



City of Greater Geraldton

Bushfire Risk Management Plan

2026 - 2028

Office of Bushfire Risk Management Bushfire Risk
Management (BRM Plan) endorsed

21 May 2026

Local Government Council BRM Plan approval

XX XX XX

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Document endorsements

This Bushfire Risk Management Plan has been endorsed by the Office of Bushfire Risk Management as consistent with the standards detailed in the *Guidelines for Preparing a Bushfire Risk Management Plan 2024*.

The approval of the Bushfire Risk Management Plan by City of Greater Geraldton Council signifies support of the plan's implementation and commitment to working with risk owners to manage bushfire risk. Approval does not signify acceptance of responsibility for risk, treatments or outcomes on land that is not managed by the City of Greater Geraldton.

Local Government	Representative	Signature	Date
City of Greater Geraldton	CEO Ross McKim		30/6/2026

Publication information

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Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Background

This Bushfire Risk Management (BRM) Plan provides contextual information to inform a structured approach to identifying, assessing, prioritising, monitoring and treating bushfire risk. The BRM Plan has been prepared by the City of Greater Geraldton, which encompasses all land within the City of Greater Geraldton and has been written on behalf of all stakeholders within that area. The BRM Plan is informed by consultation and communication with land and asset managers that has occurred throughout its development to ensure an informed and collaborative approach to managing bushfire risk.

The BRM plan has been prepared with due consideration of the requirements stated in the *Guidelines for Preparing a Bushfire Risk Management Plan* (the Guidelines) published by the Office of Bushfire Risk Management (OBRM) including the principles described in *ISO 31000:2018 Risk Management*.

1.2 Objective of the Bushfire Risk Management planning program

The BRM planning program supports local governments to reduce the threat posed by bushfire. The City of Greater Geraldton BRM Plan will contribute to achieving the objective of the BRM program by:

- Guiding and coordinating a cross-tenure, multi-stakeholder approach to BRM planning.
- Facilitating the effective use of the financial and physical resources available for BRM activities.
- Supporting integration between risk owners, strategic objectives and tactical outcomes.
- Documented processes are used to monitor and review the implementation of treatments to ensure risk is managed to an acceptable level.

The City's ***Strategic Community Plan 2025–2035: Your Voice, Our Future*** highlights the City's role in delivering on the community's priorities. The objective of the SCP is to ensure that the City priorities provided are both meaningful (delivers on priorities) and manageable (achievable within resources). This sits with the Strategic Theme 1;

Strategic Theme 1 - Connected

- An engaged and diverse community where everyone feels included and safe.

Goals:

- 2 - Create strong partnerships to improve community safety and security

1.3 Legislation, policy and standards

Legislation, policy and standards that were applied in the development of this BRM Plan can be found in the *Bushfire Risk Management Planning Handbook – Appendix 1 – Summary of Related Legislation, Policy and Guidelines*.

Chapter 2 The risk management process

The BRM planning process is a cycle of understanding the context and assessing and treating risks. Each of these steps is informed by communication and consultation and supported by monitoring and review. The three products produced during the BRM planning process are the BRM Plan, Asset Risk Register and Treatment Schedule.

Further details on the guidelines and processes for the development of this plan can be found in Chapter 2 of the Guidelines.

2.1 Roles and responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities of the key stakeholders involved in the development of the BRM Plan are outlined in **Table 1**.

Table 1 – Roles and responsibilities in the Bushfire Risk Management (BRM) planning process

Stakeholder	Roles and responsibilities
Local government	• Custodian of the BRM Plan. • Coordinate the development and ongoing review of the BRM Plan. • Undertake bushfire risk assessment of local government area. • Submit the draft BRM Plan to OBRM for review and endorsement. • Develop and implement a Treatment Schedule for local government managed land. • Encourage risk owners to treat identified risks. • Communicate the plan to the community
DFES	• Contribute to the development and implementation of the BRM Plan. • Facilitate involvement of state and federal government agencies in the BRM planning process. • Undertake treatments on unmanaged reserves and unallocated Crown land within gazetted town sites. • By agreement, implement treatment strategies for other land managers. • Endorse BRM Plans as consist with the Guidelines, BRM Program and dynamic risk environment. • Administer the Mitigation Activity Fund Grants Program.
Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA)	• Contribute to the development of the BRM Plan. • Implement their treatment program on DBCA managed land. • Provide advice on environmental assets and appropriate treatment strategies for their protection.
Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage	• Identify managed assets. • Provide advice on management of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage.

Stakeholder	Roles and responsibilities
Other State and Commonwealth Government agencies and public utilities	- Identify managed assets. - Provide advice on current risk treatment programs. - Contribute to the development of BRM Plans. - Undertake treatments on lands they manage.
Corporations and private landowners	- Identify managed assets. - Provide advice on current risk treatment programs. - Undertake treatments on lands they manage.

2.2 Stakeholder engagement

Engagement with stakeholders during the development, implementation and review of the BRM Plan ensures planning is based on comprehensive information and considers the values and objectives of the entire community.

The following table identifies key stakeholders in the BRM planning process. These are stakeholders that are identified as having a significant role or interest in the planning process or are likely to be significantly impacted by the outcomes.

Table 2 – Key stakeholders identified in the BRM planning process for the City of Greater Geraldton.

Stakeholder	Role or interest	Level of impact of outcomes	Level of engagement
Shire of Northampton	Local government authority; land manager; responsible for BRM Plan coordination, community engagement, and treatment implementation on local government land.	High	Collaborate
Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES)	State agency responsible for bushfire response, planning support, BRM Plan oversight, and funding programs.	High	Collaborate
Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA)	Manages national parks, nature reserves, and unallocated Crown land; responsible for ecological fire management and biodiversity protection.	High	Collaborate

Water Corporation	Owns and manages water infrastructure (e.g., tanks, pipelines, pump stations) that may be vulnerable to bushfire.	Medium	Consult
Western Power	Owns and manages electricity infrastructure; critical to community resilience and emergency response.	High	Involve
Dampier to Bunbury Natural Gas Pipeline (DBNGP) Gas Pipeline Operators	Manage critical gas infrastructure across the region; require protection from bushfire impacts.	Medium	Consult
Private Landowners and Leaseholders	Own and manage large areas of agricultural and residential land; responsible for firebreaks and on-property mitigation.	High	Involve
Volunteer Bushfire Brigades	Provide frontline bushfire suppression and local knowledge; essential to response and community preparedness.	High	Collaborate
Aboriginal Corporations and Traditional Owners	Hold cultural knowledge and manage heritage sites; contribute to fire management planning and protection of cultural landscapes.	High	Collaborate
Tourism Operators and Businesses	Operate in high-risk coastal and natural areas; rely on safe access and protection of natural assets.	Medium	Consult
Main Roads WA	Manages major transport routes (e.g., Northwest Coastal Highway); responsible for roadside vegetation and emergency access.	High	Involve
WA Police and Emergency Services	Coordinate evacuations and public safety during bushfire emergencies.	Medium	Consult
Local Schools and Community Facilities	Serve as community hubs and potential evacuation centres; require protection and emergency planning.	Medium	Involve

Pastoral Leaseholders	Manage large tracts of remote land; often adjacent to conservation areas and require coordinated mitigation.	Medium	Involve
Environmental and Landcare Groups	Advocate for ecological protection and sustainable land management; may assist with community education and monitoring.	Medium	Consult

Chapter 3 Establishing the context

Strategic and corporate framework

The Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework (IPRF) outlines and details the direction of all future economic, social and environmental development within the City of Greater Geraldton. The IPRF consists of a Strategic Community Plan, Corporate Business Plan, Annual Budget and Informing Strategies. The Informing Strategies are an integral part that assists the decision-making processes used to achieve the objectives incorporated into the framework³. The BRM Plan will form an important part of the issue specific Informing Strategies used to achieve the City's objectives.

