



# Greening the CBD

## Report on consultation

**Barneson Boulevard and Tiger Brennan Drive Stage 3  
public consultation on landscaping and public space  
enhancement**

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## 1. Executive Summary

The Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics (DIPL) recently completed community consultation on the Barneson Boulevard and Tiger Brennan Drive Stage 3 project to promote enhancements of public spaces and community input on this aspect of the design. Consultation occurred from 25 September 2017 to 6 November 2017.

The Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics implemented an online engagement strategy. The aim was to build on previous consultation with revamped materials, re-enforcing project benefits and engage in a constructive discussion about how to enhance greenery and urban art opportunities along the route.

209 people completed an online survey and a further 70 community members visited an information stall in Smith Street mall. A presentation was made to City of Darwin and a site briefing was provided to key media stakeholders.

Approximately 1000 people visited the project website and more than 64,000 people were reached via advertising on Facebook, YouTube, radio and newspaper.

The online survey revealed that Territorians wanted to see a practical approach to the design of the Boulevard, both in reference to potential art along the route and to the landscaping elements of design.

Trees with wide shade canopies was voted the most important consideration in tree selection – highlighting the importance of trees which serve a practical purpose and have a cooling effect on the city.

Wayfinding Art (built into the practical elements of the project such as seating, shade structures, etc.) was voted the most popular response for types of artwork to use along the route, reinforcing that people want to be able to use and interact with specific elements of the overall design.

Protection and enhancement of the natural environment (including greenery and water) was also a key theme in the survey with majority of people indicating support for the landscaping plan.

Ensuring that the look and feel of the road is reflective of Darwin's unique, tropical, warm, vibrant, relaxed character was also a key theme.

This consultation project achieved excellent coverage and was successful in raising awareness, addressing specific concerns and gaining input from the community on what they want the new entrance into the Darwin CBD to look like.

The outcomes of this consultation will inform the landscaping and art opportunities into the final design for the road.

The tender is currently advertised until February 2018.

## 2. Context

### 2.1. Background

Creating an iconic new entry into Darwin is part of Government's plan to revitalise our CBD. The new tree lined Boulevard link (\$20 million) will be delivered in conjunction with the duplication of the final section of Tiger Brennan Drive from Dinah Beach Road to McMinn Street (\$19.53 million). The project is jointly funded by the Australian (\$29.5 million) and Northern Territory (\$5 million) Governments and City of Darwin (\$5 million).

The corridor to accommodate Barneson Boulevard was initially identified more than 20 years ago in the *Central Darwin Planning Concepts and Development Opportunities (1996)* and was subsequently preserved through a Proposed Main Road zoning.

### 2.2. Previous consultation

Extensive community engagement was undertaken by DIPL and True North Strategic Communications between December 2016 and February 2017 on the development of concept designs for Barneson Boulevard and Tiger Brennan Drive. Consultation also occurred with directly impacted stakeholders in 2015 by Michels Warren Munday (former trading name of True North Strategic Communications) and with the broader community in 2013 as part of the *Darwin City Centre Master Plan* development process led by the City of Darwin.

During previous consultation (December 2016 to February 2017), 152 surveys were completed, 3,200 homes and businesses were letterboxed, 304 people attended information booths, 21 face-to-face meetings were held, 11 written submissions received and 40,000 people were reached via Facebook. The majority of community members consulted were supportive of the overall concept and offered alternative ideas for consideration, with the exception of a small number of people who did not see the need for Barneson Boulevard now or into the future.

Throughout 2017, DIPL continued to respond to questions raised by community members and provide updates on Facebook and DIPL website about the project.

In the lead up to the local government elections for City of Darwin in August 2017, more significant levels of concern about aspects of the project emerged than was evident during previous consultation. DIPL released a number of Q&As to ensure factual information was available to the public as well we a live Facebook session with the public.

### 2.3. Current consultation project

A communications strategy was developed for the greening aspects of the project in September 2017. The consultation was also an opportunity to address the concerns and encourage more constructive dialogue about how to enhance greenery and public spaces associated with the project.

The following communication activities were undertaken as part of this project:

- an online survey;
- an information stall at the Boutique Markets in Smith Street Mall, Friday 6 October 2017;
- a presentation to Council on 26 September 2017; and
- leveraging support from key stakeholders.

