

I write as a person who was present at the IPC Public Meeting on 25th March 2019 regarding the proposed cemetery on St Andrew's Road, Varroville. I understood intimately what the second last speaker referred to in her Presentation.

I have asked for my personal details to be redacted, with concern about being respected by all, in this public submission I make here.

I raise the issue here, of:

In the event that a cemetery was to proceed on St Andrew's Road, Varroville, would there be a significant risk of disrespect by some users of the cemetery, towards neighbours of the cemetery and those visiting neighbouring properties, in particular the Varroville Carmelite Retreat Centre?

This question arises, because, at the IPCN Public meeting held on 25th March 2019, a number of supporters of the cemetery proposal, made **sneering grumbling noises**, during the Presentation by the second last speaker, as she spoke of feeling suicidal, describing aspects of suicide, speaking of struggling with emotional difficulties in life; and her life-affirming experiences of staying at the Carmelite Retreat Centre.

This unsettling noise came from among the group of people closest to the speaker (towards the right front, looking from the IPC Panel's table - in the vicinity of the CMCT group), and were clearly supporters of the proponent's case, but without identifying any of the people in particular.

It was not a single outburst, but persistent for some minutes.

This scornful rumbling noise, belittling what the speaker was saying, occurred in the face of the Chairwoman saying earlier in the Public Meeting, very clearly:

- 1) That it was essential for people always to speak respectfully at the meeting; and
- 2) That it was not a community meeting with comments accepted from the audience (All speakers were required to register to speak).

After the meeting I spoke with Sr Jocelyn Kramer, who was sitting across the aisle from the people who were making this audibly disruptive noise. She told me that she was upset to hear it and kept glaring at some of the people making the noise, to try and urge them to stop it, but they ignored her. That the speaker managed to continue to complete her presentation was remarkable.

It does not matter who exactly was doing this jeering;
nor is it, in itself, relevant that this disturbing conduct occurred at the Public Meeting.

The issue of concern here, is that:

- this disrespectful behaviour occurred at all and
- what does this indicate for the future in the co-existence of cemetery users and
 1. the neighbours who have opposed the cemetery; and
 2. that sector of the affected population who stay /visit the Carmelite Retreat Centre (CRC) (Over 2,000 people stayed at the Retreat Centre in 2018, and many more went there as day visitors.)?

These people would have to travel along the narrow, remote St Andrew's Road, past the cemetery, and traffic associated with it, to reach their destination (if they are not put off being there, by the very location of the cemetery on St Andrew's Road).

Is there some risk that these people, already in situ (so to speak, in the case of the visitors), may be disrespected by others, utilizing the cemetery, either for a burial, or the regular family visits to graves, as mentioned at the Public Meeting?

This could be easily dismissed as a remote possibility, but we are referring here to:

1. People who have sought to live in this quiet, secluded area and have done so for many years; and
2. Some people attending the CRC, who are already traumatized, and their day-to-day needs are very readily overlooked already in our society, with tragic outcomes all too often.

Moreover, a wider problem: that many people attending a cemetery, are themselves highly distressed, and incapacitated in considering others, at that place, at that time of attending a burial. It can be reasonably anticipated that the conflict of needs will occur at times. If the cemetery is located elsewhere, this could be avoided.

Maybe the disrespectful conduct of some cemetery supporters at the Public meeting, is a small warning bell – an opportunity - to revise the appropriateness of placing the huge impact of a cemetery, and the users of the cemetery, in this particular location.

The contribution made in this submission, is stated with absolutely no criticism or complaint against the Chairwoman of the Meeting. I know that the Presenter in question, spoke with the Chairwoman, Ms Dianne Lesser, after the Public Meeting, about the disruptive conduct, and the Presenter was totally satisfied that Ms Lesser did not hear the disruptive noises, because she was concentrating intently on listening to the Presenter speak; and that Ms Lesser was genuinely apologetic that she did not take steps to stop it, which she certainly would have done, had she been aware of it.

From subsequent contact with the Presenter, I can add that later that day, she was deeply distressed by what had happened at the Public meeting. It was exactly a re-triggering of suffering she had experienced and which she had revealed at the meeting. She had stuck her head above the parapet, to speak publicly about her own suffering and that of others, which are all too common, but kept all too quiet within our community, and in speaking up, she copped it, very subtly done, but sneered at, like no other presenter on the day.