

City of Ipswich

Paperbark Flats Upgrade

Community Engagement Report

February 2026



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Disclaimer: Quantitative and qualitative data was collected from participants during the engagement, in accordance with council’s Information Privacy Policy. Quantitative data was downloaded from the various digital platforms and/or transcribed into a master Excel database by project staff. The data was cleaned, de-identified, aggregated and charted in the master database. Open thematic analysis of qualitative comments was carried out using Excel. For the purposes of this report, percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number, which may result in a total not equal to 100%.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Paperbark Flats is the main entry point and day use area for the White Rock – Spring Mountain Conservation Estate (WRSMCE). Thousands of people pass through Paperbark Flats each month.

It has not changed much in about 30 years, and the entry point is no longer considered fit for purpose. Parking is insufficient and there is little on site to interest visitors. Wayfaring and visibility are also poor.

A major \$4 million upgrade is planned for Paperbark Flats. Early construction (services works) is expected to start in mid-2026 but the construction will likely take about 3 years.

Council has received the concept design and has undertaken community engagement to understand community sentiment on the design. Community engagement was undertaken between 9 January 2026 – 1 February 2026.

The themes and stakeholder insights identified in this report may help inform the detailed design for Paperbark Flats.

WHY WE ENGAGED

The purpose of this engagement was to:

- Inform the community about the project and processes to provide feedback
- Understand the reactions and implications of the design
- To create understanding of the reasons for change and drive community support for the design.

HOW WE ENGAGED

The engagement was undertaken between 9 January 2026 and 1 February 2026.

Engagement feedback channels

The community was able to contribute their feedback through the channels detailed below.

Shape Your Ipswich

Comments were captured via an online survey on the project page, [Paperbark Flats upgrade](#), hosted on Shape Your Ipswich. Survey questions can be seen in Appendix 1.

Hard copy survey

Community members were able to complete a hard copy survey to share their feedback. The questions in the survey replicated the online version on Shape Your Ipswich. These surveys could be picked up at Queens Park Environmental Education Centre, downloaded from Shape Your Ipswich, or mailed to residents on request.

Community engagement events

Two community engagement events were held to provide the broader community with general information on the project and capture feedback directly from estate users. An image of the event can be seen in Appendix 2. The following events were held:

Date	Location
Saturday 17 January 2026	Paperbark Flats Picnic Area
Wednesday 21 January 2026	Paperbark Flats Picnic Area

Email

The community was able to directly reach out to council via communityengagement@ipswich.qld.gov.au with feedback on this project.

Phone

The community was able to directly reach out to council via 3810 6666 with feedback on this project.

Promotional channels

To maximise engagement for the engagement, the following communication channels were used to reach the community and trigger awareness.

Ipswich City Council social media

Two posts were shared on Ipswich City Council's social media for raising awareness of the project and encourage community to share their feedback. A screenshot of the organic post can be seen at Appendix 4.

Social Media Channel	Date of posting	Reach ¹	Clicks ²
Facebook (paid post)	13 January – 1 February 2026	74,170	3,555
Facebook (organic post)	12 January 2026	12,533	40

In addition to official council-managed social media channels, it was noted that the engagement opportunity was also shared on the following Facebook pages:

Facebook page	Date of posting
Ipswich West Moreton Today	9 January 2026
Councillor Pye Augustine – Ipswich City Council	12 January 2026
West Bremer Radio	12 January 2026
Mayor Teresa Harding	13 January 2026
Redbank Plains Community Centre	20 January 2026

Shape Your Ipswich

Two email campaigns were sent out via Shape Your Ipswich. The first campaign was sent on 9 January 2026 and was sent out to Shape Your Ipswich members who had selected any of the following categories of interest:

- Redbank Plains
- White Rock
- Community
- Environment, sustainability and climate change
- Indigenous

¹ Total number of times a social media post was viewed.

² Total number of times a URL in a social media post was clicked.

- Parks and recreation
- Tourism

This campaign was sent to a total of 817 members, of which 467 (42%) opened the email.

The second campaign was sent on 19 January 2026 and was sent out to members of the community panel. This campaign was sent to a total of 253 members, of which 88 (34.8%) opened the email.

Across the duration of the engagement period, the Shape Your Ipswich project page was viewed 3,974 times.

