

SHIRE OF WESTONIA

Local Planning Strategy



Endorsed by the
Western Australian Planning Commission

26 JULY 2023

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SHIRE OF
WESTONIA
A vibrant community lifestyle

Local Planning Strategy



Table of contents

Executive Summary.....	1	2.5.2 Emergency Services	19
Part 1 – The Strategy	2	2.5.3 Health	19
1.1 Vision and key objectives	2	2.5.4 Education.....	19
1.2 Strategy Table.....	2	2.5.6 Cemetery	19
1.3 Implementation.....	4	2.5.7 Key Implications	19
Strategy Map Town site	5	2.6 Character and Heritage	20
Part 2 – Background and Analysis.....	6	2.6.1 Aboriginal Cultural Heritage	20
2.1 Introduction	6	2.6.2 Historic Heritage.....	20
2.2 Local Profile	7	2.6.3 Key Implications	20
2.2.1 Climate	7	2.7 Transport and Infrastructure	21
2.2.2 Geology and landform	7	2.7.1 Roads	21
2.2.3 Biodiversity	7	2.7.2 Rail.....	21
2.2.4 Threatened ecological communities..	8	2.7.3 Air	21
2.2.5 Water Resources.....	9	2.7.4 Power.....	21
2.2.6 Bushfire	9	2.7.5 Water Supply	22
2.2.7 Landscape and Views.....	9	2.7.6 Wastewater Disposal	22
2.2.8 Key Implications	9	2.7.7 Waste Disposal	22
2.3 Population, Land and Housing	12	2.7.8 Key Implications	22
2.3.1 Current Population.....	12		
2.3.2 Future Population Forecasts.....	12		
2.3.3 Settlements	12		
2.3.4 Housing	13		
2.3.5 Land Ownership and Lot Supply	13		
2.3.6 Workforce Accommodation.....	13		
2.4.7 Key Implications	14		
2.4 Economy and Employment	17		
2.4.1 Employment	17		
2.4.2 Mining.....	17		
2.4.3 Agriculture	18		
2.4.5 Tourism	18		
2.4.6 Local Businesses.....	18		
2.4.7 Key Implications	18		
2.5 Community, Recreational Facilities and Open Space.....	19		
2.5.1 Recreational Facilities and Open Space.....	19		

Figures

Figure 1 - Strategy Map Townsite	5
Figure 2 - Westonia Common	8
Figure 3 – Biodiversity Map.....	10
Figure 4 - Bushfire Map.....	11
Figure 5 – Imagery Map	15
Figure 6 – Land Ownership Map	16
Figure 7 – Infrastructure Map	23

Executive Summary

The Shire of Westonia has sought to establish a Local Planning Strategy (LPS) that will be the Shire's primary strategic land use and decision-making document for the future. This is the first time that a Local Planning Strategy has been prepared for the Shire of Westonia. The LPS is intended to provide a clear plan for the future land use and development, specifically the Westonia townsite.

The Strategy aims to:

- Provide guidance for designated land uses within the townsite.
- Provide guidance on such matters as the Westonia Historical Façade Precinct, boundary fencing, sea containers and tourism.
- Set out the key aspirations of stakeholders.
- Accommodate the future needs of the community.
- Create opportunities to enhance and protect local attributes; and
- Provide a framework to achieve long-term local and regional objectives and goals.

The Strategy is intended to be the primary guiding document in all planning matters in lieu of a formal Local Town Planning Scheme, which is considered inappropriate for the limited size of the Shire. Instead, it is proposed to principally use local laws or an interim development order (IDO) to address development issues. It is also intended to provide a framework for investment by both the public and private sector.

A clear vision has been established for the area through the Shire of Westonia Community Strategic Plan, as follows:

“Westonia.....a vibrant community lifestyle”.

It is the aim of the LPS to build upon the established vision set by the Community Strategic Plan and to provide some real, ‘on the ground’ actions that can be progressed in the aim of delivering this vision. There is acknowledgement of the significant amount of work that has been previously undertaken by the Shire of Westonia, Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage (DPLH) and other stakeholders, which provides a strong foundation for the LPS.

Key planning documents relative to the Shire have been reviewed and have enabled a deeper understanding of the context and historical background of various matters relating to the Shire and the wider Region. This Strategy has pulled these documents together, explored key issues facing the Shire and recommends strategies and actions various stakeholders are to implement in ensuring that the future of Westonia is self-assured and prosperous.



Part 1 – The Strategy

1.1 Vision and key objectives

The vision and strategic direction for the Local Planning Strategy have been adopted from the 2018 review of the Shire's Strategic Community Plan, which outlines the local community's vision and aspirations to guide the Shire's decisions.

The vision for the Shire of Westonia is **A vibrant community lifestyle**:

“The Shire’s future will centre on ensuring that the population, level of economic activity and services grow in a manner that retains the area’s unique character and heritage values. This will mean that we will need to invest resources into attracting aspirational businesses and residents, exploring alternative land development scenarios, forming strategic alliances and lobbying government agencies for additional funding and assistance. We will also seek to ensure that our economic, social and environmental strategies are financially sustainable into the future. This will require the consolidation of working relationships with other local governments, community groups and local businesses.

We recognise that our town and rural communities are interdependent and will work towards ensuring that our community and sporting groups have adequate facilities and assistance.

We will recognise the contributions of all sections of the community, the importance of a bright future for youth and a high quality of life for our seniors. This vision will be grounded in a set of values that reflects the aspirations of the local community.

We will also seek to review our strategic directions on a regular basis and gauge our progress through a biennial survey of the community. To achieve this vision the Shire will need to be a place that is tolerant, flexible, open minded and prepared for change. We will be a regional leader and communicate and involve our citizens in the decision-making process.”

In achieving this vision, the local government's objectives and key strategies relating to land use planning are outlined below.

GOAL	STRATEGIES
Efficient transport connectivity in and around our Shire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build enduring partnerships with key Government Departments to improve Great Eastern Highway and seek joint venture partnerships with local mining companies to improve key infrastructure assets. • Utilise the Road Management Plan, which incorporates a road hierarchy, minimum service levels and maintenance policy.
Facilitate local business retention and growth.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance local economic activity by supporting the growth of tourism in our Shire and region. • We forward plan to improve the economic diversity in our community. • Investigate options for multipurpose accommodation if vacancies arise in mine accommodation. • Facilitate rehabilitation planning at the mine and forward planning for life after the mine.
Plan for community growth and changing demographics.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan and develop residential and light industrial land including new residential and industrial lots • The CEACA project continues to expand the number of universally designed dwellings in our town and CEACA rental agreements are inclusive of all local demographics. • Community safety and ease of access around town is a priority. • Pedestrian access continues to improve (implement the footpath plan)
Our community has the opportunity to be active, socialised and connected.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We support and retain our emergency services. • We facilitate healthy and active ageing in places. • Continue to support Community Resource Centre and community-based programs and funding opportunities.
Natural spaces are preserved and bring us value.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainably manage our reserves and open spaces emphasising the balance between conservation and sustainable economic development.

1.2 Strategy Table

Westonia Townsite and Surrounds

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Actions</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus and consolidate residential growth in the Westonia town site to utilise existing infrastructure and facilities. • Recognise the Westonia townsite's role as a service centre for the agricultural industry. • Limit further settlement in the Boodarockin, Carrabin, Warralakin, Warrachuppin and Walgoolan townsites. • Encourage the provision of a mix of housing in the Westonia town site in response to demographic trends, particularly housing options for the aged and provide flexibility for workforce accommodation • Support the protection and conservation of sites with significant heritage and cultural values and continue to reflect the Town's heritage through the built form character along Wolfram Street. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support land uses as shown on the Westonia townsite map • Those areas designated for residential use are intended to support single dwellings. • In commercial areas, dwellings are also supported but should be located behind a commercial premises or shopfront • Support development of aged care dwellings. • Use the former primary school site for 'Civic Use and Senior Centre Project and the existing Central East Aged Care Alliance project and other short-term accommodation. • Develop local laws or IDO to control the use of second-hand, and converted outbuildings being used as dwellings and control size of outbuildings. • Support opportunities for mining workforce accommodation throughout the townsite including grouped housing developments. These should be located, designed and operate to be compatible with surrounding residences. • Continue to reflect the Town's heritage through the built form character along Wolfram Street • Encourage, where appropriate, the use of public open space and Crown land for recreational use, while protecting significant landscape features. • Liaise with State Government for upgrades to Great Eastern Highway.

Natural Environment and Landscape

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Actions</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support conservation, management and remediation of areas of native vegetation • Support the restoration and protection of links between native vegetation areas, to provide connections for a range of fauna species. • Encourage the retention of native vegetation and discourage the inappropriate clearing of native vegetation on all land to enhance the Shire's biodiversity and landscape values. • Continue to balance environmental conservation and sustainable economic development. • Control the location of development and use of land to avoid placing inappropriate developments in areas of high fire risk. • Minimise the potential environmental and health impacts from extraction, processing and/or transport of mineral resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review opportunities to establish ecological corridors including reserves, vegetation along roadsides where possible and strips of native vegetation on private land. • Support the creation of conservation lots where it would be justified by the conservation value of the native vegetation and the proponent has appropriately addressed relevant planning considerations such as land use compatibility, landscape protection and bushfire management. • Limit clearing of native vegetation on private land. • Explore opportunities for long term restoration of the Edna May mining site while ensuring the sustainability and viability of its operations in the long-term. • Implement actions contained in the Westonia Common Conservation Management Plan. • Focus development in locations shown on the Westonia Townsite map and existing cleared land. • Once mining operations have ceased land is to be rehabilitated to a suitable standard.

