



LOCAL PLANNING STRATEGY

BACKGROUND REPORT

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SHIRE OF WYALKATCHEM LOCAL PLANNING STRATEGY

1 INTRODUCTION

Regulation 12A(3) of the Town Planning Amendment Regulations 1999 requires that a Local Planning Strategy shall:

- (a) set out the long-term planning directions for the local government;
- (b) apply State and regional planning policies; and,
- (c) provide the rationale for the zones and other provisions of the Scheme.

2 PREAMBLE

The Shire of Wyalkatchem's Local Planning Strategy has been prepared in two parts. The First Part (the Strategy) will contain a basic introduction with the main emphasis based on a series of **Objectives**, **Strategies** and **Actions**. This will provide an outline to guide the local government in the implementation of the Strategy, with an ability to monitor and track its progress.

The second part (this part) includes background information provided in support of the Strategy document – the first part.

The Department for Planning and Infrastructure has determined that this structure is suitable for its purposes in considering the Strategy for endorsement.

3 OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this Local Planning Strategy are to provide;

- a 'leadership' document which provides strategic planning direction for the next 15 years or longer and which manages that growth within a strategic framework;
- a document which sets out the direction for economically, socially and environmentally sustainable development based on comprehensive analysis of state, regional and local planning issues and objectives;
- a document which gives direction both to local government, the Department for Planning and Infrastructure, the Western Australian Planning Commission and the Minister in assessment of development proposals and provides strategic planning support for this decision-making;
- a document which provides the basis for coordinated decision-making on future servicing of the local government area by local, state government and any other service agency;
- a document which explains/justifies the strategic direction for growth and development to all stakeholders, and;
- a basis on which the Local Planning Scheme may be reviewed.

4 VISION STATEMENT

The following vision statement describes the way the community sees the future for the Shire of Wyalkatchem and its hopes and aspirations.

The Shire of Wyalkatchem will endeavour to meet the needs of current and future generations through the integration of environmental protection, social advancement and economic sustainability.

The Shire will endeavour to diversify its economic base by establishing rural industries that rely on similar environmental conditions but alternative markets.

The Shire will continue to promote the use of best management practices in all its activities especially in the development of its culture, arts, tourism, hospitality and service sector.

Wyalkatchem will continue to provide modern and efficient services to meet the district service centre role and will be supported as the focus of recreation, administration, commercial and residential development for the Shire and District.

The Wyalkatchem Townsite will be continued to be supported as a town maintaining its role as a residential and business centre servicing the important passing trade (both business and tourism). Wyalkatchem will also continue to provide for industrial activities to service the surrounding mining operations.

The Shire will continue to promote the creation of new industries, businesses and jobs based on economically sustainable principles. These jobs may be in a variety of disciplines including, primary industry, geo-thermal power exploration, bio-diesel development, tourism and cultural awareness.

The Shire will promote and support closer development in the rural areas of the district provided;

- The development is within easy reach of an established townsite offering services and amenities.
- The development is not too close to a developed townsite where it may restrict the future urban expansion of that settlement.
- There is no loss of amenity to the countryside and nature reserves.
- Water resources, natural vegetation and basic raw materials are not jeopardized.
- The salinity levels are not increased as a result of development.
- The Shire is not burdened with undue increases in servicing costs.
- The development meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
- The proposal avoids areas of high groundwater levels, waterlogging, flooding, remnant vegetation, rare and endangered flora or fauna, high acidity areas and other areas considered appropriate by the Council.
- The development avoids areas where there is a very high land capability for agricultural uses.

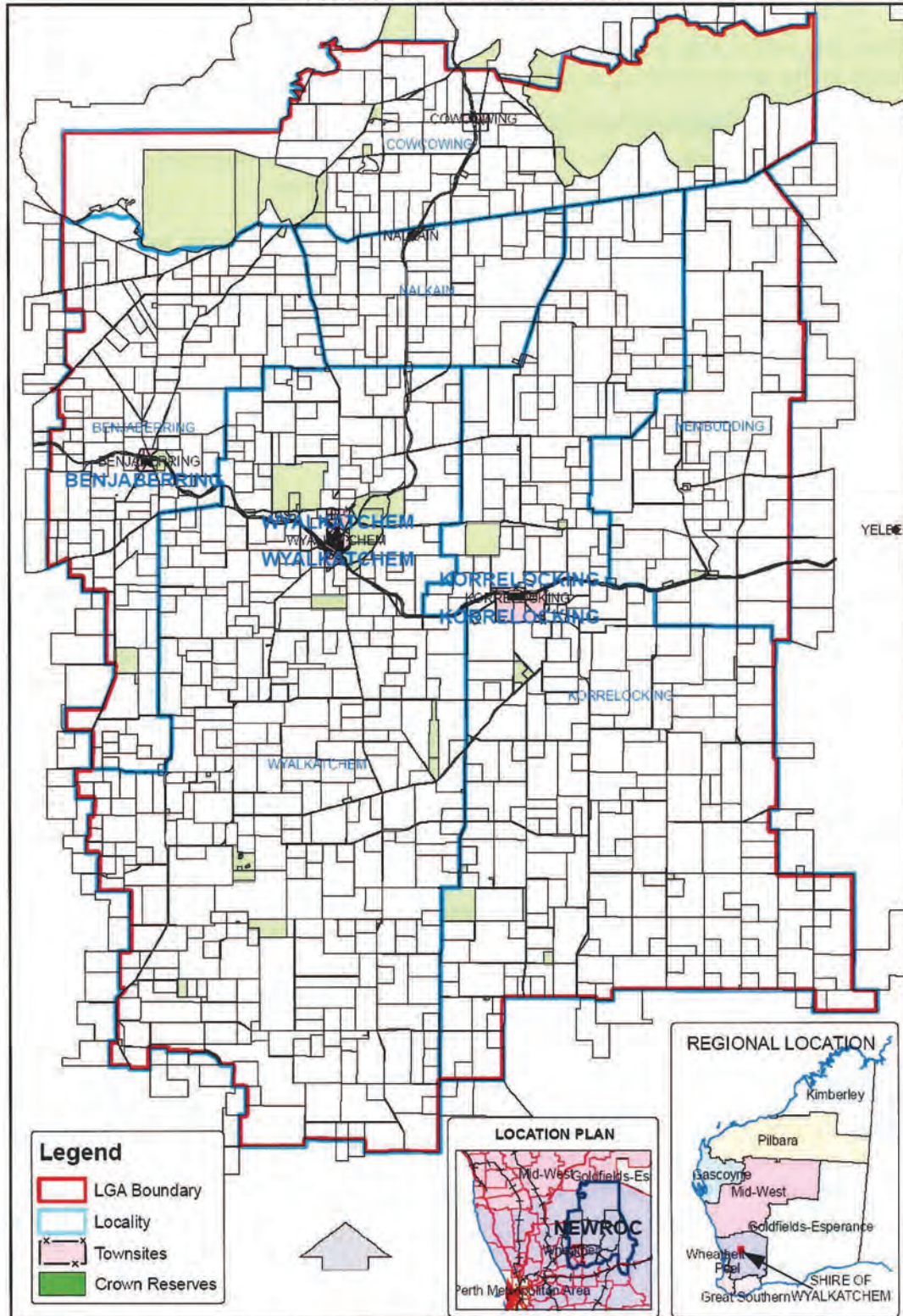
The Shire will continue to promote its cultural resources and unique landscape without jeopardising the integrity of either asset.

The Shire will continue to protect its valuable indigenous cultural resources. To this end the Shire will promote continuing cooperation between itself, its residents and the relevant agencies set up to provide advice and assistance in these social and land management issues.

5 BACKGROUND

Figure 1 shows the location of the Shire and townsite in relation to the surrounding settlements and the Perth Metropolitan Region.

FIGURE 1 - LOCATION PLAN



Source: Travellers Atlas 9th Ed, Landgate 2008, PLANWEST

Figure 1 also shows the Shire boundary, adjacent Shires, localities, DEC reserves, roads and townsites. The Shire of Wyalkatchem covers an area of 1,743 square kilometres with its closest border located about 170 kilometres north east from Perth. The Shire is roughly about 50 kilometres north-south and 37 kilometres east-west.

The Shire is bounded on the north by the Shires of Koorda and Mount Marshall, on the west by the Shire of Dowerin, on the south by the Shires of Cunderdin and Tammin, on the east by the Shire of Trayning. There are six localities within the Shire all including; Cowcowing, Nalkain, Benjaberring, Wyalkatchem, Nembudding and Korrelocking.

Some additional Council Statistics include the following;

Population	577
Number of dwellings	323
Length of sealed roads	174.5km
Length of unsealed roads	507.8km
Area	1,743km ²
Distance from Perth	186km
Number of Employees:	19
Number of Electors:	433
Total Rates Levied:	\$658,870
Total Revenue:	\$4,111'193

6 STATUTORY AND STRATEGIC CONTEXT

6.1 STATE PLANNING FRAMEWORK

The State Planning Strategy was prepared in 1997 by the WA Planning Commission. The Strategy is a broad based document that sets out a series of strategies and actions for achieving the main principles identified.

The State Planning Strategy provides a basis for the State Planning Framework. This provides for application of the State Planning Policies (SPPs) on matters of State significance.

6.2 STATE PLANNING POLICIES (SPP)

The Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) Policy (SPP 2) defines the principles and considerations that represent good and responsible planning in terms of environment and natural resource issues within the framework of the State Planning Strategy. The ENR Policy recognises that Planning Strategies, Schemes and decision making should consider any relevant accredited NRM Regional Strategy, or catchment management strategies prepared by catchment groups and endorsed by the State Government agencies, with a view to integrating implementation of appropriate and relevant parts through town planning schemes and assessment of developments.

SPP 2.5 - Agriculture and Rural Land Use Planning

The main objective of this policy is to protect productive agricultural land from activities that will threaten its productivity, whilst acknowledging a need to accommodate urban expansion and other important uses. The SPP established a number of objectives for planning in agricultural areas including the following.

1. ***Protect agricultural/and resources wherever possible by:***
 - (a) discouraging land uses unrelated to agriculture from locating on agricultural land; and
 - (b) minimising the ad hoc fragmentation of rural land; and
 - (c) improving resource and investment security for agricultural and allied industry production.

2. ***Plan and provide for rural settlement where it can:***
 - (a) benefit and support existing communities, and
 - (b) have access to appropriate community services and infrastructure.

3. ***Minimise the potential for land use conflict by:***
 - (a) providing adequate separation distance between potential conflicting land uses.
 - (b) introducing management requirements that protect existing agricultural land uses;
 - (c) identify areas that are suitable and capable of intensive agricultural pursuits as agricultural priority areas; and
 - (d) avoid locating new rural settlements in areas that are likely to create conflict with established or proposed agricultural priority areas.

4. ***Carefully manage natural resources by-***
 - (a) discouraging development and/or subdivision that may result in land or environmental degradation;
 - (b) integrating land, catchment and water resource management requirements with land use planning controls;
 - (c) assisting in the wise use of resources including energy, minerals and basic raw materials;
 - (d) preventing land and environmental degradation during the extraction of minerals and basic raw materials; and
 - (e) incorporating land management standards and sequential land use change in the land use planning and development process.

SPP 2.9 -Water Resources

This policy aims to protect, conserve and enhance water resources that have significant economic, social, cultural and/or environmental values. It also aims to assist in ensuring the availability of suitable water resources to maintain living environments, while maintaining or improving water resource quality and quantity.

SPP 3- Urban Growth and Settlement

This State Planning Policy was released in February 2006 and applies throughout Western Australia. The policy aims to provide for the sustainable development of communities throughout the State.

State Sustainability Strategy

The State Sustainability Strategy establishes a sustainability framework containing principles, visions and goals. It seeks to ensure that sustainability is considered and incorporated into decisions and actions for the future of Western Australia at all levels.

Region Plan or Scheme

In 2009 the WA Planning Commission prepared a directions paper for a draft Wheatbelt Region Strategy (WRS). The draft document suggests future needs and policies be based on the region rather than administrative boundaries. The document suggests several possible directions including those relating to remnant vegetation, retention of valuable agricultural land, buffers, plantations, tourism, raw materials, land supply, settlement hierarchy, and servicing issues. Local Planning Strategies should be consistent with the WRS.

Roads 2025

In 2007 the Main Roads WA produced a series of reports dealing regions of WA titled Roads 2025 Regional Road Development Strategy (2007). The Shire of Wyalkatchem is included in the Wheatbelt Report.

There are several Local Government Roads that are discussed in more detail in the background report. The only State route is the Goomalling-Merredin route passing through the Shire. The proposals are outlined in more detail later in this report.

Local Government

The Shire has only one Town Planning Scheme in the Shire. The Scheme is a zoning Scheme and covers the townsite of Wyalkatchem only.

7 BRIEF HISTORY

The Shire of Wyalkatchem came into being in 1961 under the Local Government Act 1960. At that time a Town Planning Scheme was being considered which eventually was adopted in June 1971. TPS No 2 was gazetted in 1985 and TPS 3 in June 2000.

