

A photograph of the Karori Cemetery in Auckland, New Zealand. The image shows a gravel path leading up a hillside covered in numerous old, weathered gravestones. The scene is surrounded by lush green vegetation, including ferns and trees, under a clear blue sky. The text 'Karori Cemetery CONSERVATION PLAN' is overlaid in white, with 'CONSERVATION PLAN' in all caps.

Karori Cemetery CONSERVATION PLAN

April 2024

Karori Cemetery

CONSERVATION PLAN

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for

the Wellington City Council

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A water colour of the Shelter and early graves, by Mary Catherine Medley, date unknown. (E-379-0101895, Alexander Turnbull Library)

Front cover: A view of graves on a steep hillside near the historic core of Karori Cemetery.

Rear cover: The cemetery c.1900, looking south-east. (MA_I683398, Te Papa)

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Executive Summary

As Wellington's principal cemetery for 75 years and the present resting place of over 80,000 people, Karori Cemetery is a place of very great regional and national heritage significance.

Karori Cemetery opened in 1891 after a protracted process to find a replacement for the over-crowded Bolton Street Cemetery and Mount Street Cemetery. Raroa Road was built specially to provide mourners access to the cemetery to and from the city. The formal structure of the cemetery was established from the outset, with the first four denominational sections laid out predominantly over gently sloping land, and the access roads set at suitable gradients for horse and cart traffic. The cemetery was initially centred where the Shelter stands at the confluence of the sections and the main access roads. The individual sections were laid out to suit the terrain, each arranged as an orthogonal grid of grave plots, aisles and access paths. The first buildings erected at the cemetery included a cottage for the sexton, a waiting shelter, and a gardener's shed, of which the Shelter still stands.

The cemetery grew slowly initially, but demand grew significantly in the early 1900s as Bolton Street reached the end of its capacity. A chapel and crematorium were built in 1909, and while cremations reduced some of the pressure for burial spaces, its widespread acceptance took some time and within 40 years the cemetery was approaching its envisaged capacity. After World War II, drastic measures, including relocating remains, had to be taken to ensure the cemetery could continue to take burials. A second chapel was designed in the mid-1950s in response to the demand for funeral services. By the late 1950s, Karori Cemetery had reached its present extent and it was superseded as Wellington's principal cemetery by Makara in 1965. Its use slowly tapered away after that time, and although it remains an active cemetery, previously-purchased plots are the only places where burials are still possible. (There is still some capacity for ash burials and for scattering ashes.) The crematorium is operational, with a new unit installed in the small chapel and the cremator well-used. The historic small chapel is a popular place to hold funerals.

Over its active life, a range of special features evolved. These include the Services Cemetery, established in 1918, which houses Commonwealth war graves, service graves and a variety of memorials and is the largest such cemetery in New Zealand, a memorial (and mass grave) for victims of the Tangiwai Rail Disaster and another for the wreck of the SS *Penguin*, a memorial to the former Prime Minister Peter Fraser, and two rose gardens (one replacing an earlier Garden of Remembrance), along with a number of commemorative and specimen trees.

The physical legacy of over 130 years of burial and cremations is 35.5 hectares of land containing a diverse and interesting collection of graves, memorials, monuments, vaults and mausolea, chapels and crematorium, columbaria, ancillary buildings of various kinds, paths and roads, trees, shrubs, gardens, fences, retaining walls and gates. The collection of memorials, burials, graves, built structures and the landscape they occupy represents a unique cultural heritage landscape. The sloping and varied nature of the terrain and diverse vegetation creates a high level of visual interest and offers a wide range of landscape experiences in a relatively small area.

The cemetery is a place of high cultural heritage significance. It is of extremely high historic and social value. The cemetery is a place where, through plot purchase, burial, cremation or genealogical connections, most families in Wellington (and many elsewhere) still have a personal interest. Public interest in the cemetery is therefore high, and likely to remain so. It has frequently been the subject of media interest and public correspondence, particularly when it has fallen into an unkempt condition or has been targeted by vandals. The place has high landscape, townscape and architectural values.

Karori Cemetery presents a special management challenge, both on a day to day basis now and when planning for its long-term future. Taken individually, few of its elements are of especially high heritage value, but the combined value of the cultural heritage landscape is immense. Keeping such a large number of structures in good condition with the limited means available is all but impossible, but vegetation management and preventative maintenance will provide a broad, if limited, level of conservation care and help guard against further loss or significant damage until greater funding resources can be brought to bear.

This *Conservation Plan* outlines policies to help decision-making on work priorities over the long-term. It includes high-level guidance for managing important heritage structures within the cemetery, and provides general guidance on the maintenance and conservation of individual graves. Detailed information on conservation, maintenance and repair is given in the companion document *Maintenance and Repair Guidelines for Graves and Memorials*. The document incorporates a disaster risk management approach into the policies for the long-term care of the place.

This plan is intended to support the long-term transformation of Karori Cemetery into a heritage park as its cemetery use declines and sits alongside – and is to be read and used in conjunction with – the *Karori Cemetery Landscape Management Plan*, which has been prepared in parallel by Boffa Miskell Ltd.

The principal work recommendations made in this *Conservation Plan* are summarised on the following page.

Summary of Work Recommendations

Refer to the section 5.0 *Influences on conservation policy* and section 6.0 *Conservation policy* for the background to the recommendations, and to section 7.0 for further detail on the work recommended.

Matters to consider	Work recommended	Timeframe
Statutory protection	Schedule the cemetery as a heritage area on the WCC District Plan.	Next 5 years. Complete by 2028.
	Propose nominating the cemetery as an historic area/place on the New Zealand Heritage List/ Rārangi Kōrero.	Next 5 years. Complete by 2028.
	Consider classifying the cemetery as an historic reserve under the Reserves Act.	Once the cemetery is closed.
Archaeological Authority	Apply to HNZPT for a general archaeological authority to carry out maintenance, repair and emergency response work for the pre-1900 areas of the cemetery.	As soon as possible, 2023-24.
Conservation plans	Prepare conservation plans for the Services Cemetery, Mess/Tool Shed and Main Chapel. Update the existing conservation plan for the Small Chapel and Crematorium.	Progressively carry out this work over the next 4 years, say 1 or 2 plans per year. Complete by 2027.
	Assess conservation plans and update as and when needed to ensure they remain current and relevant to the needs of each place, and up to date with best conservation practice.	As needed. Annual or biennial review.
Conservation work	Carry out scoping work to plan an ongoing programme of conservation, repair and maintenance to the built structures of the cemetery.	As soon as possible, 2023-24.
	Undertake conservation repair and maintenance work to a selected set of graves each year. Refer to the <i>Maintenance and Repair Guidelines for Graves and Memorials</i> .	Ongoing annual work.
	Keep the main buildings and structures in good repair and appropriately maintained, as set out in the relevant conservation plans.	Ongoing annual work.

Services Cemetery	Progressively return the Services Cemetery to its appearance in the first half of the 20 th century.	Next 5 – 10 years, in stages. Aim to complete by 2033.
Disaster risk management	Improve the resilience of buildings and structures, as funding allows.	Ongoing.
	Enhance the cemetery's preparedness for disastrous events, and ensure management and staff are appropriately trained to assist with disaster response. Develop stakeholder partnerships on DRM matters.	Ongoing.
Vegetation management work	Carry out vegetation management work as set out in the <i>Karori Cemetery Landscape Management Plan</i> , with major works phased over time. This includes an annual programme of removing seedlings and saplings from within and around graves, halting the spread of weeds and trees and the continued growth of vegetation damaging graves or inhibiting access, and a long-term plan for tree management and removal over 5 / 10 / 15 years.	Ongoing.
Setting and viewshafts	Progressively re-open viewshafts within the cemetery and out to the wider landscape. This will require tree removal work. See the <i>Karori Cemetery Landscape Management Plan</i> for requirements.	Next 5 years. Complete by 2028.
Interpretation and visitor experience	See the <i>Karori Cemetery Landscape Management Plan</i> for work proposed to enhance visitor experience and recreational opportunities within the cemetery.	Next 5 – 15 years. Complete by 2033.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Commission

This *Conservation Plan* was commissioned by Myfanwy Emeny, (then) Open Space and Parks Manager, Parks, Sport and Recreation, Wellington City Council (WCC). Bradley Schroder, Ms Emeny's replacement, assumed responsibility for completion of the plan. The preparation of the plan was overseen by Elizabeth Reddington, Cemeteries Manager.

The *Plan* was prepared by Michael Kelly, heritage consultant and Russell Murray, conservation architect, with the assistance of Annelise Schroeder, researcher, Victoria Grouden, archaeologist and Julia Kennedy, architect. The contribution of Bec Ramsey, landscape architect and author of the complementary Karori Cemetery Landscape Management Plan, is gratefully acknowledged.

1.2 Purpose and structure of the plan

This *Conservation Plan* has been commissioned to guide the conservation of the Karori Cemetery, an historic cemetery located in the suburb of Karori, Wellington. Its three main purposes are to:

- (a) meet the requirements of the *Mahare Whakahaere Urupā – Cemeteries Management Plan 2022*, which called for the upgrade of the 2003 *Karori Cemetery Conservation Plan*,
- (b) ensure that the cemetery is cared for so in such a way that its meaning and importance is conserved for present and future generations, and
- (c) to help guide the on-going transition of the cemetery to a heritage park over the next few decades.

The document sets out the history of the cemetery, describes the place and its contents, establishes its heritage values, and sets out policies to help protect those values. It includes a long-term outline programme of conservation work. The *Plan* broadly follows the standard Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga format for conservation plans (see *Guidelines for Preparing Conservation Plans*, NZHPT, 2000). Conservation standards are those set out in the *ICOMOS New Zealand Charter for the Conservation of Places of Cultural Heritage Value*. Heritage values are assessed using the GWRC Regional Policy Statement criteria.

In addition, to maintain best practice in conservation planning and to respond to the potential threats to heritage values that are posed by disastrous events, this plan incorporates a disaster risk management plan (DRM) approach into the conservation planning. This means this document can be regarded as both a conservation plan and a DRM plan.

1.3 Location, ownership and legal status

Karori Cemetery occupies 35.5 hectares of land at the southern end of the suburb of Karori. The land is divided into seven separate parcels. The cemetery has three road entrances – on Old Karori Road, Seaforth Terrace and Standen Street – and a gated entry on Rosehaugh

Avenue, and several formal and informal walking track entrances that connect to the wider surroundings, including linking paths to the bush reserves of Ōtari and Johnston Hill.

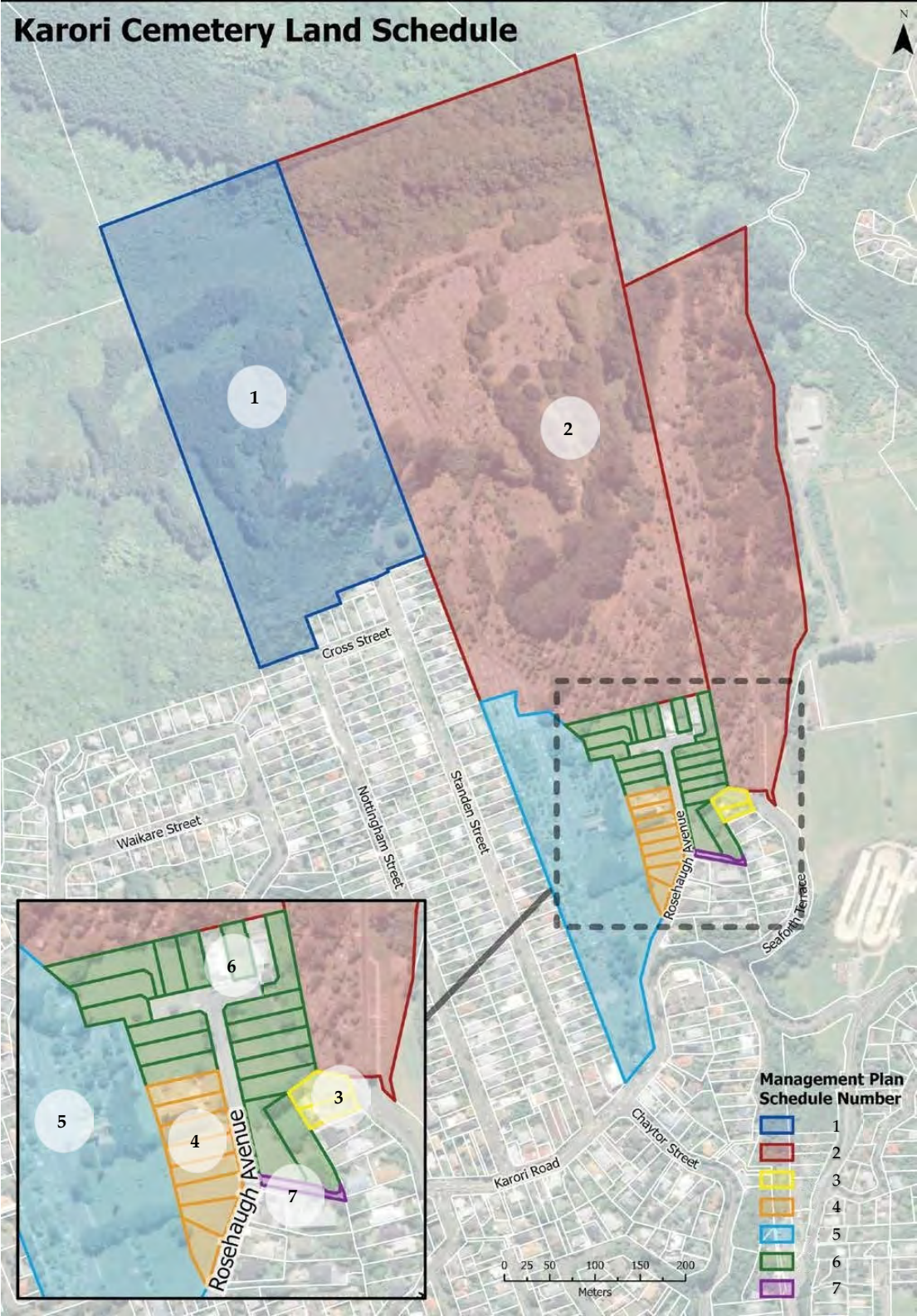


The general location of the cemetery at the eastern end of Karori. (WCC Maps, 2023)

The land occupied by the Karori Cemetery is under the control and management of the WCC but the specific status of each parcel of land varies. They are listed here in the order shown on the Land Schedule plan (see diagram on the following page).

1. Part Section 33, Karori District. Land held freehold by council but only two parts, comprising 3.78 hectares, set aside for cemetery purposes. See CT WN626/63.
2. Part Section 31 and Part 33 Section, Karori District. Land set aside under Public Works Act 1981 (NZ Gazette 1989/2169). Not a reserve. See CT WN34D/196.
3. Lot 30 and Pt Lot 31, DP 9848. Local Purpose Reserve (site for municipal buildings). Vested as reserve for municipal purposes (NZ Gazette 1950/1865). Later classified under Reserves Act as a Local Purpose Reserve (NZ Gazette 1980/1147). Part of reserve (Part Lot 31, DP 9848) was revoked. See CT WN20D/724.
4. Lots 37-44 DP 9848. Land acquired under Public Works Act. Land used for cemetery purposes under Section 23, Local Legislation Act, 1938. See CT WN578/53.
5. Part Section 33, Karori District. Land held freehold by council for cemetery purposes. See CT WN485/211.
6. Lots 2-5, 7, 9-18, 33-36, DP 9848 and Section 78 and Part Section 79, Karori District. Classified as Local Purpose Reserve under Reserves Act 1977 (NZ Gazette 1989/4484). See CT WN568/5.

7. Section 87, Karori District. Subject to Section 59, Land Act in 1948, with reference to mineral rights being reserved by the Crown. See CT WN8A/560.



The arrangement of land parcels within Karori Cemetery. (Courtesy of Cemeteries Management Plan, WCC)

Current heritage listings

The cemetery in its entirety is not currently listed either by WCC or Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga.

Three individual buildings within the cemetery are listed by both organisations. These are the Lychgate, Karori Crematorium and Chapel, and the Shelter.

1.4 Limitations on the preparation of this plan

Research

There were no limits on the availability of archival information to inform the history, but the abundance of material was such that not all of it could be viewed for the purposes of this *Plan*.

Cemetery contents

With over 85,000 graves, the cemetery contains far too many individual structures to assess the relative value of its contents. Therefore, by necessity, this *Conservation Plan* remains relatively high-level.

1.5 Relationship with other documents

The preparation of this *Conservation Plan* is a required action within the *Mahere Whakahaere Urupā -Cemeteries Management Plan: Tawa, Karori and Makara Cemeteries* (section 4.2.4, Heritage recognition and protection). The action is as follows:

1. Protect, manage and promote Karori Cemetery as an historic place in a manner that is compatible with its continuing cemetery purpose.

Action: a) Review the *Karori Cemetery Conservation Plan 2003*, update as necessary, including consideration of vegetation management as part of the cemetery's heritage landscape. Include a long-term maintenance plan with guidance on best practice maintenance, integrated with the proposed landscape management master plan for the cemetery.

Three conservation plans have been prepared for buildings and structures in the cemetery to date. They are the *Karori Cemetery Chapel and Crematorium Conservation Plan* (Bowman and Cox, 2017), *Karori Cemetery Columbaria Conservation Plan* (Kelly and Murray, 2021) and the *Karori Cemetery Shelter Conservation Plan* (Murray and Kennedy, 2022).

This *Conservation Plan* should be read in conjunction with the *Karori Cemetery Landscape Management Plan*, prepared by Boffa Miskell (Bec Ramsey, 2023), and with the *Maintenance and Repair Guidelines for Graves and Memorials* (Kennedy and Murray, 2023).

1.6 Updating this plan

This *Conservation Plan* should be regarded as a dynamic document and updated as often as is necessary (and at no more than 10-yearly intervals) and at the discretion of the WCC. It should be updated when new information comes to hand, after major work is carried out, or following a disastrous event, or as soon as any significant part of the plan is out of date. It should only be updated with the assistance of conservation specialists who have the requisite skills or knowledge to do such work.

1.7 Acknowledgements

The authors would like to thank the following for their co-operation and assistance in the preparation of this *Conservation Plan*:

The Cemeteries Management staff at Karori Cemetery, particularly Elizabeth Reddington.

Bradley Schroder, for his review and editing of draft 2 of the plan.

The staff of Wellington City Archives.

The members of the committee of the Friends of Karori Cemetery.

Becky Masters-Ramsey and Beatrice Pierce of the Ministry for Culture and Heritage/Manatū Taonga.

David Jahnke of Veterans' Affairs.

2.0 History

2.1 History of Karori Cemetery

Māori occupation¹

Karori is regarded as an abbreviation of Kaharore, which is itself an abbreviation of Te Kaha o ngā Rore – ‘the place of many bird snares’. The story of Māori occupation of the area is not extensive, but, as its name suggests, it was a place used for hunting, along with gathering and cultivation. There were notable stands of kahikatea and rimu and abundant birdlife. There is, as far as can be ascertained, no specific evidence (oral or physical) of a direct occupation of the area of the land encompassed by Karori Cemetery by Māori, except as a place for food gathering or cultivation.

The first peoples to live at Te Whanganui a Tara, Ngai Tara, arrived in the 14th century, although subsequent occupation was not continuous. In the early 19th century, much of Wellington was in the hands of Ngāti Ira, including Karori. They were usurped by Ngāti Awa and others when Taranaki whānui moved south in the 1830s. There was, reportedly, a kainga at the south end of the broad valley and cultivations on the east-facing slope of Karori, not far from where Karori Cemetery would later be sited. A pa at Makara that was occupied well into the 19th century was abandoned about the time of the attack on Parihaka in 1881.

There was a track formed by Māori that led from Pipitea Pa (Thorndon) to Karori and on to Ōhāriu / Makara. Before the removal of the forest, this track was admired for the beauty of its flora. This route was later followed, at least in part, by Pakeha to explore and occupy Karori. It was later turned into a pack track and an early road and wound its way past the area that would later become Karori Cemetery. By the time Pakeha settlers arrived in Karori, there were no Māori living there. In 1846, suggestions that settlers in Karori might be attacked by the Ngati Toa chief Te Rangihaeata led to the construction of a short-lived stockade at Karori.

Origins and establishment

Karori Cemetery’s establishment is a consequence of the decision to locate New Zealand’s first town cemeteries relatively close to populations. Bolton Street and Mount Street (Catholic) cemeteries were both established within a short distance of the centre of Wellington in 1842 and by the 1880s both cemeteries were reaching capacity. With proximity to population and overcrowding came fears of disease, particularly as both cemeteries were built on land that sloped down to the town and drainage was poor. Sanitation became an

¹ Information on Māori history of Karori gleaned from: Elworthy, Jo 2011, ‘No simple passage ; the journey of the London to New Zealand’, in *The Stockade*, Issue 43, 2011 p.21-24; Brodie, James 1973, ‘The Māori inhabitants of western Wellington’, *The Stockade*, Vol.1 No.1, pp.3-4; Keneally, Joseph and Betty Keneally 1980, *Karori, then : past images and recollections from a Wellington suburb*, Colonial Associates for Karori School, Wellington; Patrick, Margaret G. 1990, *From bush to suburb, Karori 1840-1980*, Karori Historical Society, Wellington

electoral issue as early as the 1850s and it only became more prominent as the century progressed and central Wellington became more congested.²

In 1882 the government passed the Cemeteries Act, which set regulations for the management of all cemeteries in New Zealand. One of its requirements was that an old cemetery could not close without a new site being opened. Conscious of public fears about the overcrowded cemeteries and the need to have the new cemetery operable before the old ones reached capacity, the WCC, under whose jurisdiction the new cemetery was to be formed, began investigating new sites. It got offers of land from the public in a variety of locations, some a long way from the city. A site at Evans Bay was looked at, and farms were offered at Ohiro in 1882, Melrose in 1883 and at the city end of Karori.³ The land in Karori was owned by James McKenzie, former surveyor-general and his brother Sir Thomas McKenzie, a former prime minister and High Commissioner in London. A site at Crofton [Ngāio], owned in absentia by some local Māori, was temporarily favoured.

The council sought an opinion on soil types from Sir James Hector. Although he did not favour Karori, others did. One perceived benefit was that if a road could be formed from Polhill Gully, the proposed cemetery would then be equidistant from both ends of the town i.e. Thorndon and Te Aro, although it was a long journey either way, particularly before the era of the motor car. In 1889, the council sought offers of land from Karori landowners. Again the McKenzies put forward their land and this time reduced their price from £70 to £55 an acre, which they were sure would comfortably beat the other offers the council received.⁴ By February 1890 the council had chosen three sites for a ballot. Karori won the first vote, with seven, Khandallah four and Melrose one. In a succeeding ballot Karori was favoured nine to three over Khandallah.⁵

In the period after the arrival of New Zealand Company settlers, the 'McKenzie land' was owned and occupied by Timothy Benton, who was given a Crown Grant for 61 acres of Section 33 Karori District in 1864. He was on the land much earlier, possibly as early as 1842, the year he arrived in Wellington. One source suggests he built a house on the land that year.⁶ Benton was a sawyer and he kept the property intact until he began selling it off in chunks from 1878. Sales were made to Thomas and James Mackenzie in May 1878,⁷ and again in 1879,⁸ Frances Standen (née Benton, daughter of Timothy Benton) in 1878 and 1879⁹ and Frederick Skae, the Scottish-born former inspector of lunatic asylums in New Zealand,

² Alington, Margaret 1978, *Unquiet Earth: A History of the Bolton Street Cemetery*, Wellington City Council / Ministry of Works and Development, Wellington p.77, pp.81-82

³ Alington pp.85-88

⁴ James McKenzie to Town Clerk, 9 December 1889, 00233-1889/1711, Wellington City Council Archives (WCAA)

⁵ Alington p.88

⁶ See PAColl-7489-63, Alexander Turnbull Library

⁷ Deed Index volume 14, folio 568, Archives New Zealand (ANZ).

⁸ WN17/229 & 230, WN110/268, Land Information New Zealand (LINZ)

⁹ Deed Index volume 13, folio 377, (ANZ) & WN17/228, LINZ

in April 1880.¹⁰ The land purchased by Frances Standen in 1878 and 1879 was on-sold to James McKenzie in 1890 and 1892.

Frances Standen was the wife of Edward Standen who received a Crown Grant for the western half of Section 33 in 1864.¹¹ He ran a dairy farm on his property until his death in 1869. The land remained in the family until it was subdivided by the Standen family as the 'Standen Estate' and 202 building sites auctioned off in 1906.¹² This led to the creation of Standen and Johnston Streets immediately west of the Karori Cemetery.

Following the vote in favour of Karori, the council attempted to settle terms with the McKenzie brothers. The council was only prepared to offer £42 per acre and initially the brothers turned it down, upset at the far lower offer.¹³ When it was clear the council would not budge, they reluctantly gave in.¹⁴ Negotiations continued over other minor matters. It took nearly a year before the sale was finalised. The council also inspected – and decided to purchase – the adjacent land of absentee owner, Henrietta Skae,¹⁵ widow of Frederick Skae, who had died in 1881.¹⁶ (Henrietta Skae returned to Scotland with her family after his death; the family had only been in the house for a year). The Skae land forms the western section of the cemetery close to Old Karori Road and includes most of the oldest portions of the cemetery, encompassing the former Sexton's House, the Shelter, Crematorium and Chapel and part of the Services Cemetery. Newspaper reports from the time state that the Skae land was purchased by the McKenzies before they on-sold it to the WCC, but there is no documentary evidence to support this.¹⁷

While the WCC was securing the land it needed in Karori, the government passed the Wellington City Empowering Act 1889, which allowed the council to raise a loan of £7,500 (at 5%) to purchase the land and establish the cemetery.

The proposed Karori Cemetery would not be the first in Karori. There was already a cemetery at St Mary's Anglican Church, on Karori Road, a short distance west of the proposed new site. It is not known how many graves the church cemetery held, but it fell into disuse and was closed, by statute, in 1963¹⁸ and the graves removed.

Although there was an existing route to Karori via Thorndon and Northland, the council considered the proposed second road via Polhill Gully a necessity and therefore a cost to be borne as part of the work. Nevertheless it sought a contribution from the McKenzies, who retained other land in the area, and, as the road would provide access to their properties,

¹⁰ Deed Index volume 33, folio 515, ANZ

¹¹ Deed Index, volume 6, folio 293, ANZ

¹² *Evening Post*, 16 October 1906, p.8

¹³ James McKenzie to Town Clerk WCC, 17 February 1890, 00233-1890/234, WCCA

¹⁴ James McKenzie to Town Clerk, WCC 3 March 1890, 00233-1890/407, WCCA

¹⁵ Deed Index volume 33, folio 515, ANZ

¹⁶ A monument to Frederick Skae was erected in the cemetery at St Mary's Karori in 1882. See *West Coast Times*, 19 December 1882, p.2.

¹⁷ *New Zealand Mail*, 28 February 1890, p.2

¹⁸ St Mary's Church (Karori) Burial Ground Act 1963

donations of land from other affected landowners. The McKenzies stumped up £400 of their own money to augment the council's £750, and work began in late 1890, after the consent of the various landowners was gained and the relevant conveyancing completed. The Melrose Borough Council was asked for a contribution but they declined.¹⁹ The road was finished by the middle of the following year. Originally known, with some justification, as Cemetery Road, it was later renamed Raroa Road (meaning 'sun all year', according to Fanny Irvine-Smith).²⁰

In October 1890 the council set up a Cemeteries Committee, comprising the Mayor (ex officio), three councillors and one other. The land purchase went through in late 1890 or early 1891; it was described as 'recently purchased' in February that year.²¹ The 95 acres (38.4 hectares) of land cost £4,000. However, the cemetery was close to not being established at all. Presumably as a response to the threat of disease, the Cemeteries Act also prevented the establishment of a new cemetery within the boundary of an existing city or borough. As the Karori Borough was not constituted until 1892, the land was still deemed to be 'rural' and the cemetery was established with only months to spare.²²

The first burial at Karori was a month-old infant who died on 3 August 1891. Margaret Alington, in 'Unquiet Earth', wrote of this first interment:

In the midst of the vast acres of rough hillside, the ground was first broken to receive the tiny body of Frederick William Fish, a premature infant whose remains lay in isolation on the windy slopes for six months before the next burial.²³

There were two more infant burials before the new cemetery came into regular use early in 1892. For the preceding six months, available land at Bolton Street was used (and, remarkably, there was some), there being little interest in the long trip out to Karori while burials could continue to take place close to town.

The first decades

The arrangement of the cemetery to a large extent mirrored that of Bolton Street, with the exception of the inclusion of an area for Catholic burials, previously provided for at Mount Street. The various church sections were consecrated and the first regular burials began in February 1892. The first Church of England burial was on 4 April 1892²⁴ and the first Catholic burial was five days later. A sexton, Ernest Nash (he called himself a 'custodian', initially), was appointed and for a number of years he shared staff with Bolton Street, which was still receiving interments in shared plots. The land not initially required for cemetery purposes was fenced off and leased for grazing.²⁵ This might explain why at least two

¹⁹ Town Clerk, Melrose Borough Council to Town Clerk, WCC, 2 March 1892, 00233-1892/314, WCAA

²⁰ Irvine-Smith, Frances L. 1948, *The Streets of my City*, A.H and A.W. Reed, Wellington p.225

²¹ City Solicitor to Town Clerk, 5 February 1891, 00233-1891/154, WCAA

²² Section 74, Cemeteries Act, 1882

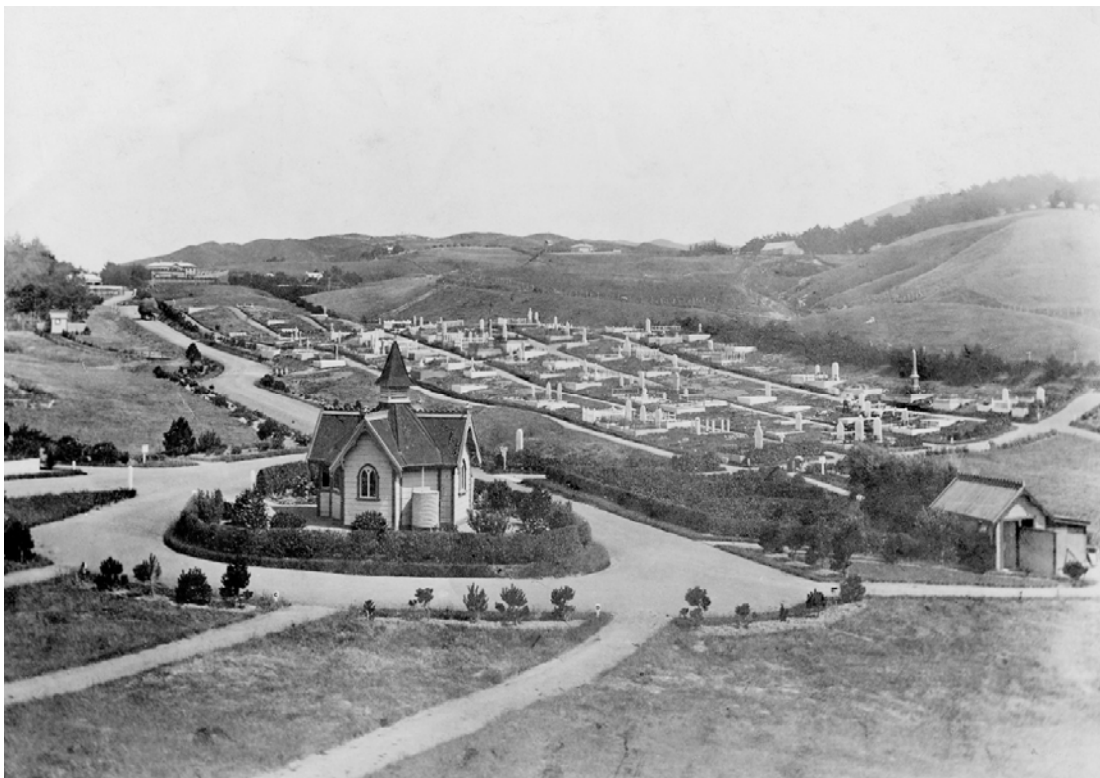
²³ Alington p.97

²⁴ Church of England 1, Burial Index / Card Index, Karori Cemetery records. The same source provided the first Catholic burial date.

²⁵ WCC Minute Book, 18 September 1891, WCAA

existing farmhouses appear to have survived well into the 20th century before the land they occupied was needed.

The first significant structure built at the cemetery was the sexton's cottage, an elegant villa with distinctive triangular-headed windows, which sat on the site of the present cemetery office close to the entrance of the cemetery until the 1950s. The house was built in 1891 and was a familiar sight to mourners and visitors until it was replaced by a new office and accommodation building in 1954. It was designed by the noted Wellington architect Frederick de Jersey Clere; his signature features on the plan of the building.²⁶



The Shelter and early graves, c.1900. The area around the shelter is the historic core of the cemetery. Note the building to the right, possibly a work shed and another top left, purpose unknown. (50010-57, WCCA)

Nash had been in his job just a few months when his wife, Caroline, died. They had been living in the sexton's cottage at the time of her death. Instead of burying her there at Karori, the funeral cortège left the cemetery and travelled all the way to Bolton Street for the interment.²⁷ The trip was expected to take one hour, which gives an indication of the typical time it might have taken for journeys between the city and the cemetery at the time. Nash may have been a volatile individual. He was twice the subject of reports in newspapers for

²⁶ Caretaker's cottage, Karori Cemetery, floor plan and elevations, 40, 30 May 1891, 00248-40, WCCA

²⁷ *New Zealand Times*, 19 December 1891 p.3

fighters with monumental masons, but from this distance it's hard to know who was at fault. He remained in the role until 1903.²⁸

While burials remained shared between Bolton Street and Karori, the increase in the rate of burials at Karori was incremental at first. Between 1891 and 1896, for instance, there were 2,102 interments. The first interments were divided between the public, Jewish, Roman Catholic and Church of England areas, which were all positioned close to the Shelter, but a fair distance from the main entrance, which was located on a narrow band of land next to Old Karori Road. As time went by, these first allocations filled up and more of the McKenzies' former farm and the Skae property were brought into use.

