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**Phase Two: Fitzroy  
Gasworks consultation**

14 December 2017

Development Victoria

CONSULTATION  
REPORT



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Fitzroy Gasworks consultation report

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## 1. Executive summary



The former Fitzroy Gasworks site, a 3.9-hectare parcel of industrial land, is being explored as an urban renewal project by Development Victoria, the State Government's development agency.

In November 2017, Development Victoria released a concept master plan for the site. The plan was subjected to community and stakeholder consultation over a six-week period.

The feedback received during this period will inform a final master plan and a rezoning application of the site to be submitted to the Minister for Planning.

This report summarises feedback from community members and stakeholders. It provides key findings from this round of engagement. The report finds:

» The concept master plan has, on the balance of feedback, been received neutrally by community members and stakeholders.

It also finds:

» There is general support for the renewal of the site – including the idea to provide for more affordable housing as well as to create spaces for community activities and new businesses.

» Open space and the inclusion of green/parkland areas are considered fundamental to the future design of the site.

» Community facilities such as childcare/kindergarten, aged care/supported accommodation and a community centre are a priority. This is followed closely by a community centre/space.

» Active transport and public transport around the site is valued and opportunities to facilitate access by walking and cycling are greatly desired.

» Strong views exist on the possible height and density of any future development. Some community members are concerned the proposed building heights will not reflect the character of the local area.

» The incorporation of art, be it public art or access to live music, is endorsed and seen as enhancing the future character of the site

» Remediation of the site is understood to be a certainty. Community members expect it to be completed safely, in accordance with health and safety regulations and to be consulted closely about the ongoing impacts of this work.

## 2. Background



In response to Melbourne's continued population growth and the need for more diverse housing, Development Victoria has been investigating the potential renewal of the 3.9 hectare former Fitzroy gasworks site at 433 Smith Street, Fitzroy North.

The site, which is owned by the Victorian Government, offers a significant urban renewal opportunity for Melbourne's inner north, with a focus on mixed-use development including housing, recreation, education and commercial uses.

Two phases of consultation with the community and stakeholders have been conducted as a part of Development Victoria's planning and investigations.

**Phase 1** - In May and June 2016 Development Victoria (then Places Victoria) carried out the first round of community and stakeholder engagement. Around 750 people were directly engaged through community information sessions, a community reference group, pop-up consultation sessions, online engagement and stakeholder meetings. More than 2,500 comments were received and analysed as part of this process.

The results from this engagement, along with other technical and commercial information, assisted with development of a concept master plan for the site.

**Phase 2** - In November 2017 a concept master plan was released by Development Victoria to inform a rezoning application, to be submitted to the Minister for Planning. The concept master plan represents a whole-of-government approach, including providing for education facilities, an indoor sporting facility, a diverse range of housing (including affordable housing), and opportunities for community, commercial and retail spaces.

Development Victoria sought feedback from community members and stakeholders on the plan during November and December 2017.

This report provides insights into community and stakeholder feedback in relation to the concept master plan. The findings will inform further development of the master plan and an application for rezoning of the site, to be submitted to the Minister for Planning in 2018.

The next phase of engagement, **Phase 3**, will commence in early 2018 when a planning scheme amendment, including rezoning of the site is formally exhibited through a public planning process. This will include further opportunities for community and stakeholder feedback.

## 3. About the concept master plan



Development Victoria has worked with leading architects to develop a concept master plan that will transform the Fitzroy Gasworks site into a mixed-use development that meets the Victorian Government's objectives of delivering vibrant neighbourhoods, including providing for education facilities, an indoor sporting facility, a diverse range of housing, and opportunities for community, commercial and retail spaces.

The concept master plan specifically provides for:

- Buildings with a mix of heights. Ranging from six to 10 storeys around the boundary of the development and six to 14 storeys. The development is expected to provide around 1,100 new dwellings with a mix of one, two and three bedroom dwellings.
- An indoor sports facility that would comprise six multi-purpose double storey sports courts – the first of its kind in Australia.
- A community space to be developed in consultation with the community and the City of Yarra.
- A new school that would accommodate around 650 students.

The concept master plan seeks to meet four 'design responses':

### Integration

- Integration of school and sports courts
- Place activation with supporting mixed-use

### Permeability and open space

- Extend the neighbourhood grain
- Provide high quality open space

### Access and parking

- Use service roads and create new streets
- Provide underground parking

### Height and massing

- Lower heights close to existing residential interface
- A development that reflects local character

Although not binding, the plan reflects the principles of the Fitzroy North Gasworks Urban Design Framework 2008 (UDF). Although the UDF allows for greater building heights, Development Victoria proposes a maximum of 14 storeys in response to community sentiment around densities and heights. It has also considered other important elements, including heritage, the environment and sustainability.

