

City of Greater Geraldton

Residential Development Strategy



PREPARED AND ADOPTED AS A LOCAL PLANNING STRATEGY
PURSUANT TO REGULATIONS 12A AND 12B OF THE TOWN PLANNING REGULATIONS 1967

Draft – September 2012



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**Hames
SHARLEY**



This Strategy should be read in conjunction with the City of Greater Geraldton Commercial Activity Centres Strategy and the associated Background Report. The latter report contains the research and analysis used to formulate both Strategies.

ADVERTISING

The City of Greater Geraldton Local Planning Strategy certified for advertising on _____

Signed for and on behalf of the Western Australian Planning Commission.

*an officer of the Commission duly authorised by the Commission
(pursuant to the Planning and Development Act 2005)*

Date: _____

ADOPTED

The City of Greater Geraldton hereby adopts the Local Planning Strategy, at the Ordinary meeting of the Council held on the xx day of xx 20xx.

MAYOR

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

ENDORSEMENT

Endorsed by the Western Australian Planning Commission on _____

*an officer of the Commission duly authorised by the Commission
(pursuant to the Planning and Development Act 2005)*

Date: _____

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Strategy should be read together with the City of Greater Geraldton Commercial Activity Centres Strategy and the associated Background Report. The latter report contains the research and analysis used to devise the Residential Development Strategy recommendations and actions.

1.1 STRATEGY SCOPE

The City of Greater Geraldton is one of 17 local government areas located in the Mid West Region of Western Australia (see Figure 1). With a current population of 39,000 residents the City of Greater Geraldton houses over half the total population of the region. More than 80% of people in the City live within the urban area of Geraldton. The City has been formed out of the amalgamation of three former local government areas: Geraldton, Greenough and most recently, Mullewa.

Currently the City and the Greater Mid West Region are entering a period of high economic growth due to the regional increase in mining activity, the construction of the Oakajee Port just north of the City of Greater Geraldton and other major projects, including the Square Kilometre Array and installation of the National Broadband Network. As Geraldton is the regional centre for the Mid West it is expected much of the activity and population growth will occur in this area.

The City's vision is to have the capacity to sustain a population of up to 100,000 residents. Geraldton will be the focal point for an active and vibrant centre with significant district centres to the north and south and linked to the small regional towns outside the urban areas.

Three population growth scenarios will form the basis of future demand projections for commercial activity, employment and residential development. The scenarios provide triggers for preferred staging of residential and commercial expansion when the population reaches a certain level.

Scenario 1 population: 50,000

Scenario 2 population: 70,000

Scenario 3 population: 100,000

Population scenarios were chosen according to the following rationale:

- A population target of 100,000 is mentioned in the City of Greater Geraldton *Strategic Community Plan 2011 – 2021*. This will require a sustained growth rate of 5% per annum, and was therefore chosen as the highest target.
- The medium scenario of 70,000 people is based on a growth rate of 3% per annum, which reflects projections quoted within the Mid West Region Investability report based upon ABS population projections. The Investability report stated, '*To reach the higher end population forecasts outlined in the Investability report would require a sustained annualised growth rate of approximately 3% per annum to 2031.*'
- The low-end scenario of 50,000 people is based on a growth rate of 1.5% per annum, which was the current national average rate for the previous 12 months.



Figure 1 – Location of the City of Greater Geraldton in Western Australia

1.2 STRATEGY DRIVERS

1.2.1 Overall Strategic Vision

The City of Greater Geraldton has the following City-Region vision for their ongoing growth and development (*City of Greater Geraldton Strategic Community Plan 2011 – 2021*):

“A creative city-region which has a prosperous, diverse and sustainable community with an attractive Western Australian setting.

In working towards this Vision, the City of Greater Geraldton will:

- Be recognised as a powerhouse of the new economy, a community which people recognise for its vibrancy and amazing transformation. It will be a preferred choice to live, work and play.*
- By 2021, have the capacity to sustain a population of 80,000 to 100,000 people. It will be the focal point for an active and vibrant region containing significant district activity centres to the north, south and the hinterland.*
- By 2050, be Western Australia's primary regional city and centre of global significance.”*

1.2.2 Residential Development Strategy Objectives

The Residential Development Strategy is a response to the changing local and regional economic environment and the need to provide a logical, coherent, highly liveable and sustainable model for residential development in the City of Greater Geraldton to meet the needs of all residents and build strong communities.

The specific objectives of the strategy are to:

- Identify preferred areas for residential growth that are capable of being serviced.
- Investigate the potential for additional 'mixed use' housing in the Geraldton CBD and make recommendations as to how to encourage this type of housing.
- Identify residential 'infill' sites within the Geraldton urban area, especially suitable crown land areas.
- Assess the future housing demands of an aging population having regard to preferred location and lot size.
- Assess the current and future housing demands for students, particular attention should be given to the preferred location of student housing.
- Recommend a regime to manage both the urban and rural interface.
- Develop a mechanism/approach to manage medium and high density housing development so as to maximize the benefits and minimize the community concerns.

1.3 AN ATTRACTIVE CITY: RESIDENTS AND THE ECONOMY

1.3.1 Perspective of Residents

Through the City of Greater Geraldton's ongoing 2029 and Beyond community consultation processes, which have been carried out over several years, the residents of the City have identified a range of characteristics of the area which are attractive. These include:

- Natural landscape – especially the coastline, river environments and Moresby Ranges;
- The family-orientated outdoor lifestyle and activities available (including organised sport and water based activities - fishing, boating, fishing, surfing, windsurfing, etc.);
- The range and proximity of local and regional services;
- The sense of community;
- The ease of living in a small-sized city;
- The working port as a component of the City's history, identity and economy;
- The diversity of the local community;
- Living amongst Aboriginal people;
- The heritage buildings such as the cathedral, railway station and the lighthouse;
- Current housing purchase and rental levels below Perth and therefore relatively affordable;
- Good primary and secondary education and boarding facilities (TAFE and tertiary need expansion); and
- Hospitals and health facilities of a good standard (though more depth of services and expansion required).

The community also identified a number of objectives to achieve in their vision for the future of the City of Greater Geraldton, which included:

- A sustainable public transport network;
- Sustainable services and utilities;
- Linked walkways connecting the city with rural areas;
- A cultural change towards more sustainable consumption;
- A place that supports family living;
- Community hubs with schools and better facilities to reduce reliance on vehicles;
- Smaller and more local retail centres, rather than huge malls;
- Progressive development of the CBD;
- More people living in the CBD;
- Rehabilitation of natural areas along the coast;
- Preservation of natural flora and fauna corridors, particularly along the rivers;
- More public and urban street art;
- Greater emphasis on infill in existing suburbs; and
- Promotion of Indigenous history and communities.

It should also be noted that the continuing engagement and strong investment of the community in developing and taking ownership of a vision for their City is one of the best assets in developing and implementing a successful residential strategy.

1.3.2 Economic Drivers

Achievement of economic development to the extent and quality of that envisioned by the City will depend on two interrelated factors. These are Geraldton's:

- Capacity for economic growth; and
- Drivers for economic development.

Figure 2 shows the relationship between these factors within the City of Greater Geraldton economy.

'Capacity for economic development' refers to the land, labour, capital and enterprise needed to support the desired population growth in the City.

'Drivers for economic development' refers to the actual reasons for economic development and subsequent population growth. This examines factors including the potential value proposition, supply chains, infrastructure workforce characteristics and projects that will be the impetus for the desired population growth in the town.

The Residential Development and Commercial Activity Centres Strategies will largely deal with capacity issues, with concurrent work being undertaken by the City examining the drivers for desired growth.

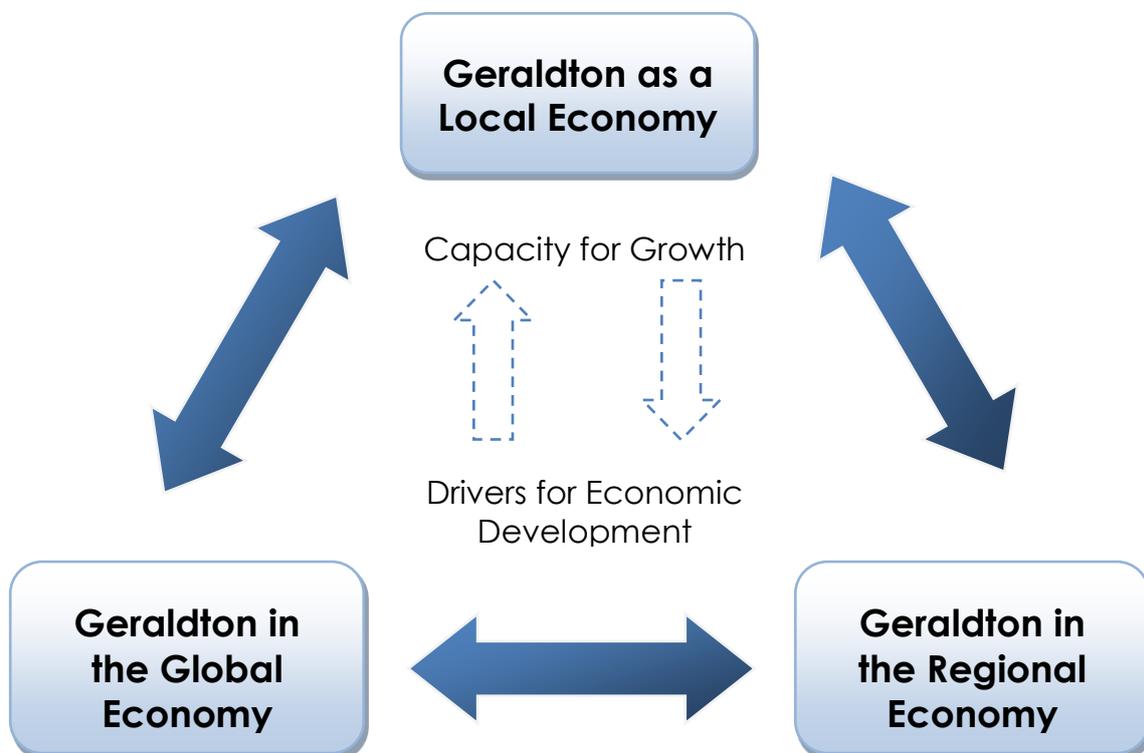


Figure 2 – Relationship between drivers of economic activity in Geraldton

1.4 ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

The key implications identified through the background research process are summarised in this section. These identify what needs to be controlled in future residential development, both in terms of ensuring the needs of current and future residents are met, and in terms of ensuring other environmental, social and economic needs are not unjustly constrained.

