



HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

Peel Street, Houghton Regis, Bedfordshire, LU5 5EY

Town Mayor: **Councillor J W Carroll**

Tel: 01582 708540

Town Clerk: **Clare Evans**

e-mail: info@houghtonregis.org.uk

2nd June 2023

To: Members of the Proposed New Cemetery Sub-Committee

Cllrs: J Carroll, Y Farrell, T McMahon, C Rollins, A Slough

(Copies to other Councillors for information)

Notice of Meeting

You are hereby summoned to a Meeting of the **New Cemetery Sub-Committee** to be held at the Council Offices, Peel Street on **12th June 2023** at **5.30pm**.

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
RECORDED¹**

AGENDA

1. ELECTION OF CHAIR

Members are invited to elect a Chair for New Cemetery Sub-Committee for 2023/24.

2. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR

Members are invited to elect a Vice Chair for New Cemetery Sub-Committee for 2023/24.

¹ *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.

3. APOLOGIES & SUBSTITUTIONS

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

5. 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.

6. MINUTES

Pages 5 - 9

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 15th August 2022.

Recommendation: To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 15th August 2022.

7. COMMITTEE FUNCTIONS & TERMS OF REFERENCE

Page 10

In accordance with Standing Order 4.j.iv. Council is required to review its delegation arrangements to committees and sub committees.

These arrangements are set out in the Committee Functions & Terms of Reference. This document sets out the system of delegation to the Committees, Sub Committees and Working Groups of the Council.

Members will find attached the extract from the approved Committee Functions & Terms of Reference which relates to this committee.

This report is provided for information.

8. PROPOSED NEW CEMETERY SUB COMMITTEE FINANCIAL REPORT 2023/24

Members are advised that this Sub Committee has no direct revenue budget available to utilise. Any agreed spend is drawn from Ear Marked Reserve 348, Cemetery (EMR 348).

As of 1st April 2023 this EMR had a balance of £77,491. This EMR is also used to fund the purchase of new ashes vaults in the Garden of Remembrance at the existing Houghton Regis Cemetery.

This report is provided for information purposes.

9. MOTION FOR CONSIDERATION

Page 11 - 30

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

From Cllrs; Jimmy Carroll proposer of the motion and Tracey McMahon seconder of the motion.

Motion.

To instruct the Clerk and Chair of the Proposed New Cemetery Sub Committee of Houghton Regis Town Council to:

- 1. To open negotiations with Central Bedfordshire Council regarding land owned by Central Bedfordshire Council at Grendall Lane Houghton Regis for its suitability as a future Cemetery for the town of Houghton Regis.*
- 2. To proceed and complete the T3 investigations at the Grendall Lane site subject to Central Bedfordshire Council as land owner. To fund the investigations of the Grendall Lane from EMR 348 and general reserves up to £20,000.*
- 3. To contact CDS cemetery consultants to inform them of the change of motion by the Proposed New Cemetery Sub Committee as to Grendall Lane and to continue with the investigations into the Grendall Lane possible cemetery site.*

Recommendation: To consider the Motion as proposed.

10. PREVIOUS SITE OPTIONS

Pages 31 - 39

Depending on the outcome of the debate under Agenda Item 9, members are invited to consider previous options including:

- Windsor Drive
- Land off Woodside Link / Frogmore Road

Members will find attached the previously prepared Agenda report (meeting date 16th November 2020) plus the CDS Summary of Key Issues.

Both these sites are within the ownership of CBC. It is not known at present whether they are still available for consideration.

Houghton Regis Town Council
New Cemetery Sub-Committee
Minutes of the meeting held on
15th August 2022 at 6.00pm

Present:	Cllrs:	S Thorne J Carroll Y Farrell M Kennedy D Jones A Slough	Chairman Substitute
	Officers:	Clare Evans Louise Senior	Town Clerk Head of Democratic Services
Apologies:	Cllr:	R Morgan	
Members of the Public:		2	
Also present:		P Burgess T McMahon C Slough S Goodchild	

NC149 APOLOGIES & SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were received from Cllr Morgan (Cllr Jones substituted).