Another important early structure built by the council that still stands was a shelter for mourners. The proposal to build the shelter was debated by the Cemetery Committee in August 1891 but a decision was deferred. The City Surveyor, George Wiltshire (1846-1905), submitted a design for the building, and estimated the cost at £90 to £100. The lower of the two tender prices was £119.19.6, from S. Hemingway, and he was awarded the contract. The shelter is thought to have been completed in late 1891. Built for the use of all, it was described by the sexton as having a tower with louvres and it came in for heavy criticism for not being able to keep out the weather.²⁹ In early 1892 the shelter was enclosed with windows and a door. By 1904 the building was referred to as the mortuary chapel. The building was later informally named the Jewish Chapel, which came about partly because of its physical proximity to the Jewish section of the cemetery. This name was reinforced in the 1950s when the Jewish community took responsibility for the building's maintenance, on the basis that by then they used the building almost exclusively. The building narrowly escaped demolition by WCC in 1965 and in 1967 the Jewish community paid for it to be upgraded. It was restored in 1977-78 by Parks and Recreation, at a cost of \$3,000, by which time the Jewish community had moved to a new building at Makara cemetery.³⁰

The opening of the Kelburn cable car in 1902 was considered something of a boon to visitors to the cemetery. The cable car was part of a third access route to the cemetery, which ran along Upland Road, over the viaduct and through the newly constructed Karori Tunnel, itself a significant improvement to vehicular access to Karori.

²⁸ *New Zealand Times*, 11 August 1903, p.5

²⁹ Rev. Coffey to Town Clerk, 00233-1892/774, WCCA

³⁰ History of the Shelter taken largely from Alington M. 1991, 'Mortuary Chapel, Karori Cemetery', prepared for WCC. See also *Karori Cemetery Shelter Conservation Plan*, 2022.



The Sexton's cottage and office, post-1910. Note the structure visible above the trees to the left. This is almost certainly the Skae house, still standing on land not then required for graves. (50010-90, WCL)

The provision of cremation at Karori was a prospect from the outset. The Cemeteries Act 1882 made cremation legal in New Zealand, but no crematorium was built anywhere for some time. Cremation had become a sufficiently mainstream idea for the *New Zealand Times* to make a plea for its introduction in Wellington in 1888. It linked its use to the prevailing concerns about public sanitation.

Another dirty habit which it is to be hoped will ere long be disused is that of burying our dead in a crowded cemetery, on raised ground, in the midst of a dense population, while there are suitable sites for interment available outside the city, and while the system of cremation, so largely growing in favour in Europe, is available as a cleanly substitute for the revolting course of slow and loathsome decay. We hope that the excellent suggestion made by Mr Ferguson, C.E., and Mr George Robertson that a crematorium should be appended to the Destructor, will be carried out at an early date. The peculiarities of this city's natural (and artificial) site render special sanitary precautions absolutely imperative.³¹

In April 1891, in advance of that year's municipal election, a petition calling for part of the new Karori Cemetery to be set aside for a crematorium was put before the WCC.³² It helped

³¹ *New Zealand Times*, 30 August 1888, p.4

³² *Evening Post*, 17 April 1891, p.2

make the construction of a crematorium an election issue. In May that year, the Cemetery Committee agreed to set aside an acre at the new cemetery for a crematorium.³³



An early image of the crematorium. The bank behind was later cut away to make way for the first columbarium, completed in 1935. (00138_0_13454, WCA), WCCA)

³³ *Evening Post*, 1 May 1891, p.2



The procession of mourners arriving at Karori Cemetery for the committal of the dead following the tragic sinking of the SS Penguin, 1909. (MA 148914, Te Papa)

Nothing happened in the short term because there was little enthusiasm for funding a crematorium. While council left the idea of a crematorium in abeyance, it nevertheless reappeared as an election issue every three years and in 1897 the WCC proposed taking out a loan to fund public works, including, among other things, a crematorium. In April 1898, following a public meeting, a delegation met Mayor John Blair to request a crematorium. The council was asked to put the subject of a crematorium to ratepayers, but it refused. The following year, the mayor put a resolution to a large public meeting that the council borrow £2,000 to build a crematorium, but it was rejected.³⁴

Periodically, the WCC would commit to building the facility, for which land remained available at Karori, but construction never started. Then, in 1905, a petition presented to the WCC pushed the issue back into the public consciousness and in 1906 an appeal began to raise funds for the construction. Architect John Swan prepared a sketch plan and in November 1906, the WCC agreed to contribute £400 to the cost of construction. Plans and specifications were prepared by Swan in February 1907.

There the matter sat for another 16 months. Then, in August 1908, tenders were called for the provision of a furnace.³⁵ There was a further delay until the WCC finally approved the

³⁴ *Evening Post*, 2 August 1899, p.5

³⁵ The relevant source only refers to the receipt of tenders for the furnace, not the call for tenders. *Evening Post*, 28 August 1908, p.8

construction of the crematorium (including a chapel) at Karori in December 1908.³⁶ Tenders were called for the construction of the building in January 1908, which was won by J. Priddey. The building, which cost £1,433, was completed in October 1909. The first cremation took place on 2 November 1909.³⁷

The crematorium was the first in New Zealand and the second in Australasia (the first was opened in Adelaide in 1903).³⁸ It was opened only 24 years after the first modern-era crematorium was built in England. Despite the public support for its construction, the crematorium was not in heavy use initially. It presumably took some time for public attitudes to cremation to shift. By the early 1930s, there were still only 140 or so cremations a year, accounting for 12.6% of all interments.³⁹

Six of the chapel windows were later replaced with stained glass windows designed and made in the An Tur Gloine (Tower of Glass) factory in Dublin. Five of the windows were donated by Wellington Harbour Board Engineer William Ferguson and his family over a period from 1914 onwards. The first ashes were installed in niches in the chapel walls and after those niches were filled, further niches were provided in columbaria outside.

Two significant events in 1918 had a considerable impact on the cemetery. With the end of World War I came the first burials in what became known as the Services Cemetery. The proposal to set aside such an area within the cemetery was first raised in 1916, by Captain Edward Vine, who was the enquiry officer at the Base Records Office at the Defence Department. His advocacy was endorsed by the Wellington branch of the Women's National Reserve. The setting aside of specific areas for war dead followed the New Zealand Government signing the Royal Charter of 1917 between the Commonwealth (then Imperial) War Graves Commission, and the governments of the Commonwealth on the care of war graves.

The government had begun allocating money for the maintenance of war graves as early as 1911 and the first Inspector of War Graves, Edith Statham, was appointed to the Department of Internal Affairs in 1913. The care of war graves grew to encompass fallen servicemen from subsequent wars, as well as local veterans.

The dedication of the cemetery was followed, over time, by the construction of memorial structures, such as a lychgate (1921), the Wellington Provincial Memorial arch (1931), sundial, seats and marble steps, as well as the planting of numerous commemorative trees. Throughout the 1920s a considerable effort was made to improve the landscaping of the Services Cemetery and by the end of the decade it was beautifully presented.

³⁶ *Evening Post*, 18 December 1908, p.7

³⁷ *Evening Post*, 2 November 1909, p.7

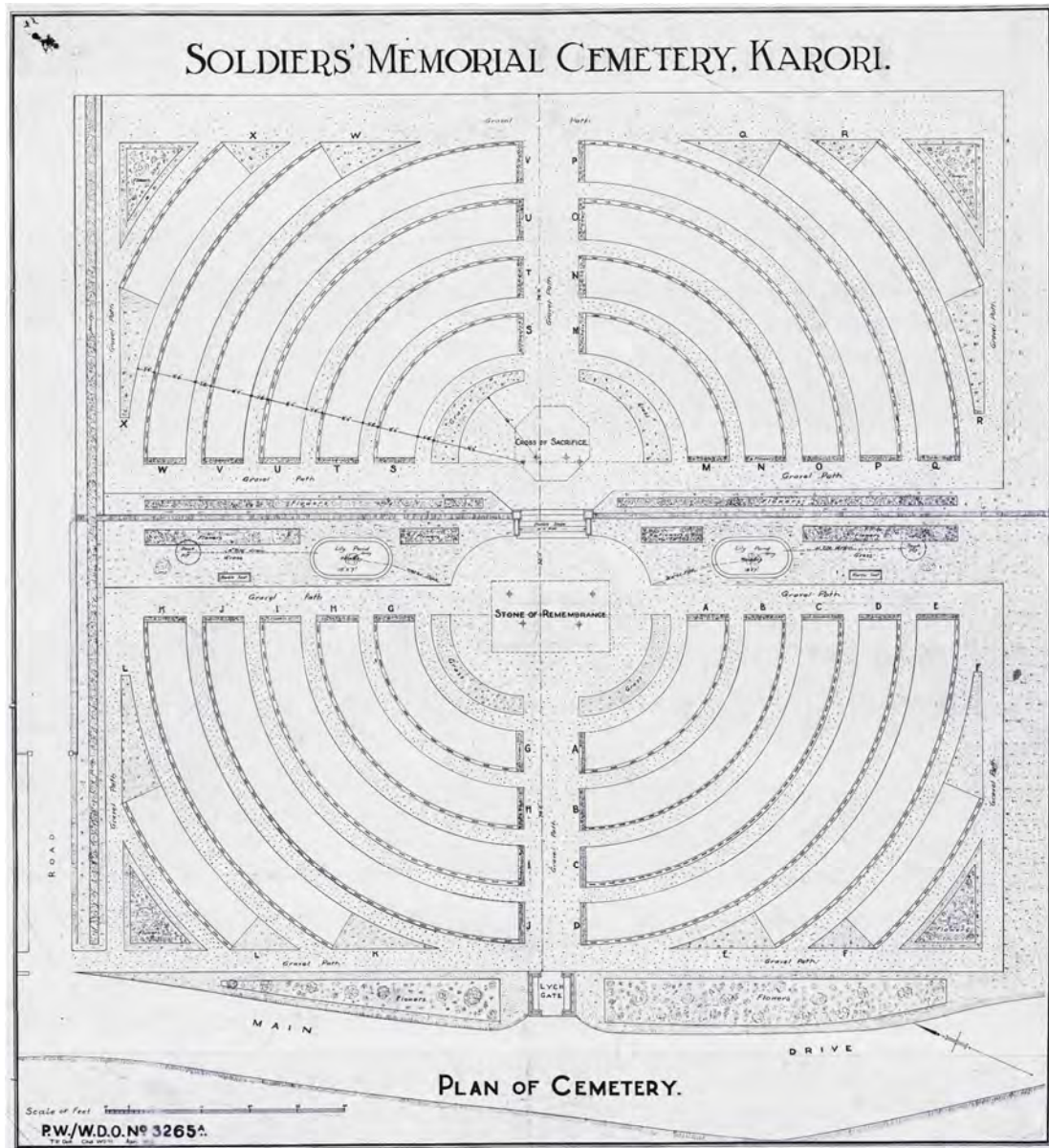
³⁸ *City of Adelaide Year Book*, 1971/74, pp. 266-268, as referenced in www.sahistorians.org.au/175/chronology/may/4-may-1903-west-terrace-crematorium.shtml [retrieved 9 July 2021]

³⁹ *Evening Post*, 16 January 1935, p.10

Late 1918 was the zenith of the influenza epidemic, which spread throughout much of the world as the war ended and killed millions of people, including nearly nine thousand in New Zealand. In Wellington the peak came towards the end of the year. On one day, 19 November, 63 people were buried in the cemetery, the greatest number of interments in one day, ever. In that week some 340 people were buried, and November was the busiest ever month recorded, with 708 burials. From 1 April 1918 to 31 March 1919, 1,604 people were interred in Karori Cemetery.⁴⁰

Images from the 1920s show a cemetery in remarkably good order. By then the tree and shrub plantings, landscaping and buildings had matured and, in the hands of an obviously attentive staff, the cemetery looked exceedingly picturesque. In particular, the 'shop-window' showed the expenditure of a considerable effort.

⁴⁰ Sexton's Notebook and Diary 1929-1939, Karori Cemetery records



A plan of the Services Cemetery prepared by the Public Works Department about 1925, showing the careful symmetry of the plan along with the structures already installed and others that were planned but never built.

(00009-7/3 Pt.1, WCCA)



The Services Cemetery taking shape, with marble seats and lychgate, c.1921. Memorial objects such as these were used to help beautify the cemetery. (50010-57, WCCA)



The maturing Services Cemetery, late 1920s, with headstones gradually replacing crosses and the landscaping mostly finished. Note the lily ponds and steps. (1/2-045825-G, ATL)

An expanding cemetery

By 1927 there had been 27,115 burials and there was a pressing need for more land. Although the initial demand for the crematorium was moderate, the number of cremations grew and helped to slow the demand for the increasingly short supply of land. The important role the crematorium played in relieving pressure on available land was exemplified by the fact that as early as 1928 the then sexton, E.H. Harlen, was complaining about the shortage of land.⁴¹ He even suggested that if more land was not found, the cemetery would have to go to Makara, one of the first recorded suggestions to that effect. The prospect of acquiring or using other land in the immediate vicinity was not considered feasible by the city solicitor, who noted that the 'creation of new burial grounds within boroughs is forbidden by Statute.' It would be advisable, he considered, to acquire land in the County of Makara that was 'useless for farming purposes'.⁴²

The year 1927 was also when the cemetery acquired a new mess and tool shed. Designed by the chief engineer's office, the building was constructed by contractor McLean and Gray. The tender price was £1,000.⁴³ The late 1920s was also the first period during which the cemetery came in for regular criticism for its appearance. Prior to this, the cemetery's size had been manageable, with many graves tended by families who still had a strong connection to the deceased. However, constant expansion and the passage of time was making it impossible for staff to keep more remote parts of the cemetery tidy.

The state of the roads and tracks – all unpaved, dusty (or muddy) and weed-ridden – was the subject of criticism from both staff and the general public. The cemetery road was first paved in the early 1930s, but it was extended only as far as the soldiers' graves. So, with the onset of the Depression, unemployed relief workers were put to work on the grounds. Sealing of paths started in 1932, but it was simply impossible to do what was needed with the available budget and staff. In 1934, more work was done when a budget of £200,000 was allocated by the WCC to special unemployed relief works. Unemployed workers cut a track from Wilton to Karori through the bush and cemetery to allow people who had no transport to walk between Karori and the northern suburbs. It quickly overgrew. In 1939, the WCC allocated £284 to sealing paths as part of on-going work to improve access.⁴⁴

The cemetery's expansion was prodigious. The third public area was opened in 1934, while new portions in the Catholic and Anglican areas were opening at a rate of one every two or three years during the 1920s and 30s. The cemetery had spread from a relatively small area surrounding the Crematorium and Mortuary Chapel, to nearly the full extent of the McKenzie purchase. As the lack of space loomed ever larger, a series of measures were taken to alleviate the pressure. One involved utilising land – steep or difficult to access – that was not really suitable for burials. Other, more drastic measures were also employed.

⁴¹ Memo to Town Clerk, 3 May 1928, 00001-7/25 Pt.1, Cemetery Karori (General), 1927-1935, WCCA

⁴² City Solicitor to Town Clerk 19 May 1928, 00001-7/25 Pt.1

⁴³ Karori Cemetery Road, mess room and conveniences, 00056-B2245, WCCA

⁴⁴ City Engineer to Town Clerk, 2 February 1939, 00009-7/3 Pt.1, Cemeteries: Karori Cemetery, General File 1929-1952, WCCA

The sheer extent of the growing cemetery meant that it was a long walk from the entrance to its furthest reaches. To give some relief, rain cover and a pick-up point for visitors doing an extended walk, the City Engineer prepared a design for a timber shelter in early 1936. The estimated cost was £73.⁴⁵ Tenders were called in 1937 but then, citing urgency, the Town Clerk decided to use day labour.⁴⁶ It is assumed the shelter shed was built soon after but the file does not confirm that one way or the other. It is noted that a concrete floor for a now long removed shelter is still extant at the north end of the cemetery. This is almost certainly the site of the 1937 shed, which suggests that it was indeed required for visitors trekking around the outer reaches of the cemetery. There was also a rest room and toilet at the north-eastern corner of the cemetery, not a great distance from the shelter.

The cemetery's expansion made it more visible than ever and its connection with Karori was not necessarily appreciated by local residents. In 1937 the Karori Progressive Association asked for the name to be changed to the more 'euphonest' (sic) Western Cemetery.⁴⁷ The council, mindful of confusing Wellingtonians and visitors about the absence of an 'eastern' cemetery, turned them down. For all that, it seems that the name 'Karori Cemetery' was not enshrined in any gazette notice up to that point and it could more accurately have been described as 'Wellington Cemetery'.⁴⁸

While work went on cleaning up the cemetery, co-ordinated tree and shrub planting was regularly undertaken. Unfortunately World War II intervened and a shortage of labour meant that, despite the work of willing volunteers, the cemetery quickly reverted to a wilder state. It was to be an uphill battle to get on top of it again. After the war things improved only slightly. There was still a significant shortage of labour and a constant turnover of staff.

In 1944 the Mayor of Wellington Will Appleton announced that a piece of land on the hill in the north-west corner of the cemetery – initially set aside for cemetery purposes in 1937 – was to be turned into a model lawn cemetery, based on Arlington Cemetery in Washington, which he had seen.⁴⁹ A newspaper report pointed out that the cemetery already had a lawn cemetery, containing 80 American servicemen who had died during the war that was, at that time, still on-going.⁵⁰

In 1945 an amendment to the by-law laid out strict provisions for the new cemetery, to be named Standen Street Cemetery (although that name does not seem to have gained any currency). The provisions included: the stipulation that there should be no protrusions above the level of the lawn, the size of the tablet, the size of the plot and the provision of a

⁴⁵ Ibid. Memo (annotated), City Engineer's Department. A note in the memo states 'Work completed as estimated. See further memo to Town Clerk dated 9.6.36.'

⁴⁶ Town Clerk to City Engineer, 30 August 1937, 00009-7/3, Pt.1

⁴⁷ Karori Progressive Association to Town Clerk, 19 May 1937, 00001-7/25 Pt.2, 1935-1940, WCCA

⁴⁸ Ibid. Memo to Town Clerk, 19 May 1937.

⁴⁹ *Dominion* 12 October 1944

⁵⁰ *Evening Post*, 14 October 1944, p.6. The article stated that forming the lawn cemetery for American servicemen came about via a suggestion from an organisation called the British-American Co-operation Movement.

standard receptacle for flowers.⁵¹ The cemetery opened two years later, in 1951, after the grass failed to take.⁵² An extension to the lawn cemetery was surveyed in 1962 and later utilised.



An aerial image of the area near the cemetery entrance, taken from the north, 1947. The future site of the main chapel and Services Cemetery extension is in the foreground. (WA-11396-F, ATL)

⁵¹ 00063-1945/63, Standen Street: Cemetery: Bylaw (Extension Karori Cemetery), 1945, WCCA

⁵² *Dominion*, 14 January 1949



*The stand-alone columbarium nearing completion alongside the chapel/crematorium, 1950.
(00009_7;2;1 Part 1, WCA)*

Telling evidence of the lack of room at the cemetery was the declaration made in 1948 by Mabel Howard, minister of health in the Labour government and the first female cabinet minister, authorising the 'removal of the remains of all those persons, to the number of approximately 4,873, who were buried during the period from 1890 to the end of 1920 in plots in the Karori Cemetery which have not been purchased in accordance with the By-laws of the Wellington City Council...'.⁵³ This declaration was accompanied by a series of strict conditions, including that the exhumations had to be done by experienced workmen under the supervision of the sexton, the new location had to be within the same denominational area and the old and new locations had to be recorded. It seems remarkable that the list, which amounted to 63 pages of closely typed names, did not attract more interest, given that the most recent interment was just 28 years earlier. The proposed exhumation was apparently advertised in newspapers and a list of affected people published to allow relatives a chance to finally pay up.⁵⁴ Most of those reinterred were placed in the 'common ground' between the heads of graves. These were also places where many infants were buried. As was always the case with the cemetery, its incomparable records mean it is possible to identify exactly where all these remains were finally reinterred. In 2022, a woman whose descendant's remains were exhumed asked for an apology for the mass exhumation.⁵⁵

⁵³ Disinterment of persons buried in Karori Cemetery 1890-1920, 00002-5530, WCCA

⁵⁴ *Dominion Post*, 14 March 2022, p.8

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

The poor state of the cemetery attracted a great deal of publicity during 1948 and 1949, but the sexton was powerless to do anything about it, except clean up the grave or path that was the subject of a given complaint. In early 1949, a *Dominion* article reported that there were 11 permanent staff, but that something like 25 were needed, for 12 months, to clear the cemetery.⁵⁶ Along with families failing to tend graves, a lack of committed staff was highlighted as an issue, with the report lamenting that farmers' sons from Makara and Karori, once the mainstay of the workforce, were no longer on the staff.

One response to the constant criticism was the decision to spray large areas of the cemetery to kill off all growth, weeds or otherwise. It is not certain when the weed control regime began, but its effect was brutal. It appears to have been largely used on the eastern slopes of the cemetery, above Western Park, and the regular use of poisons meant that when a planting regime began in the 1970s the ground was assessed as too toxic to take most plantings. Its effectiveness was illustrated in a photograph in a *Dominion* article in 1972, which shows nothing but bare ground around the graves in that area.

The Tangiwai disaster, when 151 people lost their lives in a train derailment at Tangiwai bridge on Christmas Eve 1953, had a sombre closure at the cemetery when 76 of the victims were buried in a mass grave. The Duke of Edinburgh, on tour in New Zealand at the time, attended the funeral of the victims on 31 December 1953. A few months later the grave was exhumed when it became clear that a number of the bodies had been wrongly identified. To this day, some victims remain unknown and unnamed. In 1957 the Government unveiled a plan for a memorial to be built at the head of the mass grave. Designed by Government Architect Gordon Wilson, the memorial was opened by Prime Minister Sidney Holland on 26 March 1957.

A crowded hillside

The location of the Tangiwai grave and Memorial in a cramped site at the far north end of the cemetery aptly demonstrated the accommodation problems the cemetery was experiencing. In 1956 a survey of remaining unused ground suitable for burial revealed that the Catholic portion had 75 plots, Anglican (Church of England) 18, Public 70, Greek Orthodox, 250, Jewish, 200 plots and Undenominational 2,200. In addition there were 2,000 unpurchased plots in use, the residents of which were almost certainly later exhumed and reinterred elsewhere to provide more room. Makara Cemetery would not open until 1965, so yet more ways of crowding graves into the cemetery were needed. In 1960, as a response to the size of the cemetery and its bewildering layout, the Lions Club suggested to the mayor that each road be numbered, in a manner similar to Manhattan, New York. The idea was never taken up.

Funeral directors (and pall bearers) gained a considerable boon during the 1950s with the introduction of automatic, hydraulic coffin-lowering equipment.⁵⁷ The council purchased several models of the 'Oshkosh' variety and then made them available to the various firms who plied their trade in the cemetery.

⁵⁶ *Dominion*, 14 January 1949

⁵⁷ A casket lowering device had been invented as early as 1894, by Alfred Richardson.

The popularity of cremation grew slowly but steadily during the first half of the 20th century, but increased dramatically shortly before World War II. In 1911, for instance, cremations made up just 1.3% of the combined total of burials and cremations, and even by 1930 the figure was still only 7.5%. But just six years later the figure had jumped to 24.4%⁵⁸ and by 1947-48 it stood at 45.7%. There were about 1,500 burials a year. Although this put significant pressure on the crematorium at Karori, then the only one in Wellington, it helped reduce demand for interments at a time when Karori was becoming increasingly crowded. The increasing use of cremations effectively extended the working life of the cemetery.

The first response to this increased demand was the construction of a stand-alone columbarium. Designed by the City Engineer, it was to be located neatly behind the crematorium. Carefully designed in a U-shape with flanking wings to fit in the space and to provide a formal and complementary background to the crematorium and chapel, this first columbarium was completed in 1935 and intended to contain up to 2,000 niches.

As demand for cremation grew further, new columbaria were constructed. These mainly took the form of narrow walls adjacent to roads. A long columbarium wall was built on the edge of Rosehaugh Avenue, alongside the eastern side of the Services Cemetery, in 1941, to hold soldiers' ashes. This was subsequently extended twice, in 1959 and 1972. A stand-alone columbarium was built alongside the crematorium chapel in 1950 and two columbaria walls were built alongside the main drive (near the Lychgate) in 1953 and 1955. Finally, one more columbarium wall was built beyond the crematorium on the main drive in 1963. All the columbaria are still in use, with the occasional interment of ashes still taking place.⁵⁹

⁵⁸ Kelly, Michael and Russell Murray 2021, 'Karori Cemetery Columbaria Conservation Plan, WCC p.12

⁵⁹ Ibid. p.1



The Duke of Edinburgh attending the mass grave for Tangiwai disaster victims, 31 December 1953. Several months later the graves had to be exhumed because some of the bodies had been incorrectly identified. (AAQT 6538 9 E76)



The Peter Fraser memorial nearing completion, 1956. (EP/1956/0644-F)



The combined chapel and crematorium about the time of its completion, c.1959. (00158-593-b (sheet 1213b), WCCA)



Wilton Tip, nearing the end of its operation, late 1960s. The pine trees to the right were planted in the late 1920s to screen the cemetery from Wilton. (00557-39-7, WCCA)

The increasing number of cremations put significant pressure on the chapel and crematorium. A second chapel / crematorium was first mooted in the 1940s and an elevated site was chosen on a vestige of the McKenzie estate, above the Services Cemetery. It was to be reached independently via Rosehaugh Avenue. William Gray Young, of Gray Young, Morton and Young drew up plans for the new chapel, which was considerably larger than the first, in 1947. It took another 13 years for the chapel to open. Tenders were not called until 1954 and work itself did not finish until 1957, at a cost of £34,926.

Unfortunately, a lengthy and frustrating saga with leaking windows meant the chapel did not finally open until 1960, and even by then the problem had not been fixed. It was not until 1966 that the matter was finally considered resolved, after numerous attempts at reglazing, protection and sealing. It was a saga that exasperated all involved and was a source of great embarrassment to the council at a period when the second chapel was sorely needed to meet a demand that ran to as many as 14 cremations a day.

Allied to the construction of the new chapel was the laying of a Garden of Remembrance. Various plans were drawn up and inspiration was sought from overseas examples, such as Lawnswood at Leeds Crematorium.⁶⁰ The work was undertaken in 1960 by E.H. Shirley and Sons, who had undertaken other work at the cemetery, at an estimated cost of £708.⁶¹ In 1966 a plaque was installed in the garden. It read: 'This garden is a resting place for all those wishing to linger and remember their loved ones who have passed on.'

In 1960, the Director of Parks and Reserves suggested the establishment of a rose garden near the entrance to the cemetery. Constructed at an estimated cost of £1,875, with £750 for piping of water, it involved the removal of an existing toilet block and its reconstruction at the far end of the garden. A remembrance monument was built abutting the western fence and a vault built to house unclaimed ashes. Work finished in October that year. The monument still stands, but the toilet and a vault were removed, with ashes moving to a vault beneath the office. The garden was extended along the fence line in 1990. The radial arrangement in the middle of the garden was also extended. There are also unmarked ash rows in the grass area. There is a new toilet across the road.

Karori Cemetery's northern aspect remained a mixture of forest and rural farmland nearly 70 years after its establishment and there were occasional complaints of sheep in the lawn cemetery. It was traced to a boundary gate left open by the adjacent farmer.

Two cemeteries

On 23 March 1965, Makara Cemetery opened for its first burial. The land had been purchased during the 1940s in expectation of the day Karori closed to new burials, which had been anticipated for decades. The handover had been put off for a long time but even in March 1965 there were still 1,000 plots left for purchase at Karori.

⁶⁰ 0001:451:7/5/7, Cemetery: Karori: Crematorium Chapel: Garden of Remembrance, 1929-75, WCCA. See booklet on file.

⁶¹ City Engineer's Department, Garden of Remembrance Quotations, (no date, February 1960), 00009-7/3, Pt.2

With new burials predominantly taking place at Makara, management of Karori altered, as did public perceptions of the cemetery. Burials still took place, many in previously purchased family plots (as they still do), but the emphasis shifted to stabilisation of the place and the future of the cemetery without burials. There was still not enough money to manage the cemetery and the drop in income from burials did not help. Beautification became a higher priority, especially after the council once again received complaints about the cemetery's appearance.

In 1970, having sensibly waited until the nearby Wilton Tip had closed, the Wilton Residents' Association made their views known about the view of the cemetery from their suburb. The suburb was expanding and the association wanted the 'stark and unattractive' cemetery beautified. It floated several possibilities for how that might be achieved, including tree planting or the removal of the gravestones. The Northland Residents' Association soon weighed in as well. In 1972 the Wilton Residents' Association specifically called for the gravestone laden cemetery to be turned into a lawn.⁶² This brought inevitable protests from people who had erected more traditional headstones.

The prevailing vegetation management regime, which had left the gravestones looking so stark, was described by Ian Galloway, longstanding Director of Parks and Reserves, in 1972:

The continual spraying with total weed killer at the Karori Cemetery has been necessary over the last few years to control the very heavily overgrown areas of the cemetery. This has denuded quite a large portion of land and the spraying to date has been the cause of some erosion of almost vertical banks in the steeper areas of the cemetery.

Galloway did not see the removal of the gravestones as viable, so the council's response was the institution of a tree-planting programme, despite the residents complaining that it would take too long. Some 4,670 trees and shrubs were planted during the 1975 growing season.⁶³ In some areas only eucalypts were able to survive in the poisoned soil, but they were successful to such an extent that today they present a considerable management issue in their own right.

On 19 July 1974 another milestone in the cemetery's history came with the belated closing of the 'Main Denominational and Roman Catholic' areas to new plot purchasers. Other plot purchases were to continue but they also eventually closed. Today only previously-purchased plots are used for burials, along with ash plots near the Seaforth Terrace entrance and some niches in columbaria.

As a consequence of the passing of time and the growing age of the cemetery, the WCC was notified on 14 September 1982, that the first of the cemetery's buildings had been listed by

⁶² Wilton Residents' Association to Town Clerk, 8 July 1974, 00001-7/25 Pt 8, 1973-1982

⁶³ Ibid. Memo from Director of Parks and Reserves (Galloway), 1 September 1975.

the Historic Places Trust. They were the Cemetery Chapel and Crematorium, the Shelter and the Lychgate.⁶⁴

The 1970s and 80s were a time of increasing vandalism to graves, a problem that has plagued the cemetery from early in its history. There were two particularly egregious incidents. In 1979, the year after it was restored, the old shelter was attacked by vandals, along with a number of graves, in an act of anti-Jewish sentiment. The shelter was set on fire and damaged to the extent that 'one wall was completely burned out and a section of the roof severely damaged', while 31 headstones in the Jewish section were spray-painted with Nazi and SS signs and slogans.

In February 1988, 50 headstones in the Chinese section were damaged. There was speculation that it may have been racially motivated, but Chinese community leaders regarded it as something less sinister.⁶⁵ Vandalism, racially motivated or otherwise, was an intermittent feature of the cemetery but this has mostly ended. Today, the most conspicuous form of vandalism is the dumping of rubbish.

That same year, 1988, the council received a proposal to build a large mausoleum in the cemetery. Auckland-based Wingmore Investments proposed to build a 3,000 capacity mausoleum (with room for a further 500 cremations urns) in a 'valley' somewhere in the crowded cemetery.⁶⁶ The structure was intended to last hundreds of years. It gained guarded approval at first. Later, however, the cost per burial (\$7,425), the lack of a confirmed market or interest in the concept, and the possible loss of revenue from traditional burials or cremations led the council to reject the concept.⁶⁷

In 1991 the cemetery celebrated 100 years of operation. To mark the occasion, the Rose Garden was redeveloped by contractors Horokiwi Paving Specialists to a design by the council. The final cost of the upgrade was \$45,257. (A remembrance monument in the garden was retained.) That same year, the main gates and those at the Standen Street entrance were rebuilt to designs by landscape architect Neil Aitken and Frederick Fish's grave, the cemetery's first, was located and restored.

⁶⁴ Director, HNZPT to Town Clerk, WCC, 14 September 1982, Karori Cemetery General, 00444-15/3 Pt.5

⁶⁵ *Dominion*, 3 February 1988, p.6

⁶⁶ Director Parks and Recreation to Town Clerk, 26 August 1988, 00001-7/25 Pt.9

⁶⁷ Mausoleum Sub-Committee to City Secretary, 26 March 1990, 00001-7/25 Pt.9



Looking across the Jewish section to the north wall of the mess/tool shed, 1990. To the left is the Shelter and behind, the main chapel. (00158_0_651, WCCA)

A significant change to interment arrangements came in 1994 with the decision to allow the spreading of funerary ashes in the rose garden beds and the mounting of bronze plaques as memorials to cremated individuals.

Scenes filmed in the cemetery for Peter Jackson's third film, *Brain Dead*, in 1991 had their repercussions the following year when a close-up of a tombstone appeared in one scene. The family in question objected and the matter ended up in court. The judge dismissed the case.⁶⁸

Towards a heritage park

The Karori Historical Society began taking an increasing interest in the cemetery and helped put together a thematic walk based on the graves of those who perished during the sinking of the *SS Penguin* in 1909. The walk was opened in 2003. The Society helped identify graves of significant people. The WCC's manager of cemeteries Stuart Baines acknowledged that the *Penguin* walk was a precursor to turning the cemetery into a heritage park,⁶⁹ something that was being openly discussed by other council staff. In a similar vein, the WCC established a 'Warriors' Walk', a self-guided tour in and around the Services Cemetery, in 2005. The previous year, the New Zealand Antarctic Society unveiled a sculpture of a life-sized cat on the grave of Harry McNeish, the carpenter on Ernest Shackleton's famous but

⁶⁸ See *Bradley v WingNut Films Ltd* [1993] 1 New Zealand Law Reports 415; See also McBride, Tim; Tobin, Rosemary, 'Privacy in New Zealand case law' [1994] Privacy Law and Policy Reporter [PrivLawPRpr] 32; (1994) 1(3) Privacy Law & Policy Reporter 48, <http://www8.austlii.edu.au/cgi-bin/viewdoc/au/journals/PLPR/1994/32.html>). See also 'Injunction bid fails to stop Brain Dead', *Evening Post*, 12 August 1992.

⁶⁹ *Dominion Post*, 13 January 2003, p.8

ill-fated 1914 trans-Antarctic expedition.⁷⁰ Sculpted by Chris Elliot, the statue is now amongst the most popular features of the cemetery.

Other community associations developed through voluntary clean-ups by various groups, ranging from schoolchildren to Karori Lions. Cemetery staff engaged local schools as a way of introducing the cemetery's resources and history to children and encouraging their lifelong interest. The council held clean-up days when Wellingtonians were encouraged to bring their own tools for the job.

In 2006, the New Zealand War Graves Trust was set up to 'create a digital and pictorial archive of all the graves and primary memorials (here and overseas) of New Zealand's war dead', from the South African War to 21st century peacekeeping.

