



ELEGY

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An ideally located, independently run Crematorium for the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead providing a personal and individual service for local bereaved families.



Meeting Today's Needs

We believe that it is time for bereaved families in Maidenhead and surrounding areas to have a crematorium of their own, free from the long journeys and the stretched, tired facilities of existing crematoria.

Instead, we want to create a beautiful place, sympathetically designed within its natural surroundings, able to offer somewhere peaceful and personal for each individual funeral.

New crematoria have been built elsewhere, such as in Aylesbury and Thatcham, to raise standards of care and our proposals at Long Lane promises to provide something similar for this area. Set down in the landscape, free from neighbouring views and enhanced with layers of planting, it will be the perfect discreet setting.

The Need For A New Crematorium

The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead does not have a crematorium of its own with local bereaved families having to travel to Slough Crematorium or further afield to Amersham (The Chilterns crematorium). This usually means a journey of around 35 minutes or more for a funeral cortege, an excessive amount of time when compared to elsewhere in the country, adding further distress and anxiety at the most difficult of times. Residents of Marlow are similarly poorly served.

The nearest crematorium, Slough, was built in 1963 and is tired and unwelcoming, allowing just 30 minutes between each funeral. The Chilterns is similarly aged and suffers from being overly busy, holding an average of 3218 cremations per year, typically 13 per day. This is far more than its original design allowed, with this crematorium, unavoidably one of the very busiest in the country, even after the opening of new facilities in Aylesbury in 2019.

A second chapel was added to the Chilterns site in 2007 to relieve some of the pressure but this operates alongside the original with little separation between funerals. Mourners complain that they feel that they are in a conveyor belt and can be unsure if they are attending the right funeral. There can also be delays in obtaining a suitable time, especially during the winter.

All of this is the result of The Chilterns Crematorium having to look after more funerals than it can cope with. Nor are there any viable alternatives with the next choices further away in Reading, Bracknell or the western edge of London.

Pressures on all of these facilities will only grow over the next 20 years with the ONS forecasting a 22.9% rise in deaths for the Borough by 2043. A new crematorium in this spot would finally allow families to have a personal, dignified service with a minimum of an hour allowed for each funeral. Overall, around 1000 cremations would be looked after each year, four per day on average, providing a much quieter and peaceful setting.



Chilterns Crematorium



Slough Crematorium



Reading Crematorium

A Carefully Chosen Site

Any new crematorium must be located close to Maidenhead and Marlow as both towns lie beyond a reasonable journey time from existing facilities which have become tired and stretched over time. An extensive search has taken place over the past ten years to find a suitable spot which is both highly accessible to these communities whilst being in a secluded, tranquil position, away from neighbouring views. Care has been taken as well to avoid areas of high flood risk or ecological sensitivity. In addition, unique restrictions apply to the siting of crematoria, most notably Section 5 of the Cremation Act 1902 which states: "No crematorium shall be constructed nearer to any dwelling house than 200 yards (182 metres) except with the consent, in writing, of the owner, lessee and occupier of such house, nor within 50 yards of any public highway."

The 200-yard rule effectively rules out urban areas and forces new crematoria to be located on the urban fringe close to the population it needs to serve. Space is also required to provide the right setting. This severely limits the suitability of brown field sites, the first possibilities to be examined, which are also typically reserved for residential development. Ultimately, there was no alternative to a Green Belt location especially as all of the free land between Maidenhead and Marlow is designated as Green Belt. Indeed, 82% of the Royal Borough is within this classification.



Crematoria are special cases though with six crematoria built in the Green Belt in the past three years and a further five sites gaining permission. Planning inspectors accept that crematoria have to be built in a countryside location close to the population they intend to serve and there is often no choice but to use Green Belt land to meet this need.

The proposed site meets all of the necessary criteria and is the conclusion of a ten year search. The slope of the field will allow the development to sit down discreetly against a planted backdrop in a self-contained landscape, free from neighbouring views with funerals conducted in privacy for the benefit of mourners and residents. All funerals will arrive via Switchback Road North.

The Design

We believe that we have found the right place for our modest building to nestle into the landscape. The development is single storey, @450m2 in size, set down in the landscape and in a secluded spot.

There should be no intrusive views and this sensitively designed building will match the local character with the use of red brick, timber cladding and a plain tiled roof. The building will also be screened on all sides with trees, hedgerow and a green living wall. This should ensure it blends into the existing landscape and be respectful of its position within the countryside.



The heart of the building is a 100-seat ceremony room adaptable for secular and multi faith use; along with a waiting room, accessible public toilets, a small office with family meeting room; and a crematory. 72 car parking spaces, including electric charging points and disabled bays would be provided with the layout set into the slope and surrounded by planting to limit views.

The emphasis of our plans is to transform the existing field into a beautiful natural setting for funerals, blessed with extra trees, plants, flowers and hedgerow with the garden and grounds eventually resembling a mature parkland. Just 10% of the site is planned to be developed with the rest left as a green landscape to ensure that it is a place of peace and remembrance, free of the pressure and congestion of historic crematoria.



The Environment

Carbon Neutral - The crematorium would include the latest developments in advanced filtration and abatement equipment, making it "clean to air" with no smoke or odours.

Using the very latest technology and heat recovery, the crematorium will be one of the cleanest and energy efficient crematoria in the UK. and one of the first to fit NOx (nitrous oxide) abatement.

The land will also be converted from an intensely grazed field of low ecological value to a more natural parkland offering an abundance of rich habitat to local wildlife. A full ecological survey has been undertaken which confirms that our plans will greatly improve the ecological value of the site. Ultimately people want to hold funerals in a beautiful, natural setting.



Access And Highways

The site is conveniently located on Long Lane, just off Switchback Road North. There is a regular bus service (No 37) along this road with connecting rail and bus services across the area. A pavement is proposed along Long Lane to allow pedestrian access. Almost all funerals take place between 10:30 am and 3:30pm. This is outside of peak traffic hours, and so the crematorium would not conflict with, or add to rush hour traffic.

Traffic to the proposal would be relatively light in any case as it is anticipated that @1000 funerals will be held each year once fully established, an average of just four funerals per day (Monday to Friday). With typically 20 cars attending each funeral, this would mean on average 80 cars visiting the site each day.

Currently the vehicles making these journeys have to travel to Slough or Amersham, or further afield, and there will therefore be an overall reduction in traffic and emissions on the wider road network.



Your Comments Are Important

We would appreciate your comments on our proposals and would be pleased if you could complete the comments on our website: www.elegy.co.uk. Alternatively please write to:

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