. Natural burials or ash interments.
• The draft plan was considered by staff to lack landscaping elements to provide the community with an aesthetically pleasing amenity.

As a result of the on-site discussion, staff agreed that the draft plan was not the most appropriate way forward and are now working on an in-house concept plan for the development of Kaimarama Cemetery.

The minuted discussion of the 11 August 2015 Board meeting referred to starting the burial process at the top of the cemetery, however keeping in mind the desire of the RSA and the Community Board to utilise the top area for a Returned Services area, Community Facilities staff do not support the top down approach to burial for the public areas.

Burials from the “top down” are not considered best practice given that it increases the ingress of storm water runoff into an excavated grave with a downwards flow on effect.

Also over a period of time cadaver leachate material will also migrate downwards underground contributing to an increased risk of grave instability and in a worst case scenario grave collapse is possible.

From an operational perspective best practice is considered to be starting from the bottom of a slope and working upwards, health and safety requirements are easier to manage and reputational risk is reduced by employing best practice methods utilised by external contractors experienced with grave preparation.

For slopes on the site not suited for conventional casket burials it is possible to view these areas as an opportunity to provide an alternative burial option within the Stage 1 area – i.e. Natural burials which are only required to be single depth.

The revised concept plan indicates a burial starting point to the left hand side of the internal roadway entrance. (Attachment C) with the intention to work uphill towards the ridge line.

If the Board agrees with this as the initial starting point, detailed plans can then be undertaken and reported back to the board.

5  Suggested resolution(s)
That the Mercury Bay Community Board:
2. Approve the revised Cemetery Concept Plan Stage 1 which will be implemented operationally from the indicated starting point.
3. Approve development of revised detailed plot design.

References-tabled/Ageenda attachments
Attachment A  Patrick Corfe Landscape Architect – Concept Plan
Attachment B  Patrick Corfe Landscape Architect – Location Plan
Attachment C  Kaimarama Cemetery – Revised Cemetery Concept Plan – Stage 1
Attachment A
Attachment A - New Mercury Bay Cemetery - Patrick Corfe Landscape Arch...
Attachment B
Attachment B - New Mercury Bay Cemetery - Patrick Corfe Landscape Arch...
Attachment C
Attachment C - Kaimarama Cemetery - Revised Cemetery Concept Plan - St...