


This is a **summary of the report**, with the **key risks highlighted** (especially for Glen Austin AH/Ext 1).

1. What the Jan 2026 Plan Actually Is (and what it is NOT)

This report is a **Phase 2 “Policy Review and Status Quo”** document. That means:

- It sets the **baseline reality** (land use, zoning, infrastructure, environment, socio-economics)
- It identifies constraints and pressures
- It prepares the groundwork for Phase 3, where spatial proposals, precinct structuring, and land use management tools would normally be developed

 **Important:** It is *not yet* an enforcement or implementation plan.

But it provides enough evidence to argue that enforcement failures are already driving environmental and infrastructure decline.

2. Key Planning Narrative: Glen Austin is an “Interface Zone” Under Pressure

The report describes Glen Austin as being strategically located but increasingly pressured by:

- provincial road proposals
- spillover from Commercial industrial node
- unstructured internal development
- informal settlement expansion from the east
- fragmentation caused by the Gautrain line

It explicitly states that Glen Austin remains “underdeveloped” *except for*:

- illegal land uses
- scattered commercial activity
- consent-use type development creeping in

 **Planning interpretation:**

This is a classic pattern of **incremental informal intensification**, where land use change happens *before* infrastructure planning and enforcement catches up.

3. Land Use & Development Trends (This is where the red flags are)

3.1 Consent Uses are the “real engine” of change

The report shows that the dominant planning mechanism shaping Glen Austin is **Consent Use applications**, followed by rezoning and township establishment applications

Risk (as a planner):

Consent use is often used as a “soft entry” for intensification:

- guesthouses

- places of instruction
- workshops
- storage
- offices
- informal rental accommodation

And once a consent use is granted, it **often becomes a stepping stone to:**

- illegal building additions
- second dwellings
- informal subdivision by occupation
- infrastructure overload

This is especially dangerous where enforcement is weak.

3.2 Spatial clustering shows where pressure is highest

The report identifies that applications cluster along:

- **Allandale Road / Eduvos in Extension 3**
- **Old Pretoria Road in Glen Austin AH**
- other boundary interface zones

Risk for Glen Austin Ext 1:

Even if Ext 1 is not the “growth hotspot,” it is still vulnerable because:

- it sits close to the Greater Ivory Park edge
- it contains wetlands and pans
- it has weaker municipal visibility and control (large plots, long driveways, hidden backyards)

4. Glen Austin Ext 1 & AH vs Ext 3: The Report Makes a Strong Distinction

The report explicitly states:

- **AH and Ext 1** are predominantly low-density single-storey homes on large erven.
- **Ext 3** begins shifting toward medium-density near the education precinct, with walk-ups up to 3 storeys

Practical risk:

This signals that the City may eventually accept Ext 3 as a “legitimate intensification zone,” but AH/Ext 1 may become:

- a buffer area
- a dumping ground for spillover pressures

- the “quiet intensification” zone through illegal second dwellings and backyard rental

5. Infrastructure Constraints: The Report Basically Says “You Cannot Intensify Yet”

This is one of the strongest technical sections.

5.1 Water supply is already below minimum standards

The report states:

- Glen Austin relies on President Park and Rabie Ridge reservoirs (This includes Grand Central tower and reservoir)
- President Park reservoir only provides **13 hours storage**
- standard is minimum 24 hours
- a new **80 ML reservoir is proposed**

Risk:

If illegal densification happens before the reservoir is built:

- pressure drops become common
- boreholes are overused
- groundwater becomes the fallback supply system
- contamination risks increase

5.2 Sewer infrastructure is a major cross-boundary risk

The report explains Glen Austin drains into three basins and relies on treatment works operated partly by neighbouring municipalities (Ekurhuleni and Tshwane). It also states:

- Northern Works is already operating at full capacity
- future relief depends on Lanseria WWTW

Risk for Glen Austin Ext 1:

This is a big one.

If illegal development continues:

- septic tanks / soakaways become overloaded
- illegal sewer connections happen
- sewer spills increase
- wetland contamination becomes irreversible

5.3 Electricity constraints amplify informal settlement risk

The report highlights Eskom supply and notes illegal connections and overload hazards in informal/non-compliant areas

Risk:

- fires in informal electrification
- transformer overload
- service interruptions for formal properties
- rising infrastructure replacement costs

6. Environmental Condition: The Report Confirms Active Degradation

This is where the report becomes extremely relevant for your concerns.

It explicitly notes that **field observations and the Glen Austin Conservancy** confirm that wetland areas (especially the **Rietspruit wetland near Austin Road**) are being degraded by:

- sewer spillages
- illegal dumping
- informal settlement encroachment

Environmental risks:

- loss of groundwater recharge function
- loss of biodiversity corridors
- wetland collapse → increased flooding
- erosion and sedimentation
- long-term decline in ecological resilience

And the report warns wetlands must not be treated as vacant land, but as structuring elements guiding development

As an environmentalist/resident:

This is basically the report saying:

“If enforcement fails, the ecological system will fail.”

7. SWOT: The Report Quietly Describes the Enforcement Crisis

The SWOT section is one of the most useful for risk framing.

Key weaknesses relevant to Ext 1

The report notes:

- limited visibility into properties makes land use hard to assess
- properties are far from boundary roads limiting active street frontages (especially Ext 1/AH)
- limited municipal land ownership reduces City control

Translation (planning reality):

This is exactly the condition where illegal uses thrive:

- backyard factories
- boarding houses
- illegal subdividing
- illegal business operations

Key threats

The report identifies major threats including:

- uncontrolled informal settlement invasion threatening ecological assets, land use and infrastructure
- fragmented and incompatible land uses (industrial uses in residential/agricultural holdings)

This is your enforcement problem in writing.

