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Background

Background

The Ballarat Council is proposing to demolish the Civic Hall Building at 300 Mair Street and build a new Council facility on the site, a multi level car park (261 parks in stage 1), deliver three potential commercial development sites and a public square and an access pathway to the public library.

Council has proposed to fund the project by selling 2 buildings and borrowing up to \$30 million. Part of the proposal includes the return of the Council's current premises, located at the Town Hall, to the community once Council vacates these premises.

The Civic Hall Building was built in 1950 (approx) and was used as a function venue by the Ballarat community. In the 1990's Council began to consider future use of the building. A range of options have been considered by various Councils and several private sector proposals for the site have failed. In 2002 Council closed the building and it has remained closed since then.

This research aims to identify community preferences and attitudes towards the 300 Mair Street Project and suggested alternative uses for the Civic Hall.

The Methodology for this project comprised a CATI survey and two focus group discussions. The findings from the focus group discussions have been reported separately. This report includes the findings from the CATI survey.

Sample n = 402

Sample

Discover your edge

AGE	TOTAL
18 - 34 Years	30.7%
35 - 54 Years	32.4%
55 - 64 Years	14.7%
65 - 70 Years	6.3%
Over 71 Years	15.9%
GENDER	
MALE	48.1%
FEMALE	51.9%

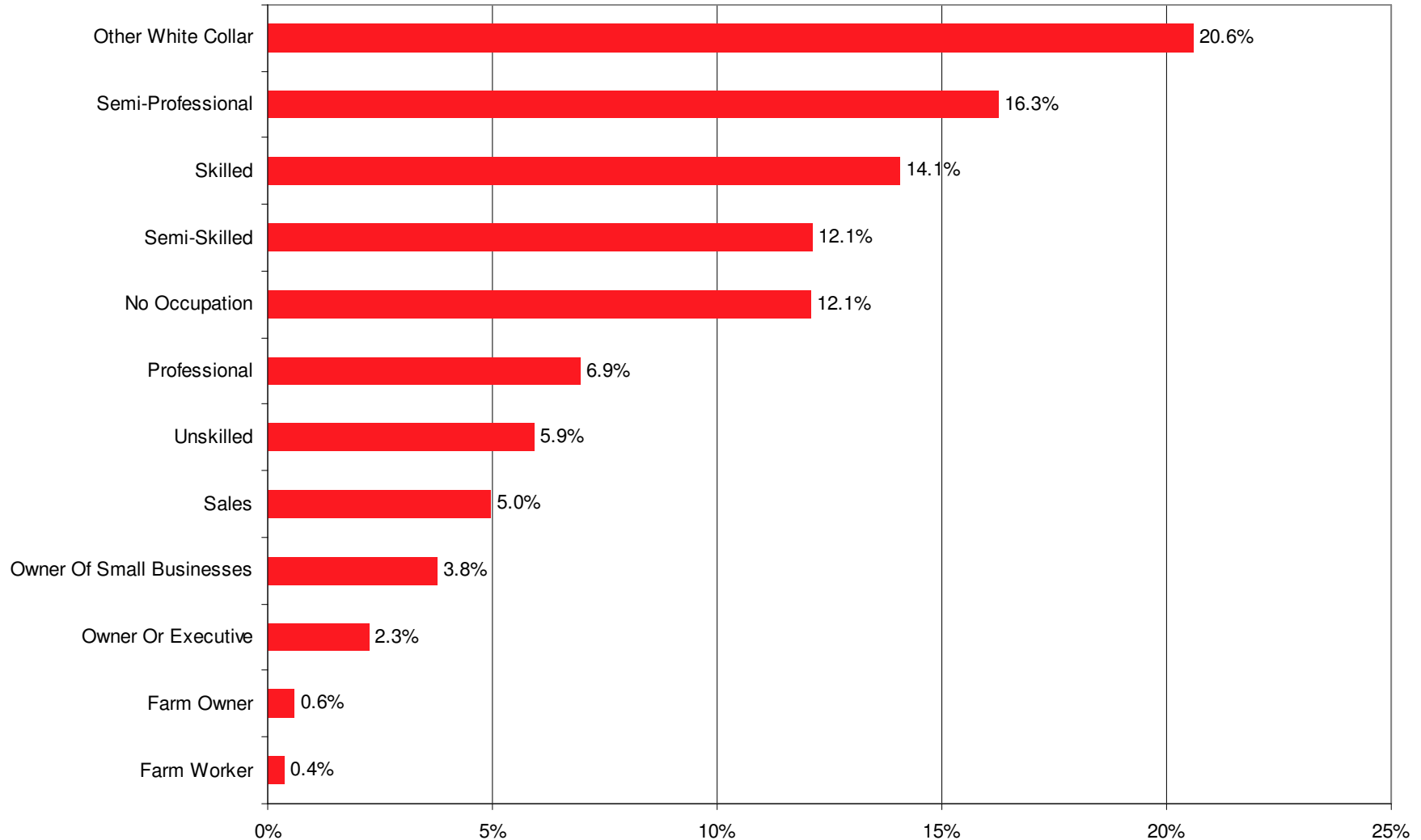
TOTAL SAMPLE n = 402

Demographics

Demographics - Occupation

20.6% of all respondents worked in the "Other White Collar" industry, followed by 16.3% who were Semi-Professionals.

