

Community Engagement Report

Developing the Cultural Heart

Ipswich Central Revitalisation – Round 2

September 2024

Office of Economic Development

Community, Cultural and Economic Development Department



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1 Executive Summary

As part of the Ipswich Central Revitalisation, Developing the Cultural Heart of Ipswich. was a recommendation from the community outlined in the Top of Town and Centre Core Place Plans, endorsed in 2021.

The strategic positioning of d'Arcy Doyle Place makes it a key connecting thoroughfare for the Centre Core and the perfect place to promote creative activation. Renew d'Arcy Doyle Place to enhance access and awareness of surrounding historical buildings, entry to the Ipswich Art Gallery and Ipswich Civic Centre.

As part of the revitalisation of the space, community engagement occurred from December 2023 – January 2024 to inform the creation of the preliminary concept design. Details of this engagement can be found in the [Developing the Cultural Heart Community Engagement Report \(Round 1\)](#).

Based on the feedback provided, a preliminary concept design was created, incorporating elements highlighted in the first phase of engagement. As part of Round 2 of the engagement, the preliminary concept design was shared with the community for further feedback.

The themes and stakeholder insights identified in this report will help inform next steps for development of the Cultural Heart.

2 Why we engaged

As part of Round 2 of the engagement, the preliminary concept design was shared with the community, and feedback was collated with aims to:

- Understand community sentiment around the preliminary concept design
- Capture any additional community considerations for this project
- Inform next steps for the development of the Cultural Heart

3 How we engaged

Round 2 of engagement on Developing the Cultural Heart was undertaken between Wednesday 17 July 2024 and Wednesday 21 August 2024. Community was able to contribute formal feedback on the preliminary concept design through:

- Online engagement through ipswichcentral.com.au (Shape Your Ipswich)
- Email
- Phone
- Face to face meetings

Engagement on the project design was confined to Shape Your Ipswich, with the intention of capturing general community sentiment while recognising that, at the time of



engagement, the project was unfunded. To maximise engagement, the following communication channels were used to reach the community to inform and consult with them:

Ipswich City Council social media

One paid ad from Ipswich City Council's Facebook account was in market during the engagement period. The post reached 38,409 accounts and led to 2,095 clicks to the Shape Your Ipswich page.

Ipswich First

An article was shared on Ipswich City Council's channel, Ipswich First, on 2 July 2024. The article, [Have your say on Ipswich's Cultural Heart](#), was viewed 502 times.

Ipswich Central (Shape Your Ipswich)

One email campaign was sent out via Shape Your Ipswich to members following the Ipswich Central project.

The campaign went out on 26 July 2024 and had a general audience as it shared a variety of projects that were open for community engagement at the same time. This campaign was sent to a total of 395 members, of which 139 opened the email (35.2%).

Ipswich Central Business List

The same email mentioned above was sent out via Campaign Monitor to Ipswich Central Businesses on 26 July 2024.

The campaign was sent to 297 recipients, of which 144 opened the email (48.48%). 32.26% clicked on the link to engage with the Cultural Heart project.

Ipswich Youth Advisory Council

The project was also shared on 6 August 2024 with the Ipswich Youth Advisory Council (IYAC) to educate younger Ipswich audiences on the projects currently open for feedback. A total of 20 students aged from 13 – 18 years old attended the meeting. See leaflet provided to all attending students at Appendix 1.

Overall, these activities led to 2,594 views of the Shape Your Ipswich page, and 109 contributions throughout round 2 of the engagement. The following engagement channels captured contributions:

Engagement Channels	Contributions
Shape Your Ipswich Contributions	109
Email contributions	0
Phone contributions	0
Face to Face meetings	3
Total Contributions Received	112

Quantitative and qualitative data was collected from participants during the engagement phase, 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.

