





State Planning Policy 4.2 Activity Centres Implementation Guidelines

For the implementation of State Planning Policy 4.2 Activity Centres

July 2023

The Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage acknowledges the traditional owners and custodians of this land. We pay our respect to Elders past and present, their descendants who are with us today, and those who will follow in their footsteps.

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Published by the Western Australian Planning Commission Gordon Stephenson House 140 William Street Perth WA 6000

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Publication date: 19/06/2023 Operational date: 03/07/2023

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1 BACKGROUND

These Guidelines provide explanatory detail to assist in the implementation of State Planning Policy 4.2 Activity Centres (SPP 4.2) and should be read in conjunction with SPP 4.2, *Liveable Neighbourhoods* [to be replaced by State Planning Policy 7.1 Neighbourhood Design (SPP 7.1)], State Planning Policy 7.2 *Precinct Design* (SPP 7.2) and *Precinct Design Guidelines* and other relevant Western Australian Planning Commission (WAPC) policies and guidelines.

2 PURPOSE OF THE GUIDELINES

- a) These Guidelines explain the intent and interpretation of State Planning Policy 4.2 Activity Centres (SPP 4.2) and can be used in the preparation, review and assessment of planning instruments and certain subdivision and development applications (refer section 4 of SPP 4.2 for applicable instruments and applications).
- b) The Guidelines provide information on:
 - how to apply SPP 4.2 through the State and local planning frameworks
 - how to apply SPP 4.2 outside of Perth, Peel and Greater Bunbury
 - how to identify new activity centres, or assess proposals that seek to change the hierarchy classification of an activity centre
 - supplementary guidance on preparation of precinct structure plans and local development plans specific to activity centres
 - how to allocate land and housing density within activity centres
 - how to assess development applications for major developments within activity centres and out-of-centre developments
 - how to stage land use diversity and housing density within activity centres
 - undertaking a Needs Assessment
 - applying the **Net Benefit Test**.

3 HOW TO PLAN FOR ACTIVITY CENTRES

This section (and sub-sections) is to be followed when planning for activity centres within Perth, Peel and the **Bunbury Metropolitan Area**.

Outside of Perth, Peel and the Bunbury Metropolitan Area, consideration should be given to providing an activity centre hierarchy for larger regional urban areas – refer to section 3.4.

3.1 REGIONAL AND SUB-REGIONAL PLANNING

- Regional and sub-regional planning strategies/ frameworks should identify district centres and above (including specialised centres).
- b) Identifying new strategic, secondary, district or specialised centres, or reclassifying existing centres to these types, should only occur through preparation or review of regional and sub-regional planning strategies/frameworks, informed by a **Needs Assessment** to ensure that the existing and planned **activity centre hierarchy** is not undermined, consistent with the objectives, outcomes and measures of SPP 4.2 and other provisions of these Implementation Guidelines.
- c) When identifying areas for investigation for future urban development, consideration should be given to how the new area compliments and supports the activity centre network.



3.2 DISTRICT-LEVEL PLANNING

- a) Where prepared, a district-level structure plan may identify new district centres, neighbourhood centres and local centres, informed by a **Needs Assessment** to ensure that the existing and planned **activity centre hierarchy** is not undermined, consistent with the objectives and outcomes and measures of SPP 4.2 and other provisions of these Implementation Guidelines.
- b) The district-level planning strategy/framework or district-level structure plan, in relation to **activity centres**, should outline high-level guidance for land uses, employment, population catchments, dwelling targets, urban form and movement networks to provide sufficient guidance to inform subsequent more detailed centre planning.

3.3 LOCAL-LEVEL PLANNING

3.3.1 Local planning strategies

- Local planning strategies must identify the neighbourhood centres and local centres within a local government area and must reflect any centres identified in higher-order strategies/frameworks.
- b) Identifying new local and neighbourhood centres should only occur through the preparation or review of local planning strategies or local-level structure plans informed by a **Needs Assessment** to ensure that the existing and planned **activity centre hierarchy** (within and adjoining the strategy area) is not undermined, consistent with the objectives and outcomes and measures of SPP 4.2 and other provisions of these Implementation Guidelines.

- c) Local planning strategies may identify a new district centre or the reclassification of a neighbourhood centre to a district centre, by designating the relevant centre as a planning area and including an action for the classification to be investigated through future reviews of the relevant higher-order strategies/frameworks.
- d) The justification for new centres or reclassifications should be provided in Part 2 of the local planning strategy under the Economy and Employment theme or provided in Part 2 of a standard structure plan.
- e) In accordance with the *Local Planning Strategy Guidelines*, local planning strategies must:
 - show activity centres (existing and new) on the local planning strategy map and detail their characteristics in Part 2 of the strategy under the Community, Urban Growth and Settlement theme and the Economy and Employment theme
 - informed by a Needs Assessment, detail
 the estimated range of activity centre uses
 needed and the indicative distribution across
 the activity centres in the local government
 area, ensuring consistency with the activity
 centre hierarchy
 - designate any centres requiring expansion or new centres as planning areas and provide relevant actions to guide the expansion
 - identify activity centres that are achieving or not achieving the relevant average dwelling density and designate those centres not achieving the average dwelling density as planning areas and provide relevant actions to address this

- designate planning areas for any activity centres which need centre planning and provide as an action the form (either precinct structure plan or local development plan) in accordance with section 7.3 of SPP 4.2
- provide a precinct vision for any activity
 centre planning areas in accordance with
 SPP 7.2 Precinct Design (section 2.6 of the SPP
 7.2 Precinct Design Guidelines) and outline
 high-level guidance for land uses, employment,
 dwellings, urban form and movement
- provide guidance on any prioritisation of centre planning
- identify those activity centres which are to be exempt from requiring precinct planning in accordance with section 3.3.2.1 of these Guidelines and detail the justification for this in Part 2 of the strategy.
- f) When undertaking the above, the local government should ensure there is a sufficient supply of land for the range of **activity centre** functions including residential, retail, commercial and mixed use development that has been identified in the local planning strategy as well as the higher-order strategies, frameworks and structure plans that considers:
 - existing and anticipated demand, viability and appropriateness of activity centre uses
 - the physical constraints of the land
 - surrounding land uses
 - the availability of, and proximity to, essential infrastructure required to service and support the proposed development.