Parts of the district were explored as early as 1846 by A C Gregory with follow up expeditions by Robert Austin in 1854, and John Forrest in 1869.

Pastoral Leases were issued from about 1870 and the first freehold land was at Quilleting at about the same time.

The Toodyay Road Board was formed in 1871 and Wyalkatching, (the early spelling of Wyalkatchem), was in that district. The Goomalling Road Board took over in 1895 and The Korrelocking Road Board in 1911. This was short lived with the Dowerin Road Board taking on the responsibility in 1912.

The Wyalkatchem Road Board came into existence on 1 July 1920 with John Lindsay elected Chairman.

By that time considerable land had been taken up for farming from 1905 and Townsites came into existence at Cowcowing, Benjaberring, Korrelocking, Nalkain, Yorkrakine, Nembudding, Dukin (now in Koorda Shire), and Wyalkatchem.

Prior to clearing of land for crops pastoral leases were used to carry sheep but the records show cropping from 1908.

Although various buildings, including houses, stores, schools and agricultural halls were built in most locations only 2 buildings remain in Korrelocking and all other townsites have been de-gazetted with the exception of Wyalkatchem which continues to thrive.

This can be attributed to the fact that Wyalkatchem is at the junction of the railway to Bencubbin, opened in 1915, and beyond and the original Dowerin to Merredin line. If Korrelocking had been the junction the story today may have been much different!

Wyalkatchem and Korrelocking have been served by railway from 1911 but alas the line to Korrelocking has not been used for many years and other than most tracks all infrastructure has long gone.

Wyalkatchem had extensive railway yards and infrastructure including barracks accommodation for railwaymen, station buildings, staff housing, a loco depot and turning wye.

Along with Korrelocking, Wyalkatchem had one of the first bulk grain bins and the first train load of bulk wheat in Western Australia left Korrelocking in 1931.

Whilst Wyalkatchem town has become a major grain receival area it is anticipated that the last of the other bins will be de-commissioned in the near future.

Since the Town of Wyalkatchem was gazetted there have been some changes with the coming and going of various businesses, reduction of the railway to a single through line to Mukinbudin, removal of early houses and the building of new properties. The district has however retained much of its Heritage with the listing of the Railway Station complex, the 1936 Wheatbin (now a Museum), the hotel and the National Bank and other buildings.

There are a few vacant blocks in town for both residential and industrial purposes. There is a noticeable increase in tourists staying at the Caravan Park and enjoying the experience of a small country town with a strong cultural and natural heritage which is being preserved for future generations.

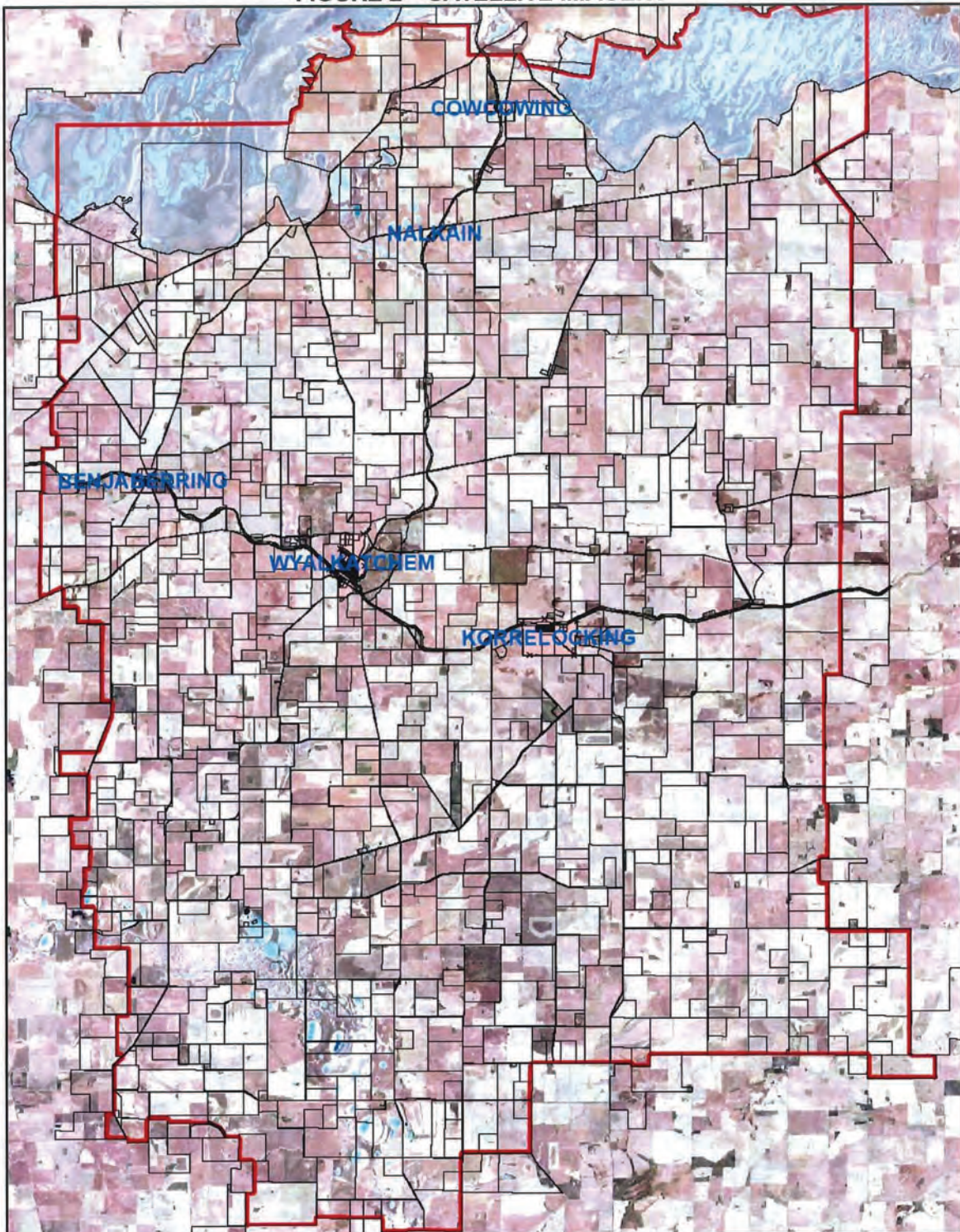
Farming is still the major activity in the Shire with grain growing and sheep farming the main products. A Gypsum mine is well used and some industrial salt is produced.

Investment in private residential properties is strong with improvements to existing buildings and new buildings under construction. Wyalkatchem is becoming more interesting to retirees who are seeking a "tree change" in a quieter and safer environment and this trend indicates that the town will grow further in the coming years.

8 LANDFORM

The landform of the Shire varies from 240 metres (AHD) in the central south part of the district which services a tributary of the Mortlock River 30 kilometres southwards. The highest sections of the Shire follow the Goomalling-Merredin route and are up to about 380 metres. The satellite imagery (**Figure 2**) clearly demonstrates the lake system in the extreme north and the aforementioned valley in the central south.

FIGURE 2 – SATELLITE IMAGERY



Source: Landgate 2008

9 SETTLEMENTS

The Shire currently has five settlements, all of which are based along the existing railway line. The main town is **Wyalkatchem** located on the Amery-Merredin rail line located about

14 kilometres from the western Shire boundary and 23 from the eastern boundary. Figure 3 provides an aerial photograph of the townsite showing the main urban area.

FIGURE 3 – WYALKATCHEM TOWNSITE



Source: Landgate 2008

The other four settlements are Cowcowing, Benjaberring, Nalkain and Korrelocking (a townsite).

The Wyalkatchem townsite covers an area of 262.9 hectares and is located at about 320 metres above sea level. The townsite has numerous properties that remain vacant. In the residential areas there are at least 50 lots that appear to be available for development albeit some are still held as VCL or Crown Reserves; in the commercial area there are only 4 or 5 properties vacant, but the area could be better used if there was a demand for land. This does not include properties that are clearly developed but remain unused. **Figure 4** overleaf shows an indicative land use plan of the main townsite area.

FIGURE 4 – WYALKATCHEM LANDUSE



Source: PLANWEST 2008

As can be seen from **Figure 4** the main areas of vacant land are at the eastern end of Wilson and Flint Streets. In the case of Wilson Street the road in part of this section has not yet been constructed.

Figure 5 provides a basic tenure map showing Vacant Crown Land (VCL), Crown Reserves and Shire owned land. The information will assist the Council to acquire government land for future development, or allow it to create lots for sale. The Figure shows the smattering of Shire owned properties in town.

FIGURE 5 – WYALKATCHEM OWNERSHIP



Source: Shire of Wyalkatchem and Landgate 2008

Benjaberring settlement is located about 5 kilometres east of Wyalkatchem Shire border and 11 kilometres west of Wyalkatchem townsite, and is about 345m above sea level. The settlement is 72.6 hectares and is currently undeveloped as can clearly be seen from **Figure 6** below. The settlement is surrounded by farming land.

FIGURE 6- BENJABERRING SETTLEMENT



Source: Landgate 2008

FIGURE 7- BENJABERRING OWNERSHIP

Figure 7 shows the existing land tenure in Benjaberring is totally composed of Crown Reserves and Vacant Crown Land (VCL). It is evident that the settlement was originally a wheatbin location but there is no such activity now apparent.



Source: Landgate 2008

Cowcowing settlement is located on the Koorda-Wyalkatchem Road about 22 kilometres north of Wyalkatchem and about 2 km south of the Shire boundary. The settlement is 48.8 hectares and is 320 metres above sea level. **Figure 8** shows an aerial photograph of the settlement with its single dwelling and sheds.

FIGURE 8 – COWCOWING SETTLEMENT

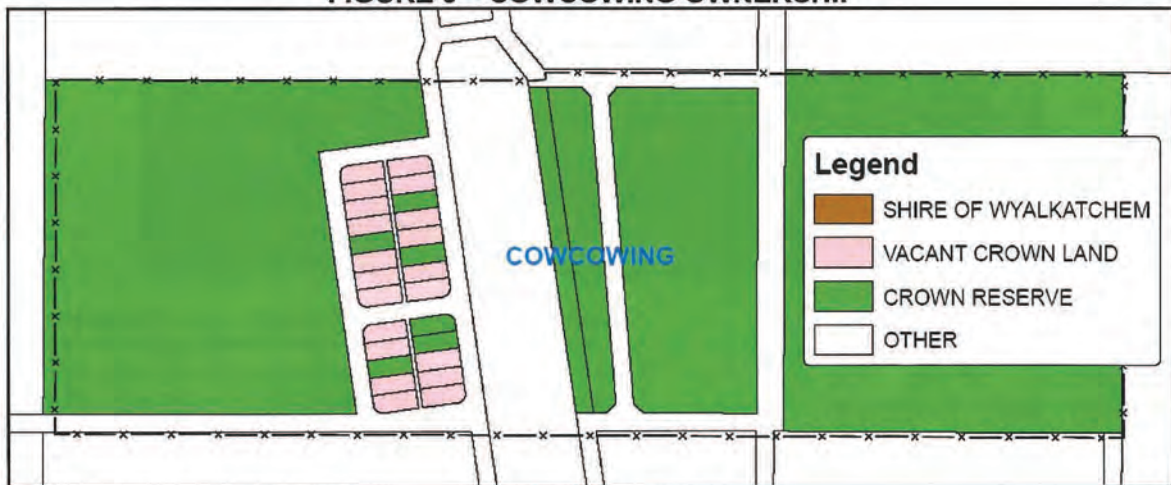


Source: Landgate 2008

The town has no development except for a wheatbin in the railway reserve.

Figure 9 shows the land ownership categories with no privately owned land evident.

FIGURE 9 – COWCOWING OWNERSHIP



Source: Landgate 2008

Nalkain settlement is located off a side road from the Koorda-Wyalkatchem Road about 17 kilometres north of Wyalkatchem and about 9 km south of the Shire boundary. The settlement is 22.0 hectares and is about 295 metres above sea level. **Figure 10** shows an aerial photograph of the settlement with its absence of development.

FIGURE 10 – NALKAIN SETTLEMENT



Source: Landgate 2008

Figure 11 shows the land ownership categories with only two lots privately owned. According to data from Landgate one of these lots are owned by FR Coate, the other has no ownership data.

FIGURE 11 – NALKAIN OWNERSHIP



Source: Landgate 2008

Korrelocking townsite is located on the Nungarin-Wyalkatchem Road about 10 kilometres east of Wyalkatchem and about 13 km west of the Shire boundary. The townsite is by far the largest townsite with an area of 356.2 hectares and 340 metres above sea level. **Figure 12** shows an aerial photograph of the developed part of town, and **Figure 13** the whole town.

