



## Cemetery Fact Sheet

### WHAT IS A PLOT?

A plot is a grave and is sometimes referred to as a site or a position.

### WHAT IS A NICHE?

A niche is used for interment of ashes and can be sited in a columbarium wall or garden area set aside for that purpose.

### CAN I RESERVE OR BUY A PLOT OR NICHE?

Yes, you can reserve or pre-purchase both. The purchase fee does not include the cost of burial or interment.

### DO I OWN THE LAND OCCUPIED BY THE PLOT?

No, the land remains under the administration of Banana Shire Council. You will become the burial rights holder which means you have exclusive right to authorise any burials or ashes placements for that site.

### CAN I CHOOSE THE LOCATION OF MY SITE?

Yes, subject to availability.

### I WOULD LIKE MY PARTNER TO BE PLACED IN THE SAME SITE AS MYSELF, IS THAT POSSIBLE?

Yes, most burial plots are prepared for two burials. It is recommended to consider this when choosing a site. The columbarium wall niches are single interments only, however multiple interments are possible in some garden niches.

### CAN I BE BURIED IN AN OLD GRAVE?

Yes, in most cases. Each site needs to be investigated as in some cases the land is not suitable for more than one burial. Ashes can also be placed in most grave sites. In all cases, the burial rights holder would need to provide permission.

### CAN ASHES GO INTO A GRAVE?

Yes, with the permission of the burial rights holder.

### WHEN I PASS AWAY, WHAT IS REQUIRED FOR MY FAMILY TO USE MY RESERVED SITE?

Your family will contact your nominated funeral director who will attend to confirm your reserved site and burial arrangements.

### WHAT HAPPENS TO THE BURIAL RIGHTS WHEN I PASS AWAY?

The burial right is considered to be part of the holder's personal estate. The holder's executor or heirs and successors would usually administer the estate under the circumstances. Council will require proof of authority in this case.

### CAN I SELL MY RESERVED BURIAL SITE?

You are not able to sell the site, however you can relinquish the plot to Council and Council will provide a partial refund.

### CAN I GIVE MY BURIAL SITE OR NICHE TO SOMEONE ELSE?

A burial right can be transferred or bequeathed. An application for transfer and appropriate fee is required before the records can be amended. The application must be signed by the current burial rights holder, and it is advisable that families are made aware of rights and responsibilities pertaining to the future management of their sites.

## FACT SHEET

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**CAN ANYONE PLACE A MONUMENT OR PLAQUE ON A GRAVE?**

No, the burial rights holder or a person nominated by the burial rights holder may apply to Council to place a monument or plaque on a grave. In instances where the burial rights holder has passed away, the executor or beneficiary of the estate would usually submit the application to Council with the appropriate fee. Restrictions apply to the type of monument or plaque that can be installed.

**CAN I CHOOSE WHAT TYPE OF MONUMENT OR PLAQUE IS PLACED ON A GRAVE?**

All placement of monuments, headstones and plaques require Council approval prior to the installation. There are a variety of different types of cemeteries across the Shire, each with their own headstone, plaque and monument requirements to ensure continuity across the cemetery.

The placement of Mausoleums, Vaults and Monuments must be in accordance with Australian standards 4425:2020 and a QBCC licenced installer must be engaged to perform the works. Evidence of these two requirements must be submitted to Council with your application to install a monument or above ground burial structure.

**WHO LOOKS AFTER PLACEMENT OF ASHES IN A NICHE?**

There is no Council fee where the ashes interment & plaque installation is completed by a funeral director. Fees will apply where the ashes interment is to be undertaken by Council or a member of the public.

**CAN I PLANT TREES ON A GRAVE SITE?**

Due to maintenance requirements and the likely effects of roots, moisture and other factors affecting current and future grave sites, the planting of trees, shrubs or other plantings are not permitted.

**WHO LOOKS AFTER THE PLAQUES AND MONUMENTS?**

Cemetery grounds are maintained by Council; however, monuments and plaques are the responsibility of the burial rights holder or family and descendants. Council will need to be advised prior to any maintenance.

**WHAT SORT OF THINGS CAN I LEAVE ON MY FAMILY GRAVE?**

To ensure that these areas remain pristine, honouring the memories of those within, the following policy has been implemented to ensure suitable access and safety for the public and cemetery staff.

- A maximum of 2 plastic vases or flower urns can be placed on each individual gravesite. Vases must not exceed 250mm (10") in height and are only permitted on the concrete beam.

- All standard vases/urns and their contents will be inspected regularly and old fresh flowers or deteriorated plastic flowers from each gravesite will be removed.
- Trees, shrubs or other plants are not permitted. If planted, they will be immediately removed from the lawn or beam sections within the Cemeteries.
- Glass vases, ceramic containers or other breakable objects/ornaments including objects with sharp edges/spikes or hooks are not permitted within the lawn sections and will be removed.
- Small ornaments or mementos may be placed within the area relating to the grave site. All tributes must ensure that they are placed on the beam only and must not encroach on another memorial/grave/plot.
- Where items are left on the Grave mounds in the 4 months following a burial, any ornaments & objects will be removed and placed on the headstone or concrete beam (larger items will be taken to the nearest council depot for storage until collected by the burial rights holder).

**WHO MAINTAINS THE CEMETERY GROUNDS AND GARDENS?**

Banana Shire Council will ensure a minimum standard of ground conditions are maintained throughout all cemeteries.

**CAN I SCATTER ASHES AT A CEMETERY?**

Scattering of ashes is not permitted on open grassed areas, including lawn sections within Council's cemeteries.

**CAN I ACCESS THE CEMETERY VIA VEHICLE?**

Council currently does not permit cars or motorized vehicles owned by the public to drive into areas where graves are located. However, special permission can be granted for those with physical health limitations and mobility restrictions who need access to designated cemetery roads to pay respects. Written request is required, and a damage bond is applicable.

**CAN I PAINT THE CONCRETE BEAM AND/OR HEADSTONE AREA OF A GRAVE?**

The burial rights holder can request for Council permission to paint the area of concrete beam allocated to the grave site. This can be done via submission of application and appropriate payment of the application fee. The burial right holder is able to refresh their existing approved painted headstone area as required. Where the design of the artwork is to be changed, a new application for approval and the design must be lodged to Council for consideration against Council's cemetery artwork standards. No painting works are permitted to start until written approval is given by Banana Shire Council.

**How can you contact us?**

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