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Place making at Narellan NSW

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Place making at Narellan NSW

Abstract

There has been an attempt at place making in Narellan in the new extension of the local shopping mall, Narellan Town Centre.

Keywords

narellan, nsw, place, making

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Place making at Narellan NSW

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Screenshot Narellan Town Centre Plaza and Extension 2016
[\(http://www.narellantowncentre.com.au/\)](http://www.narellantowncentre.com.au/)

Place making at Narellan NSW

There has been an attempt at place making in Narellan in the new extension of the local shopping mall, [Narellan Town Centre](#).

The centre owner states on its [website](#) that:

“ New civic plazas and entertainment precincts including a fantastic indoor / outdoor restaurant and casual dining precinct where you will be able to sit down and relax with friends day and night.

Kylie Legge has defined a place as

“ A location, a personal relationship to an environment, or act as a re-presentation of the spirit of the land and our unspoken community with it. In its simplest terms place is a space that has a distinct character. At its most complex it embodies the essence of a location, its community, spiritual beliefs, stories, history and aspirations. The essence of place is its genius loci, its 'place-ness'. [\[1\]](#)

Place according to Legge should deliver 'character, identity or meaning'. Place should also have community participation and create economic revitalisation. [\[1\]](#)

The centre owners and designers have attempted to create a space where local folk can have social encounters and exchange and meet other people. This type of space attempts to strengthen the local economy, inspire community by having the look and feel of a village market square. The space aims to be walkable and draw people into it.

Place making is community driven and for it to be meaningful individuals should be allowed to make their own interpretation of the space.

The plaza is an attempt at place making where a space allows people to make their own story. They can create meaning for themselves by interacting with family and friends. The plaza has attempted to create its own cultural and social identity. This has been achieved by including a water feature, street furniture and public art.



Stylised Elderslie Banksia, extracts from Narellan story and Pansy the Camden train 2016 (<http://dictionaryofsydney.org/entry/narellan>)

One of the pieces of public art is a stylized [Elderslie banksia](#), an endangered species, of the local area. There are also quotes from the history of the [Narellan story](#) by local historian [Dr Ian Willis](#) on two separate panels. There are also dioramas of [Pansy the Camden train](#) that ran through the site of the shopping centre extension, as well as cows and open pastures motifs. All these are part of the character of the development of the [Narellan story](#), with its rural past, [icon train and Narellan Railway Station](#).

So far the planners seem to have achieved their aims with early usage by local families. There mothers and children interacting, with some taking souvenir photos for family memoirs. The surrounding food outlets were busy creating a buzzy feel to the site. Workmen fitting out surrounding commercial outlets sat in the sun having their lunch. The area also has a number of financial outlets that will draw more people to the space. The plaza so far seems to quite popular and achieved the aims of the designers.



Ian Willis next to text from Narellan story 2016 (<http://dictionaryofsydney.org/entry/narellan>)

[i] Kylie Legge, 'The evolution of placemaking – what's next?', Newplanner, September 2015, pp4-5.

[ii] Kylie Legge, 'The evolution of placemaking – what's next?', Newplanner, September 2015, pp4-5.

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