

Crowland Parish Council



Design and Access Statement
Full Planning Application for a Proposed Cemetery,
Amenity Building and Associated Parking and
Landscaping
Land off James Road, Crowland

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town planning



landscape architecture



architecture

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This Design and Access Statement has been prepared by the Robert Doughty Consultancy Limited on behalf of Crowland Parish Council to accompany a Full Planning Application for a new cemetery with parking, a small amenity building and associated landscaping.
- 1.2. The application is supported by a Flood Risk Assessment, which concludes that the site is not at risk of flooding and will not increase surface water flooding elsewhere.
- 1.3. The site layout shows how the site will be developed to provide sufficient burial plots for the parish for the foreseeable future. It will be served by the existing access road off James Road that also leads to the existing parish council allotments. There is currently insufficient capacity for future burials in the parish and, therefore, the Parish Council is seeking to provide a new cemetery for future requirements.
- 1.4. Previously there has been planning permission in place for both the allotments and the cemetery at this location and these were originally proposed as being the other way round on site. A full planning application for the cemetery represents a more straightforward approach to achieving planning permission rather than a S73 application, which would require a variation to the original S106 agreement.

2. APPLICATION SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

- 2.1. The application site measures just under 1 ha and is located immediately south-east of the parish council's allotments and north-east of the land allocated for industrial development in the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan ('the Local Plan'). The allotments replaced the original ones on the west side of James Road, which have been redeveloped for housing. There is woodland to the west of the site and the A16 lies to the east.
- 2.2. The site comprises part of an agricultural field, is roughly rectangular in shape and is largely flat with few features. The western boundary is characterised by existing woodland through which there is an existing access which serves the council's allotments. The southern boundary is currently open, but this will be fenced off and a native hedgerow planted along its entire length.

3. PLANNING POLICY

The Development Plan

- 3.1. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that, "If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the Planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise."
- 3.2. The Development Plan for the purposes of this application is the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2019 (the 'Local Plan'). Those policies considered relevant to the proposal are set out below:
- Policy 2: Development Management
- Policy 3: Design of New Development
- Policy 4: Approach to Flood Risk
- 3.3. Policy 2 indicates planning permission will be granted where the development satisfies the sustainable development considerations.
- 3.4. Policy 3 requires that all development will be designed to a high quality for future needs of residents and to ensure that South Holland's essential character and main environmental assets are not damaged.
- 3.5. Policy 4 indicates planning permission will be granted for development within an area at risk of flooding, provided it meets the outlined considerations. This application is accompanied by a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment, which states the development is safe from flooding.

National Planning Policy Framework

- 3.6. The National Planning Policy Framework (the "NPPF") sets out Central Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.
- 3.7. Paragraph 96:
- "Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which:
- a) promote social interaction, including opportunities for meetings between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other – for example through mixed-use developments...;
 - b) are safe and accessible, so that crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community

cohesion – for example through the use of clear and legible pedestrian routes, and high quality public space, which encourage the active and continual use of public areas; and

- c) enable and support healthy lives, through both promoting good health and preventing ill-health, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs and reduce health inequalities between the most and least deprived communities – for example through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities, local shops, access to healthier food, allotments and layouts that encourage walking and cycling.

3.8. Paragraph 98:

“To provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should:

- a) plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments...
- e) ensure an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services.”

3.9. Paragraph 103:

“Access to a network of high-quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities. Planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the need for open space, sport and recreation facilities (including quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses) and opportunities for new provision. Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open space, sport and recreational provision is needed, which plans should then seek to accommodate”.

4. DESIGN AND ACCESS

Use

- 4.1. The application proposal is for a cemetery which includes: standard burial plots, green burial plots and cremation plots together with access, parking, a small amenity building to provide shelter for those attending burials and landscaping.
- 4.2. The existing cemetery in Crowland is close to capacity and, having regard to the significant levels of residential development seen in recent years, there is the need for further burial provision, which this proposal will satisfy.
- 4.3. New cemeteries are traditionally located beyond settlement boundaries due to the pressure to develop land for housing and employment uses within the boundaries. The site is essentially one half of a former agricultural field that has already benefitted from permission for a cemetery and an allotment in the past but the location of these have been swapped around, hence the need for a new permission for the cemetery.