Occupation



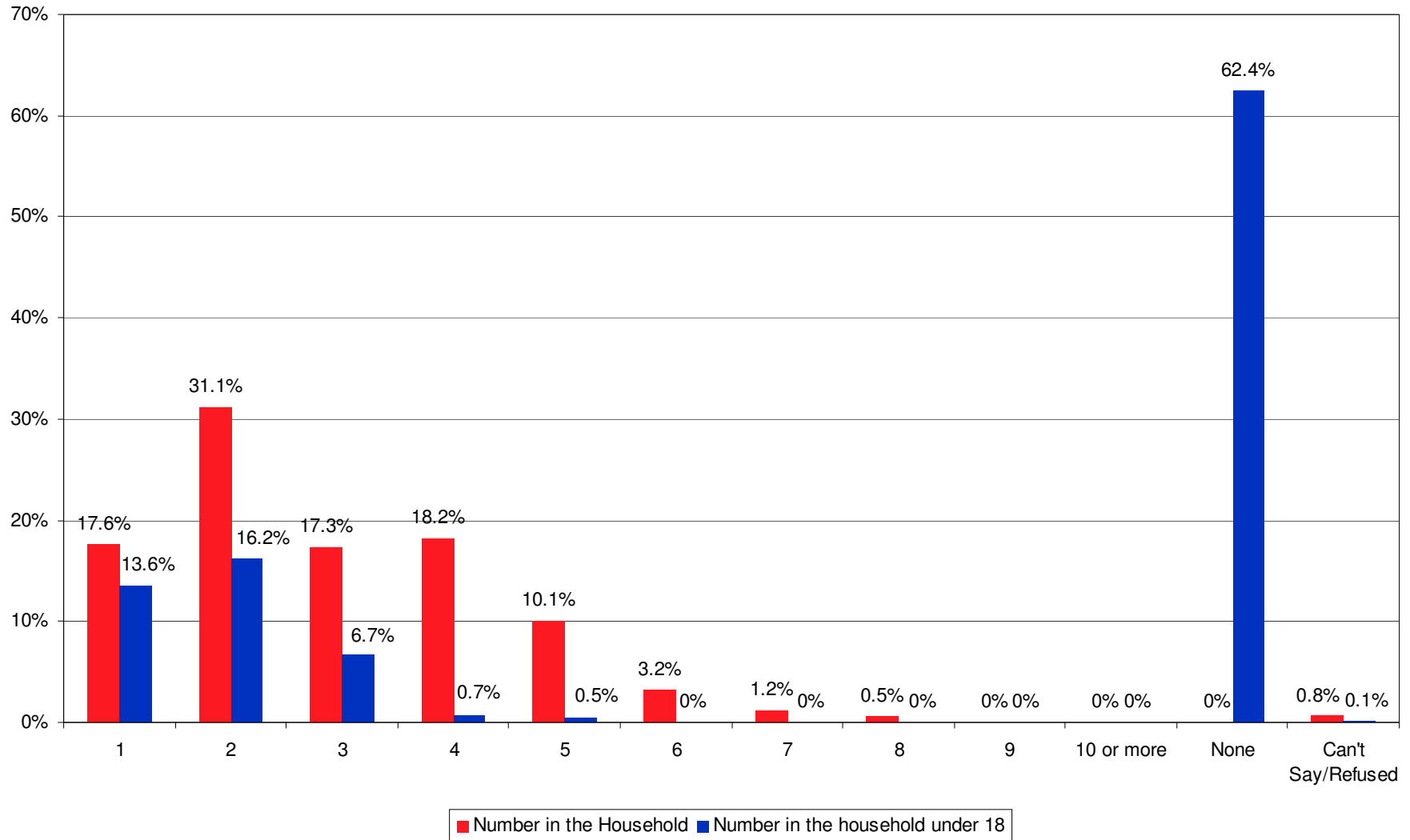
Base: All respondents (n = 402)

Demographics

- Household Size

Approximately a third of all respondents (31.1%) lived in a two-person household. 62.4% of all respondents had no children in the household under 18.

Household Size



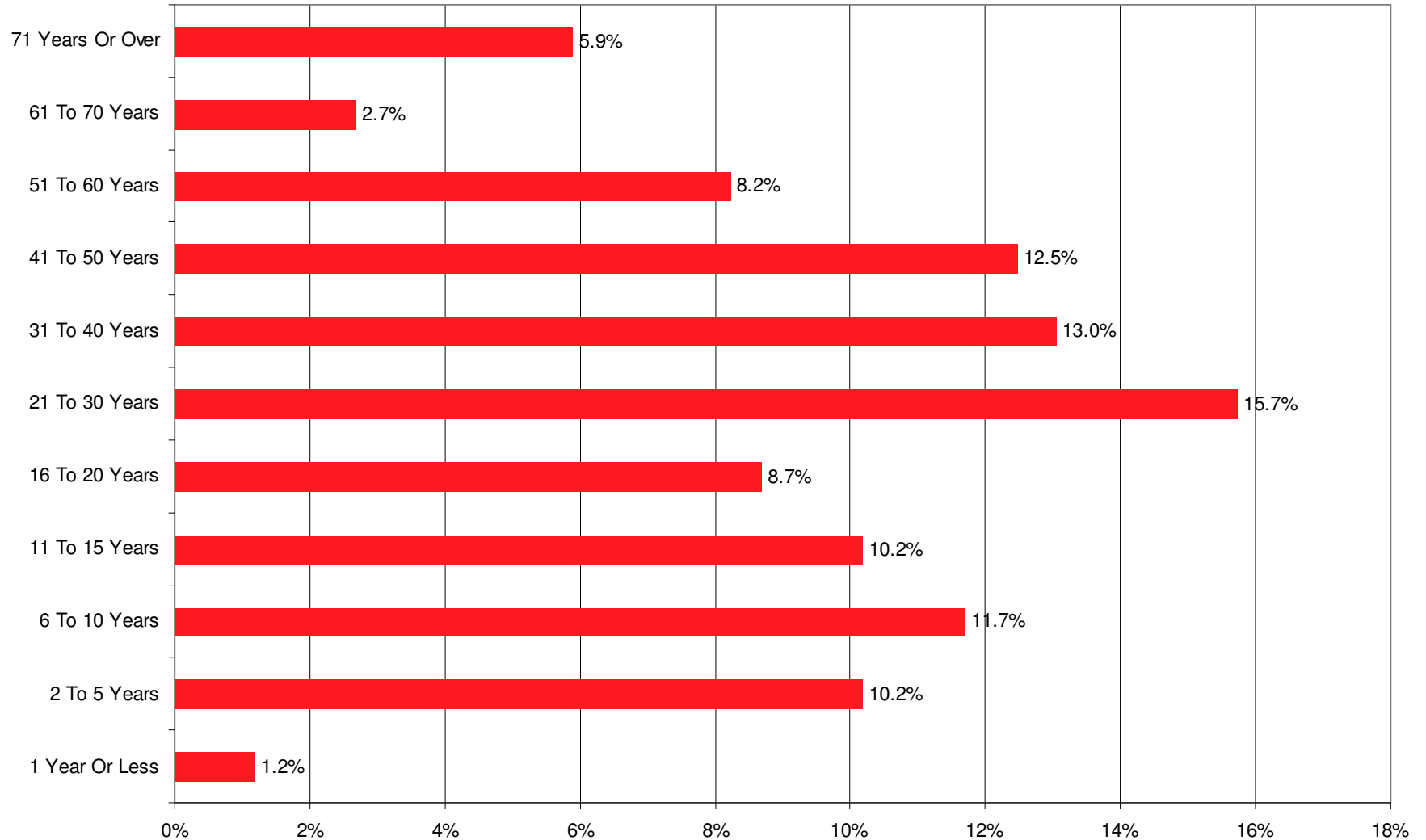
Base: All respondents (n = 402)

