

Community Consultation Report Yarraman War Memorial Cenotaph relocation proposal

Conducted by Toowoomba Regional Council

in response to a proposal from Yarraman RSL Sub Branch

Feedback recorded between

Tuesday 12 April and Friday 13 May 2022





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Introduction

This consultation report describes the consultation objectives, process and community feedback received in response to the Yarraman Returned and Services League (RSL) Subbranch proposal to relocate the memorial cenotaph and associated items from the current location on Toomey Street (D'Aguilar Highway), to the Yarraman Recreation Ground and Memorial Park, off Emmert Street.

If the proposal is supported by the community, the Yarraman RSL would be responsible for seeking grant funding.

Background

The memorial cenotaph was installed at the current location, on the corner of Barr Smith Street and Toomey Street, Yarraman in 1995 and has been the site of memorial events since.

The Yarraman RSL has expressed concern over whether this continues to be an appropriate location due to with changes in crowd numbers and traffic volumes in the region.

Yarraman RSL has proposed relocating Yarraman Memorial Cenotaph from its current location to Yarraman Recreation Ground and Memorial Park, off Emmert Street.

This relocation would include all associated signage, plaques, and the use of a removable flagpole to ensure there is no risk during sporting events.

The proposal includes landscaping, including rosemary and roses, to help define the memorial garden area. If current or future funding permits, a new multi-purpose shelter would be installed with some additional seating with backrests.

There is also a proposal for additional landscaping and space for future memorial walls, artwork, or plaques. Formalised carparking on Emmert Street will also be subject to future funding.

Council undertook consultation in response to the proposal from the Yarraman RSL.

Consultation goal

To seek feedback from Yarraman community to provide feedback to gauge support or opposition on the proposal to relocate the Yarraman Memorial Cenotaph and gain a response from as many of community members as practical.

Consultation timeline

Community feedback was open between Tuesday 12 April and Friday 13 May 2022.

Consultation process

There was a direct mail-out with details of an online survey (via the Your Say website) to 619 residential and business addresses in the township of Yarraman.

This was supported by an email to community organisations in Yarraman, a display with paper copies of the survey, with the A3 posters of the plans, in the Yarraman Library.

The link to the survey was also included two email newsletters managed by the area's Community Development Officer (emails dated 29 April and 9 May).





A media release was provided to media outlets on 13 April 2022 on the opening of the survey. It was published in

- Toowoomba Chronicle, 19 April 2022
- Toowoomba Regional Council's twitter account, 13 April 2022 (6031 followers)
- Yarraman Community Facebook Group, 17 April 2022 (1616 members, 4 shares)
- Australian Seniors News
- Darling Downs Local (Facebook group)

Consultation results

Feedback was provided by 124 community members. Of these, 39 completed the online survey and 74 were provided via email, the Yarraman Library or mailed to Council.

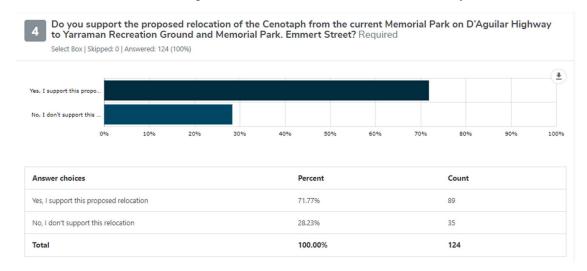
Based on the number of letters directly mailed (619), this is a response rate of 20.03% of the community.

The feedback received is summarised below.

- 89 respondents (71.77% of those who responded) supported the proposed relocation of the cenotaph
- 35 respondents (28.23% of those who responded) opposed the proposed relocation of the cenotaph.

Those that indicated they were opposed to the relocation, had strong, and at times emotive views on the proposal.

A community group representing 32 members made the group submission, against the proposal. This has been considered as a one 'response' for the purpose of the survey, but the majority vote from the group (considered to be more than 17 members) should be taken into account when considering the overall sentiment within the community.