Barbara Mulligan, an avid walker in the cemetery, began running guided tours in 2014 under the moniker 'Karori Cemetery Tours'. She also cleaned graves, and led a project that began in 2016 to identify, mark, and clean some of the 720 or more graves containing those who perished in the 1918 influenza epidemic, in time for the centenary of that event.⁷¹ It was out of her work that a new group – the Friends of Karori Cemetery – was formed in 2020. It has quickly become a key element in the wider conservation and appreciation of the cemetery, conducting public tours, working bees and advocating for the cemetery.

Alongside all the voluntary work that the FOKC has done, one committee member, Kieran Williams, completed an extraordinary feat. It began as a response to requests for photographs from individuals on the findagrave.com website. Soon he was photographing so many graves that he decided to do all of them. His work, together with the collection of the details on visible graves, has been put on a searchable web-based platform [<https://wellington.discovereverafter.com/>]. This has not only transformed the user experience but, perhaps just as importantly, allowed anyone with a genealogical enquiry to bypass the cemetery office and relieve their workload.

Technology has also transformed cemetery management. PlotBox, cloud-based software that merges cemetery data and GIS based mapping, was adopted for use by the WCC in 2021.

FOKC is not the only voluntary group operating in Karori Cemetery. The New Zealand Remembrance Army was set up in 2018 as a charitable trust to refurbish the graves of servicemen and women (i.e. not in the Services' Cemetery). Led by Simon Strombom, the NZRA was (and remains, in 2024) active across the country, with many hundreds of volunteers. After rebuffing early efforts to get it to follow cemetery rules and obtain a permit for their work, the NZRA has now developed a good understanding with the WCC (and Ministry for Culture and Heritage) over its activities.⁷²

⁷⁰ *Dominion Post*, 29 June 2004, p.3

⁷¹ *The Daily Post (Rotorua)*, 5 November 2016, p.6

⁷² *Dominion Post*, 6 March 2020, p.2

The public and the cemetery

The cemetery's managers have all had one difficulty in common, from 1891 to the present day – attempting to meet public expectations. The cemetery rarely received plaudits. There are files full of complaints, outnumbering by far the compliments to staff.

Most of the correspondence, other than requests for information about a deceased person, were complaints, and generally they were criticisms of the state of the cemetery. As stated above, the cemetery appears to have been in particularly good shape until the last 1920s – well maintained and attractively presented. Key to this was having enough staff to attend to the small stuff, such as trimming hedges and tending flower beds.

However, the sheer size of the cemetery, the lack of staff, the loss of interest by families in their plots, over time and many competing demands for resources, all contributed to the decline in the cemetery's appearance. As time went on, graves, paths or even whole areas were cleared only on demand rather than as part of a systematic clean-up. It was more than likely they would be in as poor a state as ever within a few years. Allied to complaints about the general state of the cemetery were the infrequent criticisms of the lack of wayfinding.

Often, a specific criticism would be linked to an attempt to locate a family grave. One, very typical, example was a letter to the Town Clerk from Mrs R. Lee, of Northland, in 1969.

My sister and I went over to visit my parents' grave...at Catholic part – Karori Cemetery last Monday and found it most difficult to get there, with blackberries all over, both paths and graves. Had to hold them aside many, many times to get through and then to fly back on us. We are both in our seventys (sic) and found it most difficult.

Could not some of the unemployed lend a hand to clean it up, as it would be big help to senior citizens to find their way without the paths being blocked. It is a long way round to have to make out through all those blackberries.

Trust you will look into the matter and have something done.⁷³

As always, the Town Clerk sought a response from the sexton, who in this case told him (as he often did) 'as this letter came to hand, the whole block in this portion of the cemetery was being scythed.' As the sexton indicated he would follow up with the usual dose of weedkiller, the Town Clerk was able to confidently tell Mrs Lee that she would have no difficulty reaching the grave next time she visited. Quite simply, vegetation clearance was done more often than not as a response to a complaint. The reference to the unemployed was a regular theme of letter writers from the 1930s onwards. It was inconceivable to many that those out of work could not be usefully employed on such tasks. While ensuring access to graves was the responsibility of the council, those complaining about the state of a family member's grave were generally unaware that the condition of the grave was actually their (or their wider family's) responsibility.

⁷³ R. Lee to Town Clerk, 3 February 1969, 00001-7/25 Pt.7, 1969-1972

Newspapers also made much of the state of the cemetery. During particular periods, such as 1948-49 and much of the 1970s, the cemetery came in for particular attention. Newspapers would monitor the condition of the cemetery and delight in horror stories about overgrowth or broken graves. It is unlikely that the situation at Karori was that much worse than any other cemetery in the region or nationally.

The council took the input from community groups seriously, responding to complaints about access and vegetation management with action. In 1980, when members of the Greek community complained about the difficulty of accessing their portion of the cemetery (which is on steep ground) the Director of Parks undertook to make improvements.⁷⁴

A smaller but no less interesting form of communication with cemetery officials came with the fallout from family disputes. In time-honoured fashion, families frequently fell out at or over funerals, and some even disputed the right of a particular family member to be buried in a family grave. This occurred with any kind of grave, even vaults. Without considering the propriety of involving the Town Clerk, sexton, or his staff in these bitter altercations, some members of the public would put pen to paper and occasionally divulge the most extraordinarily intimate matters.

Maintenance of the cemetery to a suitable standard required staffing adequate to the task. In a memo dated 20 October 1987 seeking more staff, the sexton noted that Karori had 18 staff members in 1960, two of whom worked in the office. Even though Makara had since opened, the staff, which had dropped to 16 over that period, were expected to manage both cemeteries. However, between 1977 and 1985, the cemetery had managed to acquire an average of 14 temporary workers per annum through a government work scheme.⁷⁵

⁷⁴ Director of Parks to Mrs S Pappafloratos, Greek Orthodox Christian Brotherhood, 26 February 1980, 00009-7/3 Pt.2, 1952-1993

⁷⁵ Sexton to Director of Parks, 20 October 1987, 00444-15/3 Pt.8, 1986-1988



Graves slowly sliding down a slumping hillside, north end of the cemetery, 1956. (EP/1956/1521-F)



The eastern slope of the cemetery, 1974, just prior to the extensive planting of gums. (AW-0964, ATL)

Today (2023), there are nine staff members managing two cemeteries, a significantly smaller work force from even a generation ago. The effectiveness of the management of the cemetery landscape is dictated not only by staff numbers but by the competing demands on their time, by the improvement in tools and mechanical equipment (which allow more to be done) and by outside influences, such as climate change.

In the last 20 years, despite all the challenges, large portions of the cemetery that were previously overgrown have been opened up to the public. This has not only allowed a greater appreciation of the cemetery but provided more descendants with the opportunity to see family graves ancestors without having to battle vegetation.

Planting and beautification

Records of co-ordinated planting are sporadic. It is impossible to know whether this reflects a similarly haphazard approach to planting or incomplete records, but it is sometimes difficult to distinguish a regular schedule of planting. For all that, comments on file, such as 'next year's planting', and instructions to plant more of a certain variety suggest that yearly planting was a key part of cemetery management for long periods. This was certainly so of the period 1933-1948, as correspondence files show, and the period 1972-75, when tree planting took place on a level never seen before or since.

Karori Cemetery was indeed windswept and bleak in the 1890s and an urgent requirement was the planting of trees to provide shelter and visual interest. The first trees – pines it is assumed – were planted very early on, some as markers at the end of rows. This planting was done by staff but occasionally augmented by families. In the case of the latter, they were primarily concerned with improving appearances around a grave. Pines and macrocarpa were among early plantings, as seen in old photographs of the place. In 1950 the *Dominion* reported⁷⁶ that 'giant' macrocarpa were being felled at the cemetery, some of 200 to be felled over the ensuing three years. Some idea of the nature of these macrocarpa can be seen in the specimens that survive to this day.

Records researched have revealed the following, in chronological order:

Pines (*pinus insignis*, Monterey pine) were planted in the Wilton Road area, towards the northerly end of the eastern boundary, in 1927 as a screen. Many of these trees still stand.

In 1935 the Beautifying Society asked for gates to be built at the cemetery. A sketch plan was drawn and the cost of the work was estimated at £160.⁷⁷ It would appear that the plan was not actioned.

In 1938 the cemeteries committee instructed the Sexton to plant 'more ornamental and flowering trees and shrubs'.⁷⁸ The response was that as soon as, for example, pohutukawa

⁷⁶ *Dominion* 24 March 1950

⁷⁷ Beautifying Society to Town Clerk, 21 December 1935, 00001-7/25 Pt 2, 1935-40

⁷⁸ Report of Cemeteries Committee, August 1938, 00001-7/26 Pt.1, Cemetery: Karori – Trees, 1927-1950, WCCA

were planted they were stolen. That same year the sexton reported the following to the cemeteries committee:

The season's planting has now been completed and comprised the planting of 100 *pinus insignis* in replacement of failures in last year's work in connection with gorse extermination, 200 *macrocarpa* and 500 *eucalyptus viminalis* [white gum] planted on waste land in areas suitable for large trees and pohutukawa, karo, and *acacia longifolia* [golden wattle] in belts between burial blocks. Hedges in the Soldiers' Cemetery have been completed by the planting of *escallonia exoniensis* and further planting has been made of pohutukawa, karo, *veronica* [hebe], *clianthus* [kaka beak] and *retinospora plumosa* [a Japanese cypress variety]. Steep windswept slopes on which it has been found difficult to establish indigenous trees have been planted with *acacia decurrens* [black wattle], which when established will afford shelter for native varieties.⁷⁹

In 1939 the Town Clerk reported that it was the policy of the council to screen the cemetery boundaries, although this was obviously not felt necessary on the eastern boundary facing Western Park, until residents complained in the early 1970s. For all that, the Standen Street boundary had no plantings on it as late as the 1930s.

In 1948 a list of trees, shrubs and hedges, planted from 1933 onwards, was prepared. It was as follows:

Cupressus Lawsoniana [Lawson cypress], 240
Cupressus macrocarpa, 350
Cupressus Benthami [Mexican cypress], 6
Pinus insignis [Monterey pine], 1,700
Eucalyptus viminalis [white gum], 600
Italian cypress, 12
Acacia longifolia [golden wattle], 42
Acacia decurrens [black wattle], 100
Pittosporum nigrescens [White Cape beech], 50
Pittosporum crassifolium [Karo], 50
Karaka (most destroyed by hares), 110
Rhododendrons, 46
Pohutukawa, 24
Lonicera nitida (hedge), 300
Escallonia exoniensis (hedge), 482

⁷⁹ Ibid. Sexton to Cemeteries Committee, 1 September 1938.

Escallonia pendula (hedge), 200

Ninety assorted flowering and ornamental shrubs (azalea, protea, cotoneaster, Japanese cherry, lasiandra, erica, ceanothus, acacia Baileyana [Cootamundra wattle], euc. Ficifolia [red flowering gum], erythina [coral tree] etc.). Does not include Arbor Day planting by outside bodies or trees and shrubs raised at cemetery or obtained from Prison nurseries, no record kept of these.⁸⁰



The planting of eucalypts in a previously unsightly and contaminated part of the cemetery during the mid-1970s has turned 'Gum Gully' into a picturesque, but overgrown corner of the cemetery. (M. Kelly)

In 1972, as discussed in the history above, the WCC announced a massive tree-planting project in the cemetery. A report in the *Dominion* summarised the Director of Parks and Reserves, Ian Galloway's intentions by saying that '...a variety of trees would be planted. As well as beautifying the area they would help the erosion problem and would provide a canopy for the cemetery from the housing areas expanding on the surrounding land.'⁸¹

As noted above, some 4,670 trees and shrubs were planted during the 1975 growing season and the intensive planting continued for the next few years. Tree and shrub pruning, removal and planting continue to this day.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.* 11 June 1948. Prepared presumably by sexton.

⁸¹ *Dominion*, 1 March 1972

Among the side-effects of the maturing trees was the increasing damage caused by their growth and the destruction wrought by falling limbs or even whole trees. Vulnerable graves were frequently badly damaged by such events, often leading to complaints from the public about damage to family headstones and memorials.

In 1979, in a summary of the state of the cemetery's vegetation for the Town Clerk, the Director of Parks (it is presumed that he was the author), noted the long-standing policy of managing low-scale vegetation growth by poisoning it, which meant that:

'...All the cemetery, other than the Soldiers area and lawns, for which the Council is paid maintenance, was sprayed with a total vegetation weed killer. Because considerable erosion was taking place, particularly in the steeper parts of the Cemetery, and due to a greater concern for the environment, the Parks Department adopted a policy of allowing the natural growth of wild flowers and grasses and has been actively involved in planting many thousands of trees and shrubs in the wasteland between the plots. Only the paths and driveways are being regularly maintained and gorse and blackberry spot sprayed amongst the regenerating growth. This Department's policy is to gradually allow for a canopy of native and exotic trees to cover as much of the old Cemetery as possible.⁸²

Planting and tree removal continues to this day. Limited staff and funding have continued to constrain the level of intervention but there is now a much greater emphasis on the removal work, as the damage to graves and the potential threat to life and limb from falling branches or whole trees, puts a greater onus on managing risk.

One notable but relatively unheralded feature of the beautification of the cemetery has been the use of stone walls made of random split greywacke as revetting for banks, as borders to paths and roads, and as structural support for roads. This stonework, now widespread throughout the cemetery, received little comment in official files but has done a great deal towards improving the appearance and visual consistency of the cemetery.

Services Cemetery

The establishment of the Services Cemetery in Karori Cemetery in 1918 was an early example of the way New Zealand set aside dedicated spaces to commemorate its service personnel within public cemeteries. The notion of setting aside an area of the cemetery specifically for soldier's graves came from Captain Edward Vine, enquiry officer at the Base Records Office at the Defence Department, who began advocating for such a facility at Karori Cemetery in 1916. He talked to the Wellington branch of the Women's National Reserve, who strongly supported the concept and Vine ended up serving on the committee that pushed for the special cemetery. *The Dominion* reported:

The ground recommended for selection lies to the east of the main roadway in the Karori cemetery, on the rise just south of the crematorium. The committee recommend that such ground be reserved for the purpose named, but that the operation of such

⁸² Draft memo for Town Clerk, 22 February 1979, 00444-15/3 Pt.5, 1979-82

scheme should not be undertaken until immediately after the termination of the war. The soldiers should be buried in the ground of their respective faiths, and upon the termination of the war reinterment of the remains can be made in the special ground (which will be suitably laid out) and space reserved for an appropriate memorial (which would probably be raised by public subscription).⁸³

The Women's National Reserve was an organisation set up to register women for employment in, among things, 'professional and clerical fields, farming, shops, factories and domestic employment'⁸⁴ to replace the men sent to the front. The organisation continued after the war. It even set up a nursery to look after children whose mothers were in hospital.⁸⁵ They set up a committee – the Soldiers' and Sailors' Memorial Cemetery Committee. This committee, and the Wellington branch, were hugely influential in the establishment of the Services Cemetery. Dedicated fundraisers, the Women's National Reserve supported the upkeep of the cemetery and added commemorative elements to the landscape.

The need for the Services Cemetery arose in two different ways. Firstly, an extraordinary number of men, 507, died during training at Trentham and Featherston camps, many of them from influenza contracted during the Spanish flu pandemic in 1918. Secondly, a number of those who returned from active duty subsequently died, mostly from wounds and disease. Those who had already been buried at Karori Cemetery were in standard graves, but the Women's National Reserve strongly urged the reinterment of such remains in the Services Cemetery. Their argument won the day.

The setting aside of specific areas for war dead followed the New Zealand Government signing the Royal Charter of 1917 between the Commonwealth (then Imperial) War Graves Commission and the governments of the Commonwealth. At Karori, the Government has always contributed to the upkeep of the Services Cemetery. After some difficulties, the first portion of the Services Cemetery (then known as the Soldiers' and Sailors' Memorial Cemetery) was set aside by May 1918,⁸⁶ and the layout planned by the Public Health Committee of the WCC.⁸⁷ By this time, 120 soldiers had already been buried in various parts of the cemetery.⁸⁸

The Services Cemetery received special attention. The land had to be levelled and graded before graves could be dug. Edith Statham, Soldiers' and Historical Graves inspector with the Department of Internal Affairs, the country's first war graves inspector, who was based

⁸³ *Dominion*, 19 December 1916, p.6

⁸⁴ Hunter, Kate 2015, 'Women's Mobilization for War (New Zealand)' in *International Encyclopedia of the First World War* https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/womens_mobilization_for_war_new_zealand [accessed 21 May 2023]

⁸⁵ 'Crèches and early childcare', <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/culture/creches-and-early-childcare> [retrieved 25 June 2023]. The nursery was an incorporated society and it only folded in 1952. (See *New Zealand Gazette*, 1952/1343)

⁸⁶ *New Zealand Times*, 15 May 1918, p.5

⁸⁷ *Evening Post*, 26 June 1919, p.7

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

in Auckland, organised the moving of soldiers' graves into the dedicated space.⁸⁹ Initially, graves were marked with white timber crosses. Eventually these were replaced with the characteristic (and identical) simple headstones, with a coping at the end of each row (now gone). The focal point of the area was, and still is, the arrangement of graves in concentric rows divided on a cruciform plan at the south end of the Services Cemetery and entered on its major axis via the Lychgate.

The area contains a number of memorial structures (see below), but it could have had even more. In 1920, architect William Page prepared a plan for a memorial wall between two sets of stairs leading to the upper area.⁹⁰ It was intended that a national memorial would be installed in the middle of this arrangement,⁹¹ but this did not eventuate, and neither did the wall, which was designed, funded and even had a builder ready to go. It was finally abandoned in 1928 in favour of the memorial arch, built three years later. Flowering trees and shrubs were planned and planted to embellish the area, although many disappeared to thieves within a few years. Another early, unfulfilled intention was the construction of a memorial chapel. A plan prepared in 1925 provided for a 'stone of remembrance' and a 'cross of sacrifice'. Again, neither of these were installed. A visitor to the cemetery in 1924 described the scene and referred to the memorial wall that was never built:

The Karori Soldiers' Cemetery is not only a monument to the dead, but a lasting memorial to the loyalty and zeal of the men and women of Wellington through whose efforts it was established. The maintenance of the cemetery is now in the hands of the Minister of Internal Affairs, who has generously supported the initial efforts of the City Council and the Women's National Reserve. To the latter belongs much of the honour of this corner of Karori having been made the soldiers' last resting place. It was they who induced the City Council to set apart a burial-site for the soldiers, through their efforts, loyally supported by the council, that it has been made the most beautiful cemetery of its kind in New Zealand. Theirs is truly a labour of love. Week by week they visit Karori to place flowers on every grave. Later on, these two bodies will build a marble wall on the terraced portion at the back of the burial ground. This wall will be inset with tablets bearing the names of men who died on active service overseas, and who lie buried somewhere in that vast trail of war cemeteries, the longest the world has ever known, that winds its way from the Valley of the Jordan, across the shores of Anzac down into burning Egypt, through France and Flanders to the Homeland and far into the lands of the Southern Cross.

The Services Cemetery was initially confined to the area bounded, on the west, by the road, to the east by private land, to the south by the narrowing land and to the north by the Crematorium. The South African veterans' cemetery was directly behind the Crematorium. The Public Health Committee recommended in 1925 that the land between the Crematorium and the initial interments be set aside to expand the Services Cemetery.⁹² This ground was

⁸⁹ Edith Statham to Town Clerk, 3 February 1920, 00001-7;8 Part 1, Graves of Soldiers in Karori, WCCA

⁹⁰ 'Soldiers Cemetery, Karori – Suggested Memorial Wall', William Page, July 1920, 00001-7;8 Part 1

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Minutes of Public Health Committee, 22 September 1925, 00001-7;8 Part 1

opened about 1930 to take an additional 80 graves⁹³ and as part of the opening of this ground, a Wellington Provincial Memorial arch was commissioned. It was completed in 1931 (see below). The reputation the area gathered for the beauty of its landscaping was due in no small way to the care and attention paid by sexton George Kay.

In 1938 and again in 1941, the government purchased private land on Rosehaugh Avenue, the balance of the McKenzie land, to allow for a further expansion of the Services Cemetery.⁹⁴ Comprising some 1.5 hectares, this land was then augmented by the purchase of an unused, private section (sold 10 years earlier) in the middle of it. The additional land provided for the extension of the Services Cemetery, at a time when New Zealand soldiers were dying in an overseas war, and the eventual construction of a new chapel in the late 1950s.



The first extension of the Services Cemetery in 1944. Note the columbarium wall behind, built earlier in the war. Behind is the largely denuded Te Ahu-Mairangi. (1/4-001929-F, ATL)

Karori contains one of the 18377 services cemeteries in New Zealand. There are two kinds of soldiers' graves: for those on regular duty who died within New Zealand during wartime (War Graves), and all other veterans (Veterans' Graves). Until 1999, both types of graves were managed by the Department of Internal Affairs' Historical and War History branch. From that date, veterans' graves in the services sections of public cemeteries became the responsibility of Veterans' Affairs, a branch of the New Zealand Defence Force, and the newly established Ministry for Culture and Heritage retained the balance. If a service person's death is deemed to be attributable to war service, then the headstone is provided free of charge and cared for in perpetuity by the Ministry for Culture and Heritage. A

⁹³ *Dominion*, 1 August 1931, p.6

⁹⁴ *Evening Post*, 15 November 1941, p.11

service person with qualifying service whose death is not attributable to war service is entitled to a fully subsidised burial plot within the services section and if they were a New Zealand veteran, a plaque or headstone to mark their grave provided free of charge by Veterans' Affairs. Spouses are entitled to be buried with them. Interestingly, New Zealand is the only Commonwealth War Grave Country that allows all members of Imperial and Allied forces who had fought alongside New Zealand forces to be buried in their services sections.

For those service person's wishing to be buried outside of a Services Cemetery, this option was also available to them, with, from 2016 onwards, a subsidised memorial or plaque. This option is often selected by Māori, so they can be buried in their urupā.

The cemetery is also subject to the oversight of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, which was founded in 1917 to work on behalf of Commonwealth governments to commemorate the men and women from the Commonwealth who lost their lives in both World Wars. Its staff have long made periodic visits to New Zealand to check the state of war graves including those in Karori.

A range of the cemetery's headstones and plaques are subject to the oversight of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC), which was founded in 1917 to work on behalf of Commonwealth governments to commemorate the men and women from the Commonwealth who lost their lives in both World Wars. The Ministry for Culture and Heritage acts as agent to the CWGC and their staff frequently visit the cemetery to check the state of war graves or bring international CWGC staff visiting New Zealand to Karori Cemetery.

Aside from the planting of commemorative trees, as noted, a number of structures and features were added to the Services Cemetery over time to commemorate those buried there, and overseas.

Lychgate

The lychgate was presented to Karori Cemetery by Mrs Ellen Hope-Lewis (née Fenton, c.1859- 1929) in 1921 in memory of her husband and son. She married Dr Thomas Hope Lewis who became an inspector of Military Hospitals during World War I and died in Auckland in 1918. Her son Thomas Hope-Lewis died shortly after returning from World War 1. The lychgate bears the inscription 'Peace with Honour'.⁹⁵ The structure is largely unaltered although the 1925 plan of the cemetery showed paving around the Lychgate entrance, which is not extant (it is not clear if this was ever done).

Memorial benches

Marble benches, known the Memorial Benches, were erected by the Wellington branch of the Women's National Reserve in 1920 or 1921. A newspaper report stated that that

⁹⁵ See [1] Karori Cemetery Mortuary Chapel (Jewish Chapel) 1891, [2] Crematorium & Chapel (1909), [3] Cemetery Lychgate (1921) in <https://archivesonline.wcc.govt.nz/nodes/view/102114> [retrieved 28 May 2023]

representatives of the Women's National Reserve 'showed them [the government's War Graves Committee] the proposed plans for...two handsome stone benches', and that 'permission was given for all plans...'.⁹⁶

Wellington Provincial Memorial Arch

The concept of constructing a marble archway to honour the memory of the New Zealand Expeditionary Force from Wellington who died and have no known grave was first raised in 1927. It was intended to be accompanied by a rest room (or records room), and plans were prepared that incorporated both the arch and room, but this was never built.⁹⁷ The arch turned out to be a replacement for a memorial wall that was never built. The arch was designed by the office of the City Engineer George Hart. Several options were prepared and Option A 'with scrolls added' was approved by the WCC, Department of Internal Affairs, Women's National Reserve and Returned Soldier's Association.⁹⁸ Tenders for the construction of the arch were called in January 1931.

The successful tenderer was the well-known monumental mason Henry Glover, who produced hundreds of tombs and headstones (and some vaults) in Karori Cemetery, many of which bear his name 'H. Glover'. Glover's tender for the cost of construction was £651.15,⁹⁹ which compared well to the estimated cost of £850. An additional three marble steps were added to the arch to transition to the lower level of the cemetery extension. Glover quoted £50 for these, to bring the total to £701.15.¹⁰⁰ A newspaper article stated that the work was completed by May 1931.¹⁰¹ Glover had to come back two years later to put one stone back in place and repoint others. There are 85 names on the arch. It is cared for by the Ministry for Culture and Heritage.

⁹⁶ *Dominion*, 27 March 1920, p.4

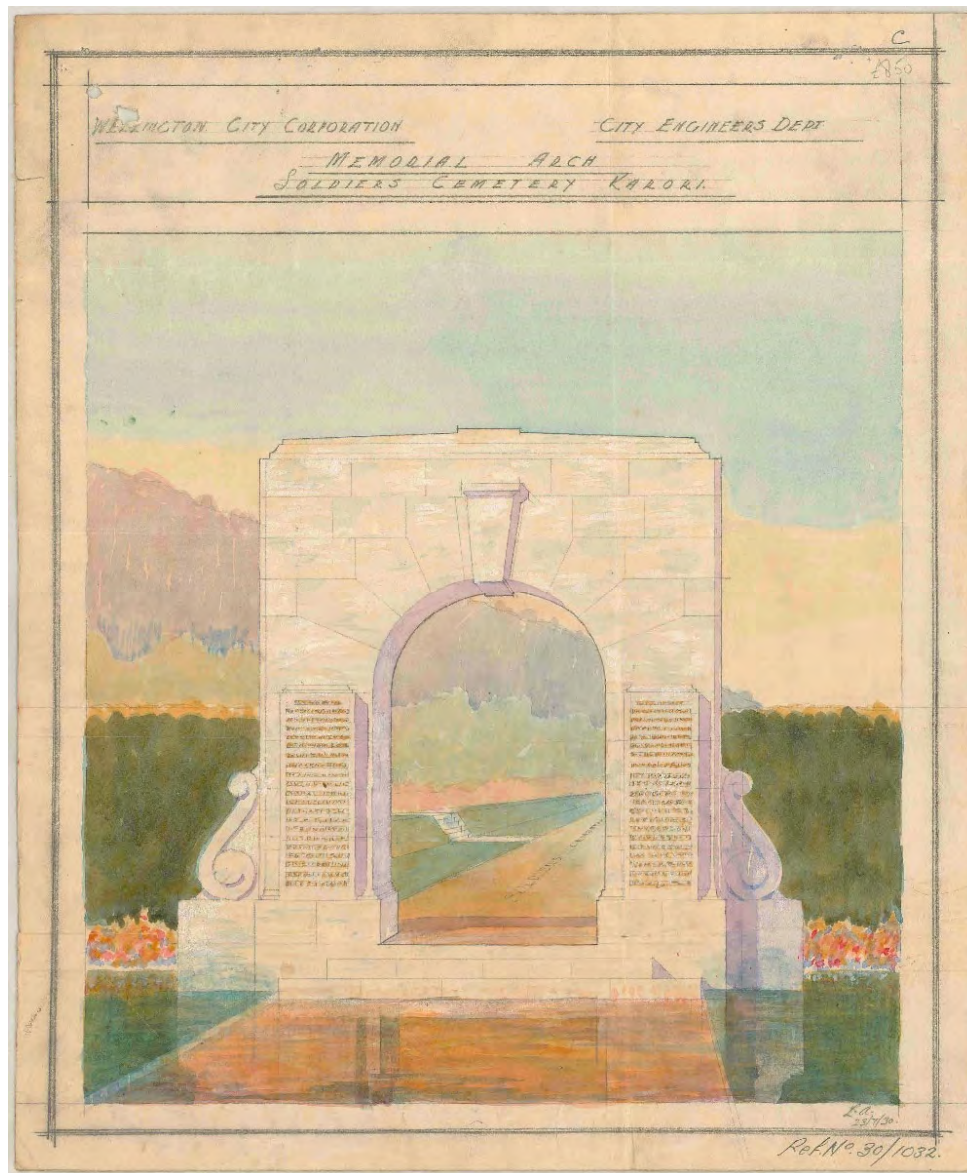
⁹⁷ Town Clerk to Officer-in-Charge, Department of Internal Affairs (War Graves Division), 25 July 1928, 00001-7;8 Part 1

⁹⁸ Town Clerk to Colonel Hutchins, War Graves Section, Department of Internal Affairs, 22 October 1930, 00009-7/3 Pt.1

⁹⁹ 'Memorial Arch; Soldiers' Cemetery; Karori, Schedule of Prices supplied by the Contractor', n.d. January 1931, 00009-7/3 Pt.1

¹⁰⁰ Memo to City Engineer, 'Tenders Memorial Arch Karori Cemetery', 5 February 1931, 00009-7/3 Pt.1. The final cost was £713.1.4.

¹⁰¹ *Hawke's Bay Tribune*, 20 May 1931, p.8



Option A, with scrolls, the design chosen for the Wellington Provincial Memorial Arch, 1930. (See file 00009-7/3 Pt.1, WCCA)

Sundial

A sundial, installed in 1921, commemorating Colonel Matthew Holmes, a medical doctor who served in World War I but was invalided home in 1918. He died of influenza in Wellington after his return.¹⁰²

¹⁰² 'Lieutenant Colonel Mathew Holmes' in New Zealand War Graves Project, <https://www.nzwargraves.org.nz/casualties/mathew-holmes-0> [retrieved 26 May 2023]

Marble steps (1)

A set of marble steps was erected in 1921 below the sundial and funded by Martha Kane of Halswell Street Wellington to honour her son, Rifleman Frank Kane, and his comrades, who died at Passchendaele on 13 October 1917.

Marble steps (2)

A set of marble steps erected 'in memory of those who fought and fell in defence of the world's peace' was erected by the Girls Branch of the Women's National Reserve in 1927. The steps were designed by the Public Works Department on 1 March 1927¹⁰³ and approved shortly thereafter. They were unveiled at a ceremony on 24 April 1927.¹⁰⁴

Trees

There are two notable memorial trees – a cherry, planted by members of the US Navy, and a memorial kauri. An avenue of pohutukawa line the gap between the graves in the first extension to the cemetery, and rows of magnolias line the main axis of the extension, leading to the upper gate in the columbarium wall. There are a number of specimen trees too, including Norfolk pines and some cypresses.

Lily ponds

Two lily ponds, 'laid out by the Government'¹⁰⁵ (the Department of Internal Affairs) were completed in November 1926. Built between the semi-circular rows of gravestones, the ponds were described as 'constructed of concrete, and...oval in shape. Some of the waterlilies were donated by the Auckland Racing Club, through Sir Edwin Mitchelson, M.L.C. They are of the red variety. In addition there are 18 varieties contributed by the Melbourne Botanical Gardens, and the Government purchased a very rare blue variety from South Australia. The goldfish in the ponds were presented by the Women's National Reserve, which cares for the graves in the cemetery.'¹⁰⁶

The goldfish in the ponds were alluring for children out walking with their parents and instructions were issued to keep a close eye out for offenders who would 'be severely dealt with'. Lilies were also taken. The goldfish have long since gone, however following the repair of the ponds, waterlilies have recently been returned.

During the restoration of the ponds in 2022-23, a number of artefacts were retrieved by the contractors. One was a piece of an infant's headstone, which the Friends of Karori Cemetery has speculated came from the headstone of Claude Victor Boyd who died aged 3 years in 1892. The provenance has not been concluded and since then, the fragment has been lost.

¹⁰³ Under-secretary, Department of Internal Affairs to Town Clerk, WCC, 1 Mach 1927, 00009-7/3 Pt.1

¹⁰⁴ *Evening Post*, 27 April 1927, p.15. The proposal was approved by the WCC on 17 March 1927 (see *Evening Post*, 18 March 1927, p.8)

¹⁰⁵ *Evening Post*, 22 November 1926, p.1

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

The Ministry for Culture and Heritage holds responsibility for 268 WWI and 124 WWII headstones, 35 cremation plaques (some on the columbarium by the small Crematorium Chapel and some on the columbarium on Rosehaugh Avenue) and the Wellington Provincial Memorial, which straddles the two sections of the soldiers' headstones. Cleaning of headstones, repainting and repairs of war graves are all done to specifications written by the Ministry and the work is carried out by appropriately trained professionals.

Graves in areas managed by Veterans' Affairs are cleaned and re-lettered as part of an annual capital works programme. This work is done on-site by suitably trained persons. Veterans' Affairs does not currently have written specifications for standards and methods of cleaning and maintaining graves. A leaflet is supplied to families to guide the care of memorials they purchase; these are subsidised by Veterans' Affairs.

Crematorium and chapels

Cremation is an ancient custom. It has been continually practised in a number of eastern countries, but was abandoned in many countries that converted to Christianity. The modern cremation movement began in Europe in the 1870s. In 1874, not long after an efficient cremation furnace was perfected in Italy, Queen Victoria's surgeon, Sir Henry Thompson, founded the Cremation Society of England. He saw cremation as a means of fighting disease. The first crematorium in Europe was built at Woking, England in 1874.

The first crematorium at Karori (and the first in New Zealand) was designed by John Sydney Swan as a chapel with a semi-detached furnace behind it, and opened in 1909. The practise took some time to be adopted and even though the crematorium was partly funded by public subscription, cremations made up just 1.3% of all disposals in the first year. However, demand steadily increased and by the late 1930s cremations started to rival burials.

This growth meant that the first chapel could not cope with the demand, and a new chapel was suggested before the end of World War II. In raising the need for the new building in early 1947, the Town Clerk told the Cemeteries Committee:

The existing chapel was designed in 1909 when cremation was looked upon as a doubtful innovation. It is now inadequate in floor space, in accommodation for mourners and has a very doleful atmosphere internally. There is room to double the floor space and to provide a more cheerful internal affect.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁷ Memo to Chairman, Cemeteries Committee, 29 January 1947, 00001-7/5/2 Pt.1, Cemetery: Karori: Crematorium Chapel (General), 1924-1960, WCCA



The chapel and crematorium, with the 1949 columbarium behind, left, and the original 1935 columbarium, right (rear). (Date unknown, likely early 1950s, 50003-410, WCCA)

When it was realised that land could be secured behind the existing structure, designs for a new chapel were commissioned from Gray Young Morton and Young. It took another 10 years before the building was finally completed. The first difficulty was buying the land, and as a result it took until 1954 for tenders to be called. Cremation would continue to be done in the existing furnace, with coffins moved there on a conveyor belt through a tunnel.