Demographics

- Years Lived in Ballarat

15.7% of respondents have lived in Ballarat for 21 to 30 years, whilst only 1.2% have lived in Ballarat for one year or less.

Years Lived in Ballarat



Base: All respondents (n = 402)

Main Findings

Awareness of Council Proposed Project

Q2. Are you aware of the Ballarat City Council's plans regarding the Civic Hall Building at 300 Mair Street?

There was a significantly high level of awareness with 96.6% of all respondents who were aware of the Ballarat City Council's plans regarding the Civic Hall Building. While there were minor differences across the board in the levels of awareness, younger respondents aged between 18 – 34 were slightly less likely to be aware of the Council's plans for the Civic Hall Building with 6.9% who were unaware.

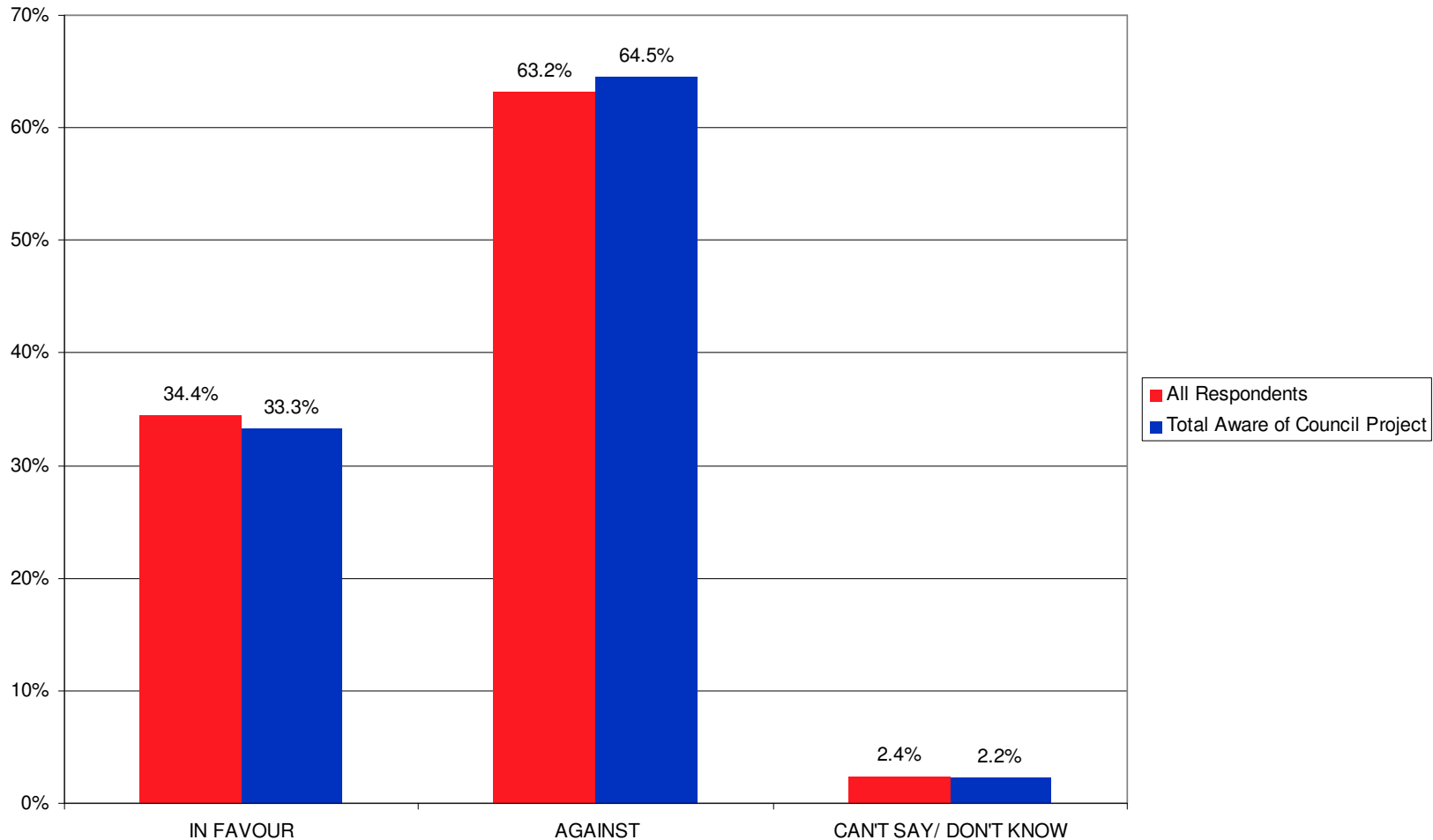
Awareness of City Council Project				
	Total	Yes	No	Can't Say/Don't Know
TOTAL	100.0%	96.6%	3.3%	0.1%
AGE				
18 - 34 Years	100.0%	93.1%	6.9%	-
35 - 54 Years	100.0%	97.9%	2.1%	-
55 - 64 Years	100.0%	96.5%	2.7%	0.8%
65 - 70 Years	100.0%	98.1%	1.9%	-
Over 71 Years	100.0%	100.0%	-	-
GENDER				
MALE	100.0%	98.2%	1.8%	-
FEMALE	100.0%	95.1%	4.7%	0.2%

Base: All respondents (n = 402)

Demolish and Build a New Council Facility

Q3. An option that has been suggested is that the Council demolish the Civic Hall Building at 300 Mair Street and build a new Council facility on the site. This would include commercial development sites, a public square and a connection to the library. Would you be in favour or against this option?

