

# Indigenous Community Consultation Report in response to Ipswich CBD RE—development Public Art Plan (September 2019)



Prepared for Ipswich City Council October 2019



## 1. Executive summary

The redevelopment of the Ipswich CBD presents an exciting opportunity to revitalise the heart of the city. The proposed arts and cultural precinct will be a hub for exploring local histories and stories, as well as sharing the rich cultural diversity within the Ipswich community. Incorporating art and design elements that reflect the experiences of Indigenous Australians will transform how people engage with the redeveloped spaces and buildings. Activating the creativity and cultural heritage of the local Indigenous community brings the benefits of better design outcomes with local relevance and culturally safe places where people feel welcomed and respected. This ensures a sense of ownership and pride in the civic spaces of Ipswich.

To ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives are incorporated into the redevelopment of the Ipswich CBD, Ipswich City Council has engaged Black Drum Productions to consult with the local Indigenous community to ascertain their views on what would be culturally appropriate and engaging within the Nicholas Street redevelopment. The *Ipswich CBD RE-development Public Art Plan (September 2019)* informed this consultation process and was the source of the three themes that were presented to the Indigenous Community for comment. The public art plan identified opportunities for the inclusion of cultural elements within these locations:

1. Library
2. Council Administration Building
3. Civic Space

Views were sought on these main areas of the redevelopment over which Council has discretion and ideas were proposed for each space, based on the opportunities identified in the public art plan. Community feedback and suggestions were documented for each location. Consultation activities included:

Pop up information store in the mall staffed by local Indigenous elders and community members. Idea posters and architectural drawings were on display to encourage discussion.

Direct interviews with key stakeholders to gather locally relevant feedback.

Online survey to gather the views of people unable to attend the pop-up store.

Social media and email promotion of all channels for providing input and feedback.

Overall, the feedback received was very positive with the local Indigenous community welcoming the opportunity to provide input and expressing a strong desire to participate as advisors and suppliers to the project. Respondents asked to be kept informed about any business opportunities, as well as key decisions relating to the redevelopment project. In total, 108 responses were received to the online survey and over 270 people visited the pop-up information store in the Mall to provide feedback.

*Thank you for giving us a voice.*

*To represent our culture - then, now and in the future.*

*Using art, stories and designs from the local people, especially youth, to have them be a part of the redevelopment.*

100%

100% of people surveyed want  
**INDIGENOUS ART AND DESIGN**  
included and think it will make the CBD  
a culturally safe place for visitors.

99%

99% of people surveyed want  
**LOCAL INDIGENOUS STORIES**  
shared with visitors to the CBD.



Overwhelmingly, the responses were positive, informative and encouraging, with the community expressing thanks to Ipswich City Council for having the foresight to consult with the local Indigenous community on this important civic project.

## 2. Indigenous community profile

Cultural diversity is a strength of Ipswich and is celebrated through events such as the annual Ipswich MultiFest and NAIDOC Week at the Briggs Road Sporting Complex. The Indigenous community makes up about 4% of the Ipswich population with around 12,985 people identifying as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander heritage. The community are active in promoting First Nation's culture and work to ensure the Indigenous people, places and events that have shaped Ipswich are remembered, shared and celebrated.

Black Drum Productions identified key stakeholders working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents and invited them to promote the community consultation process and participate in the survey. Key stakeholders included these local organisations:

- Kambu Health Service (Based in Ipswich, Booval and Goodna)
- We Care Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Centre for Aged and Disability (Based in Redbank Plains)
- Liwoarji Aboriginal Corporation (based in Ipswich)
- Kumarra Family Wellbeing Service (based in Goodna)
- Goolburri Health Service Kinship Care (based in Flinders View)

Purga Elders and Descendants Corporation  
(based in Purga)

Amaroo Kindy and Pre-School (based in Raceview)

Kambu Progress Association (based in Flinders View)

Individual community members including members of the Traditional Owner groups

Other Government and Not for profit community organisation in Ipswich

## 3. Methodology

Black Drum Productions worked collaboratively with Council personnel to develop a project methodology that would engage and inform the local Indigenous community while delivering key messages and information vital to an understanding of the redevelopment project and the opportunities it represents for local businesses, artists and community members.

Having identified the key community stakeholders, Black Drum Productions worked with Council to establish a friendly and welcoming pop-up information centre in the Terry White arcade. This pop-up centre was staffed by all indigenous team over a two-week period. It was furnished to promote relaxed discussions and information gathering through facilitated questionnaires based around architects' renderings of the proposed redevelopment spaces and site maps of potential areas where Indigenous cultural elements could be incorporated into the overall design. Posters and illustrations adorned the walls and people could write on the posters or stick Post-it notes on the posters under the



# 108

108 responses to **ONLINE SURVEY**.