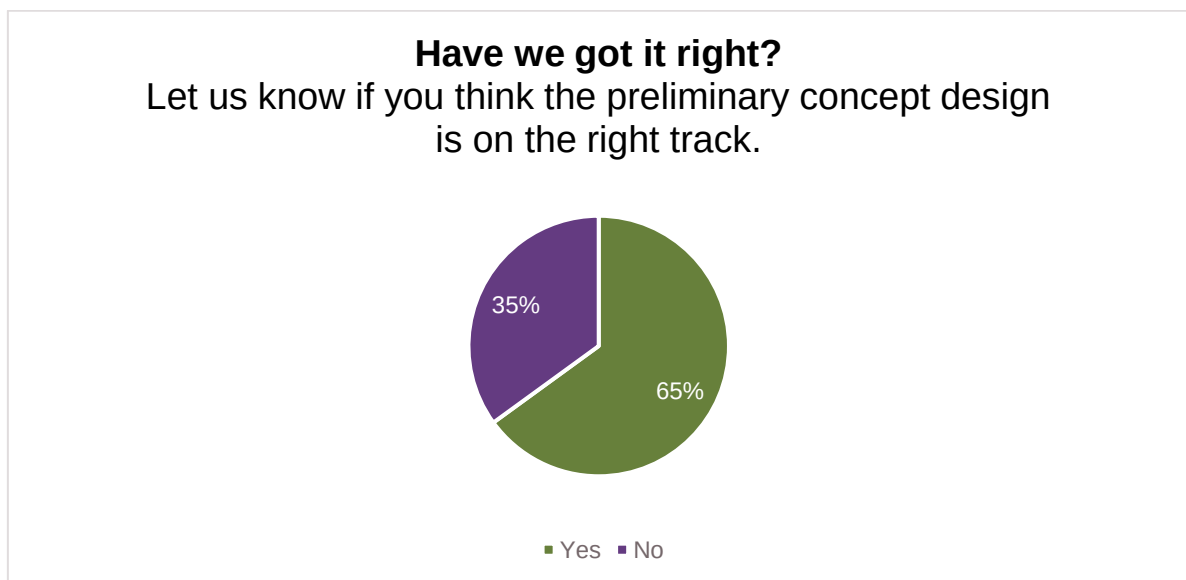
The data was cleaned, de-identified, aggregated and charted in the master database. Open thematic analysis of qualitative comments was carried out using Excel.

4 What the community told us

4.1 Shape Your Ipswich

The preliminary concept design was shared with the community on Shape Your Ipswich, alongside supporting project details. Community was able to share their feedback on the preliminary concept design using two engagement tools on the project page. See a copy of the project page at Appendix 2.

The community were asked whether they think the preliminary concept design is on the right track. While majority (65%) voted yes, 35% voted no, indicating some uncertainty around the proposed design.



Community members could also share their thoughts, questions, and reasoning behind why they were supportive or unsupportive of the preliminary concept design. Comments have been reviewed and categorised into key themes below.

Project Prioritisation

26% of contributions referenced project prioritisation. Majority of these comments were from community members who did not support the preliminary concept design. Community members felt other projects across the city were of higher priority, and the space currently meets community needs. Comments indicated concerns that this enhancement would be utilising funds and other resources needed for projects considered more important or urgent. Comments included:

- “It should be left as it is the money would be better spent elsewhere in the suburbs fixing Roads and Road congestion.”
- “This area is already quite nice and pleasant for Ipswich. The funds would be better appropriated on upgrading an area that actually requires it.”

- “because there are other areas that should be addressed before this”

Arts, Culture and Entertainment

24% of contributions referenced arts and culture. Comments were very supportive of enhancing the promotion and use of the space for arts and culture. Suggestions included opportunities for live music, more cultural experiences, incorporating interactive art into the landscape and improved visibility of the current Ipswich Art Gallery and Community Gallery. Comments included:

- *“Ipswich is in a unique position to become a leader in the arts and cultural community and the opportunity to highlight the regions artists with this development is not to be missed.”*
- *“Allowing and encouraging food trucks to go to this area every Friday and Saturday would increase foot traffic. Along with getting a band of musicians to play every weekend like it is in Southbank park will attract people.”*
- *“This space could become a photographers delight if some more outdoor art/sculpture is included. Please consider adding elements that visitors to our city will capture and share with the world.”*
- *“First Nations: Has there been consultation with First Nations representatives? Their input could inspire public art, design motifs, and storytelling elements within the landscape and overhead arbour, reflecting the cultural significance of the site.”*

