

# GLENFERRIE ROAD AND HIGH STREET ACTIVITY CENTRE STRUCTURE PLAN

## Planning for the centre now and in the future

### Consultation Stage Two - August 2014

#### Your feedback summarised

Stonnington City Council has commenced the preparation of a Structure Plan for the Glenferrie Road and High Street Activity Centre. The Plan will set out a vision for the look and feel of the Centre, and provide parameters for future growth and change.

The project commenced in March 2014 with Stage 1 consultation. This stage sought the community's views on key features and characteristics of the Centre, areas for improvement, and what is envisaged for the future. Similar discussions were also conducted with other stakeholders such as traders, major landholders and other key services (for example; Malvern Central). Government departments and agencies also provided comment. Some 97 residents, business owners and organisations provided feedback during the first consultation stage in March.

Stage 2 consultation on the key issues and opportunities was conducted from 18 August to 5 September 2014. This consultation sought the community's views on:

- a draft vision for the activity centre
- significant sites and what opportunities they present
- key themes including; linkages and connections; car parking; pedestrian, cycle, public transport friendly environment; and open / public space.

The next stage will involve reviewing the Draft Structure Plan which is scheduled for early 2015, with the draft Structure Plan due for completion in early 2015.

#### What you told us...

Through Stage 2 consultation the community was able to provide feedback at three discussion sessions with traders and residents. Approximately 50 residents, business owners and representatives from both Glenferrie Road and High Street Traders Associations attended the discussion sessions. The comments made through the discussions have been collated into themes. These themes are summarised below:

##### **Vision**

In summary, the visions expressed by the community were around the smart use of space, optimising opportunities, creating an accessible, people-focussed environment abundant with character and high quality amenity.

*A thriving shopping precinct – for local needs and specialist retailers for the region.*

- It is deemed beneficial to have a **mixture of regional and local functions**. There was a strong view that it would be beneficial for the centre to have a greater balance of uses to achieve its vibrancy and long term resilience by finding its niche and own unique offering.

*Vibrant, inviting, attractive and clean with well-designed, 'green' streetscapes, pedestrian connections and congregation spaces.*

- There was support for converting **more areas to green spaces**, retaining **street trees** and incorporating environmentally sustainable initiatives such as solar panels and green roofs. Amenity enhancements could include **activating public spaces** (car parks), improved lighting, public toilets, way-finding, landscaping and management of litter and graffiti.

*Developed with respect for heritage buildings which will be enhanced and remain prominent.*

- Heritage and its maintenance is deemed to be a very important element of the activity centre. There was a desire for a reasonable approach to be taken to development and protection that **balances the amenity of heritage with functional needs**.

*A centre for local employment and housing within the main streets while protecting residential areas.*

- Support for mixture of residential and retail / commercial use while **balancing the impact on existing residential amenity** and not displacing commercial uses. The scale of development should be identified and strictly managed.

### **Significant sites**

A number of significant sites have been identified in the study area. Following is a summary of the main comments relating to the opportunities at these sites:

- The **Dandenong Road gateway** is lacking in character and would benefit from a gateway treatment and improved amenity. There was a desire to protect the heritage buildings given any development in this area. Potential uses that were suggested for development in this area included aged accommodation, a cinema (the original cinema building is still in this area), and residential. It was suggested that any development should include setbacks to provide space for greenery on Glenferrie Road.
- Overall, improvements were suggested to enhance the interface, way-finding, amenity and vibrancy of **Malvern Central** at all access points, but particularly with Glenferrie Road and Malvern Station. It was suggested that the centre could have a higher built form and could be appropriate for multi-level car parking. Other suggestions were made for enhancing links to the centre, including continuing Railway Avenue over the railway line to reconnect Dandenong Road with Wattle tree Road, and continuing the laneway directly east of Malvern Central (running along the rears of shops facing the west side of Glenferrie Road). Some residents suggested a need for more entertainment features in the activity centre, eg. cinema, bars, bowling alley, music – and that the Malvern Central area would be an appropriate place for these uses.
- An opportunity was identified at the VicTrack **land between the railway line and Malvern Central** for the creation of a green corridor.
- Many suggestions were made for development over the **Malvern station** and the railway line while preserving the heritage value of the station, including Station Street / Claremont Avenue village. There were different views as to what the space should be used for, including; open space, car parking, commercial development (not necessarily retail) or residential. The need for improved accessibility to and through the station was reinforced. It was also suggested that the area could provide better for bicycle parking.
- The **Armada le station** area is seen as having great potential. Residents sought more vibrancy and activation of this area including a higher quality public realm to better provide for pedestrians and improved car parking conditions, way-finding and landscaping. Shared zones were suggested for this area and other pedestrian connections were also identified including to and through Kings Arcade / Kingsway which is also seen as a

unique environment to be enhanced. Building over the railway line was seen as an opportunity for achieving more open space in this area and also for increasing car parking supply.

