

60 Denmark Street Kew

Community Aspirations Report



Executive Summary



Development Victoria is transforming surplus government land into a new residential community at 60 Denmark Street, Kew.

Formerly home to VicRoads offices, the site is no longer in use and has been declared surplus by the Department of Transport and Planning. In October 2024, it was rezoned from a Transport Zone to Commercial and General Residential Zones, unlocking the potential for hundreds of new homes to help meet the area's growing housing demand.

The project, comprising of Parcels A, B, C and D, will deliver up to 500 homes, including 10% of affordable housing, supporting the objectives of the Victorian Government's Housing Statement by providing more homes, closer to where people work.

Located close to jobs, transport, schools, and green spaces, the site offers an exciting opportunity to deliver much-needed housing in an established area.

The development is likely to feature new mid-rise apartment buildings, similar in height to the existing office buildings, along with new public spaces and pathways.

We're also considering repurposing one of the vacant commercial office buildings (the one at the southern end of the site) - Parcel B - for housing. This could fast-track housing delivery and significantly reduce carbon emissions compared to demolishing and rebuilding from scratch.

While the primary objective of this project is to increase housing supply, the people who move into these new homes will become part of the Kew community, and the buildings will contribute to the area's public realm.

From 21 March to 11 April 2025, Development Victoria consulted with Boroondara Council and engaged with the local community to seek feedback on the project. The results of this consultation were used to prepare this Community Aspirations Report.

This report will serve as a reference during the tender process for private sector development partners. Developers can use the insights within the report to inform and shape their proposals.

Executive Summary



Community engagement activities included:

- An online survey
- Two community Q&A sessions
- Opportunities for written submissions.

Key themes emerging from the engagement include:

Broad support for the site's redevelopment

The urgent need for housing in the area was recognised. Many community members also highlighted the project as a valuable opportunity to revitalise the Kew Junction retail and entertainment precinct.

Walking and cycling connections

There was strong interest in including a potential link through the car park adjacent to Xavier College that could tie into a wider cycling network.

Landscaping and green space

The community supported retaining mature trees where possible; enhanced landscaping to support biodiversity; and creation of communal open spaces.

Heritage interpretation

There was a desire to acknowledge the site's rail history and Wurundjeri cultural storytelling in public spaces.

Adaptive reuse

There was general support for adaptive reuse of the southern building.

Traffic

There was interest in how the project would impact local traffic and parking in Denmark Street and surrounding areas. Around half of participants also expressed interest in potential construction impacts. A submission from Boroondara Council has also informed this report. Further details are included on page 22.

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Introduction



To help developers understand how the community and Boroondara Council would like the development to integrate with the existing neighbourhood, Development Victoria undertook a public engagement program.

This program focused on aspects of the project where community and council input could influence the design outcomes.

This Community Aspirations Report summarises the feedback received during the engagement process. It is intended as a reference document to guide developers in preparing their proposals for the site.

Development Victoria, the Victorian Government’s property development agency, is exploring options to transform the former VicRoads site in Kew into a vibrant new residential community.



How will this report be used



The tender process to identify development partners is a two-stage process.

Stage 1

An Expression of Interest (EOI).

Developers are invited to express their interest by providing details of their relevant experience and financial capacity. This information is assessed, and a shortlist of developers will be selected to proceed to the next stage. This stage ran from 3 April to 16 May 2025.

Stage 2

A Request for Proposal (RFP).

Shortlisted developers will be invited to submit a detailed proposal to acquire and deliver new housing and other project objectives.

During the RFP stage, a suite of reference documents will be provided to guide proposal development and assessment. These include:

- project objectives
- site analysis reports
- planning requirements.
- the Community Aspirations Report, capturing local community and Council priorities
- Boroondara City Council's Urban Design Framework for the site, included as Part B – Project Brief.

What we asked



Development Victoria is committed to delivering around 500 new homes across the site, including a minimum of 10% affordable housing.

We consulted on aspects such as housing types: building size and forms; and the proportion of affordable or social housing on the site to better understand the community's values and connection with Kew, including how they move around the area.

The commercial model for delivery did not form part of the engagement scope.

We asked for specific feedback on:

- preferences for walking and cycling connections to the site
- landscaping, open space and green link preferences
- opportunities for heritage interpretation in design
- views on potential future ground floor commercial uses
- the importance of sustainable design features
- overall site redevelopment.

We also provided open-ended feedback options via a mapping survey and in-person Q&A sessions.

The community engagement program ran from 21 March to 11 April 2025 and included multiple ways for people to get involved.

How we engaged



In-person Q&A sessions

Approximately 45 people attended the two drop-in sessions:

- Tuesday 3 April, 6 – 8pm, Hawthorn Library
- Saturday 5 April, 10am – 12 noon, Kew Library

Online engagement (via Engage Victoria)

- Survey 1: 219 responses to 22 multiple choice questions.
- Survey 2: 51 location-based comments pinned to maps of Kew and the project site.

Written submissions

Five formal written submissions were received.

Communication and promotion



4,475 community notices delivered promoting the survey and community drop-in sessions.



Paid and targeted social media campaign to promote the engagements.

- 9282 accounts reached
- 10,899 impressions.



News story published on Development Victoria website. Engagement program promoted on the project page, including direct link to survey.



Community engagement program details shared on Boroondara Council website, including direct link to survey.

Community aspirations - what we heard



Across the quantitative survey data, map-based comments, and in person Q&A sessions, clear themes emerged around the community's aspirations for the site.