Clarification was sought by the members of the sub-committee as what members were sat on the sub-committee as there had been a resignation at the last meeting. Members were advised that the resignation had been withdrawn shortly after the last meeting.

NC150 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

None.

NC151 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

A member of the public requested clarification to the commitment of the Town Council to keeping the cemetery in Houghton Regis as many of the other valued services in Houghton Regis had been withdrawn.

It was advised that a commitment of the stance of the council could not be confirmed.

Concerns were raised that different religious beliefs called for different processes upon death, the provision of burial plots would encourage inclusiveness for all.

NC152 MINUTES

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 18th July 2022.

Resolved: To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 18th July 2022.

NC153 MOTION FOR CONSIDERATION

In accordance with approved Standing Orders the following motion had been submitted. Members received a report 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 18th 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.”*

Mr Darryl Kelly, CDS, was in attendance at the meeting to respond to queries.

Clarification was sought as to whether there was a statutory obligation to provide cemetery sites. It was confirmed that there were no statutory obligations to provide such sites.

It was highlighted that some religions had their own burial sites dedicated to their religious beliefs to enable their customs and traditions to be fully met.

Members were advised that an average 80% of the population choose cremation over burials, albeit with regional differences.

Mr Kelly clarified the available options:

Altering the depth of the water table, which was sitting at 0.5m below ground level at the lowest point. For single depth burial the water table requirements would need to be 1.4m and for a double burial the requirement was 3m or lower, there were also Environmental Agency requirements, with stringent constraints, particularly on 'high risk' sites. Mr Kelly advised that with the prediction of 30 burials per annum due to the growing town, this would push Houghton Regis into the high-risk category.

Cllr Farrell arrived at 6.25pm

De-watering; this would require trenches to be dug to lower the water table to a lower depth, this would generally be accepted to the Environmental Agency however, this would involve 3m trenches located fairly close together, the trenches would need to have the water pumped away by an active pumping system on the site, much like a sewage water treatment plant, as the water would need to be treated as contaminated. This option would entail significant engineering with associated costs.

Land raising; using vertical retaining walls, the site would need to be raised by 1.5 – 2m depending on whether the site would hold single or double burials, which would equate to a significant land raise. The existing land drains on the site would require decommissioning and re-routing around the burial area. This option would have some complex design implications, if the land had been significantly raised by 2m at the lowest point, this could prove vehicular access difficult to engineer from Grendall Lane as this would create a steep incline accessing the site. Cost versus engineering benefits for the construction of the slope would need to be considered.

A further option was to consider the lower sections of the site to be used for car parking, road access and focussed on remembrance, memorial garden and ash interments with the higher parts of the site to be tiered for use as burials sites.

Mr Kelly acknowledged that other towns elsewhere in the country had extremely steep cemeteries, however modern-day Health & Safety regulations would prevent the same means of construction and maintenance, thus proving impossible to replicate.

Members enquired whether some rough designs could be presented with a guide to costings, as

the development of the site maybe considered cost prohibitive, Members were advised that usually the Environmental Agency would give approval before such design work would be undertaken.

DRAFT

It was suggested that the topographical survey be carried out to provide an accurate overview of the site, which would enable a concept design of the site to be presented to the Environmental Agency.

Members were advised that to produce the evidence needed to present to the Environmental Agency would cost around £10,000. Members were advised that construction costs had risen significantly over the last few years, with the possibility of further increases.

Members discussed the recommendations as listed in detail, it was suggested that the sub-committee reconsider the alternative sites Central Bedfordshire Council had originally offered.

The motion of:

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.*

Proposed by: Cllr Kennedy, seconded by: Cllr Carroll

A recorded vote was requested:

Members in favour: A Slough, J Carroll, M Kennedy.

Members against: D Jones, S Thorne, Y Farrell.

The Chair of the sub-committee used her casting vote against the motion.

The Chair requested that further consideration be given to the number of councillors who were sat on this sub-committee.