Agricultural and Rural Land

Strategies	Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rural use of land should be protected to support agricultural activity while facilitating a wide variety of complimentary land uses. Discourage further, unnecessary, subdivision of agricultural land 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the subdivision of rural land only where it is in accordance with Development Control Policy 3.4: Subdivision of Rural Land including subdivision of homesteads from large corporate landholdings. Rural lots and those identified for rural pursuits are intended to be able to accommodate a single house Include private land holdings located outside the Westonia town site in a Rural Pursuits & Hobby Farms precinct' Allow short stay accommodation on rural land where it is part of a rural-themed tourism activity.

1.3 Implementation

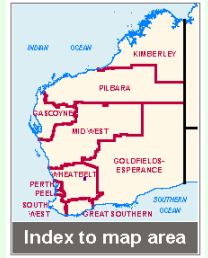
The Council have resolved that a formal Local Town Planning Scheme is too complex and an inappropriate process considering the limited size of the Shire and types of development issues it faces.

The Shire considers that it is important to maintain statutory control over development in the Shire and to protect and enhance the Shire's existing character. In particular, the Shire is seeking to direct land use in the townsite, and control repurposed dwellings (sea containers),

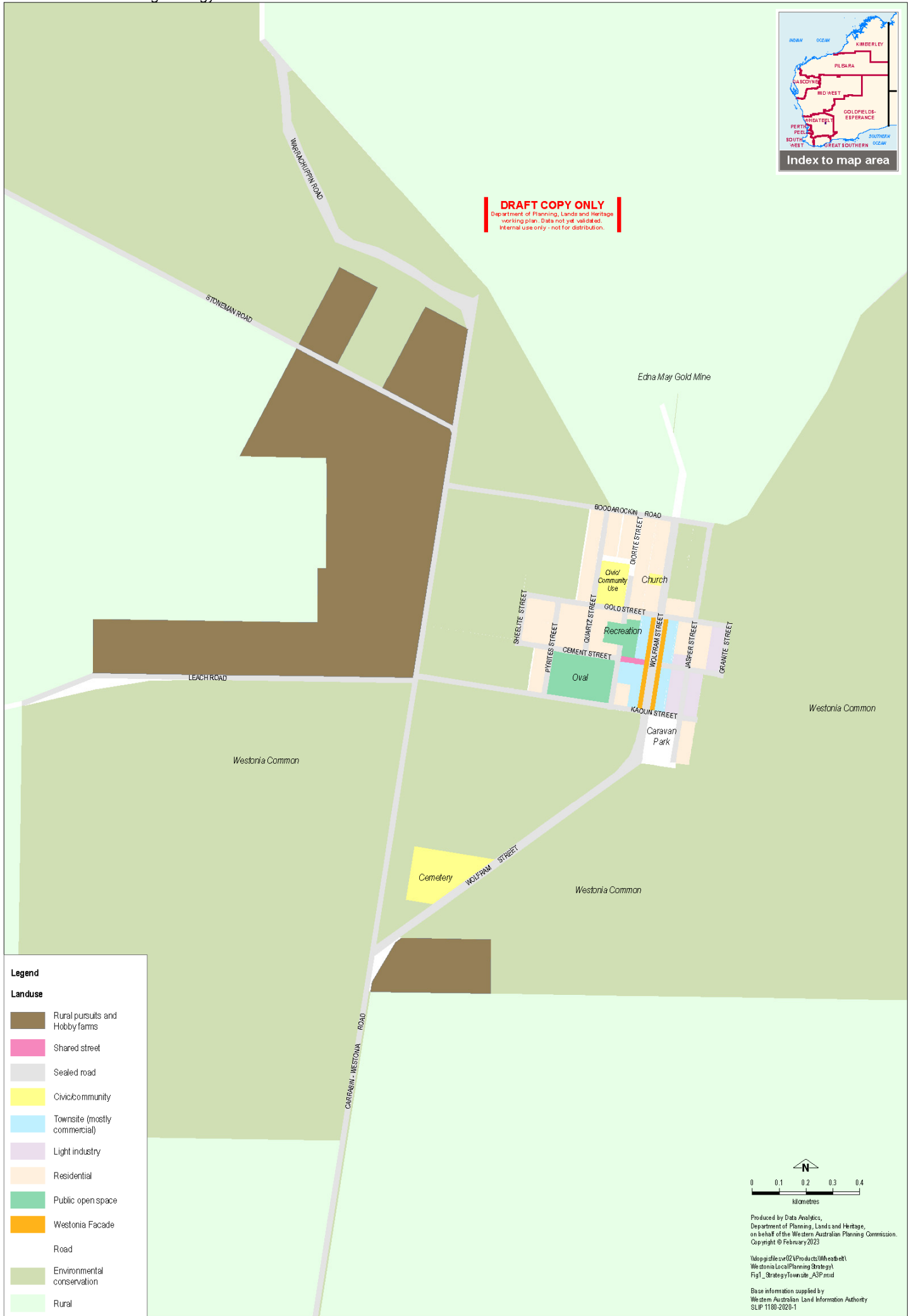
outbuildings (sheds) and boundary fencing via local laws or IDO. The Shire will require applications for some forms of development, such as:

- Westonia Historical Façade Precinct.
- Shipping Sea Containers.
- Fencing





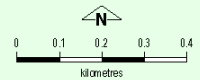
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 Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage
 working plan. Data not yet validated.
 Internal use only - not for distribution.



Legend

Landuse

- Rural pursuits and Hobby farms
- Shared street
- Sealed road
- Civic/community
- Townsite (mostly commercial)
- Light industry
- Residential
- Public open space
- Westonia Facade
- Road
- Environmental conservation
- Rural



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 SLP 1180-2020-1

Strategy map - townsite

Figure 1

Part 2 – Background and Analysis

2.1 Introduction

The Shire of Westonia (the Shire) covers an area of 3,268 square kilometres in Western Australia's Wheatbelt region, located 316 kilometres east of Perth and 306 kilometres west of Kalgoorlie (Figure 1). The Shire runs approximately 150km north to south and 40km west to east and is traversed at its southern end by the Great Eastern Highway. The Shire includes the towns and hamlets of:

- Westonia;
- Boodarockin;
- Carrabin;
- Warralakin;
- Warrachuppin; and
- Walgoolan

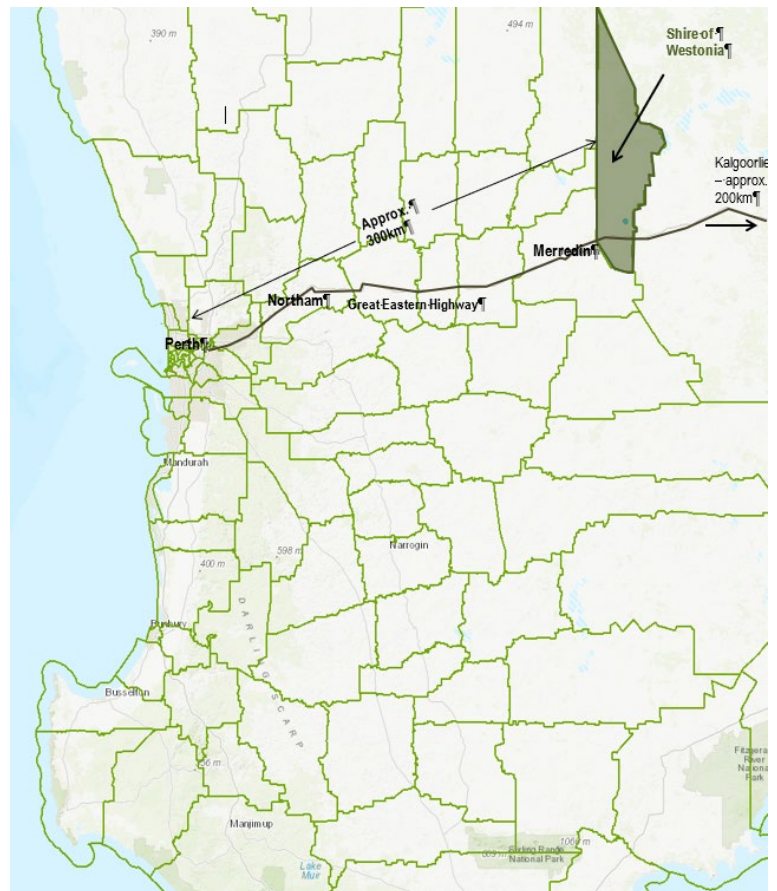
As of the 2021 census there were 395 people in the Shire including residents, workers and visitors.

The Shire's main industries are broadacre wheat/sheep farming and gold mining.

The Agriculture Clearing Line runs through the Shire, marking the eastern edge of the intensive agriculture zone across the south of the State.

The Shire is bordered by the Shires of Mukinbudin, Nungarin, Merredin and Yilgarn.

The Shire of Westonia does not currently have a Local Planning Scheme. To date, development, has been controlled primarily through the granting of building permits.



2.2 Local Profile

2.2.1 Climate

Westonia has a warm Mediterranean climate, comprising rainy winters and dry summers. The Shire lies towards the inland margin of this climate type, which transitions eastward to the semi-arid (dry) climate of the Goldfields.

