MARRICKVILLE METRO

Public Art and Creative Program
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To meet the demands of the growing Inner West community, AMP Capital have embarked on a revitalisation of the existing Marrickville Metro shopping centre. This wholistic centre-wide treatment, and development of a new dining precinct called “Smidmore Street” on the envelope of land to the south of the existing centre, will transform Marrickville Metro from an inward looking mall to a community focussed centre, as well as acknowledging the site’s historical significance.

AMP Capital’s aspirations for the development, which AMP Capital is managing on behalf of owner UniSuper, include providing an improved food based offer to the Smidmore Street precinct, and introducing unique retail offers tailored for the inner west customer across the site.

Key elements that have been considered when forming the concept for the re-development are:

— Sensitivity to the surrounding residential community and landscape
— Accommodating the public transport network
— Creating a food based retail offer unique to Marrickville
— Preserving and celebrating the heritage elements

To support the revitalisation, redevelopment and regeneration of the Marrickville Metro site, an integrated public art strategy identifies a series of opportunities and approaches to providing permanent and temporary artworks in a number of key nodes of the site.

The proposed creative strategy builds on the existing site structure and responds to both the unique history of the site as well as planned future projects. AMP Capital’s aim is to create a layered and vibrant public offering and a unique retail experience for local and visiting populations.
AMP Capital is committed to fostering a range of opportunities for creatives to shape community experience, local identity and placemaking at Marrickville Metro. We seek to embed an experience which embraces a commitment to excellence, local identity and culture, innovation, sustainability and diversity. The aim is to promote high quality art, support local artists and strengthen creatives connections and engagement with the local community, our tenants and stakeholders. There is opportunity to embrace both the traditional and experimental nature of contemporary art practice. Through creativity, we seek to introduce unique platforms to highlight Marrickville’s unique stories, history and contemporary culture, providing greater meaning, sense of place and a dynamic visitor experience.

The Marrickville Metro Public Art and Creative Programs are produced by AMP Capital in collaboration with Inner West Council in association with EDGE Inner West, a program that celebrates urban artists and cultural life, their critical role in shaping our culture, community and economic prosperity.

EDGE Inner West brings artists and community together to collaboratively produce site specific artworks and creative projects. [www.innerwestcouncil.nsw.gov.au/EDGE](http://www.innerwestcouncil.nsw.gov.au/EDGE) #EDGEinnerwest
SITE IN CONTEXT

The Marrickville Metro site lies at the north-east corner of Marrickville in close proximity to Enmore and Erskineville. Marrickville Metro is located approximately 8 kilometres south-west of Sydney’s Central Business district and is in close proximity to a number of inner-west suburbs including: Marrickville, Enmore, Newtown, St Peters, Tempe and Petersham. It is also surrounded by important urban spaces and arterial roads.

Nestled between residential and industrial zones, Marrickville Metro has the opportunity to both provide amenity to local residents as well as extend the uses and resources of the adjacent industrial areas which provide a range of venues for creative, custom design/manufacturing and food related uses, as well as traditional industrial use. The Marrickville Metro development is a significant opportunity to facilitate links and connectivity between the site, key residential and industrial zones and the wider community through a series of defined public spaces, including the existing northern Victoria Road/Mill House open space, pedestrian and bike pathways, proposed activated food precinct on Smidmore Street, improved traffic management and public transport, and important public art interventions.

The Marrickville Metro site is surrounded by key established community spaces and urban pathways including Victoria Road, Murray Street, Edinburgh Road and Smidmore Street.

Victoria Road, terminating in a cul-de-sac outside The Mill House, is characterised by its proximity to a key community space in the form of Enmore Park, and its iconic brick facades - which represent meaningful remnants of the Vicar’s Mill buildings which once occupied the site. These brick walls also feature other remnant objects such as lighting and signage from the Vicars’ era. The high quality brickwork and decorative elements contribute strongly to the character of Victoria Road.

