



Comhairle Cathrach na Gaillimhe
Galway City Council

Galway City Council

New Lawn Cemetery (Old Dublin Road)

Planning Report



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Document Control Sheet	
Document Reference	P01-Planning Report
Report Status	Issue
Report Date	May 2023
Current Revision	C
Client:	Galway City Council
Client Address:	Galway City Council City Hall College Road Galway H91 X4K8
Project Number	11614

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Revision	Description	Author:	Date	Reviewed By:	Date	Authorised by:	Date
A	Issue	MC	13/09/23	BG	12/09/2024	BG	12/09/2024
B	Issue	MC	16/09/24	BG	16/09/24	BG	16/09/24
C	Issue	MC	17/09/2024	NmcD	17/09/2024	BG	17/09/2024

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Tobin Consulting Engineers has been appointed by Galway City Council as lead consultant to prepare a planning application for works associated with a New Lawn Cemetery, on Old Dublin Road Galway. The proposed site is located on old Dublin Road Co Galway adjacent to the Connaught Hotel. The location of the site is outlined in figure 1. The existing site is a sports playing field (herein referred to as the proposed development).

To facilitate the proposed works, Galway City Council are applying for planning permission in accordance with part 8 of the Planning Regulations 2001, as amended, for proposed Development and this Planning Report provides a summary of the documentation submitted as part of the Planning Application and collates the main conclusions of the Reports submitted.

It is anticipated, should planning permission be granted, that works will commence in the summer of 2025 with the cemetery opening in 2026.

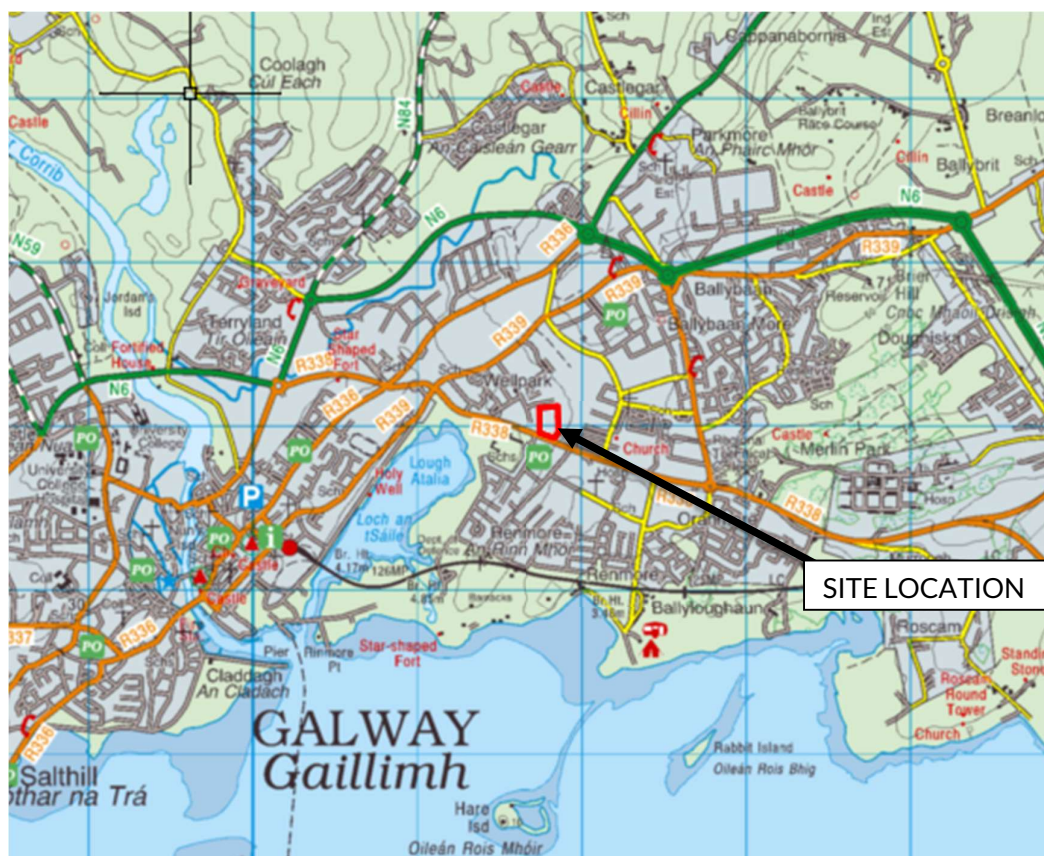


Figure 1- Site Location

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1.1 BACKGROUND

Galway City Council currently operate and maintain two cemeteries (Bohermore Cemetery & Rahoon Cemetery).