Members clarified that with the motion not carried, the resolution of the previous meeting remained as standing.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 7.12pm

Dated this day of

Chairman

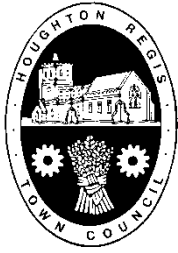
Proposed New Cemetery Sub Committee (reporting to Town Council)

Functions

1. To consider any matters referred to it by the Town Council or any other Committee
2. To consider and determine matters surrounding the development of a new cemetery for Houghton Regis, including but not restricted to:
 - Environmental matters
 - Policy matters
 - Visual impact matters
 - Design matters
 - Public consultation matters
 - Future operation and management of the cemetery
3. To commission specialist services such as may be deemed appropriate in progressing options for future cemetery provision.
4. To report and to make such recommendations to Town Council as appropriate.

Terms of Reference

- The Proposed New Cemetery Sub Committee shall function and operate in accordance with the Council's approved Standing Orders.
- The Proposed New Cemetery Sub Committee shall consist of 5 members. The quorum shall be half of its members (three).



NEW CEMETERY SUB-COMMITTEE

Agenda Item 9

Date: 12th June 2023

Title: MOTION FOR CONSIDERATION

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

Contact Officer: Clare Evans, Town Clerk

1. RECOMMENDATION

To consider the Motion as proposed.

2. BACKGROUND

On 19th 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 investigation was due to take place over a 12 month period. Part way through this period the councils cemetery consultants (Cemetery Development Services, CDS) got in contact and outlined some preliminary thoughts and concerns over the development potential of this site as a cemetery. A meeting was held on 18th 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.*

After this meeting, a Motion was submitted in accordance with Standing Orders, as follows:

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.*

This was duly considered on 15th August 2022. The Motion was debated at length but was not carried.

For information the agenda report (with attachments) and Minutes from 18th July (Appendix A) and 15th August (Appendix B) meetings are attached to this report. Members are encouraged to read these attachments to appreciate the background and consideration given to the Grendall Lane site.

3. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

On 30th May, the following Motion was submitted:

From Cllrs; Jimmy Carroll proposer of the motion and Tracey McMahon seconder of the motion.

Motion.

To Instruct the Clerk and Chair of the Proposed New Cemetery Sub Committee of Houghton Regis Town Council to:

- 1. To open negotiations with Central Bedfordshire Council regarding land owned by Central Bedfordshire Council at Grendall Lane Houghton Regis for its suitability as a future Cemetery for the Town of Houghton Regis.*
- 2. To proceed and complete the T3 investigations at the Grendall Lane site subject to Central Bedfordshire Council as land owner. To fund the investigations of the Grendall Lane from EMR 348 and general reserves up to £20,000.*
- 3. To contact CDS cemetery consultants to inform them of the change of motion by the Proposed New Cemetery Sub Committee as to Grendall Lane and to continue with the investigations into the Grendall Lane possible cemetery site.*

The following points are made:

- The effect of the motion submitted effectively re-starts the investigation into the suitability of Grendall Lane as a new cemetery site

- In accordance with the previous resolution the monitoring equipment has been removed from the site and CBC have been informed that the town council no longer wish to pursue this site as a cemetery
- An approach has been made to CBC to see if the land is still available for this use. A response is awaited.
- Advice would need to be sought from CDS as to whether the 12 month investigation period would need to commence again in full or in part as a continuation from the previous monitoring period.
- It is not known if the limit of £20,000 would be suitable to cover the work identified. A quote would need to be sought.
- Officer advice has not changed from the advice given at the July 2022 meeting.
- Members are encouraged to contact the Town Clerk if they would like further information on this matter.

4. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

As previously advised, members can see significant concerns have been expressed by CDS and the long term solutions identified appear costly and would only deliver a less than 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. This second element of the work would provide an improved indication of possible development costs.