3.3.2 Structure planning and local planning schemes

- a) The recommended approach to implement the local planning strategy (and higher-order frameworks, strategies and structure plans) is through preparation of precinct structure plans and/or local development plans for **activity centres** as required by section 7.3 of SPP 4.2. Where this process will result in changes to zoning and density coding, it is recommended that a scheme amendment is progressed concurrently to ensure that advertising processes run simultaneously.
- To provide for land use diversity within centres and between different centres in a local government, local planning schemes may use zoning and land use permissibility (such as additional use controls) to:
 - provide distinction between different levels of the activity centre hierarchy
 - provide distinction between different activity centres at the same level of the hierarchy
 - provide distinction between the activity centre core and frame.

3.3.2.1 When a precinct structure plan is not required

- a) Whilst it is expected that all strategic, secondary, specialised and district centres will require a precinct structure plan, in limited circumstances, the WAPC may agree that a precinct structure plan is not required for an **activity centre** where the WAPC is satisfied that:
 - the relevant local planning scheme already provides sufficient land that is appropriately zoned with appropriate density codings that

- allows for the activity centre to achieve land use diversity and meet the average dwelling density in Appendix 1 of SPP4.2;
- there are sufficient built form controls for building height, building setbacks and site coverage in the local planning scheme that align with the objectives, outcomes and measures of SPP 4.2, SPP 7.0 Design of the Built Environment and SPP 7.2 Precinct Design and Precinct Design Guidelines (particularly Design Element 6: Built Form), in order to guide development in the activity centre; and
- the local planning scheme or local planning strategy shows the location and boundaries of the relevant activity centre.
- b) Any exemption should be outlined in a WAPCapproved local planning strategy (or as otherwise agreed by the WAPC) and reviewed as part of scheme review processes.

3.3.3 Proponent-led precinct planning

- a) Whilst it is primarily the responsibility of local government to undertake **activity centre** planning, proponents may also take an active role in the planning of the **activity centre(s)** they have an interest in. Ideally, proponents and the local government will partner to plan the **activity centre** and undertake early and regular engagement.
- Proponents must demonstrate to the decisionmaker(s) that their proposal satisfies the objectives, outcomes and policy measures of SPP 4.2 and SPP 7.2 *Precinct Design* and SPP 7.2 *Precinct Design Guidelines* and other relevant parts of the state and local planning framework.

Proponent-led planning for only a part of an activity centre will not be supported, as this will compromise the planning of the activity centre as a whole.

3.3.4 Defining activity centre boundaries

- a) Local planning strategies should identify the indicative boundaries of the activity centre core (and frame if appropriate) and the centre point(s) to measure the walkable catchment(s) from to inform subsequent detailed centre planning. Regional, sub-regional and district-level frameworks, strategies and structure plans may also identify indicative boundaries. The boundary of the centre should coincide with the planning area boundary if the centre is so designated in the local planning strategy.
- b) Precinct structure plans, local-level standard structure plans or local development plans must identify the centre point(s) and the exact boundary of the activity centre(s) to which it applies including designating the centre core(s) and where applicable a **centre frame**. The boundary may extend outside the core (and frame) based on whether there is a need to review density and include built form controls outside the core (and frame) areas, for example urban corridors leading towards the activity centre. The SPP 7.2 Precinct Design Guidelines provides a range of factors to consider when determining the boundary (refer section 2.5 and Appendix 2 of SPP 7.2 Precinct Design Guidelines).
- Activity centre boundaries contained in a previously endorsed activity centre plan are valid until the plan expires (10 years).



d) Local planning strategies and higher-order strategies/frameworks should be updated with the exact boundary upon their next review after approval of a precinct structure plan or local development plan.

3.3.5 Allocating activity centre land and zoning

- a) Care should be taken when preparing planning instruments to ensure that the amount of land zoned for activity centre uses is appropriate, having regard to the centre's position in the hierarchy.
- b) The indicative land area guidance in Table A is to be used when planning new **activity centres**, or when preparing a precinct structure plan or scheme amendment to expand an existing **activity centre**. The land area is not intended to be overly prescriptive and is based on indicative block sizes provided in SPP 7.2 Precinct Design Guidelines (refer Design Element 2: Urban Structure) of 60m by 120m (small block) to 120m by 240m (large block). A variety of block sizes can be used.
- c) The locational criteria in Table A are to be used when planning new activity centres, or for consideration as part of a reclassification of an **activity centre**. *Liveable Neighbourhoods* (Element 1: Community Design, Element 7: Activity Centres) (to be replaced by SPP7.1 Neighbourhood Design) provides guidance on where to locate activity centres.
- d) Different zones can be used in local planning schemes to control the location of **activity centre uses** at different levels of the **hierarchy** and to

- provide for distinction between the **activity centre core** and **frame**, as guided by Appendix 1 of SPP 4.2.
- e) The Residential Zone should be used for any parts of the **activity centre frame** and **walkable catchment** that will not have non-residential uses.
- f) In geographically-large activity centres with multiple cores and walkable catchments, land uses should be distributed throughout the activity centre, particularly key goods and services, to ensure access to the broadest population catchment



Table A – Indicative land area, locational criteria and zoning for new/reclassification of activity centres and expansion of existing activity centres

