

Design & Access Statement

For Proposed Link Detached “Green Crematorium” Building On Land At “Oakfield Wood Burial Ground”, Ash Street. Wrabness. Essex. CO11 2TQ. For Woodlands Burials.

1. Introduction

This Design & Access Statement (DAS) accompanies a planning submission for a Proposed Detached Link Detached “Green Crematorium” at “Oakfield Wood Burial Ground”, Ash Street. Wrabness. Essex. CO11 2TQ. The DAS has been written to meet the requirements of Article 4C of the Town & Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995 (as amended).

2. Site Location & Description

2.1. The application site edged in red on the site location plan is an already established “Green Burial Ground” with over 3000+ existing burial sites that is run from the estate office at the nearby Wrabness Hall complex, & the Green Burial ground serves the local Wrabness, Tendring & Colchester communities, & lies just outside the main settlement area to the west of the Wrabness village, & is within walking distance from the nearby Wrabness village along the existing rural country lanes in the settlement area close to the site. The existing site is well established in the local community & was granted planning approval back in 1997 under planning application number **97/01161/FUL** for the current activities undertaken on this site, which is one of 250+ other” Green Burial” sites currently in the UK. Planning approval was granted back on 29th March 2019 under planning application number **18/01818/FUL** for a detached ceremony hall which began construction on site last year. Planning approval was also granted back on 14th April 2022 under planning application number **21/01863/FUL** for a link detached Chapel of Rest. The green burial ground will then have the benefit of a meeting hall with sanitary facilities + refreshments etc. as well as a Chapel of Rest on the site in order to enhance the overall experience for those attending funerals or visiting graves, which we hope will be further enhanced by the addition of the proposed “Green Crematorium” building to the south. As a further diversification of the burial services available on this established green burial ground, planning approval was granted on 23rd May 2023 for the change of use of existing agricultural land to a wildflower meadow burial site & woodland burial site under planning application **23/00150/FUL**.

The overall concept of a “Green Burial” is Green by its very nature & the applicant already has 3000 plots + trees on the existing site, & has planted in excess of 25,000 trees & hedgerows to date within the overall site curtilage leading to a boost to the local ecology & natural habitat on the site as a result, & indeed it is planned in the future that as each Burial Site becomes “full” that it will be transferred to the ownership of Essex Wildlife Trust who will take over the ownership title & overall site management of each Burial Site in due course in order to maintain & enhance the overall natural habitat & biodiversity on the site, which will result in a boost to the local wildlife population as it develops & becomes fully established in a tranquil & natural green setting. With this in mind we have not sought the services of a specialist ecology consultant & have not undertaken a Phase 1 Habitat survey in this instance as the overall purpose of the Green Burial Site is to boost the natural habitat upon our passing, which when one thinks about it is not a bad contribution to make to the

planet as a whole at the end of all of our lives!. It's a very proactive way of contributing positively for the overall good of mankind & the planet as a whole & good way of putting something back for the benefit of future generations! The whole process on the site can therefore be considered to be "Extremely Ecologically Friendly" which will contribute greatly to the local habitat & natural environment. The existing Green Burial Site already has the benefit of vehicle access out onto Wheatsheaf Lane & an established road network linking the site to the wider community. The site has an established extensive gravel finished informal car parking area & drive surround to the buildings which is more than capable of providing 53 + cars for the funeral services & visitors, which will be further enhanced once the ceremony hall construction is completed. This is fully established & will remain in place & will be further enhanced as part of these latest proposals, with additional vehicle access and car parking proposed to the Southern sides of the proposed new "Green Crematorium" building that will be sited to the South of the already approved Chapel of Rest Building & The Ceremony Hall Building.

3. The Main Issues

3.1. To further enhance the activities & services on the existing Green Burial site, the applicant wishes to construct a new detached "Green Crematorium" in order to provide a green & ecologically friendly on-site cremation service that will be carbon neutral & will make it the first nature reserve in the country to have a carbon neutral Green Crematorium, Chapel of Rest, & Ceremony Hall on their site, which will significantly reduce the carbon footprint of funeral & burial services undertaken on this site. Once the deceased have arrived on the site there will be no carbon emissions generated in preparing them for burial, or Cremation via Resomation (Natural Water Cremation), and carrying out the funeral service in the soon to be established Ceremony Hall & either interring them into the green burial ground, & finally placing a native broad leafed tree on their grave, or cremating the deceased in the proposed Green Crematorium via the Resomation process in the new Green Crematorium & then interring their remains in the Green Burial ground. The proposed Green Crematorium & the approved Chapel of Rest & the approved Ceremony Hall will be run & heated utilising green technology throughout with the photovoltaic roof panels generating electricity & the air source heat pump central heating systems providing heating to the proposed & approved buildings on the site.

