
Case Number	18/00235/FUL (Formerly PP-06468903)
Application Type	Full Planning Application
Proposal	Conservation works to listed/non-listed historic features; walls/catacombs; and to listed/non-listed monuments, improvements to site entrance points, landscape improvements including general footpath improvements, installation of wayfinding signage, management of trees/vegetation, and improvement/inclusion of new amenities, lighting, and car parking
Location	Sheffield General Cemetery Cemetery Avenue Sheffield S11 8NT
Date Received	16/01/2018
Team	South
Applicant/Agent	Harrison Design Development
Recommendation	Grant Conditionally

Time limit for Commencement of Development

1. The development shall be begun not later than the expiration of three years from the date of this decision.

Reason: In order to comply with the requirements of the Town and Country Planning Act.

Approved/Refused Plan(s)

2. The development must be carried out in complete accordance with the following approved documents:

- Whole Site Masterplan (Planning) / 105.01.410 rev F
- Detail Area 1 - Gatehouse Forecourt / 105.01.420 rev B
- Detail Area 2 - Gatehouse Courtyard / 105.01.421 rev A
- Detail Area 3 - NC Chapel / 105.01.422 rev A
- Detail Area 4 - Central Intersection / 105.01.423 rev A
- Detail Area 5 - Montague Street Entrance + Car Park / 105.01.424 rev B
- Detail Area 5 - Montague Street Pedestrian Entrance / 105.01.425 rev B
- Detail Area 7 - Catacombs Valley / 105.01.426 rev A
- Boundary Wall PROPOSED MINOR REPAIRS TYPE A / 105.01.360 rev -
- Boundary Wall PROPOSED MAJOR REPAIRS TYPE B / 105.01.361 rev -

- Boundary Wall PROPOSED RECONSTRUCTION TYPE C / 105.01.362 rev -
- Boundary Wall PROPOSED RECONSTRUCTION for End Pier / 105.01.363 rev -
- Proposed Catacombs Terraces Section / 105-01-470 rev -
- Section F - Sheet 1 of 2 / 105-01-471 rev -
- Section F - Sheet 2 of 2 / 105-01-472 rev -
- Section C-C - Non Conformist Chapel / 105-01-475 rev -

Reason: In order to define the permission.

Pre Commencement Condition(s) – ('true conditions precedent' – see notes for definition)

3. No development shall commence until full details of measures to protect the existing trees to be retained, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and the approved measures have thereafter been implemented. These measures shall include a construction methodology statement and plan showing accurate root protection areas and the location and details of protective fencing and signs. Protection of trees shall be in accordance with BS 5837, 2005 (or its replacement) and the protected areas shall not be disturbed, compacted or used for any type of storage or fire, nor shall the retained trees, shrubs or hedge be damaged in any way. The Local Planning Authority shall be notified in writing when the protection measures are in place and the protection shall not be removed until the completion of the development.

Reason: In the interests of protecting the identified trees on site. It is essential that this condition is complied with before any other works on site commence given that damage to trees is irreversible.

Other Pre-Commencement, Pre-Occupancy and other Stage of Development Condition(s)

4. Details of the new pedestrian entrance onto Montague Street including details and samples of materials where required, and elevational drawings specifying how the exposed stonework created by the new opening shall be finished off, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before that part of the development commences. Thereafter, the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans.

Reason: In order to ensure an appropriate quality of development.

5. Details of the amendments to the existing site entrance onto Montague Street including details and samples of materials where required, and elevational drawings specifying details of the modifications, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before that part of the development commences. Thereafter, the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans.

Reason: In order to ensure an appropriate quality of development.

6. Prior to the installation of any signage within the site or its perimeter a Signage Strategy document shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, this shall include details of signage relating to the access/mobility

parking provisions. Thereafter, all signage shall be installed in accordance with the approved documentation.

Reason: In order to ensure an appropriate quality of development.

7. Prior to the installation of any lighting within the site or at its perimeter a Lighting Strategy document shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, this shall include details of the location and specifications of each item of lighting equipment. Thereafter, all signage shall be installed in accordance with the approved documentation.

Reason: In order to ensure an appropriate quality of development.

8. Prior to the installation of any refuse bins within the site, details of the location and appearance of each refuse bin shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter, all refuse bins shall be installed in accordance with the approved documentation.

Reason: In order to ensure an appropriate quality of development.

9. Prior to the installation of any handrails details of their location and design shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter, all handrails shall be installed in accordance with the approved documentation.

Reason: In order to ensure an appropriate quality of development.

10. Prior to the installation of any benches within the site details of their design and location shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter, all benches shall be installed in accordance with the approved documentation.

Reason: In order to ensure an appropriate quality of development.

11. A comprehensive and detailed hard and soft landscape scheme for the site shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before the development is commenced, or within an alternative timeframe to be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of the visual amenities of the locality.

12. The approved landscape works shall be implemented prior to the development being brought into use or within an alternative timescale to be first approved by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the landscaped areas shall be retained and they shall be cultivated and maintained for a period of 5 years from the date of implementation and any plant failures within that 5 year period shall be replaced.

Reason: In the interests of the visual amenities of the locality.

13. The Local Planning Authority shall be notified in writing when the landscape works are completed.

Reason: To ensure that the Local Planning Authority can confirm when the maintenance periods specified in associated conditions/condition have commenced.

14. Notwithstanding the details shown of tree removals in the approved drawing (Whole Site Masterplan (Planning) / 105.01.410 rev F), a Management Plan document covering a minimum 10 year period shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The document shall include short, medium and long term strategies, identify trees and areas of vegetation to be removed within each of these identified phases, give details of a rotational approach to thinning out of vegetation and shrubbery and give details of site monitoring. Thereafter works shall proceed in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of biodiversity.

15. Prior to the commencement of development a document detailing a program of bat surveys shall be submitted to and approved in writing. The document shall identify portions of the site, identify when works are programmed within each of these portions and give details (including timings) of the bat surveys to be carried out in relation to each of the identified portions. The bat surveys shall be carried out in accordance with the agreed time schedules, include any appropriate recommended mitigation strategies and each be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The works on site shall be undertaken in accordance with any agreed mitigation strategies.

Reason: In the interests of biodiversity.

16. Prior to the commencement of development a document detailing methods for dealing with Japanese Knotweed shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Japanese Knotweed shall thereafter be removed in accordance with the approved methodology.

Reason; In the interests of biodiversity.