Green elements

22% of contributions referenced green elements. Most of these comments highlighted the value of creating a green urban space, with the use of native species. Some comments raised concerns around the proposed removal of mature trees already established in the area, offering alternative solutions for consideration. Others felt that it made sense to remove the established trees to protect the heritage listed building. Comments included:

- *“I sincerely hope Council will preserve these trees and take alternate action to address blocked gutters and water ingress, both of which have fairly simple solutions. As for tree roots lifting concrete infrastructure one option is to provide irrigation that penetrates the subsoil layers triggering tree roots to grow deeper in the soil profile. I’m sure this would be more cost effective too.”*
- *“Tree Planting: it's not clear from the proposed trees what the intended outcomes are, as they are all the same tree symbol. Consider using a variety of colours, species, and forms to enhance visual interest and achieve specific goals. For framing the view corridors and ensure appropriate tree species are spec'd at the detail stage to avoid obstruction with wide-growing canopies etc. Deciduous trees along the western edge could provide sunlight during colder months, while colourful species could enhance the landscape's appeal and sense of place.”*
- *“I hope native species planting is incorporated for the green space, maybe even native ground cover in replacement for non-native turf for the terraces?”*

- *"I've heard that some people are complaining that the big trees will be cut down. I agree with council that they need to come down to protect heritage buildings."*

Connectivity and Accessibility

19% of contributions referenced connectivity and accessibility. Generally, community comments were supportive of the preliminary concept design and its impact on connectivity and accessibility, particularly for active modes of transport. Some suggested additional design elements such as raised pedestrian crossings over roads, more seating and vehicle access to further support connectivity and accessibility in the area. Comments included:

- *"I believe the crossings on Brisbane Street and Limestone Street should be raised pedestrian crossings similar to what is already used toward the top end of town along Brisbane Street as this would improve the walkability of the area and better connect the outdoor spaces at either end of d'Aary Doyle Place."*
- *"The proposed redevelopment should not be seen as a stand alone design, rather d'Arcy Doyle place should be a critical link incorporating universal access and green space through the inner urban fabric of the City."*
- *"I like the improved accessibility for the art gallery and a sign to help find the gallery it is sort of a hidden gem found behind buildings."*
- *"I like the idea about the cycle network as I see many people on scooters and bikes getting around my neighbourhood and at the skate park no doubt it will be used."*
- *"There is no available drop off point for unloading and loading artwork etc for the gallery. This should be considered in the planning."*
- *"Materials: Extensive use of bricks or cobblestones in pedestrian thoroughfares may pose challenges for wheelchair users..."*

History and Heritage

10% of contributions referenced history and heritage. 57% of these comments highlighted opportunities to further showcase historical elements. 29% highlighted the importance of preserving the current heritage listed building in the area. One comment raised concerns around future planning for the Obelisk. Comments included:

- *"I think the preservation of heritage buildings should be a priority in this project."*
- *"...using materials that echo the heritage architecture—such as raised brick terraces instead of concrete walls—would enhance cohesion."*
- *"Some signage outlining the history of the buildings, etc - it need not be big and unsightly - it could be simple metal plaques, appropriately placed, with a QR code engraved underneath the name of the building or feature. A QR code will allow each plaque volumes of digital space for histories, stories, pictures and maps and can be updated as required."*
- *"Removing the obelisk with no plan means it's going to disappear when out of sight. Work this out or include in design. History is needed. Too much is removed."*

Other Design Considerations



17% of contributions provided suggestions on other design considerations. A wide variety of ideas were shared by community, such as children's play equipment, water features, and safety improvements. Comments included:

- *"I would like to see something magical like a fairy garden or a favourite children's story recreated this would bring more people into the city heart & would work well with the arts sector."*
- *"Please consider a water feature, the original fountain near Limestone St and water feature outside the gallery were lovely and cooling and provide interest and a calming environment."*
- *"Needs to have security cameras throughout the walkways, needs to have rubbish bins, maybe some permanently installed seating areas, water bottle filling spot/bubbler, have drainage for rain events"*
- *"Ramp/Shared Path: The ramp doubling as a shared path for the Inner City Shared pedestrian and cycle network appears problematic due to potential safety issues. The straight path and grades down to Limestone St might foster high speeds. Implementing speed mitigation measures, such as slight cranks in the ramp walkway or a defined element e.g. raised planter instead of a bollard at the end, could improve safety."*
- *"What is being done with the mosaics at the Limestone Street end. They need to be restored and placed in a prominent position. Research why they are there, disability services have a long history in Ipswich and deserve a place."*

4.2 Face to Face Meetings

Three face to face meetings took place as part of round 2 of community engagement. Two meetings were held with nearby properties to raise awareness of the project and receive feedback. A local environmentalist group was also met with to gather feedback.

Conversations aligned with above mentioned community feedback, with general support for the project. Mixed responses were provided regarding removal of trees. Meetings also discussed considerations for heritage elements, inclusion of additional greenery, accessibility throughout the site and positive impact to economic and community growth.

4.3 Email and Phone

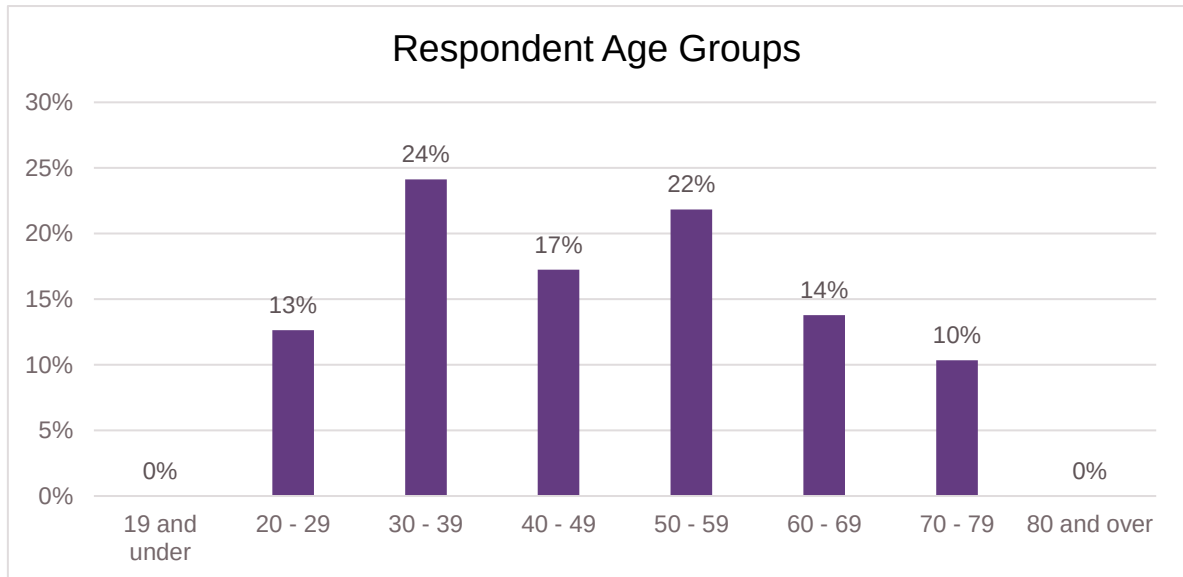
The community was provided the opportunity to share their feedback via email or phone. However, no additional feedback was received through these channels.

5 Who engaged

Where reasonable, demographic data was captured as part of engagement activities to understand the diversity of respondents.

