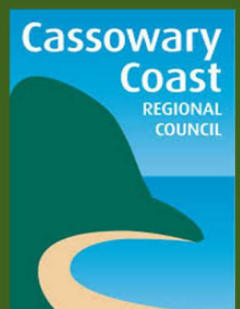




# CASSOWARY COAST CEMETERIES STRATEGY MARCH 2022



## Quality Information

Document: Cassowary Coast Cemeteries Strategy  
Purpose: To inform future decision-making regarding cemeteries in the Cassowary Coast Region  
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## Revision History

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			Name/Position
1.0	February 2022	Draft for Council	Alexis Collins, Planning Administration Officer Byron Jones, Senior Strategic Planner
2.0	July 2022	Final	Endorsed by Council 28 July 2022

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## Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners

Cassowary Coast Regional Council respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the region and pays respect to Elders past, present and future.

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## 1 Executive Summary

The Cassowary Coast Cemeteries Strategy (“the strategy”) has been developed to analyse current levels of service and management procedures and consider options for the future provision of cemetery services within the Cassowary Coast Region.

Council currently operates four (4) cemeteries:

- Innisfail;
- Tully;
- Cardwell; and
- Murrigal.

There is one (1) traditional owner owned and operated cemetery at Jumbun which is serviced and maintained by the Jumbun community and has not been considered as part of this strategy.

The strategy has a timeframe of ten (10) years and takes into consideration the evolution of the funeral/burial industry, land availability, population trends, migration, cultural practices, future demand and end of life decision trends for residents of the Cassowary Coast. The strategy is a long term, dynamic document and will be updated as societal, legislative or environmental changes occur. The strategy is to be reviewed every five (5) years at a minimum.

## 2 Purpose

The strategy document will guide the planning, management and operation of the Cassowary Coast Regional Council controlled (“Council”) cemeteries for the next ten (10) years.

## 3 Scope

The strategy applies to operation and management of the following Local Government cemeteries only:

- Innisfail;
- Tully;
- Cardwell; and
- Murrigal.

It does not apply to traditional owner cemeteries/burial grounds, cemeteries on private property or burials on private property.



## 4 Recommendations

The following recommendations have been made to provide a clear direction for the planning, management and operation of the cemeteries throughout the Cassowary Coast region, these include:

### Overall

1. Council review the cemetery based levels of service, fees and charges relevant to management and operational costs.
2. In consultation with the cemetery sextons, Council develop a Cemetery Policy and Guideline to ensure operations are being conducted consistently and in accordance with current best practice across Council owned and operated cemeteries, and develop Factsheets to provide information about services on offer.
3. Council investigate LiDAR laser surveying to develop an online plot location and reservation map.
4. Council investigate the construction of high quality columbarium walls for ashes interments to preserve space within existing cemeteries.
5. Council manage and oversee the construction of any new wall vaults to take into account ongoing maintenance, procedures and costs.
6. Council consider gardens of remembrance within existing cemeteries and parklands which provide a designated area for the scattering of ashes and reflection.
7. Council consider phasing out full grave slabs (unless previously reserved), due to ongoing maintenance issues.
8. Council explore the use of alternate, low maintenance materials suitable to our tropical climate.
9. Council actively discourage private burials on freehold or leasehold land due to environmental, planning, legacy and legal issues such as access restrictions which may be placed on the site by new owners, along with ongoing maintenance issues.
10. Council utilise existing cemetery areas before opening new sites.
11. Council does not establish a new cemetery at Mission Beach at this time. There is capacity in Council's existing cemeteries, especially in the Tully cemetery which is the closest cemetery to Mission Beach. The private sector may wish to establish a cemetery at Mission Beach if suitable private freehold property could be found and appropriate development approvals obtained. As an alternative, Council investigate the establishment of a garden of reflection on existing Council owned land at Mission Beach for spreading of ashes and reflection.
12. The strategy, guidelines, policy and factsheets are reviewed every five (5) years.

### Recommendations - Innisfail

Based on current death rates and end of life trends, the Innisfail cemetery has less than ten (10) years capacity in total with wall vaults being a short-term requirement within two and a half (2.5) years, followed by lawn beam, lawn headstone and columbarium wall in around six (6) years' time.

Short-term:

1. Council develop an Agreement which outlines the ongoing maintenance procedures and costs, between those individuals and family members who currently have an interest in the privately constructed and owned wall vaults;
2. Council manage and oversee the construction of any new wall vaults to take into account ongoing maintenance procedures and costs;
3. Council construct another wall vault within the next two (2) years;
4. Council construct another columbarium wall within the next two (2) years;
5. Council establish a new cemetery on land described as Lot 62 on NR6943 situated at Downing Street, Mighell QLD 4860
  - a. Lot 62 on NR6943 situated at Downing Street, Mighell QLD 4860 is identified as the preferred location given the following:
    - i. The site is owned by Council;
    - ii. The site has a land use of Large Home site Dwelling/Local Government;
    - iii. The site is zoned as Community Purpose under the provisions of the Cassowary Coast Regional Council Planning Scheme 2015 which provides for a Cemetery to be established on the site;
    - iv. The site is 6.91 hectares in area and will provide for at least seventy (70) years of cemetery operations;
    - v. There is an immediate need to provide for more land for cemetery operations; and
    - vi. A portion of the site is located outside the identified flood area;
  - b. the following key considerations should be investigated prior to construction commencing:
    - i. Preparation of a land management in accordance with Department of Resources requirements;
    - ii. Soil testing (i.e. soil must be suitable and limit any subsidence); and
    - iii. Flooding (construction of adequate detention basins which could become a water feature);

Other:

6. Council investigate the future use of the area of unmarked graves located adjacent to the Bruce Highway.

**Recommendations - Tully**

Based on the current death rates and end of life trends, the Tully cemetery generally has less than ten (10) years capacity and an immediate need for a new lawn beam to be constructed:

Immediate:

1. Discontinue current stone-pitched lawn beam area (once fully occupied/reserved) to allow for alternate use of surrounding land;
2. Discontinue reservations for existing stone pitched lawn beam area, unless associated with a current burial;

3. Construct two (2) concrete beams on land shown in **Attachment 5 - Tully Cemetery Proposed New Section – Concept Plan**, which is located across the road from the current stone pitched lawn beam area.

Short-term:

1. Council construct another wall vault within the next two (2) years.

**Recommendations - Cardwell**

1. Consider allocating space in the Cardwell Cemetery for lawn headstone burials if it is decided to phase out full grave slabs.

**Recommendations - Murrigal**

1. Council continue to maintain the Murrigal Cemetery; and
2. Council only allow new burials within the Murrigal Cemetery where there is already a reservation or the person/s can identify a historical family link with those already buried within the Cemetery.

## 5 Definitions

Refer **Attachment 1** for a detailed explanation of the types of burials provided by Council.

## 6 Assumptions and Constraints

The development of the strategy was subject to the following assumptions and constraints:

- There is no significant population increase in the region (i.e. the region's population continues to increase in line with historical levels being a 0.4% annual increase);
- The death rate within the region will increase in line with historical levels;
- The birth rate within the region will increase in line with historical levels;
- There is no private cemetery established within the region;
- Council will continue to manage and operate the Innisfail, Tully, Cardwell and Murrigal cemeteries;
- All capacity calculations have taken into account spaces which have been already been reserved (i.e. interred spaces include reserved spaces); and
- Meaningful reservation data is limited and therefore not included in this strategy however is now being recorded in a manner that will enable effective analysis and planning.



## 7 Consultation

The following stakeholders provided input into the development of the strategy:

- Innisfail cemetery sexton;
- Tully cemetery sexton;
- Cardwell cemetery sexton; and
- Local funeral directors.

Community consultation was carried out giving members of the public the opportunity to review the strategy and provide feedback on the recommendations. A number of platforms were utilised including media release, Council's website, Facebook, and signage at each Cemetery.

A total of 5 submissions were received from the community.

## 8 Legislative and Policy Context

A detailed review of the relevant state and federal legislation and Council's strategic documents and policies has been undertaken to ensure the strategy aligns with applicable state and federal legislation and Council's documents and policies.

### Legislation

The following is a list of relevant legislation that applies to the management of cemeteries for Council:

- *Local Government Act 2009:*
- *Land Act 1994:*
- *Environmental Protection Act 1994: and*
- *Work Health & Safety Act 2011*

### Community Plan

The Cassowary Coast Community Plan 2011-2021 outlines the vision the community has for the region.

The following sections of the Cassowary Coast Community Plan 2011-2021 are applicable.

#### **Strategic Focus Areas**

##### *Goal 1*

*The future delivery of key regional infrastructure is identified and prioritised within a long term infrastructure plan that is integrated with Council's Planning Scheme.*

#### **Leadership and Governance**

### Goal 3

*Wise and considered management of our built and natural assets bequeaths a valuable legacy for future generations.*

### **Inclusive Diverse and Cohesive Community**

#### Goal 1

*Our region's cultural diversity and depth of heritage is celebrated through festivals and events supported by Council and bringing together residents and visitors*

### **Delivering Smart Community Infrastructure**

#### Goal 2

*Managing what we already own Council is recognised as a steward of local community infrastructure across the region and is trusted to make good decisions in relation to infrastructure maintenance versus the provision of new infrastructure*

#### Goal 5

*Regular and equitable revision of community infrastructure ensures that it continues to meet our changing needs and values.*

## **Corporate Plan**

The Cassowary Coast Corporate Plan 2021 outlines the vision the Council has for the region.

The following section of the Cassowary Coast Corporate Plan 2021 are applicable.