The chapel was completed in 1959, but did not open immediately because of persistently leaking windows, the source of which proved impossible to determine. Under pressure from the unrelenting demand for funerary ceremonies, the chapel was opened in 1960, but the leaks continued. The architects and the council tried everything they could to fix the problem but in the end the council took matters into its own hands and covered the windows with a false outer layer of glazing.¹⁰⁸

By 1973 the chapel was handling up to 14 disposals a day. In more recent years, with changing funerary practices, including the establishment of further public crematoria and some private cremation facilities at funeral homes, and the with the tailing off of the use of Karori Cemetery, the use of the new chapel has been changed. In response to user requests, a kitchenette, a glass balustrade to the mezzanine (so it could be used by the public), and paintings have all been installed in the building. In addition, there have been improvements

¹⁰⁸ Ibid. Pt.3, 1965-1987, 13 December 1966

to the main chapel courtyard. Seating has been provided, the niche wall moved, a railing installed and all hard surfaces replaced. Excellent views of the skyline track as it crosses Johnston Hill can be had from the chapel.

In the 1980s, the significance of the art works in the first chapel was rediscovered. In 1984, Ian Galloway, Director of Parks and Recreation, was informed that the chapel windows were an historic set of An Tur Gloine (Tower of Glass) stained glass windows created as memorials to members of the family of William Ferguson, Wellington Harbour Board engineer. The Dublin based studio produced some of the finest stained glass work of the 20th century and the windows in the small chapel are amongst the best to be found by the studio anywhere. Two of the windows, 'Faith' and 'Hope', created in 1914, are the work of Wilhelmina Geddes. Three more, 'Charity' (1930), 'Love' (1931) and 'Wisdom' (1947), were made by Michael Healy. The final window, 'Gethsemane' (1939), was designed by Hubert McGoldrick. Stained glass restorer Fiona Ciaran restored the windows at a cost of \$13,000 in 1984.

Columbaria

The first ashes were stored in wall niches inside the chapel and it was some time before an external columbarium was required. Its construction was a response to the sudden increase in demand for cremations in the 1930s. Eventually six separate columbaria were built at the cemetery.

Erected behind the old crematorium in 1935, the first columbarium was designed by the City Engineer's office and built by contractor Arthur Lemmon for £1,276.18.3.¹⁰⁹ Two years later, 'additional niches, marble slabs' were installed by Hickmott and Sons, monumental sculptors.¹¹⁰ In 1939 the council ordered the construction of further memorial tablets for the new niches and monumental mason Henry Glover was the successful tenderer. The cost was £259.3.6.¹¹¹

In 1949, increasing demand meant that more niches were required and a plan was prepared by the City Engineer for a standalone columbarium structure of 560 niches (1,120 boxes), to be built to the side of the old chapel. Only one tender was received – from Arthur Lemmon – and as the price (£1,242) was within the suggested estimate, his firm got the job.¹¹² It was completed in October 1949. The marble plaques were provided separately by Fletcher Construction, at a cost of £619.¹¹³

In October 1952, tenders were called for a 'columbarium wall' – a low, concrete block wall constructed of three bays of 117 niches, covered with bronze plaques – on the western boundary of the Servicemen's Cemetery and located between the crematorium and the

¹⁰⁹ Memo, City Engineer's Department, 4 March 1935, 0009-7/2/1 Pt.1, Columbarium – Karori Cemetery, WCCA

¹¹⁰ Kelly and Murray 2021, 'Karori Cemetery Columbaria Conservation Plan', p.11

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Ibid. p.14

¹¹³ Ibid.

lychgate. It was single-sided, with the niches facing the drive. In January 1953, a tender for £706 was submitted by Arthur Lemmon, exclusive of the production of the concrete blocks, which were intended to be made by the WCC itself. The tender was accepted and the work completed by September 1953.

The next columbarium wall was planned for the entrance to the Services Cemetery, near the Lychgate, with the back of the wall used for the ashes of deceased ex-servicemen. The accommodation was to be five bays with 1,190 niches, the largest yet. The successful tenderer was Jones-Rees, Structural Engineers and Contractors. Work was completed in 1955.¹¹⁴

A major columbarium wall was built in three stages at the east boundary of the soldier's cemetery, running along Rosehaugh Avenue. The first stage was built in 1940. The contractor was Arthur Lemmon. In 1957, a matching addition was approved for this wall of seven bays. Tenders were called in November 1957. The successful tenderer was E.H. Shirley and Sons Ltd., at a price of £3,251.11.0.¹¹⁵ While construction was underway, the WCC decided to add yet more bays, and E.H. Shirley and Sons were asked to provide a further quote to extend the wall at its northern end, on roughly a 45° angle, towards the site of the proposed new chapel. The estimate, £1,118, was accepted. The work dragged on until July 1959.¹¹⁶

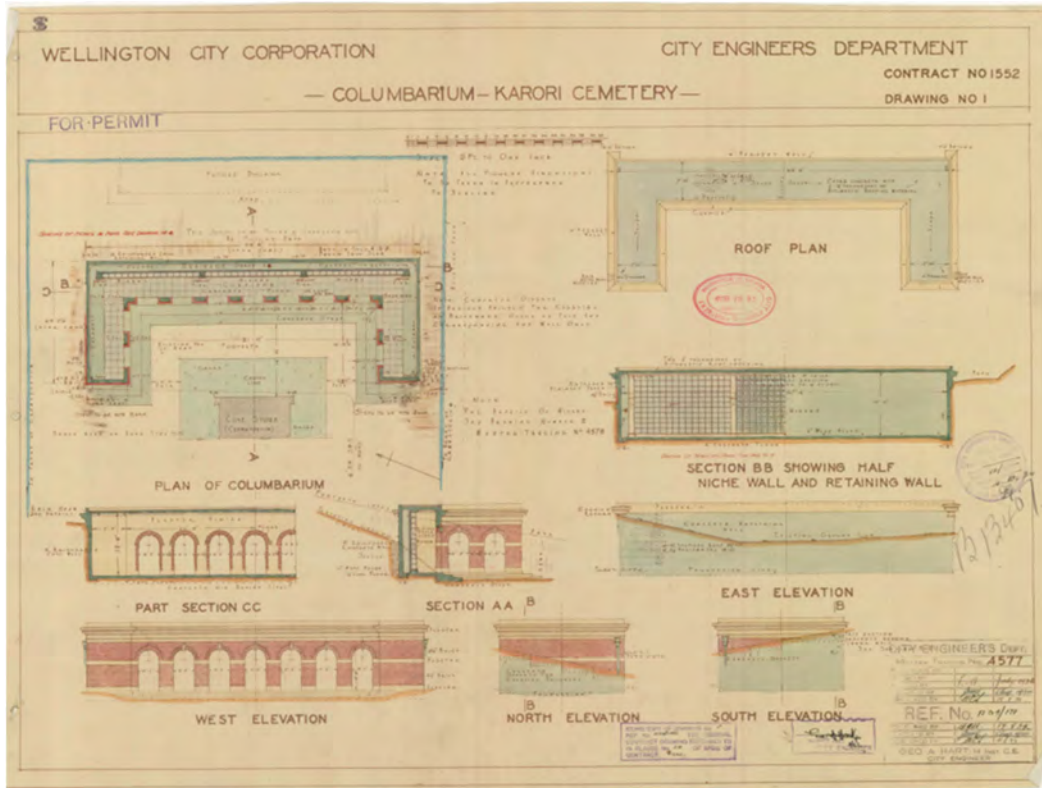
Another columbarium wall was proposed in 1960. It was to be built further down the drive, not far from the Mortuary Chapel. Tenders were called and work began in 1962, but this time the project appears to have been done by the council itself, again to a design by the City Engineer, with the principal building materials being concrete blocks made by the council.¹¹⁷ Work was completed in 1963.

¹¹⁴ Ibid. p.15

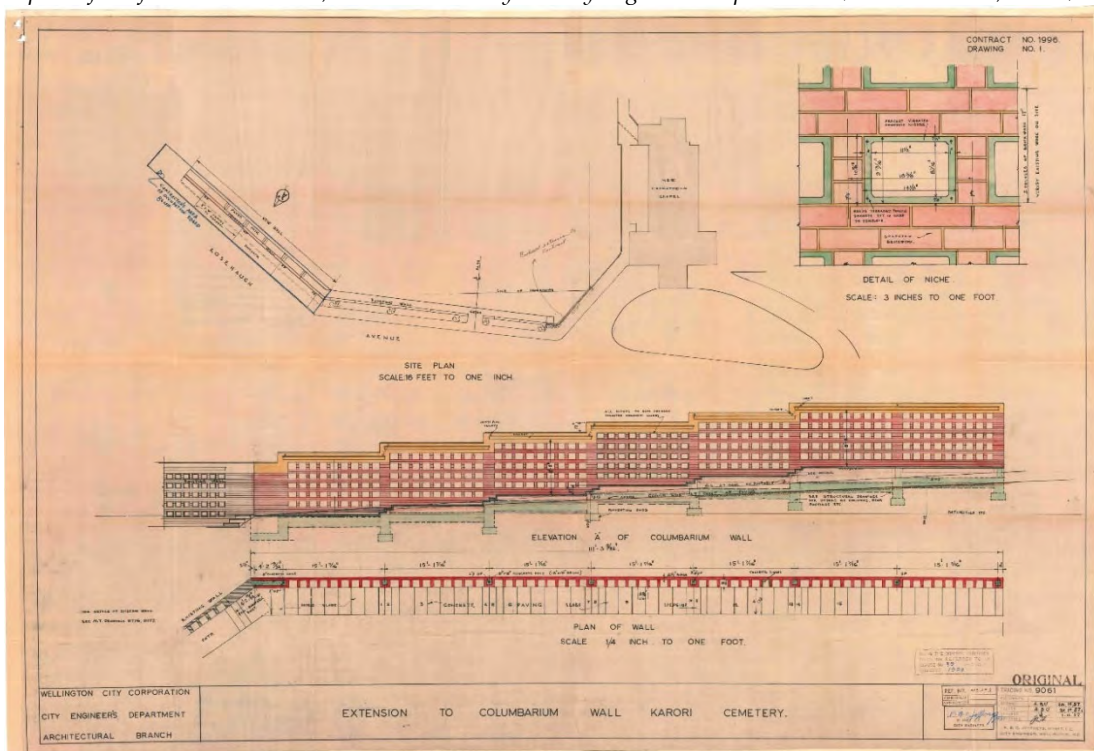
¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ 00009-7/2/1 Pt.2, 1953-64, Columbarium – Karori Cemetery, memo, 1 October 1962



A plan of the first columbarium, drawn in 1934 by the city engineer's department. (00056-B13407, WCA)



A plan of the first extension to the Soldiers' Columbarium Wall, 1957, again drawn by the city engineer's department. (00001_7;5 Part 3, WCA)

Finally, in 1972, the last extension was made to the Soldiers' Columbarium Wall, near the second chapel and abutting Rosehaugh Avenue.¹¹⁸ The final result was a monumental brick and plaster structure stepping up the rise of the hill with a strong and distinctive architectural silhouette that also acted as a boundary to the Services Cemetery.

By this time, the WCC's policy was against the erection of any more columbaria. It should be noted that some ashes are interred in niches in the ground adjacent to the walls. Today, most of the niches are occupied but some remain unused. There are others that have been occupied but are now vacant; most commonly because a family has moved ashes to another centre or put them in a family plot.

2.2 Designers

The cemetery is, apart from its overall arrangement and spatial planning, full of structures – graves, memorial, mausolea, columbaria, a crematorium, chapels, walls, statues and the like – that have been designed (and built) by a wide variety of practitioners, many of whom will never be recorded. The cemetery stands as a testimonial to the work of generations of monumental masons, some of whom produced work of high artistic and technical quality. The graves bear witness to this, particularly those in the older sections of the cemetery.

Although outside specialists were involved in the design of various cemetery structures over its life, the layout of the cemetery, the design of most of its key structures and its general aesthetic are the work of the WCC's city engineer and staff over many decades. Although much of the design work itself was produced by specialist staff – the city engineer's office had architects and draughtsmen, for example, alongside engineers – all the work that went out of the office was signed off by the city engineer.

Some of the most significant contributions to the character of the cemetery were made during the tenures of three of the city engineers – William Morton, 1904-23, George Hart, 1929-36, and Ken Luke, 1935-52 – all of whom took a close interest in the work produced by their department.

¹¹⁸ Kelly and Murray 2021, Karori Cemetery Columbaria Conservation Plan, p.1

William Hobbard Morton

William Morton (1866-1923) was city engineer from 1904 to 1923. He was born in Melbourne and trained there in the Public Works Department. Although his initial training was in architecture, he later became involved in engineering projects including harbour and defence works and in the provision of water supplies. He joined the Melbourne city engineer's office in 1888 and later became assistant engineer.

Wellington City Corporation advertised the position of City Engineer in 1904 and Morton was the successful applicant. The city undertook a wide range of projects in the early 20th century, including improvements to the water supply, sewers, tramways and public reserves. Of particular note were the construction of the Upper Karori Dam (1908), one of New Zealand's earliest large-scale concrete gravity dams and the Morton Dam (1911) in Wainuiomata (named in his honour and still standing), which supplied Wellington city with water until 1988.

Morton was an early member of the New Zealand Society of Civil Engineers (now Engineering New Zealand Te Ao Rangahau), established in 1914. He became one of its Council members and held the position of Honorary Secretary.

Beyond his work, Morton was a prominent Freemason and master of the Lodge Aorangi, and Captain of the Sapper and Mining Company of Engineers of the reservists (volunteers). His son, Hubert Morton, was one of the partners in the prominent Wellington architectural practice Gray Young, Morton & Young.

Adapted from:

'William Hobbard Morton', <https://www.engineeringnz.org/programmes/heritage/engineering-hall-fame/william-hobbard-morton-18661923/> [retrieved 5 July 2022] & WCC City Engineer – William Hobbard Morton 1866-1923', <https://www.wellingtoncityheritage.org.nz/architects/wcc-city-engineer-william-hobbard-morton> [retrieved 5 July 2022], and; 'William Hobbard Morton (1866–1923)',

Other sources:

Evening Post, 27 June 1923, 28 June 1923



William Morton, 1909. (NZG-19091124-23-2, Auckland Libraries)

George Hart

George Adam Hart (c.1870 -1948) was the WCC's City Engineer from 1926 to 1936. Prior to his arrival in New Zealand in 1926 he worked as an engineer on the Lancashire and Yorkshire railways, and at a colliery in County Tyrone, Northern Ireland. He was an assistant civil engineer to the Borough of Salford and an engineer in Birmingham. His final appointment in the United Kingdom was as a sewerage engineer for the Leeds City Corporation, Yorkshire, and this led to the claim that he was a 'world authority on municipal sanitation and his varied experience should be admirably suited to the rugged conditions of Wellington.'

As city engineer, Hart was responsible for an office that designed and managed the construction of a wide variety of municipal buildings and structures, including sub-stations, water treatment facilities, toilets and changing rooms, sporting facilities, reclamations, bridges and many others. He played a big part in planning the expansion of Wellington's water supplies via sources in the Hutt and Wainuiomata.

Although much of its output was prosaic, the council continued its tradition of building visually interesting and quirky buildings during Hart's tenure, including, arguably most famously, the Cambridge Terrace toilets (1928, aka the Taj Mahal, now a restaurant/bar). Perhaps his best-known design was the Kelburn Viaduct (1930). His staff always produced high quality drawings and renders. Hart retired in 1936 and was succeeded by Kenneth Luke.

Sources:

Auckland Star, 9 October 1935, p.8

New Zealand Herald, 16 June 1926, p.12, 26 November 1926, p.13

G.A. Hart: www.wellingtoncityheritage.org.nz/architects/wcc-city-engineer-g-a-hart?q=
[retrieved 31 January 2021]



*George Hart, date unknown but possibly at the time of his appointment as City Engineer.
(1/1-033001-F, ATL)*

Kenneth Luke



Ken Luke, in 1919, dressed in what appears to be military uniform. (1/1-015295-G, SP Andrew Collection, ATL)

Kenneth Ewart Luke (1890-1965) was born in Wellington and educated at Wellington College. His father was Sir Charles Luke, a mayor of Wellington for one year (1894-95), as was his uncle Sir John Luke, who held office from 1913 to 1921.

He joined the city engineer's department in 1907, but his career was interrupted by World War I. He enlisted to serve in 1916 and joined the New Zealand Rifle Brigade. He left New Zealand on February 1917 and after training in England he was shipped to France on 12 July 1917. He saw action on the Western Front and was hospitalised in March 1918.

Upon his return he resumed his career at the WCC, with much of his work in the 1920s involved in road building and paving. He progressed through the department and was acting city engineer before the appointment of George Hart. He was later appointed assistant city engineer and upon Hart's retirement in 1935, Luke

took over the role. He was awarded the OBE in 1951 and retired the following year.

On his retirement Luke became a director of several companies and advised on the government's development of geothermal power at Wairakei. An enthusiastic singer and sportsman, he married twice and had four children.

Sources:

Press, 9 April 1965, p.9

'Kenneth Ewart Luke (1890 - 1965)', <https://www.wikitree.com/wiki/Luke-2332> [retrieved 28 June 2023]

Luke, Kenneth Ewart, d 1965: Letters to his family, Feb. 1917-Apr. 1918, MS-Papers-6027, Alexander Turnbull Library (record entry)

2.3 Chronology of key events

Pre-1840	Māori use of Karori (Te Kaha o ngā Rore) is mainly hunting, gathering and cultivation. There were cultivations near the site of what would become Karori Cemetery.
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- 1842 Bolton Street and Mount Street Cemeteries established.
- 1882 Cemeteries Act passed.
- 1890 A site in Karori wins a ballot to be the location of the new cemetery. The McKenzie brothers (owners), agree in principle to accept council offer for their land. Council raises loan of £7,500 to establish new cemetery.
- 1891 McKenzie brothers and council sign sale agreement. Work completed on new road from Polhill Gully to Karori.
- Sexton's cottage built to a design by noted architect Frederick de Jersey Clere.
- Sexton Ernest Nash appointed.
- August 1891 Frederick William Fish, an infant, is the first burial at Karori Cemetery.
- Public shelter, designed by City Surveyor George Wiltshire, built in cemetery; later used and known as the Mortuary Chapel (1904).
- February 1892 First regular burials begin at Karori. Church burials consecrated.
- 1892 Shelter enclosed.
- 1903 Second public burial section opened.
- 1909 Chapel and crematorium built to a design by John Sydney Swan.
- 1913 Second Church of England (Anglican) burial section opened.
- 1918 World War I ends. First organised burials of soldiers in cemetery. Influenza epidemic claims hundreds of Wellingtonians and cemetery has busiest period of its history, with 63 people buried on one day in November alone.
- Services Cemetery established.
- 1921 Lychgate built in Services Cemetery.
- 1927 Mess and tool shed constructed. Designed by chief engineer's office.
- 1931 Memorial Arch, designed by chief engineer's office, built in Services Cemetery. First extension to Services Cemetery opened.
- 1932 Sealing of main road begins. Other roads and paths progressively sealed over following decades.
- 1934 A large group of unemployed workers is put to work in the cemetery. Walking track from Wilton to Karori built through cemetery land.
- Third public burial section opened.
- 1935 First columbarium constructed behind crematorium.
- 1937 WCC land near the Standen Street gates set aside for cemetery purposes. Later used for Wellington's first lawn cemetery.
- First Greek Orthodox burial section opened.

- Shelter for visitors built at the far north end of the cemetery.
- 1941 First columbarium wall constructed alongside (and as part of) the Services Cemetery.
- 1944 Mayor of Wellington, Will Appleton, announces the establishment of a lawn cemetery, to be formed above Standen Street.
- 1945 Second Catholic burial section opened.
- 1947 Gray Young, Morton and Young draw up plans for new chapel, to be built above Services Cemetery.
- 1948 To free up more space, Minister of Health Mabel Howard authorises the removal and reinterment of remains from graves not paid for.
- 1950 Second standalone columbarium constructed alongside old chapel.
- 1951 Lawn cemetery at Standen Street opened.
- 1953 Columbarium wall built alongside main drive, just north of Lychgate.
- 31 December 1953 76 of the victims of the Tangiwai Disaster are buried in a mass grave in the cemetery.
- 1954 Original sexton's cottage demolished and replaced with new brick house / office.
- 1955 Columbarium wall built alongside main road, just north of the Lychgate.
Second Greek Orthodox burial section opened.
- 1956 Fraser Memorial constructed.
- 1957 Tangiwai Memorial, designed by government architect Gordon Wilson, opened in cemetery.
- 1959 New crematorium chapel finished but not opened until 1960.
First and second extension made to services' columbarium wall.
- 1960 Rose garden established near main entrance.
- 1963 Columbarium wall built alongside main drive near Mortuary Chapel.
- March 1965 Makara Cemetery opens for burials.
- 1966 Garden of Remembrance opened alongside new crematorium.
- 1972 Decision made to plant trees on cemetery slopes facing Wilton and Northland, after complaints from local residents' association.
Last extension made to services' columbarium wall.
- 1973 A peak of cemetery use is reached, with up to 14 burials or cremations a day.
- 1974 Main denominational and Roman Catholic areas closed to new plot purchasers.

- 1979 Shelter set on fire and 31 headstones spray-painted in anti-semitic attacks.
- 1984 Internationally significant stained-glass windows in old crematorium chapel restored.
- February 1988 50 headstones in Chinese section vandalised.
- 1991 Cemetery centenary. Rose Garden redesigned and rebuilt. New gates installed at main entrance and Seaforth and Standen Street entrances. Open day held and Frederick William Fish's grave, the first in the cemetery, located and restored.
- 1994 Permission given for ash disposal and bronze plaque mounting in rose garden.
- 2003 *SS Penguin* walk opened, with the assistance of the Karori Historical Society.
- 2004 Unveiling of life-sized statue of Chippy, the cat on Ernest Shackelton's 1914 trans-Antarctic expedition, on the grave of carpenter Harry McNeish. It has become, arguably, the most visited grave in the cemetery.
- 2005 Launch of Warriors' Walk, self-guided tour around the Services Cemetery.
- 2014 Karori resident Barbara Mulligan begins taking guided tours of the cemetery.
- 2018 Centenary of Spanish flu epidemic. A project (begun in 2016) led by Barbara Mulligan identifies and cleans graves of flu victims in anticipation of centenary.
- 2020 Friends of Karori Cemetery formed out of the work of Barbara Mulligan.

3.0 Physical description

3.1 Introduction

Karori Cemetery is an important cultural heritage landscape composed of several interrelated and significant natural and cultural physical features and spaces. The cemetery sits on the east-facing lower slopes of Johnston Hill, one of the last peaks in the long ridgeline of Te Wharangi that stretches south from Kaukau. The character and form of the cemetery has been strongly influenced by the landforms it sits amongst and its layout by the local topography of slopes, ridges, gullies and streams. The landscape has in turn been transformed by the imposition of the cemetery, with all its many and different facets, over the top of it. To that has been added 130 years of development, including landscaping, tree planting and removal, road-building, culverting and building construction.

Cultural features of the place include graves and mausoleum vaults, purpose-built cemetery buildings (including chapels, a crematorium, and gardener's sheds), columbaria, monuments, the distinctive and planned area of the Soldiers' Cemetery, open spaces, gardens, fences, seats, walls, roads, paths, tracks and stairs, together with purposely planted trees and shrubs, modifications to the stream and the formed grassy areas. The relationship between these features and the natural environment has been progressively established over the length of history of the cemetery, particularly in the period prior to the opening of Makara Cemetery in 1965 when Karori was in full use.

This section describes the natural environment that exists within the cemetery, the graves and memorials, the buildings, roads and tracks and other amenities, and finally considers the interrelationship of all the features of the cemetery as a cultural heritage landscape.

3.2 Natural environment

Setting and site

Karori Cemetery is set on the lower shoulder of Johnston Hill, on hilly land that slopes downwards from west to east over a series of gentle rises and dips and sharp declines into two major gullies, and which contains several small streams that feed into the Kaiwharawhara Stream. Visually constrained at the north and northwest by Johnston Hill and the steep slopes of the Te Wharangi ridgeline, the cemetery has an open easterly aspect. Long vistas open from within the cemetery to the north-east along the valley of the Kaiwharawhara stream and out to Kaukau and beyond, while views to the east across the valley are dominated by the long ridgeline of Te Ahumairangi.

The cemetery today comprises some 35.5 hectares in area, contained within a roughly triangular perimeter with its base facing north. It is physically bounded by the close residential development of Standen Street to the south and west, by Gum Gully and the open sports fields of Ian Galloway Park to the east, and by the regenerating bush of the lower slopes of Johnston Hill Reserve to the north – which in turn meets into the old native bush of Ōtari Reserve at the north east corner of the site, following the line of the Kaiwharawhara stream.

The character of the wider Karori area has greatly changed from its original bush-clad state at the time of the signing of the Treaty. The regenerating bush and remnant native forest on the reserve land that flanks the northern end of the cemetery speaks strongly to the original character of the land and ensures that views of the cemetery from the wider area largely place it against a verdant background.

Today, remnants of the natural environment inside the perimeter are confined to the main gully and natural drainage system within the northern half of the cemetery. This area supports indigenous bush and lowland forest similar to that clothing the hills in Ōtari. The stream is quite deeply incised into the land, forming, in places, steeply-walled gullies up to 35 metres deep at the northern boundary of the cemetery. It is a sinuous element originating near the top of Standen and Nottingham Streets, curving in a loop to the south, and then curving north, progressively deepening toward the boundary.

3.3 Structure of the cemetery

Entry to the cemetery has always been from the top of Old Karori Road, down the long roadway that winds past the office, Services Cemetery and the small chapel, and culminates at the Shelter.

The terrain of the southern half of the cemetery is relatively gentle, composed largely of comparatively shallow slopes and relatively flat land. The early occupation of the place, with the first four denominational sections, was centred around the northern end of this area and makes up the historic core of the cemetery. The land quickly becomes steeper and more corrugated north of the Tool Shed/Mess, with the main gully and stream dramatically bisecting the northern half of the cemetery.

The cemetery is laid out with a formal structure of access roads, paths and burial sections that responds directly to both the local topography and the pragmatic operational needs of the cemetery. The layout was designed from the outset to take best advantage of the available flat and gently sloped terrain for burials, and to provide useable horse and cart access for transporting and carrying caskets to the graves (and for mourners and visitors). It largely left the steeper slopes to nature to take care of. Later extensions to the cemetery followed, by necessity, much the same philosophy, although ever more marginal land was used for burials as the cemetery's capacity came under increasing pressure and the use of motorised transport eased the problem of access to the steeper sections.

The formal layout of the cemetery radiates out from the historic core, which is centred around and distinctively marked by the Shelter, the oldest of the cemetery's buildings. It is situated on a small island at the confluence of the four original denominational sections and the junction of the key access roads – the long roadway wending down the hill from the entrance, and the two main roadways that lead off from there to the western and eastern parts of the north end of the cemetery.

The layout of the cemetery sections follows the same broad approach over the whole of the cemetery. Each section is set out in an approximately rectangular block with the main paths laid either along or across the contours of the land and graves at right angles; the terrain defines the irregular edges of many of the sections. The rows of graves are typically set back-to-back, with aisles paralleling the main paths, and intermittent perpendicular secondary paths used to divide off the various sections or for maintenance access, imposing a strong architectural grid over each section and defining major and minor axes and viewshafts that read clearly in the landscape.

A broad range of deliberate planting, much of it in exotic species, has been employed over the history of the cemetery to help reinforce the spatial plan – to define lawn areas, rows of trees to delineate some of the paths or boundaries of denominational sections, hedging, shelter belts, and decorative plantings around graves or areas of the cemetery, as well as specimen trees commemorating people or events. Following the transition of primary cemetery functions to Makara and reflecting the steady reduction of resources provided to manage the cemeteries over time, the major vegetation has enjoyed a period of untrammelled growth and expansion. At the time of writing, the vegetation has grown to the extent that the formal structure of the cemetery is now very difficult to see and understand except from the air, there are few visual connections between the different parts of the cemetery, and the connection of the place to the wider landscape is becoming increasingly difficult to appreciate.

3.4 Graves and memorials

Karori Cemetery contains a staggering range of grave types. The graves range from the very simple to formal and elaborate, from minimal timber surrounds to plain standard graves, to complex late Victorian and Edwardian structures, to the vaults and mausolea, to the more austere and unadorned graves of its latter history, and clearly demonstrate the passage of time, taste and funerary fashion. While many graves are not marked in any physical way, all burials are nevertheless carefully mapped.

Nine different categories of grave are discussed below, although within each there is an extraordinary range of designs and materials. (These categories could be expanded and amplified if there were the resources for a more detailed study.)

A remarkable feature of the cemetery is the consistency of form over time held by the standard grave – as described below, a plain rectangular masonry structure consisting of a raised surround and recessed ledger, all finished with a fine-grained plaster. There are differences in detail in the profiles and shapes of the surrounds, but there are graves dating from the 1890s that have their counterparts in parts of the cemetery which were developed in the 1930s.

It is likely that, while monumental fashion appears to have changed very slowly, differences in the design and quality of graves arose more from the wealth or status of the person or family, or the desire to give a good send-off that led to the great range of elaborations on the basic grave design that can be seen around the cemetery. Such elaboration is clearly

apparent in some headstones and in more monumental features such as crosses, obelisks and allegorical sculpture. Some sculptural elements are significant works of art in their own right and would have been expensive to import or commission. Graves that are richly ornamented tend to be concentrated in the early sections of the cemetery but continued to be built occasionally until the 1950s. A noticeable uniformity of very plain graves permeates the part of the cemetery developed during the Depression of the 1930s, graphically reflecting the economy of the time. In more recent years, headstones have tended to be like those erected at Makara Cemetery - often an inscription etched in a simple, tilted slab of marble or granite.

1. Standard graves

The most common form of grave in the Karori Cemetery is the standard plain rectangular structure, built in concrete and finished in fine-grained cement plaster. These graves are found over the whole of the cemetery, extending even into areas that are steep (in some cases, unsuitably steep). Their size is generally one standard plot size (1.1 metres wide by 2.1 metres long), but can vary from a third or a half of this width, to double or triple plots. Many of these include multiple burials. Most of the graves consist of a flat concrete slab (some with small areas left uncovered for planting) with a low kerb around the perimeter; the top of the kerb can be level or profiled with curves.

Other materials

This standard grave is occasionally found executed fully in marble. There are some examples of pebble-dash finish, and at least one that is left as raw un-plastered concrete; a number are painted. Tile floors are occasionally found on the ledgers of the graves.

Surrounds

In some cases, these graves are distinguished by low railings around the perimeter. Such railings are commonly in wrought iron or cast steel, although there are still several in timber. (It is thought that timber was a common material, but this material has not survived nearly as well as wrought iron.) There are examples of surrounds executed in rough (uncut) stone.

Headstones

There is a huge range of headstones, mostly in stone with a few examples of cast bronze. No timber headboards are presently known to exist, although they must have been fairly common in the early years of the cemetery. Headstones commonly rest at the head of the grave within the outer edging, although many are set into the inside face of the wall at the head of the grave.

Most headstones are plain and rectangular in shape, although there is a variety of shaped tops and Gothic or pointed tops are common. Some graves are distinguished by quite ornate headstones, which can have a base supporting a shaft and cross, an obelisk, a figure such as an angel, or an urn with or without drapery. Headstones sometimes sport special carvings – a kauri tree, a bible, an anchor and chain, or two shaking hands – which are examples of quite specific remembrance.

Lettering

Lettering on headstones is commonly lead let into incisions in the stone. It is sometimes simply carved without leading, sometimes painted, or rendered in gold leaf.

2. Vaults/ mausolea

Vaults form a distinctive grave type in the cemetery. There are 24 altogether, with a concentration in the historic core of the cemetery near the Shelter.

In plan the vaults typically take up double or triple plots, giving a basic square or rectangular plan form. They are all a single storey high and are uniformly finished with plastered concrete, and so have a strong commonality of scale and materiality. Their scale ensures most of the vaults stand out in the cemetery landscape. The vaults span an architectural range from particularly spare and basic to architecturally excessive; the more complex vaults are dressed with varying degrees of architectural elaboration and monumental statuary. While most of the vaults have gabled roofs, the Biggs vault has a spectacular dome.

One of the most distinctive views in the cemetery is the group of four contiguous vaults (Ranish, George, Jupp and Plimmer), which are themselves very interesting items of Gothic Revival and neo-Classical design. The Underwood and Biggs vaults are individually distinctive structures and are prominent local landmarks in the cemetery.

3. Services Cemetery

The Services Cemetery takes up much of the south-east corner of the cemetery, fitting in the wedge of space between the main drive and Rosehaugh Avenue, and the two chapels at the north end. It is arranged in two distinct zones relating to the two world wars of the 20th century. Each part of each section is laid out using strong linear axes, which extend to link the different sections. This part of the cemetery is notably highly planned and structured, carefully ordered, symmetrical and tidy, and quite distinct in its character from the majority of the cemetery. The Services Cemetery also extends to the Remembrance Lawn which lies to the north of the main chapel.

The first area, commemorating World War I, has its main formal entrance through the Lychgate from the main driveway on an east-west axis. It is set out on a cruciform plan centred on a flagpole, with the graves radiating in concentric circles from the centre of the plan, all with matching headstones. The secondary north-south axis links through to the later areas of the Services Cemetery via the Serviceman's Arch, and there are two lily ponds arranged symmetrically on this axis. In the next section of the cemetery, the graves are set in serried ranks on the gentle slope rising up to Rosehaugh Avenue (post-World War I and World War II). The headstones are set in concrete beams in a lawn setting with various commemorative features including steps, seats, pools and trees, and in particular the Servicemen's Arch (see also below), set on the various axes.

The headstones have a rectangular outline with polished face, and rough-hewn edges to the stone. Some service personnel are commemorated in columbaria with niches and bronze

plaques. The Services Cemetery is bordered on the uphill side by the major brick columbarium wall that steps up the hill running parallel to Rosehaugh Avenue, a significant architectural structure.

The Remembrance Lawn is a broad open area bounded by mature trees and overlooked by the terrace in front of the main chapel. It is configured as a lawn cemetery, with orderly ranks of bronze markers lying horizontally on concrete beams, all laid out on a north-south alignment that runs down the length of a gentle slope. The lawn is bisected by an east-west axis that runs off the bend of Seaforth Terrace, featuring two commemorative trees.