Direct Mail

A DL flyer was hand delivered in a letterbox drop to the residential area neighbouring the estate. The flyer provided an overview of the project and directed recipients to Shape Your Ipswich for further details. The flyer was distributed on 9 January 2026 to approximately 200 properties.

Ipswich First

An Ipswich First article, [Big changes are planned to upgrade a favourite Ipswich nature hub](#), was distributed on 12 January 2026 on Ipswich First. The article shared details of the project and encouraged community to provide feedback via Shape Your Ipswich. The article received 245 views.

Ipswich.qld.gov.au

A media release, [Big changes are planned to upgrade a favourite Ipswich nature hub](#), was distributed on 12 January 2026 on Ipswich.qld.gov.au. The article shared details of the project and encouraged community to provide feedback via Shape Your Ipswich.

Physical signage

Signage was placed at Paperbark Flats entry point for the duration of the engagement. There were also large posters in the front noticeboard of the Redbank Plains Community Centre. The signage and posters included a QR code to Shape Your Ipswich and encouraged community to share their feedback. An example poster can be seen at Appendix 3. QR codes on the signage were scanned a total of 74 times. The signage can be seen in Appendix 4.

Email

Specific community groups and organisations were identified as part of engagement planning as key stakeholders. To encourage their participation in the engagement, emails were sent to:

- Australian Climbing Association Queensland/Pinnacle Sports
- Discover Ipswich

- Yuggera Ugarapul People (YUP)
- Traditional Owner networks
- First Nations networks
- White Rock Park Run
- Brisbane Bushwalkers
- The Australian Distance Riding Association
- Orienteering QLD
- Scouts QLD
- Logan River Redlands Horse Trail Riding Club
- Queensland Police Service
- State Emergency Service

Environment Matters

Environment Matters is a monthly newsletter covering updates on environment and sustainability news and initiatives across Ipswich and beyond. The January edition was sent on 19 January 2026 to 2012 subscribers, of which 48% opened the email. The newsletter included a section which encouraged recipients to participate in the Paperbark Flats community engagement.

Ipswich Insider

Ipswich Insider is a free weekly local newsletter featuring issues related to Ipswich. Edition #44, sent out on 14 January 2026, highlighted the opportunity for community to share feedback on this project, encouraging readers to visit Shape Your Ipswich, or attend one of the planned pop-up events.

Overall, these activities led to 298 contributions throughout the engagement as outlined in the table below.

Engagement Channels	Contributions ³
Shape Your Ipswich	154
Hard copy survey	0
Community engagement events	143
Phone	0
Email	1
Total	298

³ Total number of individuals who submitted feedback per engagement channel. Noting individuals may be counted multiple times if submitting multiple submissions.

WHO ENGAGED

To understand how likely the findings in this report reflect the sentiment of the impacted community, sample size and demographic representation have been considered.

Sample size

The affected community was determined by research undertaken as part of the engagement planning stage. This project was considered most likely to affect:

- residents living near the Paperbark Flats Picnic Area. Council's spatial inquiry system indicates 2,141 properties within a 2km radius. With the average 2.73 persons per Ipswich household according to ABS 2021 Census Data, this has been rounded to 5,845 residents.
- regular users of the Paperbark Flats Picnic Area. Rough estimates indicate 1,500-2,000 visitors per week based on patrol counts. As this would include repeat visitors, this has been rounded to a conservative 75,000 unique individuals visiting the site at least once annually.

Some individuals likely belong to more than one of the identified affected groups. To avoid underestimating the affected population, a conservative combined estimated of 80,000 individuals was adopted for sample size calculations.

Based on a 95% confidence level, it was recommended that anywhere between 196 – 384 contributors participate to ensure an acceptable margin of error of 5-7%. This range aligns with industry standards for exploratory research, allowing for a reasonable degree of data accuracy while balancing resourcing constraints.

Across all engagement channels, a sample size of 298 was achieved, therefore fitting with the recommended sample size range to achieve a 95% confidence level and 5.67% margin of error.

