

Moon Gate project New Road Cemetery

This document is exploring the ideas around placing a gateway at the top of New Road cemetery. The gate is intended to create and add weight to the new scattering area at the top of the cemetery. The project is important in providing residents with an option for burial and memorials in a less traditional but more sustainable way. By providing a way of placing small memorials it increases the appeal of the space and may encourage people who do not want to be interred with a large memorial, but this allows the family to have a space for reflection and to come and pay respects. The memorials will also bring income which can help maintain the space.

Design

For the design we have taken inspiration from the Anglo-Saxon burial mound that it stands with and the nature that surrounds it. We also acknowledge that a new installation needs to stand up to the artistic vision shown with the gates at the entrance and maintain the standard laid out at conception of the cemetery. The material choices (discussed below) are in line with the Anglo Saxons and their building practices, and the wide circular archway echoes the architectural style.



This image shows the semicircular Romanesque arch. The choice of the circular arch also allows a degree of accessibility, being wider it feels welcoming and will accommodate wheelchairs, scooters or push chairs. Circular moon gates are often associated with Chinese and Japanese architecture. They hold a mystical meaning around the idea of passing through from the ordinary to the extraordinary a sentiment that fits beautifully with the idea of scattering ashes and memorials.

The picture also demonstrates another feature we wish to be included into the design, the intricate pattern work. One proposal is that the arch has the designs cut into it like fretwork. It will add to the design and create interesting plays with light. As with our own Anglo Saxon burial site in Melbourn, they buried people with important objects to them, notably jewellery and weaponry. These often included these designs that are



interconnecting and flowing like the brooch pictured. Which also includes cut out elements.

Rendering of potential design of the posts



Materials

The wooden posts and steel material options have been chosen to acknowledge the Anglo-Saxon link in the top area of the cemetery, a concept that also formed part of the original gates at the front of the cemetery. The Steel has been chosen as it will weather to a rusted finish that will look more bronze. Making it a cost-effective option that will stand the test of time structurally whilst giving the feel of bronze. The wooden post we would seek to use are of a treated sturdy sleeper style which will weather well and be replaceable easily over time as needed as they stand alone. The wood will also make it easy to attach plaques as memorials. The memorial plaques will be of a consistent and standard shape as dictated by the Parish Council to ensure cohesiveness and aesthetic intentions are maintained. The use of the wooden posts as standalone totems also means the number of posts can be increased and grow with demand.

Planting

The planting between the posts will be selected for their low maintenance qualities, also being respectful of the wildflower informal intention for the scattering area. Potential choices for planting could include the options in the table below. These options involve little maintenance limited to a cut back around once a year. And a flower bed would create an edge for the strimmer that reduces the need to cut between the posts.



Erigeron, thrive on neglect producing flowers throughout the year and spread naturally.



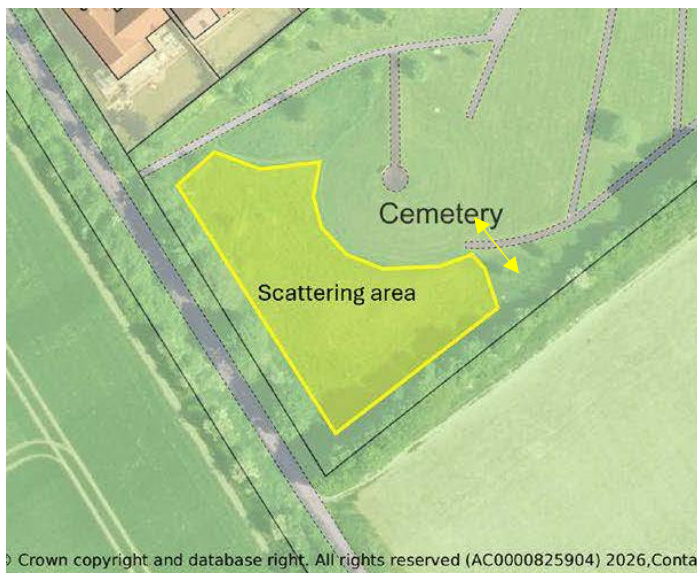
Verbena Bonariensis, Beautiful tall but wispy stems which would move in a breeze and add height and interest mimicking the columns but not obstruct any view of memorials.



Achillea millefolium, another delicate ethereal option that is wild and native



The proposed position of the arch would be across the path leading to the scattering area shown here. The existing tree would incorporate well in the layout of the columns adding interest to the design and help the new section blend with the existing. The map below provides a top down view of the positioning.

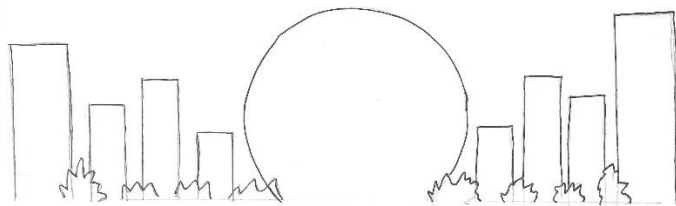


Climbing

‘Foreseeable misuse’ means we need to assume the structure may be climbed on and we need to design around this. We can approach either by prevention or making it safe to climb.

The nature of the gateway does not encourage anti climb measures as it may affect the aesthetic and calming intention of the structure. We may be better to approach it by making it safe should it be climbed. This is not at all intended to be used in this way and we would not seek to encourage climbing behaviour but need to consider the health and safety of the design.

The shoulders leading up to the arch could be used to scale the top of the moon gate easily. Potential ways around this could include inverting the angle of the shoulders, by making the one nearest the round gate below the middle point the circle should be harder to scale, also by making the gaps between the heights of the posts more varied it should make climbing them less appealing. Staggering the curve should add to the difficulty in hopping between them. To consider ongoing maintenance and grass cutting that would be made more difficult by these gaps and staggering some informal low maintenance planting at the bases create a straighter curve to strim up too. Planting also would serve as a climbing deterrent.



Potential simplified front elevation



Top-down view of the potential layout