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 (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.)
3. To follow the advice of CDS to:
 - Restart or resume (as necessary) the T3 assessment, 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 – estimated £1,000

- Remedial measure design work – concept designs to provide the EA with a greater understanding of the concept proposals – estimated £3,500
- 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 resume with investigations into Grendall Lane the following draft resolution is suggested:

1. *To contact Central Bedfordshire Council to explore the possibility of the town council pursuing the Grendall Lane site as a cemetery;*
2. *With the support of CBC, to instruct CDS to:*
 - *Restart or resume (as necessary) the T3 assessment, 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 – estimated £1,000*
 - *Remedial measure design work – concept designs to provide the EA with a greater understanding of the concept proposals – estimated £3,500*
 - *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.*

It is also highlighted to Members that the Council was presented with a petition from local residents. The wording of the petition is as follows:

Petition for the town meeting Monday 15th May 7pm St Thomas’

We, the undersigned note that, following the elections, there has been a change at Houghton Regis Town Council.

We ask our councillors to act on the following:-

Insist Grendall Lane is brought back to the full town council for further discussion.

It is signed by some 175 residents, although not cross checked with the electoral role, it is taken that the signatories are residents of Houghton Regis.

The receipt of the petition will be reported to Town Council on 19th June 2023 for information purposes only.

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

- Power available to carry out project – Local Government Act 1972, s214(2)

Financial Implications

- The cost of investigative work on Grendall Lane has not been quoted for.
- There is no certainty that the upper limit of £20,000 will be sufficient
- EMR 348 Cemetery would be used to fund the investigations and the associated reports

Risk Implications

- Reputation – the council have previously made a lawful and democratic decision not to continue with the investigations into Grendall Lane.

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 topography of the land at Grendall Lane means that this area would require significant works to make this facility feasible. At the meetings held in July and August 2022 consideration was given to the cost benefit of this, the decisions made were difficult decision to reach. There is no additional information or evidence to submit to members to alter the position as advised in summer 2022.

8. APPENDICES

Appendix A: Agenda report (with attachments) and Minutes from 18th July 2022

Appendix B: Agenda report from 15th August 2022 (for attachments please refer to App A above) and Minutes – please see attached pages under Agenda Item 6.



NEW CEMETERY SUB-COMMITTEE
Agenda Item 8

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

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 19th 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	BH1	-13.66	-13.91	-12.31	-12.315	-10.68	-11.63	-10.42	-10.33	-11.98	-12.88
106	BH2	-3.95	-4.26	-3.04	-3.05	-2.41	-2.77	-2.31	-2.26	-3.05	-3.28
100	BH3	-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
	BH1	101.34	101.09	102.69	102.685	104.32	103.37	104.58	104.67	103.02	102.12
	BH2	102.05	101.74	102.96	102.95	103.59	103.23	103.69	103.74	102.95	102.72
	BH3	98.99	98.87	99.27	99.28	99.44	99.35	99.54	99.47	99.1	99.14