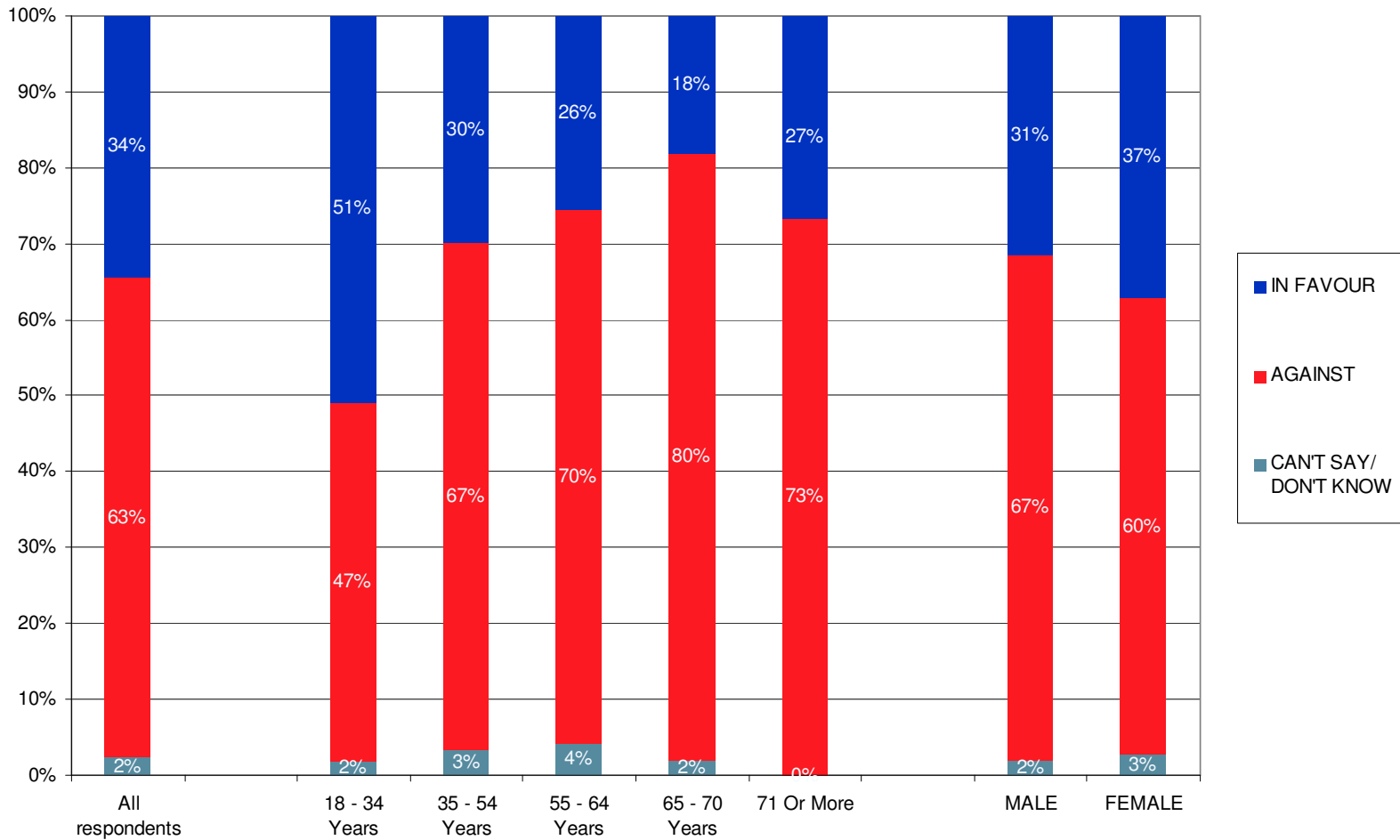
More than half of all respondents (63.2%) indicated that they would be against the option of demolishing the Civic Hall Building and building a new Council facility on the site.



Base: All respondents (n = 402)
Respondents Total Aware of Council Project (n = 390)

Demolish and Build a New Council Facility - Age & Gender

Over half (51%) of 18 – 34 year olds indicated that they would be in favour of demolishing the Civic Hall Building and building a new Council facility on the site. Conversely 80% of 65 – 70 year olds were against this option with only 18% of this age group in favour.