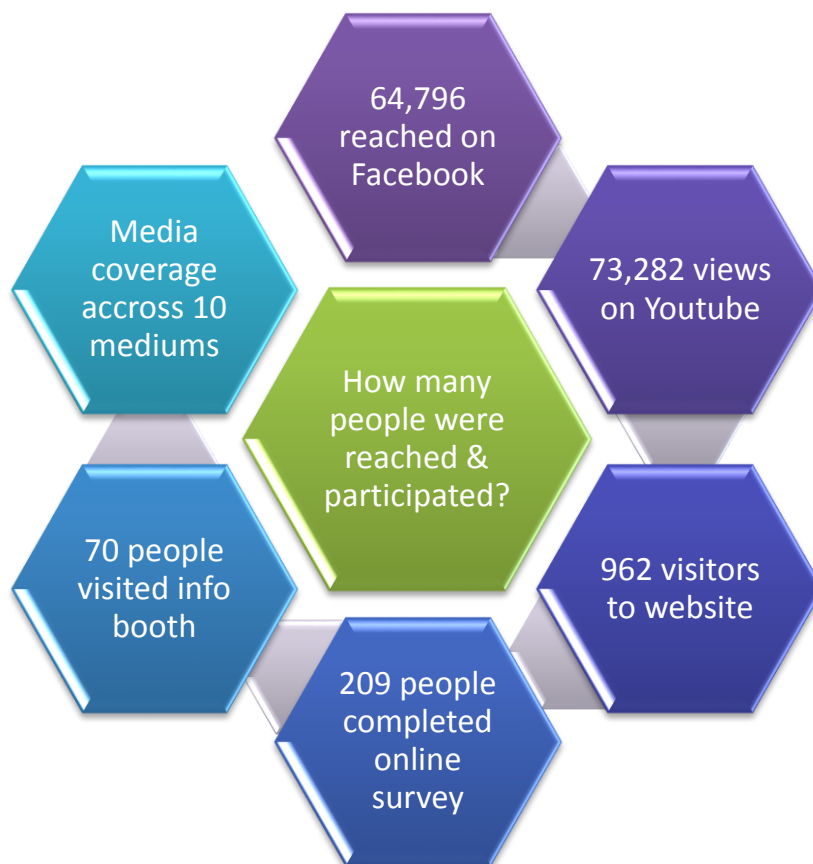
Consultation occurred from 25 September 2017 until 6 November 2017. During this time, 209 people completed the online survey.

## 2.4. Objectives

The key objectives of consultation were to:

- ensure the community and stakeholders are aware of the project's benefits as an iconic transport infrastructure project for the future;
- address concerns raised by those currently opposing the project and address misinformation being shared about the project; and
- give the community an opportunity to provide feedback about enhancement to green space, vegetation, public space and urban art opportunities along the Boulevard;

## 3. Participation and reach



## 4. Key findings

This consultation project was about raising awareness and inviting community input into the look and feel of the road, particularly through landscaping and art. Certain themes in the feedback collated as part of the online survey were evident and can best be categorised into the following four areas:

- Practicality - people want to see a practical approach to art and landscaping.
- Nature – people want the natural environment protected and enhanced.
- Water – people want water to be considered in the designs.
- Originality – people want the look and feel of the road to reflect Darwin's uniqueness.

