

Report of:	Head of Environment and Healthy Lifestyles
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Portfolio Leader:	Culture and Sport
Key Decision:	Yes
Report Track:	Cabinet: 21/05/20

**CABINET
21 MAY 2020
DEVELOPMENT OF NEW CEMETERY, NORTON ROAD / HEDNESFORD ROAD,
NORTON CANES**

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To update Cabinet on the progress made to date with regard to the proposal to develop a new cemetery at Norton Canes.
- 1.2 To seek Cabinet agreement to the allocation of the additional funds required to enable the proposed works relating to the development and operation of the new cemetery to be progressed.
- 1.3 To seek approval for permission to spend in relation to the proposals.

2 Recommendation(s)

That Cabinet:

- 2.1 Agree and approve the additional capital funds required to enable construction to start on the new cemetery and to fully deliver phase 1 of the project, totalling £100,000
- 2.2 Request that Council approves the revised capital programme for the scheme amounting to £1.411 million.
- 2.3 Agree and approve the additional revenue /capital budget totalling £53,870 required to start-up and operate the facility when opened. To note the cemetery will be self financing within a 3 year period.
- 2.4 Grant permission to spend in respect of the delivery of this project.
- 2.5 Delegate authority to the relevant Head of Service in consultation with the Culture and Sport Portfolio Leader to take such actions and enter into such contracts as necessary to progress the above scheme within agreed budgets.

3 Key Issues and Reasons for RecommendationsKey Issues

- 3.1 There is a lack of burial space in the southern part of the District and the Council has been searching for many years to establish a new cemetery that would serve the burial requirements of the residents in this part of the District. Cannock cemetery has been closed to new burials since April 2006.
- 3.2 Tender exercises have been undertaken for the two key elements of phase 1 of the project; for the civil works and the reception building and contractors are now awaiting award confirmation, subject to Cabinet approval.
- 3.3 Additional capital costs for the provision of a road crossing point by the Council and shared access works with the crematorium facility have been identified, together with the capital and revenue budgets required to run and operate the facility when it is completed.
- 3.4 The proposed phased development will provide local access to burial facilities in the south of the District for at least the next 25 years.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.5 To ensure that sufficient resources are made available to enable construction to start on the new cemetery, to fully deliver phase 1 of the project and to operate the facility when it is opened, Cabinet are asked to consider the recommendations set out in this report.

4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities

- 4.1 This report supports the Council's Corporate Priority of Improving Community Wellbeing and the provision of a new cemetery features in the Council's Priority Delivery Plan for 2020-21.

5 Report Detail

- 5.1 Officers have been investigating sites that would potentially provide the opportunity for the Council to develop a new cemetery for the southern part of the District in a similar way to that of Stile Cop cemetery which serves the northern part of the District.
- 5.2 Many sites have been identified over the last decade but have been discounted as being unsuitable for a variety of technical and financial reasons.
- 5.3 The Council originally approved and allocated £1.5m towards the delivery of a new cemetery in the district, of which £983,780 remains after the purchase of site, planning application and site specific surveys.
- 5.4 A further £327,000 has been earmarked for the project.

- 5.5 On 18 December 2014 Cabinet approved the purchase of the ex-Bleak House Colliery site for use as a new cemetery subject to planning consent being granted.
- 5.6 Planning consent for a proposed cemetery on the site was granted on 28 January 2015 and the purchase of the site completed on 22 October 2015.
- 5.7 Since the purchase of the site Members have received a number of update reports, the last being on 23 August 2018 when Cabinet resolved that the Head of Environment and Healthy Lifestyles be authorised, in consultation with the Culture and Sport Portfolio leader to:
- (A) Submit an outline planning application for a crematorium on the site and commence the process to identify a partner to deliver the cemetery and crematorium proposals
 - (B) An additional capital resource of £327,000 be earmarked to deliver the cemetery – only if the above option was unsuccessful.
 - (C) Further reports to be received on progress of the above decisions.
- 5.8 Before any of the above recommendations could be developed Horizon Cremation Limited submitted a planning application in October 2018 to develop a new crematorium on the site adjoining the Council's site. Planning consent for the development of a crematorium was approved on 21 January 2019.