The issues and challenges identified here have been used to develop the guiding principles for decision-making detailed in section 2.1 Principles. These have been used to guide Strategy decisions, recommendations and actions and will also be used to guide the review and development of planning instruments used to implement the Strategy, the decisions made regarding individual developments and the on-going monitoring and review of the Strategy.

1.4.1 GOVERN: Strategic and Statutory Planning Instruments

The effectiveness of current town planning instruments needs to be examined in the context of the objectives of the Residential Development Strategy. In particular the following issues have been noted:

- The four planning schemes and interim development order need to be rationalised and incorporated into a single scheme for the City of Greater Geraldton in order for planning of the area to be simplified. This will result in greater certainty being provided for developers and the general community.
- In order to consolidate more intense development around activity centres and provide more certainty for existing residents and potential developers the current tri-coding in Town Planning Scheme No. 3 (Geraldton) and the current R-Coding of residential areas should be evaluated.

1.4.2 NATURE: Landscape, Resources and Heritage

Protection

Natural resources are of high value in the City of Greater Geraldton for reasons of environmental sustainability, place making and amenity, and the ongoing economic sustainability and development of the region. The following challenges have been identified:

- Protection of remnant natural vegetation around Geraldton is critical for biodiversity conservation. Remnant natural vegetation around Geraldton is of high value and currently only 2% is formally protected. The EPA's position on protecting natural vegetation is to concentrate future development on land already cleared.
- High quality agricultural land must be protected from development pressures.
- Coastal developments should protect and enhance the sensitive coastal area, and should be appropriate for the location.
- Heritage places will need to be considered when determining appropriate places for future residential development. This is particularly applicable when considering appropriate locations for infill development, as any new built form will be required to

respect and complement existing heritage places worthy of retention. They may affect the residential yield through reduced height limits or increased setbacks to maintain views to heritage places.

- Sites designated for future development must be investigated in more detail for their Aboriginal heritage significance and action taken if required by relevant legislation or policy, or out of respect for the places and the indigenous people.

Climate Response

The range of local climates in the City of Greater Geraldton and the need to cater for projected changes in climatic conditions has implications for the location of residential development and the building types and orientations. Of particular concern are the following issues:

- Due to the relatively low and varied rainfall across the City of Greater Geraldton the effects of increased population in the region on water supply must be considered for domestic, agricultural and industrial uses.
- Fragmentation of rural land decreases the resilience of the rural land base to climate change and should therefore be discouraged.
- The variation in temperature and prevailing winds in Geraldton and Mullewa highlight the need to consider different lot orientations and building typologies for residential areas in order to maximise the amenity of dwellings while providing more sustainable outcomes. This is particularly critical for medium and high density dwellings.

1.4.3 LIVE: Population, Settlements and Housing

Settlement Pattern

The City of Greater Geraldton contains a wide range of settlement types, from the Geraldton CBD – a regional centre for the Mid West with high density apartments down to lower density suburbia, to outer settlements and small towns, rural lifestyle areas, remote rural areas, Aboriginal settlements and holiday accommodation. Each settlement type requires a local approach to ensure the needs of current and future residents are met, the residential population can be supported by a sustainable economic base and the natural environment cared for into the future. With this in mind the following have been identified:

- All existing Aboriginal settlements with the City of Greater Geraldton are to be recognised through the Strategies.
 - The remaining area of the former Shire of Mullewa has no specific constraints placed on residential development, although the Shire of Mullewa Local Planning Strategy suggests there should be no expansion considered for towns other than Mullewa in order to consolidate existing development and ensure Council resources are not stretched too thinly across the servicing of multiple small towns.
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Future Residential Development

- There is ample undeveloped residential land within the City of Greater Geraldton to provide for a population of 100,000 residents at a low density. According to the recent Greater Geraldton Structure Plan (WAPC, 2011) there are 3,900 hectares of land capable of substantial further development (it should be noted that the structure plan included portions of the Shire of Chapman Valley).
- Most current residential development is low density, with some medium density present. There is the opportunity for more medium density, high density and mixed use development to accommodate a broader range of household types and price-points. The location most suited to greater diversity in dwelling types is the Geraldton urban area.
- Substantial residential intensification is to be focused around activity centres to provide a more sustainable urban form. Areas of high existing amenity should be prioritised, with a precautionary approach taken to increasing density in areas of low amenity or local services.
- Infill (greyfields) development opportunities exist in central Geraldton and surrounding established suburbs.
- Increasing density requires attention to the available recreation facilities and public open space to ensure these dwelling types are an attractive alternative and a high quality of life can be enjoyed by future residents. Therefore, infill development sites located adjacent to or nearby recreation facilities and public open space should be prioritised.
- There is significant potential for future high density and mixed use development to be located near or on the Geraldton foreshore as a result of the excellent amenity of the coastal location.
- The principles of Liveable Neighbourhoods should be applied when assessing structure plans, greenfield developments and development of large urban infill sites.
- Residential development, both in residential areas and when incorporated into activity centres or mixed use development, should comply with the Residential Design Codes to manage building siting and design issues unless deemed appropriate to vary provisions by a local planning scheme, policy or design guidelines.

Living and Housing Needs

- Greater Geraldton's demographic profile is consistent with general trends in the Australian household size, family composition and bedroom numbers per dwelling. The result is smaller households are living in larger dwellings but they don't all necessarily want to live in smaller houses just because the household residents are fewer in number. Moving to a smaller dwelling, especially for the older demographic, is generally precipitated by a major life event but may also be qualified by the availability of high quality, attractive alternative dwellings nearby. Disincentives to moving for older Western Australians are cost and time of search plus taxes, especially stamp duty.
- Although family households will likely continue to dominate in Geraldton, lone person households may increase in the future as a result of an ageing population and a potential increase in students in the future. Lone person households and some forms of family households such as one parent families are increasingly displaying a preference for alternate forms of housing from detached dwellings on large allotments. If these

trends continue there may be greater demand for more compact housing forms, as well as affordable housing and adaptable housing.

- In terms of ethnic groups, the dominance of Indigenous people in Mullewa and Geraldton's populations compared with the Regional Western Australian average is notable.
 - Current housing stock in Greater Geraldton is predominantly detached dwellings with 85% of stock being of this type.
 - Flats/units/apartments are the second most available dwelling type at 8% of the stock.
 - Consistently higher sale prices have been achieved by separate houses versus multi-unit residential in Geraldton-Greenough. Generally the latter costs around one third less than the average single residential house. In Geraldton the average price achieved for a 1-2 bedroom dwelling is 20% less than a 3 bedroom and 37% less than a 4 bedroom.
 - A benefit of apartment, unit and semi-detached dwelling living is that they are usually located closer to centres of activity and have good access to amenities and employment. These aspects increase quality of life and reduce travel times. The provision of 2-3 bedroom medium density dwellings should be concentrated on as a key part of the future dwelling stock of Geraldton.
 - Ageing households still seem to be living in and requiring larger dwellings with multiple bedrooms. Whilst the number of bedrooms in a dwelling generally decreases as density increases, the trend towards providing medium and high density housing with more (albeit smaller) bedrooms is notable. Providing separate, self-contained accommodation on either their or their children's lot via the mechanism of Ancillary Dwellings could be a method of encouraging more efficient use of housing for some older people through the sharing of accommodation.
 - To allow for aged people to stay in their own dwelling for longer, in the future we should build medium density, universally designed single level dwellings that still have three bedrooms and flexible layouts to adjust to differing needs and accommodate frequent visitors.
 - Facilitate Geraldton and Mid West region students to stay in the City and study by providing viable housing options so they can remain within their support network, avoid the significant costs of relocation, potentially achieve greater success and add to the pool of skilled workers in the City by taking up jobs within the region. The latter is particularly applicable to Indigenous students that wish to work in health, ~~and~~ education and community services roles as their contributions and understanding of Indigenous needs are integral to improving people's outcomes and they provide role models for the community.
 - Affordable housing is very important to the student market segment and proximity to campus is key. Students also want to be near activity and facilities. Therefore the preferred suburbs for students are likely to be Geraldton, Mahomets Flats and Beachlands and these are also areas where good opportunities for future development of housing for this group exist.
 - Affordable housing is needed for all people who are on low or fixed incomes (not just students) to allow for flexibility over time and broad market appeal. To achieve this, diversity in housing types, sizes and densities is required. Many of the housing market segments would be satisfied and prefer housing products that are not currently being offered to them, including student/low income, rural lifestylers and upgraders. There is currently little small floorplan or lot development and limited multi-unit residential and
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some groups such as students, low income or lone person/single parent households will be excluded on the basis of price.