17. Prior to the commencement of development, construction details for the groundworks for new and altered areas of pathways, hardsurfacing and associated drainage relating to vehicle access and the mobility car park shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The construction details shall include depths of excavation, where required. Thereafter, the works shall proceed in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that there is no disturbance to any archaeological remains present at the site.

18. Prior to the commencement of development a Car Park Management document shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, which shall identify mechanisms to ensure that the car parking is for disabled users only and methods to prevent usage by non disabled users. Thereafter the car park shall be operated in accordance with the approved documentation.

Reason: In order to ensure the car park is used solely for parking by disabled persons.

Other Compliance Conditions

19. The Flood Risk Mitigation measures given in Section 4.0 to 4.2 of the William Saunders - Sheffield General Cemetery - Flood Risk Assessment (11512/12 REV A DECEMBER 2017) shall be implemented as part of the development hereby approved.

Reason: In order to mitigate against the risks of flooding.

Attention is Drawn to the Following Directives:

1. The Local Planning Authority has dealt with the planning application in a positive and proactive manner and sought solutions to problems where necessary in accordance with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework.
2. Any vegetation clearance should take place outside of the bird breeding season, generally accepted as being between March 1st and August 31st. If works are anticipated within this period, it is strongly recommended to have a suitably qualified ecologist on hand to carry out a breeding bird survey no more than 48 hours prior to work commencing.

Site Location



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LOCATION AND PROPOSAL

The historic cemetery site occupies a considerable area of land on steeply sloping ground between Cemetery Road and Stalker Lees Road.

It is designated as being a 'Cemetery' under the provisions of the Unitary Development Plan (UDP), and also forms the General Cemetery Conservation Area.

The Cemetery includes 10 separately listed buildings or structures, including:

- Main Gateway and Lodges (Gatehouse) – Grade II*
- Gateway to General Cemetery with Screen and Flanking Walls (Egyptian Gateway) – Grade II*
- Old (Non-Conformist) Chapel – Grade II*

- New (Anglican) Chapel – Grade II
- Montague House- Grade II
- The Catacombs – Grade II
- George Bennet Monument – Grade II
- William Parker Monument – Grade II
- Mark Firth Monument – Grade II
- James Nicholson Monument – Grade II

In addition to these individual designations the site is identified as a Historic Park and Garden and is graded as II*.

The site is an Area of Natural History Interest as part of the UDP. The site is also designated as both a Local Wildlife Site and a Local Nature Reserve.

The initial scheme included a 13 bay car park off the Montague Street entrance. Through the course of the application and as a response to public representations, the proposal was revised to show 3 access/mobility bays within the reduced car park.

Both full planning permission and listed building consent are sought for the following works, and this report covers each:

- Provision of 3 accessible parking spaces within the site adjacent to the existing Montague Street entrance, featuring adaptations to the current entrance
- Improvements to the site's entrance points including provision of a new pedestrian access point adjacent to the Cemetery Road and Montague Street junction,
- Conservation works to listed and non-listed infrastructure features such as wall and catacombs
- Conservation works to listed and non-listed monuments
- Landscape improvements to the site's accessibility, including general footpath improvements, some provision of new paths, installation of wayfinding signage, and sensitive interpretation of the site's important history,
- Management, including removals, of trees and vegetation within the site,
- Improvement and inclusion of site amenities (including viewing and seating areas)
- A café is *not* proposed as part of the scheme but a note was provided on the initially submitted Masterplan drawing, as more of an allusion to a potential future addition

The key objectives of the scheme are to remove the site from Historic England's 'Heritage at Risk' register, make the park more accessible and welcoming for users increasing use to a wider audience, provide a safe, accessible and welcoming public park, engage people with the site's heritage, and to protect the natural habitat and enhance bio-diversity.

The scheme forms a part of a Heritage Lottery Fund 'Parks for People' grant application. If the overall bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund is successful this would ultimately lead to funding totalling £3.8million. Due to the staged based nature of the bidding process, full details of the landscape management and maintenance schedule have not yet been developed. The scheme cannot proceed through the next part of the bid process without the appropriate planning permission/listed building consents. Further funding would allow dedicated staff and expertise to

work with volunteers and other relevant staff to produce a Ten Year Management & Maintenance Plan which would give these precise details.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

In July 1979 planning permission was granted for use of the Cemetery as open space. This coincided with the point at which an Act of Parliament was passed to change the status from a cemetery to a park.

In November 2002 planning permission was granted for restoration of Victorian features and the provision of a memorial area. The scheme authorised removal of 14 trees, to facilitate the creation of a memorial area and the demolition of a section of walling added in the 1970s to allow re-instatement of another section of historic pathway.

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS

After neighbour notification, press advertisements and the placement of 7 separate site notices, 74 representations (as of 17/4/18) have been received in relation to the scheme as originally submitted and the revised version with its reduced car parking provisions. The comments made can be summarised as follows:

In addition two separate petitions and two joint letters have been received.

The individual written comments can be summarised as follows:

Car Park

- Car park results in the loss of green space, has an aesthetic harm, introduces cars into a space which is felt to be remote from cars and is over-development.
- Many local residents have no garden and the proposal would reduce the level of green space and tranquillity.
- Would cause light, noise and air pollution creating conflict with park's wide range of users and undermines current peaceful atmosphere. Would conflict with Council's own Clean Air Strategy.
- Undermines value of a historically significant site (site is a Conservation Area), and has a negative visual impact.
- Impact on ecological value.
- Flooding issues.
- Creates conflict with pedestrian users of site. Children and dogs won't be able to roam independently.
- Discourages sustainable transport options.
- Spaces would be used by surrounding business users, visitors to locality or overnight use. Unclear how spaces would be managed.
- Pedestrianisation of northern end of Montague Street would increase competition for spaces.
- Adequate on-street parking in area (especially at weekends). Parking could be provided at the Gate House Entrance and commuter parking should be prevented. Disabled parking could be provided at the roundabout in front of the Anglican Chapel

(avoiding loss of Green Space), the Children's Nursery at Montague House, Montague Street and/or Stalker Lees Road.

- Application would set precedent for further parking proposals relating to the Anglican chapel, or further applications to expand provisions.
 - Parking should only be for essential works / to allow disabled access.
 - Funds should instead be spent on mobility scooter hire facility / public transport infrastructure / pedestrian crossing facilities / Ofo bike facility.
 - Conflicts with National Planning Policy Framework, Core Strategy, Local Nature Reserve policy, the Green and Open Space Strategy and the Clean Air strategy, despite claims made in the submission.
 - Proposed drawings regarding car parking are not fully clear, and proposal lacks detail supporting a car park. Provision of a Parking Feasibility document was delayed.
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- Revised scheme (with 3 disabled spaces) is still objected to, due to loss of green space which conflicts with many policies and the 1979 Act of Parliament. Such spaces should be provided on Montague Street.
 - Any kind of car parking undermines serenity of space.
 - Many people understood to object to principle of cars within the area. Concern that the previously stated views will be discounted as plan has changed.
 - Disregard for the War Memorial.
 - Any parking is a precedent for similar at Anglican Chapel.
 - Disabled parking does not justify the desecration of and/or removal of green space.
 - No extensive feasibility study / impact assessment of different disabled parking options has been carried out.