Demographic representation

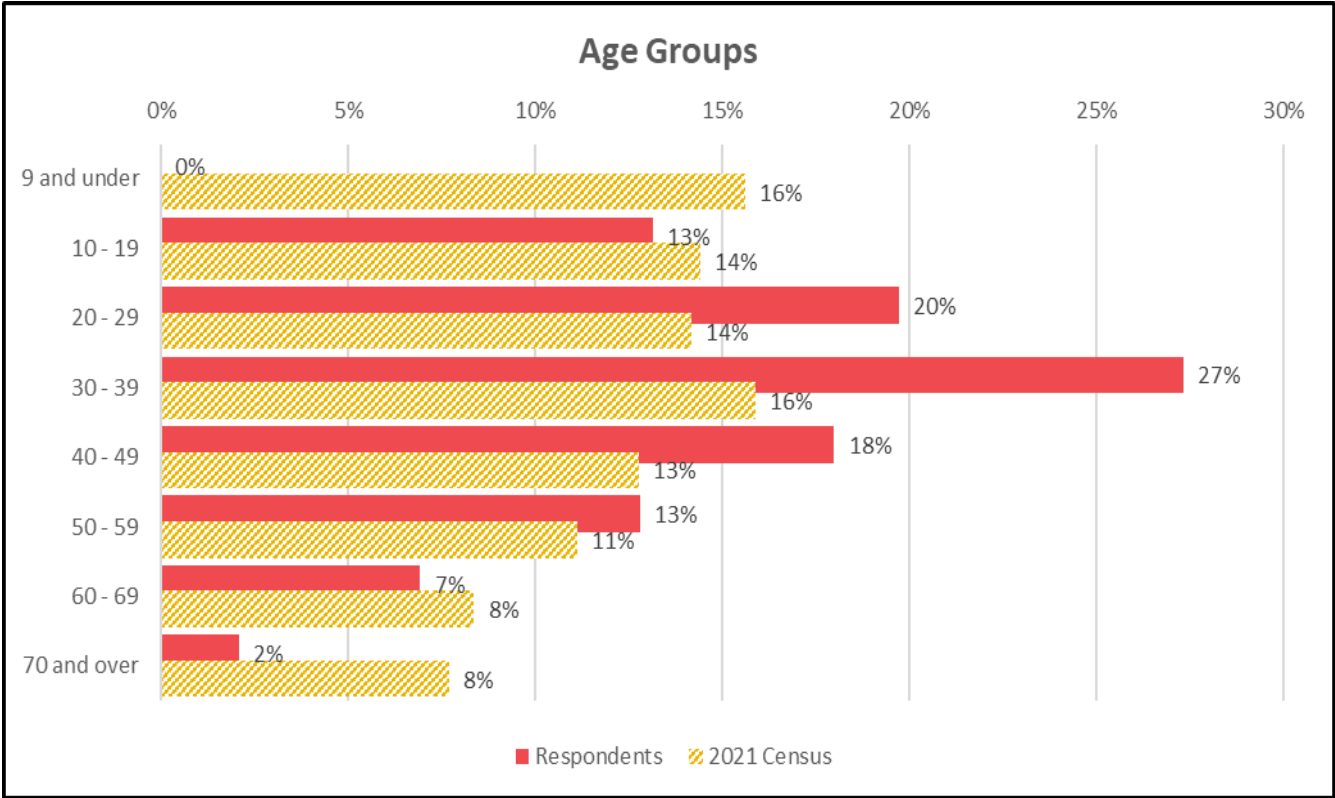
Demographic information was collected through most engagement channels, except for email submissions, where requesting this information was not appropriate for the format. A minority of participants opted out of providing some or all demographic information.

Because reliable demographic data for the specific affected population (local residents and site users) is not available, the respondent profile has been compared against the broader Ipswich population. This benchmark provides useful reference points, while acknowledging that it may not perfectly reflect the demographics of the site's visitor base.