FIGURE 12 – DEVELOPMENT IN KORRELOCKING



Source: Landgate 2008

FIGURE 13 – KORRELOCKING TOWNSITE

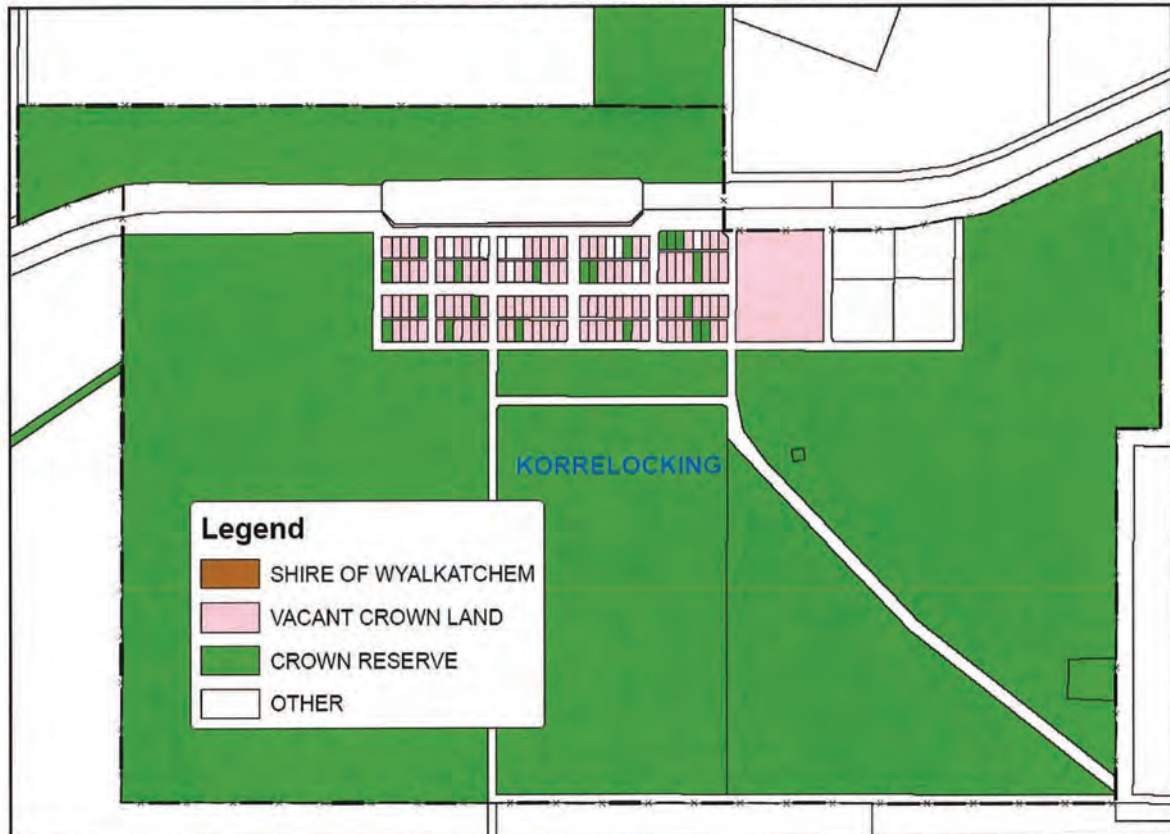


Source: Landgate 2008

Figure 14 shows the land ownership categories with only 14 lots privately owned land. Four of these lots are 1.6-2 hectare lots used, for what appears to be a single development.

The other lots are undeveloped except for two lots owned by Pike and Austin. The rest of the lots have no owners registered in the Landgate data provided.

FIGURE 14 – KORRELOCKING OWNERSHIP



Source: Landgate 2008

10 CLIMATE

The town lies in the north eastern Wheatbelt, and enjoys a temperate climate with hot, dry summers and light winters. The average rainfall in Wyalkatchem is about 330.9 mm and occurs mainly in winter from May to September.

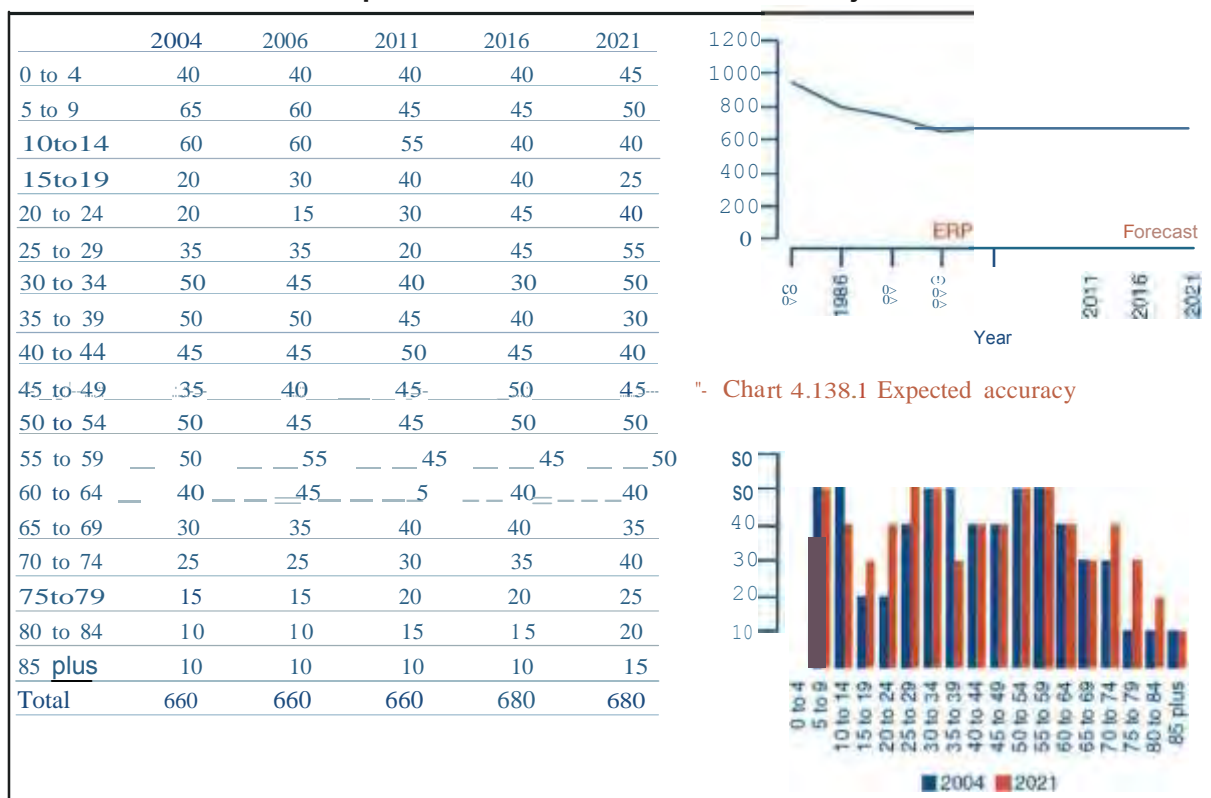
The weather is typical of the Wheatbelt Region with average temperatures shown in the table below (shown in ° Celsius).

	LOWEST MEAN	HIGHEST MEAN	ANNUAL AVE
Maximum	17.0	33.9	24.6
Minimum	6.1	17.9	11.6

11 POPULATION

The Shire of Wyalkatchem, like most inland areas of Western Australia has had declining population numbers over the last 30 years, since the early 1980s. In the case of Wyalkatchem the decline is forecast to be stable to at least 2021. The forecasts are shown in **Figure 15** below.

FIGURE 15- Population Trends 1981-2001 with Projections to 2021



Source: Western Australia Tomorrow, Report No 6, WAPC.

Generally, there is some conjecture whether population numbers are stabilising in country areas. However in the medium term, to about 2021 the forecast is for a flattening out of the recent decline. Australian Bureau of Statistics data, as at the Census in 1996 was 634, 669 in 2001 and down to 541 in 2006 a decline of about 14% (or 91 people). The median age in 2006 was 40 – about 5 years more than the State.

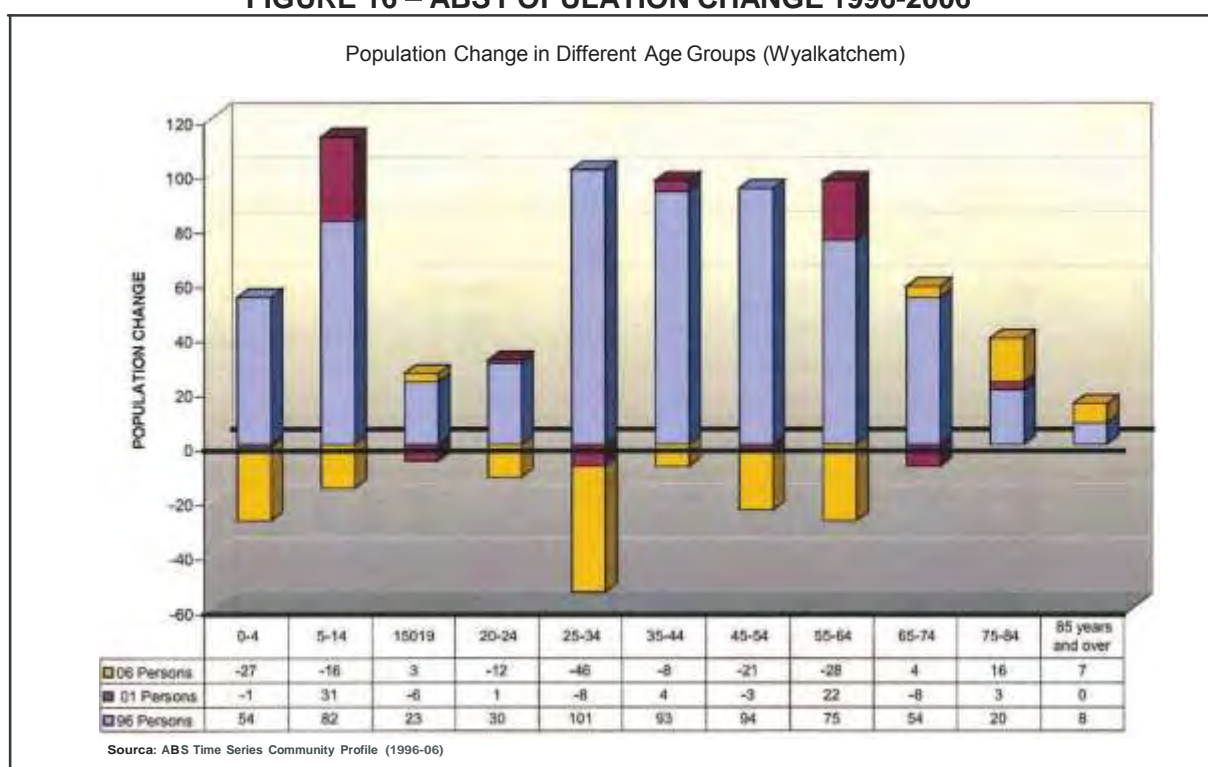
Based on the 2006 Census, the Shire of Wyalkatchem had a declining number of school age people (0-4) but a rise of the 5-19 cohort. An increasing number of the population are of retiring age (i.e. 65 years or older) with 19% of the Shire population, compared with 12% of the State. (In 2006 the 0-14 proportion was 22.7% compared with 20.2% of the State).

Notwithstanding the recent declining population, the Shire has an increased weekly household income from \$492 in 1996 to \$675 in 2006.

The 2006 projections (WAPC WAT, 2005) shown in the bar chart above (**Figure 15**) suggest that there will be increases in the 15-29 and 70 onwards brackets, with the 5-14 and 35-39 brackets decreasing.

Figures 16 and **17** provide charts demonstrating the actual change of population over the last three Census periods by age bracket and gender.