Ecological Issues

- Site is a Local Nature Reserve (LNR) and is part of a Green Corridor, so warrants protection.
- LNR has grown and developed over time, providing a rich habitat for range of wildlife. Removal of trees/landscaping to create viewpoints is a retrograde step.
- No studies of how the proposals, including a car park and lighting will affect bats, birds, wildlife, ecology and flooding.
- A yew tree near Lion Gate / Gatehouse entrance appears to be proposed for removal, and it regularly has Goldcrests there.
- Other trees proposed for removal enhance the area.
- Plans imply significant scrub clearance. This has been inaccessible for a number of years and provides a valuable habitat (feeding and nesting) for numerous bird species. Some of this should be protected.
- No survey listing vegetation and wildlife, and how this would be impacted has been provided. Cemetery has an abundance of wood mice and tawny owls. No Bird Survey carried out as part of application, but a separate independent bird survey concluded 40 species were recorded, with 12 confirmed as breeding and another 15 probably doing so.
- Bird species on the legally protected list (fieldfares and kingfishers) do visit the cemetery.
- A statement should be provided to avoid disruption to wildlife during works.
- Ecology Survey is 2 years out of date.

Landscaping Issues

- Removal of trees is a concern as they are community assets, and as much a part of the cemetery as its monuments and interred bodies.
- Proposed removal of the healthy Goat Willow tree next to the Gate House entrance is not supported given contribution to visual amenity.
- Previous tree removal has exposed rear of factories and views of graffiti.
- Proposed car park area conflicts with a well-used footpath, maintained lawn areas, mature trees and planting beds. The loss of this and replacement with parked cars would damage character.
- Trees contribute to ecological value, and replacement trees will take 30-40 years to mature.
- No new paths should be provided, although some improvements may be needed to enable greater use of the space. Many of the current paths are well used by people with prams, and don't require improvements.
- Any new paths should be in keeping with heritage nature of the site.
- Path next to Montague House is currently accessible and historically valuable. It should be improved and not replaced, particularly given that associated works involve removal of an excellent Beech tree.
- Proposals imply removal of a yew tree which would conflict with English Heritage's 'Paradise Preserved' document covering the management and conservation of cemeteries.
- Existing stone circle should remain in-situ.
- Bench provision does not justify tree removal.
- Lighting will encourage anti-social behaviour.

Open Space Issues

- Open space was created by a 1977/78 Act of Parliament for everyone, involving removal of gravestones to create much needed open-space.
- Especially valued by surrounding apartment and flat occupants, beneficial to people's well-being. Locality's growing population means open space / capita is decreasing. Planning guidelines discourage development in these conditions.
- Proposed area of parking is integral part of parkland.
- Cemetery is a small local park and doesn't need signposting/lighting, this would undermine tranquillity.
- Works to the open space to the north-east of the application are implied, but not detailed.
- Site should be visited by Committee Members before decision is arrived at.

Heritage Issues

- Site is a Conservation Area, is a Grade II* Park and Garden and should be protected from car parking.
- Heritage Statement is 2 years out of date, and does not relate to the submitted / current scheme.
- Proposed car park's location coincides with area where grave clearance was prevented in 1980s, as the area was understood to have been where the Cholera victims were buried.

- Limited / contradictory information on works to the Dissenter's Wall which hasn't been visible for many years. Information provided by Applicant contradicts the details given on the Masterplan. Dissenter's Wall never crossed the area shown on the plan.
- A viewing platform under a mature horse chestnut, where the River Porter comes closest to the catacombs would be ideal and involve modest alteration.
- Works at top/s of Catacombs are unclear. Gravestones there are some of the few remaining intact gravestones from the cleared Anglican area.
- Materials, fixtures and lighting should be in keeping with the original elements of the site.
- Query regarding proposals for pathway provision immediately to the east of the site.
- New Montague Street entrance is inappropriate. Original entrance was only used for a few years and is in a dangerous position in highway safety terms.
- Wall around site is a feature of special architectural interest and integral to overall design.

Café

- Café is not required, there are numerous others nearby.
- Would further reduce open space; involve deliveries, waste, litter and crowds.
- Not usual for charities to pursue commercial activities (i.e. car parking and café). Such activity should be concentrated into the refurbished chapel / the neglected chapel building.
- Converted chapel should be open at all times to allow use of WCs and coffee bar facilities instead.

Consultation

- Limited pre-planning consultation, conflicting with Statement of Community Involvement.
- Lack of notification and opportunity to comment. Short period for comments.
- Planning Portal facility is not adequately democratic and is hard to use and submit comments on it.

Other Issues

- Site should be promoted with additional signage on Ecclesall Road and Cemetery Road to increase awareness.
- Design and Access Statement is too brief.

Comments of Support

- Works to catacombs, monuments, walls and path networks are supported. Opening of views and pathway improvements are welcomed.
- Limited lighting would be supported
- Appreciated that maintenance is needed, and this is solely the Council's responsibility, and that there is the need to secure external funding.
- Consideration has been given to disabled/elderly people who are currently excluded by dealing with paths. Car park is small and should be screened from rest of cemetery, and shouldn't impact on ecology

-Proposals are welcomed, The Friends of the General Cemetery / General Cemetery Trust appear happy with the decision making.

-Supportive of café.

-Alteration of car parking proposals to 3 spaces, has resulted in scheme being supported.

-The General Cemetery Trust is broadly supportive of much needed investment in the important historical site.

Non Planning Issues

-General Cemetery Trust haven't carried out sufficient consultation

-No artist's impression drawings have been provided.

-The open space to east of the site should be improved, and made more attractive as an open space facility.

Petitions

One petition includes 653 signatures, and states support for the principle of investment and conservation of the General Cemetery. However, it also states they object to the proposed car park off Montague Street, and that the addition of any new buildings wouldn't be in keeping conservation principles of the site. Reasons stated are it would conflict with planning guidelines regarding open space, it would have a negative visual impact, would not work as planned due to competition for parking in local area and an alternative provision for disabled parking could be provided at Stalker Lees Road.