- Using median income to house price multiples, it is clear that to produce truly affordable housing for Greater Geraldton households price-points need to be in the \$150,000 - \$200,000 price range (providing leeway for increases in incomes since 2006). It is notable that this price band is significantly below the current Geraldton house price median of \$358,000.
- Public housing appears to be in short supply although there is a significant demand for public landlord properties. Increasing the stock of affordable or public housing in Geraldton needs to keep pace with the City's growth particularly in the proportion of people unable to secure stable and satisfactory housing on limited incomes.
- Quicker, easier, cheaper methods of construction are needed to provide lower cost housing for residents and bring them to market quickly.
- Town Planning is not the only local government service area responsible for housing outcomes. There are strong links with areas dealing with infrastructure provision, community and economic development. They have the potential to apply for housing schemes at the State and federal government levels, for example, from the Housing Affordability Fund, through the latter via their facilitation skills, raising community awareness, promotions and support of programs.

1.4.4 PLAY: Community Support and Recreation Infrastructure

- Geraldton has a reasonable supply of recreation and community facilities, however these are limited in some suburbs and in the smaller towns and settlements. Access to these amenities and facilities is primarily by private vehicle.
- The beach is an important amenity for the coastal areas of the City of Greater Geraldton, offering a wide range of recreation opportunities for residents.
- In their neighbourhoods older Australians are seeking good quality paths, seating, parklands, security and access to retail and other services.
- The goal to better service Greater Geraldton's ageing population should be to transform its residential areas into good places to grow old — communities that support healthy, productive, successful ageing and respond with support services as an individual's needs change.

1.4.5 EDUCATE: Schools and Training

- Schools form an important component of many activity centres.
- Preventing the drain of the student demographic from the population is important for Greater Geraldton to feed its future labour force and maintain community stability. If this group can be educated or trained locally and remain for work then there are economic multipliers that are generated from the students rather than their accommodation and other consumption benefits leaking out of the economy when they move away to Perth or elsewhere.
- Ensure the support services, such as schools and TAFE's, health, sport and recreation and childcare facilities as well as policing are of an acceptable level to secure long-term settlement of new workers and population stability.

1.4.6 MOVE: Transport

- Geraldton is well serviced by port, rail, air and road connections.
- Public transport services within Geraldton are limited and infrequent. The network should be connected to activity centres to provide the most efficient and effective service possible. Outer eastern suburbs of Geraldton have no public transport connections, meaning residents are completely reliant on private vehicle transport. This will increase the cost of living for those living in lower-cost housing in these suburbs.
- The use of public transport or multiple modes for instance driving to a 'park and ride' and taking a train in Greater Geraldton is much lower than in the Perth metropolitan area. This is largely due to the lack of services other than relatively infrequent buses in the urban area of Geraldton. Further, in rural areas of Greenough and Mullewa public transport is not available at all. This leads to the almost 90% rate of travel by private motor vehicle (car, truck or motor bike) to work. Interestingly walking or cycling to work in Greater Geraldton is slightly more common than in the metropolitan area, whereas working at home displays the same trend.
- The results of NATSEM research show that moving to the outskirts of a city does not automatically mean the household will escape housing stress. In terms of the number of households, both the number of purchasers and renters who are in housing stress increase by around 25% if the transport costs are included. In terms of household types affected, around half of sole parents in private rental housing are estimated to be in housing stress when their transport costs are included, while 30% of couples with children in rental housing are suffering housing stress when the transport costs are added.
- It is expected that people living in medium to higher density dwellings that are close to a range of amenities will be less likely to require several vehicles per dwelling. This assumes that these residents will be more likely to walk, cycle, or use the bus than those living further away from the CBD.
- The potential for medium to high density living is greatest especially near activity centres as development in these locations should decrease future vehicles per dwelling statistics as the use of non-private motor vehicle transport options becomes more prominent.

1.4.7 ESSENTIAL: Services, Utilities and Buffers

- Buffers around existing and future industrial, infrastructure and relevant special use areas should be observed when investigating areas for additional residential and commercial development to avoid potential land use conflict.
- The suitability of sites contaminated with substances harmful to human health for residential or commercial land uses must be considered when investigating areas for future growth. Existing contaminated sites may not be suitable for residential use and some commercial uses due to the restrictions placed on uses and cost of remediation.
- The main constraint on future residential development is sewerage disposal. The issue mainly relates to the problems associated with fractured and multiple small land ownership. This results in limited financial feasibility and ability to pay for sewer infrastructure. With the exception of continuing to make funding applications (that are successful) or land owners acquiring each other's land to amass a larger holding, there is limited scope for these issues to be resolved.

- The provisions of the Draft Country Sewerage Policy should be observed when investigating areas for new residential development.
- However, the services of scheme water, gas and telecommunications do not appear to be limiting factors to future residential development. Issues regarding the capacity of the current power supply and the timing of future upgrades may pose limitations to development in the future.
- Waste water disposal and sewer infrastructure limits the amount of and intensity of new residential and commercial development in Mullewa.
- Mining continues to contribute significantly to the local economy. This is expected to continue in the future, however, infrastructure requirements such as rail, power and water may limit future expansion of mining in the region.
- The Square Kilometre Array (SKA) project could result in some restrictions on land uses in the eastern portion of the City of Greater Geraldton due to the buffer required for operation. However, it is also likely to present opportunities for diversifying the local and regional economy into sciences and technology.

1.4.8 WORK: Economy and Commerce

- Continued economic growth in the Mid West region is likely to increase the population living and working in the area. Management of the key economic drivers, support industries and other industries is critical to ensuring the long-term sustainability of the regional economy.
- Tourism activity in Mullewa should be encouraged.
- When considering the suitability of land for future residential development and other commercial activities the value of the land for agricultural activities should be prioritised.
- Geraldton's economy is currently anchored by its geographic role as a regional service town for the Mid West, with agglomerations of strategic activity currently focused on mining, agriculture, fishing and tourism (MWDC website). It is recognised that the economy has changed since the previous 2006 census with growth and development of Mid West resource assets.
- Centres with major infrastructure (airport, port and hospital) should be planned to fully leverage existing investment through development of agglomerations of activity specifically related to current and future activities.
- The Oakajee port and rail project will provide a critical mass for the service sector and for tourism (business accommodation required). These flow ons, in addition to direct employment effects will create demand for residential development in Geraldton.

1.4.9 URBAN STRUCTURE: Activity Centres

- Activity centres as the basic unit of activity concentration within urban and regional areas, strategically located to serve their target users, should be the prime consideration in the development of the Residential Development and Commercial Activity Centres Strategies.
- Geraldton is the Primary Regional Centre for activity in the region.
- The Geraldton CBD should be the focus of the development of a diverse, intense and mature activity centre that builds upon the historic urban form and existing infrastructure assets. This will require the development of a significant residential population within a walkable distance of major CBD activity nodes.

- Future district centres to the north and south of the Geraldton CBD will provide an opportunity for smaller centres focused on delivery of a range of consumer services including education, health care and housing.
- Smaller neighbourhood and local centres should largely continue to perform their current function – with substantial increases in residential density focused in the CBD and district centres.
- The development of higher intensity activity centres that integrate the provision of aged care and student housing will allow for the efficient provision of services and infrastructure required by the target demographic, and will help to activate centres through the integration of a more diverse user mix that will potentially utilise the centre over a longer range of time for a variety of uses.
- Future decision-making for activity centres (including the provision of housing) should be based upon the desired performance of the centre rather than prescription of specific inputs.

2.0 STRATEGIC PLAN

The strategic plan is formed of two parts:

1. The guiding principles that have been developed to respond to the wants and needs of the community and identified issues and challenges; and
2. The strategy maps, which detail the recommendations for future residential growth.

2.1 PRINCIPLES

2.1.1 Developing the Principles

The issues and challenges identified in section 1.4 have been used to develop the guiding principles for decision-making. The purpose of the principles is to guide strategy decisions, recommendations and actions and will also be used to guide the review and development of planning instruments used to implement the strategy, the decisions made regarding individual developments and the on-going monitoring and review of the strategy.

2.1.2 The Principles

Eight (8) guiding principles have been identified. These principles are centred around the growth and maintenance of activity centres and can be applied to centres of all sizes and types. While focused on activity centres as the basic 'building block' of the urban structure, they are still applied to the urban and rural areas outside of activity centres as the principles guide the type and scale of development which may occur within and outside of centres.

Principle 1: Efficient, intense and compact centres

Value Statement:

The City values activity centres that have a self-perpetuating ‘energy’ and a diversity of activity appropriate to the purpose of the centre.

The City recognises that this relies on functional efficiencies, enhanced by contiguous configurations of related activities and compact urban forms.

Desired Outcomes:

- Delivery of efficient, intense and compact centres.
- A network of centres that meet the full range of user needs.
- Development of centres that facilitate multiple purpose trips.
- Encouragement of land use synergies which create useful spaces and character areas.
- Maximisation of the hours of activation of centres.
- Delivery of centres that are adaptable and well staged without adverse impact on the efficiency and intensity.

Avoid/Mitigate:

- Nodal Centres with ‘dead spaces’
- Single use/limited function centres that are inconsistent with their purpose
- Centres that can only accommodate single purpose trips.

Implementation:

- Increase the amount of medium and high density residential development and mixed use development in activity centres.

Principle 2: Optimise the frequency and quality of transactions within the City

Value Statement:

The City recognises the need to maximise the return of scarce resources to develop centres for the benefit of users.

The City also wants centres to be effective in performing their purpose. To do so, they should pursue opportunities to maximise the frequency of high quality transactions that occur within activity centres.

Desired Outcomes:

- Recognition and prioritisation of activities in activity centres that maximise the performance of the centre according to its purpose and user mix.