Walking and cycling

There is strong community support for new walking and cycling connections across the site, including the car park adjacent to Xavier College, which could link into a wider cycling network. This was the top-ranked sustainability initiative and is also a key aspiration of Boroondara Council.

Green space

There is a consistent desire to retain existing trees (where possible), to create green corridors through the site, enhance biodiversity, and establish shared open space. Biodiversity ranked third

among preferred sustainability initiatives. These views were echoed in Q&A sessions, where many expressed a wish for part of the site to become public open space. In fact, greenery and parks were the most cited reasons people enjoy living in Kew.

Sustainability initiatives

Respondents rated energy-efficient apartments as the second most important sustainability measure (after walking and cycling connections). Community Q&A participants also expressed strong support for investigating adaptive re-use of the southern building which was an idea also backed by Boroondara Council.

Commercial space

When asked about potential ground-floor uses, hospitality and food retailers were most preferred, followed by medical or

allied health services. Boroondara Council supports a broader vision for a truly mixed-use precinct - one that brings new jobs, services and community amenities. Many at the Q&A sessions also noted the potential for this development to reinvigorate the retail and entertainment offer in nearby Kew Junction.

Traffic and transport

Traffic, parking and site access were of strong interest, with nearly two-thirds of survey respondents raised these as issues. The Q&A sessions added further context, with many residents pointing out these are already long-standing problems along Denmark Street and surrounding areas.

Heritage

If heritage interpretation is to be included in open space design, preferences leaned towards celebrating the site's rail history and incorporating Wurundjeri storytelling.

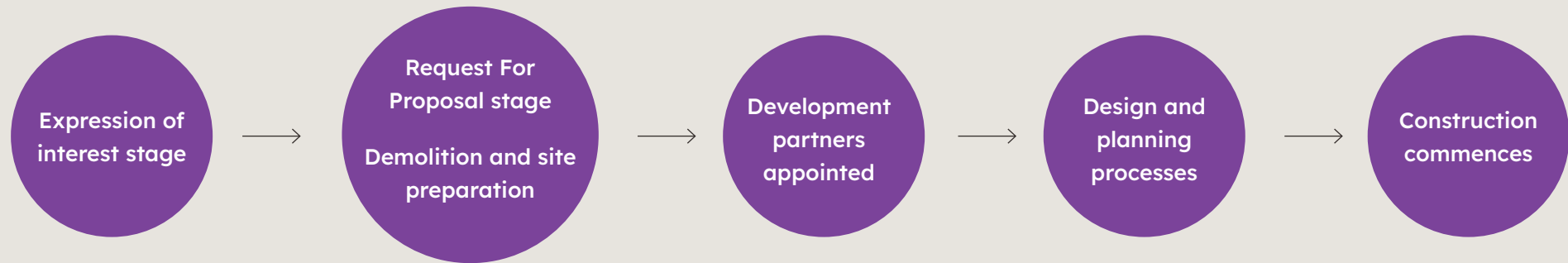
Future consultation

Some participants at the Q&A sessions expressed interest in future opportunities to provide feedback on the project, especially during the design phase. Boroondara Council expressed a desire for further consultation particularly in relation to the delivery of the proposed public open space, especially if multiple developers are involved. Council has also suggested the establishment of a community reference group and has requested clarity on its future role in the planning process.

Next steps



Below is the high-level development process for the project. Greater clarity on the delivery strategy and key milestones will come after the development partner announcement.



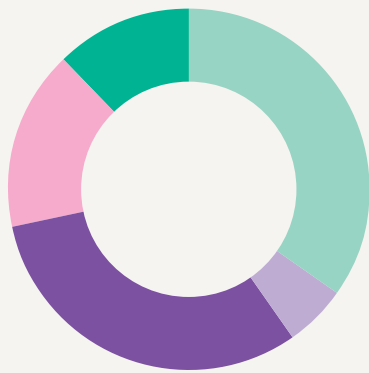
Survey results



↓ People's relationship to Kew

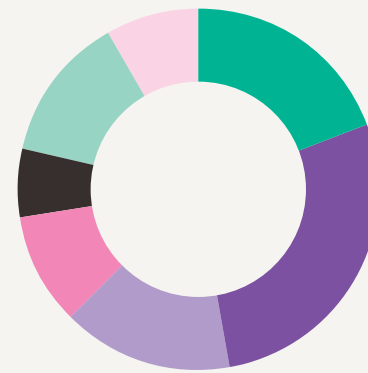
Survey results
219 responses

Which of the following best describes your connection to Kew?



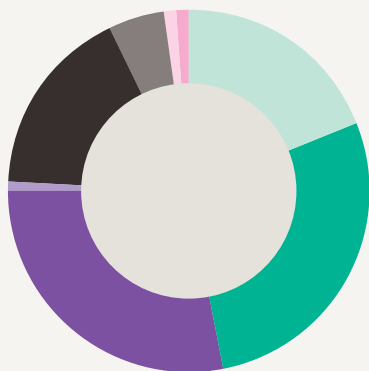
- I live in the local area.
- I'm considering buying a home here (either to live in or as an investment)
- I'm interested in the future of this area
- I'm interested in government housing policy
- I'm interested in social or affordable housing opportunities

What do you value most about Kew? (select up to three)



- Proximity to the CBD
- Easy access to shops, schools, medical services, and transport
- The vibrant and attractive environment
- The area's rich and diverse history
- The friendly and welcoming atmosphere
- A strong sense of safety and community
- Being close to family and friends

How do you travel around the area?