### Heritage

The gasworks site forms a part of North Fitzroy's industrial and social heritage, and includes buildings and artwork of historical significance.

Most of the historical industrial buildings have been removed since the gasworks closed in the 1970s, however two buildings remain that are of historical interest. These buildings will be retained under the concept master plan.

### **Environment and sustainability**

The design of the gasworks site will incorporate a number of open spaces and landscaped gardens, created to encourage a sustainable and vibrant community. Development Victoria will identify an appropriate environmental design and assessment framework to deliver the project with world class environmentally sustainable credentials.

The provision of car and bicycle parking will reflect a focus on sustainable transport including walking, cycling and public transport.

## 4. How we engaged



To help shape and inform the Fitzroy Gasworks redevelopment vision, and to contribute towards an application to rezone the site, Development Victoria invited feedback on its concept master plan between 1 November and 8 December 2017.

There were multiple opportunities for community members and stakeholders to have their say – an online platform (including a survey) and two community information sessions. One community reference group meeting was also held during the consultation period.

The online platform received 5,840 views, and there were 447 downloads.

The engagement was promoted by Development Victoria via Facebook and paid local media advertisements. Advertisements were placed in the Weekly Review Melbourne Times (see in appendix) while the Facebook promotion received 51 Like/Wow/Love, 23 shares and 25 comments.

A letter inviting participation in the consultation process was distributed to residents living in close proximity to the site (see appendix).

### 4.1. Online survey

An online survey was accessible from 14 November to the 8 December 2017.

Sixteen survey questions including a mixture of close-ended and open-ended questions were asked. Questions related to the concept master plan, design elements, transport and access, community and education, open space, art and heritage. Respondents were asked to rank their importance from 'Essential' through 'Important', 'Neutral', 'Low Importance' to 'Insignificant'.

The survey also asked respondents to identify their priorities for the site and provide their views on remediation works.

In total 76 survey responses were received. These results form the basis of the analysed data contained within in this report.

### 4.2. North Fitzroy Gasworks Precinct Redevelopment Project Community Reference Group (CRG)

During Phase One of engagement the North Fitzroy Gasworks Precinct Redevelopment Project, a Community Reference Group (CRG) was established to provide community and stakeholder input into the planning stages of the project. The group met on five occasions during 2016.

Development Victoria invited the CRG to contribute to Phase Two of engagement at a meeting held on Wednesday 1 November at Bargoonga Nganjin, North Fitzroy Library, 182 St Georges Road, North Fitzroy. Twelve members of the reference group attended, including six members of the project team.

Attendees were updated on the development of the project and provided with an opportunity to give feedback on the plan in addition to general feedback on their aspirations for the site. The plan was generally well received and CRG members were particularly pleased with the inclusion of community space. Open space is a key priority for CRG members and Development Victoria were encouraged to maximize this, as well to provide links with public transport. Members were pleased that efforts were being made to preserve the site's heritage, including the prominent valve house building.

### 4.3. Community information sessions

Two community information sessions were held at Bargoonga Nganjin, North Fitzroy Library. There were 15 attendees at a session held on Sunday 19 November between 10am-12pm and 10 attendees at a session held on Tuesday 21 November between 6pm-8pm.

Representatives from Development Victoria provided attendees with general information about the project and the concept master plan whilst also being available to answer specific detailed questions. Hard-copy versions of the online survey were available to those who wished to complete the survey by hand. The concept master plan, supporting documentation and visuals were put on display and attendees provided verbal feedback to Development Victoria's project team.



## 5.2. Concept master plan and design elements

Participants expressed mixed views about the masterplan. While those who attended the CRG meeting and community information sessions gave an even-handed assessment of the masterplan, those who completed the online survey generally viewed the plans negatively.