3.2. There are now over 7 billion human beings living on our planet & this number is increasing fast. The introduction of a third choice at the end of life has the potential to ease the pressure of burial space, which in many countries is in short demand. The choice of different funeral services at The Oakfield Wood Burial Ground is open to all faiths, & the addition of a green gentle water cremation service will offer the families of the deceased with a wider choice of funeral service on this already established burial site.

3.3. Due to the substantial increase in the local populations in Tendring & Colchester between 2011 & 2021 that has seen population increases of 7.3% in Tendring & 11.3% in Colchester as well as 7.4% in Maldon, 5.5% in Braintree & typically 5.2% & 4.7% in Babergh & Ipswich which has resulted in increased demand & pressure on the local crematoriums at Weeley & Colchester. Weeley crematorium was built in 1986 when the population in Tendring was 130,000 & now this has increased to 150,000 without any additional capacity being added to the Weeley crematorium. The applicant has discussed this issue with local undertakers who are reporting that families are having to wait for up to 5 weeks for a cremation service to be undertaken.

This obviously prolongs the grieving period and stress for families, & the addition of this new green crematorium would help to ease the pressure on Weeley & Colchester crematoriums & help reduce the waiting times needed for grieving families at a very difficult time in their lives. There is now a multi million pound media campaign to encourage direct cremations, which has become more popular in recent times & involves a simple cremation without a service which can be carried out for a fraction of the cost of a full service. Oakfield Wood would like to offer this service in the proposed green crematorium building on the site & will also offer this direct cremation service to ethnic & religious groups who require this service within 24/48 hours of the deceased passing. The new green cremation service will provide an additional 4 full time jobs on this already established rural green burial site which will help to encourage employment in this remote rural part of Tendring.

4. Resomation (Water Cremation)

4.1. Resomation, is the process technically know as alkaline hydrolysis, an alternative to burial or flame cremation at the end of life. This water cremation process involves the use of a heated 95% water/5 5 alkaline solution accelerating the natural decomposition process associated with burial, returning the body to its natural elements.

4.2. Environmental Impact :- Several independent reports have found water cremation to have a number of benefits on the environment over other end of life options.

A recent independent study (TNC Report) proved that water cremation has a carbon footprint over 6 times less than flame cremation, & over 3 times less than burial. With around 450,000 cremations in the UK annually alone (Cremation Society 2019), using water cremation rather than flame cremation would save around 81,000 tonnes of CO₂. With environmental with environmental benefits & no harmful emissions, this innovation could help the industry improve its carbon credentials and meet the capacity challenges of a growing population by ensuring :

- i). A significantly smaller carbon footprint.
- ii). 7 times less energy required in the form of electricity & gas.
- iii). No airborne release of harmful particulates, nitrous oxides, mercury from dental amalgam & dioxin emissions associated with flame cremation.

4.3. End of Life Choice

Although water cremation is now available in the USA & Canada, as well as Holland, for the vast proportion of people worldwide, there are only two options at the end of life-flame cremation and burial. With a rapidly growing & already challenging level of population, people are becoming increasingly aware of their own environment footprint, both in life and in death & are seeking an alternative. Water cremation offers people a more natural gentle & environmentally friendly choice.

4.4. Natural Process

At the end of life the body goes through a natural process of decomposition. Water cremation enables the same natural biochemical breakdown process to take place as with burial. However, with water cremation the natural process is accelerated and instead of taking months & sometimes years, this happens in a matter of hours.

4.5. The Water Cremation Process

Water cremation uses a water-based solution to essentially speed up the natural process the body goes through at the end of its life.

