



Community Engagement Report

Ipswich General Cemetery Heritage Project

22 August 2022

Updated 13 October 2022

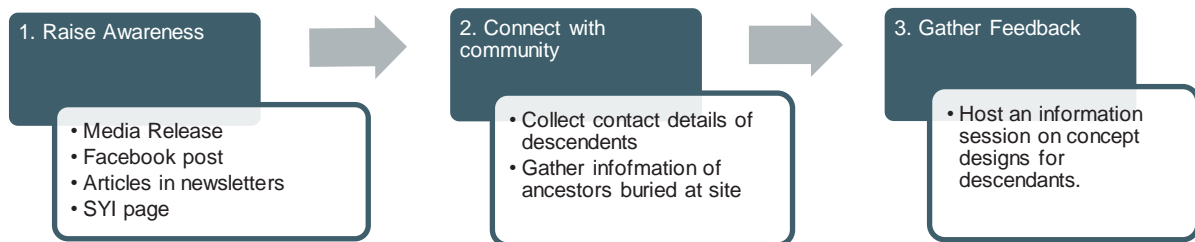


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1 Executive Summary

This report details the strategies used to raise awareness of the proposed re-design of the “pioneer section” of the Ipswich General Cemetery with community, collect information on peoples family connections to this area identified for re-development and facilitate feedback from the descendants and other relevant parties on the draft concept designs put forward by the external consultancy. Engagement was open for a nine-week period from 9 March – 15 June 2022 and involved a mixed method approach utilising online and face to face communication. The three steps of the engagement process were:



Engagement with the Aboriginal community was guided by the advice received from the Council Indigenous Liaison Officers. Further engagement with the First Nations Community will be managed through a separate process.

1.1 Reach and Scope

The project was promoted through a range of media, including social media, an Ipswich First article, local church newsletters, retirement village resident and family newsletters, printed media, and face to face at the Ipswich Show. The Shape Your Ipswich page was viewed 790 times and resulted in 27 contributions. Community also contributed via email (3 people) and phone (4 people).

The 27 contributions received identified 34 families believed buried in or near the pioneer section of the cemetery in marked or unmarked graves. Nineteen of these were the families identified on the headstones that were moved in the clean-up in the 1970's.

All 34 community members who shared their family connection to the cemetery were invited to an information session to review the proposed concept designs. Twelve people attended the session.

On the day, participants indicated their unanimous preference for Option 1 - *A Memorial Garden*.

A project update about the information session was provided on Shape Your Ipswich (hidden page created for descendants) and the two concepts and workshop feedback were uploaded to allow the five descendants who were unable to attend to have input and provide feedback. A link to the new Shape Your Ipswich project page was emailed to the database. There were two comments posted stating support for the Memorial Garden as the preferred concept and three emails endorsing the preferred concept.

