

Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council

Proposed memorial park south of Queanbeyan

Social Report

June 2018



When you
think with a
global mind
problems
get smaller

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Proposed memorial park south of Queanbeyan

Prepared for
Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council

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Executive Summary

Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council (QPRC) proposes to develop a memorial park on a parcel of land approximately 11 km south of Queanbeyan in New South Wales (NSW), south of the Googong township. The existing Lanyon Park cemetery in Queanbeyan is nearing capacity; in addition, the ACT's existing three cemeteries are expected to reach capacity within eight years. The QPRC has identified that an additional facility is required to accommodate the needs of a growing and ageing population.

QPRC has prepared a planning proposal in accordance with section 3.33 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* to amend the *Queanbeyan Local Environmental Plan 2012* to enable the use of the proposed site as a cemetery, currently zoned E4 Environmental Living. The planning proposal identified the need for studies to assess and manage potential environmental and social impacts associated with use of the site as a cemetery.

This report provides a high-level review of the existing social characteristics of the site and surrounds and the likely social issues associated with its development.

Sensitive receptors in proximity to the proposed site include residential properties to the west on the Mount Campbell Estate, properties directly south of the proposed site and St Paul's Anglican Church.

During construction, minor short-term amenity impacts may be experienced at nearby sensitive receptors from air and noise emissions generated by machinery, heavy vehicles and equipment. Nearby sensitive receptors may also experience minor short-term changes to visual amenity and traffic due to the presence of construction works and vehicles.

During operations, two sensitive receptors have the potential to experience minor amenity impacts from noise emissions associated with mobile machinery operated on site. The site is likely to be visible from immediately adjacent locations, up to 1 km to the north-east and north-west and from up to 2 km south.

Residents near the proposed site may also be concerned about the potential for the development to increase the risk of injury or death from traffic accidents during construction and operation. Residents in proximity to the proposed site may also perceive that the proposed development could affect the value of their property.

Local businesses such as eating establishments may benefit from increased demand for goods and services during construction and operation of the memorial park.

This report suggests an approach for engaging with stakeholders on the development of the proposed site as a memorial park. The potential social issues identified in this report will need to be verified and revised once formal community engagement process occurs.

1. Introduction

Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council (QPRC) proposes to develop a memorial park on a parcel of land approximately 11 km south of Queanbeyan in New South Wales (NSW) (Figure 1). The site is currently used for grazing and other agricultural uses.

The existing Queanbeyan cemetery at Lanyon Drive, approximately 10 km north of the proposed site, is expected to reach capacity in approximately five years. The cemetery caters for all denominations and cultures and capacity issues will impact on its ability to service these various needs. The Riverside Cemetery in Queanbeyan approximately 13 km north of the proposed site is closed to new plot sales. Bungendore Cemetery, approximately 38 km north of the proposed site, in Bungendore NSW is also reaching capacity. The proposed memorial park south of Queanbeyan is required to accommodate the needs of a growing and ageing population.

QPRC has prepared a planning proposal in accordance with section 3.33 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* to amend the *Queanbeyan Local Environmental Plan 2012* to enable the use of the proposed site as a cemetery, currently zoned E4 Environmental Living. The planning proposal identified the need for studies to assess and manage potential environmental and social impacts associated with use of the site as a cemetery. One such study identified was a social impact assessment (SIA).

This report provides a high-level review of the existing social characteristics of the site and surrounds and the likely social issues associated with its development. QPRC is yet to engage with the community on the use of this site as a cemetery and the potential social issues identified in this report will need to be verified and revised once this engagement occurs.

1.1. Project site and surrounds

The 36.4 ha triangular site is located 11 km south of Queanbeyan in the suburb of Googong on the eastern side of Old Cooma Road at the Burra Road intersection south of the Googong urban release area. It comprises Lot 2 DP 112382 and Lot 126 DP 754881 and is currently zoned as E4 Environmental Living.

The site is currently used for grazing and agriculture, with farming practices having taken place on the site since the 1800s. A cottage sits close to the centre of the site. Church Creek runs through the site in a north-west direction and other smaller tributaries drain into it.

Properties surrounding the proposed site are predominantly zoned as E4 Environmental Living. They consist of a mix of farming properties (mainly grazing), rural residential living lots and in the new urban release areas, smaller residential lots.