When you bury a body in the ground nature uses bacteria as a major part of its breakdown of body tissues and it takes many months or years. The actual chemical process that occurs is alkaline hydrolysis carried out enzymatically by soil bacteria. Resomation uses the same chemistry but applies it differently. The body is placed in a coffin or shroud made from biodegradable materials and then carefully positioned in a water cremator. Instead of using fire, water cremation combines a heated water and alkali-based solution and this gentle method speeds up the natural hydrolysis process the body goes through at the end of life.

When the water cremation is complete, the remaining bone remains are removed from the Resomator before being dried, processed and returned to the bereaved as pure white powdered cremation remains. The water-based liquid is transferred from the Resomator to a treatment tank where it is checked before safely entering the local water treatment system and returned to the natural waste cycle of the rivers & the ocean. In this instance the applicant is to install a 30,000 litre water tank below ground for storing the water based liquid before it is collected by specialists for treatment before it is discharged back into the water system.

With the end of life options, whether it be vaporised water into the air from flame cremation or liquid entering the soil from burial, we all return to the water cycle at the end of life. Water cremation simply does this in a more managed and sustainable natural way that avoids adding to the greenhouse gas effect and climate change such as occurs with flame.

4.6. Typical Resomation System Layout.

The complete Resomation system consists of several pieces of equipment to ensure the simple and efficient operation, these pieces of equipment comprise of the following:- Drying Oven, Resomator, Tank System & Steam Generator. We have shown the typical layout for two Resomators on the proposed ground floor plan on drawing number 24-2023-09P to show a typical layout & the different areas & rooms required in order to safely carry out an Resomation process. The system is interconnected with certain power and communication supplies and delivery networks of cabling and pipework that carry electricity, water, gas, and electronic signals to operate and control these different elements of the water cremation process. Naturally, to operate effectively it is important that the Resomation system is laid out in the most optimum footprint, in line with the operators and end service providers requirements. The configuration of the system may vary slightly from site to site due to the confines of a particular end user.

4.7. Required Utilities.

To support the Resomation system there are a number of required utilities which need to be in place for the system to run effectively as outlined below, based on a single compact system:-

Power – 400V 4ph @ 50Hz. 45A max. – This is the power required to operate all the water cremation plant & ancillary equipment.

Additional power electric steam generator – 400V 3ph @ 50Hz 150A max. – This is the additional power requirements if an electric steam generator is required over a gas fired steam generator.

Natural Gas Supply (Steam Generator) – 22m³/hr @ 30-50mbar – This is the fuel source for the steam generator. LPG and other fuel sources can be used, but whatever fuel source is used, it must quickly and easily generate the power supply required.

Water – 3-6 bar supply with 25 litre per minute flow rate – This water pressure range & water flow rate will ensure that the optimum water cremation fill rate and process timings are met by the plant.

Compressed Air – 80 litres/min @ 6 bar – Compressor supplied as part of the system to operate flow valve functions effectively throughout the process.

Drainage – Standard 4” dedicated connections to main approved sewer outlet – There are at least 4 drain outlet points to be catered for in the water cremation system.

Ventilation – 8-10 air changes per hour – The general plant area should be well ventilated.

Network – A reliable ethernet connection to the internet – The ethernet also allows immediate remote access by the supplier for technical support whenever it may be required, without having the unnecessary delay and cost of someone visiting the site to physically trace a fault.

4.8. We feel that there is a definite need for this building on the site which will enhance the diversity of the on-site facilities & services available by way of the proposed Green Crematorium for those arranging funerals & for visiting deceased friends & relatives etc. The presence of 7 full time staff & 5 part time staff on the site will greatly assist in the smooth running of the Green Crematorium as well as the Ceremony Hall, Chapel of Rest & green burial ground once established.

5. The Current Proposals.

The proposed Green Crematorium building measures 19 metres in length x 8.6 metres in width with a 45 degree 1.5 storey main roof pitch above, with the addition of a 4.644m wide x 3.7 metre long 35 degree pitched roofed single storey link section to provide a covered link to safely transport the deceased into the Green Crematorium that is protected from the elements at every stage in order to ensure a dignified entrance too & from the Chapel of Rest next door & the Ceremony Hall for friends & family at all stages. The main entrance to the Green Crematorium is sited towards the north elevation via the central link into the Chapel of Rest building next door. The

Green Crematorium building off the central link element will have a central Resomation cremation area. A preparation area & a utility area to the rear.