FIGURE 16 – ABS POPULATION CHANGE 1996-2006



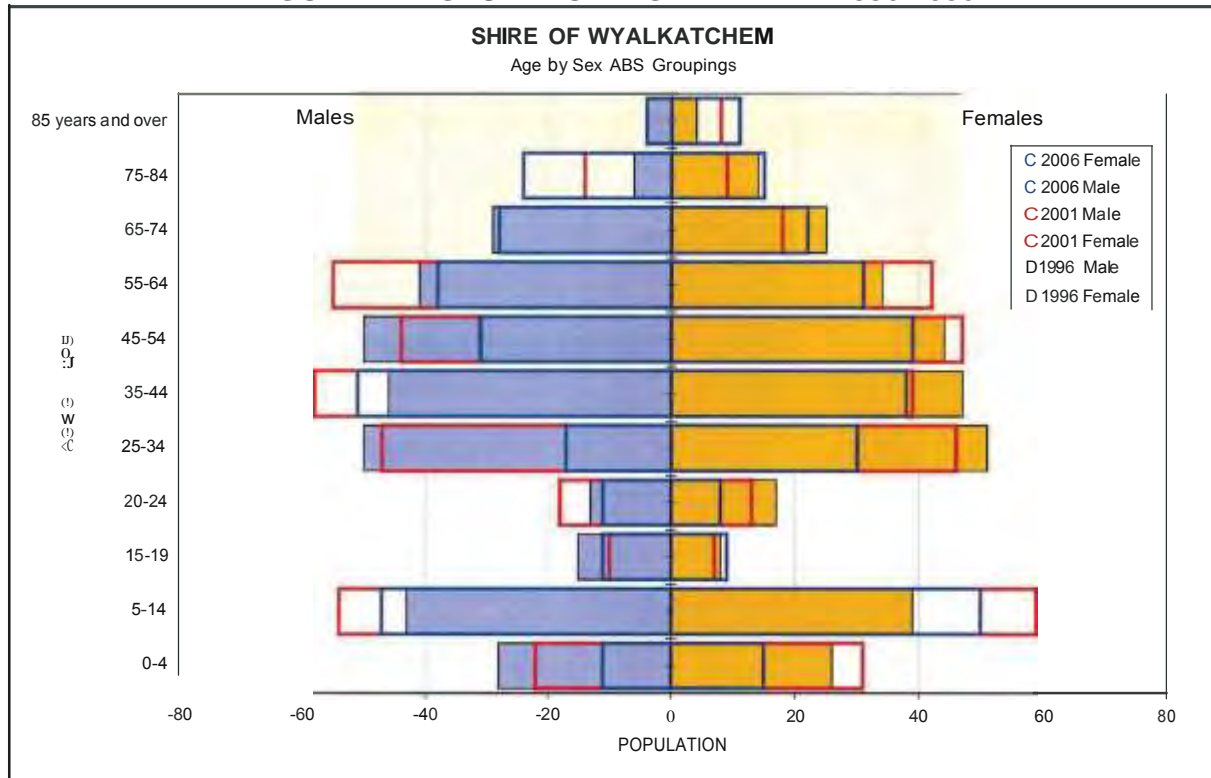
Source: ABS 2006 Census

As with many Wheatbelt communities, the number and dispersed locations of the other townsites throughout the District present a problem for servicing. Whilst these settlements may have been important during the days when the rail sidings were operational, many are now bypassed by the rail system and therefore perform no useful function in the current system.

Wyalkatchem townsite is the main urban centre in the Shire with 346 people (or 64% of the Shire). The median household income is 4610 with a median age of 45. The latter statistic probably affected by the increase in the '65 and over cohort' deciding to settle in town.

There is a decreasing Aboriginal population in the Shire (11 people in 1996), 33 people in 2001 and only 8 in 2006 (or 1.5%). There are no Aboriginal settlements and the Aboriginal Lands Trust has no properties or interests in the Shire.

FIGURE 17-POPULATION AGE PYRAMID 1996-2006



Source: ABS 2006 Census

Implications of Location, Climate and Population Characteristics on Local Planning Strategy

The Shire's distance from Perth, its climate and employment opportunities will remain the main obstacles to the lack of growth in the population projections. The Shire's location away from the major highway network contributes to the reduced passing trade and exposure of most of the tourist traffic. However this safer, quieter lifestyle could become an attractor in itself and lead to increased development in the future.

Growth population projections for the Shire (WA Planning Commission, 2005) suggest that, of the 44 LGAs within the Wheatbelt Planning Region, 16 recorded declining then stabilising populations. During the 1981-96 period most of the growth occurred in the LGAs adjacent to the Perth Metropolitan Region. Wyalkatchem is classified as expecting a 'steady' population. **Figure 18** provides an extract from the Western Australia Tomorrow report.

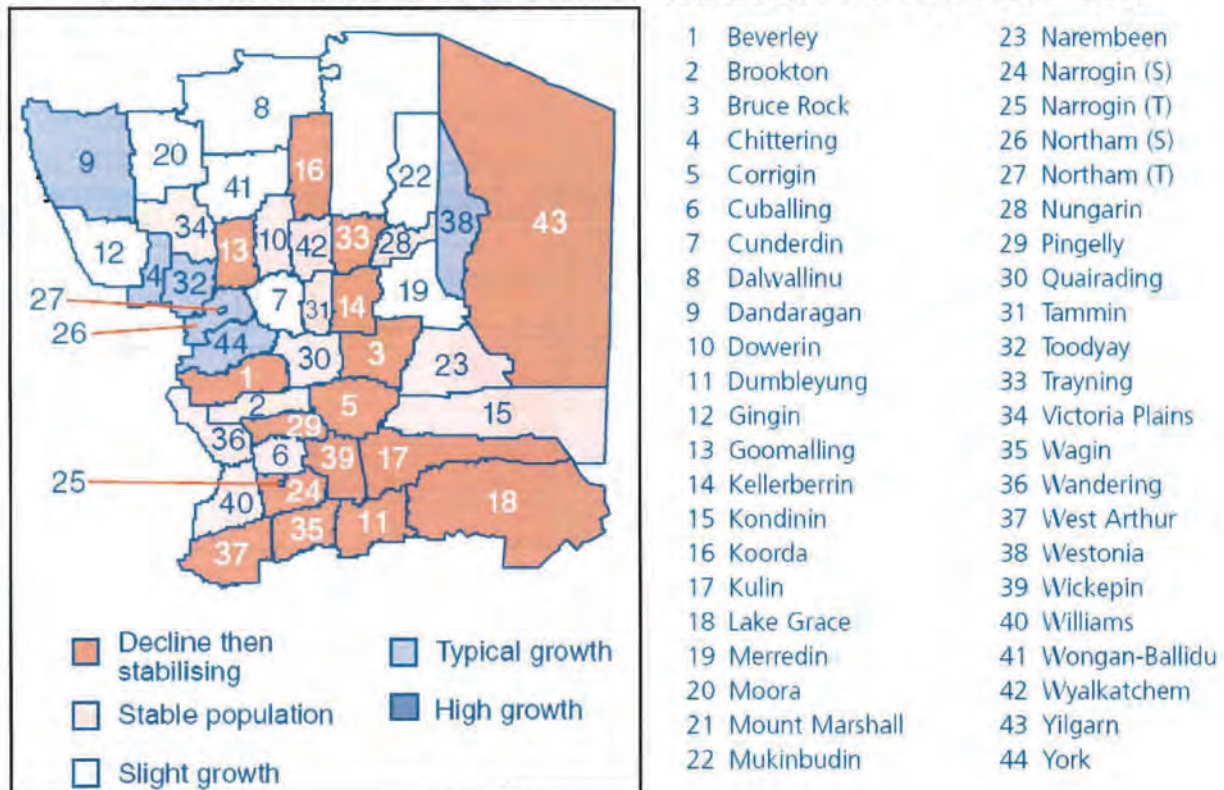
Although there is a marked variation between the genders, the overall increasing age brackets include the 15-19, and 65 and older. These increases have the respective implications of providing the appropriate services and amenities for these additional people.

In order to provide a choice for prospective residents in the District it is recommended that a range of alternative residential lifestyle options be made available. Other than selected townsites and farms, it is suggested that a greater variety of rural-residential lots be created. These lots should be grouped into a 'Rural Residential' environment but preferably have access to urban services and amenities. The selection of these areas should be determined on a set of criteria including the following;

- Proximity to services, amenities and facilities
- Land suitability
- Environmental values and risks

- Potential for land use conflict
- Potential impacts on adjacent land uses
- Existence of any buffer areas from incompatible uses.

FIGURE 18 - PREDICTED POPULATION CHANGE IN LGAs FOR 2001 - 2021



Source: Western Australia Tomorrow - Population Report No 6, Oct 2005, WAPC

The increasing number of people over 65 over the past three Census periods indicates there may be demands on future aged persons facilities. One can assume that this aging population may want to settle in the district and as such will be demanding the appropriate services. If these services are not provided, this population will seek an alternative town as a location to settle. Wyalkatchem may be a favoured location for retiring farmers in the district, but this cannot be confirmed without more detailed data. The implications of an aging population profile include the need to adequately cater for accommodation, medical facilities and support services.

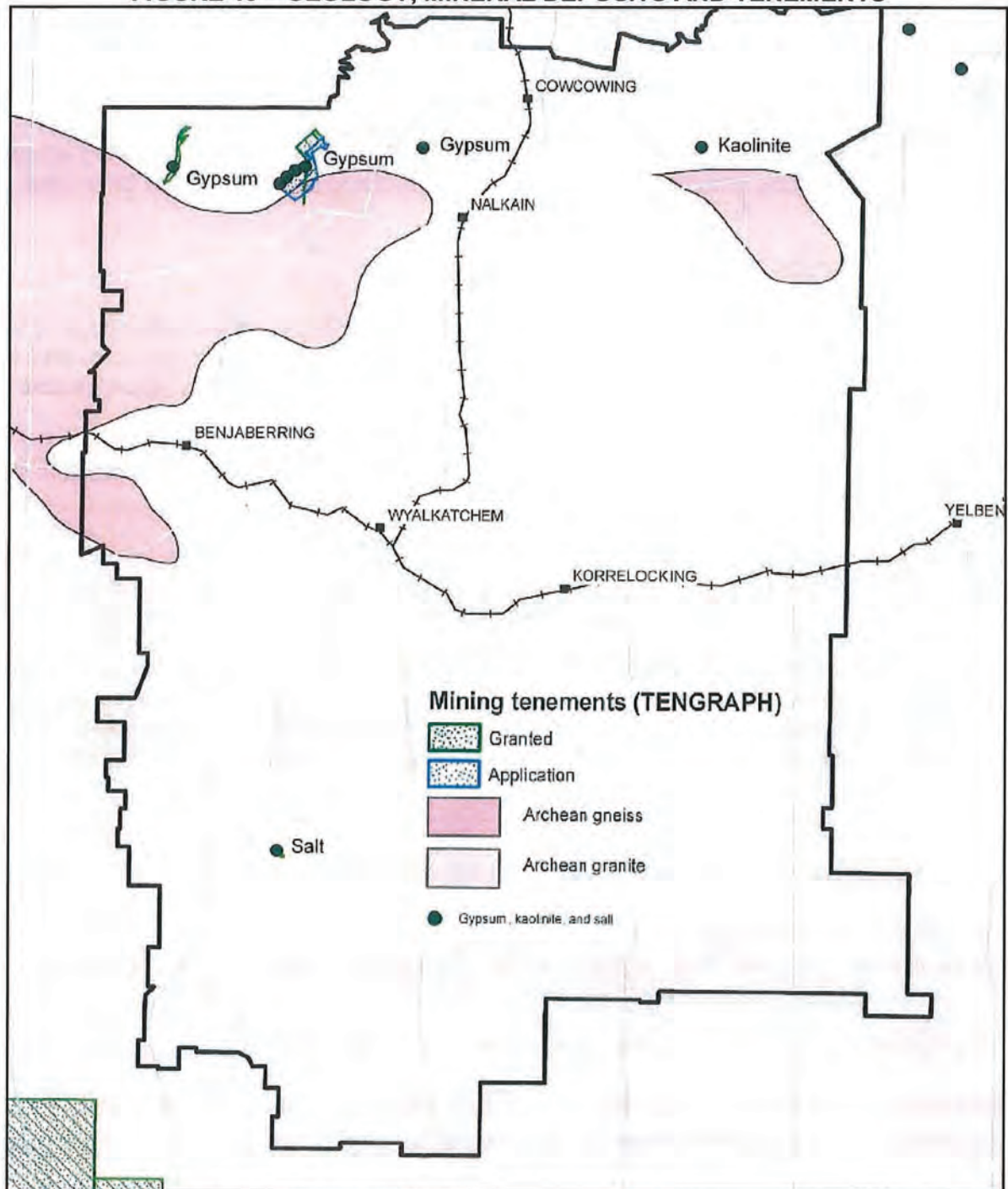
An aged persons' accommodation precinct needs to be established. The area could incorporate a 'senior's precinct' including a bowling, or recreation, club. These accommodation facilities need to be well located within walking distance the main commercial and community facilities and could benefit by grouping of these facilities serving residents with similar interests, and needs.

12 GEOLOGY

All mineral exploration and mining in WA is subject to the provisions of the Mining Act 1978, which is administered by Department of Minerals and Petroleum (DMP). Minerals, as defined by the Mining Act 1978, include all naturally occurring substances obtained from any land by mining, however construction materials such as limestone, rock, gravel, and sand are not considered to be minerals where they occur on private land.

Figure 19 below shows geology, minerals deposits and tenements, including the gypsum and salt deposits in the Shire.

FIGURE 19 – GEOLOGY, MINERAL DEPOSITS AND TENEMENTS



Source: Geological Survey of Western Australia, 2012

The Geological Survey of Western Australia (GSWA) aims to meet DMP's objective of 'achieving responsible development of industry and resources for the benefit of Western Australians'. This is achieved through the provision of quality geoscientific data and information and advice to the mining and petroleum industries, government and public to encourage and support resource exploration and facilitate informed land use planning and State development.

GSWA has a responsibility for investigating and reporting on all occurrences of minerals in WA including industrial minerals and basic raw materials. The DMP can make recommendations concerning the protection of strategic resources of specific minerals from sterilisation as a consequence of residential or industrial development or the construction of roads or other infrastructure. The responsibility for implementing such recommendations rests with local government, the Department of Planning and the WA Planning Commission.