Against

The following is a summary of the themes or issues raised by the community as part of the feedback against the proposed relocation of the memorial.

- Concerns about visibility of the memorial in the proposed new location (17 mentions)
- Feeling of this being part of the town's heritage or visual amenity (17 mentions)
- A sense of disrespect that would occur if the cenotaph were to be relocated (eight mentions)
- Concern for the other plaques at the memorial park (three mentions)
- Concern about the use of funds by the RSL for this item, rather than other direct community/ veteran support services (six mentions)
- General concern about money being spent unnecessarily (seven mentions)
- Concern about vandalism with the site being out of the town centre (two mentions)
- Travellers using the location as a rest stop visiting the site (17 mentions)
- Movement of crowd (vehicles and pedestrians) following the ANZAC Day service from the new site to the Hall for refreshments (four mentions)
- New location is a potential flooding location (three mentions)
- Parking around the new site (six mentions)
- New marching route (two mentions)
- Conflict or risk of inadvertent damage from fireworks or sports activities (two mentions)
- Concern that additional traffic control would be needed for the service on ANZAC Day (three mentions)

There was commentary regarding three separate perceived long-term changes in traffic conditions. Council has no advice on these issues, which falls under the Department of Transport and Main Roads and have no impact on this proposal.

In response to some of these concerns, Council has provided the following responses:

- Visibility and travellers visiting the cenotaph Council will ensure there is wayfinding signage included within the scope of the works if the cenotaph is relocated.
- Heritage Council recognises the community's attachment and pride in the current location of the cenotaph, however, notes it has been in place for 27 years, and under legislative and other guidelines is not considered of historical significance.
- Disrespect of relocation Council understands a possible change will be emotional
 for many within the community with personal connections to the cenotaph. This is
 an item that is being faced by many other regional towns with a range of solutions.
 We are aware of many older and more historically significant war memorials or
 cenotaphs which have successfully relocated.
- Concern for the other plaques or memorials If the cenotaph is relocated, a council
 officer will be available to assist with liaison with the families or associations
 connected to these memorials. The rest area will remain and continued to be
 maintained. These plaques can stay at this location there is a desire from these
 groups.
- Flooding or drainage based on Council's records, the proposed relocation has better flood immunity than the current location.





 Parking – Council will ensure that accessible parking is included in the scope of works if the cenotaph is relocated.

The Yarraman RSL will look to address the remaining concerns as part of their decision making process.

Sample of comments

The following is a sample of comments provided by respondents who did not support the proposal to demonstrate the feedback received by the community.

"No, I do not agree with the moving of the cenotaph. Word went around town that it was council insisting for it to be moved. I'm glad to hear that it was not so.

While driver reviver is on the van is parked at this site, I often see parents showing their children the cenotaph and the names of the fallen from our town. It is good to see the respect given to those that gave their lives for our country. It is my firm belief that if it was moved to the purposed site it would be off the main highways and nobody would even know it was there and therefore no one would stop. Many people also stop and take photos of the cenotaph."

"The Cenotaph should be at the centre of town, just like Blackbutt and Nanango and most other towns. It is a sacred area to all returned soldiers and should not be disturbed"

"The cenotaph should be in a prominent position not stuck down the back. Not good parking where [the RSL Is] seeking to put cenotaph. Traffic can be diverted like every other town does for the short services held there."

"I don't like the fact that a focal point of the town is to be moved from the main street of town to a back street where no one will see it except on certain occasions."

"Very disrespectful to our past and present soldiers, part of our Heritage, 'Lest we forget'. Big waste of money by RSL, money should be going to our veterans and families! Do not shift our Cenotaph, very purposeful where it is."

