



LANDCORP

Midlands Centres

Growing our Community

An Economic Development and Implementation Strategy



**ROYALTIES
FOR REGIONS**



Wheatbelt
Development
Commission

Document Control

This document has been endorsed by:

Wheatbelt Development Commission Board

Shire of Dalwallinu

Shire of Moora

Shire of Wongan – Ballidu

Midlands Centres Reference Group

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The Wheatbelt is a region of enormous opportunity. Its proximity to markets, diverse productive landscapes, strong economic base, its people and their strong sense of community, are all foundations for growth which contribute to the State's prosperity.

Welcome



Tim Shackleton

Chair

Wheatbelt Development Commission

In this exciting time of growth in our region, the Wheatbelt Development Commission is pleased to be involved in the Growth Planning process committed to the future of Dalwallinu, Moora and Wongan Hills.

This aspirational plan will greatly assist the expansion of industry, services and infrastructure to ensure readiness in supporting a population of 15,000 by 2050, in line with the State's projected population and economic growth.

The strategies outlined will position the Midlands Centres to build competitive advantage and economic drivers to showcase their contribution to the State's prosperity.

As a regional development organisation, the Wheatbelt Development Commission has played a responsive role to ensure the broader potential of the Central Midlands Sub-Region is recognised. An innovative partnership between the Wheatbelt Development Commission, LandCorp and community representatives within Midlands Centres has enforced the leadership and responsibility of the centres.

The process has been supported by the Department of Regional Development and LandCorp, with funding assistance from Royalties for Regions (RfR). It has involved extensive consultation with local, regional and State stakeholders and we thank each for their input and expertise. Ongoing consultation will continue to address strengths, inhibitors and opportunities for economic growth.

The Wheatbelt Development Commission is proud to be pioneering this model for delivering regional development and looks forward to future collaboration with the State Government and Shire's of Dalwallinu, Moora and Wongan-Ballidu, to ensure that strategic planning and investment result in productive growth.



Ian Seymour
Chair
Midlands Centres Reference Group

On behalf of the Midlands Centres, I would like to commend the State Government for providing its expertise and support in developing this Strategy. The vision for the strategy is:

“Economically and socially sound communities that enhance the Midlands Centres attractiveness to visitors, prospective residents and business partners to provide services and infrastructure to support a vibrant rural community.”

By identifying the strengths of these communities and the economic opportunities that will drive growth, we have been able to arrive at those priority initiatives that will ensure future prosperity.

We look forward to an ongoing collaborative approach across community, not for profit, private and public sectors to deliver on the opportunities identified in this strategy.

Midlands Centres Project Team



Wheatbelt Development Commission



LandCorp



RPS Group

**Midlands Centres
Reference Group**

Ian Seymour (Chairman), Tim Boekeman, Anita Dickens, Jo Fitzpatrick, Louise House, Braden Meers

Key Stakeholders



Shire of Dalwallinu
58 Johnston Street
Dalwallinu WA 6609
Phone: (08) 9661 0500
Email: shire@dalwallinu.wa.gov.au
Website: www.dalwallinu.wa.gov.au



Shire of Moora
34 Padbury Street
Moora WA 6510
Phone: (08) 9651 0000
Email: moorashire@wn.com.au
Website: www.moora.wa.gov.au



Shire of Wongan-Ballidu
Corner of Quinlan Street & Elphin Crescent
Wongan Hills WA 6603
Phone: (08) 9671 1011
Email: shire@wongan.wa.gov.au
Website: www.wongan.wa.gov.au

The Wheatbelt Development Commission and LandCorp would like to thank the Shire of Dalwallinu, Shire of Moora, Shire of Wongan-Ballidu, Midlands Centres Reference Group, RPS and many State Government agencies for their assistance in developing this document.

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The consultant team would like to acknowledge the traditional owners and their forebears who have been custodians of this country for many centuries, and on which their community have performed age old ceremonies of celebration, initiation and renewal. We acknowledge their living culture and unique role in the life of this region.

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Executive Summary

‘Growing our Community’ – An Economic Development and Implementation Strategy for the Midlands Centres (the Plan) provides a vision and guiding principles to enable economic growth and enhance prosperity and well-being for the communities of the Shires of Dalwallinu, Moora and Wongan-Ballidu (*the Midlands Centres*). The Plan includes actions, projects and initiatives to promote and share the benefits of growth across the sub-region and accommodate a population of approximately 15,000 in the Midlands Centres by 2050. This Plan has been prepared by the Wheatbelt Development Commission and LandCorp in collaboration with stakeholders and the communities of the region.

Vision for the Midlands Centres:

“Economically and socially sound communities that enhance the Midlands Centres attractiveness to visitors, prospective residents and business partners to provide services and infrastructure to support a vibrant rural community.”



Guiding Principles

The Plan identifies six key areas to focus on to achieve the vision.

Economy (page 47)

The Midland Centres will build on its diverse and thriving business, industry and service hubs where innovative opportunities are actively pursued and fostered through:

- Being proactive in attracting new business to the Midland Centres and encouraging existing businesses to grow.
- Improving the level and range of local employment opportunities.
- Attraction and retention of knowledge and investment, people and skills.
- Supportive business environments.
- Sustainable growth supported by innovative industry.

Communities (page 55)

The Midland Centres will build on relaxed, family friendly communities with healthy lifestyles with a wealth of activities for all. This will be achieved by:

- Creating a healthy, active, safe and informed community.
- Encouraging community participation and involvement.
- Creating affordable and accessible services that meet community expectations.
- Founding a high quality of life for the people of Midlands Centres.
- Enjoying a diverse range of social, recreational and volunteer opportunities.
- Respecting diversity and being inclusive of all peoples.
- Celebrating the Midlands Centres rich cultural heritage.
- Building on the Midlands Centres emerging arts and cultural scene.
- Encouraging community driven attraction and delivery of social services.

Built Form and Housing (page 64)

The built form and housing will capture the character and setting of the Midland Centres; connecting people and places and integrating sustainable infrastructure that meets the needs of the growing community and economy by:

- Creating active and vibrant spaces.
- Developing well connected and liveable communities.
- Encouraging design elements to celebrate communities.
- Supporting sustainable building and infrastructure design.

Infrastructure (page 70)

Pursue the delivery of timely, sustainable, integrated and high quality, modern infrastructure to meet the social, economic and environmental needs that will create well connected, liveable communities with sustainable employment opportunities by:

- Enhancing the Midlands Centres appeal for lifestyle and business development.
- Encouraging energy efficiency and sustainability.
- Adopting a whole-of-government approach towards infrastructure provision to meet the current and future needs for growth.
- Providing quality regional infrastructure to facilitate appropriate population growth.
- Improving investment in regional infrastructure to ensure greater prosperity, productivity and growth of the communities.
- Supporting public-private partnerships and other arrangements to deliver efficient and timely infrastructure projects.
- Consolidating sport and recreation facilities.

Natural Environment (page 87)

The environmental values and natural resources of the Midland Centres need to be protected for the benefit of current and future generations while providing appropriate development opportunities. This can be achieved by:

- Maintaining and enhancing the natural environment, addressing risk areas.
- Achieving environmentally sustainable and economically viable management of waste.
- The development of sustainable town sites, integrating natural elements and connection to the environment.
- Responsible access, use and enjoyment of the natural environment.
- Having a strong connection with the environment.

Governance (page 91)

The Midlands Centres will embrace collaborative and proactive leadership delivering on the values and aspirations of the communities through:

- Effective resourcing and management of Local Government activities.
- Effectively using any established and formal collaborative bodies to provide efficient, cost effective regional solutions.
- Providing positive leadership within the Sub-Region.
- Becoming customer focused.
- Ensuring open and representative decision-making processes.
- Achieving community support for the Sub-Region's Strategic Plans and Growth Planning.
- Delivering a cross-organisational approach delivered through strategic partnerships.
- Focusing on delivering shared outcomes and;
- Monitoring triggers in the Plan.

Priority Projects and Initiatives

Several key projects and initiatives for the Midlands Centres have been identified for both Local and State Governments and will help to implement the Plan's vision. The Midlands Centres Reference Group, in conjunction with the Shires of Dalwallinu, Moora and Wongan-Ballidu, has identified 13 priority projects and initiatives for the Plan period 2015 to 2050. They are:

- *Midlands Centres Industry Development Infrastructure*
- *Midlands Centres Marketing Strategy*
- *Housing*
- *Dalwallinu Business Incubator Units*
- *Development of Mocardy Centre*
- *Moora and Adjacent Areas – Development of Ground Water Resources*
- *Midlands Centres Transport Strategy*
- *Aged Care*
- *Innovation Central Midlands Inc. (ICM)*
- *Midlands Centres Total Water Management*
- *Tourism*
- *Midlands Centres Airfield Development*
- *Digital Midlands Centres*

Refer to the Implementation Plan in Appendix 16.0 for more information on these priority projects and initiatives.

The priority projects are of significance to the Central Midlands Sub-Region, impacting in and across the Midlands Centres of Dalwallinu, Moora and Wongan Hills. These relate to the key economic drivers of the sub-region including agriculture, peri-urban and rural living, tourism, mining, manufacturing and health. These projects will enable population and economic growth; encouraging more people to choose to live and work in the Midlands Centres Communities.





Introduction

The Purpose of ‘Growing our Community’

The Midlands Centres comprises of the three Local Governments of Dalwallinu, Moora and Wongan-Ballidu. This area is home to approximately 5,176¹ people (2013 ERP of 5,341²). This Plan sets the vision and guiding principles for the development of the Midlands Centres until 2050. The Midlands Centres and the broader Central Midlands Sub-Region will experience the benefits that stem from growth achieved by successfully implementing the actions, projects and initiatives as outlined within this document.

The Central Midlands Sub-Region is well placed to accommodate growth, with regional wealth in natural amenities and attractions, existing infrastructure and functional, sustainable communities. Specifically, the LGA's of Dalwallinu, Moora and Wongan-Ballidu possess unique comparative strengths complementing one another, making these three Midlands Centres a logical grouping.

Implementing the strategies and projects in the Plan will attract investment and enable people to take advantage of the significant opportunities available throughout the Midlands Centres while acknowledging that each LGA possesses a unique set of demographics, business and infrastructure characteristics and plays a different role in the sub-region.

To best accommodate growth, the Midlands Centres must adopt a collaborative approach. Universal challenges such as housing shortages and infrastructure limitations can be best resolved collaboratively. This Plan will guide decisions on a wide range of issues such as transport, infrastructure planning, cultural heritage, land-use planning, environment and resource protection in the interest of creating a clear picture to support investment decision making and promoting economic prosperity.

The Plan provides a foundation to enable sustainable economic development and strengthens communities where people live, work and play. Natural environmental features and distinctive local character is identified and provides further opportunities for regional growth.

Future economic growth and dynamism of the Midlands Centres will be delivered through key growth themes of agriculture, horticulture and livestock, peri-urban and rural living, mining, manufacturing and support services, health and aged care and tourism. These areas will drive population growth, encouraging more people to choose to live and work in the Midlands Centres and the Central Midlands Sub-Region.

The Plan will ensure that the three centres support growth and innovation in a wide variety of businesses and industries. Sustained and improved business activity of all kinds and at all scales will contribute to a stronger regional economy and leadership for improving the way in which the towns will grow in the long term.

The Plan does not replace the existing planning framework but works with it to provide growth management direction to create attractive places designed to sustain happy, healthy and safe communities to meet people's needs and aspirations throughout their lives. This is important for

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¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics. 2011. Shire Of Wongan-Ballidu, Dalwallinu & Moora Basic Community Profile

² Australian Bureau of Statistics. 2013. Estimated Resident Population (ERP)



attracting new businesses and skilled workers who will play a major role in the economic success and growth of the Sub-region.

By making the towns more desirable places to live and work in, the Plan will ensure that the Midlands Centres and the broader Central Midlands Sub-Region will be the focus for good quality community infrastructure and services to support future growth. It also provides the opportunity for improved communication to enable collaboration with stakeholders to work towards a shared vision and goals for the future.

About this Document

The Plan sets out the community’s vision for the sustained growth of the Midlands Centres. It clearly integrates economic, community and environmental initiatives to establish economic growth drivers and identifies key priority actions and projects to guide population growth and retention into the future.

The Plan is a non-statutory action plan which is designed to provide a sound basis for future sub-regional and local infrastructure planning and investment decisions. The true strength of the Plan is that it has the flexibility to embrace the individual needs and aspirations of the communities in an integrated way and therefore guide the preparation of more specialised planning and service delivery.

An Implementation Schedule has been included under each Guiding Principle and contains all actions for growth, including the key priorities and projects for the short, medium and long-term. All of the timeframes referred to in the Plan are indicative as per Table 1 unless otherwise specified. The projects and priorities will continue to be refined and reprioritised as the Plan is reviewed over the period.

Table 1: Implementation Timeframes

Short-term	2015 – 2020
Medium-term	2020 – 2030
Long-term	2030 – 2050

Context

Regional Centres Development Program

With the population forecast to double in Western Australia by 2050, the State Government, through Royalties for Regions, established the Regional Centres Development Program in 2011. This program encourages regional communities to accelerate their local planning processes to ensure settlements are well prepared to take advantage of opportunities arising from future economic opportunities and population growth.

Dalwallinu, Moora and Wongan Hills, as Regional Centres for the Central Midlands, were selected along with Merredin for Central East and Greater Narrogin for Wheatbelt South to have a growth plan created with assistance from the Wheatbelt Development Commission.

The Wheatbelt Development Commission was tasked with undertaking a growth planning process to analyse the driving forces, pressures, impacts and responses for growth and identify transformational projects. Royalties for Regions funding was made available to the Project Team to support this process in addition to the development of an implementation strategy.

The State Government's vision for Regional Development:

Regional Western Australia will continue to be a key contributor to the nation's well-being. The future success of rural and regional areas will depend on attracting investors and visitors, encouraging new residents to settle, and enabling existing residents to remain.

The facilities and services in rural and regional areas of the State will provide good opportunities for accommodation and employment, high standards of health and education, and offer a lifestyle that is safe and enjoyable.

People living in regional Western Australia will have opportunities to be involved in local decision making to set the direction of their communities³.

³ Regional Development Council, 2011. Regional Development Policy Framework – An Action Agenda for Regional Development.

Approach

This Plan has been developed by LandCorp in partnership with the Wheatbelt Development Commission (WDC). The Plan has come together using collaborative consulting where the WDC has been actively involved in its development by collecting data, providing strategic overview and conducting stakeholder consultation. This approach is highly advantageous as it:

- Draws on the WDC's existing resources to support data collection and consultation tasks;
- Uses the WDC's knowledge of the Sub-Region to assist with the Plan's development; and
- Utilises each agencies strength's in developing the Plan.

Information contained within the Plan has been sourced from Local Government documents (see References), the Central Midlands Sub-Regional Economic Strategy developed by RPS, consultation with State Agencies and Local Governments and regular meetings with the Midlands Centres Reference Group which was made up of government, business and community stakeholders. This is demonstrated in Figure 1 below.

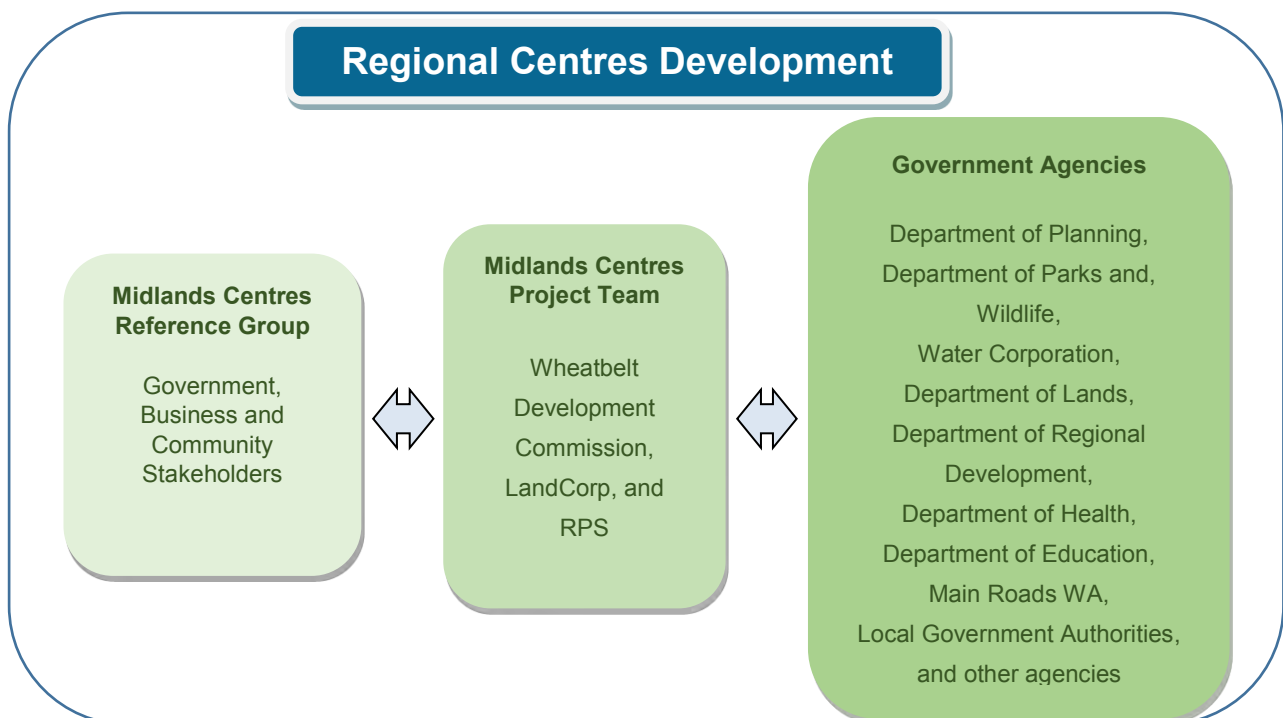


Figure 1: State and Local Agencies and organisations involved in the development of the Plan

Figure 2 demonstrates how this Plan fits into the Western Australian State Planning and Regional Development Framework. The Plan is a non-statutory, sub-regional level document that will inform Local and State Government priorities.

The Department of Regional Development, the Wheatbelt Development Commission and Department of Lands will use this Plan to assist in prioritising Government Agency priorities within the Sub-Region. State Government Agency input has been sought into the planning process and agencies will now incorporate the Plan's vision and population scenarios into their regular planning and forecasting for the Sub-Region.

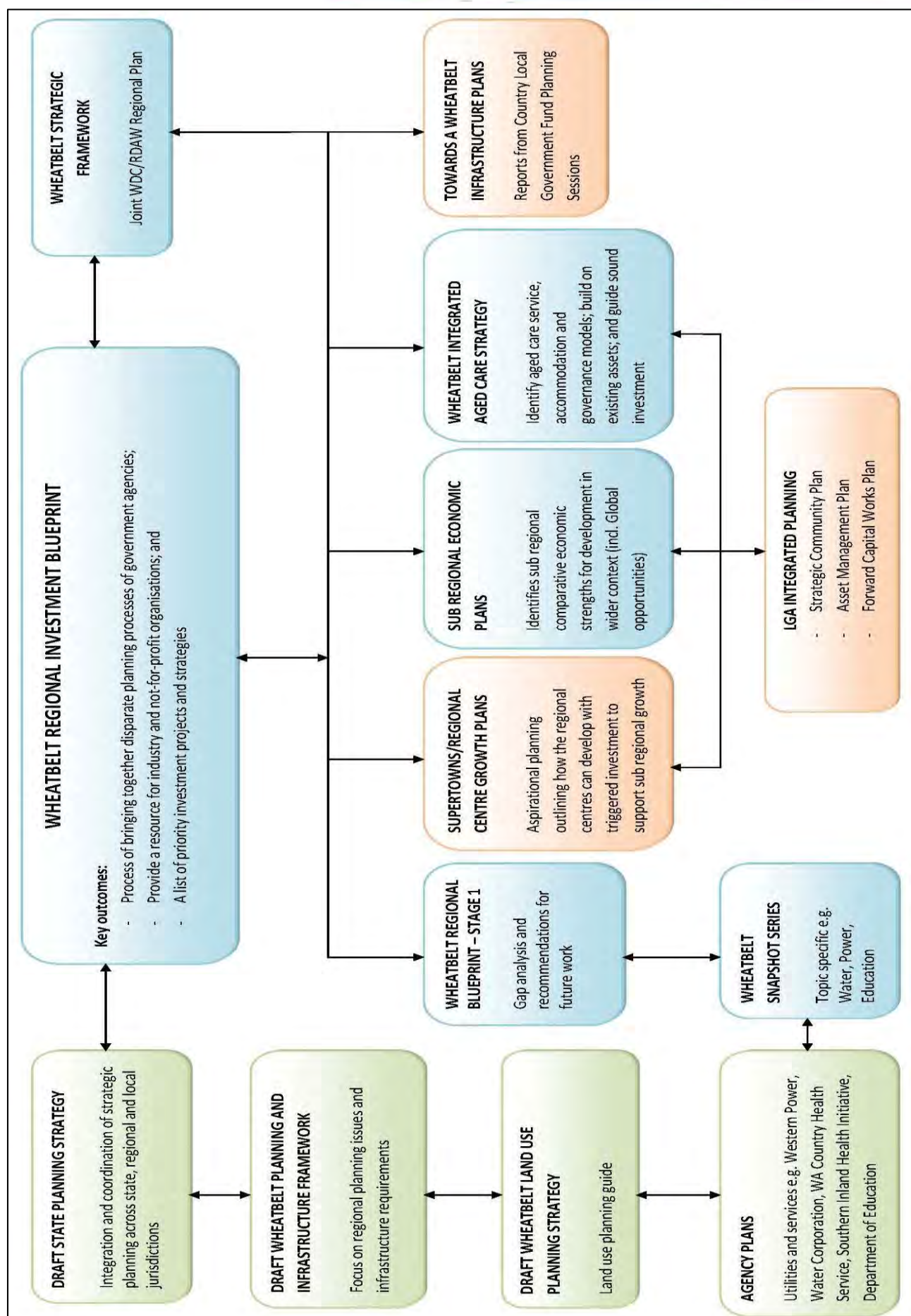


Figure 2: Strategic Framework Flow Chart

The Wheatbelt Region

The Wheatbelt comprises an area of 154,862 square kilometres, more than twice the size of Tasmania. It is home to over 75,000 people⁴, making it the third most populous Region in the State. The Wheatbelt has a diverse population, with around 5% of the population of Indigenous descent and over 15% born overseas. Over 10% of the population is aged 15-24 years, with 13% aged 65 and over. The median age is approximately 37 years. The population is widely dispersed with around 16,000 people located in the main service centres of Northam, Narrogin, Merredin and Moora⁵.

The Region has well-developed transport links, with most major highways and rail routes connecting to Perth. The Wheatbelt has 35% of the State's roads and easy access to the Port of Fremantle and regional ports at Geraldton, Bunbury, Albany and Esperance⁵.

The Region has extensive educational, health, recreational and cultural services and is home to the Central Regional TAFE (formerly C.Y. O'Connor Institute) and Muresk Education Campus. The Region also offers affordable housing and business premises, including established industrial precincts ideal for manufacturing and new industry⁵.



Figure 3: The Wheatbelt Region of Western Australia

⁴ Department of Regional Development, 2014. Wheatbelt: a Region in Profile

⁵ RPS. 2015. Wheatbelt Blueprint: A Vision for a Vibrant Future

Central Midlands Sub-Region

The Central Midlands Sub-Region is made up of five Shires: Chittering, Dalwallinu, Moora, Wongan-Ballidu and Victoria Plains. In this Plan, only three of the five LGAs, Dalwallinu, Wongan-Ballidu and Moora are examined due to their roles as regional centres and in terms of their economic development and implementation strategy for growth as 'one'. Therefore, the term 'Midlands Centres' will be used to reference these three local governments (LGAs) throughout the document (Figure 4). The remaining LGA's of the Central Midlands Sub-Region are not considered in the context of this Plan. Victoria Plains is a highly specialised centre and Chittering is identified within the Central Midlands Sub-Regional Economic Strategy as strongly aligned with the Central Coast Sub-Region and its social and economic drivers.

The Central Midlands Sub-Region is home to an Estimated Residential Population (ABS-ERP) of 10,755⁶ people across five LGAs and is renowned for its diverse economic structure and drivers and myriad communities and townships. Extending from the north of the Greater Perth Region to the Mid-West Region, the Sub-Region is playing an important role in helping to diversify and decentralise Western Australia's projected population growth.

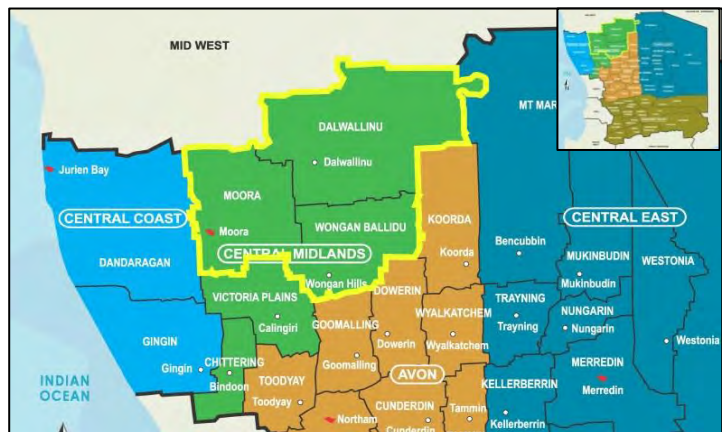


Figure 4: The Central Midlands (Green) & Midlands Centres (Yellow Border)

Midlands Centres

The Midlands Centres are a 2-3hr drive north of Perth and have a high standard of infrastructure including rail (grain freight), highway access (Great Northern Highway, Midlands Rd, Brand Highway and Northam-Pithara Rd), water supply and power. Social and economic infrastructure also includes a highly recognised district hospital, aged care services, recreation complexes, primary schools, district high schools, senior high school & residential college, Central Regional TAFE Campus, supermarkets, specialty shops, cafes, pubs and restaurants⁶.

Table 2: Distances To Midlands Centres & Perth

Location	Moora (km)	Wongan Hills (km)	Dalwallinu (km)
Moora	-	88.3	105.4
Wongan Hills	88.3	-	74.8
Dalwallinu	105.4	74.8	-
Perth	171.4	192.5	263

Table 3: Local Government Area (km²)⁶

LGA	km ²
Moora	3,763
Wongan Hills	3,365.1
Dalwallinu	7,227
Total Area	14,355.2

⁶ RPS. 2014. Central Midlands Sub-Regional Economic Strategy

Demographics

Table 4 below illustrates the demographic profile of the Shires which comprise the Midlands Centres, the Central Midlands Sub-Region and Western Australia. Midlands Centres contains 49% (5,176) of the Central Midlands population (10,498). The gender balance is relatively neutral, with 51.4% being male and females 48.5%. The medium age varies by LGA (38-40), however is above the WA median (36) indicating an ageing population.

Table 4: Demographic Profile Of Dalwallinu (Shire)⁷, Moora (Shire)⁸, Wongan-Ballidu (Shire)⁹, Midlands Centres, Central Midlands Sub-Region¹⁰ & Western Australia¹¹

	Shire of Dalwallinu	Shire of Moora	Shire of Wongan-Ballidu	Midlands Centres (Shire Total)	Total Central Midlands Sub-Region	Western Australia
People	1,266	2,476	1,434	5,176	10,498	2,239,170
Male	678	1,246	738	2,662	5,413	1,126,178
Female	588	1,230	696	2,514	5,085	1,126,178
Median Age	40	37	38	n/a	n/a	36
Families	332	660	376	1,368	2,863	585,311
Average Children Per Family	2.1	1.9	2.0	n/a	n/a	1.9
Private Dwellings	677	1,084	770	2,531	4,930	960,717
Average People Per Household	2.5	2.5	2.4	n/a	n/a	2.6
Median Weekly Household Income	\$1,171	\$1,180	\$1,172	n/a	n/a	\$1,415
Median Monthly Mortgage Repayments	\$953	\$919	\$975	n/a	n/a	\$1,950
Median Weekly Rent	\$110	\$125	\$114	n/a	n/a	\$300
Average Motor Vehicles Per Dwelling	2.2	2.2	1.9	n/a	n/a	1.9
Children Aged 0-14 Years (% Of Population)	19.6	22.2	23.9	22.0	22.0	19.7

Age Profile

Figure 5 shows a sizeable 0-14 age cohort representation in the Shires of Moora and Wongan-Ballidu in comparison to the overall population breakdown. The Dalwallinu 0-14 age cohort however is less pronounced and the number of those aged 0-14 is more homogenous with the overall age cohort representation. Dalwallinu's trend would indicate a level of stagnation in terms of population growth; however, the Australian Bureau of Statistics does not accurately capture 457 visa holders (migrant workers) which are in addition to the ABS 2011 Census. The Shire has estimated this cohort would equate to 15% of the Shires population¹². Therefore the statistics don't represent current trends for Dalwallinu's population accurately. Overall, Moora has a very large youth population, a result of the centres advantages in the provision of regionally significant education services. In addition, there is a sizeable aged demographic present, likely a result of the Moora Hospital, ancillary medical services and aged care housing and services within the Shire.

⁷ Australian Bureau of Statistics. 2011. Quickstats Dalwallinu

⁸ Australian Bureau of Statistics. 2011. Quickstats Moora

⁹ Australian Bureau of Statistics. 2011. Quickstats Wongan Ballidu

¹⁰ RPS. 2014. Central Midlands Sub-Regional Economic Strategy

¹¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics. 2011. Quickstats Western Australia

¹² Shire Of Dalwallinu. 2015. Unpublished Statistics

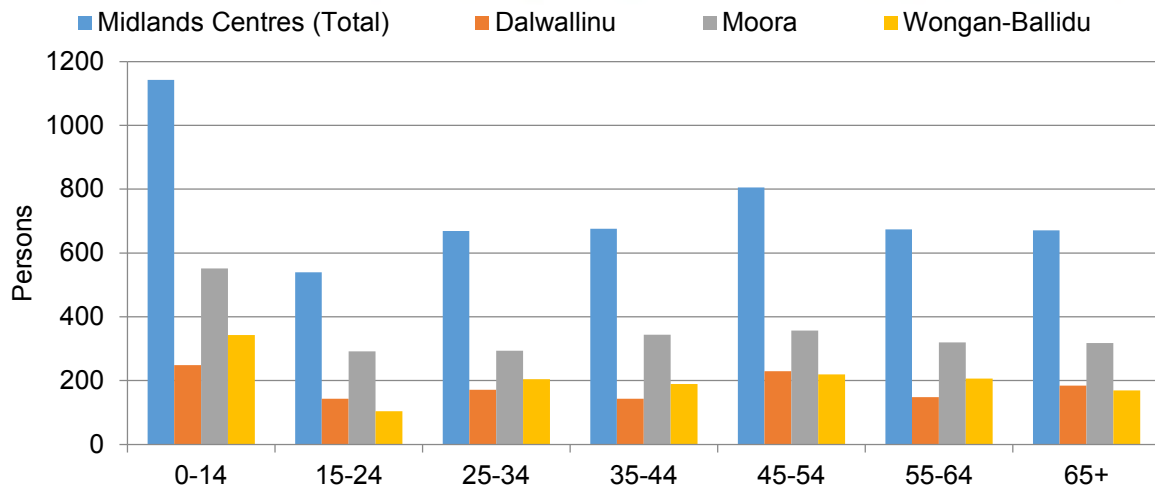


Figure 5: Population Breakdown By Age¹³

A relatively large proportion of those in the 25-44 age cohort represent the emergence of the family demographic within the Midlands Centres region, illustrated in reviewing Figure 5 & 6 together. The number of households with couples (no kids) and single persons indicates future capacity for population growth (discounting aged single persons & couples).

The younger persons within the 15-34 age cohort are likely to leave the Midlands Centres area due to economic and social factors, a common trend across Western Australia's regions. In many cases it is to pursue education or employment opportunities. However the 25-34 age cohort shows strong increase in numbers and it is therefore likely that inward migration is reducing the impact of outward migration of the young adult demographic.

The age cohort 35-65+ in Wongan-Ballidu is impacted by a strong economic and social driver operating in the Central Midlands Region. Wongan-Ballidu has a strong lifestyle, natural amenity and rural residential character in its communities. Trends indicate that lifestyle and retirement have been a strong population growth factor in the expansion of Wongan Hills, a result of this economic/social driver.

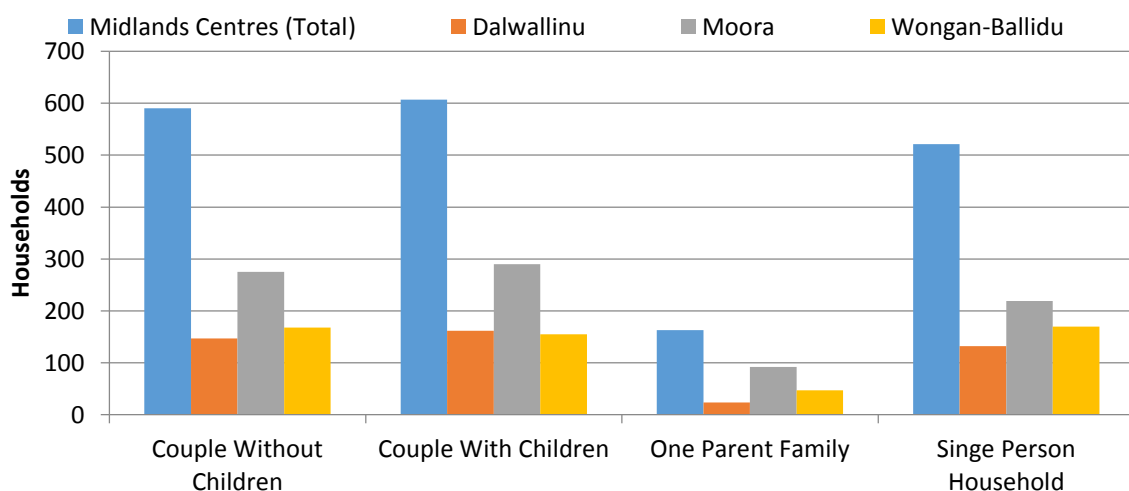


Figure 6: Household Composition By Family Status¹³

¹³ Australian Bureau of Statistics. 2011. Shire of Wongan-Ballidu, Moora & Dalwallinu Basic Community Profile

Growth Scenarios

Growth scenarios and population projections are an effective method of planning the priority actions, projects and initiatives required to implement the Plan's vision. Figure 7 outlines the growth scenarios for the Central Midlands Sub-Region, while Figure 8 examines the Midland Centres. Figure 9 provides an examination of the growth scenarios by local government. The projects utilise annual average growth rates in contrast with the 'business as usual' Band C projection from the Western Australian Planning Commission due to the economic drivers identified by RPS for the Central Midlands Sub-Region.

This Plan's population scenarios require the mid-line projection identified in Figure 9 to be achieved to meet the 2050 population target of approximately 15,000 people in the Midlands Centres. Each of the Local Governments must take a positive approach to increasing the population and actively work to achieve the required targets. All three Local Governments have experienced varying degrees of growth over the last decade and this requires consideration when planning for future growth.

