

Garden of Remembrance | Woodhouse Burial Ground | Congleton Road | Biddulph | Staffordshire Design & Access Statement

Proposed Staged Development of Existing Lawned Areas for Extension to
Burial Ground with Cremation Memorials and New 'Garden of Remembrance' Area
with Gazebo Shelter, Memorial Wall and Associated Landscaping



Design & Access Statement

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1.0 Introduction

The existing Biddulph Town Council Burial Ground has very limited plots remaining, but there is existing provision for further burial plots within Woodhouse Burial Ground, a separate site further south off Congleton Road, with pedestrian access linking the two sites. The Town Council recommends that part of Woodhouse Burial Ground is to be developed with cremation-only plots to conserve space.

The current landscaping framework of Woodhouse Burial Ground consists of seven main burial areas grouped around a central feature of planted borders and a gazebo. Two of the northernmost burial areas have already been developed for full burials. An additional two are to be developed with new cremation burial plots and a new remembrance / assembly area entitled, the 'Garden of Remembrance'.

The site already enjoys separate private access, parking and turning off Woodhouse Lane.



Fig.1 Photo of the site as existing;
(source: ctd architects)

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2.0 PLANNING POLICY

This area of land within the designated Green Belt is classed as 'other rural areas' under Policy SS10 in the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (adopted September 2020). This classification comprises the countryside and green belt outside the development boundaries of towns and larger villages, wherein further development is generally inappropriate. (Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan, 2020)

However, the development of such land for cemeteries is considered acceptable in principle according to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), if the use of land as a cemetery preserves the openness of Green Belt and does not conflict with the purposes of land within it. (NPPF, 2012)

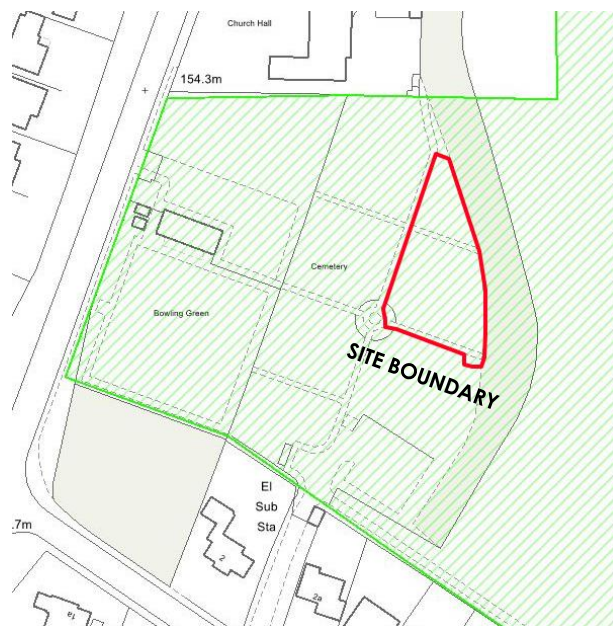


Fig.2 Map showing the extent of the Green Belt area in relation to the site;
(source: Staffordshire Moorlands District Council, 2024)

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3.0 DESIGN PROPOSALS

Two of the existing burial areas laid out are to be developed as part of the proposals, in a phased scheme which will see the memorial garden and an initial cremation urn burial area constructed first, with further cremation urn burial areas developed over time.

The design shows a total of 333 cast granite stone cremation urn memorials set out in rows relating to the site and to the dimensions recommended by Biddulph Town Council. The cremation urn memorials are a standard product placed on a prepared above ground shallow depth concrete slab foundation, and each plot will have space in front of the cremation urn memorial for digging into the ground for the interment of buried ashes.

A standard pre-manufactured gazebo shelter structure with integrated seating to match the existing one on site, is located at the end of an existing macadam path which bisects the site west to east.

The proposal incorporates a new area of paving to create a remembrance / assembly area located on a diagonal axis with one of the existing central planted borders. The remembrance / assembly area will afford opportunity for contemplation with bench seating, and a proposed '*Letters to Heaven*' post box.

The paved area is enclosed on side facing the trees by a new 2.1m high crinkle-crankle brick built curved memorial wall for families to attach memorial plaques or insert engraved bricks dedicated to their beloved and cherished deceased family members.

The development includes for a memorial tree sculpture to be located at the centre of the cemetery within the existing circular flower bed.

See drawings 2406 / AL04 & AL05 for the Site Plan Phases One, Two & Three 'as proposed'.

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4.0 ACCESS

The site is a part of the newly constructed Woodhouse Burial Ground. This cemetery already enjoys existing paved vehicular and pedestrian access from Woodhouse Lane, as well as existing paved parking & turning provision for visitors and maintenance teams. The proposed development does not require a new access point and existing car parking is considered to be adequate for the level of use to be generated.

Funeral services are generally held at the nearby St Lawrence Church, for which there is adequate parking provision. Pedestrian access to the north of the site links to the Church, from which many mourners would choose to walk to the new burial ground. There is also another existing pedestrian access from the Biddulph Bowling and Recreation Club to the west.



Fig.3 Pedestrian access from the Town Burial Ground to Woodhouse Burial Ground,
looking south towards the site;
(source: ctd architects, 2024)

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5.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

The proposal is situated as far as possible away from the existing treeline to minimise disruption to their root zones. However, this scheme is confined to an existing masterplan and the cemetery must maximise its use of the finite space available for new burial plots. No trees are located within the confines of the site as defined in drawing 2406 / AL01 and 16 new specimen trees are to be planted as part of the proposals.

The site is currently one large expanse of mowed lawn, offering very little wildlife value. There is one existing low-level, single-species *Buxus semperivens* hedgerow on site, which is to be retained. The proposal will feature multiple new low level, species-rich, mixed hedgerows throughout site which will act as 'wildlife corridors' reaching further into the site from the existing wooded shelterbelt behind.

The site will remain as lawn in between hard landscaped and paved elements. See proposed drawing 2406 / AL04 & AL05.

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6.0 BIBLIOGRAPHY & REFERENCES

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Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2012) *National Planning Policy Framework, National Planning Policy Framework - 13. Protecting Green Belt land - Guidance - GOV.UK*. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework/13-protecting-green-belt-land> (Accessed: 30 July 2024). See paragraph 152 (b).

REFERENCES

Staffordshire Moorlands District Council (2024) *Interactive local plan map*. Available at: https://www.staffs Moorlands.gov.uk/media/6155/Adopted-Local-Plan/pdf/Adopted_Local_Plan.pdf?m=1601645140880 (Accessed: 30 July 2024).