

Why do we need a new cemetery?

Residents of Queanbeyan, Jerrabomberra and Googong currently use the Queanbeyan General Cemetery on Lanyon Dr, Queanbeyan for burial and ash interment. This cemetery is very close to capacity and the sale of pre-purchase Right of Interments has been paused to ensure that local residents who need immediate burial options are prioritised.

As we progress the Memorial Garden we have also made changes at the Queanbeyan General Cemetery to add some plots. In February 2023, the Lanyon Dr Cemetery had 272 plots remaining.

The combined population of Queanbeyan, Jerrabomberra, Googong and surrounds that are being serviced by the Lanyon Dr Cemetery was recorded at more than 55,000 in the 2021 census.

It is critical that the community is provided with adequate cemetery facilities to service future generations. The new Memorial Garden is proposed to service the community for the next 80-100 years.

Council began searching for a suitable site for a new cemetery in 2009. The search criteria included:

- Suitable land availability
- Proximity to city and urban areas, 10-15km radius
- Allow for future urban infill growth and greenfield developments at Googong and South Jerrabomberra
- Proximity to main roads
- Able to accommodate separated exit and entrance
- Minimum site of 35 hectares of memorial park, including buffer zones, access roads and facilities
- Topography predominately flat to slight undulation
- Consistent subsoil depths to 3.5m deep
- Outside the 100-year river flood zone preferred
- Low water tables desirable, ideally minimum 3.5 metres
- Avoid significant environmental constraints, e.g. Googong Dam, eastern escarpment, E1 & E2 zoned conservation Lands.

How many locations did Council consider when searching for a site?

Council initially conducted a locality search based on the criteria. Eight specific properties were considered during the search. All but one failed due to environmental/ geotechnical assessment or were not available for purchase.

Who will the new Memorial Gardens service?

The proposed Memorial Gardens will service the population of Queanbeyan, Jerrabomberra, Googong and surrounds. It will be a general, multi-denominational facility catering for all religions, cultures and beliefs. ACT residents will be able to purchase space in the cemetery and equally Queanbeyan residents may choose to use cemeteries within the ACT or other regional towns.

Will the site include a crematorium?

No. There will not be a crematorium on the site.

Will ashes be placed onsite and will they be affected by wind?

Ashes will be interred at the new Memorial Garden, like all other cemeteries in Queanbeyan Palerang. Ashes are either placed within a niche wall or in a columbarium, buried in a garden, bushland or burial plot. Ashes placed in walls or columbarium are in a sealed container and buried ashes are in biodegradable bags. Council does not allow ashes to be scattered over the surface.

Has Council considered the social impact of establishing a new Memorial Garden?

As part of the SSDA process our contractors will develop an independent Social Impact Assessment that will help inform aspects of the sites design. This document will build on the initial Social Impact Report prepared by consultants, Coffey, in 2018 and independent Social Impact Assessment by Elton Consulting, in 2019 as part of the planning proposal process.

Will the site be affected by flooding of Church Creek? Will the Memorial Garden affect groundwater for surrounding properties?

The project will actually restore and improve Church Creek; it is an important natural feature of the site and we want to protect it. Burials will not be within the flood zone of the creek.

In terms of surface water, our hydrology studies show that we will be able to deal with surface water that runs across the site with various natural and engineering treatments, including vegetated swales and tree plantings.

Will there be any noise or visual impact?

A Noise Impact Assessment was completed in 2018 and found the projected impacts on nearby residents to be low. Visual impact is being addressed through the design of the site which includes a boundary of trees and native trees and grasses throughout the site.

Will there be large buildings?

At this stage there are two new buildings proposed for the site. These are included in the concept design and use neutral colours to blend with the landscape. The existing homestead is planned to be used for management of the site and storage of equipment.

Are we able see plans of what it will look like?

Yes. On our Your Voice page you can see the concept designs that show plans for the landscape, proposed buildings and planting plans for native vegetation on the site.

What would be the hours of operation when the cemetery is complete?

Currently Council operates its local cemeteries on a dawn to dusk basis. The gates are locked to the public at dusk and staff only conduct maintenance between 7am and 4pm. Funerals generally take place between 9am and 3pm weekdays. The proposed Memorial Garden will work to similar operating hours.

What will be done to prevent loud, anti-social behaviour, especially at night?

Council has not experienced loud or anti-social behaviour at the current active cemeteries in Queanbeyan, Bungendore or Braidwood. Most of the community is highly respectful within active cemeteries. This is common in close communities where many people have a loved one or know others within the cemetery. However, Council engages security patrols and uses CCTV monitoring.

