

DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Leisure, Arts and Communities Committee - 9 May 2011

REPORT ON: Western Cemetery New Cremated Remains Section

REPORT BY: Director of Leisure and Communities

REPORT NO: 233-2011

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To seek approval to allow the development of a cremated remains section at the Western Cemetery.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That the committee approve the principle of creating a cremated remains section in Western Cemetery.

2.2 That the Director of Leisure & Communities is remitted to develop and progress the proposal outlined in the 'Sketch Design' with option 1 being the preferred option.

2.3 That the Committee agree to continue to work with the Western Cemetery Association and acknowledge the role of the Association in developing the proposal for the cremated remains areas.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 Initial landscaping costs can be met from the Leisure & Communities Department's 2011/12 Revenue Budget. Income from the sale of lairs is additional income which will be passed to the Western Cemetery Association. This will provide match funding to allow the Association to apply for funding, which is not available to the Council, to undertake improvements they have identified.

4.0 BACKGROUND

Western Cemetery is currently closed to new lair sales but following an approach from the Western Cemetery Association, a 'Friends Group' which has been working with the Department to provide landscape improvements to Western Cemetery, an area was identified which offered the potential of a cremated remains section in the Cemetery.

The Department has taken these discussions forward and prepared proposals for the Western Cemetery new cremated remains section see Appendix.

In particular option 1 identified on the 'Sketch Design Proposals' is deemed to be the better option due to minimising disruption to the cremated remains lairs should maintenance be required on the wall.

It is therefore recommended that the Director of Leisure & Communities be remitted to work with the Friends Groups and take forward the proposal. The partnership offers opportunities to seek external funding for aspects of the cemetery improvement.

5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 This report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of Sustainability,

Strategic Environment Assessment, Anti Poverty, Equality Impact Assessment and Risk Management. No major issues have been identified.

6.0 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 The Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive (Support Services), Depute Chief Executive (Finance) and Head of Finance have been consulted on this report and are in agreement with its contents.
- 6.2 There has been extensive consultation with the Western Cemetery Association in the preparation of the proposals.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

Sketch Design Proposals attached

STEWART MURDOCH
DIRECTOR OF LEISURE AND COMMUNITIES

25 APRIL 2011

Western Cemetery New Cremated Remains Section

Sketch Design Proposal



Elizabeth Woodhouse
Senior Landscape Architect (TL)

Introduction

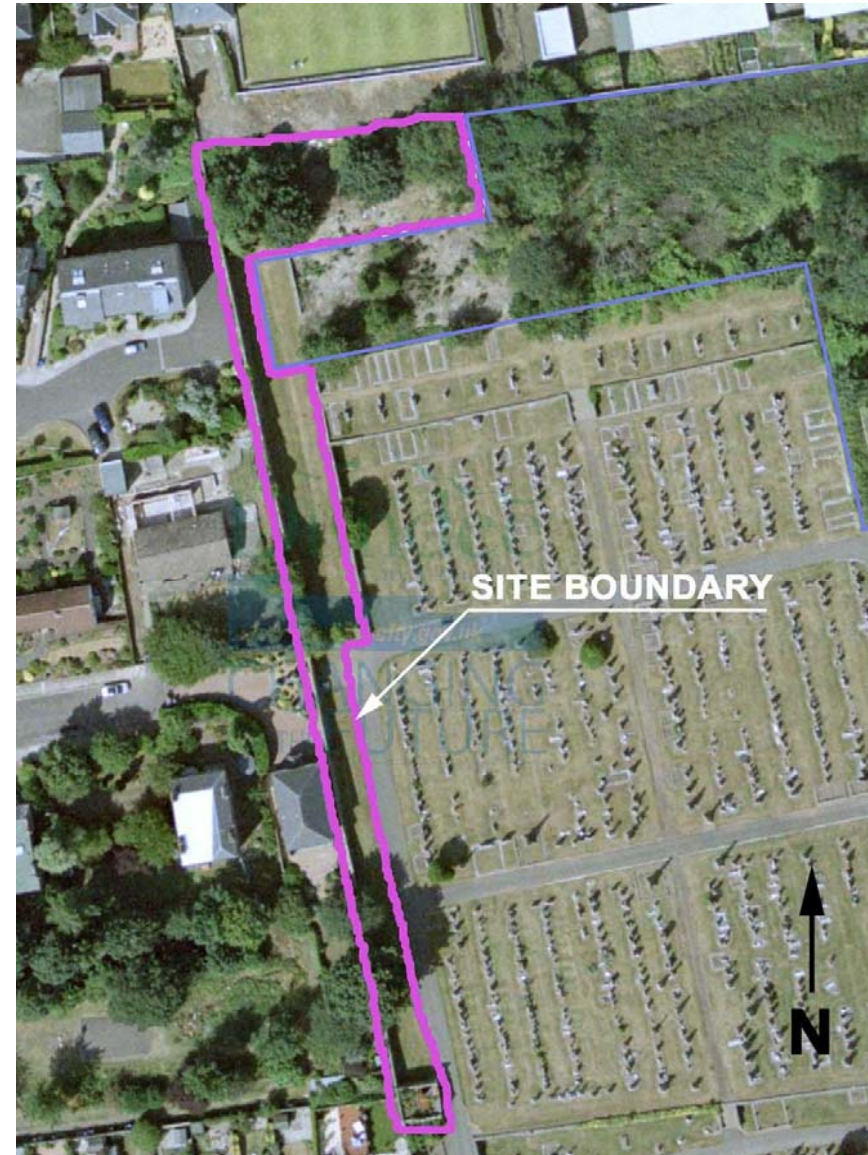
This study report has been generated in order to plan a proposal for a new Cremated Remains Section in Western Cemetery just off the Perth Road, Dundee.