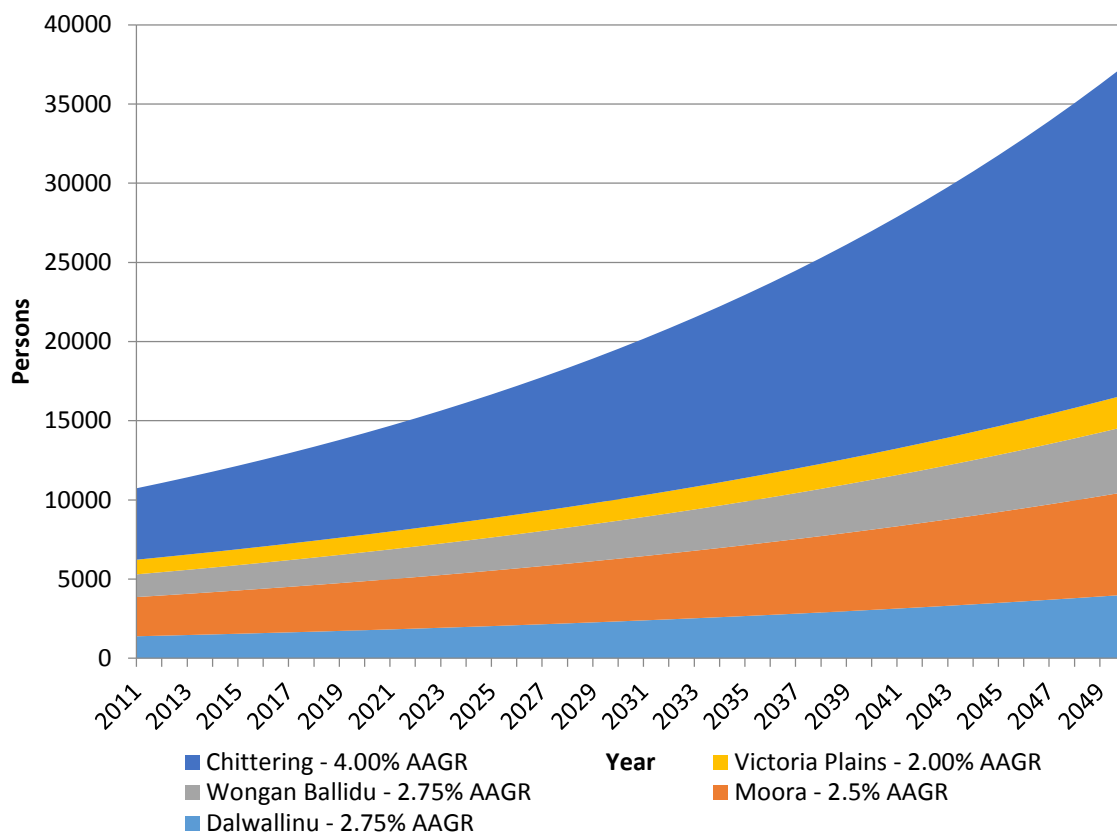


Figure 7: Central Midlands Population Projection (Source: WDC)

Central Midlands Sub-Region:

Figure 7 outlines the Central Midlands Sub-Region, incorporating the LGA's of Dalwallinu, Moora, Wongan-Ballidu with the LGA's of Victoria Plains and Chittering. Chittering is expected to see high growth due to its boundary abutting the Perth Metropolitan Region. Meanwhile, Victoria Plains is unlikely to grow as quickly, due to constrained centres (New Norcia) and the existing and well-defined regional centres of the Midlands Centres.

- The Shire of Chittering will grow at an AAGR of 4%. It is increasingly being included as part of the Central Coast Sub-Region and not the Central Midlands due to similarities in economic and population growth drivers.
- The Central Midlands (excluding the Shire of Chittering) will grow to 16,362 in 2050 from 6,246 as of 2011 (2.5% AAGR).
- The Shires of Dalwallinu and Wongan-Ballidu will grow at an AAGR of 2.75%. They will grow faster due to their industry and lifestyle drivers.
- The Shire of Victoria Plains will grow at a lower AAGR of 2%. This is a result of constraints (geography, constrained/specialised existing centres and economic drivers).
- The Shire of Moora will grow faster than the Shire of Victoria Plains at 2.5%, but slower than the Shires of Dalwallinu and Wongan-Ballidu (2.75% due to distance to major highway and traditional growth as a service centre).

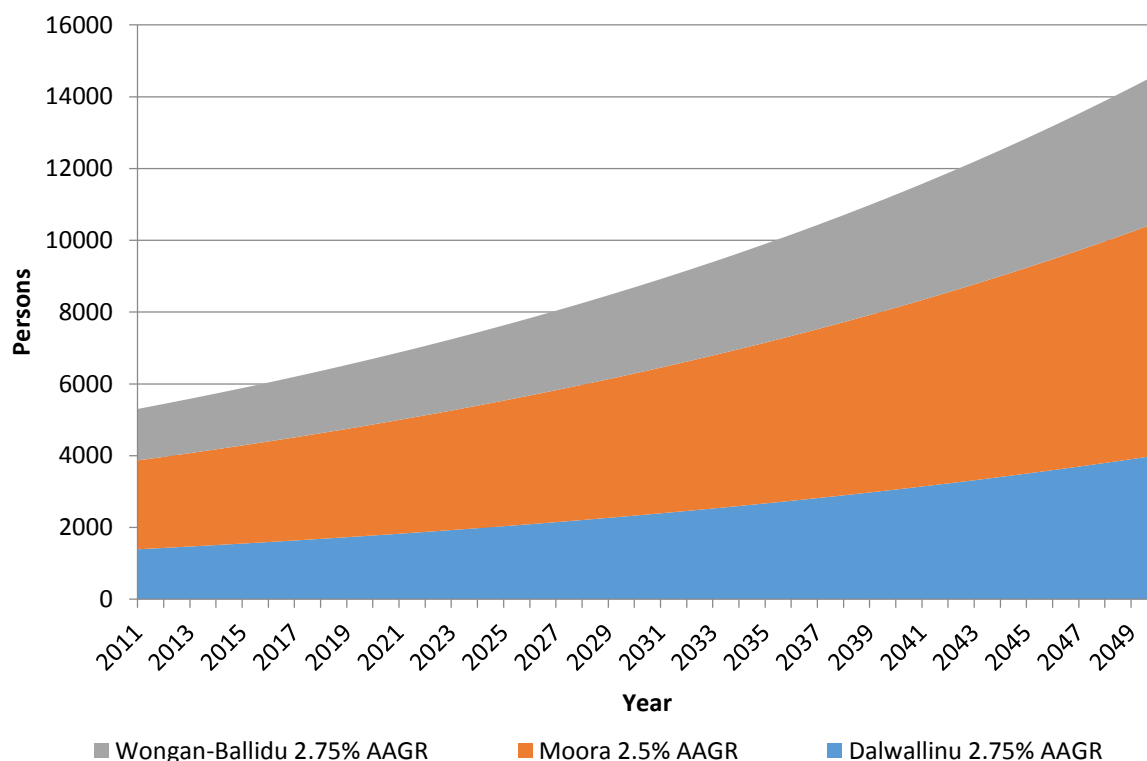


Figure 8: Midlands Centres Population Projection (Source: WDC)

Figure 8 shows the Midlands Centres population growth scenario as a result of the mid-line AAGR projections from the Shires of Dalwallinu, Moora and Wongan-Ballidu. These projections are a result of economic analysis conducted through the Wheatbelt Regional Investment Blueprint and through detailed research in the preparation of the Central Midlands Sub-Regional Economic Strategy.

Moora as an important service hub is expected to continue to experience population growth (AAGR 2.5%); however the current smaller population centres of Dalwallinu and Wongan-Ballidu are expected to experience stronger population growth (AAGR 2.75%). These two centres have a relatively smaller population as a starting base in comparison to Moora (Moora 41% share of the Midland Centres population in 2011 compared to Dalwallinu – 21% and Wongan Ballidu – 23%). They also have strong growth industries (Dalwallinu – manufacturing, heavy & light industry, Wongan-Ballidu – lifestyle and amenity led development and agricultural service growth)¹⁴.

¹⁴ RPS, 2014. Central Midlands Sub-Regional Economic Strategy

Midland Centres (Local Governments)

The projects utilise annual average growth rates in contrast with the 'business as usual' Band C projection from the Western Australian Planning Commission. Three population scenarios are included for each Local Government, low, medium and high annual average growth rate (AAGR) scenarios based on the sub-regional economic planning and analysis conducted on the sub-region.

Shire of Dalwallinu

- The population of the Shire of Dalwallinu decreased by 7.5% between 2006 and 2011¹⁵.
- Visa workforce numbers have a major impact on Dalwallinu, with 457 visa immigration arrangements accounting for approximately 15% of the population which is not recorded in the Census. The Shire indicates that 10% population growth has occurred since 2011 to 2015. As of February 2015 there were 96 residents on 457 visas or dependent on 457 visa holders¹⁶.
- The WAPC population projections predict the population will decrease to around 1,190 people by 2026¹⁷.
- Projection - As of 2011, the population stands at 1,392 (including persons under 457 visa immigration arrangements)¹⁵. A mid-line AAGR of 2.75% will result in a population of 2,395 in 2031 and 4,010 by 2050.

Shire of Moora

- The population of the Shire of Moora increased by 2.7% between 2006 and 2011¹⁸.
- The WAPC population projections predict the population will decrease to around 2,180 people by 2026¹⁷.
- Projection – As of 2011, the population stands at 2,476¹⁸. A mid-line AAGR of 2.5% will result in a population of 4,057 in 2031 and 6,486 by 2050.

Shire of Wongan-Ballidu

- The population of the Shire of Wongan-Ballidu increased by 3.5% between 2006 and 2011¹⁹.
- The WAPC population projections predict the population will decrease to around 1,460 people by 2026.
- Projection – As of 2011, the population stands at 1,434¹⁹. A mid-line AAGR of 2.75% will result in a population of 2,467 in 2031 and 4131 by 2050.

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¹⁵ Australian Bureau of Statistics. 2011. Quickstats Dalwallinu

¹⁶ Shire Of Dalwallinu. 2015. Unpublished Statistics

¹⁷ WAPC. 2012. WA Tomorrow Band C Population Projections

¹⁸ Australian Bureau of Statistics. 2011. Quickstats Moora

¹⁹ Australian Bureau of Statistics. 2011. Quickstats Wongan Ballidu

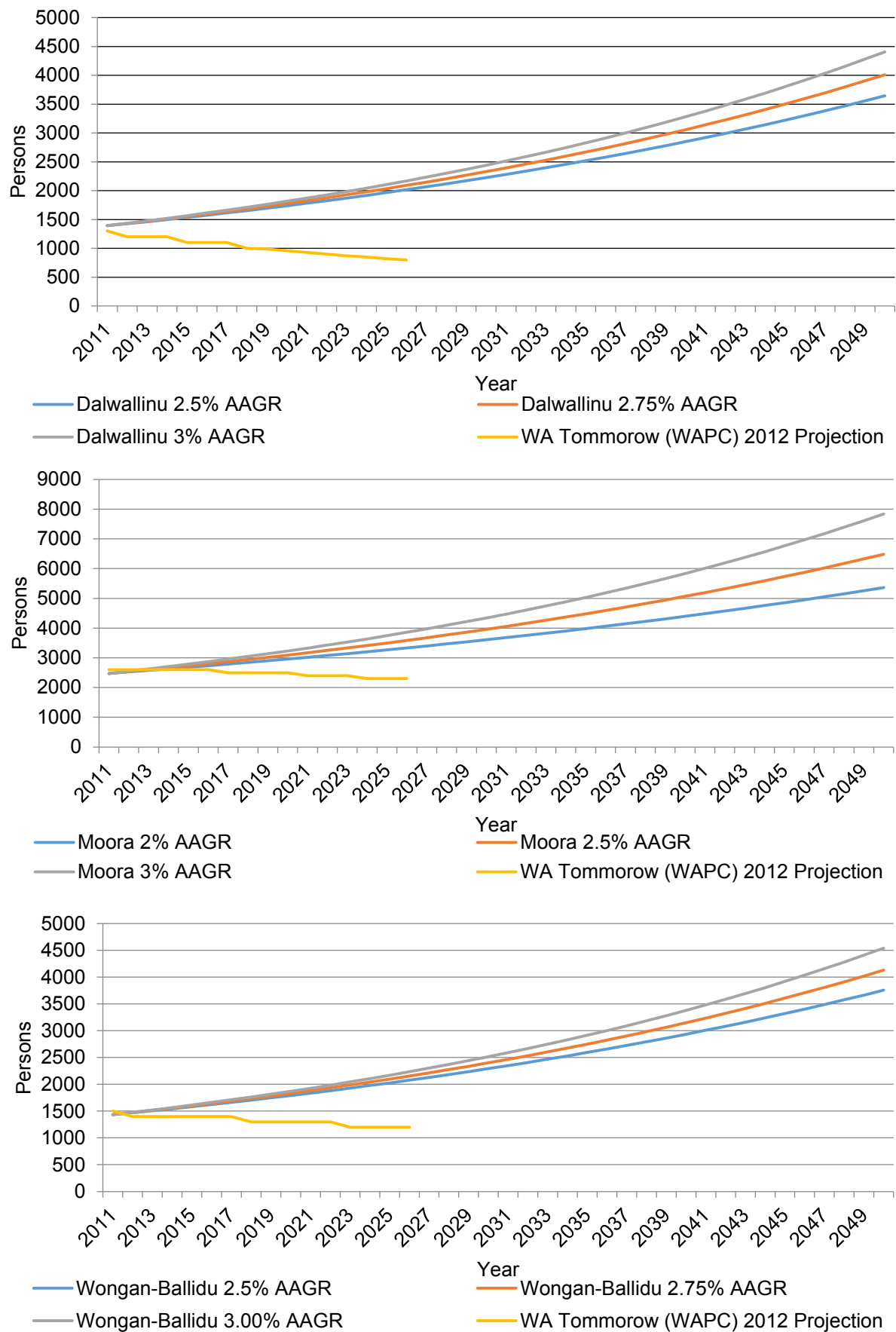


Figure 9: Shires Of Dalwallinu, Moora & Wongan-Ballidu Population Projections (AAGR Projections Source: WDC, WA Tomorrow Band C Source: WAPC)

Education

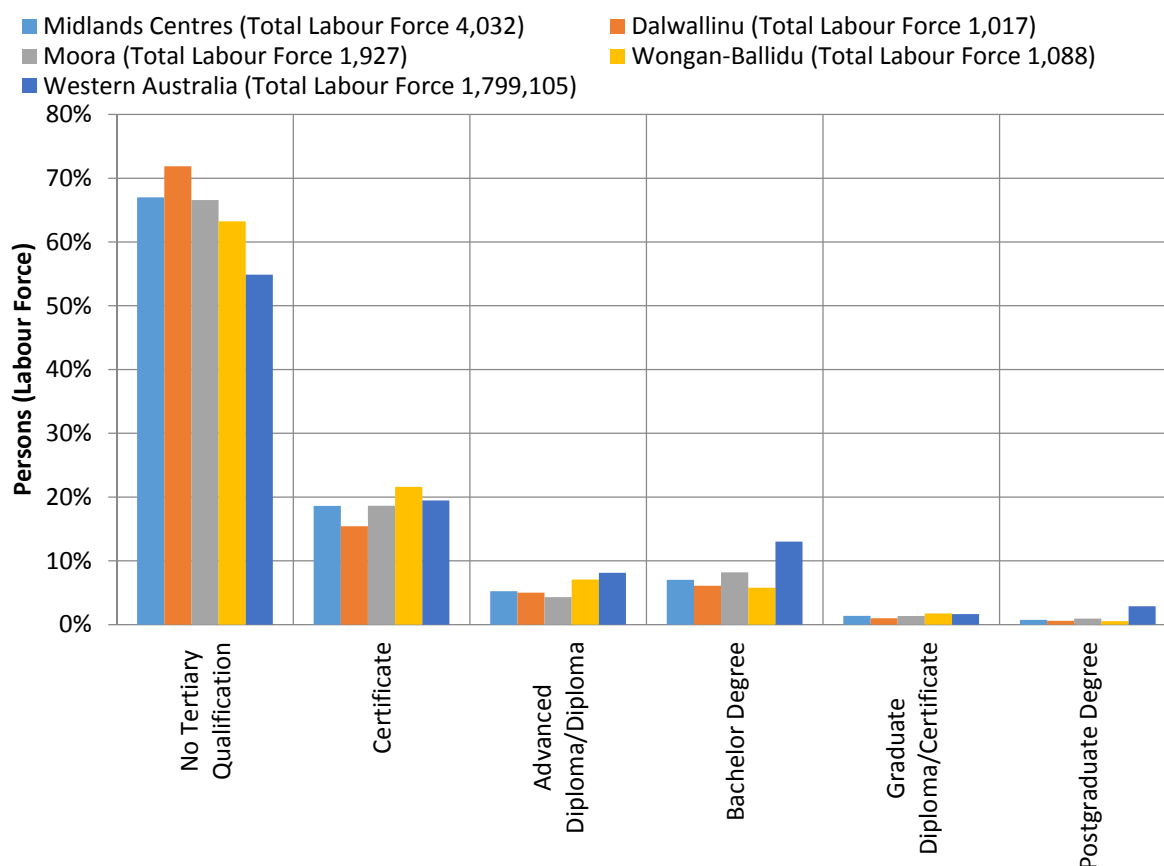


Figure 10: Levels of Education Qualification – Midlands Centres/Town Population vs Western Australia^{20 21}

As indicated in Figure 10, the Midlands Centres have a lower representation of persons in the labour force with education qualifications than the State overall. All LGA's have a higher proportion of those with no tertiary qualifications than the State, with Dalwallinu the highest at 72% of the population (WA 55%). It should be noted, as elsewhere in this document, that the 457 visa workers are not recorded within ABS statistics and this number is likely lower.

Wongan-Ballidu has a high number of people in the labour force with certificates and is comparable to Western Australia overall in those persons holding diplomas and advanced diplomas. Moora and its role as a centre for health, government and education services is clearly identified in the level of persons holding bachelor degrees, related to these occupations and employment eligibility.

Employment

According to the Department of Employment Small Area Labour unemployment rates as of March 2015 were:

- Shire of Dalwallinu 3.0%²²;

²⁰ Australian Bureau of Statistics. 2011. Shire of Wongan-Ballidu, Moora & Dalwallinu Basic Community Profile

²¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011. Western Australia Basic Community Profile

- Shire of Moora 3.0%²²; and
- Shire of Wongan-Ballidu 3.2%²².

Unemployment rates in each Shire peaked in mid-2014, but have since fallen reflecting restructure of the labour force. In general, the labour force size in all Shires has fallen indicated in Figure 11, reflecting the decline in population in the LGA's and the ageing of the population and the outward migration of youth from the Midlands Centres.

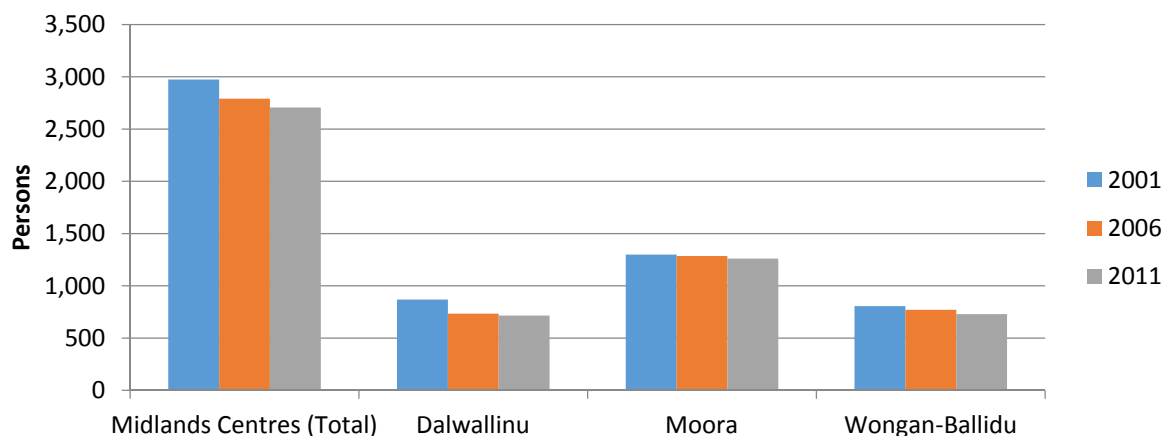


Figure 11: Size of Total Labour Force By Census Years (Labour Force Size In Persons)²³

Employment Industries

Currently the major employment industry for each LGA of the Midland Centres is farming. The top four industries for each LGA are as follows²⁴:

Shire of Dalwallinu:

- Agriculture – Livestock and cropping;
- Education and training;
- Manufacturing; and
- Local Government.

Shire of Moora:

- Agriculture – Livestock and cropping;
- Education and training;
- Local Government; and
- Transport.

Shire of Wongan-Ballidu:

- Agriculture – Livestock and cropping;
- Education and Training;
- Whole sale supply; and
- Retail.

²² Department of Employment. 2015. Small Area Labour Markets – March Quarter 2015

²³ Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011. Shire of Wongan-Ballidu, Dalwallinu & Moor Time Series Profile

²⁴ RPS, 2014. Central Midlands Sub-Regional Economic Strategy

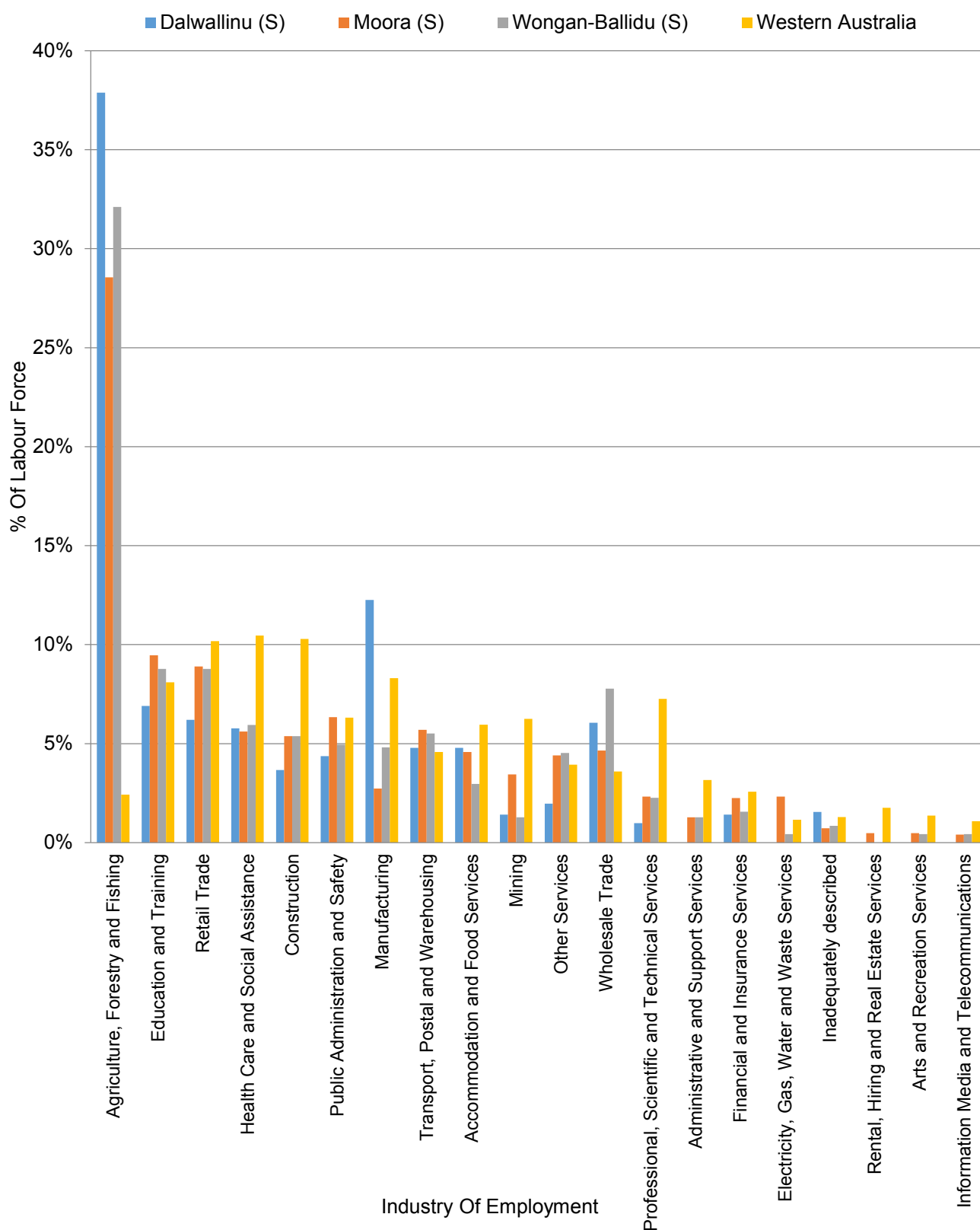


Figure 12: Employment By Industry - Shires of Wongan-Ballidu, Moora, Dalwallinu vs Western Australia^{25 26}

²⁵ Australian Bureau of Statistics. 2011. Shire of Wongan-Ballidu, Moora & Dalwallinu Basic Community Profile

²⁶ Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011. Western Australia Basic Community Profile

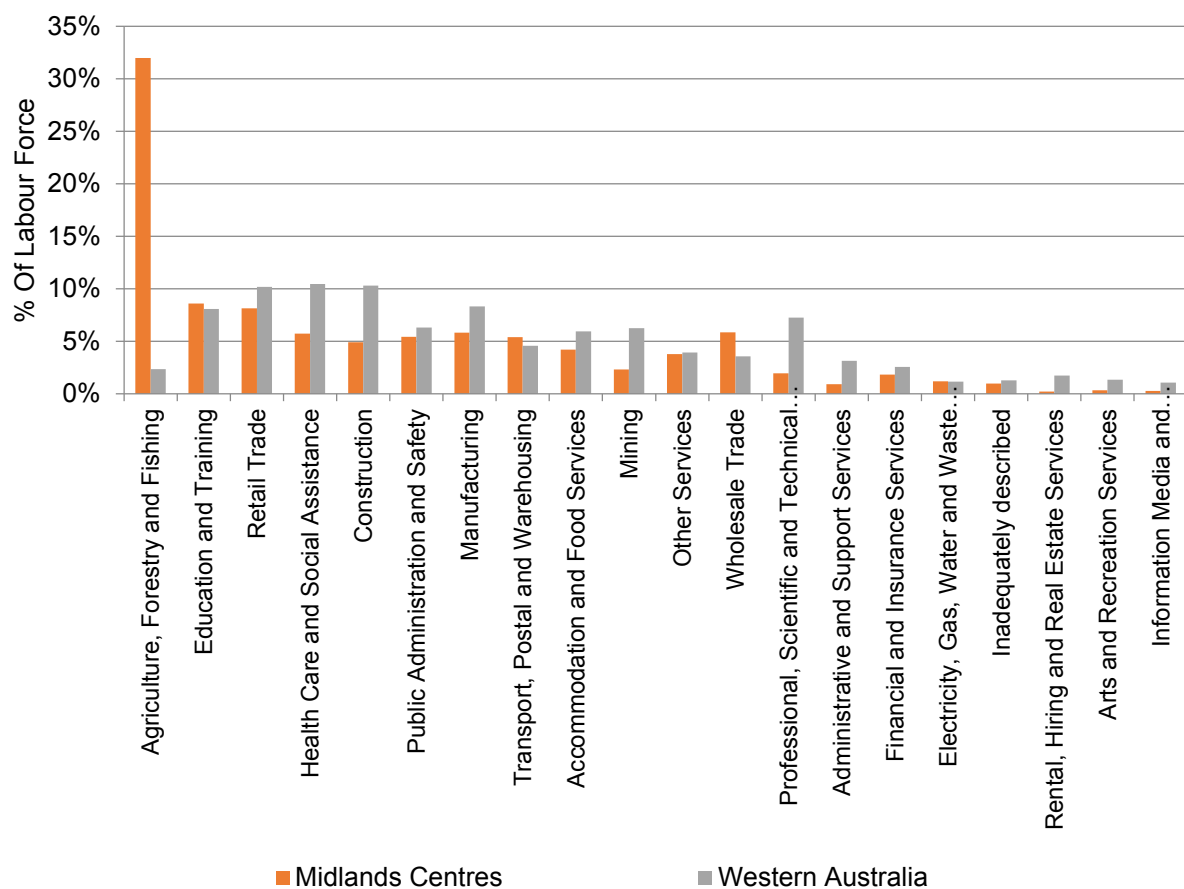


Figure 13: Employment by Industry - Midlands Centres vs Western Australia^{27 28}

As outlined in the Central Midlands Sub-Regional Economic Strategy, it is anticipated that growth in Midlands Centres will be supported by expansion in the industries supporting the following employment market segments;

- Livestock and cropping;
- Manufacturing, Transport & Logistics;
- Mining; and
- Construction.

Agriculture is a well-established industry sector in the Midlands Centres however Manufacturing, Transport and Logistics has recently taken advantage of the regions access to important transport links. This includes the Great Northern Highway where road train infrastructure and ancillary transport industry services have been developed. This positioning has allowed the Midlands Centres to develop their potential in the mining services and construction as employment sectors given the proximity the Mid-West mining industry and road access to the Pilbara²⁹.

Education is also a key employer, related to the high level of youth in the region as identified in Figure 5. It is expected that with the ageing of the population profile will result in the growth of the healthcare sector in the region.

²⁷ Australian Bureau of Statistics. 2011. Shire of Wongan-Ballidu, Moora & Dalwallinu Basic Community Profile

²⁸ Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011. Western Australia Basic Community Profile

²⁹ RPS, 2014. Central Midlands Sub-Regional Economic Strategy

Property Market

The property market for the Midlands Centres has varied since 2005. Each town contains a mixture of land uses (residential, commercial, retail and industrial) with Wongan Hills also offering rural life style lots. The current housing stock is predominantly comprised of detached housing.

The Central Midlands Sub-Regional Economic Strategy (2014) identified that the Central Midlands Sub-Region and the broader Western Australian housing market have experienced volatile conditions over the past five years. This reflects the impact that the global financial crisis and subsequent depressed level of consumer confidence on housing market activities. Despite this, the Central Midlands property market experienced price growth over this period with median house prices increasing from \$100,000 in 2006 to \$195,000 in 2013³⁰. This statement is true of the Midlands Centres (which forms a part of Central Midlands Sub-Region) as similar price increases were experienced. In comparison, the Perth Metropolitan Region median house prices for the same period have increased from \$400,000 to just under \$500,000³⁰.

Median house prices in the Perth Metropolitan Region are six times greater than that of the average household income (\$79,300 as at 2012)³¹. In comparison, the Midlands Centres median house price is only 2 to 2.5 times the average household income. Maintaining affordable and quality housing options are critical to developing and sustaining the region's economic and population growth.

Collectively, property sales are small with the majority occurring in Wongan Hills. The type of properties on the market range from pre-World War II fibro cement (3 bedroom x 1 bathroom) cottages to modern brick and tile (4 bedroom x 2 bathroom) standard homes with the majority of properties on quarter acre (1,012m²) lots³². Examples of the current housing stock are provided on page 34.

Properties are also likely to spend an extended period on the market (average 134-299 days depending on price). The limited variety and quality of housing options has anecdotally impacted sales. Property rentals are limited in all towns. As at June 2015, the only rental properties listed as available were in Moora, and priced at approximately \$215/ week³³.

One of the challenges for the Midlands Centres is the limited variety and quality of housing stock to meet the needs of current and prospective residents as well as the availability of serviced commercial land to support the expansion (and attraction) of existing and new industries and businesses.

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³⁰ RPS, 2014. Central Midlands Sub-Regional Economic Strategy

³¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics. 2013. Average weekly earnings

³² Landgate, 2015. Established Residential Property Sales (to 3,000sqm) 2004-2014

³³ Real Estate Institute of WVA. 2015. Retrieved from www.reiwa.com.au/rent



The following are key statistics on the property market for the Midlands Centres key centres over the last decade (2005 to 2015)³⁴:

Dalwallinu

- In the June 2015 quarter, no residential properties were listed as being available for rent.
- Over the last decade, on average, 15 established houses were sold per year.
- House prices fluctuated year on year due to low numbers of sales, but averaged 14% growth per year. The median price of houses sold in 2014 was \$150,000.
- As at August 2015, there were two houses listed for sale, which had spent an average of 134 days on the market.
- Over the last decade, on average, four vacant residential lots were sold per year, with the last sale occurring in 2014.
- As at August 2015, there were two vacant residential lots listed for sale, which had spent 105 days on the market.
- In the last decade, a total of 13 vacant industrial lots have been sold. The average lot size was 5,018m².

Moora

- In the June 2015 quarter, there were four residential properties listed as being available for rent at a cost of \$215 per week.
- Over the last decade, on average, 34 established houses were sold per year.
- House prices fluctuated year on year due to low numbers of sales, but averaged 14% growth per year. The median price of houses sold in 2014 was \$190,000.
- As at August 2015, there were 28 houses listed for sale, which had spent an average of 234 days on the market.
- Over the last decade, on average, seven vacant residential lots were sold per year.
- As at August 2015, there were four vacant residential lots listed for sale, which had spent an average of 312 days on the market.
- In the last decade, a total of 38 vacant industrial lots have been sold, of which 11 were purchased by the Shire of Moora. Just over half of all lots sold were smaller than 5,000m².

Wongan Hills

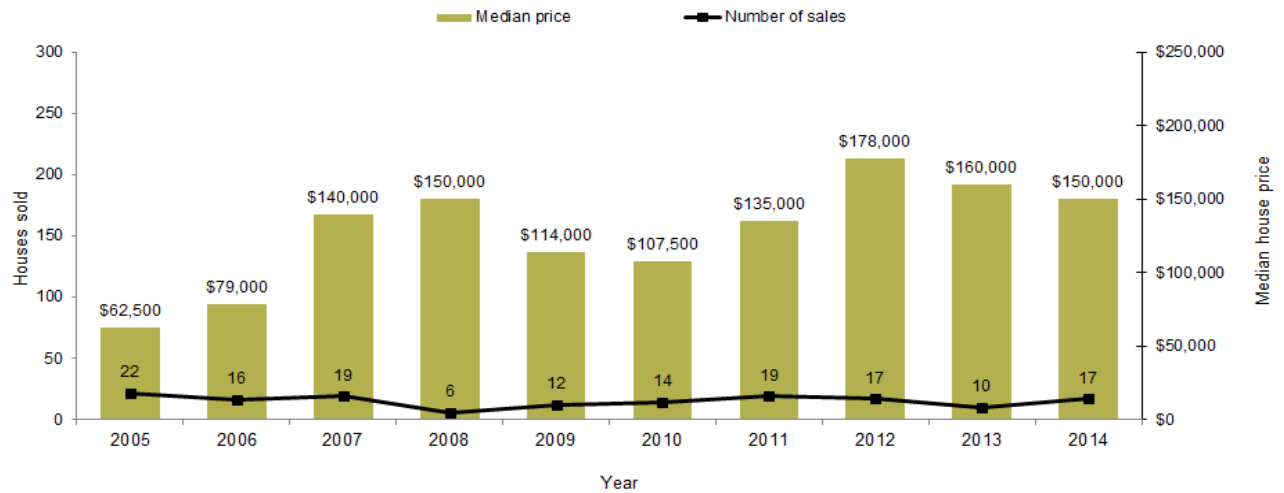
- In the June 2015 quarter, no residential properties were listed as being available for rent.
- Over the last decade, on average, 19 established houses were sold per year.
- House prices fluctuated year on year due to low numbers of sales, but averaged 8% growth per year. The median price of houses sold in 2014 was \$125,000.
- As at August 2015, there were 24 houses listed for sale, which had spent an average of 299 days on the market.
- Over the last decade, on average, four vacant residential lots were sold per year.
- As at August 2015, there were three vacant residential lots listed for sale, which had spent an average of 730 days on the market.
- In the last decade, a total of nine vacant industrial lots have been sold. The average lot size was 6,419m².

