

Crematorium at Gungahlin Cemetery and Southern Memorial Park Frequently Asked Questions

Southern Memorial Park

1. What is the latest update on the Southern Memorial Park?

The ACT Government is currently undertaking work to develop a memorial park (cemetery) in south Canberra to ensure a full range of burial and interment services can be provided across the ACT.

Designs and costings for the Southern Memorial Park are currently being prepared to start planning the infrastructure and landscaping needed for the site on Long Gully Road. A draft masterplan was prepared in 2012 and the next steps will include costings and detailed design work for Stage 1 of the development.

The Southern Memorial Park development will include consideration of the range of burial, cremation and memorial needs for Canberra's diverse communities.

2. What is the timeline for the Southern Memorial Park?

Consideration of Southern Memorial Park is in the early stages with Stage 1 being designed and costed. It is proposed that the Southern Memorial Park would provide interment services for the next 100 years, and as such, it is likely that the development of Southern Memorial Park will occur over a number of stages and years. This page will be updated as more information on the development and proposed timelines becomes available.

3. Where will the Southern Memorial Park be located?

The proposed site is on Long Gully Road in South Canberra.

4. Why is the Southern Memorial Park being considered?

Woden Cemetery is effectively fully subscribed for most major faiths. Burials will continue where a site has been reserved. The ACT Government has decided not to proceed with the extension of Woden Cemetery given surrounding Eddison Park is considered a key public open space area and is particularly important as Woden town centre continues to grow.

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Population projections show the ACT reaching a population of 450,000 by 2022 and 700,000 by 2058. The ACT Government recognises our city is growing and is also becoming more culturally diverse, so we need to provide cemetery and crematoria services which all Canberrans can access.

Gungahlin Cemetery is the only cemetery available to the general public for a range of burial options. This presents equity issues for the South Canberra community and means we do not have long term capacity for burials in the ACT. Southern Memorial Park will address this by providing a service for south Canberra and giving an estimated 100 years' capacity.

5. Why has the site in Tuggeranong been chosen for Southern Memorial Park?

Cemeteries and crematoria require specific land zoning and, as they can never be moved, their location should be carefully considered. A number of locations were investigated as part of the development of the 2012 master plan and a site off Long Gully Road and Mugga Lane was found to be most appropriate due to its size, zoning, access and proximity to existing facilities.

6. What services will be offered at the Southern Memorial Park?

Southern Memorial Park is proposed to be a full service cemetery that will meet the diverse needs of the entire ACT community. While detailed design work is still underway, the Government expects that Southern Memorial Park will offer various types of burials, cremations and memorial gardens for the interment of cremated remains. There may also be potential new services such as alkaline hydrolysis (water cremation).

Crematorium at Gungahlin Cemetery

1. Why do we need a new crematorium?

In 2018 the ACT Government engaged with the community on a review of the *Cemeteries and Crematoria Act 2003*. This engagement process told us that 1 in 10 people who have a religious or cultural need in relation to burial or cremation do not currently have this need met by the services in Canberra. Further consultations indicated the unmet need is largely in relation to cremations.

The ACT Government is committed to ensuring that all people in our diverse community have access to services that meet their needs. The development of this of this new crematorium helps deliver on this commitment.

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At present, the ACT has one privately owned crematorium to serve a population of approximately 425,000. The ACT's current cremation rate is 75%. In comparison, NSW had 49 crematoriums at 30 June 2016 which is equivalent to one crematorium per 155,000 population and a cremation rate of 66%.

2. How does this impact on Southern Memorial Park?

Southern Memorial Park is a number of years away from being developed. This means that when the time comes to consider cremation services at Southern Memorial Park consideration could be given moving the crematorium from Gungahlin Cemetery to Southern Memorial Park, or building a new crematorium at that site if there is sufficient demand. As Stage 1 for Southern Memorial Park is yet to commence, the new crematorium in Gungahlin Cemetery can be made fully operational and serve the needs of the community in the lead up to Southern Memorial Park being opened.

3. Where in Gungahlin will the Crematorium be located?

The crematorium will be located at the Gungahlin Cemetery in Mitchell.

4. Why has Gungahlin Cemetery been chosen for the new Crematorium?

Cemeteries and crematoria require specific land zoning and the siting of crematoria in particular should be carefully considered. Land that is zoned correctly and available for cemeteries or crematoria is limited. Locating the new public crematorium at a facility already operated publicly makes logistical and operational sense. It will mean the community can access more services in one location.

5. What is the timeline for the Crematorium?

The Crematorium is expected to be operational in late 2020.

6. Where will the cremator be bought from?

This has not yet been determined.

7. Is there going to be an additional Chapel?

No, there will not be an additional Chapel.

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8. What services will be offered at the Crematorium at Gungahlin?

The crematorium will offer cremations. Gungahlin Cemetery already provides for interment of cremated remains and memorialisation, and this will continue.

9. Is there going to be a memorial garden for interment of cremated remains?

Both Woden and Gungahlin Cemeteries already have provision for interment of cremated remains.

10. Is there an existing building for the Crematorium?

No. The crematorium would be housed in a new building.

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