

## 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 – Gardiner Station

### What we value about the Activity Centre:

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

---

***The Glen Iris and Gardiner Activity Centres are cherished by the community for their unique blend of natural beauty, historical character, and community spirit. The following points highlight what makes these areas special and worthy of careful planning and protection.***

---

### Character and Atmosphere

- Peaceful, green, and strongly residential in character.
- Tree-lined streets and a significant tree canopy on both private and public land contribute to a tranquil, leafy environment.
- A balanced mix of heritage homes, newer developments, and emerging high-rise apartments in specific locations.
- A welcoming, family-friendly community with a strong focus on pets, sport, and outdoor living.
- Long-term residents foster a stable and familiar neighbourhood feel.
- A friendly, social atmosphere where neighbours regularly interact.

### Buildings, Landmarks and Public Spaces

- Historic and community landmarks like St Andrews Church and other early 20th-century buildings.
- Central Park and the Harold Holt Swimming Pool are valued public facilities.
- The Gardiner Creek Trail and its associated sporting ovals and parks are central to local life.
- Malvern Road features a mix of character-filled buildings and community-focused spaces.
- Heritage overlays throughout surrounding neighbourhoods help preserve local history.

### Natural Environment and Green Spaces

- Green areas support physical health and mental wellbeing, encouraging outdoor activity and relaxation.
- The mature gardens and trees enhance the quiet, suburban feel and allow for encounters with local birdlife.
- Gardiners Creek and its trail provide popular routes for walking, running, cycling, and dog walking.

- 
- Floodplain areas, while ecologically significant, require sensitive planning and management.
  - There is potential for improved green space connectivity along the railway line.

### **Movement and Accessibility**

- Excellent public transport access via train, tram, and bus, with strong links to the city.
- Active transport is popular, especially walking and cycling along the many trails.
- Significant car congestion, particularly around the Malvern/Burke Rd corner and Freeway access, along High Street and railway crossings, poses a growing challenge.
- Improved north-south connectivity for cyclists and pedestrians is needed.
- Local plans to enhance transport access, including extending tram services and improving retail options near Central Park, are welcomed.

### **Special Qualities and Opportunities**

- The area offers a rare blend of accessibility, green space, and heritage character within close proximity to the city.
- The community values the heritage overlays and the history they preserve, even among those not living within them.
- The bird life, creek access, and peaceful gardens create a distinctive urban-natural balance.
- While the area has strong bones, it needs improved retail, better amenity, and thoughtful investment in public infrastructure to match its growth potential.
- Managing freeway noise and traffic impacts is crucial to preserving quality of life.

**The community sees Glen Iris and Gardiner as areas with both deep roots and future promise—worthy of sensitive development that honours their character and strengthens their liveability.**

## **Our Advice**

### **Part A: General Advice**

---

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

---

- **Focus development near Gardiner Station:**
  - Concentrate high-density residential and mixed-use buildings near the station to protect heritage and quiet residential areas.
  - Support proposals for maximum density residential in areas like St Edmonds Grove and around King/Malvern, where it aligns with public transport and open space access.
- **Preserve green and heritage character:**
  - Protect private gardens and existing green space, which account for a significant part of the area's amenity.
  - Use design standards that maintain the leafy, low-rise residential feel.
- **Support mixed-use community hubs:**
  - Encourage retail, healthcare, and community facilities in accessible, safe, and quieter areas (e.g., near parks rather than freeway).

- 
- Ensure these hubs include public seating, greenery, and places to gather for all age groups.
  - **Better connectivity:**
    - Prioritize safe pedestrian and cycling links to key destinations, especially across major roads and to Gardiners Creek.

#### **Areas of Agreement:**

- Need for more homes close to transport and services.
- Value of keeping heritage and garden-suburb feel.
- Support for community facilities, trails, and village-style development.

#### **Areas of disagreement:**

- Level of parking required—some advocate for more, others for less.
- Inclusion of social housing—some raised safety concerns, while others supported diverse housing.

