

INNER SYDNEY CEMETERY DEMAND ASSESSMENT

19 SEPTEMBER 2017
PREPARED FOR SOUTHERN METROPOLITAN CEMETERIES TRUST

URBIS

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Southern Metropolitan Cemeteries Trust operates the Eastern Suburbs Memorial Park at Matraville within the Randwick Local Government Area (LGA). Burial space within the Eastern Suburbs Memorial Park is reaching capacity and the Trust is proposing to extend the active burial years of the cemetery by facilitating the creation of approximately 3,000 additional full body burial plots.

1.2. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The Southern Metropolitan Cemeteries Trust has engaged Urbis to undertake a supply and demand assessment of burial space within Inner Sydney. The assessment projects the required burial plots to meet demand of the inner Sydney population and compares to the existing and proposed supply to estimate the burial life of cemeteries in Inner Sydney.

1.3. CATCHMENT AREA

The Inner Sydney catchment has been defined as the Central District comprising the LGAs of Bayside, Burwood, Canada Bay, Inner West, Randwick, Strathfield, Sydney, Waverley and Woollahra.

1.4. LEGISLATION

The NSW Parliament passed the Cemeteries and Crematoria Act in November 2013, which reformed the operation of cemeteries and crematoriums in NSW. The Act contains provisions relating to the administration and regulation of the interment industry, which is overseen and managed by the State Agency, Cemeteries and Crematoria NSW.

Part 4 of the Act introduces provisions for the operation of renewable tenure, whereby a burial right can be granted for a limited number of years. Under Part 4, the tenure period can be 25 to 99 years. A burial plot can be reused upon the expiry of the burial right. Part 4 has not been enacted yet and it is uncertain as to whether cemetery operators will be required to offer renewable interment rights. Renewable tenure had already been operating in two Sydney cemeteries, Waverley Cemetery and the Sydney Natural Burial Park. Renewable tenure will not apply retrospectively or to religious consecrated cemeteries that require perpetual interment.

The future enactment of Part 4 of the Cemeteries and Crematoria Act is likely to increase the capacity (and lifespan) of cemeteries in Sydney to accommodate future burials as there will be an ability to reuse some grave sites. There has been limited work done on the extent of the potential impact. As a result, the future rate of offering and the public demand for renewable interment rights is currently unknown.

2. CEMETERY SUPPLY

2.1. EXISTING

The Eastern Suburbs Memorial Park is the largest cemetery in the Central District covering approximately 35 hectares. The Southern Metropolitan Cemeteries Trust provided data on burial plots as outlined in the table below. As of September 2017, 71,876 burial plots have been sold at the Eastern Suburbs Memorial Park. Of those burial plots sold, 67,112 are currently used, whilst 4,764 have been pre-purchased. There are 2,694 plots available for purchase, with a further 434 plots currently under investigation as they are inhibited by water and/or roots.

Eastern Suburbs Memorial Park Burial Plots

September 2017

Table 2.1

Status of Burial Plots	Burial Plots
Used	67,112
Pre-purchased	4,764
Available for purchase	2,694
Miscellaneous*	434
Total	75,076

Note: * Miscellaneous include plots that are currently inhibited by roots/or water
Source: Southern Metropolitan Cemeteries Trust

The table below outlines the operational cemeteries that fall within the Central District and their estimated remaining burial plots. Urbis requested data from all cemeteries on available burial plots. Data on remaining plots was attained from Southern Metropolitan and Cemeteries Trust, St Stephens Church and Randwick Council. Where data was unavailable, satellite imagery was used to estimate the number of remaining plots.

There is estimated to be a total of around 8,260 burial plots available as at September 2017 with almost 90% estimated to be within the Eastern Suburbs Memorial Park. Most of the other cemeteries are approaching capacity with Waverley and Camperdown cemeteries no longer selling plots.

