



# HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

Peel Street, Houghton Regis, Bedfordshire, LU5 5EY

Town Mayor: **Councillor Y Farrell**  
Town Clerk: **Clare Evans**

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9<sup>th</sup> August 2022

**To: Members of the New Cemetery Sub-Committee**

**Cllrs: J Carroll, Y Farrell, M Kennedy, R Morgan, A Slough, S Thorne**

**(Copies to other Councillors for information)**

## Notice of Meeting

You are hereby summoned to a Special Meeting of the **New Cemetery Sub-Committee** to be held at the Council Offices, Peel Street on **Monday 15<sup>th</sup> August 2022** at **6.00pm** at the Council Offices, Peel Street, Houghton Regis.

Members of the public who wish to attend the meeting may do so in person or remotely through the meeting link below.

To attend remotely through Teams please follow this link: [MEETING LINK](#)

Please follow this [guidance if attending the meeting remotely LINK](#)

**Clare Evans**  
**Town Clerk**

***THIS MEETING MAY BE  
RECORDED<sup>1</sup>***

## AGENDA

### 1. APOLOGIES & SUBSTITUTIONS

### 2. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

In accordance with approved Standing Orders 1(e)-1(l) Members of the public may make representations, ask questions and give evidence at a meeting which they are entitled to attend in respect of the business on the agenda.

The total period of time designated for public participation at a meeting shall not exceed 15 minutes and an individual member of the public shall not speak for more

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<sup>1</sup> *Phones and other equipment may be used to film, audio record, tweet or blog from this meeting by an individual Council member or a member of the public. No part of the meeting room is exempt from public filming unless the meeting resolves to go into exempt session.*

*The use of images or recordings arising from this is not under the Council's control.*

than 3 minutes unless directed by the chairman of the meeting.

### **3. SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS**

Under the Localism Act 2011 (sections 26-37 and Schedule 4) and in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, Members are required to declare any interests which are not currently entered in the member's register of interests or if he/she has not notified the Monitoring Officer of any such interest.

Members are invited to submit any requests for Dispensations for consideration.

### **4. MINUTES**

Pages 4 - 6

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> July 2022.

**Recommendation: To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> July 2022.**

### **5. MOTION FOR CONSIDERATION**

*Page 7-18*

In accordance with approved Standing Orders the following motion has been submitted. A report is attached giving consideration to this motion.

*"From Cllr T McMahon, Cllr P Burgess, Cllr Jimmy Carroll, Cllr A Slough, Cllr Chris Slough, Cllr C Copleston.*

*We the above councillors seek the reversal of the Resolution made on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> July 2022 at 6pm by the New Cemetery Sub Committee.*

*The Resolution being;*

- 1. To recognise the significant works that are required to enable Grendall Lane to be brought into use as a cemetery and to determine at this time, these works are financially inhibitive for the Council and such further into this sit cease.*
- 2. To notify Central Bedfordshire Council as land owner of this position.*
- 3. To continue to search for alternative sites and present any options to CDS for a preliminary assessment to enable initial consideration by the Council.*

*This removal request is made by invoking Houghton Regis Town Councils standing order 15, 15(a) and 15 (b) that is:*

*15. Previous Resolutions.*

- 15 (a). A resolution shall not be reversed within six months except by a special motion which requires written notice by at least 6 councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 11, or by a motion*

*moved in pursuance of the recommendation of a committee or a sub-committee.*

- 15 (b). *When a motion moved pursuant to standing order 15 (a) has been disposed of, no similar motion may be moved within a further six months.*

*Also, by using standing order 11.*

- 11(a). *A motion shall relate to the responsibilities of the meeting for which it is tabled, and in any event shall relate to the performance of the Councils statutory functions, powers and obligations or an issue which specifically affect the councils area or its residents.*

*Therefore, we move the following Special Motion to be placed on the Agenda of an extraordinary meeting of the New Cemetery Sub Committee.*

*Motion*

*To continue to pursue the possible cemetery provision at Grendall Lane Houghton Regis.*

*To work with CDS and the Environment Agency, to continue with CDS investigation of the site and investigation to the T3 level of the site.*

*To allow CDS to investigate possible cemetery designs for the site.”*

Members are advised that Mr Darryl Kelly, CDS, will be attending the meeting to respond to any queries.

