



# **WEDDIN SHIRE COUNCIL**

**POLICY NUMBER: 5.5.3**

## **CEMETERY OPERATIONS PLAN**

**Adopted: 20 April 2017**

# WEDDIN SHIRE COUNCIL – CEMETERY OPERATIONS PLAN (No 5.5.3)

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# **WEDDIN SHIRE COUNCIL – CEMETERY OPERATIONS PLAN (No 5.5.3)**

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## **1. PURPOSE OF PLAN**

The Cemetery Operations Plan will outline the maintenance standards and specific operations of the Council Cemeteries within Weddin Shire. It provides guidelines for maintenance intervention times and frequency and procedures for burials and placement of monuments and plaques.

## **2. SCOPE**

The plan covers the maintenance and operations in the Grenfell Lawn and Grenfell General Cemetery, Bimbi Cemetery and Caragabal Cemetery.

## **3 PREPARATION OF GRAVES**

### **3.1 Application for Burial**

Applications shall be lodged not less than 48 hours prior to the scheduled funeral date unless special arrangements are made with Council. Applications will only be accepted for an interment conducted when the associated church service commences:

- a) between the hours of 9am to 3pm Monday to Friday
- b) between the hours 9am to 11:30am on Saturdays

Graves shall be available for backfill no later than 3:30pm. Interments outside the hours shown above require special Council approval and are subject to Council staff availability. There shall be no interments on Saturdays after 12pm, Sundays or Public Holidays.

### **3.2 Fees and Charges**

Fees and charges are set out in Council's annual Operational Plan. All fees and charges will be paid for in advance. Additional items not covered in the Operational Plan will be charged at cost plus any overheads incurred by Council.

### **3.3 Preparation of Graves**

Graves shall be prepared by Council and shall be in accordance with the Public Health Act 1991 and the Public Health (Disposal of Bodies) Regulations 2002. Monumental slabs or surrounds obstructing the preparation of the grave should be firstly removed by Council staff or a suitably qualified Monumental Mason. Graves will be made available no later than 3 hours before the scheduled funeral.

### **3.4 Grave Dimensions**

All graves shall be secured with shoring while opened unless considered unnecessary by Council's Overseer or Engineer.

Graves shall have a clear opening of 650mm wide by 2050mm long and be dug to a minimum depth of 1200mm for a single interment and 1800mm for a double interment. Grave dimensions different to the standard should be indicated on the Cemeteries Application form. The minimum depth of cover over the upper most surface of a coffin to the surrounding ground level shall be 900mm.

Graves in the Grenfell Lawn Cemetery shall be prepared for double interment unless otherwise stated at time of application. If rock is struck and can not be dug to the required depth the plot should be marked as single depth and a new grave prepared if required. Prepared graves shall not be left open for any more than 48 hours

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for a new grave and not more than 12 hours for a second interment. Open graves shall be securely covered until 3 hours before the scheduled funeral time.

### **3.5 Grave sequencing in the Grenfell Lawn Cemetery.**

Plots in the Lawn Cemetery can not be reserved. New interments (other than a second interment) must take the next available plot in the sequence. Sequencing of graves in the beam shall be done to avoid a new grave being opened adjoining to an existing grave that has been opened within the last 3 months. Sequencing may also be changed if there are issues with grave stability or ground water inundation. Plots on the eastern side of the beam should be used first.

### **3.6 Closure of graves**

Graves shall be backfilled within 1 hour of the conclusion of the funeral and should be done in accordance with the Public Health Act 1991 and the Public Health (Disposal of Bodies) Regulations 2002.

### **3.7 Columbarium**

The Grenfell Cemetery Columbarium shall be maintained by Council staff only. Placement of ashes and plaques shall be done only by Council staff or a suitably qualified Monumental Mason contracted by Council.

## **4 PLAQUES, MONUMENTS AND MARKING OF GRAVES.**

Council shall ensure that all graves are marked in the Lawn Cemetery and that a record is made of the date and location of all interments. Council has the right to mark a grave if it feels that the grave location will be lost to visitors or family have not made an application for a plaque or headstone within a reasonable length of time.

### **4.1 Monuments**

No monuments shall be placed or permitted to remain in the Lawn Cemetery section other than those placed by Council. A Cemeteries Application form must be submitted and approved by Council for monumental work in the General Cemetery. All monumental work shall be carried out by a suitably qualified monumental mason.

### **4.2 Plaques in the Lawn Cemetery**

Plaques placed in the Lawn Cemetery shall be of the type approved by Council and be on a plaque request form as shown in appendix A. Plaques shall be of cast bronze and be 320mm long by 152mm wide.