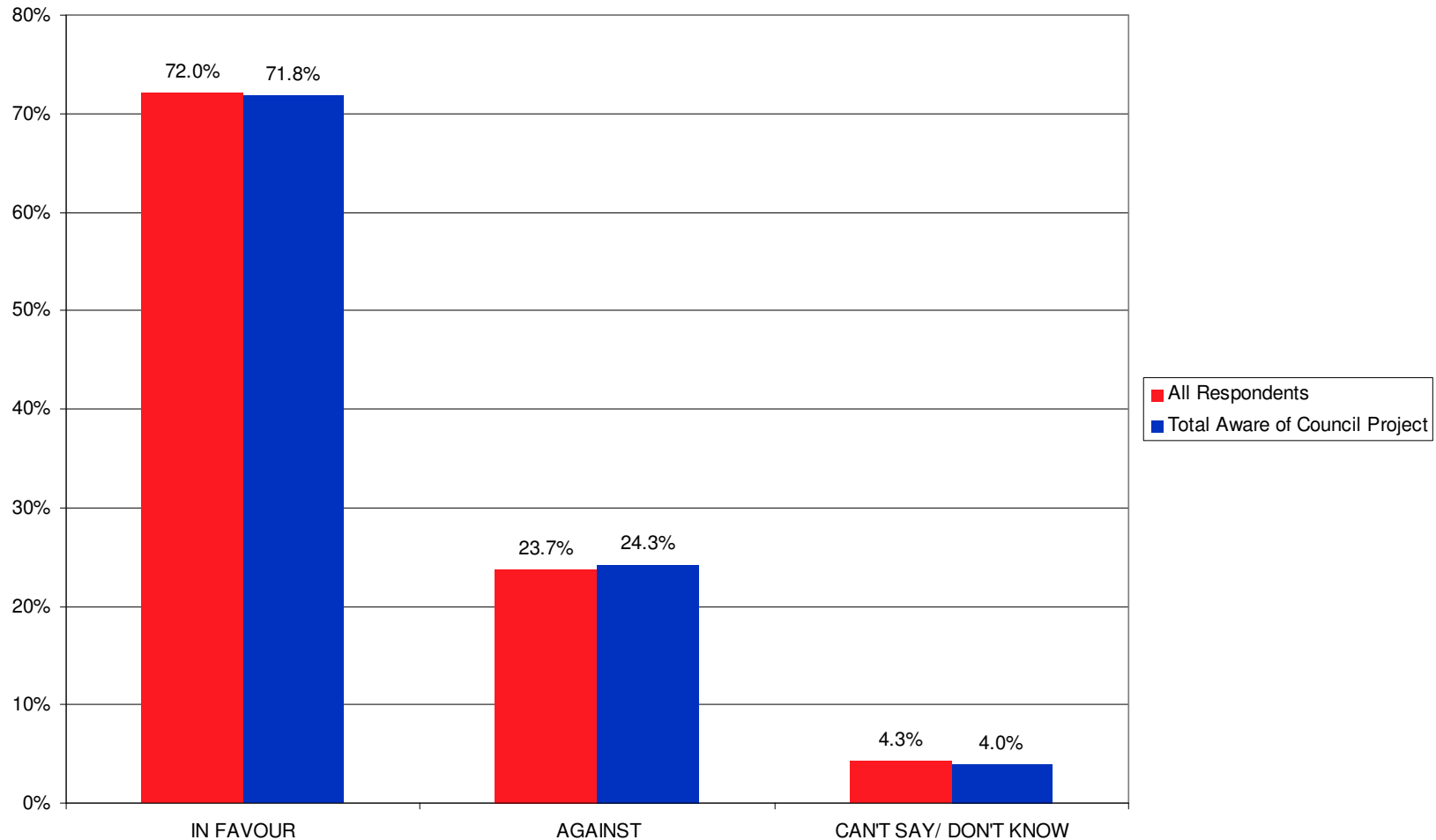


Base: All respondents (n = 402)

Retain and Re-use the Civic Hall Building

Q4. An option that has been suggested is for council to retain and re-use the Civic Hall Building and identify options for alternative use. Would you be in favour or against this option?

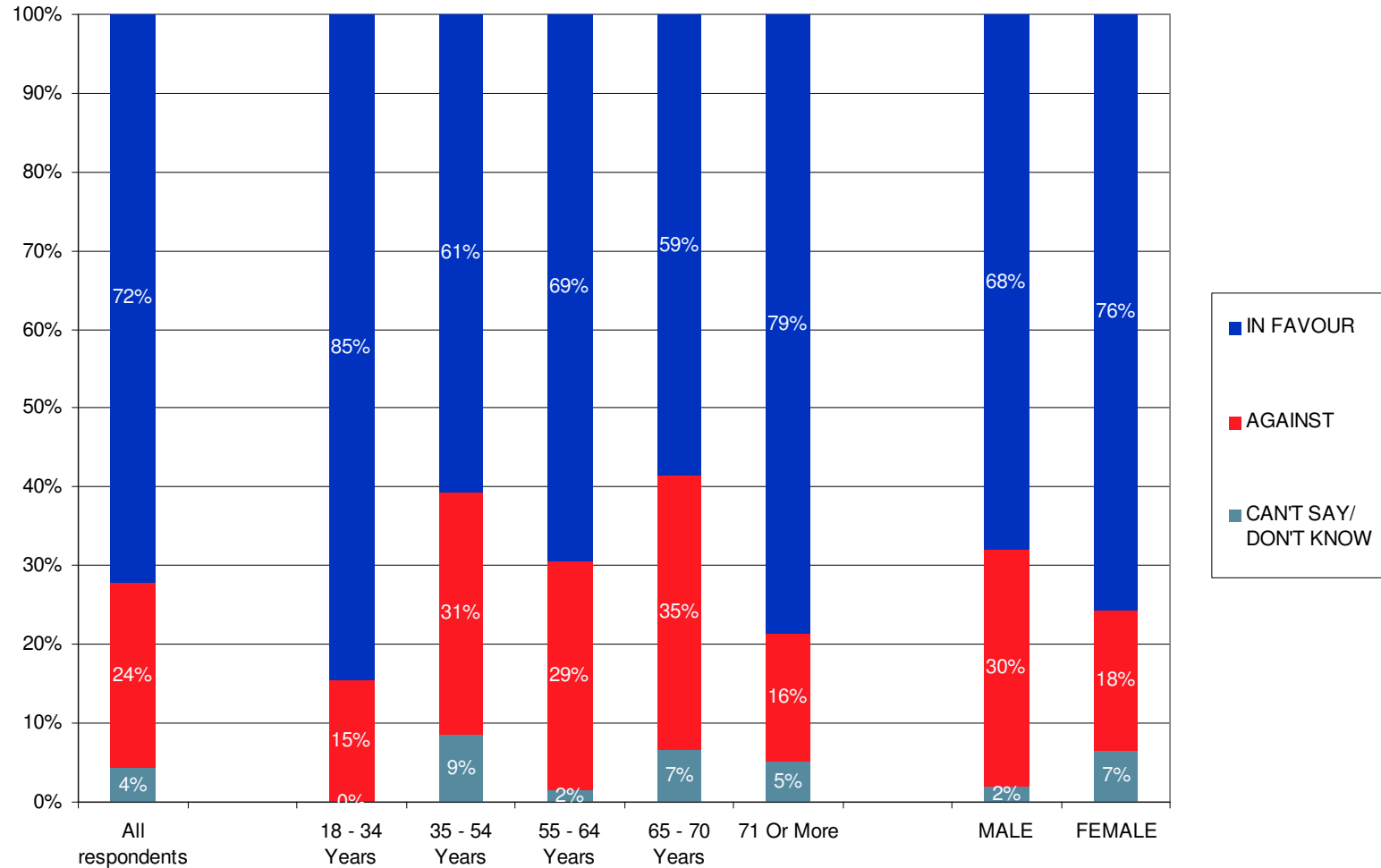
If the Council were to retain and re-use the Civic Hall Building and identify options for alternative use, 72% of all respondents would be in favour of this option.



