

## **DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT**

Rectory Lane Cemetery, 3 Close Lane, Berkhamsted

This document should be read in conjunction with, "The Conservation and Heritage Policy Statement Document", for related relevant planning policy and guidance, and with the scaled planning drawings of the proposal.

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### **1. INTRODUCTION**

The Rectory Lane Cemetery is under going repair and upgrading as part of a wider national lottery funded project to make the cemetery more accessible to the public, safer, with a increased amenity provision. Discussions have been ongoing with Dacorum planning and this application relates to items that Dacorum planning have indicated will require planning permission. The ownership of the cemetery is split between the older lower Northern section, that is a closed cemetery managed by Dacorum Council, and the later upper Southern section that is managed by the PPC(Parochial Church Council) and falls under the ownership of the position of Berkhamsted Rector, under who's direction the applicant has been empowered to submit this application.

### **2. PROPOSAL SUMMARY**

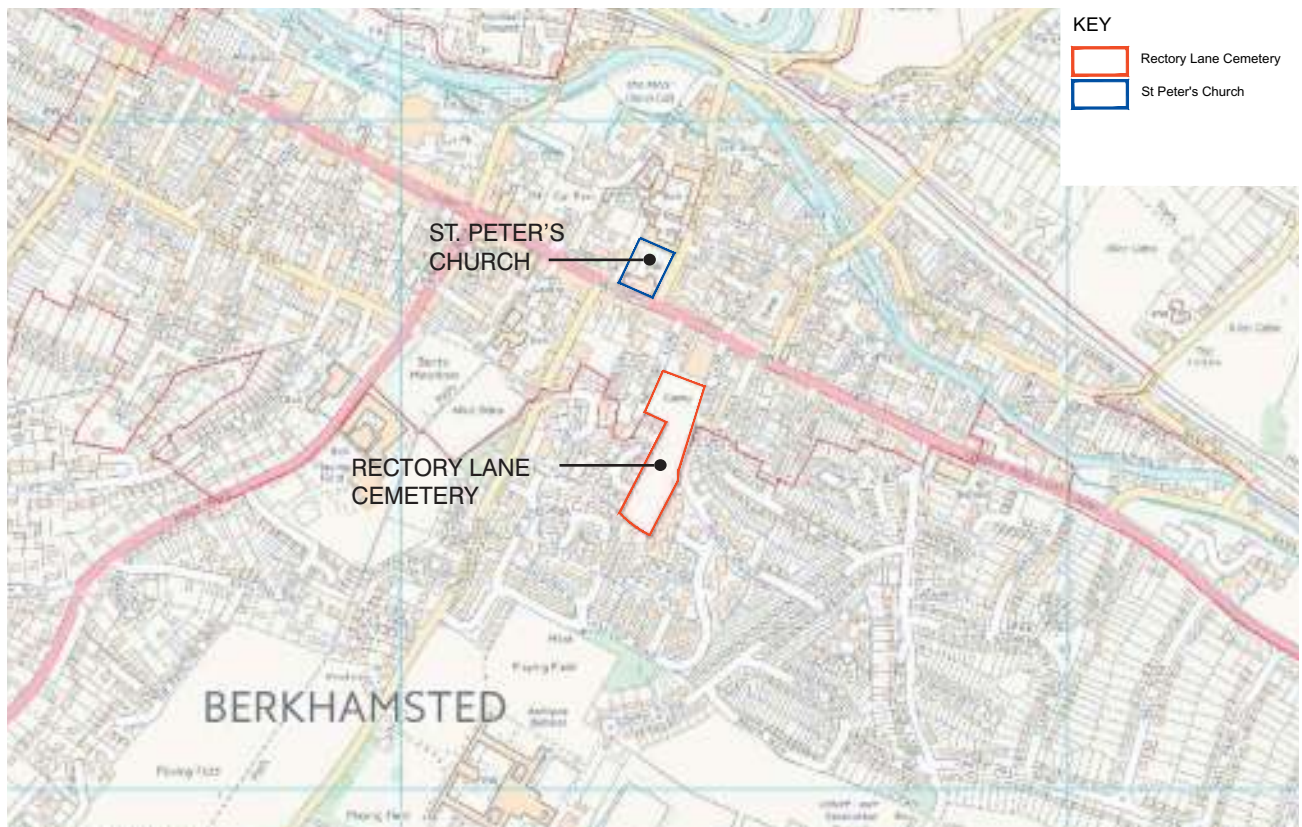
1. The change of use of the existing derelict Sexton's Hut to a visitor information center with repair works carried out to the derelict building under permitted development.
2. The introduction of a ridge rooflight on the Sexton's hut clay tiled roof.
3. The upgrading of the existing cemetery paths to resin bound gravel paths, in order to improve accessibility and safety.
4. The introduction of external lighting as part of the overall improvements in the Cemetery's amenity and security.
5. The introduction of information signage inside of both Cemetery entrances, off Rectory Lane near the brick gate piers and through the sheppards gate off Three Close Lane.