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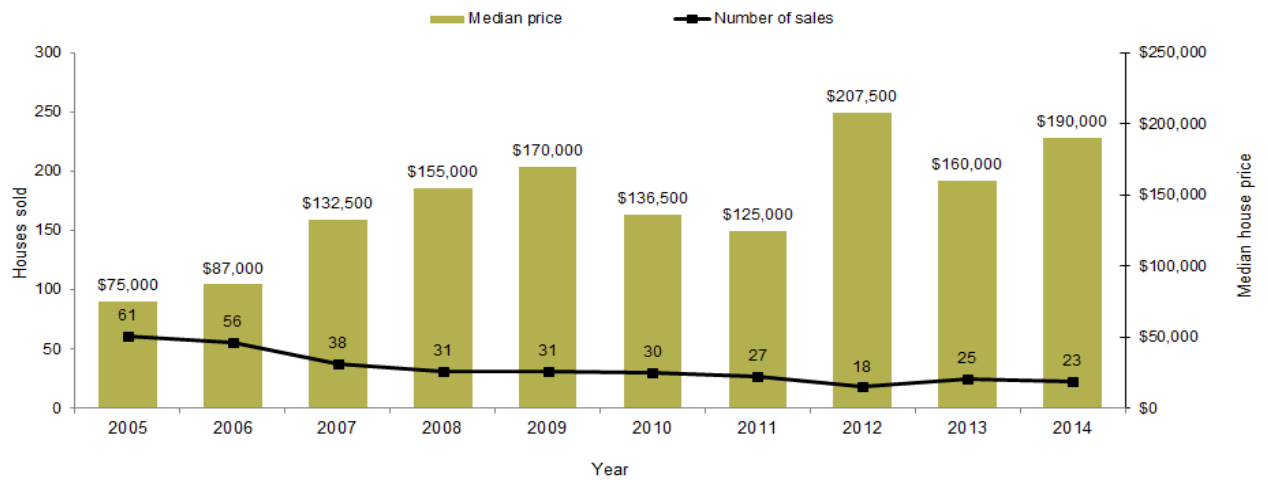
³⁴ Real Estate Institute of WA. 2015. The WA Market Suburb Profile. Retrieved from www.reiwa.com.au

Established House Sales

Dalwallinu



Moora



Wongan Hills

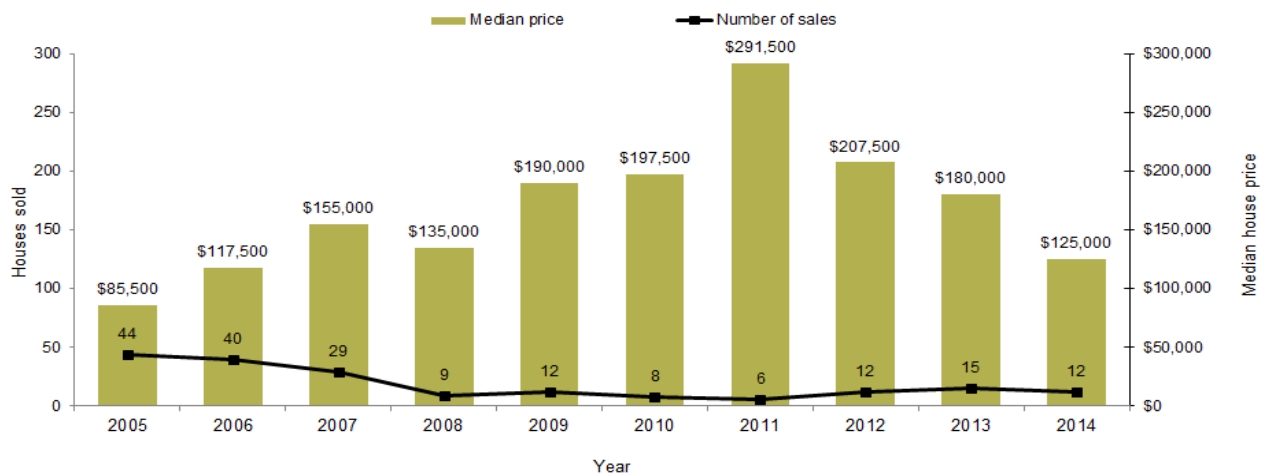


Figure 14: Established House Sales - Town Level (Source: Landgate)

Properties on the Market

As of September 2015, the buyers' market was relatively stable in the Midlands Centres with 35 houses listed for sale in the towns of Dalwallinu (6), Moora (17) and Wongan Hills (12)³⁵. There was little vacant land on the market with only two currently listed for sale in each town³⁵. However this would appear to be enough to satisfy the current market requirements. The availability of commercial land (both in the built form and vacant land) in each town was extremely limited with all towns appearing to require additional stock to satisfy current and future demand³⁵. The price range, median and averages for each town are shown below in Table 5.

Table 5: Properties On The Market (Source: RP Data On The Market Report)

Dalwallinu	Lowest listing price	Highest listing price	Median	Average
Commercial	Nil	Nil	N/A	N/A
House	\$150,000	\$575,000	\$227,500	\$305,000
Land	\$55,000	\$100,000	\$77,500	\$77,500
Moora	Lowest listing price	Highest listing price	Median	Average
Commercial	Nil	Nil	N/A	N/A
House	\$90,000	\$565,000	\$222,500	\$257,500
Land	\$22,000	\$98,000	\$30,000	\$38,707
Wongan Hills	Lowest listing price	Highest listing price	Median	Average
Commercial	\$549,000	\$549,000	\$549,000	\$549,000
House	\$109,950	\$670,000	\$235,000	\$275,270
Land	\$55,000	\$105,000	\$80,000	\$80,000

³⁵ RP Data, 2015. On The Market Report

Examples of Housing in the Midlands Centres

Dalwallinu



1950's



1970's



2000's

Moora



1920's



1970's



2000's

Wongan Hills



1930's



1960's



2000's

Global Drivers

Agriculture

The global market is projected to experience an increased demand for food, particularly from developing countries where growing populations, higher incomes and urbanisation are driving greater per capita food consumption. Per capita consumption is projected to expand most rapidly in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, followed by Latin America and other Asian countries³⁶.

Australia's competitive advantage in both broadacre agricultural production and horticulture production positions the Central Midlands Sub-Region, and more specifically, the Midlands Centres to reap the reward of structural uplifts in global agriculture commodity prices³⁶.



Ageing Population

Over the next few decades, it is expected that the ageing of Australia's population will see the share of residents aged 65+ increase from around 13% in 2010 to 20% by 2040³⁷. This will present Australia with several economic opportunities in health care and social services. In 2011, people aged 65 and over accounted for 12.9% for the Central Midlands³⁸. This is above the average of 12.5% in Perth and 12.3% across Western Australia, highlighting the older population profile of the Sub-Region.

The local impacts of this global trend are already starting to reveal themselves with employment in the health care and social assistance recently overtaking retail as the largest employment sector in the WA economy.

Rural Living

Western Australia has had the highest population growth rate of all major States since 2006, averaging 2.8% per annum³⁹. Associated with this, regional Western Australia has also been experiencing population growth over the last decade to accommodate the State's increasing population.

The proximity to Perth and regionally significant cultural and environmental assets has led to the growth of regional cities and towns over the past decade. The further growth in amenities and services as well as opportunities in the region will provide a range of lifestyles and investment opportunities.

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³⁶ RPS, 2014. Central Midlands Sub-Regional Economic Strategy

³⁷ Treasurer – Commonwealth of Australia. 2010. Australia To 2050: Future Challenges

³⁸ Australian Bureau of Statistics. 2011. Shire of Wongan-Ballidu, Moora & Dalwallinu Basic Community Profile

³⁹ Australian Bureau of Statistics. 2013. Estimated Residential Population

Key Economic Opportunities

The Central Midlands Sub-Region and that of the Midlands Centres have a distinct competitive advantage in a number of themes:

Agriculture, Horticulture & Livestock

The region is a key agricultural production area in Western Australia. Environmental circumstances (rainfall, soil type and climate variability), proximity to markets and strategic resources (water, power, labour availability) have afforded the sub-region with major agricultural production capability and industry diversity⁴⁰. Based on unique environmental and location based characteristics, the region is well placed to undertake further development in broadacre agriculture, horticulture and animal husbandry.

Broadacre agriculture, horticulture and animal husbandry and associated storage and processing activity is likely to experience increased growth resulting from global markets (economic development) and increased demand for food (population growth, income growth). Providing for and taking up opportunities to value add through food processing to satisfy the global market would position both the Central Midlands Sub-Region and Midlands Centres well for further growth.

Additionally, opportunities exist to leverage research and development investments including crop diversification (variety & breeds), identification and implementation of improved farm management practises and the development of integrated distribution and export networks which will further enhance the sub-regions competitive advantages.

Peri-Urban and Rural Living

The LGA's adjacent to Perth, particularly those in proximity to Perth's Northern Growth Corridor, have experienced significant population growth in the past decade, a reflection of the pursuit for rural and peri-urban living opportunities. Regionally significant environmental and cultural influences within the sub-region have provided strong lifestyle led population growth⁴⁰.

In addition, available employment opportunities, available services (health and education) and infrastructure access (power, water and transport) support other economic opportunities in the region which enables further development of this driver through population attraction. The advantages of regional living (including affordable homes, clean air, lack of traffic and lower crime rates) present an ideal case to retain and attract new residents.

Mining Services, Manufacturing and Supply Chains

The Midlands Centres act as a central node between key economic infrastructure and significant mineral resources. Midlands Centres are strategically located between the Perth Metropolitan Region, the State's major mineral resource precincts (Pilbara, Mid-West, Goldfields & Wheatbelt) and are located on key intra and interstate transport infrastructure⁴⁰. The union of these economic conditions has provided the Midlands Centres with the opportunity to develop as major mining and supply chain service bases. As this economic driver experiences further growth, opportunities exist by ensuring the timely delivery of development-ready industrial land and ancillary infrastructure.

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⁴⁰ RPS, 2014. Central Midlands Sub-Regional Economic Strategy

Health and Aged Care

There are clear economic opportunities in the development of the health and aged care sector in the region. Health is the second largest employment sector in WA generating tertiary qualified and knowledge intensive opportunities in health care and social service delivery. There is a strong correlation between ageing and health services demand⁴⁰. Over the next decade, the growth of the sub-region will support increased health care provision and a demand for more diverse health care services and retirement housing.

The high proportion of youth and young families identified within the demographics section of this document identifies there is, and will continue to be, a strong demand for youth and family health services, hospitals and ancillary health services. In addition, the region's ageing population also provides demand for healthcare services and hospitals services, as well as aged care services and ancillary service provision. To support the broad



requirements of servicing the population in regards to healthcare, the expansion of health and aged care facilities, health services and education and training for the healthcare sector should be explored. The region's population profile provides distinct opportunities for the expansion of the health and aged care sector, providing for increased economic development and a key driver for the Midlands Centres and the Central Midlands Sub-Region.

Tourism

The unique landscape and significant environmental and cultural features of the Central Midlands Sub-Region provide significant potential for the development of the tourism sector. Expenditure associated with visiting tourists provides economic benefits to local communities by leveraging on existing infrastructure and amenity. This expenditure also subsidises the development of higher quality retail, accommodation and public infrastructure, in which expenditure derived from local rates or turnover from the local service base would not be able to support otherwise. From 2008-2012, an average of 268,288 tourists/short term visitors were attracted to the Central Midlands Sub-Region⁴¹. This equates to an average of 25 visitors per resident, three times higher than the State average at 8 visitors per resident⁴¹.

Tourism in the sub-region is characterised predominantly by day trip visitors and efforts should be made to maximise the Midlands Centres marketing and regional exposure to encourage overnight and multi-day visitation to increase the economic value of tourism.

⁴¹ Tourism Research Australia, 2013. Online Datasets NVS & IVS

Midlands Centres Strategic Assets

The Midlands Centres has a range of strategic assets, including transport corridors, agriculture, natural resources, educational facilities and health services. Many of these strategic assets provide the Midlands Centres with significant opportunities and drivers for future growth (Figure 15).

Rail Transport Corridors	National Parks & Biodiversity Hotspots
Inter/Intra Regional Road Transport Corridors (Great Northern Highway, Northam Pithara Road)	Wastewater Infrastructure
National, State & Local Activities	Energy Supply Infrastructure
Speedway Infrastructure & Ancillary Activities	Water Supply Infrastructure
Health Services	Waste Disposal Sites
Education & Training Facilities	Industrial Infrastructure
State Government Offices	Commercial Enterprises
Tourism Infrastructure	Cooperative Business Alliance
Natural Resources & Raw Materials	Airports
Agricultural Land	Recreation Complex & Recreation Spaces
Significant Groundwater Resource	Niche Social Services
Equestrian Infrastructure & Ancillary Activities	Parks, Trails & Tourism Sites

Figure 15: Strategic Assets of the Midlands Centres

Challenges and Strategies for Growth

The Midlands Centres will face a variety of challenges as the area grows, including uncertainty in the global financial market and the unknown requirements of natural resources from abroad. This Plan considers how to meet these challenges and optimise strategies to assist in delivering growth, prosperity and community well-being for the region. The growth of the Midlands Centres will place significant pressure on transport networks, education, health, community, services and tourism infrastructure while also increasing pressure on the natural environment.

These challenges require a consolidated approach by each Local Government with support from State Government. In line with the Guiding Principles, Table 6 highlights some of the challenges and strategies for growth.

Table 6: Summary of Challenges & Opportunities For Growth

Economy	
Challenges	Strategies
Skills and labour shortage and low unemployment rates providing difficulties in filling vacancies due to lack of suitable applicants and retaining labour force.	- Improve training facilities, and ensure equitable access to online training opportunities (with an emphasis on reliable technology). - Development of education and training hubs. - Promote the Midlands Centres and employment opportunities. - Focus on the growth of the Aged Care industry. - Collaborate with business and industry to enable business retention and expansion.
- Attraction and retention of new residents. - Immediate attraction of additional workers to boost short-term growth.	- Promote quality of life with a focus on community. - Repopulations Program expansion. - Creating communities conducive to appropriate transient worker contribution to the local economy. - Offer amenity and access to essential services (e.g. health, education). - Identification of new residential land. - Promote private investment in Midlands Centres. - Improve availability of quality and affordable housing and accommodation.
Increased freight costs.	- Promote the use of locally produced goods and services. - Build on strategic transport linkages to leverage increased transport and logistics business and activity.
Reduction in tourism and limitations to tourism development.	- Plan and promote local recreation and tourism through tourism planning. - Identify opportunities for niche markets such as business diversification or eco-tourism. - Plan for increased accommodation (overnight and short-stay). - Identification and development of tourism initiatives. - Coordinated tourist information - Partner with established tourism markets.
Environmental impact on agriculture combined with finance/ support services access impact for the industry.	- Support and contribute to research and innovation. - Foster community understanding of agricultural practices. - Diversification and ongoing development of agricultural industry. - Providing support to groups which support the agriculture industry.
Impacts of financial downturns on local, state, national and abroad economy.	- Diversify the economy. - Enable research and development. - Support education and training. - Attract private investment. - Promote area to external private investors. - Facilitate introduction and assistance with growth planning.
Investment attraction for small business and retail and impact of online retail trade.	- Small and medium enterprise development. - Infill development within the town centre. - Introduction of video conferencing facilities. - Improved retail industry – attracting of new business and shift to hybrid online/store sales. - High density living within the town centres. - Development of industry prospectus' highlighting comparative advantages for industry.

Communities

Challenges

- Retention of existing population with an emphasis on the 15-34 age group.

Strategies

- Improve education possibilities and links to local industry.
- Develop strategies to attract younger generations back to the Sub-Region after travel, university, training or when starting a family.
- Promote quality of life with a focus on community, lifestyle, amenity and services.
- Continued improvement to education and training facilities.
- Continued assessment of education courses offered.

- Access to health services.

- Further improve health services through capital investment and implementing more appropriate service delivery models.
- Attract and retain health professionals.
- Improve mental health and well-being services.
- Promote the training of medical, nursing and allied health professionals to become a rural centre of choice.
- Continued improvement to health service facilities.

- Social inclusion – share the benefits of growth with everyone.

- Focus on projects, facilities and services in areas such as health, education and environment that cater for all.
- Encourage community engagement.

- Limited programs targeting needs of Aboriginal population and cultural needs.

- Plan for the needs of a growing Aboriginal population and the associated cultural and societal diversity.
- Identify the location of Aboriginal sites in the Sub-Regional and ensure their consideration and protection.
- Increased focus on cultural diversity, including showcasing our Aboriginal heritage, and demonstrating sustainable programs for the future.

- Reducing social disadvantage.

- Monitor changes in demand for community services and infrastructure across the Sub-Region.
- Improved quality and affordable social housing for disadvantaged individuals and families.

- Aging population.

- Expansion of quality and affordable housing for older persons.
- Planning and provision for an aging population and an increase in demand for community health services.

- Maintaining social and community wellbeing.

- Encourage regional sport and alternative wellbeing solutions (swipe access to indoor gyms, and provision of outdoor gyms etc).
- Engage visa and transient workers.
- Attraction of non-government organisation (NGO) social services across Midland Centres.

Built Form and Housing

Challenges

- Lack of quality housing stock.
- Providing sufficient and affordable housing options and a variety of choice.

Strategies

- Identification of new residential land.
- Encourage mixed use and higher density living.
- Promote private investment in the Midlands Centres to improve current housing stock.
- Provide suitably zoned land for future development.
- Significant improvement and distribution of public housing stock.
- The undertaking of development projects through the formal Midlands Centres collaborative body (ICM).

- Low vacancy rates for rentals and lack of rental accommodation.

- Facilitate availability of overnight and short-term accommodation for visitors and professionals.

- Development constraints (headwork costs, flood prone areas, infrastructure development).

- Look for alternative development opportunities such as increased infill, mixed use and higher density living around town centres.
- 'Lazy Land' stocktake.

Built Form and Housing (continued)

Challenges	Strategies
Land release for growth (Native Title).	- Plan for the resolution of Native Title claims to allow for the release of developable land. - Relationship building with regional Aboriginal stakeholder groups with regard to future development.
Housing design and cost of housing.	- Diversity in cost effective housing design across Midlands Centres. - Alternative Energy projects. - University designated housing. - Cluster housing development (aged care).

Infrastructure

Challenges	Strategies
Waste management.	- Enable waste elimination, recycling and reuse opportunities. - An improved regional waste management facility - Relocation of waste management infrastructure. - Implementation of regional waste plan.
Out-dated and aged community infrastructure.	- Investigate opportunities for co-location and shared facilities and services. - Explore and support alternative approaches to aged care (from healthy ageing to residential aged care). - Infrastructure capacity audit.
Reducing the dependence on cars.	- Develop alternate and sustainable transport options such as cycling, walking and shared options created through improved infrastructure. - Improve public transport. - Facilitate high density living closer to town centres. - Improve footpath safety and walkability.
Reliability of telecommunications.	- Seek opportunities to test new technologies. - Advocate for increased and improved services. - Facilitate links between agencies to ensure maintenance of reliable telecommunications services.
Population growth outstrips infrastructure and service provision.	- Ensure good planning and monitoring of population requirements. - Secure and develop infrastructure prior to new development. - Facilitate good communication between Local Government and service providers. - Enable effective project management to deliver new services on time. - Coordinated regional approach to infrastructure planning and growth. - Lack of alternative energy supply when cost and capacity and current constraints to energy provision and headworks projects.
Maintaining effective priority transport routes.	- Maintenance of local road networks. - Ongoing major transport corridor improvements to facilitate greater movement and provide State solutions. - Airport development and upgrade and improvements to airports.
Ensuring adequate water infrastructure.	- Availability of ground water resources and providing their sustainable use. - Conserving and efficient use of existing water resources, including wastewater reuse.
Energy supply infrastructure costly and inefficient.	- Support the development of strategic network infrastructure upgrades to power supply and/or capacity. - Promote renewable energy supply and projects.

Natural Environment

Challenges

- Climate change risks.

Strategies

- Opportunity to undertake risk assessments and planning.
- Greening of the built environment.
- Protection and maintenance of native vegetation and wildlife habitats.
- Improved water management.
- Balancing land use, agriculture and development with environmental values

- Accommodating population growth without damaging the local environment.

- Develop sustainable spatial growth options and planning.
- Increase community education and awareness of the environmental assets.
- Encourage sustainable developments.
- Improve management of recreational behaviour.
- Protection of the natural heritage.

- Natural resource protection

- Identify location and extent of natural resources and raw materials and ensure their protection.
- Combat rising groundwater, salinity and clearing of native vegetation.
- Protect native vegetation.
- Identify and catalogue contaminated land.
- Define the location and extent of buffer areas for existing industry, infrastructure and special uses.

Governance

Challenges

- Managing land-use conflicts.

Strategies

- Develop and implement clear planning regulations by protecting areas of community and environmental importance.

- Managing the expectations of the communities.

- Be honest and transparent.
- Foster community engagement.
- Participation in daily decision-making.
- Deliver and implement projects.

- Poor perception of the Wheatbelt.

- Foster and maintain a positive outlook in the whole community.
- Promote this Plan.

- Ensuring strong regional leadership in the growth of Midlands Centres.

- Strong focus on continued Local Government communication and cooperation.
- Increased collaboration between Local Governments and State agencies.

Vision for Growth in the Midlands Centres

A vision for the future of the Midlands Centres has been developed for this Plan. The vision was formulated through the Midlands Centres Community Reference Group in conjunction with the Shire of Dalwallinu, Shire of Moora and the Shire of Wongan-Ballidu to draw together the aspirations of the three communities and surrounding areas.

The Vision is:

‘To see prosperity and growth for the Midlands Centres by attracting new residents, providing attractive community amenity and encouraging workforce relocation and business growth.’

Factors in achieving the vision of the Midlands Centres will involve:

- Innovative and devolved decision making and resourcing.
- Internal and external recognition of the sub-region’s comparative advantages.
- Development that results in social, environmental and economic benefit.
- Strong collaboration that adds value to the Wheatbelt’s diversified development.
- A targeted strategy to meet the Midland Centres unique context – one size does not fit all.

Delivery of the Midlands Centres vision is based upon the following guiding principles, many of which will promote growth, well-being, a sustainable future, improved land use and development for the area. The Plan’s guiding principles are to:

- Create a Vibrant **Economy**;
- Strengthen the **Community**;
- Create sustainable **Built Form and Housing**;
- Deliver successful **Infrastructure** management;
- Protect and Enhance our **Natural Environment**; and
- Ensure Successful **Governance**.

For each guiding principle within this Plan, key issues and strategies are identified together with a list of key priorities comprising actions, projects and initiatives to promote growth for the Midlands Centres.

The key priorities are listed within this Plan along with an Implementation Schedule that lists all identified actions, projects and initiatives that will be required over the Plan’s period until 2050 for the Midland Centres (Shires of Dalwallinu, Moora and Wongan-Ballidu). There is also clear agreed intention to monitor and review the Plan to ensure its usefulness in future planning and decision making.

Growing the Midlands Centres

The Midlands Centres and its hinterlands enjoy genuine growth prospects based on a diversity of agricultural, health, education, transport and logistics and tourism value adding opportunities.

The communities are strong, diverse and engaged. They embrace growth opportunities and it is appropriate that there is a Plan to guide future expansion and strategic investment.

Planning at a regional level will allow for the effective coordination of natural resource issues, infrastructure provision and community services. It provides opportunities to share information, ideas, knowledge, capability and resources to get things done.

A regional approach to problems, challenges, and opportunities associated with growth and development can cooperatively address the coordination of services, achieving efficiency of operations and economies of scale. The Local Governments will cooperate in key areas including water, energy, housing and infrastructure planning. The regional transport networks will be the vital links between the communities, and will be an imperative to enabling economic growth.

Future work will be undertaken during the next Plan review to ensure enhanced collaboration between the Shires of the Midlands Centres and Wheatbelt Development Commission for the coordination of regionally significant economic drivers, actions, projects and initiatives.

Capacity for Growth

Town Planning Schemes as well as Local Planning Strategies exist for each of the Midland Centres. The Town Planning Scheme text provides the statutory guidance for development, including development provisions, permitted uses and compliance matters. The Town Planning Scheme maps provide the zonings for the land, which in turn indicate the type of uses permissible in certain areas.

To ensure growth in the Central Midlands in years to come, there is the need to ensure there is an adequate supply of suitably zoned land with the diversity to support a variety of land uses and housing densities.

The current supply of suitably zoned and serviced residential and commercial land is sufficient to meet immediate to short term demand. There is a need to ensure an adequate supply of residential land in the medium to long term however. Potentially there is a market for smaller lots (R17.5/R20 zonings) or group sites to support unit development which would create a diversity of product which is in limited supply at present. Rural residential product also needs to be considered in schemes where this land use is not presently available.





Land zoned for industrial purposes is currently limited due to a combination of land assembly, servicing and/or environmental issues. Potentially, there could also be demand for a more general purpose industrial product as well as a composite product (residential combined with light industrial usages).

A review of the current local planning strategies and town planning schemes needs to be undertaken as a priority to ensure future growth can be catered for.

Development Opportunities

The expansion of the Midlands Centres to accommodate future population growth is dependent upon a number of factors including the availability of suitably zoned and serviced land parcels. Within and surrounding the town centres, vacant land is either privately owned or Crown Land which is administered by the Department of Lands WA (which may or may not be under the control of the Local Government or by State Government Agencies).

Crown lands will require resolution of potential native title issues and Mining Act clearances prior to acquisition and development. This process can have long lead times however, this is likely to be addressed in the future as part of the South West Aboriginal Land Settlement.

A planning exercise to identify strategic land parcels (either Crown Land or privately owned) to support future growth should be undertaken as well as a stocktake of existing land to identify “lazy lands” (i.e. land not being fully utilised). The development opportunities should be accessed, prioritised and de-constrained as much as possible to ensure a “roll out” of land is available as and when required to support the expansion of the town sites and population growth.

Dalwallinu and Wongan -Ballidu have growth constraints due to nearby nature reserves and private land holdings while Moora is impacted due to the town sites position in the flood prone area of the Moore River. Ensuring appropriate actions are implemented to provide for growth are considered. These will be discussed in further detail within the Infrastructure and Environment sections of this document.

Indicative Infrastructure Requirements To 2050

Figure 16 demonstrates some identified infrastructure requirements programmed or required during the growth period to 2050. Timeframes are indicative and are dependent on further investigations and consultation with infrastructure and utilities providers. There are currently gaps in the infrastructure planning required for the Plan's population thresholds, highlighting the importance of a coordinated, sub-regional approach to infrastructure planning for growth.

The indicative timeframes for programmed infrastructure planning and projects will likely need to be brought forward if increased demand associated with population growth occurs. Government Agencies should commence forward planning for the Plan's population scenarios in the short-term.



Figure 16: Planned Infrastructure Projects

Economy

Guiding Principle I – Create a Vibrant Economy

Economic forces and policy changes at international, national and state level are impacting businesses, providing both challenges and opportunities. To ensure economic growth within the area, the Local Governments must commit to actively pursuing and fostering the key innovative opportunities and drivers. This plan seeks to assist in pursuing this activity through the development of a more diverse and robust economy, whilst maintaining and enhancing key regional economic assets.

Economic Drivers for the Midlands Centres

With a population of more than 5,000; Dalwallinu, Moora and Wongan Hills as regional centres have a growing and diversifying economy. Horticulture production and processing, along with the export of livestock and feed, have seen strong growth, while the provision of services to mining and gas production activity in the north of the State has acted as a strong economic driver.



Visitors are attracted to the areas historic tourism sites, unique wildflowers and rural landscapes creating a tourism industry that has experienced growth. Five key economic drivers and opportunities have been identified following the Plan's due diligence and stakeholder engagement process, encompassing the following:

- Agriculture, Horticulture and Animal Husbandry;
- Manufacturing, Mining Services and Supply Chains;
- Rural Living;
- Health and Aged Care; and
- Tourism.

Each driver reflects the broader and complementary Central Midlands Sub-Regional Economic Strategy. Each key economic driver is explored in greater detail in this section.

Key Priorities to Grow the Economy

Table 7 summarises how the Midlands Centres will achieve economic growth and provides an overview of the key economic issues, opportunities and actions. An Implementation Schedule and complete project list (Appendix 16.0) outline the key priority actions, projects and initiatives for the Midlands Centres to grow the economy. The actions are a combination of Local and State Government priorities which will be undertaken or implemented to facilitate economic growth.

Agriculture, Horticulture and Animal Husbandry

Global food demand has increased in recent years in response to population growth and growing incomes in developing countries. The Midlands Centres, as part of the Central Midlands, Wheatbelt, is considered a safe and very productive agricultural region. It is a reliable rainfall area with averages ranging from 300 –400mm⁴² and access to aquifers to the south, south-west and west of Moora. Horticulture, broadacre agriculture and animal husbandry are likely to continue to underpin agricultural activity in the Midlands Centres along with associated storage and processing activity.

Diversification and value adding processes are well underway including the development of horticulture around Moora. This positions Moora well to investigate the potential for processing and packaging facilities for locally grown fruit and vegetables, creating a local agri-processing industry. Meanwhile value adding through the use of agricultural by-products (straw for feed and mulch) is developing in the Wongan Hills area. The Midlands Centres will continue to play a significant role as service centres in the support of broadacre agriculture production. Each town is an important provider of banking, finance, machinery sales and services for the surrounding farming areas and agricultural industries, which extend into the Mid West.

Development of light industrial land and labour force attraction in the Midlands Centres is critical to ensure that agriculture related business can continue to develop. It is expected that there will continue to be growth in cattle numbers in the Midlands Centres. Pastoralists from the north will continue to seek land with more consistent food supply and grazing options.

In relation to the Midlands Centres economic growth:

Dalwallinu

- Light to medium manufacturing, the presence of the Exclusive Brethren⁴³ community and proximity to mining operations occurring to the north (Pilbara and Mid West); and
- Cross sector operations diversification - manufacturing to service agricultural and mining related industries.

Moora

- Horticultural related activity;
- Packing and processing of citrus (two orchards located within 30kms of the town); and
- Light industry and construction related industry (developing with BGC present in the Sub-Region and based in Moora due to its central location).

Wongan Hills

- Processing of agricultural bi-products/ value adding to grain for animal feed;
- Manufacturing/ light industry growth; and
- Ballidu-Pithara road upgrade will provide a safer connection to the Great Northern Highway from the Great Eastern Highway. This project is of State significance and would create growth opportunities for new and existing industries while reducing congestion in Midland and the metropolitan area.

⁴² Bureau of Meteorology. 2015. Average rainfall Annual. Retrieved from www.bom.gov.au

⁴³ Tonts, Matthew. 2011. The Exclusive Brethren and an Australian rural community.



The Midlands Centres have access to nationally significant transport infrastructure that positions the area well for significant industry growth particularly in the area of mining services and transport and logistics. The Great Northern Highway and the Brand Highway are highly accessible and provide strategic links to the Metropolitan area, Mid West and northern regions. The continued development of the Great Northern Highway and arterial links such as the Ballidu-Pithara Road are critical in ensuring that the Midlands Centres economy can reach its potential. Substantial works are currently underway on Great Northern Highway (Muchea to Wubin Stage 2 Upgrade).

Key actions that will encourage growth:

- Continued focus on research and development investments for agriculture;
- Feasibility in horticulture related value adding in Moora;
- Analysis of water sources south, south west and west of Moora for intensive agricultural production; and
- Improvements to telecommunications.

Manufacturing, Mining Services & Supply Chains

The strategic location of the Midlands Centres relative to metropolitan Perth, major mining regions and inter and intrastate transport infrastructure, positions it as an ideal location for mining and supply chain related services. This can include leveraging the proximity of being on the Great Northern Highway and strategic location to the Mid West mining developments.

The centrality of the Midlands Centres relative to major mineral resource and population regions (Pilbara, Mid West, Goldfields and South West), proximity to metropolitan Perth and access to major national and state transport infrastructure combined with affordable land, will continue to underpin the regions role as a transport and logistics hub. This will continue to be supported locally by increased and diversified agricultural production and be increasingly driven by global demand for commodities. Whilst manufacturing is already growing in Dalwallinu due to its comparative advantage of being on Great Northern Highway and having extensive local investment, further opportunity exists for niche manufacturing in the Midlands Centres.

The Midlands Centres does not have a specific industrial park area, rather the three towns are continually developing and zoning land for industrial use. Dalwallinu, Moora and Wongan Hills now have well established industrial areas that continue to see growth. This is in response to increased business interest within the area to service key trade linkages between Perth, mine sites and major transport hubs for exporting.

Although mining extraction operations in the area are limited at this stage, the Midlands Centres are well positioned to reap the benefits of iron ore and mineral sands in the north and north-east. There are already significant manufacturing operators and transport companies that are involved in surrounding mining activity with interest increasing due to access to transport routes.

Key actions to consider are:

- Development of industrial land in Dalwallinu (light-medium) and Moora (light);
- Appropriate power infrastructure development. This includes investigation into renewable energy powered industry clusters This could focus on peak period power supplied by alternative (solar) power; and
- Ballidu-Pithara Road upgrade.

Rural Living

Western Australia has had the highest population growth rate of all major States since 2006 and presents itself as an attractive location for new residents. Regional Western Australia represents a critical opportunity to accommodate the State's increasing population. The Midlands Centres are increasingly being considered as a rural living option as the metro outer centres of Joondalup and Midland are easily accessible, being located within a two hour drive from Moora and Wongan Hills. The Strategic Centres of Midland and Joondalup have developed into service hubs with quality health services and extensive retail offerings which ties into the Midland Centres service base. The Midlands Centres present an attractive environment for retirees as it offers affordability, safety and easy access to services. There are already residential developments occurring which cater for increasing population including rural residential and retirement villages.

Key actions to consider are:

- Moora and Wongan Hills promote themselves as tree change destinations where services and community facilities are of a high standard and there is a strong sense of community.
- There are several developments that have already occurred including Gratton Heights Rural Residential Development and Moora Lifestyle village;
- Provision of a diverse range of housing options including universally designed housing and Innovation Central Midlands acting as an investment vehicle to achieve this;
- Telecommunications and National Broadband Network access in all centres; and
- Coordinated approach to sub-regional marketing and continued sub-regional planning.



Health and Aged Care

Over the next few decades, it is expected that the ageing of Australia's population will see the share of residents aged 65+ increase from around 13% in 2010 to 20% in 2040⁴⁴. This will present Australia with several economic opportunities in the health care and social services to cater for an ageing population. Health care and social assistance is the largest employing sector in the WA economy (marginally higher than retail trade)⁴⁵, generating tertiary qualified and knowledge intensive employment opportunities in primary, general and acute health care and social service delivery.

Dalwallinu, Moora and Wongan Hills currently have an older population, with a collective average of 12.9% of the residential population aged 65+, which is above the State average of 12.3%. However, not all towns have uniformly aged populations with the Shire of Dalwallinu having the highest in the Midland Centres (14.5%), while Wongan-Ballidu has the lowest (11.9%)⁴⁶.

With an ageing population and the growing trend towards 'ageing in place' there will be an increased demand for aged care support and services to be delivered in the Midland Centres. This growing demand will require an increased workforce.

Training opportunities exist in Moora at C.Y. O'Connor Institute for aged care workers. This, along with the Moora Hospital, presents Moora as a potential centre for aged care delivery and support to Wongan Hills and Dalwallinu. Wongan Hills aspires to have a dementia suitable facility in the future which could be connected to the Moora Hospital. Currently all three centres provide health services through district hospitals (Wongan Hills, Dalwallinu) and a regional hospital (Moora).

Tourism

The picturesque landscape around the Midlands Centres together with its close proximity to Perth provides enormous potential for the Central Midlands Sub-Region tourism sector. The expenditure associated by tourists also provides economic benefits to local communities by leveraging on existing infrastructure and amenity and subsidising a higher quality of retail, accommodation and public infrastructure, which local residential expenditure alone would not be able to support. The proximity of the Midlands Centres to each other offers a variety of lifestyle opportunities within an hour's drive which boasts unique landscapes, large areas of untouched bushland, State forest and wetlands.

Tourism in the Midlands Centres is not a high value add industry, however it allows for high public amenity which may attract potential new long term residents. Tourism is driven by wildflowers



(including unique and rare flora), historic sites and is viewed predominately as a day trip destination due to proximity to Perth. International visitors in particular could be encouraged to the Midland Centres because of the level of international attraction in neighbouring jurisdictions. There is a high level of international visitation to both New Norcia (Central Midlands Sub-Region, directly connected by the Great Northern Highway) and to the Pinnacles (Central Coast Sub-Region, located west for those travelling Brand Highway and Indian Ocean Drive).

⁴⁴ ABS (2011), Census of Population and Housing, 2011, Australian Bureau of Statistics, Canberra

⁴⁵ The Department of Training and Workforce Development. 2014. Western Australian Employment Trends and Prospects May 2014

⁴⁶ ABS (2011), Census of Population and Housing, 2011, Australian Bureau of Statistics, Canberra



Encouraging international visitors to travel through the Midlands Centres would require additional focus on improving accommodation quality (4 - 5 star standard), food and customer service. The Wheatlands Motel in Dalwallinu is an exception, catering to touring groups and considered a high standard facility. Caravan Parks provide for the increasing number of 'grey nomad' travellers and have started to reinvesting capital to improve accommodation facilities by introducing then increasing the number of chalets, and powered camping sites.