The second petition includes 256 signatures. It states that the car park proposal should be rejected, the public consultation period should be extended past 1/3/18, and the scheme should be revised to include full detailed information and drawings. Concern expressed that since wildlife colonizes quiet green spaces which would be disturbed / destroyed by the proposal.

Joint/Community Group Letters

The first has been signed by 16 people and relates to the revised proposal. The comments can be summarised as follows:

-3 bay car park is not necessary as alternative solutions are available.

-Open Space was created after an Act of Parliament. Trees and vegetation are an important and are the 'lungs' of Sharrow and part of city's green corridor.

Surrounded by high density housing, and area is below minimum guidelines for open space.

-Breaches of numerous relevant local plan policies, and the requirement to improve air quality (i.e. Clean Air Strategy 2017) as even a small car park will have negative impacts.

-No inclusion of the Access Audit for the General Cemetery (2107), which states most disabled people prefer to see reasonable and practical modifications made rather than negate the heritage character of the site. Report provides an alternative location for disabled parking not in the site itself. Another alternative would be provision of spaces on Stalker Lees Road

-The proposed level of tree and shrub/vegetation management should be further reduced (site is a Local Nature Reserve). Insufficient information has been provided to allow a decision to be made, Site is a Natural England Priority Habitat, and NPPF states biodiversity should be conserved and enhanced, and application should be refused if harm from a development cannot be mitigated or compensated for.

-Tree clearance has previously resulted in unsightliness and reductions in wildlife habitat.

-Ecology Survey was prepared before formulation and submission of current plans, and isn't an impact assessment. Without an impact assessment the scheme should be refused.

-Goat Willow Tree adjacent to Gatehouse and Beech tree adjacent to old Cemetery offices give aesthetic and biodiversity benefits and should not be removed. Similar point made in relation to a number of other trees proposed for removal.

-No bird survey prepared, and without the impact assessment it's not certain what functions the shrubs and vegetation provide.

-Existing paths may need improvement, alterations to existing layout should be minimised. The insertion of new entrance near to Montague Street and Cemetery Road junction presents a road safety issue, as people would be exiting near to a blind bend. Also means gravestones will need to be moved again.

-Unsure how lighting would be managed. Extra light pollution would be unacceptable.

-Inadequate / unclear information given in plans.

-There has been a lack of transparency and major emissions in pre-planning consultation process and a site visit is needed to provide inclusive consultation. September 2017 Masterplan Consultation didn't mention car park or removal of habitat. Adjoining residents had no awareness of plans.

-Limited availability of plans in Samuel Worth Chapel and minimal notice was given on social media sites. Consultation exceeding minimum requirements should have taken place.

A community group (Save Our Green Open Space) have provided a representation, which can be summarised as:

-Was made a local nature reserve 40 years ago, and has been car free for that time. Gives a safe and calm space for many people with hidden illnesses. Council needs to meet its Equality Duties, under the Equality Act 2010. Application favours one group with disabilities over another. Air quality in area needs to be improved, and failure to do so would conflict with NPPF.

-Blue badge parking will constantly interrupt peace and tranquility and health benefits.

-The Access Survey (2017) recommended provision of blue badge parking on Cemetery Avenue by main entrance and blue badge parking on Montague Street near to entrance or provision immediately within the park. Also states reasonable modifications would be preferred to inappropriate interventions negating heritage character of the site.

- Blue badge parking in the immediate vicinity is suggested by community group as far preferable to current proposal, avoiding harm to original landscape and an intrusion into Historic Park and Garden and retain more biodiversity and open space.
- Planning Committee should wait for clarification on its requirements under Equality Duty, and postpone meeting.
- Minimal notification and consultation at pre-application stage.
- No details of works in adjacent open space area
- No plan outlining healthy trees proposed for felling
- No visual of Montague Street pedestrian entrance
- Concerns regarding impacts to flora and fauna
- A site visit should be arranged

Councillor Teal

Councillor Teal has provided comments, which are summarised as:

- There is the strong community feeling that the proposed parking area should be removed, to avoid loss of the green space and harm to the nature reserve which is a haven to many locals.
- Other suggested alternatives of Montague Street and Stalker Lees Road for additional parking should be considered.
- Many objectors have an issue with the proposed café, - no requirement for one when there are numerous cafes on Ecclesall Road.
- To meet air pollution reduction responsibilities, it would be better to invest in public transport.

Historic England

Historic England has commented and state that the Cemetery is a highly significant example of an early garden cemetery. The historic core of the site largely survives and local and national interest is expressed in the range of burials and a variety of notable 19th century monuments. The cemetery has a high communal value for a range of different groups, and the HLF project aims to enhance this through increasing and improving access to the cemetery. The proposals are described as resulting from a thorough understanding of the significance of the cemetery and its structures.

HE confirm they support and welcome the proposals, which will address the reasons why the cemetery is placed in their 'Heritage at Risk' Register, and provide many benefits for visitors and local residents. They comment it would provide significant enhancement of the Grade II* registered cemetery and the associated listed structures.

Gardens Trust

The Gardens Trust provided comments in relation to the original submission. They state they welcome the many excellent proposals which have emerged from a long and detailed study. However, the main comment is an objection, as there are serious concerns about the proposed car park (including the 13 bays initially proposed) and the proposed future café.

The car park and café is in the north eastern section of the cemetery where 7,800 headstones/memorials were cleared in 1980 forming a 'public park' area, and it is understood that graves remain below ground. The proposal for the siting of a car park on top of graves would be to many people highly disrespectful. Parking area would damage the site's function as a much appreciated green space, and the Pay & Display facility suggests main purpose is income generation.

An alternative termination feature is suggested, as being more symptomatic of Robert Marnock's design approach. The circular area lacks subtlety and doesn't preserve or enhance the character of this highly significant historic landscape. The car park would harm the north eastern section boundary walk, which goes through the proposed car park.

Planting plan would only partly screen car park and have a negative impact on the cemetery's historic landscape.

The amendments to the entrance will downgrade the historic entrance. Boundary Wall should curve into the entrance.

The circle shown in the south eastern corner at the path junction is crude, and an interesting tree and/or shrub planting should be used as per Robert Marnock typical design approach.

There is also thought to be a lack of information regarding tree removal and planting, hard landscaping, and views.

Natural England

Natural England advise that the proposal is unlikely to affect any statutorily protected sites or landscapes.

Sheffield and Rotherham Wildlife Trust

Sheffield and Rotherham Wildlife Trust have submitted two comments, and these can be summarised as:

- Appears that 7 trees would be removed to accommodate the car park. Generally not in favour of providing car parks in Local Nature Reserves and Local Wildlife Sites.