Age

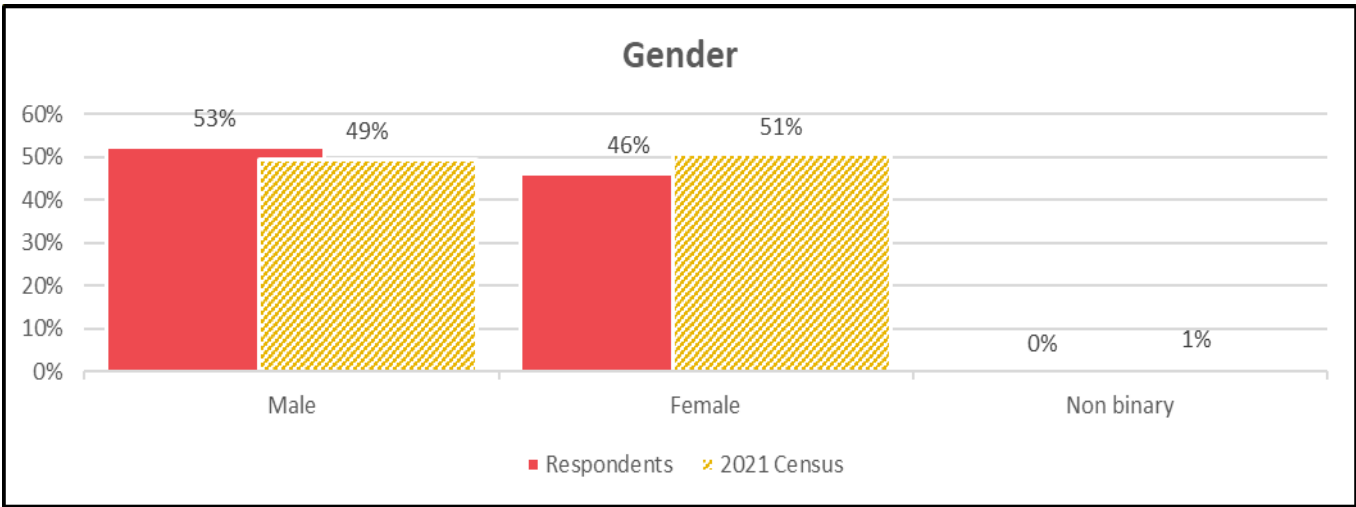
289 respondents confirmed their age. Age groups between 10 – 29 and 40 - 69 were considered reflective of the proportion of people in that age group in the general community, while 30–39-year-olds were somewhat overrepresented in the data, however this reflects the significance and popularity of this site for more advanced nature-based recreation such as trail running, mountain-biking,

bouldering, hiking and horse-riding. This report is not considered reflective of community members 9 years and younger or 70 years and older.



Gender

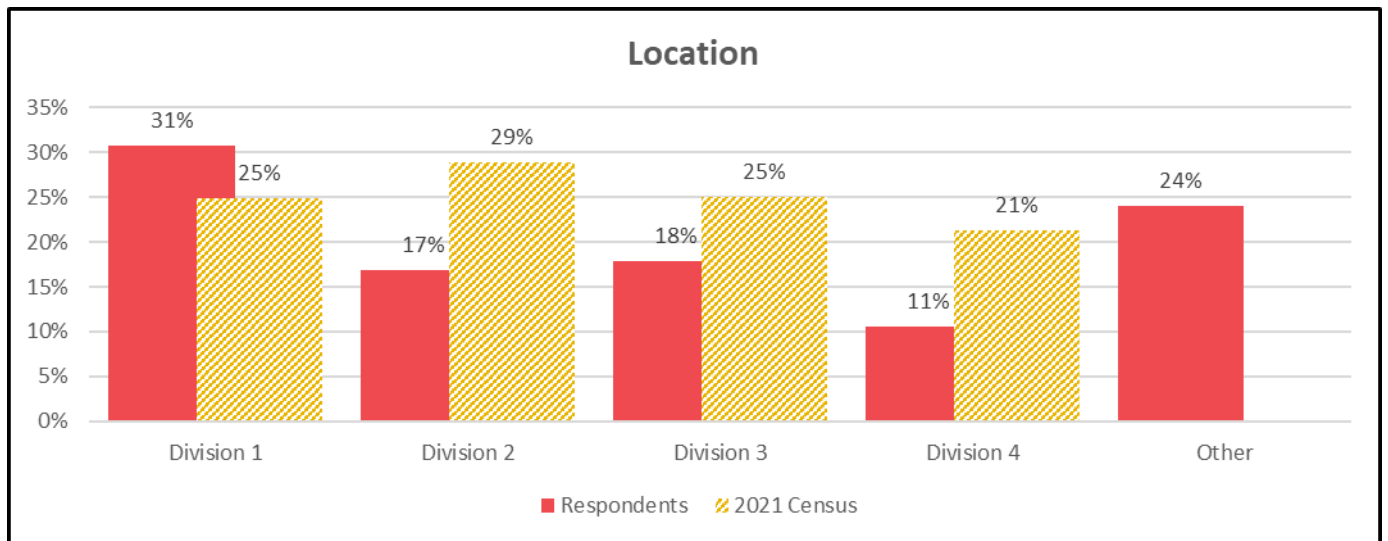
293 respondents confirmed their gender, with both males (53%) and females (46%) reflective of the Ipswich community. This report is not considered reflective of non-binary community members.



