

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 – Glen Iris 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.

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- 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 Glen Iris while strengthening the things that make it unique?

- Preserve the unique balance of heritage, green space, and community feel while planning for growth.
- New developments should incorporate communal open spaces (e.g., courtyards, rooftops) to reduce pressure on public parks and foster social connections.
- Strong agreement across the community to protect existing green spaces—development should not occur on current parks or trails.
- Apartment buildings must include practical amenities such as secure bike storage, waste and hard rubbish services, and communal facilities.
- Desire for a plaza or community gathering space near Glen Iris Station to support a growing population.
- Ensure that infrastructure (schools, health services, public transport) keeps pace with housing growth—residents are concerned about current and future capacity.
- Support for maintaining the suburb's friendly, respectful character through thoughtful planning and community consultation.

Part B: Thematic advice across four key areas:

Public and Green Space

- Widespread use and strong appreciation for the local park and trail network, including sporting ovals like Eric Raven and Nettleton Reserves.
- High community demand for improvements to the Gardiners Creek Trail: widening, surface upgrades, lighting, and separation between cyclists and pedestrians are key priorities.
- Existing trails are already over capacity during peak hours; future growth will intensify this need.
- Green spaces are vital for wellbeing and recreation, especially during crises like COVID—evidence of how essential they are for future resilience.
- Improve landscaping along the creek to create relaxing and social areas (e.g., seating, meeting spots).
- Stonnington residents on the south side of the freeway have poor access to green space—better signage and wayfinding needed.
- Increase dog off-leash areas to match demographic changes, especially more young families and pet owners.

Moving Around

- Car use dominates, with major congestion issues at freeway access points (Valley Parade, High Street, Wills Street) and level crossings.
- Strong support for level crossing removals at Glen Iris and Tooronga Stations to ease traffic flow.
- Glen Iris Station lacks secure bike storage and safe access; upgrades to lighting, bike facilities, and connections are a high priority.
- Support for better tram and bus connections, especially in north-south directions not served by train lines.
- More separated bike lanes on connecting roads to the trail network are needed for safety and accessibility.
- Walking paths are well-used, but several pedestrian crossings—especially High Street and Albion Road—are unsafe and need urgent upgrades.
- Winter conditions (dark, wet) make many walking routes unsafe, particularly near Glen Iris Station—consider covered walkways.

Safety

- Safety concerns dominate trail and pedestrian feedback—shared paths are dangerous during peak times.
- Narrow, poorly lit bridges and footpaths (e.g., Brixton Rise footbridge) are particularly risky at night or during winter.
- Pedestrian crossings near Glen Iris Station and High Street are unsafe, especially for children and older adults.
- Glen Iris Station and surrounding areas need lighting and safety improvements similar to those at Gardiner Station.
- No designated pick-up/drop-off zones for rideshare services at Gardiner Station—creates traffic and safety issues.

Local Infrastructure

- Community supports significant upgrades to Glen Iris Station and associated public infrastructure.
- Trail network needs a dedicated master plan to manage commuter and recreational needs.

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- Concerns about local school and health service capacity with increased development.
 - Call for community park in Scott Grove to be progressed.
 - New developments must include green features and proper waste services, especially for apartments.
 - Add essential amenities such as laundromats and public defibrillators for community resilience.

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

- The community supports a diversity of housing types, including a mix of apartments and townhouses to cater to different needs and demographics.
- Mixed-use buildings up to six storeys are acceptable, but only within a defined area—specifically, the east side of the railway line between Gardiner and Glen Iris stations and the Monash Freeway.
- Elsewhere in the activity centre, the community supports three to four storey developments along major roads and tram lines, with design standards and location limits.
- Retail and commercial spaces on ground floors are supported to improve local amenity and reduce car dependency.
- Emphasis on high-quality and sustainable design—including green roofs, solar panels, and communal spaces—is strongly encouraged.
- Positive references were made to developments such as Burwood Brickworks and Nightingale Housing as examples of good, sustainable, and community-friendly design.
- There is openness to growth if guided by a clear urban design framework with enforceable requirements—not vague guidelines.

Disagreement:

- Some CRG members were also supportive of up to 6 storeys between Malvern Road and the railway line between Gardiner and Glen Iris station (see map for reference).

Where the Community Does Not Support Compromise

- No tolerance for generic or “cookie-cutter” developments that erode neighbourhood character.
- Strong opposition to buildings over six storeys anywhere in the activity centre.
- High-rise development beyond identified zones is not supported.
- Protecting sunlight access, mature trees, and green space is non-negotiable—designs must prevent overshadowing and environmental degradation.
- There is no support for policy changes that undermine local planning certainty—community demands long-term commitment and accountability from all levels of government.
- Vacant, derelict lots due to inaction by developers are strongly opposed; penalties and enforcement are called for.

Key Messages for Planners – Glen Iris Station

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

1. Protect What Makes Glen Iris and Gardiner Special

- The community values the area's peaceful, green, and residential feel, its heritage homes, and tree-lined streets.
- Public spaces like Central Park, Harold Holt Swimming Pool, and the Gardiner Creek Trail are deeply important and must be preserved and enhanced.
- The unique mix of heritage and natural assets makes the area special and worthy of sensitive planning.

2. Plan Growth Thoughtfully and Sustainably

- There is support for increased housing—particularly diverse, well-designed apartments and townhouses—but only within clearly defined areas and limits.
- Buildings up to six storeys are acceptable near the railway between Gardiner and Glen Iris Stations; elsewhere, three to four storeys are preferred.
- New development must meet high standards for design, sustainability, and community benefit—cookie-cutter designs are strongly opposed.

3. Invest in Public Spaces and Green Infrastructure

- Green spaces are essential for health and wellbeing and must not be lost to development.
- Trails and parks need upgrades to meet growing demand, including better lighting, surfaces, and safe separation for different users.
- Improved landscaping and new social spaces (like a plaza near Glen Iris Station) are welcomed.

4. Address Safety and Transport Challenges

- Traffic congestion and unsafe crossings are major concerns—level crossing removals and safer pedestrian access are critical.
- Public transport access is strong, but needs upgrades, especially at Glen Iris Station.
- Safer cycling and walking routes, especially in winter conditions, must be prioritised.

5. Deliver Certainty and Community Trust

- The community expects clear, enforceable planning rules—not vague guidelines.
- New developments must include the infrastructure and services needed to support growth.
- Certainty, accountability, and timely delivery are essential to maintain trust in the planning process.