### 3. THE WIDER CONTEXT

Berkhamsted is a successful market town with its High Street in a softly sloping valley. The picturesque Grand Union canal weaves through the town. The town is divided into clear areas with the land around the Motte and Bailey Norman castle to the south, the canal area and rail station separating the castle from the High Street in the centre of the valley. Housing areas occupy both sides of the sloping valley. The High Street has a mix of building types but its overall character is a mix between Classical, Arts and Craft and Tudor buildings. In the 1960's and up until today new buildings have been added with varying degrees of success. Most of the housing is Victorian brick with some houses having Arts and Crafts detailing. Through the 1970's and 1980's and up until today shared modern apartment blocks have been added to the housing stock. The Conservation area in which the Rectory Lane Cemetery is located is Area 1 "The Berkhamsted High Street" further information about the Conservation Areas is contained within the Heritage Statement accompanying this document.



A BIRDS EYE VIEW OF THE RECTORY LANE CEMETERY AND SURROUNDINGS



THE SITE AT RECTORY LANE  
BERKHAMSTED(RED OUTLINE)



#### 4. THE IMMEDIATE SITE AND CONTEXT

Rectory Lane Cemetery was opened in 1842 on a ground behind the Elizabethan manor, Egerton House (now the site of the Rex Cinema), by Carlotta Catherine Anne, Countess of Bridgewater and widow of John Egerton, 7th Earl of Bridgewater. The cemetery is situated between Three Close Lane and the old St Peter's rectory and is a hidden gem of Berkhamsted's heritage. The cemetery contains several Commonwealth War Graves from both World War I and World War II, and among the notable burials is the grave of General Horace Smith-Dorrien, a veteran of the Second Boer War and World War I and former Governor of Gibraltar. It was extended in 1921 but by the late 1940s the cemetery was filling up and a new civic cemetery was opened at nearby Kingshill. The Rectory Lane Cemetery Project is the Friends' flagship project to restore the area as a community green space.



#### 4. BACKGROUND OF THE PROPOSAL AND COMMUNITY CLIENT

The Friends of St Peter's was launched at a very successful public meeting on May 15th 2013. It is a Registered Charity (Registered Charity Number 1160314). The objects of the Friends of St Peter's include preservation, repair, maintenance, restoration, improvement and ornamentation of the fabric of the Parish Church of Great Berkhamsted and of the churchyards occupied by or belonging to the said church. Churchyard shall mean any land occupied by or belonging to the Parish Church and includes any monuments or buildings therein and the walls, fences or railings enclosing any such land. The Friends of St Peter's has no paid staff and approximately 50 members. The FoSP have an active practical role in the care, maintenance and enhancement of one of the finest medieval churches in Hertfordshire, and the churchyards that belong to it. The Friends encourage a wider appreciation of the church and its churchyards as a rich store of local and architectural history. Together with the Cowper Society they are responsible for the management of concerts, recitals and other events in St Peter's Church. They organise social and fund-raising events and act as a focus and resource for all who are interested in the continuing history of our town. The Friends provide an opportunity for individuals, families, local institutions and businesses to become involved in the care and conservation of this irreplaceable heritage.