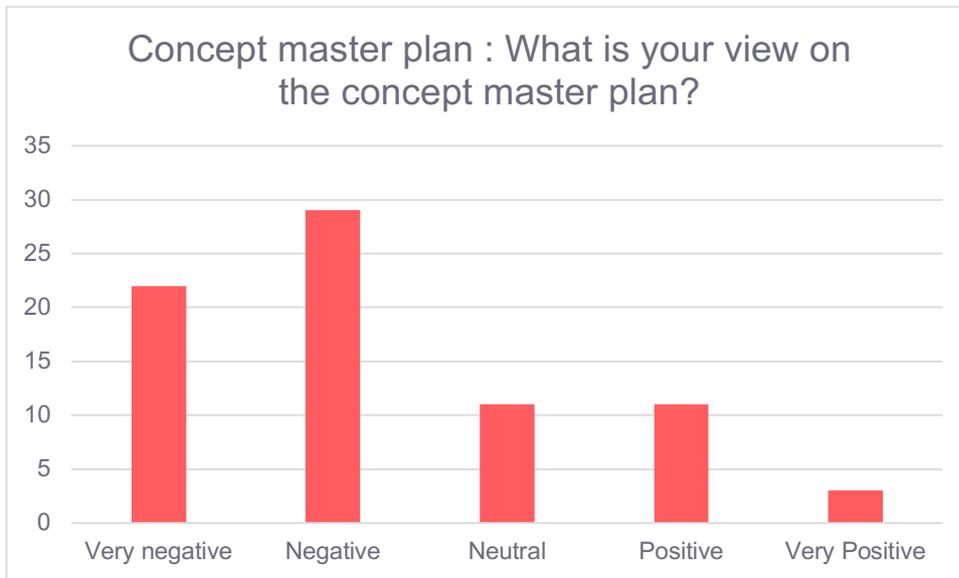


Figure 1.1 Survey Question 1

Supporters of the masterplan were pleased with Development Victoria’s vision to establish a mixed-use development that would create new business opportunities (see figure below). As one participant put it:

*“There is need for more residences in the area and integration of businesses in the plan is a good idea the location of the gasworks is ideally positioned to provide ease of transport to residence.”*

- Online survey participant

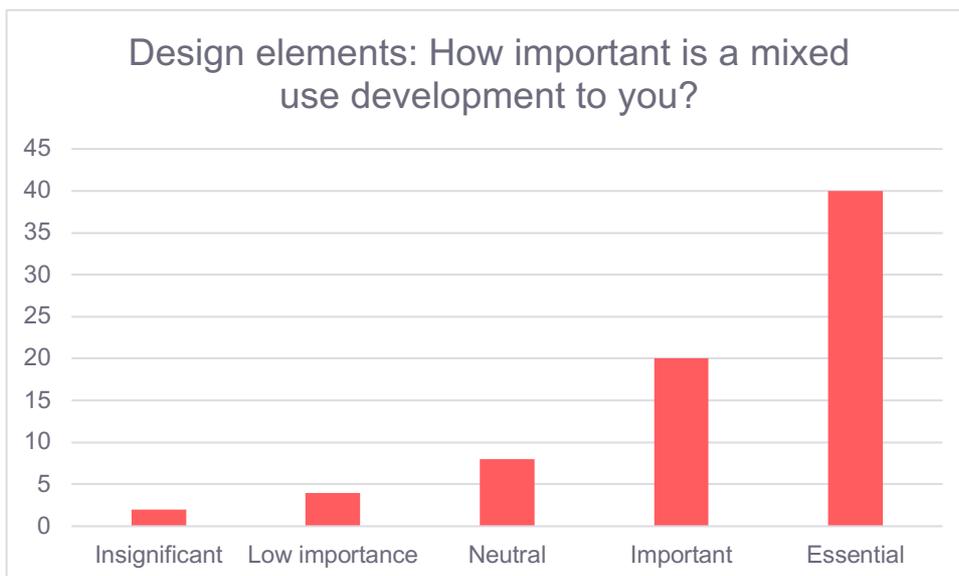


Figure 1.2 Survey Question 4

The inclusion of a new school was greatly welcomed. The rejuvenation of a 'contaminated, bland site' was also valued.

'Over development' was the primary concern from those who viewed the plans negatively. Participants felt the project was either too high, did not in fit with the character of the area or did not add value to North Fitzroy. Some of these participants argued that building heights should not exceed 5-6 storeys.

*"Over development with density being some 10 times the current North Fitzroy density. Too high. Not enough public space."*

- Online survey participant

A handful of participants wanted more information and felt there was insufficient detail to comment. On the balance of feedback, however, participants viewed the master plan neutrally.

On the topic of other design elements, participants indicated a strong preference for a sustainable design (see figure 1.3). Almost all respondents regarded this it as 'Essential' or 'Important'. Housing affordability was deemed as important by at least half of all participants. A handful deemed it to be a low priority.

