



1 OBJECTIVE

- 1.1 To honour Townsville's history and those who have made Townsville the diverse and liveable city it is today.
- 1.2 To provide appropriate standards for the services provided at Council operated cemeteries, which enable the effective delivery of services to meet community needs.
- 1.3 To provide a consistent approach to the operation of cemeteries owned, managed and maintained by Council.

2 DEFINITIONS

- 2.1 Council – this refers to the Townsville City Council.
- 2.2 Council Staff – This includes employees, contractors, volunteers, and all others who perform work on behalf of Council.
- 2.3 Interment – the act or ritual of interring or burying.
- 2.4 Right of Burial – the right to inter into a burial plot.
- 2.5 Right of Burial Certificate – A Right of Burial Certificate is a legal document and permits the right to be buried in a particular grave and the right to authorise the burial of others in the grave (up to the number permitted in that grave as determined by Council).
- 2.6 Right of Burial holder – The person who is issued the Right of Burial certificate for a specific grave. This person is the only person who can authorise an interment into the grave. Consent is also required by the Right of Burial holder for a Construction permit to erect a Monument/headstone.

3 GENERAL

- 3.1 The principles within this document apply to all Cemeteries that are under Council's control. These principles apply to all individuals, organisations, businesses and Council staff who enter a cemetery under Council's control.
- 3.2 Council managed cemeteries include Belgian Gardens, West End and Manton Cemeteries. Note: The War Graves section at Belgian Gardens Cemetery is maintained by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.
- 3.3 West End Cemetery is a historic cemetery and no new burial plots are available to reserve. Existing Right of Burial holders may make an application for interment.
- 3.4 Magnetic Island cemetery is operated by the Lions Club of Magnetic Island.
- 3.5 Manton Cemetery is a private cemetery.
- 3.6 Cemetery fees for services provided are set out within Council's Fees and Charges, which are reviewed annually.
- 3.7 Council applies cemetery fees and charges at an appropriate level to enable the provision of cemetery services at a fair price to the community. Cemetery fees and charges are set to cover the immediate costs of operating the cemetery and to contribute to the ongoing maintenance of the cemetery.
- 3.8 Council's approved cemeteries form/s must be completed for every new service and submitted to Council's Cemetery Administration Office.



4 STANDARD CONDITIONS

- 4.1 All burials shall take place between 9:00am and 3:00pm weekdays. After hours can be negotiated with Council and would incur fees for services as set out within Council's Fees and Charges.
- 4.2 For all enquiries contact Council's Cemetery Administration Office.
- 4.3 Two working days' notice must always be given to allow enough time for grave digging to be completed. In the circumstance where a burial is required on shorter notice due to religious beliefs, Council will make every effort to enable this to occur.
- 4.4 Council can accommodate a maximum of 3 coffin interments per day.
- 4.5 Belgian Gardens cemetery plot allotment sizes:
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|---------------------|-------------|
| Lawn Section | 2.4m x 1.2m |
| Infant Lawn Section | 1m x 0.9m |
| Monumental Section | 2.7m x 1.5m |
- 4.6 Grave depths prepared for burials are:
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|---------------------|------|
| Single depth | 1.2m |
| Full depth / double | 1.8m |
| Traditional | 1.2m |
| Infant | 1m |
| Ashes | 0.6m |
- 4.7 The number of interments permitted in a plot shall be:
- Two coffins (first must be at full depth) and up to six ashes are permitted in lawn and monumental plots
 - A Traditional Burial only permits one coffin in lawn and monumental plots
 - One infant coffin (with the exception of twins interred within the same coffin) permitted in an infant plot
 - Up to six ashes permitted in monumental or lawn plots
- 4.8 Testing can be conducted by Council staff to determine the feasibility of a double interment. This will be at the discretion of Council.
- 4.9 Due to the historic nature of the cemetery, there have been instances arise where the first interment has not reached the required depth of six foot. Council will confirm if a second interment can attain the required depth to accommodate a second coffin.
- 4.10 Preparation of plots – Council's Cemetery staff (or those contracted to Council) will prepare grave sites. The preparation includes:
- Digging
 - Laying shoring boards and bars as required
 - Set up of lowering devices as required
 - On request by a Funeral Director or family, Cemetery staff will set up chairs and marquees, for graveside services (setup fees apply as per Townsville City Council's fees and charges).