The Friends of St Peter's Berkhamsted have received initial support from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and the Big Lottery Fund (BIG) for the Rectory Lane Cemetery project.

The aim is to restore the heritage of the town's burial ground and to enhance it to become a truly sustainable community asset. Development funding of £73,600 has been awarded to help the Friends progress their plans to secure a full grant of £952,200 in 2017.

The project aims to carry out essential conservation work on memorials, pathways, seating and walls, improving access and interpretation on site and enriching wildlife. Information on the 1,000 memorials and 7,000 burials that have taken place in the cemetery will be digitised. In addition to telling stories of the lives of local dignitaries such as the Cooper family of the agrichemicals industry and the Smith-Dorrien family, there are also 27 war graves from the First and Second World Wars.

James Moir, a Trustee of the Friends of St Peter's and Convenor of the Rectory Lane Project, said: "We are truly thrilled that the National Lottery has recognised us with this support. It will enable us to step up a gear in the work that is planned to take the Cemetery from a 'Dead' to a 'Living' Space.

"There is something for everyone in the community to get involved in from the care of wildlife to stewarding at live events. We are looking for many different skills and all are welcome. Check the Friends of St Peter's Berkhamsted website or chat to us at our market stall on the last Saturday each month."

Rectory Lane Cemetery was founded by public subscription in 1842. Demand for space meant that two further 'terraces' were opened and consecrated in 1894 and 1921 respectively, making three acres in total. The cemetery is one of the precious few green spaces in the town, with more than 200 trees.

The Friends of St Peter's has been in close correspondence with both the Dacorum Planning Department and The Local and Borough Councils and has secured a portion of match funding from the Borough Council.

## 6. THE DESIGN PROPOSAL

In discussion between Dr. James Moir and the Dacorum Planning Department a number of items of the overall Rectory Lane Master Plan were highlighted as requiring a planning application where other elements of the design were indicated could be carried out as permitted development. this application is applying for planning for the items highlighted below.

1. The change of use of the existing derelict Sexton's Hut to a visitor information point with repair works carried out to the derelict building under permitted development.
2. The introduction of a ridge roof light on the Sexton's hut clay tiled roof.
3. The upgrading of the existing cemetery paths to resin bound gravel paths, in order to improve accessibility and safety.
4. The introduction of external lighting as part of the overall improvements in the Cemeteries amenity and security.
5. The introduction of information signage inside of both Cemetery entrances, off Rectory Lane near the brick gate piers and through the sheppards gate off Three Close Lane.

The design proposal in general aims at making the Rectory Lane Cemetery an accessible green space, , with clear information and route finding, well maintained, accessible, and a space that can accommodate sensitive activities alongside the cemeteries traditional role as a place of memory and remembrance.



## 7. COMPONENTS OF THE PLANNING PROPOSAL

After consultation with the Dacorum Planning department it was indicated that several items within the overall Rectory Lane Project required Planning Permission.