**Recommendation: To consider the Motion as proposed.**

**0-0**

**Houghton Regis Town Council**  
**New Cemetery Sub-Committee**  
**Minutes of the meeting held on**  
**18<sup>th</sup> July 2022 at 6.00pm**

Present: Cllrs: S Thorne Chairman  
J Carroll  
Y Farrell  
D Jones Substitute  
A Slough

Officers: Clare Evans Town Clerk  
Louise Senior Head of Democratic Services

Apologies: Cllrs: M Kennedy  
R Morgan

Also present: Cllrs: S Goodchild  
T McMahan

**NC141 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

Members were invited to elect a Chairman for the New Cemetery Sub-Committee for 2022/23.

Nomination: S Thorne Nominated by: J Carroll  
Seconded by: D Jones

No other nominations were received. On being put to the vote, Councillor Thorne was duly appointed as Chair of the New Cemetery Sub-Committee for the municipal year 2022 - 2023.

**NC142 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN**

Members were invited to elect a Vice-Chairman for the New Cemetery Sub-Committee for 2022/23.

Nomination: J Carroll Nominated by: S Thorne  
Seconded by: D Jones

No other nominations were received. On being put to the vote, Councillor Carroll was duly appointed as Vice-Chair of the New Cemetery Sub-Committee for the municipal year 2022 - 2023.

**NC143 APOLOGIES & SUBSTITUTIONS**

Apologies were received from Cllr Kennedy and Cllr Morgan (Cllr Jones substituted for Cllr Morgan).

**NC144 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS**

None.

#### **NC145 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

None.

#### **NC146 MINUTES**

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> July 2021.

**Resolved: To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> July 2021.**

#### **NC147 COMMITTEE FUNCTIONS & TERMS OF REFERENCE**

Members received the Terms of Reference which related to this committee.

*Members received this report for information.*

#### **NC148 GRENDALL LANE - UPDATE**

Mr Darryl Kelly, CDS, was in attendance at the meeting to present his findings to members and to respond to any queries made.

Members received data evidencing the interim results of the 12-month groundwater monitoring and a report from CDS explaining the data and its implications.

Members were advised of different options available to enable the land to be used as a cemetery in response to the results of the groundwater monitoring:

- De-watering
- Land raising
- Retaining walls over the site
- Alternative land

Members were advised de-watering, the artificial lowering of the water table, could prove costly and would remain subject to planning approval, without any guarantee of permission being granted. Consent would be needed to discharge the water away from the site, several levels of water treatments would be necessary to remove the water from the site due to the water being deemed as contaminated. A Permit would be required for each of the water treatments. The potential cost of this process could be £1 – 1.5m.

Members were advised that land raising would need to use soil that was guaranteed to be clean and contamination free in line with CL:AIRE protocols. Members were advised that soil could be obtained via several avenues, the most cost effective of which would be from developers needing to remove soil from their construction site. It was also suggested that the CL:AIRE website had donor sites which offered soil, otherwise clean soil would need to be bought in. Members were advised CL:AIRE clean soil could be moved without a permit. It was suggested that this option would also cost around £1m to deliver and may be less favourable in planning terms.

Members were advised that using retaining walls would limit the use of parts of the land as the site could not be used in its entirety. The land would be cut in and benched forming burial space, this would need further topographical assessment and structural design at a cost of around £4,225 in addition to Environmental Agency fees.

Members were advised that archives could be searched for parcels of land which could be acquired, however, the cost of purchasing such land could prove cost prohibitive as development in the area was extensive, thus, the value expectation of the landowner would be at a premium, in line with developers affordability.