The Community Strategic Plan (2025-2035) and Corporate Business Plan (2025-2029) for the City of Greater Geraldton were adopted in June 2025 by Council and will be reviewed in 2029. The adoption and implementation of the plans enabled the Council and the community to jointly develop shared visions and aspirations for the future³. In collaboration with key stakeholders and the broader community, key areas of interest for future development were identified. The purpose of the plans is to guide the development of these key areas now and into the future.

Key areas outlined for future development in the Community Strategic Plan (2025-2035) were Connected, Liveable, Thriving and Leading³. Development of these areas will aim to stimulate the local economy, support job security and maintain the lifestyle. The BRM Plan will assist in achieving the City's specific aims contained within the Community Strategic Plan (Connected) and strengthen the overall objectives in the IPRF.

³ City of Greater Geraldton. (2025) 2025 - 2035 Community Strategic Plan
https://www.cgg.wa.gov.au/Profiles/cgg/Assets/ClientData/Document-Centre/Council/Strategic/Strategic_Community_Plan_2025-2035

As outlined in the Community Strategic Plan – *Connected*, the City of Greater Geraldton aims to:

1. Provide safe and inviting public spaces for people to enjoy; and
2. Foster collaborative partnerships to improve community safety, security and social cohesion.

The annual budget provides the City of Greater Geraldton a financial plan to achieve the objectives over the next financial year ⁴. The objectives at the core of the annual budget include:

- Key strategic objectives outline by the community.
- Stimulating economic growth and maintaining job security.
- Delivering desired services.
- Meeting asset and operational needs.
- Addressing Council's long-term sustainability.

Finance of the City of Greater Geraldton BRM Plan is also incorporated into the annual budget. The budget funds the current development of the BRM Plan within the City of Greater Geraldton and the implementation of bushfire risk mitigation strategies in areas managed by the Local Government.

The BRM Plan is an Issue Specific Strategy that will enable unacceptable bushfire risks to be identified and support the programming of effective risk treatment activities to reduce the City's bushfire risk. The BRM Plan aims to reduce the potential impacts from bushfire across all land tenures within the City. The treatments, when implemented, will aim to reduce the potential loss and damage resulting from bushfires and help protect human life and assets within the City.

The City of Greater Geraldton, through the Office of the CEO, is the custodian of the BRM Plan. The Emergency Operations Officer and the Coordinator Emergency Management are jointly responsible for developing, implementing and reviewing the BRM Plan. In the event of a cessation of the above roles within the City, the Office of the CEO will delegate the responsibilities. Throughout implementation, the risk assessments and treatments outlined in the BRM Plan will be monitored periodically and the overall BRM Plan reviewed where required.

The BRM Plan involves multiple stakeholders and will require the cooperation of all landowners/managers within the City. The stakeholders include, Local Government, community groups and the broader community, businesses, other government agencies and service providers. Landowners and managers including the Local Government, are ultimately responsible for implementing land-based bushfire risk treatments on the lands they own or manage. However, there may be other types of treatments identified within the Treatment Schedule that require the involvement of a range of stakeholders, beyond those that manage land.

To effectively implement the BRM Plan across the City, the stakeholders involved are encouraged to work with each other and the Local Government. The landowners and managers are empowered to take responsibility on their own land and implement the appropriate mitigation measures or treatments outlined in the BRM Plan. The coordinated implementation of the treatments across all land tenures is critical to the BRM Plan process to reduce bushfire risk to a safe and manageable level across the entire City.

⁴ City of Greater Geraldton. (2025) 2025-26 Annual Budget
<https://www.cgg.wa.gov.au/documents/1484/annual-budget-2025-26>

The Bush Fire Advisory Committee (BFAC) of the City of Greater Geraldton (Geraldton-Greenough BFAC), as well as the Batavia LEMC will be encouraged to be actively involved during the life cycle of the BRM Plan. BFAC and the Batavia LEMC will provide important advice and feedback to assist in guiding the BRM Plan process and the selection and implementation of appropriate risk treatments.

The outcomes of the BRM Plan will also benefit the aims and objectives of the BFAC and Batavia LEMC through collective interests and informing other processes related to bushfire and emergency management. For example, treatments implemented to reduce fuel loads adjacent to major highways and roads that access the City of Greater Geraldton internally and externally, contributes to reducing bushfire risk. This also provides safe access routes for the community and emergency services in the case of a bushfire. The activities outlined in the BRM Plan will benefit and reinforce the aims and objectives of the City of Greater Geraldton's Risk Management Framework 2026-2028⁵ and Local Emergency Management Arrangements (LEMA)⁶.

Bushfire management within the City of Greater Geraldton in the past, has primarily focussed on the response to, and recovery from bushfires. In recent years there has been a gradual change to a risk management approach that uses risk identification, analysis, evaluation and treatment to manage risks. Key treatment strategies currently employed to improve preparedness and reduce the bushfire risk within the City include:

- reducing fuel loads through annual works programs, including brigade burning; and
- maintenance of asset protection zones on private and Local Government lands through the annual firebreak notice and inspections.

The BRM Plan will ensure that existing treatment strategies address priority risks using a combination of Local Government wide controls and asset specific treatments, which will also include community engagement and education programs such as Bush Fire Ready Groups. The Asset Risk Register contained within the BRM Plan details the assets within the City of Greater Geraldton that have been risk assessed and their priority for treatment. An asset's risk rating and treatment priority will assist and inform the decision-making process when allocating valuable resources to reduce identified bushfire risks to an acceptable level.

The City of Greater Geraldton experiences Level 2 bushfires within the river valley and in the vegetated reserves adjacent to the town. In the past, these fires have impacted urban areas on the outskirts of town and caused significant disruption to residents. Multiple fires burning at one time has the potential to stretch the capacity of response resources quickly, increasing the likelihood for fire ignitions to establish and spread. Through the implementation of the BRM Plan, the City of Greater Geraldton will increase efforts to develop and support bushfire preparation programs and provide bushfire prevention education programs.

⁵ City of Greater Geraldton. (2026) City of Greater Geraldton Risk Management Framework 2026-2028

⁶ City of Greater Geraldton. (2022) 2022 Local Emergency Management Arrangements
https://cgg.wa.gov.au/Profiles/cgg/Assets/ClientData/Documents/Infrastructure/Fire_Management/BLEMA_2022-Public_version

Land use and tenure

The City of Greater Geraldton is in the Midwest region of Western Australia, approximately 419 kilometres North of Perth. It is located adjacent to Champion Bay and contains the historical town site of Greenough. The City of Greater Geraldton also incorporates the town site of Mullewa which lies 98 kilometres northeast of Geraldton.

It covers an area of 12332.71 square kilometres including the Houtman Abrolhos Islands (2444.71 square kilometres). The seat of government is contained within the Geraldton townsit⁷. The City of Greater Geraldton borders the Shires of Irwin, Mingenew, Morawa, Yalgoo, Murchison and Chapman Valley.