"Yarraman has for many years held all marches and all services for our local returned and fallen men and women, at the present location, the cenotaph is the centre of our Community. and has been in its present location for many, many years. this site is central to the townspeople. whereas the intended location is not. As long as the SES resume their management of traffic control, diverting the traffic away from the





Cenotaph, there will be no traffic noise to interfere with any services. they controlled the traffic diversion for many years without fault. the present site is safe and permanent site away from the roadway. If the seating is moved toward the path at the Cenotaph and around in a half moon shape, there will be plenty of room for everyone. there is absolutely no valid reason to relocate the Cenotaph."

Supporting

- More room for attendees (18 mentions)
- Overall improved safety (49 mentions)
- Less heavy vehicle noise during services / Quieter space for reflection (29 mentions)
- Being away from the D'Aguilar Highway (29 mentions)
- More parking amenities in the area (9 mentions)
- Less traffic management required on ANZAC Day (12 mentions)
- Improves the streetscape of the public space on Emmert Street (19 mentions)
- Opportunities for more memorial days to be recognised throughout the year without interruption to township (two mentions)

General comments

- Concern or request for access to toilet facilities at new location (one mention)
- More native plants to be included in the landscaping (one mention)
- Drainage or localised flood activity within the proposed area (three mentions)
- Wheelchair or walker-friendly paving (one mention)
- Additional shade shelters within new area (two mentions)
- Concern the move might impact on the long-term open space plan for the remaining area of the Recreation and Memorial Grounds. (two mentions)
- · General comments on the current space
 - Trip hazards for elderly community members
 - Community members stand / sit on the bitumen during services
 - o Lack of shade and space for viewing of cenotaph / speakers during services.

Sample of comments

The following is a sample of comments provided by respondents who did support the proposal to demonstrate the feedback received by the community.

"I love that the area will be more accommodating to larger groups as the current location is getting increasingly smaller with growing numbers"

"I like that this proposal will bring a pleasant and safe space for the commemoration services.

The current location poses numerous safety hazards.

- Noise from traffic
- Disruption to traffic and need for community services to close key roads
- Trip hazard of keening for elderly community members
- Community members stand / sit on the bitumen during services
- Lack of shade and space for viewing of cenotaph / speakers during services.

The proposed relocation enables all community members to pay respect in a safe beautiful, grassed environment on even ground.

The proposed space is inviting, practical and has scope for numerous possibilities to engage the community during commemoration services.

It brings a renewed perspective and pride in honouring those fallen in a beautiful and tranquil space...This positive progression is of great benefit to our community."





"Improved safety of public for gatherings on memorial and ANZAC days. Reduction in traffic disruption and cost of traffic control. Opportunity to provide an updated facility to pay respects that improves the streetscape of the public space."

"Will be a better site for quiet reflection"

"I feel it will be a much better place to have the memorial place to have the memorial placed due to the busy through flow of traffic in its current place. It will be a quieter area for all to show our respect to our service men and women."

"Being the driver of heavy vehicles, I find it particularly difficult to manoeuvre around the streets of Yarraman when the D'Aguilar Highway is closed. The highway is too busy these days to have people walking on it even if there is traffic management in place."

"Traffic hazard / noise hazard will be significantly reduced. More room on oval for participants. Road Closures will be simplified. Focal point for tourists who stop at oval."

"A special area for the memorial. Traffic noise on Armistice Day 11/11 at a premium. Also, no room [at current location] for participants on special occasions. The park plan looks well thought out."

"It will remove the emerging danger from traffic at the present location and will also provide room to enhance the facility and ambiance of the memorial site so as to provide an attractive and reflective place for both locals and tourists."

"It would be good if it was moved to make it a nicer area to minimise noise and give more privacy for people to reflect and seating space, to give people the environment stay a little longer. Kingaroy and Toowoomba's memorials are lovely, and it would be nice to reflect this."





Conclusion

While the majority of feedback received during this consultation demonstrates overall support for the proposed relocation of the memorial from the current Memorial Park on D'Aguilar Highway to Yarraman Recreation Ground and Memorial Park, Emmert Street, there is likely to be continued opposition or concern from residents who don't support the proposal and for which ever reason did not respond to the survey.