Current Rate of Burial:

- Bohermore – Average of 161 nr. burials per year over the last 5 years
- Rahoon - Average of 157 nr. Burials per year over the last 5 years

Current Rate of Plot Sale

- Bohermore (Urns) – Average of 16 nr. Over the last 3 years
- Rahoon (Grave plots) – Average of 80 nr. Over the last 4 years

Predicted Capacity (Years)

- Rahoon Existing Traditional Grave Plots – Unknown
- Rahoon New Traditional Grave Plots – 3 years
- Rahoon Lawn Grave Plots – 8 years
- Rahoon Urn Plots – 15+ years
- Bohermore Traditional Grave Plots – Unknown
- Bohermore Urn Plots – 5 to 7 years

Due to foreseen limited capacity and the proximity of available graves to Galway City, Galway City Council has resolved to pursue the construction of a New Lawn Cemetery at the site in question including Part 8 Planning application) for the provision of a circa 1.7 hectare new lawn cemetery at Old Dublin Road Galway. The additional cemetery will relieve pressure on the existing cemeteries and increase the capacity for burials in Galway City as a whole.

The project is identified in the Galway City Council development plan:

Maintain existing burial grounds and provide new city cemetery site(s) in the city or city environs and approach cemetery design with an emphasis on landscaping and natural amenities. (Galway City Development Plan 2023-2029)

1.2 LOCATION OF PROPOSED SITE

The site is located on the R338 Old Dublin Road, on Recreation & Amenity lands adjacent to the Connaught Hotel. It is currently used as a grassed sports pitch and has consists of flat topography at an elevation of circa 19m OD. The site slopes from c. 21 m AOD along the eastern site boundary to 15m AOD along the western site boundary. Residential properties form the boundaries on its western and northern extents and it is bounded by the hotel and the Dublin Road on its eastern and southern boundaries respectively. The Renmore Wastewater Plant (pumping station) is located on the southwest corner of the site. The pitch is currently accessed from the junction entrance to the Connaught Hotel. The site area is approximately 1.7 hectare.



Figure 2 - Existing Site

At time of writing, the site is not located within a known flood zone from geospatial information provided on www.floodinfo.ie.

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2.0 PLANNING APPLICATION DOCUMENTATION

The planning application pack consists of 1 copy of the following documentation:

1. Planning Report (this document)
2. Plans and Elevations, consisting of:
 - Site Location Map
 - Site Location Drawing
 - Landscape Masterplan
 - Photomontage
 - Welfare Building
 - Reception Building
3. Appropriate Assessment
4. Road Safety Audit
5. Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment Report
6. Hydrogeological Report
7. Existing Tree Survey
8. Site Notice
9. Newspaper Advert

3.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT WORKS

The development will consist of the provision of a lawn cemetery which will cater for grave plots, urn plots, memorial garden (which will include an area for cremated remains), access roads, junction provision, parking, staff welfare building, machinery shed, boundary treatment, signage, surface water drainage, structure for the interment of cremated remains, headstone foundations and appropriate landscaping throughout the site to minimise the visual impact of the proposed development on the adjoining properties.

A copy of the **Drawings** with regard to the proposal are attached in appendix A

4.0 PROVISIONAL ELEMENT DETAILS

It is anticipated that a total of 68 formal parking spaces will be provided inclusive of disabled parking bays. (Note, usually, from observation at Ragoon and Bohermore Cemeteries, the maximum number of vehicles attending a funeral at a cemetery is typically 40). It is intended that an additional 25 informal car parking spaces will be provided along the perimeter road of the cemetery.

It is anticipated that a total of 1514 provisional grave spaces will be provided measuring 1.2m x 2.75m in area. A total of 1016 provisional urn plots will be provided measure 0.8m x 0.8m in area. A total of 450 provisional spaces in the columbarium walls will be provided. It is intended that the cemetery be maintained as a lawn cemetery with traditional plots simply having a headstone without a surround, with a 1.8m wide footpath at the foot of the grave.

A public disabled persons toilet will be provided in the reception building at the entrance to the site. The reception area will be utilised to store some relevant information of the details of graves in the site for persons seeking to find particular graves within the site.