An alternative motion was proposed by: Cllr Slough seconded by: Cllr Carroll to read:

*In the absence of alternative land availability, progress with the topographical survey and structural design work. Once completed, present the findings to Central Bedfordshire Council and the Environmental agency for their feedback.*

Members in favour: 2

Members against: 2

Abstentions: 1

The casting vote was against the motion, accordingly the motion was not carried.

The officer recommendation was proposed by: Cllr Carroll seconded by: Cllr Jones

A recorded vote was requested:

Members in favour: Cllrs: J Carroll, D Jones, Y Farrell, S Thorne.

Members against: Cllrs: A Slough

Accordingly, the officer recommendations were carried.

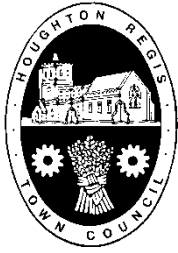
- Resolved:**
- 1. To recognise the significant works that are likely to be required to enable Grendall Lane to be brought into use as a cemetery and to determine at this time that these works are financially inhibitive for the Council and as such further investigations into this site will cease;**
  - 2. To notify Central Bedfordshire Council, as landowner, of this position;**
  - 3. To continue to search for alternative sites and to present any options to CDS for a preliminary assessment to enable initial consideration by the council.**

Cllr Carroll informed members of the New Cemetery Sub-Committee that he resigned from this sub-committee with immediate effect.

**The Chairman closed the meeting at 7.03pm**

**Dated this                      day of**

**Chairman**



## NEW CEMETERY SUB-COMMITTEE

## Agenda Item 5

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**Date:** 15<sup>th</sup> August 2022

**Title:** MOTION FOR CONSIDERATION

**Purpose of the Report:** To enable members to consider the Motion submitted.

**Contact Officer:** Clare Evans, Town Clerk

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### 1. RECOMMENDATION

**To consider the Motion as proposed.**

### 2. BACKGROUND

On 19<sup>th</sup> July 2021 this Sub Committee agreed the following:

*To proceed with the T3 investigation into the land at Grendall Lane and to fund this from EMR 348, Cemetery.*

This work has been partially completed. However, CDS have been in contact with some preliminary thoughts and concerns. A meeting was held on 18<sup>th</sup> July 2022 to enable members to consider the interim advice provided by CDS. The following Resolution was passed:

- 1. To recognise the significant works that are required to enable Grendall Lane to be brought into use as a cemetery and to determine at this time, these works are financially inhibitive for the Council and such further into this sit cease.*
- 2. To notify Central Bedfordshire Council as land owner of this position.*
- 3. To continue to search for alternative sites and present any options to CDS for a preliminary assessment to enable initial consideration by the Council.*

Subsequent to this, a Motion was submitted in accordance with Standing Orders which is provided in full on the agenda cover page.

For information the agenda report and attachments from the July meeting are attached to this report.

### 3. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

Effectively the Motion submitted looks to replace the resolution of 18<sup>th</sup> July with the following:

*To continue to pursue the possible cemetery provision at Grendall Lane Houghton Regis.*

*To work with CDS and the Environment Agency, to continue with CDS investigation of the site and investigation to the T3 level of the site.*

*To allow CDS to investigate possible cemetery designs for the site.*

The following points are made:

- Since the July meeting comments have been received which suggest that the issue would have benefited from more time being available to consider and debate all the options.
- Members will recall that the meeting in July debated for some time the different options and ultimately it was a finely balanced decision that was made.
- It has been suggested that given the scale of this decision it might be more suitable for the New Cemetery Sub Committee to refer the matter to Town Council for consideration. Although it is within the Committee Functions of the New Cemetery Sub Committee to consider and determine all matters relating to the establishment of a new cemetery, it is also in accordance with Standing Orders that the Sub Committee can refer any matter it sees fit up to a higher decision making level. In this instance this would be to Town Council.
- It is recognised that this meeting is being held during the summer holiday period, as such members of the public may not be able to attend who may have wished to do so. However members requested that the meeting be held sooner rather than later.
- Officer advice has not changed from the advice given at the July meeting.

