IPSWICH CENTRAL HEART
BRISBANE STREET REFRESH
WALKSHOP OUTCOMES

Delivered as part of the Ipswich Central Heart project funded by the Australian Government's urban Precinct and Partnerships Program (uPPP), the Brisbane Street Refresh design is another step in the revitalisation of Ipswich Central. Extending along Brisbane Street from Waghorn Street in the West to Nicholas Street in the East, taking in the Top of Town Precinct, this project aims to refresh the streetscape reinforcing it as a defining main street that supports local businesses and celebrates the area's unique heritage and identity.



85+ Walkshop participants

1. Youth Advisory Council
2. Top of Town Businesses
3. Women, Girls + Gender Diverse
4. Heritage

Since 2020, an extensive amount of engagement has been undertaken to understand the identity, opportunities and local aspirations for Ipswich Central. To manage consultation fatigue, Ipswich City Council engaged Fourfold Studio to first deliver a targeted round of engagement to inform the draft concept plan, through a series of walkshops.

Walkshops are an immersive engagement tool that prioritise time on the street, not in meeting rooms. The walkshops encourage different people to share their experience of the precinct on different days of the week and at different times. They are also an opportunity to uncover the perspectives of demographic groups often under-represented through traditional engagement methods.

Four walkshops were delivered over a two-week period, representing groups that both routinely use Brisbane Street as well as those who do not, to understand reasons why people visit and why others might avoid.

To document participant experiences as they moved along Brisbane Street, a 'Red and Green Flags' activity was facilitated. Participants were encouraged to pause at each stop to reflect on how they felt in the space, what they noticed, and potential improvements that would attract them to the street.

Due to the specific subject matter interest of the heritage session, participants were provided with a document capturing the history of the buildings of the area which they were able to annotate as they moved around.



City of Ipswich

Youth Walkshop

5 May 2026, 4:00 pm - 6:00 pm
50 high school students aged between 13 and 17 from across the region
Brisbane Street, Top of Town

Top green flags

- Students loved finding the hidden gems of Brisbane Street with a specific highlight being the Old Flour Mill.
- Murals bring more life and vibrancy to the street, strong sentiment to have more murals to represent the city and people.
- Design of the buildings offer a 'frozen in time' feel, giving Ipswich a historic look and feel.
- Fairy lights add to the vibe and experience of the street while also offering a sense of safety.
- Overhead trees make the street feel more open and inviting.

Top red flags

- No reason to visit – a lack of activities and advertising targeted to young people around what's happening in the area.
- A lack of comfortable seating for gathering as a group and socialising with friends.
- Railway underpass feels dodgy and unsafe especially at night and students avoid using it.
- The entry into the Top of Town over Ellenborough Street is overwhelmed by traffic and noise from the cars, making it feel very busy and dirty at times.
- The uphill path at the Studio 188 feels unapproachable and the landscaping is sparse and underwhelming.



"It doesn't have any benches where I could sit with a large group of friends. I wish there were circle benches. I enjoy how the shops aren't too busy"

"I feel that there could be more vibrance and noticeability about each building that really conveys memories, histories and culture"



"I would feel comfortable to visit in the evening as the fairy lights provide a lighting that makes you feel safer and it takes away the dark gloomy shadows and dark areas"



"It's very cozy and looks very welcoming, but there aren't many streetlights so we can see"

Business Night Walkshop

5 May 2026, 5:30 pm - 7:30 pm
Five local business owners from the Brisbane Street, Top of Town

Top green flags

- Heritage brings value to the street, and the facades evoke intrigue around the history of each shopfront.
- Quirky basement shops that reflect the personality and identity of Ipswich.
- St Paul's Anglican Church serves as a key landmark that anchors the Top of Town.
- Landscaping contributes to the street feeling more homely and pleasant.
- Walkable street – short distance from Nicholas Street and full of features that intrigue the eye.

Top red flags

- Lack of lighting and signage around Studio 188 making it an unknown venue that does not meet its potential as a destination.
- Trees provide good shade but attract birds leading to disruption on the street and droppings on outdoor furniture. The trees also create hazards to footpaths and damage to buildings. This is a major barrier for alfresco dining in the precinct.
- Top of Town feels disjointed from Nicholas Street due to the Anytime Fitness exterior and lack of horizontal connection.
- The signs of deterioration along the street suggest Brisbane Street is neglected rather than restored and preserved.
- Narrow footpaths prevent outdoor dining and activated streets.

"The railway underpass has enormous potential for a living mural artwork, a safe place for graffiti artists to practice"

"Yes, I love the back end of all the buildings and the multi levels that are below, I'd love to see upper storeys as residential apartments, carpark is needed outside"



"There's so much history in Ipswich and it's really undersold"

"Murals needed to disguise graffiti, keeps the area contemporary and youthful, I love to see the quirky basement shops"



Women, Girls + Gender Diverse Night Walkshop

6 May 2026, 6:00 pm - 7:30 pm
13 participants from across the region
Brisbane Street, Top of Town

Top green flags

- Murals add interest and atmosphere but can be further elevated in quality.
- Uniqueness of the heritage buildings although there is opportunity to showcase history through more interactive storytelling.
- Enjoyed visiting the underpass when it was living and breathing with murals and activations.
- The hidden family history and stories of shopfronts like Goleby & Sons, the Old Flour Mill and Colthup Chambers.

Top red flags

- Non-existent night-time economy and connectivity between venues with most businesses closed at night, membership only, or not clearly signed/advertised.
- Unclean and unsafe vibe in the underpass, discouraging usage especially at night.
- Lacking a clear sense of arrival as you enter Top of Town. It also feels disconnected from Nicholas Street. Opportunity to use signage, lighting and road treatments at key gateways.
- Landscaping feels sparse and uninspiring, needs some colour and diversity to brighten it up.

Heritage Walkshop

21 May 2026, 1:30 pm - 3:00 pm
20 participants from heritage groups across the region
Brisbane Street, Top of Town

Top features

- Looking up, behind buildings and down alleways to discover Top of Town
- Opportunities for education around heritage buildings.
- Oral story audio trails recorded by lifelong Ipswich residents.
- Projections on St Paul's Anglican Church during SPARK were a highlight.

Recommendations

- Trees that don't block the facades.
- Reduce or remove advertising signage.
- Consistency in fonts and feel of heritage building signage particularly on facades.
- Widening pathways for safe shared use.
- Audio storytelling trail to capture local history.



"Sign that says - Welcome to Top of Town"

"How to find happy medium - 'stop and look up' rather take away from the business. Add extra layer of experience through QR codes to provide more information"

"Opportunity to share actual personal stories through oral history storytelling from people who've lived in Ipswich for a long time."





"Lighting on Council buildings - images of what was once there"