Locality

208 respondents confirmed their suburb of residence. Respondents represented all divisions across Ipswich, with greatest representation from Division 1 (31%), who were specifically targeted as these residents were identified as more likely to be affected by this project. There were also significant contributions captured from community members outside of Ipswich (22%), reflecting the popularity of the estate for visitors to Ipswich. Of those who are listed under “Other”, respondents mostly indicated residence in neighbouring local government areas. In total, 70 suburbs were represented:

- Algester
- Augustine Heights
- Bald Hills
- Beerwah
- Bellbird Park
- Bellbowrie
- Birkdale
- Booval
- Brassall
- Brisbane
- Brookwater
- Bundamba
- Burleigh Heads
- Camira
- Chapel Hill
- Churchill
- Chuwar
- Clayfield
- Collingwood Park
- Coomera
- Deebing Heights
- Dinmore
- Dutton Park
- East Ipswich
- Eastern Heights
- Flinders View
- Gables
- Goodna
- Highgate hill
- Ipswich
- Jimboomba
- Karalee
- Karana downs
- Kholo
- Marburg
- Maroochydore
- Maroon
- McDowall
- Milton
- Moorooka
- Mt Crosby
- Muirlea
- North Booval
- North Ipswich
- Pine Mountain
- Purga
- Raceview
- Red Hill
- Redbank
- Redbank Plains
- Ripley
- Riverview
- Sadliers Crossing
- Sandgate
- Sherwood
- Silkstone
- South Ripley
- Spring Hill
- Spring Mountain
- Springfield
- Springfield Lakes
- St Lucia
- Taringa
- Walloon
- White Rock
- Windsor
- Woodend
- Wulkuraka
- Yamanto
- Yeronga



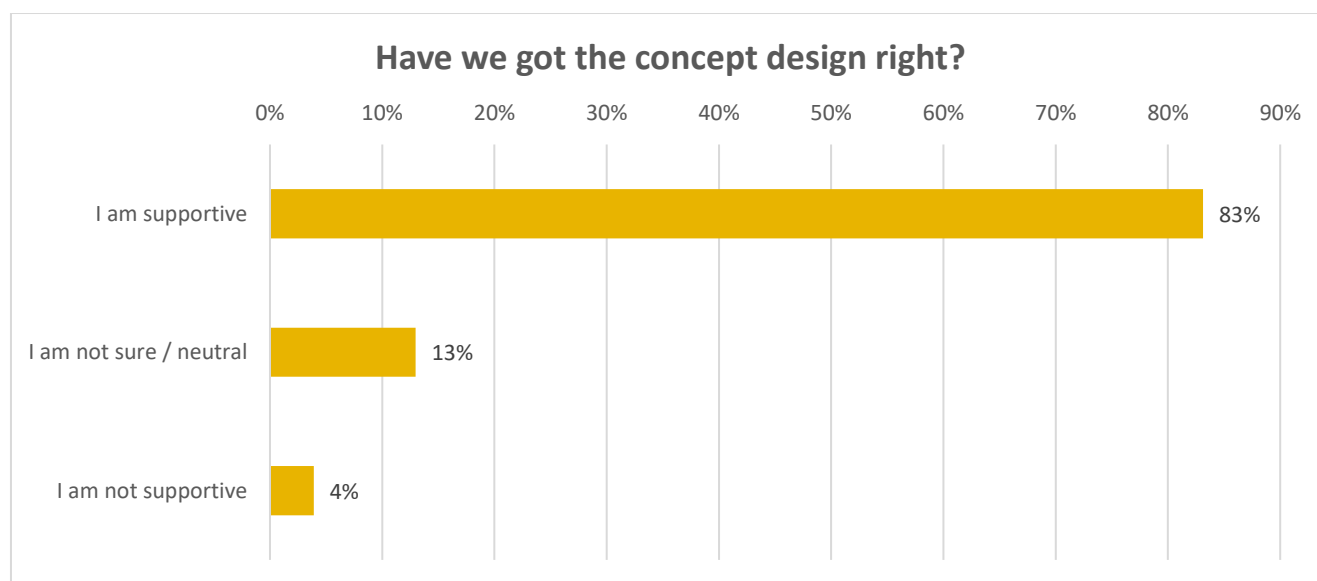
As the demographics of respondents mostly reflected the identified affected community, and sample size met the recommended range, findings outlined in this report are considered statistically representative.