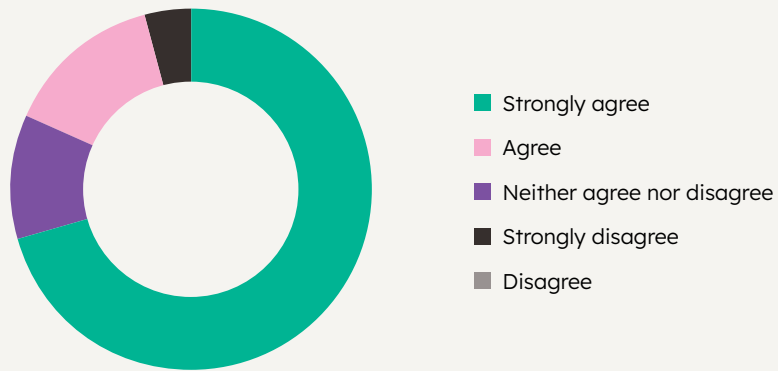


- Tram
- Walking
- Driving (private car)
- Taking a taxi or rideshare (Uber, etc)
- Cycling
- Bus
- Riding a motorbike
- Using a car-share service
- Mobility device
- e-Scooter

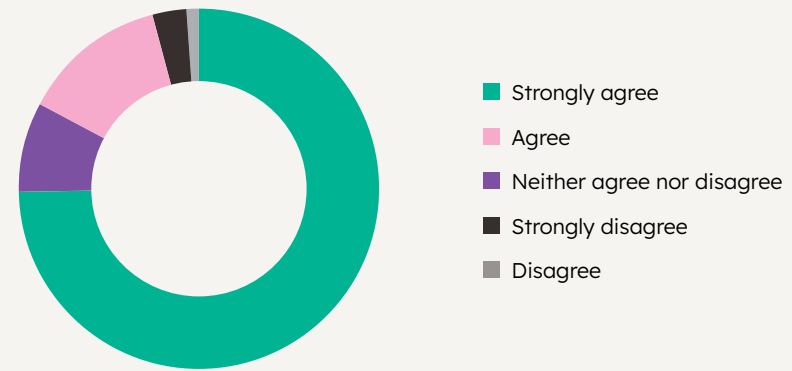
Future connectivity across the site

Survey results
219 responses

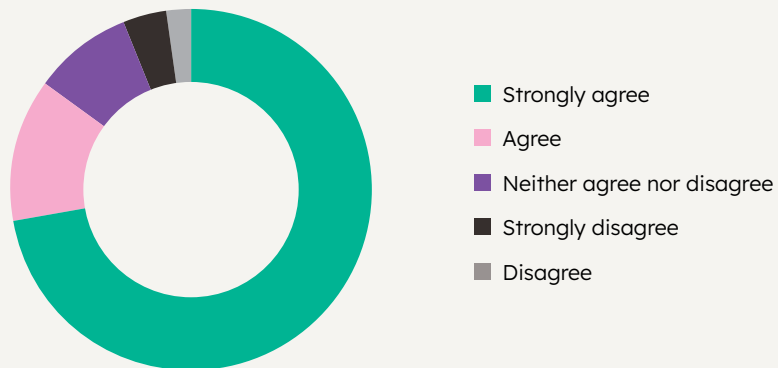
I want to be able to walk/cycle from Denmark St to Wellington Street.



I want to be able to walk/cycle through the site to get from Denmark Street or Wellington Street to Barkers Rd.



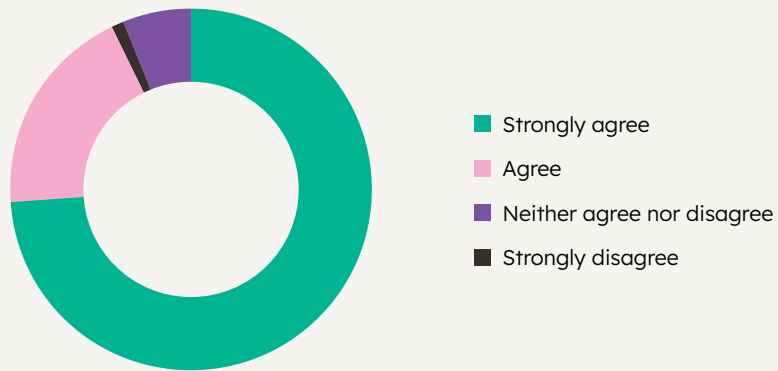
I would like the cycling connected to the broader cycling network in Kew.