### *4.2.1 Wording of plaques*

Wording of plaques shall be made in accordance with the plaque request form. At a minimum they shall include:

- a) Surname
- b) First Name – alias may be added after in brackets.
- c) Date of birth if known (shown as dd.mm.yyyy) or approximate age.
- d) Date of death. (shown as dd.mm.yyyy)

A plaque request form shall only be submitted by the next of kin or by a delegate of the next of kin or delegate by legal documentation. Council has the right to word or reword a plaque request form if considered necessary. No offensive wording shall be placed on any plaque.

Wording shall be kept to the spaces available in the plaque request form. Any additional wording can be added if it can be accommodated on the plaque and any additional costs will be paid for by the family or estate.

### *4.2.2 Badges, crosses, flowers and other motifs*

The badges and crosses available are shown on the plaque request form as shown in Appendix A. Additional badges can be placed on approval by Council and shall be paid for by the family or estate. A maximum of two badges or crosses per side are allowed. Military service badges require approval from the Department of Veteran Affairs but will not require additional payment. Where a military badge or organisational badge such as a masons badge is requested, the badge shall be placed on the side of the respective detachable name plate in the case of a double interment. Military or organisational badges may be placed on a detachable plate if sufficient space is available.

### *4.2.3 Photographs*

Photographs can be placed on a bronze plaque but must be approved by Council. The photograph frame shall be of a type offered by the foundry and be of the smallest size available. Photographs and frames shall not be placed on the Granite desks. Photographs and frames shall be of sufficient strength to prevent damage during Council's maintenance activities. All damage to photographs and frames and any replacement costs shall be the sole responsibility of the family. Council has the right to remove any damaged photograph and frame without the consent on the family. When adding a photograph and frame to a plaque, its location in relation to any future detachable plates must be considered. Any replacement of a plaque due to incorrect photograph positioning shall be the sole responsibility of the family.

### *4.2.4 Placement and removal of plaques*

The placement and removal of plaques shall only be done by Council. Requests for the removal and replacement of plaques can be made by the next of kin if errors have been made on critical information such as names and dates. The cost of the replacement of the plaque and the cost of removal of any existing plaque shall be incurred by the family or estate. Where an error has been made by Council the plaque shall be replaced at Council's cost.

### *4.2.5 Maintenance of plaques*

Maintenance shall be conducted by Council only and will be conducted when required.

### **4.3 Cemetery Records**

Council shall maintain cemetery plans and electronic files of all burials and placement of ashes within the Weddin Shire.

## **5. MAINTENANCE**

Council will ensure that maintenance will be carried out so that the Cemeteries are safe for public and Council employees and that their overall presentation is acceptable to visitors. Other works will be carried out at the Caragabal Cemetery upon request.

### **5.1 Grenfell Lawn Cemetery**

#### *5.1.1 Mowing*

Mowing of the Lawn Cemetery shall be conducted weekly in the warmer months and once fortnightly in the colder months. Consideration for additional mowing should be made prior to significant dates or events such as Anzac Day, Easter, Mothers Day, Fathers day or before a grave side ceremony.

#### *5.1.2 Irrigation*

Irrigation and watering of the Lawn Cemetery area shall be conducted three times a week in the warmer months and once a week in the colder months. Where water availability is limited, hand watering will be undertaken on an as needed basis, taking into consideration labour force and plant available at the time.

#### *5.1.3 Subsidence*

Any grave that has subsided more than 100mm below the surrounding ground level shall be filled and levelled to the surrounding ground level. Consideration for additional filling of subsided graves should be made prior to significant dates or events such as Anzac Day, Easter, Mothers Day, Fathers day or before a grave side ceremony.

#### *5.1.4 Weeds*

Inspections for weeds in the Lawn Cemetery section shall be carried out monthly. If found they shall be removed or sprayed where possible. Noxious weeds shall be reported to Council's Noxious Weeds Officer.

### **5.2 Grenfell General Cemetery and Village General Cemeteries.**

Open space areas in the cemeteries are defined as areas where there are no graves or areas other than public access areas to current grave locations. The cemetery area is defined as areas where graves are currently located and public access areas to graves is available.

#### *5.2.1 Slashing and mowing*

Mowing in the General Cemetery area shall be conducted when the average height of the vegetation reaches greater than 150mm but shall be done not less than four times a year. Slashing in the open space within the cemeteries shall be done when the average height of the vegetation reaches greater than 300mm but shall not be done any less than four times a year. Consideration for additional mowing and slashing should be made prior to significant dates or events such as Anzac Day, Easter, Mothers Day, Fathers day or before a grave side ceremony.