Current position

- 5.9 In order to provide the capacity to progress this project and a number of other key capital projects a dedicated Capital Projects Officer post was created and appointed to in October 2019.
- 5.10 The project works have been split into 4 key elements for Phase 1¹:
- 1. Civils contract (Groundworks/earthworks/drainage/roads/pathways/street furniture and concrete runners);
 - 2. Reception building (Staff welfare/storage/public toilets and reception room);
 - 3. Landscape works (Tree / shrub planting and grass seeding);
 - 4. Services provision. (Electric/water/CCTV and sewerage).
- 5.11 In December 2019 the additional estimated sum of £327k was included the capital budget for 2020/21, making a total available budget of £1,310,780.
- 5.12 A competitive tender process has now been undertaken in January 2020 using one of Staffordshire County Council's framework agreements to select a contractor to build the civils element of the project. This resulted in tender returns adding a circa £500k increase on the original budget estimate. This is due to the original budget being an estimate of costs at the time against actual

¹ See Site Location Plan – Appendix 1 and Phase 1 works – Appendix 2

prices given in the tender returns and an element of inflation due to the time between the 2018 budget and the 2020 returns.

- 5.13 A re-engineering exercise was carried out with both tenderers. This resulted in elements of the specification being reduced and cut back, without compromising on the project outcome, to ensure the final submissions were in line with the estimated budget. Discussions were also held with the new crematorium operator to identify where costs could be shared. Following a full evaluation a preferred contractor has been identified and informally advised of their intended selection, subject to Cabinet's approval of the recommendations set out in this report.
- 5.14 A tender exercise has also been carried out for the Reception building and submissions from 5 contractors are currently being evaluated by council officers. The tender costs will be kept within the estimated budget.
- 5.15 Additional capital work for the cemetery has been identified since the original cost estimate. This relates to a highway planning obligation to establish a road crossing point and shared access works identified with the new crematorium operator. These additional works have pushed the costs of the scheme up by £100,000. These costs could not have been foreseen at the planning stage and have only recently been clarified and confirmed by all parties involved.
- 5.16 All other costs and estimates will be kept within the available budget.

Capital Build Project Costs and Capital Funding

- 5.17 The Capital Build Project costs required to deliver the phase and the identified capital funding streams are set out in the table below:

Capital Project Costs	£
Civil works (Actual)*	1,023,250
Reception building (Estimate)*	200,000
Landscape (Estimate)*	51,420
Highways agreement (Actual)	63,360
Shared access arrangements (Actual)	37,000
Services (Electric/water/sewers) (Actual)	28,620
Contingency	7,130
Total Cost	1,410,780
Capital Project Funding	£
Original remaining budget	983,780
Estimated Additional funds earmarked for project	327,000
Additional capital build budget required	100,000
Total Funding	1,410,780

*Includes contingency

- 5.18 Permission is now required to increase the budget by £100,000
- 5.19 It is also considered prudent at this stage, to set out for Members the estimated start-up and ongoing revenue operational costs for the new cemetery facility so that they do not go unaccounted for.

Revenue Operational Costs

- 5.20 The day to day revenue operational costs for the new cemetery are set out in the table below:

Revenue Operational Costs	Jan 2021 – March 2022	Full Year 2022-23
	£	£
Employee	31,420	25,820
Premises	11,220	12,310
Transport	5,790	5,010
Supplies and Services	4,890	4,020
Total Expenditure	53,320	47,160
Income	(38,770)	(51,980)
Net Running Costs	14,550	(4,820)
Set up costs	39,320	
Total	53,870	(4,820)

- 5.21 There will be additional operational costs required to start-up the new cemetery. The costs may be subject to leasing or capital funding as appropriate.

Start-up costs for new cemetery provision	£
Dumper	16,090
Van	10,000
Telescoping Shoring	4,250
Burial Register	1,000
Storage container (sea container)	3,200
Office furniture / work tools	4,780
Total cost	39,320
Funding	
Leasing or Capital Funding as appropriate	39,320

- 5.22 Permission is now required to provide a revenue (capital) budget of £53,870 until 31 March 2022 when the facility is anticipated to generate income sufficient to break even.