Amount and layout

- 4.4. It is proposed to construct a single-storey amenity building, and car park with provision for 12 vehicles together with the ability to park on the internal circulation roads, should the need arise. In addition, five parking spaces will be created just off the junction with James Road so that visitors can park off the road when the main site is closed and walk through to the cemetery.
- 4.5. The cremation plots and burial plots are sited with a north-east to south-west orientation, and there are areas of planting and informal footpaths throughout the site.
- 4.6. There will be fencing and hedge planting to the boundaries and gated entrance at the northern end of the access road towards the exit/entrance on to James Road.
- 4.7. A pedestrian crossing already exists across James Road linking the allotments and, ultimately, the proposed cemetery with the village to the west.



Proposed Site layout

- 4.8. The proposal accords with Local Plan Policy 2 in that it represents sustainable development on the fringe of the village and is commensurate in scale and layout to the needs of the community.

Scale

- 4.9. The amenity building will be single-storey measuring 8.1m long, 5.2m wide, 2.6m to the eaves and 4.5m to the ridge. The building has double doors in the middle of each long elevation and will contain basic welfare facilities for those attending burials. The two double doors will be fitted with security shutters and CCTV.

Landscaping

- 4.10. There is no landscaping at the site and so, in order to meet the statutory requirements of Biodiversity Net Gain, landscaping is proposed to enable the required 10% net gain to be reached.
- 4.11. The Ecological Appraisal and Biodiversity Net Gain Statement provided to support the application by ESL Ecology and dated November 2024 provides a post-intervention development scenario based upon a site plan (1144-8_SK_SP01) available at the time of the report's production.

It was calculated that this would deliver 2.53 Biodiversity Units (BU) for habitat and 1.51 BU for hedgerows which would result in 10.00% and 163.19% net gain respectively.

- 4.12. Following design development, the Post development site plan as illustrated by Drawing No. 1144-9_FP_SP02 has been updated and, specifically, the location of area habitat and linear hedgerow provision has been amended to reflect the client's requirements. The amount and extent of area habitat creation and associated BU values, however, remain the same as included in the BNG assessment. With regard to linear habitat, hedgerow provision has been increased and the current post development site plan now provides linear BU in excess of that stated in the Ecological Appraisal and Biodiversity Net Gain Statement and above the 163.19% net gain previously referred to.
- 4.13. The site is not visible from James Road due to the proximity of the woodland to the west, but there will be limited and fleeting views from those using the A16 to the east. The proposed landscaping at the eastern end of the site will ensure that, in time, the development will assimilate into the rural landscape.
- 4.14. The proposal accords with Local Plan Policy 2 (1) and Paragraph 7a of the Town and Country Planning Act.

Appearance

- 4.15. The amenity building has a deliberately functional appearance being a simple rectangle with pitched roof over and will have a similar appearance to the building which serves the allotments to the north.
- 4.16. The building will be constructed in red brick with a red or grey tile covering, however, the exact materials have yet to be chosen. There will be little or no impact arising from the siting or design of the building, the size of which is commensurate with the needs of those visiting the cemetery. The proposed building is, therefore, compliant with Local Plan Policy 2 (6).
- 4.17. Cemeteries by their very nature have limited visual impact and the opportunity, therefore, exists to introduce some planting within the site to increase biodiversity. Burial plots will be orientated in a north-east - south-west direction, which is the accepted convention. Although the appearance of the site will change from agricultural land to that of a

more manicured landscape, this impact is acceptable in that the majority of the site will be laid to grass with the addition of native planting.

- 4.18. The proposed car park and drive will be finished in gravel or similar providing a permeable surface which will dispense with the requirement for a surface water drainage system.
- 4.19. The proposal accords with Local Plan Policy 3 in terms of the impact on the character of the area.

Access

- 4.20. It is proposed to construct a new short access into the cemetery car park off the existing track that serves the allotments. When the allotments and cemetery are closed to vehicular traffic, five new parking spaces between the James Road junction and the gates will allow pedestrian access to the cemetery. This arrangement will provide for safe vehicular access to and from the application site. There is also an existing pedestrian crossing at the James Road junction which will enable pedestrian access from the village to the site.
- 4.21. Having regard to the location of the site in relation to the centre of the village, visitors to the site will have the option of arriving on foot.

5. CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1. The existing cemetery in the village has limited capacity and, with the village having experienced a significant increase in housebuilding, there is the need for a new cemetery to cater for the future needs of the community.
- 5.2. The site is immediately adjacent to the built-up settlement of Crowland and is easily accessible on foot.
- 5.3. The application is consistent with the Development Plan and complies with the guidance set out in the National Planning Policy Framework which promotes sustainable development.

A design consultancy specialising in
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