The Shire is predominantly underlain by granites and gneisses older than 2500 million years. These rocks have potential for dimension stone and crushed rock. Overlying sand and laterite may provide other basic raw materials, and there is significant potential for sand. Some lakes in the Shire contain gypsum resources, which are currently being mined at Lake Cowcowing. Extraction of salt from a lake near Bulagen Spring has taken place since 1943.

13 EDUCATION FACILITIES

There is a District High School on the Wyalkatchem-Koorda Road in the northern part of the town. The school attracts a range of students from around the district and provides for kindergarten to year 12 and currently has 113 students. Some students attend boarding schools in the metropolitan area.

With the minimal change in population there is no need for school expansion plans in the foreseeable future.

Implications of Education Statistics on Local Planning Strategy

There has been a decline of students attending the Wyalkatchem District High School. The reasons have a direct relationship to the population and may include a combination of the maturing of the stable population, the rural economy, the migration of people towards the larger centres and general technology advances in the primary industry sector that reduce the need for manpower. The Department of Education and Training has indicated that the current school facilities are adequate enough to cater for increased student numbers without the need for significant additional land or facilities for the foreseeable future. There are no plans to establish any new schools, nor to close the existing school.

14 TOURIST ATTRACTIONS- AREAS OF INTEREST

TOURIST ACCOMMODATION

Wyalkatchem Caravan Park located on the Goomalling-Merredin Road provides for 8 caravan berths with individual en suites. A new camp kitchen is also available.

Wyalkatchem Hotel in Railway Tee, Wyalkatchem, provides serviced motel units and meals.

Wyalkatchem Barracks in Grace St, Wyalkatchem provides for basic accommodation for back packers or groups with kitchen facilities available.

PLACES ON INTEREST

CBH Museum on Railway Terrace. Housed in the original Wheatbin, the museum houses a wonderful collection of equipment which traces the history of farming and transportation from the early 1900s to the present. Much of the machinery is still in working condition as is 'Waterloo Boy' one of the first John Deere tractor models made in 1920. It is one of very few in Australia and takes pride of place in the museum

Old School House Museum is located at 41 Flint Street (cnr Gamble St). Set up as a house of earlier times with articles in room settings. Also contains the old switchboard from the telephone exchange and various old printing machines.

Walk-A-Wyal Walk Track is located at the eastern end of Piesse Street, this walk trail consists of three different tracks, marked by yellow, blue and red triangles. The track leads through attractive native bush, one branch heads for the golf club, the others past the wheat bins.

Water Wise Garden is located on the corner of Railway Terrace and Honour Avenue. Established in 2002 the Water Wise garden is located on a corner block next to a mural depicting the town in 1928. The garden contains hardy plants of the kind the pioneers would have planted. Local children have had input into the project with mosaic tiles.

Murals On a walk along the main street you will discover several murals of Wyalkatchem depicting various aspects of life in the town and rural area

'Steel Magnolias' Our local iron worker has constructed these flowers which are dotted around the town complete with lady birds and leprechauns

Endangered Species Garden is located opposite the National Bank is Wylie's endangered species garden. See an example of the Wyalkatchem Foxglove, which is native to the district but becoming increasingly rare. There are also many varieties of eremophila or emu bush.

Wyalkatchem Cemetery is located 3 kilometres west of town. Graves date from 1916.

LOCAL EVENTS

The Shire of Wyalkatchem in conjunction with the Community is developing a range of events that will showcase the best of what Wylie has to offer. This includes the following:

Heritage and Rose Festival The inaugural Heritage and Rose festival was held on the weekend of 13 and 14 October 2007. The event will take place in October each year.

Wylie Classic and Tour of the North East Wheatbelt The date of the inaugural event will be October 4th 2008. The Cycling Federation supports such events and it is anticipated that at least 600 riders would participate on a bike ride between Wyalkatchem and Koorda. This is a 90 km round trip and falls well within the type of distance that cyclists enjoy.

Model Train Expo Wylie is planning a model train expo to be held in the Town Hall sometime during 2008. The concept is for a number of model train layouts to be set up in the Hall for enthusiasts and others to enjoy.

Implications of Tourist Attractions on Local Planning Strategy

Tourism is an industry that will only grow in the future. The Council, where appropriate, will ensure that these sites are appropriately protected and managed in order to maximise their interest value and tourism appeal. Protecting these sites provides a means to attract visitors to the district. Exposure is the key to attracting visitors, residents, business people and investors.

15 COUNCIL FACILITIES AND OTHER AMENITIES

The Shire and residents have created a range of activities and clubs to ensure maximum participation, interaction and cohesion of the community. The facilities are all located in Wyalkatchem townsite.

These facilities include the following;

Library A well stocked library is open to community members during office hours.

Rubbish Collection A contract rubbish service which uses 240 litre mobile bins is provided to townsite residents every Wednesday

Road Maintenance and Construction The Shire's works crew is responsible for keeping the Shire's roads in good condition. The last year has seen the widening of many gravel roads and clearing of verges

Transport-licensing, Dog registration Motor Vehicle, drivers and gun licences may be paid at the Shire Office and all dogs should be registered

Swimming Pool Open November to March.

Sporting Facilities There are a range of sporting facilities available in the Shire, including tennis courts, bowling greens, basketball courts and an eighteen course golf course. Cricket, football and hockey are played on the oval at the Recreation Centre

Community Centre Available for hire and used regularly by Senior Citizens, Playgroup and a Seniors Exercise group. The **Town Hall** is regularly used by community groups.

Recreation Centre The kitchen and bar areas can be hired for functions.

Leisure Centre Home of our local YAC group

16 TRANSPORT FACILITIES

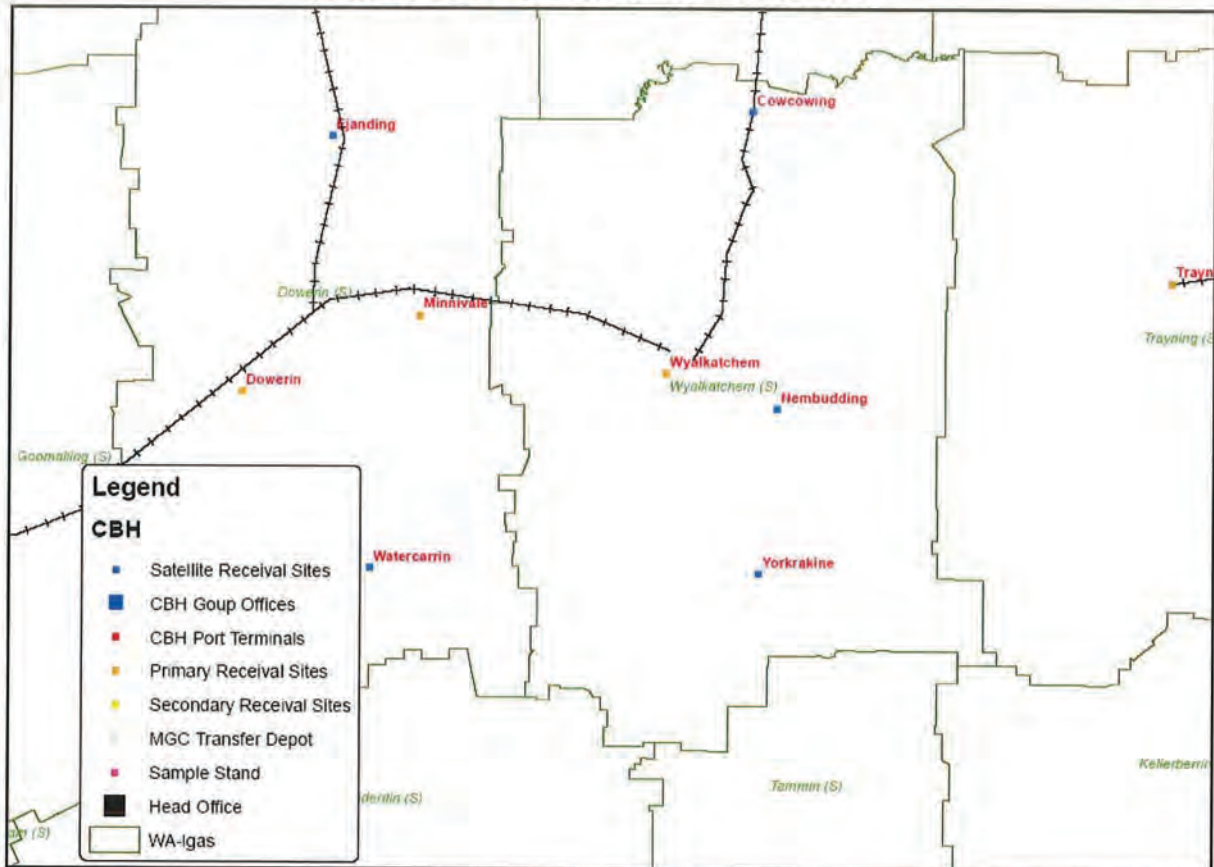
Bus

There is a bus service that passes through Wyalkatchem to East Perth Terminal that originates from Mukinbudin Railway Station and travels via Northam. The service runs twice weekly on Mondays and Fridays. Perth to Wyalkatchem takes just over three hours.

RAIL

Westrail also provides rail facilities for bulk grain freight to Northam. The line runs through Trayning, and then through to Merredin. **Figure 20** shows the approximate route in relation to the Cooperative Bulk Handling (CBH) receival stations.

FIGURE 20 – CBH RECEIVAL CENTRES



Source: CBH

AIRSTRIP

The Wyalkatchem airstrip is located on Lot 27096 about 2.5 kilometres south of the townsite. The facility has a 1500 metre sealed runway suitable for the RFDS.

The Wyalkatchem Airport is the cornerstone of the Shire’s strategy to further develop aviation training in the Wheatbelt. The Shire in conjunction with the original initiative proposed by the Wyalkatchem District High School (WDHS) and Sport Aviation Academy (SAA) has initiated a number of opportunities as part of the Wyalkatchem Aviation Program including:

- Formation of a partnership between WDHS and Sports Aviation Academy to deliver the Aviation Course of Study (Private Pilot’s License) to students;
- Development of a partnership between WDHS, the Shire and SAA in conjunction with Swan TAFE to deliver the Certificate IV in Aeronautics (Commercial Pilots Licence) and Diploma in Aeronautics to students;
- Pursuit by SAA in conjunction with the Chief Technical Officer of Recreational Aviation Australia (RAA) to develop Wyalkatchem as the Nation’s centre for sports aviation flight and maintenance engineering training;
- Allocation of land at the Airport so that the Australian Flight Instructor Training School can partner with SAA to deliver entry level training for its aviation program;
- Restoration of aircraft of historical significance including MMA DC3s by Mr Brendan Scott that will serve as a foundation for aircraft maintenance engineering training at CII and CIV Level.

Also underpinning the above opportunities is the fact that Swan TAFE is seriously considering using the Wyalkatchem Airport to complete part of the aviation training it provides. This is due to the air traffic congestion currently experienced at its Jandakot Airport training site and the fact Wyalkatchem has ideal flying conditions.

ROADS

The Goomalling-Merredin route is classified as State Road by Roads 2020 (Main Roads WA, 1997); all other roads are classified as Local Roads. These roads include the following routes;

The **Goomalling-Merredin route** includes the Goomalling-Wyalkatchem Road, Nungarin-Wyalkatchem Road and the Merredin-Nungarin Road. The function provides main access to Goomalling, Toodyay and Perth from east and north of Goomalling with access to the regional stock sale yards in Merredin. As this route is under the care, control and management of Main Roads WA, approval for new or upgraded access to this route needs to be sought from Main Roads WA. The route is anticipated to provide for increased heavy haulage traffic requiring a minimum Type 5 road (7 metre seal width).

The **Wya/katchem-Bul/finch Route** (includes Koorda-Wyalkatchem Road and part of Koorda-Southern Cross Road) is a major inter-regional route north of Wyalkatchem providing access to Great Eastern Highway and the north-west, for mining equipment and freight from the Eastern States. It is also a major link to the coast from the eastern wheatbelt areas. The road is used to cart agricultural produce, fertiliser, livestock and general freight as well as servicing local and tourist traffic. It is recommended by Main Roads WA that the road be increased to a Type 4 road. Type 4 is a sealed road with a 6 metre seal width.

The **Tammin-Wya/katchem Road** provides access for agricultural produce, gypsum and stock. The southern 30 kilometres provides access to the Standard Gauge Railway at Tammin for the Yorkrakine off-rail grain receival facility. Most crests and curves have been widened to over 6 metres, with some sections widened to 7 metres.

The **Cunderdin-Wyalkatchem Road** serves the Cunderdin and Wyalkatchem traffic and a significant level of through traffic and is a developing tourist route. The road provides access to the Standard Gauge Railway and Great Eastern Highway and is used to cart stock during drought to the southern and eastern areas of the Wheatbelt. The first 13.5 kilometres in Cunderdin Shire to the Cunderdin-Minnivale Road turn-off, forms part of the access road to the Watercarrin off-rail wheat bin. The road has been fully widened to a 6 metre seal.

Nembudding South Road connects the Goomalling-Merredin Road to the Highway. It services freight movements for grain and is planned for a 6 metre seal.

