

**6. FORMER CARETAKER'S RESIDENCE AND GROUNDS, BROMLEY CEMETERY:
128 KEIGHLEYS ROAD**

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| Officer responsible Greenspace Manager | Author Tony Hallams, Policy and Leasing Officer, DDI 941-8320 |
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The purpose of this report is to:

- (1) inform the Board that this report is being forwarded to the Parks, Gardens and Waterways Committee, which has delegated authority on behalf of the Council to consider the future of the former park caretaker's house and outbuildings within Bromley Cemetery; and
- (2) obtain the Board's recommendation to the Parks, Gardens and Waterways Committee.

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Bromley Cemetery is zoned Conservation 4 (Cemeteries) under the operative City Plan, and as such is a listed historic cemetery. Under the City Plan it is permanently recognised "as a peaceful and undisturbed environment for commemorating early settlement and subsequent occupation".

The former caretaker's dwelling is situated inside Bromley Cemetery near the corner of Keighleys Road and Linwood Avenue, having direct vehicular access from Keighleys Road (see attached plan). The property is held as fee simple land by the Council under certificate of title Lot 1 deposited plan 8825.

The dwelling had a resident caretaker living in it, up until the mid 1980's after which a change in management policy saw the discontinuation of this service. Latterly, the Council has used the property for short-term rental accommodation. The present occupier is responsible for opening and shutting the cemetery gateway in close proximity to the dwelling

The exterior of the dwelling is in a reasonably sound condition, but substantial external repainting is required. The dwelling is at least 70 years old, consisting of a weatherboard exterior with iron roof. The two outbuildings are in a state of disrepair and require demolition. The interior of the dwelling has been well maintained by the Council.

If the dwelling and outbuildings are demolished, the additional area made available could be integrated in to the cemetery to provide further burial space. A number of the city's cemeteries are close to full capacity and this proposal would provide much needed extra space. It is proposed that the area would provide a combination of full burial plots, ashes plots and children's plots. The memorial to stillborn babies is located at Bromley Cemetery and it would, therefore, seem appropriate to develop a new children's section within this additional area. This would provide an opportunity to create a design for a children's section that could accommodate the decoration and planting that many parents wish to have on their children's graves.

The matter will be referred to the Parks Gardens and Waterways Committee for a decision. Costs associated with a decision to remove the house and landscape the site can be accommodated within current Greenspace operating and capital budgets for the 2004/2005 financial year.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The former caretaker's house at Bromley Cemetery is in a fair condition, currently occupied but requiring ongoing maintenance costs. A decision is required to determine the future of this building. If the dwelling and outbuildings are demolished it is considered that the bare site (approximately 2000m2 after landscaping) could be integrated into the main cemetery to provide additional burial space which could include a children's section and ashes plots. There is an important need for burial space in the Christchurch metropolitan area and this cemetery is full, apart from space for a few second interments. Extra space would therefore be desirable. Making available the building for community purposes would be considered an inappropriate option, given its condition, location and the difficulty of regular vehicle access from Linwood Avenue through the present entranceway.

RELEVANT POLICY

The proposal is consistent with the Council's Cemeteries Enhancement Programme for years 2000 to 2005 for Bromley Cemetery, which states:

"Consider development of area occupied by sexton's house for additional full plots and ashes interment area."

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

There are no legal impediments to demolishing the dwelling and landscaping the site. The house is not a listed heritage item and therefore no resource consent for demolition or landscaping is required.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

On the basis of replacement cost, less depreciation and obsolescence, the Council's current net book value of the dwelling is \$6514.38. This book value anticipates a "residual life" for the dwelling of a maximum of five (5) years. The fences are in a poor state of repair, and are at the end of their life, and therefore are considered to have no value. Whilst there will be a minor loss in revenue from demolishing the dwelling, there will be community benefits in providing more space for ash and burial plots.

It is anticipated that the cost to the Council of having the dwelling demolished and the site cleared would be in the range of \$7500-\$14000, which could be accommodated within the Greenspace Unit's operating budget for 2004/2005.

CONCLUSION

It is considered that the demolition of the building and clearing of the site is warranted given the obsolescence of the dwelling on the site, the low net book value of the dwelling, the high cost of maintaining the asset, and more importantly, the number of burial/and or ash plots that will be made available if the site is cleared and landscaped. A separate arrangement can be facilitated with a security firm for cemetery gate opening and shutting.

Staff

Recommendation: That the Board recommend to the Parks, Gardens and Waterways Committee that:

1. The house and associated structures be removed from the site and the area cleared.
2. The cleared area dedicated to cemetery space be landscaped, as approved by the Greenspace Manager.

Chairperson's

Recommendation: That the recommendations be adopted.