



Kate Ryan & Cameron Nixon
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Planning for the dead

As planners, how often do we think about the demand placed on our cities for housing the dead? With Australia's population pushing to 50 million and land in urban areas being sought for housing and jobs, the nation's cities are also facing a critical shortage of burial space. Sydney's existing cemetery capacity may be exhausted by 2050, certain faith groups have less than 10 years remaining burial capacity. Solutions to this issue are becoming increasingly imperative as our population not only grows, but ages.

There are many challenges associated with providing additional cemetery land. New cemeteries are being pushed to the urban fringes, with new proposal facing increasing community and political objection. When tackling this issue, we need to ensure the provision of future land for burial in a way that considers all faiths, different cultures and future generations. This issue invites a conversation about where we bury but also how we bury and the evolving landscape of the cemetery.

The presenters, Kate Ryan and Cameron Nixon, both senior planning consultants at the national planning firm Urbis, have a depth of experience in planning for cemeteries. Kate has an award winning thesis exploring sustainable burial practices as a possible solution for the shortage of burial space. She has spoken at national conferences, radio and other media interviews on the topic. Cameron and Kate have extensive project experience with the interment industry planning for new cemeteries in Sydney.

The presentation will explore the challenges associated with planning for new cemetery developments by drawing on specific case studies in Sydney. The discussion will also consider emerging burial options and the future evolution of the cemetery landscape as physical space constraints become more apparent.

As planners we must engage with planning for the dead as a critical element of planning for growth!