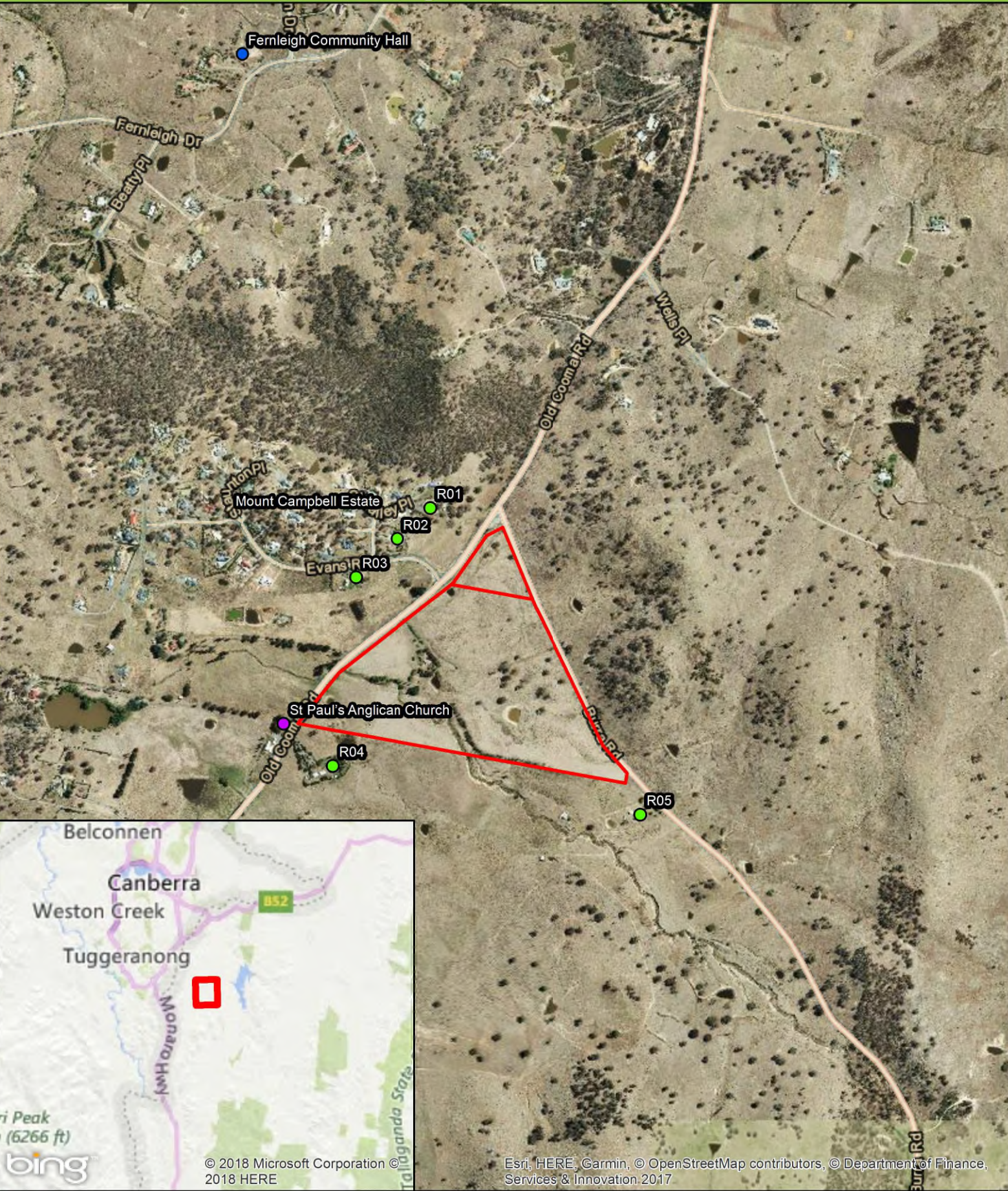
1.2. Project description

The proposed development of a memorial park is likely to involve construction of:

- Public amenities.
- Potential water features.
- Access roads and onsite parking.
- Service sheds.

Development of the memorial park will also involve extensive tree planting, including a minimum 20 m wide perimeter buffer of trees and the establishment of landscaped gardens.

Location of Proposed Site and Nearby Sensitive Receptors



Study Area

Place of Worship

Residential Receiver

Community Hall

0 150 300 600

Metres

Datum/Projection:
GDA 1994 MGA Zone 55

N

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Prepared by: EB Date: 1/06/2018

Approximately 16 ha of land will be disturbed for the construction of the memorial park. A 5 ha buffer will be established around the perimeter of the disturbed land, and an additional 6 ha dedicated to environmental restoration of biodiversity on site, including restoration of Church Creek and remnant vegetation within the site boundary.