#### **4. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION**

As previously advised, members can see significant concerns have been expressed by CDS and the long term solutions identified not only appear costly but also do not deliver a perfect solution.

Members were previously requested to consider the long term suggested solutions and to decide if there was an appetite to undertake such a high cost project. Should members feel that the long term project was affordable and right for the community it was suggested that the suggestion from CDS to undertake additional works, including a topographic survey and some remedial measure design work should be supported.

However, should members feel that the long term project was unaffordable and not right for the community, members were requested to consider the suggestion from CDS of undertaking a detailed land search at a cost of £6,000 - £10,000. Members however may feel that the council (with support from CDS) has already explored possible sites within the parish and that this was an expense which was unlikely to identify any other possible sites.

Options include:

1. To support the Motion as submitted



2. To refer the matter to Town Council for consideration
3. To follow advice of CDS to:
  - complete the update on the T3 assessment report, with the benefit of undertaking additional works, listed below, to provide a more meaningful assessment and remedial recommendations
    - Topographic survey of the site to provide detailed burial zonal plans and remedial measure assessment - £825.00
    - Remedial measure design work – concept designs to provide the EA with a greater understanding of the concept proposals - £2250.00
  - provide a summary report of the works to date and provide greater detail of the proposed concept remedial solutions in a report to the EA for pre-app advice to gauge the EA’s position and preference with regards to this site.

Should members be minded to continue with investigations into Grendall Lane the following draft resolution is suggested:

*To follow advice of CDS to:*

- *complete the update on the T3 assessment report, with the benefit of undertaking additional works, listed below, to provide a more meaningful assessment and remedial recommendations*
  - *Topographic survey of the site to provide detailed burial zonal plans and remedial measure assessment - £825.00*
  - *Remedial measure design work – concept designs to provide the EA with a greater understanding of the concept proposals - £2250.00*
- *provide a summary report of the works to date and provide greater detail of the proposed concept remedial solutions in a report to the EA for pre-app advice to gauge the EA’s position and preference with regards to this site.*

#### Interment statistics

It was also requested that this report provide detail on recent interment statistics. The figures below under the column headed 2019 are based on a 3 year average. More recent figures have not been used as the council concluded its ability of offer new body internments in 2020.

	2019	2035	2069
Population	18700 <sup>1</sup>	<i>Projected</i> 40,000 <sup>2</sup>	<i>Projected</i> 43,000 <sup>3</sup>
Mortality rate	1%	1%	1%
Predicted number of deaths	187	400	430
Interments / year in HR	50 <sup>4</sup>	100	105
New burials in HR	15	30	31

<sup>1</sup> Based on Local Insight Profile for Houghton Regis Parish June 2018

<sup>2</sup> Based on occupancy of strategic development sites and general population increases

<sup>3</sup> Based on a predicted national increase in population of approx. 6%

<sup>4</sup> Average interments taken from 2017-2019

Re-opener burials in HR	15	30	31
New ashes in HR	10	20	21
Re-opener ashes in HR	10	20	21

## 5. COUNCIL VISION

### Aspirations

- A2 To effectively and proactively **represent** our community
- A4 To develop a new **cemetery**
- A5 To ensure the **council** is fit for purpose and efficient in its delivery of services

## 6. IMPLICATIONS

### Corporate Implications

- There are no corporate implications arising from the recommendations

### Legal Implications

- There are no legal implications arising from the recommendations

### Financial Implications

- There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations

### Risk Implications

- Service delivery – the council will continue to be unable to offer new body burials within the parish
- Reputation – see Press Contact

### Equalities Implications

Houghton Regis Town Council has a duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and foster good relations in respect of nine protected characteristics; age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

This project / issue does not discriminate.