Most of the City of Greater Geraldton area is private freehold land with a total of 30,980 land parcels. The large number of private individuals presents a challenge for the City with varying understanding and commitments to mitigation works and bushfire preparation. One of the challenges is that bushfire risk can be strongly influenced by a small number of landowners not undertaking appropriate property preparation. The City manages these risks with its annual fire break notice and subsequent compliance program.

The Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions. (DBCA) Parks and Wildlife Service is the largest single land manager/agency with a total area equivalent to 1.20%. Parks and Wildlife Services is responsible for the management of the natural reserves in coastal areas and southeast of the Walkaway (Burma Road Nature Reserve), north of Mullewa (Urawa Nature Reserve) and south of Tenindewa (Indarra Springs Nature Reserve). Under current arrangements, Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) is responsible for managing the bushfire risk on Unallocated Crown Land and Unmanaged Reserves within gazetted town sites. The City of Greater Geraldton is the land and treatment manager for 0.0037% of the BRM Plan area. The breakdown of land manager/owners are shown in **Table 3**.

Table 3 – Overview of Land Tenure and Management within the BRM Plan Area

Land Manager/Owner*	% of Plan Area
Local Government	0.003%
Private	96.18%
Department of Biodiversity, Conservation & Attractions	1.20%
Department of Housing	0.088%
Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage	1.52%
Rail Network	Less than 1%
Total	100%

Source: City of Greater Geraldton. (2019). Synergy Rates Data

The City of Greater Geraldton in total contains 19 nature reserves managed by DBCA which include; Cutubury Nature Reserve, Eradu Nature Reserve, Beetalyinna Nature Reserve, Burma Road Nature Reserve, Erangy Springs Nature Reserve, Forty Mile Nature Reserve, Indarra Spring Nature Reserve, Bindoo Hill Nature Reserve, Wongoody Nature Reserve, Warrawah Nature Reserve, Kockatea Nature Reserve, Uruwah Nature Reserve, Sand Springs Nature Reserve, Barrbarra Nature Reserve, Pallotine Nature Reserve, Wilroy Nature Reserve and three unnamed reserves R33799, R24185, R14776.

There is also one conservation park, this is unnamed R23920. The City of Greater Geraldton also has over fifty-five Natural Areas, the most significant being the Chapman River Regional Park and the Greenough River Nature Reserve.

Community demographics and values

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), the City of Greater Geraldton population is 39,489 people⁸. Geraldton contains most of the City of Greater Geraldton population (~95%).

The City of Greater Geraldton contains a population with approximately 38.8% being born overseas (English ancestry) and 38.7% born in Australia. Approximately 8.85% are of indigenous heritage⁸. The age demographic of the resident population is provided by the ABS, are illustrated in **Figure 1**.

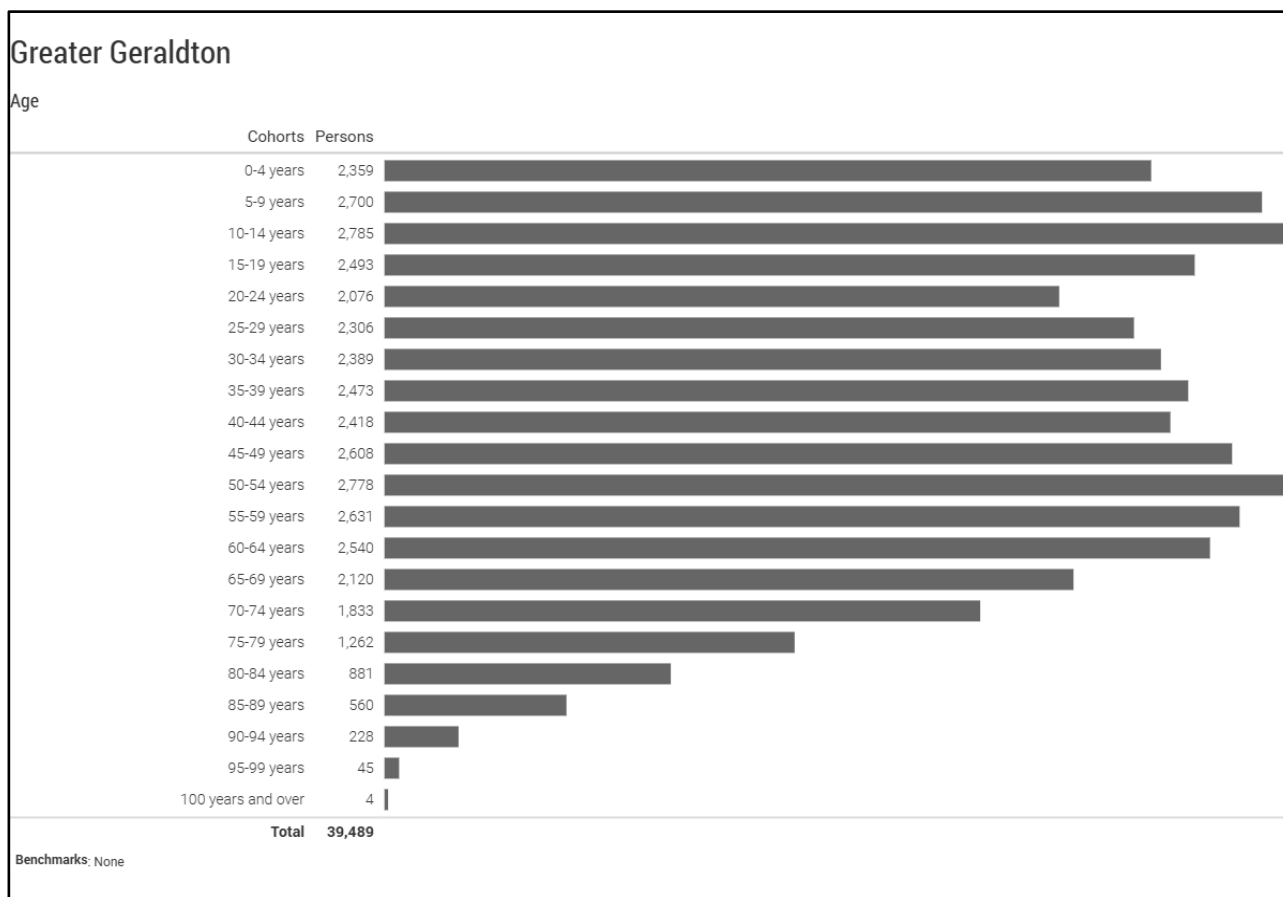


Figure 1 – City of Greater Geraldton Population by Age⁸

This distribution shows the number of residents in the City of Greater Geraldton are aged between 15 to 44 years (35.84%) which is lower than the State average (39.99%). In contrast, the number of people aged from 55 to 84 years (28.59%) is higher than the State average (26.01%). This supports the assertion that many people have settled in the area as a lifestyle and retirement choice⁹.

The above average portion of children under 18 years of age is a consideration for the BRM Plan. This group is particularly vulnerable in bushfire events as they are reliant on adults for decision making, evaluation and care. This means that additional planning is required to ensure that they are planned for in pre-planning and recovery. This group has been considered by the Batavia LEMA as a vulnerable group and will need to be considered and supported before, during and after bushfire events.