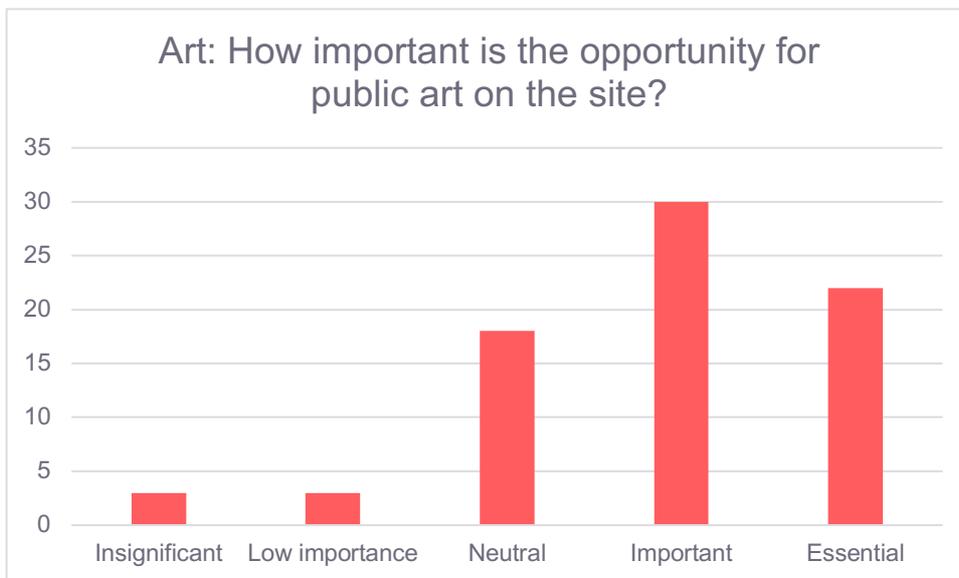


Figure 1.3 Survey Question 6

### 5.3. Transport and access

Transport and access is highly valued by participants.

Active transport was a special focus for community members with most regarding it as 'Essential' or 'Important' in the online survey (see Figure 1.4). On the topic of ensuring the site was close to public transport, the clear majority of participants rated this highly.

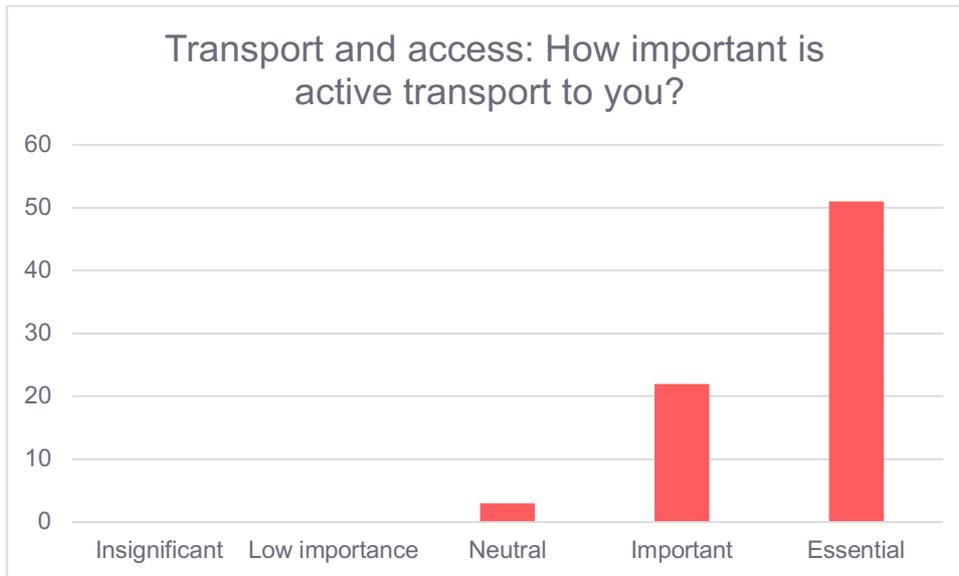


Figure 1.4 Survey Question 7

Active transport and connections with public transport was favoured by attendees at the CRG meeting. CRG members highlighted the importance of active transport and urged Development Victoria to consider a design that would promote walking and cycling.

