



**Proposed Gracemere Cemetery
Expansion Consultation**

Date: 10 August to 11 September 2015

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Executive Summary

Rockhampton Regional Council Parks and Recreation Committee (2 June 2015) recommended that the CEO be authorised to progress the conversion of SP163921/2 from Reserve for Park to Reserve for Cemetery, with requisite public consultation which was supported through a Council resolution (9 June 2015).

As Council is Trustee of the land proposed for conversion to Reserve for Cemetery, authorisation from the Department of Natural Resources and Mines (DNRM) is required and this agency also provided guidelines on their requirements for community engagement to support any approach for conversation of the Reserve purpose.

Considering the information required, the changes being proposed, this consultation was rated by the Council's Community Engagement Matrix as a Level 2 High Local type engagement and an extensive level of engagement with the community was undertaken. This included:

- Written correspondence to all owners and residents along Johnson Road, Fisher Street, Bland Street and adjoining streets in Gracemere where local residents would be presumed to utilise this park for recreational reasons. The correspondence outlined the proposed changes, a draft design concept and a submission form (with a reply paid envelope). Please see Map of Site, P5.
- Promotion through Council's website outlining the proposed changes, the draft design concept and an online submission form.
- Providing face to face meetings to affected persons (where requested).
- Undertaking a drop in centre at the Gracemere Shopping World.
- Undertaking meetings with the Gracemere Community Voice, Gracemere CWA and Funeral Directors that utilise the existing site.

The engagement was conducted over a four week period from 10 August to September 11 2015. Total response to the online and mail based submission forms was 5 official responses, feedback received at meetings with groups outlined above was positive with no issues with the proposal.

Main messages from participants

- **No significant issues raised by the community**
 - Through the engagement there was only one negative comment from one person, which related to the size of the proposed cemetery.
- **Positive comments from the community included:**
 - Well thought out and planned.
 - It will give an attractive look.
 - Gracemere population is large and increasing, needs more places in the cemetery.
- **There was interest from residents at the drop in centre – and all positive**
- **Gracemere Community Voice provided positive comments on the proposal**
 - There was interest in the history of the site with the group providing positive feedback on the look and feel of the proposed concepts.
- **Gracemere CWA has no concerns with the proposal**
 - There was a discussion on the fenced element of the proposal with all other comments being positive on the development of a larger cemetery.
- **Queensland Hospital and Health Service had no concerns with the proposal**

Feedback from Submission Forms

4th September 2015 Rockhampton Regional Council Rockhampton 4700 I am in wholeheartedly in favour of the Proposed Gracemere Cemetery Expansion Concept Plans for the following reasons. 1. It was previously zoned for cemetery purposes. 2. The land is flood free and close to Gracemere residential areas with good access and parking design particularly for the elderly who are more likely to be visitors to a cemetery than any other age group. 3. By retaining the old historic parts of the cemetery with the expanding cemetery, we will be assured the whole area will be well maintained. 4. The design brings the cemetery into 'modern times' with modern ideas such as a grieving area for parents of babies lost pre full term, nice garden areas and shade cover. 5. It will give an attractive look to passing traffic on what is a busy road now and will become busier. 6. It will look a whole lot more attractive than a housing estate. 7. Because of the topography and slope of the land, it will come up as really nice to look at. 8. Other amenities around it - fire station and ambulance centre, can be noisy with sirens, it is better the land be passive and not filled with houses. 9. Gracemere population is large and increasing, the need will grow for more places in the cemetery. 10. The costs of establishing a cemetery elsewhere and then objections which invariably arise no matter what from certain politically motivated people who have no other interest other than objecting to Council ideas would delay or halt any future plans. 11. Gracemere is fortunate to have the land adjoining an existing cemetery and the outlook, aesthetic plans will be a great asset to the community. I support in full the planned expansion and the design of the extension to the Gracemere Cemetery.

The viewing of the plans for the proposed expansion of the Gracemere Cemetery has confirmed my belief that the proposed expansion is in fact a proposal for a regional super - cemetery to be located in the centre of our pretty little town of Gracemere. Statistics show that there are approximately 6.5 deaths per thousand people in Australia with approximately two thirds of these being cremated with the remaining one third being buried. This equates to a town with a population of 15,000 having approximately 33 people being buried per year. The proposed expansion to the Gracemere Cemetery allows for an extra 3,688 sites. Statistics show that this would last a town the size of Gracemere approximately 112 years. So the only conclusion that can be drawn that this is really is a regional super-cemetery being dumped on the township of Gracemere. I believe that a cemetery is not a regional asset but a local community asset and is part of a locality's history. This should be appreciated and accepted. I believe that expanding the Gracemere Cemetery as per the proposed plans is an insult to our community and should not go ahead. The lack of Rockhampton Regional Council's ability to maintain this area at present does not give any confidence in their ability to maintain any further improvement to the area. Shouldn't Rockhampton Regional Council show some respect to the Gracemere Community and develop and maintain the area in a more community friendly way?

I have looked at the plans & I fully agree to the expansion & improvements. I live approx. 1 street away & would not mind if this was to happen. It looks very nice & I think it would improve the look of that area seeing as it has been terrible for over 20yrs now. The only concern I would have is if it was over used by Rockhampton residents (or they were forced to use it) because nothing was being done to improve burial facilities in Rockhampton itself. I would like to see the people with a connection to Gracemere be given first rights on being buried there.

Yes I think Gracemere cemetery needs the redevelopment and am impressed by the plans

It looks well thought out and will allow the community to engage much nicer surrounds for saying farewell to loved ones. I have attended a funeral at the cemetery about 8 years ago and we had to use the St Pauls School church for the service and then move to the cemetery for the graveside farewell.



P Florian
P12-01-01
Central Queensland Public Health Unit
4920 6889

Central Queensland
Hospital and Health Service

15 September 2015

Ms Margaret Barrett
Manager Parks
Rockhampton Regional Council
PO Box 1860
Rockhampton Qld 4700

Dear Ms Barrett

RE: Gracemere Community Consultation – Gracemere Cemetery

Thank you for your letter dated 1 September 2015 concerning the proposed change of purpose of Lot 2 Bland Street, Gracemere (being Lot 2 on SP163921) from a Reserve for Park to a Reserve for Cemetery. The following comments are offered for your consideration.

After assessing the proposal document and visiting the Gracemere cemetery site it was considered that the Central Queensland Public Health Unit has no concerns with the proposal. The corner community use/access parkland marked on the Concept Master Plan as Note 13 would be regarded as an improved recreational area should these areas be developed with a high amenity.

I trust that this is of assistance. Please contact Mr Paul Florian, Manager Environmental Health on 4920 6895 if further assistance is required.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kerry Coleman", written over a horizontal line.

Kerryn Coleman
Director, Public Health Physician
Central Queensland Public Health Unit

Map of Site