The location will be at an area of unused ground to the north west of the cemetery, which runs along the edge of a listed, high stone wall.

Western Cemetery was originally opened by a commercial company in 1845, and then purchased by the City of Dundee District Council in 1979.

Many people of historical interest are buried here including James Bowman Lindsay (1799-1862) an early experimenter with electricity who, in 1835 demonstrated a 'constant electric light', 40 years before Thomas Edison. Preston Watson (1880-1915) an aeronautical pioneer who some claim to have made the worlds first powered flight over the Carse of Gowrie, several months before the Wright brothers in America.

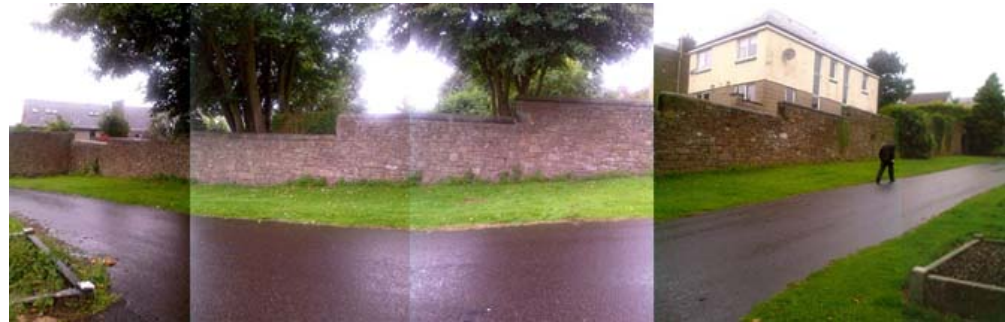
As part of this sketch design proposal, we will be referring to other proposals that are being considered within the whole of Western Cemetery (see *Overview, page 14 & 15*).



Design aims

1. Provide for a new section of interments along the north west stone wall; maximising the use of space but without overfilling
2. Friends Group preference for unmarked lairs and area for scattering ashes
3. Create a small memorial seating area with soft landscaping at the top of the cremated remains lairs
4. Create a garden to the north of the interment section as an option for scattering of ashes
5. Create a place of peace, with comfortable access for all visitors, complying with DDA
6. Consider surfacing, furniture, and planting materials in keeping with the site
7. Consider preservation of existing trees on site during and after works
8. Research problems associated with digging near the old stone wall which is very high, buckling at one point and believed to have poor foundations
9. Consider requirements such as dimensions of lairs, installation of plaques / tablets and any foundations.

Some of the above considerations would be dealt with through detailed design development at a later stage.