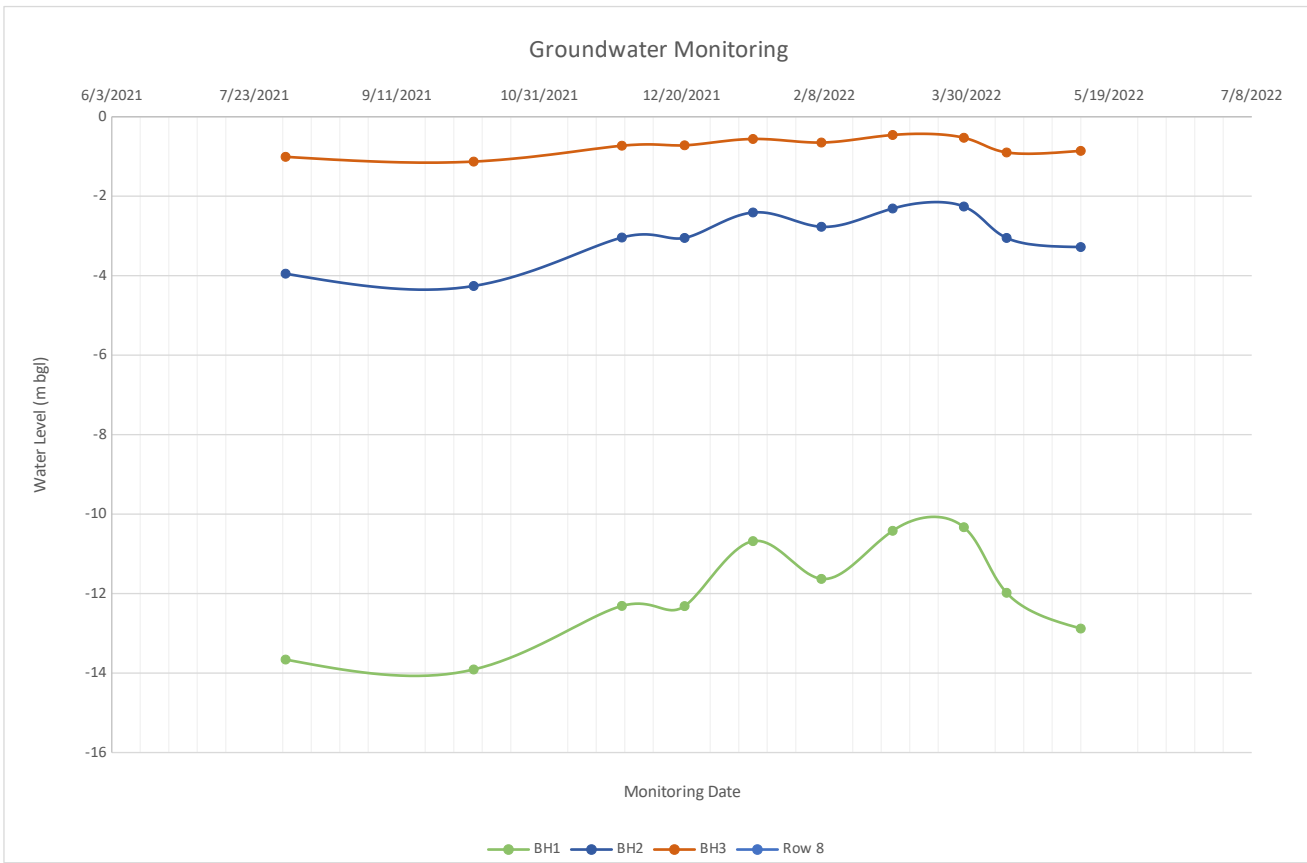
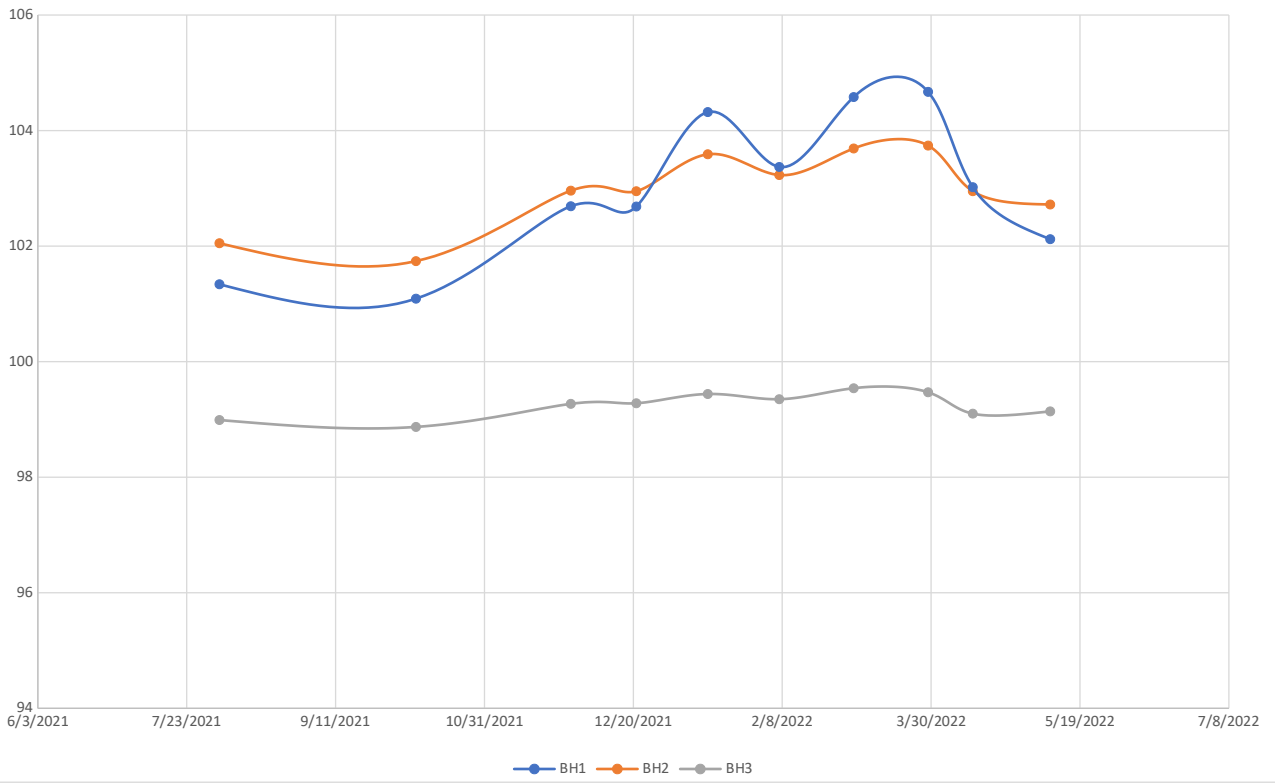


