

Mitcham General Cemetery

Mitcham General Cemetery draft management plan

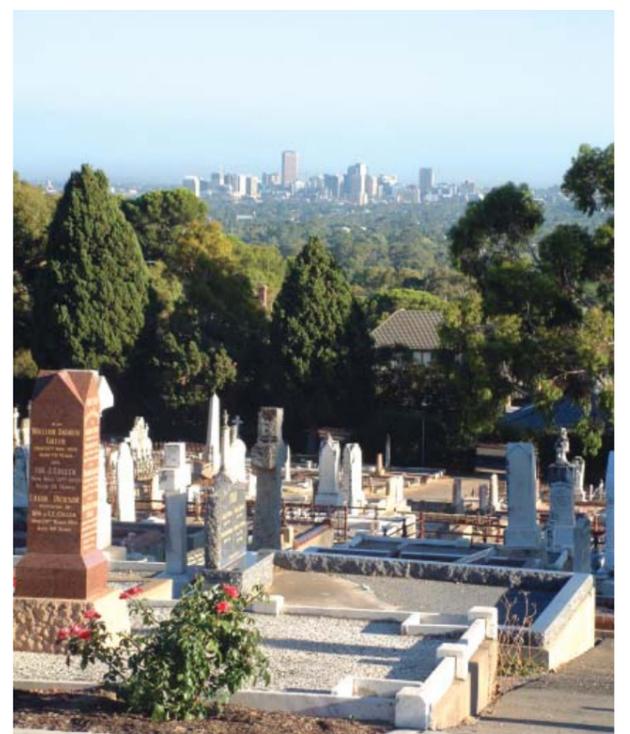


Mitcham General Cemetery draft management plan

Mitcham General Cemetery is located at the base of the foothills of the Mount Lofty Ranges in the City of Mitcham. The Cemetery, officially opened in 1854, has considerable heritage significance through the graves of famous early settlers, the architecture of its graves and its use in tracing family genealogies, and is also an important part of Mitcham's parks and gardens.

The City of Mitcham has prepared a Draft Management Plan for the Mitcham General Cemetery for public consultation. The plan will ensure the future development of the cemetery by preserving the heritage value; improving the management, landscaping and maintenance; identifying additional burial areas; and improving the operation and administration of the cemetery.

The Management Plan examines a wide range of issues involving physical works, monuments and graves, leases, historical records and administration activities associated with the management of the cemetery.



Heritage

In looking to the future the City of Mitcham understands the importance of the old section of the Cemetery and the historical character of the site to our community.

A comprehensive heritage survey of significant monuments and graves will be undertaken to protect the heritage of the cemetery.

Mitcham Council will prepare a policy to ensure that all new headstones and grave monuments will be of materials, style and appearance in keeping with those established in the Cemetery so far.

Infrastructure

Plans have been drawn and work has begun for infrastructure enhancements and maintenance incorporating drainage, access roads, pedestrian promenades, parking, fencing, toilets and an information bay/public shelter. Funding has been established for completion of improvements and for regular maintenance.

Vehicular access into the Cemetery via the northern and western entrances will be restricted and visitor car access and parking will be mainly from Barr Avenue. Hearse and funeral processions will still be able to seek approval to use the northern and western entrance roads. When the fencing and gates (across access roads) are completed it is intended to secure the site each night to protect the cemetery against vandalism and damage.

A public toilet facility, improved seating and signage is planned for part of the undeveloped area adjacent Barr Avenue.

Administration

The City of Mitcham will review systems to improve cemetery records for easier access to information sought by funeral directors and the public for plot identification and genealogical histories.

On-going use of Graves

In planning for the long term viability and use of the Cemetery, Mitcham Council will consider the method of managing grave sites where the original licence has expired and not been renewed. This will include a program to identify and advise families or interested parties of the opportunity to renew the licence.

A policy will be prepared for the re-use of graves as inevitably it will not be possible to ensure contact is made on all occasions and some licences will not be renewed or may be relinquished to the Council by the families concerned.

Heritage graves will not be subject to the re-use of graves policy.

New Development

The draft plan proposes additional burial areas and memorialisation of cremated remains on undeveloped sites to the south and east of Barr Avenue. In investigating the best means of developing, managing and marketing these areas and possibly the whole Cemetery, the Council will encompass in-house opportunities, contracting out or joint venturing with the private sector.

A concept plan has been prepared to ensure a high standard of development and landscaping which would be site sensitive. Benefits will be the long term access to the community for the interment of the remains of loved ones in their chosen locality. Also, explore opportunities to generate on-going funds to supplement Council expenditure on capital improvements and regular maintenance.