If the City is not enforcing, the threats listed become self-fulfilling.

8. Key Risks You Should Highlight to the City / Committee (Ext 1 Focus)

Here are the biggest risks *specifically relevant to Glen Austin Ext 1 and AH*:

8.1 Risk: Wetland & groundwater system collapse

Because the report already confirms wetland degradation and sewer spillages

Impacts

- reduced groundwater recharge
- higher flood risk
- biodiversity loss
- declining property values over time

8.2 Risk: Illegal densification will overload infrastructure that is already below standard

Because the water reservoir only provides 13 hours of storage

Impacts

- water interruptions
- reliance on boreholes
- groundwater depletion and contamination

8.3 Risk: Sewer failures become permanent pollution sources

Because Northern Works is at full capacity and sewer systems rely on cross-boundary agreements

Impacts

- sewage in wetlands and pans
- odour + disease risk
- ecosystem damage becomes irreversible

8.4 Risk: Loss of semi-rural character through uncontrolled land use drift

Because the report warns about incompatible land uses and high intensity development changing Glen Austin's identity

Impacts

- increased traffic and road degradation
- noise and dust pollution
- conflicts between residents and industrial users
- decline in local environmental quality

8.5 Risk: Informal settlement encroachment becomes "locked in"

Because the report explicitly states uncontrolled invasion creates fragmented patterns that are difficult and costly to formalise

Impacts

- long-term governance failure
- service delivery crisis
- rising municipal costs

- heightened social conflict

9. The Big Planning Concern: The Plan Assumes Governance Will Work

This is **the elephant in the room**.

The report identifies constraints and pressures, but it implicitly assumes:

- development management will be controlled
- approvals will align with capacity
- land use will remain coherent
- infrastructure upgrades will happen

If enforcement is already failing, then Glen Austin is at risk of becoming a **precedent-driven development zone** where:

- illegal development happens first
- later the City **“legalises” it to avoid political fallout**
- wetlands and ecological assets are sacrificed
- infrastructure upgrades lag 10–20 years behind

This is one of the most common causes of suburban ecological collapse in Gauteng.

1-Page Committee Brief

Purpose

The Phase 2 report provides the baseline policy review and status quo assessment to inform the Glen Austin Precinct Plan. It consolidates the socioeconomic, spatial, environmental and infrastructure realities shaping the precinct and identifies priority constraints and opportunities that must guide the Phase 3 planning framework.

Strategic Context

Glen Austin is located in Region A, positioned between Johannesburg and Ekurhuleni and under increasing development pressure. Key drivers of change include planned provincial road upgrades, spillover from Commercial Industrial Node, unstructured internal development, informal settlement expansion from the east, and fragmentation caused by the Gautrain line.

The report highlights that Glen Austin is strategically located but remains underdeveloped and increasingly exposed to illegal/non-conforming land uses due to the absence of a guiding precinct framework.

Key Land Use & Development Trends

The report confirms Glen Austin is transforming unevenly across its sub-areas:

- **Glen Austin AH + Extension 1** remain predominantly low-density residential holdings.
- **Glen Austin Extension 3** is shifting more rapidly toward intensification, especially around the education precinct, where medium-density development is emerging.

Development applications have increased significantly in recent years, driven largely by consent uses, rezonings and site development plans, indicating incremental intensification rather than major township establishment.

Applications are spatially concentrated along key corridors and edges, particularly around Allandale Road and the Eduvos campus in Extension 3, and along Old Pretoria Road in Glen Austin AH.

Infrastructure Constraints (Key Development Gating Factors)

The report identifies major bulk service constraints limiting future development potential:

Water Supply

- President Park Reservoir currently provides only 13 hours of storage (below the 24-hour minimum standard).
- A proposed 80 ML reservoir is identified as essential for future growth.

Sewer/Wastewater

- Glen Austin falls into three sewer basins linked to Olifantsfontein (Ekurhuleni), Sunderland Ridge (Tshwane), and Northern Works (Johannesburg).
- Northern Works is operating at full capacity and future capacity depends on cross-boundary coordination and the planned Lanseria WWTW.

Electricity

- Eskom supplies the precinct, but reliability is impacted by load shedding, network constraints, and illegal connections in informal/non-compliant areas.

Environmental and Climate Risk

The report highlights Glen Austin as environmentally sensitive due to wetlands, pans and groundwater systems. It identifies increasing wetland degradation (notably near Austin Road/Rietspruit) linked to sewer spillages, illegal dumping and informal settlement encroachment.

Environmental assets are positioned as structuring elements that must guide development, rather than being treated as vacant land.

SWOT Summary (Strategic Implications)

Strengths

- Large plot sizes allow flexible secondary uses such as small-scale agriculture, home enterprises and additional accommodation.

Weaknesses

- Limited street frontage activation, particularly in Glen Austin AH and Extension 1, where properties are located far from boundary roads.
- Limited municipal land ownership reduces direct public sector control over development outcomes.

Opportunities

- Strategic parcels near metropolitan nodes present potential for higher-intensity mixed-use infill development.

Threats

- Informal settlement expansion threatens ecological assets, planned land uses and infrastructure capacity, and increases long-term formalisation costs.
- Fragmented and incompatible land uses (industrial activity within residential/agricultural holdings).

Key Committee Takeaway

The January 2026 Phase 2 report confirms Glen Austin has strong long-term infill potential but is constrained by bulk infrastructure capacity, environmental vulnerability, and increasing informal encroachment. It highlights the need for a differentiated precinct response:

AH/Ext 1 require stronger environmental and land use protection, while Ext 3 is the primary intensification and corridor growth opportunity area.