## SURVEYED



Over 90% were Ipswich residents aged 10-70 years

## GENDER



Male 30%  
Female 70%

## HERITAGE



90% Aboriginal  
8% Torres St Islander  
2% Other

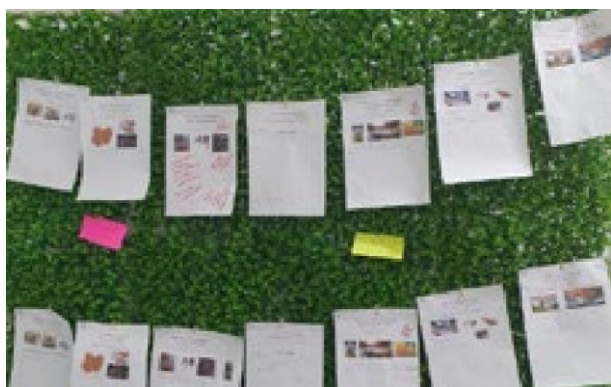
# 270

270 visitors to pop-up **INFORMATION CENTRE** in the mall - 30 people interviewed per day

relevant headings. This proved a popular way of gathering information and sparked ideas and suggestions for artworks and design elements within the project spaces.

Staff on hand in the information store were able to guide visitors through the architects plans and assist them to supply ideas and feedback through questionnaires or Post-it notes. Local community members and elders were engaged to staff the pop-up store, and this contributed to a strong local visitation response. The pop-up store was promoted via the Black Drum Productions Facebook page and email bulletins to a database of key stakeholders and agencies. It was also promoted via Council channels and a flyer was distributed to key stakeholders promoting opening times and dates for the information store

In addition to the pop-up information centre, an online survey was also developed and opened for four weeks between 24 September and 16 October. Survey questions were developed in consultation with Council and sought to gather specific information and ideas from the local Indigenous community about key areas of the redevelopment identified in the public art plan.



## 4. Summary of findings

A summary of the ideas and feedback supplied through the online survey, interviews and via the pop-up information centre are listed below. They are grouped under the relevant headings for the spaces identified in the public art plan as suitable for the inclusion of cultural art and design elements within the redevelopment precinct. The three spaces are:

1. Library
2. Council Administration Building
3. Civic Space

Responses to the community consultation were overwhelmingly positive and informative about what the local Indigenous community would like to contribute to the Ipswich CBD redevelopment. Over 99% of the people surveyed want to local Indigenous stories to be shared and 100% or respondents thought that the inclusion of Indigenous art and design elements could make the CBD a culturally safe place. The involvement of youth in the design process and future public programs was vital to making the CBD space a welcoming and inclusive space for all visitors.





## Space 1. Library

What was proposed?

- Cultural fabrics and patterns on soft furnishings and furniture (i.e. upholstery)
- Aboriginal cultural ready space

What was the Indigenous community feedback?

- Interior furnishings and décor incorporating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patterns and motifs were considered appropriate, but not animal totems, as people didn't want to sit on animale.

*Having the seats covered in cultural patterns is a great idea for the library.*

*A space that is inviting interesting and eye catching for all which includes artwork of local people and an acknowledgement of our traditional owners of Ipswich.*

- The community wanted flexible spaces available for yarning and holding workshops. They also requested more Indigenous resources, books, author talks and activities for children, such as interactive workshops to engage them in reading and learning.

*Yarning circle, traditional storytelling and more indigenous books.*

*Digital stories of notable aboriginal Elders, maybe a circle where kids can sit and read.*

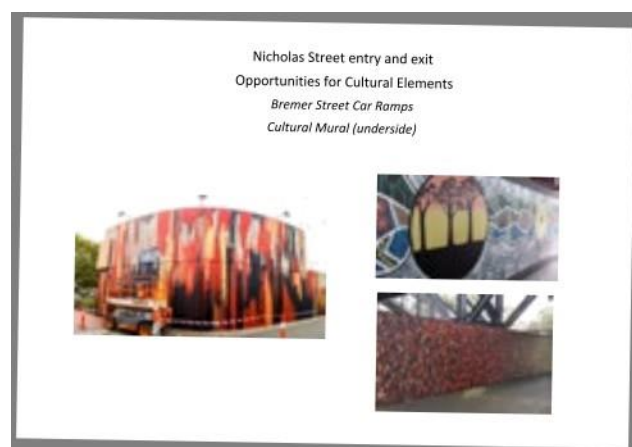
Photographs of elders and ancestors were important to connect with the past and make the space comfortable and welcoming to Indigenous Australians.

Room names in language.

What other suggestions were provided?

A community project to develop a feature art piece for the library.

- Local histories to be recorded and presented as part of Black History Month exhibitions.





## Space 2. Council Administration Building

What was proposed?

- Wall displays (Artwork — weaving)
- Totem Poles

What was the Indigenous community feedback?

- Wall mounted and free-standing sculpture of local cultural artefacts were relevant to the space i.e. weavings, totem poles, carvings etc.
- Cultural artefacts on display to reflect local history and culture

*Weaving, carving, artwork, artefacts, upholstery, uniforms for staff, carvings on building.*

*Weaving is a good idea. Better than just a traditional painting.*

*Weavings, painting, artefacts, flags, photos of elders.*

What other suggestions were provided?

