

Overview

Community Reference Groups (CRGs) were established for each Activity Centre to provide advice to the Department of Transport and Planning in developing its Activity Centre Plans. The advice was developed over 3 sessions in June 2025.

All Statements of Advice will be released publicly alongside other engagement outcomes during Phase 2 engagement planned for September 2025.

Statement of Advice – Glenferrie Station

What we value about the Activity Centre:

A summary of what CRG members believe makes the place unique and worth protecting.

Glenferrie Activity Centre holds a special place in the hearts of its community members. It blends history and vitality, heritage and innovation, to create a unique and irreplaceable character that we believe should be preserved and enhanced. The following points highlight what makes Glenferrie distinctive and worthy of protection.

A Lively and Youthful Atmosphere

- Glenferrie is defined by its energy and activity, especially due to its close ties to Swinburne University and nearby schools.
- It is a youthful and vibrant precinct, full of life during the day with students and residents filling its streets.
- While it is most active during daytime hours, there is a noted lack of evening options for older adults, highlighting a potential area for future improvement.
- The area feels like a true urban village that is dynamic and socially connected.

A Strong Blend of Heritage and Contemporary Life

- Glenferrie offers a rare combination of historic architecture and modern urban life.
- The character of the area is shaped by heritage buildings throughout Glenferrie precinct, maintaining a sense of continuity and place.
- Contemporary cafés, cultural venues, create a lively, area that appeals to a broad cross-section of the community.

Landmarks and Public Spaces That Anchor the Community

- Key destinations such as Glenferrie Station, Lido Cinema, Glenferrie Oval, the Hawthorn Arts Centre, Centre Gardens (Rocket Park) serve as cultural and social anchors.
- Swinburne University adds to the intellectual and social life of the area.
- Central Gardens (known locally as "Rocket Park") is an essential green space where people of all ages gather, play, and relax, especially families and students.
- The Hawthorn Recreation and Leisure Centre provide facilities for fitness and wellbeing.
- Leafy residential streets and nearby parks provide a quiet contrast to the busy main roads and enhance the area's liveability.

Movement and Connectivity

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- Glenferrie is well connected by public transport, with trains and trams making it accessible to people across the area.
 - Walking is common and convenient, contributing to a strong sense of community connection.
 - However, the area's road congestion creates safety issues for pedestrians and cyclists.
 - Despite this challenge, people continue to navigate the centre on foot, by public transport, or by car to access its many amenities.

A Place of Deep Meaning for the Community

- The blending of old and new, green and urban, quiet and active makes Glenferrie a distinctive and valued place.
- It is a centre where people feel a sense of belonging, shaped by both its heritage, physical appeal and its social fabric.

Our Advice

Part A: General Advice

How do we plan for more homes in and around Glenferrie while strengthening the things that make it unique?

- Focus on liveability alongside density — Glenferrie's appeal comes from its vibrancy, greenery, walkability and sense of community.
- Protect and extend green spaces, especially small, functional parks and linear trails, as these serve as "backyards" for higher-density housing.
- Prioritise walkability and easy access for all needs — including children, the elderly, and people with disabilities.
- Prioritise active transport, including walking, cycling, wheelchair use, mobility scooters, and prams.
- Make connections for active transport between Hawthorn, Glenferrie, Auburn via rail trail.
- Prioritise well-maintained parks, seating and public toilets.
- Maintain and grow community feel — through public spaces, markets, community gardens, and gathering points.
- Support the mix of education, business, and residential uses with thoughtful transitions and buffers.
- Invest in infrastructure ahead of growth — ensuring roads, paths, schools, and services can accommodate increased demand.
- Engage continually with the community to keep the area's unique character intact while evolving to meet future needs.

Part B: Thematic advice across four key areas:

Public and Green Space

- Community gardens, pocket parks, and linear trails are highly valued for their communal and multifunctional uses.
- Develop a 'Rail Trail' connecting Hawthorn, Glenferrie and Auburn and link to the Main Yarra Trail.

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- As housing density increases, green spaces are expected to serve as substitutes for private backyards.
 - Strong interest in connecting existing parks and creating safe, green corridors for walking and cycling (e.g. linking Auburn rail trail to Hawthorn).
 - Many public/private spaces are used sporadically (e.g., for markets or events); these could be better utilised with pop-up activations or redesigns.
 - Suggestions to transform laneways and underused land into green linear parks.
 - Enhanced urban canopy (trees and vegetation) is requested along streets and around buildings.
 - Emphasis on ensuring new developments include green infrastructure as a core requirement, not a luxury.
 - Increasing the number and cleanliness of public toilets was mentioned as essential to support public life.
 - Desire to balance recreation and tranquillity in green space planning, making room for both active and passive uses.

Moving Around

- Concerns about children's safety during school drop-off/pick-up times due to traffic and inadequate crossings.
- Suggestions to increase the number of pedestrian crossings, especially along Glenferrie Road, Barkers Road and Burwood Road
- Proposal to separate bike lanes, ban e-scooters from footpaths, and regulate delivery riders more strictly.
- Recognition of Glenferrie's role as an educational hub; poor connectivity between schools and public transport is a key issue.
- Mixed views on multi-storey car parks and the use of smart technologies to manage parking — balancing sustainability with accessibility.
- 'Rail Trail' for active transport between Hawthorn, Glenferrie and Auburn.
- Make connections for active transport between Kew and Glenferrie.

