



# **South Geelong Urban Design Framework (UDF) Stage Three Engagement Report Issues and Sentiments on the Draft Interim Final**

**Prepared by thenoagroup on behalf of  
the City of Greater Geelong**



**thenoagroup**

helping groups move from uncertainty to purpose

South Geelong Urban Design Framework (UDF)  
Stage three engagement on the Draft Interim Final

## At a glance...



### UDF Element and Times Raised

UDF Element	No. times raised
Development areas, height and sense of place	80
Area amenity, tree planting and beautification.	29
Social infrastructure and services	14
Social and affordable housing	12
Heritage Overlay	12
Level crossings	2
UDF timeframe	2
Barwon Water site presently being used as a dumping ground	1
Impact on rates from development	1

## Introduction

Engagement around the South Geelong Urban Design Framework (UDF) has been an iterative process. Each stage delivered a set outcome and deeper understanding of the community's issues and insights into their connection to place and responses to the UDF elements around development and amenity:

- Stage one delivered a vision for the area.
- Stage two provided the opportunity for community members to respond to the initial draft UDF.
- Following this stage, further studies and reports were undertaken:
  - South Geelong Heritage Character Study
  - South Geelong Capacity and Change Area Review
  - Barwon Water Development Feasibility Study.

Community comments from stage two and the additional studies resulted in the development and release of the Draft Interim Final UDF for further comment.

## Description of engagement activities

A process of **participatory appraisal** was undertaken involving:

- Releasing the Draft Interim Final UDF and informing the community of engagement opportunities and feedback mechanisms. Maps and reports supported the release. Participation was promoted through letter box drops, on-line presence through Have Your Say site, posters at the South Geelong train station and a video.
- Capacity building through a webinar held March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2022 involving 29 community members. Questions were submitted prior to the webinar and addressed by panel members Jessica Hurse, Manager, Planning and Growth; Dr Jonathon Daly, Manager Urban Design and Heritage and David Scott, Senior Heritage Planner from the City of Greater Geelong who explained the changes and directions of the Draft Interim Final UDF and provided answers to questions. Further questions were also encouraged during the session. Answers to most questions submitted prior to and during the webinar were published on the Have Your Say page. Questions or comments not specific to the UDF were not covered. In total this activity generated 45 questions relevant to the UDF.
- 27 Interviews involving one-on-one meetings between community members and officers (7 face to face and 20 over the phone). The focus was individual properties and therefore that content has not been included in the outputs and analysis of this report.
- A face to face workshop held Tuesday, April 5<sup>th</sup>, 2022. This was promoted via letter-box drop and also on-line. 3 residents attended.
- A call for submissions was promoted through the Have Your Say page and during all activities. 45 submissions were received.

## Activity and Participation

The following table summarises the activities and participation.

Engagement Activity	Participation
Webinar	29 participants
Questions	45 received
Interviews	27 held
Workshop	3 participants
Submissions	45 submitted

## Summary of UDF contributions by activity

The outputs from all engagement activities - questions, workshop and submissions have been triangulated to assist with analysis.

UDF Element	No. of Questions	Comments submissions		Comments workshop		Total
Development areas, height and sense of place	25 in total	49 in total		6 in total		80
• Impact on area	16					
• Design of building and choice of developer	6	For	Against	For	Against	
• Economic feasibility of development	3	14	35	0	6	
Area amenity, tree planting and beautification.		15		1		29
• Footpaths,	2	11		0		
• Street cross-section						
• Active transport.						
Social infrastructure and services	3	8		3		14
• School						
• Community hub, supermarket,						
• Open spaces and places						
Social and affordable housing	6	6		0		12
Heritage overlay	4	6 in total		2 in total		12
		For	Against	For	Against	
		2	4	2	0	
Level crossings	2					2
Barwon Water site presently being used as a dumping ground	1					1
UDF timeframe	1	1				2
Impact on rates from development	1					1

## **UDF elements and associated issues raised**

### **Development Areas, Height and Sense of Place**

The development areas around the Moorabool Street and the Barwon Site including the railway station and car park received the greatest number of comments with density and building height being the significant issues. There was a total of 80 contributions with 14 in favour of increased development. 41 were against, stating that 6 storeys were too high, and development should not go over 4 storeys. 25 questions expressed uncertainty around impact and loss of sense of place.