Temperature

The maximum summer temperature ranges from 28 degrees to 42 degrees, with an average maximum summer temperature of approximately 33 degrees. In winter, the maximum temperature ranges from 12 degrees to 21 degrees, with an average maximum winter temperature of approximately 20 degrees.

Rainfall

The Shire receives an annual average of 331mm of rainfall, mostly during winter. Summer months are dry. The Shire's rainfall is at the low end of rainfall across the Wheatbelt.

The CSIRO report *Climate Change in Australia*¹ indicates that the southwest of Western Australia has experienced a substantial rainfall decline since 1975. Recent droughts have become hotter with both the maximum and minimum temperatures higher than in previously recorded dry periods.

In parts of the southwest the decline in cool season rainfall is as much as 40 per cent over the past 50 years, with large decreases in runoff. There is significant variation in climate change forecasts.



Elachbutting Rock

2.2.2 Geology and landform

The Shire's gently undulating surface of laterite, clay, sand and salt lakes is underlain by ancient granitic and greenstone rocks from the Archean age that comprise the Yilgarn Block. Gold is the major mineral found.

There is no connected drainage, although a chain of salt lakes, a remnant of ancient drainage systems, traverses the centre of the Shire from Baladjie Lake in the east (in the Shire of Yilgarn) to Lake Champion in the west (in the Shire of Nungarin).

Massive granite outcrops are a distinctive feature, and several are prominent landmarks:

- Elachbutting Rock, about 100km north of Westonia townsite, is a large, distinctive natural rock formation with similar 'wave' characteristics to Wave Rock, as well as several large caverns and a tunnel.
- Baladjie Rock is approximately 42km northeast of Westonia townsite on Koorda-Bullfinch Road in woodland adjacent to Baladjie Lake.
- The Sandford Rocks Nature Reserve, 10 km northeast of Westonia on Boodarockin Road, protects 806ha of granite outcrop, pools, wildflowers, scrub and woodland and contains a wide variety of flora and fauna species.
- Yanneymooning Reserve, about 75km north of Westonia town site, is a 513ha reserve containing granite formations and bushland.

2.2.3 Biodiversity

Figure 4 maps the key environmental features of the Shire of Westonia including areas with remnant vegetation and threatened ecological communities.

According to the *Westonia Common Conservation Management Plan 2016-2021*, approximately 40 per cent, or 130,985ha of the Shire, contains remnant native vegetation protected by the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*. This *Act* also protects individual flora that has been declared rare or threatened. The proportion of the Shire that retains its original vegetation is high for the Wheatbelt, and is explained by the Shire's location at the fringe of the vast Great Western Woodlands which extends eastwards.

The State Barrier Fence passes east-west 27km south of the Shire's northern tip. Designed to confine emus, wild dogs and kangaroos to the rangelands and woodlands that adjoin agricultural land, it marks the northern extent of agricultural land use in the Shire.

In regions such as the Wheatbelt in which a large proportion of the original vegetation has been cleared, remnant vegetation along roadsides often has conservation significance. A 2015 survey of 1,658km of the Shire's roadsides, undertaken as part of the Commonwealth Government's assessment of the Eucalypt Woodlands of the Western Australian Wheatbelt Threatened Ecological Community, indicates that the Shire's roadside vegetation is of good quality compared with that of many other Wheatbelt shires. 58% of the roadsides were classified as having high conservation value; 94% of the roadside comprised two or more layers of vegetation (tree layer plus shrub understorey); 61% of roadsides contained less than 20% weeds; and 48% of the roadsides contained more than 20 plant species. These statistics were achieved despite about half of the roadsides remnants surveyed being only 1-5m in width. The vegetation in the road reserves provide linkages between areas of remnant bushland, contributing to the Shire's ecological values.

There is also remnant vegetation on private landholdings and many farms also comprise vegetation strips which have been retained as wind breaks and/or to support farm management practices. These strips contribute to connections between vegetated areas and ecological linkages.

Surrounding the Westonia town site are a number of remnant vegetation reserves collectively known as the Westonia Common (Figure 3).

The Common is subject to numerous threats including (but not limited to) invasive flora and fauna species, inappropriate recreational use, abandoned mine shafts and a drying climate. In 2016 the commissioned the preparation of a Conservation Management Plan (CMP) which incorporates best practice approaches to facilitate maintenance of the unique natural heritage for future generations.

2.2.4 Threatened ecological communities.

The Shire of Westonia contains two threatened ecological communities (TECs): 'Eucalypt Woodlands of the Western Australian Wheatbelt'; and 'Granite Pool Invertebrate Assemblages'.

The Wheatbelt's eucalypt woodlands are protected under the Commonwealth's *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*. These woodlands, dominated by a complex mosaic of eucalypt species with a tree or mallet form over an understorey with a highly variable structure and composition, were once the most common type of vegetation across the Wheatbelt. A tree habit refers to a eucalypt with an erect, single stemmed trunk and variable crown form and mallet habit refers to a eucalypt with a single, slender trunk and steep-angled branches that give rise to a dense crown.

However, extensive clearing has taken place throughout the Wheatbelt and these woodlands now exist as fragmented, scattered remnants.

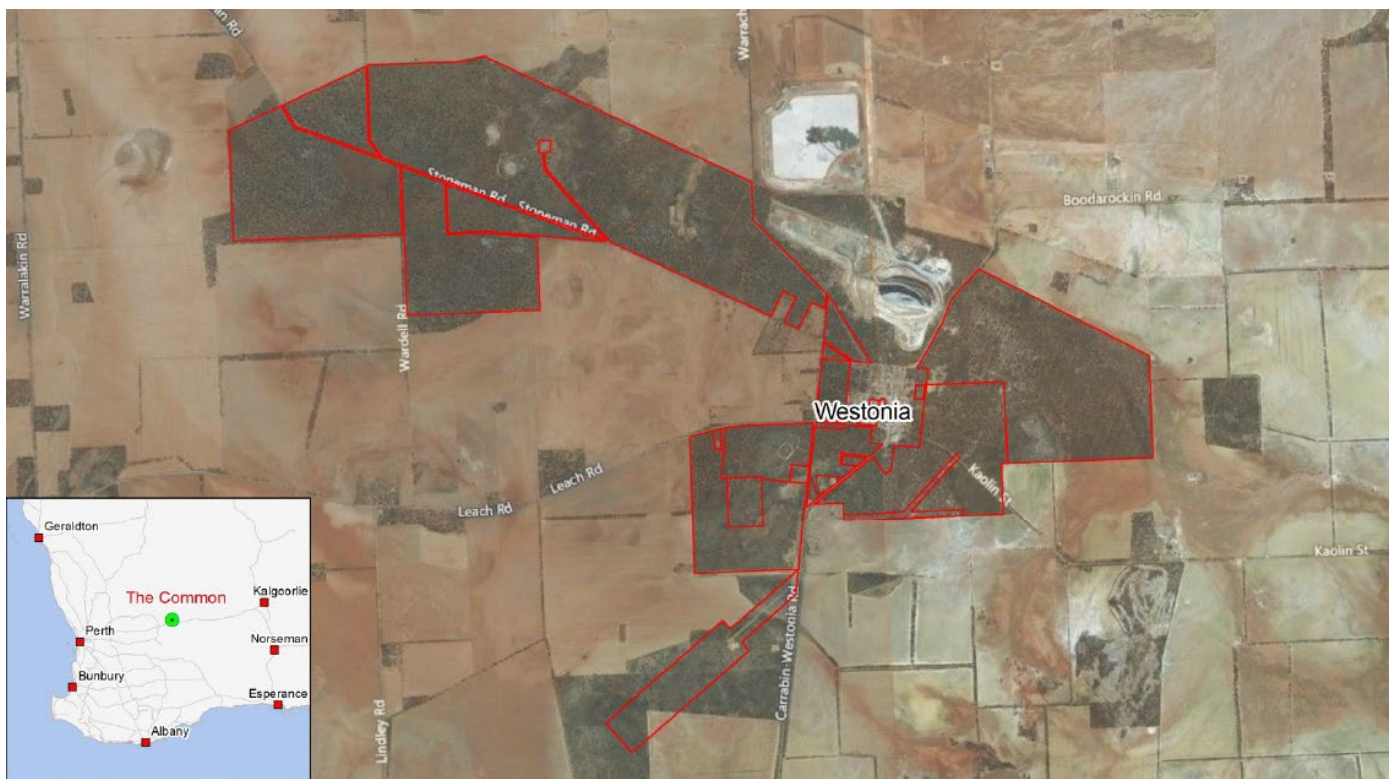


Figure 2 - Westonia Common

Granite pool invertebrate assemblages are protected under the State's *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*. Granite rock formations are located in DBCA legislated lands and and Crown reserves.

Long-term management of the environment involves the enhanced conservation of the State's natural and biological resources, to achieve a Comprehensive, Adequate and Representative (CAR) reserve system, which establishes integrated water cycle management, and creates ecological linkages to protect biodiversity.

The WA Herbarium's database of Western Australian flora identifies 876 species of flora known to occur within the Shire. Of these, ten species have been declared threatened. These are species of flora that are likely to become extinct, are rare, or are otherwise in need of special protection. A further 44 species of flora which may be threatened, but about which there is insufficient information, have been included on a list of priority flora under priorities 1, 2 or 3. Priority 4 species are those that require regular monitoring.