The over 65 age group are also above average which has its own challenges. Elderly people are an identified vulnerable group the elderly tend to be frailer, have more health issues and may be dependent on others for care. The ability to elderly residents to prepare and maintain properties and fight a bushfire is limited. Often elderly people over estimate their abilities in emergencies which can lead to risk taking behaviours and is often not advisable for elderly to stay and defend properties. In addition, elderly people often have additional needs in time of emergency in relation to mobility, medical conditions and other special requirements meaning they need careful consideration and care in times of evacuation. For these reasons the City of Greater Geraldton has considered this group during all stages of their bushfire planning.

The level of bushfire preparedness and engagement with bushfire messaging differs across the various areas. The broadacre farms further inland and away from Geraldton have a higher level of engagement in bushfire preparedness. The higher level of preparedness is the combination of the inherent bushfire risk associated with farming especially during harvesting and from past bushfire experiences of families and neighbours within these areas. In densely populated coastal areas, there is less engagement and currently only two (2) registered Bushfire Ready Groups operating within the City of Greater Geraldton.

Cultural heritage

The Yamatji people have a strong presence in the region and a major focus for the City is to engage and consult with Aboriginal community groups on all key aspects pertaining to culture and to foster a unified approach towards building a positive sustainable future.

The City is committed to meeting cultural protocols with the traditional owners of Yamatji Country and developing an understanding of the local Aboriginal history and promoting and supporting the preservation of heritage and significant sites in the Midwest.

Within the Midwest region there are various localised Aboriginal language groups which are collectively known as Yamatji and include the Amangu people, Naaguja people, Wajarri people, Nanda people, Badimia people and additionally the region includes the Western Desert people known as the Martu people.

Registered Aboriginal Cultural Heritage sites and Protected Areas are shown in the [Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Inquiry System \(ACHIS\)](#). This system will be consulted and appropriate approvals obtained when planning bushfire mitigation activities.

The recognized Native Title holders and Traditional Owners of the land and waters in and around Geraldton are the Yamatji Peoples. Following a landmark 2020 settlement, the Yamatji Nation Claim was formally recognized. Specifically, the Southern Yamatji people are recognized as the Traditional Owners of the City of Greater Geraldton.

Key traditional owner groups in the region:

- Southern Yamatji: The overarching group recognized for the Greater Geraldton area.
- Amangu: People of the Southern Yamatji region.
- Naaguja: People associated with the northwest of the Southern Yamatji region.
- Wilunyu: Coastal or seaward Yamatji people.
- Wajarri Yamatji: People in the Midwest region, including areas near Mullewa.

⁷ Australian Bureau of Statistics 2021 Census of Population and Housing

⁸ Australian Bureau of Statistics 2021 Census of Population and Housing

Economic activities and industry

The City of Greater Geraldton was historically known for its aquaculture industry and broad acre farming⁹. Currently there is a blend of coastal and rural environments which support various industries including mining, fishing, aquaculture, agriculture, manufacturing, construction, retail and tourism. The City of Greater Geraldton also has a stable growing tourism industry and provides several accommodation options in various locations.

The Beresford Foreshore provides a summer playground and attraction for residents and tourists, especially during school holidays. In recent years the City of Greater Geraldton has undergone enormous development, revitalising the foreshore with the Eastern Breakwater, Multi-User Facility and Youth Precinct. The refurbishment of the original Railway Station which was a finalist in the 2015 Western Australia Heritage Awards. These developments have created spaces where people can connect with each other while enjoying the benefits of living in this special space⁹.

Geraldton is a regional hub and provides a range of services to surrounding areas, including major retail, health, education and government services. This is consistent with the employment sector data also. The port facility and associated logistics facilities service the regional export industries - wheat, sheep, mining, fishing and tourism (cruise ships), so transport infrastructure is also critical.

The largest employment sector in the City of Greater Geraldton is the combined Health Care and Social Assistance industry (17.37%)¹⁰. Other major industries include retail trade, construction and education and training. The number of people employed in the different industry sectors within the local economy are illustrated in **Figure 2**.

More than half of all agricultural income to the region is derived from wheat production, with recent harvests at Geraldton Port receivals totalling 3,473,000 tonnes. ^(2024/25 harvest) The Geraldton Port is Australia's second largest in terms of wheat export trade. The region's high-quality grain makes it ideal for milling and for use in a wide variety of processed foods. Cereal, lupin and legume crops are also grown here.¹¹

Due to the increased bushfire risk during agricultural operations the community have a well-developed network of communicating between farmers to notify each other when a fire starts. Some of our key farmers are also fire control officers so they can manage the risk of burning using permits, and imposing conditions on the permits so fires are not lit on days that could be considered a risk. Our fire control officers have been appointed as they have a great deal of local knowledge of the farming practices, seasonal weather conditions and how the fire can be influenced by varying vegetation types.

The Dampier to Bunbury natural gas pipeline runs through the Local Government and has a statewide significance in the commercial and domestic supply of natural gas. Disruptions to the gas pipeline can prevent continuous distribution of gas to the southern region of Western Australia and has the potential to significantly impact the State's economy, as seen in 2008 when a rupture at the processing plant on Varanus Island disrupted supplies for several months. While the pipeline presents a low risk and it is buried deep underground, however the above ground infrastructure needs to be managed to avoid the impact of bushfire. This infrastructure has been assessed through the BRM Plan risk assessment process.

Utilising tourism opportunities within the industry is an important part for the future economic objectives. In the school holiday period through the warmer seasons, accommodation within the City of Greater Geraldton is usually at full capacity. This is indicated by the need to usually book six months to a year in advance to secure accommodation throughout these periods.

A total of 122 islands make up the pristine Houtman Abrolhos Islands located just 60km off the Geraldton coast. They are accessible via aircraft and boat. Diving, fishing, snorkelling, photography and bird watching.

During the annual Shore Leave held during April school holidays, the town has a significant influx of visitors¹². The other two events that see significant local participation are the Australia Day festival and Christmas on the Terrace; both events are managed by the City of Greater Geraldton events team.

The school and public holidays require a balanced approach to bushfire risk management. In these periods, it is vital to protect people and assets from the potential impacts of bushfires. However, it is important to minimise the affect some treatment activities may have on tourism during these times.