The level of amenity in the three towns, particularly Moora, attracts self-sustaining tourists who are able to access affordable accommodation whilst being able to stock up on groceries, make medical appointments, access a pharmacy and have vehicles serviced etc. Local Governments are now placing more value on plans for more elaborate public information provision, welcoming entry statements and increased native verge plantations along the major tributaries into town sites adding to the appeal of the Sub-Region.

Discover Golden Horizons, driven by surrounding Local Governments, is the main tourism promotion tool in Midlands Centres. Structured packages for experiential tourism activities may be a cost effective focus to develop growth of the industry coupled with a focus on "self-drive" promotion for the Midlands Centres area. There are several wildflower related self-drive routes that are proving successful in attracting visitors in the August-October season. These include, 'Discover Golden Horizons' and 'Wildflower Way'. This could build on an existing market that enjoys the journey involved in wildflower discovery.

The pioneering history, heritage buildings, local architecture, historical and agricultural museums identify Midlands Centres as one of the earliest settled regions of Western Australia known for high agricultural fertility to produce export crops.

Tourist attractions and activities in the areas surrounding the Midlands Centres include but are not limited to;

- Biannual Wongan Hills Arts Show;
- Reynoldson Reserve Wildflower Show;
- Westways Wildflowers;
- Western Wildflower Farm (includes international export of product);
- Carnaby Cockatoo Interpretative Walk Trail;
- Watheroo National Park And Jingemias Cave;
- Biannual Dalwallinu Arts Festival;
- Dalwallinu Wattle Week;
- Monastic town of New Norcia (the only privately owned Monastic town in Australia)*; and
- Historical Wyening Mission Buildings*

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*Denotes major attractions central to but not within Midlands Centres (Shire of Victoria Plains)



The Shire of Victoria Plains borders the Midlands Centres, and houses the town of New Norcia. Logistically it plays a central role in domestic and international tourism to the Central Midlands Sub-region. For the purpose of explaining future tourism growth in the Midlands Centres, the flow on effects and 'full package' experience of New Norcia must be considered even though it is not part of the Midlands Centres. New Norcia is an internationally significant tourist attraction bringing tens of thousands of visitors to the Midlands Centres annually. New Norcia is the only Monastic town in Australia and is privately owned and run. The town offers a range of experiences from mass in the Abbey Church, Spanish architecture, an impressive art collection through to Aboriginal culture and heritage experiences. A 2013 visitor survey indicated that approximately 69% of participants stayed overnight. An opportunity exists for the Midlands Centres to capitalise on those staying overnight and encourage tourists to venture further. Maximising exposure to overnight and multi-day visitation is critical to increasing the economic value of tourism in the local market.

Key actions to achieving:

- **Highlight diversity within the framework of one Midlands centre as a packaged day trip and/or overnight stay.** A great deal of diversity is offered across population centres. Capitalising on individual differences, building on shared strengths and packaging these tourist opportunities could compliment current tourist activity and create sector growth;
- **Marketing these areas as one creates a broad offering for external people.** Marketing of community facilities and offerings across these three communities will assist to develop interest from a broader market base. It is important that these communities do not see themselves as in competition with each other, but plan and market themselves in the best interest of the whole Central Midlands Sub-Region; and
- **Joint investment from Midlands Centres stakeholders to capitalise on strengths to build amenity and capacity.** Innovation Central Midlands Inc. has been developed as a joint investment vehicle by the Midlands Centres to enable these three communities to work together and invest in projects of sub-regional significance. The Midlands Centres has been a leader in this activity and currently has a focus to increase housing diversity.

Labour Force (Migration, Skill Gaps & Opportunities)

Historically unemployment rates in the Midlands Centres area have been below the State unemployment levels. Participation in the workforce is traditionally high with majority of the workforce engaged in agriculture or agricultural servicing. In addition to agriculture, increasing employment opportunities are evident in horticulture, mining and mining servicing, construction and population services. As the horticulture industry grows in proximity to Moora it is expected this will drive demand for an increase in a seasonal workforce. This demand is currently being met by a combination of local workers and more predominately international workers on temporary work (skilled) visa (subclass 457) holders, a trend which is expected to continue. The contribution from visa workers is also noticeable throughout entire Midlands Centres, specifically Dalwallinu where an estimated 10% population increase has been experienced as a result of 457 visa workers.

Table 7: Achieving A Vibrant Economy

Guiding Principle 1 – Create a Vibrant Economy

Goal: *The Midlands Centres will build on its diverse and thriving business, industry and service hubs where innovative opportunities are actively pursued and fostered through:*

- Being proactive in attracting new business to the Midland Centres and encouraging and facilitating existing businesses to grow.
- Being proactive in attracting new business to the Midlands Centres and encouraging existing businesses to grow.
- Improving the level and range of local employment opportunities.
- Attraction and retention of knowledge and investment, people and skills.
- Supportive business environments.
- Sustainable growth supported by innovative industry.

Key Economic Issues

- Shortage of available rental accommodation (affordability and quality).
- Lack of quality tourism accommodation options.
- Shortage of labour and skilled workers.
- Impact of online competition on local business.
- Investment attraction for small business and retail.
- Industry retention and attraction.
- Impacts of climate change on the agricultural industry.
- Diversifying employment in the agricultural industry.
- Subdivision of productive agricultural land for rural living type lots.
- Reducing the local economy's dependence on the agricultural sector.
- Encourage and support mixed use developments in the Midlands Centres.
- Ensure commercial and industrial developments appropriately located
- Overcoming limitations to further investment in tourism development
- Identification of mineral resources and basic raw materials within the region to attract new extractive industries
- Need for greater private investment
- Changing agricultural support services, placing increased pressure on local grower groups
- Declining understanding of Agricultural industry by financial institutions
- Decline of population with appropriate skill sets within Midlands Centres

Key Economic Opportunities

- Emerging digital economy and access to faster and reliable internet.
- Skills and workforce development.
- Airport upgrades to support Fly-In Fly-Out workers.
- Small and medium enterprise development.
- Work force attraction.
- Innovative healthcare delivery.
- Expansion of health services.
- Tourism initiatives.
- Infill development within the town centres.
- Education and training hubs.
- Ageing population.
- Business retention and expansion.
- Improved housing and accommodation (quality and affordable options).
- Improved education to retain younger generation and their families.
- Introduction of video conferencing facilities.
- Improved retail industry – attraction of new business and shift to hybrid online/ in store sales.
- Further development of agriculture industry.
- High density living within the town centre.
- Ability to expand the Repopulation Program.
- Collaborative processing solutions (Agri-precinct).
- Coordinated tourist information centres.
- Capitalise on growing Aged Care Industry.
- Partner with established tourism markets.
- Creating communities which are conducive to encouraging transient workers for economic development.
- Providing support to groups which support the Agricultural industry.
- Development of Industry prospectus' highlighting comparative advantages for industry.

Action/activity/project:

- Horticultural development, agri-processing and packaging development.
- Development of Business Incubator Units.
- Upgrade caravan parks to cater for demand.
- Large Scale Roadhouse Development.
- Groundwater resources made available.
- Growing the Digital Wheatbelt.
- Increased liaison and partnerships with transport companies.
- Increased investment in tourism campaigns.

Communities

Guiding Principle 2 - Strengthen the Community

In developed countries, the 65+ years' population is surging and this has become more prevalent with the retirement of the Baby Boomer generation (1946 - 1964). The growth of this age cohort as a result of a decline in mortality and fertility levels, reflects global health advancements and the world's total fertility rate (TFR) falling from five children per woman in 1950-1955 to 2.5 children per woman in 2010-2015⁴⁷. The ageing population is creating great pressures on communities both socially and economically and in particular labour force participation rates, health and social services.

Community Drivers for the Midlands Centres

Western Australia's 65+ year olds account for 12.3% of the population which is in line with trends in the developed world. The Central Midlands 65+ year olds account for 12.9% of the population which is higher than Western Australia's average⁴⁸. It is expected that the Central Midlands will experience growth in demand for health-related services and employment opportunities across this sector. The Midlands Centres will be the centre of this activity and must consider all population demographics in accommodating this global phenomenon to ensure the whole community benefits from the opportunities that will arise from the ageing population.

Six key community drivers and opportunities have been identified following this Plan's due diligence and stakeholder engagement process. They encompass the sectors of:

- Health and well-being;
- Recreation;
- Culture and arts;
- Housing and accommodation;
- Education and training; and
- Aboriginal community.

Each of the key community drivers is explored in greater detail in this section.

Key Priorities to Strengthen the Community

Table 8 summarises how the Midlands Centres will strengthen the community. It also contains an overview of the key community issues, opportunities and actions. An implementation schedule and complete project list (Appendix 16.0) outline the key priority actions, projects and initiatives for the Midlands Centres. The actions are a combination of Local and State Government priorities which will be undertaken or implemented to facilitate growth.

⁴⁷ United Nations, 2013. World Population Ageing 2013 (Accessed 5th November 2014)

⁴⁸ RPS, 2014. Central Midlands Sub-Regional Economic Strategy

Health and Wellbeing

Access to health services in the Midlands Centres is a key strength and with health being the second largest employment sector in the WA economy, preparation for sector growth needs to be considered. A generation of tertiary qualified and knowledge intensive employment opportunities in primary, general and acute health care and social service delivery in anticipation of the economic and population growth of the Midlands Centres.

Each population centre in the Midlands Centres is serviced by medical centres, specialist health professionals and mental health services coupled with access to hospitals and aged care bed capacity. Moora contains a private medical centre housing up to five doctors and a Regional Hospital. District Hospitals are located in Dalwallinu and Wongan Hills. The distribution of hospital and aged care facilities are highly aligned, reflecting the interrelationship between the different levels of health care. In addition to general and acute hospitalisation, population ageing also increases the intensity of local demand for pharmacy, radiation oncology, cardiology, pathology and other primary and ancillary support services, including residential aged care services.

There is an opportunity to leverage increased services to both encourage and cater for growth across the Midlands Centres by identifying needs and areas of strength within each population centre that could be supported by Moora taking a leadership role. Since the Central Midlands Sub-Region does not have any Health and Emergency Services Precinct to fulfil the primary role in health care provision in the Midlands Centres, it will be crucial to plan facilities and services across Moora, Dalwallinu and Wongan Hills to best service these areas. Taking into consideration the Moora Regional Hospital and associated aged care facilities, a sub-regional model could be developed with Moora as a base from which to service the area. The provision of a Midlands Centres planned health care delivery model will enable local facilities to be tailored to the needs of the surrounding shires, leverage funds and enable growth in the health industry.



The older age profile of the Midlands Centres will underpin continued demand for aged care and support which will place added pressures on public, private and non-government sectors to provide primary health care services to manage chronic health conditions and co-morbidities. Growth will occur in the aged care industry over the next few decades, when it is expected that the ageing of Australia's population will see the share of residents aged 65+ increase from around 13% in 2010 to 20% in 2040⁴⁹. The State average is 12.3% with Dalwallinu having the highest (14.5%) in the Midland Centres and Wongan-Ballidu having the lowest (11.9%)⁵⁰. There exists a strong correlation between ageing populations and a fuller spectrum of health services demand. Demand for specialised dementia and high care aged care and ageing in place residential services is also likely to increase.

⁴⁹ RPS, 2014. Central Midlands Sub-Regional Economic Strategy

⁵⁰ Australian Bureau of Statistics. 2011. Census Data – Basic Community Profiles

Increased focus on prevention and rehabilitation including alternative exercise solutions is likely to occur with a paradigm shift already occurring from traditional sporting club models to 24 hour gym access in Moora and Wongan Hills, plans for re-commencing gym operation in Dalwallinu, and the consideration of a thermally heated hydrotherapy pool in Moora.

The combination of housing affordability and an ageing demographic will also increase demand for age appropriate housing. Therefore, the provision of quality and affordable lifestyle villages, universal housing and cluster housing within the Midlands Centres particularly in towns with strong health care provision and strong natural amenity, will be required. The strategic targeting of niche village type models and aged friendly communities, which complement existing health service hubs, will be crucial to attracting and retaining people in the community, and catering for future growth in a rapidly growing industry.

Recreation

To encourage the community to enjoy healthy active lifestyles and sustain strong communities, there is a need to support initiatives relating to recreation and sporting activities.

The Midlands Centres are well known for their recreational pastimes with football, cricket, hockey, netball, equestrian, basketball, swimming, cycling and golf facilities, to name a few, all located in the sub-region. Comprehensive planning is required at the local level for community infrastructure and development.

State Government Agencies must undertake sports and recreation audits which are vital to the planning and provision of new and upgraded facilities. To attract and retain residents, the upgrading of sporting grounds, rejuvenation of local playgrounds and parks, consolidation and promotion of recreational activities (other than core sports) and improved management of facilities and events must be a continual process.



Culture and Arts

Cultural development will be a significant contributing factor in the attraction and retention of new residents and the provision of new employment opportunities for many segments of the community. The key to bringing the community together and to assist with future growth is to provide places where people can come together to learn about the Central Midlands area, its history and people. To ensure the local community feel valued and connected, there is a need to encourage the development of a diverse, inclusive, vibrant, happy and accepting community.

The Midlands Centres has traditionally placed value on culture and arts, and over time developed formal performing arts spaces beyond the 'town hall' concept. Formal state wide and national performing touring circuits have visited Midlands Centres for several decades. The Moora Performing Arts Centre was upgraded to provide higher level technical specifications which enabled attraction of well renowned WA and interstate touring performances. The Moora Performing Arts Centre, The Dalwallinu Discovery Centre (boasting an outdoor amphitheatre and a Performing Arts Room with a purpose built sprung flooring system), and the recent construction of the Wongan Hills Community Resource Precinct, 'The Station', collectively acknowledge the role culture and arts has to play in the growth of the Midlands Centres.

The recent building developments mentioned above, coupled with the role of Community Resource Centres demonstrate a possible shift from a Local Government office coalface, to a designated visitor focus, acknowledging emphasis on liveability. Community Resource Centres across the region play an increasing role in meeting, welcoming and in some cases entertaining public and visitors. It is possible that cost efficiencies and shared community vision could assist local groups showcase local and visiting displays more often in Community Resource Centre space. Volunteer community arts groups continue to cycle through strong vibrant years against periods of consolidation. The development of shared formal spaces for the visual arts assists to combat volunteer burnout and build a platform for strong growth in the community sector.



Additional growth could be demonstrated by the restoration and promotion of historical locations within the Central Midlands Sub-Region and the creation of places where local artists can display their work and hold cultural events bringing the local community together. Wongan Hills is demonstrating opportunity in this sector with the recent development of 'The Station', housing a visual arts and visitor centre. It is adjacent to old railway station buildings which have the potential to capitalise on historical buildings to enhance a newly created vibrant activity centre.

Industry and population growth will encourage multiculturalism within the Sub-Region and bring together different cultures to ensure a welcoming place for new residents. Dalwallinu has touched on this by welcoming a large working population of 457 visa holders into their community through a myriad of tailored education and information packages however; there is also room for development of the Midlands Centres' Aboriginal history. There has been limited investment in capitalising on local talent for creation of sustainable local enterprise and employment programs. By providing a more visual recognition of Aboriginal culture and history, economic and reinvestment opportunities may result for future growth. Moora has a significant Aboriginal population and could take a leadership role in meeting a tourist demand for cultural experiences which may take advantage of the nearby Mogumber Mission.



Housing and Accommodation

Population growth in the Midlands Centres will require sufficient and diverse housing options being available to accommodate the needs of the community in ways that are responsive to their changing size, distribution and demographics. Meeting the demand for short and also affordable long-term accommodation is paramount in combating issues such as quality, availability, affordability of housing options as well as enabling social inclusion and attraction and retention of residents.

Addressing these issues supports economic growth. A plan to increase the number of rental properties should be created with the identification of available land a priority. Incentives for developers and investors to build within the Midland Centres will help create viable housing options for prospective new residents. An increase in quality rental properties will assist with attracting new families and workers to the area (e.g. health and business professionals, Drive-in/Drive-out and Fly-in/Fly-out (FIFO) workers). Innovation Central Midlands Inc. is a possible driver to achieve increased housing supply and quality challenges across the Midlands Centres.

The growing number of older residents in the community places particular demand in terms of accommodation, care and access to medical services. A proactive approach should be considered to encourage community services to be located in residential areas. Focus on increasing the density of residential living in areas that are already well serviced and close to town centres, should be demonstrated.

The creation of long and short-term higher density living within the Midlands Centres will assist with problems experienced with availability of tourist accommodation whilst also increasing the vibrancy of the town centres. With the population expected to increase, planning also needs to commence on initiatives such as the dispersion and improved quality of social housing, the introduction of innovative, sustainable and universal housing options and the identification of development opportunities.

Education and Training

The Midlands Centres has a wide range of educational facilities that provide great resources for the current population. Within the Midlands Centres there are government primary schools, catholic primary schools, senior and district high schools, a residential college, TAFE campus, kindergartens and childcare centres.

There is currently a perceived view by the community that the quality of education and the variety that is offered within the region is not at metropolitan standards and, like any other region, it causes an exodus of students (and in many cases families) from the area as children progress towards high school (grade 7 and above). In order to retain the current population and attract more families to the Midlands Centres, an improvement in education facilities and resources is required.

To allow for growth, planning should begin to improve education in the Midlands Centres by assessing the size and location of the different facilities, quality of teaching, resources available, variety of courses offered and the consolidation of campuses. The possible introduction of industry based training centres under a regional approach should also be investigated.

Primary and Secondary Education

Dalwallinu and Wongan Hills each have a district high school which caters for years Kindergarten (K) -10. Dalwallinu currently has 128 primary students (K-6) and Wongan Hills has 182 primary students (K-6)⁵¹.

Moora contains both a public primary school and a private Catholic primary school (St Joseph's). Moora Primary School currently has 100 students and St Joseph's has 183 students⁵¹.

Dalwallinu District High School and Wongan Hills District High School provide a range of learning opportunities for years 7-10 which includes both academic and vocational options. School of Isolated and Distance Education (SIDE) and Technical and Further Education (TAFE) courses are also delivered through information technology at both schools. Dalwallinu has 41 secondary students and Wongan Hills has 72⁵¹.

Central Midlands Senior High School (CMSHS) in Moora offers senior education for years 7- 12 in the region. Currently, there are a total of 204 students. CMSHS offers a range of programs for academic, vocational, cultural and technological pathways. Recent investment into the CMSHS includes a \$3.5 million Trade Training Centre and \$165,000 on improving online learning technology, linking with the Senior High schools in Narrogin and Merredin. St James Residential hostel offers boarding facilities for 50 students⁵².



51 Department of Education student numbers as at Semester 2 2015 accessed via <http://www.det.wa.edu.au/schoolsonline/> on 10 March 2016

52 Moora Boarding St James Residential College, 2015 Annual Report, Page 3

Tertiary and Specialised Education and Training

The Central Regional TAFE (formerly C.Y. O'Connor Institute) provides higher education through apprenticeship/ traineeship courses and vocational education programmes. A TAFE campus exists in Moora. The campus offers a range of facilities suitable for courses in computing, visual arts, automotive and metal trades and horticulture.

Aboriginal Community

Of particular importance is acknowledging and maintaining the history and culture of the regions Ballardong, Widi Mob and Yued people. Aboriginal people typically have a much shorter life expectancy than other Australians and are more likely to experience disability and reduced quality of life due to ill health.

Contributors to better health and well-being includes access to health services, the involvement of the Aboriginal community, improving attendance levels at school, reducing the level of unemployment and increasing the participation in recreational activities.



Potential Aboriginal engagement and enhancement projects include the development of interpretive centres, documentation of cultural knowledge including local Aboriginal art works, and local medicinal and food species and the development of a positive mentoring program through Aboriginal Elder groups. It is important Aboriginal Liaison Officers in education and law enforcement are maintained.

Heritage

It is important when considering the development of the Midlands Centres to take in to consideration its history and heritage, as this forms part of the character of the towns. In order to achieve the population growth objectives it will be necessary to develop new and existing areas with appropriate care and controls so that the heritage and character of the region is not adversely affected. Of particular importance is acknowledging and maintaining the history of the Aboriginal community.

The Department of Aboriginal Affairs, Aboriginal Heritage Enquiry System database currently identifies three registered sites within the Moora town site; the historical and mythological Gingin Brook Waggyi Site and mythological Moore River Waugal and Chandala Brook sites. There are currently no registered sites in Dalwallinu or Wongan Hills.

Acknowledging Aboriginal heritage is of great importance. There is a need to ensure the Aboriginal community is represented and consulted when decisions are made on the growth of the towns. Sensitivities to family groups and other formal and informal entities need to be acknowledged and managed.

Multiculturalism

Cultural development will be a significant contributing factor in the attraction and retention of new people and the provision of new employment opportunities for all segments of the Midlands Centres.

This has been highlighted by the Shire of Dalwallinu being honoured with an award at the WA Multicultural Community Service Awards 2013 where they were recognised for their work with and commitment to Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CaLD) communities.

The Shire of Dalwallinu won the Implementing Multiculturalism Locally Award for its work in assisting skilled migrants to settle in their community by improving access to a wide range of support services. Utilising the Dalwallinu Repopulation Project initiative and the appointment of a Community Liaison and Support Officer, the Shire of Dalwallinu identified which services, events and initiatives were needed by people in a CaLD community. These included free English language classes, vocational education and training courses, a New Resident Welcome Pack, welcome BBQs and access to appropriate government offices such as the Department of Immigration.

The continued positive actions of the Local Government has encouraged interaction between old and new community members, allowing for the successful integration of migrants from diverse backgrounds, and a stronger and more harmonious community. This has in turn influenced the other towns of the Midlands Centres to consider and reflect on their own multicultural initiatives.

The Midland Centres recognise that multiculturalism adds vibrancy to the community. However as demonstrated in Dalwallinu, it comes with special demands to provide language and support services beyond those typically catered for.



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*Photo courtesy of Shire of Dalwallinu 'Australia Day Breakfast'

Table 8: Achieving A Strong Community

Guiding Principle 2 – Strengthen the Community

Goal: *The Midlands Centres will comprise relaxed, family- friendly communities with healthy lifestyles and a wealth of activities for all. This will be achieved by:*

- Creating a healthy, active, safe and informed community.
- Encouraging community participation and involvement.
- Creating affordable and accessible services that meet community expectations.
- Founding a high quality of life for the people of Midlands Centres.
- Enjoying a diverse range of social, recreational and volunteer opportunities.
- Respecting diversity and being inclusive of all peoples.
- Celebrating the Midlands Centres rich cultural heritage.
- Building on the Midlands Centres emerging arts and cultural scene.
- Encouraging community driven attraction and delivery of social services.

Key Community Issues

- Access to quality, affordable and a variety of housing.
- Retention of population, particularly younger people.
- Attraction and retention of additional health professionals.
- Privacy associated with access to mental health services.
- Limited access to childcare facilities.
- Limited programs targeting needs of Aboriginal population and cultural needs.
- Poor perception of quality of secondary and tertiary education, training services and infrastructure.
- Competing aged care services limiting resource scope.
- Limited access to telecommunication services.
- Increasing community expectations in the planning and delivery of community services.
- Social conflict within the community.
- Limited options for teenagers to participate in community recreational activities.

Key Community Opportunities

- Plan for the needs of a growing Aboriginal population and the associated cultural and societal diversity.
- Identify the location of Aboriginal sites in the region and ensure their consideration and protection.
- Planning and provision for an ageing population and an increase in demand for community and health services.
- Continued improvement to education and training facilities.
- Continued improvement to health service facilities.
- Continued assessment of educational courses offered.
- Continued support for arts cultural programs and events.
- Increased focus on cultural diversity, including showcasing our Aboriginal heritage, and demonstrating sustainable programs for the future.
- Monitor changes in demand for community services and infrastructure across the region.
- Expansion of quality and affordable housing for older persons.
- Improved quality and affordable social housing for disadvantaged individuals and families.
- Attraction of non-government organisation (NGO) social services across Midlands Centres.
- Engage visa and transient workers.
- Encourage regional sport and alternative well-being solutions (swipe access to indoor gyms, and provision of outdoor gyms etc).

Action/activity/project:

▪ Aged Housing Development. ▪ Construction of Moora Hydrotherapy Pool. ▪ Development of Mocardy Centre in Wongan Hills. ▪ C.Y. O'Connor Campus Development/Upgrade.	▪ Childcare solutions. ▪ Creating Age Friendly Communities Project. ▪ Mobile coverage for Wubin, Goodlands, Northwest Road (Yallalie), Koojan, Wirrilda, Cadoux, Kondut.



Built Form and Housing

Guiding Principle 3 – Create sustainable Built Form and Housing

Despite its population size and expansive geographic area, Western Australia, like many other areas in developed countries, is highly urbanised. Growth pressures along Western Australia's Swan Coastal Plain characterised by low density greenfield developments, require sound planning and must consider regions as part of this strategy to accommodate long-term growth projections.

The introduction of the Royalties for Regions Regional Centres Development Plan (SuperTowns) by the Western Australian Liberal-National Government in 2011 has provided this opportunity. The Program enabled a number of communities including Jurien Bay and Northam to plan and prepare for the future where they can take advantage of the opportunities created by WA's population growth which is predicted to more than double to 4.9 million people by 2050⁵³. This has encouraged formulation of similar smaller scale plans such as this Plan, for Wheatbelt centres.

Built Form and Housing Drivers for the Midlands Centres

Although not part of the SuperTowns program, the Midlands Centres are viewed as an integral area for future population growth. This Plan, modelled on the SuperTowns process, will help guide the planning and built form development required to cater for a projected population growth.

This Plan's due diligence and stakeholder engagement process identified five key built form and housing drivers and opportunities. They encompass the sectors of:

- Public Space;
- Town Site Development;
- Rural Living Development;
- Commercial and Retail; and
- Industrial.

Each of the key built form and housing drivers is explored in greater detail in this section.

Key Priorities to Create Sustainable Built Form and Housing

Table 9 summarises how the Midlands Centres will create sustainable built form and housing solutions and provides an overview of the key built form issues, opportunities and actions. An implementation schedule and complete project list (Appendix 16.0) outlines the key priority actions, projects and initiatives. The actions are a combination of Local and State Government priorities which will be undertaken or implemented to facilitate growth.

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⁵³ Regional Development Council, 2011. Regional Development Policy Framework – An Action Agenda for Regional Development

Public Space

To attract and retain residents in the Midlands Centres, there needs to be an emphasis on improving urban places and the quality of design in public spaces. Improving areas where the community can come together will help build happy and thriving centres where new people could come to live. Various initiatives could be implemented to reinvigorate the region:

- The installation of locally created public art;
- Upgrading local parks, and children's play equipment;
- Revitalisation of the amenities and street scapes near commercial areas to attract and encourage visitors and the community to the precincts. This could include Wi-Fi hubs in town centres;
- Promotion of community gardens;
- Regular local farmers markets;
- Improved lighting and surveillance for the safety of residents;
- Improved telecommunications coverage; and
- Improved picnic areas and stopping places for locals, visitors and tourists.

It is also important to promote accessible services along with well-designed, functional and high quality residential, commercial, industrial and recreational spaces. The development of sustainable transport networks, including the promotion of alternative means of transport will provide more options for the Midland Centres, and in some cases, improve the health of the communities. Initiatives such as dedicated cycle paths, age friendly pathways and the expansion of the public bus system for Dalwallinu, Wongan Hills and Moora (including their smaller towns) will all help in making the Midlands Centres and the Central Midlands Sub-Region more attractive to prospective residents. It will also play a role in increasing physical activity levels and promoting well-being.



Town Site Development

The Central Midlands Sub-Region comprise of a number of town sites. The majority of the population resides in the centres of Dalwallinu, Wongan Hills and Moora. These function as local service centres providing the daily needs of residents (of the towns and surrounding agricultural areas).

Each town has been set out in a grid pattern subdivision layout centred on a main commercial precinct, typically comprising of a strip of commercial and retail business along the main streets. This has led to the establishment of distinct and recognisable town centres and civic precincts.

The towns have a wide variety of buildings and styles reflecting distinct phases of establishment and development over the last 100 years including a number of heritage buildings in Moora. Residential development consists of lots averaging approximately 1,100m² with a density coding of R12.5 through to small rural residential holdings and each town has serviced industrial developments and commercial precincts.

To deliver greater population growth into the future, the Local Governments will need to ensure there is an adequate supply of suitably zoned, serviced and affordable land in the three towns. The land is required to attract new investment and maximise opportunities for economic development and growth in the future. The current supply of suitably zoned and serviced residential land is sufficient to meet short-term demand and current supply of suitably zoned and serviced industrial land is at a premium in Dalwallinu. There is a need in all towns to ensure an adequate supply of suitably zoned and serviced residential and industrial land to meet medium to long-term future needs. Financial and other incentives or assistance are required to encourage development that will provide diverse lot sizes within the different zones.

Given the high costs associated with developing land, it is important to encourage consolidated mixed use zoning development in close proximity to the town centre. This will provide significant opportunities for higher density residential development, particularly to accommodate the housing requirements of a growing aged population.

Future planning at Dalwallinu and Moora needs to incorporate proposed perimeter roads and main road re-routing at Wongan Hills. The final designs must not constrain opportunities for future urban development and provide clearly defined, safe and easily accessible entry points to the towns.



Rural Living Development

Rural living opportunities are currently provided in the Midlands Centres with broadacre agricultural land and rural residential type lots located around town sites and surrounding areas in Moora and Wongan Hills. There has been an increased demand for rural living opportunities in recent times within the region, evidence of which is attributed to the fact that peri-urban and rural living are seen as a key economic driver. Planning reviews should be undertaken to capitalise on the increased interest which can provide alternative lifestyle choices and assist in attracting new residents.

Each Local Government should plan for rural living subdivision development in appropriate locations with due regard to its potential impacts on productive agricultural land, the natural environment, fire safety and essential servicing and prospective community infrastructure requirements.

Residential

Currently all towns have vacant land available for sale as well as built form product. Rental accommodation is limited in the three centres, particularly in Dalwallinu where a shortage is critical and there is a waiting list for rental properties. The quality and suitability of rental properties is also an issue.

Due to a combination of the high costs associated with land development activities, low returns (on capital investment) and slow sale take up rates, recent land releases have been undertaken by either LandCorp or Local Government.

Low density codes to support single story development are currently the predominant style typical of the Sub-Region with higher density sites generally utilised for aged care accommodation. There is a lack of diversity of product in the Midlands Centres with limited vacant land options available for small lots (under 700 square metres) or for built form options to support group site developments. This is mainly due to the lack of critical infrastructure (reticulated sewer).

The existing low residential densities within the Midlands Centres combined with the absence of sewer do not facilitate increased housing density or diversity in the built form product. A review of existing densities is recommended as well as the identification of future potential sites to support group site development.



Commercial/Retail

There is currently existing retail space to accommodate immediate growth; however the availability of un-occupied space may only accommodate limited future growth. This needs to be further investigated to determine requirements for future demand.

Office and “hot desk” space to accommodate visiting professionals and government officers is limited and when demand for retail space increases, it is highly likely existing office space will be converted into retail. To see growth in the Midlands Centres, opportunities to support the creation of additional office space will need to be identified and planned for.

Industrial

There is limited availability of vacant or developed sites for light or general industrial purposes for sale or rent.

Similar to development of land for residential purposes, the high cost of developing and servicing of the land combined with low returns has resulted in all land development being undertaken by either LGA's or LandCorp.

Due to high entry level costs, many new businesses initially struggle. The development of a business “incubator” centre could assist by providing facilities to support the development and attraction of new industry to the Midlands Centres. A project of this nature is currently being facilitated by the Shire of Dalwallinu where it has acquired land and secured funding to support the construction of a building/shed to service the need.



Additional support to business could be provided by the incorporation into the town planning schemes of special control areas to enable composite industrial development. This land use could assist businesses by providing the opportunity for owners to acquire land which could support a limited scope of light industrial type usages plus a residence. A composite zoning would allow owners to live and work at one place of address.

Rental Accommodation

The expansion of Midlands Centres to accommodate future population growth is dependent upon a number of factors which includes the availability of suitable, well maintained and affordable rental properties. Currently there is little to no stock available in the Midlands Centres with a number of the Local Governments reporting waiting lists.

In an effort to address the shortage of rental properties, leaders within the Sub-Region have finalised the registration of Innovation Central Midlands Inc. which is a collaborative Midlands Centres Housing Alliance and hosts the Central Midlands Construction (CMC) subsidiary.

The group has been developed initially as an infrastructure trust to pool money and leverage additional funding to build houses across the three jurisdictions (and possibly beyond) to meet the needs of professionals, an aging population, seasonal labour force, and families who require accommodation in the region.

Table 9: Achieving Sustainable Built Form & Housing

Guiding Principle 3 – Create sustainable *Built Form and Housing*

Goal: *The built form and housing will capture the character and setting of the Midlands Centres; connecting people and places and integrating sustainable infrastructure that meets the needs of the growing community and economy by:*

- Creating active and vibrant spaces.
- Developing well connected and liveable communities.
- Encouraging design elements to celebrate communities.
- Supporting sustainable building and infrastructure design.

Key Built Form and Housing Issues

- Lack of rental accommodation.
- Limited consideration of the future housing needs for an anticipated population growth.
- Urban development in smaller towns not being supported due to cost of services.
- Native Title, and the transition to a new regime under the South West Native Title Settlement.
- Availability of land for residential development.
- Lack of suitable housing options i.e. professionals, families etc.
- Housing affordability.
- Cost of headworks.
- Cost of flood mitigation.
- Lack of awareness of alternative housing options suitable to regional areas to address regional issues.

Key Built Form and Housing Opportunities

- Planning required for an increase in new housing and light industrial lot demand.
- Maintain an adequate supply of suitably zoned and serviced land for residential use, rural living and light industrial purposes.
- Plan for higher density living.
- Significant improvement and distribution of public housing stock.
- Encourage and support mixed use developments in the town centres.
- Plan for the resolution of Native Title claims to allow for the release of developable land.
- “Lazy land” assessment.
- Universally designed housing.
- Cluster housing development (Aged Care).
- Relationship building with regional Aboriginal stakeholder groups with regard to future development.
- Diversity in cost effective housing design across Midlands Centres.
- Alternative Energy projects.
- Shared regional projects through a formal collaborative body representing Midlands Centres.

Action/activity/project:

- Innovation Central Midlands Inc. as a key driver for housing in the Midlands Centres.
- Moora Westend Sub-division.
- Remain informed and take a proactive position in transitioning from Native Title to a stronger foundation developed through the South West Native Title Settlement.
- Bell Street Sub-Division in Dalwallinu.
- Investigate and release suitable land for housing in Wongan Hills.
- Development of suitable accommodation across the Midlands Centres for:
  - Workers and their families;
  - Shire staff;
  - Professionals; and
  - Short term/transient workers.



Infrastructure

Guiding Principle 4 – Deliver Successful Infrastructure Management

Ageing infrastructure, climate change and population pressures and cost of development are influential factors driving government planning and market investment. Parallel to this are the high expectations Australians have placed on having access to reliable, quality infrastructure, where governments are seen as accountable to fulfil these expectations⁵⁴. With water, energy, transport and telecommunications identified as Australia's key economic infrastructure assets and networks by Infrastructure Australia, it is integral that the community and Government have a high level of confidence that this infrastructure is meeting the needs of business, households and individuals. The delivery of timely, sustainable, integrated and high quality, modern infrastructure to meet social, economic and environmental needs that will create well connected, liveable communities with sustainable employment opportunities, will be ensured by:

- Enhancing the Midlands Centres appeal for lifestyle and business development;
- Encouraging energy efficiency and sustainability;
- Adopting a whole-of-government approach towards infrastructure provision to meet our current and future needs for growth;
- Providing quality regional infrastructure;
- Improving investment in regional infrastructure to ensure greater prosperity, productivity and growth of our communities; and
- Supporting public-private partnerships and other mechanisms to help deliver efficient and timely infrastructure projects.

Infrastructure Drivers for the Midlands Centres

All planning activity must consider short and long-term infrastructure needs of the Midlands Centres to ensure community expectations and commitment by Government can be met. The Midlands Centres will need to work closely with utility providers and agencies to ensure this Plan's population scenarios are incorporated into their own plans. Nine key infrastructure drivers and opportunities have been identified through the Plan's due diligence and stakeholder engagement process:

- Infrastructure Planning;
- Waste Management;
- Transport;
- Telecommunications;
- Energy;
- Water;
- Wastewater;
- Drainage; and
- Community Infrastructure.

Each of the key infrastructure drivers is explored in greater detail in this section.