Further heritage elements include the paving in front of the Metro which was constructed during the depression as a measure to provide work to the unemployed. The frontage is also characterised by an avenue of very established and prominent fig trees.

A 2017 upgrade to the open space and centre frontage included a number of interpretive elements such as paving inserts describing the chronology of use on the site, weave pattern through stone work and creation of ‘loops’ which act as seats but also spell out the “VICARS” name, and hide and seek totems for children in the family space offering a game for children to seek out and identify indigenous plants. The area includes an installation of “The Vicars, Celebrating Marrickville” by Alex Lehours, an artwork commissioned by Marrickville Metro through Inner West Council’s Perfect Match street art program and inspired by the history and stories of the Vicars Mill site and surrounds.
Murray Street is the primary access to the site from the north. The elevation of the historic Vicar’s wall provides a distinct character to the site which then transitions to an elevation occupied predominantly by loading and park vehicular access. Established figs provide a high degree of character to this zone.

Edinburgh Road provides the primary vehicular access from the south-west, it marks the transition from residential to industrial use. The interface with the site’s southern neighbours is ‘gritty’ with opposite frontage including a disused factory site, business parks and warehouses.

Inner West Council and NSW State Government identify this area as an important employment zone for industry indicating that industrial use will continue to be encouraged in this zone.

Smidmore Street provides the primary address for the approved Stage 1B extension to Marrickville Metro, as well as the southern address for the existing centre.
ARTISTS IMPRESSION
Inner West Council, AMP Capital and Art Pharmacy acknowledges the Gadigal and Wangal peoples of the Eora Nation, who are the traditional custodians of the lands in which the Inner West local government area is situated.

We celebrate the survival of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, heritage, beliefs and their relationship with the land and water. We acknowledge the continuing importance of this relationship to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples living today, despite the devastating impacts of European invasion. We express our sorrow for the past injustices and support the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders to self-determination.

We understand our responsibilities and role in working with the Aboriginal community to promote cultural heritage and history, address areas of disadvantage, and protect and preserve the environment as well as sites of significance to Aboriginal peoples. In doing so, we acknowledge that Aboriginal cultures continue to strengthen and enrich our community.

Today, diverse groups of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples live and work across the Inner West. We admire the resilience displayed in their significant achievements and making immense contributions to both Council and the broader community.

This program is committed to embedding the values and perspectives of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to ensure we learn from the mistakes of the past and forge a positive future of long-lasting value built on mutual respect, equality and opportunity.

Observing appropriate protocols when working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities is critical to establishing positive and respectful relationships. Consulting with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities should always be seen as a two-way process, with both parties learning together and from each other.
The Marrickville Metro site is part of the area formerly known as Gumbramorra Swamp, a site cared for by the traditional custodians of the land, the Gadigal people of the Eora nation, who have managed the land for 60,000+ years. Remnants of the pre-colonial Aboriginal economy, including walking tracks and midden sites, still exist today. Some have been paved over to form our transport systems and modern infrastructure.

European colonisation forced a significant gap in the quality of life and self-determination of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. However, through colonial oppression, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples continue to live in the local government area and practice their diverse cultural traditions and lore.

As a result of colonisation, Aboriginal people were not afforded the same rights or opportunities as non-Indigenous counterparts. This impacted the local Aboriginal communities' ability to undertake significant cultural practices such as the cultivation of land and resources. Forced government policies and limited work opportunities led to Aboriginal people taking up jobs in local estates. Oral histories from the Aboriginal community reflect how some Aboriginal people in the 1960's were forced to conceal their identity to escape prejudice and obtain employment in prominent factories on the current site.

Despite colonial historical records not accurately representing or portraying the Aboriginal community in history, it can be observed through oral histories, court records, government policies, births, deaths and marriages that there is a depository that remains to be drawn upon for truth telling. These records teach us many things about the European colonisation and layered histories of this shared space. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across Australia who now live in the Inner West continue to advocate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander affairs, take care of significant sites, are involved in reintroducing endemic species to the area and support provision of cultural practices.

