

**From:** Ellie Watkins <[Ellie@agriadvisor.co.uk](mailto:Ellie@agriadvisor.co.uk)>  
**Sent:** 19 May 2021 15:20  
**To:** Atkins, Charlotte <[Charlotte.Atkins@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Charlotte.Atkins@herefordshire.gov.uk)>  
**Subject:** Full response to Ash Farm, Natural Burial Site 204377/N

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Dear Charlotte

As discussed in our previous email, I have collated all of the requested answers into a single email, which I trust is in order.

- 1.) Access improvements drawing attached as a separate document
- 2.) Transport survey – new survey done and amended transport statement attached. It should be noted that from the pre-app that the advice was to confirm average speeds, not traffic volumes, which was what was requested thereafter.
- 3.) I believe a condition limiting the use to one burial per day would be agreeable.
- 4.) I would suggest there would be incidences such as birthdays, anniversaries where visitors would come to site, but such events are spread equally over the year, I do not imagine any event where there were multiple groups on site attending to multiple different graves. Whilst Christmas is a constant, in my experience, people tend to visit graves around Christmas time, rather than the day itself, and visits are generally short in duration and we do not enjoy favourable weather in December. Whilst there is no defined time length for people to visit graves, visits are not generally very long in duration, and it is seen that site could operate with a small number of people coming and going each day.
- 5.) I note your comments about the loss of agricultural land, the land is allocated as Grade 2, that swath of Grade 2 also covers a large area of the developed land in Much Birch and in fact the majority of Herefordshire is allocated Grade 3 or above, it happens to be an extremely rich, fertile county. There are not many instances of development that would not result in some loss of good quality agricultural land in this specific county. I attach the soilscape map which provides more specific information about the soils in the area, and actually details that specific soil type as low in fertility. I would suggest the agricultural land classification maps are actually quite outdated, and the soilscape map does offer at least a little more specific information. The field to the east is unaffected as there is a different access point from the farmyard, and the field forms an essentially a grazing paddock. The field to the south excluded from the burial site was considered, but it was decided that there would have been a much greater effect on visibility, due to the topography of that field, as it can be seen from a wider vista. The chosen fields are situated in quite a neat form, benefiting from natural screening, and as is shown in the visibility and impact they provide a minimal visual impact on the wider area, and arguably not a negative one in any instance. Should you like more information on this point, just let me know.
- 6.) Access to the lower field - I confirm there is an existing historic gateway into the lower field, in the south east corner, adjoining Tump Lane, which the applicants would seek to utilise to continue accessing the lower field once the Burial Site became operational, do you need a site plan to this effect? We are happy to agree to a condition in relation to securing this access.
- 7.) Impact on neighbour

- a. Realistically, I think if there was to be a full service at this time it would be conducted elsewhere, and on site there would be more internments and the small “services” that accompany that. So yes there would be some “services” graveside, but they would largely be internments based ones only, and generally those are only accompanied by family.
  - b. I would anticipate these services would be no longer than 45 minutes, probably 30 minutes or less in most instances. No times have been agreed.
  - c. At this time there is no plans to prevent people playing music or signing, the idea is to offer flexibility on whatever the family would like? Volumes would be considered at all times, and certainly the aim would be to minimise any effect on neighbouring properties.
  - d. The pavilion would be more an area to be used in poor weather, and for those visiting the site to visit their loved one. It is anticipated at this time a wake would not happen on site, but it is something they applicants might consider in the future.
- 8.) Colour of stone The landscape officer suggested colour of the stone to be confirmed, and in the absence of anything else I have consulted the Malvern hills Colour Guide and suggest a mixture of greys as per the Timber wooded principle timbered farmlands category? Do you need something more specific than that?
- 9.) Proposed pavilion plans amended and attached.
- 10.) New proposed site plan amended as per Landscape officer’s comments, including location of foul drainage system and new access arrangement.
- 11.) Tracking for site plan attached
- 12.) Simon Tucker on David Tucker Transport confirmed in relation to 10 cars per funeral – *“it was just based on experience at a similar site we worked on in Knowle, Solihull. Ultimately though the traffic generation is based on the survey at Widney Manor and therefore is not reliant or dependant on the 10 cars per funeral.”*

I hope this now answers all of the issues raised in your letter, and to include everything in one place for ease.

Four weeks from today’s date is an acceptable extension to us.

Regards  
Ellie

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**Ellie Watkins MRICS, FAAV**

*Syrffŵr Siartredig Gwledig / Rural Chartered Surveyor*

Ffôn/Tel: 01544 327122

Ffôn Symudol/ Mobile: 07495 006808

Ffacs/Fax: 01558 610330

<http://www.agriadvisor.co.uk>

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Llys Y Llan, Pumsaint, Llanwrda, Sir Gâr/Carmarthenshire, SA19 8AX

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Cartrefle, Bridge Street, Castell Newydd Emlyn / Newcastle Emlyn, Sir Gâr/Carmarthenshire, SA38 9DX

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2 Questmoor Farm

Eardisley

Henffordd / Hereford

HR3 6LN

Ffôn/Tel: 01544 327122

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