Avoid/Mitigate:

- Allowance for activities, urban forms and movement networks that compromise the optimal frequency and quality of transactions within activity centres.

Implementation:

- Prioritise areas of existing high amenity for residential and commercial intensification.

Principle 3: Support the maturation of Geraldton CBD into a diverse, intense and highly connected activity centre

Value Statement:

The City recognises the primacy of the Geraldton CBD in the network of activity centres.

The City values the maturation of the Geraldton CBD into a diverse, intense and highly accessible centre however this should not come at the expense of other centres achieving their defined purpose.

Desired Outcomes:

- The maturation of Geraldton CBD into a diverse, intense and highly connected activity centre.
- The maturation of Mullewa as a regional satellite town centre serving local needs.
- The continuation of the existing Aboriginal settlements as small nodes of activity.

Avoid/Mitigate:

- The development of other centres which is inconsistent with their purpose and compromises the maturation of the Geraldton CBD.
- The maturation of the Geraldton CBD at the expense of other activity centres achieving their designated purpose.

Implementation:

- Prioritise the Geraldton CBD as a location for mixed use and high density residential.

Principle 4: Optimise access to and within centres to residents, workers and visitors

Value Statement:

The City values activity centres that are highly accessible to all users.

The City recognises that centre accessibility must be considered in terms of access to and from centres and access within centres.

The City understands the need to balance accessibility with the need to safeguard the overall efficiency and integrity of the broader movement network.

In order to protect the efficiency and integrity of the City's movement network, accessibility needs to be considered at a regional, district and local level.

Protection of the efficiency and integrity of the movement network also requires aligning activity with appropriate location in terms of the accessibility needs of the activity and its users.

Desired Outcomes:

- Activity centres that facilitate multiple purpose, higher occupancy trips in alignment with their defined role.
- Activity centres that encourage active transport options for users accessing and moving within the centre.
- A highly efficient movement network at the local, district and regional levels.

Avoid/Mitigate:

- Accessibility to any one centre/area or via any one transport node that compromises the overall efficiency of the movement network.
- Attraction of private vehicle and freight movement to an area which is inconsistent with the purpose of the area and the available transport infrastructure.

Implementation:

- Assess levels of access infrastructure provided within and to activity centres, with particular regard for active transport and low cost transport from lower socio-economic status areas, student housing and aged persons' dwellings.

Principle 5: Place identity, amenity and integrity

Value Statement:

The City values places that have a clear and positive sense of identity, that users care about and in which they can invest. The public realm is an important arena for creation of a sense of identity as it is the communal space in which users can share experiences and build connections.

The City's role is to provide and facilitate investment that generates utility for users of all activity centres. The City will strive to provide the appropriate type and level of amenity to meet the needs of users.

Desired Outcomes:

- The creation of places that are more than their utilitarian function
- The creation of places that communities can care about
- The creation of places that are demonstrable authentic with a sense of integrity
- Alignment between places identity and the mix of amenity with the intended purpose and user mix of a place.

Avoid/Mitigate:

- Planning and decision-making that is counter-productive to or discourages the alignment of amenity with purpose.
- Development of centres which lack a clear and positive sense of identity.

Implementation:

- Respect of existing heritage developments.
- Avoid potential land use conflict between residential, commercial, industrial and rural land uses.
- Assess the existing levels of recreation and community infrastructure servicing activity centres and identify where additional infrastructure/services are needed.

Principle 6: Place equity

Value Statement:

The City recognises its role in balancing the economic pursuits of activity centres against the broader needs and aspirations of the community.

The City understands that transactions within an activity centre are not just economic; but also social and cultural. Planning will aim to support all needs in an equal way.

Desired Outcomes:

- Equitable access for all users to fulfil their range of required transactions.

Avoid/Mitigate:

- Centres that exclude potential users from undertaking the range of transactions that are appropriate for that type of centre.

Implementation:

- Cater for the ageing population by ensuring all activity centres are provided with a minimum percentage of universally-designed dwellings (may be single level medium density or appropriately designed high density dwellings).
- Encourage the development of alternative and innovative construction methods to provide more affordable medium and high density housing.

Principle 7: Meet the needs of future as well as current users

Value Statement:

The City recognises its role in balancing the impact of short-term market drivers with the long term strategic vision for activity centres.

Desired Outcomes:

- Equitable planning that balances the needs of current centre users with future centre users.

Avoid/Mitigate:

- Planning that prioritises the needs of the existing user mix at the expense of the needs of the future user mix.
- Planning that prioritises the needs of the future user mix at the expense of the needs of the existing user mix.

Implementation:

- Assess the impact of current decisions on future users of activity centres and areas outside of activity centres.

Principle 8: Appropriate configuration of land inside and outside activity centres

Value Statement:

The City recognises the need to protect the area outside of activity centres from land uses more appropriate to within activity centres, and vice versa.

Desired Outcomes:

- Equitable planning that balances the needs of residents and commercial development while placing a high value on the preservation of the natural environment and natural resources.

Avoid/Mitigate:

- Planning for residential or commercial development that prioritises the development at the expense of other strategically important land uses such as land of significant agricultural value.

Implementation:

- Avoid the fragmentation of rural land.
- Protection of remnant natural vegetation and sensitive environments (e.g. coastal).
- Protection of high value agricultural land from development pressures.
- Future development of residential land uses to use optimal lot orientations and building typologies to maximise the amenity and passive climate control of dwellings.

2.2 STRATEGY MAPS

The Residential Development Strategy Maps (see Figures 3 and 4) broadly indicate the extent of residential and future residential land along with existing and proposed rural living areas within the City of Greater Geraldton and the Geraldton urban area. The latter is based on the Greater Geraldton Structure Plan 2011 and includes details on priority activity centres.

The residential densities are based on the classifications in the Residential Design Codes (i.e. low, medium and high density codes), however in the Geraldton area there is a need to further refine and split the low density codes.

The R2 to R5 coding represents lot sizes from 5,000m² to 2,000m² which currently do not require the provision of reticulated sewer. These lots are commonly referred to a “low density” (or special residential).

The remaining R10 to R25 coding (875m² to 320m² lot sizes) represents what is commonly referred to as “single residential” (or traditional suburbia, generally in the 500m² to 700m² lot size range).

The Strategy Maps are not intended to provide specific density codes for individual land parcels but rather will form the basis from which specific densities can be applied via scheme amendments, structure planning and a new Local Planning Strategy and Scheme.

Indeed small discrete increases in density to that shown on the Strategy Map are appropriate in certain circumstances (e.g. in single residential areas, medium density dwellings adjacent to areas of high amenity such as quality public open space; or in beach front areas small, discrete pockets of high density adjacent to tourism sites).

Also there are small pockets of lower density in areas surrounded by single residential that are a result of historic subdivisions (e.g. Bayside Boulevard, Drummond Cove and Eakins Crescent, Wandina). Increasing the density of these areas is limited by the fact that the majority of the lots are developed with substantial housing and are not provided with reticulated sewer.

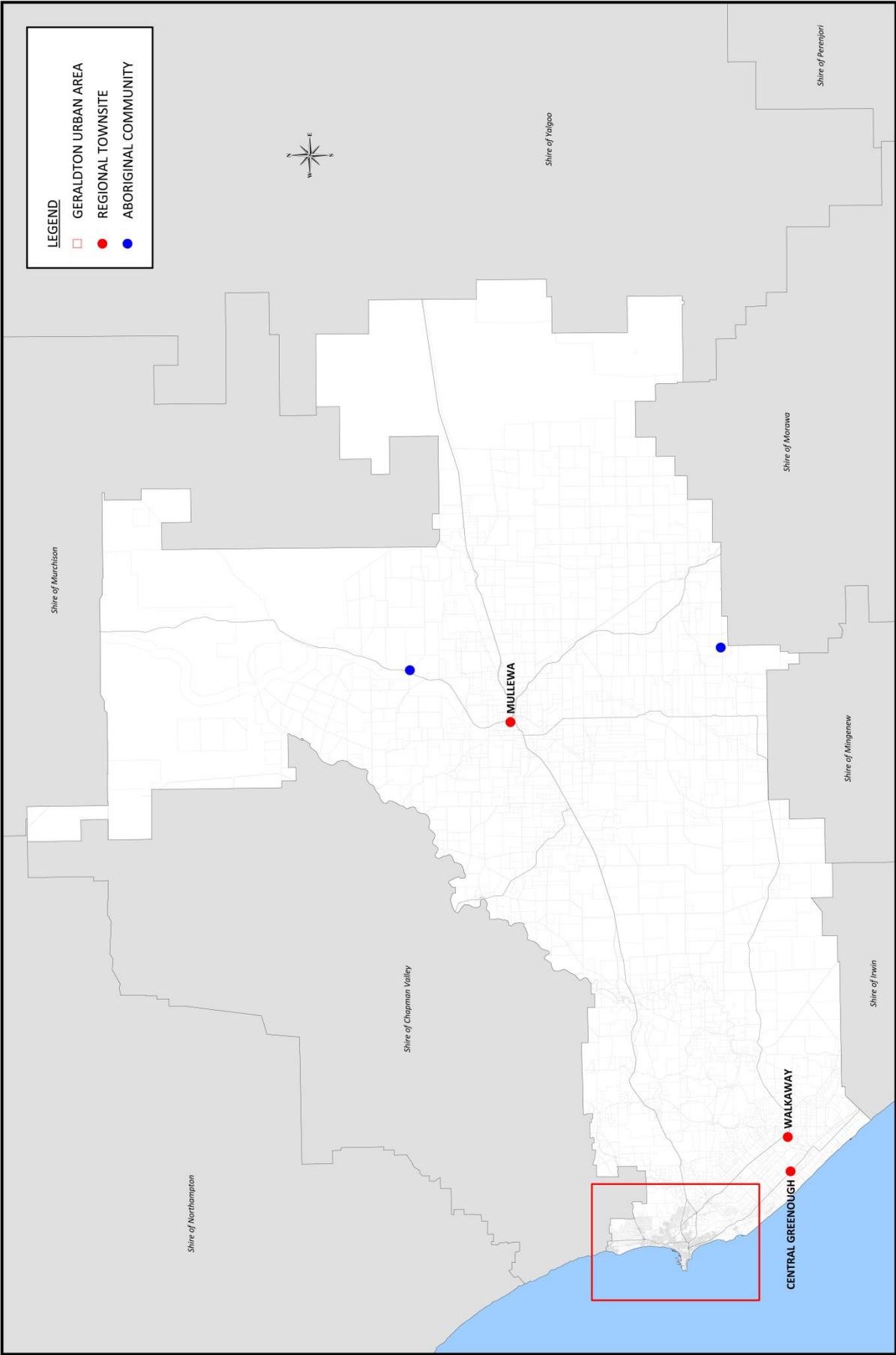


Figure 3 – Residential Development Strategy Map (Local Government Area)

