



Visayan Association of Australia, Inc.

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Independent Planning Commission NSW
Level 3, 201 Elizabeth St
Sydney NSW 2001

Re: Crown Cemetery Development Varroville (MacArthur Memorial Park)

Sir/Madam,

I would like to express my support on the Crown Cemetery Development Varroville. My name is Dionimar 'Jhun' Salazar, president of the Visayan Association of Australia, and past president of the Alliance of Philippine Community Organisations. I am also a resident of Liverpool for more than 10 years.

As resident of Liverpool, we will be affected by the growing shortage of burial space in our region and the rising prices. We have 2 cemeteries, the Liverpool Cemetery which I believe is running out of burial spaces and because of the shortage, is selling burial plot at a higher price. The second one is the private cemetery at Leppington, Forest Lawn Memorial Park, which in my opinion based on government reports, will run out of burial land in 20 to 30 years. At the same time, a price of burial land has gone up more than \$7,000.00.

It has now become critical that the government or the Crown Cemeteries find an accessible location for a new cemetery with scale and scope to provide burial spaces for the next 100 years. With the continuing strong growth of population in south Sydney, I believe that the proposed development is essential in meeting the needs of the future.

I am supporting the proposed development of MacArthur Memorial Park at Varroville for the following reasons:

Accessibility

I have seen the proposed site and it is a mere 10-minute drive from Liverpool central through the Hume Highway. At the same time, it is as much accessible to the communities in Campbelltown and MacArthur regions. Our communities will not have to travel far to visit their deceased loved ones if ever they will be buried at MacArthur Memorial Park.

Affordability

I believe that MacArthur Memorial Park is run by a not for profit organisation, the Catholic Metropolitan Cemeteries Trust. With a new cemetery that can offer lower prices it will put pressure on privately owned cemeteries in competition.

Religious and Cultural Belief of Communities

The Filipinos being majority Catholics, prefer burial over cremation. Thus the need for burial spaces. They are also religious by nature, observing religious events and celebrations of patron saints. But most important is the celebration of the Filipino All Soul's Day in the cemetery. I was consulted on the plan for a Filipino section at MacArthur Memorial Park. Our community welcomes the plan for it will provide us with an area where we can keep our families together in one resting place forever. We love our families and protect them from financial and emotional stress. Thus, our custom that we pre-arranged our memorials.

Parkland for the Community to Enjoy

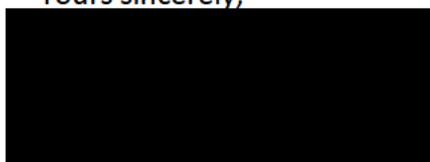
The proposal includes about 35 hectares of parkland while preserving its nature and environment with open spaces. A cemetery is not just a place for dead, but also for the living to reflect and meditate. This plan will benefit the whole community as they are allowed access to a meditative natural environment of the park.

Conclusion

I must add that it is the responsibility of the local government of Campbelltown to provide the essential services such as a cemetery in an area where there is none of this scale and scope. If they fail, then the State Government is not without responsibility to ensure that this sensitive and much needed services are provided to all communities of all background and religion with accessibility.

I pray to the Independent Planning Commission tasked to review the Development Proposal to consider the growing needs of the community long term (100 years) and consider the proposal favourably.

Yours sincerely,

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of the author.

President, Visayan Association of Australia, Inc.
23 March 2019