## **Part B: Thematic advice across four key areas:**

### **Public and Green Space**

- **Much-loved spaces:**
  - Gardiners Creek Trail, Peace Park, Central Park, Linear Park, and Ferndale Park were frequently mentioned for exercise, socializing, and relaxation.
  - Private gardens seen as essential and defining.
- **Opportunities for improvement:**
  - Underused spaces like Glenarm and Peace Park need better seating, tree planting, and activation.
  - Linear Park could be extended to Glen Iris for better access and more use.
  - Add shaded picnic areas, seating, lighting, and toilets to encourage more diverse use.
- **New green connections:**
  - Create a continuous walk/bike trail along the rail line from King Street to Glen Iris Station.
  - Better access from south of the freeway to Gardiners Creek is essential, including overpasses or underpasses at Burke Road.

### **Moving Around**

- **Pedestrian and cyclist issues:**
  - Unsafe and slow crossings, especially Burke/Malvern Road, Wills Road, and freeway entry points.
  - Support for prioritizing pedestrian movement at key intersections.
  - Suggestions for new overpasses and rail-side trails to avoid major road crossings.
- **Traffic congestion and rat runs:**
  - Major roads like Burke and Malvern are heavily congested at peak times, with drivers cutting through residential areas.
  - Recommendation to upgrade signals, reconfigure intersections (e.g., allow Carroll Crescent eastbound lane to go straight), and restrict local street access for through-traffic.
- **Public transport limitations:**
  - Trams and trains are at capacity, especially during peak times.
  - PSOs at the station are appreciated and should be permanent.
  - Calls to remove remaining Glen Waverley line level crossings to improve service frequency.

- 
- **Parking and access:**
    - Mixed views on parking: some demand more, particularly for disabled access, while others say it increases congestion.
    - Taxi and rideshare access to the station is problematic—current drop-off points are unsafe.

## Safety

- **Lighting and visibility:**
  - Improve side street and pathway lighting without removing trees.
  - Open frontages from newer buildings perceived as safer than tall, opaque fences.
- **Designing for safety:**
  - Public spaces should be well-lit and activated to deter loitering.
  - Some concerns around crime and suggestions for increased surveillance, community policing, and better after-dark safety.
- **Disagreement around social housing:**
  - Some support diverse housing options.
  - Others express fear of crime associated with high-density or social housing and suggest limiting its placement.
- **Traffic danger points:**
  - Blind corners and poor visibility at several intersections (e.g., King St, Wills Rd).
  - Calls for infrastructure changes to reduce car-pedestrian conflict.

## Local Infrastructure

- **Community needs:**
  - More health, aged care, child care, and education services are needed to support population growth.
  - A public high school in the area is lacking—current options are all private.
  - Local employment opportunities would reduce car use.
- **Digital and physical services:**
  - Internet infrastructure under strain due to increased demand.
  - Waste and hard rubbish collection need to keep pace with large residential developments.
- **Retail and commercial gaps:**
  - Residents want a vibrant village feel, with everyday amenities like groceries, cafes, and services within walking distance.
  - Current lack of foot traffic deters retail activation—need for more housing density near retail to support it. Mixed opinions regarding whether an increase in density would lead to greater activation of retail shops.
- **Transport infrastructure:**
  - Improve connections between train, tram, and bus services.
  - Support for Suburban Rail Loop and Metro completion to relieve pressure on local transport networks.
  - Proposal for tram lines with better north-south connectivity.

## Considerations

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

---

## Where the Community is Open to Acceptable Compromises

### **Focused High-Rise Development in Core Areas**

- Broad support for concentrating high-density housing in clearly defined core precincts near Gardiner Station and along the Burke/Malvern Road corridor.
- Mixed acceptance of tall buildings—up to 20 storeys—within two main development blocks: Burke–Malvern–York–Monash Fwy and Burke–Malvern–Kenilworth/St Edmunds–Monash Fwy.
- Mixed preference for taller buildings in smaller footprints rather than spreading medium-height buildings (2–3 storeys) across the wider area. Others were supportive of 3–4 storeys in a wider area.

### **Mixed Use and Retail Integration**

- Strong support for including supermarkets, healthcare, cafés, and local shops at the base of new developments to foster vibrant, walkable precincts.
- Some community members see value in revitalising currently underutilised blocks (e.g., King Street/Malvern Road) through mixed-use development that brings needed services.

