



## REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 21ST MAY 2012

**SUBJECT: GELLIGAER CEMETERY EXTENSION**

**REPORT BY: ACTING DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

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### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To propose and seek approval for a joint working project between Caerphilly CBC and Cardiff University Archaeological Department at Gelligaer Cemetery extension site.

### 2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Gelligaer cemetery is now at capacity and requires an extension to accommodate future burials. The extension site is an allocation (Policy CF1.12) within the Adopted Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan (LDP) November 2010. The extension site lies immediately adjacent to the Gelligaer Roman Fort Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) and initial investigations on the proposed cemetery extension site indicates significant Roman remains of national importance. A full archaeological inspection of the site is required before the site can be utilised as a cemetery.

#### **Glossary of Terms**

GGAT – Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust

SAM – Scheduled Ancient Monument

LDP – Local Development Plan

### 3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 The Gelligaer Cemetery extension is an allocated site within the adopted Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan. Delivery of this scheme will contribute toward the implementation of the Statutory Local Development Plan.
- 3.2 Scheduled Ancient Monuments have statutory protection under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Act 1979.
- 3.3 The Welsh Government recognise the importance of unscheduled monument as well as scheduled ancient monuments and *Welsh Office Circular 60/96: Planning and the Historic Environment: Archaeology* recognises the need for positive planning and management to bring sensible solutions to the treatment of sites with archaeological remains and to reduce the areas of potential conflict between development and preservation (Para 7).

## **4. THE REPORT**

### **4.1 Background**

- 4.1.1 The site in question (area edged red – Appendix 1) has been allocated and protected for a cemetery extension within the adopted Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan (LDP). The Council manages ten municipal cemeteries throughout the county borough and the existing cemetery at Gelligaer has been operational since 1935. During the period of 2011/2012 there were 26 interments at Gelligaer cemetery, however the cemetery is now at capacity and there is a critical need to extend the cemetery to accommodate future burials.
- 4.1.2 Caerphilly County Borough Council has submitted a planning application (11/0772/LA) to extend the existing cemetery at Gelligaer that included an access road, car parking and footpaths. The Local Planning Authority were advised by the Curatorial Division of the Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust (GGAT) that the proposed development is likely to be a significant archaeological resource due to the proximity of the land to two Roman forts, a Roman marching camp and the medieval castle motte of Twyn Castell at Gelligaer and that archaeological surveys needed to be undertaken.
- 4.1.3 Initial trial pits and geotechnical evaluations were undertaken and results indicated that there was material of national archaeological interest. It was recommended that a more thorough investigation be undertaken. The Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust (GGAT) (Projects Division) was commissioned by Caerphilly County Borough Council to carry out the archaeological evaluation works. The works took place during April and May 2012 and the report was submitted in October 2012. Archaeological significant remains and structures of national importance were discovered during the course of the evaluation, most notably the presence of a Roman Road.
- 4.1.4 There is now a requirement for the archaeological remains at the proposed cemetery site to be fully investigated before the whole site can be used as a cemetery. However there is a significant cost associated with this work. Initial estimates indicate the cost could be well in excess of £100k, although no final figures are available as yet.
- 4.1.5 In respect of the current outstanding planning application, the results of the archaeological surveys have meant that the planning application site area has been amended and reduced in size. The eastern half of the planning application site has been retained for cemetery use and will provide sufficient burial space for the next 5 years. The western half of the site is considered to hold the more significant archaeological interest and has thus been excluded from the application site at this time to allow the investigative works to be undertaken without compromising the need for additional burial space in the short term. The planning application is still pending a decision.
- 4.1.6 A separate planning application will need to be submitted for the western half of the cemetery extension site once the archaeology works have been completed for the use of the land as a cemetery.