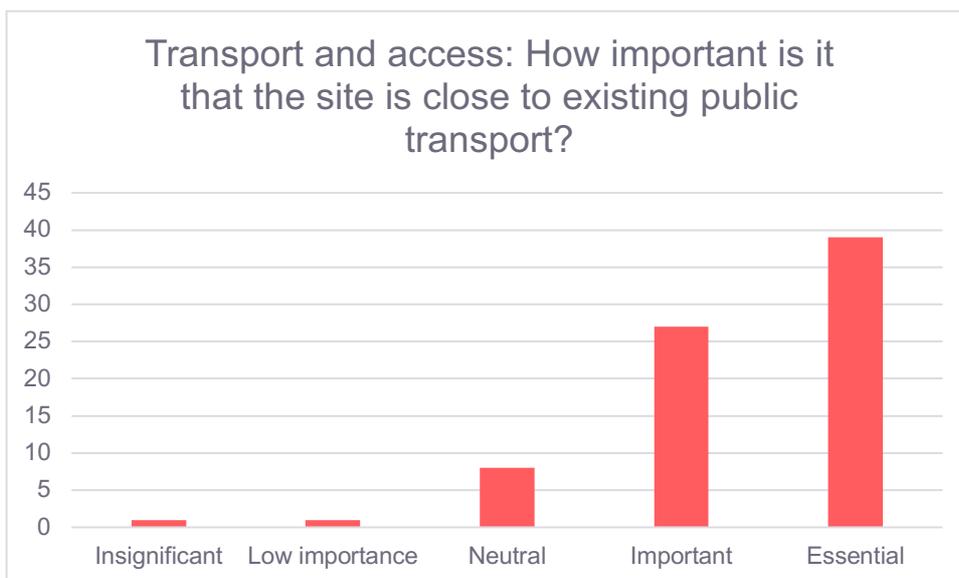


Figure 1.5 Survey Question 8

## 5.4. Community and education

Community facilities and spaces are considered a priority for the site.

Of the facilities and spaces listed, an aged care/supported living option and a community centre were most frequently prioritised, closely followed by a childcare/kindergarten.

Most participants selected aged care/supported living as 'Essential' or 'Important' (see figure 1.6). Likewise, many participants valued the inclusion of a community centre (see Figure 1.7). Only a small number of participants saw these as being of 'Low Importance' or 'Insignificant'.