### 1. CHANGE OF USE OF THE SEXTON'S HUT TO VISITOR INFORMATION CENTER

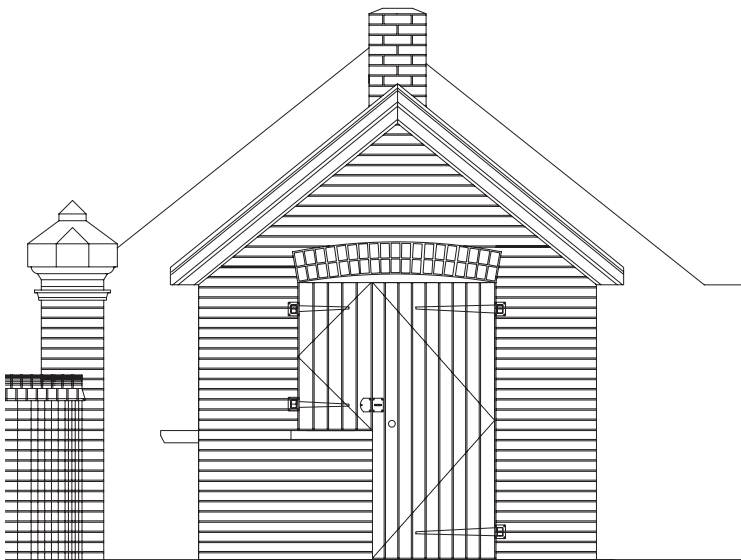


A PHOTO OF THE EXISTING DILAPIDATED SEXTON'S HUT FROM INSIDE THE CEMETERY

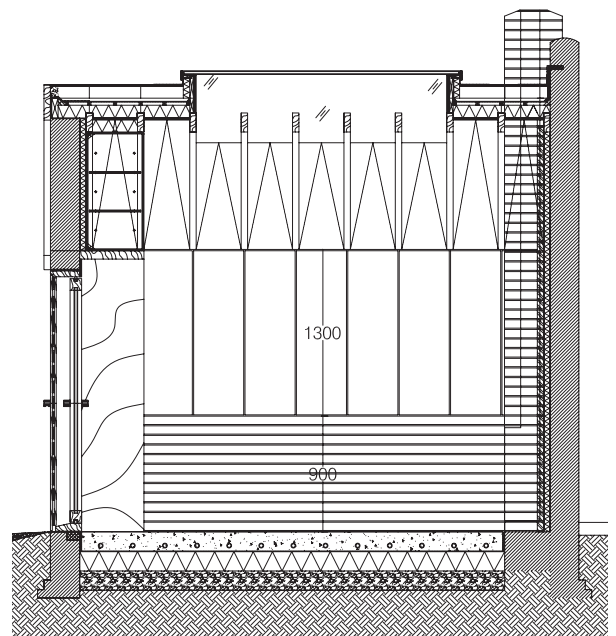


A PHOTO OF THE EXISTING DILAPIDATED SEXTON'S HUT THREE CLOSE LANE

IT IS UNDERSTOOD THAT THE REPAIR WORKS TO THE SEXTON'S HUT CAN BE CARRIED OUT UNDER PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT RULES, IN DISCUSSION WITH THE DACORUM PLANNING DEPARTMENT.



PROPOSED REPAIR WEST ELEVATION



PROPOSED REPAIR LONG SECTION

A CLEAR GLAZED RIDGE ROOF LIGHT IS PROPOSED IN THE CLAY PEG TILE ROOF OF THE SEXTON'S HUT AND WE ASK THAT THIS BE CONSIDERED AS PART OF THIS APPLICATION.

### PHOTOS OF COMPLETED RENOVATION WORKS

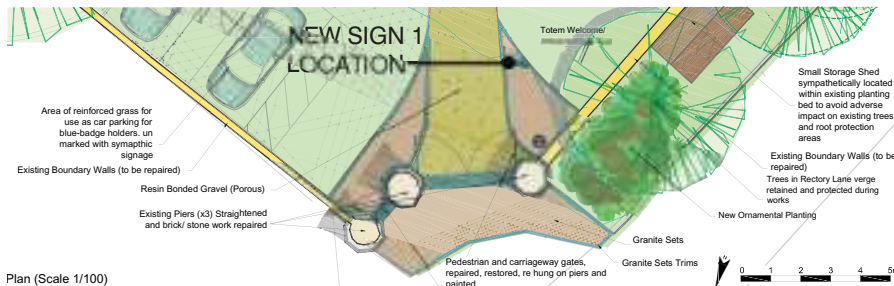
8-12 Clarence Road Depot, Berkhamsted, HP4 3AS  
Telephone 07881428701  
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## 2. NEW SIGNAGE

Rectory Lane Cemetery- **Rectory Lane- Main Entrance**



Above : Visualization of proposal to cemetery entrance from Rectory Lane . Proposed refurbished gates not shown