Construction of the memorial park is anticipated to take three to six months. The existing farm house and buildings onsite are expected to act as offices.

Once the memorial park is developed, the following activities are predicted to occur on the site:

- An average of three to four burials per week. These will involve light excavation works to prepare the ground using equipment equivalent to a backhoe or farm tractor. Cars associated with a funeral procession will come in and out of the memorial park on the day of the service using the on-site car parking.
- Routine garden maintenance involving lawn mowers, whipper-snippers and other garden maintenance equipment will be carried out on site on a regular basis.
- Routine maintenance and funeral services with operating hours 7:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m., Monday to Friday. There may be occasions where late or weekend services are carried out to meet religious or family needs.

A water management strategy will be implemented to use stormwater run-off and treat the site's effluent.

The memorial park will employ three staff members during its operational life.

2. Method

This chapter outlines the method used to develop the social report.

2.1. Scoping

The first phase of work involved identifying potential social issues associated with the development of the proposed site as a memorial park. These issues were used to frame what needed to be investigated as a part of the baseline assessment.

2.2. Baseline assessment

A high-level baseline assessment was conducted to describe key social characteristics of the site and surrounding area. This involved a review of aerial imagery of the site and surrounds and information collected from a site visit by ELA (March 2018). This information was used to understand the land uses and potential sensitive receptors in proximity to the proposed site and any other notable features of the surrounding landscape.

Baseline information was collected on the suburb of Googong and the Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Local Government Area from a range of secondary sources including Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2016 census, local policies and strategies and newspaper articles.

2.3. Refinement of potential social issues

This phase involved refining the list of potential social issues identified during the scoping phase based on a review of:

- Background information on the project.
- Findings of the social baseline assessment.
- Findings of other relevant technical studies being completed for the project including the Desktop Visual Assessment (ELA, 2018), Noise Impact Assessment (WSP, 2018a) and Transport Impact Assessment (WSP, 2018b).
- Media articles on the community's response to the proposed development of the site as a memorial park.

The focus of this phase of work was on identifying and describing potential social issues for QPRC to discuss and verify with the community at a later date.

2.4. Suggested approach to stakeholder engagement

The final phase of work involved developing a suggested approach to guide QPRC in engaging with government stakeholders and the local community on the use of the proposed site as a memorial park. The focus of this phase was to provide an approach to disseminating information to stakeholders on the development of the proposed site and to understand stakeholder values and concerns.

3. Existing social environment

3.1. Social context

New growth areas south of Queanbeyan include Googong, South Jerrabomberra and Royalla.

Googong, where the proposed memorial park would be located, is a master planned township located south-east of Queanbeyan. Residents first moved into the township in early 2014, and in 2016 there were close to 900 residences (ABS, 2018). Further development of the town is planned over the next 20 years to accommodate a projected population of 18,000 people in 6,200 residences (Googong Township Pty Ltd, 2018).

The town currently includes a school, childcare centre, recreation centre, playgrounds and sporting fields and a village centre incorporating a supermarket, café, health services, shops and a community centre. Further development of the town is projected to include construction of additional residential areas, shopping villages, recreational areas, a primary and secondary school, community centre and library.

3.1.1. Demographics

The population of Googong was 2,690 in 2016 and is projected to increase to 11,588 in 2031 according to the NSW Department of Planning and Environment (Department of Planning, 2016) (see Table 1). In 2016, Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Local Government Area (LGA) had a population of 56,027 (ABS, 2017) and is predicted to increase by 42.6 % to 79,900 people in 2031).

Table 1 Population projections

Locality	2011	2016	2021/2022	2031/2032
Googong State Suburb	1,122*	2,690	5,344	11,588
Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional LGA	54,850§	56,027†	67,250§	79,900§
ACT	357,222†	397,397†	437,032‡	499,463‡
NSW	7,218,529†	7,480,231†	8,297,500§	9,386,850§

* ABS (2011).

† ABS (2017).

§ NSW Department of Planning and Environment.

‡ ACT Government Treasury.

The median age of people living in Googong was 32 in 2016 compared to 38 in the Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional LGA. Further details of age demographics within the region are provided in Table 2. The population of the Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional LGA of retirement age is expected to increase by 50.2% between 2016 and 2026.