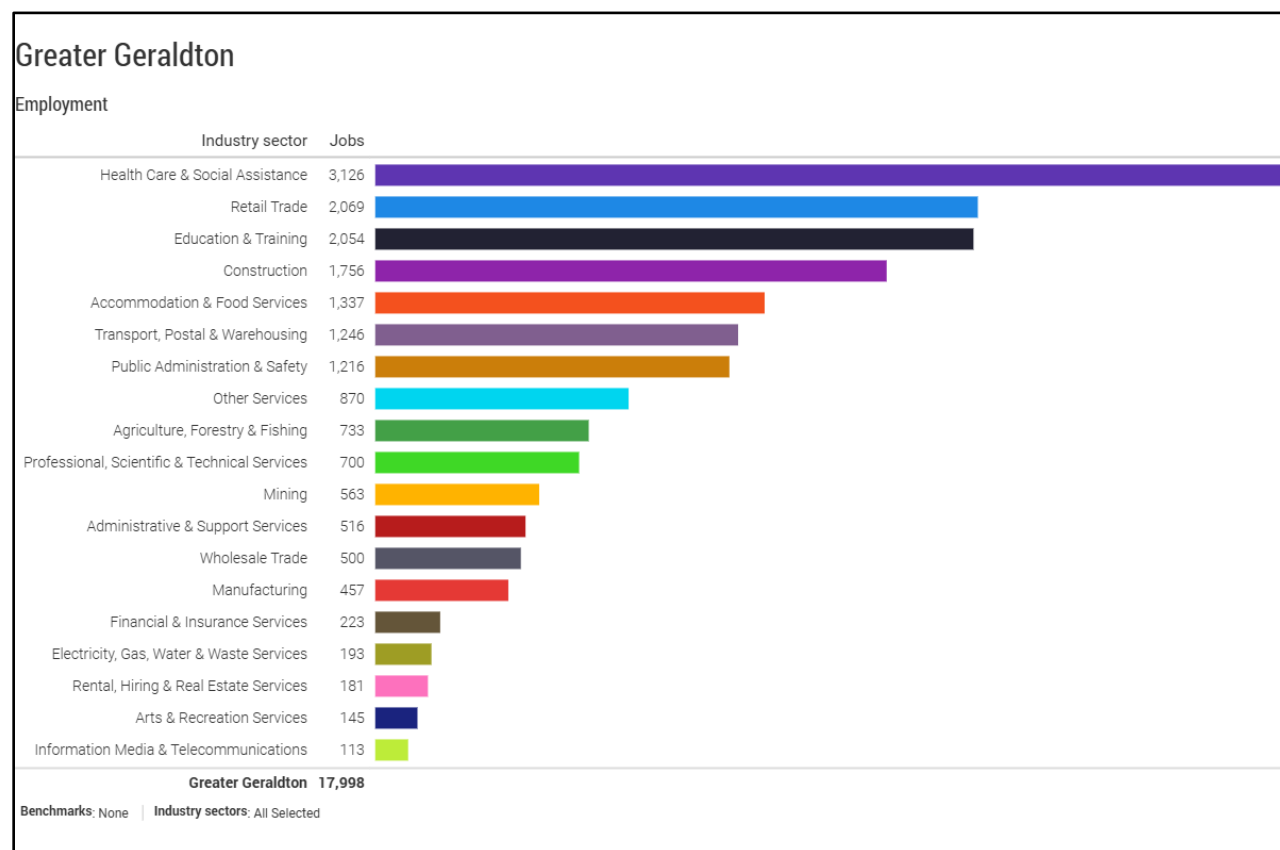


Figure 2 – City of Greater Geraldton Employment by Industry (2021 data)¹³

⁹ Britannica online (16 April 2026)

<https://www.britannica.com/place/Geraldton>

¹⁰ REMPLAN data incorporating Australian Bureau of Statistics' (ABS) 2021 Census Place of Work Employment Data

¹¹ City of Greater Geraldton webpage

<https://www.cgg.wa.gov.au/work/economic-profiles/sectoral-performance.aspx>

¹² City of Greater Geraldton Events and Programs

<https://www.cgg.wa.gov.au/community/events-and-programs>

¹³ REMPLAN data incorporating Australian Bureau of Statistics' (ABS) 2021 Census Place of Work Employment Data

Topography and landscape features

The City of Greater Geraldton is within the Chapman River catchment area (North of Geraldton) and the Greenough River catchment (South of Geraldton) with the suburb of Cape Burney on the Greenough River mouth. It contains no national parks, nineteen Nature Reserves and one Conservation Park (R23920). These protected natural areas constitute 1.2% (14,854.29 hectares) of the total City of Greater Geraldton area. The coastal landscape contains relatively flat terrain east of the coastline to the West of the Brand Highway except for the Northern aspect of the City.¹⁴

The general topography of the City varies from the flat Coastal plain in the West to the Moresby Range hills. Certain areas of the Coastal plain are only just above sea level, whilst the hills area rises to a height of 160 metres above sea level. The hills have significant slopes with houses and other assets on the slope and the plateaus above them. This creates a significant bushfire risk because a bushfire will spread faster as it moves upslope – a 10° slope will double the rate of spread of a fire.

The Coastal plains have several swamp areas around the Allnooka area. Peat swamps contain large number of organic soils and have the risk of acid sulphate soils. Organic soils smoulder because their compact nature limits the oxygen available to the fire. This means they produce far more smoke, and for a longer period, than a vegetation fire of the same size.

Fires in these areas burn for long periods and can be difficult to access. Organic soils are unstable, especially when burnt, and may collapse beneath people or vehicles. Their thin surface crust may give way with little pressure, exposing the soft and extremely hot soil beneath. Because of this, extinguishing fires in organic soils requires large amounts of water and/or mechanical works.

Within the Moresby hills there a complex system of small creeks that join the Chapman River, this complex topography, creates valley systems that create a challenge for fire management. This creates areas where the vegetation is bifurcated and limits egress and access for both residents and first responders. This is particularly challenging when fires occur in these areas. Fires often spot across the watercourses where fire fighters cannot easily cross and may have to travel some distance to be able to get to the other side of the creek systems. This can often result in a minimum 15-minute delay in firefighting response allowing the fire to grow and develop in this time. These valleys also create challenges for fire predication and modelling as well as they can creating localised weather patterns and wind effects that can make fires hard to predict and control.

The impact of topography is greater in the east of the City, where the rock outcrops can restrict and, in some cases, prevent access by fire appliances. In areas where the rocky formations prevent ground-based firefighting, direct attack of a fire is limited to aerial response (very limited) or waiting until the fire reaches an area of suitable topography for ground crews to access. This may greatly increase the time taken for fire to be suppressed, which can allow fires to grow, resulting larger, more destructive fires often with higher intensities and rates of spread. While these land formations can present challenges when installing firebreaks, the issue highlights the need for fuels to be broken up across the landscape using a range of suitable and sustainable strategies that provide low fuel buffers and firebreaks for use in fire suppression and mitigation.

The Cattamarra coal measure mainly underlies the coastline of the City of Greater Geraldton. The formation comprises of siltstone, shale, claystone, coal and sandstone. The Yarragadee formation underlies the area of Greenough region including Cape Burney. The Yarragadee formation consists of fine to coarse grained sandstone with thin interbeds of shale. The Cadda formation lies south of the Cattamarra Coal Measure and north of the Yarragadee formation. The Cadda formation consists of grey shale, siltstone and sandstone.

The geology underlying the Moresby ranges comprises of a series of complex geology formations. Quartzofeldspathic gneiss is associated with the Northampton Complex. The Cadda formation underlies the area directly south and west of the Northampton Complex. The Cadda formation consists of grey shale, siltstone and sandstone. The Yarragadee formation is the dominant underlying geology east of the Cadda formation. Lying east of Yarragadee formation and west of the town site of Mullewa is the Nangetty formation and Tumblagooda Sandstone.

The Nangetty formation consists of diamictite, shale and sandstone. The Tumblagooda Sandstone consists of fine to coarse grained red-bed sandstone and minor siltstone. The Holmwood Shale underlies the area south of the Nangetty formation, which was formed during the Permian from sedimentary and volcanic rock. The Holmwood shale consists of grey shale, well-bedded clayey siltstone and interbedded limestone. The underlying geology within the area of the Mullewa town site and eastern portion of the City are the Gneiss and Granitic rocks, which forms a part of the Yilgarn Craton. The northeastern portion of the City of Greater Geraldton consists of the Granite gneiss with greenstone enclaves. Gabbro and dolerite form the southern scarp of the Granite gneiss.