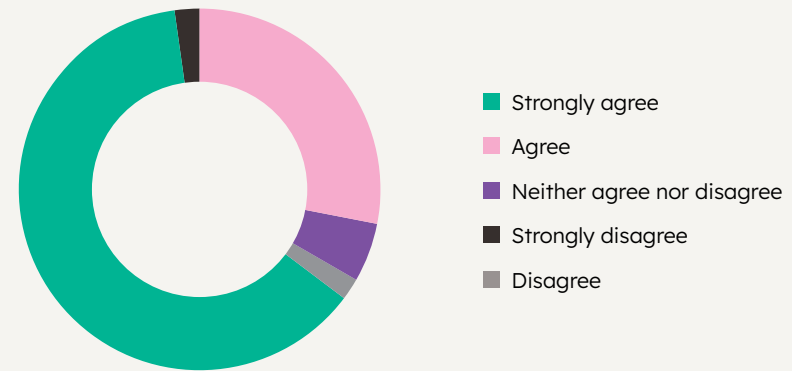
↓ Landscaping

Survey results
219 responses

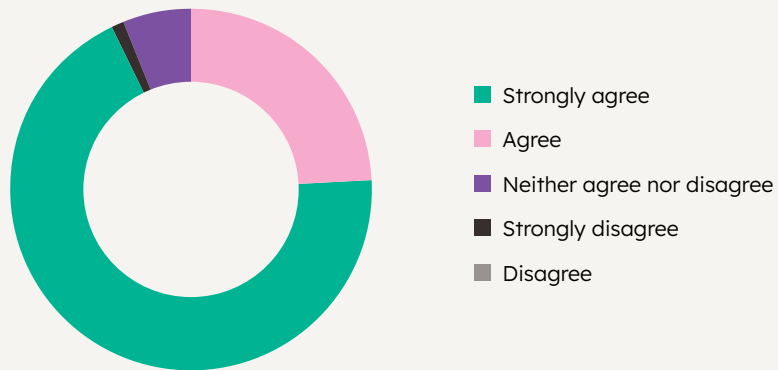
I would like to see (if possible) the large perimeter trees retained.



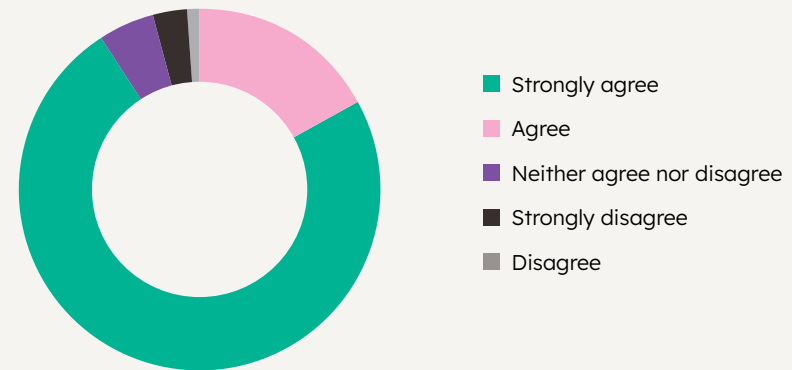
I would like open space for communal use.



I would like the open space to increase nature and diversity.



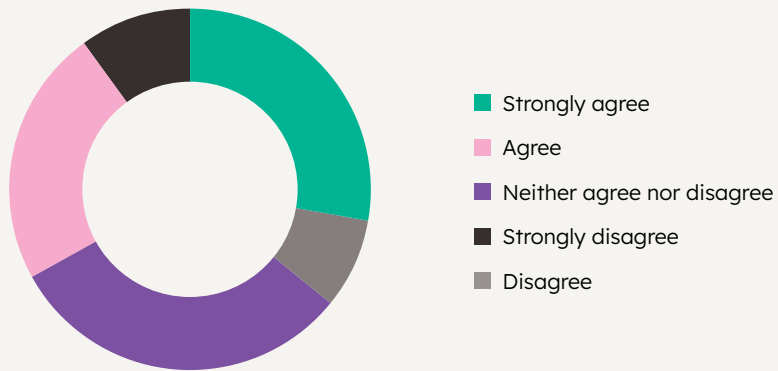
I would like the 'green links' through the site.



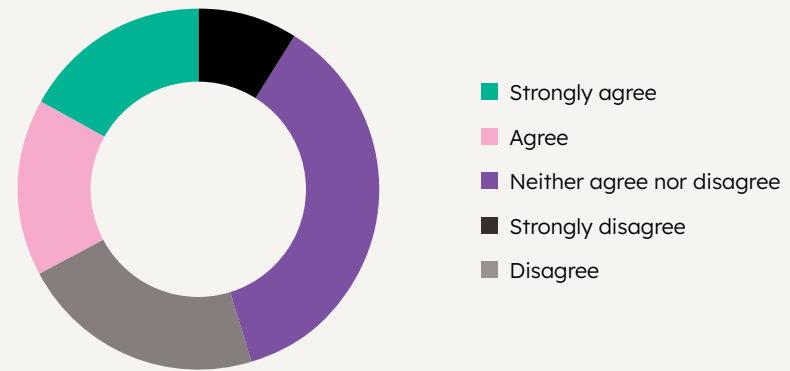
↓ Heritage

Survey results
219 responses

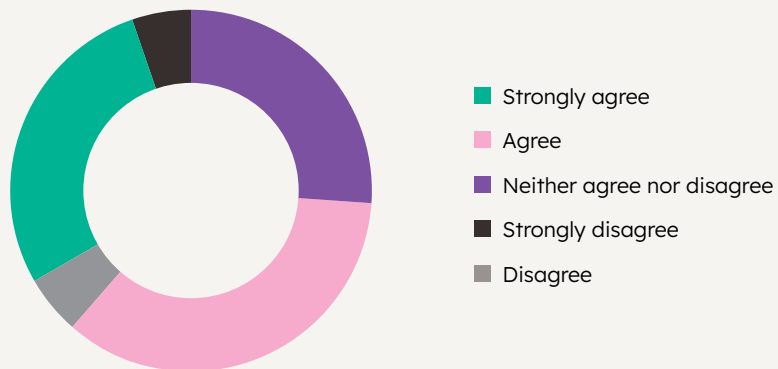
I would like to see the traditional stories of the Wurundjeri people reflected in design.