### **Community – Our People**

- *Value, share and celebrate our diversity of cultures across our region*

### **Community – Our Built Environment**

- *Sustainable asset management to effectively deliver services in a consistent and financially sustainable manner representing value to the community;*
- *Integrated planning to support current and future needs of the region; and*
- *Build an 'organisational culture' that values risk management, facilitates the development of risk mitigation measures that are proportionate to the issues at hand, and capitalises on opportunities.*

## **Local Laws**

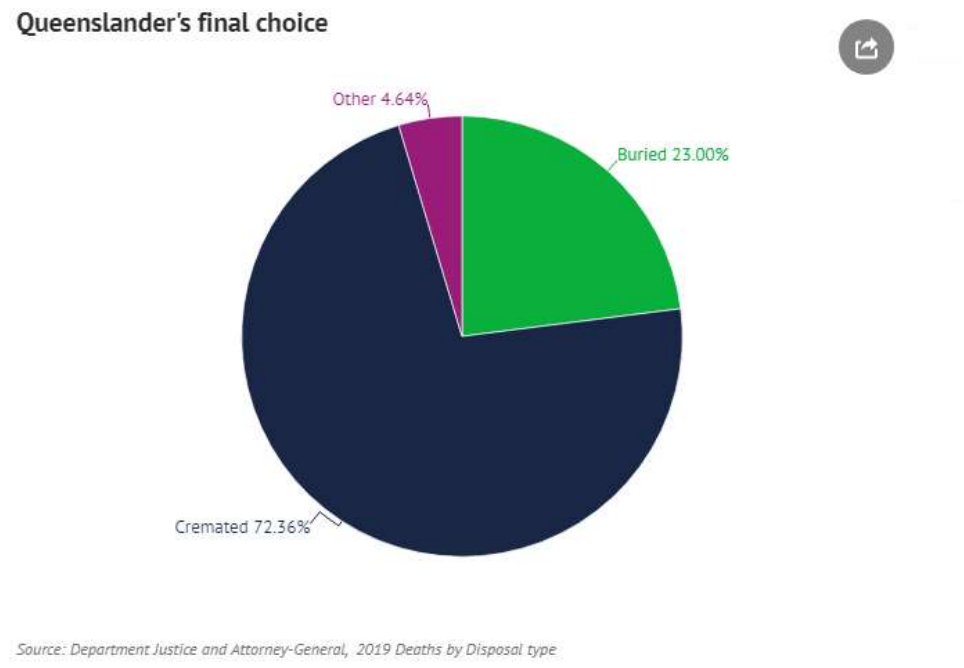
The following local laws have limited provisions regarding the management of Council's cemeteries:

- Subordinate Local Law No. 1 (Administration) 2011; and
- Subordinate Local Law No. 4 (Local Government Controlled Areas, Facilities and Roads) 2011

## 9 General End of Life Decision Trends within Queensland and the Cassowary Coast Region

There are a number of factors which individuals may consider when deciding on where and how they will be laid to rest at the end of their life, these include available facilities, cost, religion, personal/moral values.

These factors have contributed to a shift in how people are being laid to rest, with almost three-quarters of Queenslanders who died in 2019 being cremated.



**Figure 1: Queenslanders Final Choice: how people are being laid to rest in 2019**

Council carries out cemetery related activities such as administration processing of applications, customer assistance, setting up for burials and general cemetery maintenance as a part of Council's core services.

These services include:

- Burials including lawn grave, plaque or headstone sections: Generally a grave site can accommodate up to two interments, however in certain circumstances only a single burial may take place in some locations due to the presence of rock, sandy soil or water table;
- Ashes interments including graves or columbarium walls: generally a grave site can accommodate up to six (6) ash interments, and a niche within a columbarium wall

- can accommodate up to two interments (70 double niches and 127 single niches per wall); and
- Other including mausoleum/family chapels, full grave slabs (single and double) and wall vaults.

A recent desktop audit of cemetery burial records has produced the following key trends:

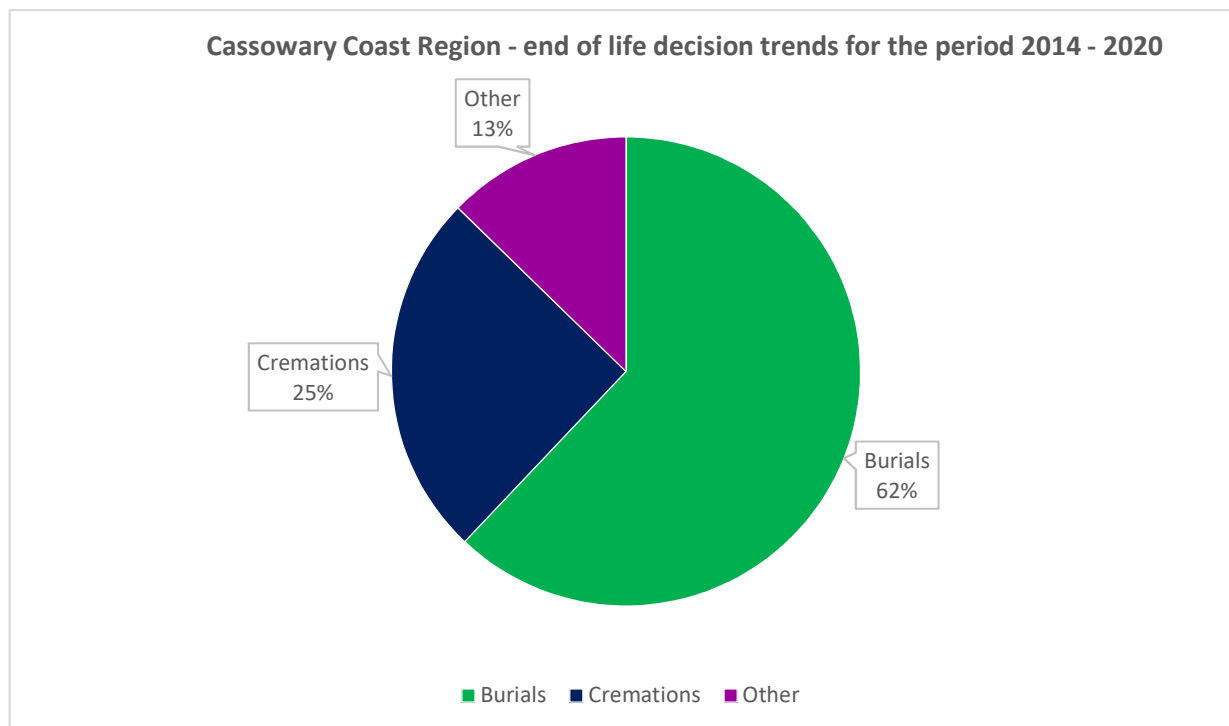


Figure 2: Cassowary Coast Cemetery Trends 2014-2020

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Total Burials*	109	110	83	100	113	93	81
Total Ashes Interment*	36	43	31	40	41	43	46
Other*	21	16	17	26	19	19	23
Total Interments	166	169	131	166	173	155	150

Figure 3: Cassowary Coast Cemetery Trends 2014-2020 Table

\*Burials include lawn grave, plaque and headstone sections

\*Ashes interments include graves and columbarium walls

\*Other includes mausoleum/family chapels, full grave slabs (single and double) and wall vaults.

Over the last five (5) years there has been a steady increase in both burials and ashes interment activities, with total burials across all Council cemeteries remaining consistent over the last five (5) years.

The following information is considered critical in future planning of cemetery operations:

1. The expected population growth in the next ten (10) years for the region;
2. The region having a higher than Queensland average for 50+ year old residents which will lead to further cemetery related requirements;
3. The region has a high level of Christianity therefore more likely traditional burial methods will not change in near future;
4. The region has a high level of Aboriginal and Torres strait islander residents, there is a need to engage with Aboriginal and Torres strait islander residents to integrate any cultural requirements into cemetery operations and planning;
5. The region has a high level of cultural diversity with forty-six (46) different religions practiced within the Cassowary Coast with there is a need to engage with these cultures and religions to integrate any cultural requirements into cemetery operations and planning; and
6. Council cemeteries are currently the preferred location for the community needs when it comes to cemetery interments.

Over the life of this strategy Council needs to take proactive planning to ensure that the community requirements will be catered for.

## **10 Regional population**

As at 30 June 2019, the estimated resident population for Cassowary Coast (R) LGA was 29,794 persons with a predicated average annual growth rate of 0.4% over ten years. Therefore, in 2031, approximately 31,256 will call the Cassowary Coast home. The region has an ageing population trend and prides itself on its cultural diversity. At last count, there were 48 languages spoken and 46 different religions practiced. With this increase in ethnic groups and religious requirements in the region, new services to accommodate these requirements need be considered in local cemeteries. In order to establish what these requirements are, consultation has been undertaken with the cemetery sextons and local funeral directors who have recommended that Council address these requirements in a cemetery policy and a set of frequently asked questions.

The table below identifies the regions projected population growth over the term of the Cemetery Strategy (2021- 2031). The majority of increases occurring in the key localities of Innisfail, Mission Beach, Tully and Cardwell.

Year	Population (0.4% Annual Increase)
2019	29794
2020	29913
2021	30033
2022	30153
2023	30274
2024	30395
2025	30516
2026	30638
2027	30761
2028	30884
2029	31007
2030	31131
2031	31256

Figure 4: Cassowary Coast Region Population Trends

### Age

As at 30 June 2019, the proportion of the estimated resident population aged 65 years and over for Cassowary Coast (R) LGA was 21.1% (6,277 people) with the estimated resident population aged between 45 years to 65 years being 28.4% (8474 people). Therefore, the proportion of the estimated resident population aged 65 years and over for Cassowary Coast (R) LGA was 49.5% (14,751 people).

Variations are expected with age structure during the life of the Cemetery Strategy.

As at 30 June 2019, the median age for Cassowary Coast (R) LGA was 44.5 years which is an increase of 3.3 years from median age of 41.2 years as at 30 June 2009.

This predicted increase in population in the 45+ age group will impact on the need for cemetery related services provided by Council.