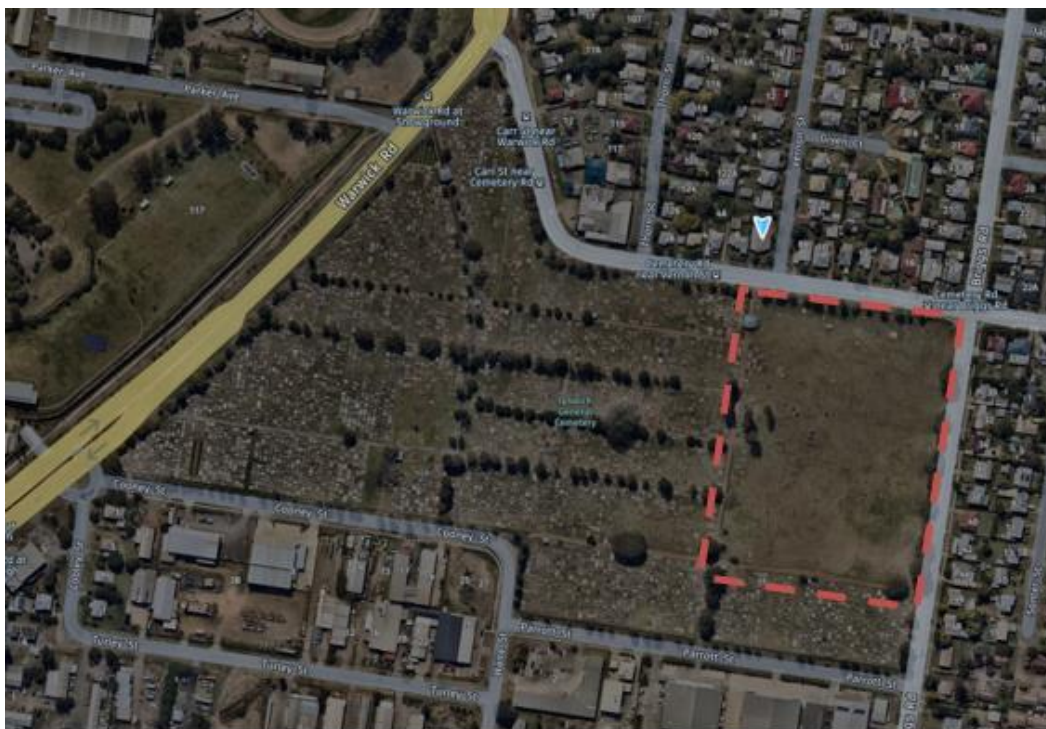
Based on descendant's feedback, the heritage cemetery project will now move to detailed design of Option 1 - A Memorial Garden, while still allowing time for consultation on 8 September with First Nations People to inform the concept design of the Aboriginal precinct.

2 Why we engaged

Ipswich General Cemetery is locally significant for its association with people and events of importance in both Queensland and local history. It is also significant for its war graves and war memorials. In the 1970's Cemetery Trustees organised the clearing of the site to reduce maintenance cost. Many of the memorials were removed from their original location within the project site and their association with the graves they marked was lost. The memorials were later relocated to their current location as a temporary measure. An external consultancy was contracted by Council to develop a conceptual design of the area shown in figure 1. This report details the strategies used to raise awareness of the project with interested members of the community and the feedback received from the community on the draft concept designs. The objectives of the engagement were to:

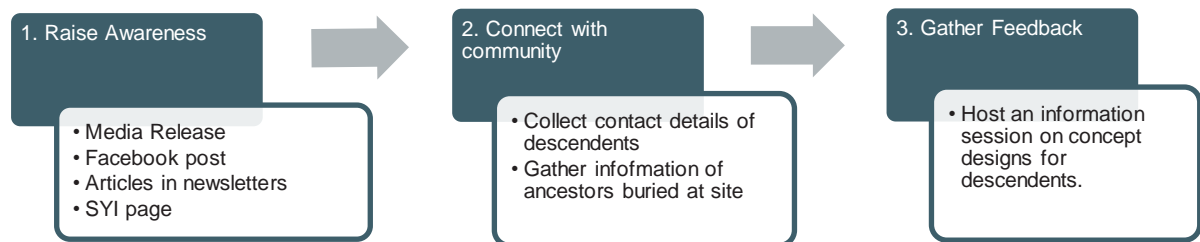
- Review the draft designs submitted by the consultant for the re-housing of the historic Headstones and the landscape design for the surrounding area (defined in figure 1).
- Provide feedback to the Council on the appropriateness of the design in addressing community concerns regarding preservation and acknowledgement of the historical significance of the headstones and Cemetery.
- Inform future concept designs scheduled for the remaining four cemeteries, Warrill Park, Tallegalla, Stone Quarry and Haigslea Lawn Cemetery.