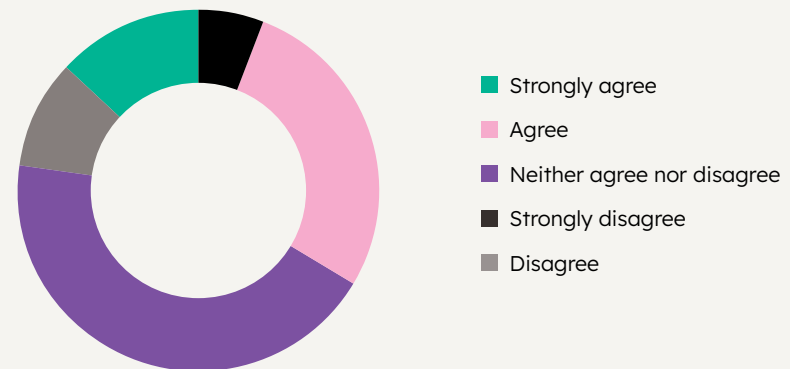
I would like to see the history of VicRoads reflected in the design.



I would like to see the sites former rail heritage reflected in the design.

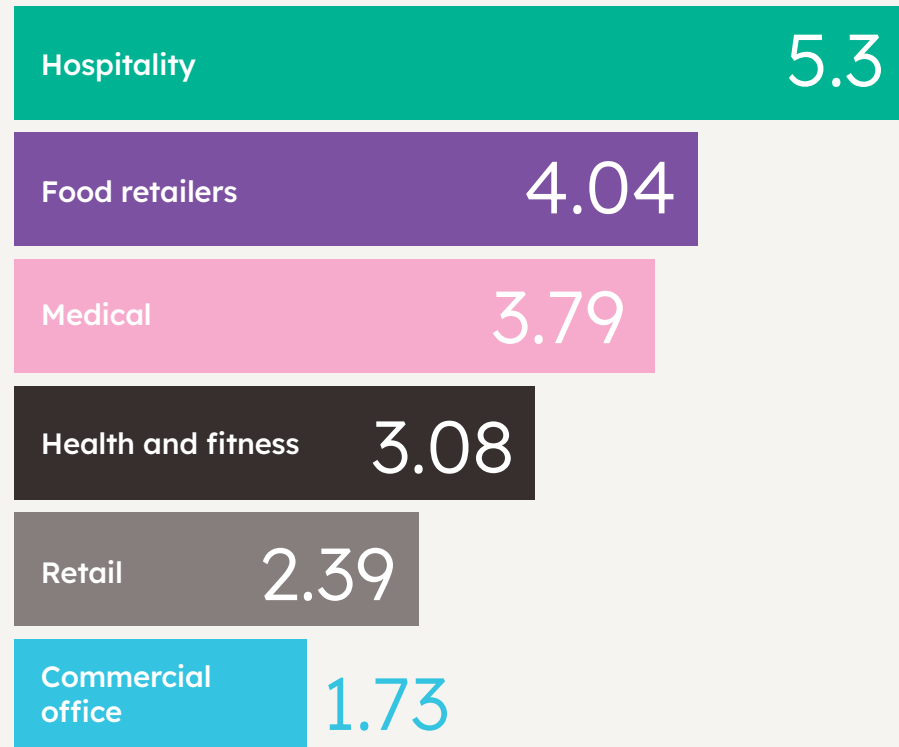


I would like to see contemporary Kew reflected in the design.