Base: All respondents (n = 402)
Respondents Total Aware of Council Project (n = 390)

Retain and Re-use the Civic Hall Building - Age & Gender

Of all the age groups, respondents aged between 18 to 34 years were most likely to be in favour of the option of retaining and re-using the Civic Hall Building (85% - 18 - 34 years old).

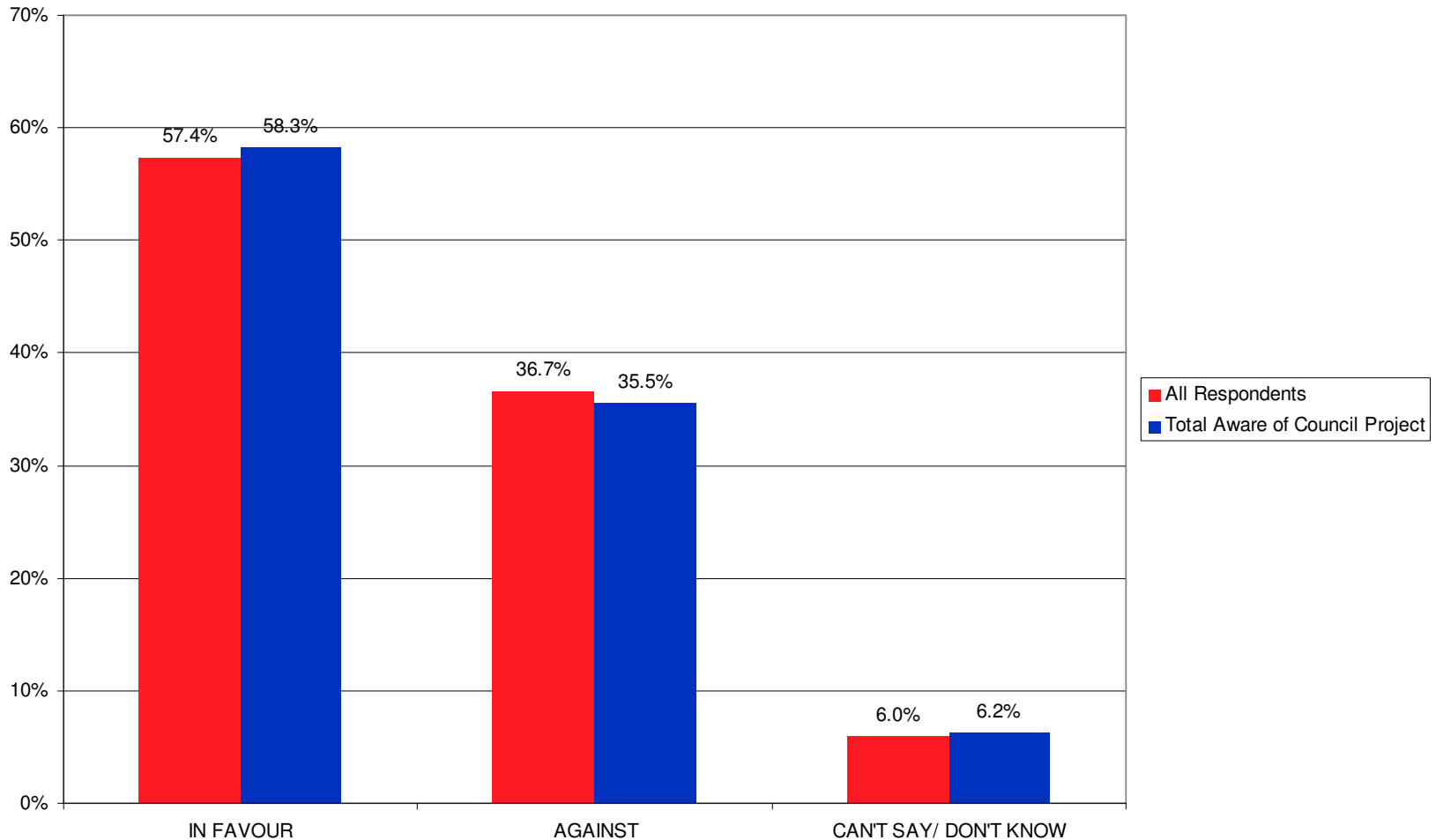


Base: All respondents (n = 402)

Demolish and Identify Other Options for the Site

Q5. An option that has been suggested is for the Council to demolish the Civic Hall Building and identify other development options for the site that do not include a Council building. Would you be in favour or against this option