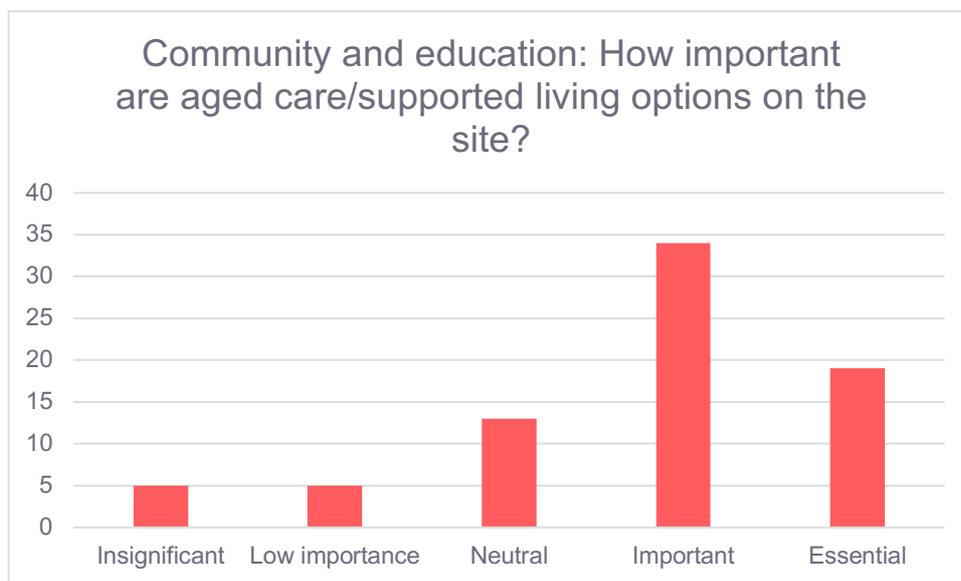


Figure 1.6 Survey Question 13

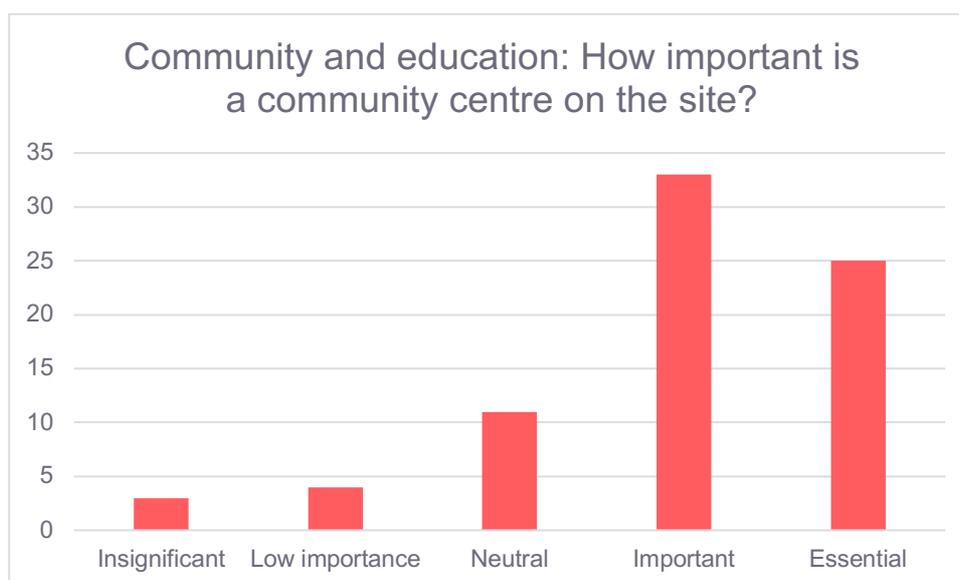


Figure 1.7 Survey Question 12

### 5.5. Open space

Participants strongly valued open space for recreation on the site. The clear majority regarded it as 'Essential' or 'Important' (see figure 1.8). Tellingly nearly none of the participant saw it as 'Neutral', 'Low Importance' or 'Insignificant'.

Members of the CRG described it as a crucial element in the design of the site, and called for Development Victoria to maximise this where possible.

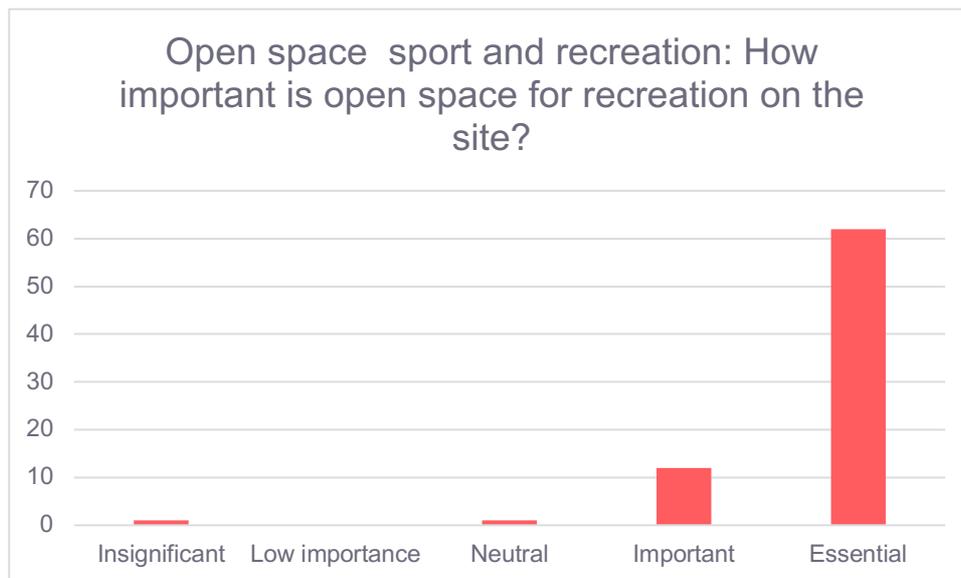


Figure 1.8 Survey Question 14

The idea to establish playgrounds on the site was generally well received. Most participants saw this as 'Essential' or 'Important' and only a very small number ranked it 'Neutral' or lower (see figure 1.9).