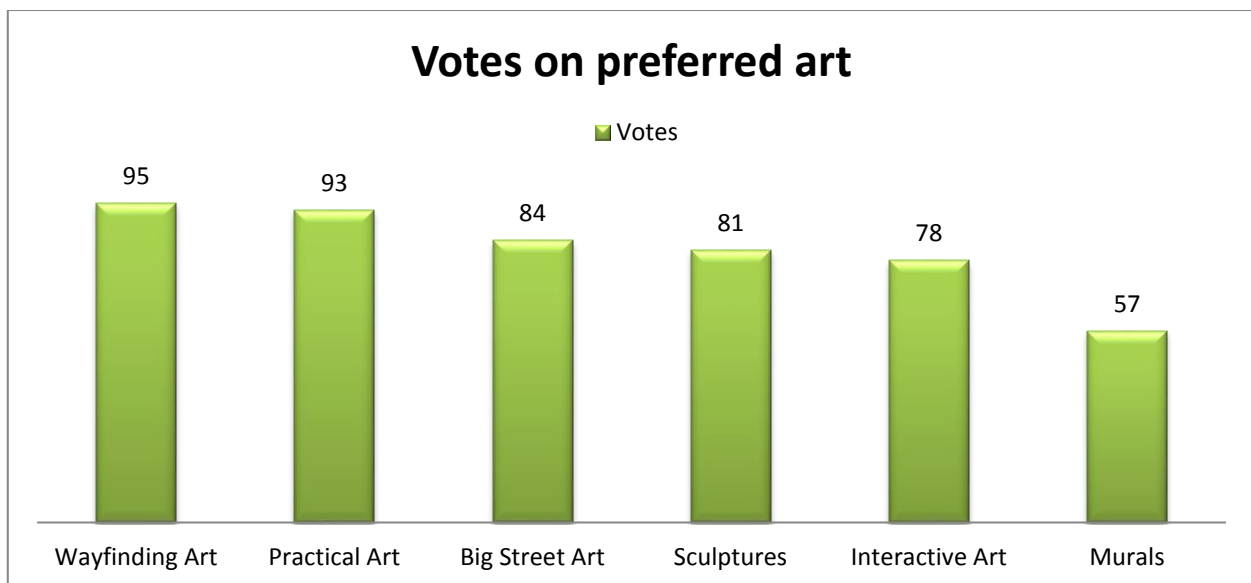


#### 4.1. Practicality

Many people offered practical ideas and advice as part of the online survey both in reference to the urban plaza idea as well as landscaping and art. People wanted to see art that they could use and trees that offered shade. Some of these practical ideas are summarised below:

| Subject                        | Practical ideas   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Urban Plaza / Frog Hollow Park | Provision of power access for performances; bush tucker and trees that people can pick fruit from; shade during the day; drainage; lighting; access; pop up stalls/vendors/food vans; kids water play area. |
| Art                            | Practical art that creates airflow; use recycled materials; solar powered electronic art; combining light and water.  |
| Landscaping                    | Trees that don't need much maintenance; shade trees; trees that don't lose leaves and have too disruptive roots; replant the trees to be removed.   |

When asked what types of art people would like to see used along Barneson Boulevard, the most popular answers were wayfinding art (built into the practical elements of the project such as seating, shade structures) and practical art (that people can use like tiered seating of an amphitheatre). The top six answers are as shown below:



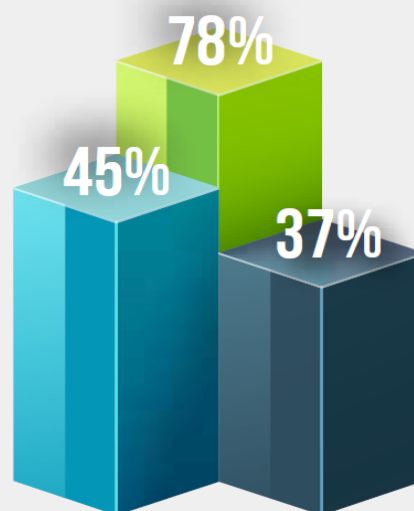
In answer to the question what types of trees should be considered along the route, by far the most popular answer was 'wide shade canopy' (141 votes). This was followed by 'native trees' (82 votes) and 'diversity in species to build resilience' (64), reinforcing that people want to see a practical approach to landscaping in choosing trees that serve a purpose and are easy to maintain.

## Q: WHAT ARE THE IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS FOR TYPES OF TREES BEING PLANTED ALONG BARNESON BOULEVARD?