The coastline of the City of Greater Geraldton consists of deep calcareous sandy soils associated with alluvial plains and complex dune system. The area east of the coastline is characterised loam earthy soils overlying gently rolling terrain. Sodic subsoils of red loamy duplexes overlie the Northampton Complex. Sandy and loamy duplexes of non-alkaline subsoils often overlie relics of an alluvial plain associated with riverbeds and terraces lies east of Northampton.

Deep siliceous sandy soils often associated with a lateritic breakaway and long gentle slope broken by low gravel ridges and broad open depression, lies in the southern portion of the City of Greater Geraldton. The eastern portion of the City of Greater Geraldton is characterised by loamy earth soils of red shallow loams and red-brown hardpan soils overlying undulating plain and low hills/sandy rises. Deep sandy and sandy earth soils underlie the area associated with the boundary of the City of Greater Geraldton and Shire of Yalgoo¹⁵.

Most of the population is concentrated within the town site of Geraldton. There are relatively efficient response times in these densely populated areas from the two Fire Brigades (Geraldton Career Fire and Rescue Service and Geraldton Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service) within the City of Greater Geraldton. Response times are likely to be increased in areas that are isolated such as remote/regional farms or areas that contain thick parcels of dense vegetation that hinder vehicle access. These considerations will be considered during the development of bushfire risk management strategies. The City of Greater Geraldton is supported by eight bush fire brigades spread across the Local Government. These brigades have approximately 210 volunteer members and eleven appliances ranging from Light Tankers to 4000L 4WD rural tankers.

¹⁴ Landgate Map Viewer, viewed 27/11/2019.

<https://maps.landgate.wa.gov.au/maps-landgate/registered/>

¹⁵ Northern Agricultural Regional Vision (NARvis), City of Greater Geraldton (Landscape and Topography profile, viewed 5/08/2020

Climate and weather

The climatic conditions in the Coastal Mid-West Gascoyne Region consists of a typical Mediterranean climate. Summers are relatively dry with the hottest month on average being February and the winters are generally mild and relatively wet with July/August having the coldest monthly average maximum. Several Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development Automatic Weather Stations (AWS) provide automated weather updates in the following localities Allanooka, Eradu, Tenindewa and Mullewa. The annual temperature trend in the City of Greater Geraldton provided by these weather stations is illustrated in **Figure 3 and 4.**¹⁶

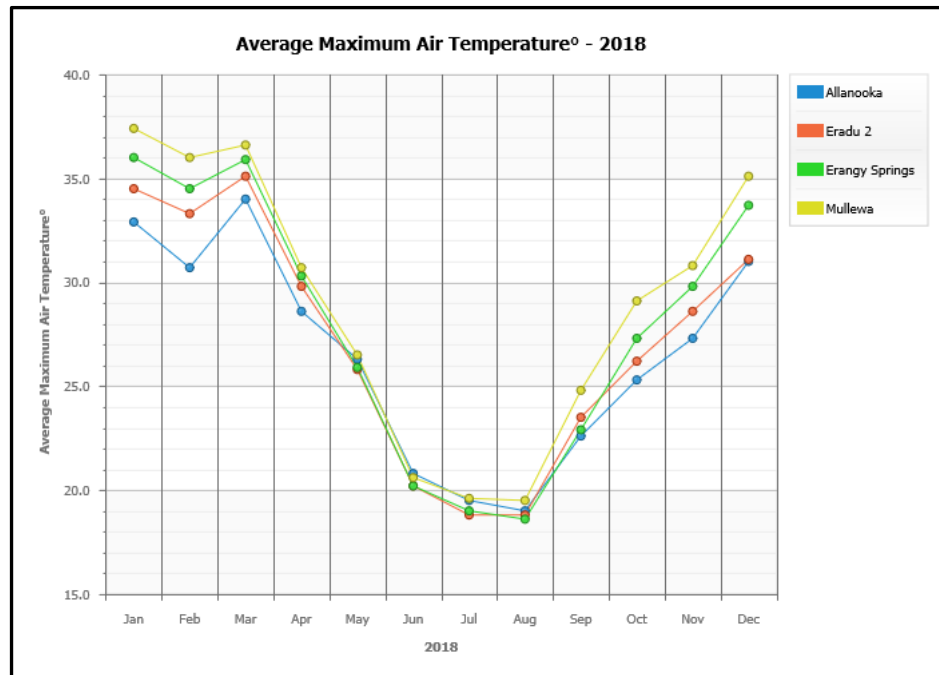


Figure 3 – Average Maximum Temperatures for 4 AWS in CGG (2018)¹⁶

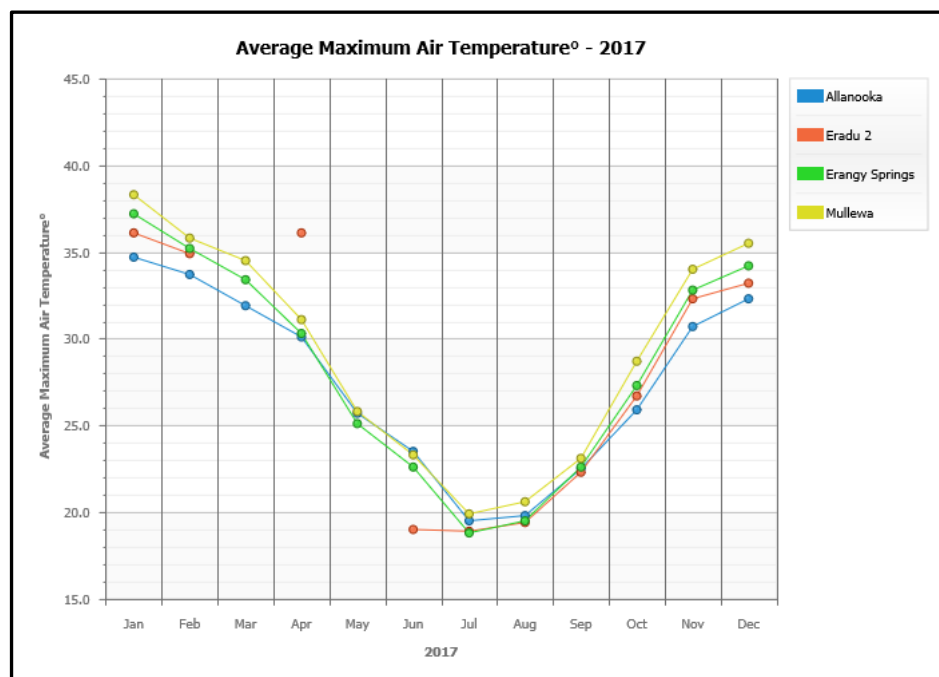


Figure 4 – Average Maximum Temperatures for 4 AWS in CGG (2017)¹⁶

Rainfall is relatively minimal during the summer months with only the occasional storm bringing rain to the area. The driest month with the lowest rainfall on average is February. During February 2018 the Eradu AWS recorded 0.2mm¹⁶. The wettest month with the highest rainfall on average is July. During July 2018 the Allanooka AWS recorded (141mm).¹⁶ The amount of rainfall ranges between 5.3mm in December to 97.2mm in June with a monthly average of 34.78 (Allanooka AWS, 2018). The annual rainfall data from the four (4) weather stations is illustrated in **Figure 5** and **6**.¹⁶