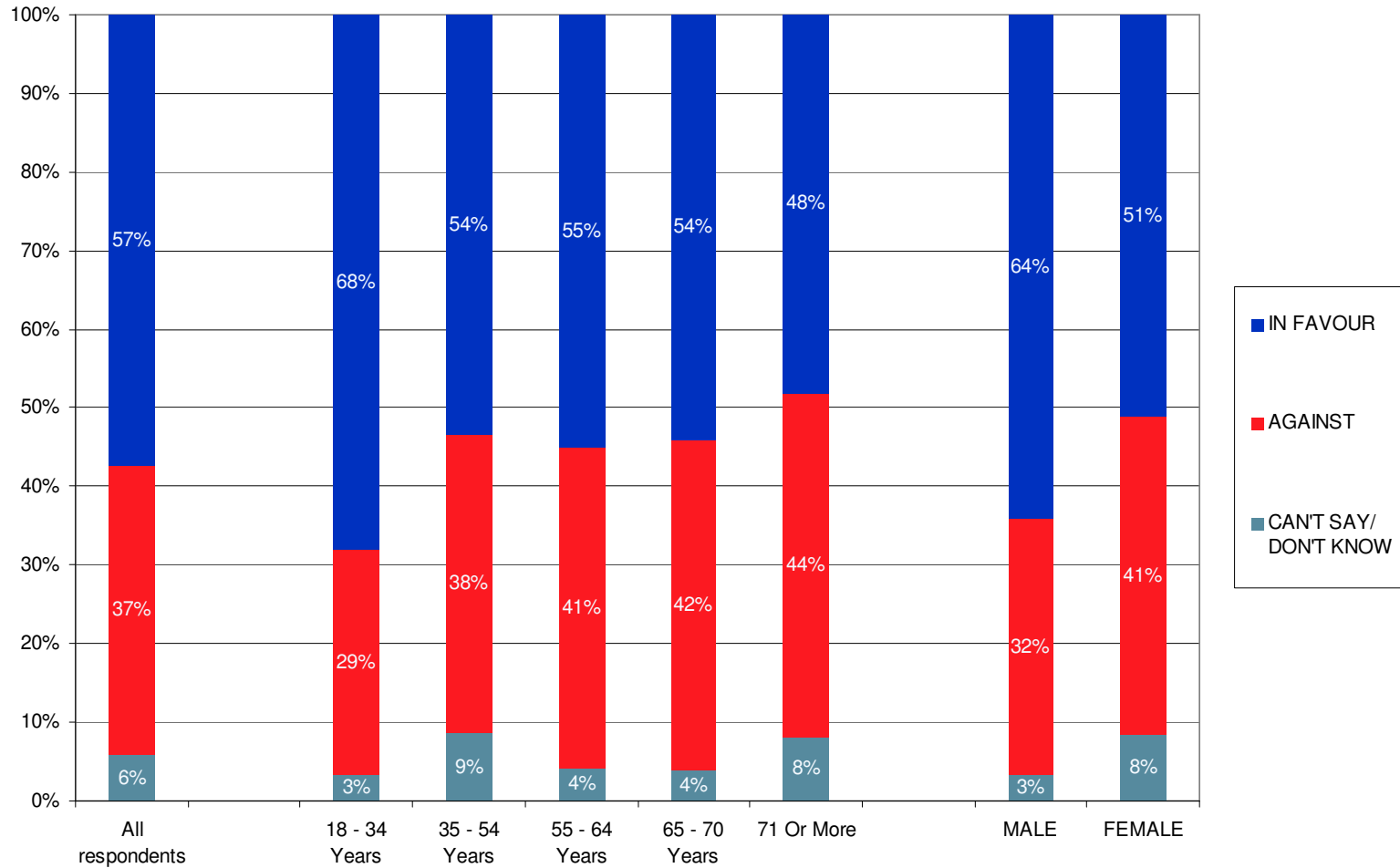
A total of 57.4% of all respondents would be in favour of the Council demolishing the Civic Hall Building and identifying other options for the site, whilst over a third of all respondents (36.7%) were against this option.



Base: All respondents (n = 402)
Respondents Total Aware of Council Project (n = 390)

Demolish and Identify Other Options for the Site - Age & Gender

Male respondents were more likely to be in favour of demolishing the Civic Hall Building and identifying other options for the site (64%) compared with 51% of female respondents.