### Climate Change Implications

- There are no climate change implications arising from the recommendations

### Press Contact

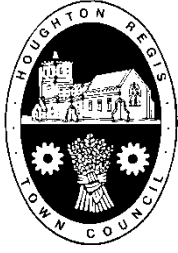
The decision relating to this agenda item should be communicated to the press, via the website and social media.

## 7. CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

The Council has recognised the importance of being able to offer residents a body burial facility and has committed considerable time and expense to investigating options and opportunities. The more detailed investigation works authorised to be carried out on Grendall Lane appeared to be the last opportunity to create a new burial site. However, the nature of the area would require such significant works to make this facility feasible that the cost significantly outweighs the benefit. This decision was made at the New Cemetery Sub Committee on 18<sup>th</sup> July 2022. It was a difficult decision to reach. As a result this motion has been submitted for consideration. There is no additional information or evidence to submit the members. The decision remains a difficult one.

## **8. APPENDICES**

**Appendix A:** 18<sup>th</sup> July Agenda report with attachments



## **NEW CEMETERY SUB-COMMITTEE**

## **Agenda Item 8**

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<b>Date:</b>	<b>18<sup>th</sup> July 2022</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>GRENDALL LANE - UPDATE</b>
<b>Purpose of the Report:</b>	<b>To provide an update to members on the ground water monitoring progress made to date.</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Clare Evans, Town Clerk</b>

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### **1. RECOMMENDATION**

- 1. To recognise the significant works that are likely to be required to enable Grendall Lane to be brought into use as a cemetery and to determine at this time that these works are financially inhibitive for the Council and as such further investigations into this site will cease;**
- 2. To notify Central Bedfordshire Council, as landowner, of this position;**
- 3. To continue to search for alternative sites and to present any options to CDS for a preliminary assessment to enable initial consideration by the council.**

### **2. BACKGROUND**

On 19<sup>th</sup> July 2021 this Sub Committee agreed the following:

*To proceed with the T3 investigation into the land at Grendall Lane and to fund this from EMR 348, Cemetery.*

This work has been partially completed. However, CDS have been in contact with some preliminary thoughts and concerns.

The advice in Sections 3 and 4 has been provided by CDS.

### **3. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION**

Following the results of the groundwater monitoring (Appendix A) undertaken to date, the shallower water table in the northern half of the site would preclude the site from being developed into a cemetery in its current form as the site would breach the statutory guidelines for cemeteries.

This would only leave the steeper southern sector of the site, which in our view, would, in its current form, be too steep for burials to take place. Therefore, without significant remedial works the site in its current form is not considered to be suitable to be developed into a cemetery.

Moving forward, there are options which can be further considered which could potentially overcome the issues identified:

1. Dewatering

- a. A series of deep land drains, pumping chambers and treatment plants could be installed on site to manage and lower the water table.
- b. This would require an environmental permit from the EA and permission to discharge treated water from the LLFA/drainage board into the adjacent ditch.
- c. Long term, there would be requirement for ongoing maintenance of the pumping chamber and treatment works.
- d. The cost of such work is likely to be significant, potentially in the region of £500k to £1million for the drainage works alone.
- e. We would consider the likelihood of getting approval for such a scheme to be low.

2. Land Raising

- a. Due to the shallow nature of the groundwater identified in the northern part of the site, consideration could be given to land raising to provide the required unsaturated zone thickness.
- b. Soils could be imported onto the site under the CL:aire protocol, and given the numerous developments taking place in the area could be economical to source.
- c. The volume and height of the land raise would need to be assessed in greater detail to understand its impact.
- d. Land drains running beneath the site would still need to be removed.
- e. The EA are unlikely to object to such a proposal, however planning would be more difficult to obtain and would be the key issue.