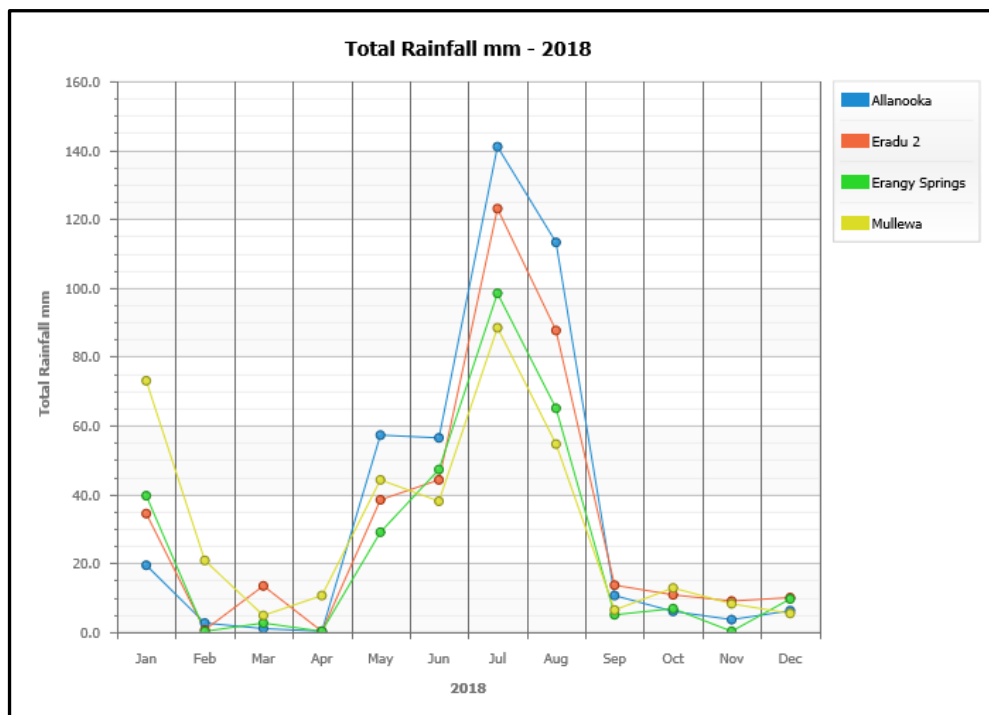


Figure 5 –Rainfall for 4 AWS in CGG (2018)¹⁶

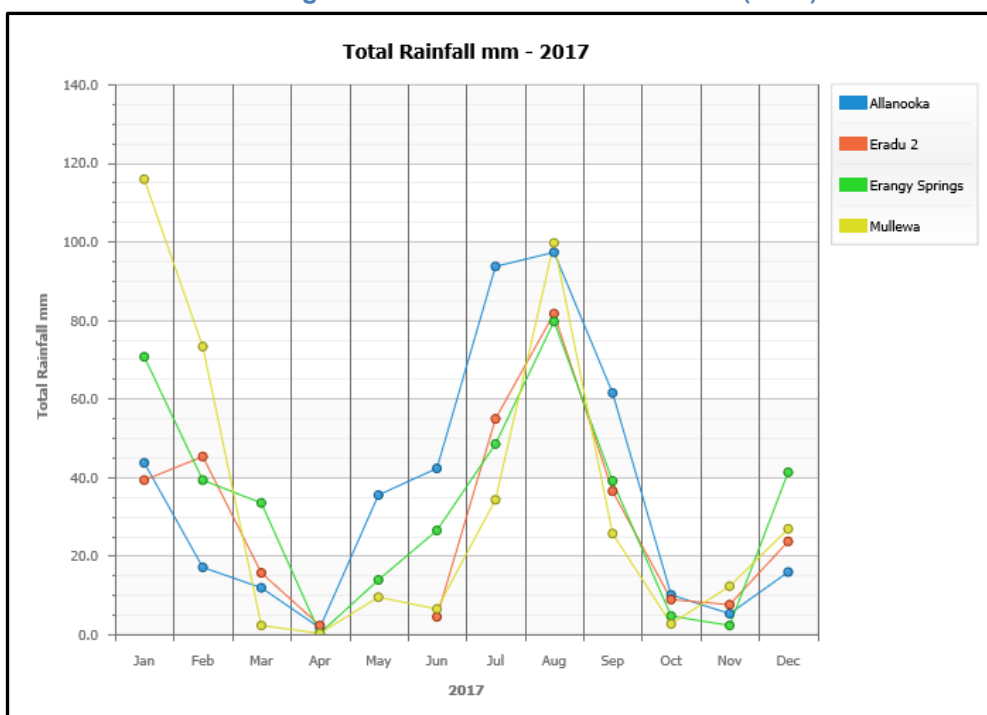


Figure 6 – Total Rainfall for 4 AWS in CGG (2017)¹⁶

The prevailing wind direction is generally from the Southwest during the cooler seasons. The wind direction changes in the hotter months and periods to Southerly. Winter months experience the greatest wind speeds but on average the summer months are higher.¹⁶ The average wind speed and direction for the City of Greater Geraldton since 1941 are illustrated in **Figure 7**. In the summer months, hot, dry easterly winds can result in very high temperatures, low humidity and strong winds, and are associated with the formation of low-pressure troughs along the west coast. These weather conditions make firefighting difficult as these hot easterly winds increase the fire intensity and make fire suppression difficult. Using these climatic variables a Grassland Fire Danger Index (GFDI) can be determined and used to rate the conditions in relation to potential fire behaviour and suppression difficulty. Over the past two years, weather conditions have resulted in the local area having a GFDI of either extreme or catastrophic a number of times. During these conditions dry lightning storms may be prevalent and there is high potential for vegetation to ignite. This can lead to significant bushfires causing concern for landowners/managers and residents in the town sites and rural areas. Over the past five fire seasons, a total fire ban was declared in the City of Greater Geraldton hundred and eight (108) times¹⁸. Extreme weather conditions are not the only reason a total fire ban may be declared, as many factors can cause the total fire ban, including reduced response capacity from resource commitments in other areas of the State.

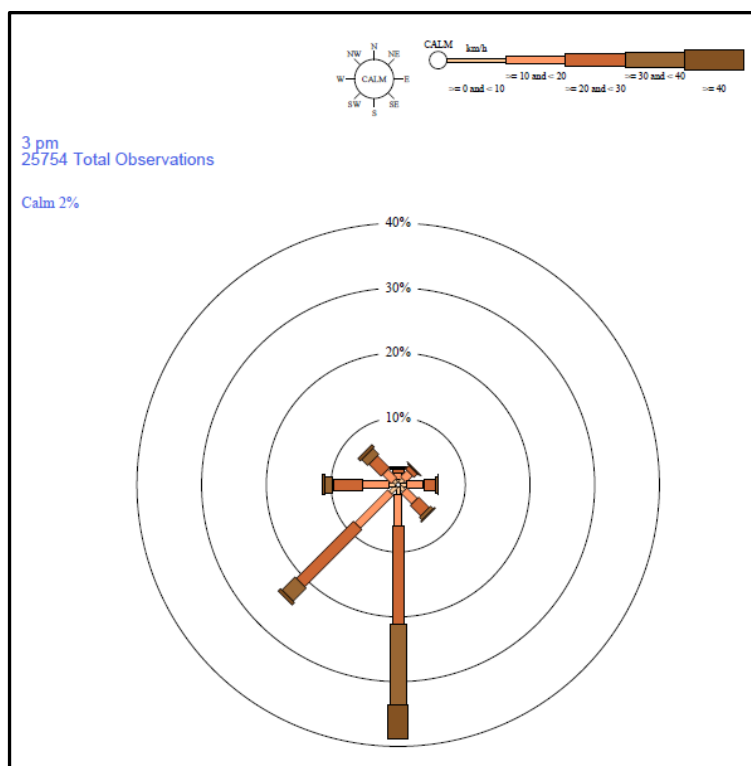


Figure 7 – Wind Rose for the City of Greater Geraldton (BoM Geraldton)¹⁷

¹⁶ Government of Western Australia. (2019, November Thursday). Weather Charts. Retrieved from the Department of Agriculture and Food: <https://www.agric.wa.wa.au/weather-stations>

¹⁷ Australian Bureau of Meteorology 2026, Geraldton Airport online climate data, viewed 30/04/2026.