WHAT THE COMMUNITY TOLD US

A summary of the feedback received across all channels has been outlined below.

Have we got the concept design right?

154 respondents provided an answer to this question. 83% were supportive, indicating strong support across the respondents for the concept design. 13% were not sure / neutral, and only 4% were unsupportive.



Let us know of any comments, ideas or concerns you have about the concept design

155 respondents provided an answer to this question. Most comments were generally supportive of the concept design and recognised how the updates would better accommodate the growing popularity of the site. Comments on various elements of the concept design are outlined in the table below.

Theme	Details
Toilets	Comments relating to the toilets generally supported the need for new toilets, reporting issues with existing facilities. Comments included: • Support proposed relocation area of the toilet block • Increase number of toilets • Inclusion of a parents room • Toilets to be disability friendly • Support for flushing toilets, and water for hand washing (currently hand washing is reliant on a tank)
Improved vehicle and pedestrian access	The majority were supportive of improving access into Paperbark Flats, with comments including: • Upgrade to support peak periods such as weekends and early mornings. • Wider roads to better support two-way traffic / larger vehicles • Upgrade roads to bitumen

	- Improved footpaths to connect horse-float area and day use area - Some suggested to keep the existing carpark
Picnic area and kids discovery space	Comments relating to the picnic area and kids discovery space included: - Families particularly supportive, with new facilities to encourage more visits to the area. - Inclusion of barbeques in picnic area - Suggestions for sand / water play, log balance, ropes course - Examples of other sites such as Karawatha nature play area and Warril Parkland - Keep as 'natural' as possible, not 'over-engineered'
Additional facilities	Respondents suggested additional facilities for consideration, including: - Incorporation of education on flora, fauna, cultural and historical significance of area, laws around littering, and information on activities in the area (e.g. bouldering, hiking) - Access to water for drinking in the horse float area (start of Yaddamun trail) - Sufficient bins to manage waste from visitors - Dedicated space for events/entertainment/coffee cart - Security cameras for public safety - Shading solutions
General design considerations	More general design considerations mentioned by respondents included: - Prioritise use of natural materials for new infrastructure - Ensure works continue to mitigate impact on the environment, and consider how rare/endangered species will be protected - Consider wet weather management / irrigation - Involve relevant stakeholders in details design of relevant infrastructure (e.g. First Nations community to share cultural information about area).
Concerns	Of those who were unsure or unsupportive of the concept design, concerns raised included: - Impact on fauna and flora / culturally sensitive areas - Concerns of overdeveloping a natural space - Reduced access to estate during construction - Would like more detailed information on the plans to inform opinion

Additional comments raised ideas or concerns such as need for improved wayfinding and roads to the estate and enhancements to activities available throughout the broader White Rock Conservation Estate. While these suggestions are outside of scope for this project, comments have been noted for future consideration.

A sample of quotes from respondents included:

- “Additional parking is definitely needed, I have generally avoided going on weekends due to lack of parking. The access road needs work, needs to be a bit wider to allow cars to pass each other. BBQs in the picnic area would be great.”
- “I love that the new plan minimises destruction of natural spaces.”
- “I love the idea of an interactive space where kids can play in a playground themed entirely as a bush playground. Some short hike / bike tracks for kids to get out on their bikes / roller blades (White Rock path is Sandy, so not as easy access for scooters etc). Something interactive and educational to learn about native flora / fauna, maybe some log balance / low ropes course. A shady multi-purpose picnic ground.”
- “Please keep the place as close to nature as possible, I like that it looks a little wild and unkempt as it adds to the experience. If there is too much done it will be like everywhere else.”
- “I am concerned that this is going to end up full of parents just using an overdeveloped nature area. The beauty of this place is that it is undeveloped. We never have any problem finding a park as if the small carpark is full its only a short walk from the next carpark. We love going for bush walks here and then walking around the bush by the carpark and spotting birds kangaroos and reptiles. If this place is turned into a silly nature play area those animals will probably disappear. It would be nice if the bush by the carpark was tidied a little but leave it natural. Don't overdevelop it into something of a fad.”
- “Love it but also how about some BBQ's in the picnic areas? Also the car park needs some cameras put in for safety. Also needs to be sun safe so shade sails or covered areas needed. Some water taps for drinks to be refilled and a dog tap for dog to drink out of. Some proper safe walk ways would be nice. What ever plants get planted also should be like bee and bird attracting.”
- “We would use this area as a young family all the time. Would be a great place to come for a bbq and let the kids explore the area. We love white rock and will be here for the next 20+ years so love the idea of having somewhere else to bring the kids! Fully support the upgrade.”
- “The design concept looks like it will improve parking, facilities and attract more people. Please find a way to keep access open to the larger trails while work is being done. There are a lot of regular, local walkers that use the trails.”

