

Summary of residents', local historical group's concerns and Council response

1 Details of submitters

Member of the public - The submitters have a family burial plot of eight graves (173-180) at St Bartholomew's Cemetery.

Prospect Heritage Trust

Blacktown and District Historical Society

2 Consideration of issues raised

Member of the public

Issue	Planning comment/response
Access to existing graves (Nos.173-180) for a lawn mower may not possible over the planted swale.	As part of the detailed design work two access points over the swale between the new cemetery area and existing cemetery are proposed. One is a level access point at the southern end of the new access drive. The other is midway along the new access drive and utilises a ramp.
Bartholomew Place may become a 'working area' for prostitutes and a dumping ground for abandoned cars (as was Tarlington Place before it was gated off).	This will be a management and operational issue. Night time access/control and level of lighting (timed control) is included as a condition of consent.
No objection to the development.	Noted

Prospect Heritage Trust

Issue	Planning comment/response
Concerns about accessibility to the terraced area for funeral directors and visitors to the area. Requested that Council consult with funeral directors and/or a cemetery that has established a terraced burial area and accessibility.	<p>The ramps in the terraced area have been reconfigured and the gradient of them improved from 1:20 to 1:33.5 (i.e. made flatter).</p> <p>In addition, the number of graves in the terraced area has been reduced from 309 to 166 and only a single row of graves (rather than double) is now provided on each level.</p> <p>The garden bed areas have been increased in the terraced area and will be able to accommodate ashes interment.</p>

	<p>The applicant has consulted L J Follington and Jeffrey Brothers Funeral Services on the proposed design. Both organisations have provided support for the proposed development and have provided sound feedback on the operative considerations for terraced grave sites, from their experience with similar grave sites at St Gregory's in Kurrajong and Botany Cemetery.</p>
<p>Suggested that the steep area be used for ashes interment instead of grave plots, as noted in the CMP.</p>	<p>The garden bed areas have been increased in the terraced area and will be able to accommodate ashes interment.</p> <p>The proposed columbarium walls act as a retaining structure between the imported fill area and the proposed drainage swale and established grave sites. The proposed use for interment allows for the retaining walls to have an additional use and to animate an otherwise utilitarian structure. They also act as an attractive screen to the raised walkway.</p> <p>The steeper part of the site would require significant cut/fill to terrace it to provide appropriate columbarium walls and would have potentially more visual impact on the heritage listed church given their vertical nature. The proposed graves and shallow ramps, with potential for ashes interment within the lawn areas, considered a more appropriate, low scale intervention in this part of the site.</p>
<p>Requested further consideration of parking that is allocated to the terraced area, especially designated disabled parking spaces.</p>	<p>In the detailed design, the 2 parking spaces at the base of the terraced area (numbered 3 and 21 on the DA plans) have been allocated for hearse and disabled parking respectively</p>

Blacktown and District Historical Society

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<p>Concerned about accessibility (especially for the mobility impaired) to the grave sites and columbarium walls</p>	<p>In the detailed design, 2 disabled parking spots are proposed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1 at the base of the terraced area (numbered 21 on the DA plans). - 1 at the easternmost end, southern side of the new access road. <p>An accessible path (suitable for the mobility impaired) will be provided at the eastern end of the new access road to provide access to the columbariums. Walking ramps to the grave sites now have a reduced gradient.</p>
<p>Need for more parking closer to the grave sites, particularly for the mobility impaired. Mindful that on-street parking is not an option at the site, as it might be at other cemeteries.</p>	<p>The maximum distance between the new access road and a new grave site is 50 m. This is considered acceptable for pedestrian travel distances for cemeteries. Two accessible parking spaces are provided (refer to response above).</p> <p>Additional overflow parking can be provided along the north-eastern side of St Bartholomew's Place, on the 'expansion</p>

	<p>lands’.</p> <p>The parallel spaces on the new access road will be suitable for people with walking sticks and mobility walkers, but are not designated as disabled parking spots.</p> <p>The 68 proposed parking spaces will be sufficient for small to average sized funerals and grave visits.</p>
Consultations with funeral directors recommended.	<p>The applicant has consulted with L J Follington (grave diggers and burial services) and Jeffrey Brothers Funeral Services on the proposed design in March 2019. The key feedback was that access is the key for every party involved in a funeral. Terracing of grave sites can work, but ample access is needed at each end, at every level.</p> <p>It was advised that ramps provide the optimum access, as they allow flexibility for trolleys as well as clearer visibility for pallbearers. Stairs are not ideal when carrying coffins as the bearers at the rear of the coffin have difficulty seeing the stairs. L J Follington confirmed that the proposed hearse parking provided adequate space.</p> <p>This advice has been taken on board in the revised designs.</p>
Considered important to properly identify what is in the ground at the ‘anomaly/potential unmarked grave’ sites. ‘Something vague and nebulous is a less than satisfactory outcome’.	<p>OEH indicated in its meeting with the applicant and Sue Galt from Council on 20 February 2019, that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It supported the proposed treatment of the 7 potential unmarked graves. - It would not seek excavation of the potential unmarked grave sites, for confirmation purposes.
Very happy for potential reactivation of the cemetery.	Noted.