Art built into the foyer and public spaces was a popular request and ideas included using local cultural histories and artefacts as the source materials. People wanted to be welcomed by their cultural heritage when they visited the building and reminded of the important people and events in the life of Ipswich.

*An Elders gallery with portraits of Elders who contribute to or have contributed to community.*

## Space 3. Civic Space

What was proposed?

Naming - Tulumur Place

Cultural Garden - native plants, Brush-tail Rock-wallaby bronze sculptures

Connection to water (in water play area) - Bronze sculptures of fish traps

- Shade Structure - cultural mural (underside)

Car Ramps - cultural mural (underside, pillars as totems)



What was the Indigenous community feedback?

Tulumur Place was endorsed by 90% of respondents as a positive choice for naming the redeveloped Civic Space. Tulumur, meaning Ipswich in Yagara Language (which is the language the three local Aboriginal groups) has been verified by Desmond Crump, the Indigenous Languages Coordinator at the Queensland State Library and it is the name advocated by the Traditional Owners in Council's prior community consultations. A graphic of two boomerangs, one above and one below the wording Tulumur Place, was a possible logo or design element.



*Yes, there are so many different cultures in Ipswich and many of them are wanting to learn more about our Traditional Owners and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.*

- Use of local plants such as wattles, eucalypts, bottle brush and grass trees were requested, and these local species were suggested:

- o Eucalyptus curtisii Plunkett Mallee
- o Notelaea ipsviciensis Cooneana Olive
- o Backhousia citriodora Lemon Myrtle
- o Davidsonia jerseyana Davidson's Plum
- o Citrus australasica Finger lime
- o Eustrephus latifolius Wombat berry
- o Bidgerdii plant (a local medicine)

Abush tucker garden with plant labels in Yugara language alongside the English

Sculpture of local animals such as Brush-tailed Rock—wallaby, koala, platypus, emu

The history and cultural significance of local waterways was highlighted strongly with suggestions for place-naming and artworks based on waterways, water plants and aquatic animals — Bremer River, water lilies, edible plants, fish traps, platypus, turtle lungfish etc.

A water park based on the Rainbow Serpent design with paving leading the way through the park and telling the Dreaming Story. Different water depths to denote the zones in the waterways and ripples where people are fishing with traps.

Artwork and sculptures of fish traps cast in bronze.

Sandstone as a local material was important to reference the hills and peaks of the region.

Street furniture in the shape of a boomerang utilising designs burnt into the wood was suggested. Barbeques for families to access.

Shade structures and car ramps to feature cultural designs by local artists about totems and places of significance.

*Native plants, rocks, water garden, benches with Indigenous burnt designs outside.*

*Just to have a space that the Indigenous community can feel connected to and be able to use and incorporate cultural activities.*

*More programs that represent both Aboriginal & Torres Strait culture*

*Space for Cultural Markets etc.*

#### What other suggestions were provided?

Local artists and business owners would like to be considered for supplier opportunities on the redevelopment project and asked to be kept informed about how to apply.

Remembering elders and people who have contributed significantly to the Ipswich community was important in this space and plaques, signage or a Remembrance Wall were suggested. Neville Bonner AO and Georgina Thompson OANI were mentioned.

Murals or projected artworks were a way in which different community groups could come together and work collectively on the project. The benefits were being mutual respect for differing histories and opinions, as well as capturing the diversity of Indigenous cultural heritage in the region. The use of local artists and imagery was vital to the project's relevance.

There was a definite need expressed for the spaces to be activated through cultural dance, performances, art workshops, craft markets, art exhibitions and cultural walks. The community wanted the spaces to be flexible so that they could be adapted to multiple uses and not static spaces.

Gateway signage upon entering Ipswich was important in acknowledging the local Aboriginal cultural heritage of the region.

Youth centre with resources for entertainment, socialising and learning is a safe environment.

A men's shed for sharing culture and learning skills.

A drop-in centre where people can have showers, wash clothes and access resources to improve their employment prospects and living conditions.

## 5. Considerations

The initial consultation process demonstrates that the Indigenous community of Ipswich are excited about the CBD redevelopment and eager to participate in public art, cultural heritage and business opportunities arising from the project. Council can support this level of enthusiasm by implementing these actions:

- Continue to involve the local Indigenous community in the ongoing design process for the Library, Council Administration Building and Civic Space by sharing information about progress and key decisions.

Consult with local Traditional Owners and the community to ensure place naming and selection of imagery and artworks is culturally appropriate and relevant.

- Commission local Indigenous suppliers to produce cultural design elements and public artwork for the redeveloped project spaces.

*In your decision making in the final stages, please make sure you include our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders and Leaders. There needs to be a balance - a sense of community in these decisions from the bottom up. Inclusion is the best factor. Congratulations on journey towards this change.*







P07 3844 0238 (9AM-5PM MON-WED)  
PO Box 5968, West End Q 4101  
Level 1, 12 Merivale Street,  
South Brisbane