SUPPORTING ENGAGEMENT EVIDENCE

In addition to the Paperbark Flats Upgrade engagement, Ipswich City Council has recently conducted other engagement activities that relate to this project. These findings allow for a more robust understanding of community sentiment and expectations to ensure informed decision-making. Themes identified in these previous engagements have been outlined below.

Community Views in Ipswich

Each year, council partners with [.idcommunity](#) to understand current community sentiment in Ipswich and identify opportunities to advance quality of life in the local area. The last check in was undertaken between 14 May 2025 and 19 June 2025. 1,124 individuals provided feedback through this engagement.

This engagement highlighted that access to the natural environment was considered a strength within Ipswich City Council, and the most highly regarded aspect of the local area. However, experiences accessing the natural environment were poorer in Division 1, indicating some demand for improvement to daily access to green spaces.

These findings identify the natural environment as an area of importance to the community, with opportunities to improve these spaces, particularly in Division 1, aligning with proposed works for this project.

Detailed findings have been outlined in the [Living in Ipswich 2025 Views Report](#).

Corporate Plan 2026-2031

The Corporate Plan is a working document outlining council's five-year priority outcomes. All decisions regarding projects and allocations of resources across council align to the publication. As part of drafting the Corporate Plan 2026-2031, council sought community feedback to guide the outcomes of the plan. Engagement was open between 20 October 2025 and 7 December 2025. 443 individuals provided feedback through this engagement.

This engagement captured feedback on environmental outcome, balance positive conservation and nature-based recreation, inclusive of:

- Engage community in environmentally beneficial activities
- Community expectations that council make decisions that protects animals and plants
- Prioritise retaining green spaces

This feedback indirectly supports the overall concept design, which has prioritised facilities that enhance the visitor experience, while mitigating impact on wildlife.

Detailed findings have been outlined in the [Corporate Plan 2026-2031 Community Engagement Report](#).

FINDINGS

Review and analysis of the data from all engagement activities identified the following key findings from the community.

Findings as outlined in this report are to be shared publicly via Shape Your Ipswich, along with relevant project updates to show how the community's feedback has shaped this project.

- Strong community support was provided throughout the engagement, with 83% stating they were supportive of the concept design.
- A diverse range of suggestions were provided by community to improve the visitor experience for various elements of the concept design. Additional features raised included incorporation of educational elements, access to drinking water, bins, shading, security cameras and entertainment space.
- When considering design, respondents generally sought a natural look that complimented the space, with consideration to mitigating impact on the surrounding environment and ongoing engagement with key stakeholders.
- Of those who were unsure or unsupportive of the concept design, concerns primarily related to concerns around potential damage to the environment/culturally sensitive areas, overdevelopment and reduced access to the estate during the construction period. Some wanted more information to inform their opinion.

This information will be considered when planning next steps for this project.

APPENDICES

1. SURVEY

Paperbark Flats upgrade

**SHARE
YOUR
FEEDBACK**

Council has developed a concept design for upgrades to Paperbark Flats, located at 265-317 School Road Redbank Plains. Provide your feedback on the concept design below. Once completed, please return this survey by the closing date of **7 December 2025**. Surveys can be returned by:

- Posting to PO Box 191, Ipswich QLD 4305 (Attn: Community Engagement team)
- Dropping off in person at 1 Nicholas Street, Ipswich
- Scanning a copy and emailing communityengagement@ipswich.qld.gov.au

Learn more about this project at <https://www.shapeyouripswich.com.au/paperbark-flats-upgrade>

About you

We want to make sure we are hearing from people of all backgrounds. Please complete these questions to help us know who has or has not been represented through this survey. Your personal information provided in this form will be managed in accordance with the Information Privacy Act 2009. To access your information, please contact our Information Privacy Officer at (07) 3810 6666. For further details, visit our Privacy Statement at www.ipswich.qld.gov.au.