Centre	Indicative land area for activity centre uses (Excludes residential only areas)	Locational criteria	Indicative zones for land with activity centre uses
Capital City	n/a	n/a	RS: Central City Area
Strategic	Aligned with region scheme Central City Area Zone.	New centres must be co-located with a train station.	RS: Central City Area LPS: Centre Zone for the core(s); Mixed Use Zone and/or Service Commercial Zone for the frame as necessary It is acceptable to use Local Centre Zone or Neighbourhood Centre Zone for some of the core(s) if wanting to provide distinction between core(s) within the centre.
Specialised	n/a	Should be co-located with a train station.	n/a
Secondary	Four to eight large blocks or equivalent – 120,000-240,000m ² 16 large blocks if there is a train station – 480,000m ² . Additional land may be required if accommodating for bulky goods showrooms.	New centres must be co-located with a train station. Reclassification to secondary should only occur where the centre has a train station.	Centre Zone for the core(s); Mixed Use Zone and/or Service Commercial Zone for the frame as necessary.
District	Two to four large blocks or equivalent – 30,000-120,000m². Additional land may be required if accommodating for bulky goods showrooms.	Should be co-located with a train station where possible. Refer to <i>Liveable Neighbourhoods</i> (Element 1: Community Design, Element 7: Activity Centres) (to be replaced by SPP7.1 Neighbourhood Design).	Centre Zone for the core(s), Mixed Use and/or Service Commercial Zone for the frame as necessary.
Neighbourhood	One or two small block lengths or up to one large block length, both sides of a street –7500-30,000m².	Refer to <i>Liveable Neighbourhoods</i> (Element 1: Community Design, Element 7: Activity Centres) (to be replaced by SPP7.1 Neighbourhood Design).	Neighbourhood Centre Zone.
Local	One or two lots at the corners of an intersection, although some centres in an area may be up to one small block length on one side of a street or half a block length on both sides of a street if required – up to 4000m ² .	Refer to <i>Liveable Neighbourhoods</i> (Element 1: Community Design, Element 7: Activity Centres) (to be replaced by SPP7.1 Neighbourhood Design). May be suitable in industrial areas to provide convenience services for workers.	Local Centre Zone; or Residential Zone/Industrial Zone with additional uses.



3.3.6 Allocating housing density and achieving average densities

- a) SPP 7.2 Precinct Design and Precinct Design
 Guidelines (particularly Design Element 2: Urban
 Structure and Design Element 5: Land Use) and
 Liveable Neighbourhoods (particularly Element 1:
 Community Design and Element 3: Lot Design)
 (to be replaced by Draft SPP 7.1 Neighbourhood
 Design) provide extensive considerations and
 guidance for allocating density throughout
 precincts. The following should also be considered:
 - The highest density should be located within the activity centre core(s), with density transitioning outwards to adjoining lower density areas outside the walkable catchment(s).
 - The highest densities should be located near amenity such as public open space or areas with river, lake or ocean frontage.
 - The highest densities should be located near public transport, particularly rail stations.
- b) The 200m, 400m and 800m walkable catchments provided in Appendix 1 of SPP 4.2 must be used when planning for activity centres. The 1200m catchment is an optional extension that is encouraged to be used for those activity centres in high-amenity locations and/or with significant existing employment opportunities, particularly capital city, strategic and some secondary centres.

- c) Activity centres with walkable catchments occupied by constraints such as large water bodies, regional or district open spaces, areas for heritage or character protection and industrial areas should still try to achieve the average residential densities in SPP 4.2 Appendix 1. This will ensure that the activity centre is best placed to perform its role and function within the hierarchy.
- d) Table B demonstrates how the average residential densities can be achieved by applying density codes within **walkable catchments**, assuming minimal constraints:

- Consideration should be given to increasing to the next higher density coding where the centre has:
 - high amenity e.g. public open spaces, rivers/ lakes/ocean frontage
 - high employment self-sufficiency
 - high-frequency public transport in multiple directions.

Table B - indicative density codings to achieve average residential densities

Average density (dwellings per		Walkable catch	ments (measured fro	om central points)	
gross Urban/ Central City Area/ Regional Centre Zone hectare)	200m (Core)	400m	600m	800m	1,200m
75	R-AC1+*	R-AC1+*	R-AC3+	R-AC3+	R80+
50	R-AC1+*	R-AC1+*	R-AC3/R160+	R80+	R40+
40	R-AC1+*	R-AC3/R160+	R100+	R60+	R40+
35	R-AC3+/R160+	R100+	R60+	R35+	
30	R100+	R80/60+	R40+	R35+	
25	R60/40+	R40+			

^{*} Consider use of R-AC0 density coding to allow for taller buildings.



3.4 ACTIVITY CENTRES OUTSIDE PERTH, PEEL AND THE BUNBURY METROPOLITAN AREA

When considering whether to provide an activity centre hierarchy for a regional urban area:

- a) It is only appropriate that a hierarchy apply to regional urban areas where there are a number of existing centres and a need to manage growth and distribution of centres, in line with the objectives of SPP 4.2.
- b) Towns within the same region but separate from the regional urban area should be excluded. **Bunbury Metropolitan Area** provides an example of how this operates in relation to the wider South West Region, where the towns of Brunswick, Dardanup and Capel are not part of the hierarchy.
- c) It is preferred that providing an activity centre hierarchy is considered when regional or subregional strategies/frameworks are being prepared, however it may be appropriate to consider this when preparing a local planning strategy if there is no regional or sub-regional framework applicable.
- d) In instances where it is not appropriate for an activity centre hierarchy to be provided, such as for smaller towns, the objectives of SPP 4.2 may still be considered for proposals to zone additional land for activity centres uses outside of established town centres.

4 SUBDIVISION AND DEVELOPMENT WITHIN ACTIVITY CENTRES, STAGING OF DEVELOPMENT

4.1 ACTIVITY CENTRE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

- a) Where development applications are subject to SPP 4.2 (refer section 4 of SPP 4.2), they are to be assessed against the objectives and outcomes of this policy, and where required any Net Benefit Test. Additionally, they are to be assessed and determined in accordance with:
 - the measures of SPP 4.2 that apply to development applications
 - an endorsed standard or precinct structure plan (or previously endorsed equivalent)
 - an endorsed local development plan
 - the Local Planning Scheme
 - the Regional Planning Scheme (where relevant)
 - any other relevant SPPs and local planning policies.
- b) Interim or staged development must not prejudice the ultimate vision for the **activity centre**.

4.2 SUBDIVISION WITHIN ACTIVITY CENTRES

- a) Subdivision of land within activity centres, other than land within the Residential Zone or identified as Residential in a structure plan, should occur in a manner that supports the development of the activity centre. Subdivision should align with an endorsed precinct or standard structure plan (as applicable) and must not prejudice the ultimate vision for the activity centre.
- b) Subdivision should consider the future urban form of the **activity centre**, by ensuring that street block lengths and depths, individual lot widths and depths and street cross-sections are conducive to activity centre development as outlined in SPP 4.2, elsewhere in these Guidelines (particularly s3.3.5), SPP 7.2 *Precinct Design* and *Precinct Design Guidelines* (particularly Design Element 2: Urban Structure) and *Liveable Neighbourhoods* (particularly Element 3: Lot Design) (to be replaced by SPP7.1 Neighbourhood Design).