Should the Yarraman RSL proceed with this proposal, it is recommended that the subbranch continue conversations with the community regarding their plans and provide regular updates to minimise misinformation or growing negative sentiment during the possible transition.

Points to be communicated would be:

- · timeline and funding sources
- contractors who will carry out the work
- possible changes to the march route
- location of refreshments after ANZAC Day service
- general crowd and parking management plans and, when available, updates to traffic management plans.

If there are any questions regarding the content of this report or the data used to form this position, please the Toowoomba Regional Council's Customer, Communication & Engagement team, via 131 872 or email yoursay@tr.qld.gov.au.

Next Steps

The application has been assessed against Councils Policy 2.47 Memorials and Plaques.

The application meets the requirements and satisfies criteria of Stage 1 of the assessment process and is given in-principle support to progress to Stage 2, based on the plans which have been publicly shown for comment, subject to the following conditions:

That the Yarraman RSL Sub-branch source all funding towards the future design and construction of the relocation

That the scope of works for the relocation include all items identified by Council

That further consultation is undertaken as recommended in this Community Consultation Report

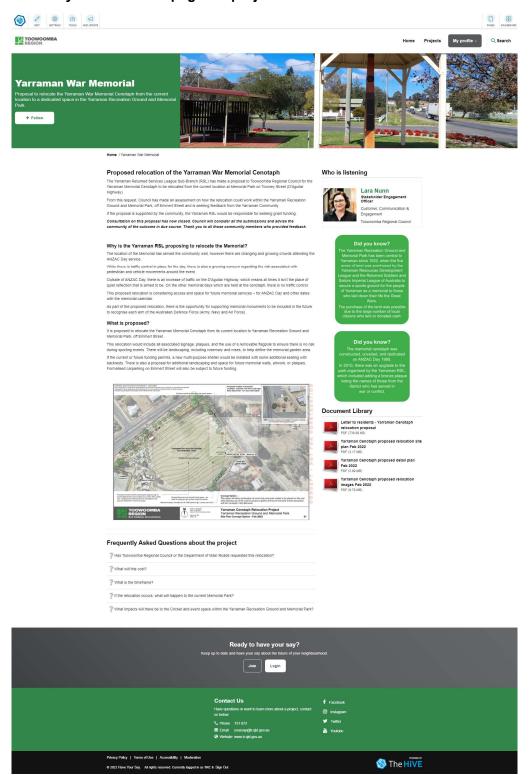




Appendix

Community consultation materials.

Your Say website front page for project:



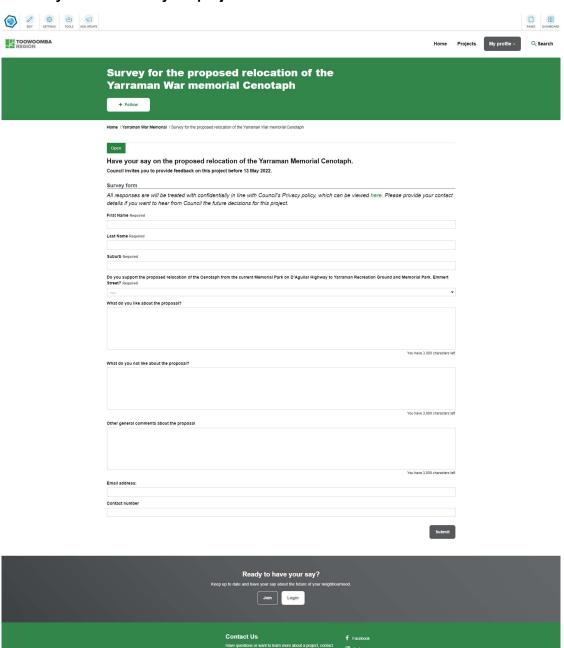


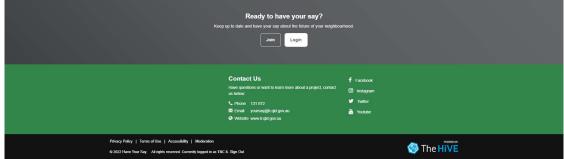






Your Say website survey for project:







Letter to residents (619 addresses within Yarraman) – survey form and plans not shown

(page 1 of 2)



Rich traditions. Bold ambitions.