## Births and Deaths

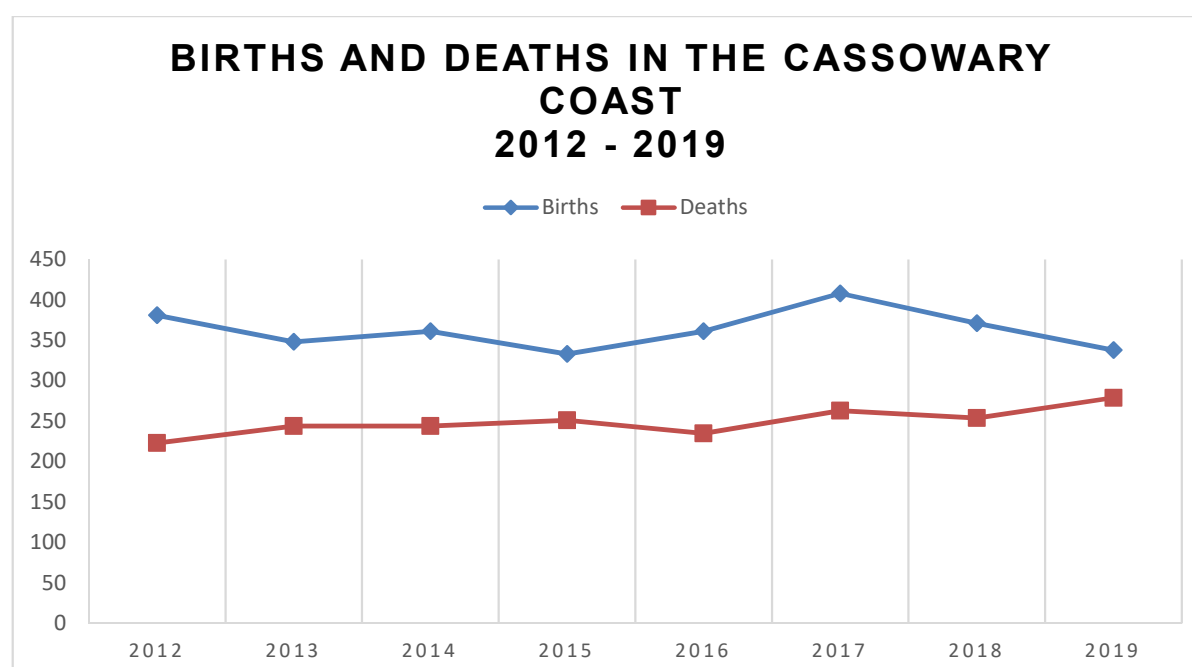


Figure 5: Births and Deaths in the Cassowary Coast 2012-2019

## Migration

In 2019, the number of people born overseas now residing in the Cassowary Coast (R) LGA was 3,998 persons (or 13.9%) were born overseas.

The top five English speaking backgrounds for the Cassowary Coast (R) LGA were:

1. England (2.3%)
2. New Zealand (1.9%)
3. Scotland (0.3%)
4. South Africa (0.2%)
5. United States of America (0.2%)

The top five non-English speaking backgrounds for the Cassowary Coast (R) LGA were:

1. India (2.1%)
2. Italy (1.1%)
3. Philippines (1.0%)
4. Papua New Guinea (0.4%)
5. Germany (0.4%)

2,829 persons (or 9.8%) stated they spoke a language other than English at home.

Migration is a key consideration in planning for the future of cemetery services, future interment options will need to be considered as a part of the cemetery strategy to cater for these emerging religions. As well as catering for the emerging trends, considerable burial capacity will still be required to cater for traditional burial options.

## Religious and Ethnic Background

The region prides itself on its cultural diversity with 46 different religions practiced within the Cassowary Coast with Christianity the most popular 17,146 persons (or 59.7%) (Australian Bureau of Statics 2019). 6,828 (23.8%) of Cassowary Coast residents stated they have no nominated religion where 1,211 (4.2%) stated that practiced 'Buddhism', 'Hinduism', 'Islam', 'Judaism' and 'Other Religions'.

With these religions continuing to grow, future interment options will need to be considered as a part of the strategy to cater for these emerging religions. As well as catering for the emerging trends, considerable burial capacity will still be required to cater for traditional burial options. Consideration should be given for cultural burial requirements during the actual burial and afterwards when the family may wish to place trinkets and memorial items on the gravesite.

## 11 Existing Cemeteries

Council currently operates four cemeteries:

- Innisfail;
- Tully;
- Cardwell; and
- Murrigal.

## 12 Innisfail

### Location



Figure 6: Innisfail Cemetery

Innisfail Cemetery Lot A	
<b>Title Reference</b>	49000207
<b>Address</b>	River Avenue Mighell
<b>Real Property Description</b>	Lot 82 on I281103
<b>Tenure</b>	Reserve
	Date Gazetted: 25/07/1885
<b>Land Use</b>	Cemeteries/Local Government
<b>Area</b>	4.45 hectares
<b>Owner/Jurisdiction</b>	State of Queensland
	Cassowary Coast Regional Council as trustee
	The land has been placed under the control of Cassowary Coast Regional Council as Trustee and is to be managed in accordance with the principles of the Land Act 1994 and the Land Regulation 2009.

<b>Innisfail Cemetery Lot B</b>	
<b>Title Reference</b>	49000208
<b>Address</b>	Scullen Avenue Mighell
<b>Real Property Description</b>	Lot 154 on I281103
<b>Tenure</b>	Reserve Date Gazetted: 05/02/1944
<b>Land Use</b>	Cemeteries/Local Government
<b>Area</b>	2.04 hectares
<b>Owner/Jurisdiction</b>	State of Queensland  Cassowary Coast Regional Council as trustee  The land has been placed under the control of Cassowary Coast Regional Council as Trustee and is to be managed in accordance with the principles of the Land Act 1994 and the Land Regulation 2009.

<b>Innisfail Cemetery Lot C</b>	
<b>Title Reference</b>	20485015
<b>Address</b>	Scullen Avenue Mighell
<b>Real Property Description</b>	Lot 4 on RP711087
<b>Tenure</b>	Reserve Date Gazetted: 05/11/1953
<b>Land Use</b>	Cemeteries/Local Government
<b>Area</b>	1.18 hectares
<b>Owner/Jurisdiction</b>	State of Queensland  Cassowary Coast Regional Council as trustee  The land has been placed under the control of Cassowary Coast Regional Council as Trustee and is to be managed in accordance with the principles of the Land Act 1994 and the Land Regulation 2009.

<b>Innisfail Cemetery Lot D</b>	
<b>Title Reference</b>	20485015
<b>Address</b>	Scullen Avenue Mighell
<b>Real Property Description</b>	Lot 2 on RP711087
<b>Tenure</b>	Reserve Date Gazetted: 05/11/1953
<b>Land Use</b>	Cemeteries/Local Government
<b>Area</b>	1.03 hectares
<b>Owner/Jurisdiction</b>	State of Queensland  Cassowary Coast Regional Council as trustee  The land has been placed under the control of Cassowary Coast Regional Council as Trustee and is to be managed in accordance with the principles of the Land Act 1994 and the Land Regulation 2009.

Figure 7: Innisfail Cemetery Details

### Maps

Refer **Attachment 2 – Innisfail Cemetery Map**

### Photos

Refer **Attachment 3 – Innisfail Cemetery Photos**

### Services

Council offers the following services at the Innisfail Cemetery:

- Burials including lawn grave, plaque or headstone sections: generally a grave site can accommodate up to two interments, however in certain circumstances only a single burial may take place in some locations due to the presence of rock, sandy soil or water table;
- Ashes interments include graves or columbarium walls. Up to 6 ashes interments can be placed in a grave site, and up to two ashes interments, depending on whether a single or double niche, in a columbarium wall; and
- Other including mausoleum/family chapels, full grave slabs (single and double) and wall vaults.

Cemetery Statistics 2014-2020

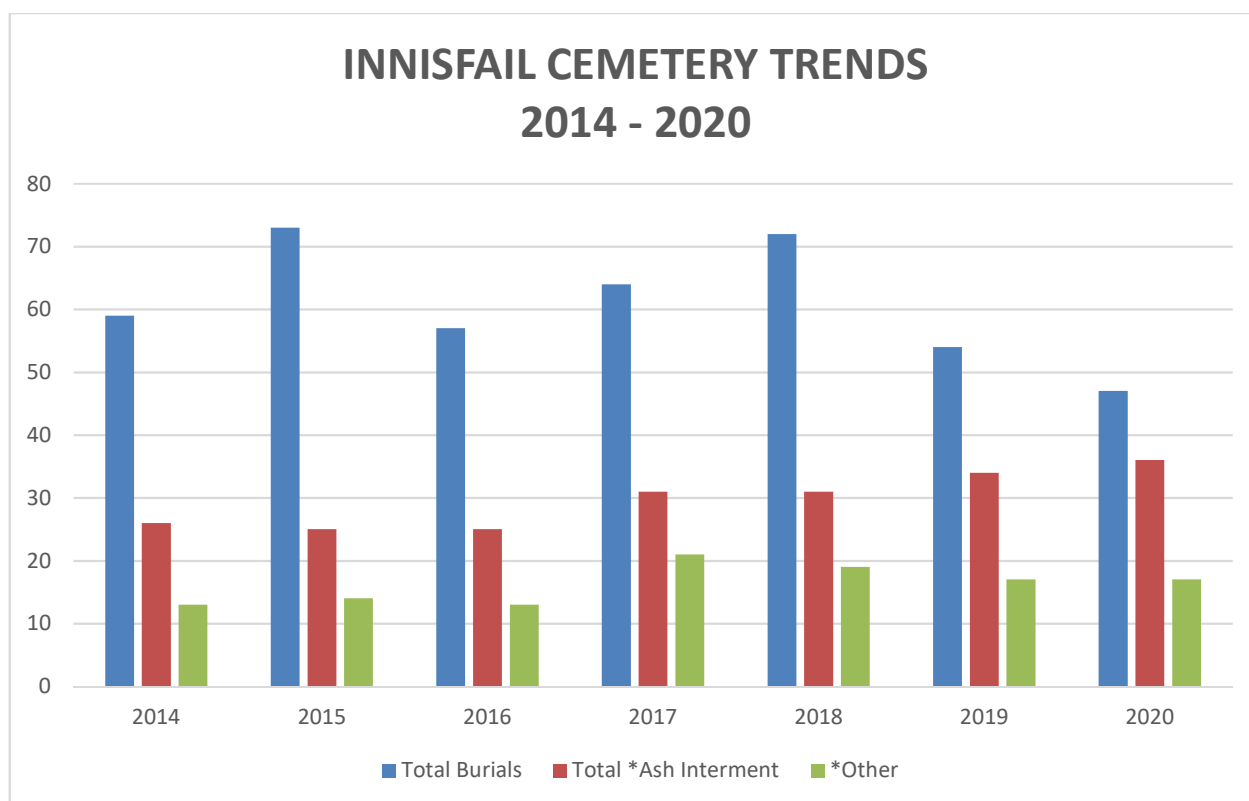


Figure 8: Innisfail Cemetery Trends 2014-2020 Graph

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Total Burials*	59	73	57	64	72	54	47
Total Ashes Interment*	26	25	25	31	31	34	36
Other*	13	14	13	21	19	17	17
<b>Total Interment</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>100</b>

Figure 9: Innisfail Cemetery Trends 2014-2020 Table

\*Burials include lawn grave, plaque or headstone sections

\*Ashes interments include graves or columbarium walls

\*Other includes mausoleum/family chapels, full grave slabs (single and double) and wall vaults

Capacity

Burials

Burials include lawn grave, plaque or headstone sections: generally a grave site can accommodate up to two interments, however in certain circumstances only a single burial may take place in some locations due to the presence of rock, sandy soil or water table.