Operational Cemeteries

Central District, September 2017

Table 2.2

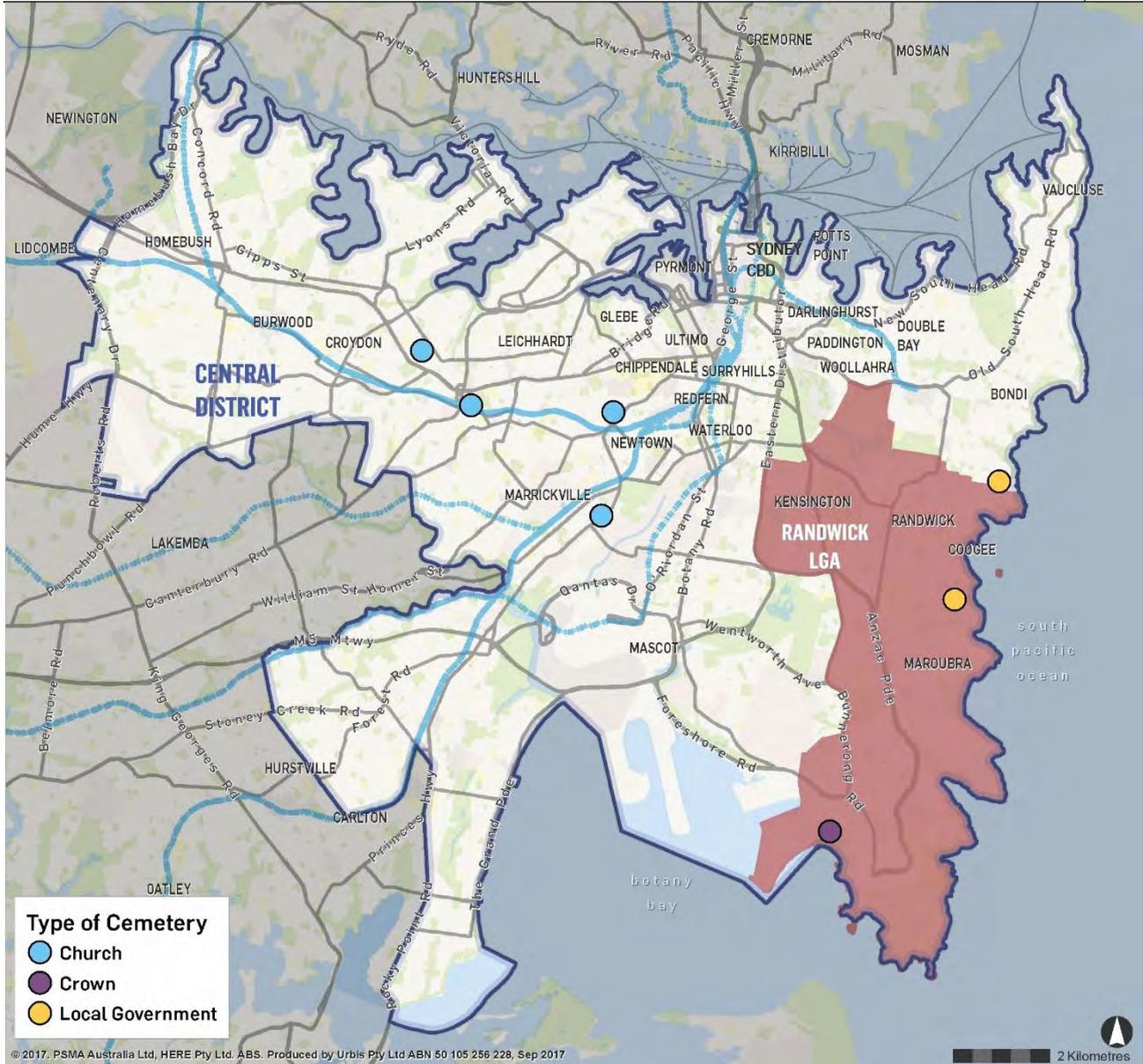
Cemetery	LGA	Ownership	Estimated Remaining Plots
Eastern Suburbs Memorial Park	Randwick	Southern Metropolitan Cemeteries Trust	7,458
Waverley Cemetery	Waverley	Waverley Council	<500
Camperdown Cemetery	Inner West	St Stephens Church	0
Randwick Cemetery	Randwick	Randwick Council	0
St David's Uniting Church Cemetery	Inner West	St David's Uniting Church	<100
Petersham Cemetery	Inner West	Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney	<100
St Peters Anglican Church	Inner West	St Peters Anglican Church	<100
Total			~8,260

Source: NSW Cemeteries and Crematoria Register, Southern Metropolitan Cemeteries Trust, Urbis

Map 2.1 outlines the location of the existing operational cemeteries in the Central District as included in the NSW Cemeteries and Crematoria Register.

Cemeteries in Central District

Map 2.1



2.2. PROPOSED

The proposed expansion of the subject site involves the proposed extension of the active burial years of the cemetery by facilitating the creation of approximately 3,000 additional full body burial plots in addition to space for ash interments.

Urbis is unaware of any proposed additional or expanded cemeteries within the Central District.