The area on which the current Marrickville Metro site sits was parcelled into James Waine's land grant and was used by European settlers as farm land to supply Sydney Markets in 1795. It then supported a tannery and boot factory (which benefited from the fresh water supplied by a local creek) before the site, which already featured the Mill House by that stage, was purchased by the Vicars family in 1894.

The Vicars family procured large government contracts for blankets and textiles, resulting in a steady expansion of their operations - five of the site's eight acres were covered with Vicars buildings by 1923, and by the mid-century Vicars Mill employed up to 1200 workers. Changes in the industry forced the closure of the mill in 1976 and the vacant site was offered for sale in 1979. In 1982, an application to turn the site into a shopping centre that included the demolition of the Mill House was submitted by Lendlease. This came to the attention of the National Trust who campaigned for its preservation and classified it that year.

As well as Vicars, the iconic Australian drinks company Shelley's and the Sydney Steel Company have also had a significant impact on the historical significance of the site. Shelley's operated its beloved original factory on the site for many years before being bought out by a multinational and relocated further south, and the Sydney Steel Company - who supplied steel portions of the Harbour Bridge, lending it its name to nearby Sydney Steel Road on the border of the site.

The property was purchased by AMP in 2004.

"The history of the site is incredibly extensive. Please get in touch with us should you wish to learn more from our local historian."
The Marrickville Metro Creative Program, as outlined in this document, builds on collaborations between InnerWest Council and AMP Capital through Council’s Perfect Match public art program and Council’s new suite of Edge Inner West multifaceted arts programs.

This project seeks to demonstrate “best practice” in terms of a co-curatorial approach bringing artists, community and stakeholders together to collaboratively produce meaningful site specific works.

The Inner West is renowned for its thriving creative and independent art scene, influenced by a rich Aboriginal, colonial, industrial and multicultural history and diverse, progressive and inclusive communities.

The Inner West boasts 6,400 jobs in creative and artistic industries, which is 8.8% of local employment and worth $1.4B per annum to the local economy.

1 in 10 people in the Inner West are employed in a creative industry, double the figure for greater Sydney. Overall, the Inner West has the highest concentration of cultural employment in Australia. More data is available at Cultural and Creative Industries in the Inner West

Inner West public art programs are unique opportunities to showcase the immense creativity and liberal lifestyle of the Inner West - to work with our partners to engage creatives to activate spaces, amplifying the heritage, stories, aspirations and experience of unique sites and surrounding communities.

This framework engages artists and community in an intense co-curatorial collaboration to develop innovative art with placemaking outcomes to enhance the environment, highlight and reflect the unique heritage, stories and character of selected sites.

These projects are great examples of the benefits of engaging with artists towards enhancing our public spaces, and associated community and visitor experiences to the Inner West.
THE PEOPLE OF MARRICKVILLE ARE SPIRITED AND THEY ARE CONSCIOUS
MARRICKVILLE IS ABOUT SUBSTANCE, EXPERIENCE, CONNECTION

People in Marrickville question everything and make discerning choices. They creatively reuse and reimagine spaces, they engage with their built environment with a sense of play and spirit.

They hold sustainability in their hearts and consider their impact on the world. They vote with their feet and they are loyal to the businesses they support.

They are devoted to supporting businesses they believe in.

They make statements with their choices - whether that be as an individual consumer or as a business owner.

Image: Carizza Teague, Founder
Monster Mouse Studios, Marrickville
Marrickville has long been the home of an Australian brand of industrious spirit. From the steel works that fabricated the iconic Harbour Bridge, to Vicars Wool that clothed the army through two world wars, to the generation of new Australians and women that flooded the area in the second half of the 20th century, this enclave of Marrickville has a demonstrated legacy of people starting successful independent businesses, testing ideas, and producing innovations in their chosen industries.