Please see separate

Figure 4 – Residential Development Strategy Map (Geraldton Urban Area)

2.3 GERALDTON URBAN AREA

The Greater Geraldton Structure Plan 2011 identified that the “Urban and Future Urban” areas could potentially accommodate a population of between 100,000 to 230,000 depending on the average density of development (p4, WAPC 2011). Given the City's vision to sustain a population of between 80,000 to 100,000 people there is no need to provide for additional urban land outside of that shown on the Strategy Map (for the Geraldton Urban Area) in the foreseeable future.

Geraldton is somewhat fortunate in that there are existing constraints to expansion of the urban area in all directions. To the north the Oakajee Industrial Estate buffer effectively limits residential expansion, to the east is the Moresby Ranges which provides a natural backdrop to the Geraldton urban area and to the south there are highly productive agricultural soils which need to be protected.

2.4 PRIORITY ACTIVITY CENTRES

In order to provide a more efficient and sustainable urban form, increases in residential density development should be prioritised within activity centres and activity centre catchments.

Generally residential development at the upper end of the medium density coding (i.e. R40 to R60) should be provided within the 200m, 400m or 800m activity centre walkable catchment (each equating to a different walking distance ranging from less than 5 minutes to 10 minutes). These walkable catchments form the areas to be further investigated for establishing specific increased densities, taking into consideration the unique layout and characteristics of the particular area (e.g. natural features, other non-residential land uses and the character of the surrounding neighbourhood). Additionally where centres are located on major roads that are envisaged to act as strategic transport routes (such as Chapman Road) then increases in densities should be elongated along that road.

There are also activity centres where it is currently not realistic to increase residential density to the extent of the walkable catchment, but rather to concentrate increased density in much smaller areas immediately adjacent to the activity centre itself.

The activity centres shown on the Strategy Map (for the Geraldton Urban Area) are those where priority should be given for more intensification and increased residential densities. They are mostly existing neighbourhood / local centres which are important local community focal points that help provide for the main daily to weekly household shopping and community needs. They should also be a priority for increases in residential density.

It is acknowledged that there are other activity centres that either exist or are zoned however, due to the surrounding development, location or the nature of the centres themselves the residential densities shown on the Strategy Map (for the Geraldton Urban Area) should accommodate the residential needs.

For example the Strathalbyn zoned centre is fully surrounded by 2,000m² lots with no sewer infrastructure and there is limited opportunity to increase density; and the site in the Seacrest Estate is surrounded by very recent residential development that has been structure planned from its inception. Reference should be made to the Commercial Activity Centres Strategy for further detailed information on activity centres.

2.4.1 Regional Centre

The Geraldton CBD is the largest of the activity centres in the City of Greater Geraldton and provides services to the whole of the Mid West Region. It provides the most intensely concentrated development in the region and offers the greatest range of high order services, jobs and commercial activity of the region. It is the focus of most regional activities including government and administration, retail, business, cultural, entertainment, tourism, public transport and employment. The centre also provides the highest level and greatest variety of comparison shopping in the Mid West and is an important focus for passenger networks.

The density of residential development within the CBD should be in accordance with the R-AC coding (activity centres) with a minimum density target of R60. The Batavia Coast Marina affords itself to higher residential density. The area of influence of the centre that is most preferable for residential intensification is up to 800m.



Figure 5 – Regional Centre (Geraldton CBD)

2.4.2 District Centres

Future district centres are proposed north and south of the Geraldton CBD and these should also be priority areas for high density residential.

2.4.3 Large Neighbourhood Centres

Areas within the 200 – 400m catchment of Neighbourhood Centres should be investigated for suitability for increased residential density, which may include mixed use in the core of the centre and various levels of medium density.

Bluff Point

Bluff Point is a neighbourhood centre located on the corner of Chapman Road and Hosken Street, Bluff Point. The centre consists of a variety of mainly convenience retail stores that are spread across a road intersection. The tenants include a post office, pharmacy, video store, surf shop and deli. The centre is in close proximity to a number of schools and the North West Coastal Highway. There is significant potential for increasing density given the age of the existing housing stock and location close to the Geraldton CBD.



Figure 6 – Bluff Point

Rangeway

Rangeway is a neighbourhood centre located on Rifle Range Road, Rangeway. The main feature is the Rangeway Shopping Centre which provides convenience retail and some local health services. Other tenants include a grocery store, pharmacy and takeaway restaurant. The neighbourhood centre also includes a petrol station. The centre is in close proximity to the Geraldton Regional Aboriginal Medical Service, primary school and large neighbourhood park. Given the age of the existing housing stock and the recent “down-grading” of Utakarra Road, there is opportunity to increase density.



Figure 7 – Rangeway

Sunset Beach

Sunset is a neighbourhood centre located on Chapman Road, Sunset Beach. The main feature is the Sunset Shopping Plaza which is primarily convenience retail and services a local catchment population. The tenants include a supermarket, a pharmacy and liquor store. There are significant crown land parcels to the south that have potential for intensification.



Figure 8 – Sunset Beach

Wonthella

Wonthella is a neighbourhood centre located on Fifth Street, Wonthella. It is mainly convenience retail focused though does offer some comparison retail. The tenants include a supermarket, a liquor store, a furniture store and a post office. The centre is in close proximity to the regional “Eight Street Sporting Precinct” which includes a number of sporting facilities. The suburb is located in close proximity to the Geraldton CBD and other activity areas such as the Webberton industrial area. The road pattern is the traditional grid style which lends itself to increasing density.



Figure 9 – Wonthella

2.4.4 Other Activity Centres

There are a number of other activity centres (both Neighbourhood and Local) that should be investigated for future increases in residential density within the 200 – 400m catchment.

Beachlands

Beachlands centre is located on Whitfield Place, Beachlands. The focus of the centre is business providers. The centre services a local catchment and is in close proximity to the Geraldton CBD. The Department of Housing has recently begun revitalizing its land holdings in the vicinity of the centre with subdivision at higher densities.



Figure 10 – Beachlands

Drummond Cove (440 Roadhouse)

The 440 Roadhouse contains a service station and associated café with limited accommodation facilities and is located at the junction of Chapman Road and the North West Coastal Highway, Drummond Cove. Given the limited shopping facilities north of Sunset it acts a small local convenience store for the adjacent Drummond Cove locality and has significant trade from tourism traffic and overnight stops for road trains. Land to the west is developed for the 'Bayside' estate and land to the east is part of the 'Drummond Heights' low density estate. There is vacant land to the south of the centre that has the opportunity to facilitate increases in density.



Figure 11 – Drummond Cove

Geraldton (Durlacher Street)

The Geraldton centre is located on Durlacher Street at the intersection with Shenton Street, Geraldton. It is mostly focused on convenience retail servicing a local catchment population. The site is currently occupied by a supermarket. The centre is in close proximity to the Geraldton CBD. The area contains a number of professional offices and medical facilities along with some short term accommodation. The housing stock is aged and there are some large residential lots that provide opportunities for increasing density.



Figure 12 – Geraldton

Mahomets Flats (Fortyn Court)

Mahomets Flats is located on McAleer Drive and Fortyn Court, Mahomets Flats. The focus of the centre is a service station with a recent fast food outlet. The area is characterised by a number of short-term accommodation units and is in close proximity to the beach and surf club. The lot sizes are traditionally larger which represents an opportunity for increases in density.



Figure 13 – Mahomets Flats

Mt. Tarcoola

Mount Tarcoola is located on Paringa Street, Mount Tarcoola. It is primarily convenience retail servicing a local catchment population. The centre is in close proximity to a primary school, neighbourhood park and day care centre and these add to the amenity of the centre and the potential for increasing density.



Figure 14 – Mt. Tarcoola

Utakarra

The Utakarra centre is located on Utakarra Road, Utakarra. The focus of this activity centre is convenience retail servicing a local catchment population, with the majority of the user mix made up of local residents. The diversity of activity at this activity centre is limited to the offerings of a supermarket and liquor store. The land abutting the centre to the south has recently been rezoned and is proposed for a discount liquor store. The recent “down-grading” of Utakarra Road and the large vacant sites near the centre provide an opportunity to increase density.



Figure 15 – Utakarra

Specialised Centre (Health, Education and Training Precinct)

Specialised centres focus on regionally significant economic or institutional activities that generate many work and visitor trips which require a high level of transport accessibility. Although there are a number of specialised centres in the City, there is only one that lends itself to significant increases in residential density.