- 4.11 Maximum of 30 minutes early or late arrival times from the scheduled time indicated on the *Interment Consent Application Form* permitted with advanced notice to Council's Cemetery Administration Office.
- 4.12 The Funeral Director must always remain on site and present during the funeral.
- 4.13 Funeral Directors must supervise and assist families throughout the duration of a traditional funeral service, including the removal of shoring boards.
- 4.14 The responsibility of the site concludes when the last of the family members and the Funeral Director's employees leave the site. At this point the site is handed back to Cemetery staff.
- 4.15 It becomes the Families'/Funeral homes responsibility to engage with a Monumental Mason to have the structure removed at least 48 hours prior to the funeral to allow Cemetery staff to prepare the plot.
- 4.16 Participation by Council staff in the actual interment process is not permitted; this includes Council staff carrying the casket from the funeral vehicle.
- 4.17 All activities undertaken within the Cemetery grounds shall comply with relevant Work Health and Safety requirements. Work Health and Safety Act 2011, Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011, AS4204-2019 Headstones and Cemetery Monuments, AS4425-1996 Above Ground Burial Structures.

5 RESERVING A PLOT

- 5.1 The person/s reserving a new plot (Right of Burial Certificate holder) acquires the entitlement to be buried in that plot and the right to authorise the burial of others into the plot as per specifications under Section 4.5.
- 5.2 A valid Right of Burial may be surrendered to Council. Upon surrender, the Council will pay the valid Right of Burial holder or the valid Right of Burial holder's estate an amount not less than 90% of the original reserve price of the unused grave.

6 RIGHT OF BURIAL TRANSFER

- 6.1 The Right of Burial Certificate may be transferred to another applicant where Council eligibility requirements have been met, these include –
 - 6.1.a Original Right of Burial Certificate and written authority from the current Right of Burial Certificate holder consenting to the transfer, or;
 - 6.1.b A certified copy of the deceased Right of Burial Certificate holder's last known Will and Testament, and;
 - 6.1.c Certified written authority provided from all beneficiaries, or;
 - 6.1.d Written authority from the Right of Burial Certificate holder's personal legal representative providing evidence of authority to transfer.



7 APPLICATION FOR INTERMENT

- 7.1 An *Interment Consent Application form* must be completed and sent to Council's Cemeteries Administration Office at least 2 working days before the intended funeral date to allow sufficient time for the grave to be prepared.
- 7.2 Where the *Interment Consent Application* is for a new plot, the Applicant for the interment will become the Right of Burial holder and abide by the terms of the *Townsville Cemeteries - Statement of Principles*.
- 7.3 Approval of an *Interment Consent Application* for a pre-reserved site will be granted when:
 - 7.3.a The Applicant is the Right of Burial holder; or
 - 7.3.b The Right of Burial certificate holder is the person being interred; or
 - 7.3.c The Right of Burial certificate holder has consented to the interment where indicated on the *Interment Consent Application form*.
- 7.4 Where the application is for the deceased Right of Burial holder, the Applicant has the authority to arrange a suitable memorial. Authority for any future interments into the plot shall not be permitted, until such time as the Right of Burial has been transferred to the rightful beneficiary, as per the Right of Burial Transfer guidelines outlined within Section 6 of this document.
- 7.5 Refer to Council's Cemetery Fees and Charges for a full list of applicable fees.

8 TRADITIONAL BURIALS

- 8.1 All traditional burials are carried out at a single burial depth of twelve hundred millimetres or four feet to allow the family to backfill the grave in line with their tradition.
- 8.2 Where the first burial is a traditional depth (four foot) the grave can only be used for one coffin burial (plus ashes).
- 8.3 During the excavation of a single traditional burial grave, headboards and side boards will be installed where possible. This is to ensure the grave can be excavated safely.
- 8.4 During a traditional burial it will be necessary to remove head and side boards once the coffin has been lowered.
- 8.5 Townsville City Council will not provide any additional material for the purpose of back filling the gravesite. Once the family has finished the backfilling of the grave, Council staff will remove any additional overburden from the grave and the grave will be top dressed. (in the lawn section only).
- 8.6 No unapproved structures are to be left at the gravesite. Any unapproved structures or items left at grave sites shall be removed at the discretion of Townsville City Council.