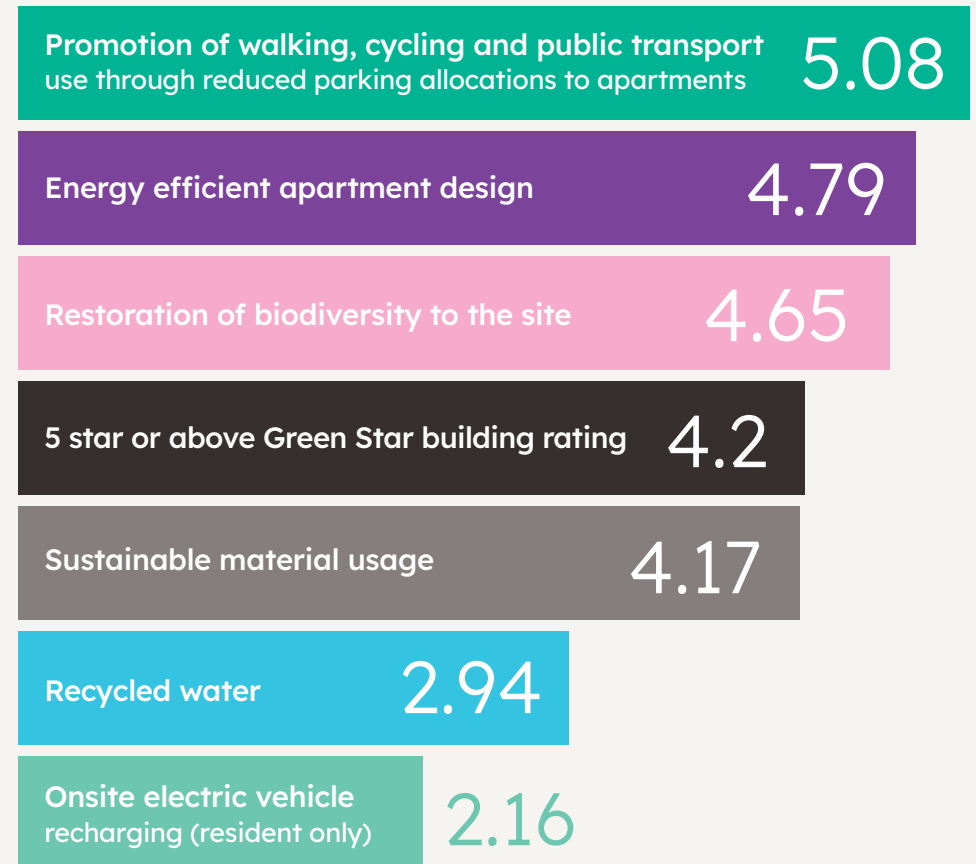
↓ Potential commercial options

Preferred business types for potential ground floor activation. Ranked



↓ Sustainable design

Importance of potential sustainability initiatives. Ranked

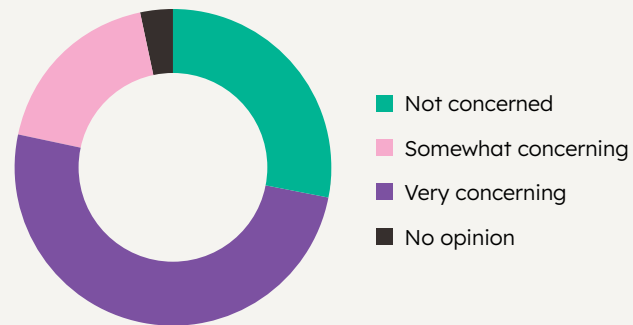




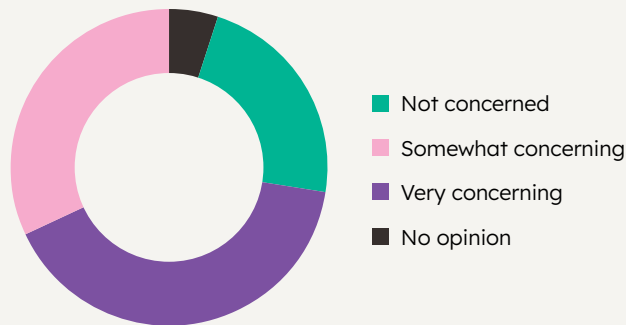
Moving from commercial use to housing - Understanding which aspects of the project concern you most.

Survey results
219 responses

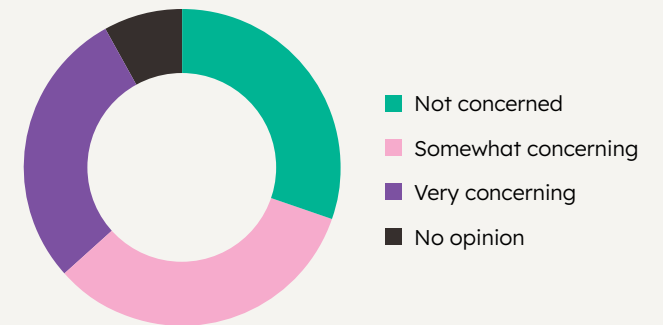
Traffic impacts associated with residents.



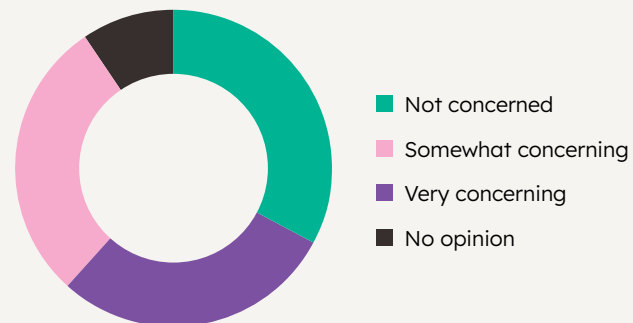
Entry and exit points to the site for new residents.



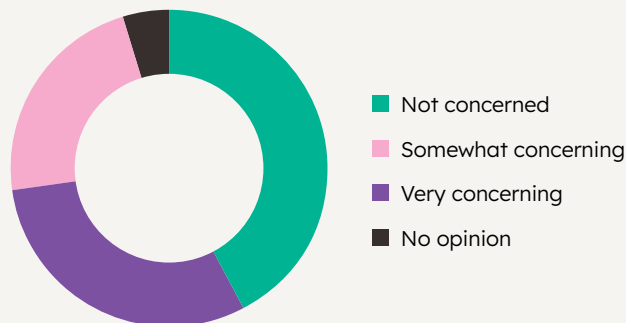
Construction impacts during delivery (noise, impacts, dust).



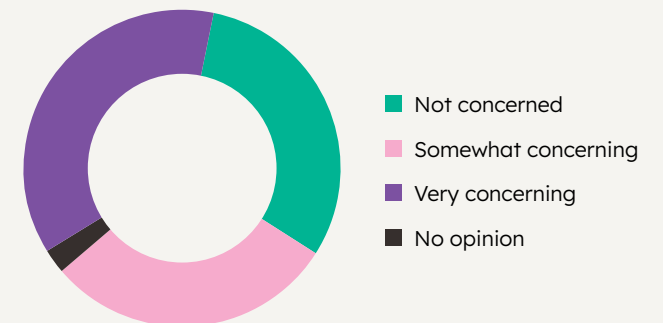
Overshadowing or loss of privacy to neighbours.