**78%** wide shade canopy

**45%** native trees

**37%** diversity in species to build resilience of trees

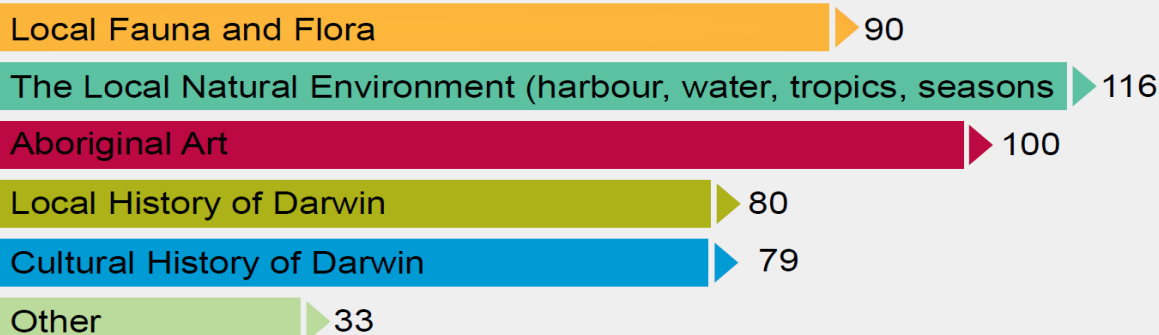


### 4.1. Nature

Preserving and promoting the natural environment as much as possible was a key theme in the feedback. People were generally supportive about the landscaping plan. Even where they were not supportive of the project, preservation and enhancement of natural greenspace was a key priority for respondents.

When asked about potential themes for the road, the leading answer is “the local natural environment (harbour, water, tropics, seasons)”. (Second preference is “Aboriginal Art” and cultural diversity being mentioned as another potential consideration for theme).

## Q: WHAT CREATIVE OPTIONS ARE PREFERRED WHEN CREATING AN ICONIC ENTRY INTO DARWIN CITY?



## 4.2. Water

Respondents to the online survey often commented on the importance of water and wanted to see it conserved as part of the landscaping designs, represented in the artwork and used creatively in the provision of art or interactive elements of the design.



### Conserve it

- Use native trees that don't need much water



### Represent it

- Waterfall/tropical mural
- Practical water features in art



### Provide it

- Water fountains for people and pets
- Water feature for kids to play in

## 4.3. Originality

There was strong sentiment that art should reflect uniqueness of Darwin and not copy other cities. Many people pointed to Singapore as a good example for landscaping and other foreign or Australian cities for examples of large welcome signs that make a statement. Nevertheless, there was a strong emphasis on capturing Darwin's individuality and vibe. Key words used in reference to this were "tropical", "relaxed", "bright", "vibrant" and "warm".

## 5. Key observations

### 5.1. Great coverage compared to low input

This consultation campaign reached over 64,000 people, yet only 1.5% of this reach visited the project page on [haveyoursay.nt.gov.au](https://haveyoursay.nt.gov.au) (962 people). Even less people went on to do the survey (209 people or .3% of the total reach). This implies a general lack of interest for the majority of the Darwin population.

There were no similar DIPL-lead consultation projects to compare these figures to at the time of writing this report.



## 5.2. Diversity in views

### 5.2.1. Diversity in views about the overall project

People generally fit into four cohorts, in terms of their views about the project:

- Those who have heard about the project, but were not moved to comment or engage.
- Those who don't see the need, and don't want the project to proceed.
- Those who see the need, but would like to see some changes made to the design.
- Those who see the need and would like to see the project commence ASAP.

While this consultation campaign did not set out to measure public support for the project, the engagement rate indicates that majority of people fit into the first category. With roughly 1,000 people actively participating, this leaves approximately 54,000 people who were reached via several means of advertising methods, who did not engage.

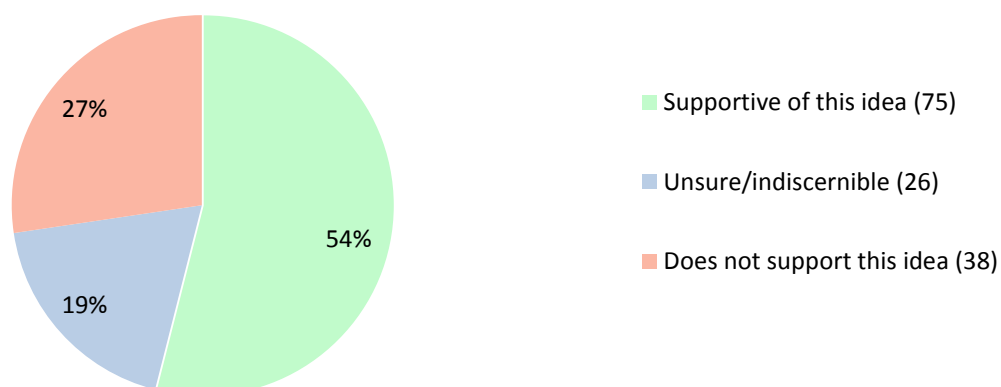
Further research would need to be undertaken to determine the causes for apathy in this consultation project. In some public engagement campaigns, apathy can be an indication of support. However it can also be an indication of distrust or cynicism that their involvement will make a difference.