Based on current death rates and end of life trends, the Innisfail cemetery has the following capacity (refer **Attachment 4 – Innisfail Cemetery Capacity**):



- Approximately six (6) years for lawn plaque (beam) cemetery burials (three hundred and fifty (350) plots), based on this, the timeline for exceeding current capacity is 2027; and
- Approximately six (6) years for lawn headstone burials (one hundred and forty (140) plots), based on this, the timeline for exceeding current capacity is 2027.

### Ashes Interments

Ashes interments include graves or columbarium walls. Up to 6 ashes interments can be placed in a grave site, and up to two ash interments, depending on whether a single or double niche, in a columbarium wall.

Based on current death rates and end of life trends, the Innisfail cemetery has the following capacity:

- Approximately two (2) years for ashes interments within existing columbarium walls (one hundred and ninety-six (196) niches per wall), based on this, the timeline for exceeding current capacity is 2023, however there is space to construct an additional seven (7) columbarium walls in the immediate vicinity, this increases the capacity to approximately twelve (12) years for ashes interments (one hundred and ninety-six (196) niches per wall x 7 walls).

### Other

Other includes mausoleum/family chapels, full grave slabs and wall vaults.

Based on current death rates and end of life trends, the Innisfail cemetery has the following capacity:

- Approximately six (6) years for full grave slab sites (twenty one (21) plots), based on this, the timeline for exceeding current capacity is 2027; and
- Approximately three (3) years for existing wall vaults (one and a half (1.5) vaults (twenty-one (21) niches per vault), based on this, the timeline for exceeding current capacity is 2024, however there is space to construct an additional two (2) vaults in the immediate vicinity, this increases the capacity to approximately seven (7) years for wall vaults (two (2) vaults (twenty (21) niches per vault).

### Issues

- The vacant land on the existing cemetery site is limited due to the following:
  - Unmarked graves being present along the Bruce Highway frontage;
  - Flooding and drainage issues, especially those graves near Bamboo Creek;
- The privately constructed and owned wall vaults have ongoing maintenance issues for which there is no agreement as to who is responsible for the ongoing costs;
- There is no up to date cemetery policy;
- Certain existing materials (i.e. tiled columbarium walls) are outdated and contribute to ongoing maintenance costs.

## Recommendations

- Council develop an Agreement between those individuals and family members who have an interest in the privately constructed and owned wall vaults which outlines the ongoing maintenance procedures and costs;
- Council manage and oversee the construction of any new wall vaults to take into account ongoing maintenance procedures and costs;
- Council construct another wall vault within the next 2 years;
- Council construct another columbarium wall with the next 2 years;
- Council establish a new cemetery on land described as Lot 62 on NR6943 situated at Downing Street, Mighell QLD 4860
  - Lot 62 on NR6943 situated at Downing Street, Mighell QLD 4860 is identified as the preferred location given the following:
    - The site is owned by Council;
    - The site has a land use of Large Home site Dwelling/Local Government;
    - The site is zoned as Community Purpose under the provisions of the Cassowary Coast Regional Council Planning Scheme 2015 which provides for a Cemetery to be established on the site;
    - The site is 6.91 hectares in area and will provide for at least seventy (70) years of cemetery operations;
    - There is an immediate need to provide for more land for cemetery operations; and
    - A portion of the site is located outside the identified flood area;
  - the following key considerations should be investigated prior to construction commencing:
    - Preparation of a land management in accordance with Department of Resources requirements;
    - Soil testing (i.e. soil must be suitable and limit any subsidence); and
    - Flooding (construction of adequate detention basins which could become a water feature); and
- Council investigate the future use of the area of unmarked graves located adjacent to the Bruce Highway.

## 13 Tully

### Location



Figure 10: Tully Cemetery

Tully Cemetery Lot A	
<b>Title Reference</b>	20645149
<b>Address</b>	Tully Gorge Road, Tully
<b>Real Property Description</b>	Lot 53 on CWL1718
<b>Tenure</b>	Freehold
	Date: 11/07/1963
<b>Land Use</b>	Cemeteries/Local Government
<b>Area</b>	2.17 hectares
<b>Owner/Jurisdiction</b>	Cassowary Coast Regional Council

<b>Tully Cemetery Lot B</b>	
<b>Title Reference</b>	50907058
<b>Address</b>	Campbell Street, Tully
<b>Real Property Description</b>	Lot 65 on SP230734
<b>Tenure</b>	Freehold
	Date Gazetted: 26/02/2013
<b>Land Use</b>	Outbuildings/Local Government
<b>Area</b>	30.69 hectares
<b>Owner/Jurisdiction</b>	Cassowary Coast Regional Council

Figure 11: Tully Cemetery Details

### Maps

Refer **Attachment 5 - Tully Cemetery Maps**

### Photos

Refer **Attachment 6 - Tully Cemetery Photos**

### Services

Council offers the following services at the Tully Cemetery:

- Burials including lawn grave, plaque or headstone sections: generally a grave site can accommodate up to two interments, however in certain circumstances only a single burial may take place in some locations due to the presence of rock, sandy soil or water table;
- Ashes interments include graves or columbarium walls. Up to 6 ashes interments can be placed in a grave site, and up to two ashes interments, depending on whether a single or double niche, in a columbarium wall; and
- Other including mausoleum/family chapels, full grave slabs (single and double) and wall vaults



Cemetery Statistics 2014-2020

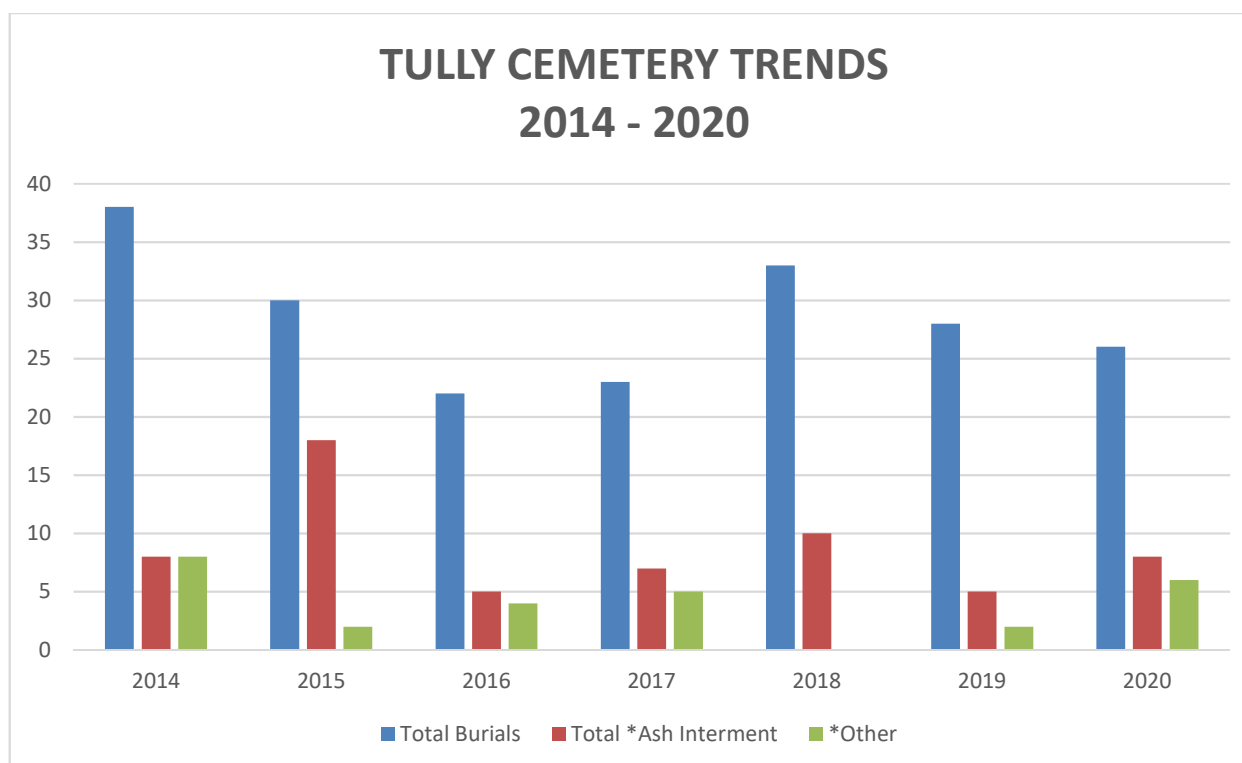


Figure 12: Tully Cemetery Trends 2014-2020 Graph

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Total Burials	38	30	22	23	33	28	26
Total Ashes Interment	8	18	5	7	10	5	8
Other*	8	2	4	5	0	2	6
<b>Total Interments</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>40</b>

Figure 13: Tully Cemetery Trends 2014-2020 Table

\*Burials include lawn grave, plaque or headstone sections

\*Ashes interments include graves or columbarium walls

\*Other includes mausoleum/family chapels, above ground vaults (single and double) and wall vaults

Capacity

Burials

Burials include lawn grave, plaque or headstone sections; generally a grave site can accommodate up to two interments, however in certain circumstances only a single burial may take place in some locations due to the presence of rock, sandy soil or water table.

Based on current death rates and end of life trends, the Tully cemetery has the following capacity (refer **Attachment 7 – Tully Cemetery Capacity**):

- Approximately 3 months for the stone pitched lawn beam cemetery burials (eighteen (18) plots), based on this, the timeline for exceeding current

capacity is 2022 however there is space to construct additional lawn beams across the road (refer **Attachment 5 – Tully Cemetery Maps: Tully Cemetery Proposed New Section – Concept Plan**), this increases the capacity well into the future; and

- Approximately two and a half years (2.5) years for lawn headstone and full grave slab burials based on (fifty-two (52) plots) remaining, based on this, the timeline for exceeding current capacity is 2024.

### Ashes Interments

Ashes interments include graves or columbarium walls. Up to 6 ashes interments can be placed in a grave site, and one ash interment in a columbarium wall.