The gender distribution within the Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional LGA is relatively even with slightly more men than women (50.2% male and 49.8% female), whereas in Googong, there are slightly more women (51.9 %) than men (48.1 %).

Table 3 outlines the household type and composition within Googong and the Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional LGA. The average number of people per household is 3.1 in Googong compared to 2.6 across the Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional LGA. Almost all the residents in Googong (99.6%) live in separate houses, whereas dwelling structures in Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional LGA are more diverse with 14.1 % semi-detached, row, terrace or townhouses and 11.9 % flats or apartments.

Most households in Googong and in the Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional LGA are classified as family households (91% and 71.8% respectively). Over 60% of families consist of a couple with children in Googong, while in Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional LGA this figure is below 50%.

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Table 2 Age profile

Locality	Total	Dependent Children % (0 to 14)	Workforce Age % (15 to 64)	Seniors % (65+)	Median Age
Googong State Suburb	2,690	25.3%	68.6%	6%	32
Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional LGA	56,027	19.5%	68.4%	12.1%	38
ACT	397,397	18.7%	68.7%	12.6%	35
NSW	7,480,231	18.5%	65.1%	16.2%	38

Note: the sum of percentages for a given area do not all equal 100 % due to decimal rounding.

Source: ABS (2017)

Table 3 Household structure

Locality	Dwellings	Ave. people/ house-hold	Dwelling structure				Household type			Family composition			
			SH (%)	SD (%)	F/A (%)	OD (%)	Family (%)	Single person (%)	Group (%)	Couple without children (%)	Couple with children (%)	One parent (%)	Other (%)
Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional LGA	23,983	2.6	73.2	14.1	11.9	0.5	71.8	25.8	2.3	36.8	48.2	13.9	1.2
Googong State Suburb	897	3.1	99.6	0	0	0	91.0	7.9	1.0	32.5	59.6	7.4	0.4

SH: Separate house; SD: Semi-detached, row or terrace house, townhouse etc; F/A: Flat or apartment; OD: Other dwelling

Source: ABS (2017)

3.1.2. Income

The median personal, family and household incomes for residents in Googong are higher than those of Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional LGA, NSW and the ACT (see Table 4). The median weekly personal income within Googong is \$1,234 per week, compared to \$933 per week in Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional LGA, \$998 in the ACT and \$664 per week in NSW.

Table 4 Median personal, family and household income

Locality	Median weekly income		
	Personal	Family	Household
Googong State Suburb	\$1,234	\$2,816	\$2,813
Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional LGA	\$933	\$2,303	\$1,882
ACT	\$998	\$2,445	\$2,070
NSW	\$664	\$1,780	\$1,486

Source: ABS (2017)

3.1.3. Religious affiliations

Religious affiliations for Googong and Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional LGA residents vary. The top five religious affiliations are detailed in Table 5.

Table 5 Religious affiliations

Locality	Top five religious affiliations
Googong State Suburb	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catholic: 31.5% • No affiliation (as stated): 25.6% • Anglican: 15.2% • Not stated: 10.5% • Christian (not further defined): 3.2%
Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional LGA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No affiliation (as stated): 28.7% • Catholic: 26.9% • Anglican: 16.4% • Not stated: 9.9% • Uniting Church: 2.6%

Source: ABS (2017)

3.1.4. Property values

Median property prices within the Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional LGA for the June 2017 quarter range from \$345,000 for strata properties to \$618,000 for non-strata properties (Housing NSW, 2018). Non-metropolitan median property prices for the rest of NSW were \$350,000 for strata properties and \$415,000 for non-strata properties (see Table 6).

Table 6 Property values

Locality	June 2017 quarter (strata)	June 2017 quarter (non-strata)	June 2017 quarter (total)
Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional LGA	\$345,000	\$618,000	\$495,000
Greater Metropolitan Region of NSW	\$742,000	\$895,000	\$820,000
Rest of NSW	\$350,000	\$415,000	\$400,000
NSW	\$700,000	\$700,000	\$700,000

Source: Housing NSW, 2018 – website: <https://www.housing.nsw.gov.au/about-us/reports-plans-and-papers/rent-and-sales-reports>.

3.1.5. Traffic and access

The proposed site has frontages onto Old Cooma Road and Burra Road. Both are two-way roads with one traffic lane in each direction intersecting at a priority controlled intersection with Give Way control on Burra Road. The speed limit on each road is 100 km per hour.