### **Increased Core Area in Exchange for Heritage Protection**

- Willingness to expand the “core” to accommodate denser housing if it means preserving heritage areas such as the “Golden Triangle” and leafy residential streets.
- Agreement that some older or run-down properties closer to the station could be repurposed for housing without affecting valued neighbourhood character.

### **Improved Infrastructure to Support Growth**

- Residents accept growth if paired with commitments to infrastructure—particularly better freeway access (e.g., new eastbound High Street ramps), pedestrian crossings, and upgraded transport links.
- Emphasis on ensuring planning accounts for a shift away from car-dependence by improving walking and cycling links between key destinations.

### **Design-Led, Context-Sensitive Development**

- Residents suggest taller buildings are more acceptable in lower-lying areas where their visual impact is reduced.
- Agreement that “leafy character” and open space should be retained, with design features like tree protection and green streetscapes forming part of new developments.

## Where the Community Does Not Support Compromise

### **Preservation of Established Residential Areas**

- Strong opposition to increasing density beyond 2–3 storeys in the inner and outer residential catchments, especially in the Golden Triangle.
- Clear desire to retain existing homes, gardens, and the low-rise, open-feel of the broader neighbourhood.

### **Protection of Green and Open Spaces**

- 
- Firm stance that public green spaces and natural assets like Gardiners Creek, indigenous trees, and open space corridors must be protected and enhanced, not replaced.
  - Resistance to over-concretisation—preference for additional seating, trees, and community meeting areas in parks and reserves.

### **Concerns About Arterial Roads**

- Mixed views that high-rise buildings should not be concentrated along major arterial roads like Burke and Malvern, due to safety, access, and traffic flow concerns.
- Consensus that building designs should avoid forcing cars to enter or exit high-density housing directly from busy streets.

### **Limits on Infrastructure Encroachment**

- The airspace over railways and creeks should remain undeveloped to preserve openness and avoid a “Box Hill-style” environment.
- Community is wary of excessive urbanisation that undermines the area’s calm and green appeal.

### **Desire for Thoughtful, Localised Planning**

- Community members express concern about blanket rezoning or planning that doesn’t respect the specific conditions and history of each street or precinct.
- Call for collaboration with Stonnington Council to ensure local planning controls reflect the community’s values and input.

## **Key Messages for Planners – Gardiner Station**

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

### **1. Concentrate Growth Near Transport, Preserve Character Elsewhere**

- Focus high-density and mixed-use development near Gardiner Station, particularly in designated core precincts like Burke/Malvern Road and St Edmonds Grove blocks.
- Allow taller buildings in these areas (up to 20–30 storeys), provided they are design-led and located in low-lying areas to minimise visual impact.
- Avoid increased height or density in surrounding neighbourhoods, especially the “Golden Triangle” and garden-suburb areas, where residents strongly value the existing character and open space.

### **2. Green and Open Spaces Must Be Protected and Enhanced**

- Existing green spaces like Gardiners Creek, Central Park, Peace Park, and private gardens are central to the area’s appeal and must be preserved.
- Improve underutilised spaces (e.g., Glenarm Reserve) with more trees, seating, lighting, and amenities.
- Create better green connections, including continuous walking and cycling trails along the railway line and safe access over the freeway.

