

**Policy and Design Guidance: Cemeteries***MEPA Comments on submissions made on Public Consultation Document – 23rd April 2014 to 6th June 2014*

<b>Date</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Summary of submission</b>	<b>MEPA Comments</b>
23/04/14	Brian Taylor	It is time to move on and get a crematorium built. The stranglehold that the Church has had on such matters needs to be broken.	Alternative methods of burial were integrated in the Public Consultation Document and these are being retained in the approved policy document.
24/04/14	Nazareno Azzopardi	A particular family has a grave at the Addolorata Cemetery. However, one of the ancestors had ordered the sealing of the grave after the burial of his son, wife and himself. The last burial took place almost one hundred years ago. The current family members have sought to re-activate its use, however, this was not possible. A grave should be re-opened after a period of time and this would not be of disrespect to the buried. Graves should not remain sealed, particularly when there is huge demand for their use, especially from the same family that inherited the other possessions of the deceased.	Although this suggestion would release a number of graves for re-use, therefore easing pressure for further cemetery development, it is not a planning policy matter. Nonetheless, this would improve cemetery management. However, the objectives of this provision are better achieved through legislation rather than planning policy.
07/05/14	Frances Grech	The objectives are clear and all issues were addressed. There should be no new cemetery developments to avoid the taking up of further virgin land in ODZ. The recent permissions issued for cemeteries were decided without a direct policy framework. The further extensions to cemeteries are also of concern. Graves on different levels should be introduced without taking up virgin land.	The Public Consultation Document already prohibited the construction of new cemeteries and this provision is being retained in the approved policy document. Similarly, the construction of multi-tier graves is required, unless physical constraints indicate otherwise.
09/05/14	Lilian Mifsud	An alternative method is the use of a biodegradable urn where ashes are put after cremation as well as a	Alternative methods of burial were integrated in the Public Consultation Document and these are being

		seed which will grow through the urn into a tree. This can make Malta greener. Many would like the idea to “become” trees after they die.	retained in the approved policy document. Although this specific method is not mentioned, the document allows any alternative method, however, “subject to the limitations imposed by national operational standards for the process”.
17/05/14	Andrew Gatt	In cemetery extensions, a number of trees should be included in the landscaping to provide shade in the hot summer months. Cemeteries should be planned as public gardens where one could visit to spend some moments and cherish the good memories of the loved ones.	The requirements for landscaping and the use of appropriate trees were integrated in the Public Consultation Document and these are being retained in the approved policy document. Paragraph 6.4.1 is being amended to include reference to shade.
26/05/14	Duncan Hall obo Marsaxlokk LC	The Local Council does not agree that no new cemeteries can be constructed. The Local Council believes that there should always be an option to have a cemetery for the Marsaxlokk community.	The objectives were set by Government in terms of article 48(1) of the Environment and Development Planning Act (2010). One of the objectives requires that only extensions to existing cemeteries are considered.
05/06/14	Shirley Farrugia obo Mosta LC	The Local Council highlighted that the main issue is the pressing need for more burial space to be found for Mosta families. The Local Council frequently receives requests for an extension to the existing cemetery so that their family members are buried in the locality to facilitate visiting.	The Public Consultation Document allowed extensions to existing cemeteries and listed criteria for assessment of proposal. These are being retained in the approved policy document.
06/06/14	Karol Aquilina obo Siggiewi LC	The Local Council does not agree that permissions are given for extensions or development of cemeteries which are in disuse or abandoned and which have historical value. MEPA should not change its policies to allow this. In Siggiewi there are two historical cemeteries: ta’ San Teodoro (known as ta’ San Dawdar) and ta’ San Andrea (known as Ta’ Brija). The Local Council believes that no permissions should be issued for their	The re-activation of disused cemeteries does not require MEPA permission unless such re-activation requires development to be carried out. The Design Criteria listed in the Public Consultation Document allowed extensions to historic cemeteries provided that such development would not have “a negative impact on the character of the existing cemetery or its setting”. These requirements are being retained in the approved

		extension or development. The policy should ensure that the historical value of these cemeteries is protected through appropriate restoration and conservation. No permissions should be given for the development of the surrounding area.	policy document.
06/06/14	Paula Grech Bonnici obo Water Services Corporation	<p>The WSC is in full agreement with the 150 to 300 metres exclusion zone from public groundwater abstraction zones for upgrading of existing cemeteries. However, it is imperative that the same exclusion zone applies to underground galleries connected to pumping stations.</p> <p>As regards the alternatives to burial (aquamation and resomation), these produce liquid wastes which contain highly corrosive chemicals and also liquefied bodily fluids. These cannot be discharged directly into the sewer and will require intensive treatment and subsequent disposal or, if treatment is not possible, shipment abroad or incineration. Nonetheless the owner of such cemeteries using these methods should apply for a Public Sewer Discharge Permit.</p>	<p>For clarification, paragraph 5.6.2 is being amended to include the wording “or underground galleries connected to pumping stations”.</p> <p>The alternative methods are allowed, however, “subject to the limitations imposed by national operational standards for the process”. For clarification, the relevant section of Part 7 is being amended to include the wording “by the environmental permitting procedures or”.</p>