4.3 STAGING OF LAND USE DIVERSITY AND RESIDENTIAL DENSITY

- a) The challenges of achieving medium and high residential density and land use diversity targets in planned and emerging **activity centres** is acknowledged. However, significant underdevelopment, particularly within the **activity centre core** and **frame** is strongly discouraged.
- b) The staging of residential density and land use diversity targets for planned and emerging **activity centres** may be appropriate. An acceptable approach is to implement:



- initial/interim density and diversity targets, to be achieved within 10 years of the approval of the precinct structure plan [in accordance with the principles in sub-clause (c)]
- ultimate density targets, to be achieved through a review of the precinct structure plan following 10 years of the precinct plan implementation (or another timeframe as approved by the WAPC).
- c) The following principles should be considered when preparing planning instruments and considering subdivision applications and development applications for **major developments** to allow for interim development in a way that does not compromise the ultimate development of the **activity centre**:
 - Larger lots in the centre core and frame should be retained for commercial, mixed use and apartment development. This could mean deferring the rezoning of lots until the intended development is likely to be delivered, or using minimum density and lot size controls in the scheme.
 - Residential development and non-residential development on main streets should be designed and constructed so that the ground floor can be easily adapted from residential or passive land uses to active land uses (e.g. shops, cafes).
 - Buildings could be designed and constructed in a way that additional storeys can be added in the future.

- Larger format land uses such as car parks, motor vehicle sales and some bulky goods showrooms may be a suitable interim use in the **activity centre frame** until they can be replaced by mixed use and apartment developments.
- Buildings should be constructed to contribute towards a streetscape character within the **activity centre** consistent with its level in the hierarchy (refer to Appendix 1 of SPP 4.2).
- Time-limited planning approvals or short-term leased arrangements can be used.
- d) While strongly discouraged, applications that do propose under-development may only be supported where:
 - the application provides for housing choices (size and affordability) or employment options within the locality that are not currently available or will not likely be provided elsewhere in the locality without the development or
 - it is demonstrated that the proposal can be easily adapted to the ultimate vision or provides space set aside for future land use and development aligned with the ultimate vision.

5 NET BENEFIT TEST

5.1 REQUIREMENTS

- a) The **Net Benefit (NB) Test** shall assess the potential impacts and benefits to the community of a proposal on **existing** and **planned activity centres** in the locality, considering:
 - the supportable retail/commercial floorspace for an appropriate service population
 - the implications for and optimal use of public and private infrastructure and services provided or planned in the locality
 - the overall costs and benefits of the proposal to the community, considering the objectives, outcomes and measures of SPP 4.2.
- b) The potential loss and/or gain of services and any associated detriment/benefit to the community caused by a proposal shall be assessed.

 The assessment must consider impacts and benefits in relation to all **activity centres** that may be affected, which are not necessarily just those closest to the proposal and may be in neighbouring local government areas. The extent of **activity centres** considered should be proportionate to the development.

5.2 ASSUMPTIONS

a) The detail provided in the **NB Test** should be appropriate to the scale and context of the proposal, drawing on existing information where possible. Applicants and local and State planning authorities should seek to agree the scope, key 9

- impacts/benefits for assessment, and level of detail required in advance of applications being submitted.
- b) The methodology, assumptions and data used in the **NB Test** must be specified and be appropriate, transparent and verifiable. A template methodology is provided at Appendix G2 as a guide to assist proponents and decision-makers in the preparation and assessment of a **NB Test**.
- c) The assumptions and findings of a NB Test may be validated through an independent peer review. This independent peer review should be overseen by the responsible authority, with costs to be shared equally between the proponent and the responsible authority.

5.3 ASSESSMENT

- a) The following key considerations should be used to guide the assessment:
 - Is there a demand for additional floorspace, and how does the proposal meet this demand?
 - How will the proposed development impact on the role of the **activity centre** and/or the viability and vibrancy of other **activity centres** in the **hierarchy**?
 - What is the anticipated loss and/or gain of services to the community?
 - What is the anticipated impact on access (distance, time, mode of travel) to services by the community?
 - Will the proposal contribute to a net increase in employment?

- Does the proposal align with the objectives and outcomes of this policy and the planning framework?
- Are any potential impacts reduced over the longer term?
- b) A judgement as to whether the likely impacts/ benefits are significant can only be reached considering local circumstances (such as the role, offering and performance of an **activity centre** and the level of service to the community).
- c) Competition between businesses in and of itself is not considered a relevant planning consideration.
 In this regard, the **NB Test** is not to be used in a way purely to prevent competition between businesses.

5.4 IMPLEMENTING NET BENEFIT

- Where items or components of a development (refer s2.8.1 of SPP 7.2 Precinct Design Guidelines) are proposed to demonstrate net benefit being achieved, they are to be genuinely over and above what would normally be required to address the requirements of the planning framework. For example, undertaking road upgrades to cater for increased traffic from the development is not to be included as a benefit as the development cannot occur without the upgrade.
- b) The responsible authority may impose reasonable conditions on development approvals to ensure that such items/development components are delivered. Similarly, where such items are proposed

- as part of a scheme amendment or structure plan process, it is reasonable to include these items as scheme or structure plan requirements to be satisfied by subsequent development.
- c) As a general principle, such items or development components should not burden the responsible authority or other landowners without their agreement.
- d) There should be a demonstrated need for such items or development component, which are best articulated in a local planning strategy or through the local government's Strategic Community Plan/Corporate Business Plan.



6 **DEFINITIONS**(AS IN SPP 4.2 SECTION 8)

ACTIVITY CENTRE

An activity centre shown in an endorsed regional, sub-regional, district-level or local-level strategy, framework or structure plan. Capital City, Strategic, Specialised, Secondary and District activity centres endorsed at the date of gazettal are shown in Appendix 1 for reference.

ACTIVITY CENTRE CORE

The main focus(es) of activity within the **activity centre**. Cores contain any central points from which **walkable catchments** are measured (refer walkable catchment definition).

ACTIVITY CENTRE FRAME

The secondary focus of activity within the activity centre, adjacent to the **core**. **Walkable catchments** are not measured from the frame area. Smaller centres may not have a frame.