A staff toilet, canteen and machinery storage shed will be provided in the welfare building in the northeast corner of the site. This area will also include a stockpile area for excess material accumulated from the excavation of graves which will be removed on a regular basis.

A partial one-way traffic system will be implemented on the perimeter and central road around the cemetery. The interior roads will be constructed from asphalt/ bitumen and internal paths will be constructed from concrete. In

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addition to the footpaths, it is also proposed to cast the plinth beam for the headstones during the construction stage of the project.

It is proposed to continue the wall and rail boundary fence across the southern boundary of the site (to match the exiting entrance to the Connaught Hotel). A post and rail fence will be installed along the eastern boundary of the site with provision to maintain existing pedestrian access to the site.

A new electrical, water and sewer connection will be made to the welfare building and reception building. The exact alignment and sizing of these services will be made at detailed design stage of the project.

External taps and power points will be provided throughout the cemetery to cater for cemetery masses and to provide water points for persons to maintain graves.

2 X 1000 l bins (1 waste bin & 1 green waste bin) will be provided onsite that will be utilised by both Galway city Staff and the Public for waste management. Some smaller bins may be provided should such need arise during the operational period.

Stormwater attenuation will be provided to ensure that site runoff is limited to green field runoff rates. It is proposed to leverage the installation of the vegetation screening area with Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) to utilise and detain stormwater runoff appropriately.

The site will have a vegetation screening buffer on all boundaries of approximately 5m in width to reduce the visual impact to and from the cemetery. It is intended to utilise the existing vegetation as part of the screening

5.0 PROPOSED CEMETERY OPERATIONS

Once the initial groundworks and buildings have been constructed and the cemetery is formally opened, it is anticipated that graves will be designated, dug and utilised in a systematic process.

It is intended that graves will be excavated utilising mini digger and small site dumper. Under no circumstances will workers enter the excavation without appropriate trench shoring and training. Graves are not to be left open for an extended period of time and all openings should be supervised to ensure protection to the public and staff. Should concerns arise over the stability of the opening, shoring should be installed for the duration of funeral. Excess soil material will be temporarily stored onsite where it will be regularly removed and recycled.

It is proposed that 24hr access to the cemetery for pedestrians however, vehicular access will be limited to daylight hours each day. It is proposed that security level lighting will be provided and operate at night.

Galway City Council will maintain all elements of the site to a level of their discretion, including but not limited, the management of waste, the maintenance of roads, paths and lawn areas of graves, the management of weeds and vegetation, the maintenance of the buildings and toilet, the excavation and backfilling of graves,

6.0 SCREENING FOR APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

A Screening for AA, in Accordance with The EU Habitats Directive, has been carried out on the proposed development and it has been concluded that there is no potential for likely significant effect on any European Natura 2000 sites. The details of the stage 1 **Screening for AA** are attached in appendix **B**

7.0 ROAD SAFETY

To date a stage F Road Safety Audit (RSA) has been undertaken on the site. It has been concluded to utilise the existing entrance to the Connaught Hotel as part of the development in order to reduce potential traffic conflicts

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on the old Dublin Road and between sites off the Old Dublin Road. A stage 2 RSA is scheduled to be undertaken during the detailed design stage. The details of the [Stage F RSA](#) are attached in Appendix C

8.0 CULTURAL HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

A preliminary Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment of the potential impact of proposed works associated with the provision of a circa 1.7-hectare new lawn cemetery at Old Dublin Road Galway, has been carried out on the site and has been concluded that there is low risk of discovery of significant artifacts within the site boundary. The details of The [Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment](#) are attached in appendix D

9.0 HYDROGEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

A review of the Hydrogeological report prepared by BlueRock Environmental Limited in 2022 was carried out by Tobin Consulting Engineers to determine the suitability of the site and assess potential impacts on groundwater should the site be used as a cemetery. Given the presences of a well close to the eastern boundary of the site it was found that traditional gravel plots could not be located within a 50m radius of the well. The details of The [Hydrogeological Assessment](#) are attached in appendix E

10.0 TREE ASSESSMENT

A tree survey, in accordance with BS 5837 was carried out to assess the impact of the proposed works on the existing trees on the site and to determine root protection zones and along with the condition of the existing trees. It is proposed to utilize existing trees, where possible, to form as part of the vegetation screening buffer. A copy of the [Tree Assessment](#) is attached in appendix F.

A copy of the [Site Notice & Newspaper Notice](#) is attached in appendix G.