Chart Title



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

Present:	Cllrs:	S Thorne J Carroll Y Farrell D Jones A Slough	Chairman Substitute
	Officers:	Clare Evans Louise Senior	Town Clerk 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 19th July 2021.

Resolved: To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 19th 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.

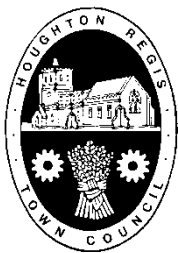
- Resolved:**
- 1. To recognise the significant works that are likely to be required to enable Grendall Lane to be brought into use as a cemetery and to determine at this time that these works are financially inhibitive for the Council and as such further investigations into this site will cease;**
 - 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

Date: 15th August 2022

Title: MOTION FOR CONSIDERATION

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

Contact Officer: Clare Evans, Town Clerk

1. RECOMMENDATION

To consider the Motion as proposed.

2. BACKGROUND

On 19th 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 18th 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 18th 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 ¹	<i>Projected</i> 40,000 ²	<i>Projected</i> 43,000 ³
Mortality rate	1%	1%	1%
Predicted number of deaths	187	400	430
Interments / year in HR	50 ⁴	100	105
New burials in HR	15	30	31

¹ Based on Local Insight Profile for Houghton Regis Parish June 2018

² Based on occupancy of strategic development sites and general population increases

³ Based on a predicted national increase in population of approx. 6%

⁴ 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

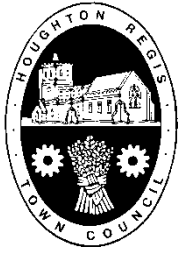
The decision relating to this agenda item should be communicated to the press, via the website and social media.

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 18th 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: 18th July Agenda report with attachments



NEW CEMETERY SUB COMMITTEE
Agenda Item 5

Date: 16th November 2020

Title: NEW CEMETERY PROVISION

Purpose of the Report: To provide members with options for site investigations for land for a new cemetery.

Contact Officer: Clare Evans, Town Clerk

1. RECOMMENDATION

1. To commission T2 Groundwater Risk Assessment for Land at the end of Grendall Lane and, provided this is supportive, to proceed with the monitoring work and an updated T3 report;
2. To fund the investigations from EMR 348, Cemetery provision

2. BACKGROUND

Following on from the meeting of the New Cemetery Sub Committee on 14th July 2020, the Clerk has been working with CBC officers on considering options and possibilities for new burial provision with Houghton Regis. This report updates members on this work and also present options for next steps.

3. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

CBC have completed a desk top survey of the town and have identified 3 land possibilities:

1. Windsor Drive
2. Land off Woodside Link / Frogmore Rd
3. Land at end of Grendall Lane

CBC have sought preliminary advice from Cemetery Development Services (CDS) on these sites and this is summarised in Appendix A. This table has been expanded to include comments on other localised conditions i.e. access, visual amenity, neighbouring properties / land uses etc

As members can see the more favourable site is the Land at the end of Grendall Lane. Most significantly this site is less unsuitable in terms of ecology. Equally it has good access and a cemetery use would not be detrimental to neighbouring land uses.

CBC officers have sought on behalf of HRTC advice on this option from colleagues in Highways, Archaeology, Ecology and Planning, their comments are as follows:

Planning

The site would form part of the Houghton Regis North allocation, so, once the Local Plan is adopted, the site would be removed from the Green Belt. As such, the principle would likely be acceptable in the future.

There is a water treatment facility neighbouring the site, so there may be odour concerns. If this is pursued, then discussions should be held with Anglian Water to establish their position. Would this present an appropriate character/feel for a cemetery site?

A recent application (20/00511) for a modular extension to an office block, directly adjoining the site to the north, didn't identify any significant issues from consultees.

Highways

An acceptable access could be achieved via the existing road connecting to Thorn Road. Any access from Watling Street would be heavily discouraged.

The feedback was caveated somewhat by officers advising that without a scheme to comment on there is limited advice that could be provided, and that the above was an informal view only.

4. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

To progress to next steps the Council need to commission a Tier 2 survey for Grendall Lane and, subject to this being favourable, to commission a Tier 3 survey. The costs are as follows:

T2 Groundwater Risk Assessment with flux model	£4,900
Installation of groundwater monitoring wells (cost dependent on depth to groundwater)	£5,000 - £10,000
Baseline groundwater sampling visit	£1,350
12 months of groundwater monitoring at £350 per visit	£4,200
Production of updated T3 report	£1,200
	Total £16,650-£21,650

This is a considerable amount of budget to spend should members decide not to proceed with this site due to reasons outside of matters which may be highlighted by the T2 and T3 reports, such as:

- Localised conditions i.e. access, visual amenity, neighbouring properties / land uses etc

- Located out of central town area
- Compatibility with surrounding land uses namely CBC Highways Depot and Household Tidy Tip
- Unknown access by public transport

Members should be confident of this site in relation to the above matters before commissioning the T2 and T3 reports.

Should members decide not to proceed with Grendall Lane, 2 other options have been presented and members may like to consider these as alternatives.

These options are the result of a considerable amount of investigation. Should members decide not to proceed with any option, it is felt unlikely that any other land would come forward for consideration.

5. COUNCIL VISION

Aspirations

- A1 To develop and enhance **partnerships** between HRTC, stakeholders, partners, community groups and residents
- 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

Objective 4: Our community

- 4.1 To create or enhance community facilities which support community development and cohesion

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

- Budget _ EMR 348 Cemetery provision, total available £78,908

Risk Implications

- Reputation – this is a considerable amount of budget to spend should members decide not to proceed with this site due to reasons outside of matters which may be highlighted by the T2 and T3 reports

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.

Press Contact

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

7. CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS


The support of CBC in this matter has been greatly appreciated and has enabled more detailed consideration of sites such that this report presents a land option to members to consider. Although the land is considered a high risk due to its ecology, on balance it is felt that it is a possibility. Members are encouraged to consider this site as a whole in terms of its location, accessibility, and surrounding land uses before commissioning further investigations into this site.