ACTIVITY CENTRE HIERARCHY / NETWORK, HIERARCHY

All **activity centres**, **existing** and **planned**, within the Metropolitan and Peel Region Scheme areas and the **Bunbury Metropolitan Area**, arranged into the seven classification levels being capital city, strategic, specialised, secondary, district, neighbourhood and local activity centres.

ACTIVITY CENTRE USE(S), CATEGORY A AND B

Includes the following land uses as defined in Schedule 1 of the *Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes)*Regulations 2015, split into Categories A and B:

	Category A uses	Category B uses
Planning Land Use Categories*	Triggers various policy requirements when exceeding the major development threshold	Only triggers policy requirements when preparing new or amendments to planning instruments
Shop/Retail (PLUC: 5-SHP)	Shop Liquor store – large Fast food outlet / lunch bar Restaurant/café	Convenience store Liquor store – small Market Restricted premises Service station
Other Retail (PLUC: 6-RET)		Bulky goods showroom Motor vehicle, boat or caravan sales
Office / Business (PLUC: 7-OFF)		Medical centre Office
Entertainment / Recreation / Cultural (PLUC: 9-ENT)		Amusement parlour Art gallery Cinema / theatre Hotel Motel Nightclub Reception centre Recreation – private Small bar Tavern
Service Industry (PLUC: 4-SER)		Motor vehicle repair Motor vehicle wash

^{*} From the WAPC's Land Use and Employment Survey.

Note 1: Other land uses in local planning schemes may be suitable in activity centres (for example consulting rooms, trade supplies) but are not subject to this policy as they may also be suitable outside activity centres.

Note 2: Where a land use in a local planning scheme reasonably aligns with the above land uses (for example personal care services which aligns with shop), decision-makers should consider whether this policy should apply to that land use.



BULKY GOODS SHOWROOM

As defined in the *Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015.*

BUNBURY METROPOLITAN AREA

As shown in the Bunbury-Geographe Sub-Regional Strategy.

ESTABLISHED ACTIVITY CENTRE

There are existing **activity centre uses (or use)** within the **activity centre**.

EXISTING OR PROPOSED TRAIN STATION

An existing train station or a proposed train station identified in a sub-regional planning framework, within a 400m walkable catchment of the activity centre.

HIGH FREQUENCY PUBLIC TRANSPORT

A public transport route, or multiple routes serving the same station/stop that if combined have timed stops every 15 minutes during weekday peak periods (7am to 9am and 5pm to 7pm).

MAJOR DEVELOPMENT

A development application is considered a major development if the net additional floorspace for **Category A activity centre use (or uses)** is greater than the thresholds in Table 1. Note, this includes a development application for change of use from a Category B use to a Category A use.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

As outlined in section 7.2 Needs Assessments, an information base to support decision-making by including an assessment of projected land use needs of communities in a local government area, that considers and assesses the demand for all **activity centre uses**.

NET BENEFIT TEST

A test prepared in accordance with section 7.8 Net Benefit Test.

NET LETTABLE AREA (NLA)

As defined in the *Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015.*

PLANNED ACTIVITY CENTRE

There are no existing **activity centre uses** (or use) occurring within the **activity centre**.

OFFICE

As defined in the *Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015.* SPP 4.2 provides for two different sizes:

- Office small no greater than 1500m² NLA
- Office large greater than 1500m² NLA

OUT-OF-CENTRE DEVELOPMENT

As outlined in section 7.9 Out-of-Centre Development, out-of-centre development is:

 any development application that proposes floorspace greater than 500m² NLA for Category A activity centre uses located outside the boundary of an activity centre, unless exempt

Table 1: Major activity centre use floorspace thresholds

Activity Centre Hierarchy	Established Activity Centre (m ² NLA)	Planned Activity Centre (m ² NLA)
Strategic	10000	0 – any development in a planned centre is major
Specialised	3000	development
Secondary	10000	
District	5000	
Neighbourhood	3000	
Local	1500	



any new planning instrument or amendment to a planning instrument that will result in new land being capable of accommodating **Category A or B activity centre uses** outside of **activity centres** (regardless of land size).

SHOP

As defined in the *Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015.* SPP 4.2 provides for two different sizes:

- shop small no greater than 1500m² NLA
- shop large greater than 1500m² NLA.

STRATEGIC EMPLOYMENT

Is associated with the production and transfer of goods, services and knowledge predominantly to serve markets beyond the immediate location or catchment. Also known as trade clusters, as distinct from local clusters, which comprise industries that serve local population and business driven demand.

WALKABLE CATCHMENT

Derived from application of the ped-shed technique to the existing or proposed street/footpath network measured from an agreed upon central point(s) within the **activity centre core**. The central point(s) may be a town square or main street, rail or bus station and/or important services such as a supermarket. Depending on the **centre** type (Appendix 1), the extent of the walkable catchment is either 200m, 400m, 800m or 1200m with the inner 200m comprising the **centre core**.



APPENDIX G1 – SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY FOR NEEDS ASSESSMENT

A1.1 SCOPE

The need for **activity centre uses** refers to the scale and mix of non-residential uses likely to be needed within a catchment area over the plan period (10 years for precinct and standard structure plans, 15 years for local planning strategies and scheme amendments). The assessment should measure demand for the area and identify the scale of supply necessary to appropriately accommodate this demand in square metres **net lettable area (NLA)**.

The scale and detail of the assessment should be commensurate with the planning process or proposal being considered. Only future scenarios that could be reasonably expected to occur should be considered.

The assessment of need must be based on facts and unbiased evidence. The methodology used must be transparent and verifiable.

The WAPC's Land Use and Employment Survey Planning Land Use Categories (PLUC) system may be used in lieu of scheme land use terms (refer definition of **activity centre uses** for relevant PLUC codes).

A1.2 INPUTS

Verifiable data sources must be provided with preference given to publicly available and transparent data sets (e.g. Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Land Use and Employment Survey, WA Tomorrow*). Data sources used must be justified.

The Needs Assessment should include an estimate of current supply of **activity centre uses** and historical and forecast population.