View along entire length of the site for interring



Site of proposed memorial seating area



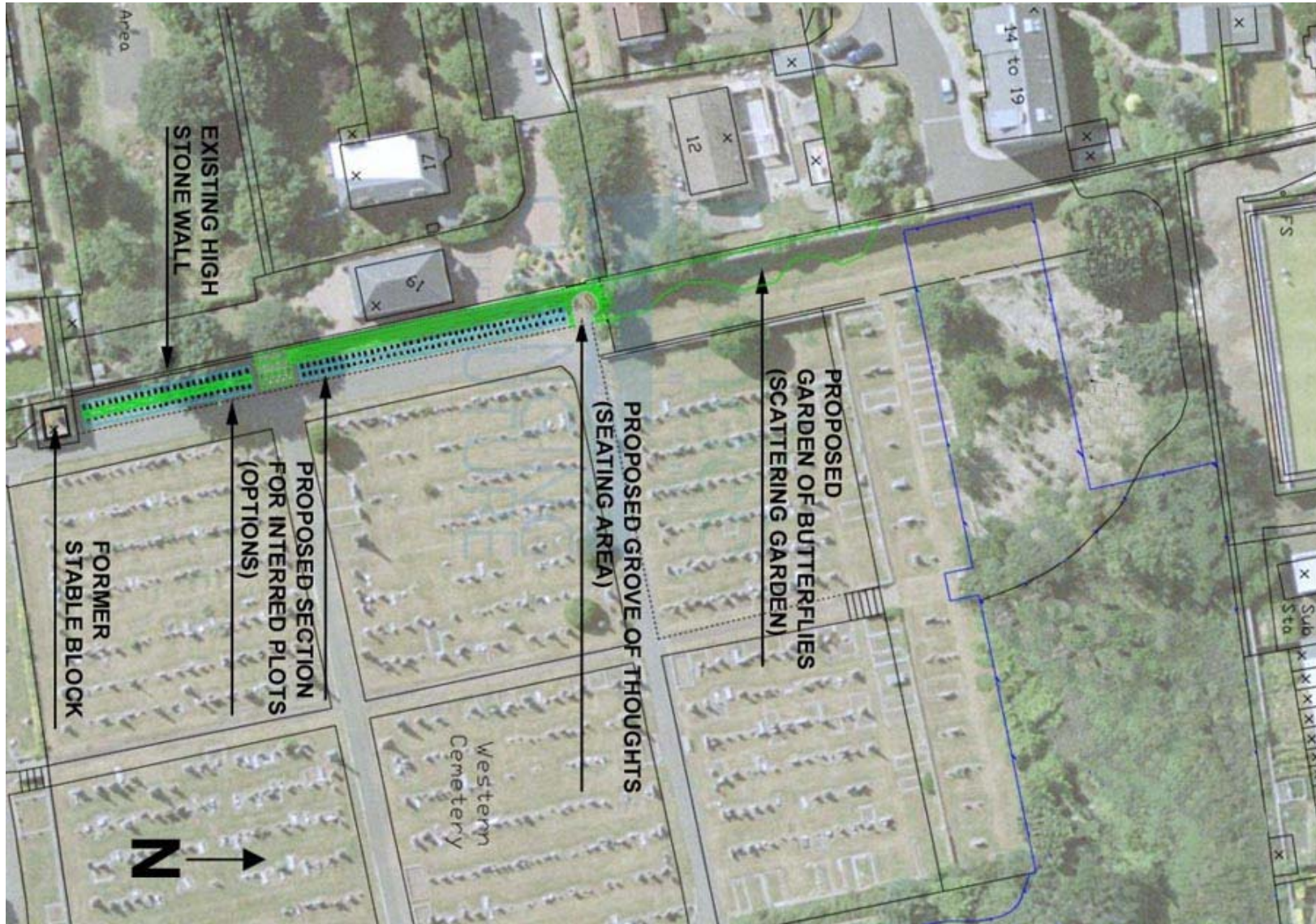
Looking north to proposed seating area

Looking south down slope

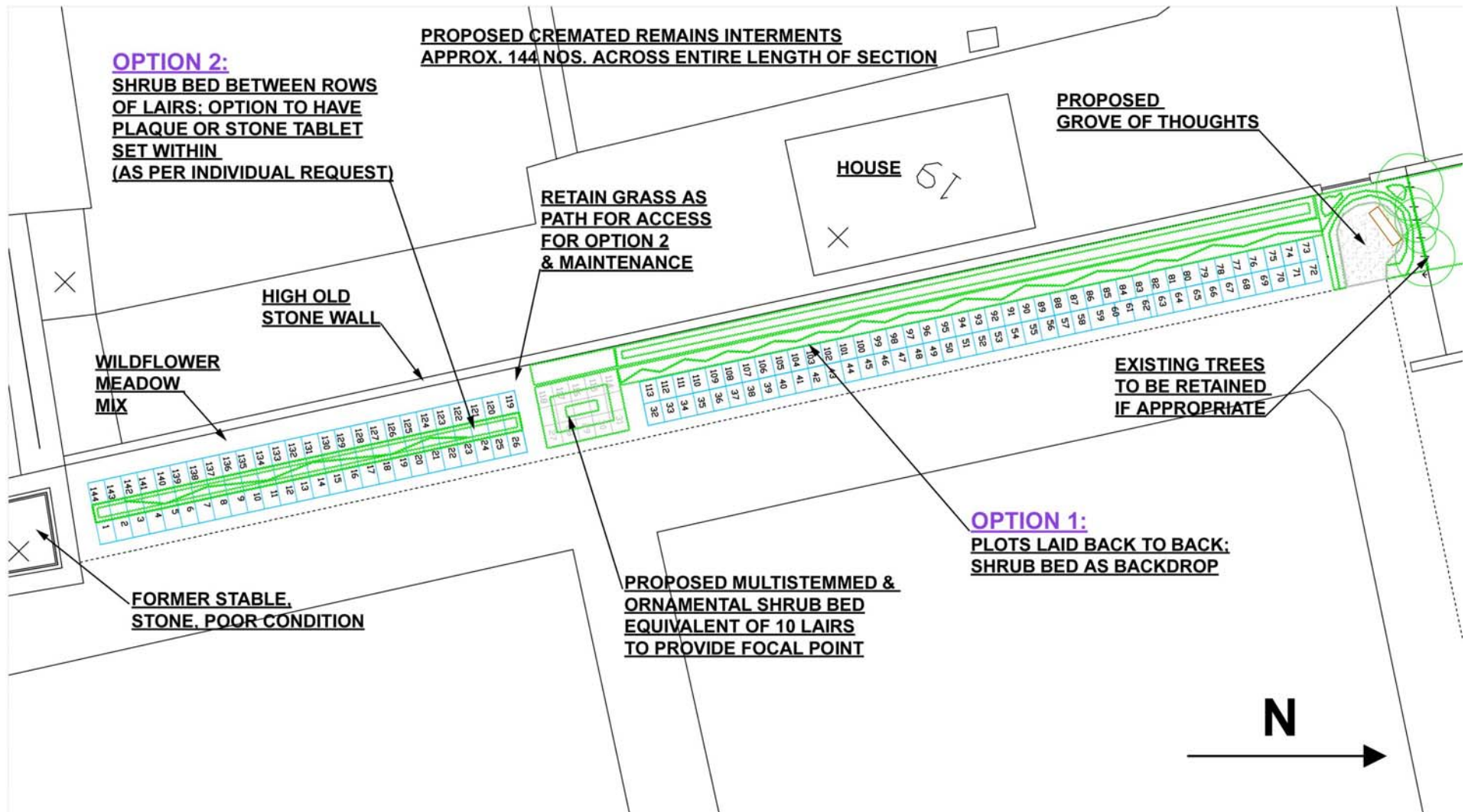


Looking south; note bush at wall - may cause problems in future

Site Layout



Rough layout of interred plots section showing Options 1 & 2



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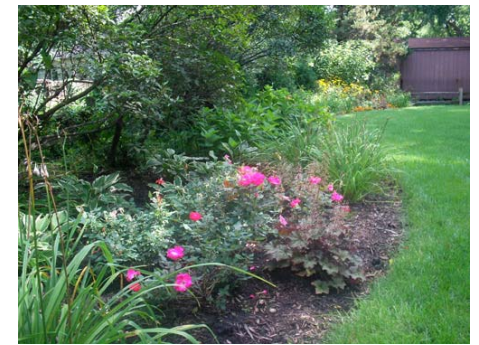
Option 1 - back to back lairs with planting against wall