The Shire is home to 12 species of fauna that are protected under the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* or an international agreement.

2.2.5 Water Resources

The Shire has no major permanent water courses, although there is a network of salt lakes which can connect and form non-perennial (temporary) watercourses during wetter years. The Shire does not contain any declared public drinking water source areas.

2.2.6 Bushfire

Bushfires are an inherent part of the Australian environment. In many parts of Western Australia, bushfire threat is increasing due to hotter, drier weather conditions associated with long-term climate change.

Mapping of bushfire prone areas as of February 2019 (Figure 5) shows that approximately half the Shire has been declared bushfire prone. Areas which are declared bushfire prone are dispersed throughout the Shire, with larger areas in the northern half of the Shire which is more vegetated. Much of the area surrounding and within Westonia town site is identified as bushfire prone.

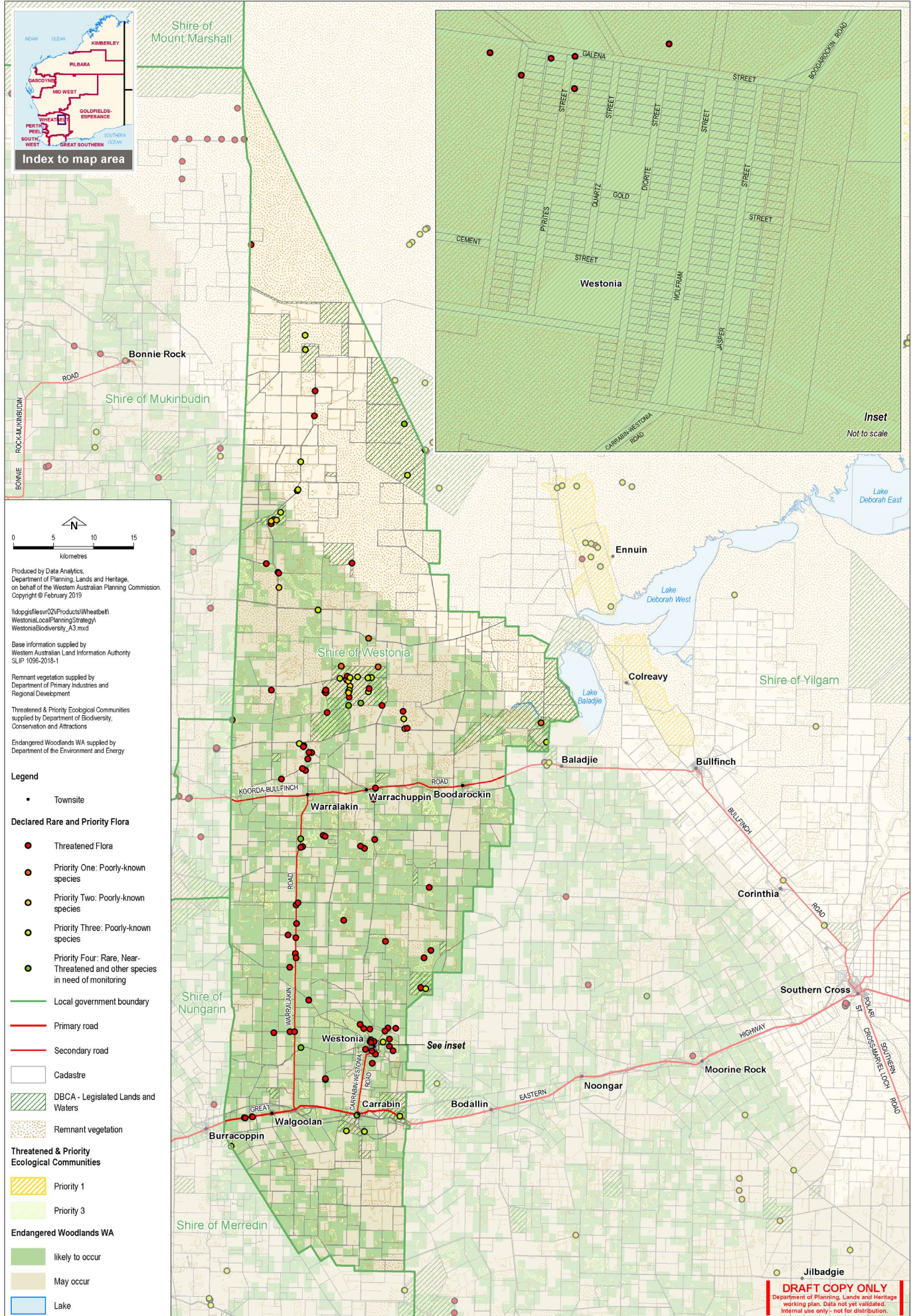
2.2.7 Landscape and Views

The Shire's open, gently undulating agricultural landscape is principally viewed from Great Eastern Highway. Those who venture to the nearby Westonia town site find a streetscape of prominent faux heritage structures and building facades, and streets closed off to create sculpture parks. The town is surrounded by extensive bushland, and other bush reserves throughout the shire feature massive granite outcrops that provide extensive views. The Shire's well-vegetated road reserves provide close-up views of wildflowers in season. The Edna May open cut gold mine just north of Westonia town site is a dramatic landscape feature, with a public viewing platform.

2.2.8 Key Implications

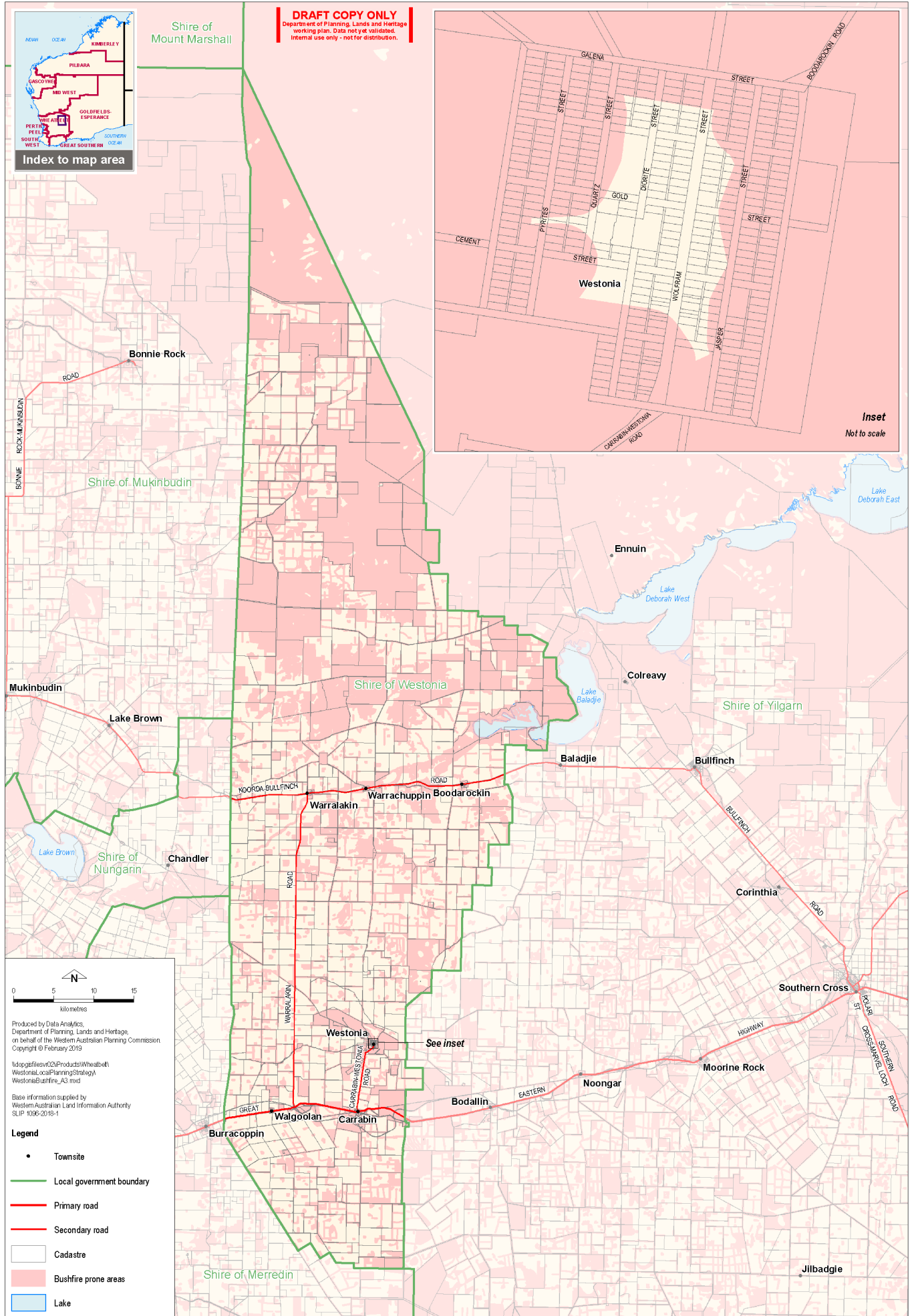
- Low rainfall levels limit access to a sustainable water supply, with climate change likely to further limit access into the future. The long-term sustainability of agriculture will become more dependent on efficient water practices.
- Extensive areas of native vegetation on crown land and land managed by the State and local government are an asset to the Shire and should be reserved for conservation in the local planning strategy.
- Vegetation on private land should be retained where possible as it forms linkages between larger reserves of remnant vegetation.
- Vegetation in road reserves contributes significantly to the Shire's biodiversity and mechanisms to protect the vegetation should be implemented.
- Wildflowers in bushland reserves and along roadsides, and large granite outcrops, are tourist assets.
- The Shire comprises extensive Bushfire Prone Areas, however provisions contained in the Planning Regulations to address development in bushfire prone areas in Western Australia do not currently apply. It therefore depends on best practice principles and control via building compliance.