The road network surrounding the proposed site does not currently accommodate walking and cycling facilities, or public transport services (WSP, 2018b).

Traffic data collected in 2017 indicates that Old Cooma Road carries approximately 2,540 vehicles per day. Weekday peak hour periods are between 8:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. and 6 p.m. during which there are approximate hourly volumes of 310 to 350 vehicles respectively. On weekends, traffic is generally consistent between 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., with up to 270 vehicles per hour.

Burra Road carries approximately 1,100 vehicles per day including a peak of hourly volume of 132 vehicles in the morning and 154 vehicles in the afternoon.

A school bus service (No. 66) runs past the site on Old Cooma Road. The service runs once in the morning and once in the afternoon. A bus stop is located adjacent to the site on the western side of Old Cooma Road, north of Evans Road.

3.1.6. Nearby sensitive receptors

One of the closest sensitive receptors is St Paul's Anglican Church, located approximately 40 m south-west of the proposed site on the western side of Old Cooma Road.

Other sensitive receptors close to the site include residential properties on 1291 Old Cooma Road and 102 Burra Road. Both properties share the southern boundary of the proposed site and appear to be used for grazing.

The driveway to 1291 Old Cooma Road exits onto Old Cooma Road, just south of the proposed site and the driveway to 102 Burra Road exits onto Burra Road, just south-east of the proposed site.

The Mount Campbell Estate is located immediately west of the proposed site. The estate can be accessed via Evans Road which runs off Old Cooma Road just south of the proposed site. Five properties to the east of the estate that can be accessed via O'Malley Place are closest to the proposed site (a minimum of approximately 170 m).

Other sensitive receptors close to the site include Ferleigh Park Community Hall, located approximately 1.6 km north-west of the proposed site on Swan Drive, and Avalanche Homestead (a sheep and cattle station that also operates as a farm stay and B&B and offers 4WD tours), located over 2 km south-east of the proposed site, on Burra Road.

Googong Foreshore is a recreational area located approximately 4 km east of the proposed site. The area is used for bushwalking, birdwatching, bike riding boating and fishing.

No known tourist attractions are located close to the site.

3.2. Community response

To date, no engagement has been conducted by QPRC with the community on the use of the proposed site as a cemetery. Given this, the community's response to the proposed development is unknown except for reports in the local media.

In May 2017 the Canberra Times reported that local residents were rallying against the council over the proposed development (The Canberra Times, 2017). The Queanbeyan Age reported (May 2017) that the proposed cemetery was unlikely to be supported by residents of the Mount Campbell Estate (The Queanbeyan Age, 2017).

The main issue raised by residents in these media articles is the lack of community consultation and transparency about the proposal by the council. Other community concerns reported in the local newspapers include the potential for stormwater flooding at the site and the negative impact on one resident's visual amenity of the area.

Local media also reported that up to 50 people attended a community meeting on the proposed development in May 2017, with some residents voicing their objection to the cemetery.

4. Potential social issues

Use of the proposed site as a cemetery has the potential to create a range of social issues and impacts for community members living, working and travelling close to the site.

Potential social issues are discussed below, and will require further refinement and verification once stakeholder engagement is conducted by QPRC to accurately understand community concerns.

4.1. Amenity

4.1.1. Air and noise emissions

Residents living close to the proposed site could experience a change in amenity associated with air and noise emissions from the proposed development.

Noise emissions will be generated during construction and operation of the proposed facility during the daytime only. During construction, noise emissions will be generated from machinery, heavy vehicles and equipment undertaking land clearing and earthworks, landscaping works, demolition, building works and vehicle movements. During operations, noise will be generated from light excavation equipment and vehicle movements, and routine maintenance activities involving ride-on lawn mowers, whipper-snipper and other garden equipment (WSP, 2018a).

Unattended noise monitoring was conducted at the proposed site and at the five nearest sensitive receivers over a 15-day period to establish existing ambient background noise levels (Figure 1). The background noise monitoring indicates that the local noise environment is dominated by traffic noise along Old Cooma Road and natural sounds such as birds and the wind in trees.

Using the background noise monitoring data, noise criteria were established for the construction and operation of the proposed Project, in accordance with the *Interim Construction Noise Guideline* (NSW) (ICNG) and the *NSW Noise Policy for Industry* (NPfI) respectively (Table 7). The criteria provide noise emission thresholds for the Project, that if exceeded, could result in noise impacts to nearby residents.