The sentiment from those opposed, is that the neighbourhood's sense of place and identity is now less stable due to potential population growth, a shift from an Increased Housing Development Area to Key Development Area and associated perceptions of 'high-rise development', increased traffic and congestion, overshadowing and loss of privacy. Design, developer credentials and minimising any impacts on the existing neighbour were raised. This sense of place has its roots in Geelong's history of a built environment to a height of 4 storeys with views to Corio Bay and the You Yangs. The notion of buildings above the 4-storey historic height challenges this historical perspective. Many stated they 'did not want to become Melbourne' which is seen as over-developed particularly around railway stations.

Some residents feel that their input and concerns are being ignored and that the consultation itself was biased through being offered only two choices either 6 or 10 storeys, regarding the development of the Barwon Water Site. Illustrating potential change from the street level 'human perspective' instead of an aerial view was recommended. The inclusion of topographies was suggested to increase understanding of the place. These sentiments emphasise the strong sense of potential loss some people associate with the UDF.

It was suggested that future growth could be accommodated to the City's North and West or closer to Torquay, instead of established neighbourhoods like South Geelong.

The Economic Report was used to highlight the present lack of feasibility for medium to higher density apartments and uncertainty over when this might change in the future.

Those supporting 6-storeys in the development areas saw it as a positive response to population growth, an improvement to housing diversity and affordability, and building the capacity of the area for future commercial viability. The balance, within the UDF, between increased density of housing in the development areas and heritage acknowledgement and protection, was appreciated by those supportive of the UDF.

### **Area Amenity**

Tree planting and beautification, improving footpaths, open places and spaces and encouraging active transport were all seen as desirable improvements to the area.

The proposed tree plantings down the middle of Moorabool Street pleased most participants.

The species of tree drew comments with the use of one species seen as making the biggest contribution to creating a boulevard. There was uncertainty about using eucalypts as they are seen as unable to provide adequate cooling and shade in summer. Large deciduous trees were seen as a better choice by some. The inclusion of a strong statement about the City supporting increased vegetation cover in the final UDF was encouraged and there was a call to establish a Significant Tree Register. To many, planting more trees is essential and even better if this could be done on streets running east/west as well as north/south.

Improvements to footpaths is always appreciated with many residents calling for the City's program to extend further into South Geelong. There are many paths with trip hazards making them difficult to navigate.

Maximising opportunities to encourage active transport was raised with the suggestion to expand the network throughout South Geelong. A suggestion was made to change the street cross-section so cars and cyclists are not physically separated and therefore both forms of transport learn to safely share the space.

### **Social infrastructure**

There are some concerns that social infrastructure and services will not cope with the increase in population particularly school, parks and playgrounds. The addition of a proposed community hub and supermarket was welcomed. Adding a section to the UDF to acknowledge the potential planning and provision of additional community infrastructure to support population growth was suggested.

### **Social and affordable housing**

Definition of the difference between social and affordable housing was highlighted and some questioned how much the provision of social housing was driving the development of the UDF. Some residents do not want social housing in the area stating that they thought it was unfair as they pay high premiums to live in South Geelong and that anti-social behaviours would increase. Other residents welcomed the notion of social housing seeing it as bringing diversity in both people and housing to the area and addressing a real community need.

### **Heritage overlay**

The increase in the heritage overlay was welcomed by most participants. Those who did not welcome further heritage protection highlighted the loss of opportunity to promote diversity of housing, inclusion, and equity in areas close to the CBD. There were also questions over what renovation changes were allowed and how to achieve energy efficiencies. There was concern over how heritage values within the existing heritage overlay in Moorabool Street, in particular the Barrabool Shire Hall and Uniting Church and the church hall in Balliang Street would be maintained within a Key Development Area? It was also stated that the UDF presented an opportunity to strengthen the rules and policies around protection and to integrate heritage into the mindset when setting strategic directions and plans for communities.

### **Other issues raised included**

- An inclusion of an indicative timeframe for the development of the UDF
- Not leaving the Barwon Water Site empty as it is already becoming a dumping ground
- Any impact the proposed development of the UDF will have on rates
- The provision of updates on the State Government's level crossing program and implications to the UDF



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