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⁵⁴ Infrastructure Australia, 2013 State of Play Report, Australia's Key Economic Infrastructure Sectors, 2013, pg 4

Key Priorities to Deliver Successful Infrastructure Management

Table 10 summarises how the Midlands Centres will deliver successful infrastructure management along with an overview of the key environmental issues, opportunities and actions. An implementation schedule and complete project list (Appendix 16.0) outlines the key priority actions, projects and initiatives. The actions are a combination of Local and State Government priorities which will be undertaken or implemented to facilitate economic growth.

Infrastructure Planning

Enabling infrastructure will be planned for and implemented to provide for current and future population pressures. The Local Governments will be required to consult with Government Agencies, local organisations and communities to ascertain critical infrastructure needs.

Some information has been obtained from infrastructure and utility providers to partially plan for the population growth scenarios, however agencies should be encouraged to incorporate this Plan's population scenarios into their forward planning. Further consultation and investigation should be undertaken to ascertain infrastructure thresholds and barriers that may exist with regard to infrastructure and utilities provision to meet accelerated demand.

The State Government is intent on taking a coordinated, high level approach to infrastructure planning across Government Agencies and the utility providers to ensure that the population scenarios are incorporated into State planning activities.

Any future infrastructure should embrace new, sustainable and alternative technologies and enhance the standard of living, integrating into the built and natural environment and resulting in positive community and environmental impacts. Green infrastructure techniques should be adopted to integrate the essential infrastructure with the built and natural environments and to encourage greater efficiencies and sustainability. Infrastructure will act as an enabler for economic development in the Midlands Centres.

Waste Management

The Midlands Centres each operate approved and licensed landfill sites. In addition, refuse sites and rubbish tip sites are located in the Midlands centres:

Shire of Moora

- Moora Townsite Rubbish Tip
- Watheroo Rubbish Tip

Shire of Dalwallinu

- Dalwallinu Landfill
- Kalannie Refuse Site

Shire of Wongan-Ballidu

- Ballidu Tip Site
- Wongan Hills Landfill Site
- Cadoux Tip Site

The Shire of Dalwallinu operates two approved Class II putrescible landfill sites. The Dalwallinu Landfill has an estimated 50-70 year life, while the Kalannie Refuse Site has an estimated 20-30 year



life. Rubbish collection is undertaken weekly and recycling twice a month. In addition, a commercial service is provided twice per week to Dalwallinu.

The Shire of Moora operates two Class II putrescible landfill sites. The Moora Townsite Rubbish Tip has an estimated 15 year life, while the Watheroo Rubbish Tip now acts as a transfer station to the Moora Rubbish Tip not as a landfill site. Rubbish collection for commercial and street bins is undertaken three times a week, while residential rubbish is collected once a week and recycling for the North of Moora and other towns and the South of Moora on alternating fortnights.

The Shire of Wongan-Ballidu operates two Class II putrescible landfill sites and the Wongan Hills Landfill Site is licensed as a Class II putrescible landfill site and a Liquid Waste Facility. The Wongan Hills Landfill Site has an estimated 20-30 year life, while Cadoux and Ballidu Tip Sites an estimated 20 and 10 year life respectively.

Moving forward there is the need for improved collaboration and management of waste generation and disposal within the Midlands Centres. This will involve encouraging the local community to minimise waste creation and encourage recycling to reduce demand for further waste facility development.

Transport

The existing transport network in the area comprises road, bus, rail and air infrastructure and services. Dalwallinu is located on the Great Northern Highway which is a major inter-regional route linking the metropolitan area with the north-west and forms part of the National Highway route around Australia.

Moora is located on the Midlands Road (which for part is termed the Bindoon-Moora Rd) and, although connected to the Great Northern Highway via the Moora-Miling Road, is not suitable for heavy haulage. Caravans and 'grey nomads' are frequent users of the Midlands Road which creates tourism opportunities.

Wongan Hills is located on the Northam-Pithara Road, which provides a poor to limited connection between the Great Northern Highway and the Great Eastern Highway. This section of this road between Ballidu and Pithara is in need of an upgrade to make it more suitable for heavy haulage. An upgrade of this road would have significant benefits for the Sub-Region, and the State.

The community requires access to safe, reliable and sustainable transport options that provide the best available connections to other regional cities and the metropolitan areas. The current public transport option available involves a TransWA bus service which services the Midlands Centres. The rail service is solely for the freight of grain with no passenger services. There should also be a range of alternative modes of local transportation developed within the Midlands Centres to provide local residents with greater flexibility and choice. This includes upgrades to pedestrian and bicycle linkages in the towns. This will support the development of healthy, liveable communities.

Dalwallinu, Moora and Wongan Hills operate airstrips that are used by the Royal Flying Doctor Service. The three airstrips are also available for private uses. Moora and Wongan Hills currently have plans in place to upgrade their airstrips to cater for increasing private demand as Jandakot Airport in the Perth metropolitan area becomes more congested.

With the proposed growth in population there will be a need to upgrade the network of State Highways and transport corridors to reflect their status as major routes that enable economic growth and development.

Roads

The state and national highway network is a major economic enabler, vital for transporting freight into and out of the Sub-Region and providing linkages throughout and, to regional cities, the metropolitan area and the State.

Logistics is a major growth industry and employer in the Central Midlands and that of the Midlands Centres. Quality, safe and reliable road and transportation networks will be imperative for sustained industry growth. Most roads in the Midlands Centres are controlled by Local Governments. There is one National Highway and five significant State roads providing linkages throughout the region:

- Great Northern Highway (National Highway);
- Bindoon Moora Road;
- Calingiri Wongan Hills Road;
- Mullewa – Wubin Road;
- Midlands Road; and
- Northam – Pithara Road.

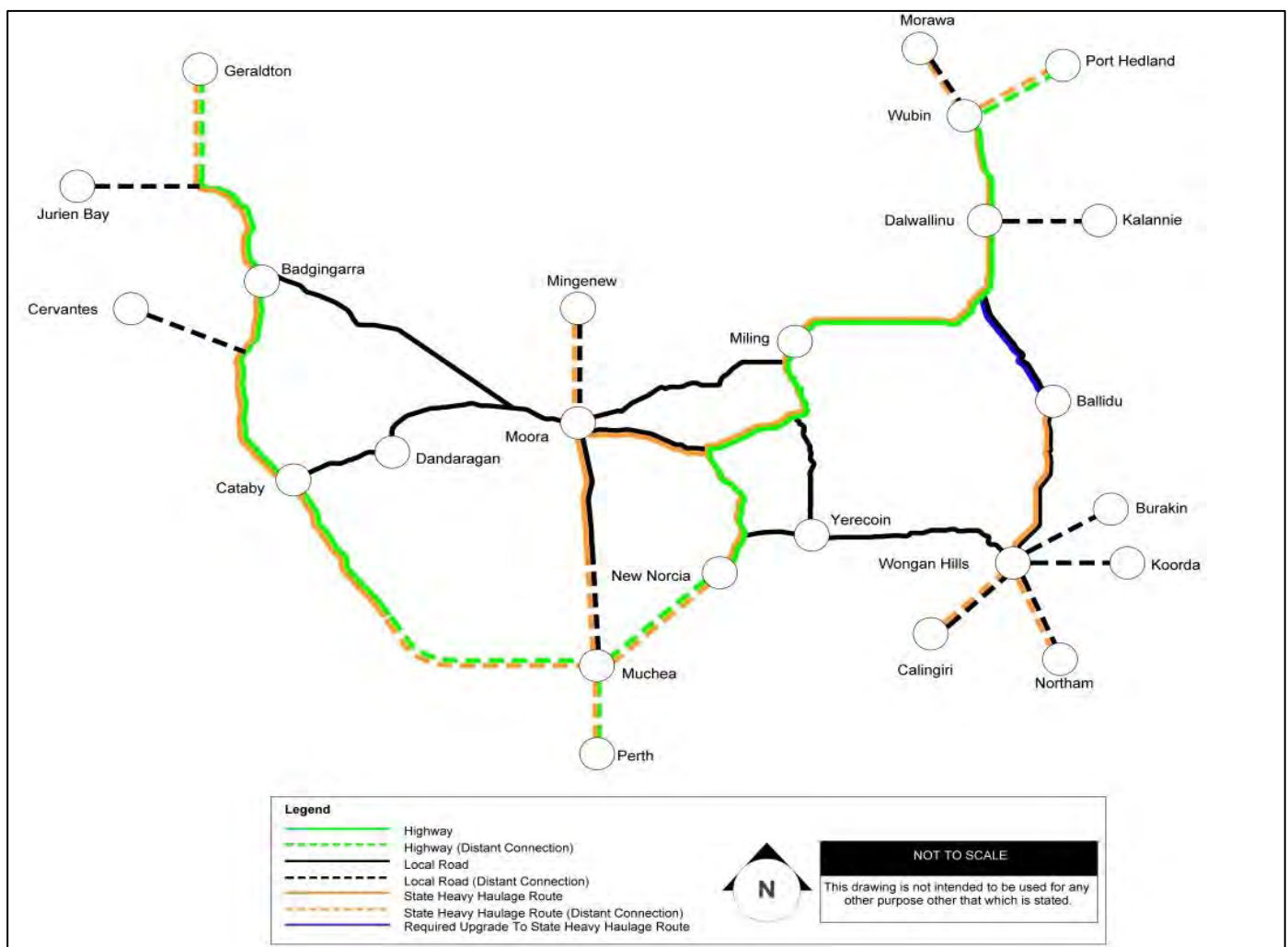


Figure 17: Regional, State & National Highway Network



Whilst Brand Highway and Great Eastern Highway are not located in the Midlands Centres Study-Area, it is important to consider the impact these major routes have on the Midlands Centres. Traffic from Brand Highway often moves through to Great Northern Highway, and once the Northam Pithara linkage is upgraded this will support a direct heavy haulage route connection between Great Eastern Highway and Great Northern Highway (resolves Midland and Upper Swan freight issues and congestion).

Roads within the towns and Local Governments carry significant volumes of heavy vehicles which haul a variety of products including locally manufactured mining and agricultural products, concrete products, grain and livestock, fuel, fertiliser, general freight, farm and mining machinery, basic raw materials and minerals. They also cater for a substantial amount of light through-traffic that has neither origins nor destinations within the Midlands Centres Study-Area. Tourist traffic is also significant, particularly during the wildflower season in late winter and early spring.

The maintenance and upkeep of the local regional road network places a heavy financial burden on Local Governments but will remain a necessary requirement to enable economic development, growth and community connections within the Midlands Centres. Offering alternative local transport choices and introducing new methods for funding and managing road assets will assist in maintaining quality road networks.

Significant road projects undertaken by Main Roads WA have recently been completed with some still under construction and further projects planned. Upgrades to Great Northern Highway have been ongoing with the recent completion of the upgrades to the Bind Bind Curves and the New Norcia to Wubin section. Further projects are underway with \$384.8 million of funding from the State and Federal Governments secured to continue upgrades to, the Great Northern Highway between Muchea and Wubin and bypasses for Miling and Wubin⁵⁵.

Although New Norcia is not part of Midlands Centres Study-Area, the flow on effect of the planned bypass for the town will create an easier route to destinations in the Midlands Centres, especially for tourist visitation impacted by heavy haulage.

Continued improvements to the alignment, passing lanes and shoulders of local roads should be progressively undertaken whilst lobbying for improvements to State and National Roads throughout the Central Midlands Sub-Region. In particular the upgrade to the Northam – Pithara road would provide a direct link between Great Northern Highway and Great Eastern Highway and be a major economic enabler for the region.

Local and State roads used for transporting agricultural lime and grain also need to be considered for future upgrades and provided with increased maintenance budgets as heavy traffic use grows placing further pressure on this valuable infrastructure.

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⁵⁵ Main Roads WA Great Northern Highway – Muchea to Wubin Stage 2 Upgrade, accessed via www.mainroads.wa.gov.au/BuildingRoads/Projects/Regional/Pages/GNH_Muchea_Wubin.aspx on 10 March 2016



Figure 18: Midland Centres, Central Midlands & Central Coast Sub-Region - Historical Lime Routes

Figure 18 highlights the Lime Routes that traverse the Midlands Centres⁵⁶. The use of lime sand to address soil acidity across the agricultural region has been increasing in recent years with benefits to production.

The Department of Agriculture and Food WA estimate that over the next 10 years around 2.5 million tons of lime will be required annually across the Wheatbelt with an ongoing two million tons per annum after the initial 10 years to continue to manage soil acidity. The vast majority of lime sand will be sourced from the coastal region between Perth and Geraldton as the readily available product is of higher quality and has a greater neutralising value. This is a significant increase from around 1.2 million tons in 2014/15. In order for infrastructure to manage this increase in haulage there will need to be further investment in the lime routes⁵⁷.

The majority of the lime routes are managed by the Local Governments putting financial pressure on the council budgets to manage and upgrade roads being used by heavy vehicles, which may not be sustainable going into the future. The Shires of Dalwallinu, Moora and Wongan - Ballidu all have lime routes traversing their areas.

A “Wheatbelt Lime Strategy” report is currently being developed. It seeks to recommend strategies and investment into infrastructure that will best address these issues.

⁵⁶ Main Roads WA, Review of Agricultural Lime Sand / Heavy haulage Routes 1 & 2, July 2010, Perth, WA

⁵⁷ DAFWA, Soil Acidity, a Guide for WA Farmers and Consultants, April 2014, Northam, WA



Air

In Midlands Centres there are currently no commercial air transport services to and from the Dalwallinu, Moora or Wongan Hills airstrips. However they do cater for irregular light aircraft movements.

The airstrips, managed by the Local Governments, are considered an important part of the area, particularly in terms of emergency services. They have the potential to be developed to accommodate a number of tourist related activities including, but not limited to, hosting visiting dignitaries, sky diving, gliding, hot air ballooning, scenic flights and an aviation themed residential estate.

A review of options to enable capitalisation on the investment made in the airstrips by increasing the services offered and air traffic volumes should be considered. Any future expansion plans will need to take into account existing and proposed surrounding land uses to avoid any potential land use conflicts associated with potential aircraft noise. Investigations should also be made into the possibility of using the airstrips for FIFO workers. This would allow FIFO residents to remain living in the area rather than relocating to Perth or a Regional City.

In the short-term the LGA's should consider small upgrades to the current airstrips which would include the entry roads and facilities.

Public Transport

With growth predicted for the Midlands Centres, public transport is a service that will need to be improved. The Public Transport Authority currently contract manages the delivery of a local school bus service in the towns using contracted school bus operators. Consideration needs to be given to expanding the public bus service for the general community of the entire area to help improve the community's mobility, particularly low income earners and the elderly.

TransWA operates a road coach service through Dalwallinu and Wongan Hills (Perth to Geraldton route); Monday through to Thursday. There is currently no plan for this service to be increased or removed from the schedule. TransWA buses stop in Moora (Perth to Geraldton/Kalbarri via Moora route) Saturday, Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday.

Currently there are no taxis operating in the Midlands Centres. A taxi service within the area should also be encouraged in the future to accommodate a growing population and different requirements of the population.

Rail

The narrow gauge rail network that operates in the Shires is used purely for the transportation of freight, in particular grain. The grain is generally transported throughout the year depending on demand with an average of 25 trains per month for Moora, and 21 for both Dalwallinu and Wongan Hills. Due to flexibility of road transport and logistics, increasingly grain transport is being undertaken by road rather than rail.

Brookfield Rail is currently responsible for the access management, signalling and communication systems, train control and construction and maintenance of the network. The Public Transport Authority is responsible for managing and protecting the long term viability of the railway corridors and infrastructure.

As with the south eastern area of the Wheatbelt (Kondinin/Bruce Rock Area), with the closure of the tier 3 grain freight network in this and other areas of the Wheatbelt, planning should begin for a similar possibility in the Midlands Centres region. Should the rail network cease to operate there will be an increase in heavy vehicle traffic on the roads which would lead to increased maintenance costs. It could also have an impact on the local economy due to businesses needing to change the method of transport for their products.



Telecommunications

The digital economy provides a launching platform for all development within the Wheatbelt and will be a key driver for the Midlands Centres. Telecommunications is currently a key issue in both the Midlands Centres and the broader Central Midlands Sub-Region. The lack of quality, high speed digital access is a barrier to attracting new or relocating business and population. The Midlands Centres are currently served by a range of telecommunication services including aging fixed line services and mobile phone coverage, internet access, digital television and radio.

Telstra is the major provider delivering telecommunication services across the Wheatbelt. However Optus has had applications for mobile towers processed through the Local Governments of the Midlands Centres, but to date only built in neighbouring LGA's and sub-regions.

The State Government's Regional Telecommunications Project and the Federal Government's Federal Mobile Blackspot Program (MBSP) will improve mobile phone coverage throughout the Midlands Centres with the Shires of Dalwallinu, Moora and Wongan-Ballidu all receiving additional towers through these programs. MSBP Round 1 is currently under construction (2015-2018) with nominations for MBSP Round 2 recently collated for funding assessment (as at January 2016).

However, there are still widespread black spots in the Midlands Centres which require more tower installations. Midlands Centres have identified the following priority blackspots:

Shire of Dalwallinu

- Goodlands
- Wubin

Shire of Moora

- Northwest Road
- Koojan
- Wirrilda

Shire of Wongan-Ballidu

- Cadoux
- Kondut

Two-way radio is a common form of communication in the remote areas as facilities outside the towns are limited, with fixed line phone services available to most rural properties but mobile phone signal often not reliable.



Digital television remains largely in a transition period since June 2013, with Wongan Hills selecting to upgrade their local transmission facility in contrast to adopting Viewer Access Satellite Television. Coverage is acceptable; however the Moora transmission tower strength needs to be improved. Dalwallinu currently has acceptable coverage across town.

Current internet access for the general community can be unreliable and extremely slow at peak times. Both Moora and Wongan Hills were previously listed as intended recipients of Fibre to the Premise while Dalwallinu was not. With a change in government policy these communities are



unsure of how and when service is expected to be improved. It is predicted that Moora and Wongan Hills will receive Fibre to the Node (FTTN) with fixed wireless intended for town perimeters. Dalwallinu continues to lobby for an improved technology to proposed access to the National Broadband Network (NBN) satellite which is expected to be a lesser service that currently delivered to the town site through ADSL/ADSL+2.

All require significant upgrade to allow for a population increase. Local Governments have identified that the NBN service delivered through the Satellite service is not the preferred option for the current or expected future population, rather fixed wireless or FTTP/FTTN technologies are sought to serve a regionally significant population base by 2050.

Health services have access to fibre optics, but the surrounding exchange and fibre network needs upgrading to support advancing technology within the industry and to support other emerging industries.

Similarly, access to greater bandwidths in the education sector should be investigated to allow for new methods of teaching from primary school level through to tertiary education. Limited service and mobile congestion at peak times provide an inequity for regional students needing to complete homework in the digital era. This includes those returning from boarding school needing to complete holiday homework.

Faster and more reliable internet access and improved telecommunications will allow the sub-region's communities to be connected globally. It will facilitate a new digital economy allowing local business, education and health providers and community organisations to compete and develop effectively. Overall, a more 'level playing field' with metropolitan counterparts will be created with opportunities for the digital economy including faster internet access enabling the sub-region to grow, and attract and retain population.

Energy

The current power supply network in the Midlands Centres has sufficient capacity to accommodate only limited future development and growth in the short term. A capacity audit needs to be undertaken and the appropriate upgrades implemented to remove barriers to growth in the Sub-Region. The transmission network supply map can be examined in Appendix 10 & 11.

As indicated in Appendix 10 & 11, Western Power provides electricity from the interconnected grid via the Moora zone substation, which is located in the North Country Load Area transmission area. Moora is the major power supply node for the Midlands Centres, delivered via a 133kV High Voltage Overhead Transmission Line. Wongan Hills is fed via a 33kV high voltage overhead transmission line. Dalwallinu is fed via a three phase high voltage three phase overhead distribution line. Dalwallinu is the only Midlands Centre which is not supplied directly by a high voltage overhead transmission line.

Due to load requirements in the North Country Load Area and demand along feeder distribution lines originating from Moora, upgrades are required to provide for current and forecasted demand. Planned upgrades involve the replacement of three existing transformers at the Moora Substation with a single higher capacity transformer by summer 2014/15⁵⁸. This replacement project also provides additional capacity to address emerging capacity issues that arise around mid-2020.

Planned projects to alleviate demand/supply led issues include the following:

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⁵⁸ Western Power. 2012. Annual Planning Report 2012.

- Installation of a third 132/22 kilovolt-ampere (kVA) transformer at Moora Substation (2014/15);
- Establishment of Eneabba terminal to allow new entrant generation connection (Summer 2016/17); and
- Construction of a new zone substation in the North Country (2017/18).

Key constraints exist in the network including substation capacity, thermal overload risk and voltage constraints. A number of major resource project development proposals exist within the Central Midlands Sub-Region requiring substantial power supply, demonstrating the need for a capacity audit. Individual electricity supplies to new developments are subject to agreements with Western Power.

Broader implications for the Midlands Centres exist through upgrades being delivered through the Mid West Energy Project, providing additional capacity on the existing 132kV lines through the establishment of the 330kV high voltage transmission line between Perth and Three Springs as per Figure 19. Karara Mining has established new private lines from Three Springs to connect their mine sites to this infrastructure. Asia Iron has also considered building a 330kVA connection line. Funding is being sourced for Stage 2 which will extend line connection to Moonyoonooka (Geraldton).



Figure 19: Mid West Energy Project (Source: Western Power)

The cost of providing electricity services to new developments is a significant proportion of total development costs and a major constraint to new development in the Midlands Centres. Dalwallinu continues to face major cost inhibitors to business development in the industrial area, with each new business having to make a separate and costly application for a lot upgrade (an average cost of \$130,000⁵⁹). Town power supply issues have been reported, however the capacity sits at around 60% at this stage with room for additional growth until the 80% mark at which upgrades would need to be planned for.

⁵⁹ Unpublished Interviews - Midland Centre's Local Governments

Continued support should be given for development of alternative energy production including solar, wind and bioenergy. The Wheatbelt is recognised as a major prospective contributor to the renewable generation market in Western Australia, due to its proximity to major load areas and transmission connectivity and capacity for renewable production. However, the renewables sector is currently constrained by existing infrastructure capacity issues limiting the capacity to feed energy into the grid. This is particularly relevant to market generators intending to earn income from the reserve capacity and energy markets by providing alternative solutions.

Alternative energy sources will provide more sustainable power while adding greater diversity to the economy. There will be significant opportunities for the area to develop and expand local, renewable and cost effective energy sources with the possibility of extensive Federal Government and private sector investment in the renewable energy sector over the coming decades.

There is also a need to consider energy conservation in the design of urban areas and housing. The concepts of environmental design, solar orientation and energy efficient housing have significant benefits for consumers in the face of large increases in the price of grid power and should be promoted by Midland Centres. There is currently no gas reticulation in place in the Midlands Centres. Gas is supplied using cylinders by local distributors. There are no plans to introduce reticulated natural gas to the Midlands Centres in the near future.



Water

A reliable and safe water supply is critical to support population and economic growth. Issues include:

- climate change impacts;
- decreasing rainfall;
- increased storm events;
- more intense rainfall during the summer season; and
- salinity.

Groundwater extraction issues mean that better water planning and efficiency will be paramount. Population growth will put substantial pressure on the water supply. Facilitation of upgrades to existing water supply infrastructure is required for future development, growth and for drought mitigation. Key to this is identifying the location of all strategically important public water supply dams, catchments and tanks in Crown ownership. A capacity audit and upgrade for the Midlands Centres is necessary for infrastructure upgrades. A basic outline to inform a holistic solution is detailed on the following page.



Dalwallinu - The Water Corporation has a licence to operate the water system. Water is delivered to two 225m³ town service tanks from the CK Extension which is part of the Goldfields and Agricultural Water Supply. The tanks do not meet the Water Corporation's requirements and are to be replaced by a proposed 2ML Service Tank currently scheduled for completion in 2017 (an upgrade from the 600,000L storage capacity which proved insufficient in the Summer of 2014/2015). Further investigation is required, but initial information suggests that this new service tank will provide sufficient capacity for several more years based on current growth rates. It has been determined that the location of this storage tank will move to the opposite end of the town, on higher ground to enable a fall back gravity fed system for when there is a power outage. Supply to the town is via a 255mm mains pipe.

Moora - The Water Corporation has the operation licence. The Moora town site water supply is sourced from the local Kolburn bore field approximately 11km west of the town. Treated drinking water is stored in holding tanks (2250, 2500, 225, and 225 m³ capacity) and then pumped to the town through a 250mm mains pipe. As the town grows, the Water Corporation will need to be consulted with sufficient lead-time (3-5 years) to allow the capacity of these assets to be assessed and plans put in place to fund system upgrades.

Wongan Hills - The Water Corporation has a licence to operate the water and systems. Water is delivered to the 4500m³ Mocardy Tank from the BP Extension which is part of the Goldfields and Agricultural Water Supply. The town is fed from the Mocardy Tank and two smaller service tanks. The capacity to supply additional lots is mostly dependant on upgrading water mains between Mocardy Tank (BP Extension) and the town site. Supply to town is currently via a 205mm mains pipe. Additional storage is provided at the Wongan Hills Depot Tank (capacity 200m³) and Wilding Road Tank (capacity 200 m³). A 100mm main joins the Wilding Road tank to town.

More generally, in the Midlands Centres the salinity of groundwater resources means there are only a limited number of bores available to supplement existing water supply sources. Expensive treatment is required to enable its use. Information regarding the location of suitable groundwater sources is currently limited and requires further investigation in consultation with the Department of Water and the local community. Areas not served by scheme water, such as rural properties, are generally serviced by on-site storage tanks, farm dams (and associated catchments) or through trucking water from numerous scheme water standpipes and dams currently vested with the Water Corporation.

Water Corporation mains do not always provide the necessary water pressure for fire protection requirements for specific development especially with relation to large industrial lots. In many cases, on-site storage/reticulation and booster systems are required for fire protection. Installation and investment to meet Building Code of Australia requirements are required at the owner's expense.

The Water Corporation has produced "Water Forever", a 50 year plan for providing Perth with sufficient water in a drying climate. The document forecasts a reduction in overall scheme water use per capita, and more recycling of treated wastewater. They have also produced a number of other water efficiency documents including a State strategy focused on development, building and systems design.



Wastewater

In the Midlands Centres, waste water is recycled and stored for use on ovals, parks and gardens. Promoting water wise solutions such as the use of grey water, installing rain water tanks and planting a water wise garden relies heavily on community education.

The Shire of Dalwallinu holds a water services operating licence (WL14) to provide sewerage and non-potable water supply services. It allows the Shire of Dalwallinu to undertake, maintain and operate any appropriate water service works. These services are provided through 4.9km of earthenware sewerage pipe reticulation, and a waste treatment plant, serving 259 properties and an estimated 650 residents. The sewerage treatment plant operates on a gravity system via 150mm earthenware mains to the Imhoff Tank. Decanted waste water, containing dissolved pollutants and any remaining suspended solids gravity feeds to the oxidation lagoon. Waste water gravity feeds out of the oxidation lagoon via an open concrete spoon drain to the pump pit located at the primary lagoon, where it is pumped to either of the secondary lagoons. The pump station draws water from either secondary lagoon for subsequent storage into the holding dam for on-use.

The current retention time for the system is 48 hours, which enables sufficient time to address any major malfunctions. The Shire of Dalwallinu uses recycled wastewater on the hockey and football ovals. There is a high likelihood that another storage dam will be required in the next few years.

The Shire of Moora holds the wastewater licence for the town. It owns and operates the conveyance system, wastewater treatment plant and reuse system. In Wongan Hills, preliminary wastewater planning has included land to the south of the town which would double the current system. The two additional sub catchments will require pump stations. The Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP) is adjacent to the town and requires the buffer to be depicted as a Special Control Area on the Town Planning Scheme in order to cater for development projections. Based on current data, the existing WWTP could accommodate about 50 additional lots. Furthermore, Wongan Hills has the potential to link the Mocardy Dam to the existing reticulation system in town to better utilise the harvested water.

Drainage

Stormwater drainage is currently managed by a combination of open drains, pipes and culverts. Most streets within the established towns are kerbed and drained with inlet pits and piped drainage systems. Rural areas are served predominantly by open drains, culverts and dams. In some cases stormwater is discharged into natural drainage systems which have potential to negatively impact the environment. Issues such as land degradation and loss of native plants and animals due to reduced water quality are potential consequences of this discharge.

Due to the landforms and soils in the area, there are numerous small drainage lines and creeks that are seasonal and flow directly into the major surface water features. Many of the natural drainage features are significantly altered, degraded and are susceptible to inundation and flooding, particularly during extreme storm events.

Non-structural mitigation measures to assist in addressing inundation and flooding issues include land use zoning controls, building and development controls, flood proofing of buildings (including house raising), public awareness, education and flood forecasting (including warning and evacuation).

Structural measures which could be introduced include the construction of detention basins, levees, river diversions and channel widening.

Flood Control Areas

Extensive parts of the Moora town site are located on land that was inundated during a flood event in March and again in May of 1999. Rigorous modelling of the flooding event resulted in mapping and development control provisions being incorporated into the Shire of Moora's Town Planning Scheme to regulate new development. These controls preclude new buildings from being built within the 'floodway' and require all new buildings to dispose of all effluent off-site.

The Department of Water has advised that any new development infrastructure must provide adequate protection from flooding and the development should not detrimentally impact on the existing flooding regime of the general area. To address the flooding issues into the future, the WA Planning Commission has requested the Shire of Moora prepare a Local Planning Strategy to identify future growth options around the town. It should be noted that the areas identified for growth as part of this plan still need to be the subject of further planning processes.



Community Infrastructure

The Midlands Centres have a wide range of community services and facilities provided by both the public sector and non-government organisations (NGO's). Included are health, education, cultural and recreation services and facilities.

Moving forward there will be a need to monitor changes in demand for community services and infrastructure in the Midlands Centres to facilitate the efficient provision and maintenance of an adequate range of services and facilities and provide improved coordination between public and private sector service providers.

- 
- **Child Health Centres**
  - **Post Offices**
  - **St Johns Ambulance Depots**
  - **Courthouse**
  - **State Government District Offices And Depots**
  - **Hot Desk Space**
  - **Cemeteries**
  - **Museums**
  - **Railway Stations**
  - **Playgrounds**
  - **Playing Fields**
  - **Equestrian Facilities**
  - **Golf Courses**
  - **Local Government Administration Centres And Depots**
  - **Caravan Parks**
  - **Fire Stations**
  - **Police Stations**
  - **Community Halls**
  - **Tourist Parking And Information Areas**
  - **Airfields**
  - **Outdoor Swimming Pools**
  - **Regional Libraries**
  - **Showgrounds, Ovals And Green Spaces**
  - **Outdoor Courts**
  - **Recreation Buildings**
  - **Bowling Club**
  - **Regional Events**
  - **Community Resource Centres**
  - **Swipe Access Gym Facilities**
  - **Performance And Visual Arts Spaces**
  - **Walk Trails**
  - **Speedway Facilities**
  - **457 Visa Integration Training Space**
  - **Mocardy Centre For NGO Social Services**

Figure 20: Community Infrastructure

Table 10: Achieving Successful Infrastructure Management

Guiding Principle 4 – Deliver successful *Infrastructure* management

Goal: Pursue the delivery of timely, sustainable, integrated and high quality, modern infrastructure to meet the social, economic and environmental needs that will create well connected, liveable communities with sustainable employment opportunities by:

- Enhancing the Midlands Centres appeal for lifestyle and business development.
- Encouraging energy efficiency and sustainability.
- Adopting a whole-of-government approach towards infrastructure provision to meet the current and future needs for growth.
- Providing quality regional solutions to facilitate appropriate population growth.
- Improving investment in regional infrastructure to ensure greater prosperity, productivity and growth of the communities.
- Supporting public-private partnerships and other arrangements to deliver efficient and timely infrastructure projects.
- Consolidating sport and recreation facilities.

Key Infrastructure Issues

- Slow and unreliable internet service.
- Poor mobile phone service to areas throughout the Midlands Centres including Wubin, Goodlands, Northwest Road (Yallalie), Koojan, Wirrilda, Cadoux, Kondut.
- Lack of alternative energy supply.
- Lack of sewer services restricting development potential.
- Below standard drainage infrastructure.
- Rising groundwater and increasing salinity causing significant drainage issues.
- High cost of providing electricity to new developments.
- High cost of developing industrial land comparative to market value.
- Lack of local public transport.
- Lack of long-term electricity capacity.
- Lack of quality and appropriate planned NBN solutions.

Key Infrastructure Opportunities

- Improvements to airports.
- Maintenance of local road network.
- Ongoing major transport corridor improvements to facilitate greater movement and provide State solutions.
- Conservation and efficient use of existing water resources, including wastewater reuse.
- Availability of ground water resources and future sustainable use.
- Future wastewater management.
- Need for an improved regional waste management facility.
- Waste elimination and reduction.
- Airport development and upgrade.
- Shared waste plan/solutions.
- Assessment of abundant ground water.
- Infrastructure capacity audit.
- Formal collaborative approach for shared project development (ICM).
- Greater availability, provision and use of hot desking (business space).
- Development of an agri-precinct within Midlands Centres.

Action/activity/project:

▪ Regional Growth Capacity Audit and Upgrade. ▪ Mobile Phone Tower Installation. ▪ Development of Airstrips. ▪ Upgrade of Northam – Pithara Road. ▪ Groundwater Availability Investigation and Management. ▪ Regional Waste Site Investigations and Development.	▪ Development of Additional Industrial Land in Dalwallinu. ▪ Development of Southern Industrial Precinct in Moora. ▪ Development of Industrial and Commercial land in Wongan Hills. ▪ Continued Upgrades to Great Northern Highway. ▪ Wastewater Management.

Natural Environment

Guiding Principle 5 – Protect and Enhance the Natural Environment

The global climate is changing and will continue to change in ways that affect the planning and day to day operations of businesses, Government Agencies and other organisations. The consequences of climate change include higher temperatures, altered rainfall patterns, and more frequent or intense extreme events such as heatwaves, drought and storms⁶⁰. While Western Australia falls below many of the national targets to combat climate change, the impacts of climate change that are beginning to occur will likely become greater in the future. Western Australians will need to adapt to ensure the well-being of the community, the environment and the economy and to minimise the costs of climate change impacts on society.

Natural Environmental Drivers for the Midlands Centres

The Midlands Centres are not sheltered from changes to the climate. Increased seasonal volatility such as extreme weather events and declining winter rainfall are already impacting industry and the community. Nature reserves are critical to protecting fragile eco-systems and of great significance in preserving natural heritage. Three key environmental drivers and opportunities have been identified following this Plan's due diligence and stakeholder engagement process. They encompass:

- Managing Resources;
- Current Environmental Challenges; and
- Future Environmental Challenges.

Each of the key environmental drivers is explored in greater detail in this section.

Key Priorities to Protect and Enhance the Natural Environment

Table 11 summarises how the Midlands Centres will protect and enhance the natural environment along with an overview of the key environmental issues, opportunities and actions. An implementation schedule and complete project list (Appendix 16.0) outlines the key priority actions, projects and initiatives. The actions are a combination of Local and State Government priorities which will be undertaken or implemented to facilitate economic growth.



⁶⁰ Australian Government, Department of the Environment. Climate Change impact and risk management – A guide for business and government, accessed via <http://www.environment.gov.au/climate-change/adaptation/publications/climate-change-impact-risk-management> on 7 November 2014



Managing Resources

The communities within the Midlands Centres recognise the environmental aspects of the area are a significant part of the heritage, values and identity. The region is home to a number of rare and endangered species of flora and fauna (such as Carnaby's Cockatoos and Malleefowl) along with number of nature reserves which provide conservation, biodiversity, recreation and tourism opportunities.

The Department of Parks and Wildlife views the bushland in the Central Midlands Sub-Region and that of the Midlands Centres as unique with mixed species of flora and fauna that could be used to promote the area. To assist in attracting new residents and tourists to the region, the natural resources should continue to be used to market the area. Where appropriate, promotion of natural amenities and landscapes for conservation as economic drivers and visitor destinations should be seen as a tool for growth. It is important to show that the proximity of the natural environment is part of the lifestyle and spirit of the Midlands Centres. Therefore, it should be ensured that these elements are captured in marketing, branding, tourism and recreation opportunities.