1. Gender

Select one answer only
☐ Male
☐ Female
☐ Non-binary / gender diverse
☐ Prefer not to say

2. Year of birth

3. Which suburb do you currently live in?

Share your thoughts

4. See the concept design on page 3. Have we got the concept design right? Vote to let us know if you are supportive of the concept design for the Paperbark Flat Picnic Area.

☐ I am supportive

☐ I am unsure / Neutral

☐ I am not supportive

5. Let us know of any comments, ideas or concerns you have about the concept design.

Thank you for completing this survey and helping to shape this project.

Concept design



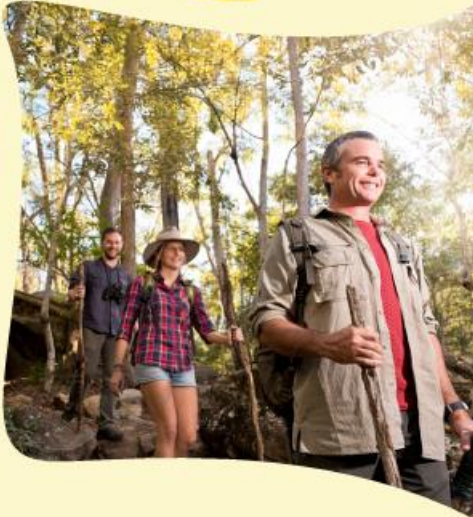
- 1) **New forecourt:** The concept design includes a new forecourt area as an entry feature to the estate, including improved wayfinding.
- 2) **Horse float parking:** Improvements to existing horse float parking area and entry point to Yaddamun trail.
- 3) **Improved arrival experience:** The concept plan proposes to improve wayfinding through additional signage and entry features in key locations to help welcome visitors and improve how people arrive and flow around the site.
- 4) **Pedestrian priority space:** The concept plan proposes to improve safety and access to the day use area for pedestrians.
- 5) **New carpark:** The concept plan proposes to establish a new large carpark on the Powerlink easement (subject to Powerlink approval). This will significantly increase number of parking spaces available for this high visitation area (about 60 additional spaces).
- 6) **New picnic area:** The concept plan proposes to transform the current small carpark into a visitor area suitable for family picnics.
- 7) **New toilet block:** The concept plan proposes to replace the current 'drop toilet' with a modern 'flushing' toilet in a more visible and accessible location.
- 8) **Open natural area:** Open grass area and shade trees, retaining the existing paperbark trees and swale.
- 9) **Kids discovery space:** The concept plan proposes to introduce a new nature play / discovery area for children to enjoy, providing another reason to visit and alternative to walking trails.

2. COMMUNITY POP-UP EVENT



3. POSTER DESIGN

BIG
CHANGES ARE
COMING TO
**PAPERBARK
FLATS**



A major upgrade
will transform this
day use area into an
engaging space to
enjoy time in nature.

- ✓ More to explore
- ✓ Better facilities
- ✓ Improved parking
- ✓ Enhanced experience



This project is made possible by the Ipswich Enviroplan initiative.

See the concept design now –
let us know what you think.
Visit Shapeyouripswich.com.au



3. ORGANIC SOCIAL MEDIA POST

 Ipswich City Council
12 January · 🌐

Have your say on planned upgrades for the Paperbark Flats Picnic Area! 🍷🌿

This popular day use area is the main entry point for the White Rock–Spring Mountain Conservation Estate.

Council has developed a concept design to bring picnic facilities and a nature play area to the space. Now we want to hear your thoughts! 🗣️

The concept design will be available for community feedback on Shape Your Ipswich until Sunday 1 February.

 Read more: <https://loom.ly/CvVYkyk>

 Share your feedback: <https://loom.ly/3Kw5yDU>







 26

11 comments 8 shares

 Like

 Comment

 Share



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