

Harbour Esplanade

Continuing the conversation

***Community engagement
summary report***
July 2014

Places Victoria

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Introduction

From 9 May 2014 to 6 June 2014, Places Victoria and the City of Melbourne sought to build on past conversations with the Docklands and Melbourne community to inform ongoing planning and development of Harbour Esplanade.

During this time, Places Victoria spoke to more than 300 people at pop-up information events or formal meetings, and together with the City of Melbourne shared information with almost 4000 people via the Participate Melbourne website and received feedback from about 460 people through a questionnaire.

This report summarises the feedback received during the engagement process. This feedback will be used to refine the master plan for Harbour Esplanade, which will be the blue print for the development of the Docklands waterfront over the long term.

Later this year, Places Victoria expects to apply to the City of Melbourne for a planning permit to prepare for the next stage of development.

Summary of findings

At a high level, what the community and stakeholders told us was that they want open spaces that can be used for multiple purposes and activated to enhance events. Lawn areas, seating and passive areas and play opportunities were the key design elements people wanted to see in public spaces.

In terms of interaction with the water, space to sit and water level access or water play along the esplanade featured most highly in the feedback. Water transport services were also important.

Two thirds of people who completed the survey supported the reinstatement of heritage sheds, either through complete reinstatement or a contemporary interpretation and some buildings on the waterfront are acceptable to the community.

Who participated

The main platform for disseminating and capturing community feedback was the Internet. Between 9 May 2014 and 6 June 2014, 3887 people were made aware of the plans for Harbour Esplanade by visiting the City of Melbourne's Participate Melbourne website. Of those, almost one third (1100) sought further information by downloading videos or fact sheets. The preliminary visualisation for Harbour Esplanade was viewed by more than 1000 people. Places Victoria also reached more than 56,000 people on Facebook.

In total, 455 people filled in the survey (some surveys in the initial count of more than 460 were later discounted as test surveys). Of those who registered on the Participate Melbourne site (149 people), about 31% were residents, 16% ratepayers, 26% workers, 12% visitors, 9% businesses and the rest were students (6%).

The survey was translated into the five most common languages other than English in Docklands – Mandarin (8%), Cantonese (4%), Hindi (2%), Korean (2%) and Arabic (1%) – and made available on the Participate Melbourne site.

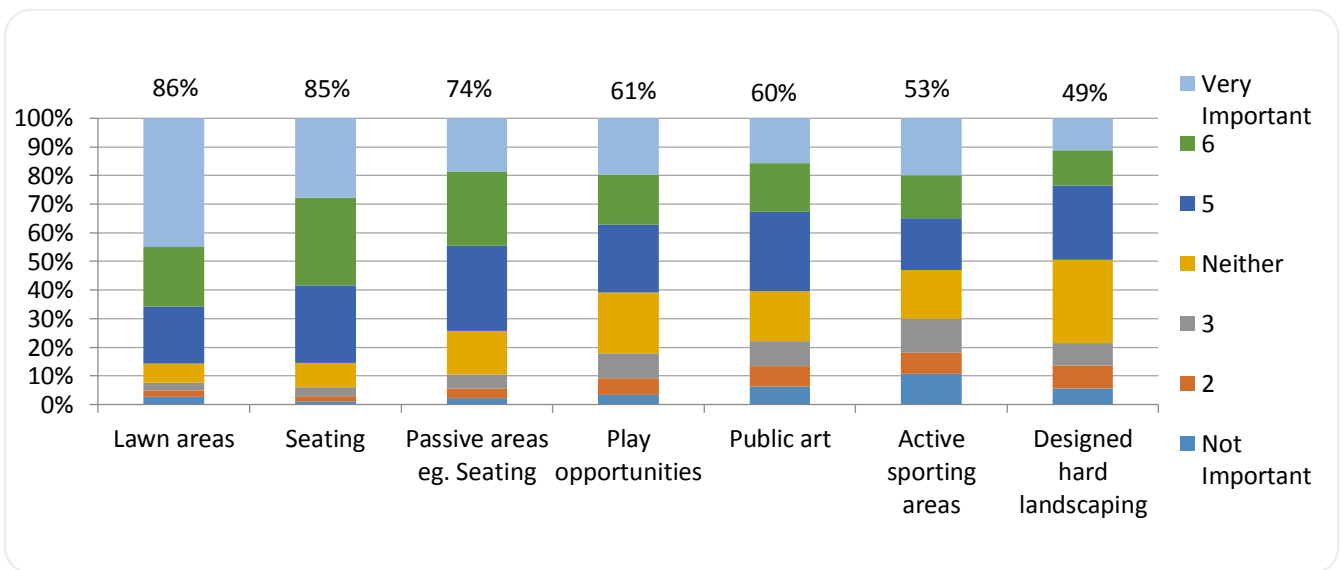
Places Victoria spoke to more than 300 people at pop-up information events throughout Docklands, including at:

- NAB Docklands forecourt
- Harbour Town shopping centre
- Three drop in sessions at Hortus
- New Quay East
- Etihad Stadium concourse Friday night football
- Docklands Market
- YMCA Docklands
- Library at the Dock opening
- Digital Harbour
- Docklands Park/Collins Street

Responses

Not all participants completed every question. As such, the results are expressed as a percentage. The percentages at the top of each chart represent the proportion of respondents who provided a 'top three' response (that is, the sum of respondents who indicated something was *important* by ranking it 5, 6 or 7, with 7 being *very important*).

1. During past consultation about Docklands, the community identified more usable public space across Docklands as important. How do you see Harbour Esplanade contributing to an appropriate mix? More specifically, what design elements would you like to see more of in Harbour Esplanade public spaces?



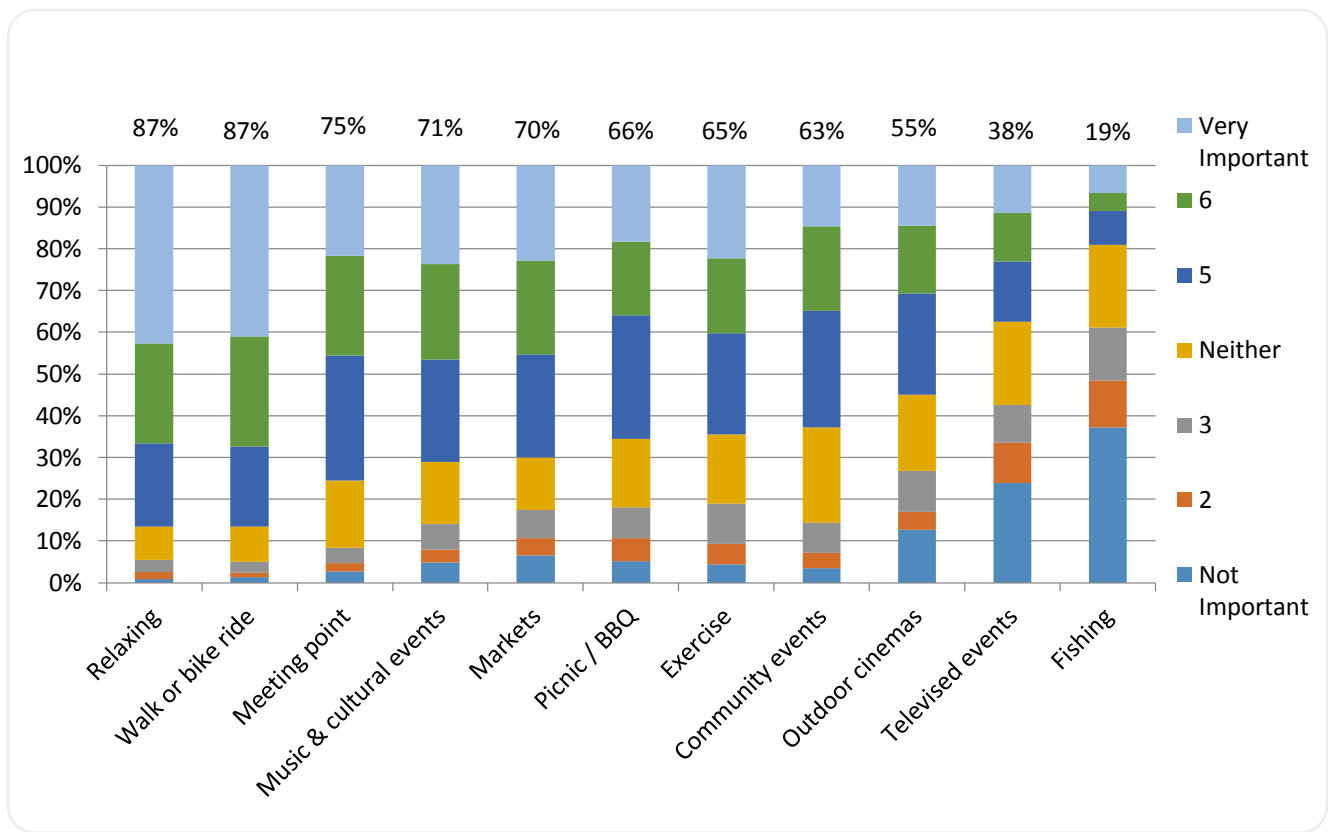
Base ~ 442

When asked what design elements the community would like to see more of in Harbour Esplanade public spaces, respondents were most enthusiastic about 'lawn areas', with 86% deeming this option important.

'Seating' and 'passive spaces such as seating, passive games/spaces' were also appreciated, with around eight in 10 (85% and 74% respectively) considering these options important. 'Designed areas using hard landscaping' and 'active sporting areas' fared the lowest in terms of importance, relative to the other options put forward. About half (49% and 53% respectively) of respondents considering these important.

'Areas for physical activity such as exercise equipment, sports courts etc' was the option that received the lowest feedback on the importance scale, with three in 10 (30%) respondents providing a '3' or lower out of 7.

2. How would you like to use public spaces on Harbour Esplanade?



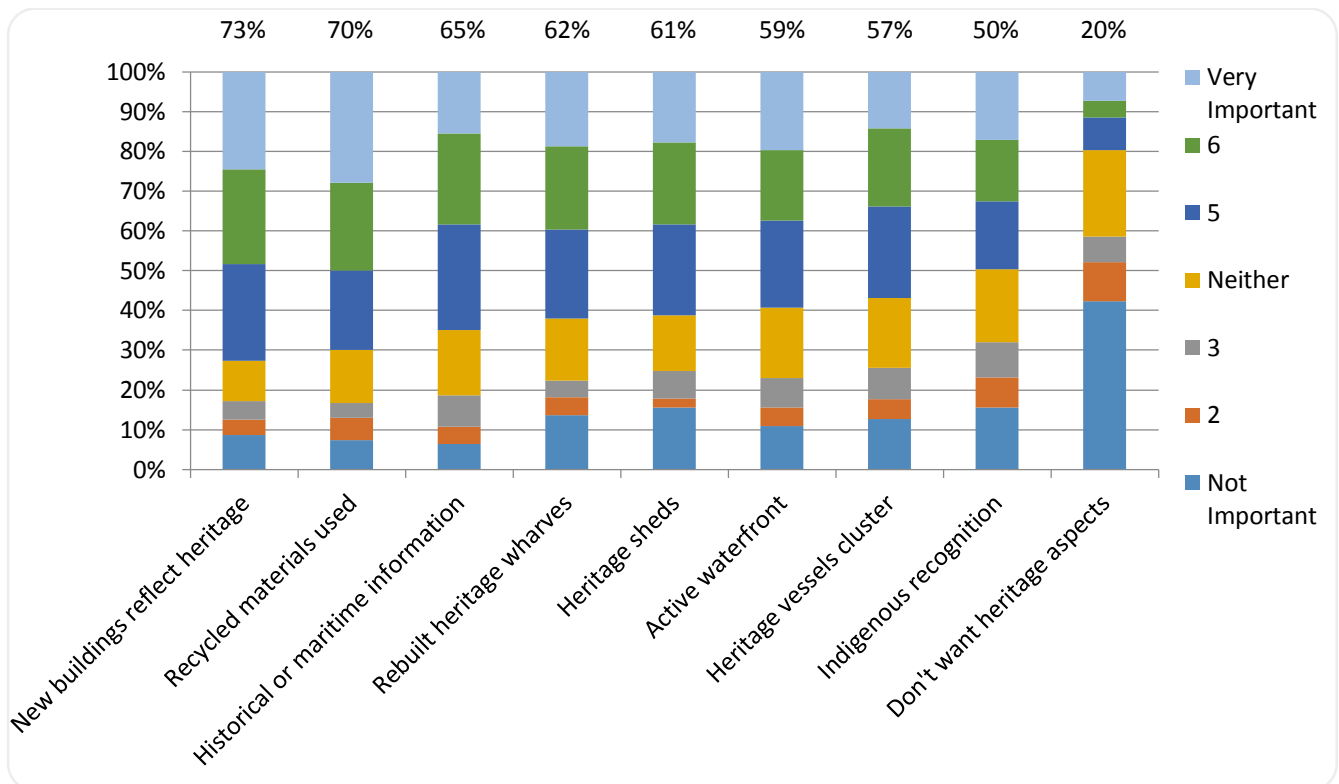
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Nine in 10 respondents would like to see public spaces on Harbour Esplanade used for laid back activities such as 'relaxing' (87%) or 'walking or bike riding' (87%).

Three quarters (75%) said Harbour Esplanade should be an important 'meeting point' and rated 'attending music/cultural event' (71%) and 'going to markets' (70%) as *important* when considering how public spaces should be used.

Dedicating public spaces to 'fishing' (19%) or 'watching televised sporting events' (38%) were deemed to be the least *important* among respondents, relative to the other available options offered.

3. A key theme in the Docklands Community and Place Plan was embracing the history of Docklands. How would you like to see aspects of the past reflected?



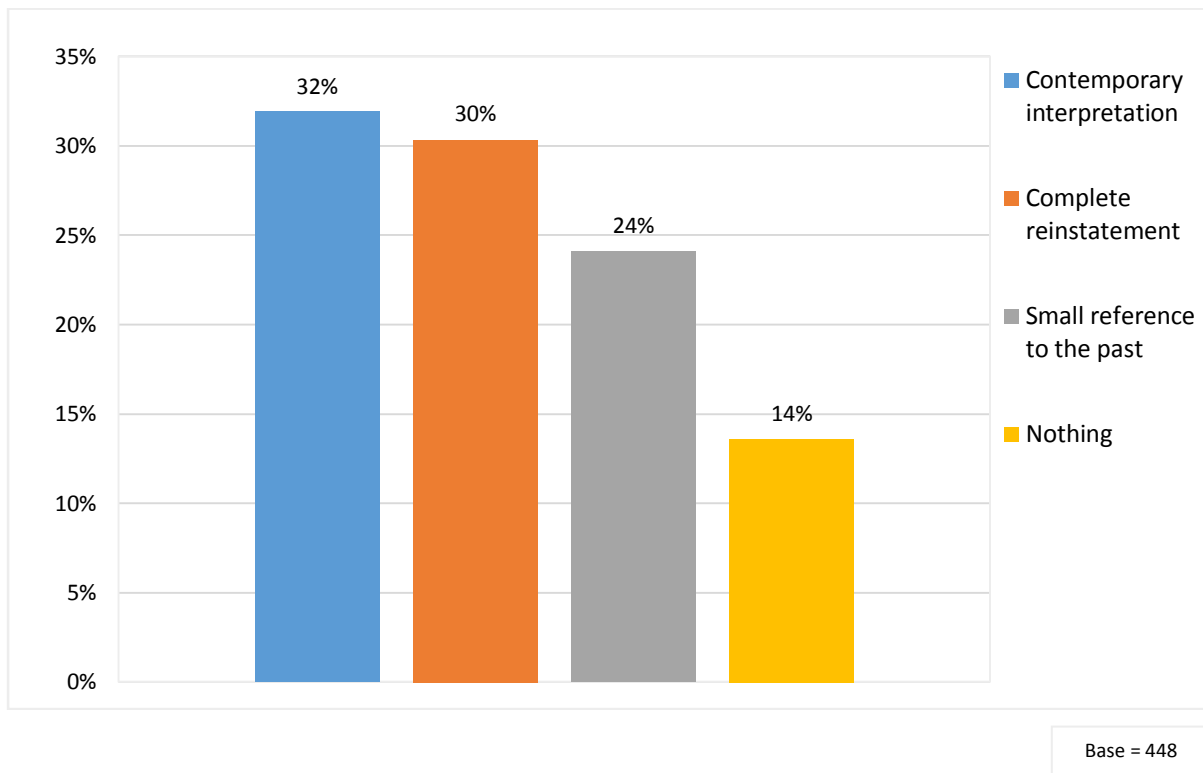
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There was a strong desire to see ‘new buildings reflect heritage’ (73%) and for ‘recycled materials (to be used)’ (70%).

At least half (50% or more) of all respondents provided ratings of either ‘7’, ‘6’ or ‘5’ for all options presented to them regarding aspects of the past being reflected in planning.

One in five respondents indicated that heritage aspects were not important – that is, 20% of respondents said ‘don’t want heritage aspects reflected’ was important.

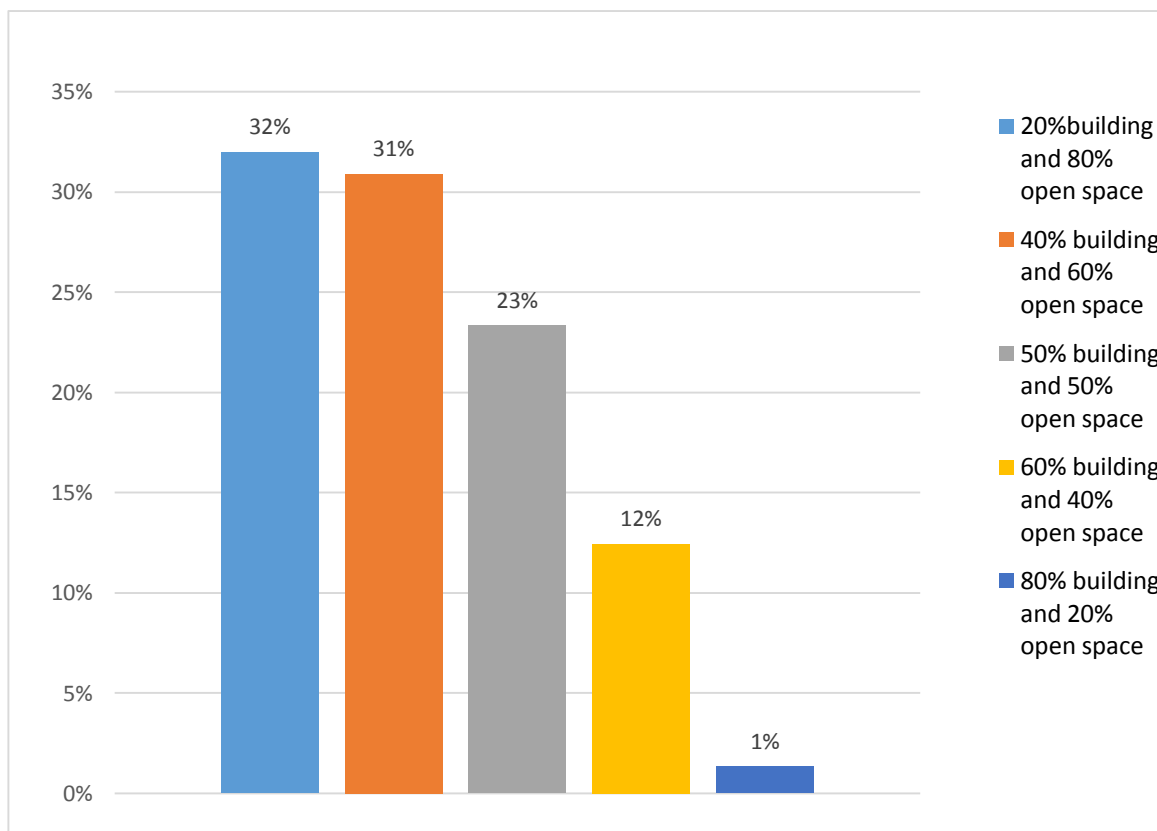
4. There may be the opportunity to reinstate a heritage shed to reflect the area's history. If the reinstatement of heritage sheds was possible what level of reinstatement would you support?



About one third of respondents said that they would like to see either a 'contemporary interpretation' (32%) or a 'complete reinstatement' (30%) a heritage shed/or sheds.

A relatively low proportion (14%) suggested that they would like to see 'nothing', while one quarter (24%) would like to see a 'small reference to the past'.

5. Providing shelter from the wind has been a high priority in feedback received during past engagement. Buildings are one way of creating this protection and can also be used to incorporate heritage elements or hold public events. If publicly-owned/publicly-managed (civic in nature) buildings of up to five storeys high were considered, how much of the waterfront area do you think should have this kind of development?

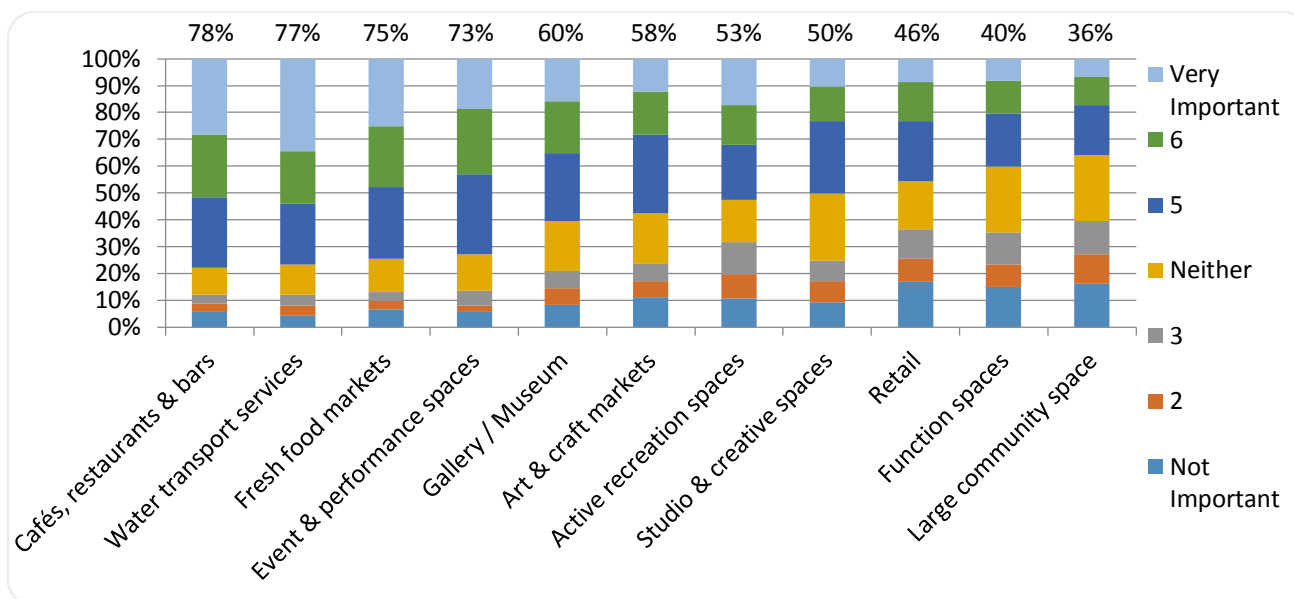


Base = 450

The questionnaire results indicate that about two thirds of respondents would be comfortable with a mix of 40% buildings and 60% open space. This includes those respondents who directly supported a 40/60 mix (31%), and those who said they would support a more dense development (including 23% who supported 50/50, 12% who indicated that they would support 60% buildings and 40% open space and 1% who were supportive of 80% buildings and 20% open space).

A third of respondents wanted a higher proportion of open space to buildings, with 32% saying they would support 20% buildings and 80% open space.

6. If the area did include publicly-owned/publicly-managed buildings, what type of uses do you think would be suitable for these?



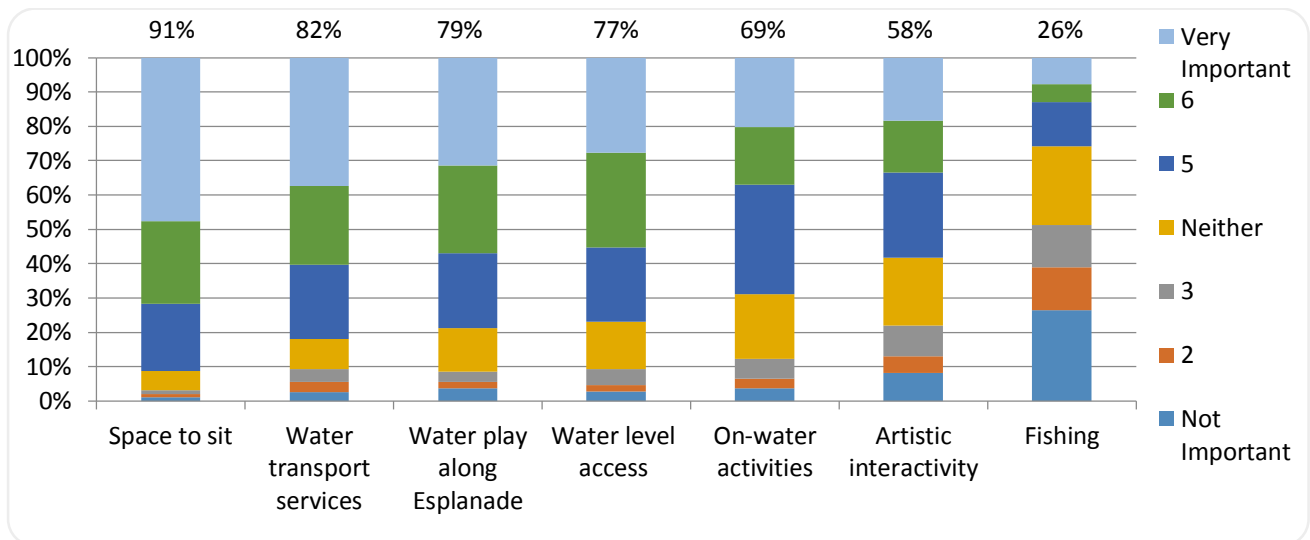
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At least three quarters of respondents considered the following uses *important* when considering what uses would be suitable for the area: ‘cafés, restaurants or bars’ (78%), ‘facilities for water transport services (e.g. water taxis, ferries, passenger terminals)’ (77%); or ‘fresh food markets’ (75%).

‘Event or performance spaces’ (73%), ‘galleries or museums’ (60%) and ‘art and craft markets’ were all considered important by at least two thirds of respondents.

‘Medium to large scale community spaces for hire (e.g. a community hall or meeting spaces)’ (36%) and ‘function spaces available for hire’ (40%) were deemed to be the least suitable, relative to the other options on offer to respondents regarding the use of publicly owned or managed buildings.

7. Interaction with the water is an important element of the redevelopment. How do you see this interaction taking place?



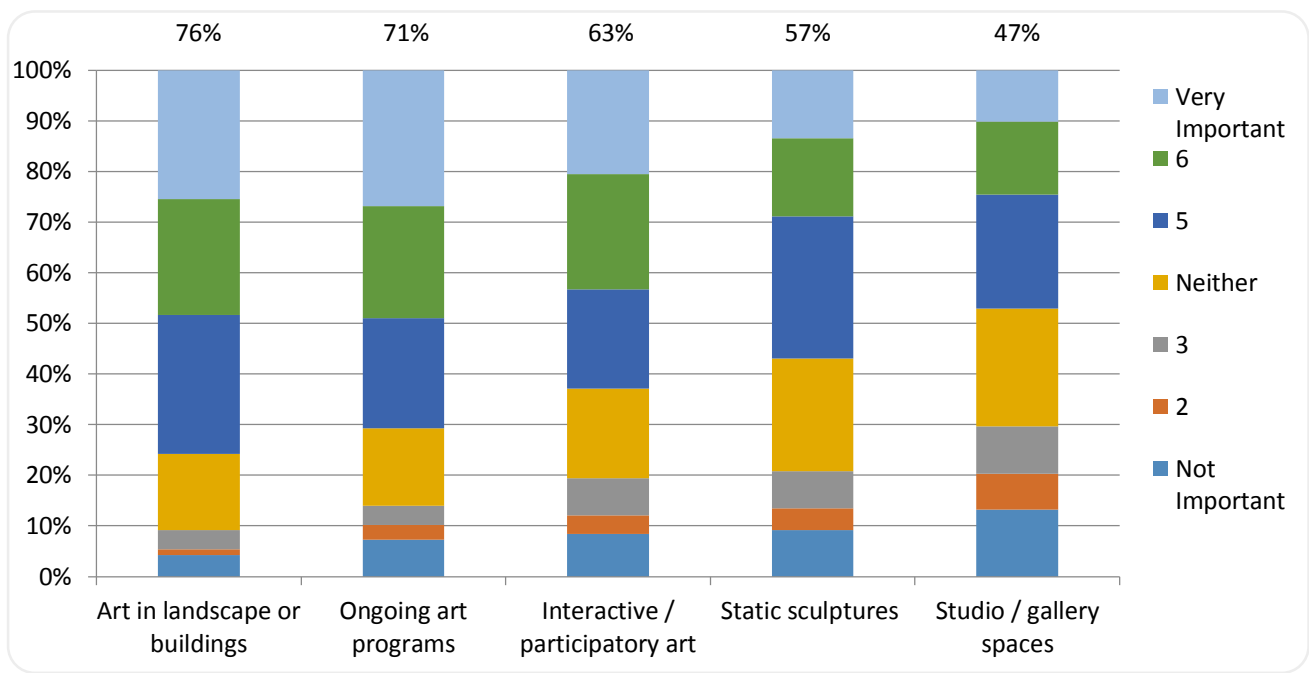
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‘Having somewhere to sit and watch the water’ was deemed the most *important* element of a redevelopment in terms of interacting with the water, with 91% rating this as *important*. ‘Facilities for water transport services (e.g. water taxis, ferries, passenger terminals)’ was again considered relatively *important* by respondents, with eight in 10 (82%) rating this as *important* in relation to interaction with the water.

‘Water play along the Harbour Esplanade (fountains, stepping stones etc)’ (79%) and ‘water level access’ (77%) also fared well in terms of *important* elements related to interaction with water.

As with Question 2 regarding the use of public space on Harbour Esplanade, ‘fishing’ (26%) was considered to be the least *important* interaction by respondents.

8. One per cent of Docklands' development costs are invested in public art. What type of public art would you like to see in this space?

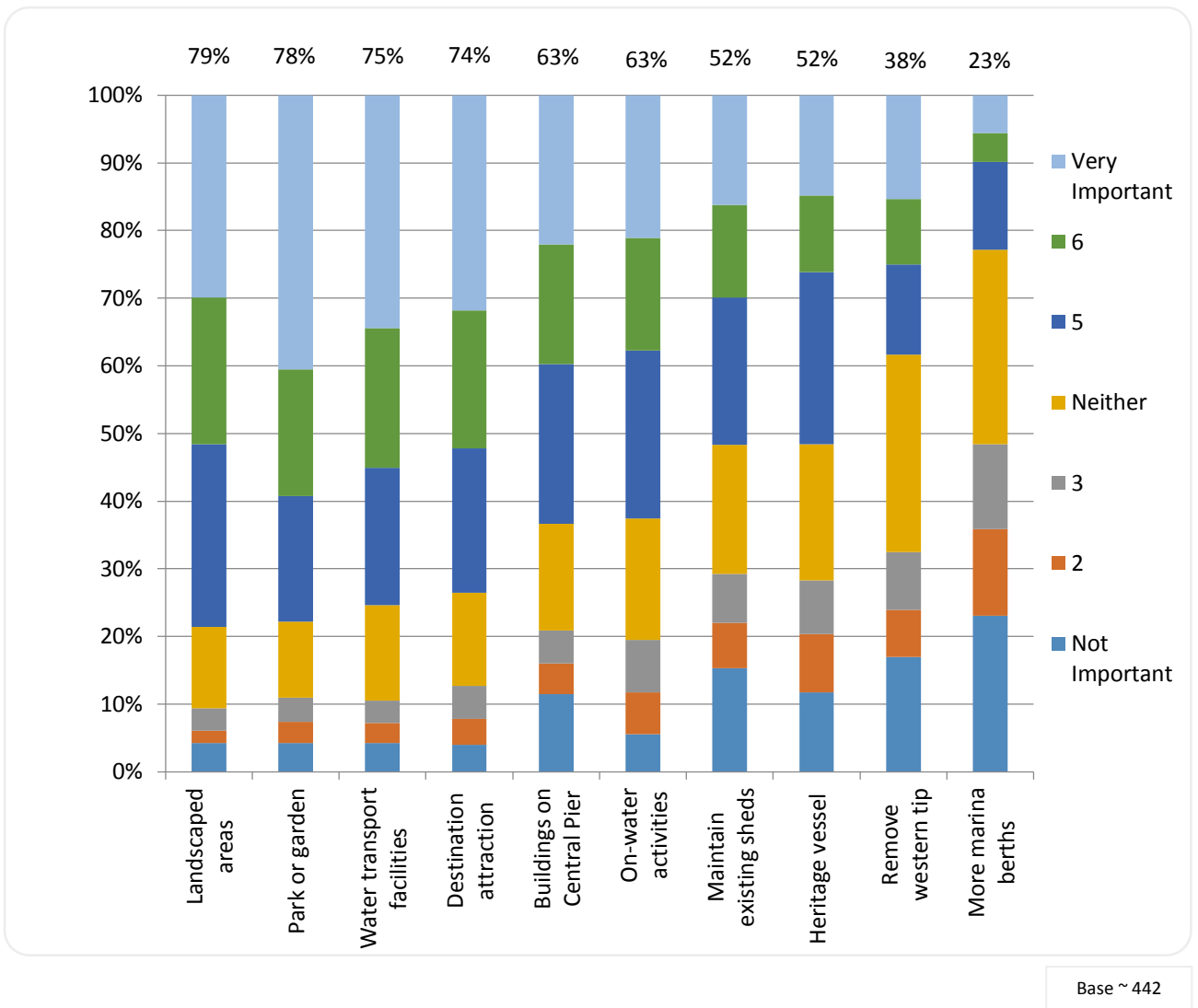


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About three quarters (76%) of respondents suggested that ‘art in landscape or buildings’ were important types of public art that they would like to see on Harbour Esplanade. ‘Ongoing art programs, such as seasonal events, performances or festivals’ (71%) and ‘interactive/participatory art’ (63%) were also *important*.

‘Studio or gallery spaces’ (47%) and ‘static sculptures’ (57%) were rated as the least *important* by respondents, relative to the other options offered, noting that about half of respondents still considered these important.

9. Although it will not be redeveloped at the same time as Harbour Esplanade, we are interested in seeking feedback on the future of Central Pier. What do you think should happen to make Central Pier an integrated part of a developed waterfront?



‘Landscaped areas’ or allocating a ‘space for a park or garden on the pier’ were considered *important* for the development of Central Pier by about eight in 10 respondents (79% and 78% respectively). Three quarters thought ‘facilities for water transport services (e.g. water taxi, ferries, passenger terminals)’ (75%) and a ‘destination attraction for Melbourne on the pier’ (74%) were *important* to make Central Pier an integrated part of a developed waterfront.

‘More marina berths’ (23%) received the lowest *importance* rating among the options on offer to respondents.

Key themes from conversations

Community

Places Victoria spoke to more than 300 people at pop-up events throughout Docklands. Survey participants were also invited to share their view about how they like to use Harbour Esplanade in an open question at the end of the survey.

More than 200 additional comments were received.

A large number of respondents spoke about the need for open space, green grass and trees.

Another strong theme was the provision of shelter, including shade during the summer months and protection from the wind in the winter.

Stakeholders

Places Victoria also held meetings with key stakeholders from the Docklands community ranging from adjacent operators, developers, land owners, government agencies and wider business operators.

Stakeholders generally believe there needs to be a commercial element to the waterfront, however they are seeking complementary uses not competitive uses. All stakeholders agreed with the key design principles, particularly with retaining views of the water and better interaction with the stadium, and most were supportive of heritage themes being retained. Feedback from stakeholder meetings and the official responses indicated a preference for:

- Open spaces that can be used for multiple purposes and activated to support events
- Uses that give people a reason to stay in Docklands after work, and before and after major events
- Creation of a centralised activity centre in Docklands, possibly with a major attraction.

Next steps

Places Victoria and the City of Melbourne have already held an internal workshop involving more than 20 people across disciplines as broad as planning and urban design, waterways, park services, tourism, sustainability, recreation and events. The purpose of this workshop was to share the community and stakeholder feedback and identify and agree on modifications to the current plan.

Places Victoria and the City of Melbourne will continue to work together to refine the master plan for Harbour Esplanade, which will serve as the blue print for the development of the Docklands waterfront over the long term. Later this year, Places Victoria expects to apply to the City of Melbourne for a planning permit to prepare for the next stage of development.

Places Victoria will provide information about how community and stakeholder feedback influenced the master plan development when the permit application is lodged.