Current Environmental Challenges

To assist with land development that will allow for future growth in the Midlands Centres, certain issues need to be addressed in the short-term. Land contamination is a serious environmental problem that has gained increased recognition in recent years (e.g. asbestos). Detailed information on the location, extent and severity of contaminated land is not currently known, however anecdotal evidence suggests that many sites may require remediation in the future. Given the potential health and other impacts associated with the use of contaminated land (e.g. food chain, water supply), it is important to identify all land contaminated sites to minimise risk to the environment and residents' health, and provide opportunity for remediation.

The current location and extent of buffer areas to existing industry, infrastructure and special uses in the Midlands Centres are not well defined or documented in the current planning framework. In some cases, the local planning framework has not been effective in providing adequate separation of industry and sensitive land uses. The determination and establishment of suitable buffer areas to provide for the separation of industrial and sensitive land uses is required at an early stage in the planning process to ensure that amenity is maintained at acceptable levels. There is currently a demonstrated need to identify the location and extent of recommended buffer areas along with improved land use, management and monitoring controls. This approach will ensure the compatibility of future land usage minimises potential adverse environmental and health impacts and land use conflicts.

Supporting growth and development while protecting and managing natural systems, habitats and biodiversity can be challenging. The nature reserves located near Moora and Wongan Hills are recognised hosts to rare and endangered flora and fauna. The impacts of development on the natural environment can be addressed by adhering to State Government policy and by encouraging the development of land which has previously been developed or cleared.

Recent State Government reforms pertaining to the management of bushfire related risk has meant additional planning and building requirements may apply to developments located within designated bush fire prone areas. The impacts of this legislation will require careful consideration when identifying development opportunities to support growth in the Midlands Centres.

Future Environmental Challenges

Increased passenger and freight movements on road and railways is likely to place pressure on the environment through generation of emissions (noise, dust and odour) and increase requirements for reliable water and energy supply. An expanded population is also likely to place pressure on existing remnant vegetation through land clearing and pressure on significant natural features. There is a need to recognise the future implications of climate change on the Midlands Centres and the impact of flooding and drought events on agriculture and other key industries. A commitment by the Midlands Centres must ensure that future land use and development does not exacerbate the impacts or increase the risk or cost to the community.

Knowing more about the potential impacts of climate change will help to accurately target infrastructure investment. Energy efficient development through site layout, design and development provisions and regulation needs to be encouraged to reduce the impacts of climate change. The impact on climate change from new developments can be mitigated by:

- Supporting the use of sustainable forms of energy (e.g. solar panels and wind turbines);
- Improved water management;
- Protection of the natural heritage;
- Greening of the built environment; and
- Protection and maintenance of native vegetation and wildlife habitats.



Table 11: Protecting The Natural Environment

Guiding Principle 5 – Protect and Enhance the Natural Environment

Goal: The environmental values and natural resources of the region need to be protected for the benefit of current and future generations while providing appropriate development opportunities. This can be achieved by:

- Maintaining and enhancing the natural environment, addressing risk areas.
- Achieving environmentally sustainable and economically viable management of waste.
- The development of sustainable town sites, integrating natural elements and connecting the community to the environment.
- Responsible access, use and enjoyment of the natural environment.
- Having a strong connection with the environment.

Key Natural Environment Issues

- Recreational management of environmental assets.
- Balancing land use, agriculture and development with environmental values.
- Salinity.
- Climate change including droughts, storms and flooding.
- Reduced rainfall for the region and the impacts on groundwater supply.
- Rising groundwater and salinity caused by extensive clearing of native vegetation.
- Increased water discharges and reduced water quality leading to the loss of native plants and animals.
- The impact on threatened species of animals and plants.
- Lack of original native vegetation in the region.
- Identification of contaminated land in the region.
- Lack of definition on the location and extent of buffer areas for existing industry, infrastructure and special uses.

Key Natural Environment Opportunities

- Identify location and extent of natural resources and raw materials and ensure their protection.
- Supporting the use of sustainable forms of energy such as solar panels and wind turbines.
- Improved water management.
- Protection of the natural heritage.
- Greening of the built environment.
- Protection and maintenance of native vegetation and wildlife habitats.

Action/activity/project:

- Moore Catchment Councils Eco-Trails Booklets and Trail Upgrade.
- Continued Eco – Tourism.
- Improved Waste Management.

Governance

Guiding Principle 6 – Ensure Successful Governance

The Western Australian Liberal-National Governments' Royalties for Regions policy has been the driving force to ensure a focus on Western Australia's regions. The Royalties for Regions program has set aside 25% of mining royalties per year (capped at \$1 billion) to fund infrastructure and services across regional communities. Royalties for Regions has established the State Government's commitment to building stronger regional communities and investment that enhances economic growth. To maximise benefits from this program and to ensure this commitment becomes a reality, greater integration and coordination at both the regional and local level is required

Governance Drivers for the Midlands Centres

Strong leadership is essential for the Midlands Centres to engage in Western Australia's opportunity for growth. Due to historical development, Moora has naturally acquired a level of responsibility and in the interest of strong future growth, needs to demonstrate a leadership role in consultation with the population hubs of Dalwallinu and Wongan Hills. Due to Moora possessing a traditional role as the regional centre, it has established infrastructure and stronger service provision in the health, education and finance sectors.

Moora needs to capitalise on these strengths and, in consultation with the members of the Midlands Centres, take a leadership role in coordinating and leveraging for regional solutions for the betterment of the whole area. In addition to this, each Midlands Centre possesses unique comparative advantages which they should continue to acknowledge and market through mutual dependence. This will further enable better leveraging for community services and infrastructure.

Solid governance structures and processes which align with the economic strengths of the Midlands Centres and the continued determination to drive economic and population growth in a collaborative way will ensure the Midlands Centres benefits from this Plan. This Plan's due diligence and stakeholder engagement process identified three key governance drivers and opportunities. They encompass the sectors of:

- Regional leadership;
- Delivery of the plan; and
- Implementation and monitoring.

Each of the key governance drivers is explored in greater detail in this section.

Key Priorities to Ensure Successful Governance

Table 12 summarises how the Midlands Centres will ensure successful governance along with an overview of the key governance issues, opportunities and actions. An Implementation Schedule and complete project list (Appendix 16.0) outlines the key priority actions, projects and initiatives for Midlands Centres which may have wider reaching regional benefit. The actions are a combination of Local and State Government priorities which should be undertaken or implemented to facilitate growth.

Regional Leadership

Moora should assume a regional leadership role for the development of the Midlands Centres. It is important that a positive “can do” message on behalf of the Sub-Region is communicated in order to attract investment and market this area as a place to live, work and invest. Such leadership creates a positive message and investment should be targeted where there is opportunity. Whilst Moora has traditionally attracted more services and infrastructure, logistics and surrounding centres have altered the strength of this role, with infrastructure and services being more widely dispersed in recent times. With consideration to this, each town in the Midlands Centres has a role to play as a “combined inland centre” driven by strong collaboration, communication and a shared vision.

Employment statistics that were collected by the University of WA, in conjunction with the Wheatbelt Development Commission, explore the relationship between communities and their regional centres. The research found there are three forms of leadership roles that a regional centre displays in a sub-region:

- Regional Centre As of Right;
- Regional Centre As of Action; and
- Regional Centre As of Responsibility.

Moora is found to be a ‘Regional Centre *As of Right*’, which is historically based, and increasingly shifting towards a need to be a ‘Regional Centre *As of Action*’. Prior to the expansion of road networks in the Central Midlands and Central Coast Sub-Regions, Moora was the central town on ‘the major’ road heading north. As such it attracted the majority of government services and infrastructure investment. This area is a stable, safe and productive agricultural region which has attracted high level of agricultural services and financial institutions. This has assisted economic and employment diversity in Moora along with the wider surrounding population’s use of the town as a service centre. However, with the development of, and emphasis on alternative transport routes (Great Northern Highway to the mining areas), and the opening of coastal plains access (Brand Highway and Indian Ocean Drive), Moora is no longer the sole thoroughfare.

As such, to retain its regional centre status, and to continue to focus on growth, Moora needs to shift from an ‘*As of Right*’ leadership role to an ‘*As of Action*’ role. Moora’s established education facilities service the Central Midlands, and elevated health services in comparison to other inland centres were developed in an ‘*As of Right*’ period. As a consequence of these changes, a strategic approach to cater for the other population centres in addition to Moora is required. In terms of Government service provision, Moora should lobby more for regional solutions which benefit the Midlands Centres overall, with regards to health, education and other Government services. The shift towards an ‘*As of Action*’ leadership role is occurring and Moora needs to demonstrate this by actively consulting with and considering regional needs when planning for growth. Thought needs to be given to expansion which allows for specialisation in the hubs of the Midlands Centres, for example; Wongan Hills delivering strong NGO social services, Dalwallinu expanding manufacturing, mining and transport services and Moora capitalising on existing health, education and finance sector strengths. More sub-regional service delivery planning is needed to ensure the best regional solutions for the Midlands Centres.

Marketing and investment attraction should consider comparative advantages and each Local Government should take on a responsibility to attract investment to the Midlands Centres as a whole. There should not be competition for investments between the areas.

Below (Figure 21), concern is focused on Employment Diversity against Growth, for Midlands Centres. Specific to only the 2001-2006 data, Midlands Centres is converging with the Wheatbelt trend and therefore is becoming similar to other communities of the Wheatbelt. Moora is the only LGA above zero in terms of employment growth during this period, with the rest of the LGA's being highly specialised and experiencing negative employment growth. This is likely due to the specialisation of these LGA's in agriculture.

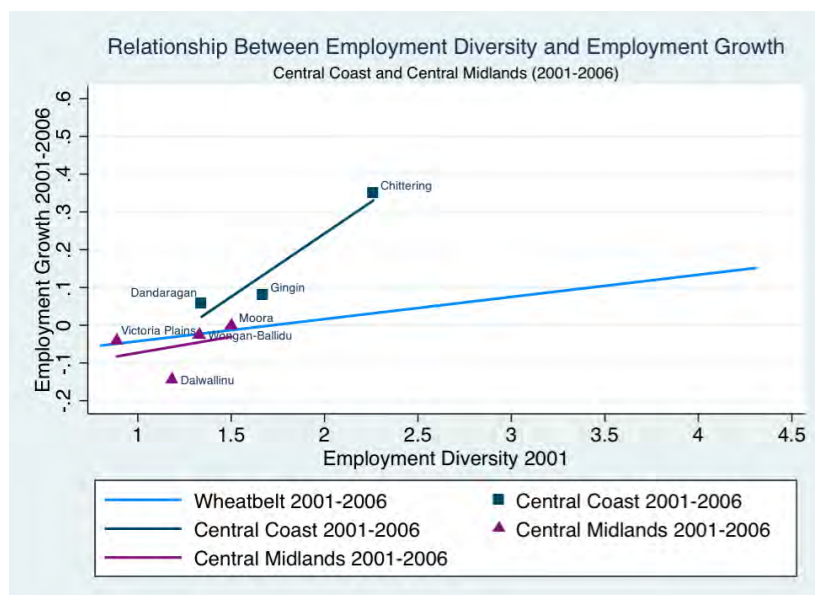


Figure 21: Relationship Between Employment Diversity & Employment Growth (2001-2006)

Figure 22 shows that in more recent years (2006-2011), the Midlands Centres Local Governments are becoming dissimilar to other LGA's in the Wheatbelt. They are diverging from the Wheatbelt trend with no Midlands Centres LGA's experiencing growth. It should be noted that Dalwallinu, Moora and Wongan Hills are converging in terms of diversity. Moora features the most diverse economic base amongst Midlands Centres however, the difference is not great.

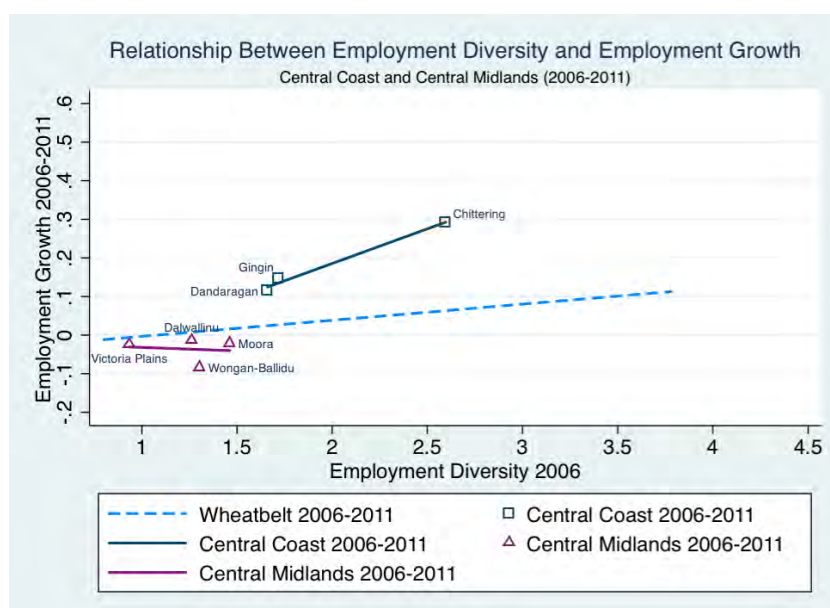


Figure 22: Relationship Between Employment Diversity & Employment Growth (2006-2011)



Whilst we are not examining the Wheatbelt's Central Coast Sub-Region in this Plan, it is interesting to note that employment diversity and growth has decreased for the Shires of Chittering and Gingin but remains at a much higher level than Midlands Centres. The Shire of Dandaragan is the only area which has experienced growth in both. It is expected that employment growth will have increased for at least Dalwallinu in the period since 2011 and that the three areas will remain similar in diversity compared with areas like the Wheatbelt South where Narrogin shows far greater employment diversity than other LGA's in its Sub-Region⁶¹.

The emergence of surrounding centres such as the Shires of Gingin and Chittering and Dandaragan can both compliment and compete with the Midlands Centres. Taking advantage of the growth in these other areas will require strong positive leadership from Shire of Moora to encourage collaboration between the three Local Governments of the Midlands Centres.

The Shire of Dalwallinu displays a marked change in employment growth. The positioning of the Dalwallinu town site on Great Northern Highway, mining activity to the Shire's north and significant Exclusive Brethren community investment have encouraged growth. Industrial and manufacturing business expansion; the ability of the town to accommodate visa workers and the activity introduced by the *Regional Repopulation Plan* have also facilitated this increase.

The initial employment for Moora has been stable, and employment growth has been experienced. Wongan Hills however, tells a different story which relates to a growing over 55 years' population moving from 16% (2001) to 19% (2006) and to 25% (2011) and a reduced labour force 806 (2001) to 729 (2011)⁶². This could also demonstrate a shift towards the 'lifestyle retirees', whilst the younger demographic is vacating to capitalise on other opportunities.

The Midlands Centres communities have shown increasing regional collaboration; evidenced by their combined workings during the State Government's Country Local Government Fund and more recently the development of Innovation Central Midlands Inc. (ICM). This formal alliance between the Shire's of Dalwallinu, Moora and Wongan-Ballidu was established on 30 May 2014 as an incorporated association (replacing the Central Midlands Voluntary Regional Organisation of Councils) and acts as a regional economic development agency for the Central Midlands and surrounds. The Central Midlands Construction (CMC) is the operational arm of ICM and will be responsible for delivery of future projects. It is anticipated ICM will enact the recommendations of this Plan; the Midlands Centres Economic Development and Implementation Strategy; and further establish a portfolio to attract future funding interest.

ICM is the first formalised joint investment structure of this kind in the Wheatbelt region. It encourages and enables the Midlands Centres to focus on growth and associated investment through targeted projects. Housing is the first focus area this group is assessing for joint investment potential.

While the Shire of Moora must show leadership in the Midlands Centres, the Shires of Wongan-Ballidu and Dalwallinu must be receptive to joint investment attraction; service delivery planning; and approach future growth in a collaborative way if this area is to reach its full potential.

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⁶¹ An Economic Development and Implementation Strategy – Greater Narrogin Region, 2015

⁶² Australian Bureau of Statistics. 2011. Census Data – Basic Community Profiles



Delivery of the Plan

Various key actions are required to successfully deliver the vision, guiding principles, actions, projects and initiatives of this Plan. The implementation schedules that form part of each guiding principle, sets out the actions, projects and initiatives required by the Midlands Centres LGA's, with assistance from State Government Agencies, to take them on the path to growth, prosperity and well-being, including the key priorities listed within this document.

The key to successful delivery of this Plan and ensuring successful governance for the area into the future will be the:

- Strong partnerships between State, LGA's and the private sector;
- Ownership of the Plan by the Midlands Centres Local Governments;
- Coordination and leadership displayed by the Shire of Moora for the Midlands Centres area , and an ongoing commitment to collaboration with the Shires of Wongan Hills and Dalwallinu;
- Creative methods of collaboration from Local Governments, community and business in priority projects;
- Positive attitude towards achieving the required goals – delivering on actions, project and initiatives; and
- Constant review of the required goals and aspirations and their adaptation depending on changing circumstances.

The Midlands Centres should collaborate on a local and Sub-Regional level (with other communities and stakeholders in the Wheatbelt) to ensure awareness of its shared vision and aspirations.

Implementation and Monitoring

The Plan will be a living and adaptable document that can respond to new data and information, changes in the economy and new State, regional and local plans and strategies. The Shires of Dalwallinu, Moora and Wongan-Ballidu together, with Wheatbelt Development Commission, will regularly monitor the performance of this Plan and undertake a review of the document on a joint basis within five years (2020).

The review of the Plan will audit the success of the document in achieving the vision and planning directions for the Midlands Centres and will review changed circumstances and/or altered community aspirations and needs. This provision for regular review will ensure that the Plan remains relevant and continues to effectively shape development within the towns and Local Governments over the next 10 to 15 years and beyond.

The Plan may also be reviewed within the proposed five year review periods at the discretion of the LGA's involved. This may be in response to any major changes, other unforeseen circumstances or community identified needs. All modifications to the document will be undertaken jointly and on a consultative basis.

In the future, the Plan should be reviewed whenever any significant new information comes to hand from sources such as the Wheatbelt Regional Investment Blueprint, as well as State Government land and population audits. This will be vital to guide future industry and investment attraction strategies and provide detailed direction on how to develop the Sub-Region's key economic drivers. This data

will refine population growth scenarios to enable effective and responsive planning for infrastructure and services by Government Agencies, NGO's and the private sector.

The Midlands Centres should be encouraged to develop and review regional population scenarios for identifying performance indicators to monitor the progress of the Plan's implementation and to ensure positive impacts for the communities of both the Midlands Centres and Central Midlands Sub-Region.

In the medium term, a central point of contact should be established to be responsible to coordinate such activities as:

- Proactively seeking economic development and business growth opportunities;
- Monitoring and driving opportunities in the Midlands Centres;
- Coordination of the development of business cases for priority projects;
- Reviewing and monitoring triggers for key project implementation;
- Pursuing developments in areas identified as economic drivers and opportunities for the Midlands Centres by the Central Midlands Sub-Regional Economic Strategy; and
- Approaching relevant businesses and community groups based on recommendations.

It should be noted that the priority of projects is expected to change over time. Private investments, changing Government policy, demographic changes and the economic conditions in the Central Midlands Sub-Region can all impact current priorities. Also new projects can be added through the review process. Major changes in the vision and key drivers would require extensive consultation and substantial review of the document. However, priority project changes and additions can be included at any time with agreement between the Local Governments and the project stakeholders.

Table 12: Achieving Successful Governance

Guiding Principle 6 – Ensure successful Governance

Goal: *The Midlands Centres will embrace collaborative and proactive leadership delivering on the values and aspirations of the communities through:*

- Effective resourcing and management of Local Government activities.
- Effectively using any established and formal collaborative bodies to provide efficient, cost effective regional solutions.
- Providing positive leadership within the Sub-Region.
- Becoming customer focused.
- Ensuring open and representative decision-making processes.
- Achieving community support for the Sub-Region's Strategic Plans and Growth Planning.
- Ensuring a cross-organisational approach delivered through strategic partnerships.
- Focusing on delivering shared outcomes.
- Monitoring triggers in the Plan.

Key Governance Issues

- Layers of agencies and organisations.
- Planning bureaucracy.
- Interagency cooperation.
- Leadership in the region.
- Local Government cooperation.
- Poor marketing of the Sub-region in the past.

Key Governance Opportunities

- Increase collaboration between Local Government and State Agencies.
- Implementation, monitoring and reviewing of the Plan.
- Need to promote a more positive local view of the Midlands Centres future.

Action/activity/project:

- Innovation Central Midlands Inc.

Acronyms

(S): Shire

AAGR: Annual Average Growth Rate

ABS: Australian Bureau of Statistics

ARI: Average Risk Interval

BCA: Building Code of Australia

CaLD: Culturally and Linguistically Diverse

CBD: Central Business District

CBH: Co-operative Bulk Handling Corporation

CLGF: Country Local Government Fund

DAA: Department of Aboriginal Affairs

DAFWA: Department of Agriculture and Food
Western Australia

DER: Department of Environment Regulation

DoE: Department of Education

DoH: Department of Housing

DoL: Department of Lands

DoP: Department of Planning

DoW: Department of Water

DPaW: Department Parks and Wildlife

DRD: Department of Regional Development

ERP: Estimated Resident Population

FIFO: Fly In, Fly Out

FTTH: Fibre To The Home

FTTN: Fibre To The Node

GNH: Great Northern Highway

HACC: Home and Community Care

ICM: Innovation Central Midlands

ILU: Independent Living Unit

kVA: Kilovolt-Ampere

LC: LandCorp

LED: Light Emitting Diode

LGA: Local Government Authority

MBSP: Mobile Blackspot Program

MRWA: Main Roads Western Australia

NBN: National Broadband Network

NGO: Non-Government Organisation

ODP: Outline Development Plan

PTA: Public Transport Authority

RDA: Regional Development Australia

RDC: Regional Development Commission

RDCo: Regional Development Council

RDCP: Regional Centres Development Plan

RfR: Royalties for Regions

SIHI: Southern Inland Health Initiative

SWALSC: South West Aboriginal Land and Sea
Council

TBC: To Be Confirmed

TFR: Total Fertility Rate

UCL: Urban Centre Locality

WA: Western Australia

WAPC: Western Australian Planning
Commission

WDC: Wheatbelt Development Commission

WWTP: Waste Water Treatment Plant

Glossary of Terms

Economic Development

Economic development is a broad term that generally refers to the sustained, concerted effort of policymakers and communities to promote a standard of living and economic health in a specific area. Such effort can involve multiple areas including development of human capital, critical infrastructure, regional competitiveness, environmental sustainability, social inclusion, health, safety and literacy, among other initiatives.

Economic Growth

The increase in the productive capacity of the economy over the Plan's period. This includes an improvement in the quality of life of the communities through an increased share of jobs and prosperity.

The Plan

The Plan is a non-statutory strategic planning document that builds on existing statutory plans to set the direction for economic growth and community population expansion within the Midlands Centres area. It is an adaptive plan to facilitate growth and builds on existing statutory requirements for Local Governments to develop integrated strategic planning frameworks, aligned with strategic community plans. It incorporates population growth opportunities and strategies. The Plan has been prepared using a similar framework to which was used for nine SuperTowns addressing the key focus areas identified within the Regional Centres Development Plan Framework.

Growth Period – The Plan is concerned with the period up to 2050.

- **Short Term** – In this Plan, short term denotes the period 2015-2020.
- **Medium Term** – In this Plan, medium term denotes the period 2020-2030.
- **Long Term** – In this Plan, long term denotes the period 2030-2050.

Guiding Principle – An overarching goal or aspiration identified within this Plan to set the direction and values for growth within our communities.

Midlands Centres

In this Plan the Midlands Centres area comprises the Shire of Dalwallinu, Shire of Moora and the Shire of Wongan-Ballidu.

Stakeholder

Partner organisations, consisting of Local Governments, State Government Agencies, industry and community bodies who are engaged to develop and implement the guiding principles, actions, projects and initiatives of this Plan.

Midlands Centres Project Team

The lead agencies and Local Governments who will implement the Midland Centres vision and initiatives from this Plan, together with stakeholders and the communities involved.

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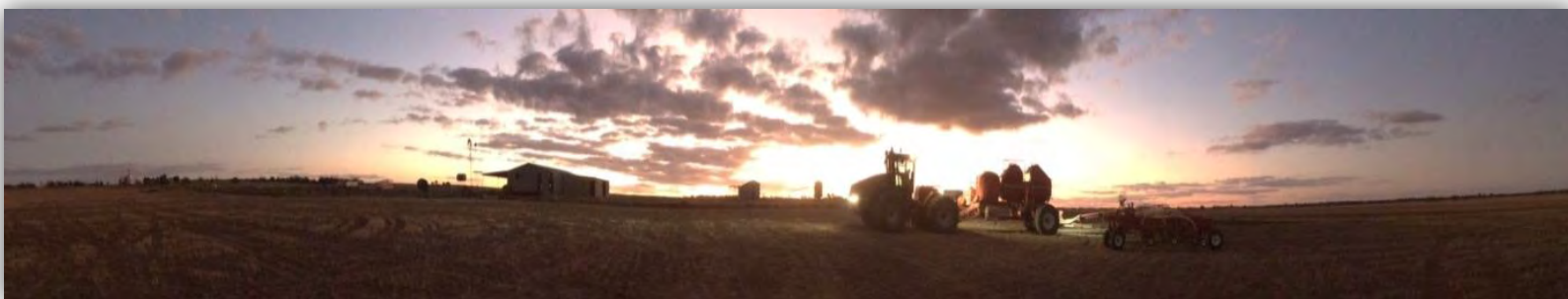
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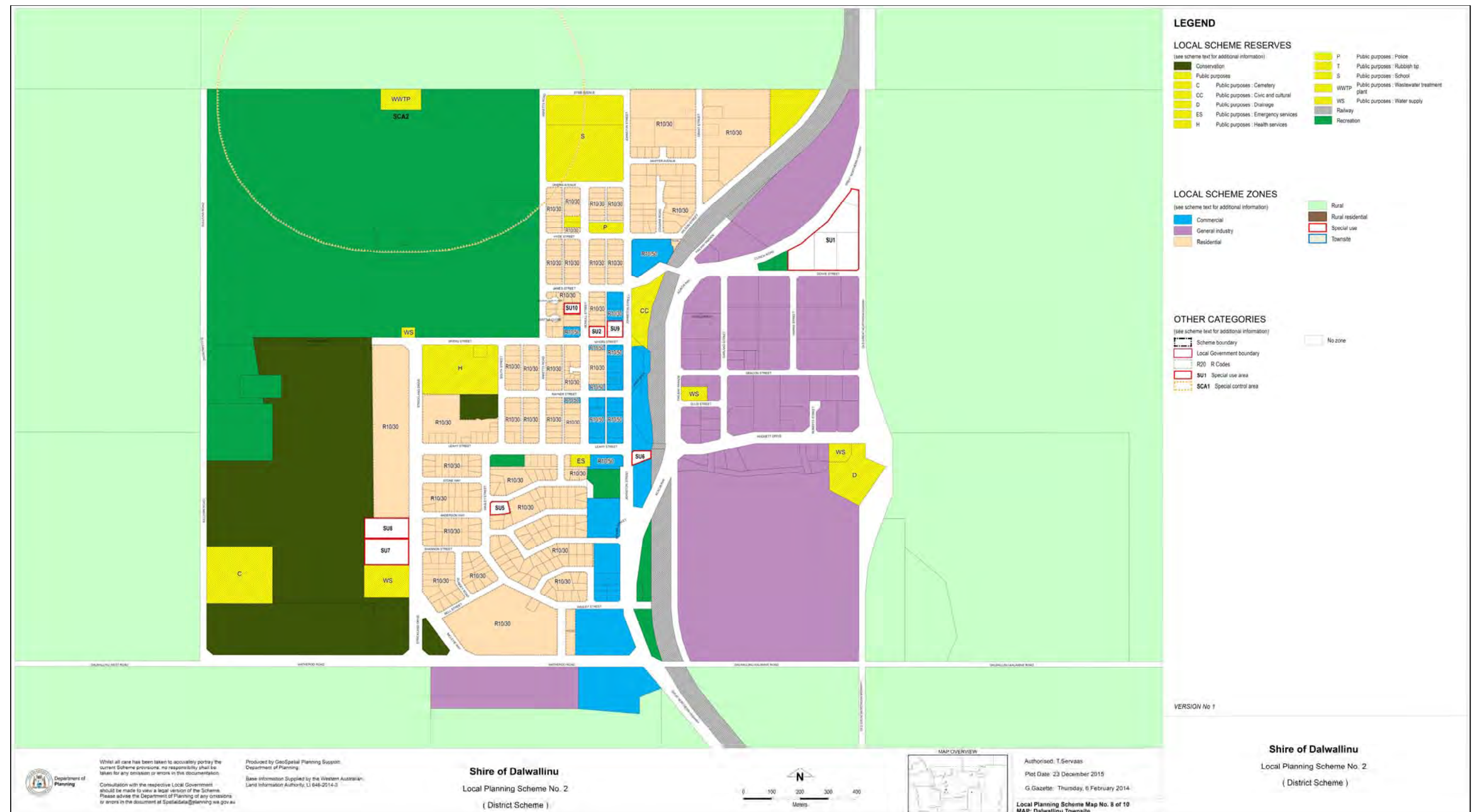
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Appendices

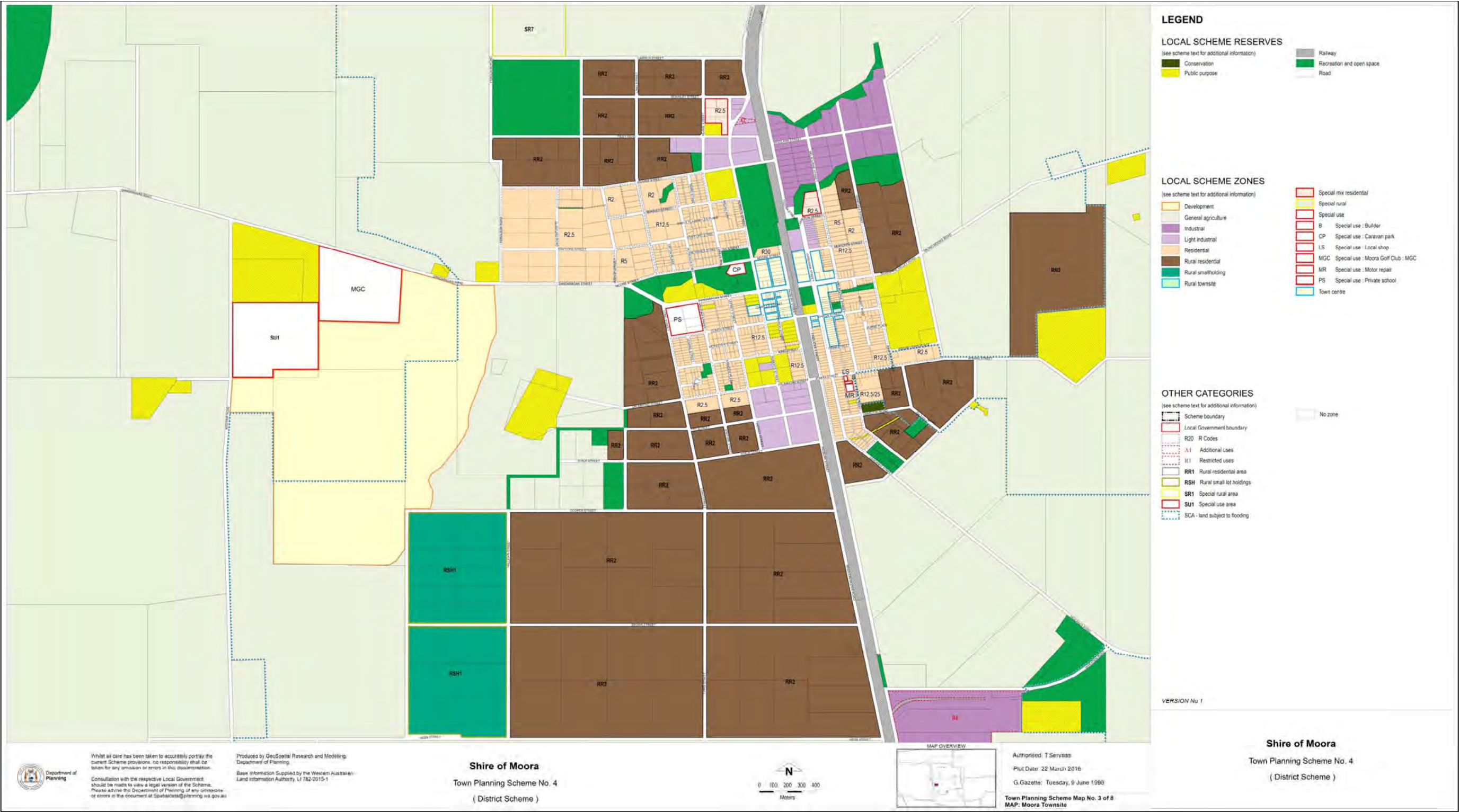
1.0 Shire of Dalwallinu Local Planning Scheme Map

NOTE: NOT TO SCALE, PLEASE USE ORIGINAL FOR PLANNING PURPOSES



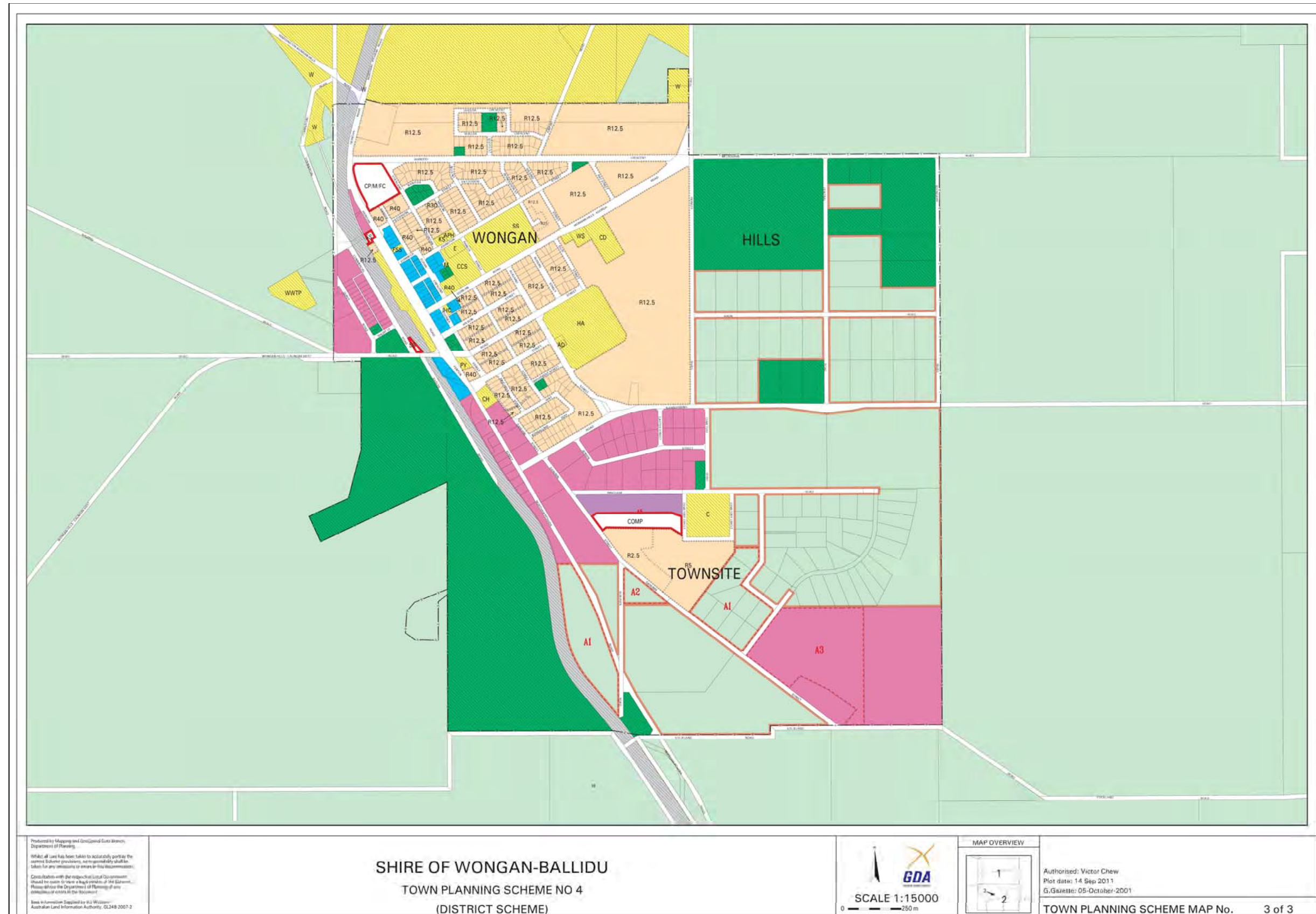
2.0 Shire of Moora Local Planning Scheme Map