Project Management and Timeline

- 5.23 The project will be overseen and managed by the Council's Capital Projects Officer
- 5.24 Subject to Cabinet approval to progress Phase 1 of the project, the estimated timeline for the delivery of the project is as follows:

1.	Let Civils contract	Q1 2020-21
2.	Let contract for Reception building	Q1 2020-21
3.	Tender Landscape works	Q2 2020-21
4.	Start civil works on site	Q2 2020-21
5.	Reception building on site	Q2 2020-21
6.	Let Landscape contract	Q3 2020-21
6.	Landscape contractor on site	Q3 2020-21
7.	Consecrate ground	Q3 2020-21
8.	Open cemetery	Q4 2020-21

Alternative Options

- 5.25 Other alternative options to consider include:
- Do nothing – this would not be in line with Cabinet's original intentions to provide a new cemetery in the south of the District, neither would it meet the burial needs of the residents of Cannock Chase.
 - Reduce the specification or area of cemetery build scheme further to fit within the existing budget – given the re-engineering exercise already undertaken this would compromise the quality and sustainability of the scheme and also reduce the burial capacity further.
 - Operate the new cemetery within existing resources and budgets – this would severely impact the Council's ability to operate and run its other 3 cemeteries and 6 closed Churchyards effectively, transporting equipment and staff across the District.

Conclusion

- 5.26 Cabinet are therefore asked to agree the recommendations in this report to enable construction to start on the new cemetery.

6 Implications

6.1 Financial

The Council originally approved and allocated £1.5m towards the delivery of a new cemetery in the district, of which £983,780 remains after the purchase of site, planning application and site specific surveys.

A further £327,000 has been earmarked for the project

The total cost of the scheme is expected to be £1.41m. As the Council has already secured £983,780 previously and earmarked a further £327,000 due to financial shortfall, it is envisaged that a further £100K would be required to deliver the completed capital scheme.

However the revenue costs for the first 1.25 years, together with associated set up costs -would need to be approved until the site becomes self-funding from the financial year 2022 – 23 onwards.

Whilst the Council has identified significant funding for the project, the scheme is still dependent on additional capital and revenue budgets.

Subject to Cabinet approval:

- a supplementary capital budget of £100,000 is required to deliver the scheme. The approved Capital Programme includes uncommitted resources of £567,000 of General Fund resources. However it should be noted that this position includes capital receipts forecast from the sale of residual property of £1.7 million which are yet to be received.
- Provision of £53,870 will be included in the revenue budget for the operating and start-up costs up to 31 March 2022 when the facility is anticipated to generate income sufficient to break even.

6.2 Legal

Any legal implications are set out in the report.

6.3 Human Resources

Costings for the additional Cemetery team member are made on the assumption that the post will operate as part of the group of three Cemetery and Maintenance Operatives currently engaged within the service who are each graded within C of the Council's pay scaling. Should the requirements of this post differ from that of the existing Operatives based at the other Cemeteries in the District then a revised Job Description and Job Evaluation will be required.

Recruitment to this additional post will need to follow standard recruitment protocols and as such a period of approximately 12-16 weeks should be factored in to account for the recruitment, offer and appointment stages of the process to be undertaken in good time to ensure full staffing from the expected opening date of January 2021.

6.4 Section 17 (Crime Prevention)

This proposed facility would be designed in conjunction with secure by design standards and Cannock Council standard policy around crime prevention.

6.5 Human Rights Act

None

6.6 Data Protection

None

6.7 Risk Management

Escalating costs - One of the main risks will be that of escalating costs. Ensuring robust, effective and appropriate procurement processes are in place and followed will assist in mitigating this. The two key phases for this project have also been subject to tender so most project costs are now known. Having a dedicated Project Manager following strict project management principles throughout the project will also mitigate this risk as well as ensuring tight budget control.