8. APPENDICES

Appendix A: Summary of Key Issues from CDS Initial Site Assessment

Summary of Key Issues from CDS Initial Site Assessment

NB see CDS report for all detailed findings

High Risk Findings	Detail and other Issues	Investigations	Costs
Land at Windsor Drive: High Risk			
		<p>T2 Groundwater Risk Assessment</p> <p>G/water Monitoring & Sampling</p> <p>Subsequent sampling</p> <p>T3 Report</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •T2 Groundwater Risk Assessment with flux model - £4900.00 •Installation of groundwater monitoring wells - £5000.00 - £10000.00 (depending on depth to groundwater) •Baseline groundwater sampling visit - £1350.00 •12 months of groundwater monitoring - £350.00 per visit – 12*350 = £4200.00 •Production of updated T3 report- £1200.00 exc VAT <p>Total Min. £16,650 Total Max. £21,650</p>
Geology	Chalk bedrock, lack of superficial deposits		
Groundwater	Poss shallow as 1.5m bgl		
River adj to site	30m non burial buffer required on northern edge		

bedrock aquafer	Underlying Principle aquafer		
Burial numbers	4.2ha site - 30-40/year Moderate Risk		
<p>Localised conditions i.e. access, visual amenity, neighbouring properties / land uses etc Sited in amongst a residential area Land locally used for informal recreation Good road network Vehicular access required A cemetery use would only form part of the site and would need to be well integrated into the site as a whole Anticipated local opposition due to residential nature of area and long-standing use for informal recreation.</p>			
Land at The Woodside Link Houghton Regis: High Risk			
	T2 Groundwater Risk Assessment	•T2 Groundwater Risk Assessment with flux model - £4900.00	
	G/water Monitoring & Sampling	•Installation of groundwater monitoring wells - £5000.00 - £10000.00 (depending on depth to groundwater)	
	Subsequent sampling	•Baseline groundwater sampling visit - £1350.00 •12 months of groundwater monitoring - £350.00 per visit – 12*350 = £4200.00	
	T3 Report	•Production of updated T3 report- £1200.00 exc VAT	

Geology	Zig Zag chalk bedrock - no mapped superficial deposits on the site. This is considered a high risk as burial contaminants can freely migrate down into the underlying aquifer.		Total Min. £16,650 Total Max. £21,650
Groundwater	Historic borehole data suggests that groundwater could potentially be as shallow as 1.5m bgl.		
Stream	A stream runs through the site north of the Woodside Link to the east into the River Lea. A balancing pond and drain are located in the eastern portion of the site south of the Link.		
bedrock aquafer	Site mapped on principle aquafer bedrock		
Burial numbers	6ha site - 30-40/year Low Risk		
<p>Localised conditions i.e. access, visual amenity, neighbouring properties / land uses etc</p> <p>Split site - adjacent to residential areas and straddles a major road</p> <p>Land locally used for some informal recreation</p> <p>Good road network</p> <p>Vehicular access required</p> <p>Suggested that the site doesn't naturally lend it self in a visual way to use as a cemetery</p>			
Land at Grendall Lane: High Risk			



T2 Groundwater Risk Assessment	•T2 Groundwater Risk Assessment with flux model - £4900.00
G/water Monitoring & Sampling	•Installation of groundwater monitoring wells - £5000.00 - £10000.00 (depending on depth to groundwater)
Subsequent sampling	•Baseline groundwater sampling visit - £1350.00 •12 months of groundwater monitoring - £350.00 per visit – 12*350 = £4200.00
T3 Report	•Production of updated T3 report- £1200.00 exc VAT
<p>Total Min. £16,650 Total Max. £21,650</p>	

Geology	West Melbury Marly Chalk - no mapped superficial deposits on the site. This is considered a high risk as burial contaminants can freely migrate down into the underlying aquifer.
Groundwater	Historic borehole data suggests that groundwater could potentially be as shallow as 1.5m bgl.
Sewage works	Work discharge into stream mapped further to north of the site
Bedrock aquafer	Site mapped on principle aquafer bedrock
Burial numbers	2.7ha site - 30-40/year – Low risk
Topography – Low Risk	The site slopes down from the south to the north, with an elevation change of approximately 10. The

	<p>hummocky and uneven nature of the site would make it difficult to be developed.</p>		
<p>Localised conditions i.e. access, visual amenity, neighbouring properties / land uses etc Sited away from residential areas Surrounding land uses include CBC Highways Depot and Household Tidy Tip. It should be highlighting that should this site proceed there may be concerns over a funeral procession having to pass these facilities Land is not developed and has limited, if any, current use Good road network but is out of central town area Vehicular access readily available</p>			