- No ecological impact assessment of car park. Reports have been received about bats using this area, and this isn't covered in bat reports.

- The requirement for access/mobility is understood. If it were built, it shouldn't have bright lighting.

- Query how use of car park would be controlled, in order to prevent commuter usage.

PLANNING ASSESSMENT

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies and how these are expected to be applied. The key principle of the NPPF is the pursuit of sustainable development, which involves seeking positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural and historic environment, as well as in people's quality of life. The following assessment will consider these overarching principles.

Land Use Policy Issues

The site's designation as a Cemetery means it falls into the provisions of the Open Space chapter within the UDP.

Policy LR4 covers 'Open Space' and states open space will be protected from built development where it is needed for outdoor recreation, or where it makes valuable contribution to the natural environment, urban heritage or quality of life. The implications on recreation space will be covered in this section, and the impacts on the natural environment and urban heritage are covered below.

Policy LR9 (Cemeteries, Graveyards and Crematoria) requires redundant cemeteries to be retained as open space, whilst not preventing public access for grieving and paying respects and enhancing public use and appreciation of the grounds. The proposals very much retain public access to the area, and more significantly are designed to expand public usage to a wider audience and to increase engagement with the historical aspects of the cemetery. It is therefore considered that the proposals are considered to meet these land policy requirements.

LR9 also requires the relevant provisions of policy LR5 to be met. LR5 underpins the UDP's approach to open spaces, and includes the requirements that new development should not harm the character or appearance of the public space, cause a loss of open space of City-wide importance, or result in over-development or harm to the area's character.

There is a lack of informal open space in the local area. So the proposed parking area would further diminish this provision. The parking facility, as now amended includes a small car parking area giving 3 accessibility spaces adjacent to the existing Montague Street access. It would include a hardstanding area measuring approximately 11.0m by 12.5m, and the removal of 3 trees. This would involve some slight reconfiguration of boundary and plinth walling at the access to give an entry point which would be 3.5m wider.

The parking area is of limited extent. It is required as no other acceptable alternatives which would meet access/mobility criteria are available, either in the site or immediately adjacent. Those people requiring access parking bays are currently an under represented user group of the facility, and this provision would address that issue.

Given these circumstances, it is considered that the resulting minor reduction in green open space would be considered to be acceptable.

Policy CS46 (Quantity of Open Space) within the Sheffield Development Framework Core Strategy (CS) states that as opportunities arise new open spaces will be created where a quantitative shortage of open space is identified in the local area.

Policy CS47 of the CS deals with 'Safeguarding of Open Space'; and sets out the parameters against which the loss of open space must be considered.

Section a) of CS47 states that the loss of existing open space would not be permitted if it would result in a quantitative shortage of the relevant type of open space.

Section b) states that the loss of open space would not be supported if that open space is of high quality, or of heritage, landscape or ecological value.

Section c) says that people in the local area should not be denied easy or safe access to a local park that is valued or well used.

Section d) states the development should not cause or increase a break in the green network.

Given that open space is underprovided locally and the scheme does not include a quantitative replacement of the lost open space, the proposal contravenes the relevant sections of the above policies, with a particular note to CS47 a).

Against this point it is relevant that a key objective of the proposals is to enhance general public's use of the facility, with particular focus on disabled users by providing 3 mobility parking spaces within the confines of the cemetery. So whilst the proposal would result in a small quantitative reduction in open space provisions, it also achieves greater usage particularly by an under represented user-group.

In relation to CS47 b), the area of open space involved in the formation of the access/mobility parking is not considered to be of high quality. The 3 mobility spaces would not impact upon the existing war memorial, and the widened access would not undermine the historic value of the overall site. The excavations involved in the formation of the parking bays would be highly unlikely to conflict with any burial plots. It is therefore considered that the proposal would not undermine the heritage value of the site.

The 3 trees proposed for removal are not considered to make a significant contribution to the landscape value of the site in their own right, and 5 replacement trees are proposed. As a result, the proposal would be considered to not lead to a loss of open space that's of significant value in landscape terms.

In addition to the existing trees the area is maintained grass and pathways, and as a consequence the area is not considered to be of high ecological value. There is therefore not considered to be a conflict with section b).

In regards to CS47 c), no part of the community would be denied access to the site. Instead usage would be enhanced and promoted. Therefore, there is not considered to be conflict with section c).

Regarding CS47 d), the small area of the proposed parking facility would not cause a break in the Green Network.

CS47 e) to g) give circumstances where development resulting in the loss of open space will be allowed, these include where equivalent or better replacement open space would be provided in the local area; or where the site is identified as surplus for its open function; or where the development would be ancillary to the open space and have minimal impact on the use or character of the

open space. The scheme would be considered to be integral to wider and improved access to the open space, achieving increased usage. It is therefore considered that the proposal would comply with these sections of CS47.

Based upon the above, it clear that there would be some non-compliance with specific sections of local policy, most notably elements of Policy CS47. These points of conflict are considered to be outweighed by the achievement of increased access by a currently under represented user group. As such it is not considered that it would be reasonable to resist the proposals based on these issues.

Conservation and Heritage Issues

Policy BE16 'Development in Conservation Areas' states permission will only be given for proposals which preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Policy BE19 'Development affecting Listed Buildings' states that proposals for alterations to a listed building will be expected to preserve the character and appearance of the building / structure.

Policy BE21 'Historic Parks and Gardens' states the character, setting and appearance of Historic Parks and Gardens will be protected.

Policy LR9 deals with 'Cemeteries, Graveyards and Crematoria' and is summarised above. It also requires compliance with Policy LR5 of the UDP.

LR4 states that open space will be protected where it makes a valuable contribution to urban heritage.

LR5 identifies situations including the following conservation and heritage issues where development in Open Space Areas such as the General Cemetery will not be permitted. These are where it would damage nature conservation sites, Scheduled Ancient Monuments or other archaeological sites, harm the setting of a Listed Building, damage the character of a Historic Park / Garden, harm the character or appearance of the Public Space, lead to loss of open space which is of City-wide importance, or result in over-development or harm the area's character.

The Sheffield Development Framework – Core Strategy at Policy CS74, states development will be expected to respect and take advantage of distinctive features of the city, including open spaces.

Paragraph 132 of the NPPF states that great weight should be given to conservation of designated heritage assets. Paragraph 134 adds that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to a designated heritage asset, this should be weighed against public benefits of the proposal.