Wya/katchem North Road provides access from Koorda to Wyalkatchem to the Gypsum Mine. It also provides access to the Cowcowing lakes area for recreation. The majority of the road will be widened to 6 metres for the heavy haulage traffic.

Implications of Transport Facilities on Local Planning Strategy

Due to the town's location away from a major Highway it is essential that the roads leading to Wyalkatchem and the district are as inviting and accessible as possible. This implies that major access roads must be kept in good condition and signposted to invite traffic to the towns, or at least through them. The treatment of entry statements and verge planting (including wildflowers) may add to the attraction to the district. Exposure to traffic is an essential ingredient in increasing trade. Every effort must be encouraged to ensure that any new regional transport initiative or strategy does not bypass the towns. Input to these proposals must be on-going and active. In order to attract tourist traffic to the district the road conditions must be made more suitable (ie safer).

17 SERVICING ISSUES

WATER SUPPLY

The Shire's water supply is part of the Goldfields and Agricultural Water Supply Scheme that provides a water supply to the district from the Mundaring-Kalgoorlie pipeline. The scheme has limited capacity in some areas and any significant increase in demand will require investigation. The Corporation has particular requirements for the provision of scheme water to subdivisions of rural land for residential lots one hectare and larger.

WASTEWATER

Wyalkatchem townsite has a waste water sewerage scheme administered by the Water Corporation. The Corporation recommends a 500 metre buffer be maintained to sensitive uses. Other areas of the Shire onsite disposal is in accordance with the Health Department and Shire requirements.

RUBBISH COLLECTION

The Council's rubbish tip is located along Cemetery Road about three kilometres west of Wyalkatchem.

POWER SUPPLY

The power supply to Wyalkatchem and the district is part of the state grid system operated and maintained by Western Power.

GAS SUPPLIES

LPG Gas is supplied in cylinders by a local distributor.

FLOOD RISK

Flooding is not considered a risk in Wyalkatchem or any other townsite in the Shire. Engineering design of roads, culverts and reserves prevents any damage from heavy downpour events.

FIRE MANAGEMENT

Volunteer Fire and Rescue respond to HAZMAT situations, structural fire, and road crash rescue. Furthermore a Bush Fire Brigade is also present which does bush fires only

AMBULANCE

The StJohn's Ambulance service is operated as a volunteer operation in Wyalkatchem.

18 MANAGING NATURAL RESOURCES

In 2003 (updated in 2004) an Environmental Protection Plan for the Shire was commissioned. The report presents many strategies to assist in the improvement of environmental conditions in the Shire. These strategies include;

- The improvement of community involvement.
- Promoting Best Practices.
- Minimising the impact of land holders.
- Improving the economic viability of environmental protection.
- Developing and implementing the management of water.
- To slow the spread of salinity.
- Reducing the impact of drought.
- Making the Shire more *Water Wise*.
- Protecting vegetation and fauna.
- Reduce soil degradation and improve soil quality.

The Shire has expressed its support to the principles and will endeavour to implement the actions as and when time and budgets permit.

The Shire of Wyalkatchem is part of the Rural Towns Program. The Program was established in 1997 as part of the State Salinity Strategy to assist local communities to tackle salinity generally but specially in townsite areas where the problem can be more acute. Townsite salinity occurs because towns are traditionally built in low-lying areas. Natural development of the land within the townsite areas has resulted in tree clearing, causing watertables to rise. As the watertable rises it brings corrosive salts closer to the surface where they can damage roads, bridges, recreation areas, public buildings, even people's homes.

The Rural Towns Program aims to provide solutions to the environmental and economic problems that arise as a result of townsite salinity.

The Rural Towns Program is working with several local governments especially in the Wheatbelt agricultural region, to measure the characteristics of groundwater systems and produce computer-generated models to predict the effects of townsite salinity in the future for each specific area.

These models can also show the likely effectiveness of various salinity management strategies suitable for each area, helping the community to plan and implement programs to protect their future.

The Department of Agriculture recommends certain approaches to manage the problem. The details of these measures can be obtained through the Department and/or its web site. Basically the groundwater study recommends; checking for water leaks in pipes, dams, drains and culverts; monitoring water use; replacing septic systems with deep sewerage; preventing ponding of water; and growing perennials on bare ground.

SALINITY MONITORING

Table 1 below provides a summary of the salinity status for the shires in the surrounding area. Wyalkatchem data is shown in red.

TABLE 1- SALINITY STATISTICS SUMMARISED BY SHIRE

Shire	Shire area		Salt affected					Salinity risk		
			Area proc'd	Past		Present		Change	Area proc'd	At risk
	ha	%	ha	%>	ha	0/0+	%	%	ha	0/0*
Cunderdin	186,237	100%	12,628	(6.8%)	12,721	(6.8%)	0.0%	100%	3,444	(1.8%)
Dalwallinu	722,135	100%	83,384	(11.5%)	84,422	(11.7%)	0.1%	100%	136,695	(18.9%)
Dowerin	186,303	100%	10,413	(5.6%)	10,852	(5.8%)	0.2%	100%	7,352	(3.9%)
Kellerberrin	191,554	100%	13,490	(7.0%)	12,824	(6.7%)	-0.3%	100%	11,552	(6.0%)
Koorda	283,197	100%	41,255	(14.6%)	42,619	(15.0%)	0.5%	100%	26,101	(9.2%)
Merredin	329,393	100%	8,441	(2.6%)	9,743	(3.0%)	0.4%	100%	35,314	(10.7%)
Mount Marshall	1,016,138	41%	21,484	(5.2%)	25,703	(6.2%)	1.0%	98%	518,396	(52.1%)
Mukinbudin	342,862	9%	1,148	(3.7%)	1,532	(4.9%)	1.2%	100%	105,307	(30.7%)
Nungarin	116,305	96%	8,942	(8.0%)	12,861	(11.5%)	3.5%	100%	11,935	(10.3%)
Tammin	110,246	100%	8,139	(7.4%)	8,476	(7.7%)	0.3%	100%	3,860	(3.5%)
Trayning	165,196	100%	8,420	(5.1%)	8,835	(5.3%)	0.3%	100%	12,990	(7.9%)
Westonia	334,636	43%	1,484	(1.0%)	2,282	(1.6%)	0.6%	100%	116,409	(34.8%)
Wongan-Ballidu	336,518	100%	34,232	(10.2%)	36,587	(10.9%)	0.7%	100%	22,100	(6.6%)
Wyalkatchem	159,545	100%	17,873	(11.2%)	17,491	(11.0%)	-0.2%	100%	5,006	(3.1%)
Yaloo	2,787,887	1%	4,693	(12.4%)	4,826	(12.8%)	0.4%	19%	155,014	(28.9%)
Yilgam	3,042,681	12%	5,254	(1.4%)	7,132	(1.9%)	0.5%	80%	1,685,202	(69.3%)

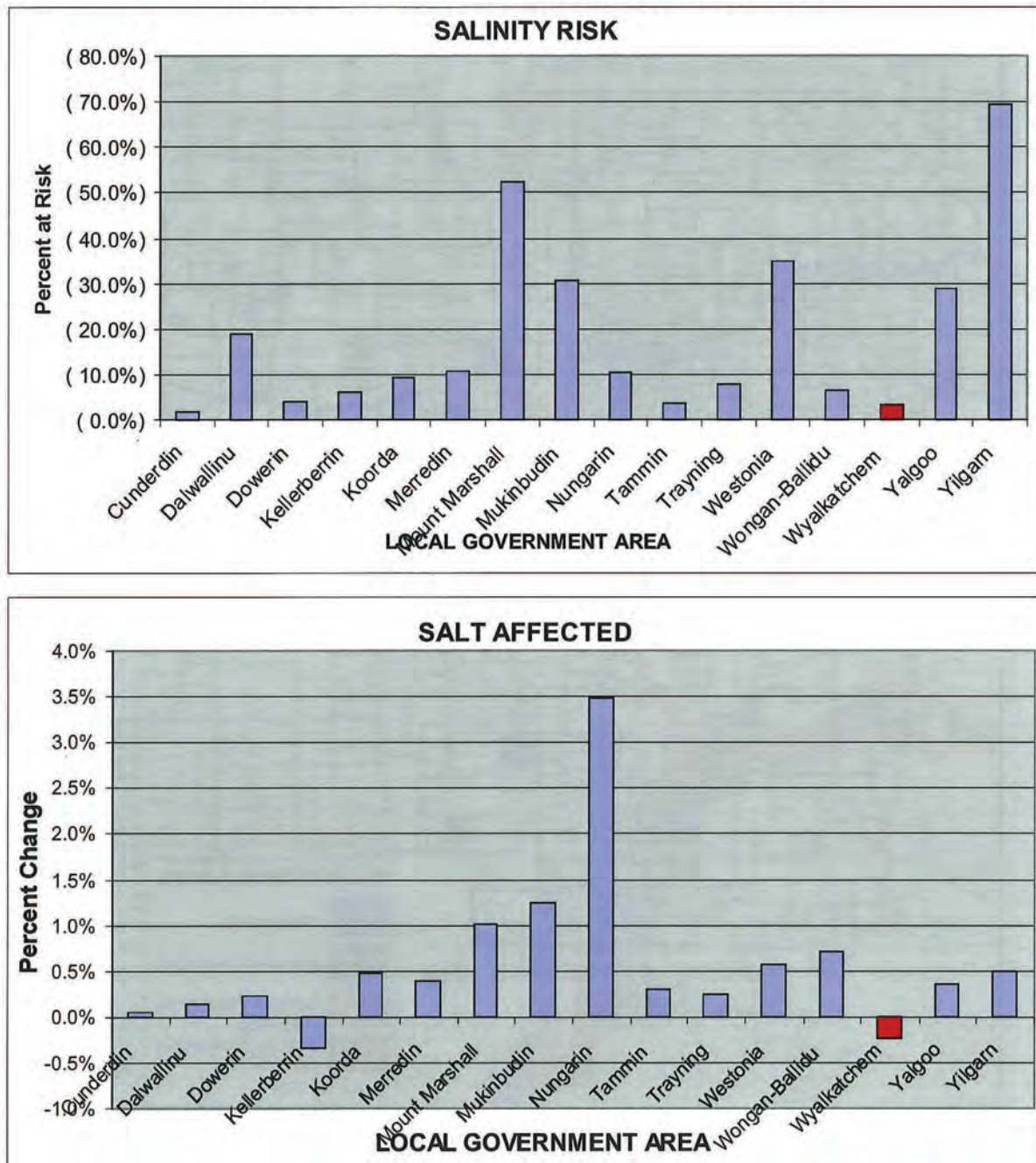
Source: DLI, Satellite Remote Sensing Services 2002.

Wyalkatchem Shire has had a 0.2% decrease in the saline land component that comprises only 3.1% of the Shire. This is considered outstanding when compared to some other Shires, for example Yilgarn, where there has been an increase of 0.5% increase but over nearly 70% of the Shire.

The salinity estimates have been aggregated to produce Shire summaries. The table contains area estimates expressed in hectares (ha) as well as the percentage of each shire estimated to be saline, and the rate of increase of these estimates.

From the Table we observe that the estimates of the extent of salinity are increasing for all surrounding Shires and all at different rates (Figure 21). Wyalkatchem is shown in red.