Contemporary Marrickville continues to demonstrate this entrepreneurial foundation through its concentration of artists and creative businesses that leverage passion, workmanship and social accountability into unique products and services that continue the legacy of creation and innovation.
From long before colonisation, when this area was well-known for its fertile kangaroo hunting grounds, through recent industrial history and until the present day, Marrickville has been a consistently rich source of food and safe community gathering spaces.

In contemporary times, Marrickville continues to provide a safe space for a huge variety of people to find inspiring spaces and sustenance through its current function as a grocery and retail hub and as part of the “food basket” of local independent specialty food offerings that pepper the surrounding streets and neighbourhoods. Popular public markets such as the nearby Addison Road Community Market echo this high value placed around community gathering to eat and share experiences.

Image: Inner West Council
Marrickville continues to be a hot-bed of creativity and innovation, whether that be in food, retail or the creative industries.

Marrickville has long embraced and harmoniously accommodated a huge variety of independent businesses, for whom innovation and creativity is absolutely key. Marrickville has consistently nurtured businesses that have been leading innovation in their relative fields - think the wool and steel factories of history, and the independent coffee roasters, suburban breweries, studio collectives, small food producers and industrial designers of today.

In keeping with Inner West Council’s Edge Inner West programs, the Marrickville Metro Creative Program is committed to continuing this foundation of innovation and creation with an innovative, collaborative and co-curatorial approach, bringing artists, community, and local businesses together to engage closely in a process around developing the ideas, concepts and outcomes for outstanding Public Art with outstanding site specific and placemaking outcomes, loved by the community and visitors alike.
EXISTING PUBLIC ARTWORKS

THE VICARS MILL
Artist: Alex Lahours
The work celebrates the site of the Vicars Woollen Mill (the site of the current Marrickville Metro), an important place in the history and story of Marrickville. It pays homage to the original Indigenous inhabitants, the textile industry, the wool process and the immigrants and families who built and shaped the textile industry for which Marrickville became famous.

Alex Lahours created a contemporary piece using a combination of imagery and typography that reflects the vast history of the site but also looks to the future and provides inspiration for a younger generation who will, in their time, have an influence on the area as well.

UNTITLED
Artist: Studio Dennis
Conceived and installed by local resident and renowned street artist, Andrew Boddam-Whetham, a vibrant artwork inspired by local flora and fauna, transforming a previously dull rooftop into a welcoming and celebratory public space.

UNTITLED
Artist: Brad Robson
A street art commission featuring portraits of past contemporary locals who have played a significant role and influence on the Marrickville identity and culture.

These artworks were commissioned by AMP Capital for Marrickville Metro in partnership with Inner West Council through the Perfect Match Street Art Program.
SELECTION CRITERIA: COMMISSIONED ARTWORKS RESPOND THROUGH 4 KEY CRITERIA
Art commissioned for Marrickville Metro Public Art and Creative Programs is characterised by a co-curatorial approach as art opportunities are selected, conceived and developed and defined by a true partnership between local creatives, community, AMP Capital, Inner West Council and stakeholders.

It is anticipated that selected artists will demonstrate a creative and innovative response to the brief, artistic excellence and demonstrated capacity to deliver large scale public artworks. Selected artists will have lived or worked in the Inner West or can demonstrate a significant connection to the Inner West.

Projects may encourage collaboration between creatives - whether that is two artists working together or interdisciplinary pairings that result in exciting and memorable outcomes.

Art for Marrickville Metro will be more impactful through representation of artist’s passion and spirit through storytelling that speaks inclusively to the Inner West community.
MOODBOARDS
MARRICKVILLE IDENTITY & INSPIRATION
Art: I Have a Dream by Andrew Alken, Julie Pryor and Unmitigated Audacity Productions

Image: Fintan Magee, Rallis Timber, Marrickville

Image: Katlyn Giberson on Unsplash
Art: Fintan Magee

Art: Beastman x Phibs x Creepy
Artist: Ochre Lawson, Mess with It Studios
Prepared by Art Pharmacy on behalf of AMP Capital Investors Ltd. in partnership with Inner West Council as part of EDGE Inner West public art programs.