Based on current death rates and end of life trends, the Tully cemetery has the following capacity:

- Approximately twelve (12) years for ashes interments (one hundred and eight (108) niches within existing columbarium walls (one hundred and thirty-two (132) niches per wall), based on this, the timeline for exceeding current capacity is 2027, however there is space to construct additional columbarium walls, this increases the capacity well into the future.

### Other

Other includes mausoleum/family chapels, full grave slabs (single and double) and wall vaults.

Based on current death rates and end of life trends, the Tully cemetery has the following capacity:

- Approximately three (3) years for existing wall vaults (2 vaults (twelve (12) niches per vault), based on this, the timeline for exceeding current capacity is 2024, however there is space to construct additional fourteen (14) vaults (twelve (12) niches per vault) in the immediate vicinity which will increase the capacity well into the future.

### Issues

- There is no up to date cemetery policy;
- Certain existing materials (i.e. tiled columbarium/vault walls) are outdated and contribute to ongoing maintenance cost.



## Recommendations

- Discontinue current stone pitched lawn beam area (once fully occupied/reserved) to allow for alternate use of surrounding land;
- Discontinue reservations for existing stone pitched lawn beam area, unless associated with a current burial;
- Construct two (2) concrete beams on land shown in **Attachment 5 – Tully Cemetery Maps: Tully Cemetery Proposed New Section – Concept Plan**, which is located across the road from the current stone pitched lawn beam area;
- Council construct another wall vault within the next 2 years.

## 14 Cardwell

### Location



Figure 14: Cardwell Cemetery

<b>Cardwell Cemetery Lot A</b>	
<b>Title Reference</b>	49000502
<b>Address</b>	Gregory Street, Cardwell
<b>Real Property Description</b>	Lot 161 on C1047
<b>Tenure</b>	Reserve  Date Gazetted: 25/03/1905
<b>Land Use</b>	Cemeteries/Local Government
<b>Area</b>	4.05 hectares
<b>Owner/Jurisdiction</b>	State of Queensland  Cassowary Coast Regional Council as trustee  The land has been placed under the control of Cassowary Coast Regional Council as Trustee and is to be managed in accordance with the principles of the Land Act 1994 and the Land Regulation 2009.

Figure 15: Cardwell Cemetery Details

### Maps

Refer **Attachment 8 – Cardwell Cemetery Map**

### Photos

Refer **Attachment 9 – Cardwell Cemetery Photos**

### Services

Council offers the following services at the Cardwell Cemetery:

- Burials including lawn grave, plaque or headstone sections: generally a grave site can accommodate up to two interments, however in certain circumstances only a single burial may take place in some locations due to the presence of rock, sandy soil or water table; and
- Ashes interments include graves or columbarium walls. Up to 6 ashes interments can be placed in a grave site, and one ash interment in a columbarium wall.

Cemetery Statistics 2014-2020

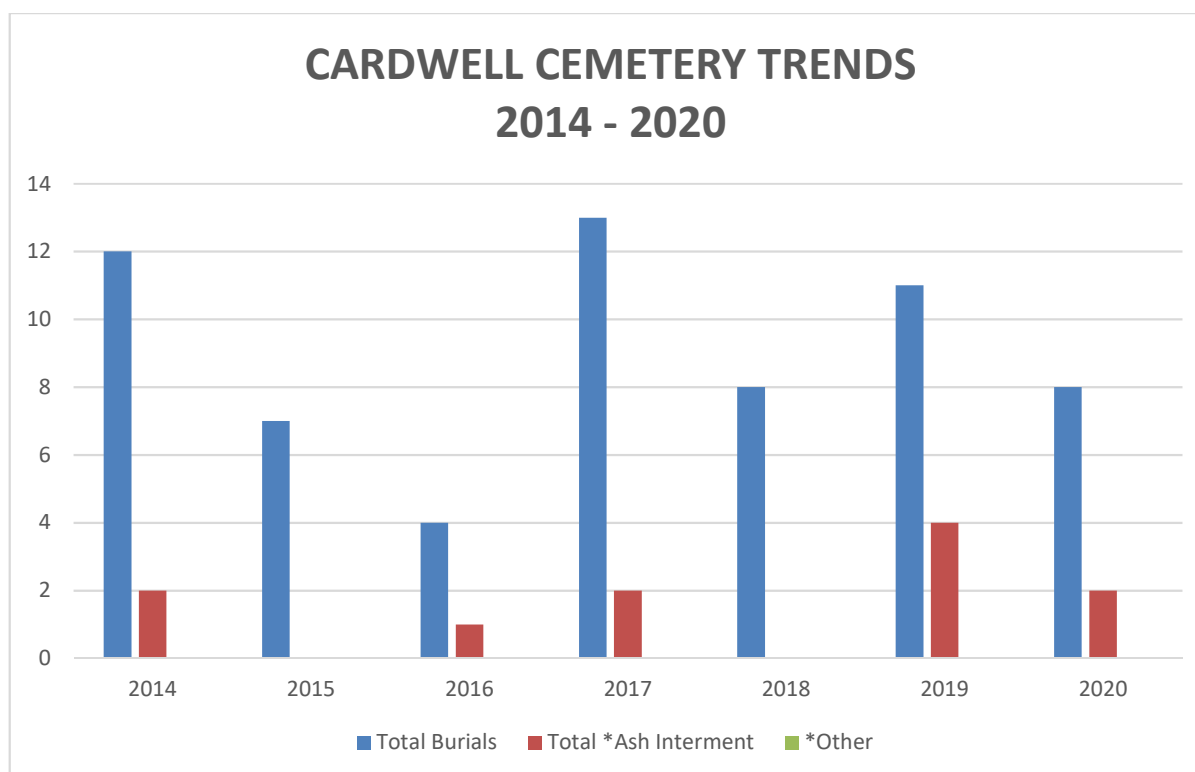


Figure 16: Cardwell Cemetery Trends 2014-2020 Graph

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Total Burials*	12	7	4	13	8	11	8
Total Ashes Interment*	2	0	1	2	0	4	2
Other*	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Interments</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>10</b>

Figure 17: Cardwell Cemetery Trends 2014-2020 Table

\*Burials include lawn grave, plaque or headstone sections

\*Ashes interments include graves or columbarium walls

\*Other includes mausoleum/family chapels, above ground vaults (single and double) and wall vaults

Capacity

Burials

Burials include lawn grave, plaque or headstone sections: generally a grave site can accommodate up to two interments, however in certain circumstances only a single burial may take place in some locations due to the presence of rock, sandy soil or water table.

Based on current death rates and end of life trends, the Cardwell cemetery has the following capacity (refer **Attachment 10 - Cardwell Cemetery Capacity**):

- Approximately fifty-one (51) years for lawn plaque (beam) cemetery burials (four hundred and sixty (460) plots), based on this, the timeline for exceeding current capacity is 2072; and
- Approximately seven (7) years for full grave slab burials (forty-six (46) plots), based on this, the timeline for exceeding current capacity is 2028.

### **Ashes Interments**

Ashes interments include graves or columbarium walls. Up to 6 ashes interments can be placed in a grave site, and one ash interment in a columbarium wall.

Based on current death rates and end of life trends, the Cardwell cemetery has the following capacity:

- Approximately thirty-six (36) years for ashes interments (seventy-two (72) plots), based on this, the timeline for exceeding current capacity is 2057.

### **Issues**

- There is no up to date cemetery policy;
- Certain existing materials (i.e. tiled columbarium walls) are outdated and contribute to ongoing maintenance costs.

### **Recommendations**

- Consider designating additional areas within the cemetery for lawn headstone burials once full grave slab burial capacity is reached.



## 15 Murrigal

### Location



Figure 18: Murrigal Cemetery

Murrigal Cemetery Lot A	
Title Reference	49000293
Address	Bruce Highway, Murrigal
Real Property Description	Lot 26 on CWL1585
Tenure	Reserve
	Date Gazetted: 03/08/1895

<b>Murrigal Cemetery Lot A</b>	
<b>Land Use</b>	Cemeteries/Local Government
<b>Area</b>	0.61 hectares
<b>Owner/Jurisdiction</b>	State of Queensland  Cassowary Coast Regional Council as trustee  The land has been placed under the control of Cassowary Coast Regional Council as Trustee and is to be managed in accordance with the principles of the Land Act 1994 and the Land Regulation 2009.

Figure 19: Murrigal Cemetery Details

### Maps

Refer **Attachment 11 – Murrigal Cemetery Map**

### Photos

Refer **Attachment 12 – Murrigal Cemetery Photos**

### History

The Murrigal Cemetery is a small cemetery located adjacent to the Bruce Highway at Murrigal. The Cemetery contains a small number of burials, with only thirty-four (34) burials recorded in December 2012. Forty-four (44) burial plots have been allocated/identified at the Cemetery. The headstones take a variety of different forms, reflective of the date they were commissioned. Burials appear to be grouped by family origin rather than religious denomination. The Cemetery is also significant for its role in the history and evolution of European settlement in the Tully region. The most recent burial occurred in 2019 according to Cassowary Coast Regional Council burial records.

### Recommendations

- Council continue to maintain the Murrigal Cemetery; and
- Council only allow new burials within the Murrigal Cemetery where there is already a reservation or the person/s can identify a historical family link with those already buried within the cemetery



## 16 Additional Cemetery Facilities

### Mission Beach

There have been suggestions from some sectors of the community for a traditional and 'green' cemetery option at Mission Beach.

According to the Green Burial Council, *green burial* allows full body interment into the ground in a manner that does not inhibit decomposition. The three top defining characteristics of any green burial are absence of a vault, non-toxic preparation of the body, and use of containers made of organic materials. (Webster, 2016)

A green cemetery may also be characterised as any burial ground that cares for the dead with minimal environmental impact. This means only non-toxic and biodegradable materials are used in the burial process, like eco-friendly caskets, shrouds, and urns. Only non-toxic preservation techniques may be used (like green embalming fluid). Additionally, green burials need to cause as little harm to the environment as possible. (Tetrault, 2021)

Currently there is no cemetery facility in the Mission Beach area,

In deciding whether to propose a cemetery or 'green' cemetery at Mission Beach as part of this strategy the following factors were key considerations in undertaking the assessment:

- Cemetery operations (i.e. ongoing maintenance);
- Cost; and
- Capacity of existing cemeteries

It is recommended that Council does not establish a new cemetery at Mission Beach at this time. Council cemetery operations run at an operating deficit, where revenue generated from cemetery activities currently doesn't cover operational expenditure, therefore it is unsustainable for Council to open another cemetery when there is capacity in Council's existing cemeteries, especially in the Tully cemetery which is the closest cemetery to Mission Beach.