Table 7 Noise emission thresholds

Land use	Noise emission threshold (dBA $L_{Aeq\ 15min}$)*		
	Day	Evening	Night
<i>During construction†</i>			
Residential	43	41	NA
<i>During operation§</i>			
Residential	38	38	NA
Place of worship	50	50	NA

* Equivalent continuous sound level over 15 minutes.

† Criteria established in accordance with ICNG.

§ Criteria established in accordance with NPfI.

Day = 7am – 6pm, evening = 6pm – 10pm, night = 10pm – 7am.

The noise impact assessment (WSP, 2018a) found that some construction activities such as earthworks, foundation works, concrete pours and building construction (when a crane is in use), are likely to generate noise levels at nearby sensitive receptors that exceed the criteria and could cause noise disturbance. Impacts would be limited to the period of construction (i.e., across three to six months) and restricted to standard construction hours (7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday to Friday and 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Saturday). In such circumstances, the ICNG provides guidance on measures that should be implemented to reduce noise emissions during construction. Such measures include

notifying surrounding receivers of the proposed construction program (and the timing of potentially noisy activities) and adopting construction methods that are less noisy. Specific noise mitigation measures based on the recommendations of the noise impact assessment (WSP, 2018) will be confirmed during detailed design and implemented during the construction phase.

During operations, noise emissions from mobile machinery such as a small excavator, small tip truck, and ride on mower, are expected to exceed the nominated noise criteria at two sensitive receptors (R04 and R05) by up to 3 dB. This minor exceedance is only expected to occur where mobile machinery is operating in a relatively small area of the site, closest to R04 and R05 (WSP, 2018a) and specific mitigation measures were not recommended. Other noise emissions during operations (such as from light vehicles and buildings) are expected to be at or below the adopted noise thresholds. The noise impact assessment report (WSP, 2018) noted that these anticipated noise levels from the proposed developed should be verified during the detailed design phase.

Any change in noise emissions generated by increased vehicle movements to and from the site during construction and operations is expected to be negligible.

Air emissions will be generated during construction from vehicles, machinery and equipment and are expected to be negligible in the context of a site located near a main road. Dust could be generated during earthworks and would be controlled with standard mitigation measures. Emissions during operation will be restricted to light vehicles and excavators on site.

4.1.2. Visual amenity

Development of the proposed site as a memorial park has the potential to change the visual amenity experienced from properties and roads in proximity to the proposed site.

The proposed site is visible from immediately adjacent locations, up to 1 km to the north-east and north-west and from up to 2 km south (ELA, 2018). The site is likely to be visible from some residential properties on the Mount Campbell Estate to the west of Old Cooma Road, particularly those properties located close to Old Cooma Road. The site is also likely to be visible from residential properties situated to the north of Royalla and south of the site, as well as from St Paul's Anglican Church. Properties north of the proposed site, in areas such as Googong, have minimal visibility of the site.

The site is also visible from higher slopes and ridges between 2 km and 5 km away, including sections of Old Cooma Road, to the south of Binowee Drive and discontinuous areas along Royalla Drive (ELA, 2018). People travelling on these road sections are likely to have views the site. Many of the slopes and ridges do not contain private residences or public recreation facilities and many are over 3 km away. Larger buildings only are likely to be discernible. Visual impacts are only likely to be an issue if the site is further developed (ELA, 2018). Existing trees could provide significant screening, particularly at distant locations (ELA, 2018).

During construction of the proposed memorial park, residents in the Mount Campbell Estate and directly south of the proposed site are likely to view construction works, as will people travelling on nearby roads. Once constructed, these residences and road users may experience views of some of the structures on site such as the public amenities. The minimum 20-m-wide perimeter buffer of trees is likely to screen some views of the site, particularly as the trees mature over time.

4.2. Traffic and access

Increased vehicle movements on local roads during construction and operation of the cemetery could change local access and increase travel times for people living, working or travelling in proximity to the site.

4.2.1. Traffic

Relatively small numbers of construction vehicle movements are expected in and out of the proposed site during the construction period (three to six months). Road closures are unlikely. Increased travel times are not expected due to the relatively small numbers of construction vehicle movements. While Nearby residents and other users of Old Cooma Road and Burra Road may experience minor traffic disruptions.