3. BURIAL DEMAND

In considering the future need for burial space, it must be identified that cemeteries are an intergenerational investment in infrastructure. Rookwood Necropolis (NSW), Woronora General Cemetery (NSW), Springvale Botanical Cemetery (VIC) and Fawkner Crematorium and Memorial Park (VIC), established 1868, 1895, 1901 and 1905 respectively, are examples of cemeteries still in operation, demonstrating the importance of the significant future planning required for the development of cemeteries.

Urbis has assessed the demand for burial plots using the following approach and key assumptions:

- Mortality rates by age group across NSW have been calculated from Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data. It is assumed that mortality rates will decline into the future as average life expectancies increase. As such, Urbis has adjusted mortality rates so that they correspond to the forecast number of deaths in NSW as projected by the NSW Department of Planning and Environment.
- Projected population by age group for the catchment has been sourced from the NSW Department of Planning and Environment. The adjusted mortality rates for NSW were applied to the population projections by age for the catchment areas to estimate future deaths.
- The proportion of deaths that result in burial in Metropolitan Sydney were outlined from the 2014-15 Crematories and Crematoria NSW Activity Report comprising 33%. The ratio is assumed to be constant moving forward though it is noted that scarcity could result in high prices for burial plots and result in a low proportion of people choosing burial.
- It is noted that not all people are buried in new plots with some people choosing existing burial sites such as family members being buried together. As such, an allowance has been made on the proportion of burials that will occur in new burial plots. Data from the Cemetery Reform Group indicated that approximately 73% of burials occurred in unused burial sites.
- According to the 2014-15 Crematories and Crematoria NSW Activity Report, the Sydney Central District recorded a net volume of services equal to -2,618 in 2014/15 (services minus deaths within region), indicating a significant number of services are being 'exported' to other areas throughout NSW. This likely includes the major cemeteries elsewhere in Sydney.
- It is noted that the data presented is as at 30th June 2017 and data is presented in financial year intervals.

Based on the projected number of deaths in the Central District from 2017 onwards, and assuming the proportion of burials remains constant, approximately 24,300 new burial sites will be required over the next 15 years from 2017 to 2032. This represents around three times available burial plots currently estimated to be available in the Central District. If demand for burial plots remains constant, the current stock of burial plots in the Central District would be fully absorbed in approximately five years from now (approximately 2022). It is noted that with the additional 3,000 proposed burial plots, stock would be fully absorbed in approximately seven years from now (approximately 2024), allowing for an additional two years of supply.

Within the Randwick LGA, it is projected there will be some 15,700 deaths over the period 2017 to 2032. Assuming the proportion of burials remains constant, and if people are buried close to their place of residence, around 4,100 burial sites will be required in the catchment area over the period. If no additional plots were made available, all plots would be fully absorbed by around 2043. It is noted that with the additional 3,000 proposed burial plots, stock would be fully absorbed by around 2052, allowing for an additional nine years of supply.

Burial Demand

Randwick LGA and Central District

Table 3.1

	2017-2022	2022-2027	2027-2032
Sydney Central District			
Projected deaths (cumulative)	32,279	61,071	92,213
No. of burials in unused sites (cumulative)	8,518	16,115	24,333
Remaining burial sites* (at end of period)	2,782	-4,815	-13,033
Randwick LGA			
Projected deaths (cumulative)	5,704	10,557	15,695
No. of burials in unused sites (cumulative)	1,505	2,786	4,142
Remaining burial sites* (at end of period)	8,995	7,714	6,358