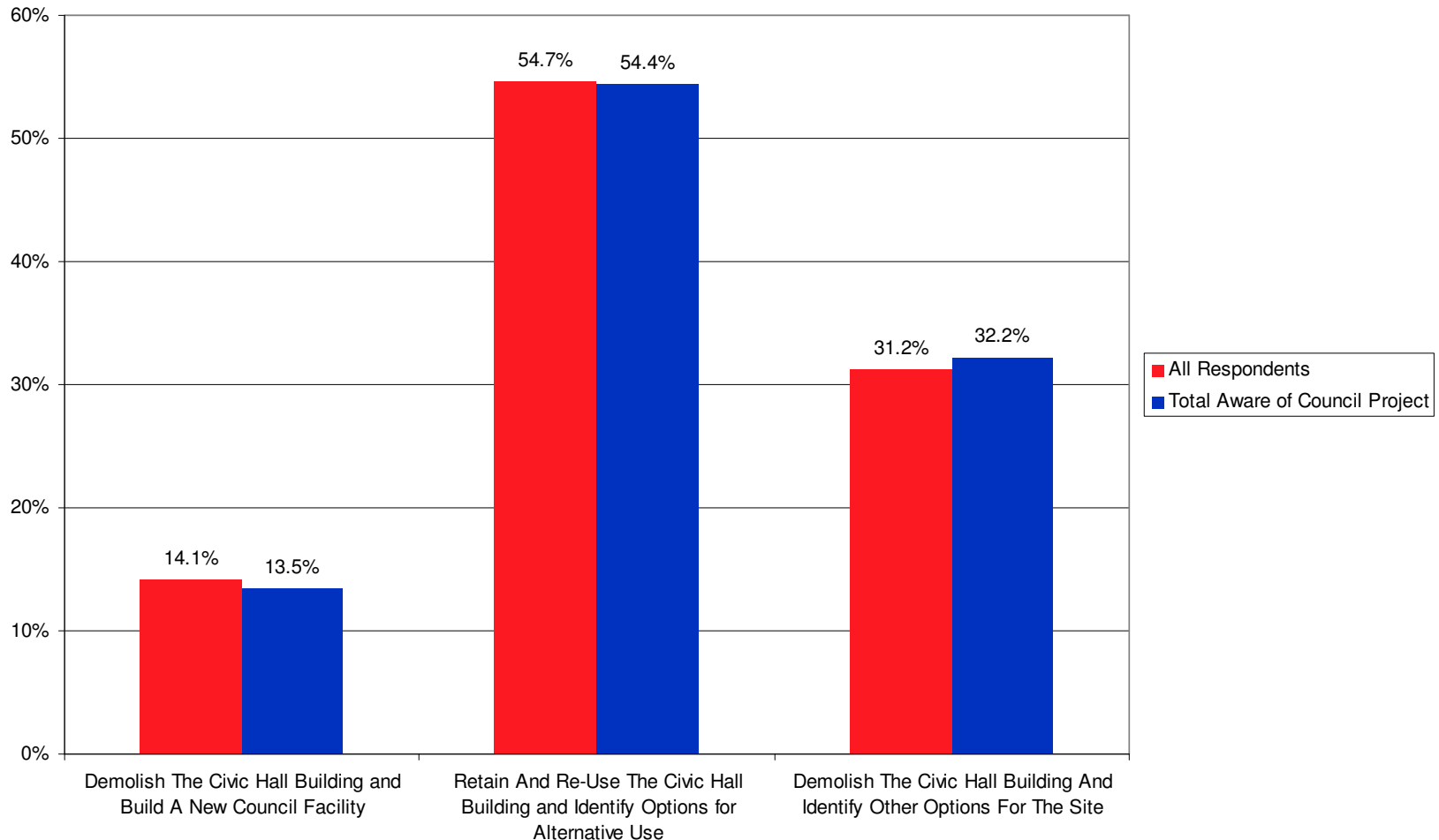


Base: All respondents (n = 402)

First Preference from the Three Proposed Options

Q6. Thank you for your views on each of the three alternatives. As you would probably realise, Council could not implement all three alternatives. Which of the three alternatives would be your first preference?

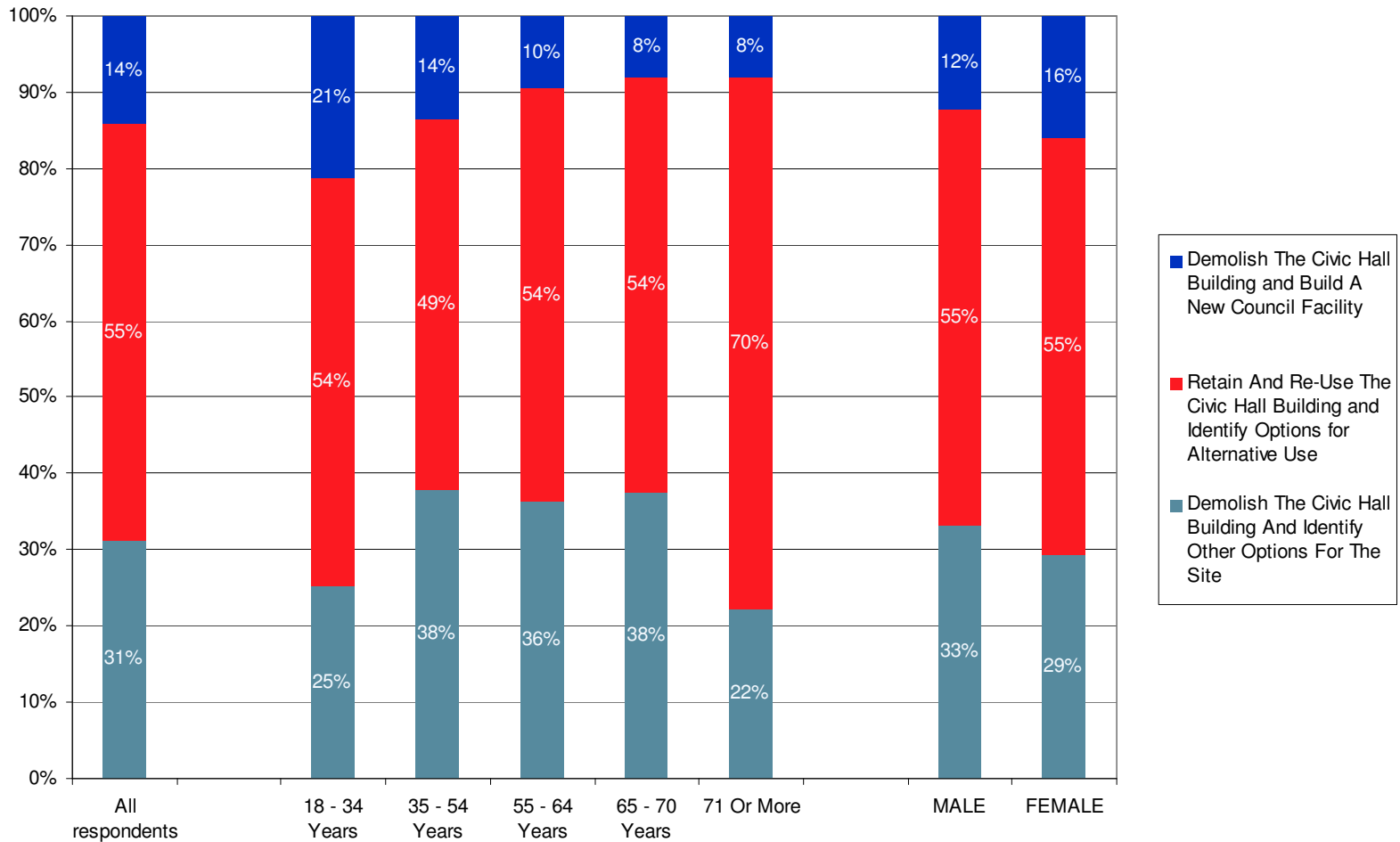
When provided with a choice of the three proposed options, 54.7% of all respondents would prefer to retain and re-use the Civic Hall Building and identify options for alternative use. This is followed by a preference to demolish the Civic Hall Building and identify other options for the site with 31.2%.



Base: All respondents (n = 402)
Respondents Total Aware of Council Project (n = 390)

First Preference from the Three Proposed Options - Age & Gender

The first preference was to retain and re-use the Civic Hall Building across all ages and gender. This was followed by demolishing the Civic Hall Building and identifying other options for the site and thirdly demolishing the Civic Hall Building and building a new Council facility.



Base: All respondents (n = 402)

Conclusions

- First preference clearly is to retain and re-use the Civic Hall Building and identify options for alternative use.
- Second preference is to demolish the Civic Hall Building and identify other options for the site.
- Third preference is to demolish the Civic Hall Building and build a new Council facility.
- Whilst there appears to be reasonable support for the Council's 'Demolish and build....' amongst the younger age groups (18-34 years), this support dissipates quickly as the age of respondents increases. The qualitative research indicates that 'nostalgia', 'historical retention' and 'heritage' are some of the main reasons.