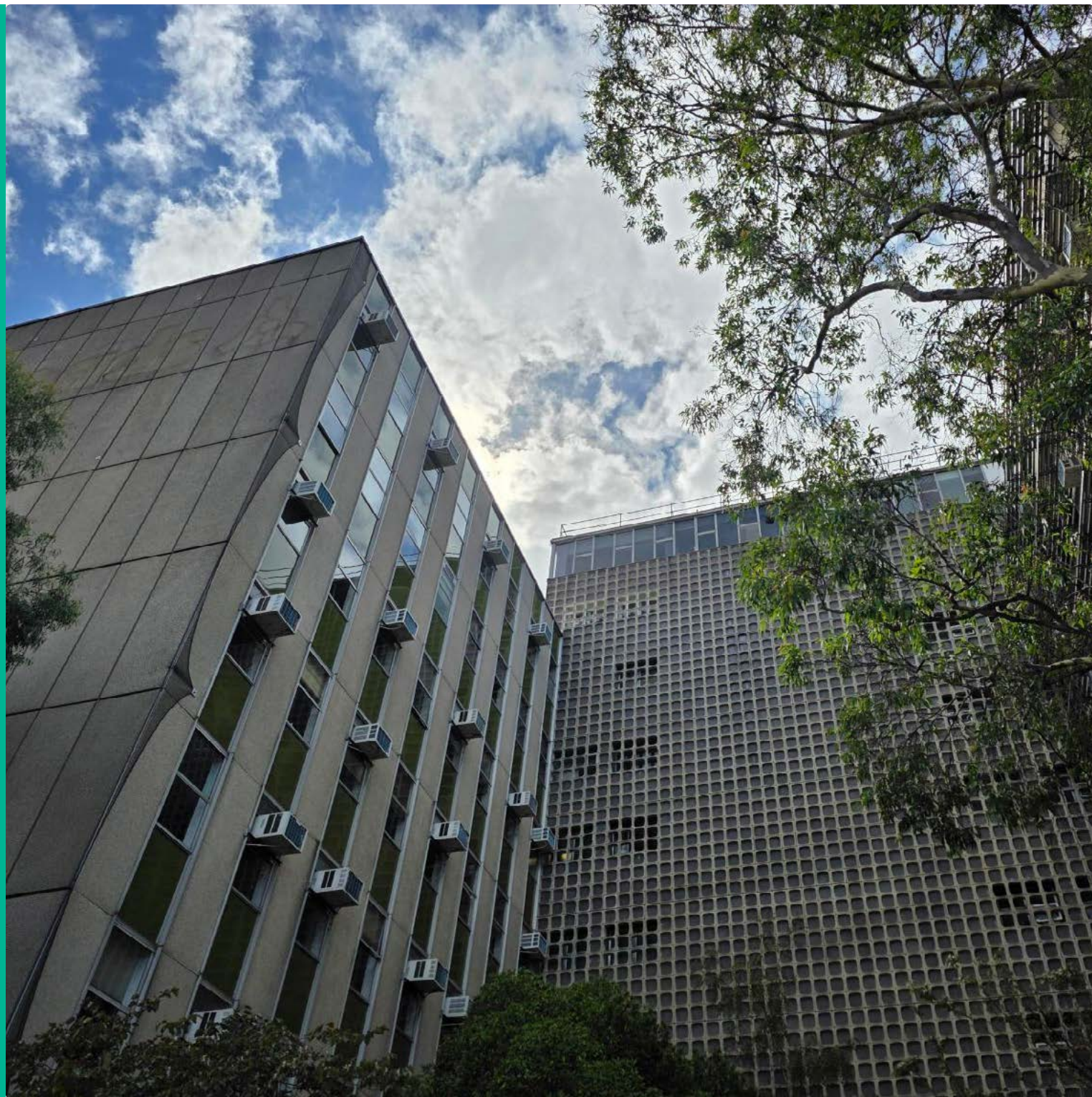
Neighbourhood safety.



Impacts on public transport network.



Map survey results





Map survey 31 comments, 4 written submissions

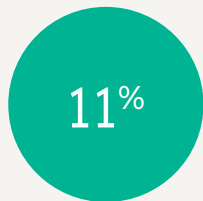
Participants placed a pin on locations around the site and commented based on: “You could consider...”

Please note: As four of the written submissions were brief, they have been combined with the open comments received via the mapping tool for reporting purposes.



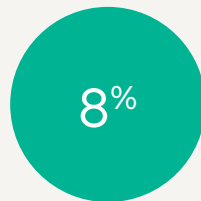
Walking and cycling connections across the site.

“The old rail alignment would be a good place for a cycling route.”



Adequate parking to manage existing traffic challenges.

“Traffic through this area is a nightmare the majority of the time. Need adequate onsite parking.”



Government should do more to deliver affordable housing.

“It is very important to provide affordable housing in this area that is energy efficient and uses onsite renewable energy.”



Do not want adaptive re-use – building should be demolished.

“If repurposing existing buildings, perhaps make changes to the facades to make these less of a brutalist eyesore.”

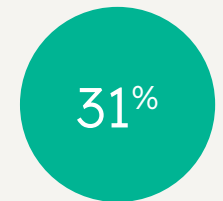


Support adaptive re-use and want facades changed if building repurposed.