Figure 1. Arial view of Ipswich General Cemetery (re-design area identified in red)



3 How we engaged

Engagement for this phase of the project was open for a nine-week period from 9 March – 15 June 2022 and involved a mixed method approach utilising online and face to face communication. The three steps of the engagement process were:



During the planning of the engagement the Project Team became aware of the identification of a dedicated area for “Aboriginal” burials on the 1850 cemetery site survey. To ensure that engagement with the First Nations community was done respectfully and appropriately the engagement team connected with Derek Kinchela, the Indigenous Community Development Officer and Tina Longford, the Native Title and Cultural Heritage Officer. The information provided and engagement approach with the Aboriginal community was guided by Derek and Tina’s advice. Further engagement with the First Nations Community will be managed through a separate engagement process.

3.1 Raise Awareness

A key assumption in planning the engagement was that those in the community interested in the project may be elderly and not comfortable with engaging online. To address this potential barrier to engagement for some of the community the project was promoted through local church newsletters, retirement village resident and family newsletters, printed media, and face to face at the Ipswich Show. Utilising these methods of engagement proved successful with peaks in engagement corresponding with the release of information through the various channels. Comments on the Ipswich First Article and related social media post were very much in support of the project. Example comments below:



Photo: Ipswich First Article, 24 March 2022

“So happy to see that something is finally being done about this. My heart goes out to all the families that were impacted by this”.

"This is great! How good would it be if this was done across the whole cemetery? We have a family plot (1899 - 1935) we would love to locate. Looking forward to seeing the result".

"Good to hear, maybe some of the lined-up headstones on the corner of Briggs road can go back to their correct places?"

3.2 Connect with the Community

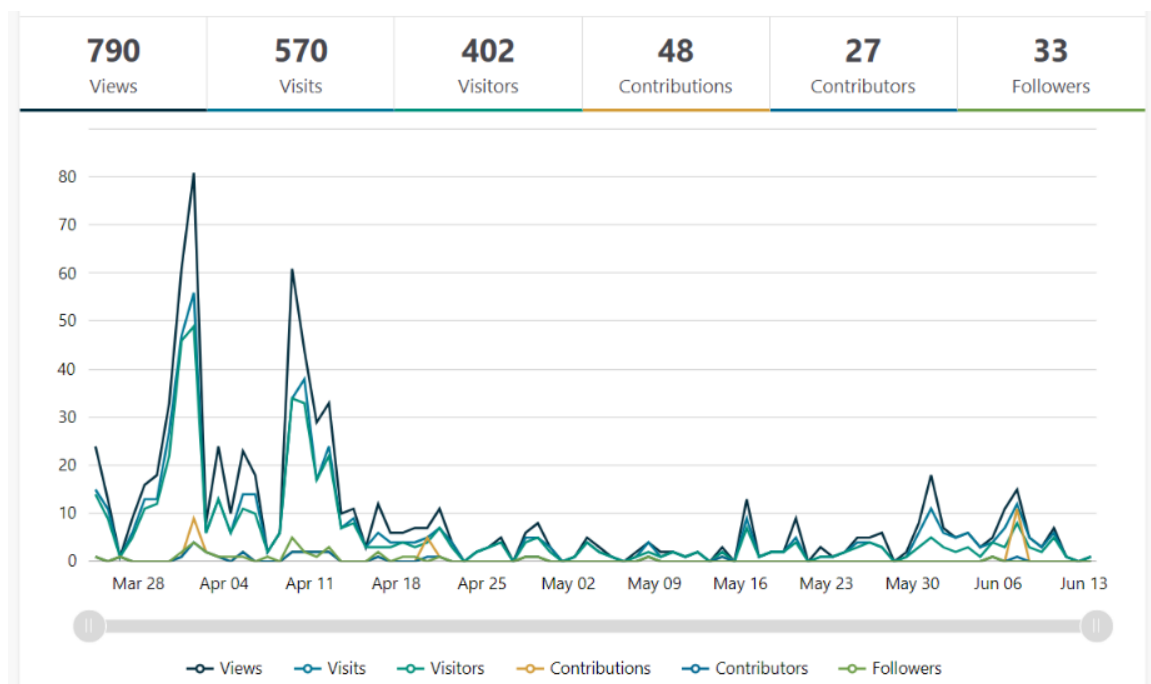
Community could connect with the project team via email (3 people) phone (4people) or via the Council virtual engagement platform Shape Your Ipswich (27 people). In instances where the community member did not feel comfortable using the online platform, they were invited to email or post information for the team to add to the SYI page on their behalf.