The proposed formation of 3 accessible parking spaces would take an area of approximately 140sqm. Whilst it would be visible from the main open space area, it would not be considered to have a significant visual impact. The surface is proposed to be surfaced in bonded gravel, but more details would be required to be provide by

condition. There would be replacement trees planted, and it would be viewed against the backdrop of the existing stone perimeter wall and widened opening out on to Montague Street.

The proposed parking area is necessary to achieve parking provisions for disabled users. Locating this provision on Montague Street itself would not be feasible for disabled users given its gradient. Users of any access bays at or near to the Gatehouse Entrance would be faced by gradients of 1 in 12 to get to the Non-Conformist / Samuel Worth Chapel, which would be excessively steep. Given the absence of alternatives the proposed parking facility is considered to be the only remaining option for achieving access/mobility parking bays either within or adjacent to the site.

Given this context, the proposed parking facility would be considered to have an acceptable impact, and to not significantly undermine the historic amenities of the site, its listed buildings / structures, its designation as a listed garden or its general character and appearance. The impacts would be considered to have a less than substantial harm upon the designated heritage asset, and this harm would be outweighed by the public benefits which would be generated. As a result it would meet with the requirements of paragraph 134 of the NPPF.

The Gardens Trust's comments made in regards to the proposed car park relate to the original scheme featuring 13 parking spaces. However, from their comments it would appear likely that a similar objection would apply to the revised proposal.

The eastern section of the Cemetery site was re-specified as a public park from a cemetery in 1980. The clearance of 7,800 gravestones followed this with only a small portion of reburials. It is therefore likely that the proposed car-park would overlay previous burial plots.

The Gardens Trust and other representations express concern that this represents an insensitive approach, lacking appropriate respectfulness. The revised layout, has been confirmed to involve dig-depths below existing ground level of no more than 350mm. Such excavation depths are highly unlikely to involve any grave disturbance. Since no disturbance would be expected, the proposal would be considered to ensure that graves are dealt with sensitively and respectfully.

Conservation Works to the Listed and Unlisted Structures

The main components of these works concerns the catacombs, where it is proposed to address structural issues. The works primarily involve tying the outer stone leaf to the inner structural brickwork core and repointing the façade to form a weather proof surface discouraging vegetation growth. The lower tier also requires reinforcement of brick archways, and the upper tier requires the fixing of anchors into the structure.

The lower wall is to be taken down, with a suitable concrete foundation and inner leaf being constructed. The outer stone would then be re-constructed in the same form. A significant mature tree would be retained and protected, as it likely dates back to the original planting scheme. Works proposed to the upper wall are more modest, involving filling in of voids and rebuilding of sections of fallen stone walling.

Works to the top portion of the catacomb structure are proposed to prevent structural movement, involving reconstruction of a bay/pier, replacement of balustrades/pier caps and improvements to surfacing to prevent water ingress. The making good of surfacing of the two catacomb's terraces is proposed to prevent water ingress. Also the proposal involves access into an empty catacomb vault, including removal of the current stone infill from the doorway and installation of high quality metal gates.

Works are also proposed to the Non-Conformist Chapel's external areas. The focus of these works is to improve access into the chapel, including improvements to the path in front of the chapel, provision of an accessible route into the chapel and formation of a parking area for less able users.

This involves:

- The addition of extra steps in front of the chapel to address a cross-fall in front of the chapel leading to an accessible ramp at the chapel's west side and occasional car parking with grass surfacing proposed at the east side.
- The large steps at the front of the chapel include repairing of stonework and resetting of treads. A central handrail is proposed to aid accessibility. Repairs to the retaining walls at either side of the large staircase are proposed, to remove vegetation, repair stonework and install coping stones.

Works to Listed Monuments

Works are proposed to all 4 of the listed monuments, from very minor pointing and repairs to more substantial conservation works. However, the full extent of the works will not be known until elements of the structures are removed during works.

Unlisted Walls and Monuments

- Works to non-listed boundary and internal walls are proposed, and these are considered as being repairs which do not constitute development requiring planning permission or listed building consent.
- Works to non-listed monuments are also proposed, including vegetation clearance, repair and resetting of monuments if necessary, and in some cases removal of monuments to provide access to key areas of the site. These works would also not require planning permission or listed building consent.

Site Entrance Works

The proposed improvements to the site's entrance points include;

- Improvements of awareness of the site from Cemetery Avenue, by providing high quality paved forecourt area at the Gatehouse roadway/turning area. A nameplate wall is also proposed. A courtyard will also be provided just within the site as a congregation/orientation space.
- Improvements to the existing Montague Street entrance to improve awareness of the site

-The re-establishment of a smaller entrance on Montague Street close to Cemetery Road. This would be pedestrian only and improve access to the site from Cemetery Road and the city centre approach.

Pathways and Landscape Works

Proposed pathways and general landscape improvements are:

- Pathway improvements to address the site's steep gradients, focusing on the reduction of steep crossfalls, to make gradients as shallow as practical, which is 1:12 in the majority of cases. No-dig pathways are proposed in and around existing trees.
- Where paths are extremely steep (over 1:6) stepped ramps are proposed, to avoid steep and slippery paths.
- Feature spaces are proposed at key areas of the site including the central path intersection, the upper catacomb entrance and at the north of Montague House. Enhancement of existing features is also proposed, mainly at the Montague Street entrance to improve the setting of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission memorial wall.

Site Amenities

- These include lighting to the main route from Montague Street to the Non-Conformist chapel, this will support use of the converted chapel as a base for activities / events. Lighting design would be carefully considered to minimize impacts to wildlife and appropriate design.

The range of works are considered to be necessary in order to secure appropriate repairs ensuring that the buildings, monuments and structures involved have a future lifespan. The proposals also ensure that the site will become more usable in a safe and accessible way.

The range of proposals would be considered to meet the requirements of the relevant local policies. Similarly in regards to paragraphs 132 and 134 of the NPPF, it is not considered that any harm to the heritage assets would be considered to arise whilst significant public benefits would be generated. As a result, these elements of the NPPF would be considered to be satisfied.

The Applicant has provided confirmation and produced an amended Masterplan drawing to illustrate that it is not intended to reconstruct the Dissenter's Wall. The Dissenters Wall is a historically significant element of the history of the Cemetery, being a low stone wall separating the original and extended cemetery. It is intended to carry out some repairs to a maximum 10metres overall, where sections are exposed and visible for interpretation. This is most likely to be where the wall is close to or easily visible from footpaths. Notwithstanding this, the Dissenter's Wall is not a listed structure and as a result the repair works would not require full planning permission or listed building consent.