Westonia Local Planning Strategy



Biodiversity map

Figure 3



Bushfire map

Figure 4

2.3 Population, Land and Housing

2.3.1 Current Population

According to the 2021 census, the Shire has a resident population of 301 people. Of the total population 1.6% are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islanders.

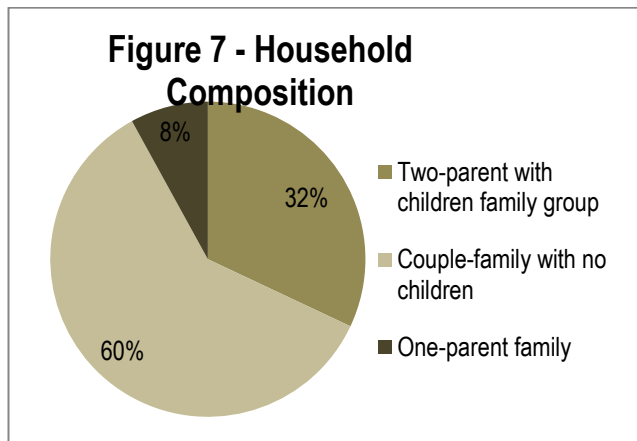
The majority of the population live in the Westonia townsite. The population has remained relatively steady over the past 20 years.

Demographic Profile

Of the Shire's resident population, approximately 60.1 per cent is male. This compares to 50 per cent male and 50 per cent female across Western Australia.

As of the 2016 census, the median age of the Shire's population was 48 years, which is older than the State average of 38 years. There are higher proportions of those in most age brackets above 55 years which has been an ongoing trend and indicates potential demand for aged person housing in the Westonia town site.

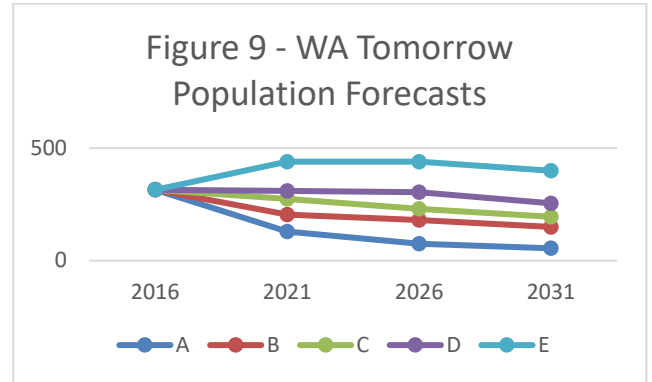
As shown in Figure 7 below, as of the 2021 Census, the predominant family type in Westonia was couples without kids (60%), followed by couples with kids (32%)



2.3.2 Future Population Forecasts

The State Government's official population forecasts for the years 2016 to 2031 are set out in *Western Australia Tomorrow 2015 (WA Tomorrow)*, which contains a series of population forecasts based on current fertility, mortality and migration trends. These forecasts are divided into five 'bands' – bands A and B contain lower forecasts; band C is the median forecast and bands D and E represent higher forecasts.

As shown in Figure 8, the population forecasts for the Shire, to the year 2031, range from 55 to 400. The band C (median) 2026 population forecast is for 195 residents.



But the population of the Shire is sensitive to the economic volatility of the mining industry and state and global mining demand will invariably cause short term fluctuation in population statistics.

There has also been a trend for "lifestylers" to locate to the Westonia townsite taking advantage of the Lifestyle Village they promoted by the Council.

2.3.3 Settlements

The Shire contains six gazetted townsites shown in Figure 10, most of which apart from Westonia contain little or no development.

Westonia townsite

Settlement within the Shire is concentrated in the Westonia townsite, which is the Shire's administrative and commercial centre. The town site covers approximately 153 hectares. Further detail on land and land ownership in the Westonia town site is provided under the Land Ownership and Lot Supply section below.

Other townsites

The Shire contains another five gazetted townsites – Boodarockin, Carrabin, Warralakin, Warrachuppin and Walgoolan.

Boodarockin

The Boodarockin townsite, covers approximately 59.5 hectares containing 34 residential sized lots.

Carrabin

The Carrabin townsite covers approximately 153 hectares containing 66 lots approximately 1000 square metres in area. Development within the townsite comprises a service station and hotel.

Warralakin

The Warralakin townsite covers approximately 45.4 hectares and contains 38 residential sized lots Development



within the townsite comprises CBH grain handling facilities and three single dwellings.

Warrachuppin

The Warrachuppin townsite covers approximately 50.3 hectares containing 32 historic lots. No development exists within the townsite.

Walgoolan

The Walgoolan townsite covers approximately 40.4 hectares containing 51 residential sized lots and seven rural residential sized lots (one hectare to four hectares in area). Six lots in the town site have been developed.

2.3.4 Housing

As of 2022 there were 112 dwellings in the Shire, which consists almost entirely of single detached dwellings. 65 of the dwellings are located in the Westonia town site with the remaining 47 mostly on rural properties.

In the Westonia townsite, 100% of private dwellings were occupied. The average household size of occupied dwellings is 2.2 people which is slightly less than the state average of 2.5 people. About half of dwellings are owned outright and about 20% are rentals.

Most properties are owned by individual landowners with a small number owned by commercial organisations. The Shire is the largest residential landowner in town.

With the number of residents aged 65 and above increasing this indicates the need for aged person housing in the Westonia town site. In August 2018, the State Government transferred a portion of the former primary school site to the Central East Aged Care Alliance (CEACA) for the development of age-friendly independent living units. There

are currently two units with a further four units considered for future construction. The Council own and Manage a further 12 Aged Units.

The relative abundance of vacant land within the Westonia town site is able to cater for the aging demographic, provided it can provide aged care and retirement villages

2.3.5 Land Ownership and Lot Supply

Land ownership across the Shire and Westonia town site is shown in Figure 6. The majority of land in the Shire is privately owned for rural use, with a number of unallocated crown land and crown reserves. Since 2004, there have been no new lots created in the Shire.

The Westonia town site comprises 353 lots which are approximately 1010sqm size. These are arranged in a grid pattern and were gazetted upon the establishment of the Westonia town site in the 1910's. Of the 353 lots, 85 comprise of some form of development, mostly single dwellings.

As of 2023, there is a sufficient number of vacant lots to cater for any additional housing in the short to medium term with water supply and road access. Development in these areas will also assist to consolidate development in the town site. In the longer term, there is demand for some development on lots which are currently crown reserves preferably surrounding the existing school site.

2.3.6 Workforce Accommodation

The mining industry dominates the Shire's workforce and the Shire's development is highly influenced by state and global

mining demands and markets.

Housing for those employed in mining operations is primarily provided through dwellings in the Westonia town site. The caravan park site on Wolfram Street which comprises 18 units and also provides accommodation for mine workers. Fluctuations in state and global demand can result in short term demand for additional workforce accommodation and therefore flexibility is required to cater for changes in demand. In addition, it is important to ensure that mining accommodation is established with easy access to services and supply outlets of an established settlement and to support local business.