On the first floor of the proposed Crematorium building is a staff room to the front that faces the car park, a full staff bathroom including bath, shower, WC & wash basin (in order to cater for any eventualities encountered in the recovery & processing of the deceased), a staff office for administration purposes including organising funeral arrangements with the public & the general running of the cremation service. There will be an open staff kitchen & dining area off the landing area adjacent to the staff bathroom. To the rear of the first floor area is a storage are for recyclable coffins & equipment etc as well as a cupboard for water tanks used in the Resomation process below. & the kit required for the photovoltaic roof panels above. The design layout has been derived following discussions with Resomation Ltd in the Uk. Who have provided the technical input needed in order to put a viable scheme & layout of the equipment & plant needed for the water cremation service for this planning application.

6. Utility Services

The building can be connected to the existing electricity supply running along Wheatsheaf Lane. Foul drainage will be catered for by a specialist design, manufactured & installed Sewage Treatment Plant to pick up the toilets & sinks in the new Green Crematorium. There is plenty of room on site to locate the sewage treatment plant. Rainwater from the roofs will run to soakaways on the site, although we are going to look into the possibility of installing a rainwater harvesting system which could use the rainwater collected to be recycled & used to flush the toilets inside the new building?.

As the new building is to be sited on an existing “Green Burial Site” it naturally follows that the heating & lighting of the new building should have inbuilt “Green Credentials” & therefore we propose to heat the building using a specialist designed, manufactured & installed Air Source Heat Pump complete with underfloor heating at ground floor level & radiators to the first floor level. The building will also benefit from an electricity supply via photovoltaic roof panels to the South facing roof. All these renewable energy supplies will be channelled into the water tank cupboard at first floor level as part of the overall design package. The water tank cupboard at first floor level will also house the water tanks serving the bathroom & kitchen and ground floor toilet as well as the Resomation room below. Mains water supply can be via a connection to the existing supply in Wheatsheaf Lane. Once complete the building will be a self-sufficient & very green energy powered building, which fits in well with the general green theme of the site.

7. Planning Policies.

The relevant policies are as follows:-

National:-

- i). NPPF National Planning Policy Framework
- ii). National Planning Practice Guidance.

Local:-

Tendring District Local Plan 2007.

- i). QL9 Design Of New Development
- ii). QL10 Design Of New Development To Meet Functional Needs.
- iii). QL11 Environmental Impacts And Compatibility Of Uses.
- iv). HG9 Private Amenity Space.
- v). HG18 Permanent Dwellings For Agricultural Workers.
- vi). EN1 Landscape Character.
- vii). EN3 Coastal Protection Belt.
- viii). TR1A Development Affecting Highways.
- ix). Vehicle Parking At New Development.

Tendring District Local Plan 2013-2033 And Beyond Preferred Options Consultation Document (July 2016).

- i). Policy SPL1 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development.
- ii) Policy SP2 Meeting Housing Needs.
- iii) Policy SP3 Providing For Employment.
- iv) Policy SP4 Infrastructure & Connectivity.
- v) Policy SPL3 Sustainable Design.
- vi) Policy HP1 Improving Health & Wellbeing.
- v) Policy HP2 Community Facilities.
- vii) Policy HP3 Green Infrastructure.
- viii) Policy HP4 Open Space, Sports & Recreation Facilities.
- ix) Rural Exception Sites.
- x) Policy PP13 The Rural Economy.
- xi) Policy PPL2 Coastal Protection Belt.
- xii) Policy PPL3 The Rural Landscape.
- xiii) Policy PPL4 Biodiversity & Geodiversity.
- xiv) Policy PPL5 Water Conservation, Drainage & Sewerage.
- xv) Policy PPL11 Renewable Energy Generation.
- xvi) Policy CP1 Sustainable Transport & Accessibility.

Supplementary Planning Guidance:-

- i). Parking Standards Design And Good Practice Guide (2009).

8.0. Principle Of Development: The Government on 27th March 2012 published the National Planning Policy Framework which took immediate effect with regards to the determination of planning applications. It is considered that the following provisions are relevant to the determination of this application.

The presumption in favour of sustainable development – Paragraph 14 sets out that “At the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. This should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan making & decision taking.

Paragraph 7 aims to provide a definition of sustainable development & it sets out that there are three dimensions to sustainable development which are economic, social & environmental in order for a development to be classified as a sustainable development all three dimensions must be met.

8.1. Economic Role:- This application proposes the erection of a new detached Green Crematorium on the development site & it is considered that allowing this application to be approved will have a direct economic benefit to the local economy particularly during the construction period. It is proposed that locally sourced labour will be used by the applicant and that it is envisaged that locally sourced materials/local merchants/firms will be utilised as appropriate.

Furthermore, whilst the use of the site is for an already established green burial purposes it will also have a direct social benefit to the local community for generations to come, & should be considered to be a positive addition to Wrabness Village & the outlying local area. In this regard it is considered that the proposed development meets the economic role in terms of the definition of Sustainable Development.

8.2. Social Role:- The application proposal hereby submitted proposes the development of a parcel of land to the west of the existing public car parking area which will make a positive contribution towards the local village community & outlying area by way of providing an on-site green cremation funeral service to work alongside the approved ceremony hall & Chapel Of Rest on the already established green burial site to further enhance the services available, which is currently lacking at present. The establishment of a Green Crematorium on this site will also provide both full time & part time employment in this rural setting to the benefit of the local community. In this regard, it is considered that the application is in accordance with the social role in terms of the definition of Sustainable Development as set out within the NPPF.

8.3. Environmental Role:- The site is located in a sustainable rural location with direct access to many of the key service provisions & with direct access to the local public transport network. The new Green Crematorium building proposals will be constructed to a high-quality utilising environmentally friendly construction methods & materials where appropriate. It is considered that allowing this application to be approved will enable the provision of much needed facilities on the site, which is environmentally sustainable & makes the best & most effective use of the land. Development on this site therefore is fully in accordance with the environmental role in terms of the definition of Sustainable Development.

The NPPF makes it clear that these three roles should not be taken in isolation because they are mutually dependent. Paragraph 14 sets out that at the heart of the NPPF is the presumption in favour of Sustainable Development which should be seen

as a golden thread running through both plan making & decision taking. As set out above, it is considered that this proposed development fulfils all of these three roles & therefore the development as proposed is classified as “Sustainable Development”!.

It is therefore considered that the presumption is in favour of the proposals hereby presented which fully comply with the principals of the NPPF and the application should therefore be considered favourably.

In terms of the hereby submitted application the NPPF also makes it clear at paragraph 17 that one of the core planning principals is to “proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver the homes, business & industrial units, infrastructure and thriving local places the country needs. The application will assist in delivering much needed bereavement facilities for the area and will have a positive impact upon the local economy during the construction phase & therefore this proposal should be supported.

Emerging Policy SD1 of the TDLP:PSD states the Council will take a positive approach that reflects ‘the presumption in favour of sustainable development’ as contained in the NPPF. Further, the Council will work proactively with applicants jointly to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area. Planning applications that accord with the policies in the TDLP:PSD will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise

With regard to Policy SD8 in relation to the hierarchy of transport types, the Council will require that all proposals for new development will be required to maximize Accessibility through their location to existing services and facilities and by providing safe pedestrian and cycle connections to existing networks as a priority over motorised forms of transport. Any development that fails to demonstrate that the provision of transport types in the policy’s hierarchy of transport modes has been given full consideration will not be acceptable. The existing green burial site is an already established site & there is an existing car parking area & vehicle access out onto Wheatsheaf Lane which is already in place & is used at present by those already attending funerals & visiting graves on the site. The construction of the additional on-site facilities by way of our current proposals won’t change this situation regarding transport to and from the site & therefore is of little relevance regarding this current application as it is already happening now & won’t change as a result of these proposals.