The Health, Education and Training Precinct (HETP) comprises of many institutional functions, including the Durack Institute of Technology, Geraldton Health Campus, Geraldton University Centre (GUC), St John of God Hospital and the Combined Universities Centre for Rural Health (CURCH). The precinct also includes an aged care centre and a lawn bowls club. There are some low density residential areas that surround the precinct. As the HETP is located approximately 1km south of the Geraldton CBD and providing student and worker housing opportunities in the immediate vicinity is an important goal, development to accommodate greater residential intensification near the centre should be encouraged.



Figure 16 – Health Education and Training Precinct

2.5 FUTURE RESIDENTIAL AREAS

There are substantial areas that have the potential for future residential development. These areas require structure planning to define the specific residential (or rural living) density however the Strategy Map (for the Geraldton Urban Area) indicates the broad densities that are appropriate for the areas.

2.6 REGIONAL TOWNSITES

Regional townsites are the main rural activity/service centres. They are multi-purpose centres that provide a diversity of uses and the full range of economic and community services necessary for the communities in their catchments.

2.6.1 Central Greenough

Central Greenough (previously known as the "Greenough Hamlet") comprises a collection of colonial buildings dating from the 1850's, chiefly owned by the National Trust. A majority of the buildings have been restored, however there has only been limited exploitation of the tourism opportunities afforded by the site, and at present it is perceived as lacking in vitality. The aim of the National Trust has been to preserve the buildings and operate the site as an historical experience using formal tours. This type of interpretation has been in place since the 1970's.

The Greenough heritage area has many attractive aspects for development and the importance of Central Greenough should not be under rated either in social or economic terms. There is a significant opportunity to convey to everyone both the location and character of the place in a unique and memorable way, potentially as an “ecomuseum”, where the heritage of the region is to be found not solely in the form of artefacts within buildings, but equally outdoors, in the land and buildings and in the agricultural history of the area. Central Greenough could position itself to be a training venue for trades, cultural tourism and heritage interpretation based upon its historical buildings and the environment.

To complement the above and add to the vitality of the area, increases in density should be investigated with the aim of providing for some low density residential/rural living that can bring back the “village” type atmosphere to the area. However any development must honour, preserve and enhance the heritage appeal of the area and not diminish it.



Figure 17 – Central Greenough

2.6.2 Mullewa

Mullewa is a regional town located some 100 kilometres east of Geraldton. The local population is serviced by a small amount of convenience retail such as the general store. The centre also contains basic hotel and motel accommodation, a caravan park, pub, service station and a tourist information centre. The surrounding areas are primarily used for agriculture with the emergence of iron ore mining. Major infrastructure in the centre includes a train station for transporting freight to the Geraldton Port, a district high school and district hospital.

In accordance with the (former) Shire of Mullewa Local Planning Strategy housing activity should be consolidated in existing areas and no further residential development south of the railway reserve. Residential density should be single residential (R10) with opportunities for medium density residential (R30) in areas that can connect to reticulated sewer.



Figure 18 – Mullewa

2.6.3 Walkaway

Walkaway is a regional townsite some 30 kilometres south east of Geraldton. The local population is serviced by a small amount of convenience retail such as the general store. The centre encompasses a primary school, tavern, museum, recreational centre and is in close proximity to one of Australia's largest wind energy facilities.

There are existing areas of low, single and medium density residential development. The existing residential areas are not used to current density capacity as there is no reticulated sewer which will limit residential density increases. Opportunities exist to increase the population of Walkaway via rural living lots however this is subject to detailed planning that will need to address issues of flooding.

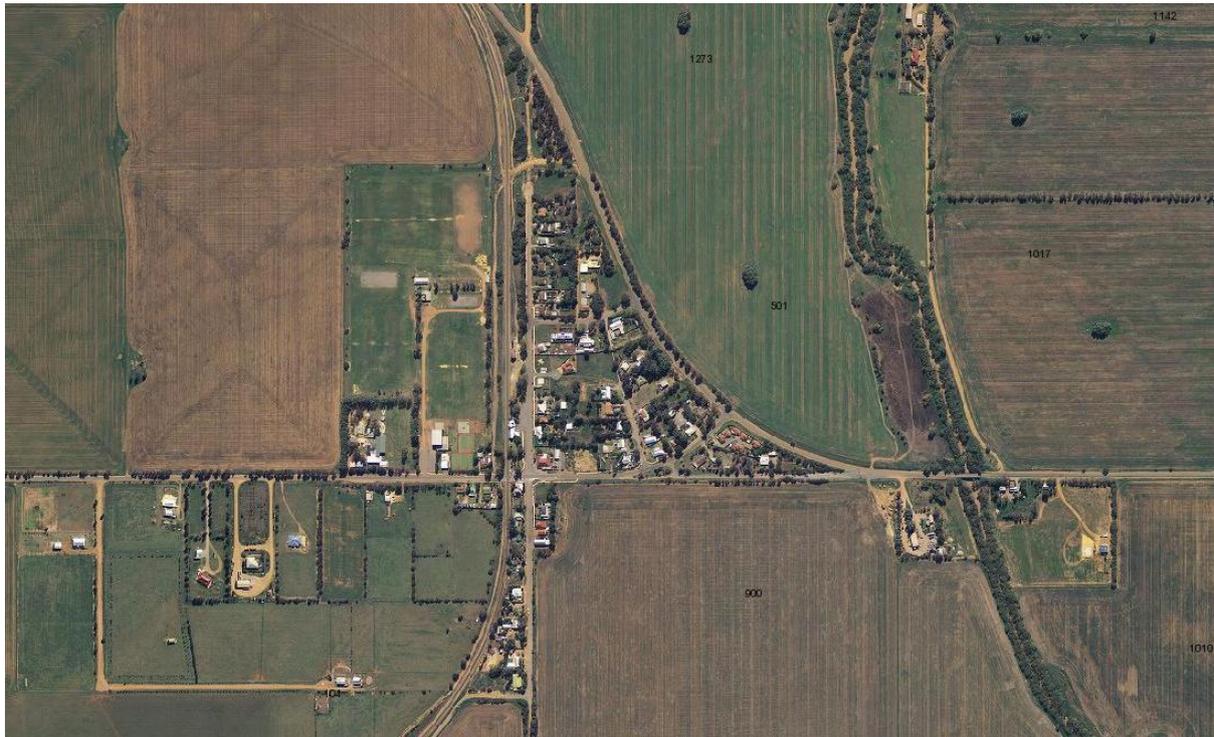


Figure 19 – Walkaway

2.7 ABORIGINAL COMMUNITIES

Aboriginal communities should be developed in accordance with an approved Community Layout Plan to ensure appropriate future land use, as per *State Planning Policy 3.2: Aboriginal Settlements*.

2.8 CROWN LAND OPPORTUNITIES

There are some significant areas of crown land that have potential for intensification (see Figure 20). Where these land areas fall in close proximity to activity centres they provide opportunities for residential development or development of supporting infrastructure or community facilities.

Decision making on the type of development best provided for on these crown parcels should be based on the strategy principles and an analysis of the infrastructure or development type most needed in the activity centre. This will allow a more flexible approach by the City and allow for collaboration between local, regional and state Government authorities, organisations and private companies. Examples of this approach are:

- Analysis of activity centre needs shows that in order for private developers to commit to residential redevelopment additional public open space or community facilities are required;
- Analysis of activity centre needs shows that a developing centre requires additional pedestrian and cycling access infrastructure to assist in mitigating pedestrian, cyclist and car traffic conflicts; and
- Analysis of activity centre needs shows that a particular centre lacks any medical or health facilities and residents are travelling to other centres for these needs. The City of Greater Geraldton sets up a partnership with the Department of Health or a private health provider to meet the needs of the centre residents.



Figure 20 – Crown land opportunities

2.9 PRIORITISING AND STAGING OF DEVELOPMENT

The Residential Development Strategy is intended to be a flexible planning guideline and does not provide specific timeframes for the development of particular localities given the range of parameters that can affect the timing of development. The major factor that would affect development staging within the study area is the Oakajee Industrial Estate. Should this area be developed, there is potential for significant population growth to occur in a relatively short period of time. Fragmented land ownership and availability of servicing infrastructure are other critical factors in determining development timeframes.

Indicative prioritising of residential development is however important in terms of planning for the timely provision of services and infrastructure and providing a basis for long-term strategic planning and investment decision making. The three population growth scenarios provide triggers for the staging of residential development when the population reaches a certain level.

- Priority 1: Development may proceed now.
- Priority 2: Optimal development between 50,000 to 70,000 population.
- Priority 3: Optimal development between 70,000 to 100,000 population.
- Priority 4: Optimal development at 100,000 plus population.

Development Type	Population Scenario			
	Develop now	Between now and 50,000 residents	Between 50,000-70,000 residents	Beyond 100,000 residents
	Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3	Priority 4
Activity Centres Residential density to be increased using the total population scenarios as a trigger.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geraldton CBD • Bluff Point • Rangeway • Sunset Beach • Wonthella 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beachlands • Geraldton 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mt. Tarcoola • Uta-uta 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drummond Cove • Mahomets Flats
Future Residential Areas Population scenarios to be used as guide for optimal development timing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Glenfield Beach • Woorree New Town • Karloo 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waggrakine / Moresby • Greenough River South 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moresby • Rudds Gully 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West End • Southgates • Waggrakine
Regional Towns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mullewa 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walkaway 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central Greenough

Figure 21 – Residential development priorities under proposed scenarios

The indicative staging merely indicates a preference for development based on current factors. It is not intended to prevent the orderly and proper planning and development of any area(s), nor should it be used as sole justification for refusing subdivisions, scheme amendments, structure plans and the like. As previously stated there are a number of external influences that will impact on residential land development including market factors and land owners willingness to develop.