The transport impact assessment (WSP, 2018b) carried out for the proposed development estimated up to 150 vehicles will be generated during peak periods. Traffic generated is likely to fluctuate as people arrive for a funeral service in one hour and then leave in the next hour. Funerals are expected to generally occur outside of peak teams (i.e., after 9:00 a.m. on weekdays with the occasional service on weekends or after 4:00 p.m. on a weekday). Given this timing, WSP identified a low likelihood that peak traffic generated by development of the proposed site would overlap with that for Old Cooma Road (WSP, 2018b).

Indicative traffic modelling conducted by WSP (2018) indicates that the intersection of Old Cooma Road and Burra Road currently operates well with minimal queues or delays on all approaches. Old Cooma Road and Burra Road are expected to experience a 6% annual increase in traffic from future residential development nearby (WSP, 2018b). Allowing for this annual growth in traffic movement, and the expected growth associated with the proposed development of this site, the intersection of Old Cooma Road and Burra Road is expected to continue to operate well with minimal queues and delays on all approaches in the future (year 2031) (WSP, 2018b). Turn treatments (for example the use of traffic islands) have been proposed at the intersection of Old Cooma Road and Burra Road (on Old Cooma Road) to improve road safety conditions.

No on-street parking is available at the proposed site and 150 car parking spaces will be required on site to accommodate the anticipated peak demand for parking (WSP, 2018b).

4.2.2. Access

Access is expected be maintained at all times to properties located in proximity to the proposed site during construction including those with driveways on Old Cooma Road and Burra Road. Once constructed, access on Old Cooma Road and Burra Road will remain unchanged.

As there is currently no access to the site by public transport and no cycling or walking facilities are available, access will be limited to private vehicles and ride share vehicles unless these services are established.

Development of the proposed site will provide improved access to a cemetery facility for the growing population of Queanbeyan, particularly growth areas to the south of the city such as Googong. The demand for specific religious or cultural services is also likely to be met, which Lanyon Drive Cemetery is understood to experience.

4.3. Safety

Development of the proposed site has the potential to increase the risk of injury or death from traffic accidents during construction and operation from additional vehicle movements on nearby roads and increase community concern over road safety.

For instance, the community may be concerned over the safety of school students getting on and off the school bus at the bus stop located adjacent to the site on the western side of Old Cooma Road. A review of crash data from 2012 to 2017 for Old Cooma Road and Burra Road did not highlight any crash trends or significant road safety hazards (WSP, 2018b). Turn treatments at the intersection of Old Cooma Road and Burra Road (on Old Cooma Road) and a proposed reduction to the speed limit on Burra Road from 100 km per hour to 80 km per hour will assist in improving road safety conditions.

4.4. Economic

4.4.1. Property values

Residents living near the proposed site, such as people living on Mount Campbell Estate, could perceive that the value of their property will decline should it be developed as a memorial park. While the site is visible from some residential properties on the Mount Campbell Estate to the west of Old Cooma Road, the perimeter buffer of trees is expected to screen some views of the site.

4.4.2. Livelihoods

Development of the proposed site as a cemetery has the potential to affect the value of nearby businesses that are reliant on tourists such as short-term accommodation providers and eating establishments. Few such establishments are located close to the site, reflecting the rural residential nature of the area.

The closest known establishment is the Avalanche Homestead (located approximately 2 km south-east). The property is a working sheep and cattle station that also operates as a farm stay and B&B and offers 4WD tours. Development at the proposed site is unlikely to be visible from the Homestead (ELA, 2018). Other built elements in the landscape are of a similar scale and nature (such as churches and houses) and the proposed development is not expected to deter tourists from visiting the area.

Local businesses such as eating establishments may benefit from increased demand for goods and services during construction and operation of the memorial park. Potential employees will also benefit from employment during both construction and operations.

5. Suggested approach to community and stakeholder engagement

This chapter outlines an approach for engaging with stakeholders on the development of the proposed site as a cemetery.

QPRC should commence stakeholder engagement as early as possible in the planning process to provide stakeholders with the opportunity to provide input and minimise the potential for stakeholder concern. Importantly, engagement with stakeholders will also assist to understand any key constraints associated with the proposed site early in the planning process.

5.1. Community drop-in sessions (phase 1)

The first suggested step in engaging with community stakeholders is to hold community drop-in sessions. These informal gatherings could be held at Fernleigh Park Community Hall which is located approximately 1.6 km north-west of the proposed site. The sessions would provide an opportunity for interested members of the community to speak with Council planners and obtain information on:

- Why the proposed site was selected.
- What is proposed at the site (based on available information).
- Timing and process for development of the proposed site.
- Findings of the technical studies prepared to date.