4. Columbaria

The cemetery contains six columbaria, i.e. walls with niches containing ashes. The first, built in 1935, is a substantial arcaded brick and concrete structure bedded into the bank and set around a courtyard behind the crematorium. Adjoining the chapel on the north is a freestanding brick structure with a gabled Marseilles tile roof, built in 1950. Both have marble and cast bronze plaques fitted to the niches and walls. The design of both these structures is complimentary to the style and materials of the old chapel.

There are three concrete block wall columbaria distributed along the main drive. These are long low structures faced with bronze plaques.

The last columbarium is the Soldiers' columbarium wall, which runs along the boundary of Rosehaugh Avenue, stepping up in sections as the road rises. It isolates the Services' Cemetery from road traffic and helps to create a quiet and reflective space. This is a significant brick and concrete structure, with a distinctive architectural form and striking silhouette.

Refer to the *Karori Cemetery Columbaria Conservation Plan* (Kelly and Murray, 2021) for further detail on the various columbaria.

5. Lawn cemetery graves

Opened in 1951 with a view to the kind of cemetery that would later be built at Makara, the lawn cemetery is located at the highest point of the cemetery, in the far north-west corner. It occupies an open rolling slope with expansive outlooks across the valley and out to the wider world. It is literally all lawn, although surrounded by trees. Within the lawn parallel concrete beams are laid, with regularly placed bronze plaques set flush with the concrete.

As noted above, the Services Cemetery also has a large lawn cemetery section on the north side of the main chapel.

6. Special graves

The cemetery has special graves that don't fit into the descriptive categories above. Of note in this category is the memorial grave of Prime Minister Peter Fraser, which occupies a prime site atop a small promontory on the high ground at the north-east of the cemetery, with long views out across the surrounding country. This is a single-storey high open

architectural structure made of concrete and stone that was designed by the Government Architect.

There are two mass graves in the cemetery. The first is the memorial to the *SS Penguin* disaster of 1909, which comprises a group of 14 graves on the slope on the west side of the access road from Seaforth Terrace, drawn together by a common kerb. A large shield flanked by stone scrolls (one missing) commemorates the event. Many of the other *Penguin* dead are buried separately at the cemetery, some close to the memorial.

The second mass grave is that containing the bodies of some of those who perished in the Tangiwai rail disaster in 1953; a special memorial, designed by the Government Architect in a distinctive 1950s modern style, marks the head of this grave. This is located at the north end of the cemetery, beside the access road at the foot of the lawn cemetery.

7. Unmarked and pauper's graves

There are a large number of graves that have never been marked in any meaningful way, those of some children for example who were buried between plots, or of paupers, or of reinterments of those whose plots were not paid for. Cemetery records make it possible to locate most of these graves and who was buried in them, although some are in areas that are now too overgrown to access. Some previously unmarked graves have been subsequently identified with simple, small markers (similar to those marking ash deposits in the rose gardens).

There are also graves that are so badly decayed that fragments only remain, including a number of old timber graves.

8. Memorials

Although not graves, there are various memorials that deserve mention. As noted above, the Servicemen's Arch in the Services Cemetery commemorates those soldiers from the Wellington Province who died in both World Wars.

A less well known memorial is that recently constructed to remember stillborn children; it is located at the far north of the cemetery, above BP3 and Fraser's memorial.

There is a memorial to the children killed in the Holocaust – a colourful headstone in the infants burial area at PC2 at the bush end of a row. The inscription reads:

'In Memory of over 1,800,000 small children exterminated in the Holocaust. Now is the time for our children to laugh.'

9. Rose gardens

There are two principal rose garden areas, one to the west of the main entrance and the second to the east side of the Seaforth Terrace entrance. Both feature compact garden beds ringed by concrete beams with affixed bronze plaques, and bench seating, but are otherwise vastly different.

The radial layout of the first rose garden sits somewhat awkwardly in a wedge-shaped site below the driveway and has large semi-circular brick paving features at its centre. It is very prominent when entering the cemetery. The garden at Seaforth Terrace, with a simple linear layout, is a much more comfortable fit for its setting overlooking Ian Galloway Park and contains plants better suited to Karori's climate.

3.5 Buildings

Karori Cemetery contains a number of buildings that relate to the functional and commemorative requirements of the site. Several have special heritage values and have been listed by HNZPT on the New Zealand Heritage List / Rārangī Kōrero and scheduled by the WCC on the Wellington District Plan.

Office, 1954

The Office is just inside the main gates on the right of the drive. It was built as the home and office of the Sexton, and dates from 1954. The building has no special architectural distinction or historic merit, but it provides a useful function as an office. The main materials are brick, with timber joinery and a Decramastic metal tile roof. There is a timber garage nearby with access from Old Karori Road. Just to the north of the garage, and set between the driveway level and Rosehaugh Avenue, is the modern self-contained toilet block.

Lychgate, 1921

The Lychgate stands on the right side of the main drive, where it marks the entrance to the Services Cemetery and the main axis of the WW1 area. It is a small but tall and well-proportioned structure of a Tudor-inspired style, with black-painted heavy timbers standing on a brick plinth forming open walls and a steep roof clad in plain clay tiles; the gable ends are half-timbered with textured white roughcast plaster between vertical timbers. An inscription over the gate reads 'Peace with Honour'.

Listed Category 2 under the HNZPT Act (no. 1400) and scheduled on the District Plan.

Crematorium and Chapel, 1909

A short distance down the main drive, the Crematorium and Chapel forms the historic and functional heart of the cemetery. The Chapel is a beautiful Arts and Crafts style building, built in brick with a Marseille tile roof. Stained glass windows are a special feature of the Chapel – these were made by the An Tur Gloire studio in Dublin, are rare examples of their work, and are of a very high aesthetic standard. The building was designed by the noted Wellington architect John Sydney Swan. The crematorium is attached to the back of the chapel, but discretely set back and apart so that it reads as a distinct object. The large square chimney behind illustrates its function.

Listed Category 1 under the HNZPT Act (no. 1399) and scheduled on the District Plan.

Refer to the *Karori Crematorium Conservation Plan* (Bowman / Cox, 2017) for further information.

Shelter, 1892

The Shelter is another focal point further down the main drive and sits at the junction of several important paths. It is a small timber-framed and clad structure, a Greek cross in plan, with gables to each arm of the cross and a central turret roof. It is surrounded by six pohutukawa, which obscure views to and from the building.

Listed Category 2 under the HNZPT Act (no. 1362), and scheduled on the District Plan.

Refer to the *Shelter Conservation Plan* (Murray, Kennedy and Clark, 2022) for further information.

Mess and Tool shed, 1927

This building stands opposite the Shelter and was built in 1927. It continues the general Arts and Crafts style evident in the Lychgate and the Chapel, being built of brick to window sill level with textured stucco above. The main gable facing the drive is of half-timbered construction. The very steep-pitched roof is sheathed in Decramastic tiles; these replace what was most probably the original cladding of Marseille tiles.

A tractor shed added to the north side of this building was opened in December 1992; it matches in with the style of the original building.

The building is not currently listed or scheduled, but is likely to have sufficient heritage value to meet the District Plan threshold. (A conservation plan should be prepared.)

Main Chapel, 1959

The Main Chapel is accessible from Rosehaugh Avenue on the eastern side of the cemetery. It is an interesting modernist building, designed by the important Wellington architects Gray Young, Morton and Young. It is built in in-situ reinforced concrete with plain plastered finish; the roof is sheathed in clay tiles.

The building is not currently listed or scheduled, but is likely to have sufficient heritage value to meet the thresholds for both HNPZT and the WCC. (A conservation plan should be prepared.)

3.6 Roads, paths, gates, walls and other facilities

The cemetery has a complex network of roads and paths that make the entire cemetery accessible. They range in design from the wide sweeping main driveway which gives access to the Services Cemetery and the Chapel, to remote paths that are narrow and unsealed.

The main entrance gates are modern, fabricated in aluminium and hung from brick piers that are part of the walls that mark the boundary at the south end of the cemetery. There is

another gate, in timber, part of the Lychgate, and this gives formal access to the Services Cemetery. There is also a gate at the Standen Street entrance, similar in style and construction to the main gates.

The cemetery has numerous other built structures, many of them small but important in defining edges or acting as retaining walls. Examples are the brick edgings to driveways and paths; pools and seats, especially those in the Services Cemetery; and the numerous random-rubble stone walls (or stone facing on reinforced concrete), including those supporting the main drive where it crosses the stream.

There is a brick and timber pergola in the Rose Garden, which contains a brick-paved courtyard and stone sculpture.

3.7 Cultural heritage landscape

Karori Cemetery has a diverse, complex and strongly interrelated cultural heritage landscape, determined by the imposition of built expressions of interment and plantings on a lightly modified landform. Ways in which the physical elements of the cemetery interact to establish this cultural heritage landscape include:

- The built structure and layout of the cemetery, designed for foot and cart access, responds directly to the natural topography of the land.
- Long views through the cemetery and out to the surrounding landscapes were available for most of the history of the cemetery, visually connecting its parts within the cemetery and linking it to the wider setting. (These views are, for the most part, presently blocked by tree growth.)
- The main roadways flow with the natural topography; they serve to delineate and separate the main areas of the cemetery while linking all the parts and providing connections to the wider setting.
- The cemetery sections are each laid out in neat rows separated by aisles and cross aisles. They collectively create a series of strong and deterministic planning grids draping over and imposing geometric order on the underlying landform. The orientation of each section and the edges of the sections are determined by the topography. The aisles and paths create geometric axes in the landscape.
- Grave plots all share a common rectangular module, giving the sections a strong geometric ordering and architectural pattern, a quality amplified by the generally rolling terrain which presents the majority of the graves as a series of tiers.
- Individual and family plots express ownership with their kerbing or edging, reinforced with a headstone; the graves show individuality within the tight confines of each plot to varying extents. This results in the ranks of graves having a great visual variety, particularly in the earlier sections of the cemetery.
- The Services' Cemetery forms its own self-contained space within the wider cemetery. The graves with headstones impose a rigid symmetry over flat and rolling grassed areas. It is clearly expressive of its purpose – highlighting the collective magnitude of loss.

- Mausolea and larger plots or structures (including those to acknowledge a collective tragedy such as the Tangiwai Disaster) as well as assorted buildings for various purposes, punctuate the landscape and provide reference or focal points within the cemetery.
- Columbarium walls, particularly the wall at the boundary of the Soldier’s Cemetery and the columbarium behind the crematorium, introduce enclosure, define spaces, frame views, and create axes.
- The lawn cemetery areas, and ashes beams at ground level create the opportunity for flowing lawns and a sense of open space and connection to the wider setting.

Planting has been used in various ways throughout the cemetery to augment the ‘hard’ physical structure of the place:

- as a buffer between abutting residential land and roads and the cemetery – Standen Street being a conspicuous example.
- to formally define avenues or axes, typically within grassed areas or paralleling roads, or in some cases along rows of plots.
- to visually soften the edges of plots especially where there is an awkward-to-maintain low bank or change in level.
- to add visual interest in the more open areas of the cemetery.
- as a higher-level forest canopy above graves (e.g., Gum Gully).
- as a unifying element of remembrance such as the rose garden near the main entrance.

3.8 Current photographs



Panorama of the Rose Garden near the main entrance.



The Shelter.



The earliest part of the cemetery, opposite the old chapel and crematorium.



The Underwood vault, just north of the Shelter, an example of one of the cemetery's 24 vaults.



Timber grave memorial, Anglican 1.



Timber grave surround, Anglican 1.



Servicemen's lawn cemetery, north of the main chapel.



Old chapel and crematorium (1909, right), original columbarium (1934, rear) and additional columbarium (1950), left.



The ceiling of the Peter Fraser Memorial.



The view from the north end of the cemetery towards Mt Kau Kau.



Examples of cemetery walls.



The rose garden near the Seaforth Terrace entrance.



Lawn cemetery.



Concrete foundations of former shelter, north end.



A view hindered by vegetation – from the lawn cemetery looking towards the Shelter and chapels.



Services cemetery.



Wellington Provincial Memorial arch, Services Cemetery.



The view down to Gum Gully from the top of the public section.



Overgrown graves on the Gum Gully hillside.



The Holocaust children's memorial. (E. Reddington)



The still-born children's memorial. (E. Reddington)

4.0 Significance

The WCC has adapted the Greater Wellington Regional Council's heritage criteria when assessing the significance of heritage places, whether it be for listing or for conservation plans or any other purpose. These criteria are contained in the Regional Policy Statement, *Policy 21: Identifying places, sites and areas with significant historic heritage values – district and regional plans*. The WCC's amended version of these criteria are listed in the *Conservation Management Plan Template* (Parks, Sport and Recreation, August 2020).

The following assessment uses these criteria to assess the heritage significance of Karori Cemetery.

4.1 Historic

Themes: the place is associated with important themes in history or patterns of development.

Karori Cemetery is one of the most significant historic places in Wellington and recognised as a nationally important historic place. As the location of over 80,000 graves and the repository of thousands of cremations, it constitutes the largest such cemetery in Wellington and the second largest in New Zealand. Burying the dead, and other mortuary procedures, have a most important role in society and these activities imbue a place like Karori with very great historic significance.

The cemetery is remarkable for the scope and accuracy of the information it contains, both within its records and out in the cemetery itself. Through the written records and grave inscriptions, the cemetery offers social commentary on types of mortality e.g. infant and early deaths, accidents and epidemics. The many types of grave monuments and the changes in their design and materials over time reveal much about taste, affluence (or otherwise) and the impact of a death on grieving relatives.

The special connection that churches and cultural groups have with cemeteries is expressed at Karori with the historic allocation of burial areas. Death has a significant role in religious ceremony and many of the tens of thousands of burials that took place at Karori were religiously based.

Events: the place has an association with an important event or events in local, regional or national history.

Among the many graves are special monuments or places that commemorate events that shaped the lives of New Zealanders. The Tangiwai disaster of 1953 is remembered in the mass grave and monument constructed at the northern edge of the cemetery. Peter Fraser, a successful 20th century prime minister, has his own monument. There are graves containing the remains of victims of the wreck of *SS Penguin* in 1909, the influenza victims of 1918, and those of servicemen and women who died during or after the world wars. Individual graves contain connections to notable events, such as the recognition given to the grave of Harry McNeish, carpenter on the trans-Antarctic expedition of 1914-1917. McNeish accompanied leader Ernest Shackleton on his epic boat journey from Elephant Island to South Georgia in 1916, regarded as one of the greatest feats of survival in human history.

People: the place is associated with the life or works of an individual, group or organisation that has made a significant contribution to the district, region or nation.

The graves of some of the most important New Zealanders of the 19th and 20th centuries, as well as the ordinary citizens of Wellington, are contained within the cemetery's boundaries. Among them are prime ministers, politicians, church and community leaders, prominent sportsmen and women, explorers, business leaders, unionists, a wide range of prominent professionals and academics, civil servants and soldiers. The Services Cemetery is a special feature, commemorating the contribution of the men and women who served the country, most conspicuously in overseas conflicts. There are groupings of graves that belong to particular organisations, such as religious orders, which bring their members together in death as they did in life.

The cemetery is a showcase of the work of the WCC's city engineer's department over a long period. It demonstrates the organisation's competence in designing a wide range of structures and its strong contribution to the aesthetic qualities of the cemetery.

Social: the place is associated with everyday experiences from the past and contributes to our understanding of the culture and life of the district, region or nation.

Cemeteries are, to an extent, egalitarian places, in that the distinguished in life lie alongside thousands of people who never achieved any prominence in society but who nevertheless lived lives of meaning and fulfilment and contributed to society. Hidden from view are the stories about some of these people that might demonstrate that, in their own way, they did live extraordinary lives.

4.2 Physical

Archaeological: there is potential for archaeological investigation to contribute new or important information about the human history of the district, region or nation.

Karori Cemetery has considerable archaeological value, for a variety of reasons that go beyond its pre-1900 boundaries. In some areas, activity pre-dates the use of the area for cemetery purposes, in the case of the McKenzie Brothers' occupation. The changes through time in the physical fabric of graves, headstones, memorials and the cultural landscape provide evidence about past attitudes to death and changes in fashion and taste. Decorative elements provide information about symbolism and cultural beliefs and the analysis of materials used to construct graves can provide information about the role of personal choice and socio-economic status in funerary customs.

The burials themselves possess important archaeological values. Osteological studies of human remains can provide information about age at death, sex, ethnicity, nutritional and reproductive history, general health, disease and trauma.

Cemeteries are an especially sensitive type of archaeological site, however, as their potential to provide valuable information about the health and composition of past populations needs to be placed within the wider context of their cultural value. Although burials do provide

potential opportunities to study ko iwi, the primary goal within the Karori Cemetery is the preservation of the burials and minimisation of any disturbance to them.

Although burials and associated grave furniture/plots are of high archaeological significance, there are other elements of the cemetery landscape that can also be considered to have archaeological values, such as pre-1900 buildings, such as the Shelter, as well as in ground and above ground landscape and service structures, such as paths, retaining walls, foundations and drains.

Architectural: the place is notable for its style, design, form, scale, materials, ornamentation, period, craftsmanship or other architectural values [and]

Townscape: the place is strongly associated with other natural or cultural features in the landscape or townscape, and/or contributes to the heritage values of a wider townscape or landscape setting, and/or it is a landmark.

Taken as a whole, the cemetery is the repository of significant artistic achievement, stretching over 130 years, and it is a unique cultural artefact for this reason.

The cemetery has very significant townscape, architectural and artistic values. These values reside in the whole of the place as much as its individual components – roads, paths, graves, vaults and other funerary monuments, and buildings.

The design of the cemetery derives from a direct mapping of its functions onto the available landscape; the roadways flow with the natural topography and connect the parts of the cemetery; the layout of the sections imposes a strong architectural ordering over the terrain and creates geometric axes and viewshafts in the landscape, and the rolling terrain and relatively constant base scale of the graves creates a strong architectural pattern in the landscape.

Townscape values are evident in all parts of the cemetery, where a complex mix of built objects (buildings, graves, vaults, memorials, walls, paths and roads) and natural features (grass, trees, streams and natural landforms) provide vistas and views and juxtapositions of great visual interest, both from within and outside the cemetery. Here and there, buildings, structures, obelisks or raised statues act as landmarks and visual reference points. The natural – albeit modified – environment is expressed principally through the stream corridor with its sinuous pattern, landform and indigenous vegetation.

There is a wide range of artistic expression in the graves, some of which exhibit very high levels of craftsmanship and design, not just in the special features of stone carvings but in the lesser details of construction, finishing and inscriptions.

The buildings and structures have high architectural value too. The old Chapel is an important architectural work and is enhanced by stained glass windows that are of international interest. There are other structures of architectural interest, including the Shelter, the major columbaria, the memorial arch and lychgate in the Services Cemetery, the

Main Chapel, various vaults and mausolea and the two modern memorials (Tangiwai and Fraser).

Groups: The place is part of a group of buildings, structures, or sites that taken together have coherence because of their age, history, style, scale, materials, or use.

Cemeteries are distinctive landscapes and instantly recognisable for the combination of structures they are typically composed of. Karori is no different in this regard. It contains a collection of buildings, structures – mostly graves – and sites that covers much of the ground within the cemetery's boundaries and knits together in an entirely coherent way.

Surroundings: the setting or context of the place contributes to an appreciation and understanding of its character, history and/or development.

Although Karori Cemetery sits partly in a suburban landscape, it is closely attended by native bush on its northern boundary and, for most of its western boundary, it is flanked by a field – Ian Galloway Park, leaving it set predominantly in green space. The suburban development speaks to the general expansion of Wellington during the 20th century, which eventually expanded to the cemetery's boundaries, while the park is the product of a longstanding municipal facility – the Wilton Tip – that closed in 1970. The native bush, which occupies the lower slopes of Johnston Hill and the banks of the Kaiwharawhara Stream, and links to Ōtari, is a striking feature of the northern end of the cemetery and its regeneration, encouraged by active pest control and planting, gives a strong indication both as to how the wider area looked prior to 1840 and as to how the cemetery might one day start to gracefully merge into the wider landscape.

Scientific: The area or place has the potential to provide scientific information about the history of the district or region

Not applicable.

Technological: the place provides evidence of the history of technological development; and/or demonstrates innovation or important methods of construction or design; and/or contains unusual construction materials.

For the most part, the structures in the cemetery demonstrate typical design and building technology of their time that is well represented in the cemetery and elsewhere.

Integrity: the significant physical values of the place have been largely unmodified. This includes the retention of important modifications and/or additions from later periods.

Although the condition of the cemetery's structures varies, and some are in poor condition, the level of authenticity and physical integrity on display is consistently high. The simple reason is that most of the cemetery, aside from plantings, remains essentially unaltered from the way it was planned and built. The various buildings in the cemetery have remained relatively unaltered, and are largely found in an authentic state.

Age: the place is particularly old in the context of human occupation of the Wellington region.

Karori Cemetery was established in 1891, and is the second municipal cemetery in Wellington, so it is not a particularly old place by the city's standards. As time elapses, it will become more venerable.

4.3 Social

Sentiment: the place has strong or special associations with a particular cultural group or community for spiritual, political, social, religious, ethnic, national, symbolic or commemorative reasons.

Symbolic, commemorative and spiritual values of the Karori Cemetery are high, especially for those whose forebears are interred within its boundaries. Many families in Wellington, and well beyond, feel a special reverence for the place; many have taken part in the last rites of loved ones and friends in the chapels or at the graveside, and many visit graves to reflect and remember. The presence of the Services Cemetery and its various features adds an additional commemorative value to the cemetery. The variety of cultural and religious groups are acknowledged in different parts of the cemetery, often in a visually clear way because of different styles of burial or memorial.

Recognition: the place is held in high public esteem for its historic heritage values, or its contribution to the sense of identity of a community, to the extent that if it was damaged or destroyed it would cause a sense of loss.

The cemetery is generally held in high public esteem by most of the community, primarily because it is a graveyard and therefore a place of particular importance to the community, but it also has acquired importance as a recreational space over time. The cemetery has come in for its fair share of criticism over much its life, mainly for overgrown vegetation obscuring graves and paths, but vegetation management in recent decades has ensured that the public mostly favours and supports the management of the cemetery. This will only increase over time.

Sense of place/continuity: the place provides evidence of cultural or historical continuity, or contributes to a sense of place for a community

Karori Cemetery clearly demonstrates evidence of cultural and historical continuity; its graves and memorials have been there since 1891 and the landscape contains mostly fixtures that have been there for a considerable period of time. What that means is that, vegetation aside, the place has not changed all that much, so as a fixture at the eastern end of the suburb, it is a familiar and thoroughly ensconced part of the landscape for local residents.

4.4 Tangata whenua

Tangata whenua values: the place is sacred or important to Māori for spiritual, cultural or historical reasons.

The cemetery does not contain an urupa, nor is it known to contain a collection or grouping of graves of Māori. It does contain individual graves of local Māori, so the cemetery is likely to be culturally important to the whanau of those deceased if not of broader value.

4.5 Rarity

The place is unique or rare within the district or region.

Karori Cemetery is typical of any other cemetery of its age and length of use in the country, or even in the western world, but it is also unique, as a record of life and death in Wellington for a period of over 130 years. The cemetery is a testament to the life experiences of generations of Wellingtonians. It contains the graves of a wide cross-section of society and it is a special place for anyone with a passing knowledge of Wellington history and social life.

As time passes the cemetery will become more significant, especially with the changes in the form of graves, monuments and columbaria in use in modern cemeteries. This type of cemetery will not be constructed again in New Zealand. This will only enhance the rarity of the cemetery and its individual features in the future.

4.6 Representativeness

The place is a good example of its type or era.

Karori is an excellent representative example of a late 19th century cemetery, both for its original design and layout and for its contents dating from the first decades; it can be considered a good representative example of a 20th century cemetery too, as the parts beyond the historic core are largely contiguous in age and give a clear account of the development and use of the place over time.

The cemetery includes representative examples of most styles and types of late 19th and 20th century graves and memorials. Amongst the buildings, the Arts and Crafts style of the early 20th century is well represented by the Chapel, and the modernist style by the Main Chapel, whereas the Shelter exhibits a distinctive pointed Gothic revival style. Vaults provide extremely interesting essays in the Classical and Gothic styles, and many graves exhibit details of these and other styles.

4.7 Inventory of heritage fabric

Karori Cemetery is a cultural heritage landscape of great significance. Almost everything within its boundaries can be considered to have heritage value, mostly because it has been created, built or installed for cemetery purposes over the past 130 years and almost all the elements that make up the cemetery are closely interrelated, including recent graves and memorials. As the built fabric of the place is not expected to change in any notable way in the decades to come, its heritage importance will progressively increase over time.

To that end, there is little merit in distinguishing different levels of heritage significance now for management purposes as the heritage values of the different parts and elements of the place will steadily increase in importance over time. The inventory of fabric is therefore simply divided into fabric of heritage significance and non-heritage fabric.

Inasmuch as any fabric of the place could be considered more important than any other fabric, the historic core of the cemetery represents the oldest parts and is to be the priority for management attention under the landscape plan.

A heritage inventory of the contents of the cemetery includes a variety of features, which can be grouped as follows:

Type	Heritage fabric	Non-heritage fabric
Landform	All the landform of the cemetery and associated physical features (including streams and gullies etc.).	
Structure of the cemetery	Layout of the roads and of the cemetery sections, including aisles and paths.	
Burial-related structures	Graves incl. headstones, ledgers, curbs, fences and statuary, monuments, vaults and mausolea, lawn cemetery markers etc.	Anzac poppies and other markers not affixed by families.
Commemorative structures	Services Cemetery, Tangiwai Memorial, Peter Fraser Memorial, <i>SS Penguin</i> Memorial	
Cremation-related structures	Columbaria, Crematorium, Small Chapel and Main Chapel	Rose gardens
Ancillary buildings	Shelter, Mess and Tool Shed	Office (and associated garage)
Access facilities	Road and path formations	Surface treatment, kerb and channel, risers; informal paths.
Visitor facilities	Shelter, foundation of old waiting shelter, amenities in the Services Cemetery.	Toilets, seats, picnic tables, rubbish bins, water taps, car parks, signage.
Landscaping	Stone walls	Lawns
Plantings / natural vegetation	Long-standing specimen trees and vegetation, special commemorative trees, natural vegetation outside of areas occupied by graves.	All other vegetation

The treatment of heritage and non-heritage fabric is explained in broad terms in section 6, *Conservation Policy*.

5.0 Influences on conservation policy

5.1 Owner's objectives

Mahere Whakahaere Urupā – Cemeteries Management Plan

This plan sets the expectations for the long-term management of Wellington's cemeteries. It is a high-level document that sits above this *Conservation Plan* and the *Karori Cemetery Landscape Management Plan*. The management plan recognises that 'cemeteries are important places of commemoration' and that they 'are also valued open spaces with amenity, heritage, natural and recreation values'. The moemoeā / vision stated in the plan is:

Wellington's cemeteries are recognised places of guardianship and remembrance where we support our bereaved, treasure our heritage and experience peace and tranquillity.

This is based on recognising and respecting key values associated with the cemeteries:

- *Spiritual*
Enduring places of rest for the deceased where the rituals of death are carried out with respect.
- *Emotional*
Places where the bereaved feel supported in farewelling and remembering their dead.
- *Tikanga*
Places where tikanga Māori is practiced.
- *Heritage*
Historic places that hold individual and collective stories of our past.
- *Landscape*
A tranquil setting where restorative nature is interwoven with built features.
- *Community*
Places of meaning and interest that people like to visit, explore and care for.

Several policies in this plan, and section 4.2 of the plan, have direct bearing on the conservation of Karori Cemetery.

Policy 3.1.2.2.1 (3) calls for closed cemeteries to be classified as historic reserves under the Reserves Act to recognise and protect the historic heritage contained within the cemeteries, recognising that as the cemeteries reach capacity and are closed, the emphasis will shift towards heritage management.

Policy 3.2.2.1 (3) bears on the provision of interpretative material at Karori – this states 'consult denominational groups on whether they wish to provide information about their customs to help other visitors understanding'.

Policy 3.2.2.3 deals with the physical nature of remembrance, including allowing the personalised design of monuments, the planting of native trees as a commemorative option, and considering requests for commemorative features such as seats and sculptures.

Policy 3.2.2.4 sets out the requirements for grave-site maintenance and the distribution of responsibility between WCC and grave owners, including the requirement for obtaining a permit from WCC for maintenance and repair work on graves. In certain circumstances, council can step in and make safe or remove any monument or headstone that endangers people.

Policy 3.3 deals explicitly with heritage matters. It notes:

In the context of this plan, heritage includes the built structures, plants and introduced features that are of historical, social, aesthetic or scientific significance within the cemeteries. This term also encompasses the intangible values that cultural groups may associate with a place. The focus of natural environment values, which are also a form of heritage, is on significant components of indigenous and native ecosystems. All these aspects of heritage are interwoven within the cemeteries and the distinction between them is not always clear. For instance, native bird species are part of our natural environment but have come to depend on exotic as well as native plants for food. Exotic plants are also part of the unique character in some parts of the cemetery landscapes.

Cemeteries are valued worldwide as places that reflect the history of a locality. Wellington's cemeteries hold some of the city's oldest built heritage and stories of the past

The key objectives are (3.3.1):

1. To identify, recognise, protect and enhance appreciation of the significant heritage features and values of the cemeteries.
2. To maintain and enhance the essential landscape character of each cemetery in a way that preserves a sense of tranquillity and respect for the dead and is compatible with heritage values.
3. To protect and, where appropriate, restore indigenous biodiversity and indigenous ecosystems in the cemeteries, including freshwater ecosystems.

This *Conservation Plan*, and the related document *Maintenance and Repair Guidelines for Graves and Memorials* deals primarily with objective (1) (policies 3.3.2.3 *heritage recognition and protection*, 3.3.2.4 *graves and monuments*, 3.3.2.5 *buildings and infrastructure* and 3.6 *Resilience*) and overlaps with objective (2).

The *Karori Cemetery Landscape Management Plan* deals primarily with objective (2), with overlaps to objectives (1) and (3) (policies 3.3.2.1 – *landscape character and amenity planting*, 3.3.2.2 *natural environment*, and 3.4 *visitor experience*).

The three documents together address the actions and requirements set out in section 4.2 *Karori Cemetery*.

Karori Cemetery management

Karori cemetery is a unique site, significant for its heritage, history, and landscape while still remaining operational through the chapels, crematorium, community connection and passive recreation.

This requires a careful balance between the various cemetery users; the recently bereaved, genealogists, historians, volunteers, and other recreational users.

The needs of these diverse users are connected by the heritage of the site, which should be recognised, maintained, and protected. The landscape is vast, and memorials are numerous with significant historical value. It is thus important to have achievable targets met by the broader network of interested and effected people responsible for preserving Karori Cemetery. This will ensure the cemetery as not only an important place of remembrance but a place of learning, history and reflection and a connection point for the community.

5.2 Stakeholder objectives

Friends of Karori Cemetery

The Friends of Karori Cemetery (FOKC) is an organisation set up 'to support the preservation, protection and enhancement of the heritage, recreational and ecological aspects of the cemetery, promote public interest in the cemetery, support and undertake research into the history of the cemetery and those interred in it, and advise and assist WCC in its efforts to achieve all of the above.'

The monuments, mausoleums, headstones and other structures in Karori Cemetery allow us to obtain insights into people, their families, historic events, and past society, and provide a tangible connection to those who have come before. The FOKC therefore believe that the built heritage should be preserved and where possible restored. This will start to mitigate the degradation and decay that is already occurring, maintain the overall aesthetic and landscape of the cemetery, recognise the personal and spiritual meaning of both the cultural landscape and the built heritage - allowing people to connect with their ancestors and pay respects to their loved ones - facilitate both formal and informal education and research, and enable the progressive transformation of the cemetery into a heritage park. The Friends propose that understanding and interpreting the built heritage can be greatly facilitated by good maps, walkways, assistance with direction finding, comprehensive interpretation, and a visitor centre to bring all this together.

The main points the FOKC wishes to convey are:

- While supportive of the aims of this plan, it is concerned that the recommendations will not be achievable in the current economic climate.

- It would prefer a ‘softer’ approach to the balance between native and exotic trees and other planting, as articulated in the Karori Cemetery Landscape Management Plan. It feels that while natives should predominate in the future, there is still a place for exotic trees, where historically, culturally and visually appropriate. The retention of such trees provides a point of difference from the neighbouring Otari-Wilton’s Bush to the north and Zealandia to the southeast. It allows the different elements of the cemetery to retain and develop sensitively using exotics, and enables the ongoing presence of features such as the rose garden, the magnolia walk, the dogwood bank etc. Notwithstanding the need to remove trees to protect graves and to open up viewshafts (see below), the Friends would prefer a careful, one-by-one consideration of the removal of any trees of size.
- More toilets should be provided.
- It supports the opening up of viewshafts but not the re-creation of a more open character such as existed before the mid part of the 20th century. Clearly many of the big exotic trees must be removed as an early priority for reasons of safety and minimisation of damage to graves, and many are aging and getting past their best, but many can and should remain as they provide shelter and help create the character of the cemetery which we are trying to preserve. Larger trees in appropriate places, be they native or exotic and be they existing or yet to be planted, reduce the chance of an area feeling ‘denuded’ and characterless, especially with good management as they grow e.g. by limbing up.

Manatū Taonga/Ministry for Culture and Heritage

Manatū Taonga Ministry for Culture & Heritage (The Ministry) is mandated to maintain a wide range of memorials and graves in Karori Cemetery. These memorials and graves acknowledge significant aspects of our nation’s history including disasters (Tangiwai Memorial), conflicts (war graves and memorials to the missing), and national leaders (Peter Fraser).

The Ministry has a close relationship with Karori Cemetery due to the volume and range of heritage assets it is home to, and the close proximity it has to our offices. The Cemetery is not only significant to New Zealand on a national scale, but is part of a global footprint of Commonwealth War Grave Commission sites that are located in 23,000 locations, in over 150 countries.

While the Ministry may be the custodians of a range of heritage assets of both national and international importance within Karori Cemetery, we know we can’t achieve this alone and in isolation – we are part of a larger eco system which includes WCC staff and volunteers. We look to the council to manage site safety, cemetery facilities, horticulture and volunteers to ensure our graves and memorials are safe and in an environment fit for commemoration. The Karori Cemetery team play an essential part in our commemoration of the dead. While Karori Cemetery is not an official CWGC Cemetery, the original aspirations for the CWGC are that visitors to our fallen feel a sense of peace in garden-like settings. It is this special commemorative environment we look to the cemetery team to maintain.

Our goal in Karori Cemetery, is to sustainably manage our heritage assets through a conservation approach in perpetuity. As our heritage assets continue to age, we will look to partner with Council to achieve this.