Plan (Scale 1/100)

## TOTEM SIGNAGE AT THE RECTORY LANE GATES

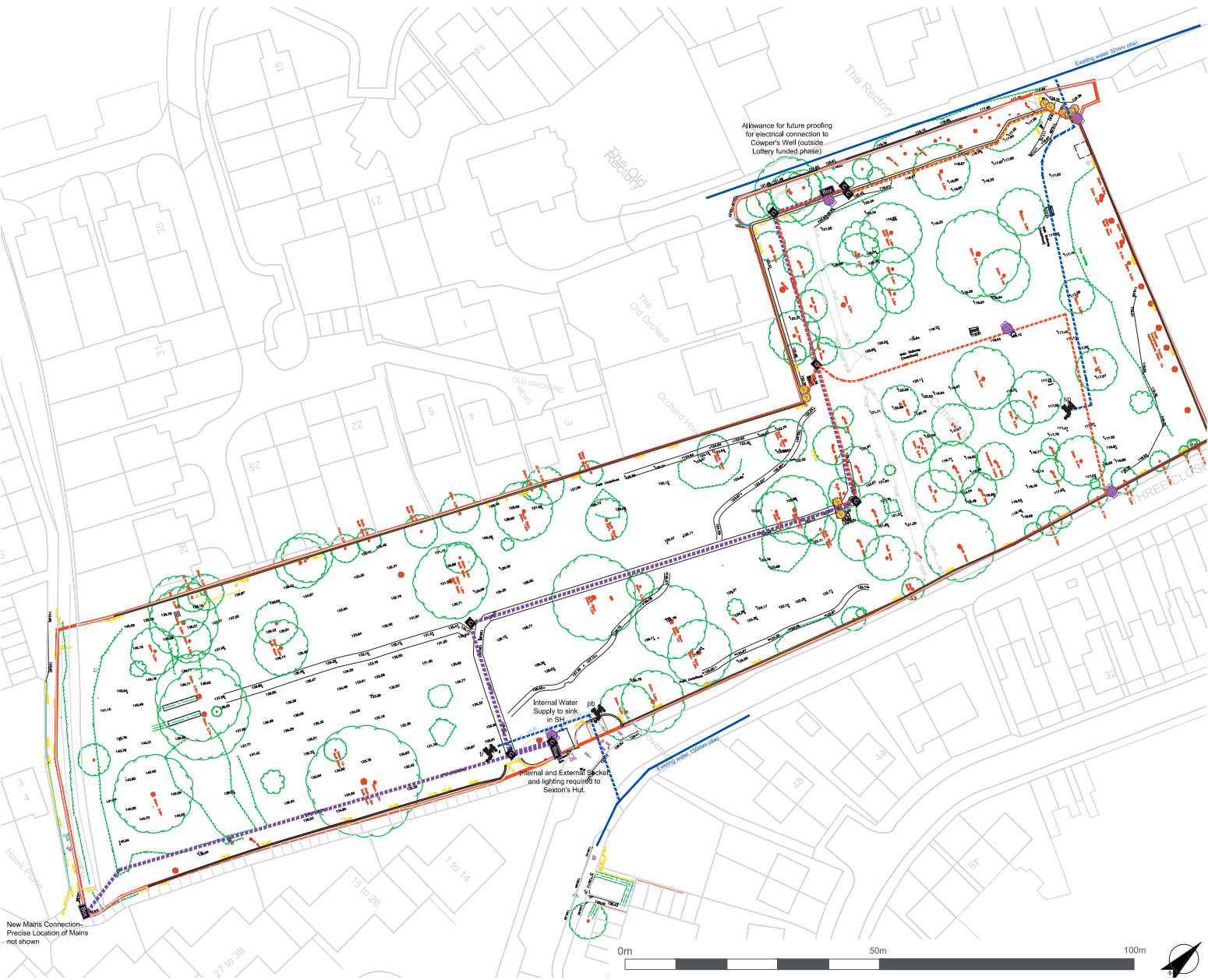
Rectory Lane Cemetery- **Three Close Lane Entrance and Sexton's Hut**