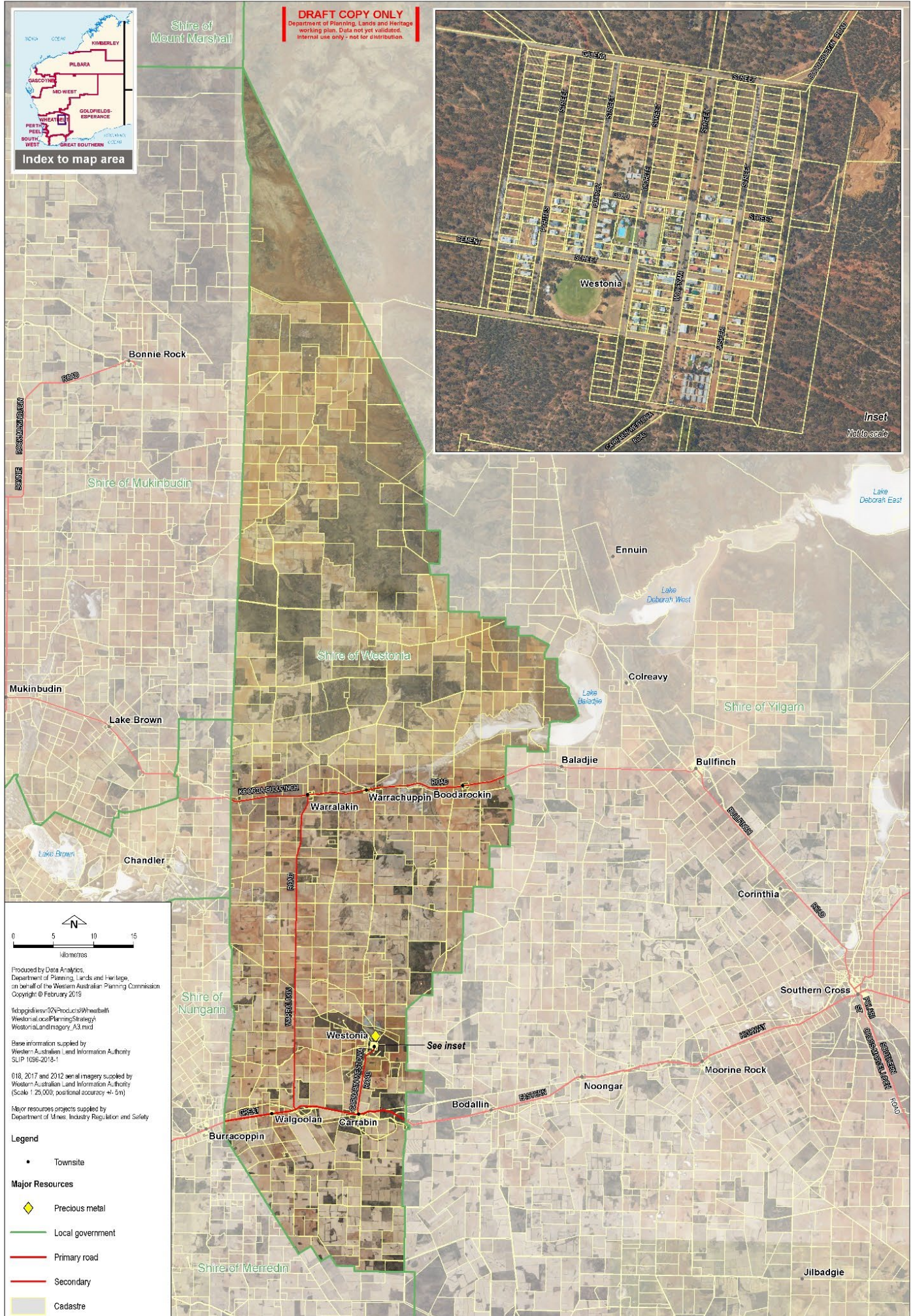
Generally, proposals for workforce accommodation for operational workforces that are outside the jurisdiction of the Mining Act or State Agreement Acts should be located in a town and integrated with town services, in so far as practicable.

It is recommended, however, workforce accommodation be slightly separated from other residential areas unless the proponents can satisfy the Council that the irregular hours of operation will not unduly impact the amenity of the existing residential areas.

2.4.7 Key Implications

- There is a need to locate future development in and around the Westonia town site, particularly in areas with access to constructed roads and services and to define a boundary for future development.
- There is sufficient supply of serviced lots (18 lots) in the Westonia town site to meet short to medium term demand for housing.
- There are 70 lots with road access that could be developed for housing. Some of these lots are crown reserves and/or do not currently have access to a mains water supply.
- Future population and housing needs are highly dependent on mining activity in the Shire and could vary over time. There needs to be flexibility in the town planning strategy to provide opportunities for workforce accommodation within the residential area.
- The ageing population is likely to require additional aged housing in the Westonia town site.

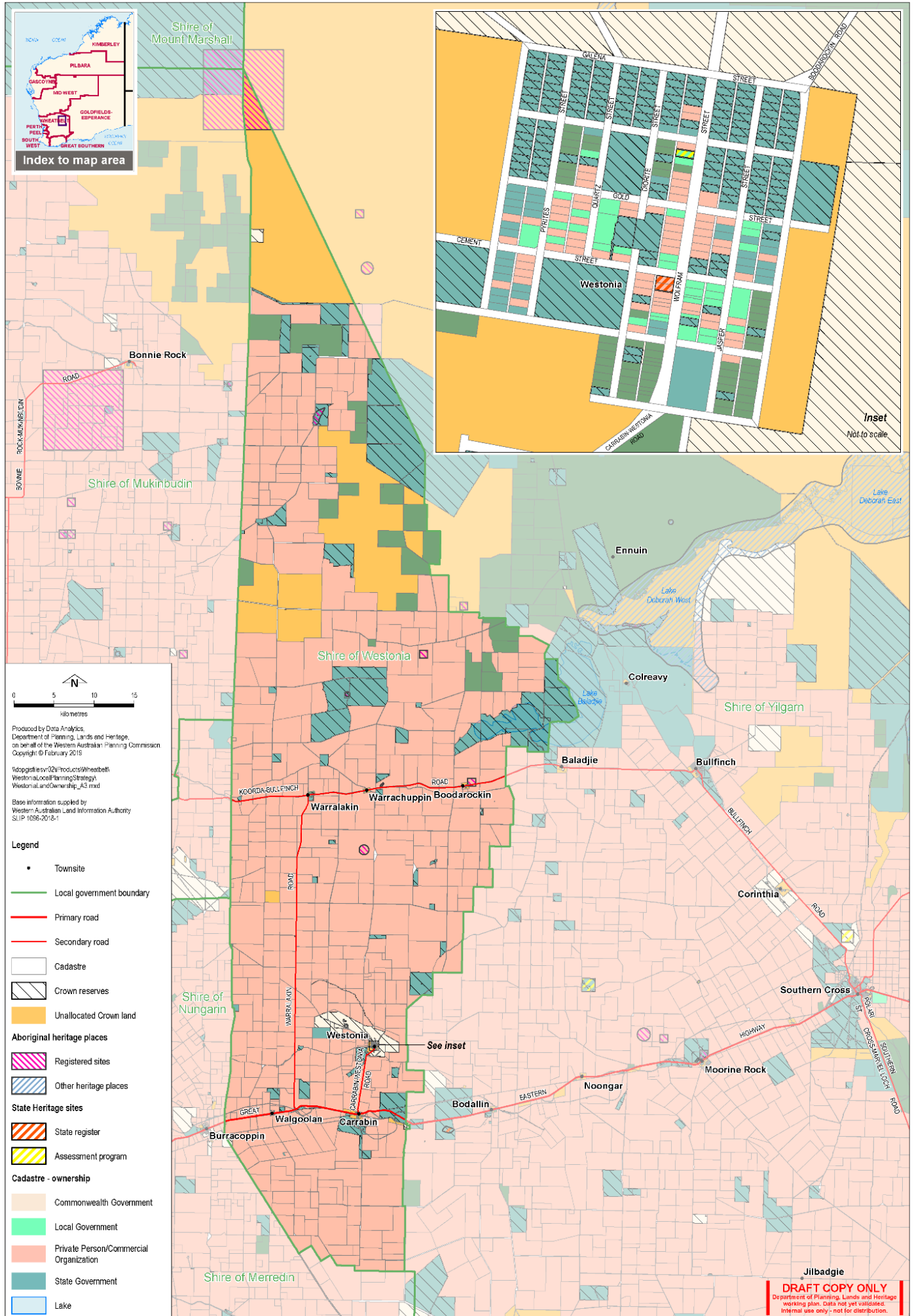




Imagery map

Figure 5

Westonia Local Planning Strategy



Land ownership map

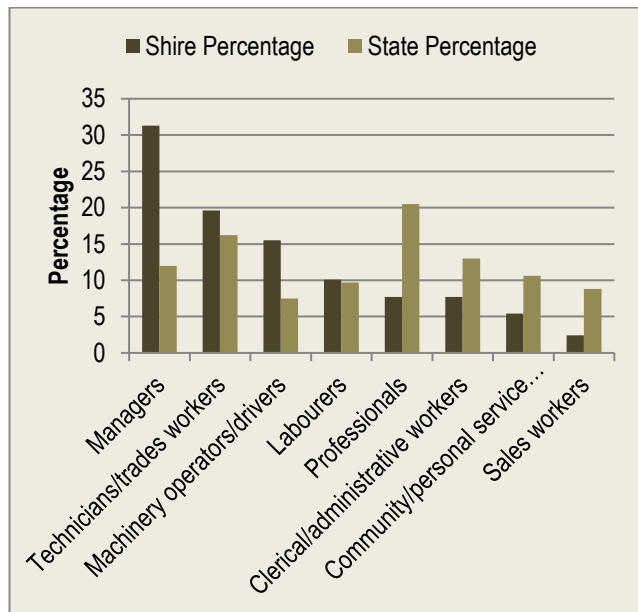
Figure 6

2.4 Economy and Employment

2.4.1 Employment

At the time of 2021 census, 115 people in the Shire were in the labour force. Of these 72% were employed full time, 21% were employed part-time and none were unemployed.

The highest number of persons (44 per cent) employed by occupation in the workforce were employed as managers



Agriculture also dominates the local economy with almost most residents employed in grain-sheep or grain-beef cattle farming or some other form of grain growing. The number of those employed in gold ore mining has fallen between 2016 and 2021 but may rise again as mining activity increases.

Catering for an ageing population and promoting tourism opportunities in the Shire may offer some employment growth and diversification.

Industry of employment	Shire	State
Gold Ore Mining	8%	1.4%
Grain-Sheep or Grain-Beef Cattle Farming	16%	0.3%
Other Grain Growing	12%	0.3%
Local Government Administration	10%	1%
Hospitals	6%	4%

Table 1: Employment by industry

2.4.2 Mining

The Edna May gold mine originally commenced operations in 1911 and has been closed and reopened a number of times due to water and labour supply shortages and low ore quality. The mine most recently resumed operations in 2007 and the first gold to be poured from the mine occurred in 2010. This began full production at the Edna May gold mine for the fourth time. In 2015, a programme to confirm the viability of an underground mining operation commenced. In October 2017, ownership of the Edna May gold mine was transferred to Ramelius Resources, which plans to conduct drilling programs and carry out feasibility studies to determine the best way of extending the mine's operational life. Table 2 below outlines the mine's gold production since 2010.