A1.3 METHODOLOGY

The following table provides a guide on what should be included in a Needs Assessment:

1. Purpose and objectives

2. Study parameters:

- a) Define study area
- b) Identify study period (10 years for a precinct structure plan or standard structure plan; 15 years for a local planning strategy or scheme amendment)
- c) Define **activity centre uses** to be assessed by study

3. Review drivers of floorspace, including:

- a) Historical and forecast population growth and its socio-economic characteristics
- b) Employment growth
- c) Visitor growth
- d) Existing infrastructure
- e) Infrastructure investment
- f) Government policy including centre policy and **hierarchy**
- g) Changing expenditure patterns
- h) Technological influences impacting floorspace demand
- i) New product and services growth

4. Property market profile:

- a) Rents current and rental growth
- b) Sale prices current and price growth
- c) Vacancy current and historical
- d) Yields current and historical

5. Floorspace supply for the relevant study area and not just the immediate local government area – current, in development, and planned in terms of:

- a) Scale land area, gross floor area
- b) Location
- c) Type zoning, lot size
- d) Occupancy proportion vacant vs occupied

6. Floorspace demand for the relevant region:

- a) Historical consumption rates site area, NLA
- b) Employment projections by industry sector with particular focus on relevant activity centre-based sectors

7. Net demand assessment:

- a) Overall LGA net floorspace demand by 5-year intervals
- b) Activity centre/market net floorspace demand
- c) Identification of risk factors, issues and opportunities

8. Land use development options:

- a) Base case (business as usual)
- b) High growth scenario
- c) Low growth scenario



APPENDIX G2 – SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY FOR NET BENEFIT TEST

A2.1 APPROACH

Verifiable and current data sources must be provided with preference given to publicly available and transparent data sets (e.g. Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Land Use and Employment Survey, WA Tomorrow*). Data sources used must be justified.

The **Net Benefit (NB)** Test must provide a short description of the model and methodology used. All assumptions are to be clearly articulated.

The assessment:

- only evaluates the external costs and benefits to the community of the proposal
- only includes costs and benefits that have a net impact on community welfare impacts that simply transfer benefits and costs between individuals and businesses in the community are not included
- quantifies impacts and benefits where possible.

A2.2 IMPACTS

A critical output from the modelling process is an estimate of the impact of the proposal on existing and planned activity centres and the level of service to the community.

A.2.2.1 Non-retail proposals

For proposals without shop/retail or other retail, no impact modelling is required.

A2.2.2 Retail proposals

For retail proposals, the **NB Test** should include the supply of shop/retail (PLUC:5-SHP) and/or Other Retail (PLUC:6-RET) floorspace (present period and over a defined future time period – minimum five years) within relevant **activity centres** and the retail turnover estimates for each **activity centre** for the base year and NB test year/s. An estimate of the retail turnover for each relevant **activity centre** should be identified for the following scenarios:

- base case without the planning proposal/ development and
- with the new planning proposal/ development.

The differences between the scenarios is the turnover impact for each **activity centre**.

When estimating impacts, the assessment should include the following detail:

Location of proposed development

Provide a contextual description of the proposal and location with supporting maps, identifying if out-of-centre, within-centre or new activity centre

Size of the proposal

Detail the change in net lettable area (NLA) of the shop/retail (PLUC:5-SHP) and/or other retail (PLUC:6:RET) floor space

Describe the following for the existing situation

- Definition of trade area (including primary trade area and any secondary and tertiary trade areas)
- Estimated current and historical population of the trade area
- Overview of trade area resident attributes and implications for floorspace need and spending estimates
- Estimated historical expenditure of the trade area using latest ABS Household Expenditure Survey or other reliable source

Detail the following for the proposed situation

- Definition of trade area (same as existing situation)
- Estimated forecast population of the trade area
- Estimated forecast expenditure of the trade area



Estimate the average annual sales turnover (aggregate and per m²) for the proposed development and/or activity centre pre-and post-development proposal.

The following impact percentage and risk level for retail turnover is provided as a general guide and should not be used as the only indicator of acceptability of a proposal:

Impact Percentage	Risk Level	Description
0-5%	Low	Any impacts are likely to be temporary and have no long-term effects on the viability of individual activity centres.
5-10%	Medium	Impacts are likely to be more significant for individual centres but overall network sustainability is unlikely to be undermined in the long-term.
10% +	High	Impacts are likely to be very significant for individual centres and will undermine the long-term network sustainability.

Where the short-term impact is initially high before falling to a medium or low level in the long term, consideration should be given to how the development can be staged or if there needs to be any additional short-term benefits to ensure that level of service is always maintained.

A2.3 BENEFITS

When estimating benefits to the community, the assessment should consider:

What benefit will occur and how important the benefit will be?

- Detail what benefit will occur due to the proposed development
- Wherever possible use existing data and standards to measure the size of the benefit and how important it will be to the community.

Who in the community are expected to experience the benefit?

- Identify those in the community who will be likely to experience the benefit – customers and employees, the local community, different socio-economic groups
- Define the geographic boundary where the benefit is experienced – the site, the surrounding area, the local government.

How much benefit is expected?

- Estimate how many individuals are expected to experience the benefit
- Describe the degree of change expected due to the henefit
- Determine the expected duration for which stakeholders are expected to experience the benefit.

The following assessment template should be used to evaluate the net benefit to the community of a proposal. The criteria should be examined when assessing the merits of the planning/development proposal against the base case or current situation.