- Lairs are unmarked and left as open lawn
- Wrought iron ornate plaque memorial board to be erected at foot of section
- Shallow rooted screen planting at base of wall to edge of lairs help unify the space
- Minimises maintenance by keeping planting to the back, easy access for lawn mower



Example of plaque memorial board



Idea for planting border



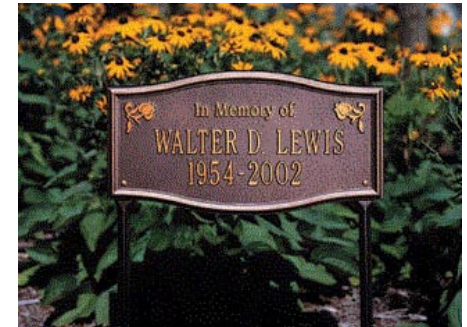
Option 2 - lairs divided by planting bed



- Maintenance access to be kept for lawn area at base of wall
- Wrought iron ornate plaque memorial board to be erected at middle of section
- Lairs left as open lawn but plaque or stone tablet can be added at individual request
- Easy maintenance planting between lairs give interest and may accommodate plaques / tablets



Stone tablets may be laid into ground flush with lawn



Memorial plaque may be inserted into planting bed



Memorial tablet / plaque may be inserted into planting bed

Site of proposed Grove of Thoughts

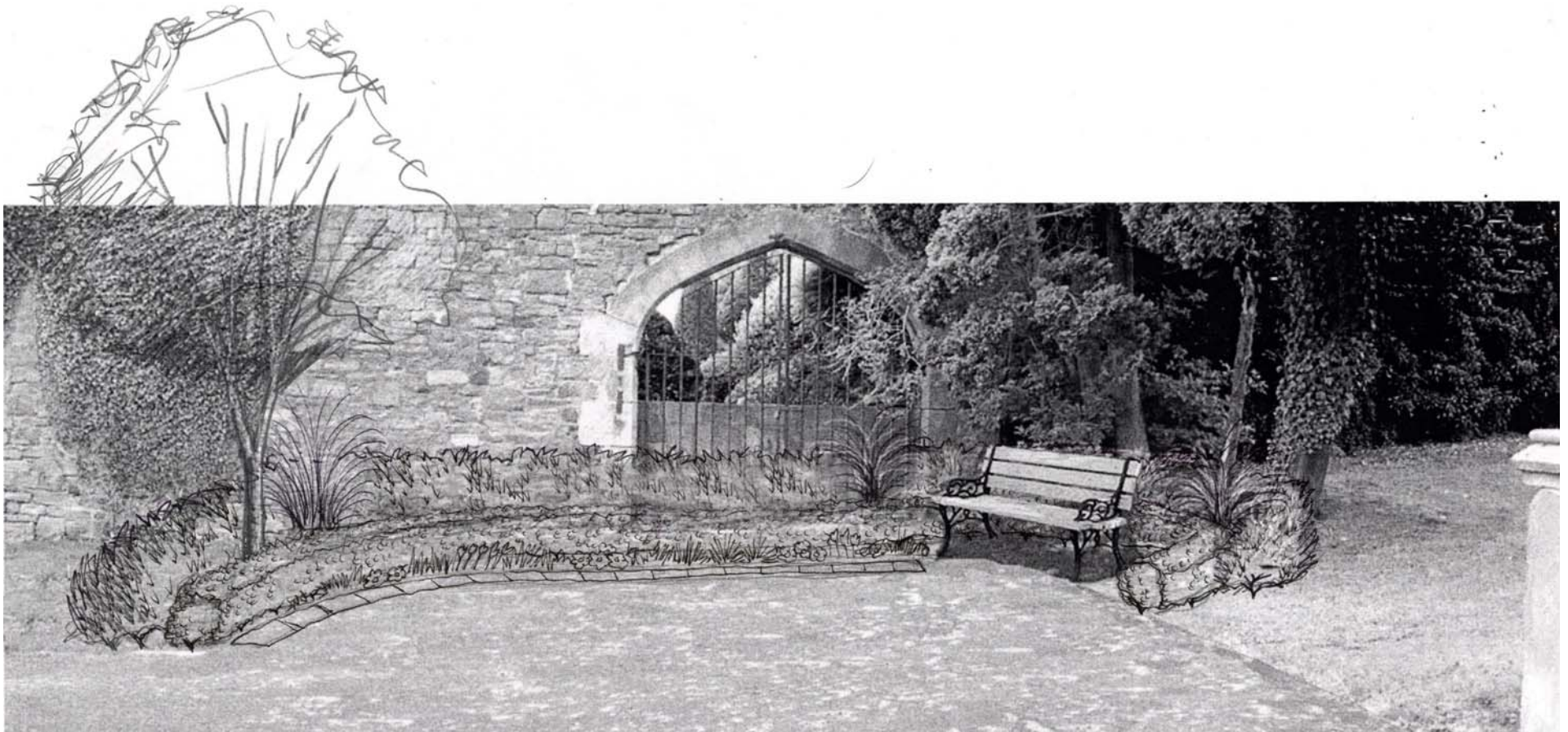


- Listed feature gate adjacent to neighbouring residential plot
- High open views across the cemetery and towards the Tay
- Existing conifer trees either retained or replaced
- Relatively good soil and drainage

The proposed Grove of Thoughts is to be located to the north of the cremated remains lairs, close to an existing wrought iron feature gateway which was once used as a through-route.

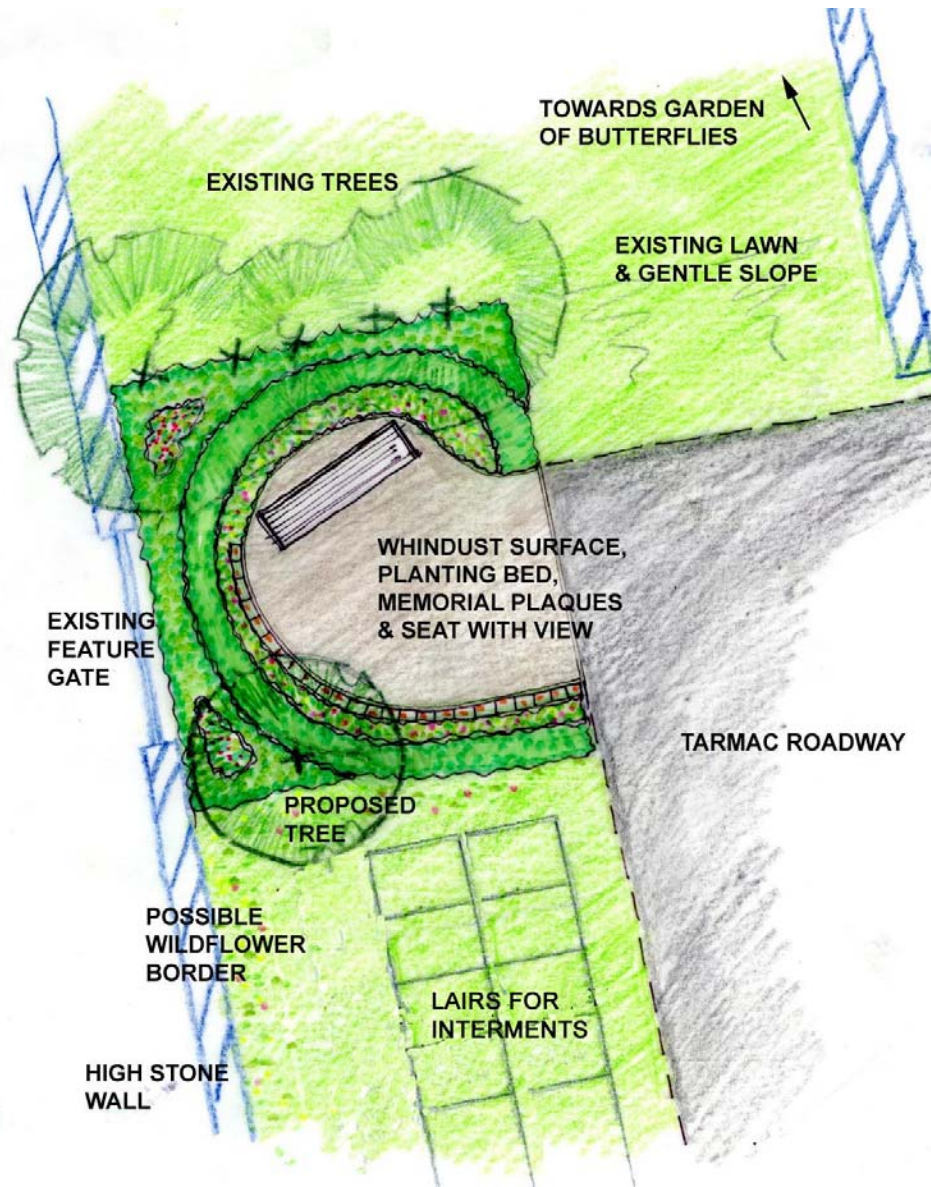
The location is ideal for a quiet seating area as it is on higher ground and relatively level, with panoramic views across the cemetery and beyond towards the Tay. One or two mature trees also give shelter.