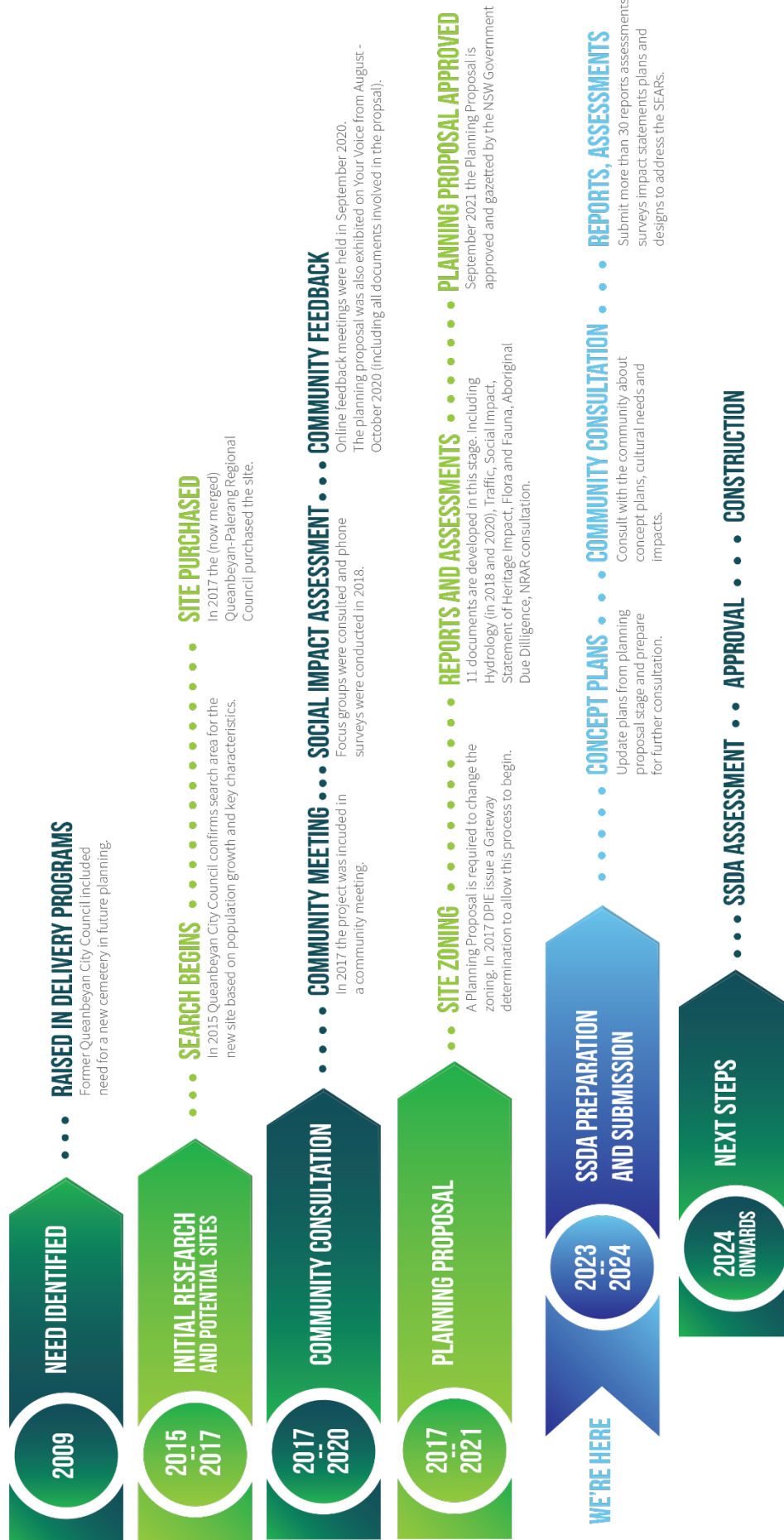
What is the process from here to the operation of the Memorial Garden?

Happening now

- Concept designs have been developed and we are again consulting to make sure we get the details right
- The State Significant Development Application (SSDA) is being prepared including neighbour notification, consultation and a wide range of further

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- Up next
- detailed studies, assessments and documents
 - The SSDA will be referred to the Independent Planning Commission for a decision
 - Call tenders for Construction of Memorial Garden
 - Operation of Memorial Garden



Who is the Consent Authority?

The NSW Government recently changed the process for cemeteries in NSW. They are now considered a State Significant Development and the Independent Planning Commission is the Consent Authority.

Does Council own the land that the proposed Memorial Park will be on?

Yes. Council purchased the land in 2017 following negotiations with the owner.

A variety of environmental and geotechnical investigations have been carried out on the site and can be found on our Your Voice page.

How is Council paying for this?

Council is funding the planning and proposed construction of the Memorial Garden via a low-interest loan from the NSW Treasury Corporation. The loan will be repaid from revenue collected from the operation of the Memorial Garden.

Why can't we join with the ACT to use their new cemetery?

Communities generally have an expectation that they will be able to be buried within their local community. Councils and governments have an obligation to plan for the long term provision of critical social infrastructure, including cemeteries, to service the community into the future. It is not reasonable to rely on a neighbouring state or community to provide this service.

Can I give feedback?

Yes. We are currently seeking feedback from the wider community. Submissions will be received up to **10 November**.

Can the Lanyon Drive Lawn Cemetery be extended?

No. There are a number of reasons that the Lanyon Drive Lawn Cemetery cannot be extended. The land across the road on the other side of Lanyon Drive (accessed from Hoover Road) is zoned E1 and is owned and managed by the National Parks and Wildlife Service because of its environmental importance. The large property nearby on Lanyon Drive is zoned E2: Environmental Conservation and is not appropriate for a cemetery.

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