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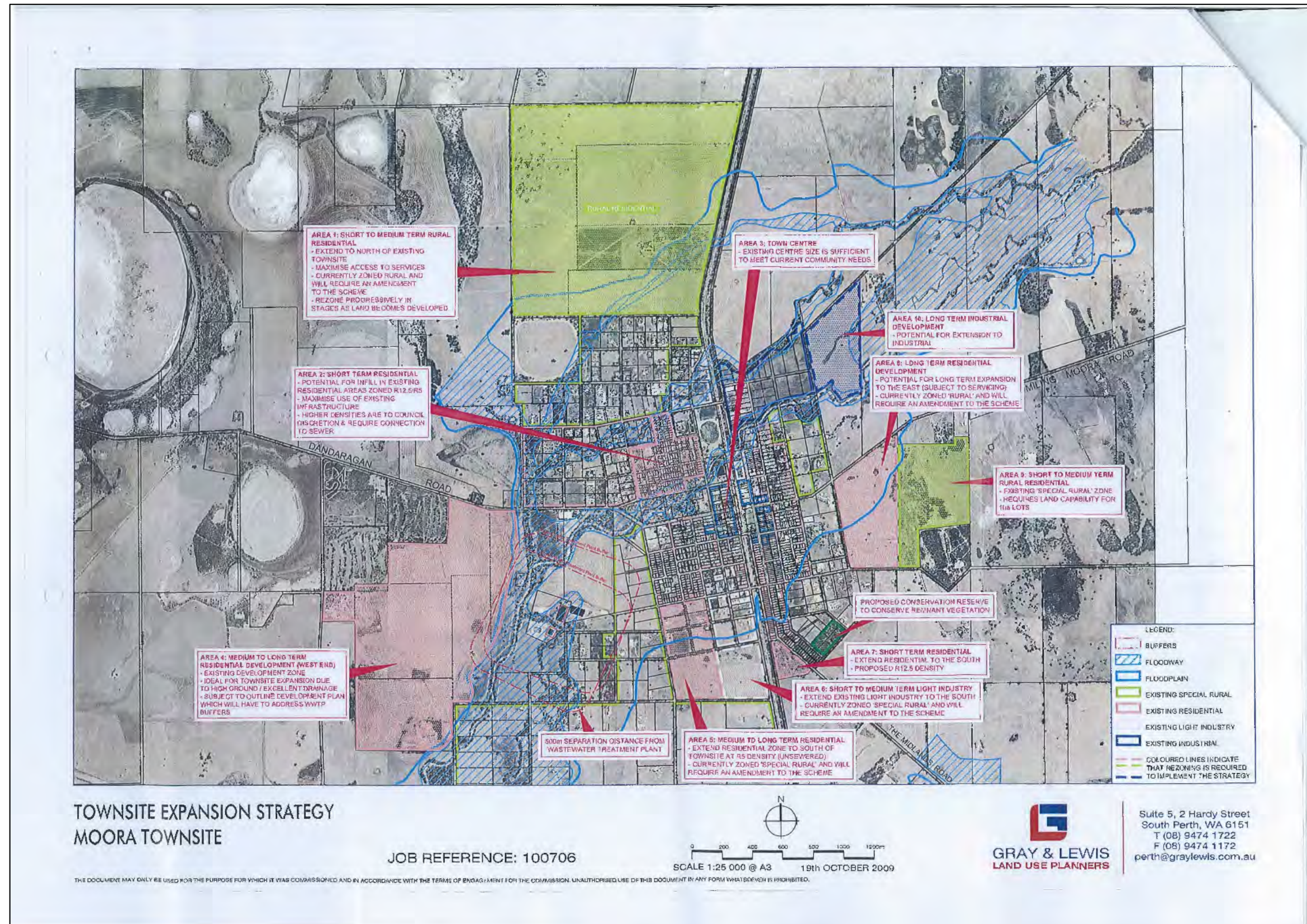


3.0 Shire of Wongan-Ballidu: Wongan Hills Local Planning Scheme Map

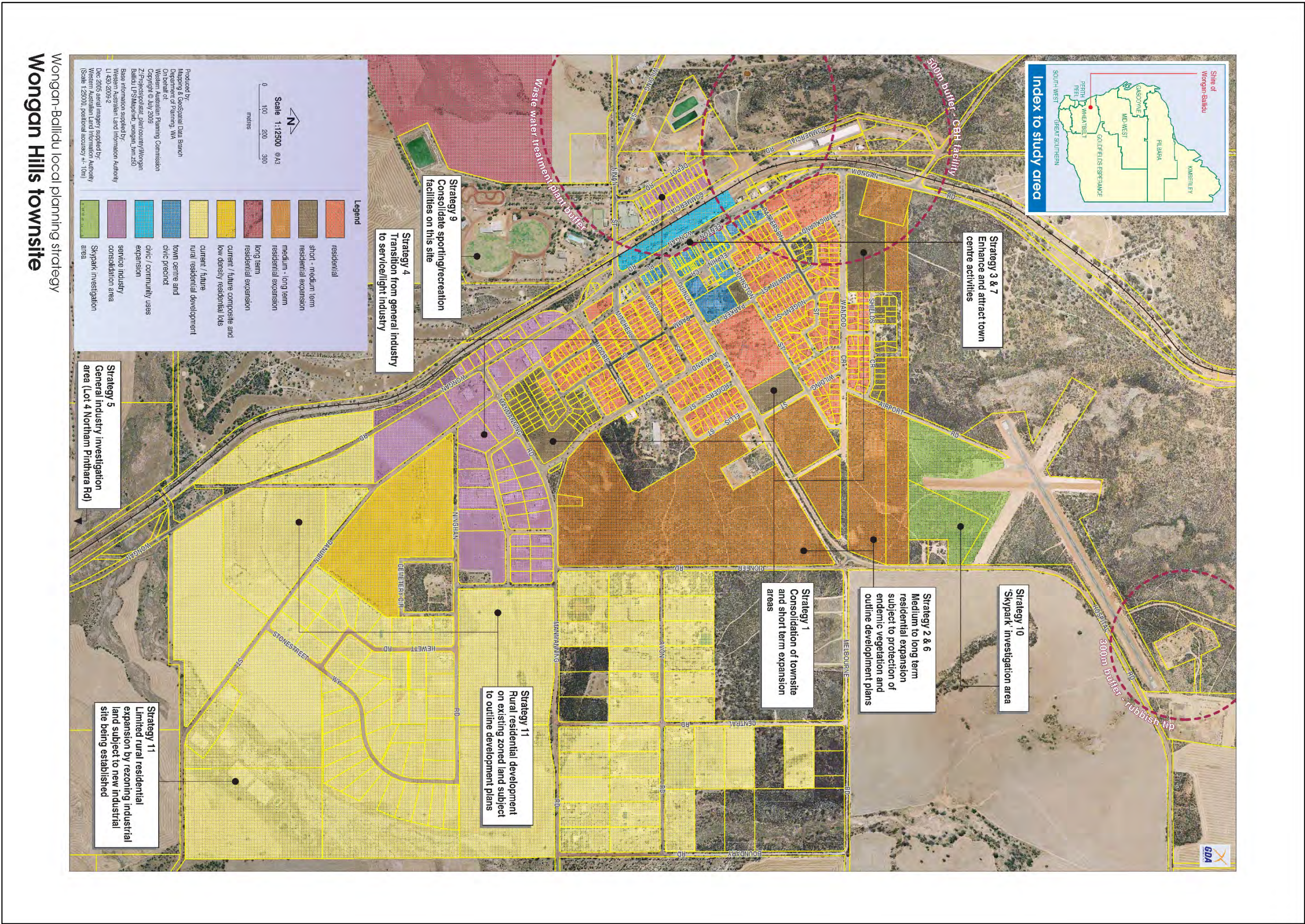
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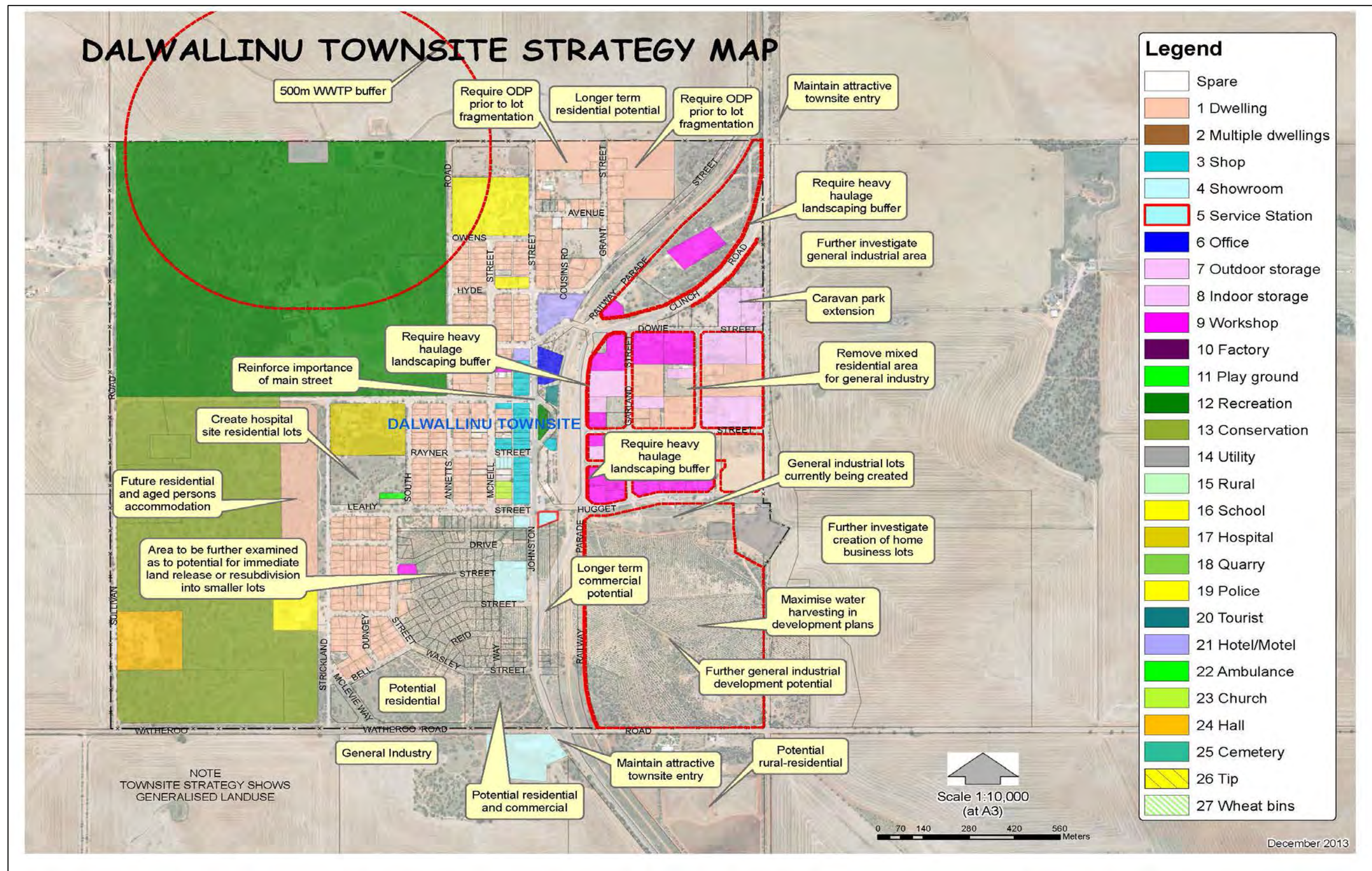
4.0 Shire of Moora Local Planning Strategy Map



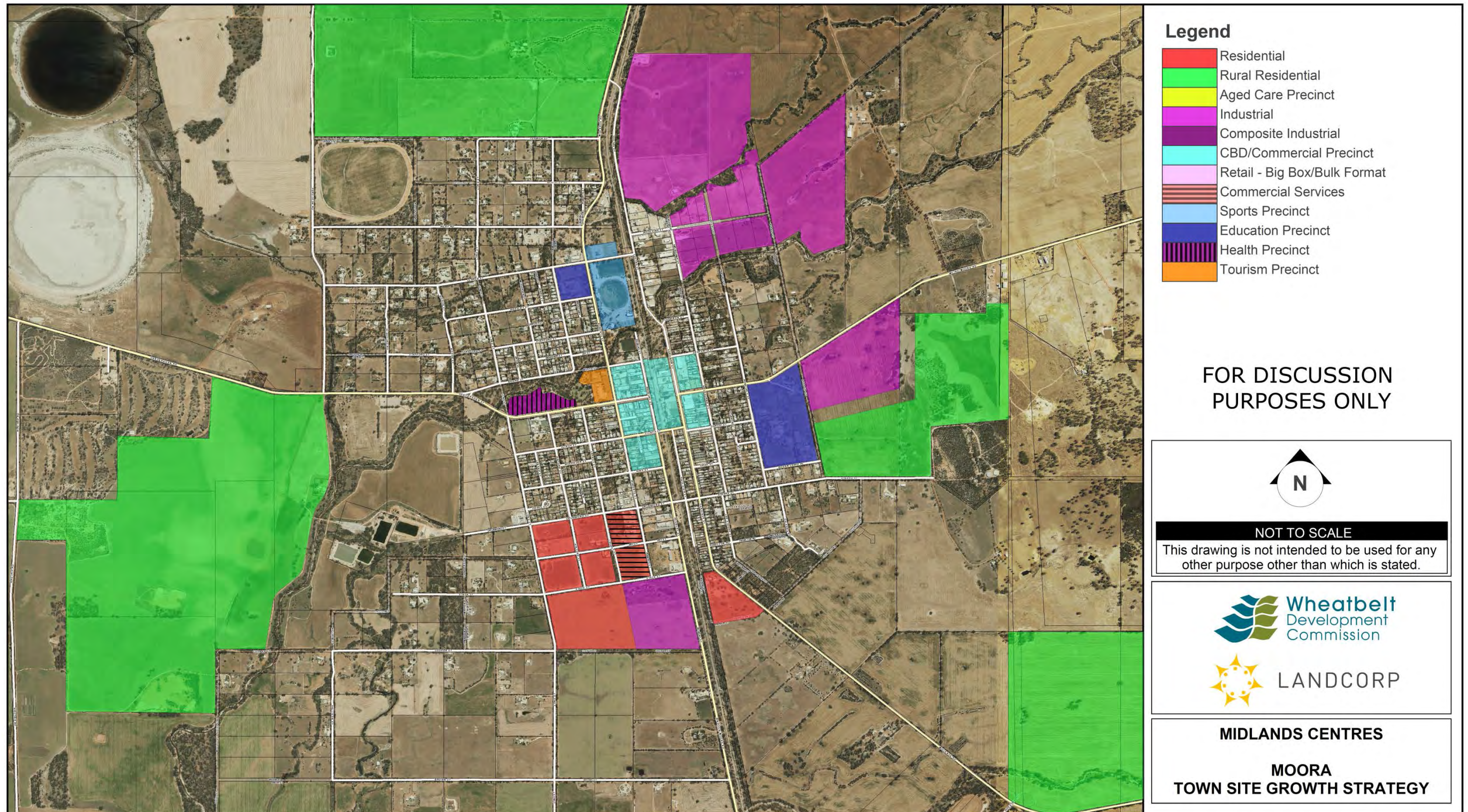
5.0 Shire of Wongan-Ballidu: Wongan Hills Local Planning Strategy Map



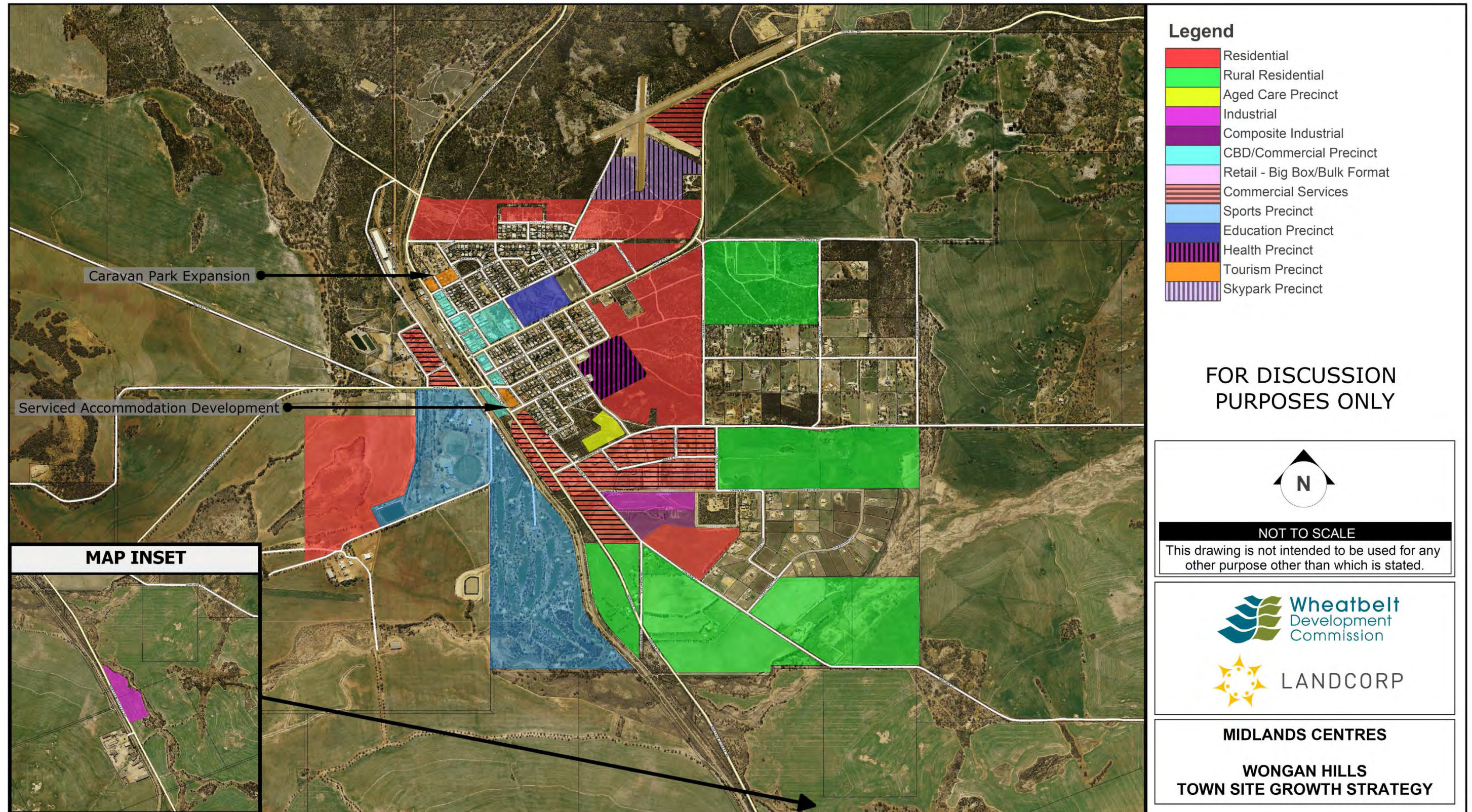
6.0 Shire of Dalwallinu Local Planning Strategy Map



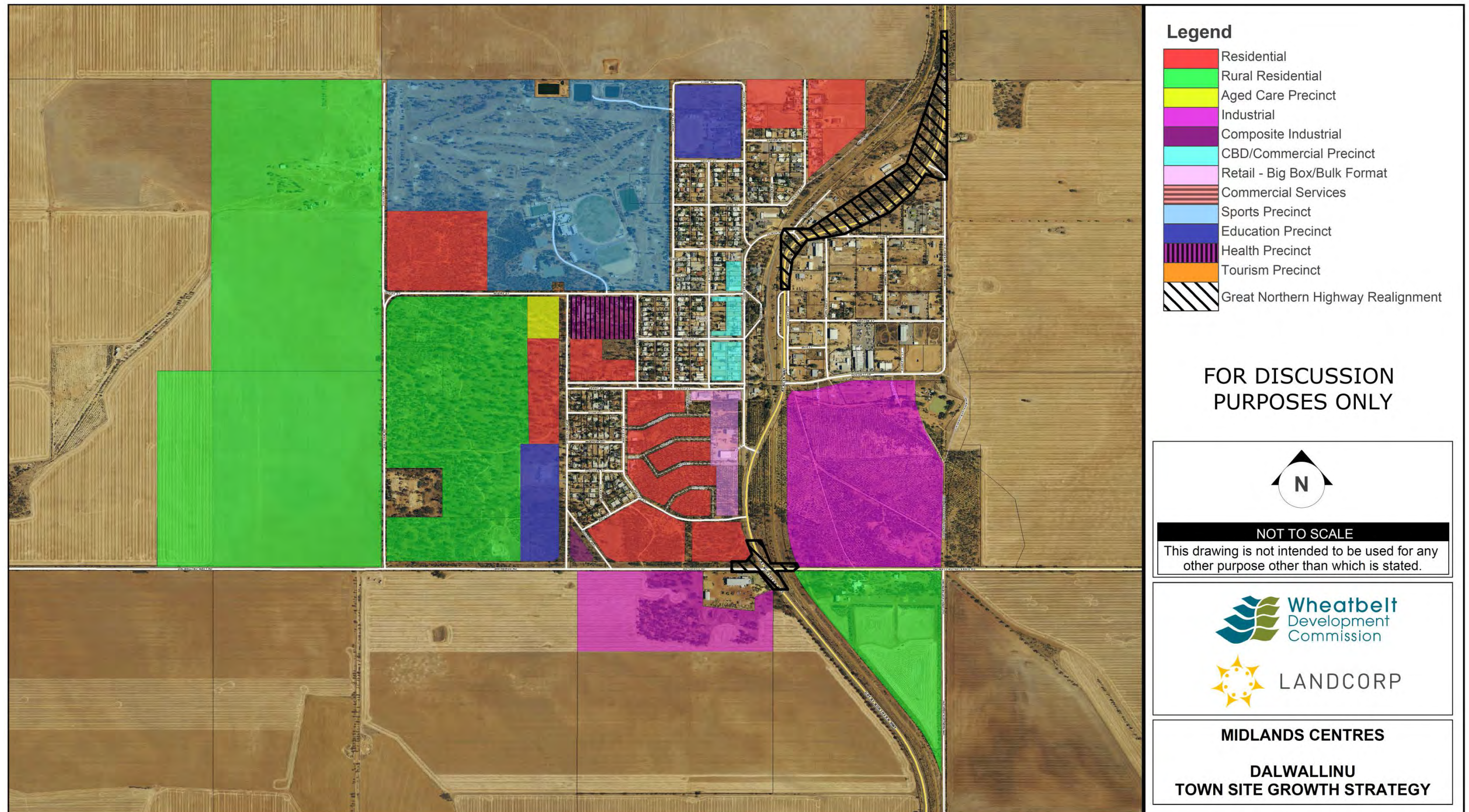
7.0 Moora Precinct Plan



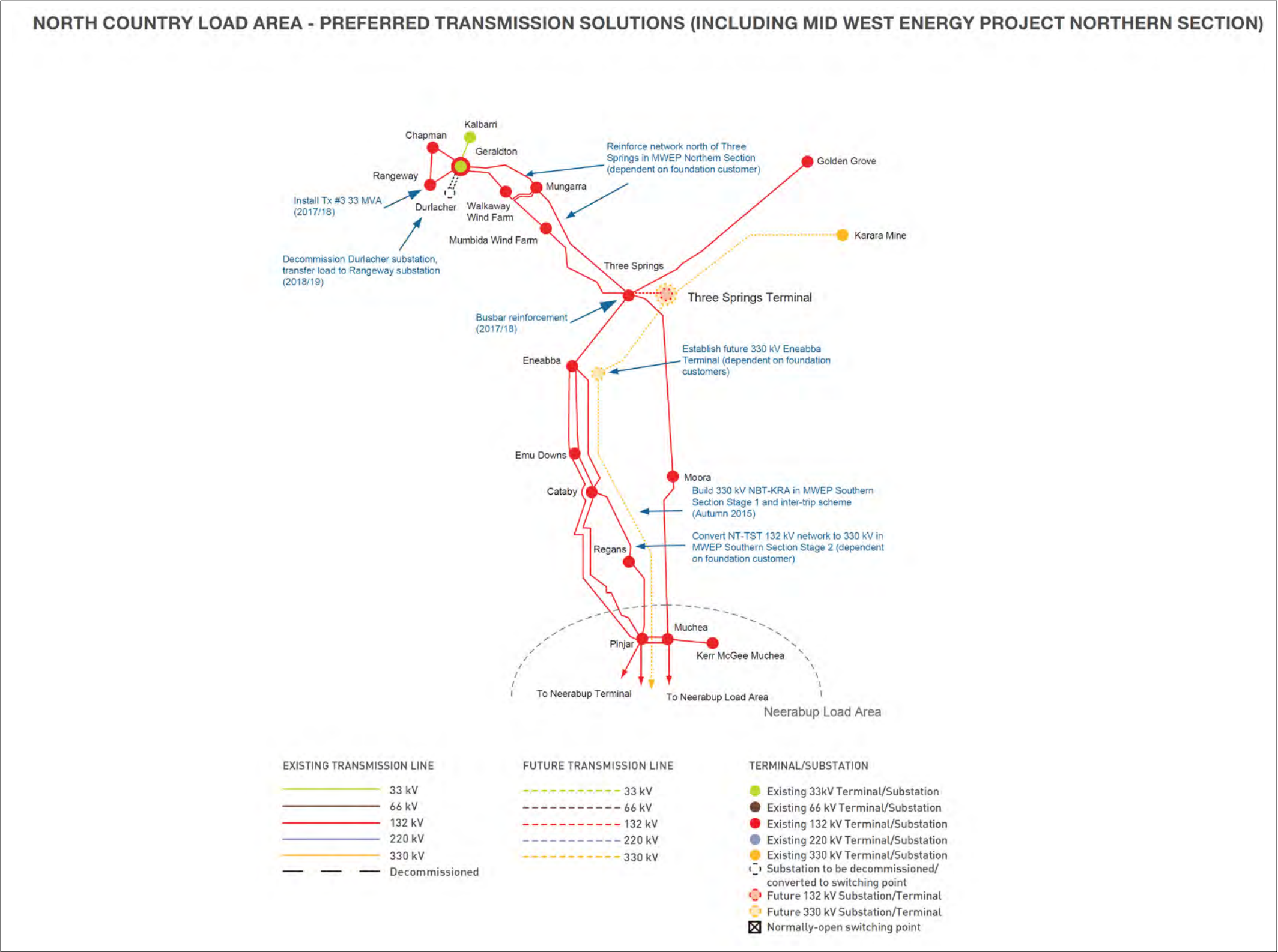
8.0 Wongan Hills Precinct Plan



9.0 Dalwallinu Precinct Plan

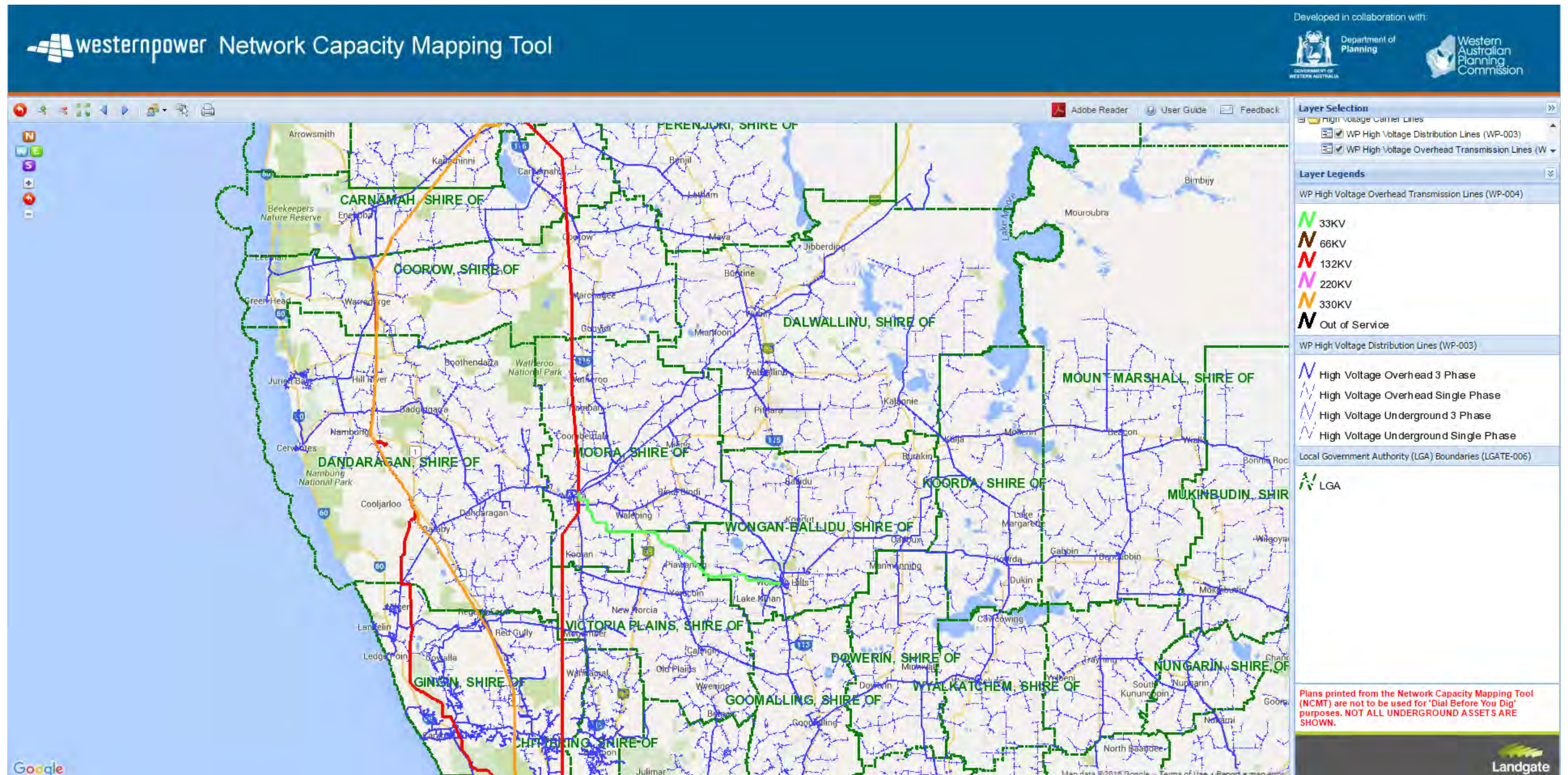


10.0 Western Power Solutions



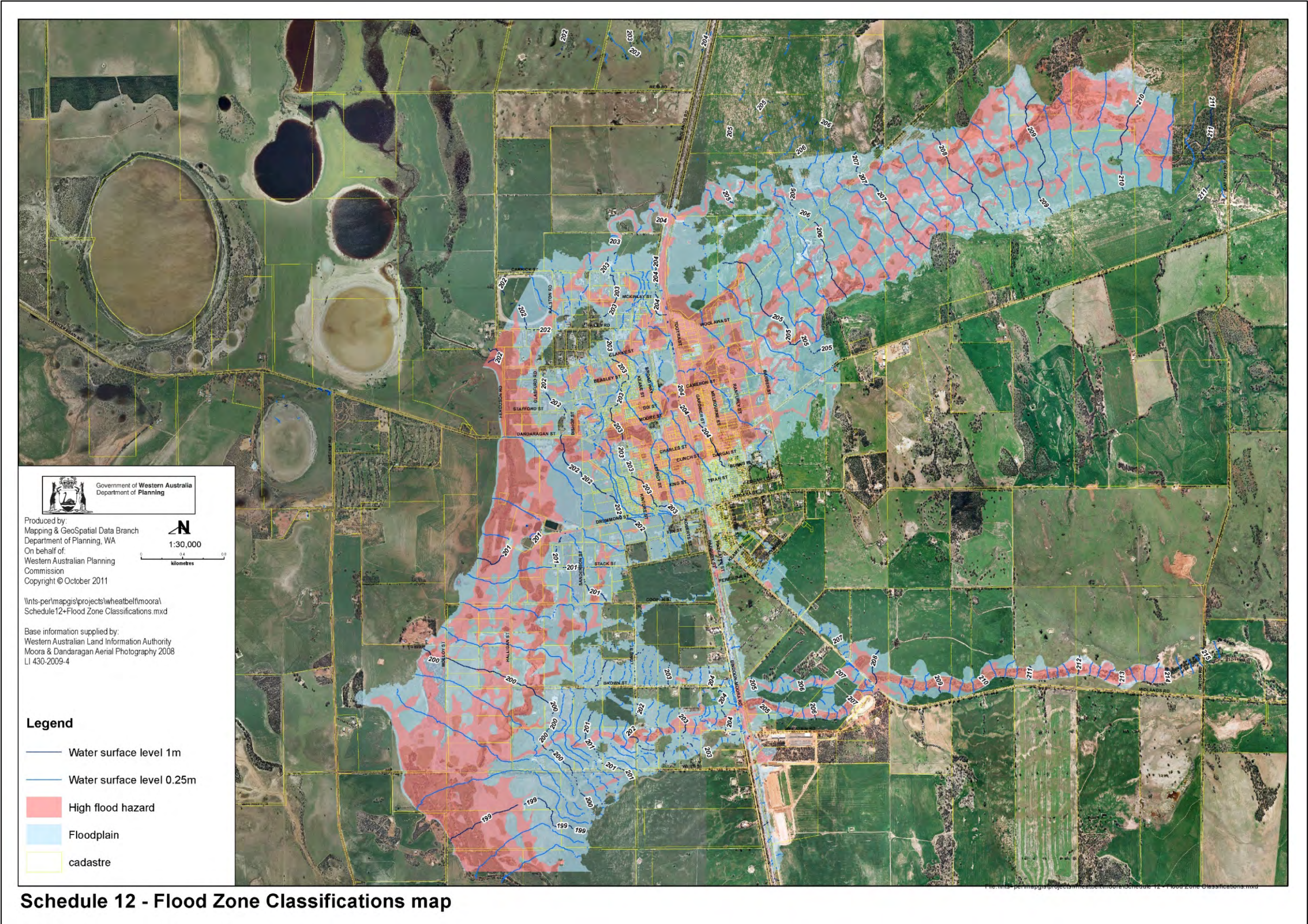
Source: Western Power Annual Planning Report 2014/15

11.0 Western Power Network Capacity Mapping Tool



Source: <http://ncmt.westernpower.com.au/index.cfm> (Accessed 04/05/16)

12.0 Moora 100 Year Flood Risk Map



13.0 Moora Water & Sewerage Services



Water Services

Sewer Pipe

Source: www.locate.wa.gov.au (Accessed 1/04/16)

14.0 Wongan Hills Water & Sewerage Services



Water Services

Sewer Pipe

Source: www.locate.wa.gov.au (Accessed 1/04/16)



 Water Services

 Sewer Pipe (NOTE: Data Unavailable Online, Dalwallinu Currently Undertaking Mapping Works)

Source: www.locate.wa.gov.au (Accessed 1/04/16)