Table 2: Edna May Gold Production

Financial Year	Gold production (ounces)
2009/2010	10,222
2010/2011	65,592
2011/2012	73,264
2012/2013	86,216
2013/2014	80,165
2014/2015	98,766
2015/2016	71,028
2016/2017	70,188



The Shire also comprises undeveloped mineral deposits of uranium in the north of the Shire, gypsum and magnetite. Note: The State Government has implemented a 'no uranium' condition on future mining leases.

2.4.3 Agriculture

Almost all of the Shire of Westonia falls within the Southwest Agricultural Area (as defined by the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development), the boundary of which is also known as the clearing line. As the name suggests, land in this area has been extensively cleared to facilitate the agricultural development and use of land. As a result, approximately 60 per cent of the Shire of Westonia has been cleared of native vegetation.

Shire of Westonia's agricultural sector is dominated by grain-sheep or grain-beef cattle farming and other grain growing. Mapping prepared by the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development indicates that large parts of the Shire of Westonia are suitable for dry cropping. A CBH grain silo is located at Warralakin.

The Shire of Westonia's crops and livestock are afforded some protection by the State Barrier Fence, which plays an important role in preventing:

- the migration of emus, which can affect grain crops, from rangelands into the southwest agricultural area; and
- the entry of wild dogs, which attack livestock, into the southwest of Western Australia.

Given the importance of agriculture to Westonia's economy, rural land should be protected from proposals that might compromise agricultural viability such as ad-hoc subdivision and incompatible use or development.

Though with the onset of Corporate Farm ownership prevalent in the Shire an issue has arisen in the rural area that old homesteads (serviced by power and water) are being decommissioned which affectively reduces the capacity for population growth in the rural areas.

Council therefore encourages small subdivisions of serviced homesteads lots that can be sold off to hobby lifestyle people that will help increase resident population.

2.4.5 Tourism

The Shire has a variety of tourist attractions including the Westonia townsite facades, walk trails, granite outcrops, Westonia Common woodlands, Historic Westonia Tavern, the Golden Pipeline Drive Trail, Edna May Gold Mine Lookout and the Hood- Penn Old Club Hotel Museum.

The Shire boasts several granite outcrops including the Yanneymooning Hill, Chiddarcooping and Sandford Rocks Nature Reserve, Boodalin Soak, Baladjie and Elachbutting Rocks.

The tourism industry makes an economic and social contribution to the Shire and can assist in supporting the conservation of environmental and heritage features.

Tourist accommodation is currently available and includes the Westonia caravan park, free campsite at St Luke's Church, Westonia tavern and motel and the Carrabin hotel, Motel and roadhouse.

2.4.6 Local Businesses

The Westonia town site has a General Store, Post Office, Community Resource Centre, Tavern and Motel, Roadhouse and Motel (in Carrabin), a builder, Mobile Mechanic, carpenter and cabinet maker, Wessy Woods, mining support businesses as well as the Ramelius Resources Mine. It is important for the long-term sustainability of the town that existing retailers and services continue to operate.

2.4.7 Key Implications

- The economy of Westonia is highly dependent on gold mining operations and the agricultural sector and economic activity is susceptible to fluctuation.
- Ensuring the long-term sustainability of mining operations is important for long-term economic growth.
- Facilitating diversification in the agricultural sector, service economy and tourism will support the local economy.
- The lack of workers aged between 15 and 44 years may constrain economic growth.
- Corporate Farming ownership reducing outlying populations.

2.5 Community, Recreational Facilities and Open Space

2.5.1 Recreational Facilities and Open Space

Westonia comprises a range of excellent sporting facilities and has numerous recreational areas including picnic spots, parks and gardens.

Recreation Complex and Oval

Located near the centre of town in Westonia. The Recreation Complex has a grassed oval, cricket pitch, a function hall and gymnasium.

Playground and Skate Park

Recently upgraded, the children's playground has a grassed area, shade trees, play equipment and well serviced public conveniences. It is located on the corner of Diorite and Cement Streets in Westonia.

Wanderers Stadium & Bowling Green

The Wanderer's Stadium is located in the Diorite Street Sporting Precinct and comprises a sheltered 6 rink Bowling Green, tennis courts, function area and BBQ facilities. The multi-purpose Stadium serves as club rooms for the Westonia Tennis Club and the Westonia Bowling Club.

Westonia Memorial Swimming Pool

The Westonia memorial Swimming Pool is currently an 8 lane x 25m lap pool with a shaded toddlers pool. Council have undertaken a Masterplan for the refurbishment of the Pool facilities which will modernise the facility for the future.

Golf Course

The Westonia Golf Course, with 18 holes and sand greens, is located east of the Westonia townsite on Della Bosca Road.

2.5.2 Emergency Services

There are no police stations within the Shire; however, there are seven police stations within 100 kilometres of the Westonia townsite. These are located in Southern Cross, Bencubbin, Mukinbudin, Kellerberrin, Merredin, Bruce Rock and Narembreen. There are three bushfire brigades within the Shire, located at Warralakin, Westonia and Walgoolan.

The Council also manages 3x Bushfire brigades throughout the district with numerous items of equipment for fire suppression.



2.5.3 Health

There are no hospital facilities within the Shire; however, facilities are available in the Shire of Merredin (to the west) and Southern Cross (to the east).

Council has a well-equipped Health Clinic which currently is serviced by a visiting Doctor on a monthly basis, a Nurse Practitioner visiting one day a week. Council also employs a qualified registered nurse as a Health & Wellbeing Officer who undertakes house visits and initiate programs that make elderly residents stay in their home more comfortable.

A St Johns Sub-Centre utilising volunteers is located with the townsite.

2.5.4 Education

There are no primary or secondary education facilities within the Shire; however, there is a daily bus to Merredin College which provides education from Kindergarten through to year 12. The local primary school closed in 2014 and now serves as a Civic Centre for the Seniors residing in the district.

2.5.5 Social Organisations

Social groups are a very important part of the Shire and include the Westonia Progress Association, church groups, emergency services, a museum committee and a Tidy Towns committee.

2.5.6 Cemetery

The Shire's cemetery is located on Wolfram Street, at the southern tip of the Westonia townsite's gazetted boundary. The cemetery occupies a small portion of Reserve 15664, which is approximately four hectares in area and has been specifically set aside for use as a cemetery.

2.5.7 Key Implications

- The town has a number of recreational facilities which need to be maintained and is also reliant on connections to services outside of town.



2.6 Character and Heritage

2.6.1 Aboriginal Cultural Heritage

The *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2021* provides for the protection and preservation of Aboriginal heritage and culture throughout Western Australia, including places and objects of significance to Aboriginal people. Aboriginal sites and materials are protected regardless of whether or not they have been previously recorded or reported.

The Western Australian register of Aboriginal heritage sites identifies seven registered heritage sites within the Shire:

- site 5601 – Mukinbudin – painting
- site 5887 – Elachbutting Hill – painting
- site 5063 – Chiddarcopping Hill – painting
- site 5512 – Chiddarcooping Hill – painting
- site 5900 – Warrachuppin Rock – artifacts / scatter, painting
- site 5901 – Boodarockin Siding – painting
- site 5899 – Warren Double Cunyan – engraving, painting

There may be additional sites which have not yet been identified - as these are identified, they should be protected, in accordance with the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972*.

2.6.2 Historic Heritage

The Shire's Municipal Inventory (MI), now referred to as Local Government Inventories (LGI) was adopted in 1998 and comprises 67 places including a number of tanks, school sites, halls, wells and former government and commercial buildings. The Shire contains one heritage site

which has been added to the State register of heritage places, the Edna May Westonia Tavern (place 2707).

The tavern was relocated from the townsite of Bonnievale and rebuilt in Westonia in response to the development of the Edna May Gold Mine in the early 1910s. It was one of three such establishments servicing the gold industry in Westonia at the time.

The tavern demonstrates the continued development and relevance of a hotel in Westonia that has experienced and survived the boom and bust of mining at various times since 1915. It has significant social value to the local community as Westonia's only remaining hotel and as a social venue and gathering place that makes a significant contribution to a sense of place for residents and visitors to the district. It is also the only remaining single-storey timber-framed hotel in the Wheatbelt and is unique in Western Australia as a relocated timber and corrugated iron hotel still in operation.

To reflect the Town's heritage, the "Wolfram Street Facades" project has been undertaken to construct new buildings in the style of the 1920's in the town's commercial area. The town's original bank, cafe, hotel, fire station, boarding house and green grocer's store have new facades and new buildings have been constructed in the style of the 1920s.

2.6.3 Key Implications

- Aboriginal and historic heritage sites need to be protected.
- Any native title claims affecting the Shire need to be considered when developing land use proposals, particularly if the proposal affects Crown land.
- Continue to reflect the Town's heritage through the built form character along Wolfram Street.



2.7 Transport and Infrastructure

The key infrastructure networks are shown in Figure 7.

2.7.1 Roads

The Shire is connected to Perth and the Goldfields region by Great Eastern Highway, which runs through the Carrabin and Walgoolan town sites in the southern part of the Shire. Great Eastern Highway is the only road which is classified as a State Road by Main Roads Western Australia and the only road under its control.