Archaeology Issues

UDP Policy BE22 covers Archaeological Sites and Monuments and requires sites of archaeological interest to be preserved, protected and enhanced. It goes onto state

that development will not normally be allowed which would damage or destroy significant archaeological sites.

The predominant archaeological interest relevant to the site are the graves, both marked and unmarked, in the remaining cemetery portion as well as the area converted to open space.

The main potential conflict with these features is the excavation works involved in the provision of new/altered pathways and in the formation of the 3 bay access/mobility parking provision.

The improvements to existing paths would essentially involve resurfacing to enhance use. There would be limited excavation, as weight loadings involved in footpath provision are not excessive. The limitation of the excavation depths results in there not being detrimental implications in this respect.

The formation of the car park would involve excavation up to a maximum of 350mm depth. This is considered to be a 'light-touch' form of construction which would be highly likely to avoid disturbance of graves, which would be further below ground level.

In order to ensure that all ground and excavation works involve acceptable excavation depths, a condition requiring submission and agreement of these measures should be incorporated into any approval.

Concern has been expressed about that the provision of the pedestrian-only entrance onto Montague Street would lead to gravestones inside the site being moved again. The entrance was previously provided and was blocked over. The gravestones are understood to have been relocated to this position as part of the removal of graves through the 1980s period when the open space was formed. Since they do not actually mark graves, and the pathway would involve very shallow excavations this issue would not be considered to form a reason to resist the scheme or require alteration to the proposals.

On this basis the proposal would meet the requirements of UDP Policy BE22, and be acceptable in this regard.

Landscaping Issues

UDP Policy GE15 covers Trees and Woodlands and states that developers will be required to retain mature trees wherever possible, and replace any trees which are lost.

UDP Policy LR5, amongst other things, requires proposals to not cause damage to mature or ancient woodland or result in significant loss of mature trees, or to significantly detract from the green and open character of the Green Network.

The applications are accompanied by a comprehensive tree survey. Along with the ecological survey, the tree survey recommends the managed thinning and clearance of some trees and vegetation in the site over a period of approximately 10 years.

The thinning of woodland planting and management of pathway edges would not require planning permission, and so will not be assessed here.

It is proposed to remove 54 trees from a total of around 360 trees. Of the 54 trees, 31 are considered to be of 'fair/poor' quality and 23 are considered to be 'good'. The proposed removals would make the entrances more welcoming and open up sight lines throughout the site. Three trees are shown as being removed in order to enable provision of the parking area. However, five trees would be planted as replacements, and the species/maturity details of these could be controlled by condition.

The proposed tree removals would be considered to have an acceptable impact upon the character of the General Cemetery site, providing enhancements of sight-lines, bringing more light into areas and enhancing habitat value, access and appreciation of the site.

It is considered that retention of the trees proposed for removal would significantly undermine the project's benefits of increasing access and making it more welcoming. The retention of all existing trees would prevent the scheme from achieving these benefits which are welcomed in broader planning terms and represent a key objective of the overall proposals. Therefore, the proposed tree removals are considered to be acceptable and to meet the requirements of policies GE15 and LR5.

Ecology Issues

The site is designated as an Area of Natural History Interest, a Local Nature Reserve and a Local Wildlife Site. It is also part of the Green Network as identified in the UDP.

UDP Policy GE10 (Green Network) states that the Green Network will be a) protected from development which would detract from its green and open character or cause serious ecological damage, and b) enhanced by encouraging development which increases the value for wildlife and recreation.

UDP Policy GE12 (Sites of Special Scientific Interest and Local Nature Reserves) states developments which would damage LNRs will not be permitted.

UDP Policy GE13 (Areas of Natural History Interest and Local Nature Sites) states development damaging Areas of Natural History Interest will normally not be permitted, and development affecting Local Nature Sites, should where possible, be sited and designed so to protect and enhance the most important features. Where development would decrease the nature conservation value, the decrease must be kept to a minimum and compensated for.

UDP Policy LR5 in part c) requires development to not detract from the green and open character of the Green Network. Also Policy LR4 states open space will be protected from development where it makes a valuable contribution to the natural environment.

The Ecology Survey provided with the application concludes that the cemetery includes a variety of habitats, including grassland, woodlands, mature trees and flowerbeds. The west of the site comprises mature trees, with self-set woodland species which are becoming increasingly dense and overgrown. The eastern portion of the site includes areas of woodland plantations planted in the 1980s which are also becoming dense, resulting in areas of impoverished ground and shrub floras and closed canopies.

It is concluded that without some thinning of the woodland, habitat diversity is declining which is reducing the variety of habitat.

The survey concludes that there is a high potential for bats and birds to be present within the site, with the Catacombs in particular having a high potential to support bat roosts and bird nesting areas. A Bat Survey was carried out on the Catacombs, which did not find any bats within the structure. There is however, the possibility that bats may use the catacombs in the future, and this also applies to mature trees within the site. It is therefore recommended that further surveys would be provided prior to any works commencing on particular parts of the site.

In response to the submissions, the Council's Ecology officer comments that the Bat Roost Assessment and Ecology Survey give an accurate and thorough assessment of the habitats, and make sensible suggestions for conservation works in line with ecological best practice.

The observation regarding the requirement to provide updated bat surveys is noted, and it is suggested conditions requiring this are added to any approval.

Additionally, it is noted that the Cemetery is widely recognised as a good quality habitat for a range of bird species. It is advised that the appropriate felling, pruning or thinning of trees and shrubs would achieve a balance between regenerating impoverished ground flora and continuing to provide suitable bird habitat. It is agreed that some of the wooded areas have become dark and impenetrable thickets of ornamental, non-native species, with shaded and impoverished ground flora. It is also considered that without conservation input it is likely that the overall biodiversity value of the site will decline. Whilst some bird species thrive in dense scrub, the key to maintaining a rich and biodiverse flora and fauna is through creating a range of habitats of different ages and structure. Therefore, a gradual and phased approach to thinning out dense thickets and scrub would help to achieve this and would therefore be supported.

The selective thinning of trees would open up glades, and in turn greatly benefit ground flora. It would also help to create a varied age structure and would be considered to be acceptable. However, a cautious approach to thinning out dense shrubberies, understorey, saplings and diseased trees is recommended to create open glades and help ground flora re-establish. In order to ensure that these procedures are carried out in a manner sensitive to ecology, a management plan covering a minimum 10 year period should be agreed and this can be required by condition. This would be able to set in place a strong emphasis on regular site monitoring and require submission of details to the Biological Records Centre.

It is therefore considered that the imposition of appropriate conditions would achieve ecological benefits, and that the proposal would meet the relevant UDP policies. As a result, it would be considered to be acceptable in this regard.