Prepared by: Becky Masters-Ramsay, Pou Tohu Matua, Te Pae Mahara | Senior Adviser, War Graves and National Memorials, Manatū Taonga Ministry for Culture & Heritage.

Te Tira Ahu Ika A Whiro/Veteran's Affairs New Zealand

Veteran's Affairs represents central government's commitment to honouring those who have served their country in the NZ Armed Forces. We administer and monitor government's investment in the maintenance and development of services cemeteries and are funded to support local authorities with this maintenance

Veterans' Affairs also acts as the guardian of services cemeteries on behalf of the people of New Zealand and the families of deceased veterans, by ensuring that services cemeteries are maintained in a way that recognises the service to New Zealand of the veterans buried there.

Overall responsibility for the maintenance of services cemeteries is shared between Veterans' Affairs, local councils, RSAs, and other interested veteran groups. Whilst we fund some maintenance and improvements, much of this work is done by volunteers and the high standard of presentation at Karori services cemetery is a tribute to their efforts.

Veterans' Affairs maintains a close working relationship with Karori cemetery management and agree with the view that the heritage of the site, should be recognised, maintained, and protected. We have also noted the direction taken in recent years to retain or where possible restore the special character of areas such as the services cemetery to original design and this aligns well with our goals.

Our long terms goals for the Karori services cemetery are to balance the above with the principles of uniformity, remembrance, accessibility and ease of maintenance. We feel it is also important to retain and enhance space within the services cemetery for community commemorative events. Veterans' Affairs is aware of the challenges faced in a number of services cemeteries around New Zealand regarding shortage of available space, shifting preferences around burial practices and requirements for recognition. As such we would like to see further consideration given during future planning to alternative solutions such as Memorial walls.

Overall, we are pleased with the sense of peace in garden like settings that exists at Karori cemetery and will continue to partner with council to preserve and maintain this place of remembrance for future generations.

5.3 Statutory requirements

A number of statutes are relevant to the management of this place. They are discussed below.

Burial and Cremation Act 1964

The Burial and Cremation Act controls the establishment, use and closure of cemeteries and burial grounds and the process for disinterment. The use of the cemetery for burial purposes is governed by this legislation for as long as burials and cremations continue to take place.

Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014

The purpose of the Act 2014 is 'to promote the identification, protection, preservation, and conservation of the historical and cultural heritage of New Zealand' (section 3). In achieving the purpose of the Act, all persons performing functions and exercising powers under the Act must recognise:

- '(a) The principle that historic places have lasting value in their own right and provide evidence of the origins of New Zealand's distinct society; and
- (b) The principle that the identification, protection, preservation, and conservation of New Zealand's historical and cultural heritage should –
 - (i) Take account of all relevant cultural values, knowledge, and disciplines; and
 - (ii) Take account of material of cultural heritage value and involve the least possible alteration or loss of it; and
 - (iii) Safeguard the options of present and future generations; and
 - (iv) Be fully researched, documented, and recorded, where culturally appropriate; and
- (c) The principle that there is value in central government agencies, local authorities, corporations, societies, tangata whenua, and individuals working collaboratively in respect of New Zealand's historical and cultural heritage; and
- (d) The relationship of Maori and their culture and traditions with their ancestral lands, water, sites, wahi tapu, and other taonga.'

HNZPT maintains the New Zealand Heritage List/Rārangi Kōrero of historic places and acts in a variety of ways to ensure the preservation of heritage.

Heritage Listing

Part 4 of the Act, 'Recognition of places of historical, cultural, and ancestral significance' makes provision for a New Zealand Heritage List/Rārangi Kōrero. The purpose of the List is to '...inform members of the public about historic places..., to inform the owners of historic places ... as needed for the purposes of this Act, and to be a source of information about historic places ... for the purposes of the Resource Management Act 1991' (Section 65.)

Any place may be entered on the list provided that HNZPT 'is satisfied that the place or area has aesthetic, archaeological, architectural, cultural, historical, scientific, social, spiritual, technological, or traditional significance or value.' (Section 66; part 3 of this section.)

Karori Cemetery currently contains three places that have been listed by HNZPT. These are the Lychgate (no. 1400, Category 2), Crematorium and Chapel (no. 1399, Category 1) and the Shelter (no. 1362, Category 2).

Other individual structures that are not listed, but which may well meet the threshold for listing are the Mess Room/Tool Shed and the Main Chapel. The Soldier's Cemetery is also likely to meet the threshold for listing.

One of the recommendations in *Mahere Whakahaere Urupā – Cemeteries Management Plan* is to nominate the place to HNZPT for inclusion on the New Zealand Heritage List / Rārangī Kōrero. The whole of the Karori Cemetery would be likely to meet the threshold for a Category 1 listing that would recognise it as a place of 'special or outstanding historical or cultural significance' or for listing as a heritage area.

A key implication of these listings is that any work on these places that requires a building consent or an application for a project information memorandum will trigger a statutory notification to HNZPT under Section 39 of the Building Act 2004 (see below).

Archaeology

The Act requires that any person intending to do work that may modify or destroy an archaeological site must go through a process to gain an archaeological authority from HNZPT.

As defined in the HNZPT Act (section 6), archaeological site means, subject to section 42(3), —

- (a) any place in New Zealand, including any building or structure (or part of a building or structure), that
 - (i) was associated with human activity that occurred before 1900 or is the site of the wreck of any vessel where the wreck occurred before 1900; and
 - (ii) provides or may provide, through investigation by archaeological methods, evidence relating to the history of New Zealand; and
- (b) includes a site for which a declaration is made under section 43(1)

In principle, this means that the advice of HNZPT must be sought in relation to any activity requiring or resulting in potential, physical modification of graves, associated structures and materials, landscape structures and the like that could potentially be dated prior to 1900. This would include, but not necessarily be limited to:

- Locations and general vicinities of pre 1892 buildings relating to the McKenzie brothers pre-cemetery occupation. (See Appendix ?)¹¹⁹
- Marked pre-1900 graves in designated plots and their immediate vicinity.

¹¹⁹ Refer to "Plan accompanying letter to Wellington City Council from James MacKenzie regarding access to his property off Karori Road, 1894". (00248-417, WCCA) in Appendix 1.

- Graves originally occupied pre-1900 but subsequently exhumed and reused post-1948, following the 'Mabel Howard declaration' of 1948.
- Exhumed pre-1900 remains reburied in other areas (e.g. between graves and rows).
- Pre-1900 burials (e.g. pauper) not within designated grave plots, e.g. between rows and under paths.
- Retaining walls, pathways, drains etc.

If an activity is required that will or may modify any part of the cemetery containing pre-1900 graves or associated structures, application must be made to HNZPT for an archaeological authority. This is a statutory requirement. This holds true whether or not a site or an area of sites is a recorded archaeological site or is entered on the New Zealand Heritage List/Rārangi Kōrero or on the Landmarks list (refer to HNZPT Act Section 44).

It is recommended that an Archaeological Authority is sought by WCC from HNZPT to cover any work affecting the ground in the pre-1900 areas of the cemetery and in the general vicinities of pre 1892 buildings relating to the McKenzie brothers pre cemetery occupation. Note that Authorities are valid for a period of five years and do not have a renewal mechanism, so a new Authority would need to be periodically applied for.

It is recommended that advice be sought as above from HNZPT for burials and structures from the 1900-ca 1910 period, which are included within the 'historic core' of the cemetery. Although graves and structures associated with this time period are not formally protected under the HNZPT Act, they will contain information that is significant to the earliest use and history of the cemetery. Excavation in these areas can and should be investigated archaeologically if the need arises for such work. These and other matters could be covered in a Memorandum of Understanding negotiated between the WCC and HNZPT.

Resource Management Act 1991 and amendments

The Resource Management Act 1991 is concerned with the sustainable management of natural and physical resources; it aims to avoid, remedy or mitigate any adverse effects of development on the environment. Amendments to the Act in 2003 identified historic heritage as an important resource and elevated the protection of historic heritage to a matter of national importance. The amendments specifically identified the need to protect historic heritage from "inappropriate subdivision, use and development".

The Act defines historic heritage as:

- (a) ... those natural and physical resources that contribute to an understanding and appreciation of New Zealand's history and cultures, deriving from any of the following qualities:
 - (i) archaeological:
 - (ii) architectural:
 - (iii) cultural:
 - (iv) historic:
 - (v) scientific:
 - (vi) technological, and

- (b) includes—
- (i) historic sites, structures, places, and areas, and
 - (ii) archaeological sites, and
 - (iii) sites of significance to Māori, including wahi tapu, and
 - (iv) surroundings associated with the natural and physical resources

Section 88 of the RMA requires an application for a resource consent on a listed heritage item to include an assessment of any actual or potential effects of the work and lists matters to be considered in the Fourth Schedule of the Act. Such matters can include “any effect on those in the neighbourhood, and where relevant, the wider community,” and “any effect on natural and physical resources having aesthetic, recreational, scientific, historical, spiritual, or cultural, or other special value for present or future generations.”

A resource consent is required for any work on the Lychgate, Crematorium and Chapel and Shelter that is not basic repairs and maintenance (see section 5.4 following).

Section 187 of the Act provides for heritage orders to be sought by heritage protection authorities. This is a wider scope than that provided under the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act, and heritage protection authorities can include territorial authorities, a Minister of the Crown, the HNZPT, a body corporate, or a specially approved heritage protection authority. Heritage orders can be used to protect:

- (a) Any place of special interest, character, intrinsic or amenity value or visual appeal, or of special significance to the tangata whenua for spiritual, cultural, or historical reasons, and
- (b) Such area of land (if any) surrounding that place as is reasonably necessary for the purpose of ensuring the protection and reasonable enjoyment of that place.

A place may be of special interest by having special cultural, architectural, historical, scientific, ecological, or other interest. Heritage orders are rarely sought and there would be no perceived benefit in pursuing such an order for any place at Karori Cemetery.

Building Act 2004

The Building Act 2004 controls all matters relating to building construction. The following matters are of relevance when considering repairs, maintenance and alterations to existing and historic buildings. Within the meaning of the Act, graves are generally considered to be buildings, at least in relation to life safety matters.

Repair and Maintenance (Schedule 1 Exempt Building Work)

A building consent is not required for ‘any lawful repair and maintenance using comparable materials’. Note that the definition of repair and maintenance in the Building Act is significantly broader than the corresponding definition in the WCC District Plan and that work that might not require a building consent (by being exempt) may nevertheless require a resource consent approval if it affects a scheduled heritage place, structure or building.

Some building works are exempt from requiring a building consent approval in certain circumstances (these generally relate to not reducing the existing level of compliance); the latest revision of Schedule 1 should be checked for details when work is ready to be carried out. As above, a resource consent approval may be needed even if the building work is exempt.

Regardless of consent requirements, all building work is required to comply with the Building Code. For buildings, this means compliance with durability requirements (clause B2): for structural elements, not less than a 50-year life; for secondary elements which are difficult to replace, 15 years; and for linings and other elements that are easily accessible, 5 years. Note that in dealing with heritage buildings or structures, it is usually appropriate to aim for a 50 year or longer minimum life for all elements, and often much longer.

Consent requirements for remedial work to the various buildings of the cemetery are typically noted in their respective conservation plans.

Repair and maintenance work to graves, including cleaning or making good or reinstating fallen elements, would generally fall under the repair and maintenance exemptions in both the Building Act and the District Plan.

Principles to be applied (section 4)

Assessment of building work subject to the Act is required to take into account, amongst other things,

‘the importance of recognising any special traditional and cultural aspects of the intended use of a building’, and ‘the need to facilitate the preservation of buildings of significant cultural, historical or heritage value’ (sub-sections d and l); also

‘the need to facilitate the efficient and sustainable use in buildings of materials and material conservation’ (sub-section n).

Building consents (sections 40 - 41)

It is an offence to carry out building work not in accordance with a building consent, except for exempted buildings and work as set out in Schedule 1 of the Act. (These include certain signs, walls, tanks etc, as well as repairs and maintenance.)

Section 41(c) allows for urgent work, such as emergency repairs, to be carried out without a consent, but such work is required to obtain a Certificate of Acceptance directly after completion.

Alterations to existing buildings (Section 112)

Alterations to existing buildings require a building consent, which will be issued by the consent authority if they are satisfied that after the alteration the building will ‘comply, as nearly as is reasonably practicable and to the same extent as if it were a new building, with the provisions of the building code that relate to:

- (i) means of escape from fire; and
 - (ii) access and facilities for persons with disabilities, and
- continue to comply with the other provisions of the building code to at least the same extent as before the alteration’.

Alterations that do not comply with full requirements of the building code may be allowed by the territorial authority if they are satisfied that:

- ‘(a) if the alteration were required to comply ... the alteration would not take place; and
- (b) the alteration will result in improvements to attributes of the building that relate to (i) means of escape from fire; or (ii) access and facilities for persons with disabilities; and
- (c) the improvements referred to in paragraph (b) outweigh any detriment that is likely to arise as a result of the building not complying with the relevant provisions of the building code.’

Similar (but considerably more onerous) provisions apply to the change of use of a building (Section 115). As no change of use is likely to be contemplated for any of the cemetery buildings, the implications of this section are not discussed further here.

Access (Sections 117 – 120)

In carrying out alterations to any building ‘to which members of the public are to be admitted ... reasonable and adequate provision by way of access, parking provisions and sanitary facilities must be made for persons with disabilities’.

The specifics of accessibility requirements for the cemetery buildings are typically noted in the respective conservation plans.

Dangerous, Earthquake-prone and Insanitary Buildings (Sections 121 – 132)

A dangerous building is one likely to cause injury or death, whether through collapse or fire. An ‘earthquake-prone’ building is one that will have its ultimate capacity exceeded in a moderate earthquake and would be likely to cause injury or death. The threshold for ‘earthquake-prone’ is typically assessed as being less than one-third of the capacity of an equivalent new building.

An insanitary building is one that is offensive or likely to be injurious to health because of its condition or lack of appropriate facilities. A territorial authority can, if it judges a building to be dangerous, earthquake prone or insanitary, require work to be done to reduce or remove the danger or to render it sanitary.

None of the cemetery buildings are known to the authors to be dangerous, insanitary or earthquake prone. The specifics of these matters are typically noted in the respective conservation plans.

Reserves Act 1977

The purpose of the Reserves Act 1977 includes "...(a) Providing, for the preservation and management for the benefit and enjoyment of the public, areas of New Zealand possessing:

- (i) Recreational use or potential, whether active or passive; or
- (ii) Wildlife; or
- (iii) Indigenous flora or fauna; or
- (iv) Environmental and landscape amenity or interest; or
- (v) Natural, scenic, historic, cultural, archaeological, biological, geological, scientific, educational, community, or other special features or value..."

Some portions of Karori Cemetery are currently gazetted as Local Purpose Reserve (see also section 1.4) vested in WCC, 1.5ha in total. Because the reserve area is such a small portion of the place, it currently has little bearing on the management of the cemetery, although proper regard must be given when managing the current reserve land.

The Act identifies different kinds of reserves and sets out management obligations and responsibilities for each of them. Local purpose reserves are to be so administered and maintained that:

- (a) where scenic, historic, archaeological, biological, or natural features are present on the reserve, those features shall be managed and protected to the extent compatible with the principal or primary purpose of the reserve:

provided that nothing in this paragraph shall authorise the doing of anything with respect to fauna that would contravene any provision of the Wildlife Act 1953 or any regulations or Proclamation or notification under that Act, or the doing of anything with respect to archaeological features in any reserve that would contravene any provision of the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014:

provided also that nothing in this paragraph shall authorise the doing of anything with respect to any esplanade reserve created under section 167 of the Land Act 1948, or section 190(3) or Part 25 of the Municipal Corporations Act 1954 or Part 2 of the Counties Amendment Act 1961 and existing at the commencement of this Act, or any local purpose reserve for esplanade purposes created under the said Part 25 or Part 2 or under Part 20 of the Local Government Amendment Act 1978 or under Part 10 of the Resource Management Act 1991 after the commencement of this Act, that would impede the right of the public freely to pass and repass over the reserve on foot, unless the administering body determines that access should be prohibited or restricted to preserve the stability of the land or the biological values of the reserve:

- (b) to the extent compatible with the principal or primary purpose of the reserve, its value as a soil, water, and forest conservation area shall be maintained.

The Department of Conservation administers the Reserves Act and has the responsibility to ensure all reserves are managed effectively, regardless of whether they are vested in the Department of Conservation or another agency. To this end, a reserve management plan is

required, which ‘...shall provide for and ensure the use, enjoyment, maintenance, protection, and preservation, as the case may require ... of the reserve for the purpose for which it is classified’ (section 41). The plan must be made available for public submission when in draft form and be approved by the Department of Conservation (on behalf of the Minister) before it can be formally adopted.

Mahere Whakahaere Urupā Cemeteries Management Plan: Tawa, Karori and Mākara (2021) is the current Reserve Management Plan for the purposes of the Reserves Act. The plan proposes as one of the actions (4.2.4 (b) (ii)) classifying the cemetery as an historic reserve once the cemetery is closed. In that case, a specific Reserve Management Plan would need to be written for the cemetery.

If and when the historic reserve proposal is progressed, it should ideally incorporate the whole of the place within the cemetery boundaries. Note that this status would impose a much higher level of obligation to protect the reserve and its contents (‘in perpetuity’) than other types of reserve.

Section 18 of the Act sets out the purpose and definition of an Historic Reserve:

- (1) ...for the purpose of protecting and preserving in perpetuity such places, objects and natural features, and such things thereon or therein contained as are of historic, archaeological, cultural, educational and other special interest.
- (2) ...every historic reserve shall be so administered and maintained that –
 - (a) The structures, objects and sites illustrate with integrity the history of New Zealand;
 - (b) The public shall have freedom of entry and access to the reserve... [subject to conditions]

Section 58 sets out the powers available to the administering body of the historic reserve, including the ability to establish leases. Section 94 sets out a list of offences applicable to reserves, including (m) any action that ‘...in any way interferes with a reserve or damages the recreational, scenic, historic, scientific, or natural features...’

The chief implication of the Reserves Act status is that regardless of classification, all actions in administering and maintaining the Reserve must protect the historic and other values of the reserve. At present this applies only to a small fraction of the land, but it could potentially apply to the whole site in the future.

War graves and veterans’ graves

War Graves and what are now known as Services Cemeteries were set up during World War I by the families and communities of service personnel who had died in service to New Zealand. There has never been an overarching body in New Zealand that has cared for cemeteries; instead they were created and cared for by communities. This practice was influenced by the treatment of urupā, which are tended to by iwi and hapū. So like other cemeteries in New Zealand, interested people cared for the graves in Services Cemeteries.

The Imperial War Graves Commission, later the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, was established in 1917. It created guidelines for what constituted a war grave and established standards of uniformity so that all graves would appear and be treated the same.

War graves are defined as interring those who died as members of His Majesty's Forces, including Imperial and Allied forces, between 4 August 1914 and 31 August 1921, and after World War II, between 3 September 1939 and 31 December 1947.

The care for these graves included 'permanent' grave work, which was defined by the commission as erecting headstones and grassing graves. This work eventually needed maintenance, which was carried out by the Public Works Department at the government's expense.

Services Cemeteries as we know them today were established by Internal Affairs and the Royal New Zealand Returned and Services Association (RNZRSA). They were collaborative, with both organisations as well as communities and local government all involved in their care.

Although there are 183 services cemeteries in New Zealand, no specific legislation guides the erection, care, maintenance and governance of services cemeteries, or war graves and veterans' graves.

The Ministry for Culture and Heritage has responsibility for graves of serving soldiers who have died, in active duty in New Zealand or overseas, during the period of a war New Zealand has participated in. It is also responsible for national monuments. Its management of war graves is conducted under the auspices of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, which the Government of New Zealand is a signatory.

Though the responsibility to care for graves of all other serving soldiers rests with the family of the soldier and the cemetery authority, Veterans' Affairs (part of the New Zealand Defence Force) represents central government interests in veterans' graves. Not all serving soldiers are entitled to be buried in a services cemetery. Currently, eligibility for burial in this area is only for those who served in Her Majesty's Forces on specific operational deployments along with their spouse or partner. Karori has graves for both the war dead and veterans. Services cemetery maintenance is a partnership between cemetery authorities, the Returned and Services Association and central government. Cemetery authorities provide the land for services cemeteries free of charge, on the understanding central government contributes to the maintenance and development of the cemetery. That arrangement continues at Karori Cemetery to this day.

5.4 Threats

There are many potential and actual threats to Karori Cemetery's built heritage. These are outlined below, divided into broad groups, although there is clearly some overlap between many of them. Note that the threats linked to disasters are analysed in more depth, with four sub-headings that align with international best practice in disaster risk management.

Management impacts

Exposure

The potential management issues that could present a threat to the future of the cemetery include taking decisions that adversely impact its heritage values, delaying or deferring repair or maintenance or undertaking maintenance in a way that leads to a deterioration or loss of heritage fabric, undertaking inappropriate remedial work or maintenance or failing to act on or manage known risks appropriately before damage is caused. It could be at risk from a loss of institutional memory that results in a reduction of due care and attention.

Vulnerability

The cemetery is being managed to the extent that the available resources allow and its long-term future is reasonably secure, but the sheer size of the cemetery and the number of challenges it poses make it highly vulnerable, regardless of the quality of its management. Many of the threats listed are compounded by the fact that graves are privately owned, and their maintenance and repair is the responsibility of the families that own them. Given the huge spread of responsibility, it is little wonder that many graves are left untended and are in poor condition.

Capacity to respond to events

There is scrutiny of the cemetery, by interested groups and stakeholders and members of the public, so the expectation is that any inappropriate management would be identified and rectified before the consequences became serious.

Required actions to minimise risk

Placing the heritage values of the cemetery at the heart of all management decisions should become the primary management aim for the future. It already drives much of cemetery decision-making, but the long-term transition to a heritage park makes this an imperative. Ensuring that overall maintenance of the cemetery is undertaken to an appropriate and pre-determined service standard, and that any changes are properly considered within the context of the *Conservation Plan* will then avoid most poor outcomes, if there are any. The adoption and effective use of this *Conservation Plan* will help achieve that, but it will require a significant increase in funding and resources to achieve this.

Note that the *Conservation Plan* is a living document that should be updated whenever necessary to ensure that it remains relevant and up to date with all the requirements of the cemetery and to match current conservation practice.

Climate change and extreme weather events

Exposure

New Zealand is facing ever more extreme weather events because of climate change. Alongside rising sea levels, the main expected risks for Wellington relate to an increased frequency and severity of serious storms. Excessive rain could lead to surface flooding, even in a steeply cut and sloping site like Karori, flooding of the streams and riparian erosion, as well as landslips and land erosion.

Vulnerability

The cemetery is located away from the sea but it is on elevated ground and in a windy location. While the vast majority of cemetery structures are made of permanent materials, a lack of maintenance and the presence of many large trees that are at risk of falling makes them particularly susceptible to the effects of extreme weather. Steep slopes, particularly if lacking in vegetation, are vulnerable to undermining by water, especially flooding, or to landslip events resulting from saturated ground conditions.

Capacity to respond to an event

The cemetery staff has some capability to respond to the effects of extreme weather events. In the event of a particularly large event, external labour and equipment would likely be required to aid the response. It should be noted though, that should such a widespread event occur, it is likely that the cemetery would only be a moderate priority for attention.

Required actions to minimise risk

The most urgent action required is the removal of trees that threaten cemetery structures. There are likely to be many of these and the most pressing issue is to identify those trees and have them removed. This includes trees, such as eucalypts, that shed limbs without warning; trimming of potentially hazardous limbs may be sufficient in the interim. The next priority is to identify the trees that could become a problem and ensure they are targeted in an appropriate timeframe. It is important to provide appropriate succession planting in each area to maintain ground cover and surface water absorption.

Water courses – open or culverted – should be kept free of any obstructions and water levels monitored in heavy rain to ensure that water can move through the cemetery without affecting graves or other structures.

The other priority is to implement a maintenance regime for graves, monuments, memorials and buildings that are the responsibility of the WCC. The standard grave repair and maintenance guidance, prepared in conjunction with this plan, will assist with that work.

Three of the buildings managed by the WCC have conservation plans prepared for them (the Old Chapel and Crematorium, the columbaria, and the Shelter) and further conservation plans should be prepared for other important cemetery buildings and places or groupings of such places. (Maintenance plan should be prepared for structures and buildings that are not of heritage significance). The key to the effectiveness of conservation plans is to ensure that they are in constant use, closely followed and kept up to date.

Natural processes

Exposure

The cemetery is full of structures that, despite being mostly made of hard-wearing ‘permanent’ materials – such as stone and concrete – are susceptible to degradation through natural processes. General weathering from sunlight, acid rain, vegetation growth and rising damp play a part, and mechanical abrasion from plants can effect the materials.

Plants such as ivy and pests such as gorse grow over graves. Ivy suckers can cause damage to plasterwork and stonework over time. The roots of large trees and shrubs can grow through graves and cause fracturing and uplift. Trees, branches or limbs can fall and break gravestones, statuary or monuments. Ground covers can also mask underlying problems with the condition of graves or soil erosion. Vegetation retains moisture, as do shady areas, which can contribute to decay and deterioration. The growth of lichens and mosses on headstones do not generally pose a structural threat, although they can obscure inscriptions and decorative details.

Excessive growth of vegetation or lichens and mosses can further obscure graves and headstones, which compromises the visitor experience.

Rain, erosion and wind can all influence the stability and condition of the cemetery and its contents. Karori Cemetery is steep in places, so erosion or landslide is a possible threat and, in the past, minor slips have exposed graves (even small earth movements can cause trouble). Streams, especially in flood, can cause serious erosion.

Vulnerability

Most grave structures are built of permanent materials, so they are more resistant to natural processes than timber structures. However, the cemetery does still contain timber structures and these can be considered fairly vulnerable, particularly if they receive little or no maintenance. The buildings require ongoing care to ensure they remain safe and useable – they would be considered vulnerable to damage or loss if maintenance is not kept up.

Capacity to respond to an event

The WCC has limited staffing capacity and funding resources to respond to all these threats when they become noticeable. The difficulty of managing the graves appropriately is further compounded by many of them being privately owned.

Required actions to minimise risk

The best way to reduce the effects of natural processes is to keep structures in the best condition possible. This is not going to be possible for all or even most of the graves, but it is feasible for the cemetery's significant buildings. The existing conservation plans provide repair and maintenance guidelines. New conservation plans should be prepared for the other buildings and structures of heritage significance, and maintenance plans should be prepared for other buildings and structures managed by WCC.

Disasters

The most obvious disasters that may potentially affect the cemetery and its contents are earthquakes and fires. The effects of both could be compounded by climate change effects.

Earthquake

Exposure

The Wellington Regional Emergency Management Office (WREMO) describes the general earthquake risk in Wellington as follows:

The Wellington region is regularly shaken by small and medium sized earthquakes. A large or very large earthquake on a fault in the region would result in deaths, injuries and considerable disruption to lifelines and infrastructure. Large (magnitude 7+) events are thought to occur once every 500 years and very large (magnitude 8+) events every 1,000 or more years. Earthquakes are the highest risk hazard in the region due to the potential for catastrophic damage.¹²⁰

It is worth noting that no significant rupture of a Wellington fault has yet occurred since European occupation of the region began. All the most destructive earthquakes in this timeframe have thus far taken place on faults elsewhere e.g. the magnitude 8.2 Wairarapa fault rupture of 1855. A huge earthquake centred on, or close to, Wellington is likely to result in catastrophic damage to the whole region from ground shaking.

Wellington's 'Ground Shaking Hazard Zones', as defined by the Greater Wellington Regional Council, assesses the geographic variation in the ground shaking across the region during earthquake events. The region is divided into five zones, with 1 being the least hazardous and 5 the most hazardous. The cemetery sits in an area assessed as a mixture of zones 1 and 2.

Zone 1, the least hazardous zone, is characteristically underlain by bedrock, and typically shows very low to low amplification of seismic waves.

Zone 2 areas are underlain by firm material, including compact gravel and stiff to hard clay or less than 5 metres of soft and/or loose material, and show low to moderate amplification of earthquake shaking relative to bedrock.¹²¹

The combined earthquake risk merges tsunami inundation, major fault traces, ground shaking, liquefaction and slope failure to provide a hazard overview and ranks the risk into five categories, with 1 being low and 5 being high. In this assessment, the cemetery area is ranked as mostly 2 - low to moderate.¹²²

Regardless of the qualities of the land occupied by the cemetery, a significant earthquake is likely to have major consequences for the whole of the place (and its surrounding environment).

Vulnerability

The cemetery's grave structures are mostly built of unreinforced masonry, predominantly concrete. This makes them highly susceptible to ground shaking and land movement. Graves are, for the most part, low lying, simple structures, which may reduce the impact of

¹²⁰ 'Earthquake Hazards', <https://wremo.nz/hazards/earthquake/> [retrieved 22 February 2019]

¹²¹ 'Wellington Region Ground Shaking Hazard Zones', <https://hub.arcgis.com/datasets/GWRC::wellington-region-ground-shaking-hazard-zones/about> [retrieved 30 June 2023]

¹²² 'Wellington Region Combined Earthquake Risk', <https://hub.arcgis.com/datasets/GWRC::wellington-region-combined-earthquake-risk/about> [retrieved 30 June 2023]

an earthquake. However, graves in deteriorated condition would be at risk of further damage or loss.

Also of benefit is the fact that most of the cemetery's larger structures, such as the vaults, are single storey and uncomplicated structures, with simple rectangular plan forms and are solidly built and robust.

The cemetery's buildings each have different vulnerabilities to earthquakes. The Shelter may be the most robust of the collection. None of the other buildings have been assessed as 'earthquake prone' by WCC, but buildings that meet that low bar could nevertheless be so significantly damaged in an earthquake that they would be beyond repair and would need to be demolished. Broadly speaking, the cemetery's buildings are single-storey and fairly robust, so it would take a very large earthquake to do that.

Capacity to respond to an event

While the WCC has the expertise and capability to respond to disastrous events, the larger the event, the more there is to respond to. Parks, Sport and Recreation has a Business Continuity Plan that contains a contingency plan should the cemetery be unable to be used as a result of an emergency. Both Makara and Karori Cemeteries are Priority 1 for buildings to be assessed and for operations to resume within eight hours. While this relates more to its function as a cemetery rather than the broader management of the cemetery grounds, anything that impedes the operation of the cemetery is likely to be in scope.

More broadly, the Council has comprehensive planning in place for emergency planning. WREMO manages emergency management region-wide on behalf of the Greater Wellington Regional Council, the territorial authorities, Te Whatu Ora, Fire and Emergency, New Zealand Police and iwi. It operates six Emergency Operations Centres (EOC), which co-ordinate responses to emergencies, including disasters. WREMO follows the internationally accepted approach to disaster risk management, with its emphasis on the four Rs of risk, readiness, response and recovery. Karori Cemetery, as a key WCC facility, comes under the umbrella of the Wellington EOC.

Required actions to minimise risk

The only realistic way to mitigate the worst effects of a major earthquake is to make the cemetery's buildings as resilient as they can be, through strengthening (where required) and by keeping up with regular and cyclical maintenance. Generally speaking, the WCC has kept the cemetery's core buildings in good condition.

Smaller structures, including graves, will be much more difficult to maintain *en masse*, so it is important to consult the *Maintenance Guidelines for Graves and Memorials* to work out which graves should receive attention.

Fire

Exposure

Fires could occur by accident (for instance an electrical fire, or a fire started by a lightning strike), or as a consequence of an arson attack.

Vulnerability

The major elements of the cemetery that are vulnerable to fire are the trees, vegetation and the main buildings. Although the risks of a large landscape fire occurring may be low, such an event could have potentially devastating consequences for the trees and mature vegetation and could affect the graves and other structures in the cemetery.

The buildings are vulnerable to damage or loss from a fire. This risk has been mitigated at the chapels, office, depot and shelter with automatic sprinkler systems.

The graves are, for the most part, made of non-combustible materials, but they are nevertheless vulnerable to the extreme heat that could be generated by a pyre or broader conflagration – which could melt leaded lettering and cause stone and concrete elements to split.

Capacity to respond to an event

Although the cemetery is surrounded with watchful neighbours who could give an alert for a fire in the landscape and the local fire station, which operates 24 hours, is located at the front gate, serious damage could still occur from a fire before a response could be mounted.

Required actions to minimise risk

There is little that could be done to prevent a potential arson attack, but positive actions can be taken to minimise the risk of damage or loss from a fire.

To mitigate the risk of vegetation fires spreading, it is important to reduce the available fuel source by periodically removing deadwood and accumulated leaf litter from the major stands of trees (particularly the cypresses, pines and gum trees).

To mitigate the risk of serious damage from building fires, ensure that electrical supplies are fitted with arc fault detection devices, and that the extent of potential fuel materials stored in or adjacent to the buildings is minimised. Provide hand-held fire extinguishers in the occupied buildings.

Operational matters

Vandalism

Risk

Vandalism is a risk, although it is uncommon. The cemetery is open to anyone at any time of the day or night, so it is easy for anyone intent on doing so to do damage to cemetery structures in any part of the cemetery. That damage could include arson, graffiti, purposeful breaking of graves, breaking open columbaria niches, the entering of vaults and the dumping of rubbish. Mitigating against this is the fact that the cemetery is busy with members of the public and staff and there is a camera monitoring movements near the main entrance.

This risk includes those who undertake unauthorised cleaning, especially using inappropriate methods, or those who affix items to graves using unsuitable forms of adhesion, all of which can lead to damage to the graves in the longer term.

Required actions to minimise risk

Measures that could be taken include encouraging respect for the cemetery and its heritage fabric through positive messaging about its heritage values (on-line or on-site interpretation), and ensuring regular scheduled and unscheduled visits by security staff.

Visitor impacts

Risk

The risk should not be significant, as long as visitors avoid leaving paths and confine their interest to looking at graves and memorials. Anyone who is seeking to clean a grave (including family members) is required to get the permission of the office via the issue of a permit to work in the cemetery before doing so, but this is not always adhered to. When this occurs, a non-compliance fee is issued.

Required actions to minimise risk

Signage containing clear instructions should be installed at suitable locations. The aim should be to foster respect for the cemetery's wide range of heritage values.

Loss of use or purpose

Risk

The possible loss of a sustainable use or purpose for this cemetery would pose a significant threat, as identified in article 7 of the *ICOMOS New Zealand Charter*. This would lead to lack of support and funding, allowing other threats to manifest. The cemetery is used for cremations and it has a minor use for interments. There is still space in family plots for further interments of both caskets and ash urns. If family plots are too full for caskets, they can often still accommodate ash urns. There are still niches available in columbaria for ash interments.

The cemetery's major use now is recreational, as a public open space. It is in the process of transitioning to a permanent use as an historic park, open to the public and, hopefully, well patronised and supported. This will help ensure the long-term survival of this important historic place.