The private sector may wish to establish a cemetery at Mission Beach if a suitable private freehold property could be found and appropriate development approvals obtained. Unlike the private sector that provide death care arrangements focusing on profits for stakeholders, Council carries out cemetery operations as a service to the local community.

As an alternative, until the strategy is further reviewed, Council may provide a designated area for the scattering of ashes and reflection in a local parkland at Mission Beach.

If market trends showed an increase in need for greener burial options in the region, Council may consider a hybrid traditional and green burial option within its existing cemeteries.

## 17 References

- Tetrault, S. (2021, November 19). *Green Cemeteries: How They Work & Where to Find Them*. Retrieved from Cake : <https://www.joincake.com/blog/green-cemetery/>
- Webster, L. (2016). *GBC Publications*. Retrieved from Green Burial Council: [https://www.greenburialcouncil.org/green\\_burial\\_guide\\_for\\_families.html](https://www.greenburialcouncil.org/green_burial_guide_for_families.html)

## 18 Action Plan



Cemetery	Action Required	Timeframe <i>*Immediate (immediate action required)</i> <i>*Short-term (within 3 years)</i> <i>*Ongoing</i>	Responsible Section	Budget (approximate 2022 figures)
<b>Overall</b>	Council develop a Cemetery Policy and Guideline to ensure operations are being conducted consistently and in accordance with current best practice across Council owned and operated cemeteries, and develop Factsheets to provide information about services on offer. The Policy should actively discourage private burials on freehold land due to environmental, planning, legacy and legal issues.	Short-term	Asset Maintenance	\$10,000.00
	Council review the cemetery based levels of service, fees and charges relevant to management and operational costs.	Short-term	Asset Maintenance	\$5,000.00
	Council investigate LiDAR laser surveying to develop an online plot location and reservation map.	Short-term	Asset Maintenance	\$30,000.00
	Council investigate the construction of high quality columbarium walls for ashes interments to preserve space within existing cemeteries.	Short-term	Asset Maintenance	N/A
	Council investigate gardens of remembrance within existing cemeteries and parklands which provide a designated area for the scattering of ashes and reflection.	Short-term	Asset Maintenance	N/A



<b>Cemetery</b>	<b>Action Required</b>	<b>Timeframe</b> <i>*Immediate (immediate action required)</i> <i>*Short-term (within 3 years)</i> <i>*Ongoing</i>	<b>Responsible Section</b>	<b>Budget (approximate 2022 figures)</b>
	Council consider phasing out full grave slabs and mausoleums (unless previously reserved), due to ongoing maintenance issues.	Short-term	Asset Maintenance	N/A
	The strategy, guidelines, policy and factsheets are reviewed every five (5) years.	Ongoing	Asset Maintenance	N/A
<b>Innisfail Cemetery</b>	Council develop an Agreement between those individuals and family members who have an interest in the privately constructed and owned wall vaults which outlines the ongoing maintenance procedures and costs.	Short-term	Asset Maintenance	\$10,000.00
	Council manage and oversee the construction of any new wall vaults to take into account ongoing maintenance procedures and costs.	Short-term	Asset Maintenance	N/A
	Council construct another wall vault within the next 2 years.	Short-term	Asset Maintenance	\$100,000.00
	Council establish a new cemetery on land described as Lot 62 on NR6943 situated at Downing Street, Mighell QLD 4860.	Short-term	Asset Maintenance Planning Services (Strategic Planner)	\$800,000.00
	Council prepare a land management plan in accordance with Department of Resources requirements.	Short-term	Asset Maintenance Planning Services (Strategic Planner)	
	Council investigate the future use of the area of unmarked graves located adjacent to the Bruce Highway.	Ongoing	Asset Maintenance	\$5,000.00

<b>Cemetery</b>	<b>Action Required</b>	<b>Timeframe</b> <i>*Immediate (immediate action required)</i> <i>*Short-term (within 3 years)</i> <i>*Ongoing</i>	<b>Responsible Section</b>	<b>Budget (approximate 2022 figures)</b>
<b>Tully Cemetery</b>	Discontinue current lawn beam area (once fully occupied/reserved) to allow for alternate use of surrounding land.	Immediate	Asset Maintenance	N/A
	Discontinue reservations for existing lawn beam area, unless associated with a current burial.	Immediate	Asset Maintenance	N/A
	Construct two (2) concrete beams on land shown in <b>Attachment 5 - Tully Cemetery Proposed New Section – Concept Plan</b> , which is located across the road from the current stone pitched lawn beam area.	Immediate	Asset Maintenance	\$30,000.00
	Council construct another wall vault next to the existing wall vaults, within the next 2 years.	Short-term	Asset Maintenance	\$100,000.00
<b>Cardwell Cemetery</b>	Consider allocating space in the Cardwell Cemetery for lawn headstone burials if it is decided to phase out full monumental grave/vault burials.	Ongoing	Asset Maintenance	N/A
<b>Murrigal Cemetery</b>	Council continue to maintain the Murrigal Cemetery.	Ongoing	Asset Maintenance	\$30,000.00
	Council only allow new burials within the Murrigal Cemetery where there is already a reservation or the person/s can identify a historical family link with those already buried within the Cemetery.	Ongoing	Asset Maintenance	N/A





## 19 Attachments



### Attachment 1: Cemetery Definitions



Term	Definition	Additional information	Photo
Burial site	Is the allocated space where an interment has or will occur. Also referred to as a plot or gravesite.		
Columbarium Wall	Means a wall or walls constructed for the purpose of interment of an urn containing the ashes of a deceased person.	Bronze plaque	 <p>Figure 1 – Columbarium wall (Innisfail)</p>  <p>Figure 2 – Columbarium wall (Tully)</p>
Disturbance of human remains	Includes interfering with remains, removal of remains and opening of a site of burial.		

Term	Definition	Additional information	Photo
Full grave slab	Means a rectangular or square concrete slab which fully covers the surface area of a normal in-ground interment.	Full grave and headstone <i>Maximum site coverage: 3.048m x 1.829m</i>	 <p>Figure 5 – Full grave slab</p>  <p>Figure 6 – Full grave slab</p>
Garden of remembrance	Means any cemetery or part thereof set aside for the burial of ashes.		
Human remains	Means the body or part of the body of a deceased person, whether cremated or not.		
Interment	Includes burial of the body of a deceased person and placement in a niche of the ashes of a deceased person.		



Term	Definition	Additional information	Photo
Lawn Cemetery	Means any cemetery or part thereof set aside exclusively for the erection of a headstone or plaque: (a) On an individual concrete base; or (b) On a continuous concrete beam located at the head of the grave		
	<b>Lawn Plaque/Lawn Beam:</b> An area of the cemetery set aside for a lawn burial and placement of a bronze plaque	Bronze plaque fixed in place by Council staff and 2 plastic vases provided by Council at the time of burial	 Figure 1 – Lawn beam (Innisfail)  Figure 2 – Lawn beam (Tully)
	<b>Lawn Headstone/Headstone Beam:</b> An area of the cemetery set aside exclusively for the erection of a headstone on a concrete beam or plinth.	Headstone on concrete slab/beam within the following maximum dimensions: <i>Height 600mm x width 200mm x length 800mm</i>	 Figure 3 – Lawn headstone grave  Figure 4 – Lawn headstone beam

Term	Definition	Additional information	Photo
Local Government cemetery	Means a cemetery under the control of Council, including a cemetery located on land owned by Council or on land for which Council is the trustee.		
Mausoleum	An external, freestanding building Constructed as a monument enclosing the interment space of burial chamber of a deceased person or people.  Also known as a family chapel.	Refer picture	
	<b>Family Chapel:</b> Refer Mausoleum	Refer Figure 7	Refer Figure 7 above
Memorial	Means anything erected or placed within a cemetery to mark a grave or commemorate a deceased person or people.		
Niche/Double niche	Is the space in a columbarium wall for the placement of an ashes container (or two in the case of a double niche), or space in a wall vault for the placement of a coffin.	Bronze plaque and small vase (plaques and vases are arranged and paid for by the family).	
Vault	Means the lining of a grave or graves by means of bricks and mortar or concrete liners cemented together so that the floor, walls and ceiling of the grave are completely covered and sealed and includes, walk in room or rooms constructed either above or below ground level, and a chapel		
	<b>Double vault:</b> Smaller version of a wall vault, sits on 1 burial plot and contains 2 niche spaces for the interment of coffins.	Double vaults are sealed with a large plaque by a monumental works contractor.	Figure 10 – Double vault

Term	Definition	Additional information	Photo
	<p><b>Wall vault:</b> A freestanding building for the interment of a coffin in each niche space.</p> <p><i>Innisfail</i> – constructed across 8 burial plots and contains 21 niche spaces</p> <p><i>Tully</i> – constructed across 3 burial plots and contains 12 niche spaces</p>	<p>Wall vaults require the purchase of either 3 or 8 burial plots and require building approval for construction of the wall.</p> <p>Vaults are sealed with a large plaque by a monumental works contractor.</p>	 <p>Figure 8 – Wall vault (Innisfail)</p>  <p>Figure 9 – Wall vault (Tully)</p>