Shape Your Ipswich participation and contribution

The SYI Page served the following purposes:

- Provided information to the community of the historical significance of the cemetery to the community
- Provided an opportunity for people to share information about their family and connection to the Cemetery
- Provided an avenue for community to register their interest in reviewing the designs and attending the face to face engagement.

Figure 1. below shows the level of interaction with the SYI page from the 24 March – 14 July 2022. The peaks in activity correspond with the release of communications on the project.



The assumption that many of the community interested in the project would be over fifty is reflected in the demographic data in Figure 1. More women (67:34) than men engaged with the project.

Figure 2.

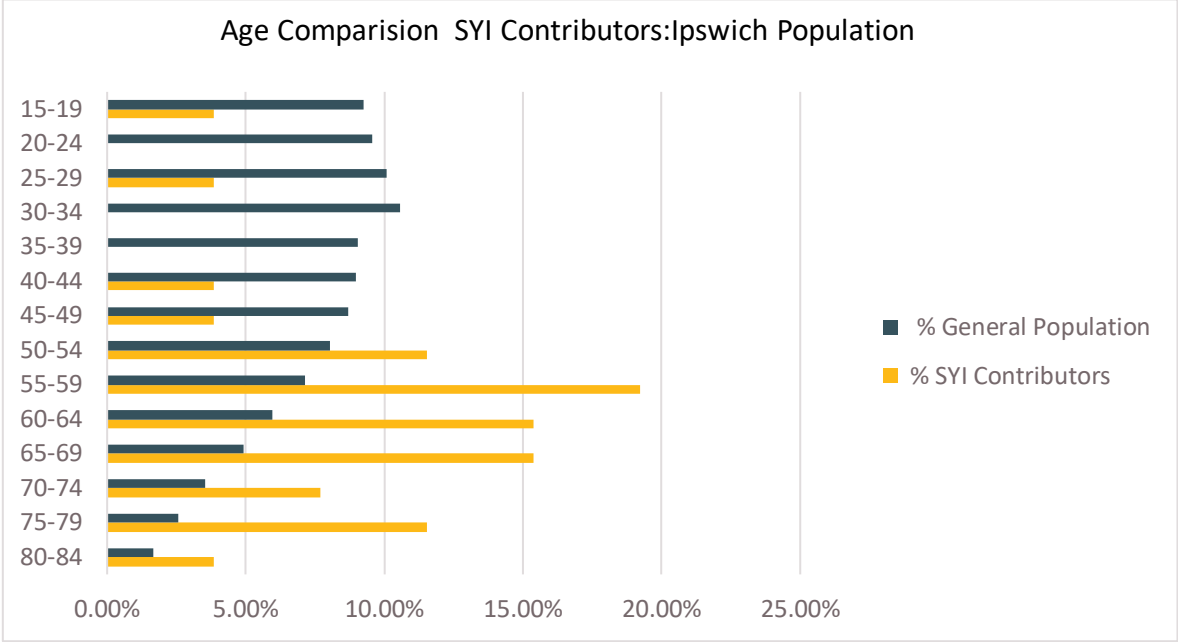


Figure 3.

PROJECT HISTORY

ARE YOU RELATED TO THESE FAMILIES?

SHARE YOUR PHOTOS AND STORIES HERE

Records of burials in the area defined for re-design are limited. However, we do have some information on the families identified on headstones that were re-located in the 1970's. Below are some photographs of some of these people or their descendants (courtesy of Picture Ipswich). Transcripts of the headstone inscriptions are in the document library. If you are related to any of these people, please connect with council by completing the form below.