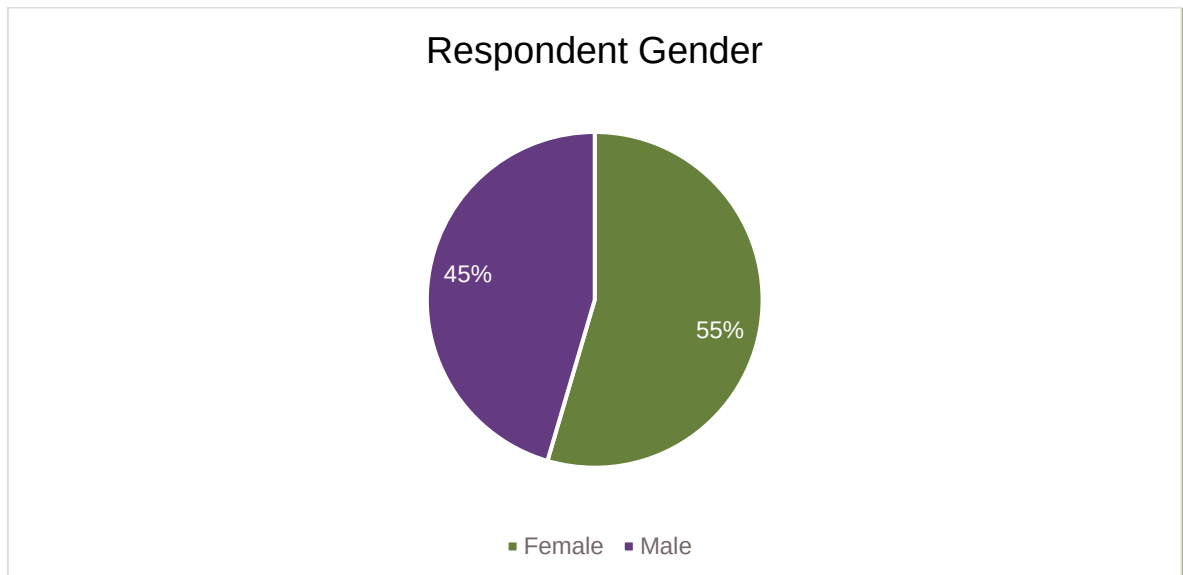
Age

87 respondents confirmed their year of birth. Respondents were aged between 20 and 79 years old, with relatively even distribution across each age bracket.



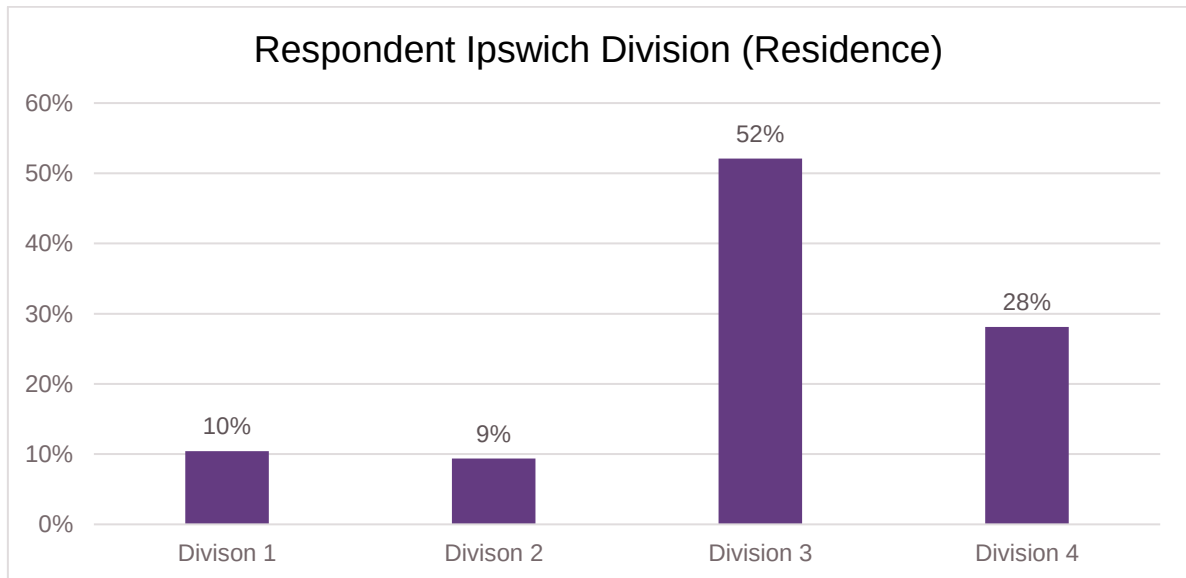
Gender

66 respondents confirmed their gender, with relatively even contributions from both males and females.