Attachment 2: Innisfail Cemetery Map



**Attachment 3: Innisfail Cemetery Photos**



**Innisfail Cemetery: Lawn Plaque Section**



**Innisfail Cemetery: Wall Vault Section**





**Innisfail Cemetery: Columbarium Wall for Placement of Ashes**

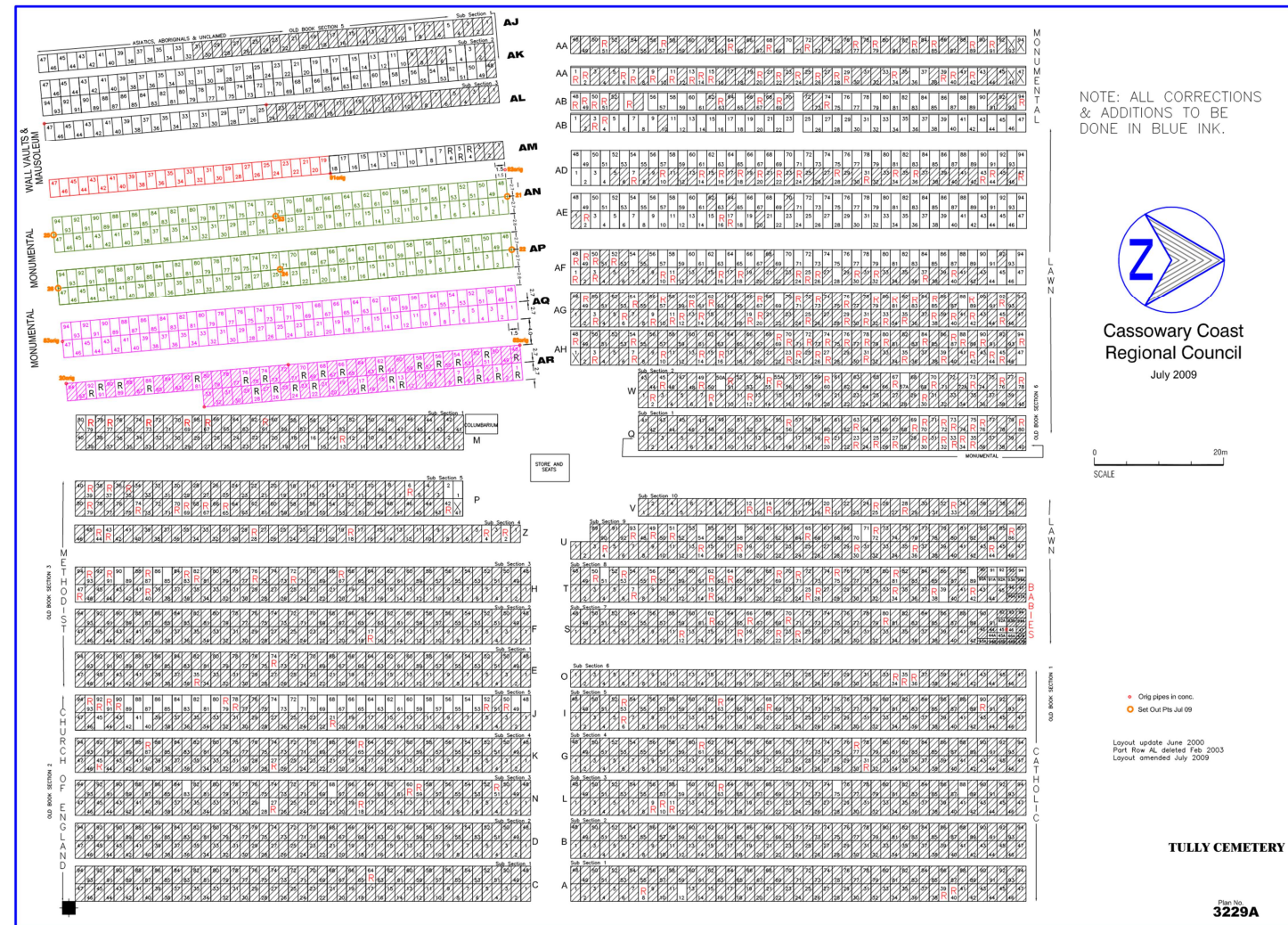
#### Attachment 4: Innisfail Cemetery Capacity

Section	Current Capacity	Average burials/year	Projected timeframe
Lawn beam	350 plots	61	6yrs (2027)
Lawn headstone	140 plots		Up to 10 years (2031)
Full monumental grave/vault	21 plots		6.5 years (2027)
Columbarium wall	196 niches	30	6 years (2027)
Wall vault	31 niches	16	2 years (2023)