Sketch of proposed Grove of Thoughts



- Accent planting in corners
- Perennials and other small flowering shrubs as border
- Low and medium evergreen shrub planting as backbone
- Possibility of memorial plaques inlaid around planting border
- Provision of ornate bench positioned for best view over cemetery and the Tay
- Small tree such as birch as feature and to balance existing trees (subject to Forestry Officer's recommendations)

Plan of proposed Grove of Thoughts



The proposal would be low key, to create a small quiet place for visitors. It

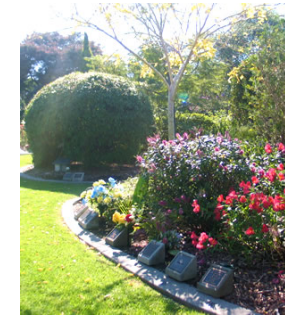
would include windust surfacing with larch edging to define the space off the tarmac roadway. A seat (possibly provided by Parks Ops.) of ornate design would be very appropriate here, shaded by the Japanese pines. A strong and simple planting palette would be of a low to medium nature and 'cuddle' the seat; scented, evergreen and bold plants would be the preferred choice. Planting schedule to be developed with plants suitable for semi-shade aspect.

Planting options may include:

Evergreen low hebe of colourful shades
Evergreen medium cherry laurel
Roses of different varieties
Rosemary and lavender
Selection of perennials
Grasses

If a phased development approach is implemented, then there is also an opportunity for swathes of temporary wildflower grassland across undeveloped parts of the new cremated remains section, until required.

Ideas for proposed Garden of Butterflies



Points to note

Proposals will need to consider at a later stage, the following:

1. Implementation and maintenance costs of: new cremated remains section, any new concrete founds, memorial seating area with surfacing, planting and grassing
2. Construction cost options, for example: option a) implement entire scheme in one contract, option b) develop scheme in phases as required to spread cost over time (total cost of option b may be higher than option a)
3. Ownership of listed high stone wall, and what maintenance is planned for its protection and public and employee safety
4. Maintenance practicalities of the proposed scheme (to be discussed with parks operations)
5. Detailed discussion with the Conservation Officer and Health & Safety Officer on the proposal - good practice due to proximity of the listed wall; planning permission may be required
6. Detailed discussion with the Forestry Officer on the proposals and recommendations for existing trees
7. Recent site visit with Health & Safety Officer has suggested an Engineer's Report on the West Wall should be part of future proposals.



View from north west slope (proposed scattering garden)

Overview



Sawara cypress by archway
Tree Officer to assess trees



Proposed site for Grove of Thoughts seating area
Potential repainting of gate and treatment to breezeblock



Mature sycamore undermining stone wall
Possible requirement for Engineers report & repointing with lime



Former stable, stone, roof in disrepair
Potential to be used if re-instated



Open grass on slope
Potential site for scattering ashes - Garden of Butterflies
Planting options required



Mausoleum, overgrown and in disrepair
Potential to be used if re-instated



Proposed Cremated Remains Section
Planting & layout options required



Grass verge at south east of cemetery near hearse house
Potential for use for additional cremated remains plots. Also potential refurbishment of hearse house