Project Delays - Delay in delivering the project could lead to a gap in burial provision within the district and hence reputational damage to the Council. There is currently adequate provision at Stile Cop Cemetery although this provision will be reviewed regularly to ensure space is maximised should any delays become evident.

The proposed measures aim to ensure the continuity of service provided by the Council's Bereavement Services to provide burial space for residents of the District

6.8 Equality & Diversity

The new site has been designed to be compliant with all current equality legislation. It will be fully accessible by all residents and groups within the District and religion and belief have been a key consideration in the design of the site. The site is close to public transport and car parking will be provided on site including the provision of spaces for Blue Badge Holders. Consultation has been undertaken as part of the planning process.

6.9 Best Value

Best Value will be sought for the delivery of the project through a robust, effective and appropriate procurement process and tight budget control.

7 Appendices to the Report

Appendix 1: Site location plan

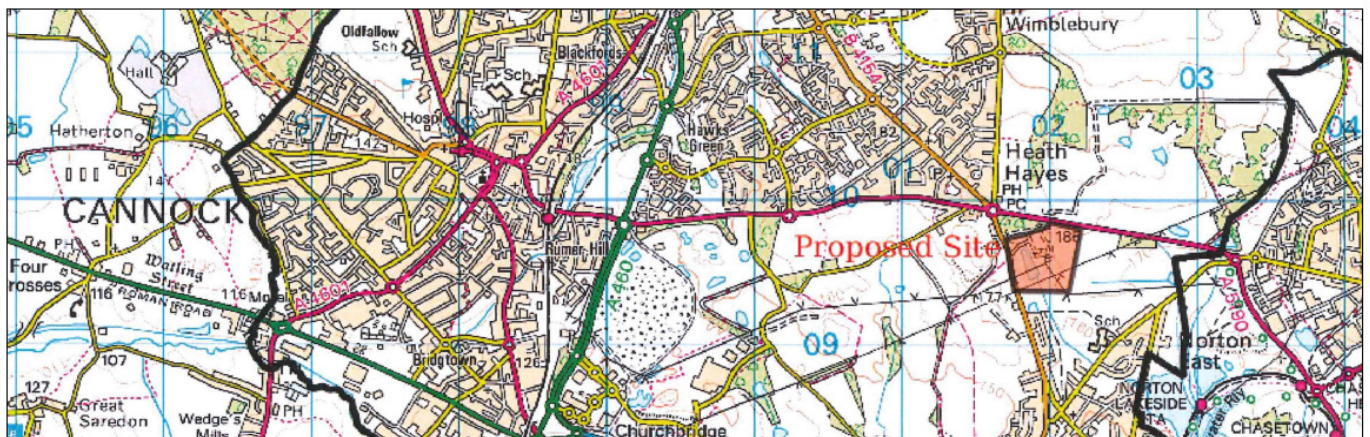
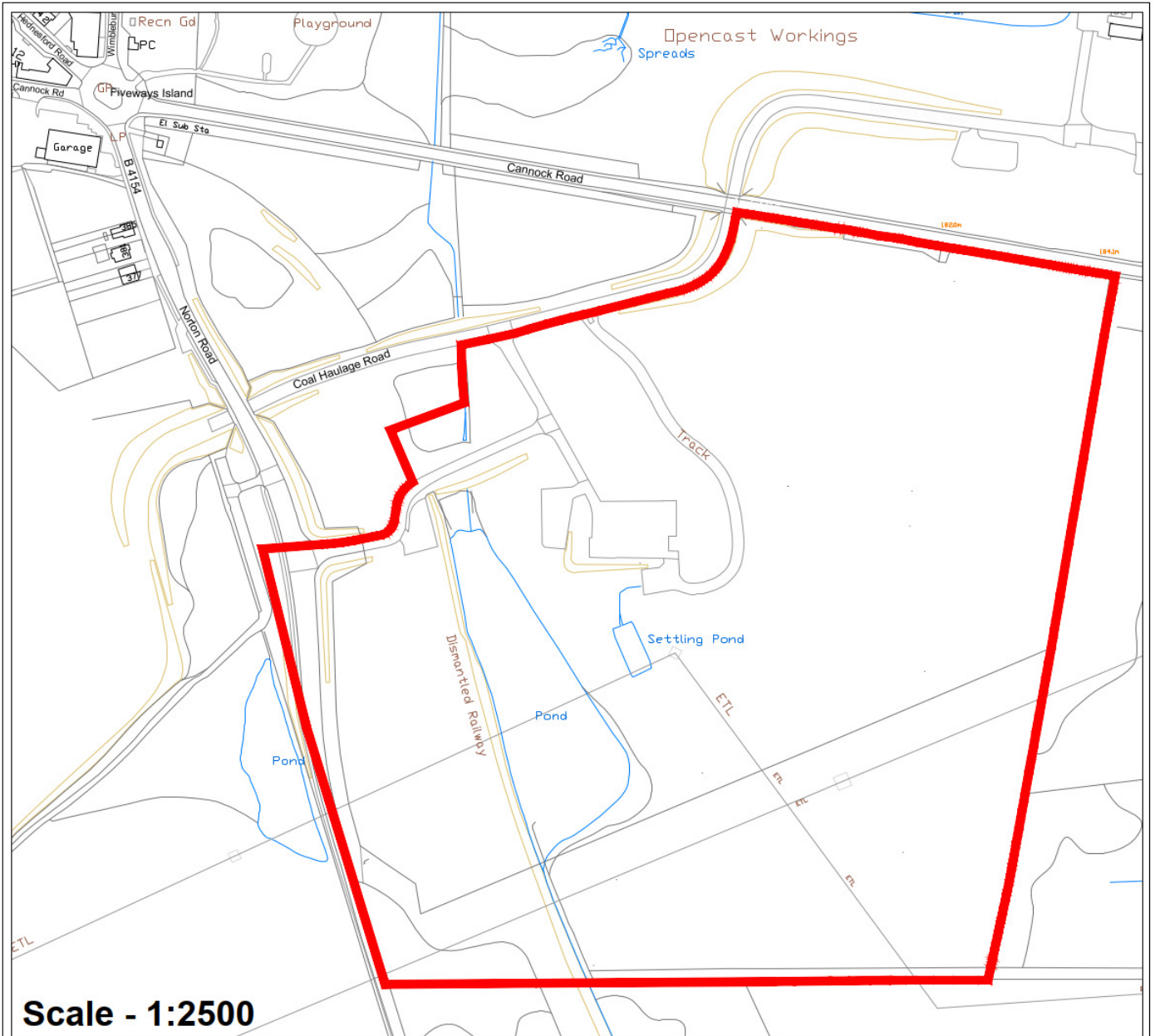
Appendix 2: Phase 1 works