### **4.2 Proposal**

- 4.2.1 The proposal is for a two-phased approach. Phase one would be the use of the eastern half of the allocated site for burials for the next 5 years. During this time, phase two would be running in parallel on the western half of the site, which would include undertaking the required archaeology work and the reinstatement of the land for use as a cemetery.
- 4.2.2 In an attempt to try to reduce the costs to Caerphilly CBC, Cardiff University Archaeological Department were contacted to establish the potential for a joint working project. A number of options were discussed with the Head of Roman Archaeology, Dr Peter Guest.
- 4.2.3 Dr Guest was keen to establish a working relationship with CCBC that would enable the University to use the site as a training excavation site for the archaeological students. This

will enable the necessary archaeological work to be undertaken without CCBC directly employing skilled consultants to undertake the work, dramatically reducing the cost of the required work to the Council.

- 4.2.5 There is potential for part of the site to be used for interpretation purposes as part of the cemetery extension proposal and the reinstatement work, although a decision could be taken on this at a later date when the full extent of the archaeology and its significance has been established.

### **4.3 Timescales**

- 4.3.1 The University usually undertake training 'digs' in 4-week blocks over the summer break (June-September). This would mean that the work that is required on the site could potentially result in a project that would cover a period of 4-5 years.
- 4.3.2 Bereavement services are satisfied that this phased approach to the scheme will meet the Council's needs. The proposed timescale would still provide sufficient burial space over a period of 10 years, in two phases, and would not compromise the Council's requirements for burial space at Gelligaer Cemetery.

### **4.4 Partners**

- 4.4.1 There are a number of partners that would potentially be involved in delivering the project as follows:-
- Cardiff University would be the key partner that would be responsible for the physical work that would need to be undertaken;
  - GGAT are likely to want to be involved as they are the archaeological trust that cover the Gelligaer area and have produced the initial archaeological report. Dr Edith Evans, one of GGAT's Community Archeological Team has also been involved to date with the recommendations for the site and has a close alliance with the Archaeological team at Cardiff University;
  - It is also likely that there would be a small amount of involvement from Cadw given that the Gelligaer Roman Fort Site adjacent to the proposed excavation site is a Scheduled Ancient Monument.
  - The Gelligaer Historical Society is an active and key community group. Dr Guest has had a number of very positive dealings with the group and has suggested that they would be very keen and able to assist in the day-to-day running of the project.
  - The National Museum of Wales work with various partners to take custody of archeological artefacts where the landowner is unable to record, clean and store them.
- 4.4.2 Other than Cardiff University, the other possible partners (GGAT, Cadw, the Gelligaer Historical Society and the National Museum of Wales) have not yet been formally approached to determine if they would be interested in this project on a joint working basis. Whilst their involvement would be valuable, it would not be essential in terms of staff or financial resources.
- 4.4.3 As the landowner, it is anticipated that various departments of CCBC will need to participate in the project. Principally this is seen as offering the relevant officer advice and overseeing the project. The degree of participation will depend upon the final management arrangements for the project. All final decisions in respect of the artefacts, reinstatement of land and interpretation will also be that of the Council.

#### **4.5 Potential outcomes**

- 4.5.1 Principally the key outcome would be to identify the archaeological presence on the site and record the information so that the site can be used for the second phase of the cemetery extension, with minimal financial outlay on behalf of CCBC.
- 4.5.2 Dependent upon the archaeological remains discovered, there is the possibility of including some interpretation on the site, the retention of the Roman Road as an exposed feature for example. The interpretation of the site could be used as a tourist attraction, an educational tool and an important local historical focal point for the community.
- 4.5.3 The project will also seek to establish a good working relationship with high profile external partners, in this instance an education establishment that could benefit future projects within the County Borough.

#### **4.6 Constraints**

- 4.6.1 There is a potential that there will be times when burials will be taking place at the same time as the archaeological digs. In order to ensure that the very sensitive nature of burials is respected, an appropriate agreement will need to be reached with the University for the protocol during these times.
- 4.6.2 The proximity to the Gelligaer Roman Fort Scheduled Ancient Monument (Appendix 2) and the location of the land within the Gelligaer Common Historic Landscape of Special Interest (Appendix 3) in Wales, requires early consultation with Cadw to be undertaken to ensure that CCBC complies with all the relevant legislative requirements.