9.0. Planning History

9.1 The site has been subject to a previous planning application & a brief description of the application is provided below:-

<u>Reference</u>	<u>Description</u>
97/01161/FUL	Land To South of Oakfield Wood, Wrabness. Change Of Use To Woodland Burial Ground (A Variation Of Consent TEN/93/1324) APPROVED 27.01.1998.
18/01818/FUL	Proposed Detached Ceremony Hall & wardens accommodation and change of use land from agricultural use to burial ground. Oakfield Wood Burial Ground, Ash Street. Wrabness. Essex. APPROVED 29th March 2019.
21/01863/FUL	Proposed Link Detached Chapel Of Rest. Oakfield Wood Burial Ground, Ash Street. Wrabness. Essex. APPROVED 14th April 2022.
23/00150/FUL	Proposed Change Of Use Of Existing Agricultural Land To A Wild Flower Meadow Burial Site & Woodland Burial Site. Oakfield wood Burial Ground. Ash Street. WRabness. Essex. APPROVED 23rd May 2023.

10. Design Principles And Concepts

10.1. The current application proposals to build a New Green Crematorium Building on the proposed development site comprise of the following:-

- a). **Existing Overall Burial Ground Site Area = 24.15 hectares. Outlined In Blue on the site location plan.**
- b). **Existing Overall Burial Ground Site Width = 653.57 metres from East to West & 664.31 metres from North to South.**
- c). **Existing Development Site Area = 0.284 hectares. Outlined In Red on the site location plan.**
- d). **Existing Development Site Overall Length = 52.933 metres.**
- e). **Existing Development Site Width = 49.907 metres.**
- f). **Ground Floor Area = 164.176 sq. metres** comprising of a single storey link with a unisex disabled WC leading from the chapel of rest building & ceremony hall beyond, & with external exits leading to the front & rear of the building. There is a staircase leading to the first floor above. The link leads to the main Resomation area with a preparation area to the front & a utility room to the rear.
- g). **First Floor Area = 105.75 sq. metres** comprising of a staff room, with a staircase leading from the first floor landing down to the ground floor lobby area, staff bathroom, staff office & staff room, staff kitchen & dining area, & equipment store & water tank/plant room to the rear.
- h). **Building Dimensions :-** The overall width of the new Green Cremation Building = 8.6 metres with an overall length of 19 metres. The overall ridge height is approx.

8.608 metres with a roof pitch of 45 degrees to the main roof span to match the height of the adjoining Chapel of Rest building. The overall width of the single storey link to the ceremony hall is 4.644 metres x 3.70 metres in length with an overall roof height of 4.332 metres with a roof pitch of 35 degrees.

10.2. Regarding the external finishes to the new building, we propose to construct the new building as proposed – Roof to be finished in re-constituted slate or equal approved). External Walls to be constructed of Maldon Antique Red Facing Brickwork plinth with Natural Oak cladding above. Rainwater goods to be black PVC on natural oak fascia boards, with natural oak bargeboards to all roof gables. The windows & doors to be natural oak coloured aluminium double glazed units. The roof facing Southwards will be fitted with photovoltaic panels & the main roof plains to the South & North will be fitted with Velux conservation rooflights to provide high level light to the new first floor staff rooms.

The overall design concept is to construct a building that matches the design & materials of the previously approved ceremony hall & chapel of rest buildings, on a similar overall scale, & looks like a typical agricultural barn which will be finished in traditional materials so that it blends in & doesn't look out of place in this rural community setting. The building will also have a degree of natural screening, with existing natural hedgerows to the front & sides. The design theme is to create a natural oak clad barn in this rural setting in order to match the existing countryside location.

11. National Planning Policy Framework “Delivering Sustainable Development”

Paragraph 3 Supporting a prosperous rural economy:-

28. Planning policies should support economic growth in rural areas in order to create jobs and prosperity by taking a positive approach to sustainable new development. To promote a strong rural economy, local and neighbourhood plans should:-

Support the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings.

Promote the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses.

Support sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments that benefit businesses in rural areas, communities and visitors, and which respect the character of the countryside. This should include supporting the provision and expansion of tourist and visitor facilities in appropriate locations where identified needs are not met existing facilities in rural service centres; and

Promote the retention and development of local services and community facilities in villages, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.

12. Principal of Development

The central policy for this proposal is COM4 of the Saved Plan states that permission will be granted for the change of use or redevelopment of land or buildings for appropriate community use provided the proposed facility:-

- a) Is readily available to local people and ideally served by viable public transport.
- b) Is not detrimental to the character and amenities of the areas.;
- c) Will not lead to unacceptable parking or traffic problems; and
- d) Does not compromise a site with overriding planning or infrastructure constraints. In addition, for proposals outside the Settlement Development Boundaries the following criteria need to be satisfied;
- e) There is a proven local need for the facility; and
- f) There is no suitable site available within the settlement it is intended to serve.