Previous Consideration		
Options for the development of new cemetery and crematorium	Cabinet	23 August 2018
Capital and Revenue Costs for development of a new cemetery	Cabinet	25 August 2016

Purchase of a new cemetery budget - General Fund Capital Programme 2010/11	Cabinet	18 December 2014
Provision of a new cemetery in Cannock – Update Report	Cabinet	17 March 2011
Provision of additional cemetery land	Health Select Committee	6 February 2007
Provision of additional cemetery land – Cannock	Healthier Communities, Housing and Older People Select Committee	4 December 2007
New Cemetery Site - Cannock	Policy and Resources Committee	24 June 1999

Background Papers

Technical information relating to the Bleak House ex colliery site – Tests etc.



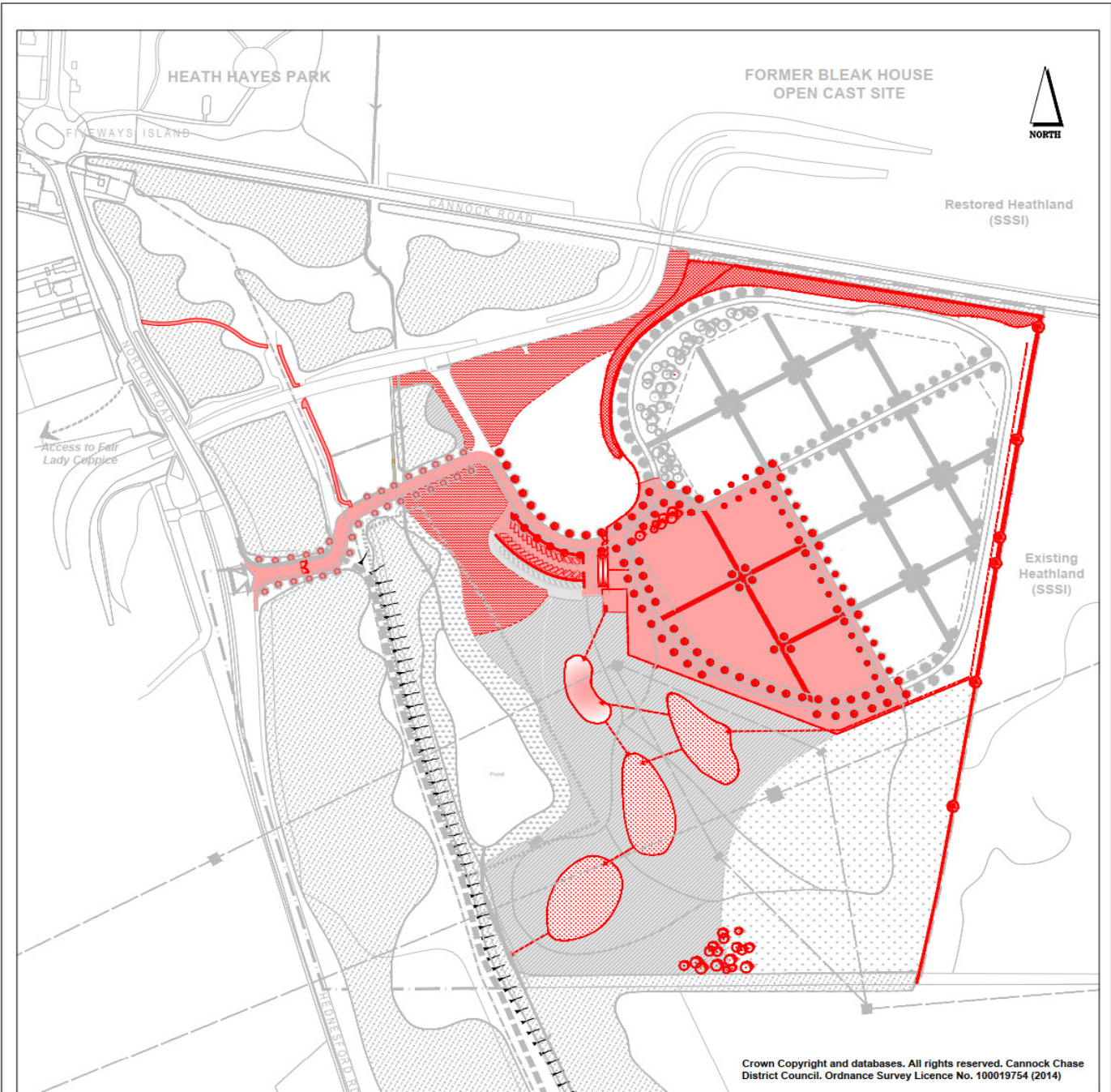
Revision A - Boundary Revisions

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Scheme: PROPOSED CEMETERY	
Drawing Title: Site & Location Plan	
Drawing No: ES/PR/NC/005-A	Scale: As shown @ A3
Drawn By: JPS / JW	Date: JULY 2014
Checked By:	Date:



PHASE 1 : All elements highlighted in red / pink

 <small>Cannock Chase COUNCIL</small> <small>Civic Centre P.O. Box 25 Barnard Road Cannock Staffordshire WS11 1BG Tel: 01543 462621 Fax: 01543 462317 www.cannockchase.gov.uk</small>	Scheme: PROPOSED CEMETERY	
	Drawing Title: Phase 1	
	Drawing No.: ES/PR/NC/Ph1	Scale: 1:1250 @ A1
	Drawn By: CWD	Date: April 2020
	Checked By:	Date: