

Attachment 3

Peer Review of DPO16



**Fitzroy Former Gasworks Site
Proposed Schedule 16 to Clause 43.04 Development Plan Overlay**

Peer Review Commentary

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I have been requested by Development Victoria to provide a brief Peer Review Commentary regarding the DRAFT Schedule 16 to Clause 43.04 Development Plan Overlay (the draft DPO) for the Fitzroy Former Gasworks Site (the Site) bounded Queens Parade, George Street, Alexandra Parade and Smith Street Fitzroy. The site is approximately 4.3 Ha in area.

I make the following general observations regarding the draft DPO and the Site.

Draft DPO and Urban Design Framework Plan, 2008

The draft DPO and the Indicative Concept Plan shown therein has been informed by a master plan (Fitzroy Gasworks Master Plan – Design Report 2017) developed by Development Victoria. The North Fitzroy Gasworks Precinct Urban Design Framework Plan (UDF) adopted by the City of Yarra in 2008 was used as a reference for this master plan.

The draft DPO and the Indicative Concept Plan would allow a reasonably scaled, staged development of the site over time that would be in reasonable accord with the principles and guidelines of the UDF.

Remediation

The Site is severely contaminated owing to its historic industrial use as a Gasworks. The cost of site remediation and de-contamination is estimated to be in the tens of millions of dollars. Whilst such remediation costs present significant economic and social imposts on any future use and development of the Site it is very important that remediation occur in order to limit (or halt) on-going contaminations of groundwater and to substantially ameliorate the toxicity present in site soils.

Reasonable and appropriate development of the Site will allow remediation to occur through the removal of contaminated soils in order to construct basement areas. The remediation of contaminated sites through bulk soil removal is a more effective method compared to capping methods which are generally seen as providing lower cost alternatives but may also be more temporal in their efficacy.

By way of example I note the 1986 soil capping of the South Melbourne Gasworks Park (3.2 Ha) has been recently identified in contamination reports commissioned by the City of Port Philip to require re-capping of the site at potentially significant economic cost to that city. The City of Port Philip is seeking to have the State Government pay these substantial re-capping costs as the City contends the State was the original polluter through its ownership of the Gas and Fuel Corporation of Victoria.

Urban Infill Opportunity

In recent years, Melbourne's population has grown at an average of 100,000 people per annum. Population forecasts indicate that similar growth rates are expected to continue for the foreseeable future. The Site's inner urban location, proximity to transport and large area provide the capacity for a major urban infill development that can partially respond to the expected population increases. In addition, the Site's close proximity and ready access to major employment, education and service hubs including Melbourne's CBD, The University of Melbourne, RMIT University and the Parkville bio-medical precinct further reinforce the opportunity for well-located and considered urban infill development.

Review Process

The draft DPO and the Indicative Concept Plan therein have been derived from the Fitzroy Gasworks Master Plan – Design Report 2017. This master plan has been reviewed by the Victorian Design Review Panel on two occasions during its development. The general response of the VDRP to the master plan was positive; feedback from the VDRP was used by Development Victoria to refine and further inform the master plan.

Building Height and Boulevards

The boulevard frontage heights outlined in the UDF General Principles are for a 17 metre maximum height along Queens Parade and a 30 metre maximum height along Alexandra Parade. Assuming an average storey height of 3.2 metres these heights would result in a 5.5-storey building height along Queens Parade and a 9-storey height along Alexandra Parade.

The draft DPO Design Guidelines outline frontage heights (within setback) of 20 metre maximum height (6-storeys) along Queens Parade and 32 metres (10-storeys) along Alexandra Parade. In practical effect therefore, the draft DPO proposes one additional storey in height on the boulevard frontages than the UDF General Principles.

My view is one storey additional height of the draft DPO guidelines constitutes an acceptable departure from the UDF maximum boulevard frontage heights due to, but not limited to the following:

- In three-dimensional terms, boulevards can be defined by their generous widths, rows of mature trees creating linear canopy conditions within central green medians, perimeter green medians and by appropriately scaled built definition at the street edge. The approximately 60 metre width of Queens Parade will be further

defined by a built frontage (street wall) height equivalent to approximately one-third of street width;

- The approximately 60 metre width of Alexandra Parade will be further defined by a built frontage (street wall) height equivalent to approximately half of street width;
- The filtered viewing of street-edge built form of articulated height through and above trees accords with a key pedestrian experience of boulevards where the scale and positioning of canopy trees and the heights of street-edge built form are reasonably balanced in a three-dimensional sense. The location of rows of approximately 8-12 metre high existing Elm trees along the central median and on the perimeter medians of Alexandra Avenue together with the 60-metre width of the street mean tree tops will generally align visually with the upper portions of the built frontage street wall when viewed from the opposite footpath.

Public Use Zone

The draft DPO proposes the north-west sector of the Site be a Public Use Zone. The rationale for this location is well founded in my view as the Public Use Zone:

- would be north-facing on Queens Parade with the solar, visual prominence, vehicular and community access benefits such a location would bring;
- would be adjacent to two public open space plazas; a northern plaza fronting Queens Parade and a central plaza to the south of the Public Use Zone;
- would be located on Queens Parade which is a calmer traffic thoroughfare than Alexandra Parade, has much wider perimeter median strips and a service road which further promotes safer vehicular access, egress, short-term parking and drop-off to the Public Use Zone than other street frontages bounding the Site.