Consultation

The Council has endorsed the draft plan for consultation to seek the communities views before finalising the plan.

The draft plan is available for viewing at the Council Civic Centre, Depot and both Mitcham and Blackwood Libraries. It is also available for viewing on Council's website www.mitchamcouncil.sa.gov.au

Your comments on the draft plan are welcomed and must be made in writing by the 9th April 2004 and addressed to:

Mitcham General Cemetery
City of Mitcham
PO Box 21
Mitcham Shopping Centre
TORRENS PARK SA 5062

For further information or to discuss elements of the draft plan call Andrew Ciric on 8372 8891 during normal business hours.

Action plan

The following outlines the actions recommended in the Draft Management Plan.

Site Management

Prepare a site management plan that integrates the following actions associated with the existing and future development of the cemetery.

Site Amenity and Landscaping

Roads and Pathways

- Vehicle access into the centre of the cemetery via the western and northern entrance to be restricted to Council's maintenance vehicles. Hearses, mourning cars, monumental masons and gravedigger's vehicles are permitted subject to approval.
- Continue to replace the concrete path in the 'old' section with grey pavers.
- Complete the construction of the promenade areas and landscape.
- Maintain bitumen footpaths in sections A, B C and D.
- Repair footpaths in section E and replace in future. Investigate the feasibility of grassed footpath areas.

Stormwater and Seepage

- Continue to address the surface water runoff and seepage problems through the construction of water table drains and sub-surface drains.
- Address the problem of surface water runoff and erosion of some of the gravesites and pathways with the construction of paved pathways in the 'old' section and the two promenade areas.

Water Reticulation

- Install new main immediately adjacent to the water table beneath the garden beds to one side of the new central promenade.
- Reconnect water main to section E of the cemetery.

Fencing and Entrance Gates

- Continue with post, rail and mesh fencing along the unfenced portion of the cemetery.
- Erect wrought iron entrance gates for security and to better control access by vehicle traffic.

Public Conveniences

- Construct an environmentally friendly, single, unisex toilet facility with disabled access located in the undeveloped area adjacent Barr Street.

Landscaping

- Prepare a landscape master plan in consultation with a suitably qualified and experienced landscape architect and historian to ensure the historical significance of the cemetery is appropriately reflected in the design.



Public Shelters, Seating, Signage and Information

- Construct an information bay/public shelter in the vicinity of the public conveniences.
- Provide seating at selected locations within the cemetery and offer it to families for memorialisation.
- Erect section signs of complimentary design to the exiting cast bollards and retain current path numbers on white marble to assist visitors in locating graves.
- Place a notice in the rotunda or shelters in the reserve informing visitors that plans, historical notes, self-guided walks, etc are available from the Research Centre, Council Civic Centre and Libraries.
- Construct an information bay compatible in style to the rotunda with seating, information, signs and landscaping.

New Developments

- Prepare a concept plan including landscaping for additional burial areas and memorial sites for cremated remains.
- Undertake a detailed evaluation of the cemetery records to confirm the existence of vacant graves.
- Market the newly available graves.
- Investigate the most suitable means of developing, managing and marketing the additional areas including in-house opportunities, contracting out or joint ventures.

Maintenance

- Prepare a maintenance management plan.

Monuments and Graves

Significant Monuments and Graves

- Complete a comprehensive heritage survey of significant monuments and graves.

New Memorials and Maintenance of Mitcham General Cemetery's Character

- Prepare a monumental policy for all monuments in the cemetery.
- To ensure that the historical character of the cemetery is retained all monuments should, where practicable, be in keeping with current materials, style and appearance of existing monuments.

Licences/Leases

Cemetery Fees and Charges

- Review cemetery fees and charges annually according to the schedule.
- Determine the level of fees for cremation memorials when costing of specific developments are in hand.

Expired Licences/Leases

- Prepare a licence/lease plan that includes expired licences/leases, licences/leases about to expire and the method of managing expiration, period of extension, ownership and re-use of graves.

Reuse of Graves

- Establish a database of heritage graves and cemetery areas. These graves are not to be re-used.
- Identify graves that may be re-used if licences/leases are not renewed.
- Establish criteria for grave re-use.