#### *5.2.2 Irrigation*

Irrigation will not be undertaken in the General Cemeteries or open spaces.

#### *5.2.3 Subsidence*

Any grave not associated with a monument surround, railing or fencing or that could be a hazard to visitors that has subsided more than 100mm below the surrounding ground level shall be filled and levelled to the surrounding ground level.

#### *5.2.4 Weeds*

Weed spraying in the General Cemetery shall be done when considered necessary due to varying seasonal conditions but shall not be done less than once in mid winter and not less than once in late spring depending on conditions. Noxious weeds shall be reported to Council's Noxious Weeds Officer. The open space areas will not be sprayed for weeds unless noxious weeds are found or if considered necessary to control weed infestation of the adjoining cemetery areas. Particular attention should be made in areas of Spiny Burr Grass, Catheads and Khaki Weed to minimise infiltration into clothing.

### **5.3 Removal of unauthorised structures.**

Council has the right to remove and dispose of all unauthorised structures such as fencing, railing or edging around graves, monuments, statues, vases or holders, photographs, memorial plaques and attachments, plantings such as flowers and trees or any other structures that may detract from the presentation of the Cemetery or become a hazard to the public and council employees.

### **5.4 Maintenance and repair of monuments in the General Cemeteries**

All maintenance to monuments, grave surrounds or slabs shall be done by a suitably qualified Monumental Mason. Replacement or major changes to any monument, grave surround or slab shall require approval by Council. Minor maintenance such as removal of weeds, grass and moss from a monument or around a grave site may be done by family with verbal approval by Council's Engineering Department. Columbarium maintenance shall be carried out by Council staff.

### **5.5 Trees and shrubs**

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Fallen or damaged limbs shall be removed and disposed. Trees shall be replaced if diseased or dead.

### **5.6 Vandalism**

Vandalism found in the Cemeteries will be reported to the Police within 12 hours and be repaired by Council unless associated with a grave, monument or plaque in the General Cemeteries. Vandalism of a grave, monument or plaque in the General Cemeteries will be reported to the family who will make arrangements for any repairs or removal of graffiti. Vandalism found in the Lawn Cemetery will be repaired by Council and any graffiti will be removed within one business day.

### **5.7 Removal of rubbish**

As part of the weekly inspections by Council staff, garbage bins shall be emptied, rubbish removed and disposed. Cut flowers or artificial flowers shall be removed if they become strewn about or if it is considered unsightly. Vases or other ornaments shall be removed if broken or disruptive to public or Council operations.

### **5.8 Access Road Maintenance**

Gravel road maintenance shall be done in accordance with any public road maintenance policies adopted by Council.

Bitumen sealed road maintenance shall be done in accordance with any public road maintenance policies adopted by council.

### **5.9 Boundary Fencing – Grenfell, Bimbi and Caragabal**

Boundary fencing shall be placed and maintained to a level that will prevent livestock from entering the cemetery grounds and be safe for visitors and Council staff. Replacement and repair of fencing adjoining a road reserve or public lands will be the sole responsibility of Council. Replacement and repair of fencing adjoining private lands or leased public land will be the sole responsibility of the private land owner or holder of the lease. Where a fence allows stock to enter the cemetery grounds, Council may make temporary repairs until permanent repairs by the owner can be made. Fencing repairs or replacement shall be made within one month of any notification from Council to the owner for the need for such repairs or replacement.

## **6. Review and Amendment**

- This policy shall be reviewed by September 2021 and thereafter at four (4) yearly intervals, to ensure it meets all statutory requirements and the needs of Council.
- This policy may be amended or cancelled by Council at any time without prior notice or obligation to any person.

## **7. Adoption**

- This policy commences as from the date of adoption by Council, being 18 April 2013 and replaces any previous policy.