Highways Issues

The proposed insertion of three access parking spaces via a widened access point onto Montague Street would not be considered to lead to any detrimental implications upon highway safety. The access would be a shared vehicle and pedestrian point, however, the limited vehicle usage would mean conflict between these two groups would not occur.

The proposed parking area also provides a pedestrian pathway to and from the north avoiding the parking area, meaning those on foot do not need to go through the parking bay area itself.

As a result, the scheme is considered to be acceptable in this regard.

An additional potential access/mobility parking bay lies on-street bay outside of the site immediately adjacent to the Gatehouse Entrance is shown on submitted drawings. The space isn't required to make the scheme acceptable from the perspective of achieving increased access by disabled persons, but does confirm a commitment to achieving this through the entirety of the site.

The provision of 3 car parking bays would not generate a level of vehicle activity which would generate air quality concerns. It would therefore not be reasonable to resist the application due to issues connected to air quality. As such there would be no conflict with UDP policy GE23 which states only development which would not locate sensitive uses where they would be adversely affected by air pollution. Similarly, there would not be conflict with Core Strategy policy CS66, which requires air quality to be protected and action to be taken to improve air quality.

Flood and Drainage Issues

Small portions of the site are located within Flood Risk Zones 2, and a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) has been provided with the application.

The FRA concludes that the proposal is considered suitable, subject to the implementation of recommended mitigation measures. These measures include replicating existing levels in the parts of the site in Flood Zone 2, profiling of land levels to direct flows towards nearest drainage points and the use of French drains adjacent to footpaths to allow infiltration into the ground.

It is therefore concluded that the proposals would not lead to any increase in risks from flooding either to those attending the site or others elsewhere. As a result, the proposal is considered to be acceptable in this regard, and it is recommended that any approval should include a requirement for implementation of the mitigation measures given in Section 4.0 of the FRA.

The revised drawing/s showing the modified parking layout makes provisions for drainage, which would connect into the existing drainage network in the highway. This would avoid any drainage implications within this portion of the site.

RESPONSE TO REPRESENTATIONS

The large majority of comments have been addressed in the above report. In relation to the outstanding matters the following comments can be made:

- The light, noise and air pollution arising from the revised parking provision including 3 access/mobility bays wouldn't be considered to be significant, and would not constitute a supportable reason for refusal.
- The amended proposal for 3 access/mobility parking spaces would not act to discourage sustainable transport usage.
- Montague Street is too steep to provide access/mobility parking, and being on-street there would be no scope to provide access zones adjacent to the bays. Parking on Cemetery Road would leave disabled users needing to cross the road, which would not be acceptable. Provision of access/mobility parking at Stalker Lees Road/Cemetery Avenue with access via the Gatehouse Entrance would take users to paths which either run along the site's northern perimeter to the Montague Street access or lead to over steep lengths of pathway. As a result, these suggested alternatives would not in fact achieve appropriate disabled access to the site and would not be acceptable.
- Some concerns are expressed that the proposed parking provisions would act as a precedent for similar provisions at the Anglican Chapel, however, as each case is assessed on its merits any approval of the current scheme would not justify parking provisions at Anglican Chapel.
- The alternative suggestions of mobility scooter hire, public transport infrastructure, pedestrian crossing facilities or Ofo bike facilities were not proposed as part of the application and therefore are not able to be assessed as alternatives.
- The yew tree near to Lion Gate / Gatehouse entrance would be retained
- The Ecology Survey is considered to have provided an appropriate account of the site. The bat surveys are noted as being 'in-date' up until last summer, and therefore further surveys will need to be undertaken and provided prior to the commencement of works in particular locations.
- Only 3 trees are proposed to be removed alongside the site's northern boundary. Their removal would not reveal the rear of factory units.
- The Masterplan shows a retained (and enhanced) geological circle feature.
- Lighting will be low level and aid navigation at dusk and after-dark. They would not be intended to provide wide areas of illumination and would not be expected to generate anti-social behaviour.
- The age of the Heritage Statement is not relevant, as no or little alteration has been made to/within the site in the intervening period.
- The proposed works relating to the Dissenter's Wall are limited. The structure is not listed and the proposed works are considered to be acceptable.
- A part new / part improved path runs virtually adjacent to the boundary of the site with the River Porter, making a viewing platform in this area unnecessary.
- The Catacomb works (and works to all other listed buildings / structures) are closely specified, and are considered to be acceptable.
- Materials and lighting details will be covered by conditions.

- The adjacent to the site at its east is currently open space, but is not included in the application site so is not considered as part of the current application / assessment.
- The proposed entrance on Montague Street near to Cemetery Road is not considered to present a highway safety concern. It re-instates a previously existing opening, increases access opportunities to the site and is therefore supported.
- The application does not propose a café, and the reference to one was inserted as a future potential proposal, rather than a definite proposal. It has been removed from the amended Masterplan drawing. As such there is no requirement to consider a café as part of the assessment of this application.
- Notification regarding the application/s was in accordance with normal requirements, involving 7 separate site notices and over 50 direct letters. Prior to the submission of the application several different consultation exercises were carried out.
- The alleged inadequacies of pre-application consultation would not represent reason to resist the applications or to delay their determination. Notification of the application is fully in line with statutory requirements, and the Council's published Code of Practice for publicity of planning applications, having included 7 separate site notices and direct notification of over 50 neighbouring occupiers.
- Officers have complied with their obligations in respect of the "Equalities Duty". In assessing the application and making this recommendation officers have had due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. Officers have also had due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and prohibited conduct and the need to foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATION

The proposal seeks full planning permission and listed building consent for a wide programme of works to the General Cemetery Site, which includes a number of individually listed buildings, monuments and structures.

The Applicants are currently part way through a bid process where grant funding totalling £3.8million from the Heritage Lottery Fund is being sought. This funding would facilitate works allowing the site to be removed from Historic England's 'Heritage at Risk' Register.

The proposals are considered to have an acceptable impact on the architectural and historic character and significance of the site overall, as well as the individually listed buildings and structures.

The proposed tree removal would be carried out through a 10 year management programme and would be considered to open up the site, and have ecological benefits throughout the site.

The scheme would be considered to enhance the site's attractiveness as an open space feature, and the proposed accessible car parking facility would widen the user groups able to access the site with only a very limited reduction in the open space area.

Overall, the scheme would be considered to meet the relevant UDP and Core Strategy policies and the relevant aspects of the National Planning Policy Framework.

On this basis the applications are considered to be acceptable and therefore planning permission and listed building consent are recommended.

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