On a specific level, the use of the crematorium and chapels is expected to continue as they do at present. Karori has one of only two public crematoria in the Wellington area (there are two other privately-run crematoria).

Required actions to minimise risk

The WCC intends to continue to fund the cemetery as it transitions to a heritage park and for the future. Except for cremations and the infrequent burial in existing plots, this is the primary purpose the cemetery will have, which will leave its fate dependent on the long-term support of the WCC.

Lack of public support

Risk

Some visitors may interpret vegetation overgrowth as an indication that the WCC is not taking its management responsibilities seriously and does not care appropriately for its heritage. It is important that visitors are encouraged to treat the cemetery with care and respect and a failure to care and maintain areas, or explain their appearance, might encourage a negative public reaction. The feedback from visitors in recent years has been mostly positive, with a recognition that much gets done by such a small team.

Required actions to minimise risk

Explain the value of the cemetery to visitors via interpretation and notices and keep up with sufficient maintenance to demonstrate that the WCC is a responsible manager of the cemetery.

Information loss

Risk

The destruction of important archival sources such as old documents and photographs, and the loss of unrecorded oral history sources constitute a threat.

Loss of inscriptions on head stones can result in the loss of genealogical information. This threat is best met by careful maintenance and repair, and by taking photographs and transcripts.

Required actions to minimise risk

Overall, the WCC has excellent records of the cemetery over its history. These records are mostly archived and available for public viewing. It has also digitised many records, including interments. The risk is therefore relatively low that archival information will be lost in the future. Unrecorded oral history sources might be a point of vulnerability, so if an opportunity to interview sextons and cemetery workers appears, it should be taken.

A good photographic record of all the cemetery's graves has been made in recent history and is available online, although it is not on a WCC site. Ideally, this would be transferred to a WCC website and updated where appropriate.

5.5 Conservation requirements

The most appropriate conservation standards for use in New Zealand are those set out in the *ICOMOS New Zealand Charter for the Conservation of Places of Cultural Heritage Value*,¹²³ which has been formally adopted by Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga, the Ministry for Culture and Heritage and a number of territorial authorities, among others. These standards are applicable to all planning and physical work to do with historic places.

¹²³ Also known as *Te Pūmanawa o ICOMOS e Aotearoa Hei Tiaki I Ngā Taonga Whenua Heke Iho o Nehe*, published in 2010. The full text is available at: https://icomos.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/NZ_Charter.pdf.

All relevant requirements of the *Charter* should be followed in considering work to the cemetery, particularly its buildings and structures. The conservation principles contained in the *Charter* are explained below (some may not be as relevant, but are included for the sake of completeness).

Carry out regular maintenance

Regular inspections, monitoring and maintenance are essential to the long life of heritage places. If maintenance is not carried out on a planned basis, repairs become progressively more difficult and expensive, and fabric of heritage value can be lost, thus diminishing the significance of a place. A well-maintained place will be better used and enjoyed and will survive the effects of storms and other natural disasters better than one that is poorly maintained.

Life safety

Where any life safety or health risk exists, work should be carried out to ensure the safety and well-being of people using heritage buildings or places.

Mitigate risk

Where there is a risk to the survival of heritage places, whether from natural disasters such as storms or earthquakes, or from man-made threats such as those posed by neglect or district plan requirements, then all reasonable actions should be taken to mitigate those risks. Intervention should always be the minimum required to achieve a reasonable level of security. To help achieve this, this *Conservation Plan* incorporates disaster risk management into policies and work.

Prioritise work

Work should be organised in such a way that risks that threaten life and are fundamental to the survival of heritage places are dealt with before other tasks that can afford to wait.

Repair rather than replace

When repairs are necessary, cut out and replace only decayed material. It is better to have fabric that is worn and carefully patched than modern replica material, however faithfully copied.

Repair in compatible materials

In carrying out repairs, materials matching the original should generally be used if they are available. Work to a higher technical standard is good practice in some circumstances and may be required by the NZ Building Code in some instances.

Restore with care

Restoration of lost features should be carried out only if there is clear evidence of the original form and detail. Such evidence could come from original drawings, early

photographs or elements relocated to other parts of a place. Detailed examination of the fabric of the place can often reveal information that is not available from other sources.

Keep change to the minimum

Where alterations are carried out, change should be the minimum necessary to suit new functional or technical requirements. There should be the least possible loss of fabric of heritage value, so that the authenticity and integrity of the place is maintained.

Use

Ideally, the original use of a heritage place should be continued; where this is no longer appropriate, a compatible use should be the aim.

Make new work reversible

Where possible, new work should be reversible, so that change back to the present form remains a possibility should this be appropriate or required in the future. Recycle or store early fabric that has to be removed and make new junctions with the old fabric as lightly as possible.

Respect alterations

Additions and alterations to heritage places can have historic or aesthetic significance. Returning places to their original form is recommended only when the significance of the original place is outstanding and later alterations have compromised its integrity.

Document changes

Changes should be fully documented in drawings and photographs, with the latter taken before, during and after conservation work. New materials should be identified by discrete date stamping.

Respect the patina of age

Patina, the visible evidence of age, is something to protect carefully. Places should look old as they mature, as age is one of the qualities we value them for.

Respect the contents and setting

The contents and setting of a place can often have heritage value and both should be regarded as integral with the place.

5.6 Conservation processes

The *ICOMOS New Zealand Charter* describes the key processes of conservation work as follows.

Preservation

Preservation is work undertaken to ensure the long-term survival and continuation of the cultural heritage value of a place. This includes:

- Stabilisation – slowing or eliminating processes of decay
- Maintenance
- Repair – in matching or like materials. Where new materials are used, they should be distinguishable by experts and well documented.

Preservation involves as little intervention as possible, but as much as necessary to secure the place. The cemetery is full of structures that require stabilisation, repair and maintenance work. Priorities in undertaking this work will be guided by the nature of the structure (i.e. building, graves, monument etc.), criteria provided in this plan (see 6.2.3) and by the *Maintenance and Repair Guidelines for Graves and Memorials*, prepared in tandem with this *Conservation Plan*, for all of Wellington's cemeteries.

Restoration

Restoration typically involves reassembly and reinstatement. It is based on respect for existing fabric and the identification and analysis of all available evidence so that the cultural heritage value of a place is recovered or revealed. Restoration processes include:

- Reassembly and reinstatement
- Removal – whether for advanced decay or loss of structural integrity, or because particular fabric has been identified as detracting from the cultural heritage value of a place.

The cemetery has a great many candidate structures and elements for restoration. Some of this may be required for larger projects, such as the Services Cemetery. In other cases, this work will be guided by the nature of the structure (i.e. building, graves, monument etc.), criteria provided in this plan (see 6.2.3) and by the *Maintenance and Repair Guidelines*.

Reconstruction

Reconstruction is the introduction of new material to replace material that has been lost. It is appropriate where it is essential to the function, integrity, intangible value or understanding of a place, if conjecture is minimised or eliminated and if surviving cultural heritage value is preserved.

Some reconstruction work may be required to reinstate lost features, particularly on graves. This is particularly likely to be the case for timber graves or other early graves that have lost some of their more vulnerable features.

Adaptation

Adaptation, such as additions and alterations, may be acceptable where it is necessary to maintain a long-term compatible use of a place. Any change should be the minimum necessary, be substantially reversible and have little or no adverse effect on the cultural heritage values of the place.

No adaptation work is anticipated for the cemetery.

6.0 Conservation policy

6.1 Conservation philosophy

The heritage values of the cemetery reside in its history, its physical structure and relationship to the terrain, in most of the buildings and structures, in the graves and monuments and wider built landscape and in some of the trees and plantings. These features and the heritage values they embody will be at the centre of the cemetery's future management. The purpose of this plan to provide guidance to protect and enhance these values as the cemetery transitions to a heritage park over the next 50 years, a process which is already well underway.

It is important to be realistic about what can be achieved with the resources that are likely to be available. Given the sheer size of the cemetery and its multitudinous component parts, conservation work will, by necessity, be concentrated on preserving what is there (in the first instance this will be mostly by eliminating threats to existing structures rather than direct action to preserve graves and memorials) and, where possible, enhancing and upgrading special or selected structures.

Allied to this, policies and work actions should benefit other values in the cemetery, such as ecology and biodiversity, enhance the recreational opportunities on offer and continue to support commemoration and funereal practices, and must always respect the place as a cemetery.

For the management of built heritage, there are general statements that can be made to support specific policies. They are:

1. The general homogeneity of grave types means that the cemetery can be divided into two parts - the historic core, which was established early in the cemetery's development, and the rest.
2. The historic core can be treated as an archaeological zone, an area where there is a reasonably high potential of uncovering archaeology or material of archaeological value (as per the HNZPT Act); the area has enough early graves (1891-1910) to justify special treatment.
3. The historic core will attract most of the hands-on conservation in the initial 10 years or so. The remainder of the cemetery can be more of a priority after that, except for urgent tree management, which must be undertaken as and when risks become evident.

6.2 Conservation policies

1. Statutory protection

The entire cemetery should be scheduled on the WCC district plan as a heritage area. Individual listings for notable buildings or structures could also be pursued but this would be less beneficial if the heritage area is scheduled.

2. Repair and maintenance of graves

Repair and maintenance of cemetery graves will be guided by the *Maintenance and Repair Guidelines for Graves and Memorials*, prepared by Julia Kennedy and Russell Murray.

Although these guidelines were prepared in tandem with this *Conservation Plan*, they apply to all the WCC's cemeteries.

The minimum basic level of grave maintenance is determined by the one criterion – that the average person can read a legible inscription on any grave in the cemetery (unless it is in a location that is physically difficult to access).

Any intervention on individual graves and mausolea comes with the caveat that they are privately owned and the permission of the family and/or a work permit is needed before any significant intervention can be undertaken.

3. Priorities for restoration and maintenance

1. Listed structures and other structures with demonstrable heritage value

This includes the Old Chapel and Crematorium, Lychgate, Shelter, Main Chapel, Columbaria, Memorial Arch and other memorial structures in the Services Cemetery, along with the Mess / Tool Shed. Three of these structures already have individual conservation plans prepared for them that will help guide their long-term care. It would be prudent to prepare conservation plans for most of the remainder of the buildings, as well as the Services Cemetery (see below).

2. Graves

In no particular order:

- a. Timber graves (a selection of early examples in the historic core demonstrating a range of styles). These are particularly important in the cemetery not only for their age and visual interest, but also because, without intervention, the fabric will eventually be entirely lost to decay.
- b. A mixture of graves, illustrating the breadth of society over the working life of the cemetery.
- c. Graves demonstrating high aesthetic and artistic achievement.
- d. Graves on main routes – so that the cemetery 'shop front' looks its best.
- e. A mixture of graves of different periods and styles.

3. Mausolea/vaults

Ideally all these structures would be subject to a basic level of care and conservation, even if it is just removing vegetation from walls and roofs, because they offer such an interesting physical contrast with the rest of the graves, and they serve as local landmarks within the cemetery. Note that if the condition of the vaults is allowed to deteriorate significantly, they could become hazards in the cemetery.

4. Additional conservation plans

Conservation plans (or updates of existing plans) should be prepared for structures or special places within the cemetery that would benefit from the extra level of attention. These are:

Services Cemetery (including the Memorial Arch and Lychgate etc.)

Main Chapel

Mess/tool shed

Old Chapel and Crematorium (update the existing plan)

5. Services Cemetery

As noted above, a separate conservation plan should be written for the Services Cemetery to acknowledge its special status and character, its carefully designed landscape and layout, its historic authenticity and the opportunities it presents to restore lost features. To help manage its restoration and future management, this plan would incorporate sections that focus on the various notable structures within that area e.g. Lychgate, Wellington Provincial Memorial, memorial stairs, sundial etc. and the requirements for their long-term care.

The general aim for the original part of the Services Cemetery would be to return it to something like its appearance in the first half of the 20th century, notwithstanding that it will not be possible to restore it in its entirety. It should continue to stand apart from the character of the rest of the cemetery.

Any initiative at the Services Cemetery will require extensive consultation with the relevant staff of MCH and Veterans' Affairs.

6. Archaeology

In relation to preservation of archaeological values, general management of the cemetery should take a precautionary approach to the protection of potential archaeological resources, including:

- Minimise earthworks in and around circa pre-1910 grave plots and other (less formal) burial areas, including disinterred early graves and reburials of pre-1910 inhabitants.
- Locate removed headstones from disinterred pre-1910 graves (if possible) and reinstate appropriately, where the original locations are known.
- Acknowledgement of individuals disinterred and re-buried during the 1950s, via markers and/ or interpretation.

Application to HNZPT for a general archaeological authority is recommended for the most appropriate management of pre-1900 graves and associated structures. An Authority would be valid for a period of five years from date of issue and would likely need to be renewed after that time.

Archaeological monitoring and recording would be required in circumstances requiring excavation and other modification of pre-1900 remains such as:

- Repair or mitigation of damage to graves and other structures caused by natural events such as fires, floods, earthquakes, tree falls and slips.
- Routine maintenance and repair of damaged and/or degraded grave surrounds and other structures, especially those requiring excavation.
- Repair of service pipes/drains in areas of the cemetery used prior to 1900.
- Demolition or significant modification of pre-1900 buildings.
- Modification of pre-1900 standing structures (not classed as buildings).

- Removal of larger vegetation where some ground disturbance is unavoidable.

Archaeological monitoring and recording should also be carried out, if required, in circumstances requiring excavation and other modification of 1900-c.1910 remains as above, as per the MOU.

Activities relating to management of archaeological sites/features *not* generally requiring archaeological monitoring would include but not be limited to:

- Replacement/removal of concrete grave ledgers (pre 1910 graves), where these were added after the original burial.
- Introduction of new soils to raise ground levels (e.g. for replacement of sunken grave ledgers, formation of pathways).
- Above ground modification of pre-1910 buildings (excluding total demolition or significant alteration).
- Removal of invasive, woody vegetation from pre 1910 grave plots and unmarked burials (as far as they can be ascertained), cut down to the existing ground level. NB: In-ground material must be left to decay, rather than extracted to avoid further damage to potential sub-surface archaeological deposits.
- General excavation required in areas not used prior to 1900/1910.
- Modification/demolition of buildings dating to post 1910.

7. Vegetation management

Refer to the *Karori Cemetery Landscape Management Plan* for detail on vegetation management matters.

The general intention is to reduce the overall coverage of vegetation and trees and make the cemetery somewhat more open than it is at present. The purpose is two-fold, firstly to enhance the character of the cemetery and improve visual connections through the place, and secondly to address the steadily increasing threats posed by the many large and aging trees.

The threat that trees planted amongst graves pose to grave fabric, along with the advancing age of many of the large trees and the risk they pose of falling or dropping limbs, means a reduction in tree coverage is an inevitable outcome of managing the place to protect the heritage values of the graves. Under-storey vegetation that could get bigger and threaten fabric will also need to be closely managed to prevent threats developing.

Specific policies:

1. Only a relatively small number of (different) exotic specimen trees should be retained or maintained in the long-term, with a particular emphasis on those trees that have been identified as commemorative plantings (or are likely to be) or specific specimen plantings associated with WCC's cemetery planting programmes over time, or which are important to understanding the evolution of the cemetery landscape over time.

Succession planting should be planned for the most important of these trees, according to their condition and likely longevity. It is understood that some records of Karori's commemorative trees are held at the WCC's plant nursery at Berhampore. Research will be required to assist in identifying those trees.

2. New plantings should predominantly be natives. This means that, except where the existing character of the landscape is highly valued and existing exotic trees are important to that character, succession planting with natives should generally be selected in favour of exotics. The intention is that the cemetery be seen, in the long-term, largely as an extension of the primary and secondary growth on Johnston Hill and in Ōtari-Wilton's Bush.
3. Pohutukawa should be significantly reduced in number, particularly in and around the historic core. They are not native to Wellington and are not special to the cemetery. They are especially intrusive around the Shelter and in the historic core, and their removal in these areas will enhance the character of the cemetery considerably. Similarly, the Norfolk pines should be removed.
4. Tree management work should be prioritised to:
 - Minimise the risk to people from falling limbs or falling trees, especially during or after a storm.
 - Re-open viewshafts through the cemetery and to the wider landscape.
 - Halt ongoing damage to graves.

Tree removal should be carried out selectively and over a period of time to avoid sudden large-scale change, and with consideration to:

- Whether removal of the tree will result in additional damage to graves or exacerbate the difficulty of repairing existing damage.
 - Trees reduced to stumps that sit alongside graves will need to be carefully managed as they decay, to minimise the risk of further damage to the graves.
 - Whether succession planting is appropriate and can be done without risking long-term damage to graves or risk to people.
5. Regarding vegetation management at graves, this will include:
 - The regular (annual or more frequent) removal of weeds, brush, gorse, ivy, creepers, seedlings and saplings from within and around graves and on-going work to reduce damage to the graves and keep them visible. Generally, any ground cover plant that obscures graves or grows in or over them should be removed.
 - New trees should only be planted in areas where their roots and trunks will not affect graves. Small trees that will not grow big enough to physically affect graves could be considered for graveside locations, if there is room.

8. Landscaping

The stone walls lining roadways and supporting raised sections of graves are important landscape features and should be retained. Any new walls required should be dressed in stone in the same way.

The existing roads and paths should be retained and key walkways resealed. Older sealed paths should be revealed and repaired where and when appropriate. In the long-term, the least-used paths should be allowed to revert to grass.

9. Interpretation and visitor experience

The shift to a heritage park requires the provision of a variety of amenities to support visitor use of the cemetery, provide for a range of recreational activities, and promote a better and broader understanding of its heritage values to the wider public. This should take the form of:

- Providing new signage, including discrete wayfinding signage and maps.
- Additional interpretation (both physical and on-line).
- The construction of new amenities to improve visitor experience, possibly including shelters, a toilet (at the north end), seats and water taps/drinking fountains, and improving the visual consistency of existing amenities.
- Maintaining and enhancing key walking routes.
- Forming additional connections to the wider setting, including formalising an access route from Gum Gully to Ian Galloway Park and improving the connections to the surrounding bush tracks.
- Work to lessen motor vehicle use over time and improve the safety and quality of the experience of the place for pedestrians, including constructing further lengths of footpath on the main roadway where possible.

The provision of these matters is specified in more detail in the *Karori Cemetery Landscape Management Plan*.

10. Disaster risk management

As outlined in Section 5.4, Karori Cemetery faces some significant threats, including hazards that could potentially lead to disasters. The key to ensuring that disasters can be avoided is to implement a plan, known as the '4 Rs':

1. **Reduce** risk – eliminating or minimising risks to the cemetery
2. Be **ready** – prepare for a possible disaster
3. Have an effective **response** – actions required during an emergency
4. Ensure that the place can **recover** – actions needed to recover heritage value.

A disaster risk response outline is included in Appendix 2.

Reduction

Reducing the cemetery's exposure to disaster can be achieved by:

- Maintaining and enhancing the general resilience of its buildings and structures and carrying out regular and cyclical maintenance so that they are kept in sound condition.
- Regularly monitoring the cemetery to ensure that any potential risks are identified and mitigated.
- Pruning or removing trees that have the potential to drop limbs or fall and damage or destroy buildings and structures.
- Ensuring management of the cemetery is focussed on preserving heritage values by adopting and using this *Conservation Plan*.

Readiness

The cemetery can be better prepared for a disaster by:

- Maintaining partnerships on DRM with WREMO (through the business continuity plan) and local stakeholders (particularly the Friends of Karori Cemetery).
- Ensuring that the cemetery's management and staff are trained to handle a disaster response and that all scenarios are catered for in disaster preparedness.

Response

The response to a disaster should involve:

- Ensuring the safety of people in the cemeteries e.g. visitors, staff or contractors.
- Recording and assessing the condition of the affected part(s) of the cemetery as soon as possible.
- Securing any affected area via the use of a cordon (e.g. temporary fencing or hoarding or roping off) and ensuring the safety of visitors to the cemetery or staff at work.
- Engaging expert advice, including from conservation specialists.
- Managing access to the site during the aftermath to ensure that urgent work on buildings or structures or any other affected area of the cemetery can proceed.

Recovery

Post-disaster recovery can be achieved by:

- Consulting with the relevant insurance company to ensure that future conservation work is supported in an insurance claim. (Applicable to the buildings and infrastructure but not the graves.)
- Establishing an appropriate buffer around any affected building, structure or affected area and removing debris and storing any heritage fabric.
- Engaging appropriate expert advice, including from conservation specialists.
- Preparing a communications plan to keep the public well-informed on the care of the cemetery during its recovery.

Note that this approach is covered, in general terms, by the business continuity plan.

11. Setting and viewshafts

Karori Cemetery's setting is multi-faceted; there is the wider setting within suburban south Karori and the regenerating native bush of lower Johnston Hill and the Kaiwharawhara Stream catchment. There are also settings *within* the boundaries of the cemetery, and viewshafts through the cemetery and out of to the wider landscape. These aspects all constitute a notable part of the cemetery's character but have been diminished over time by the planting and growth of (largely) exotic trees within the cemetery that have steadily closed off connections and views.

The cemetery was established on a denuded hill side, that remained relatively open until the second half of the 20th century. Early plantings including extensive shelter trees as well as a mixture of native and exotic trees and plants intended to beautify the place. As noted above, the long-term aim is the return of a somewhat more open character to the cemetery by opening up of views within and out via tree management, planting and succession plans that remove much of the existing tree cover and replaces it – selectively – with natives.

In the short-term, while this process slowly unfolds, there are several key viewshafts that should be opened up to allow a better sense of the scale of the cemetery and the historic connectivity of its various parts and to also offer some visual connection to the outside world. This can be done progressively over time, with the first focus given to views to and from the historic core and also to re-establishing some of the visual connections to the wider landscape. The highest priority viewshafts to be re-opened are as follows:

- 1) From the main roadway to the Main Chapel across the Old Chapel.
- 2) From the high point of the Catholic cemetery (timber cross) to the Main Chapel
- 3) From the seats and table above the lawn cemetery (Standen St exit) to the Shelter / Main Chapel.
- 4) From the north end of the cemetery (along the roadway east of the Tangiwai memorial) looking north over the bush and out to Mt Kaukau. (Note: this will enhance views from the entire east-facing area from the lawn cemetery to the Fraser Memorial.)
- 5) Views to the Shelter (this will be achieved by removing the surrounding pohutukawa), to reinstate its central importance in the historic core of the cemetery.

In most cases, the initial removal of a small number of trees will reinstate views. This work may suggest further tree removals that could be carried out to enhance the views. The aim should not be to open up the cemetery to the point where graves are prominent in views from outside its boundaries.

These and other viewshafts that should be reinstated to enhance the experience of the cemetery and its sense of place are identified in the *Karori Cemetery Landscape Management Plan*.

7.0 Work recommendations

Statutory protection

Prepare an evaluation report for Karori Cemetery for inclusion in the District Plan as a heritage area. Most of the material required for this can be found in this *Conservation Plan*, so it need not be a laborious exercise.

Timeframe, next 5 years, by 2028.

Consider nominating the cemetery as an historic place/area for the New Zealand Heritage List/Rārangi Kōrero.

Timeframe – next 5 years, by 2028.

Consider classifying the cemetery as an historic reserve under the Reserves Act.

Timeframe – when the cemetery is formally closed under the Burials and Cremations Act.

Archaeological Authority

Apply to HNZPT for a General Archaeological Authority to carry out maintenance and repairs and emergency response work for pre-1900 areas of the cemetery and in the general vicinities of pre 1892 buildings relating to the McKenzie brothers pre cemetery occupation. Renew the Authority, every 5 years as required.

Timeframe – as soon as possible, 2023-2024

Conservation plans

Prepare conservation plans for the following:

- Services Cemetery, including the Remembrance Lawn north of the Main Chapel.
- Mess / Tool Shed.
- Main Chapel.
- Old Chapel and Crematorium (update the existing conservation plan)

Timeframe – over the next 4 years, one or two conservation plans per year, complete by 2027.

Update all existing conservation plans as and when needed, to ensure they remain relevant to the needs of each place, up to date with all external requirements, and current with best conservation practice.

Timeframe – as needed. Review the conservation plans annually or biennially.

Conservation work on structures

As soon as practicably possible, embark on an exercise to identify the scope of conservation work on the cemetery's built structures that is feasible each financial year, and establish a programme of work for, say, the forthcoming five years. The aims will be:

1. To maintain all important buildings on a regular and cyclical basis and undertake any repairs or restoration identified in a relevant conservation plan in a timely fashion.
2. To identify a set of graves each year for treatment (see policy 3, section 6.2) and undertake appropriate maintenance and remedial work.
3. To undertake basic preventative maintenance on a certain number of vaults (say, 3-4) each year.

Timeframe – planning work, as soon as possible, 2023-2024.

Refer to the *Maintenance and Repair Guidelines for Graves and Memorials* in planning for maintenance and remedial work. Review this programme annually.

Timeframe – maintenance and remedial work on an ongoing annual basis.

Services Cemetery

Following the preparation of a conservation plan for the Services Cemetery, undertake conservation work on the non-grave structures and landscaping with the general aim of returning the area substantially to its appearance as it was in the first half of the 20th century. Some modifications to ease ongoing landscape maintenance, such as paving, may be allowable.

Timeframe – over the next 5-10 years, in stages worked in with the sequence of work proposed in the Karori Cemetery Landscape Management Plan. Aim to complete by 2033 or earlier.

Disaster risk management

See the tabular summary in Appendix 2. Note that most of the work required soon is outlined under policy 9 Reduction and Readiness (section 6.2) and is also covered under other headings. DRM work will include:

- Improving resilience of, and undertaking regular maintenance on, buildings and structures that don't currently receive such attention (to the extent that funding allows).
- Regular monitoring of the state of the cemetery to ensure that maintenance issues are addressed promptly and not left unattended.
- Removal and pruning of trees that pose a risk to built heritage or to the landscape (or to people).
- Maintaining partnerships on DRM with WREMO (through the business continuity plan) and local stakeholders.
- Consult the business continuity plan to ensure that the cemetery's management and staff (and other WCC staff) are able to handle a disaster response and that all scenarios are catered for in disaster preparedness.

Timeframe – ongoing.

Vegetation management

Conduct research to identify commemorative and special specimen trees within the cemetery and assess their importance, condition, likely remaining life and, where appropriate, the requirements for succession plantings.

Carry out a long-term vegetation management programme following the *Karori Cemetery Landscape Management Plan*, including annual work programmes to keep the graves clear of vegetation and longer-term tree management and planting work.

Timeframe – ongoing.

Setting and viewshafts

Carry out work progressively over time to open selected viewshafts through and out of the cemetery, to re-establish historic connections between different parts of the cemetery and link it to the wider setting.

See *Karori Cemetery Landscape Management Plan* for the intended vegetation management programme.

Timeframe – next 5 years. Complete by 2028.

Interpretation and visitor experience

See *Karori Cemetery Landscape Management Plan* for details on the provision of interpretation, signage and visitor facilities, and opportunities to enhance visitor's experience of the place and provide for a variety of recreational opportunities. This includes measures to reduce motor vehicle traffic over time and to improve the amenity of the place for pedestrians and all visitors.

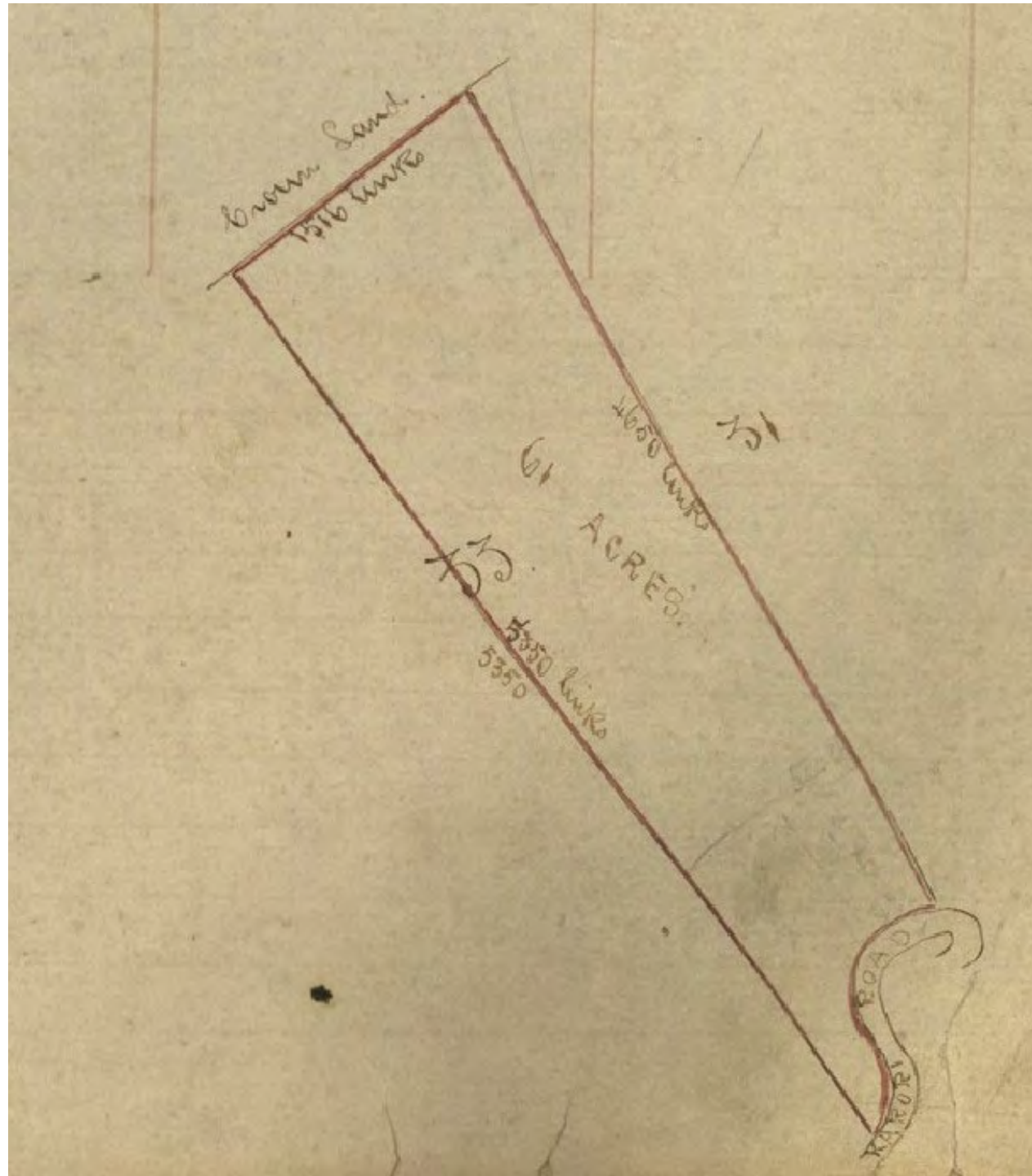
Timeframe – next 5-15 years. Complete by 2038.

Appendix 1: McKenzie Plan overlay

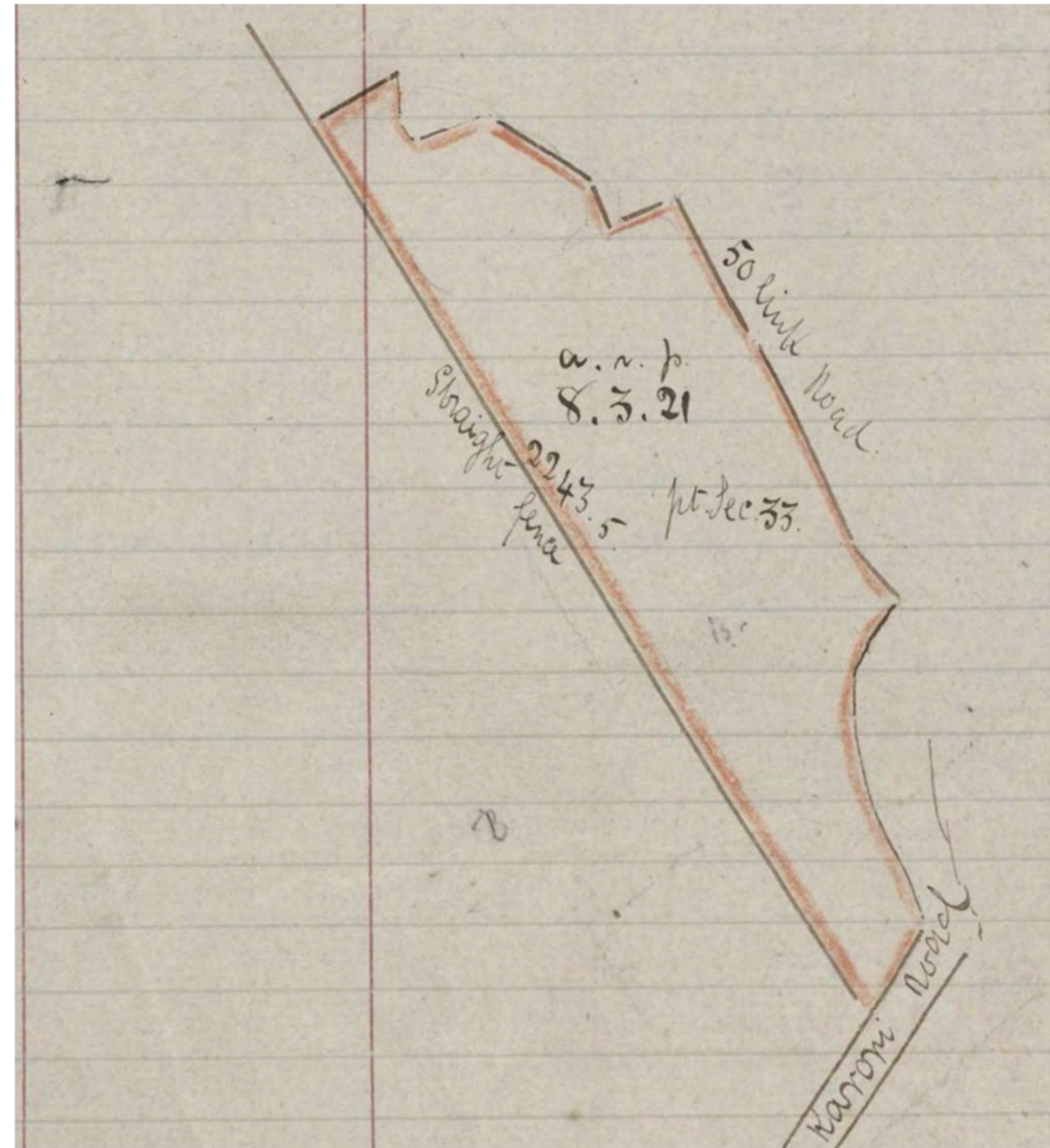


The overlay of the McKenzie plan (1894, WCCA – see Appendix 2) in relation to the modern cemetery layout.

