

## WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

### Report by the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development

Housing, Environment and Economic Development Committee:  
11 January 2012

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**Subject: Proposed acquisition of ground for the extension of Kilmaronock Cemetery, by Gartocharn**

#### **1. Purpose**

- 1.1** To seek Committee approval to the proposed acquisition of 3,031 sqm (0.75 acres) of ground at Kilmaronock Church, Old Military Road, by Gartocharn to extend the existing cemetery.

#### **2. Background**

- 2.1** It has been identified that there is a requirement to extend the burial capacity at Kilmaronock Cemetery. Currently there is limited space for new lairs and it is estimated that the Cemetery will reach full capacity by July 2012.
- 2.2** The Estates Section has undertaken some preliminary investigations and ground adjacent to the existing cemetery has been identified as a potential option for an extension to the cemetery. The ground extends to 3,031 sqm (0.75 acres) and is shown hatched on the attached plan.
- 2.3** The ground proposed to be purchased is currently owned by Mr. James Caldwell of Badshalloch Steadings, Kilmaronock and is currently used as agricultural ground. Provisional terms have been agreed with Mr. Caldwell for the purchase of the ground at a price of £1,500 with the Council meeting Mr. Caldwell's legal costs up to a maximum of £500.

#### **3. Main Issues**

- 3.1** The existing cemetery is approaching burial capacity and therefore it is important that the additional ground required for the extension is acquired to continue to provide the service for the surrounding communities.
- 3.2** Given the current rate of burials it is estimated that the ground proposed to be acquired would provide enough space for burials for the next 100 years.
- 3.3** Planning permission would be required for the change of use from agricultural ground to a cemetery. Initial discussions with Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park, which is the planning authority, have suggested that the change of use may be acceptable subject to the actual layout and boundaries proposed being suitable.

**3.4** Detailed site investigations will also be required to be undertaken as part of the design process however given the location next to the existing cemetery it is not considered likely that any significant issues will be identified.

#### **4. People Implications**

**4.1** There are some people implications from this proposal with resources required from the Estates and Legal Services Sections to conclude the proposed acquisition and the ongoing resources from Greenspace to develop the cemetery extension.

#### **5. Financial Implications**

**5.1** The proposed purchase price is £1,500 together with the seller's legal costs up to a maximum of £500. The estimated additional costs for the actual development of the cemetery extension are £500 for a planning application, £2,000 for ground investigations, £1,000 for the design and £80,000 for the development of the cemetery extension. Funding for this development work will be sought from the 2012/13 capital plan.

#### **6. Risk Analysis**

**6.1** The most significant risk is that the cemetery is not extended and the Council is unable to continue to provide the service. If the acquisition proceeds the main risk is that the ground is subsequently found to be unsuitable however this is considered to be unlikely and is not considered to outweigh the risk of not providing the service.

#### **7. Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)**

**7.1** No significant issues were identified in a screening for potential equality impact of this proposal.

#### **8. Strategic Assessment**

**8.1** The Council has identified four main strategic priorities for 2011/2012, namely Social & Economic Regeneration, Financial Strategy, Asset Management Strategy; and Fit for Purpose Services. This proposal will primarily contribute to social regeneration and service provision by allowing the continued provision of burial services for outlying areas within the Authority.

#### **9. Conclusions and Recommendations**

**9.1** The existing cemetery at Kilmaronock is approaching full capacity and additional ground is required to allow the burial service to continue to be provided. An area of ground has been identified for acquisition and provisional terms have been agreed with the landowner.

**9.2** It is recommended that:

- (i) the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development be authorised to conclude negotiations with Mr. James Caldwell for the acquisition of 3,031 sqm of ground at Kilmaronock Church (shown hatched on the attached plan) for £1,500 together with Legal costs of up to £500 and development costs of £80,000; and
- (ii) the Head of Legal, Democratic and Regulatory Services be authorised to conclude the transaction subject to such legal conditions that are considered appropriate.

**Elaine Melrose**

**Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development**

**Date: 12 December 2011**

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**Appendix:** Appendix 1 - Location plan

**Background Papers:** Background papers are retained within the Greenspace and Estates Section's files.

**Wards Affected:** 1