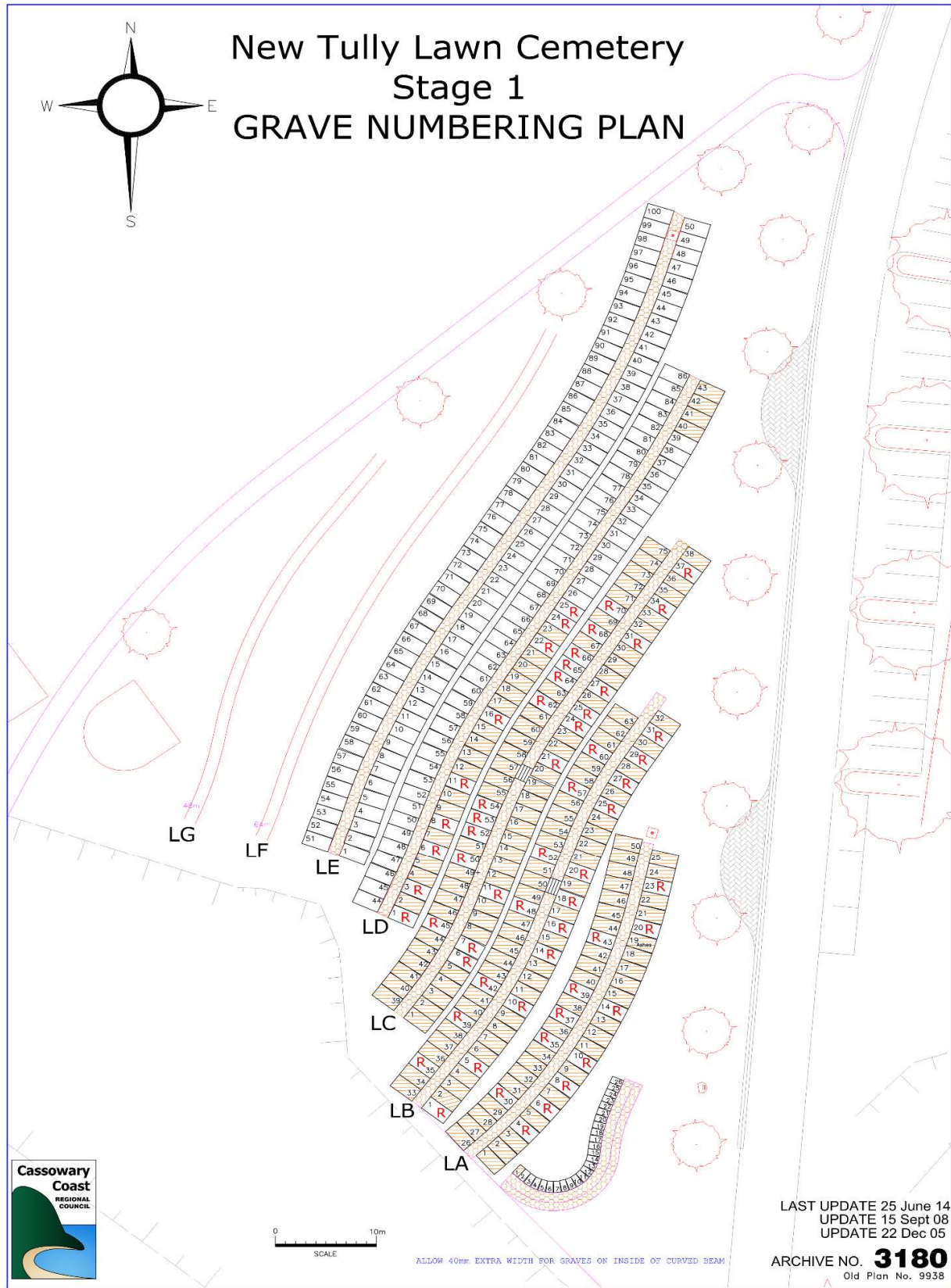


## Attachment 5: Tully Cemetery Maps

### Tully Cemetery Map Lot A:

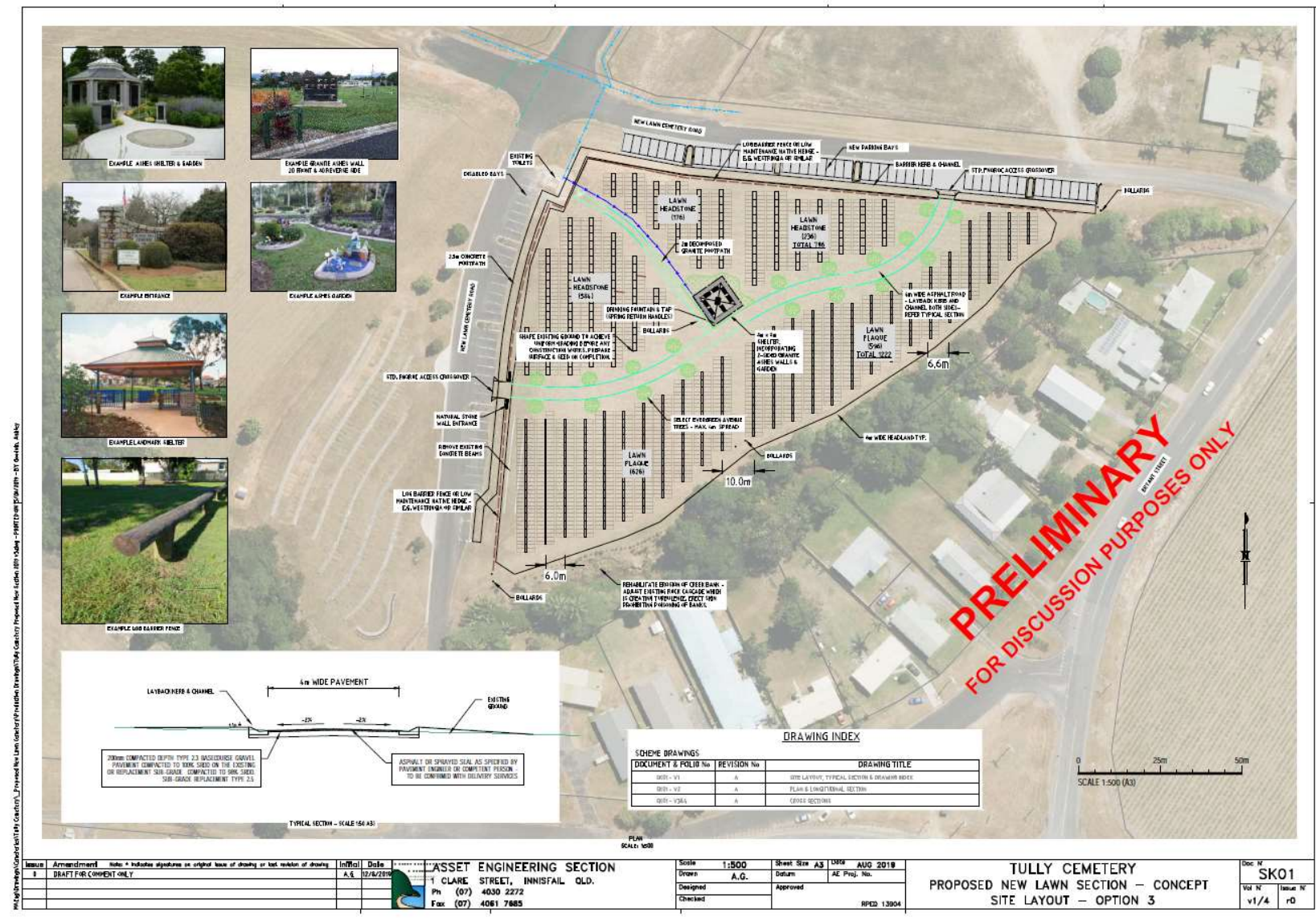


Tully Cemetery Map Lot B





# Tully Cemetery Proposed New Section – Concept Plan





**Attachment 6: Tully Cemetery Photos**



**Tully Cemetery: Original Monumental Section**



**Tully Cemetery: Original Monumental Section**





**Tully Cemetery: Original Lawn Plaque Section**



**Tully Cemetery: Original Lawn Plaque Section**



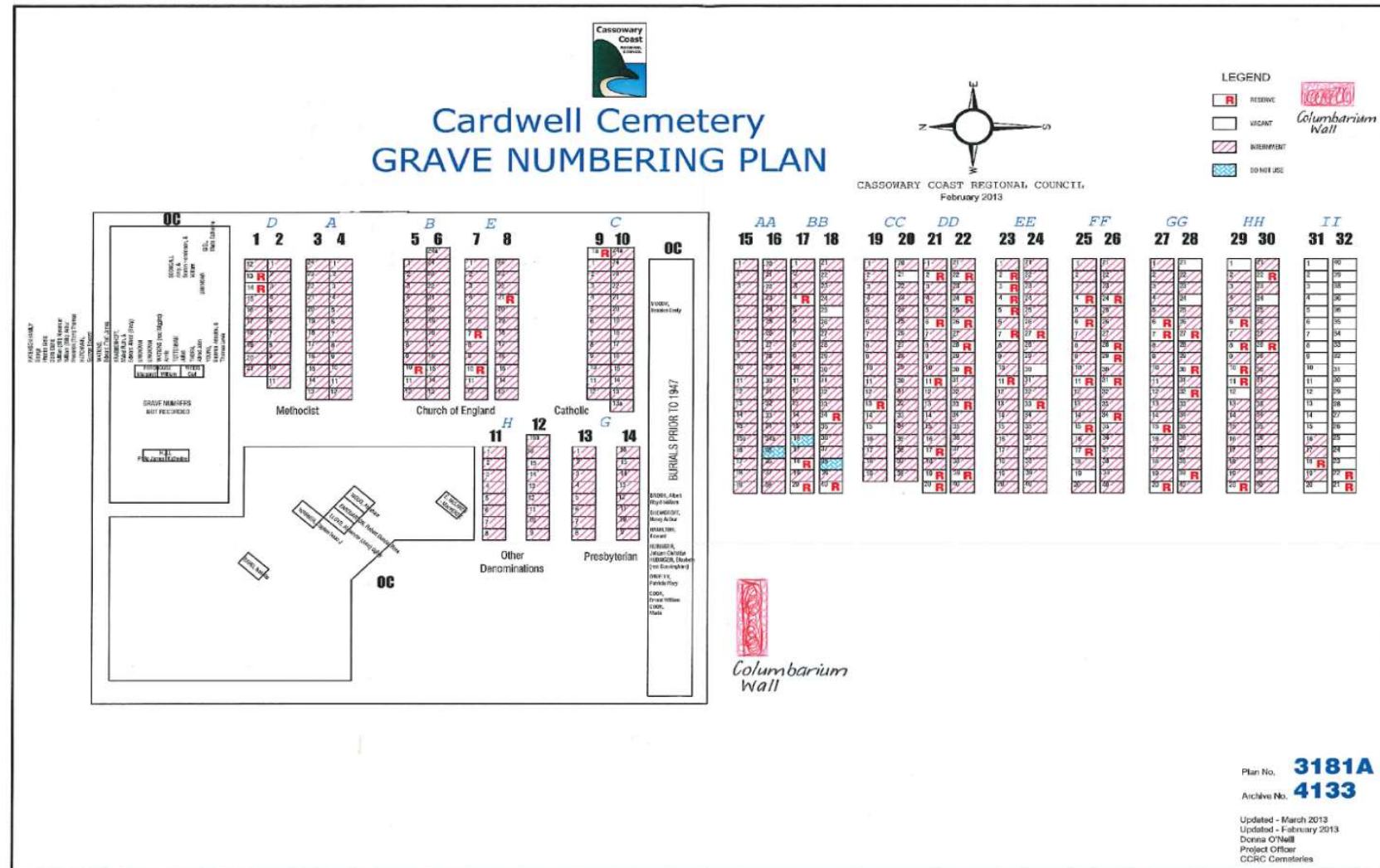


**Tully Cemetery: New Lawn Plaque Section**

**Attachment 7: Tully Cemetery Capacity**

<b>Section</b>	<b>Current Capacity</b>	<b>Average burials/year</b>	<b>Projected timeframe</b>
Lawn beam	18 plots	29	March 2022
Lawn headstone	52 plots		Approx. 9 years (2030)
Full monumental grave/vault (combined area)			
Columbarium wall	108 niches	5	21 years (2043)
Wall vault	8 niches	3	2.5 years (2023/2024)

### Attachment 8: Cardwell Cemetery Map





**Attachment 9: Cardwell Cemetery Photos**



**Cardwell Cemetery: Lawn Plaque Section**



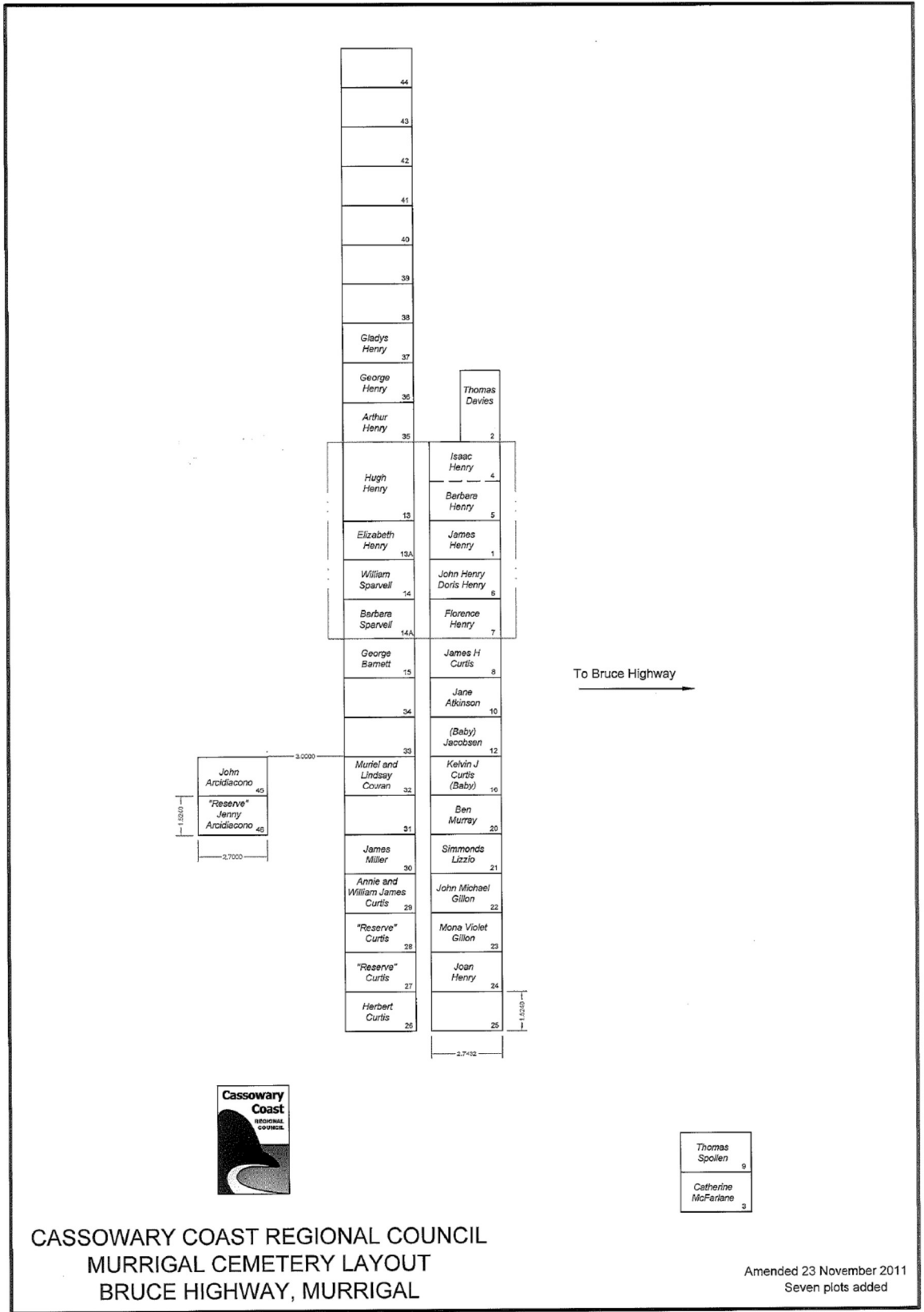
**Cardwell Cemetery: Lawn Plaque Section with Markers**

## Attachment 10: Cardwell Cemetery Capacity

Section	Current Capacity	Average burials/year	Projected timeframe
Lawn beam	460 plots	9	51 years
Lawn headstone	N/A		N/A
Full monumental grave/vault	46 plots		7.5 years (2028)
Columbarium wall	72 niches	2	36 years
Wall vault	N/A	N/A	N/A



Attachment 11: Murrigal Cemetery Map



**Attachment 12: Murrigal Cemetery Photos**



**Murrigal Cemetery**





**Murrigal Cemetery**



**Murrigal Cemetery**



**Murrigal Cemetery**





**Murrigal Cemetery**