### 5.2.2. Diversity in views about Frog Hollow Park

There were conflicting views expressed by community members during consultation about Frog Hollow Park. These views can be best categorised as below:

|                        | Passionately against   | Generally for   | Ambivalent  |
|------------------------|--|---|---|
| <b>Belief</b>          | Frog Hollow Park (and precinct) is being destroyed by proposed road. | Frog Hollow Park is underutilised and the proposed changes will enhance it. | Proposal looks ok, but only if you also do X, Y, Z... |
| <b>Message to DIPL</b> | Leave it alone!  | Anything to encourage more use of the park is great!                        | Support with changes.                                 |

Stakeholders were asked as part of the online survey for their thoughts on the idea of an urban plaza near Frog Hollow Park. Survey responses to this idea can be categorised as below:



Those who did not support the idea generally opposed the project in its entirety – not just the urban plaza. Others supported the idea of the road but thought the urban plaza was detracting from the purpose of the project (to provide transport-related infrastructure).

Some of those who supported the idea, but wanted to also see X, Y, Z implemented made the following comments:

- Covered picnic tables
- Drinking fountains
- Security
- Lighting at night
- Shade during the day
- Accessible toilets
- Power and water available at amphitheatre to support performances
- Park is used by dog group every Saturday – put in dog drinking bowls, obstacles course for dogs
- Provision of bins
- Better to have an active space such as skate park
- Need to consider parking if having performances and disability access
- Provision of multi storey car park at Frog Hollows [sic] Park
- Ensure drainage so not soggy
- Minimal impact to flora and fauna, keep it natural
- Utilise natural acoustics
- Misting fans under gazebos, outdoor fans on poles (Lego land Malaysia)
- Food gardens around the amphitheatre
- Add a stair case by the side or reasonable sized tiers
- Fitness stations along the route or in the park

A full breakdown of ideas and advice that came out of the online survey is attached at Appendix A.

## **6. Conclusion**

This stakeholder engagement and community consultation project was dynamic and responsive to the concerns and questions being raised by community members. The objectives, (a) to raise awareness about the project, (b) address concerns and (c) gain input into urban art and public space development, were achieved.

Advice from the community in reference to urban art and landscaping are to consider the following principals in design:

- Practicality - people want to see a practical approach to art and landscaping.
- Nature – people want the natural environment protected and enhanced.
- Water – people want water to be considered in the designs.
- Originality – people want the look and feel of the road to reflect Darwin's uniqueness.

Shade, native trees and species that build resilience are key considerations to the selections of trees for the route. Art should be practical and enhance, promote and preserve the natural environment.

A one page summary of the survey outcomes has been prepared and should be considered for public release as a means to close the consultation loop.

# Appendix A

## Summary of ideas from online survey

Greening the CBD Barneson Boulevard and Tiger  
Brennan Drive Stage 3 public consultation

## GREENING CBD – SURVEY COMMENTS

### IDEAS:

#### Art

- Welcome to Darwin sign x 3
- Practical art that creates airflow
- Paint a green, tropical mural on the Woolworths wall
- Use recycled materials in roads base such as - art and seating
- Big giant barramundi sculptures with Darwin written on it
- Interpretive signs capturing history of nearby Railway Hill
- Statue of Charles Darwin or Goyder or both (20 metres)
- Statue of a local Aboriginal leader
- One art piece every 50 metres (Brolga, Croc, Eagle then Roo)
- Steel flower art work
- Something that incorporates light and sunset/shadows
- Croc, jabirus, billabong type theme
- Water features
- Use lighting to create visual effect and safety at night
- Brisbane sign that is illuminated at night good example
- Yarnbombing (a type of graffiti or street art that employs colourful displays of knitted or crocheted yarn around tree branches, statues, etc.)
- Combining light and water – moving art that shows only once or twice a day
- Electronic art should be solar powered
- Waterfall/water feature depicting top end landscape
- Big, bold entry statement to reflect Darwin's character
- Feature escarpment rock.