Alternatively, if the scale and associated risk of the works identified above are considered to be too great, CDS could assist in undertaking a detailed land search within the confines of Houghton Regis parish to assess whether there are any parcels of land elsewhere which would be more suitable. A budget figure of between £6000 - £10000 is recommended depending on the scale and extent of the assessment.

Moving forward, our recommendation would be to undertake a summary report of the works to date and provide greater detail of the proposed concept remedial solutions in a report to the EA. This can then be submitted for pre-app advice to gauge the EA positions and preference with regards to this site.

To date we have an agreed sum of money of £1200 to provide an updated T3 assessment report, this can be completed but would benefit from undertaking the additional works listed below to provide a more meaningful assessment and remedial recommendations

- Topographic survey of the site to provide detailed burial zonal plans and remedial measure assessment - £825.00 exc VAT.
- Remedial measure design work – concept designs to provide the EA with a greater understanding of the concept proposals - £2250.00 exc VAT.

#### 4. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

It is opportune for CDS to contact the council to report on interim findings. As members can see significant concerns have been expressed and the long solutions identified not only appear costly but also do not deliver a perfect solution.

Members are requested to consider the long term suggested solutions and to decide if there is an appetite to undertake such a high cost project. Should members feel that the long term project is affordable and right for the community it is suggested that the suggestion from CDS to undertake additional works, including a topographic survey and some remedial measure design work should be supported.

However, should members feel that the long term project is unaffordable and not right for the community, members are requested to consider the suggestion from CDS of undertaking a detailed land search at a cost of £6,000 - £10,000. Members however may feel that the council (with support from CDS) has already explored possible sites within the parish and that this is an expense which is unlikely to identify any other possible sites.

#### 5. COUNCIL VISION

##### **Aspirations**

- A2 To effectively and proactively **represent** our community
- A4 To develop a new **cemetery**
- A5 To ensure the **council** is fit for purpose and efficient in its delivery of services

#### 6. IMPLICATIONS

##### **Corporate Implications**

- Implications for other committees – to notify E&L Committee

##### **Legal Implications**

- There are no legal implications arising from the recommendations

##### **Financial Implications**

- There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations

##### **Risk Implications**

- Service delivery – the council will continue to be unable to offer new body burials within the parish
- Reputation – see Press Contact

##### **Equalities Implications**

Houghton Regis Town Council has a duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and foster good relations in respect of nine protected characteristics; age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

This project / issue does not discriminate.

#### **Climate Change Implications**

- There are no climate change implications arising from the recommendations

#### **Press Contact**

The decision relating to this agenda item should be communicated to the press, via the website and social media.

### **7. CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS**

This was a difficult recommendation to reach. The Council has recognised the importance of being able to offer residents a body burial facility and has committed considerable time and expense to investigating options and opportunities. The more detailed investigation works authorised to be carried out on Grendall Lane appeared to be the last opportunity to create a new burial site. However, the nature of the area would require such significant works to make this facility feasible that the cost significantly outweighs the benefit. It is with much regret and sadness that this recommendation was reached.

### **8. APPENDICES**

**Appendix A:** Results of Grendall Lane groundwater monitoring to date

Grendall Lane - Groundwater Monitoring Results

Where water levels are above ground enter as a positive number, where they are below ground enter as a negative value.

Add data and results along these rows, graph will update

	Date	03/08/2021	08/10/2021	29/11/2021	21/12/2021	14/01/2022	07/02/2022	04/03/2022	29/03/2022	13/04/2022	09/05/2022
115	<b>BH1</b>	-13.66	-13.91	-12.31	-12.315	-10.68	-11.63	-10.42	-10.33	-11.98	-12.88
106	<b>BH2</b>	-3.95	-4.26	-3.04	-3.05	-2.41	-2.77	-2.31	-2.26	-3.05	-3.28
100	<b>BH3</b>	-1.01	-1.13	-0.73	-0.72	-0.56	-0.65	-0.46	-0.53	-0.9	-0.86