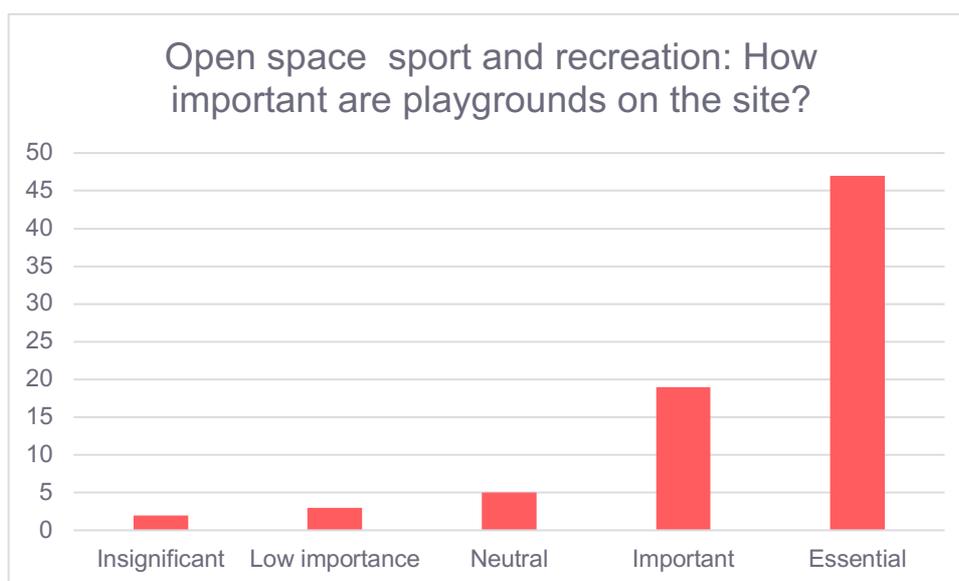


Figure 1.9 Survey Question 15

## 5.6. Art

The opportunity to create public art on the site was valued by participants. Most regarded it as ‘Important’ or ‘Essential’, with the CRG members calling for arts to be included in design from the early stages.

*“I believe public art could be a really beautiful way to bring this heritage to life. Through parkland and sculpture/mural. An arts precinct area with studio spaces and open parkland would be extremely beneficial.”*

- Online survey participant

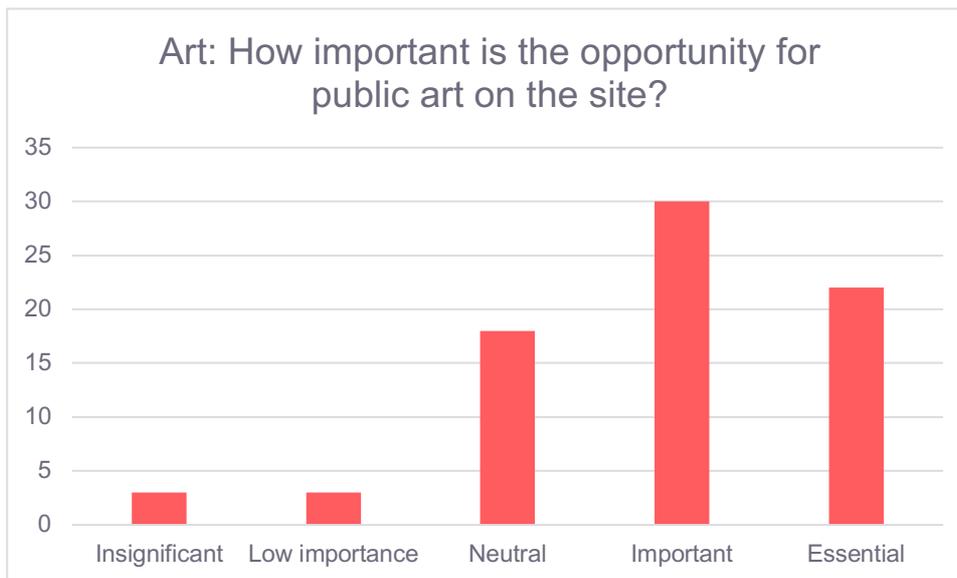


Figure 1.10 Survey Question 16

## 5.7. Heritage

Participants have strong views about retaining the heritage of the site. They believe the industrial identity and heritage of site should be preserved and promoted.

*“Aspects of the industrial site should remain visible - gas pipes could become an integrated part of the new neighbourhood visible throughout the area as a reminder of the sites past. Plaques with photos and descriptions would also help people understand the historical significance of the buildings.”*

- Online survey participant

These views were similarly expressed by CRG members.

## 5.8. Priorities

Participants were asked to identify their ‘number one priority’ as the project moves forward. Most reflected the need for open space to be incorporated into the design.

*“That the site retains a similar population density as the rest of North Fitzroy does not dominate the skyline and provides sufficient space to accommodate the new population increase”*

- Online survey participant

Others regarded accessibility as a key priority in the development of the site, and spoke of the need to maintain the affordability of the site.

*"In this area of Melbourne my number one priority would be affordable and public housing with some provision for older residents. As well as building undertaken in the most sustainable safe and environmentally friendly manner."*

- Online survey participant

Community consultation and information about remediation impacts was also cited as a need by participants.

## 5.9. Remediation

Participants understand remediation is inevitable for the project to be developed. They expect remediation to be completed properly, and in accordance with health and safety standards.

*"Just do what needs to be done to make it safe and clean for future residents and users of the space"*

- Online survey participant

Some participants, particularly those living within the vicinity of the site, expressed concern about the impact of remediation. They expect to be closely consulted and communicated with during construction.

*"Yes we live very, very close (we look at the site) and thus need to be kept informed. Dread the trucks and trucks and trucks which will be needed to remove soil and bring items in."*

- Online survey participant

## 5.10. Other comments

Participants have reiterated the need to retain a sense of community, incorporate open space, green/parkland elements into the design and to keep density to a minimum.