The drop-in sessions would enable community members to discuss any concerns that they may have with the proposed development of the site for consideration by QPRC in planning.

A minimum of two sessions should be held on a weekday evening and/or Saturday morning to maximise the opportunity for attendance. Information could be presented on display boards including large (A2 or A1) maps showing the site and surrounding area and images of similar facilities. Feedback forms could be made available for people to record their views and any queries they may have.

5.2. Understanding stakeholder concerns and values

Community values are qualities of the social environment that are important to people and conducive to individual wellbeing. They form the basis of an assessment of how the community could be impacted by a development. Community values may relate to community connections, local places, access to infrastructure and services and aspects of a lifestyle that people enjoy.

A key step to understanding how the local community could be impacted by the proposed development of the site as a cemetery is to engage with them on what they value about their area, and what concerns they have with the proposal. This information could be gathered through feedback forms distributed at the drop-in session or a small workshop with a cross-section of community members.

Information gathered would need to be reviewed and collated to develop an understanding of community values and key areas of concern to inform an assessment of social impacts.

5.3. Community drop-in sessions (phase 2)

Should the planning proposal be approved and QPRC decide to proceed with an application for Development Approval (DA) for a cemetery at the proposed site, additional community drop-in sessions should be held to enable community members to view and comment on the draft design(s).

Council officers could provide an overview of the findings of the social impact assessment, how this information influenced decision making to proceed with the proposed development at this location, and the timing and nature of the proposed works.

Should QPRC determine not to proceed with a cemetery at the proposed site, Council should consider publishing information on their website on the key reasons not to proceed with the development of the site and next steps.

5.4. Engagement with government stakeholders

QPRC should engage with government stakeholders such as the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage, Rural Fire Service and NSW Police on the development of the proposed site as a cemetery.

Information could be sent to key government stakeholders on the proposed site, including on what is being proposed, timing of the proposed works, and potential environmental and social issues identified in the technical studies.

A follow-up letter could be sent to these same government stakeholders to outline and seek comment on the draft design(s) for the memorial park throughout the DA stage, when available.

6. Conclusion

QPRC has identified a proposed site approximately 11 km south of Queanbeyan to develop a cemetery facility. The proposed site is south of the Googong township, one of a number of new urban growth areas south of Queanbeyan.

The existing Lanyon Park cemetery in Queanbeyan is nearing capacity; in addition, the ACT's existing three cemeteries are expected to reach capacity within eight years. The QPRC has identified that an additional facility is required to accommodate the needs of a growing and ageing population.

Sensitive receptors in proximity to the proposed site include residential properties to the west on the Mount Campbell Estate, properties directly south of the proposed site and St Paul's Anglican Church. Further north-west and south-east of the site are Ferleigh Park Community Hall and Avalanche Homestead.

Potential social issues have been identified with the construction and operation of a cemetery at the proposed site. During construction, minor short-term amenity impacts may be experienced at nearby sensitive receptors from noise emissions generated by machinery, heavy vehicles and equipment. Nearby sensitive receptors may also experience minor short-term changes to visual amenity and traffic due to the presence of construction works and vehicles.

During operations, two sensitive receptors could experience minor amenity impacts from noise emissions associated with mobile machinery operated on site. The site is likely to be visible to sensitive receptors to the west of Old Cooma Road, to the north of Royalla (south of the site), at St Paul's Anglican Church, on higher slopes and ridges between 2 km and 5 km away and on certain roads in proximity to the site. Development of the proposed site will provide improved access to a cemetery facility for the growing population of Queanbeyan. Local businesses such as eating establishments may benefit from increased demand for goods and services during construction and operation of the memorial park.

Residents near the proposed site may also be concerned about the potential for development of the site to increase the risk of injury or death from increased traffic volumes on and potential for more frequent accidents to occur during construction and operation. Residents close to the site may also perceive that the proposed development could affect the value of their property.

The development of the proposed site as a cemetery, and the potential social issues identified in this report (and other concerns of stakeholders), will need to be refined and verified once a formal community engagement process occurs.

An approach has been proposed for engaging with stakeholders on the development of the proposed site as a memorial park. The focus of this engagement is on providing stakeholders with information on what is being proposed at this site to assist in informing QPRC's decision making. Stakeholder engagement is also required to understand stakeholder values and concerns and ensure that any key constraints associated with the proposed site are considered early in the planning process.

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