	Date	03/08/2021	08/10/2021	29/11/2021	21/12/2021	14/01/2022	07/02/2022	04/03/2022	29/03/2022	13/04/2022	09/05/2022
	<b>BH1</b>	101.34	101.09	102.69	102.685	104.32	103.37	104.58	104.67	103.02	102.12
	<b>BH2</b>	102.05	101.74	102.96	102.95	103.59	103.23	103.69	103.74	102.95	102.72
	<b>BH3</b>	98.99	98.87	99.27	99.28	99.44	99.35	99.54	99.47	99.1	99.14



### Groundwater Monitoring

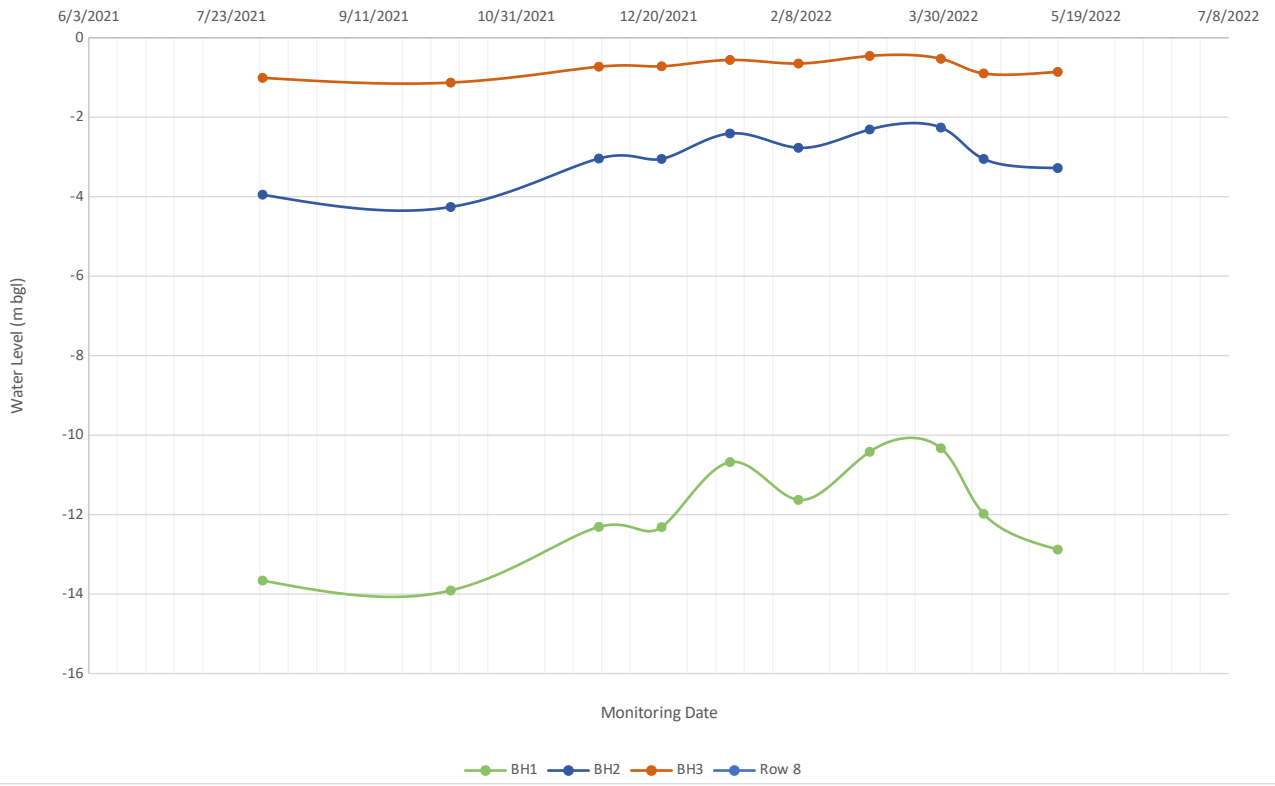


Chart Title