A2.4 NET BENEFIT ASSESSMENT TEMPLATE

	COMMUNITY COSTS AND BENEFITS – NET BENEFIT				
CRITERIA	BASE CASE – CURRENT SITUATION For the subject centre and nearby centres/trade area	PLANNING/DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL For the subject centre and nearby centres/trade area	QUANTITATIVE COST/BENEFIT Is there a quantified cost or benefit that the proposal will bring to the community? What is it? Where a cost or benefit cannot be quantified, state NIL.	QUALITATIVE COST/ BENEFIT Outline the qualitative benefits to the community of the proposal. Can a non-quantifiable benefit o impact be described?	
STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT					
Is the proposal consistent with the strategic planning for the area? Is it aligned with the relevant regional strategy and approved local planning strategy?	Describe how the current situation (zoning, land uses, development, built form) is aligned or otherwise with the strategic planning for the area.	Describe how the proposal will enable development that is compatible with and achieves the objectives of the strategic planning for the area.			
Is the proposal consistent with the objectives and outcomes of SPP 4.2?	Describe how the existing situation is/is not consistent with the objectives and outcomes of SPP 4.2.	Describe how the proposal achieves the objectives and meets the outcomes of SPP 4.2.			
What are the potential impacts on the activity centre hierarchy? Is the size and scale of the proposal consistent with the level of the hierarchy?	Describe how the existing situation aligns with the activity centre hierarchy and detail the size and scale in net lettable area (NLA) of existing and planned development.	Describe how the proposal may impact on the existing and planned activity centre hierarchy. Detail the size and scale (NLA) of the proposal.			
PRODUCTIVITY					
Does the proposal provide new jobs in addition to any that may be lost elsewhere – net additional jobs?	Outline the estimated existing employment located on site and in the surrounding area.	Provide an estimation of the expected additional employment to be provided on site and in the local area as a direct result of the proposal.			
Does the proposal contribute to diversifying local jobs – creating more strategic employment versus population-driven employment?	Describe the existing employment mix and the ratio of strategic vs population-driven employment on site and in the surrounding area.	Provide details of the changes to the employment mix that the proposal will bring on site and in the surrounding area.			



		COMMUNITY COSTS AN	ID BENEFITS – NET BENE	FIT
CRITERIA	BASE CASE – CURRENT SITUATION For the subject centre and nearby centres/trade area	PLANNING/DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL For the subject centre and nearby centres/trade area	QUANTITATIVE COST/BENEFIT Is there a quantified cost or benefit that the proposal will bring to the community? What is it? Where a cost or benefit cannot be quantified, state NIL.	QUALITATIVE COST/BENEFIT Outline the qualitative benefits to the community of the proposal. Can a non-quantifiable benefit or impact be described?
For retail proposals, how is the proposal expected to impact upon the current and expected turnover and role of relevant activity centres?	See Scope and Methodology for Impacts above	See Scope and Methodology for Impacts above		
Will the proposal increase the choice and availability of goods and services in the area?	Describe the range of choice and the availability of goods and services in the area for the existing situation.	Describe how the proposal will enable a greater range of choice and improve the availability of goods and services in the area.		
QUALITY OF LIFE				
Is the proposal compatible with surrounding land uses? Will there be an improvement in the level of amenity and vibrancy that benefits the wider community?	Describe the existing land uses, built form and public realm. Detail the character and level of amenity provided by the existing situation.	Describe how the proposal will/ will not be compatible with the surrounding land uses and contribute to improvements in the amenity provided by the built form and public realm.		
Does the proposal include land uses such as healthcare, education and community facilities?	Describe the existing level of healthcare, education and community facilities in the area.	Detail any additional or potential loss of healthcare, education and community facilities in the area as a result of the proposal.		
ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINAB	BILITY			
Would the proposal have an impact on overall vehicle trips? Would car-based net trips (by distance) increase or reduce as a result of the proposal?	Describe the existing vehicle trips for the existing situation within the trade area.	Calculate the potential increase or decrease in vehicle trips within the trade area as a result of the proposal.		



		COMMUNITY COSTS AN	ND BENEFITS – NET BENE	FIT
CRITERIA	BASE CASE – CURRENT SITUATION For the subject centre and nearby centres/trade area	PLANNING/DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL For the subject centre and nearby centres/trade area	QUANTITATIVE COST/BENEFIT Is there a quantified cost or benefit that the proposal will bring to the community? What is it? Where a cost or benefit cannot be quantified, state NIL.	QUALITATIVE COST/ BENEFIT Outline the qualitative benefits to the community of the proposal. Can a non-quantifiable benefit or impact be described?
Does the proposal contribute to improved air and water quality – such as incorporating water sensitive urban design (WSUD), or walking and cycling infrastructure that reduces emissions from vehicles?	Describe the existing situation for the area in relation to WSUD and the provision of walking and cycling infrastructure.	Describe how the proposal will improve air and water quality through incorporation of WSUD, the provision of new and/or enhancement of existing walking and cycling infrastructure, or other measures.		
Does the proposal protect or enhance remnant vegetation or contribute to improving the urban tree canopy?	Describe the existing levels and quality of vegetation on site and the extent of urban tree canopy.	Provide details of how the proposal will protect and/or enhance vegetation on site and improve the urban tree canopy in the area, over and above any requirements of the planning framework.		
Does the proposal help reduce energy consumption and emissions – for example through sustainable construction methods and/or incorporating renewable energy systems?	Describe the current situation with regards to how energy is produced and consumed on site.	Describe how the proposal will help reduce emissions and incorporate renewable energy on site.		
INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVI	CES			
Is there significant government	Describe the government services	Detail how the proposal may impact		

Is there significant government investment in services, infrastructure or development in the area or nearby centres that may be affected by the proposal? Will the proposal impact patronage/viability of the investment and what is the expected impact?

Describe the government services (Federal, State and local) that already exist in the area or nearby centres.

Describe government investments in infrastructure or government-led (re) development in the area or nearby centres.

Detail how the proposal may impact upon or benefit the provision of government services in the area or nearby centres.

Detail how the proposal may or may not undermine government investment in infrastructure or (re)development in the area or nearby centres.



	COMMUNITY COSTS AND BENEFITS – NET BENEFIT			
CRITERIA	BASE CASE – CURRENT SITUATION	PLANNING/DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL	QUANTITATIVE COST/BENEFIT	QUALITATIVE COST/ BENEFIT
	For the subject centre and nearby centres/trade area	For the subject centre and nearby centres/trade area	Is there a quantified cost or benefit that the proposal will bring to the community? What is it? Where a cost or benefit cannot be quantified, state NIL.	Outline the qualitative benefits to the community of the proposal. Can a non-quantifiable benefit or impact be described?
Does the proposal include new, or improvements to existing transport infrastructure, particularly walking, cycling and public transport, that increases access and helps manage congestion?	Describe the transport infrastructure in the area and the current estimated mode split.	Detail how the proposal will improve transport infrastructure in the area with a focus on walking, cycling and public transport, over and above any requirements of the planning framework.		
Does the proposal include enhancements to utilities that benefit the local area?	Describe the existing provision of utilities.	Provide detail on any improvements to utilities that the proposal will bring.		
EQUITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION				
Does the proposal have the potential to improve access to economic opportunity for minority and vulnerable groups?	Describe the existing services and employment opportunities.	Detail how the proposal will improve access to economic opportunity.		