Locality

96 of respondents confirmed place of residence is in Ipswich. Respondents lived across 31 different suburbs of Ipswich, from all four divisions. Over half of respondents were from Division 3, of which the project's proposed works would also take place in.



Cultural Background

87 respondents confirmed their cultural background. 70% of respondents identified as Australian. In addition, 9 other confirmed cultural backgrounds represented in engagement which were English (11%), Aboriginal (6%), Austrian (2%), Irish (2%), Jamaican (2%), Scottish (2%), Spanish (2%), Dutch (1%) and Italian (1%).



6 Conclusion

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.

- a. 65% of respondents were supportive of the preliminary concept design for the Cultural Heart. Majority felt the preliminary concept design successfully supports the promotion of arts and culture, as well as improves connectivity in Ipswich Central
- b. While many were supportive of the proposed enhancements, some community members highlighted the importance of preserving the green elements, heritage, history and cultural elements already in place where possible.
- c. A variety of additional suggestions were provided by community members to further enhance the space and meet diverse community needs inclusive of improved accessibility, safety and entertainment.
- d. Of those who were not supportive, reasons provided primarily centred around prioritisation of funding and resources in other areas across the Ipswich Local Government Area. Some felt the space currently meets community needs and does not require further enhancement. Others raised concerns of this using funding that could be otherwise used for alternative projects.

The information will be used to inform next steps for the renewing d'Arcy Doyle Place, while taking into consideration the entire stretch of the Cultural Heart, Brisbane Street to Roderick Street along Nicholas Street and the potential Ipswich Civic Centre redevelopment.

The next stage of this project will be dependent on funding to support continued work on this project.

7 Appendix

1. Ipswich Youth Advisory Council leaflet



Open



Developing the Cultural Heart

We have now developed a preliminary concept design for the Cultural Heart, incorporating elements that reflect what the community told us.



Western Resource Recovery Centre Site Location

Make a submission to provide input into the criteria used to identify and rank potential site locations and suggest specific locations.



What's the GO with Organics?

We are working out the best ways to recover our organics with the new GO system. Help us understand how the community can get the most out of this service.



Walkability along East Street

We are working with the Department of Transport and Main Roads to improve connectivity in Ipswich Central, particularly along East Street. Tell us what you think.

Closes: 21 August



Closes: 26 August



Closes: 15 September



Closes: 13 October



Developing the Cultural Heart

+ Follow



As a key connecting thoroughfare for Ipswich Central, renewing **dArcy Doyle Place** is a key step to enhance access and awareness of surrounding historical buildings, entry to the Ipswich Art Gallery and Ipswich Civic Centre. The space also showcases Ipswich's heritage and culture, and promotes the Nicholas Street spine (South of Brisbane Street) as the Cultural Heart of Ipswich.

The renewal of d'Arcy Doyle Place is not currently funded beyond development of the preliminary concept design, however it will be able to be considered for future capital budgets by Council and may be considered for external funding by state and federal governments.

You have voted on this survey. [Cancel your vote](#)



Based on the above, share any comments, concerns or ideas for us to consider before we finalise the preliminary concept design

☒ Site Investigations

Undertake site investigations to inform the preliminary concept design

Community Engagement - Round 1

Engage with the community to gather feedback to inform the preliminary concept design. Engagement occurred between 4 December 2023 - 29 January 2024.

- ✓ Prepare Preliminary Concept Design

- Collate all feedback to inform the preliminary concept design

Community Engagement - Round 2

Engage with the community to gather feedback on the preliminary concept design. Community engagement is open from 17 July 2024 - 21 August 2024.

 Project next steps

Collate all feedback from round 2 of community engagement.

Based on feedback, project investigations and budget, next steps to be confirmed.

See less

? 1. Why are we undertaking this project?

? 2. When will these changes occur?

? 3. Why is the obelisk not shown in

4. Why are the large trees at 116 Brisbane St not

* shown in the design?

Have questions or want to learn more about this project? Contact us below:

Name: Erin Marchant

Phone 3810 6666

✉ Email business@ipswich.com

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