Elizabeth Ann Pettigrew
Died 8/5/1868

James Johnson, brother
of William Johnson...

Charlotte Brown (Nee
Bell) Died 22/4/1866

George Phillips (right)
Died 22/5/1882

E.W. Hargreaves Died
7/8/1918.

1883 photo of the
children of Aaron and...

Francis Henry Chubb,
possibly related to the...

Thomas Hancock Jr.,
brother of Josias -Died...

Whilst the number of contributors was relatively small at 32 contributors, those who did engage were keen to share their family history and connection to the Ipswich General Cemetery. The following names were nominated by the contributors as likely to have been buried in the area under investigation.

Table 1. Family connections to “Pioneer” section identified by community

HEADSTONE RELOCATED (19)	
Brown , Charlotte (nee Bell) Collins Family Denman , Elizabeth Doonar Family Doonar , Michael Ferguson , William Lecky Ferguson , Mary Jane (nee Given) Ford Family Gilliver , Catherine/Cat (nee Brooks) Gilliver , James Jeffrey , James Jeffery Family	Mc Mahon , Bridget (nee O’Loughlin) Buried 24 Feb 1859 McMahon , Michael (husband to Bridget) Buried 14 Dec 1868 McNamara , Patrick Muller Family: Johann Gottfried, Christine Louise, Carl Fredrich, Marie Christine, Caroline and Peter Murray , Robert, Agnes and David Schorbach Family Toomey Family
HEADSTONE NO LONGER EXISTS /DAMAGED IN 1979 CLEAN-UP (10)	
Butler , John Butler , Johanna (nee Ryan) Collins , John, Burial #002081 1880 Gleeson Family McLaughlin , Margaret (Buried 22 July 1915) McLaughlin , Rebecca (Buried 3 June 1910)	Murray , James Davis (Buried 24 Nov 1921) Salisbury Family Skinner Family Witheyman , Barnard/Bernard
PLAQUE IDENTIFYING BURIAL REMAINS IN OPEN GRASSED AREA (1)	
Kelly , Patrick	
KNOWN BURIAL IN UNMARKED GRAVE (4)	
Cooney Family, dating back to 1870’s or earlier, unmarked paupers’ graves in Catholic section Lovell , Richard	Tronc , Heinrich (Henry) Died 25 July, 1917 Vowles Family
KNOWN BURIAL – DO NOT KNOW IF THERE WAS A HEADSTONE OR PLAQUE (1)	
North , Sarah and William	

5.1 Engagement with Direct Descendants

The 27 contributions received on Shape Your Ipswich identified 34 families believed buried in or near the pioneer section of the cemetery in marked or unmarked graves. Nineteen of these were the families identified on the headstones that were moved in the clean-up in the 1970's.

5.1.1 Concept Design Information Session

A concept design presentation for the direct descendants and Friends of the Cemetery was given by the Principal Landscape Architect in June 2022. The session also included an interactive workshop facilitated by the IED Stakeholder Manager, where the 12 attendees shared their family histories and provided feedback about the two preliminary concept designs. On the day, participants indicated their unanimous preference for Option 1 - A Memorial Garden. A subsequent update was provided for the descendants on Shape Your Ipswich (hidden page created for descendants) to share the feedback outlined below with five descendants who were unable to attend, and to confirm their choice of the Memorial Garden concept. During the workshop, participants shared the following "likes" about the Memorial Garden concept:

- retains the grouping of memorials and gravestones in denomination areas.
- allows for the marker locations and interpretive signage to commemorate denominations.
- shaded pathway around the perimeter would encourage visitors to stroll and view the memorials.
- option 2—A Heritage Memorial—was considered too similar to the existing temporary arrangement for the memorials.