Plan (Scale 1/100)

TOTEM SIGNAGE AT THE THREE CLOSE LANE SHEPPARD GATES  
DESIGNED TO MATCH THE SIGNAGE AT THE RECTORY LANE GATES





KEY

Cabling Trenching

- 3 Phase Elec Cable
- Single Phase Elec Cable
- Water Main (Off Site)
- 32mm Water (New Connections)

Pillars, Chambers

- Box Pillar, Distribution, Meter
- C Electric Chambers (Change of Direction)

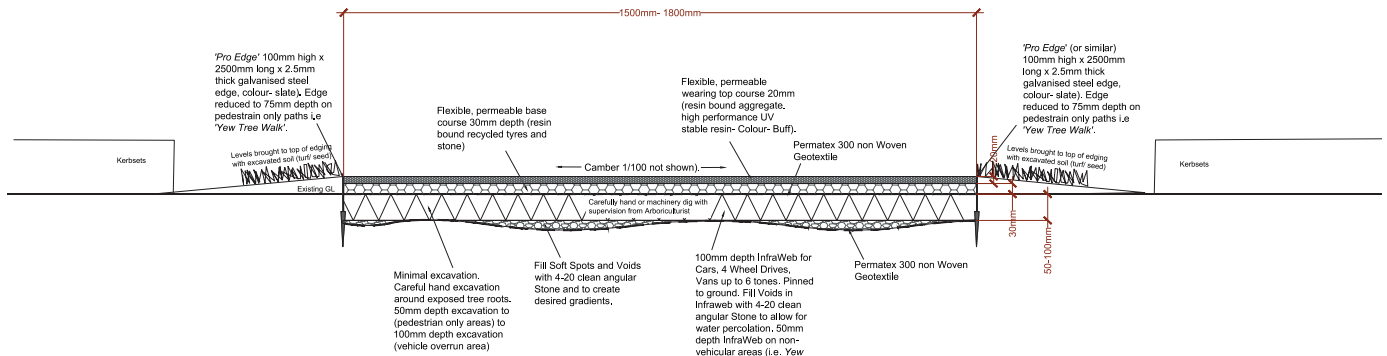
Fixings

- ES Electrical Double Socket (attached to Wall)
- ESG Electrical Double Socket (Ground Mounted)
- UL Architectural up-lighters to historic features
- Water Source
- sp- Underground Standpipe Connection. For use during events
- pb- Public Bib Tap
- tr- Animal drinking Trough

THE POSITION OF THE NEW LIGHTING IS INDICATED ON THE LIGHTING PLAN SHOWN HERE:  
WHERE INSPECTION OF THE FINAL SPECIFIED LIGHTS IS REQUIRED IT IS PROPOSE THE APPEARANCE OF  
THE LIGHTS COULD BE MADE A PLANNING CONDITION OF THE AWARD.

## 4. NEW GRAVEL BOUND PATHS

Illustrative Section- New Cemetery Footpaths within root protection areas of existing trees  
(Permeable surfacing and minimal excavation) Scale 1/5 at A1, 1/10 at A3



Selection of Photographs to show existing paths to be surfaced and the relative location of trees and memorials. Approximate extent of footpaths shown as dashed line.



1.5m wide path to eastern side of Lower Cemetery (partially Yew tree lined)



1.8m wide path leading to Foundation Stone in Lower Cemetery (not tree lined)



1.8m wide path leading from Memorial Arch to Middle Cemetery (Some large broadleaf and evergreen trees in close proximity to path.)



1.8m wide path leading from Three Close Lane gateway (not tree lined)



1.8m wide path to Yew Tree Walk Lower Cemetery (Yew tree lined)

PATH CONSTRUCTION DIAGRAM AND PATH DIAGRAMS. IT IS PROPOSED THE COLOUR OF THE RESIN BOUND GRAVEL COULD BE MADE A PLANNING CONDITION OF THE AWARD. A BUFF COLOUR IS CURRENTLY UNDER CONSIDERATION.



