

# **Proposed Development: Installation of a Columbarium and New Access Path at Mount Noddy Cemetery, East Grinstead**

## **1. Introduction**

This Planning Statement is submitted in support of a planning application for the installation of a columbarium and a new access path at Mount Noddy Cemetery, Blackwell Road, East Grinstead. The proposal seeks to enhance the cemetery's facilities by providing a dignified option for the interment of cremated remains and improving accessibility through a newly installed pathway directly from the main driveway of the cemetery.

## **2. Site Location and Description**

- **Site Address:** Mount Noddy Cemetery, Blackwell Road, East Grinstead, RH19 3HP.
- **Site Context:** The cemetery is a long-established public burial ground managed by East Grinstead Town Council. It is characterized by mature trees, landscaped gardens, and a tranquil setting, with the Cemetery Lodge located at the main entrance.
- **Existing Use:** Public cemetery providing burial plots, a Garden of Remembrance, and other memorial options.
- **Surroundings:** The site is bordered by residential areas to the north and west, with open green space providing a natural setting.

## **3. Proposed Development**

- Development Type: Installation of a freestanding columbarium and a new access path.
- Columbarium Details:
  1. **Design:** A modular columbarium structure constructed from natural stone or brick, in keeping with the aesthetic of the existing cemetery.
  2. **Dimensions:** Approximately [insert dimensions].
  3. **Capacity:** Provision of niches for the interment of cremated remains, secured with individual memorial plaques.
- Access Path Details:
  1. **Location:** The new path will connect the main driveway of the cemetery to the columbarium, providing a direct and accessible route.
  2. **Material:** Durable, weather-resistant, and permeable paving (e.g., resin-bound gravel, permeable concrete, or compacted gravel) to ensure proper drainage.
  3. **Width:** Minimum 1.5 meters to accommodate wheelchair users and those with limited mobility.

4. **Alignment:** The path will follow a gentle gradient, ensuring safe and comfortable access for all visitors.
5. **Landscaping:** Additional planting may be introduced alongside the path to enhance visual appeal and maintain a serene environment.

#### **4. Planning Policy Compliance**

The proposal is consistent with relevant local and national planning policies, including:

- **Mid Sussex District Plan (2018):**
  1. DP37 (Trees, Woodland, and Hedgerows) – Protection of existing trees along the driveway.
  2. DP41 (Flood Risk and Drainage) – Use of permeable path materials for natural drainage.
  3. DP26 (Character and Design) – Sensitive design of the columbarium to complement the cemetery's aesthetic.
- **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF):**
  1. Emphasizes sustainable development, accessibility, and high-quality design.

#### **5. Design and Visual Impact**

- The columbarium will be designed to harmonize with the existing cemetery landscape, using natural stone or brick.
- The new path from the main driveway will provide a clear, direct, and accessible route to the columbarium without disrupting the existing visual character.
- Any necessary adjustments to the landscape will be sensitively designed, with additional planting to enhance the natural beauty of the site.

#### **6. Access and Accessibility**

- The new path will provide safe, convenient, and direct access to the columbarium for all visitors, including those with limited mobility.
- The pathway will be constructed with a gentle gradient, slip-resistant surface, and clear edges to ensure safety.
- Signage will be provided where necessary to guide visitors.

#### **7. Environmental Considerations**

- The columbarium and path will be designed to minimize environmental impact, using sustainable materials and permeable surfaces to support natural drainage.
- Tree protection measures will be implemented during construction to prevent damage to existing mature trees along the main driveway.
- A detailed Sustainability Statement is submitted with this application.

## 8. Conclusion

The proposed columbarium and new access path at Mount Noddy Cemetery will provide an enhanced and accessible option for the interment of cremated remains, respecting the site's natural and cultural character. The development is compliant with local and national planning policies and offers clear benefits to the local community.

## UPDATED SUSTAINABILITY STATEMENT

Proposed Development: Installation of a Columbarium and New Access Path at Mount Noddy Cemetery, East Grinstead

### 1. Introduction

This Sustainability Statement supports the planning application for the installation of a columbarium and a new access path at Mount Noddy Cemetery, East Grinstead. The statement outlines the sustainability measures incorporated into the design, construction, and operation of the proposed development.

### 2. Environmental Sustainability

- **Low-Impact Design:** The columbarium will be constructed using sustainable, durable materials, including natural stone or brick.
- **Energy Efficiency:** The design minimizes energy consumption, requiring no active energy for operation.
- **Water Management:** The path will be constructed using permeable materials (e.g., resin-bound gravel) to ensure natural drainage and reduce surface runoff.
- **Tree Protection:** Construction will be planned to avoid damage to existing mature trees along the main driveway.
- **Biodiversity Enhancement:** Additional planting along the path will enhance the local ecosystem, supporting pollinators and wildlife.

### 3. Social Sustainability

- **Enhanced Accessibility:** The new path ensures safe, convenient, and direct access to the columbarium for all visitors, including those with limited mobility.
- **Inclusive Memorial Options:** The columbarium offers a respectful and dignified option for cremation memorialization, supporting diverse cultural and religious practices.
- **Community Benefit:** The project provides an enhanced facility for the community, meeting the growing demand for cremation options.

### 4. Economic Sustainability

- **Efficient Maintenance:** The columbarium is designed for low-maintenance operation, reducing long-term costs.
- **Local Economic Support:** Local suppliers and contractors will be prioritized for materials and construction.
- **Revenue Generation:** The columbarium provides a new service option, generating revenue to support the cemetery's ongoing maintenance.

### 5. Climate Change Mitigation

- **Sustainable Materials:** The use of low-carbon materials for the columbarium minimizes its carbon footprint.
- **Natural Drainage:** The permeable path prevents surface runoff and supports groundwater recharge.
- **Carbon Offset:** Additional planting alongside the path will enhance carbon sequestration.

### 6. Conclusion

The proposed columbarium and new access path at Mount Noddy Cemetery have been designed with sustainability as a core principle, ensuring minimal environmental impact while providing clear social and economic benefits.