## **8. History**

<b>Version</b>	<b>Details</b>
5.5.1	Adopted 16 July 2009
5.5.2	Adopted 18 April 2013
5.5.3	Adopted 20 April 2017



**Appendix 1 - Cemeteries Application for Burial, Placement of ashes and Monumental Work.**

## Cemeteries Application form

**WEDDIN SHIRE COUNCIL**

<input type="checkbox"/> Burial <input type="checkbox"/> Placement of Ashes <input type="checkbox"/> Monumental Work <i>(See part 5 only)</i> <small>Tick appropriate boxes</small>
<p><b>1. Deceased Details</b></p> <p>Surname <input style="width: 200px;" type="text"/>      Given Names <input style="width: 300px;" type="text"/></p> <p>Date of Birth <input style="width: 100px;" type="text"/>      Date of death <input style="width: 100px;" type="text"/>      Age at death <input style="width: 100px;" type="text"/>      Gender <input style="width: 100px;" type="text"/></p> <p>Last address <input style="width: 600px;" type="text"/></p>
<p><b>2. Funeral Director Details</b></p> <p>Contact Name and Company <input style="width: 600px;" type="text"/></p> <p>Postal Address <input style="width: 600px;" type="text"/></p> <p>Contact phone number <input style="width: 150px;" type="text"/>      Signature <input style="width: 150px;" type="text"/>      Date <input style="width: 100px;" type="text"/></p>
<p><b>3. Next of kin or Executor Authorising Burial</b></p> <p>Name <input style="width: 350px;" type="text"/></p> <p>Postal Address <input style="width: 600px;" type="text"/></p> <p>Relationship to deceased <input style="width: 250px;" type="text"/></p> <p>Contact phone number <input style="width: 150px;" type="text"/>      Signature <input style="width: 150px;" type="text"/>      Date <input style="width: 100px;" type="text"/></p>
<p><b>4. Burial details</b></p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> New burial                  <input type="checkbox"/> Open existing grave  <input type="checkbox"/> Special grave dimensions required      Length (m) <input style="width: 50px;" type="text"/>      Width (m) <input style="width: 50px;" type="text"/>  <input type="checkbox"/> Single depth only <i>(Lawn Cemetery - Standard is double depth)</i>  <small>Tick appropriate boxes</small> </p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Grenfell General                  <input type="checkbox"/> Grenfell Lawn                  <input type="checkbox"/> Grenfell Columbarium  <input type="checkbox"/> Bimbi Cemetery                  <input type="checkbox"/> Caragabal Cemetery         </p> <p>Burial Location (For Reserved Plots or Reopen)</p> <p>Demomination <input style="width: 150px;" type="text"/>      Section <input style="width: 50px;" type="text"/>      Row <input style="width: 50px;" type="text"/>      Plot <input style="width: 50px;" type="text"/></p> <p>Name on existing grave <input style="width: 350px;" type="text"/></p> <p><small>For Lawn Cemetery burials a Plaque Application should be completed and forward to Council.</small></p>

### 5. Monumental works to be carried out

- New work                       Work to existing grave
- Request to install ashes at Columbarium  
*(Ashes interment to Columbarium by Council only)*

Contact Name and Company (if different from Funeral Directors details)

Postal Address

Contact phone number *Monumental work must be carried out by a suitably qualified Monumental Mason.*

Signature                       Date

Description of work to be carried out.

(Additional information may be attached)

Proposed date of works

#### Office use

Interment of body	\$	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>
Grave Fees	\$	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>
Monumental Fees	\$	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>
Additional Fees	\$	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>
Placement of ashes in grave	\$	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>
Placement of ashes in Columbarium	\$	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$</b>	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>

Council Receipt Number                       Date of payment







Additional details

Appendix 2 - Grenfell Lawn Cemetery Plaque application.

CONTACT PERSON: .....  
NAME: .....  
ADDRESS: .....  
TELEPHONE: .....

THE COUNCIL OF THE SHIRE OF WEDDIN  
TOWN OF GRENFELL - LAWN CEMETERY

DETAILS REQUIRED FOR BRONZE PLAQUE  
\*\*\* PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY \*\*\*

"A"  "B"  "C"  "D"  "E"  "F" 

IS CROSS REQUIRED ON BASE PLATE: YES/NO IF YES, STATE TYPE OF CROSS: .....

SURNAME (BASE PLATE)

CHRISTIAN NAMES + OTHER INFORMATION  
SEE SAMPLE (DETACHABLE PLATE)  
MAX. 6 LINES

\*\*\* PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY \*\*\*

WORDING FOR DOUBLE INTERMENTS SHOULD BE SELECTED VERY CAREFULLY, IN ORDER THAT IT IS SUITABLE FOR THE SECOND DETACHABLE PLAQUE.

INSCRIPTION  
SEE SAMPLE (BASE PLATE)  
MAX. 3 LINES

SEE THE REVERSE SIDE FOR THE LAYOUT FOR A DOUBLE INTERMENTS

SHIRE OF WEDDIN. SAMPLE LAYOUT ON BRONZE PLAQUE.

PLAQUE SIZE : C 320 x 152 E.