3.0 IMPLEMENTATION

In order to successfully implement the Residential Development Strategy changes to existing planning instruments and future actions to be investigated by the City of Greater Geraldton are recommended. The implementation is divided into strategic, statutory and infrastructure related recommendations.

3.1 STRATEGIC PLANNING

Recommendation 1: Future Strategic Planning Requirements

The Residential Development Strategy should be used to guide future strategic planning exercises in the City of Greater Geraldton, including:

- The preparation of a new Local Planning Strategy;
- Detailed planning of individual activity centres, such as precinct specific planning or master planning; and
- Public amenity planning, such as community facilities and open space planning, education planning and health planning.

The strategic planning required to implement this strategy should be underpinned by the strategy principles.

Recommendation 2: Geraldton Urban Area and Regional Townsites

No residential subdivision should be supported outside the Geraldton Urban Area (as shown on the Strategy Map) other than in the regional townsites of Mullewa, Walkaway and Central Greenough.

3.2 STATUTORY PLANNING

Recommendation 3: A Single Local Planning Scheme

Currently there are multiple local planning schemes operating within the City of Greater Geraldton. In order to simplify the statutory planning system, give greater certainty and apply consistent planning across the municipality a new scheme covering the entire City should be produced with consistent zones. The Scheme should adopt a more performance based approach, especially for activity centres, which can be combined with the Model Scheme Text.

Recommendation 4: Zoning Outside Of Activity Centres

The Strategy Map (for the Geraldton Urban Area) should be used as the basis from which specific residential densities are to be applied via scheme amendments and structure planning.

Recommendation 5: Zoning Within Activity Centres

The zoning within activity centres and the surrounding catchments should be revised to reflect the Strategy Map. Increases in residential density should only be allowed within density focus areas (generally the walkable catchment specific for that centre) identified in and around activity centres.

Recommendation 7: Minimum Density Requirements

In order to protect the integrity of the residential density planning, consideration needs to be given to minimum density requirements in appropriate locations, particularly within activity centres. This will assist in achieving density targets and will avoid the situation where excessively larger lots are created that can potentially lead to the proliferation of lower density residential housing to the detriment of the objectives of the Strategy. An option for consideration may be the setting of maximum lot sizes.

Recommendation 8: Future Residential Areas

No additional land should be zoned for future residential development other than the areas shown on the Strategy Map (for the Geraldton Urban Area).

Recommendation 9: Land Uses

The land uses allowed within and outside of each activity centre under the Scheme should be reviewed to ensure they are appropriate to the activity centre function and will contribute to the amenity and maturity of the centre.

Recommendation 10: Local Planning Policies

The existing local planning policies should be examined to determine if the provisions are sufficiently supportive of the Residential Development Strategy, or if any provisions are likely to impede the implementation of the Strategy. New local planning policies should be developed, using the strategy principles as a guide (where relevant).

Recommendation 11: Design Guidelines

Design guidelines should be developed and adopted as a local planning policy for all activity centres as a primary means of implementing this strategy. Reference should be made to the Strategy principles when developing the design guidelines to ensure the provisions are flexible enough to allow for innovative types of development but strong enough to ensure desired outcomes. These should be used to assess development applications within the subject area, guide master planning or structure planning for the activity centre and inform the planning of public realm works. Design guidelines should be written to take precedence over the Residential Design Codes where the Codes allow. This will create an easier, more understandable assessment process for applicants.

Design guidelines should address the following aspects:

- Preferred land uses;
- Economic activators;
- Social activators;
- Access and transport;
- Setbacks, interfaces and building activation;
- Built form (including height, building bulk and features);
- Public realm design (including streetscape, public open spaces and public squares);
- Environmental, cultural and heritage protection;
- Local character response; and
- Climate responsive design.

Figures 22 and 23 below, are examples of area the design guidelines should address and possible guidance on resolving design issues and meeting performance objectives.

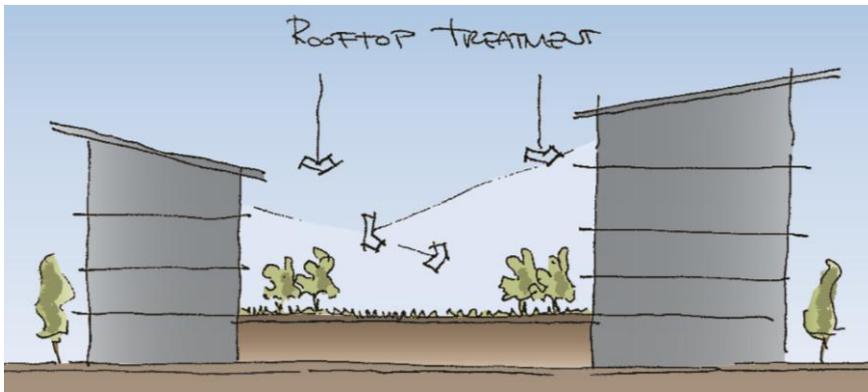


Figure 22 – High amenity provided for high density residential or mixed use development

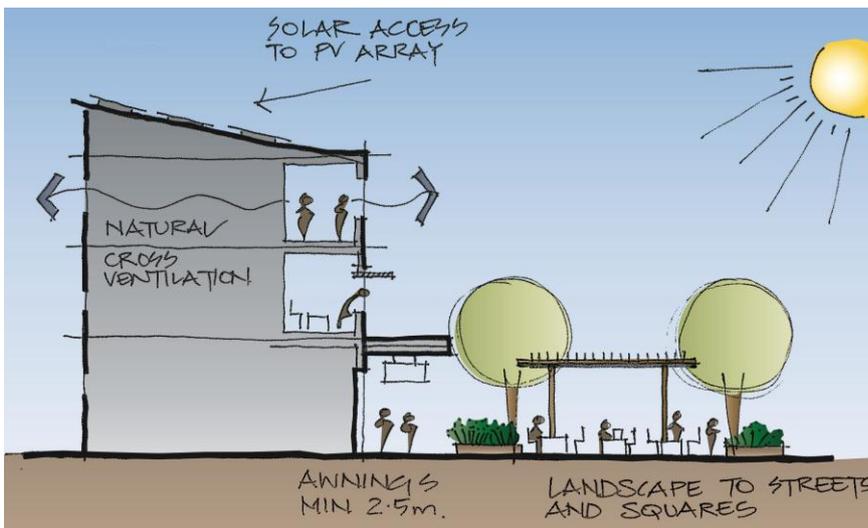


Figure 23 – Example of climate responsive design

Recommendation 12: Residential Interface

The interfaces between different land uses need to be addressed in order to ensure conflict is minimised. The main land use conflicts likely to arise through as a result of additional residential development or increases in density within and around activity centres are:

- High density residential and the public realm;
- High density residential and medium density residential;
- Commercial and high/medium density residential;
- Industrial and low density residential;
- Rural uses and low density residential;
- Conservation areas and residential; and
- Transport infrastructure and residential.

The general principle which should be observed to minimise land-use conflict is providing physical and visual separation between potentially conflicting land uses and emissions, appropriate to the type of use. This may include physical separation distances, visual separation and physical buffering through use of materials. For example:

- Rural, rural residential and low density residential land uses should be separated by a road as a minimum. Any emitting land uses within rural sites adjacent to residential sites should be buffered according to the type of emission and intensity of adjacent uses.
- Noise, particle and odour emissions from industrial or similar land uses should be buffered through statutory boundaries to contain the impact of the land use and ensure constraints are not placed on the surrounding uses or potential uses.
- The visual impact of industrial land uses on adjacent residential uses should be buffered with vegetation, especially trees.
- The interface between medium and high density residential and the public realm should be treated with appropriate physical barriers to ensure privacy, security and a high level of visual amenity is provided for residents and public realm users.
- Medium and high density residential development within activity centres should be designed to minimise the noise impacts from adjacent dwellings, commercial tenancies, users of the public realm, vehicle use within car parks and other access ways, and other noise emitting land uses. The provision of noise attenuation measures in all high density residential dwellings should be required prior to development approval being granted.

Figures 24 and 25 illustrate some of the approaches to minimising land use conflict through appropriate design solutions.

