

Address to Public Briefing Meeting of the SYDNEY WESTERN CITY PLANNING PANEL

Panel Reference: 2017SWT016, LGA – Penrith, DA17/1092, Address: 13-15 Park Road Wallacia

Dear Sirs,

Thank you for this opportunity to speak with the Panel this evening.

I wish to express my strong objection to this development for the following reasons: -

1. Wallacia is a wonderful community with a rural village landscape and feel. This is precisely why I and many others are attracted to live there rather than in heavily developed areas.

Construction of a cemetery and crematorium immediately adjacent to the Wallacia village (within 600m initially and eventually within 100m) is inappropriate and a grossly unfair imposition on those who have invested heavily in their homes and currently enjoy living in the area. I believe the proximity of the cemetery to the village centre, its location on one of the two main arterial roads and the scale of the development will overshadow the entire community. I do not consider this an exaggeration to embellish my point. Should the development proceed, then I share the real concern of many residents of the community that Wallacia will become infamous as the regions graveyard or "dead centre" – a truly appalling thing for residents of the village to have forced upon us.

To illustrate this point I would like to refer the Panel to an aerial image of the site which gives one an appreciation of the scale and proximity of the proposed development to the village (Attach. 1).

2. Cemetery's are necessary but nobody in their right mind would choose to live in proximity to or worse still in view of one. The sight of a graveyard leaves one feeling empty. The sight of smoke or steam during winter and perhaps the smell of a crematorium furnace in operation would surely be a sickening thing to all. It should be located well away from established residential properties.
3. The development will substantially devalue property in the village.

I do not accept that I and others should personally suffer a very substantial financial loss while CMCT gain massively as a result of the development.

Empirical evidence to support this claim in Australia is not readily available, however research from the UK proved property prices in close proximity to cemeteries in 13 towns were on average 23% lower than the surrounding postcode average [Attach. 2 reference: - <http://www.propertyreporter.co.uk/finance/can-living-next-door-to-a-cemetery-affect-the-value-of-your-property.html>].

4. A portion of the site drains south through a natural watercourse and chain of ponds

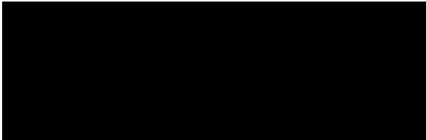
A large area of land catchment from the site feeding this waterway has severe down hydraulic gradients and I have a major concern that leachates from decomposing bodies, the chemicals used to hasten the process,

formaldehyde, heavy metals, etc., or perhaps pathogenic bacteria will enter the waterway. Sewer from the development, if not connected to the village sewer treatment system, will massively add to the problem of nutrient overload with resultant weed and algae blooms in downstream waterways including on my property, Jerry's Creek and the Nepean River.

5. CMCT have highlighted that a 9 golf course will remain for 70 years, though as I understand it, there is no binding and irrevocable undertaking that this will happen. I am a golfer and from my experience I know serious golfers will not want to play on a short course (less than 18 holes) and that it will therefore likely become unviable in the shorter term. As for visitors being welcome to enjoy the parkland – seriously who would want to picnic in a graveyard?
6. CMCT through their consultants have marketed the development as a 'Memorial Garden' intentionally giving one the impression of a rolling landscape with mown green lawns not unlike a golf course. This impression was further embellished recently in an on-air interview with a prominent Sydney radio broadcaster and CMCT's CEO where it was repeatedly stated that there would be no head stones. This is untrue. I refer the Panel to page 18 of the DA document "Plan of Management" which clearly shows that around half of the site will have head stones up to 1.5m. The development will therefore in fact look like a modern day graveyard on a major scale.

I understand that this development is a highly attractive commercial proposition for CMCT but I see it as having a very negative impact upon me and others as neighbouring residents of Wallacia.

Please hear my objections and prevent this development proceeding. Thank you.



Attach. 1

The proposed 88,000 plot cemetery and 2 x crematoriums will overshadow the village



Attach. 2 Extract from: -

<http://www.propertyreporter.co.uk/finance/can-living-next-door-to-a-cemetery-affect-the-value-of-your-property.html>

Can living next door to a cemetery affect the value of your property?



Warren Lewis

31st October 2016



A new report from online estate agents HouseSimple.com, has revealed that there are around 14,000 cemeteries in the UK which means hundreds of thousands of homeowners live next to or near a cemetery.

Despite having incredibly quiet neighbours, it might not all be good news as the data shows that living next door to a cemetery could potentially knock almost 25% off the value of your property.

HouseSimple.com looked at property prices on streets in 13 UK towns and cities which are next to cemeteries, and compared those prices to the average price for the postcode area. The figures revealed that house prices on these streets are on average 23% lower than the postcode average.

For example, the average property price overlooking St Patrick's Cemetery in Leytonstone is £258,400, compared to the postcode average of £511,311. That's half the average property price in the E11 postcode. Property prices next to Linthorpe Cemetery in Middlesbrough are 43.8% below the postcode average.

However, living next to a cemetery doesn't appear to chill prices everywhere. Property prices next to Harehills Cemetery in Leeds are actually 7.4% higher than the postcode average, and prices next to Hollybrook Cemetery in Southampton are more than £17,000 higher on average than the average for the postcode.

The following table show average property prices on streets next to cemeteries compared to the average price of property in the postcode area:

Town/City	Name of Cemetery	Postcode	Average price - Postcode	Average price - Road next to cemetery	% Difference between Road vs Postcode average price
London	St Patrick's	E11 4HL	£511,311	£258,400	-49.9%
Middlesbrough	Linthorpe	TS5 5AN	£138,793	£78,000	-43.8%
Manchester	Southern	M21 7GL	£288,801	£186,600	-35.4%
Birmingham	Lodge Hill	B29 5AA	£196,127	£131,000	-33.2%
Bradford	Undercliffe	BD3 0QD	£80,796	£58,400	-27.7%
Newcastle	All Saint's	NE2 1NL	£305,904	£239,800	-21.6%
Bournemouth	East	BH7 6JB	£315,187	£255,600	-18.9%
Stoke-on-Trent	Hanley	ST4 2DL	£125,561	£109,400	-12.9%
Liverpool	Anfield	L4 2SL	£76,714	£70,400	-8.2%
Sheffield	City Road	S2 1GD	£112,777	£114,600	1.6%
Bolton	Heaton	BL1 4LH	£152,844	£162,800	6.5%
Southampton	Hollybrook	S016 6HW	£253,143	£270,600	6.9%
Leeds	Harehills	LS9 6LZ	£102,772	£110,400	7.4%
Average			£204,979	£157,385	-23.22%

Alex Gosling, CEO of online estate agents HouseSimple.com comments: "For many of us, living next to a cemetery would cause us sleepless nights. But for buyers who aren't easily spooked, they could pick up a bargain. And if you can get past the fact there are gravestones a few yards from your front door, what you're actually overlooking is a serene and quiet space, that is unlikely to ever be developed."