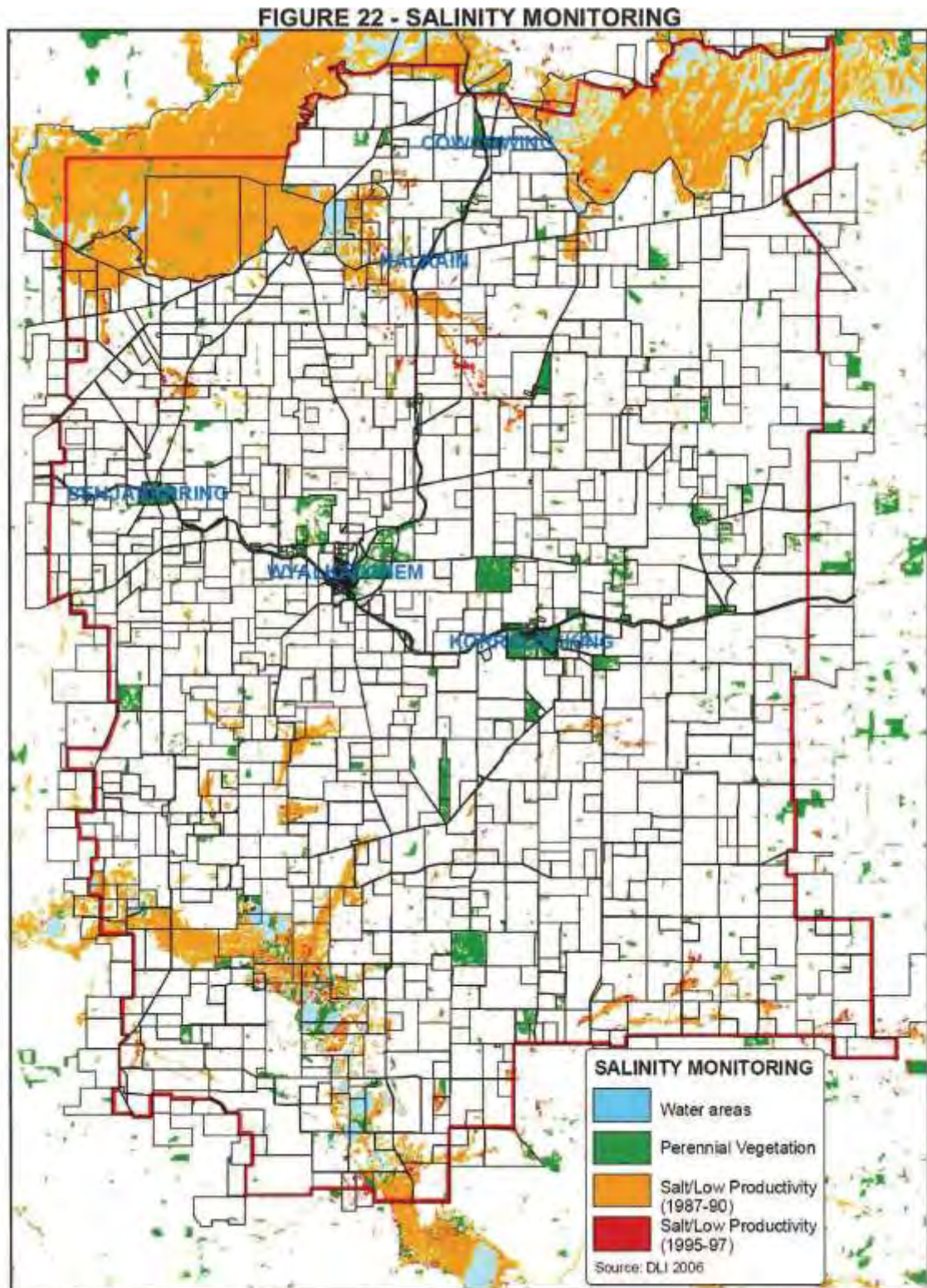
FIGURE 21 – SALINITY GRAPHS FROM TABLE 2



Source: DLI, Satellite Remote Sensing Services 2002.

Implications of Salinity Monitoring on Local Planning Strategy

The owners of the land areas shown orange, and especially red in **Figure 22**, should be advised of these findings with information about remedial measures that can be put in place to mitigate against further increases in salinity levels and areas.



Source: DLI, Satellite Remote Sensing Services 2002.

This mapping will be invaluable for determining whether land is suited for conservation areas, protection, future development options and treatment.

A strategy should be put in place to promote the acquisition of such areas in order to protect areas of viable vegetation that cannot be cleared. The purchase cost of these holdings should be minimal due to the limited use and restrictive clearing practices established in wooded areas of the State.

The mapping provides a useful tool for LandCare projects to target most susceptible or delicate areas in most need of treatment. **Figure 22** provides salinity data from remote satellite sensing conducted in two surveys. The first in was between 1987-90 (shown orange) and the second 1995-1997 (shown red).

The Shire is all within the Swan Avon – Mortlock Catchment area. The Shire's NRM office provides an advisory service to the Shire on management and monitoring issues associated with development proposals and services within the Shire's control.

The landform of the Shire is more dramatically demonstrated by **Figure 23** where a Digital Elevation Model (DEM) colours land by elevation. The valley subject to most of the Shire's salinity is clearly visible.

Regional Partnerships -The Avon Natural Diversity Alliance (ANDA)

Greening Australia (WA) has become successful tenderers in a number of Avon regional projects through the establishment of the Avon Natural Diversity Alliance (ANDA). ANDA consists of 2 non-government organisations Greening Australia (WA) and the World Wildlife Fund for Nature (WWF), and the Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC). The formation of ANDA has enabled this range of organisations to secure over \$6 million in regional projects in 05/06.

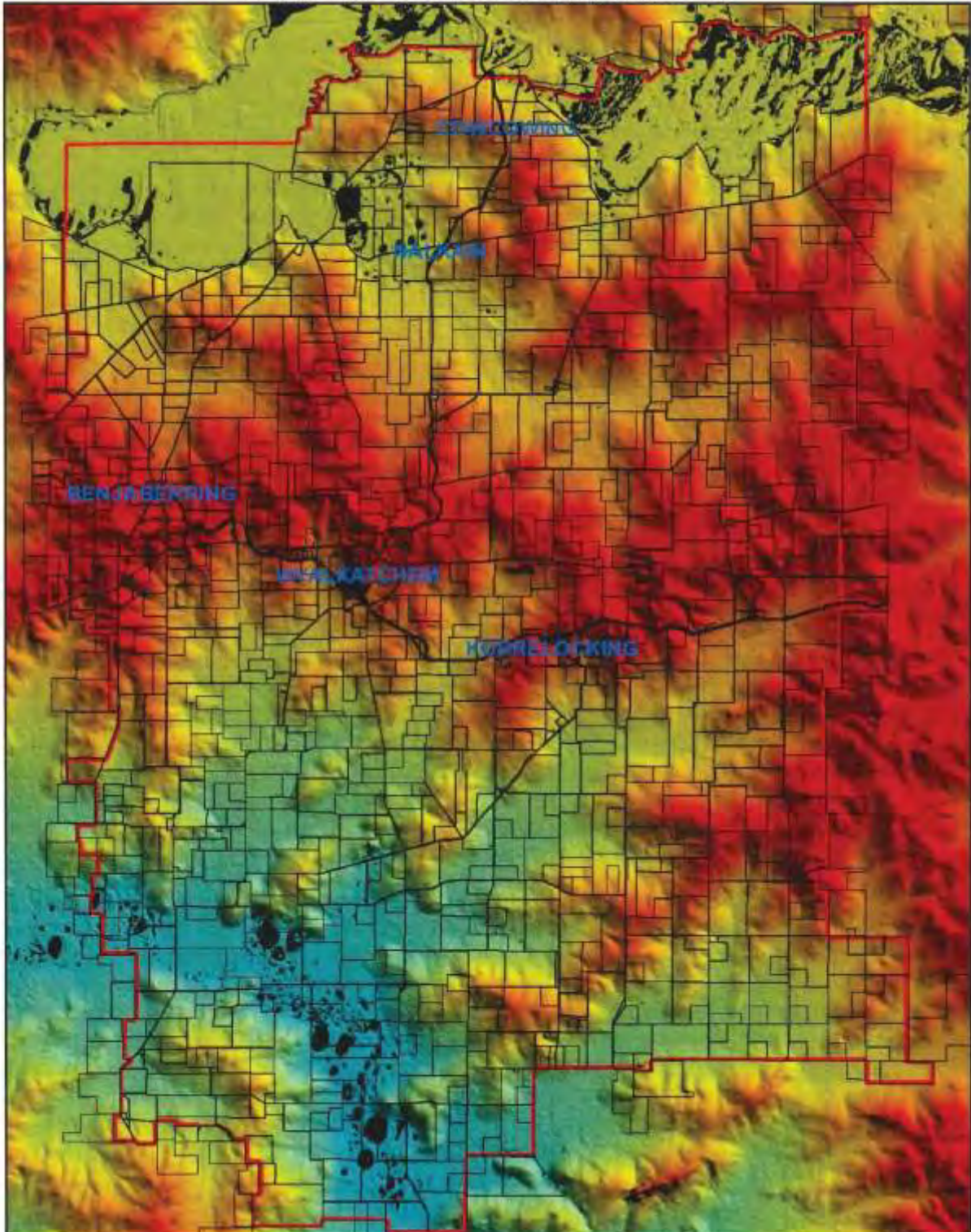
Under the ANDA banner, Greening Australia (WA) has a partnership arrangement with DEC, the states peak environment conservation department to deliver the Ecoscapes project. Ecoscapes is a \$2.4 million dollar per annum project focused on conserving the extent and integrity of the natural diversity (species NECs and ecosystems) within 12 landscapes that best represent the natural diversity of the Avon River Basin (ARB). This is a 3 year project that when complete will maintain and enhance nature conservation assets over some 720,000ha. Ecoscapes will link with other Avon Catchment Council (ACC) investment projects to achieve salinity mitigation and weed control targets.

Ecoscapes will combine the social learning aspects of Greening Australia (WA)'s Living Landscapes (LL) program with the technical and Recovery catchment and representative landscape programs of DEC. Initial challenges are the development of criteria for ecoscape selection using scientific natural diversity criteria and social criteria. Ecoscapes will then apply a threat assessment framework and develop conservation options to protect assets and address identified threatening processes. The development of conservation plans for each ecoscape is where the strengths of Greening Australia (WA) is applied to engage the landholders and community in awareness raising as to the importance of remnant areas and applying the 'focal species' approach of LL. This allows landholders to understand the setting of required revegetation targets and where they are best placed in the landscape.

Greening Australia (WA) has also formed a strategic partnership with the North Eastern Wheatbelt Regional Organisation of Councils (NEWROC). NEWROC is a Local Government based organisation formed to progress those issues of importance to Local Government. A key area of NEWROC's focus is NRM. Greening Australia (WA) and NEWROC developed a joint tender to deliver the 'Our Patch' project. The aim the Our Patch project is to support local governments and communities across the whole Avon River Basin (ARB) in their conservation aspirations for their local patch. It provides for local communities to make

significant conservation improvements in areas not covered by the other Avon Catchment Council (ACC) projects.

FIGURE 23 – DIGITAL ELEVATION MODEL



Source: DLI, Satellite Remote Sensing Services 2002.

Selection of conservation sites will be based on local and regional priorities. The communities of each local government area will select five highest value bushland remnants and priority tributaries for enhancement through rehabilitation, establishment of wildlife corridors, buffers, weed management, vermin control, and improved fire management.

Particularly impressive and progressive is the recently established North East Wheatbelt Regional Organisation of Councils (NEWROC) in Western Australia. NEWROC includes the Shires of Wyalkatchem, Trayning, Mt Marshall, Mukinbudin, Nungarin, Koorda and Westonia.

The third smallest of the seven Shires has a total operating budget of \$1 million and the biggest has a budget of \$3.5 million. The Shires unanimously agreed that with the health of the environment the very fabric of rural endeavour, NRM was as important as road maintenance and construction to rural Councils.

With salinity escalating as a regional crisis, a meeting between NEWROC representatives and staff from the Western Australian Local Government Association, Agriculture Western Australia and the Avon Working Group identified maintaining and restoring vegetation a top priority in the development of an NRM Strategy. With assistance from the State Government's Local Government Incentive Fund, an NRM Officer has been appointed. The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) is also helping implement the strategy through their Woodlands Watch initiative, with a Vegetation Officer assisting landowners to manage native vegetation remnants.

The NEWROC group is seeking to investigate what possibilities there are to use saline water as a resource for power generation and desalination opportunities to support their communities.

NEWROC Natural Resource Management Strategy 2005-2010

A Strategy has been prepared for the NEWROC group of Councils to address the natural resource management issues. The Strategy has a vision for NEWROC to be progressive and vibrant region that has protected and enhanced natural resources for conservation, lifestyle and economic benefit.

The Strategy puts forward several objectives, strategies and actions to achieve the goals outlined in the Strategy. The actions include implementing; vegetation (and weed) surveys; fox, rabbit and cat surveys; revegetation projects; promoting 'corridors' through the NEWROC area; promote widening of corridors; development of Shire management templates; soil workshops; water management plans (including Schools *Water Wise* programs); rate relief program for protecting vegetation; promote bushfoods; promote tourism; promote alternative energy; and promote perennial vegetation including mallee oil and saline land species.

19 ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

Flora and native remnant vegetation

The identification and protection of these natural assets will need to be carried out at the stage where a significant change in use is proposed. It is the Council's view that the onus for detailed research and protection of identified flora and native remnant vegetation needs to be placed back to the proponent as rural Shire budgets do not permit the appropriate level of investigation. The Shire (and EPA) will ensure that this research is conducted at the Scheme Amendment stage.

Wetlands, watercourses and other surface waters

The same principles apply to these areas as for flora and native remnant vegetation. Any change in use will trigger an appropriate level of assessment.

Water quality protection

There are no water protection areas within the Shire.

Buffer requirements

Buffer requirements are required around chlorine stores (100m), rubbish tips and quarries (500m). The Shire has no abattoirs or other noxious industries that currently require buffers. Any new strategic industrial areas (to perhaps cater for these higher impact activities) will need to be assessed in more detail prior to amending the Scheme.

Potential pollutant outputs

There are no potential pollutant outputs that have impacts other than mining activities. These mining activities are administered by the Mines Act and are not determined by the planning statutes, however a Local Planning Policy has been prepared to convey the Council's views about the location of mining camps and the like.

Fauna protection

The same principles apply to these areas as for flora and native remnant vegetation. Any change in use will trigger an appropriate level of assessment.

Landscapes and landforms

The same principles apply to these areas as for flora and native remnant vegetation. Any change in use will trigger an appropriate level of assessment.