### **3. Support Local Hubs with Mixed Uses and Everyday Services**

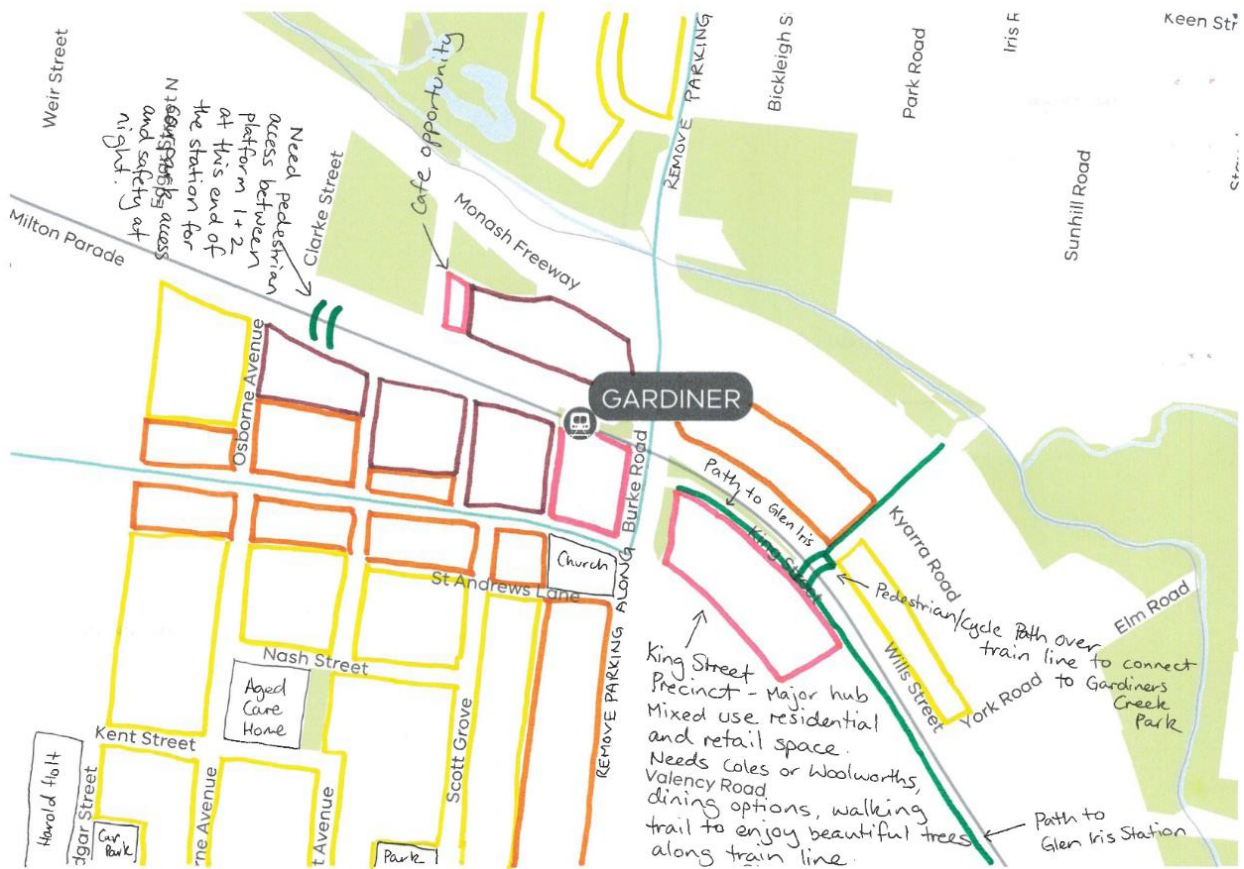
- 
- Residents want walkable access to groceries, healthcare, cafés, and other services integrated into new developments near the station.
  - Revitalise underused sites (e.g., King Street and Malvern Road) through mixed-use zoning that encourages local retail and community life.
  - Avoid locating retail or communal spaces next to high-traffic arterial roads for safety and comfort.

#### **4. Make Movement Safer and More Sustainable**

- Prioritise pedestrian and cyclist safety with better crossings, overpasses, and dedicated trails, especially at congested junctions like Burke and Malvern Roads.
- Address traffic congestion by improving signals and reducing “rat runs” through residential areas.
- Strengthen public transport with more frequent services and long-term projects like the Metro and Suburban Rail Loop.

#### **5. Plan with Sensitivity, Collaboration, and Infrastructure in Mind**

- Growth is acceptable if it comes with thoughtful investment in infrastructure, including schools, healthcare, digital networks, and waste management.
- Avoid overdevelopment of sensitive areas like creek corridors or railway airspace.
- Engage meaningfully with residents and local councils to ensure that planning respects the area’s distinct history, values, and liveability.



**KEY**

- Mixed use core
- Residential core
- Inner catchment
- Outer catchment
- Proposed pedestrian/cycle paths

Burke Rd intersection is a major issue which causes widespread traffic problems, is very dangerous for cyclists and pedestrians, and is a significant barrier to movement in the local area. Improvement is a high priority, and urgent.

Further to improving Burke Rd, level crossing removal at Tooronga and Glen Iris are urgent, as well as increasing public transport options in the North/South direction to connect these areas to Cabrini Hospital and the Princes Hwy.

Figure 1. Map of Gardiner with suggested considerations.