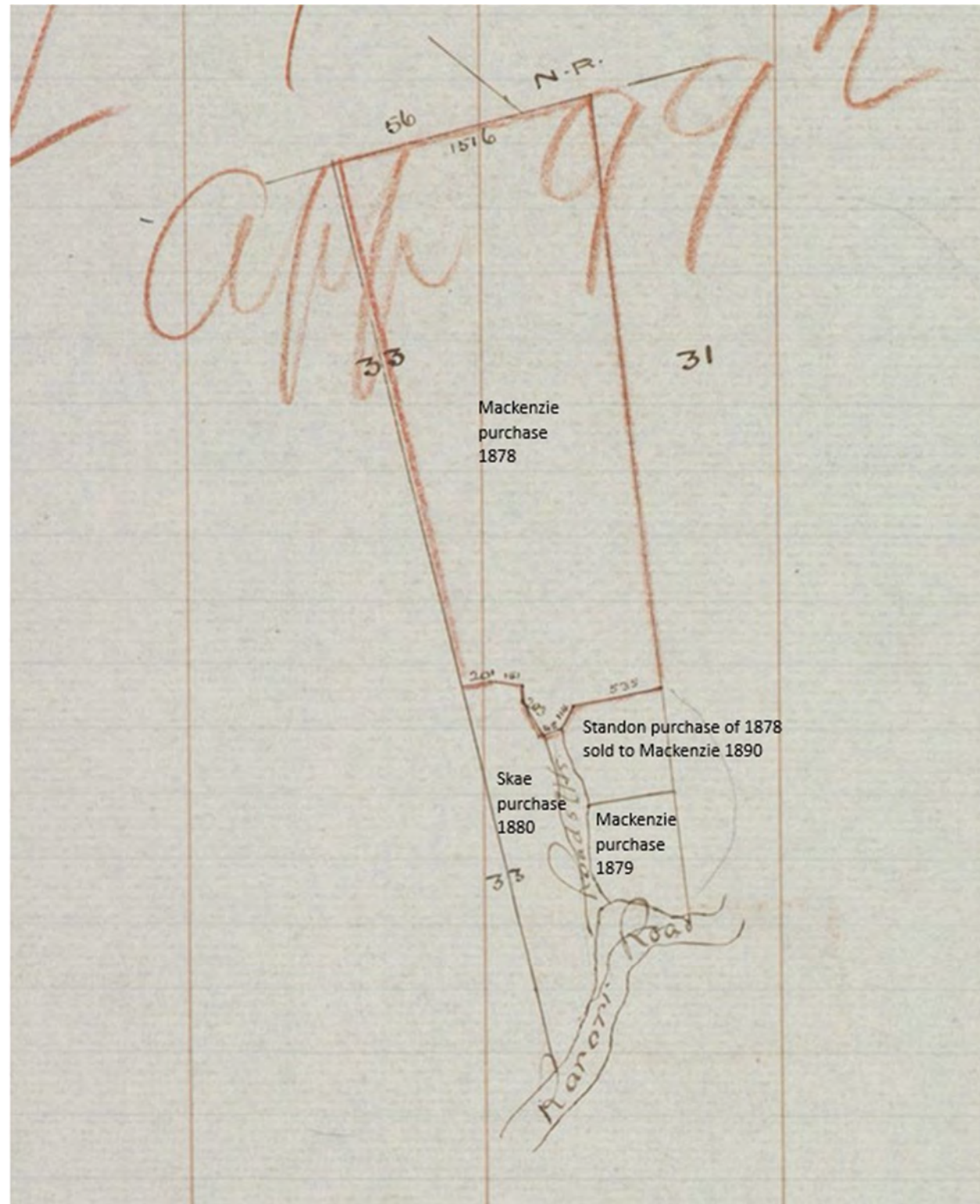
Appendix 2: Maps and plans



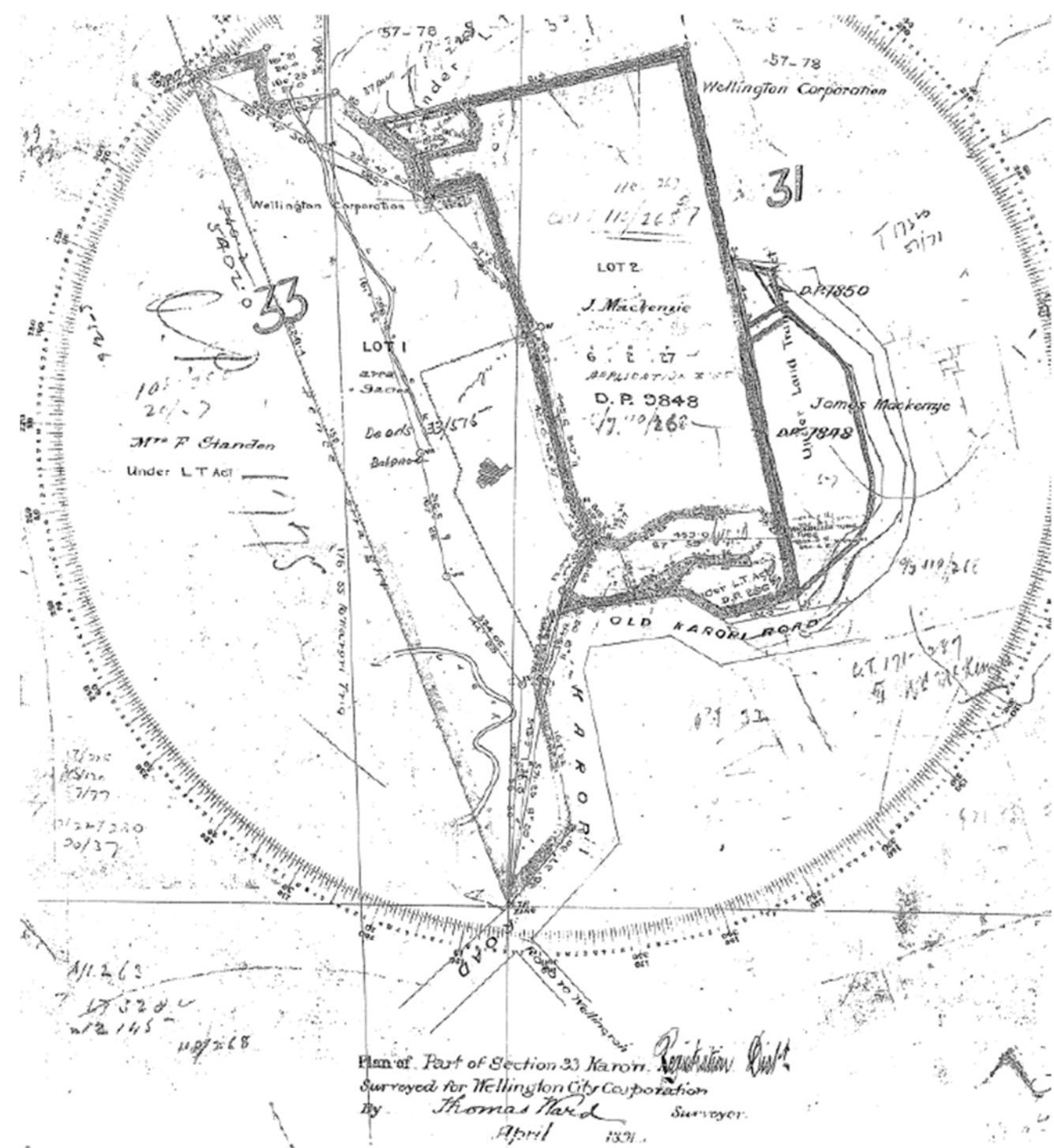
1. The Crown Grant awarded to Timothy Benton in 1864.
(Deed Index Volume 6, Folio 325, ANZ)



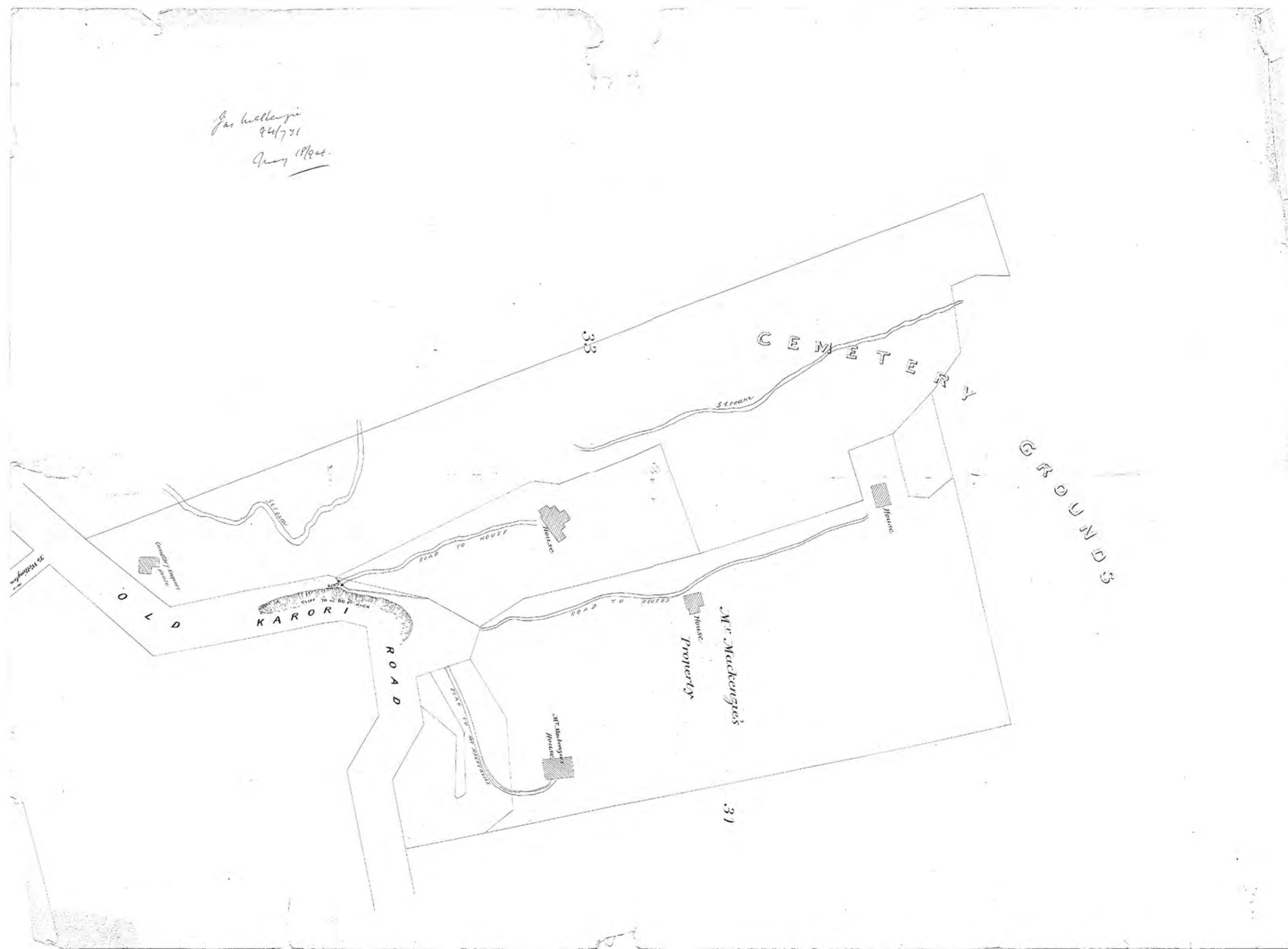
2. Land purchased by Frederick Skae from Timothy Benton in 1880 and late sold to the WCC in 1890.
(Deed Index volume 33, folio 515, ANZ)



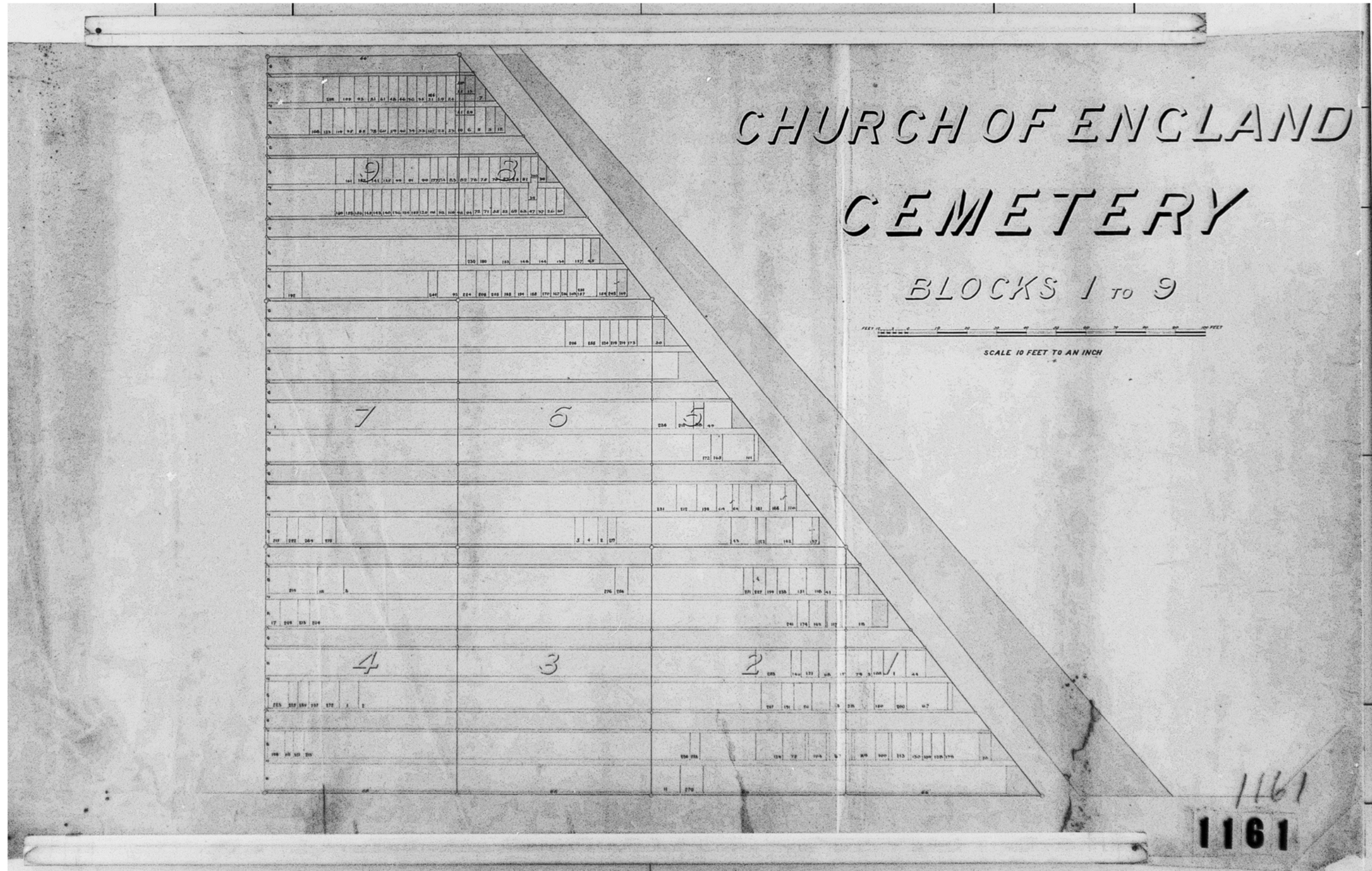
3. Land purchased by McKenzie brothers from Timothy Benton in 1878, with other purchases annotated. (Deed Index volume 14, folio 568, ANZ)



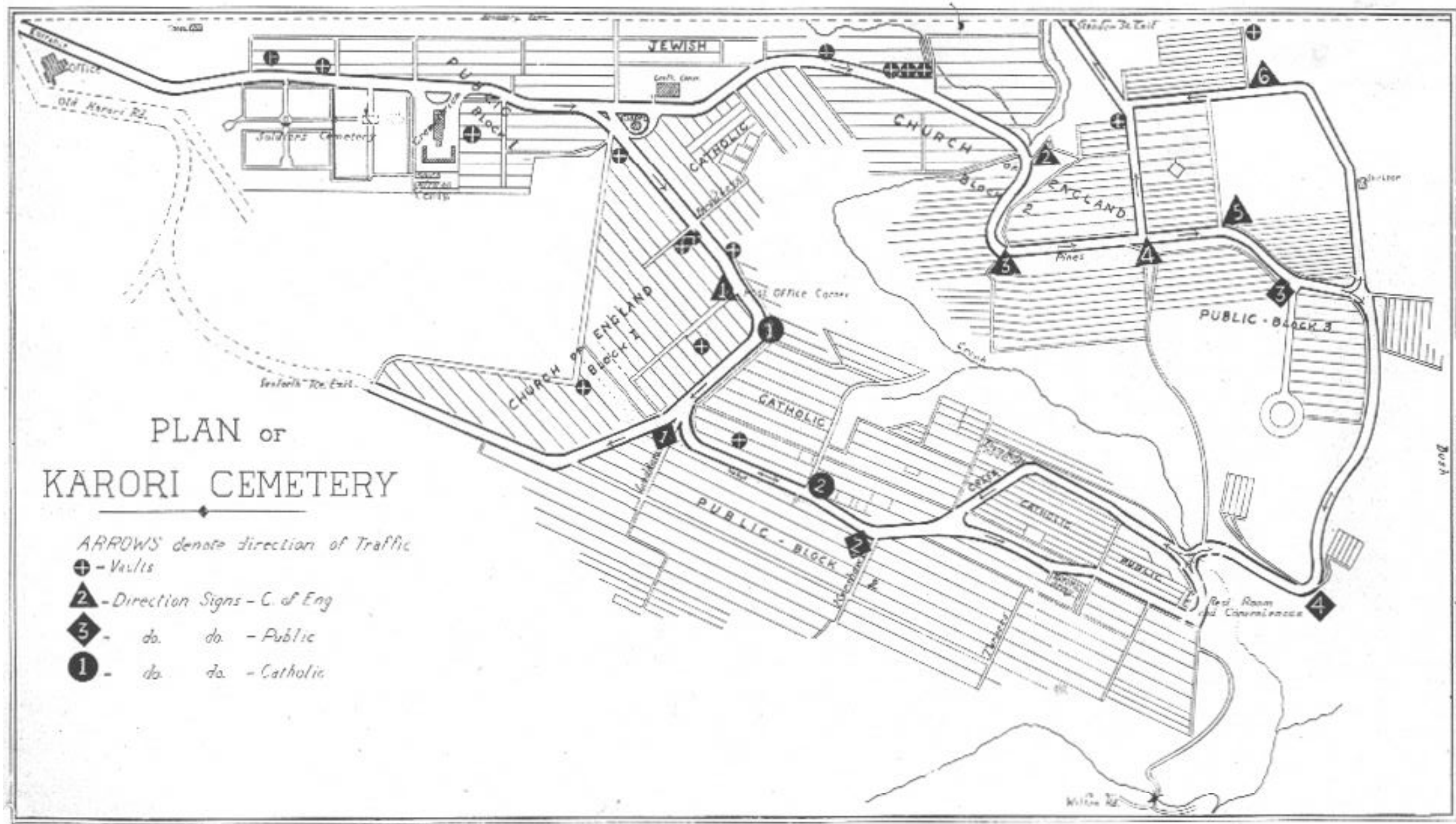
4. Detail of 1891 survey plan by Thomas Ward showing Standon property (left), former Skae property (Lot 1) and McKenzie holdings (Lot 2). (Plan A316, LINZ)



5. Plan that accompanied the letter to the WCC from James McKenzie regarding access to his property off Karori Road, 1894. (00248-417, WCCA)



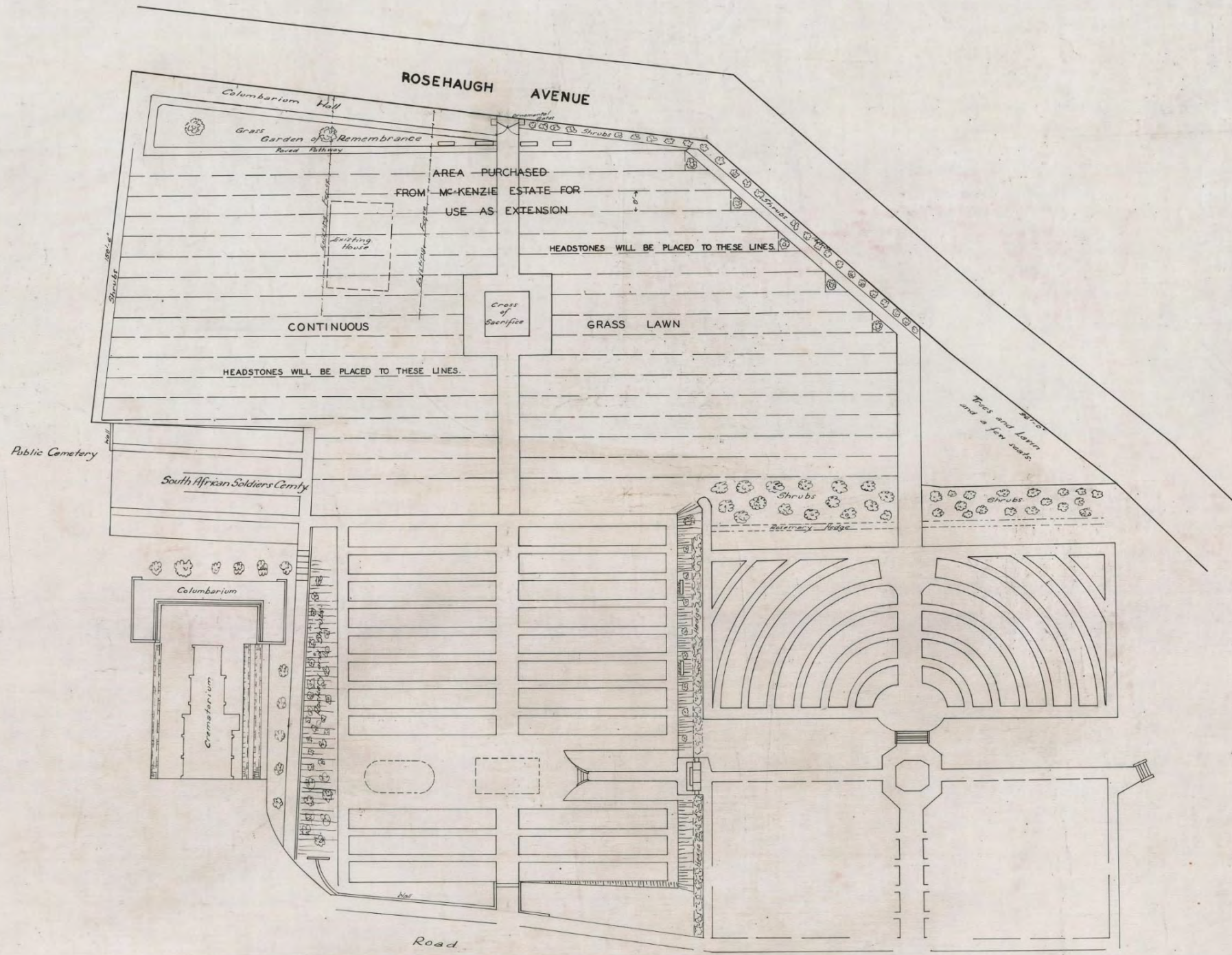
6. An early (1892) plan of the Church of England part of the cemetery. (2011/26-1161, WCCA)



7. The cemetery as it stood in the early 1930s. (WCCA)

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SOLDIERS CEMETERY KARORI

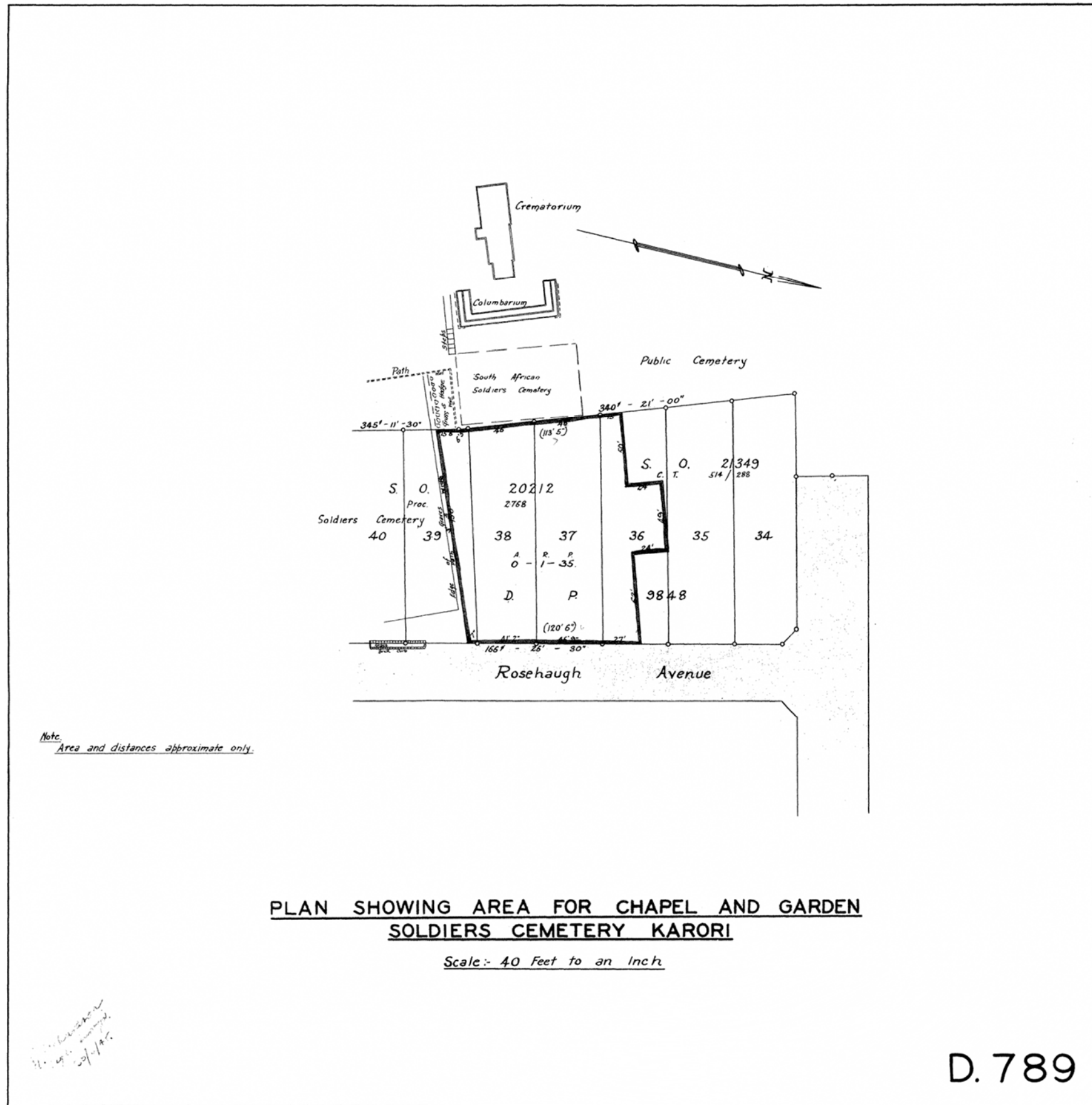
CITY ENGINEERS DEPARTMENT



—SCALE—20 FEET TO AN INCH.—

CITY ENGINEER'S DEPT.	
MASTER TRACING No. 8607	
DESIGNED BY	
DRAWN BY	M. P. R. 21. 8. 40.
CHECKED BY	
APPROVED BY	
REF. No.	
PREPARED BY	
REVISIONS BY	
APPROVED BY	

8. Plan of area purchased to extend the Soldiers' Cemetery, 1940, prepared by the City Engineer's Department. (00757-263, WCCA)

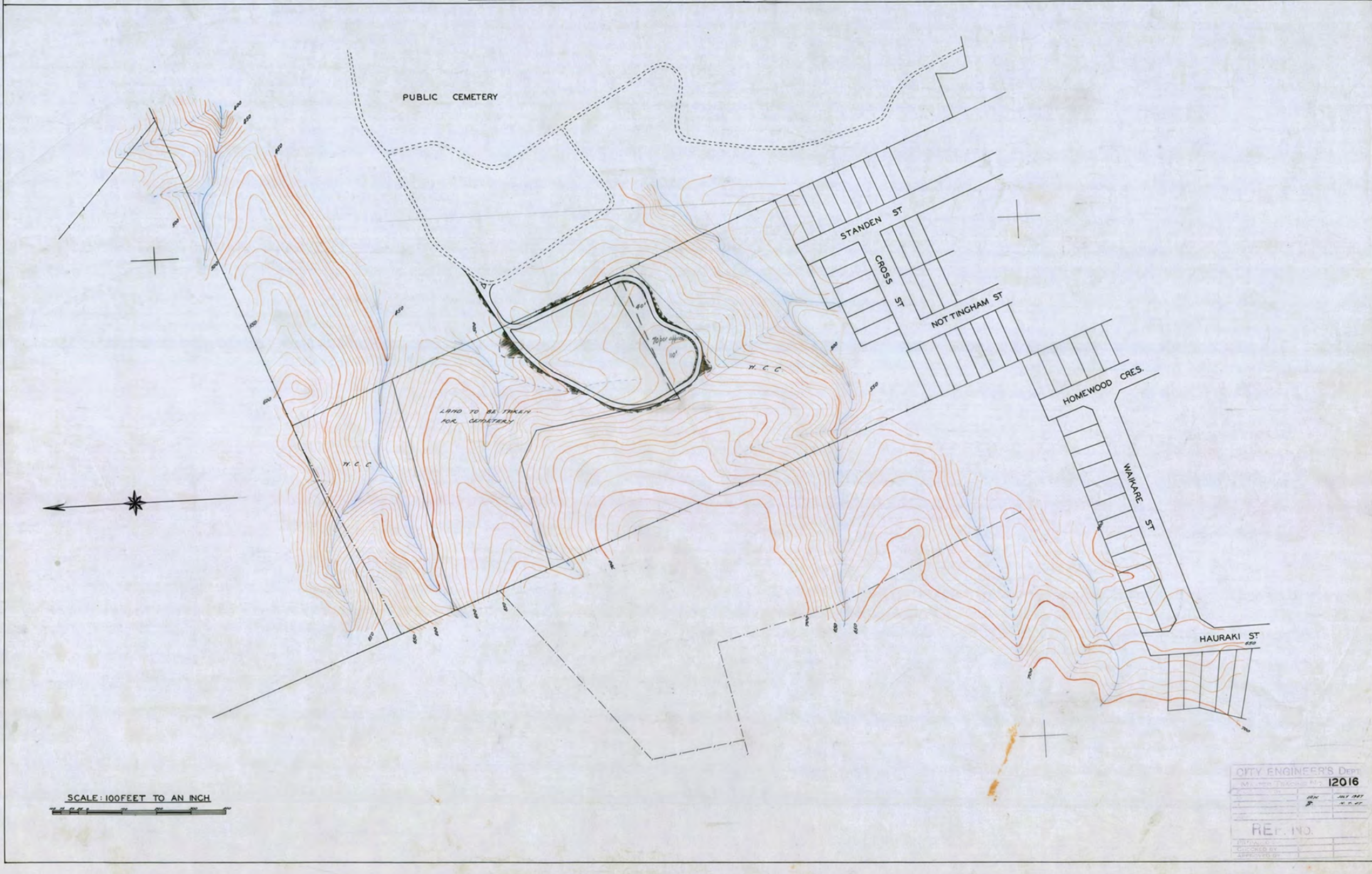


9. Plan showing the area earmarked for 'chapel and garden' alongside the Soldiers' Cemetery, 1945. (See file 00001-7/140 Part 1, WCCA)

WELLINGTON CITY CORPORATION

PORTION OF
— KARORI CEMETERY —

CITY ENGINEERS DEPARTMENT



CITY ENGINEER'S Dept	
12016	
DATE	1947
BY	M. J. D.
REVISION	
REP. NO.	

10. The proposed lawn cemetery extension, 1947. (00757-275, WCCA)

Appendix 2: Disaster Risk Management Tabular Actions

Minimise the risk of fire spread in the cemetery	Manage undergrowth, leaf litter and debris to minimise fuel sources	Medium	WCC	FOKC	Reduced risk of fire starting, and reduced risk of spread of fire.	Annual		
Management	Adopt and employ this <i>Conservation Plan and Landscape and Masterplan</i> .	High	WCC	FOKC	The resilience of the place is improved and it is kept in optimum condition.	Permanent		
Accessibility	Ensure that access to the place is available at all times and especially during a disaster.	High	WCC	WCC, WREMO, FOKC	The place is accessible at all times to emergency services.	Permanent		
Improving WCC readiness	Organise training in H & S, prepare an emergency plan to manage future responses to emergencies	High	WCC	WCC, WREMO, FOKC	WCC has skills and systems in place to respond to a disastrous event at the cemetery	End 2023		
Safety during an emergency	Ensuring a full evacuation of the place. Evacuation plan prepared and a trial evacuation carried out.	High	WCC		Human life is not placed at risk.	Regular trial evacuations		
Cordon	Maintaining a cordon to ensure security of the place. Temporary fencing kept available to close off road entrances etc.	High	WCC		Security of the place is maintained to prevent loss of heritage fabric.	When required		
Expert advice	Engaging expert advice, and consulting with HNZPT.	High	WCC	HNZPT, Consultants	WCC is properly supported by relevant expertise during the response phase.	When required		
Insurance	Consultation with insurance company to establish terms of access and recovery.	High	WCC	Consultants	The foundations of cultural recovery are undertaken.	When required		
Pre-work recording and assessment	Recording and assessment of the state of the place, planning and prioritising remedial works	High	WCC	HNZPT, Consultants	The state of the place, and the scope of necessary remedial work, is properly understood as far as possible.	When required		
Site works	Establishing a buffer, removing debris, storing heritage fabric.	High	WCC	Contractors, HNPZT	The place is properly prepared for conservation work.	When required		
Stakeholder engagement	Ensure HNZPT is involved in post-event decisions making	High	WCC	HNZPT	Significant recovery decisions are made with HNZPT.	When required.		
Specialist engagement	Ensuring appropriate expert advice is engaged.	High	WCC	Consultants	WCC receives appropriate advice from experts	When required		
Communications	Preparation of communication plan for the public.	High	WCC		The public is well-informed on the care of the place (as appropriate).	When required		