Outdoor space and gardens.

“More inviting outdoor setting.”



Related to issues outside the scope of the project such as broader traffic and cycling initiatives, outdoor seating in other areas, schools and taxation policy.



Map survey 20 comments

Participants placed a pin on locations around the site and commented based on: “What I like...”

55%

Public parks, trees and greenery, such as Yarra Bend, Alexandra Gardens, Kew East Community Garden, Stradbroke Park.

“Leafy streets. Cools the area, looks great, feels good, generates oxygen and home for birds and wildlife.”

10%

The vibrancy and food options in Kew Junction.

“A good vibrant shopping centre near-by, with cafes, supermarket etc for people to walk to so that they can interact with others, meet their friends and easily do the things they need to do without having to drive.”

15%

Places to meet such as Kew Library, Windalla Ave Reserve and the community centre.

“The library is very important for all ages and backgrounds.”

10%

Heritage buildings and respecting heritage overlays.

“ I like the older style architecture and red brick materials that reflect a lot of the earlier buildings brought to original and older suburbs of Melbourne like Kew that have a lot of history.”

5%

Public transport.

“Our transport availability is wonderful.”

5%

I love this project.

“ Love the plan to redevelop this site! We need more local housing, and this is a great location/opportunity.”

**Community
Q&A: what
we heard**



Housing-related themes



General support for home delivery

Overall, there was good support for the concept of developing the site, with broad recognition that more housing is urgently needed in the area. Many saw the project as a great opportunity to revitalise the Kew Junction retail and entertainment precinct.

Apartment numbers and housing typologies

While most participants accepted the proposed 500 apartments, a small group felt this was excessive and suggested town homes might be more in keeping with the area's existing character.

Affordable and social housing provision

Many attendees questioned why only 10% of the housing is proposed as affordable, and why no social housing is currently planned. There was strong sentiment that the Victoria Government should lead by example and invest more in public and lower-cost housing.

Private sector involvement

Some questioned the rationale for selling parts of the site to the private sector instead of Development Victoria undertaking the full development itself.

Community input and influence

There was concern about the level of community influence on the project, particularly in future design phases.

Design oversight and coordination

Concerns were raised about how community feedback would be carried through to private sector-led development. Agreement will ensure coordination and oversight across the entire site.

Southern building adaptive re-use

Most residents supported the potential adaptive re-use of the southern building, though a few questioned why it was being retained given its outdated appearance.

Northern building demolition

Some residents asked why the northern building isn't being retained.

Overshadowing and building height

Some concerns were raised about overshadowing impacts and the overall height of new buildings.

Other key themes



Open space and green areas

There was strong support for the inclusion of open space in the development. Residents welcomed the emphasis on retaining and enhancing green areas as part of the masterplan.

Shared pathways and connectivity

A shared pedestrian and bike path through the former rail car park was met with strong interest.

Car parking capacity

Concerns were expressed about whether there would be adequate parking on-site, particularly given existing pressure on surrounding streets from residents and construction workers.

Calls for more parkland

A small number of attendees questioned whether the entire site could become public parkland. We explained the land has been rezoned by the Victorian Government for residential use, given its strategic location, and is intended to help meet housing demand.

Traffic and congestion impacts

Many residents flagged traffic congestion as a significant issue and expressed interest in how it would not be worsened.

Construction

Residents living close to the site, particularly near the northern building, raised concerns about demolition and construction impacts such as dust and noise.

**Boroondara
Council:**
what we heard



Summary of Boroondara Council's position



Boroondara Council welcomes Development Victoria's commitment to include the Urban Design Framework (UDF) in all Expressions of Interest (EOI) and Request for Proposal (RFP) documentation. Council expects developers to clearly demonstrate how their proposals respond to, or integrate, the key objectives of the UDF.

Council encourages Development Victoria to fully recognise the strategic significance of the site - not just as a location for housing, but as a key part of the wider Activity Centre. There is strong support for a truly mixed-use development that delivers high-quality jobs, services, diverse land uses, and tangible community amenity.

Council supports improving site permeability, including green corridors and strong east-west and north-south active transport links. In particular, the creation of a shared pedestrian and cycle path through the site and the southern tail - identified in the UDF - is a high priority.

While Council supports the proposed delivery of 500 dwellings, it believes a significantly higher proportion should be delivered as affordable, social and public housing.

Council supports the adaptive re-use of the existing office building and hopes this can be retained as part of the development.

Council is concerned that dividing the site among multiple developers with varying priorities may result in a fragmented and poorly integrated outcome. This

risk is particularly acute for the delivery of high-quality public realm, open space, and key linkages - such as the shared path - connecting the site to the wider community.

Council expects, at a minimum, the opportunity to review final development proposals before they enter the planning permit stage. Ideally, Council would also be provided with copies of preferred private-sector proposals that Development Victoria intends to progress, prior to any final selection.

Council strongly supports Development Victoria's commitment to best-practice sustainable design and carbon neutrality. It encourages Development Victoria to show leadership and set a benchmark in sustainable development for the broader market to follow.

Council wants greater clarity and commitment around community and Council involvement across all stages of the project. It's calling for a clearly defined engagement process, including a Community Reference Group, to ensure genuine input into the final development.



Thank you

Development Victoria would like to thank everyone who took the time to participate in the Kew redevelopment engagement program.



development.vic.gov.au