Safety

- Calls for more police presence were mixed — some see it as reassuring, others as potentially overbearing.
- Support for restarting or publicising local Neighbourhood Watch to reinforce safety through community action.
- Suggestions include adding more lighting, wider walkways, and better maintenance to reduce trip hazards and improve visibility.
- Interest in surveillance cameras was raised but noted as contentious — some see them as helpful, others doubt their effectiveness.

Local Infrastructure

- Widespread agreement that current infrastructure is already under strain — concerns about how it will cope with population growth.
- Separated bike lanes
- Better traffic management (especially turn signals and timing)
- Drainage system upgrades to manage flooding and climate events
- Improved footpaths (aesthetic, wider, accessible)
- Sheltered areas in parks for weather protection
- Interest in natural drainage solutions (e.g., rain gardens) that double as aesthetic features.
- Glenferrie Road was a focal point for calls for partial pedestrianisation or traffic calming.

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- Desire for more schools, especially a mainstream government secondary school in closer proximity than Auburn High.
 - Calls for expanded community services like childcare, maternal health, and family support infrastructure.
 - Public transport is considered good, but more frequency, reliability, and school-specific options (e.g. school buses) are needed.
 - More and better-maintained public toilets, bins, and seating in general and in parks.
 - Recognition that without upgrades, services like rubbish collection, drainage, and schools will not meet the demands of added housing.
 - Concerns about the lack of a local police station in the area.
 - Shelter at tram stops and more weather-resilient infrastructure were suggested.

Key Areas of Agreement and Disagreement

Agreement:

- Green space is vital — especially as housing density increases. Community gardens, linear parks, and trees matter deeply.
- Walking and cycling need serious investment — including better crossings, footpaths, and bike lanes.
- Safety at night is a priority — with design-led solutions like lighting, active spaces, and good maintenance.
- Glenferrie Road is congested and problematic — both for traffic and for people on foot.
- Infrastructure for education, health, and family support needs expansion to support growth.
- Public transport frequency, especially at school times, must be improved.
- Preserve heritage and identity: Strong consensus on retaining the existing heritage overlay and ensuring new buildings reflect the local character.
- Design quality is essential: The community will support increased housing only if it comes with high-quality design and appropriate scale.
- Infrastructure must be upgraded: Growth must be matched with investment in public services, transport, and utilities.
- Concentrate growth smartly: Most agree that if higher buildings are necessary, they should be located in the core of the precinct.

Disagreement:

- Police presence and surveillance: Some considered added enforcement as key to safety; others see it as invasive or ineffective.
- Car infrastructure vs active transport: Some support multi-storey parking and ease of car access; others prioritise sustainable, car-free options.
- Use of underutilised space: Varied opinions on how best to activate sporadically used public spaces (e.g., event pop-ups vs permanent facilities).
- School provisioning: While there's consensus on the need, solutions vary — build new local schools vs improve connections to existing ones.
- Extent of change to heritage overlays: While most opposed any change, a minority supported carefully selected modifications to allow growth.
- Height and density: There were mixed views on acceptable height levels and the appropriate density, even in central locations.
- Use of certain commercial or industrial land: Some residents support repurposing these for housing, while others see them as essential to Glenferrie's function.

Compromise is possible when:

- Design quality, infrastructure upgrades, and community benefits are guaranteed.
- Changes are targeted and sensitive to context (e.g., near main roads, on underused sites).

Compromise is not supported when:

- Heritage, safety, or amenity is perceived to be at risk.

Considerations

Areas where the community was open to acceptable compromises, and areas where compromise was not supported.

Support for quality:

- The community is open to more housing if higher design standards are enforced. This includes:
 - Design that reflects the neighbourhood's character
 - A strong preference for no with aircon units on balconies.
 - Integration of greenery in built form and open spaces.
 - A mix of modern and traditional styles but avoiding "cramped box" designs.
 - Prioritising redevelopment of underused sites such as outdated office buildings, warehouses and open-air carparks in keeping with its environments.

Preserving heritage and local character:

- The majority want no changes to the existing heritage overlay.
- Some participants supported limited changes to allow development in select non-sensitive areas.
- There is strong support for limiting any high-rise development within the central heart of the activity centre.
- Adaptive use and better land efficiency:
- Ground-level carparks and low-utility industrial spaces should be reassessed for better use.
- Maintaining a mix of residential, commercial, offices and businesses, is considered essential to preserve local functionality.

Transport and movement:

- Traffic management changes are needed, particularly near school precincts.
- Increase signage
- There is openness to considering high rises along arterial roads (e.g., Barkers Road) and larger commercial blocks (e.g., Burwood Road), which are already high-capacity corridors.
- Light commercial must be incorporated into residential (e.g. shops and cafes)
- Support for better footpath infrastructure, improved pedestrian crossings, and more sustainable transport options like cycling.

Community infrastructure must grow with population:

- Any additional housing must be matched with upgraded infrastructure, including schools, parks, public toilets, health services, and drainage.
- Some concern was raised about whether current infrastructure can handle projected growth without reducing amenity.

Housing typologies and use diversity:

- Creative housing types (e.g., terraces, low-rise apartments) were generally supported.
- Participants emphasised the importance of not losing diversity in business and community use.
- Housing for people at different life stages, including families with children.

Key Messages for Planners – Glenferrie Station

Final key messages the group would like to leave with decision-makers.

- Preserve Glenferrie's Unique Identity and Heritage
- Plan Growth Around Livability, Not Just Density
- Make it Safer and Easier to Move Around Without a Car
- Invest in Green, Inclusive and Activated Public Spaces
- Involve the Community in Every Step of Change