9 LAWN CEMETERY SECTIONS

- 9.1 Council is responsible for the maintenance of the lawn area. All shrubs, plants etc. within the cemeteries are planted and cared for by Council.
- 9.2 No tree, shrub or other plant is permitted to be planted within the cemetery, including at grave sites, other than by Council.
- 9.3 Fresh and plastic flowers are permitted to be retained within flower urns and metal vases only and must be securely placed in the allocated space between the concrete edges or on the concrete beam for those where such is provided. Such flowers will be removed as they deteriorate, at the discretion of Council. Council takes no responsibility for any items left at gravesites.
- 9.4 Any unapproved structures or items left at grave sites as outlined here in shall be removed at the discretion of Council and placed in the green removed items bin located near the office for a maximum of 4 weeks after removal at which time they will be disposed of.
- 9.5 Plots must not be enclosed with railing or kerbing or surrounded by rocks, bricks or other materials.
- 9.6 No glass, rocks, shells, non-approved vases and ornaments are to be left at grave sites.
- 9.7 No archways, statue or other structure is permitted to be installed within the lawn section.
- 9.8 In relation to Traditional Burials, Council will not provide any additional material for the purpose of back filling the gravesite. Once the family has finished the back filling of the grave, Council staff will remove any additional overburden from the grave and the grave will be top dressed. No unapproved structures are to be left at the gravesite.
- 9.9 Any item identified as a hazard that may endanger the wellbeing of the public or Cemetery staff shall be removed at the discretion of Council. Council reserves the right to remove any headstone, granite, marble, concrete and any flower containers in the event that the condition of same renders it dangerous to Cemetery staff or visitors and the cost of so doing may be recovered, at the discretion of the Council, from the valid Right of Burial holder or their family.
- 9.10 Memorial plaques and headstones (permanent fixtures) may be installed within the allocated space by the Construction Permit holder. Memorial plaques and headstones must comply with the specifications outlined in the Memorials & Monuments section of this document.

10 MONUMENTAL CEMETERY SECTIONS

- 10.1 Council is responsible for the maintenance of aisles between the rows of graves in the Monumental grave sections. Maintenance of the grave and immediate surrounds is the responsibility of the Right of Burial certificate holder and family. All shrubs, plants etc. within the cemeteries are planted and cared for by Council.
- 10.2 No tree, shrub or other plant is permitted to be planted within the cemetery, including at grave sites, other than by Council.
- 10.3 Fresh and plastic flowers are permitted to be retained within flower urns and metal vases only and must be placed at the head of the grave site. Such flowers will be removed as they deteriorate, at the discretion of Council.



- 10.4 Any unapproved structures or items left at grave sites as outlined here in shall be removed at the discretion of Council and placed in the green removed items bin located near the office for a maximum of 4 weeks after removal at which time they will be disposed of.
- 10.5 No glass, shells, non-approved vases and ornaments are to be left at grave sites.
- 10.6 The placement of turf on a plot is permitted by families as part of keeping the plot in good order. Council will not take responsibility for maintaining any laid turf placed on a plot in the Monumental section.
- 10.7 Any item identified as a hazard that may endanger the wellbeing of the public or Cemetery staff shall be removed at the discretion of Council. Council reserves the right to remove any headstone, granite, marble, concrete and any flower container in the event that the condition of same renders it dangerous to Cemetery staff or visitors and the cost of so doing may be recovered, at the discretion of the Cemetery, from the valid Right of Burial holder or their family.
- 10.8 Memorial plaques and headstones (permanent fixtures) may be installed by the Construction Permit holder. Memorial headstones and plaques must comply with the specifications outlined in the Memorials & Monuments section of this document.

11 MEMORIALS & MONUMENTS

- 11.1 A Construction Permit application form must be completed for the erection of all new monuments, headstones and upgrade works. The Right of Burial holder must provide their consent for this application to be processed. Where the Right of Burial holder is deceased, a Construction Permit to erect a monument or headstone may be issued with the approval of the applicant identified on the Application for Interment Form/s
- 11.2 All memorials and headstones must be constructed by the Construction Permit holder or a representative of the permit holder. A Construction Permit will only be issued to a qualified Monumental Mason/Licensed Builder who has provided Council with evidence of a current public liability insurance policy. All works must comply with the Australian Standard AS4204-2019 Headstones and Cemetery Monuments as well as any additional requirements identified by Council. Failure to comply may result in removal.
- 11.3 The fee for a Construction Permit is designated in the Cemetery Fees and Charges. Once a permit has been paid for and approved, it will be issued to the Monumental Mason/Licensed Builder.
- 11.4 A family can request to erect a monument on a historical plot in honour of the deceased person through a Construction Permit application form. Council may consider such a request where it believes the family are acting with the full consent of the deceased person. If approval is given, the Right of Burial certificate will not automatically be transferred, refer to section *Right of Burial Transfer* of this policy.
- 11.5 Any monumental grave, vault, monument, headstone, plaque or marker in the Cemetery shall be maintained by the Legal Personal Representative or family of the person whose remains have been buried within the plot.
- 11.6 The opening of vaults, crypts or mausoleums are to be arranged directly with a Monumental Mason. Council must receive formal notification via the *Interment Consent Application Form* or *Exhumation Request Application Form* (from the family or Funeral Director) prior to any action being taken.
- 11.7 All contractors must sign in on arrival and sign out when leaving the site. The sign in book is located outside the office in Belgian Gardens Cemetery.