#### Amenity

- Solar energy for lighting both for footpath and highlighting art x 2
- Fitness stations along the route or in the park x 2
- Raised solar panel walkway / shelter from the rain x 2
- Covered picnic tables at Frog Hollows Park x 2
- Drinking fountains x 2
- Power and water available at amphitheatre to support performances x 2
- Park is used by dog group every Saturday – put in dog drinking bowls, obstacles course for dogs.
- Provision of bins
- Provision of multi storey car park at Frog Hollows Park
- Solar bike paths that generate solar electricity like in the Netherlands.

## Amphitheatre

- Better to have an active space such as skate park x 2
- Utilise natural acoustics
- Misting fans under gazebos, outdoor fans on poles (Lego land Malaysia)
- Food gardens around the amphitheatre
- Leave it natural. Just add some informal seating and sculptures
- Add a stair case by the side or reasonable sized tiers
- Picnic benches in the shade.

## Themes:

- multiculturalism / cultural diversity x 5
- tropical x 4
- Incorporate the theme into street signs (e.g. decorative metal)
- water
- export / cattle industry
- Darwin pioneers
- Railway
- Darwin history, culture and changing seasons
- Larrakia people.

## Trees

- Like Gardens Road (unclear if mean Darwin or Singapore) x 5
- Use fruit trees / bush tucker that people can pick from x 3
- Extend tree planting to surrounding streets.

## Miscellaneous ideas

- Area for pop up stalls/vendors/food vans in Frog Hollow Park x 4
- Kids water play area in F.H. Park x 2
- Create a 'Darwin Icons Walk' (Tom Harris Snr, Haritos family Nellie Flynee, Holtz, Larrakia, the old Chinatown, heritage buildings, banyan/milkwood/tamarind trees and their association with Darwin and Larrakia peoples
- Put garden beds around F.H. park marking the natural boundaries
- Viva energy site for transport hub.

## ADVICE:

### Art

- No giant fish
- No crocs
- No murals or paintings
- No giant TV screen
- Urban art is a bad substitute for a great green park
- Engage local artists – they're keen to be involved
- Welcome message needs to be controlled by NTG
- Graffiti should stay in back streets and laneways
- Should be weather proof.

### Amphitheatre

- Need to consider parking x 3
- Provide disability access x 3
- Security x 1
- Lighting at night x 1
- Shade during day x 1
- Accessible toilets
- Noise from performances shouldn't disturb neighbours
- Away from the Boulevard so traffic noise doesn't disturb performances
- Ensure drainage so not soggy
- Support if minimal impact to flora and fauna.

### Trees

- Low maintenance trees (minimal water and tidying required) x 4
- Choose trees that encourage and cater for native fauna and birds x 4
- Wide shade canopy like Garden's Road (Singapore) x 2
- No foreign trees x 2
- No palms as no tangible shade benefit
- Don't plant shade trees and then not let them grow (by trimming or not watering)
- Trees that don't lose leaves and have too disruptive roots
- Replant existing beautiful old trees that need to be removed.



## Tree species

- Haliconias
- Bougainvillea
- Raintrees
- No raintrees or flametrees
- Mimosops elangi
- Allosyncarpia ternate
- Maranthes corymbosa
- Calophyllum sil
- Mimosops elengi
- Peltophorum pterocarpum - Yellow Flame Tree
- Ganophyllum falcatum - Scaly Ash
- Delonix regia – Poinciana
- Maniltoa lenticellata - Silk Handkerchief Tree
- Grevillea dryandra / formosa / pteridifolia, Cochlospermum fraserii - Kapok Bush, Melastoma malabathricum - Native Lasiandra, Bossiaea bossiaeoidea.

## Originality

- Reflect Darwin's uniqueness x 3
- Don't try and recreate laneways of Melbourne. Be original. We're tropical, relaxed, bright, vibrant and warm
- We don't have Singapore's rainfall over our dry season – we need our own identity.
- Not a copycat city – make it connect to vibe of Darwin
- Be proud of our uniqueness and not follow in footsteps of down south.

## Miscellaneous

- Ensure easy maintenance is considered x 1
- Finish the existing two (some say three, some say four) entries into the city x 3
- Should capture views of multicultural organisations in consultation, esp. Chinese, Greek, Vietnamese and Indians
- No water wastage
- Nearby future developments should interface with new road
- Please build it. No more delays
- Make the city car free.