Contaminated soil or groundwater

The Council is not aware of any contaminated sites within the Shire. In the event that any are identified they will be appropriately dealt with to ensure the continued safety of the residents, workers and ratepayers.

20 ECONOMIC BASE

Mining Activity

There is an on-going interest in mining activities in the Shire mainly centred around gypsum and salt resources. The Shire is yet to be the subject of a major mining activity that would put pressure on the land supply, facilities and amenities in the district. Due to the population being well below its previous peak there is capacity in the infrastructure to absorb a significant increase in population.

Agricultural Produce

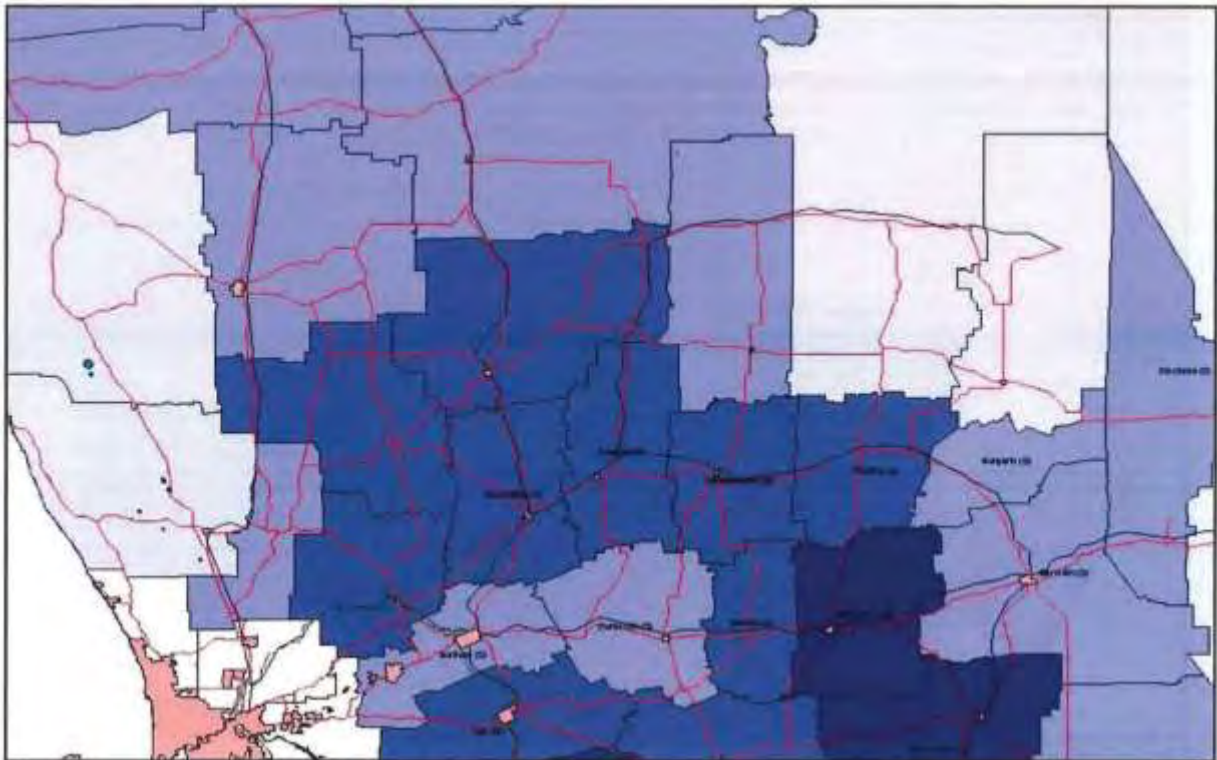
Wyalkatchem is clearly a Wheatbelt Shire. Agriculture is the main economic activity in the Shire. The following figures provide a general perspective of the Shires importance in the NEWROC region. The darker colours indicate a higher value per hectare rate.

Recent varying rainfalls over the region may have an impact on the values of each crop; however the figures are designed to be indicative only. If climatic conditions keep changing it is likely that agricultural pursuits will also change. These changes may include a diversification of landuses to avoid reliance on a single crop type.

It is possible that plantations will become viable in some areas when carbon trading becomes a reality.

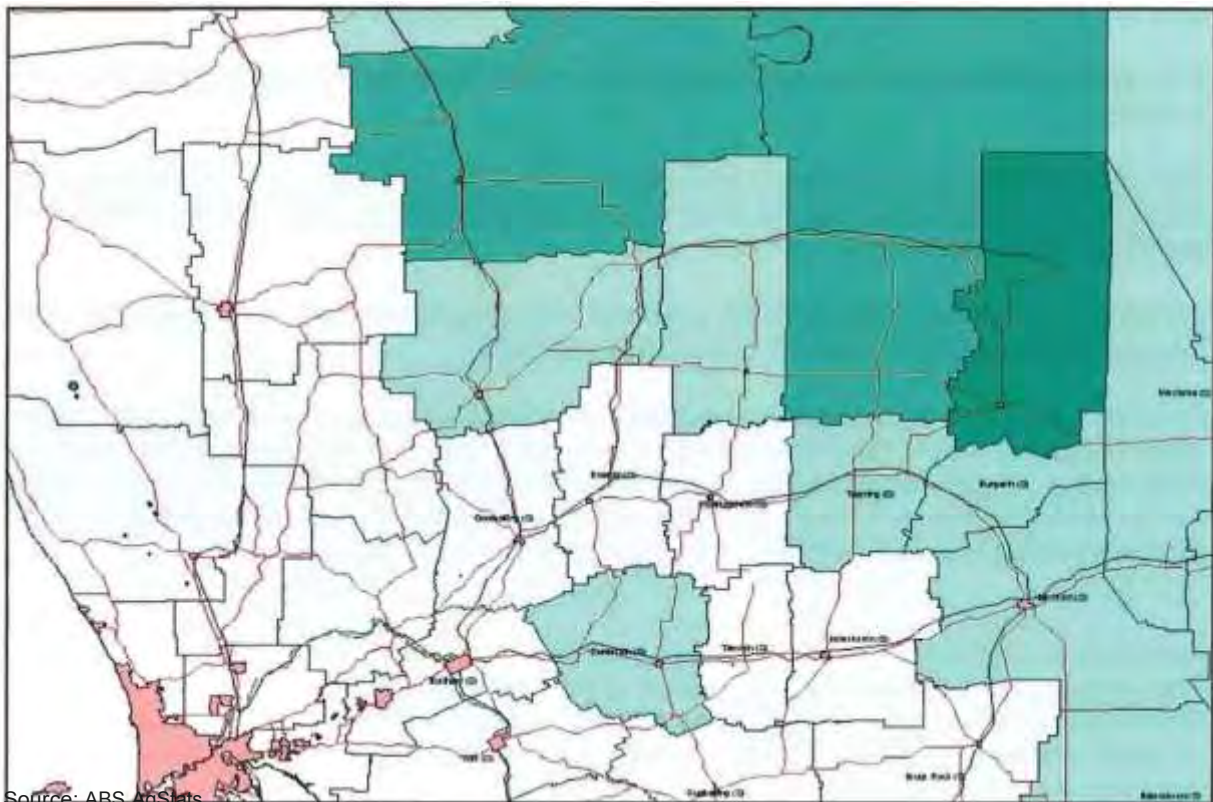
Agricultural concerns are currently centred around salinity. Although groundwater levels are dropping due to the lack of rainfall over the past few years there is still an issue with salinity problems around townsites.

FIGURE 24- BARLEY PRODUCTION



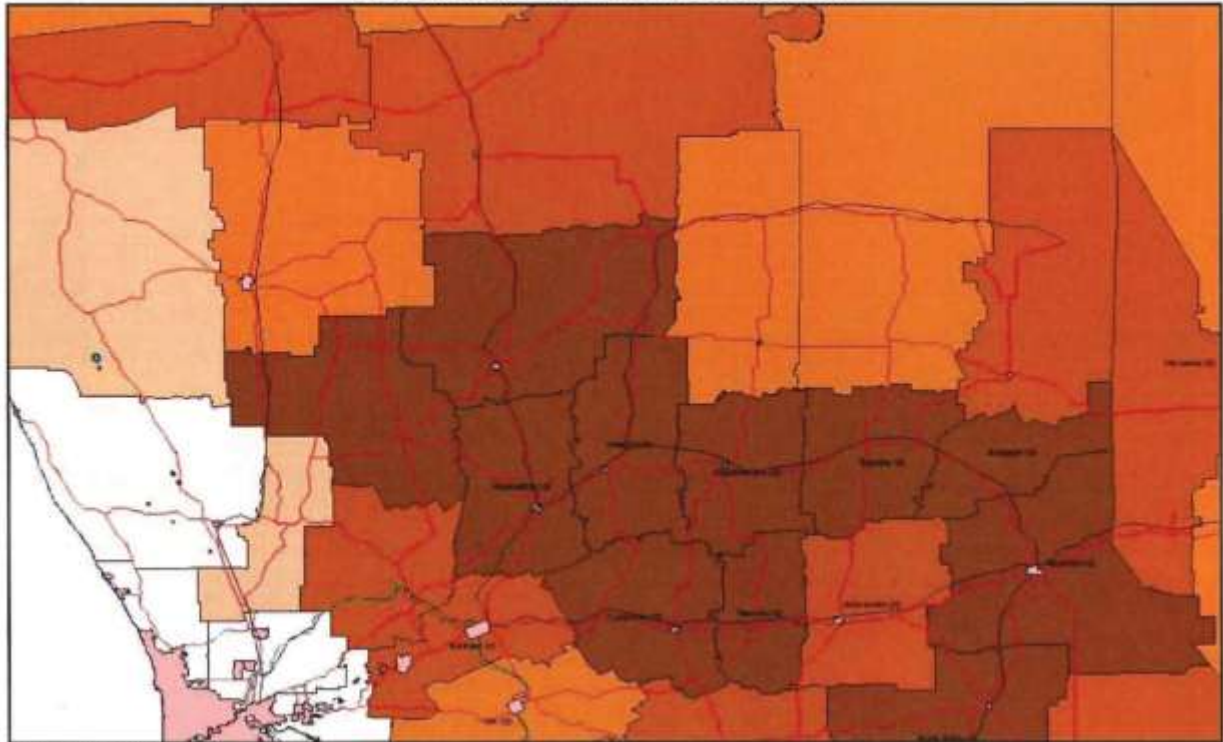
Source: ABS AgStats

FIGURE 25- TRITICALE PRODUCTION



Source: ABS AgStats

FIGURE 26 – WHEAT PRODUCTION



Source: ABS AgStats

Recent varying rainfalls over the region may have an impact on the values of each crop; however the figures are designed to be indicative only. If climatic conditions keep changing it is likely that agricultural pursuits will also change. These changes may include a diversification of landuses to avoid reliance on a single crop type.

It is possible that plantations will become viable in some areas when carbon trading becomes a reality.

Agricultural concerns are currently centred around salinity. Although groundwater levels are dropping due to the lack of rainfall over the past few years there is still an issue with salinity problems around townsites.

Adherence to sound management practices including stormwater drainage and flood mitigation will assist in the control of the salinity problem.

Deep trenching has been used in the district with varying results. The practice has created other peripheral issues like flood damage where the trench outfall crosses public roads and accessways. These issues are currently being considered by the NEWROC group however are not considered to be landuse planning issues – and therefore difficult to justify as issues to be addressed in a local planning strategy or local planning scheme.

Implications of the Economic Base on Local Planning Strategy

The analysis above shows the dominance of the agricultural production in the region. The Shire's prosperity is obviously reliant on the continued protection of this economic base and as such planning decisions should be cognisant of the importance of protecting Prime Agricultural Land.

21 IDENTIFICATION OF PLANNING ISSUES

During the preparation of this Local Planning Strategy various State Government and other relevant authorities were consulted. The following comments were received from the respective agencies.

DPI	No response.
DEC	No response.
MRWA	Main Roads advises that there are no proposals for the creation of or significant changes to alignments of State roads within the Shire of Wyalkatchem, but requests adherence to guidelines for developments abutting main roads.
WATERCORP	Advice regarding water supplies.
DMP	All mineral exploration and mining in WA is subject to the provisions of the Mining Act 1978, which is administered by Department of Minerals and Petroleum (DMP). Minerals, as defined by the Mining Act 1978, include all naturally occurring substances obtained from any land by mining, however construction materials such as limestone, rock, gravel, and sand are not considered to be minerals where they occur on private land.
AGRICULTURE	Meetings in Northam and Perth regarding issues.
FESA	No response.
DLI	No response.
DIAIALT	The Department has suggested initial investigations should include a desktop study to determine whether there are any known sites in the district. Four sites are known to exist in the Shire. The ALT advises that it has no properties or interests in the Shire.
HOUSING & WORKS	The Department has a number of land holdings in the Shire and requests that residential densities are increased.
EDUCATION	No response.
DPI - LAND ASSET	No response.
LANDCORP	No response.
WAGR	No response.

Consultation with the community will be determined in accordance with the Council's requirements.