**Directorate: Transport Canberra and City Services**

**17/726 - Provision of cemeteries and interment services in the ACT**

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| **Summary of Impacts** |
| * The Woden Cemetery will reach capacity for most people in late 2018 and burials thereafter will need to occur at the Gungahlin Cemetery with reduced capacity at Gungahlin. Limited burial and cremation facilities across the ACT will affect competition, cost of services, the needs of ethnic and religious groups and restrict access to these services for southern residents of the ACT.
* The Southern Memorial Park cemetery (SMP) will meet the future demands of the ACT community and provide services for people living in South Canberra.
* If the crematorium is managed and operated by the ACT Public Cemeteries Authority (the Authority) this will help address the Authority’s $18 million unfunded liability.
* The proposed site for the SMP is currently being used for horse agistment. Users will need to find alternative accommodation for their horses.
* A review of the *Cemeteries and Crematoria Act 2003* (the Act) and the current ‘in perpetuity’ tenure arrangements for burial and interment sites will be considered, in conjunction with the community.
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*Key to impacts: Red – negative, Blue - neutral and Green - positive.*

**Social**

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| **Community and individual health/safety** | * Limited burial and cremation facilities across the ACT will affect competition, cost of services, the needs of ethnic and religious groups and restrict access to these services for southern residents of the ACT.
* The SMP and a second crematorium will address these issues and benefit community members in terms of access to funeral and memorial facilities.
* The social and health impacts of a second crematorium will be considered in detail through the planning process.
* The proposed site for the SMP is currently being used for horse agistment. Users will need to find alternative accommodation for their horses. This is considered a minor overall impact.
* A review of the *Cemeteries and Crematoria Act 2003* (the Act) and the current ‘in perpetuity’ tenure arrangements for burial and interment sites will be considered, in conjunction with the community.
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| **Income levels and distribution** | * More restricted burial and cremation services is likely to increase the cost of services for the community.
* The SMP will ensure relatives and friends of deceased living in South Canberra that rely on public transport to travel to and from the cemetery for visits, and particularly those on lower incomes, have easy access to a facility in the South of Canberra. Not proceeding with the preferred option will mean that all Canberran’s will need to go to Gungahlin cemetery for burials and cremations.
* The SMP and a second crematorium will increase competition and is likely to bring costs down for the community.
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| **Human rights** | * Burial supports the human right to freedom of religion and belief. The SMP will support equal access in the ACT to support religious and cultural/ethnic beliefs.
* The only crematorium in the ACT only provides for Christian and non-religious services. A second crematorium would provide for all cultural/ethnic beliefs.
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| **Justice and rights** | * See above. Proceeding with the SMP and a second crematorium would support the rights of all Canberra’s to accessible burial and cremation services that respect all beliefs and religions into the future, and is affordable.
* Any review of the Act will involve substantial community consultation so the community can have their say and to ensure that the views of the community are reflected in how we manage cemeteries and crematoria into the future.
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**Economic**

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| **ACT Government Budget** | * The preferred option will have a potential impact on the ACT Budget.
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| **Competition** | * There is currently only one crematorium in the ACT. The provision of a second crematorium in the ACT and another cemetery for burials will introduce competition for services.
* Studies that support the Cabinet submission generally show that there is unlikely to be market interest in operating a cemetery, particularly with perpetual care arrangements.
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**Environmental**

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| **Environment and climate change** | * There will be some environmental impacts associated with clearing the site and building the new SMP. These will be fully assessed and considered as part of the planning process, and offset where required.
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