

**PROPOSED FUNERAL CHAPEL AND BURIAL GROUND AT CLARKELY HILL BURGHEAD**

**FOR DANIEL RALPH AND SON**

**WRITTEN REPRESENTATION IN SUPPORT OF NOTICE OF REVIEW APPLICATION**

**BUILDING DESIGN**

The objection to the application is centred on the modern design, prominence and visual intrusiveness of the proposed building and car park. All the other clauses in the policies quoted have been satisfied as listed below.

An alternative design of the building is included in this appeal in which the roofline has been broken up to reduce the impact of the building. The two end sections have been given a lower ridgeline and lower roof pitch, so that it looks more like a cluster of farm buildings, including catslide roofs.

Additional mounding/ground sculpture and planting to mask the building and car park from the road can be incorporated and screen planting of semi mature trees native to the locality and planted and protected at the beginning of the building process to speed up the masking process has been indicated on the appeal drawings. The building will then blend into the landscape with the visibility of the building from the road, broken up and obscured by the planting, rather than looking like a stark and prominent intrusion onto the landscape.

It is noted that the football stadium opposite is also a modern building masked by mature trees.

The approach to the village along the B9013 also has modern residential developments with red tiled roofs rather than the traditional grey slate, making the buildings even more prominent on the horizon.

**POLICY REQUIREMENTS MET**

Adequate roads public transport etc

Adequate water power drainage

Sustainable urban drainage

This is a community facility

Integration of renewable energy systems and construction, in the provision of roof mounted photovoltaic cells. Consideration is also being given to a deep borehole ground source heating system to eliminate fossil fuel usage

Conservation and enhancement of natural environment with extensive new planting of native trees and shrubs.

Ground investigations have already taken place to investigate pollution and contamination issues and the results have been approved by the appropriate consultees. The investigative excavations were also witnessed by a professional archaeologist, and no historical artefacts were found.

The site comprises vacant grazing land with no issues affecting the built environment. The natural heritage will be enhanced with the planting of indigenous trees and shrubs encouraging the establishment of wildlife.

Proximity to populated areas and locational justification – where possible, burial grounds should be located conveniently close to but outwith settlement areas.

#### **POLICY REQUIREMENTS NOT APPLICABLE**

Adequate social educational healthcare facilities

The site is private with no public spaces as such, although the public will have access.

There are no flood related issues.

There are no mineral workings affected, the land is scrubby grazing land not prime agricultural and no forestry land affected.

There will not be any industrial waste produced.

The development does not involve serviced industrial premises or workings.

No issues raised re the capacity of the local infrastructure

There are no noise emission issues.

There are no retail activities proposed.

There are no existing building affected by the proposals.

The applicant's family have provided a service to the local community for 105 years, and are aware that there is a growing need for new funeral and burial facilities within the district and this application has the support of the Moray Council Burial Grounds Dept.

Our country is traditionally Christian and burials have always taken place within a Christian context. However, our modern society has an increasingly diverse nature with people of different faiths and cultures and those of no religious faith at all. The client, as an experienced undertaker, has identified a need to cater for those who would feel uncomfortable celebrating the life of a loved one within a traditional Christian church environment. As a private funeral chapel and parlour, this would be a non-denominational and non-faith based facility open to all, in which all would feel comfortable.

The client also wishes to incorporate an area of natural or eco burials within the site as outlined below:

## **NATURAL OR ECO BURIAL**

### **The Best Option for the Environment**

#### **The Concept:**

The unique sense of place will be achieved through a clear guiding concept: the central idea is that everything about the "eco" part of the cemetery is as 'natural' as possible. In essence, nothing will be introduced to the cemetery which would interfere with, or pollute, environmental processes. For example, to help natural processes, plots are dug only into the active soil layer, the deceased are not embalmed and are buried in coffins of untreated sustainable wood or wicker., often overplanted with a tree native to the area.

#### **Key Points:**

**No embalming:** Bodies buried on this site will not be embalmed. This is to speed up the natural processes of returning the body and its nutrients to the soil, and to reduce the amount of artificial and toxic chemicals and materials introduced to the soil.

**Burial in the upper soil layers:** Bodies will be buried as close to or within the active soil layer as possible. Depth will vary according to the soil conditions.

**Trees:** A native tree could be planted at the head or base of the plot. Families can choose from a dozen nursery plants. These trees are the basic building blocks of a native habitat restoration programme.

Over time, other trees will be planted over and around the plot. To improve survival, trees for plots will not be planted in summer.

Sandstone memorials can be provided as an alternative to trees, this could be sourced from the nearby Meadowhillock Quarry.

**Caskets:** Caskets will be provided by, or approved by the applicant and will be made from sustainably grown and harvested woods or wicker, with no chemicals or artificial compounds used in treatment of the wood or manufacture of the casket or its accessories.

The family business includes joinery with the occasional manufacturer of bespoke coffins in locally grown timber. The eco concept could well offer potential for the future expansion of this service.