Shops have found life

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''THE whole place is changing. I think it's the beginning of things building up,'' Mr Walker said.

''If the café wasn't here, I don't think we'd be getting the [new] pharmacy.

''Support for the various groups is increasing too because people believe that something could be achieved.''

Brothers Andrew, Arthur, and Steve Savoulidis opened Wilbur's Café Bar following their involvement with the suburb's IGA.

''My brothers grew up in Downer, and growing up in the area and playing a lot of sport on Hackett oval, we used to come up here shopping, the shops used to be really good,'' Steve Savoulidis said.

''We thought let's do this as well, because we've always been in cafés.

''I thought it was going to work, a lot of people said 'no way, what are you doing, Hackett's dead', but it's actually exceeded what we thought, too.''

Mr Savoulidis said when the café first opened, they noticed a big group of people walking towards the shops.

''We were thinking, 'where are all these people going?' and they were walking towards here – no one veered off,'' he said.

''The first week was just crazy. We thought it was going to work but not bang like that.''