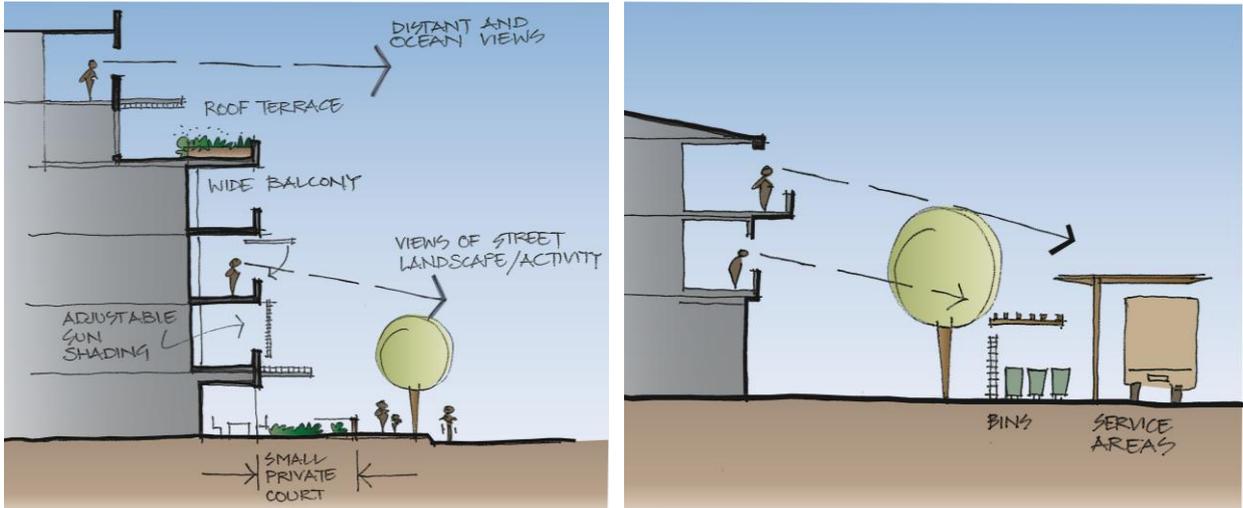


Figure 24 – Private open space in high density living (left), visual barriers between the public and private realm (right)

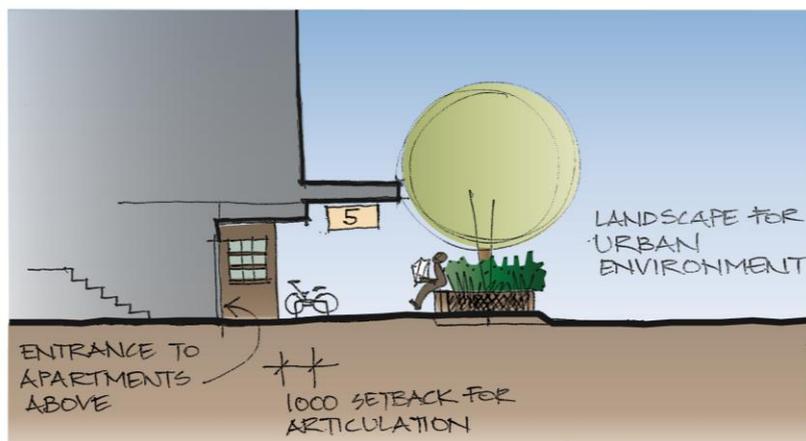
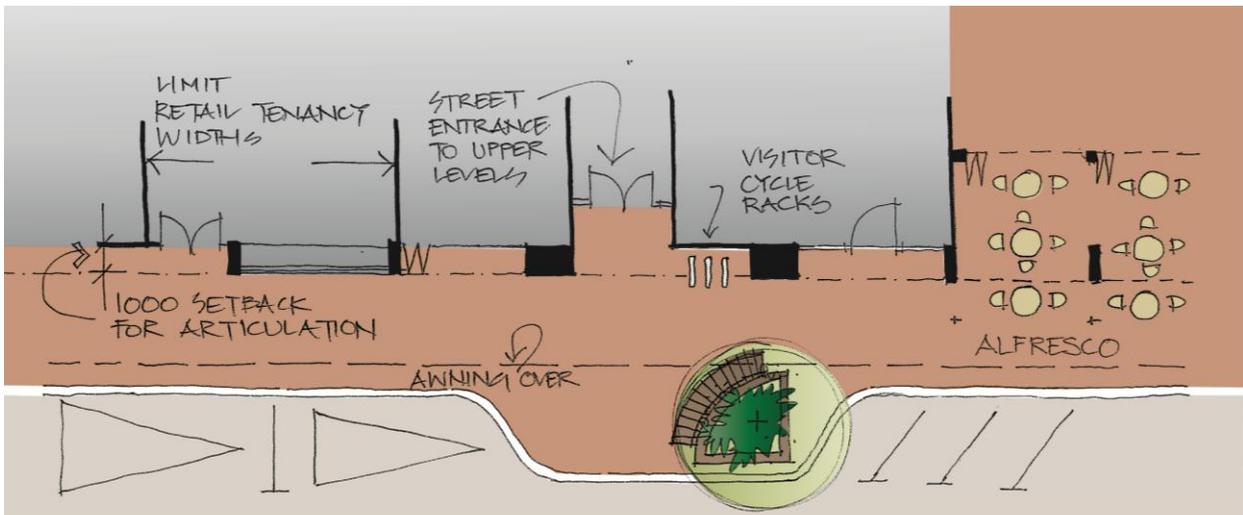


Figure 25 – A managed interface between high density residential and commercial land uses

3.3 INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING

Recommendation 13: Determine Need For Additional Infrastructure

The infrastructure contributing to the utility and amenity of each activity centre should be assessed and the need for improvement, additions and maintenance identified. Infrastructure may be provided by the local government, state/regional government organisations, the private sector, or as a joint venture, however it is critical the need for additional infrastructure is identified regardless of the provider. Infrastructure may be related to:

- Access (footpaths, street trees, wayfinding signage, cycling infrastructure, public transport, road and car parking);
- Amenity (street trees, parks, soft and hard landscaping, public art, playgrounds, sports equipment and facilities, picnic amenities and seating);
- Community (public resource centre, library, childcare, schools, aged citizens or youth facilities);
- Health (medical or wellness services, including child health services); and
- Other specialised infrastructure.

4.0 MONITORING AND REVIEW

The Residential Development Strategy provides a guide for future development over the short, medium and long-terms based on current trends and plans. Monitoring and review of the Strategy will be required. In particular the changing needs of the current and future population should be evaluated alongside the achievement of milestones in population and employment growth.

The Strategy should be reviewed (in conjunction with a review of the Commercial Activity Centres Strategy) when each population milestone is achieved, that is, when the residential population of the City reaches 50,000, 70,000 and 100,000.

DISCLAIMER: Whilst all care has been taken in the preparation of this data, this information is provided as a guide only and no responsibility shall be taken for any omissions or errors in this documentation. The accuracy provided is not to be used for legal purposes, but reference made to original documentation, which includes certificate of titles, survey diagrams & legal versions of the Town Planning Schemes.

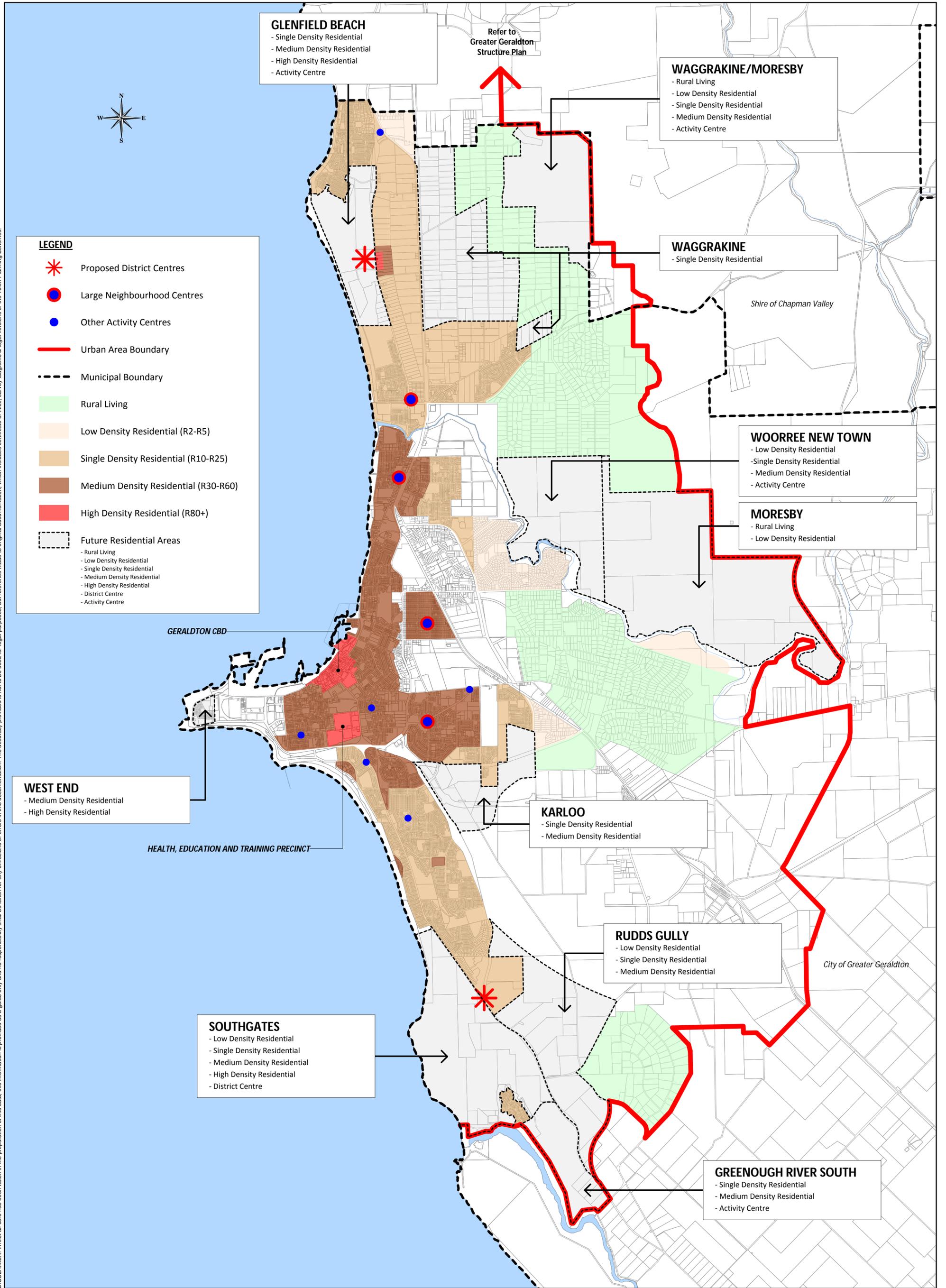


Figure 4: Residential Development Strategy Map (Geraldton Urban Area)