

**COMMUNITY & SOCIAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE****22<sup>nd</sup> JANUARY 2014****REPORT OF THE HEAD OF COMMUNITIES AND NEIGHBOURHOODS****NATURAL BURIAL SITE****1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To provide members with an update in regards to potentially forming a partnership or joint agreement with a local landowner expressing interest in working together with the council with a view to establishing a local 'Natural Burial' site

**2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 **Members agree to take Option 1 forward for further detailed work to be undertaken regarding the development and establishment of a Natural Burial site local to Melton Mowbray The outcome of that further investigatory work to be reported back in due course for members consideration**

**3.0 KEY ISSUES**

- 3.1 At a meeting of the Community and Social Affairs Committee on 18 September 2013 , members agreed to expressions of interest being sought from Landowners / Farmers in regards to seeking a partner with suitable land available locally who might potentially work in partnership with the council with the intension of developing a local Natural Burial site
- 3.2 Accordingly advertisements seeking interest were placed in a number of relevant publications : the Melton Times ,Grantham Journal ,More to Death ( a publication of the Natural Burials Association) a National Farmers Union publication and the Countryside Landowners Association magazine
- 3.3 The response to these has been good in regards to telephone enquiries and requests for further information and accordingly the process has identified three possible local sites detailed below as Options 1,2 and 3.
- 3.4 Option 1.( see Appendix 1 )

Bartholomew Way area Melton Mowbray

Owner / Agent

Mr A Home Address:  
Ab Kettleby, Melton Mowbray, LE14

Site Address/ Location

Field directly off St Bartholomew's Way

**Site Details**

Size:  
12 Acre plot

See Appendix 1

Description:

Open countryside with woodland

Minimum Development / Infrastructure :Requirements

Natural Burial site infrastructure i.e. Landscaping ,paths ,information boards / car parking / Signage/ no services available

Comments:

This site would appear to be the preferred option at this point .Its close proximity to Melton together with its existing lead road is unique amongst the expressions of interest. It is on the outskirts of Melton Mowbray with public transport able to get within half a mile of the proposed site The general landscape is open and green, there is a small wood to one side of the site and this could be incorporated in some way to enhance the landscape quality of a natural burial site .Much of the site appears to be well drained and well above the natural water table. In summary this option would appear to warrant a closer detailed assessment. If members are minded to follow this suggestion ,it is expected that a detailed purpose and site specific investigation would be undertaken resulting in a Natural Burial site project report with all associated costs and expected requirements

If members support this view, it would be intended that this information be reported back to members for their further determination in regards to progressing the project to a point that will include regulatory and planning considerations and conditions

### 3.5 Option 2 ( see Appendix 2 )

Waltham on the Wolds

Owner / Agent

Ms B Home Address:  
Stonesby Melton Mowbray LE14

Site Address:/ Location  
Land off Bescaby lane, Waltham on the Wolds

#### **Site Details**

Size:  
Part of a 25 acres pasture  
See Appendix 2

Description:

Pasture land

Minimum Infrastructure Development: Requirement

Natural Burial site infrastructure i.e. Landscaping ,paths ,information boards / car parking / Signage/ no services available

Comments

This site is about 1.5 miles outside of Waltham on the Wolds. The site does have an existing lead road with public transport available from Melton Mowbray to Waltham on the Wolds. This site is an open and green pasture adjacent to the former closed landscaped Landfill site which is now landscaped and grown over as a shallow hill to one side of the plot. The site has a number of small tree copses and does appear to be well drained and above the natural water table .This site does have some merit mainly in regards to the

aforementioned points, however the adjacent proximity of the old landfill site together with its comparatively remote location and therefore reduced accessibility would suggest it is not as ideal as option 1.

### 3.6 Option 3 ( See Appendix 3)

Scalford

Owner/ Agent  
Ms C  
Home Address:  
Scalford, LE14

Site Address:/ Location  
Eastwell Road, Scalford

#### **Site Details**

Size:  
2 Acre Woodland  
See Appendix 3

Description:  
A plantation woodland with large fields on all sides .

Minimum Infrastructure Development: Requirement

A lead road / path network / Natural Burial site infrastructure i.e. Landscaping , ,information boards / car parking / Signage/ no services available

#### Comments

This site is less than half a mile outside of Scalford on the Eastwell rd. It is essentially an average sized plantation plot of uniform linear planted trees that are reasonably mature. . It is a very tranquil peaceful site however there is likely to be significant financial investment required to develop this site for the use in question

The required infrastructure would include a lead road and network of access paths. The site is considerably more remote compared to option 1 and 2 in regards to reaching an existing publically accessible point The site does appear to be well drained and well above the natural water table .This site does have a high landscape value but its remoteness from a public road and the likely cost of establishing suitable access and infrastructure greatly reduce its viability

## 4.0 **POLICY AND CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 There are no specific policies or corporate implication as a result of this report.

## 5.0 **FINANCIAL AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 The introduction of an additional option for the council's cemetery services should result in an additional income stream not previously available The initiative is at an early stage however it is already clear that a degree of investment is likely to be required to establish a local natural burial site. Officers will develop a business case that outlines both the potential income and investment as the project develops.

Members previously allocated monies for this project and this should be sufficient to progress the scheme, however, members should note that subject to approval the funding of the skate park and country park pavilion will mean there will be no capital resources left

in special expenses in 2014/15.

## 6.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS/POWERS

6.1 There are no legal implications or powers implications as a result of this report.

## 7.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY

7.1 There are no community safety implications as a result of this report

## 8.0 EQUALITIES

8.1 There are no equalities implications as a result of this report

## 9.0 RISKS

9.1 There are not expected to be any risks involved at this exploratory stage of the initiative as the project progresses any legal planning environmental or fiscal risks that emerge will be reported for member's consideration.



## 10.0 CLIMATE CHANGE

10.1 There are no direct climate change implications as a result of this report

## 11.0 CONSULTATION

11.1 Members have for a number of years been seeking progress in regards to identifying the viability ,investigating potential sites and establishing a business case to take forward , or not, as the case may be a corporate Natural Burial option to add to the existing options available within the current cemetery service No specific consultation has been carried out in regards to such a provision , however a number of enquiries are received annually in regards to natural burials and the availability of such a service for the Boroughs residents and in particular to residents local to Melton Mowbray

## 12.0 WARDS AFFECTED

12.1 This proposal if taken forward would provide a natural burial provision for anyone who wished to opt for such a service. The project is seeking a facility that is local to Melton Mowbray, but as it patronage is not expected to be restricted to any area or locality it will effectively add a possible natural burial option to residents of all the Boroughs Wards.

Contact Officer     Raman Selvon  
Date:                    10/1/14

Appendices :        1 Site information for option 1  
                             2 Site information for option 2  
                             3 Site information for option 3

Background Papers:   No

Reference :            X : Committees\CSA|2013.14|220114|HR- Natural Burial Site