A2.5 CONCLUSIONS

An executive summary should provide a comparison of the impact and benefit of the proposal to determine acceptability of the proposal in accordance with the requirements of SPP 4.2 and these Guidelines.



APPENDIX G3 – DETERMINING WHETHER DEVELOPMENT IS WITHIN CENTRE OR OUT-OF-CENTRE IN THE ABSENCE OF AN EXACT BOUNDARY

For the purposes of determining whether an area of land is within centre and whether development is out-of-centre and subject to section 7.9 of SPP 4.2 where there is no exact boundary in place, the following land is deemed to be within centre:

- Land zoned/identified as Centre or similar* in the local planning scheme, region scheme or structure plan
- Land located within the indicative boundaries of an activity centre as shown in the local planning strategy, a structure plan, or higher-order strategy/ framework. A dot on a map is generally not sufficient unless it is reasonably clear through the zoning beneath as to the spatial extent of the centre (refer examples).
- * Includes any zone with the word centre in the name such as Local Centre Zone, Regional Centre Zone, City Centre Zone, Town Centre Zone and other similarly named types of centre zones. It does not include zones without centre in the name such as Business, Commercial or Mixed Use as these zones do not always coincide with activity centres.

Example 1 – No centre zone, no local planning strategy



Figure 1: Extract of local planning scheme with sub-regional framework activity centres overlaid (red dot)

This example in Figure 1 shows two areas of Commercial Zone land (in blue).

The Commercial Zone land in the top-right has a red dot over it which indicates a district centre in the sub-regional framework. All of the land within the Commercial Zone around the red dot is therefore within the District Centre as it is clearly distinctive from the surrounding Residential zone land.

The other Commercial Zone (middle) has no dot which means it is not identified in the sub-regional framework. The local government does not have a WAPC endorsed local planning strategy and therefore it is not clear whether it is an activity centre or not. As there is an insufficient planning framework in place, development should be considered as out-of-centre and assessed against section 7.9 of SPP 4.2.

Example 2 – No clear zone or structure plan boundaries



Figure 2: Extract of local planning scheme with sub-regional framework activity centres overlaid (red dot)



Figure 3: Structure plans in the area (green boundaries)

In Figure 2 the red dot (middle) indicates a district centre in the sub-regional framework, however, all the land around it is zoned Development Zone (cream with orange border). In Figure 3, there are no structure plans (green boundaries) that capture the red dot. Accordingly, it is not clear what the spatial extent of the activity centre is and what land is within centre. As there is an insufficient planning framework in place, development should be considered as out-of-centre and assessed against section 7.9 of SPP 4.2.



APPENDIX G4 – ACTIVITY CENTRE CONSIDERATIONS CHECKLIST

The following provides a checklist to the relevant considerations in the planning of activity centres:

REGIONAL AND DISTRICT PLANNING

Identify activity centre hierarchy in strategies and frameworks in accordance with SPP 4.2.

Identify targets for employment self-sufficiency and dwellings (Perth and Peel regions only).

Identify activity centre and zone according to hierarchy (region planning schemes).

LOCAL PLANNING STRATEGY

Prepared in accordance with the Local Planning Strategy Guidelines

Identify activity centre locations and hierarchy in accordance with SPP 4.2 on the strategy map.

Identify activity centres that require precinct structure plans and/or local development plans as planning areas and include relevant actions in the local planning strategy.

Identify indicative boundaries of **activity centres**, or exact boundaries where a precinct structure plan (or previous equivalent) provides the boundaries on the strategy map, aligned with any relevant planning areas.

Demonstrate how **activity centres** contribute to the dwelling and employment self-sufficiency targets from *Perth and Peel @ 3.5 million* (or other relevant regional or sub-regional planning frameworks). Include actions to address any shortfalls.

Allocate retail/commercial floorspace amounts, as informed by the **Needs Assessment**, to **activity centres** or other precincts as appropriate. If centres need to be expanded or new centres designated to accommodate increases, designate these as planning areas and include relevant actions in the local planning strategy.

Identify the walkable catchments for the activity centres and include a range of dwelling targets within these walkable catchments.

Define employment locations and job targets for **activity centres**, consistent with the sub-regional targets within the Perth and Peel regions.

Assess current and future public open space needs to consider the demand generated from projected activity centre development, considering quantity, quality and accessibility of public open space, with strategies for addressing any shortfalls.



LOCAL PLANNING SCHEME REVIEW/AMENDMENTS

Reflect the approved local planning strategy and **Needs Assessment** completed and, for the Perth and Peel regions, demonstrate contribution to the dwelling and self-sufficiency targets from *Perth and Peel @ 3.5million*.

Include the standardised land use definitions from the Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015 as it applies to activity centres.

Include the standardised zoning provided in the SPP 4.2 Implementation Guidelines.

Restrict offices and commercial uses within industrial zones to incidental only.

Apply R-Codes within walkable catchments to meet the density requirements outlined in Appendix 1 of SPP4.2.

Identify bulky goods/large format retail precincts as Service Commercial.

Include requirements for precinct structure plans/local development plans to be prepared for **activity centres** prior to **major development** for local and neighbourhood centres that require it (as identified in the Strategy).

Include built form requirements to guide activity centre development that is not major development where precinct structure plans or local development plans are not prepared or not required.

NEIGHBOURHOOD AND/OR PRECINCT STRUCTURE PLANNING Prepared in accordance with the Structure Plan Framework

Prepared for **activity centres** identified in SPP 4.2 and in the local planning strategy

Reflect the approved local planning strategy and **Needs Assessment** completed, where relevant

Provides sufficient land in accordance with the local planning strategy and/or **Needs Assessment** and, for the Perth and Peel regions, demonstrate contribution to the dwelling and self-sufficiency targets from *Perth and Peel @3.5million* (or other relevant regional or sub-regional planning frameworks)

Prepared in accordance with the Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015

Plans prepared in accordance with the requirements of SPP 7.2 Precinct Design or Liveable Neighbourhoods (to be replaced by SPP 7.1 Neighbourhood Design)

Plans appropriate to activity centre classification and meets the objectives, outcomes and measures of SPP 4.2