- There was general support for the presence of a **health precinct along Wattletree Road** associated with Cabrini hospital. However, there was a strong view that the interface with residential areas needs to be managed, and the heritage value of the area is to be protected. It was suggested that any expansion of health services should be limited to Wattletree Road. Car parking for visitors and staff is a key issue in this area and needs to be managed. Residents reinforced the need for good pedestrian access in the area.
- The **tram depot** was identified as a site of great potential and opportunity for the activity centre. Protection of the heritage buildings was strongly supported.
- The opportunity was identified to activate the **Malvern Town Hall / civic precinct** more as a civic space. Suggestions were made to increase way-finding and to enhance pedestrian access to and through the site (eg. creating a walking circuit), and improve landscaping. Residents noted the opportunity to enhance the space around Northbrook House and the historic centre, including development of the gardens.
- There were mixed views about the current design, character and functionality of **Malvern Square** (in front of Georgio's restaurant at the corner of High Street and Glenferrie Road). Various suggestions were made for the site, including; incorporating more green into the landscape with shady trees, creepers and lawn, holding a market and other activities, making the site more level so that it can be used as more of a congregation space, and increasing public seating.
- Residents and traders stressed that all **car parks** should be retained. Further, it was noted that new developments should include parking provisions. The need was identified to improve the safety and amenity of car parks through way-finding, signage, enhanced lighting, landscaping and public toilets. Suggestions were also made to provide all-weather protection through roofing car parks, undergrounding car parks to provide for open space at-grade, and to consider removing some small buildings to create open space connections between the main streets and rear car parks. Car parks were also seen as presenting alternative opportunities, such as recreational areas when not in use. Creating multi-level car parks was suggested where there was an identified need for additional supply. To manage demand for car parking it was suggested that visitor car parking should be given priority while also providing safe areas for staff to park in longer term spaces (such as top level of multi-level car parks). Provision of bicycle parking at car parks was also suggested.

### **Theme: Pedestrian, cycle, public transport friendly environment**

Strategies for creating a pedestrian, cycling and public transport friendly environment were sought from residents and traders. The following suggestions were made:

- Residents saw streets as 'community hubs' where pedestrian access should be prioritised and the street spaces should service as community spaces. It was noted that there is conflict between pedestrians, cars, bikes and trams on Glenferrie Road. Various suggestions were made to address the street environments, including reducing speed limits, limiting turning options and creating one-way areas in and around side streets.
- Priorities for pedestrian movement were noted as; widening footpaths and developing kerb 'outstands' with shelters and seating at side street junctions. Suggestions were made for improving some linkages and local pedestrian travel routes to provide better connections throughout the activity centre.
- Opportunities were identified to better link the Kooyong Road bus route and reduce the number of express trains that pass through the train stations in order to increase provision of public transport in the centre.

- Routes for bicycle travel were suggested including safe alternatives off Glenferrie Road and High Street, as well as improved way-finding and bicycle parking facilities. The need to improve the cycling route along Glenferrie Road was highlighted and creating dedicated bike lanes along the main streets and developing an off-road bicycle route along the railway line corridor were also suggested.

#### Theme: Open / public space

- There was a view that **more open space** was required in the activity centre and that there is **not enough green space**. A need was also expressed for general streetscape improvements. The vacant King David School site was noted as an opportunity for creating additional public open space.

#### Theme: Built form

- Delicate **development** of multi-storey buildings was considered to be appropriate in the activity centre, with protection of heritage buildings and amenity from the street face (ie. through the use of set-backs, no overlooking or overshadowing). Shop top development was generally supported at appropriate sites. It was recognised that the greatest opportunity for development in the activity centre is infill at individual sites – which should occur at a scale that reflects surrounding buildings.
- Better utilising **second storeys of buildings and shop tops** for residential / office spaces was suggested.

#### Theme: Land use

- Residents were mindful of the balance between the regional and local focus of the retail sector in the centre, and expressed a strong desire for the local catchment needs to be the primary focus. Residents were mindful of the current retail environment and suggested the need to consider **alternative purposes for shops** and the potential impact of a changing retail sector.
- A need was highlighted for development and use of land to **build a sense of community** through street life and activity. There was some support to build **night time activity** in the centre, providing it is appropriately located and sensitive to surrounding residences.
- A need was identified for additional **public toilets** throughout the activity centre.

## How to find out more

The involvement of residents, traders and other interested parties in this project is important to ensure that the Structure Plan reflects the community's aspirations for the Centre, and this community involvement is highly valued by Council. Your ongoing participation is encouraged.

For further details on this project, or to register to be kept informed of future consultation opportunities, please contact City Strategy on 8290 1395 or visit Council's website at [www.stonnington.vic.gov.au/glenferriehigh](http://www.stonnington.vic.gov.au/glenferriehigh)