Direct descendants and Friends of the Cemetery gathered to share family histories and provide feedback about the preliminary concept designs.



4 Consultation with First Nations People

An information session is scheduled to be held onsite at the cemetery on 8 September 2022 for First Nations People, to obtain their feedback on the preliminary concept design for the Aboriginal precinct and input into a concept design that will respectfully tell the story of the cemetery and the historically designated “Aboriginal” area. An invitation has been prepared and will be sent to local First Nations People through networks maintained by Council’s Native Title and Cultural Heritage Officer and Indigenous Australian Community Development Officer.

5 Conclusion

Based on feedback provided by the direct descendants and Friends of the Cemetery, the Ipswich General Cemetery Heritage Project will now move to detailed design of Option 1 - A Memorial Garden, while still allowing time for consultation with First Nations People to inform the concept design of the Aboriginal precinct.

6 Acknowledgement

Ipswich City Council would like to respectfully acknowledge the work of the Ipswich Genealogy Society and Picture Ipswich for providing information and images used in this project.

Addendum

Report of Consultation with First Nations People



First Nations People gathered onsite at the Ipswich General Cemetery to inspect the Aboriginal burial site and provide feedback on the preliminary concept design for the heritage restoration project.

Two workshops were held onsite at the Ipswich General Cemetery on 5 and 8 September 2022, to accommodate the availability of the seven participants. Direct descendants of the Ugarapul People attended the first workshop. The second workshop was attended by Aboriginal persons, one being a direct descendant of a family member buried in the unmarked 'Aboriginal' section and also the Salvation Army Section, which has burials connected to Deebing Creek Mission.

The workshops were promoted via an invitation that was sent to local First Nations People through networks maintained by Council's Native Title and Cultural Heritage Officer and Indigenous Australian Community Development Officer. The workshops were also promoted at the Murri Interagency meeting in September and advertised more broadly on social media and Murri radio.

The workshops included a gathering at the historic Aboriginal burial precinct, where an overview of the history of the site was provided by the Principal Landscape Architect, followed by story telling and the sharing of connection to country and family histories. Back at the rotunda, an informal deliberative engagement process was undertaken, beginning with an explanation of The Memorial Garden concept led by the Principal Landscape Architect, followed by Questions and Answers. As the preliminary concept design for the Aboriginal burial site was deliberately less detailed, pending input by First Nations People, the final activity was a free-flowing feedback session, where participants were invited to provide suggestions for a concept design that would respectfully tell the story of the cemetery and the historically designated "Aboriginal" area.



Overall, there was unanimous support for the preliminary concept design (The Memorial Garden).

Local Aboriginal History

Valuable and previously unknown local Aboriginal history was shared at the workshops, including information about a significant number of Aboriginal burials in the Salvation Army section of the cemetery and the connection to the Deebing Creek Mission.

Feedback

There was unanimous support for The Memorial Garden concept, which was variously described as “Great” and “Sounds good”. Common themes included:

- “Like the walkway (Memorial Garden pathway design), but we need somewhere we can sit down and pay our respects”.
- We need a place to come and sit and reflect. Seating that allows a “yarning circle” would be good...(tie-in) with the gum tree.
- Plantings need to be endemic species.
- Our stories are important and need to be incorporated into the design e.g. signage and/or engravings etched in stonework (pathways/yarning circle could be potential options).

Suggestions for specific design elements included:

- Welcome to Country sign.
- Aboriginal artwork designed by “the young blokes”.
- Timber slat seating with backing [for Elders].
- Stones could be embedded in walkway with stories inscribed.
- Create a point of focus in the ‘yarning circle’ e.g. a [symbolic] fire pit.
- Tie back to Salvation Army/Deebing Creek Mission connection.

Both workshops concluded with morning tea, which provided the opportunity for further informal discussion.

Next steps

The participants were advised that the project will now progress to Detailed Design and “We’ll come back to you when it’s finalised” for a second round of consultation.