The proposed development site lies outside of the settlement development boundary but is accessible to the local village community by the existing rural roads, as well as having the benefit of main line bus services to the east of Wrabness Village in Wrabness Road, with footpaths linking this service to the development site. The proposed rural barn design blends in with the rural countryside environment, and will complement the previously approved adjoining ceremony hall. All the existing hedgerows are to be retained in order to provide natural screening to the new building. There is adequate parking for visitors to the previously approved new Ceremony Hall & the Chapel of Rest building as well as the proposed Green Crematorium Building & it is anticipated that most visitors & users of the services provided on the site will be from the immediate Tendring District on most occasions. The green burial site is already established & is in operation & therefore this issue is already established on this site. The previously approved ceremony hall & chapel of rest buildings & the proposed Green Crematorium Buildings will enhance the public facilities available on the site, & there is a proven need for this new building on the site in order to serve the local community that isn't provided by the existing public facilities on the site at present. There is insufficient capacity at present for cremations in the Tendring & wider Colchester & Ipswich & Suffolk districts & the construction of the proposed Green Crematorium Building will relieve some of the pressure on these existing establishments. There aren't any other suitable sites in the local community & this site is the obvious place to build the new Green Crematorium for the reasons already stated as it is immediately adjacent to the already approved Ceremony Hall & Chapel Of Rest Building & the existing green burial ground which it is being built to serve. The building has been located away from the settlement boundary to avoid any issues regarding noise emanating from the building after normal working hours, which due to the stated opening hours we don't feel that this will ever be an issue in this remote location. By siting the proposed Green Cremation building adjacent to the already approved Ceremony Hall & Visitor Centre & Chapel Of Rest Building on this already established green burial ground we are neatly containing a complete package of services relating to green burials & green cremations in one place in a very green & sustainable location.

With regard to parking on the site we have provided 53 + parking bays of 5.5m x 2.9m size & also including 2 disabled parking bays of 6.5m x 3.9m size on the existing & proposed extended informal car parking area & the drives surrounding the previously approved & proposed new buildings which is already established & we intend to provide an additional 4 no. parking bays of the same size plus a further disabled parking bay to the south of the new building. We can provide 4no. disabled parking bays in this area & close to the new buildings with tarmacked finishes linking these disabled bays to the new buildings for disabled access facilities. The new car parking area is to have a tarmac finish with all surface water drainage discharging to soakaways within the site. The existing vehicle access leading from the existing parking area out onto Wheatsheaf Lane is already established & should therefore meet ECC Highways requirements.

The ramps leading from the new car park to the main building entrances are to be fully compliant with AD part M of the building regulations. All internal circulation routes & doors widths are also to comply with AD part M, with a full disabled WC on the ground floor.

The site area is not in a flood zone & therefore this issue is not relevant to this application.

13. Planning Assessment

13.1. The applicants Woodland Burials strongly contends that the proposed development will not have any adverse impacts that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh its benefits and there are no specific policies in the framework which indicate that development should be restricted. The site is set in the countryside, however we feel that the economic benefit of constructing a good quality building for the community to use on the existing green burial ground in this location would not have a detrimental or urbanising effect upon the countryside environment, & indeed, we feel that the positive effect and overall benefits to the local Wrabness Village community would far outweigh any arguments regarding the development of the site, & would lead to a positive impact on the local community as a whole by transforming this site into an important local rural asset with rural employment opportunities to the local Wrabness Village & the overall Tendring community. Taking account of the contribution that the proposed development could make towards addressing the identified shortage in community facilities and the previously identified lack of capacity in existing local & wider cremation sites, we feel that these current proposals meet the development objectives of the draft local plan, we would strongly contend that the benefits of the scheme in its ability to help reduce the pressure & reduce the workload on the districts existing crematorium at Weeley & Colchester & Ipswich/Suffolk beyond substantially outweigh any adverse impacts that may arise. As such planning permission should be granted without delay.