## MASTERPLAN SHOWING PATH LOCATIONS

## **8. THE NEW WORKS IN RELATION TO THE NEIGHBOURING PROPERTIES.**

Although some properties front onto the Rectory Lane Cemetery, above the older closed Northern section of the cemetery, off Rectory Lane, there is not believe to be a significant impact from the proposed works on these properties.

The properties along 3 Close Lane are on the opposite side of the roadway and do not front onto the cemetery making impact on these properties even more unlikely.

Amenity lighting has been positioned a reasonable distance away from the Cemetery boundaries and is here for security and sureness underfoot in low lighting at evening time and during events in the Cemetery.



## **9. ACCESSIBILITY, SERVICES AND TRAFFIC**

The scheme has been designed to adhere to the relevant building regulations and sustainability standards.

Access to the new proposal will be through the main Rectory Lane Gates and the Three Close Lane Sheppards Gates.

The proposals will tie into existing services and will drain to the mains sewers or soak away as currently arranged.

The proposals has the addition of two designated short term accessible parking spaces just inside the Rectory Lane Gates.

## 9. RELEVANT POLICIES DACORUM CORE STRATEGY

The scheme has been designed closely in line with the following Dacorum Core Strategy Policy objectives and in principal with the NPPF objectives.

### **CS4 The Towns and Larger Villages**

*Encourages Social and Community Uses*

The cemetery is the 2nd largest open space in the center of Berkhamsted after Butt's Meadow, yet up until the work that has been undertaken by the Friends of St. Peter's over the last 4 years the cemetery had been largely dropped from the Berkhamsted Collective imagination.

The cemetery is being enhanced to encourage greater public use. The Master plan (Forming part of this application) illustrates provision has been made to encourage a wider range of uses. Heritage open day events have already expanded the use with demonstration of historical skills, live music and historical tours of the cemetery and created awareness of the Cemetery in the wider Berkhamsted Community. The Heritage lottery funded scheme, of which this application forms a part, will further enhance, sensitively repair and enable greater access to what is already a beautiful space by dog walkers, walkers and local residents.

### *Maintaining Open Character*

The proposal scheme does not alter the open nature of the cemetery.

### **Figure 12 Urban Design Principals**

Character

Defined layout and enclosure

Making Connections

Quality of the Public realm

Legibility

Adaptability

Diversity

Safe and Welcoming

The focus of the Friends of Rectory Lane has been on conservation, sensitive repair and enhancement in order so the much loved existing character is maintained for generations to come.

The new proposed paths are re-inforcing and re-instating existing paths bringing the cemetery back to its former layout while improving safety and accessibility. Lighting is making the site self and welcoming and together with the other elements of the Master plan and maintenance programme aimed at meeting the urban design principals set out in figure 12.

### **CS12 Quality of Site Design**

A) Safe Access

B) Parking

C) Minimal Intrusion, right to light, privacy and minimal disturbance

D) retain important trees

The wider cemetery Master plan proposals provides 2 accessible parking spaces within the cemetery boundary and the proposed enhancements within this application are aimed at enhancing safe access.

It is believe the proposals will create minimal intrusion, have no impact of natural light to neighbouring properties, will not affect privacy to any greater degree than current use and given the nature of the work covered in this application and distance from Neighbouring properties will create minimal if any disturbance to local residents.

A tree survey has been carried out and the works covered in this application will not affect important trees.

**CS23 Social Infrastructure**

Located to aid accessibility

Designed to allow different activities

The proposal is aimed at meeting these two objectives as covered above under CS4.

**CS25 Landscape Character**

Quality

Character

Condition

The focus of the Friends of Rectory Lane has been on conservation, sensitive repair and enhancement in order so the much loved existing and historical character is maintained for generations to come.

**CS27 Quality of the Historic Environment**

Conservation of heritage assets

Integrity, setting and distinctiveness

Please see the Conservation and Heritage Document included with this application and this document covers this CS27 in detail.