*"Have a balance between development and community"*

- Online survey participant

*"We get VERY few opportunities to turn back urban spaces into green/parkland areas. Please, please, please, give us a little more green space in a suburb dominated by concrete with very very few trees compared to other leafy surrounding suburbs like Abbotsford Richmond Carlton Please consider what the HIGHLINE did for a disused railway line in New York City - it turned it into a green oasis enabled the city to breathe and juxtaposed the concrete with nature."*

- Online survey participant

*"I like the thought of this site being utilised and hope it will be undertaken in close consultation with all stakeholders and without high rise buildings, and providing opportunities for the less fortunate in our society and not benefitting the more well off."*

- Online survey participant

## 6. Next steps



Phase 2 of engagement on the former Fitzroy Gasworks site has heard feedback from the community and stakeholders on Development Victoria's concept master plan. This feedback has informed the future development of the plan; ensuring the community's needs and aspirations are factored into a future redevelopment.

With Phase 1 and Phase 2 now complete, Development Victoria will proceed with a rezoning application for the site. The application replaces the existing industrial zoning and enables Development Victoria to pursue a mixed-use development.



In early 2018, a finalised masterplan for Fitzroy Gasworks will be released. The master plan will be formally exhibited as part of the statutory process. Phase 3 engagement will seek further feedback from the community. This will inform the ongoing development of the master plan.

Additionally, Phase 3 is expected to include consultation on remediation works likely to commence in 2018.

## 7. Appendices



Letter to Fitzroy residents and JE Fitzroy Gasworks advertisement.

November 2017

Dear Resident / Business Owner,

**Fitzroy Gasworks Precinct – 433 Smith Street, Fitzroy**

As you may be aware, Development Victoria is investigating the potential renewal of the former Fitzroy Gasworks site located at 433 Smith Street, Fitzroy.

The inner-urban location of the Fitzroy Gasworks, along with its proximity to transport corridors, public transport, education, centres of economic activity and open space makes it appropriate for development.

In mid-2016 we engaged with the community to understand the importance of the site, and seek community values and aspirations for the potential redevelopment.

We received over 2,500 comments from the community and stakeholders with the key themes relating to:

- Recreation and open space – desire for an indoor sporting facility, open space and playgrounds;
- Built form, housing and land use mix – need for affordable and social housing, height and density, sustainable designs and mixed land use;
- Community facilities and amenities – galleries, artistic spaces, commercial space for retail, food and beverage, education / child care facilities, community drop centre, a 'village feel';
- Transport – access, cycling facilities, car parking, public transport and site access;
- Heritage – retaining the existing heritage aspects and reflecting the historical use of the site;
- Environment – green open space, sustainable design principles, site remediation concerns.

With the help of leading architects, this feedback has been used along with other technical and commercial information to develop a draft master plan for the former Fitzroy Gasworks site.

Community drop in sessions are planned to provide the community with an opportunity to view the plan and provide feedback before a rezoning application is submitted later this year.

**When:** Sunday 19 November, between 6.00 pm and 8.00pm

Tuesday 21 November, between 10.00am and 12.00pm

**Where:** Bargoonga Nganjin seminar room at Fitzroy North Library

If you are unable to attend but would like further information, please visit [www.development.vic.gov.au](http://www.development.vic.gov.au).

Yours sincerely

Ken Munro  
Development Director



If you require information about Development Victoria in another language, please call us on **9280 0755**.

# Community engagement - Redevelopment of the Fitzroy Gasworks site - Smith Street Fitzroy

**Development Victoria is investigating the redevelopment of the former gasworks site at 433 Smith Street Fitzroy.**

Development Victoria revitalises public buildings and develops land to create spaces and homes that help make Victoria a great place to live. Development Victoria is investigating the redevelopment of the former gasworks site at 433 Smith Street Fitzroy to create a new urban village, providing housing, community facilities and open space for Fitzroy's growing population.

A draft master plan has been prepared based on input we received from the community in 2016 which we would like to share with you to hear your feedback.

Come and meet the development team at one of the drop-in sessions:

**When:** Sunday 19 November, 10:00am-12:00pm

**Where:** Bargoonga Nganjin seminar room at Fitzroy North Library,  
182/186 St Georges Road, Fitzroy North

**When:** Tuesday 21 November, 6:00pm-8:00pm

**Where:** Bargoonga Nganjin seminar room at Fitzroy North Library,  
182/186 St Georges Road, Fitzroy North

For more information, please go to

<http://www.development.vic.gov.au/projects/fitzroy-gasworks-site>