13.2. As explained before the site is well located in relation to local services and with Excellent public transport links, ensuring compatibility with the frameworks goal to cut down on greenhouse gases and reduce car journeys. The proposed Green Crematorium building development is ideally placed to help support & further enhance the ongoing viability and vitality of the overall site and local rural community, addressing a key objective of the draft local plan and the government's national planning policy and guidance.

14. Access

14.1. Vehicular access to the existing green burial site is via an existing entrance onto the Wheatsheaf Lane highway on the eastern boundary as shown on the application drawings, & this vehicle access is already established & is already in use.

14.2. The ground within and around the site is generally level with no steep gradients or slopes for the occupants to concern themselves with. There will be a disabled ramp to the main front door of the new building & tarmacked drive & pathway areas leading to the new disabled parking bays to the south of the new building all in accordance with approved document M of the building regulations in order to assist access and egress by wheelchair users. The site is also considered to be readily accessible to emergency service vehicles.

15. Transport

The main mode of transport in Wrabness is by motor vehicle in this more remote rural community, which is enhanced by the local Wrabness branch line train station less than three quarters of a mile away, & a bus route running along the bottom of Primrose Hill & the top of Wheatsheaf Lane along Wrabness Road approximately 1.5 & 0.5 miles away respectively. As the site is already established & is already in full operation the sustainability of transport modes too & from the site has already been established with regard to this issue.

16. Consultations

16.1. We have not discussed the proposed application with TDC planning prior to this planning re-submission.

16.2. The Local Parish Council & other parties will no doubt be consulted during the planning application process and their comments and views taken into account when considering this application.

16.3. We have not consulted with the highways department, as the vehicle access to the existing site & the proposed new building etc. are to remain as existing, and due to the extremely low traffic volumes and open clear visibility along Wheatsheaf Lane, we do not think that this will be a major issue when considering this application. We don't believe that ECC Highways had any objections to our previous proposals, which remain unchanged & will be further enhanced on-site under our current proposals.

16.4. The environment agency has been consulted regarding our previous planning applications, however as this site is within an already established development above the estuary below, & therefore the risk of flooding is extremely negligible, & therefore no separate consultation will be required.

The client has discussed the previously approved Ceremony Hall proposals with a flood consultant "Flood Sense" in Swaffham Norfolk who confirmed that although parts of the site are in flood Zone 3, the area of proposed change of use site (Burial Ground C), which is sited on higher ground towards the north of the site & also the approved ceremony hall building that will be sited towards the east of the overall site are actually outside Flood Zone 3 and are not in an area of flood risk. Our new Green

Cremation building will be sited immediately to the south of the previously approved Ceremony Hall & Chapel of Rest buildings.

16.5. We have not consulted an Ecology Consultant regarding the phase 1 habitat survey on this occasion due to the fact that the green burial activities on the site are an ecological enhancing activity which by its very nature is slowly helping to build a woodland habitat for wildlife for future generations. It should be noted that TDC Tree & Landscaping Officer was broadly in favour of our previous proposals, which will remain the same under this application.

17. Conclusion

17.1. The proposed development of this existing and already established green burial site comprising of a new Green Crematorium building is in close accord with both national and local planning policies. The proposed site development will also provide enhanced local amenities & facilities, and employment opportunities to the local community in a low-level impact rural setting to the overall benefit of the local community and environment, which in time could provide a rural public service & visitor asset in this remote area of Tendring District.

If approved, the scheme to provide a new Green Crematorium Building on the site would enhance the on-site public services & facilities, setting, maintenance, operational use and overall site security of this existing green burial site and would not give rise to material harm by way of traffic generation, visual disharmony, or any other issue of acknowledged planning importance. We have given thought to the location of the new building in relation to its impact upon the local rural community, hence its location to the south of the approved ceremony hall & to the west of the existing car parking area & behind the existing hedgerow running along the eastern side of the car parking area on the site.

It is therefore respectfully requested that with all of the above taken into consideration, regarding the proposed carbon neutral Green Crematorium building, the possibilities for creating further rural employment & the further enhancement of the services & facilities that would be built on this site, that will be the first green burial site of its kind in the country that also incorporates a green crematorium, & the fact that establishing this facility on the site will go a long way to offering alternative green cremation services on this site which will help to relieve the pressure on the already stretched existing TDC crematorium at Weeley, planning permission be granted for our proposals.