Administration and Operation of the Cemetery

Administration

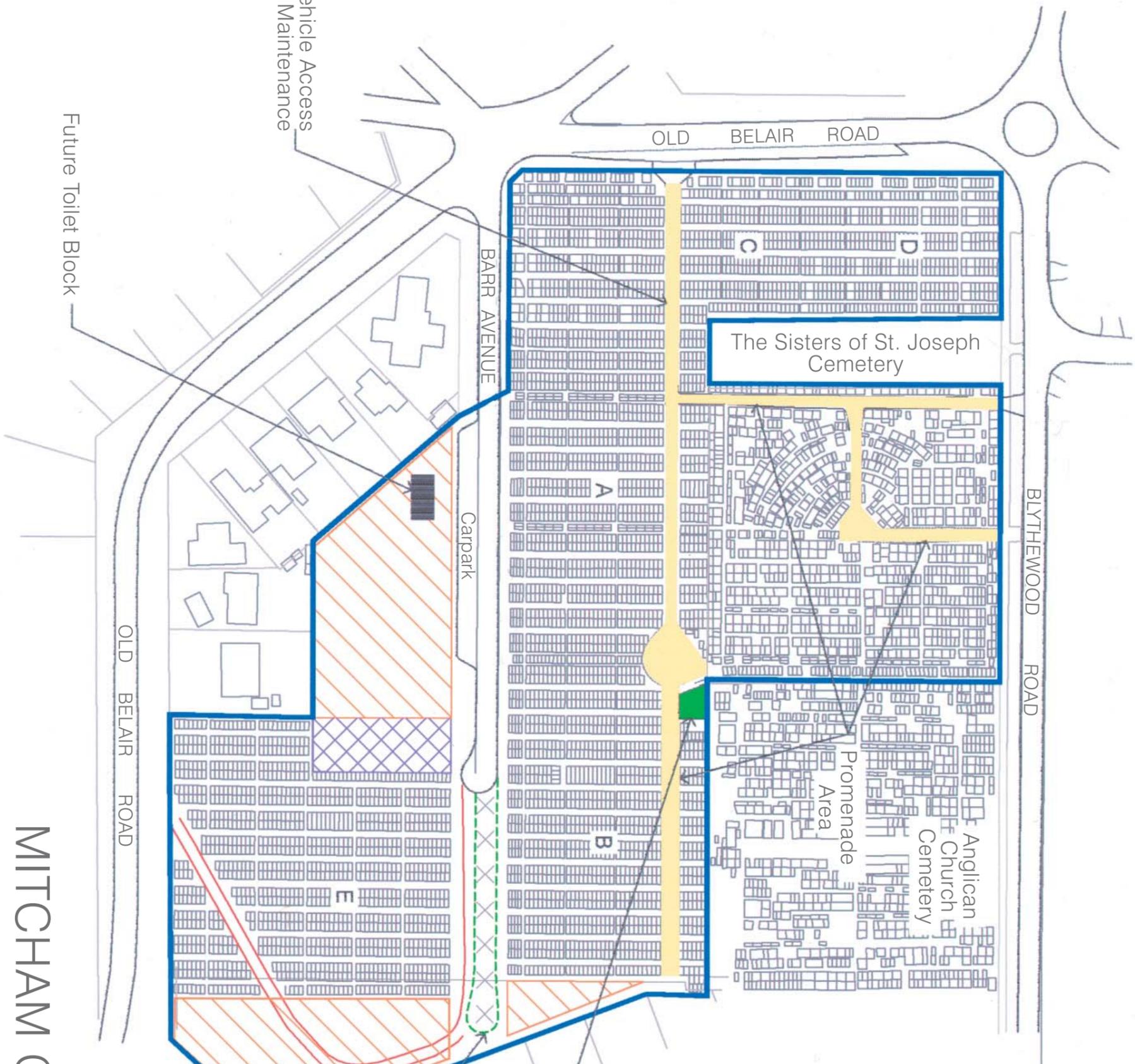
- Continue to resource administration activities of the cemetery.
- Review administration systems and procedures.
- Investigate and cost a computer software package to transfer and integrate all cemetery records in order to streamline administration of cemetery records and enable easy access to information.
- Continue the plot profiling of burial sites.

Operation

- Establish procedures and systems that integrate all activities associated with the cemetery.
- Investigate funding options and prepare budgets and estimates to undertake the actions described in the Action Plan.

Coordinate Action Plan

- Secure adequate resources to implement the Action Plan.



LEGEND

-  Memorial Site for Cremated Remains Area to be landscaped with native trees and shrubs.
-  Burial Sites not currently utilised as part of Section E
-  Boundary of General Cemetery

Future Information Bay and Seating Area

Limited Vehicle Access

Limited Vehicle Access Funerals and Maintenance

Future Toilet Block

MITCHAM GENERAL CEMETERY

General Concept Plan

February 2004
Not to Scale