Our reference: DM#10319397 Contact Officer: Lara Nunn Telephone: 07 4614 5172

8 April 2022

Dear Resident,

RE: Proposed relocation of the Yarraman Memorial Cenotaph

The Yarraman Returned Services League Sub-Branch (RSL) has made a proposal to Toowoomba Regional Council for the Yarraman Memorial Cenotaph to be relocated from the current location at Memorial Park on Toomey Street (D'Aguilar Highway).

From this request, Council has made an assessment on how the relocation could work within the Yarraman Recreation Ground and Memorial Park, off Emmert Street, and is seeking feedback from the Yarraman Community.

If the proposal is supported by the community, the Yarraman RSL would be responsible for seeking grant funding.

What is proposed?

It is proposed to relocate the Yarraman Memorial Cenotaph from its current location to Yarraman Recreation Ground and Memorial Park, off Emmert Street.

This relocation would include all associated signage, plaques, and the use of a removable flagpole to ensure there is no risk during sporting events. There will be landscaping, including rosemary and roses, to help define the memorial garden area.

If the current or future funding permits, a new multi-purpose shelter would be installed with some additional seating with backrests. There is also a proposal for additional landscaping and space for future memorial walls, artwork, or plaques. Formalised carparking on Emmert Street will also be subject to future funding.

Why is the Yarraman RSL proposing to relocate the Memorial?

The location of the Memorial has served the community well, however there are changing and growing crowds attending the ANZAC Day service.

While there is traffic control in place for the day, there is also a growing concern regarding the risk associated with pedestrian and vehicle movements around the event.

Outside of ANZAC Day, there is an increase of traffic on the D'Aguilar Highway, which means at times it isn't the place of quiet reflection that it is aimed to be. On the other memorial days which are held at the cenotaph, there is no traffic control.

This proposed relocation is considering access and space for future memorial services – for ANZAC Day and other dates within the memorial calendar.











Rich traditions. Bold ambitions.

As part of the proposed relocation, there is the opportunity for supporting memorial monuments to be included in the future to recognise each arm of the Australian Defence Force (Army, Navy and Air Force).

Next steps

We want to hear from you if you support the project, and what you like or don't like about the proposal.

The maps and some frequently asked questions about the project are attached and provide more of the details. You can also view them at https://yoursay.tr.qld.gov.au/yarraman-warmemorial.

Council invites you to provide feedback on this project before 13 May 2022.

There will be a number of ways you can provide your comments:

1. Email: yoursay@tr.qld.gov.au

2. Phone: 4614 1572

3. Webpage: https://yoursay.tr.qld.gov.au/yarraman-war-memorial 4. Library: a collection point available at the Yarraman Library

(with a small display)

5. Post: Toowoomba Regional Council

PO Box 3021

Toowoomba QLD 4350

If you have any questions, please contact Lara Nunn of the Stakeholder Engagement team on 4614 5172.

Yours sincerely

Micheal Condren

Micheel S. Condea

Manager Parks and Recreation Services







Display at Yarraman Library









MENTION RIAL FEEDBACK

A SURVEY for the future of Yarraman War Memorial Cenotaph has been launched to get opinions from residents for the possible relocation of the memorial.

A proposal to move the cenotaph has been made to accommodate a growing number of people attending Anzac Day services.

To have your say visit https://yoursay.tr.qld.gov.au/yarraman-war-memorial. The survey will run until May 13.

Left: Page 2 of Toowoomba Chronicle, 19 April 2022.

Below: Yarraman Community Facebook, private post to group on 17 April 2022