#### **4.7 Local Authority Obligations**

- 4.7.1 Under the *Welsh Officer Circular 60/96: Planning for the Historic Environment: Archaeology*, Local Planning Authorities have a number of responsibilities in relation to archaeological sites within their areas. These include the management of historic sites that contribute to the local landscape, amenities and economy and safeguarding the archaeological heritage through their development control functions.

### **5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are no equalities implications associated with this report.

### **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The majority of the project will run on a voluntary basis, with minimal outlay or investment required by CCBC. The University predicts that the project will principally be self funded and would require little or no additional funding from CCBC. The University would provide all of the necessary insurances.
- 6.2 If the Gelligaer Historical Society agree to become partners on the project then the day-to-day management would also be based upon a voluntary basis and reduce likely costs.
- 6.3 The costs of cleaning, recording and storing the artefacts would need to be covered. The University have indicated that there is scope for them to undertake this work if they have capacity. Failing this, the other option is to donate the artefacts to the National Museum of Wales, who will then be responsible for the recording, cleaning and storage of the artefacts. In this instance the National Museum of Wales would cover all the financial costs.
- 6.4 If CCBC wanted to retain the artefacts then it would be the responsibility of the Council to finance the recording and cleaning of all artefacts removed from the site. The estimated cost

of a specialist to clean and record them would be approximately £150 a day. It is anticipated that there could be 2000 plus artefacts removed from the site. Additional costs would then be incurred for the storage of the artefacts, some of which would require specialist temperature controlled environments. CCBC's museums and heritage department have confirmed that it is not council policy to retain artefacts and that they would support the artefacts being donated to the National Museum of Wales

- 6.4 There are a number of sources of funding available for heritage projects such as the excavation of Gelligaer Roman Fort area. These include, but are not exclusive to:
- Rural Development Plan 2007-2013;
  - Heritage Lottery Fund;
  - EU Cultural Heritage Funding (Horizon 2020 – is a new funding programme for research and innovation, including the contribution to culture).
- 6.5 Additional funding may be required if, at the end of the project it is decided to include interpretation as part of the restoration of the site, but this can be applied for nearer the time given the proposed timescale of the project.

## **7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 It is anticipated that the project will require minimal investment or commitment from the Council both in terms of funding and personnel resources. The University anticipates that the project will be relatively self-sufficient and would require minimal management input from CCBC in the day-to-day running of the excavations.
- 7.2 If the Gelligaer Historical Society are amenable to the suggestion of being the principal contact for the project, then it would be advisable to hand over the day-to-day management of the project to them. Detailed discussions with the Gelligaer Historical Society will need to be undertaken to confirm the level of management they are willing to undertake.
- 7.3 As the landowner, CCBC would need to retain some degree of involvement in the project to ensure that our key objective (i.e. the delivery of the future cemetery extension) is met. However, with regard to the actual groundwork being undertaken, it is anticipated that the Council's involvement can be minimal. Officer support and advice would need to be available to the Historical Society and to the University and close contact with regard to timetables and schedules would also need to be agreed.

## **8. CONSULTATIONS**

- 8.1 All comments have been taken into consideration within the committee report.

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 9.1 To note the content of the report and the proposals for a joint working venture to undertake archaeological investigative works to facilitate the extension to Gelligaer Cemetery.
- 9.2 To note the potential financial implications of the retention of any artefacts which are discovered on site and recommend to Cabinet that any artefacts be donated to the National Museum of Wales.

## **10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 10.1 To make members aware of plans for progressing this initiative.

10.2 To make members aware of the need to donate any artefacts discovered on site to the National Museum of Wales.

## 11. STATUTORY POWER

11.1 The Council as local planning authority has a duty to ensure the implementation of its Statutory Local Development Plan prepared under the auspices of the Town and Country Planning Acts and associated Regulations and Guidance.

11.2 The Council has a duty to fulfil municipal cemetery provision requirements as set out within the Local Governments Cemeteries Order (LACO) 1977.

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### Appendices:

Appendix 1 Cemetery Extension Boundary  
Appendix 2 Scheduled Ancient Monument Boundary  
Appendix 3 Gelligaer Common Historic Landscape of Special Interest