The Westonia town site which is approximately 9km north of Great Eastern Highway is accessed via Westonia Road. Koorda-Bullfinch Road is a regional west-east road which runs through the centre of the Shire and connects Warrachuppin, Warralakin and Boodarockin. Warralakin Road runs in north-south direction and connects Koorda-Bullfinch Road to Great Eastern Highway. Numerous other local roads connect the Shire with the surrounding local government areas.

Within the Shire there are approximately 160 kilometres of sealed roads and 724 kilometres of unsealed roads. Most roads are sealed in the Westonia townsite; however some road reserves have unsealed roads or no constructed roads. Sealed roads across the Shire and town site are shown in Figure 7 below.

The portion of Great Eastern Highway which runs through the Shire is in need of upgrades to improve safety, road alignment and access for oversized vehicles. Upgrades between Walgoolan and Southern Cross have commenced and are due for completion mid-2023. This includes:

- New 2-kilometre East-bound passing lane between Bodallin and Moorine Rock
 - A new west-bound rest area between Bodallin and Moorine Rock
 - A bridge replacement at Walgoolan and a 3 km realignment around the bridge
 - Widening the bridge at Moorine Rock
- Intersection upgrades at Warralakin and Liddell roads

These works are part of a larger improvement project between Walgoolan and Southern Cross. The safety improvements include overlay, widening, realignments, overtaking lanes and bridgeworks. The works are currently split in to eight packages of works which are in various stages of development and delivery.

2.7.2 Rail

The Shire is serviced by a single active heavy rail line, connecting Perth and Kalgoorlie which generally follows the alignment of the Great Eastern Highway. This line carries freight and passenger trains (Prospector Rail which runs at least once per day) with passengers able to board the service at a stop adjacent to the Carrabin townsite. A second, disused railway line follows a similar alignment.

The Carrabin siding was upgraded in December 2018 with services operating from a new station. The project included a new raised and sheltered platform, lighting, parking, bus turning circle and bus shelter.

2.7.3 Air

There is an unsealed airstrip south of the Westonia townsite which is available for public use and is occasionally used by the Royal Flying Doctor Service.

2.7.4 Power

Substations and Terminal Sites

Electricity for the Shire is generated via the Yerbillion substation (off Graham Road, Yerbillion) and Carrabin substation (off Carrabin South Road).

Transmission network

The transmission network throughout the Shire consists of a 66kV which connects Carrabin/ Yerbillion and a 220kv Collgar terminal to Yilgarn which runs along the southern boundary of the Shire.

Distribution network

The distribution network differs from the transmission network, providing a more localised power supply from 33 kilovolts down to 415 volts along less prominent overhead structures or via underground cabling.

The existing distribution network is robust; however, development may require existing distribution infrastructure be upgraded or additional infrastructure be provided. It is important that planning for new development involves consultation with Western Power to inform specific development requirements and potential developer contribution plans from both a distribution and transmission perspective.

Based on current levels of supply and demand, Western Power does not have any plans to increase the power supply network or number of terminal sites within the Shire of Westonia in the next 10 to 25 years.

Any potential sites will require further strategic planning to consider and appropriately plan for the provision of power infrastructure.

2.7.5 Water Supply

The Shire is connected to the Water Corporation's Goldfields and Agricultural Scheme pipeline. Water mains within the Shire are (mostly) small capacity and feed rural farmlands customers. Westonia and Warralakin, which hosts the CBH facility, are the only settlements serviced by mains water. The Water Corporation has one water treatment plant in the Shire at Warralakin.

Although the Water Corporation's planning for the Shire assumes there will be little or no growth in the Westonia and Warralakin townsites, it does recognise that the main unknown and unplanned for source of demand for water are mines and mining camps that occur from time to time.

2.7.6 Wastewater Disposal

There is no reticulated sewerage infrastructure within the Shire. There is a Waste water treatment at the Edna May campsite.

The majority of the residential lots in Westonia are a quarter acre in size (approximately 1010 square metres) and are not connected to a deep sewer system but have individual on-site wastewater disposal systems such as a septic tank and leach drain system.

The Government Sewerage Policy outlines requirements for development to be connected to reticulated sewerage. Residential subdivision and development in towns without an established sewerage scheme and not located in a

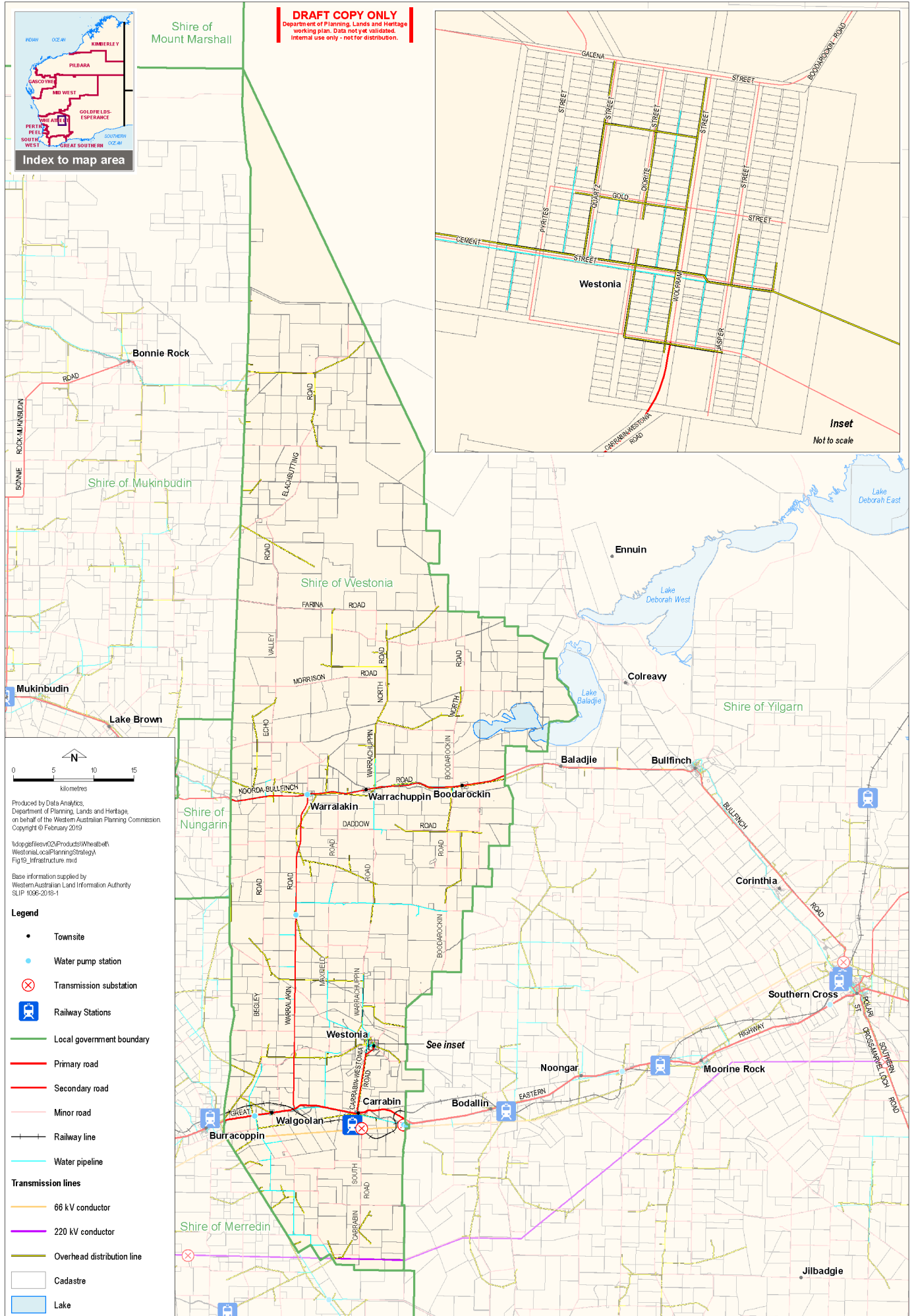
sewerage sensitive area or public drinking water source area, is permitted, provided the average lot size is no less than 1000m², such is the case in Westonia. If development such as grouped dwellings occurs within the town centre, an onsite sewage treatment and disposal system would be required.

2.7.7 Waste Disposal

The Shire operates a 1.9 hectare registered rural landfill site on Reserve 45601, on Leach Road about 1.4 kilometres west of the Westonia town site, which includes facilities for recycling plastics and aluminium cans and disposing of waste oil. A separate facility on Carrabin-Westonia Road accommodates the disposal of green waste.

2.7.8 Key Implications

- Future development in the Westonia town site should be focused on lots with access to power and mains water supply.
- There is a need to build partnerships with State Government in support of upgrades to Great Eastern Hwy.
- Future development in the Westonia town site should focus on areas with existing access to sealed roads.



Infrastructure map

Figure 7

Adoption and Endorsement

CERTIFICATION FOR ADVERTISING

Certified for advertising by the Western Australian Planning Commission on the 14th March 2023

COUNCIL RECOMMENDED / SUBMITTED FOR APPROVAL

Supported for submission to the Western Australian Planning Commission for endorsement by resolution of the Shire of Westonia at the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on _____

SHIRE PRESIDENT

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

ENDORSEMENT OF LOCAL PLANNING STRATEGY

Endorsed by the Western Australian Planning Commission on _____

DELEGATED UNDER S.16 OF
THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT ACT 2005