16.0 Projects & Initiatives Implementation Plan

Delivery & Thresholds			
Action/Activity/Project	Threshold Indicator	Delivery Method	
		Lead Agency & Partners	Funding Source
MIDLANDS CENTRES SUB-REGION INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT INFRASTRUCTURE			
<u>Sub-Regional Growth Capacity Audit and Upgrade</u> Scale: Sub-Region Description: Investigate and complete upgrades necessary for expansion of light and medium industry, residential lots and potential horticultural opportunities across the Midlands Centres. This project requires collaboration to best utilise resources and identify key comparative advantages. Initially, the investigation will likely be based on utilities and infrastructure needs. Scope: The investigation will identify strengths and limitations in infrastructure and services allowing relative advantage and disadvantage to be promoted and addressed. The necessary upgrades to infrastructure and services would then be staged based on priorities including demand, availability of funding and land tenure processes. Outcome: Facilitation of private investment leading to increased private investment in the Sub-Region and development of relevant industries in the towns of Dalwallinu, Moora and Wongan Hills. Resulting in job creation, improved service provision and increased population.	▪ Short: Funding available for capacity audit ▪ Medium: Funding for priority infrastructure identified from the audit. ▪ Long: Market and attract investment. Increased investment from private stakeholders.	▪ Lead: Shires of Dalwallinu, Moora and Wongan Hills, WDC ▪ Partners: Western Power, Water Corporation, LandCorp	(Potential funding through Royalties for Regions)
<u>Dalwallinu – Develop Additional Industrial Land</u> Scale: Dalwallinu Townsite Description: Investigation and development of light - medium industrial land in Dalwallinu town site to meet private sector demand. Scope: Land tenure requirements to be identified and completed and, land acquisition included in the project budget. Development of land in collaboration with LandCorp. Outcome: Development of light to medium industrial serviced lots to meet current and future demand of industry in the town site.	▪ Short: Acquisition of land, development of outline development plan for site and scheme amendment where appropriate. ▪ Medium: Less than two vacant lots remaining and/or 90% stock utilised in light industrial area triggers headwork’s development and creation of a marketable release of lots. ▪ Long: Less than two vacant lots remaining from previous land release triggers the next stage	▪ Lead: Shire of Dalwallinu, LandCorp ▪ Partners: Landowners (if applicable), private sector, Department of Lands	TBC
<u>Moora – Southern Industrial Precinct</u> Scale: Moora Townsite Description: Develop and release light industrial lots outside of the Moora floodplain to meet future private sector demand. Scope: Development prerequisites include acquisition from a private land owner, land re-zoning and planning completion. Outcome: The development of five to 10 serviced light industrial lots outside the Moora floodplain.	▪ Short: Acquisition of land, development of outline development plan for site and scheme amendment where appropriate. ▪ Medium: Less than two vacant lots remaining and/or 90% stock utilised in light industrial area triggers headwork’s development and creation of a marketable release of lots. ▪ Long: Less than two vacant lots remaining from previous land release triggers the next stage	▪ Lead: Shire of Moora ▪ Partners: LandCorp, private landowners, Department of Lands	TBC
<u>Wongan Hills – Develop and Release Land for Commercial and Industrial Purposes</u> Scale: Wongan Hills Townsite Description: Develop and release commercial and light industrial lots in the Wongan Hills town site to meet future public and private sector demand. Scope: Identification of land with appropriate tenure and acquisition requirements. Development of commercial land closer the town centre may require relocation of existing light industry. Outcome: The development of serviced and suitably positioned light industrial and commercial lots available to the public and private sector.	▪ Short: Acquisition of land, development of outline development plan for site and scheme amendment where appropriate. ▪ Medium: Less than two vacant lots remaining and/or 90% stock utilised in light industrial area triggers headwork’s development and creation of a marketable release of lots. ▪ Long: Less than two vacant lots remaining from previous land release the next stage	▪ Lead: Shire of Wongan-Ballidu ▪ Partners: LandCorp, Private sector, private landowners, Department of Lands and existing businesses	TBC

Delivery & Thresholds			
Action/Activity/Project	Threshold Indicator	Delivery Method	
		Lead Agency & Partners	Funding Source
MIDLANDS CENTRES SUB-REGION MARKETING STRATEGY – LIVING AND WORKING IN THE MIDLANDS CENTRES SUB-REGION			
<u>Dalwallinu – Regional Repopulation Pilot Project</u> Scale: Shire of Dalwallinu (Sub-Regional Expansion Potential) Description: Address labour shortages in the Shire of Dalwallinu by attracting 457 visa workers. Support workers to relocate their families, attain Australian citizenship and become permanent community members. Scope: Increased potential for farm labour to be a recognised skill under 457 visa category to address farm labour shortages. Outcome: Improved labour available for businesses to expand to increase the Midland Centres population. To date 96 residents on 457 visas, including dependents, have relocated to Dalwallinu town site to work in various industries.	▪ Short: Continue current activities including education programs to facilitate population growth. ▪ Medium: Private sector is consulted on the development of certifications and training programs. Example: Identification of 'Farm Labour' as a federally recognised skill. New light industries including transport related industry. ▪ Long: Skilled worker cohort reaches 15-30% of the Shire's population, plan for the development of appropriate services to meet demand.	▪ Lead: Shire of Dalwallinu ▪ Partners: Department of Immigration and Border Protection	Ongoing funding provided by the Shire of Dalwallinu.
<u>Wongan-Ballidu – Skilled and Professional Worker Attraction Program</u> Scale: Shire of Wongan-Ballidu Description: Address skilled and general labour shortages by adopting a marketing program to attract workers to the Shire of Wongan-Ballidu to complement increased housing and accommodation options. Scope: Partner with Heartlands WA, particularly to complete a '<i>labour force attraction strategy</i>', to attract specific workers to the Shire of Wongan-Ballidu. Housing shortages that contribute to labour shortages will be addressed by increased housing options through the Innovation Central Midlands Inc. housing development initiative and other projects outlined in this document. Outcome: Increased diversity of skilled and general labour options for local businesses, including farmers, and improved retention of workers in the Shire of Wongan-Ballidu and surrounds.	▪ Short: Completion of <i>labour force attraction strategy</i> by Heartlands WA and launch of marketing program. ▪ Medium: Housing development. ▪ Long: Continue to improve community amenity to attract labour force.	▪ Lead: Shire of Wongan-Ballidu ▪ Partners: Heartlands WA	TBC
HOUSING			
<u>Innovation Central Midlands Inc. Housing Development</u> Scale: Sub-Region Description: Development and consolidation of an incorporated association to act as a regional economic development agency for the Midlands Centres Sub-Region. Membership will be split between representatives from the Shires of Dalwallinu, Moora and Wongan-Ballidu. Scope: Facilitation of initiatives to address housing shortages experienced in the Sub-Region. Potential/ ability to develop light industrial land and broaden the scope to investigate other projects. Outcome: Housing development to address significant accommodation and rental shortages currently experienced in the Shires of Dalwallinu, Moora and Wongan-Ballidu.	▪ Short: Completion of aged care needs analysis and audit. Completion of Country Local Government Fund Housing project. ▪ Medium: Investigation into housing design and cost tailored to regional needs. Prioritisation of strategic housing developments, funding identification and interest from suitable private stakeholders. ▪ Long: Funding sought and secured. Investigate development of sustainable funding model.	▪ Lead: Innovation Central Midlands Inc. ▪ Partners: WDC, Housing Authority	Initial funding provided by the Shires of Dalwallinu, Moora and Wongan-Ballidu (Potential for funding through Royalties for Regions)
<u>Dalwallinu – Bell Street Residential Sub-Division</u> Scale: Dalwallinu Townsite Description: Develop and release residential land in Dalwallinu town site. Residential releases on Leahy Street have two remaining lots as of 5 May 2016. Scope: Land acquisition, tenure, zoning and planning completion. Outcome: Residential lots available for private purchase and housing development. Enables the Shire of Dalwallinu to build housing to address current acute accommodation shortage.	▪ Short: Stage 2 Leahy Street Sub-division reaches sold out. ▪ Medium: Acquisition of land, development of outline, site plan and scheme amendment where appropriate. LandCorp completes development. ▪ Long: Headwork’s development and creation of a marketable release of lots.	▪ Lead: Shire of Dalwallinu ▪ Partners: LandCorp, Department of Lands, Housing Authority	TBC
<u>Dalwallinu – Build Additional Accommodation</u> Scale: Dalwallinu Townsite Description: Develop accommodation catering for a range of occupants including workers and their families, professionals and Local Government staff to address current acute housing/ accommodation shortage. Scope: Build appropriate housing (not including the land development process). A prerequisite for this project is the development of residential land. Outcome: Availability of appropriate accommodation for a diverse workforce and population in the Dalwallinu town site, removing a significant barrier to the attraction and retention of new and existing residents.	▪ Short: Identify a range of needs. ▪ Medium: Identify appropriate land solutions, including zoning requirements. Acquisition of land, development of outline, site plan and scheme amendment where appropriate. Remove constraints. ▪ Long: Attract investment in housing.	▪ Lead: Shire of Dalwallinu ▪ Partners: Innovation Central Midlands Inc. and Housing Authority	TBC

Delivery & Thresholds			
Action/Activity/Project	Threshold Indicator	Delivery Method	
		Lead Agency & Partners	Funding Source
HOUSING (CONTINUED)			
<u>Moora – Westend Sub-Division</u> Scale: Moora Townsite Description: Develop rural-residential lots to the west of the Moora town site outside of the floodplain. Scope: Land tenure and re-zoning requirements will need to be undertaken and private partnership opportunities considered (previous analysis completed in 2008 will need to be revised). Outcome: Availability of larger rural -residential lots outside the Moora floodplain to cater for anticipated increase in demand for rural living.	▪ Short: Acquisition of land, development of outline development plan for site and scheme amendment where appropriate. ▪ Medium: Continued housing and rental shortage, combined with town infill and increased capability of ICM to create a sustainable regional housing development unit will trigger headwork’s development and creation of a marketable release of lots. ▪ Long: Attraction of private investors/developers.	▪ Lead: Shire of Moora ▪ Partners: Innovation Central Midlands Inc., LandCorp, private sector	TBC
<u>Moora – Professional Suite Accommodation</u> Scale: Moora Townsite Description: Develop accommodation catering for a range of occupants including workers and their families, professionals, Local Government staff and nurses to address current acute housing/ accommodation shortage. Scope: Build appropriate housing (not including the land development process). A prerequisite for this project is the development of residential land. Outcome: Availability of appropriate accommodation for a diverse workforce and population in the Moora town site, removing a significant barrier to the attraction and retention of new and existing residents.	▪ Short: Identify a range of needs. ▪ Medium: Identify appropriate land solutions, including zoning requirements. Acquisition of land, development of outline, site plan and scheme amendment where appropriate. Remove constraints. ▪ Long: Attract investment in housing	▪ Lead: Shire of Moora ▪ Partners: Innovation Central Midlands Inc., WA Country Health Service, Housing Authority	TBC
<u>Moora – Development of Nursing Accommodation</u> Scale: Moora Townsite Description: A lack of available housing for nursing staff is putting pressure on the provision of health services and has potential to jeopardise the standard of care provided by Moora Hospital. This project will address short term demand. Scope: Building a small unit complex on vacant residential land owned by the Shire of Moora to house at least three nursing staff. Outcome: Suitable accommodation for at least three nurses in Moora.	▪ Short: Agreement between WA Country Health Service (WACHS) and Shire of Moora. Sale of the current WACHS/Shire house is likely to create a crisis point. ▪ Medium: Funding sourced.	▪ Lead: Shire of Moora ▪ Partners: WA Country Health Service, Housing Authority	TBC
<u>Wongan Hills - Investigate and Release Suitable Land for Housing</u> Scale: Wongan Hills Townsite Description: Investigate, acquire, develop and release residential land in the Wongan Hills town site to address acute housing and accommodation shortages in the short – medium term. Scope: Development and release of residential land including completion of appropriate processes i.e. land acquisition, re-zoning and land tenure. Outcome: Developed land to facilitate the construction of housing in Wongan Hills.	▪ Short: Housing and rental shortage. Completion of capacity audit. ▪ Medium: Acquisition of land, development of outline, site plan and scheme amendment where appropriate. Funding for development secured and/or LandCorp completes development. ▪ Long: Headwork’s development and creation of a marketable release of lots. Plan medium density housing for long term multiple use to assist in residential land requirements.	▪ Lead: Shire of Wongan Hills ▪ Partners: LandCorp, Wongan-Ballidu Development Group, Department of Lands	TBC
<u>Dalwallinu Business Incubator Units</u> Scale: Dalwallinu Townsite Description: Develop medium sized workshops/sheds to create a location for start-up businesses to run their operations on a short to medium term basis. This provides the opportunities for small businesses to set up businesses without investing significant capital into infrastructure which may burden and prevent the establishment of new businesses in the town and broader Sub-Region. Scope: Acquisition of suitable land, zoning (if required), and the planning and construction of the ‘incubator units’. Outcome: A suitable location for new start-up businesses and entrepreneurs to facilitate growth and initial business establishment. This will increase the number of businesses starting up in the town and help to improve local innovation and skills development.	▪ Short: Identification and acquisition of suitable land, development of outline, site plan and scheme amendment where appropriate. ▪ Medium: Funding available. Continued industrial land shortage, combined with continued demand for land in Dalwallinu on the Great Northern Highway will trigger headwork’s development and creation of a marketable release of lots. ▪ Long: Attraction of new industry, and private investors/developers.	▪ Lead: Shire of Dalwallinu ▪ Partners: Prospective businesses, LandCorp	Shire of Dalwallinu (Potential funding from Royalties for Regions)

Delivery & Thresholds			
Action/Activity/Project	Threshold Indicator	Delivery Method	
		Lead Agency & Partners	Funding Source
HOUSING (CONTINUED)			
<u>Wongan Hills – Development of Mocardy Centre</u> Scale: Wongan Hills Townsite and surrounding area Description: To build and equip a permanent community base as a NGO social services hub providing for those beyond the reach of mainstream social services. A physical meeting place for community driven initiatives and activities. Scope: Construction, fit out and landscaping of the building. Outcome: Increased community involvement in an increasing amount of community driven and administered programs to address social issues in Wongan Hills and surrounding communities.	▪ Short: Project is proceeding. Turning of the sod on 9th March 2016.	▪ Lead: Perth Diocesan Trustees ▪ Partners: Mocardy Group, Shire of Wongan-Ballidu, local businesses and community	Project fully funded, partially through Wheatbelt Regional Grants Scheme, Lotterywest and Wongan Hills Anglican Diocese
<u>Moora and Adjacent Areas – Development of Ground Water Resources</u> Scale: Shire of Moora Description: Conduct water assessments, partnering with the Department of Water, to test water quality, quantity and licence allocation in the Shire of Moora. Scope: Use of current existing information, undertaking drilling and further research required to create a definitive analysis of the water resources and availability in the Shire of Moora. Outcome: Identify the potential for expansion of existing industry and development of new industry that relies on ground water resources. This may include the development of a marketing prospectus.	▪ Short: Completion of Department of Water’s Water for Food (WFF) Project. Gaps and priorities identified. Funding identified for the preparation of Moora and surrounds study. ▪ Medium: Wider study prepared for agriculture and industry to identify aquifer/groundwater reserve size in prioritised locations for environmentally and economically acceptable abstraction rates for industry in Moora and to the West of Moora.	▪ Lead : Water Corporation & Department of Water ▪ Partners: Department of Agriculture and Food WA	Department of Agriculture and Food WA – Water for Food Project
DALWALLINU, MOORA AND WONGAN TRANSPORT STRATEGY			
<u>Upgrade of Ballidu-Pithara Road</u> Scale: Sub-Region Description: The Ballidu-Pithara Road is a significant haulage route shortfall in the Sub-Region. An upgrade would create opportunities for the transportation of heavy haulage through an alternative route, alleviating the need to double back by travelling through Midland when transporting goods around the State. Scope: Investigating potential funding sources to complete the required road upgrade in line with completed planning and costings. Outcome: A safer section of road accommodating heavier loads; connection of Great Eastern and Great Northern Highways; congestion reduction in suburban Perth, and supporting industry to gain greater profitability through travel time efficiencies. Opportunities will be created for businesses to access new markets and increase business feasibility.	▪ Short: Availability of funding for already completed planning and costings. Current status: funding application submitted to Growing the South Fund by Main Roads, endorsed by WDC Board. ▪ Medium: Funding secured. Increased pressure from all stakeholders to complete the build.	▪ Lead: Department of Transport ▪ Partners: Main Roads WA, WDC ▪ Support letters provided from Shires of Dalwallinu, Moora and Wongan-Ballidu	Main Roads, Department of Transport, Royalties for Regions. Current request to Royalties for Regions is \$19m, with \$9m being contributed by Main Roads.
<u>Dalwallinu – Maximise Transport Investment in Dalwallinu and Wubin</u> Scale: Dalwallinu & Wubin Townsite Description: Seek investment from transport companies to capitalise on Dalwallinu and Wubin’s strategic location on the Great Northern Highway which has already warranted significant private investment. Scope: Identification of opportunities and constraints facing the transport industry and further investigation into the transport industry in Dalwallinu and Wubin. Outcome: A comprehensive understanding of the transport industry to better inform current and prospective stakeholders. Private investment.	▪ Short: Assessment of transport industry’s long term plans including identification of needs with regards to opportunities and constraints. ▪ Medium: Priority projects identified ▪ Long: Appropriate private investment.	▪ Lead: Shire of Dalwallinu ▪ Partners: WDC, Main Roads WA, Department of Transport, Private stakeholders	TBC
<u>Moora – Plan for Re-route of Heavy Vehicles Through Town</u> Scale: Moora Townsite Description: Establish an alternative route through or around the Moora town site to reduce significant heavy traffic (particularly during harvest) travelling through the busy pedestrian health precinct of Moora which is the location of the Moora Frail Aged Lodge, Moora District Hospital, Moora Health Campus and St Joseph’s Primary School. Scope: Planning for an alternative route including completion of road upgrades, kerbing and installation of signage. Outcome: A safer and client friendly health precinct and primary school. Reduction of congestion caused by heavy vehicle movement during harvest will also be achieved.	▪ Short: Complete planning, including route identification, potential road upgrades, kerbing and signage installation. ▪ Medium: Planning findings utilised in consultation with Department of Transport, Main Roads WA and relevant private stakeholders to determine a priority works program.	▪ Lead: Shire of Moora ▪ Partners: Main Roads WA, Road Safety Council	TBC
<u>Great Northern Highway Upgrades</u> Scale: Statewide Description: Upgrade and improvement of Great Northern Highway including widening, additional overtaking lanes, rest stops and improved intersections. The Great Northern Highway is a major national highway servicing Local, State and National interests. It is the major haulage route between mining operations in WA’s north. It is also used extensively by local residents. Scope: Consultation with the transport industry and Great Northern Highway users to continue to be undertaken. Outcome: A safer Highway more suited for heavy haulage traffic and wide loads to better reflect its role as a major national highway.	▪ Short: Works currently being undertaken. New Norcia bypass is intended to commence in Mid-2016. ▪ Medium: Further funding has been allocated and further works intended to be completed over the medium term.	▪ Lead: Main Roads WA ▪ Partners: Department of Transport, private stakeholders, communities and landowners	Australian Federal Government with State Government contributions.

Delivery & Thresholds			
Action/Activity/Project	Threshold Indicator	Delivery Method	
		Lead Agency & Partners	Funding Source
AGED CARE			
<u>Wongan-Hills Aged Care Facilities</u> Scale: Wongan Hills Townsite & Surrounds Description: Develop additional aged care accommodation to cater for people across a range of different care levels and attract then deliver the necessary services. Scope: Undertake planning and detailed needs analysis prior to structural planning and land tenure requirements. Outcome: Suitable aged accommodation and services in Wongan Hills and surrounding communities to cater for growing demand.	▪ Short: Aged friendly community plans and accommodation needs identified. Completion of aged care needs analysis and audit as part of the Midlands Centres Aged Care Accommodation Project (MCACA). To include a comprehensive review of population projections, the availability and condition of current housing stock, waiting lists for current aged housing and community input. Investigation into housing design, cost and exploration. Funding Identified. ▪ Medium: Cost Benefit Analysis, analysis of selected sites, and business plan completion. Funding secured. Identification and acquisition of suitable land, development of outline, site plan and scheme amendment where appropriate. Prioritisation of strategic housing developments across Midlands Centres. ▪ Long: Funding sought and secured for next project. Possible inclusion of ICM helping to identify a sustainable business model.	▪ Lead: Shire of Wongan-Ballidu ▪ Partners: WA Country Health Service. Possibly ICM.	TBC
<u>Midlands Centres Sub-Region Aged Friendly Communities</u> Scale: Sub-Region Description: Undertake audits across towns throughout the Midlands Centres Sub-Region to assess to level of accessibility for the aged and upgrade where suitable. This includes footpaths, access to buildings/services. Scope: Assessment of each of the communities existing town infrastructure and identification of priority upgrades. Outcome: Upgrades to town infrastructure to better facilitate the movement of the aged and disabled.	▪ Short: CAFC Audits completed. Prioritisation of projects for CAFC grant funding. ▪ Medium: Utilise Audit data to inform development of Age Friendly Community Plan. ▪ Long: Endorse and implement AFC Plan. Attract funding for priorities.	▪ Lead: WDC ▪ Partners: Shires of Dalwallinu, Moora and Wongan-Ballidu	Initial funding has been provided through the Creating Aged Friendly Communities Fund. Dalwallinu - \$55,000 Moora - \$44,077.50 Wongan-Ballidu - \$40,000
<u>Moora Hydrotherapy Pool</u> Scale: Moora Townsite & Surrounds Description: Build a hydrotherapy pool to complement the aged care and health precinct. Provision of hydrotherapy services for aged health, sports injuries and rehabilitation. The completion of the Moora Frail Aged Lodge occurred under budget and remaining funds may be available for use. Scope: Construction of a pool in the existing health and aged care precinct. Disabled access requirements to be incorporated into design. Training for new and existing staff to operate the pool and activities requires investigation. The potential to investigate planning for expansion of existing health services for the precinct may also be possible. Outcome: Provide a regional hydrotherapy service, currently only accessible in Perth or Geraldton. Long distance travel and pressure on metropolitan health services would be decreased, by providing a service which would complement the range of health care offered in Moora.	▪ Short: Finalise site identification. ▪ Medium: Identify additional funding to couple with current funding. Construction. ▪ Long term: Market facility along with other aged friendly developments.	▪ Lead: Shire of Moora ▪ Partners: WA Country Health Service	Utilise remaining funds from Moora Frail Aged Project, TBC.
<u>Midlands Centres Aged Care Accommodation (MCACA)</u> Scale: Sub-Region Description: Create a consistent framework across the Midlands Centres Sub-Region for the provision of accommodation for the aged including appropriate service delivery. Scope: Development of guidelines for demand based and staged aged care accommodation including the physical layout of accommodation (door way widths, handrails in bathroom etc.). Attract funding. Investigation of service delivery should also be explored focusing on cost efficiencies to attract appropriate service providers. Outcome: The development of appropriate aged care accommodation, and service delivery across the Midlands Centres Sub-Region.	▪ Short: Completion of Aged Care needs analysis and audit as part of the Midlands Centres Aged Housing Development Project (MCAHD). A comprehensive review of population projections, the availability and condition of current housing stock, waiting lists for current aged housing and community input undertaken. Investigation into housing design and cost. Funding application made. ▪ Medium: Funding secured. Identification and acquisition of suitable land, development of outline, site development plan and scheme amendment where appropriate. Prioritisation of strategic housing developments across Midlands Centres. ▪ Long: Funding sought and secured for next Midlands Centres project to continue to build a sustainable ICM business model.	▪ Lead: Shires of Dalwallinu, Moora and Wongan-Ballidu ▪ Partners: WA Country Health Service, WDC	RfR Funding application for \$10.38m to Southern Investment Initiative (SII). This is for an approximated 26 units over a 3-4 year period to be built in Dalwallinu, Moora and Wongan Hills.

Delivery & Thresholds			
Action/Activity/Project	Threshold Indicator	Delivery Method	
		Lead Agency & Partners	Funding Source
AGED CARE (CONTINUED)			
<u>Innovation Central Midlands Inc. (ICM)</u> Scale: Sub-Region Description: Creation of an incorporated body with equal membership from the Shires of Dalwallinu, Moora and Wongan-Ballidu used to build housing in the Sub-Region. It may be a possible vehicle to drive and facilitate aged care housing development, and other projects as such the formation of any additional mechanisms required to reach desired outcomes is a ‘work in progress’. Scope: The construction of housing and the re-investment of profits into more housing. Residential lots need to be available and industrial land projects may be considered in the future. Outcome: Appropriate housing availability across the Midlands Centres Sub-Region resulting in a reduced reliance on Government funding for housing. The formation of any additional mechanisms/subsidiaries under or alongside the not-for-profit incorporated body for the purpose of acting as a regional economic development agency for the Central Midlands.	▪ Short: ICM has been formed and a trial CEO employed, and commencement funding contributed by LGA's in Midlands Centres. ▪ Medium: Investigation into housing design and cost. Funding identified or sustainable funding model developed. Completion of Aged Care needs analysis and audit - MCAHD Project. Prioritisation of strategic housing developments across Midlands Centres. ▪ Identification and acquisition of suitable land, development of outline, site development plan and scheme amendment where appropriate. ▪ Long: Building commenced and completed. Funding sought and secured for next project/s. Attraction of private investors.	▪ Lead: Innovation Central Midlands Inc ▪ Partners: WDC, Shires of Dalwallinu, Moora and Wongan-Ballidu	Country Local Government Fund, TBC
TOTAL WATER MANAGEMENT			
<u>Wongan Hills Mocardy Dam Development</u> Scale: Wongan Hills Townsite Description: Connection of the Mocardy Dam to the existing town reticulation system. Scope: Supply and installation of the pipes to connect the dam to the reticulation system and associated earthworks and road works. Outcome: Reduced water costs for the Shire of Wongan-Ballidu due to reduced reliance on the purchase of scheme water through the use of a resource that currently is underutilised.	▪ Short: UWA preliminary project investigation in partnership with WDC and Wongan-Ballidu shire has occurred. Strategy for the future needs developed. ▪ Medium: Wastewater demands near current supply triggering acquisition of land, planning, design and approvals process. Funding sought.	▪ Lead: Shire of Wongan-Ballidu ▪ Partners: Water Corporation, WDC	TBC
<u>Wongan Hills - Total Water Management Plan</u> Scale: Wongan Hills Townsite Description: Initiate investigations into future waste water needs and develop a strategy to address land tenure, zoning changes and identify suitable land. Scope: Feasibility studies, site selection processes, business case development and funding applications. Outcome: A plan for future water management in the Wongan Hills town site that will cater for future growth and opportunities to improve efficiency.	▪ Short: Development of future needs strategy. Funding identified to explore options. ▪ Medium: Funding secured. Appropriate site selected. Acquisition of land, planning, design and approvals process commenced.	▪ Lead: Shire of Wongan-Ballidu ▪ Partners: Water Corporation, Wheatbelt NRM	TBC
<u>Dalwallinu - Total Water Management Plan</u> Scale: Dalwallinu Townsite Description: Monitor and review existing infrastructure and future requirements to cater for future growth in the town. Focus includes Dalwallinu Drainage Improvement, Dalwallinu Sewerage Scheme Upgrades and Dalwallinu Water Catchment Dam. Scope: Feasibility studies, site selection processes, business case development and funding applications. Outcome: A plan for future water management in the Dalwallinu town site that will cater for future growth and opportunities to improve efficiency.	▪ Short: Projects prioritised. Determine if funding is required to investigate options. Funding identified. ▪ Medium: Funding secured. Appropriate projects and sites selected. Acquisition of land, planning, design and approvals process commenced.	▪ Lead: Shire of Dalwallinu ▪ Partners: Water Corporation	TBC
<u>Moora - Total Water Management</u> Scale: Moora Townsite Description: Monitor and review existing infrastructure and requirements to cater for future growth in the town. Focus includes Moora Sewerage Pond Upgrade and Moora Sewerage System Extensions/Maintenance and Upgrades. Scope: Feasibility studies, site selection processes, business case development and funding applications Outcome: A plan for future water management in the Moora town site that will cater for future growth and opportunities to improve efficiency.	▪ Short: Projects prioritised. Determine if funding is required to investigate options. Funding identified. ▪ Medium: Funding secured. Appropriate projects and sites selected. Acquisition of land, planning, design and approvals process commenced.	▪ Lead: Shire of Moora ▪ Partners: Water Corporation	TBC

Delivery & Thresholds			
Action/Activity/Project	Threshold Indicator	Delivery Method	
		Lead Agency & Partners	Funding Source
TOURISM			
<u>Moora – Caravan Park Upgrade</u> Scale: Moora Townsite Description: Investigation into the expansion of the caravan park to accommodate current demand and expected growth. Moora Caravan Park is consistently at capacity, and upgrades should occur as the park grows. Scope: The planning for caravan park expansion, including necessary upgrades. Outcome: More on-site accommodation, caravan and RV space to facilitate demand driven growth.	▪ Short: Plan complete. ▪ Medium: Identify and secure funding. ▪ Long: A sustainable model for ongoing delivery of tourist/community amenity.	▪ Lead: Shire of Moora ▪ Partners: Tourism Groups, Department of Sport and Recreation	TBC
<u>Wongan Hills Trail Development</u> Scale: Wongan Hills Townsite Description: Upgrades to paths and increased signage for the tourism trails around the town site. Scope: Earthworks to paths, installation of signage. Outcome: Increased activities for tourists, resulting in more time and money spent in Wongan Hills.	▪ Short: Complete plan. ▪ Medium: Identify and secure funding available.	▪ Lead: Shire of Wongan-Ballidu ▪ Partners: Tourism Groups, Department of Sport and Recreation	TBC
<u>Tourism Marketing for the Midlands Centres Sub-Region</u> Scale: Sub-Region Description: A combined approach to tourism in the Midlands Centres Sub-Region utilising organisations such as Heartlands WA, Golden Horizons and Moore Catchment Council. Scope: Marketing strategy, advertising campaigns and liaison with caravan/RV clubs. Outcome: More awareness of the Midlands Centres Sub-Region throughout target markets, particularly those based in Perth and the 'grey nomad' group.	▪ Short: Key stakeholders identified. Projects developed and prioritised. ▪ Medium: Funding identified. ▪ Long: Funding secured. Relationships built and maintained.	▪ Lead: Shires of Dalwallinu, Moora and Wongan-Ballidu ▪ Partners: Tourism Groups, Heartlands WA, Golden Horizons and Moore Catchment Council	TBC
<u>Moora Tourism Trails</u> Scale: Shire of Moora Description: Produce and design 10,000 eco-trail booklets that detail walk trails, identify flora and fauna and provide aboriginal heritage information around the Moora area. Booklets will be available in Local Government offices, tourism outlets etc. This project will also create the trigger for the upgrade of the Jingamia Cave walk trail and signage. Scope: Design, print, launch and distribute booklets, with the opportunity to also upgrade the Jingamia Cave walk trail and signage. Outcome: Detailed tourist information in the absence of a tourism office including walk trails, natural attractions and increased marketing of the flora and fauna of the Shire of Moora. The intention is to encourage prolonged tourism stays in Moora.	▪ Short: Project has commenced. ▪ Medium: Stage 2 investigated and funds applied for and secured.	▪ Lead: Moore Catchment Council ▪ Partners: Shire of Moora, Department of Sport and Recreation, Department of Parks and Wildlife, Yued Group, WDC.	Stage 1 Funded (14/15 RfR CCF Contribution) Stage 2 Pending
MIDLANDS CENTRES AIRFIELD DEVELOPMENT			
<u>Moora Airfield Development</u> Scale: Moora Townsite Description: Upgrade the Moora airstrip including the extension and sealing of runway, new markers, a wind indicator and solar lighting. The addition of commercial/recreational hangars and a shuttle vehicle to be used for moving between the airstrip and town also to be considered. Scope: Revision of current planning and costings required, funding identification and commencement of upgrades. Outcome: An upgraded airstrip to improve safety for essential services such has the Royal Flying Doctor Service and also facilitate increased recreational use.	▪ Short: Demand identified. ▪ Medium: Business case completed. ▪ Long: Funding available.	▪ Lead: Shire of Moora ▪ Partners: Civil Aviation Safety Authority, Royal Flying Doctor Service	TBC
<u>Wongan Hills - Development of Area around Airstrip for ‘Skypark’</u> Scale: Wongan Hills Townsite Description: Development of residential land around the Wongan Hills airstrip to attract recreational users to the town. Scope: Investigate and develop residential land adjacent to Wongan Hills airstrip and undertake a marketing campaign to attract recreation pilots to the town. Outcome: Facilitate growth of recreational aviation industry catering for Jandakot Airport congestion. Increased growth and tourism in Wongan Hills.	▪ Short: Ensure appropriate planning is developed and demand for development is identified. ▪ Medium/Long: Monitor aviation developments (Merredin, Narrogin, Jurien, Cunderdin, Northam and Wyalkatchem) to determine Wongan-Ballidu’s potential for development. Collaborate marketing and conduct development.	▪ Lead: Shire of Wongan-Ballidu	TBC

Delivery & Thresholds			
Action/Activity/Project	Threshold Indicator	Delivery Method	
		Lead Agency & Partners	Funding Source
DIGITAL MIDLANDS CENTRES			
<u>Dalwallinu – Improved Mobile Phone Coverage, Digital Television and NBN</u> Scale: Shire of Dalwallinu Description: Address current shortfalls in mobile phone coverage, local digital television coverage and NBN service intended throughout the Shire of Dalwallinu. Lobby appropriate stakeholders and decision makers for improved NBN service (than what is proposed which is likely to be inferior to the current ADSL2+ service) and for mobile coverage for Goodlands and Wubin. Scope: Stakeholder engagement at Local, State and Federal Government levels and promotion of the uptake of digital technology for local businesses Outcome: Improved technology, improved availability, increased uptake of digital technology and improved competitiveness of local businesses. To continue to cater for visiting interstate, international and metropolitan counterparts who rely on continued connectivity.	▪ Short: Priorities clarified and mobile coverage needs submitted Mobile Black Spot Program round 2 (MBSP2). Monitor NBN rollout and engage a wide audience, (including NBN) in an improved solution for Dalwallinu. ▪ Medium: Funding announced. Completion of Mobile Blackspot Program round 1 and Regional Telecommunications Project. Monitor Federal and State announcements to ensure gaps are identified, recorded and developed into needs case studies for future planning.	▪ Lead: Shire of Dalwallinu ▪ Partners: WDC, Department of Commerce, NBN Co,	TBC
<u>Wongan Hills - Expand the Use of Digital Technology</u> Scale: Shire of Wongan-Ballidu Description: Promote the advantages of digital technology for local businesses, community groups and lobby for improved availability of digital technology across the shire including sites in Cadoux and Kondut. Monitor the NBN rollout to ensure that FTTN and wireless NBN solutions are delivered to maximum footprint. Scope: Marketing and campaigning of benefits of digital technology for local businesses and lobbying to improve availability of digital technology across the Shire of Wongan-Ballidu Outcome: More competitive local businesses, improved technology and increased commerce and business opportunities across the Shire. To continue to cater for visiting interstate, international and metropolitan counterparts who rely on continued connectivity.	▪ Short: Identify opportunities for better utilisation of existing technologies. Identify gaps and guide solutions via consultation with NBN Co and Department of Commerce during the planning and construction phase. Mobile coverage needs submitted into a potential Mobile Black Spot Program round 2. Monitor NBN rollout to ensure maximum FTTN and wireless footprint. ▪ Medium: Strategies for community participation. Additional funding sought for value adding processes.	▪ Lead: Shire of Wongan-Ballidu ▪ Partners: Department of Commerce	TBC

Projects and Initiatives founded as at 5 May 2016. These Projects and Initiatives for Midlands Centres have been identified from Local, State and Federal Governments, private enterprise and Non-Government-Organisations during the consultation and research phase for this Plan. It is of the view that the Projects and Initiatives will guide the development of the Midland Centres and the broader Central Midlands Sub-Region. A prioritisation process was undertaken that identifies the priority projects which will have the most impact on economic and population growth at this point of time. It is of the view that this list is not exhaustive and will evolve as Projects and Initiatives are completed, new Projects and Initiatives identified or changed completely. The list will form part of the Implementation and Monitoring process of which will be reviewed to ensure project information is current and accurately reflects the investment required to meet the infrastructure and service needs of a growing population and economy. The Wheatbelt Development Commission as part of the Implementation and Monitoring of this Plan will be updating this project list on a regular basis.