Source: Urbis

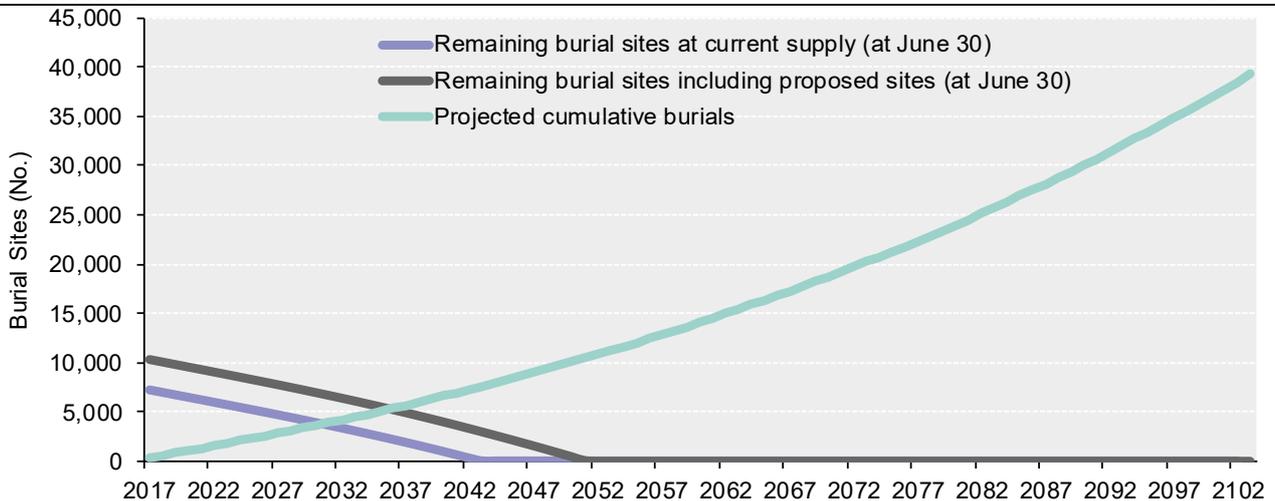
Note: * includes proposed supply

By projecting the remaining unused burial sites in the Randwick LGA beyond 2017, it is estimated that if no further burial sites become available capacity will be reached at 2043. With the addition of the Eastern Suburbs Memorial Park's 3,000 spaces, capacity would be reached in approximately 2052.

Burial Demand and Supply

Randwick LGA

Chart 3.1



Source: Urbis

It is estimated that if no further burial sites become available in the Sydney Central District, exhaustion of unused burial sites will occur at 2022. With the addition of the Eastern Suburbs Memorial Park's 3,000 spaces, capacity would occur at approximately 2024.

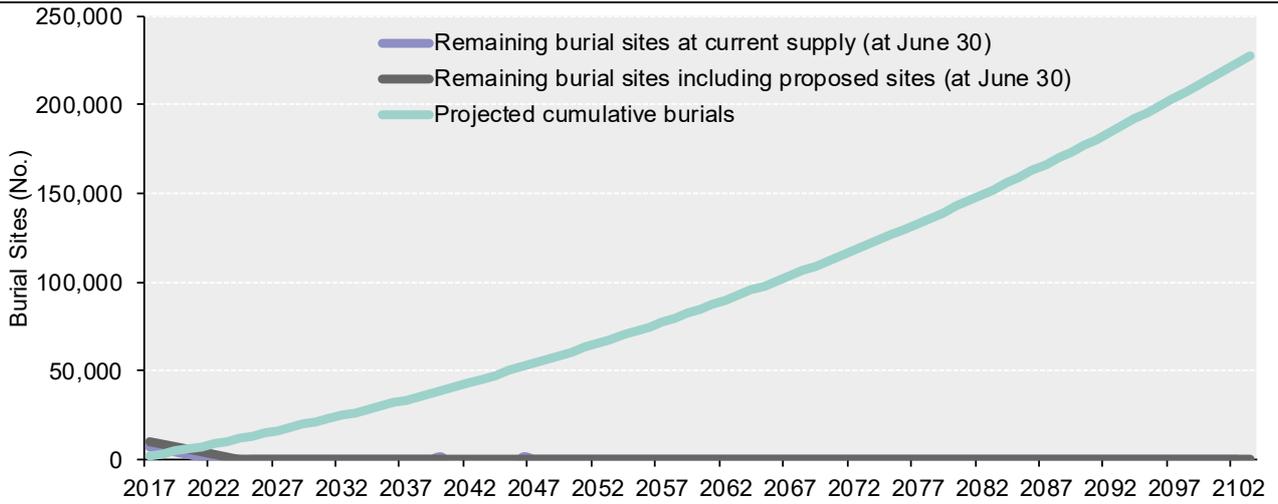
Urbis notes there may be some plots that become available in the future due to expiring leases of renewable tenure following the enactment of the Cemeteries and Crematoria Act. The rate at which renewable tenure plots will be offered compared with perpetual rights is currently unknown. In addition, the rate of uptake of a renewable plot over a perpetual plot relies on public demand for this type of burial right, which is currently unknown. Overall, even if the uptake of renewable tenure is strong, the limited existing supply of available plots in the Central District means the plots re-entering the market in 25+ years time will be well below what is needed to meet demand. As such, supply will remain exhausted with the majority of burials needed to be located outside the District.

Cemeteries represent an intergenerational investment in infrastructure for communities. The analysis indicates that the cemeteries within the Central District will be exhausted in the near future (and remain exhausted), highlighting the need for additional burial space in the region to meet community needs.

Burial Demand and Supply

Central District

Chart 3.2



Source: Urbis

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