¹⁸ Data supplied by Department of Fire and Emergency Services.
<https://publications.dfes.wa.gov.au/publications/total-fire-ban-declarations-2017-2023>

PERIODS & PERMITS ALTERATION TO RESTRICTED AND PROHIBITED BURNING TIMES: Subject to change due to seasonal conditions. CBD (GERALDTON AND MULLEWA) AND SURROUNDING SUBURBS A application for a permit to burn is required, at any time outside of prohibited burning period. An onsite inspection by a Fire Control Officer (FCO) is mandatory before a permit can be issued. Permit required to burn during Restricted Burning Period. Permit to burn is required until 30 SEPTEMBER Burning Prohibited 1 OCTOBER - 28 FEBRUARY Permit to burn is required from 1 MARCH SEMI RURAL AREAS - ANY PROPERTY outside the gazetted fire district not a broadacre or commercial farm Burning Permits are required from 1 March to 30 September. (Inspection is at FCO's discretion). Permit required to burn during Restricted Burning Period. Permit to burn is required until 30 SEPTEMBER Burning Prohibited 1 OCTOBER - 28 FEBRUARY Permit to burn is required from 1 MARCH BROADACRE OR COMMERCIAL FARM Permits are required for burning of bush, grass or stubble from 15 September to 30 September and 1 March to 15 March. Burning of bush, grass and stubble only from 16 March to 14 September is unrestricted (does not require permit). Permit required to burn brush, grass or stubble. No permit required until 14 SEPTEMBER Permits required 15 SEPTEMBER - 30 SEPTEMBER Burning Prohibited 1 OCTOBER - 28 FEBRUARY Permits required 1 MARCH - 15 MARCH No permit required from 16 MARCH

Figure 8 – Restricted and Prohibited Burning Times 2024/25 City of Greater Geraldton ¹⁹

The risk of a fire outbreak is substantially larger prior to and during harvesting, due to increased fuel loads in areas of cured crops and grasses and an increase for potential ignition from harvesting activities. Within the Prohibited Burning Time, it is a requirement that a fire appliance is in attendance during harvesting activities, so that ignitions can be dealt with quickly. Once harvesting is complete, the risk of bushfire decreases quite significantly in these areas due to the fuel load being removed. Burning of stubble and windrows is undertaken outside of the fire season, so the risk of a bushfire is minimal. Burning of stubble and windrows is undertaken outside of the peak fire season (e.g. February onwards), but often prior to the autumn rains, where soil moisture is minimal. Prefrontal winds, late season cyclones and other weather events can occur during this time, so the risks associated with these activities need to be carefully managed by landowners.

¹⁹ City of Greater Geraldton – First & Final Firebreak Annual Notice.

Vegetation and fuel

The City of Greater Geraldton vegetation types change progressively between the coastline and inland areas. Information describing vegetation types has been sourced from the Geraldton Regional Flora and Vegetation Survey (GRFVS, WAPC 2010) and Beard Vegetation Associations (BVA).

Along the coastal area, fore dunes the vegetation is dominated by *Atriplex isatidea* and *Spinifex longifolius* (GRFVS PC3), which blends into the *Acacia rostellifera* open low shrubland plant community (GRFVS PC8). The vegetation found within the dune system typically have high ground fuels made up largely of leaf litter, particularly under the *Acacia rostellifera*. Fires in this area have the potential to move fast through the leaf litter and when the acacia's burn, they are known for producing lots of embers with large spotting distances. This results in fast moving fires that can be perpetuated by spotting and easily cross small breaks in the landscape.

East of the coastal dune systems is where the Acacia shrubland plant community (GRFVS PC10) can be found, which can be taller and denser as you move away from the coast. The *Melaleuca caridiophylla* plant community (GRFVS 12) occurs on limestone ridges and slopes high in the landscape. Between the near-coastal areas and the Moresby Ranges, most of the large patches of remnant vegetation are Acacia/Banksia shrubland types of plant community (GRFVS 10, 13). These are mostly located in proximity to either the Chapman or Greenough Rivers which wind through the City of Greater Geraldton area. These larger trees have the potential to escalate the fire behaviour as the bark acts as a ladder fuel carrying the fire from the understorey into the overstorey which increases the intensity, speed and spotting potential of the fire.

As you move further inland, vast areas are cleared for agricultural purposes including broad acre cropping and grazing. Large areas of open grassland and crop paddocks are found around the town sites. Fires in the cropped areas are generally fast moving due to the finer fuels and open nature of the country, but the intensity and rate of spread can be greatly influenced by the type of crop planted and the seasonal growth. Contained within the farming paddocks are smaller pockets of Jam scrub (BVA 35), Melaleuca/Hakea mixed thicket (BVA 675) with scattering York Gum woodland vegetation depending on the distance from the coastline. Towards Mullewa, the vegetation turns to scrub-heath on deeper sands (BVA 372, 380), before you get to the clearing line. These areas of remnant vegetation carry hot fires and often spot ahead of the main fire front, the mix of vegetation with cropping country can result in complex fires that require multiple approaches to managing.

On farmland, the fuel load will depend on the growing stage of the crop and will vary greatly before and after the harvesting period. For risk assessment purposes, it is assumed that a fire in any of the different broad vegetation types will reach human settlement and/or cultural assets. The exceptions are in circumstances where either an asset protection zone of $\geq 20\text{m}$ for grasslands or crops and/or a hazard separation zone $\geq 100\text{m}$ for scrub/shrub/woodland are existent between the asset and vegetation. The risk assessment also excludes managed or manicured gardens as a bushfire risk.

In the summer months, hot, dry easterly winds can result in very high temperatures, low humidity and strong winds and are associated with the formation of low-pressure troughs along the west coast. Using these climatic variables a Grassland Fire Danger Index (GFDI) can be determined and used to rate the conditions in relation to bushfire risk. The high wind speeds experienced during the summer and the fuel type being predominantly coastal shrub lands and crop, means that bushfires are typically wind driven and therefore fast moving.

The fuel can be relatively evenly distributed and aerated, resulting in fires that are extremely fast-moving, this is especially prevalent in wind driven fires. In the broad acre farming areas East of Geraldton and west of Mullewa these crop fires are often challenging to extinguish. These fires have extreme intensity, flame lengths often exceeding 20 metres making suppression difficult. The terrain can be extremely steep and inaccessible with or without heavy machinery. Additionally, the change in topography often provides for unexpected wind forecasts due to channelling from ridges and gullies which can quickly change the direction of the fire and entrap unwary or inexperienced firefighters.

The GRFVS determined that 15% of the pre-European extent of native vegetation remains in the GRFVS area, in 625 discrete remnants. Analysis of remaining vegetation extent has indicated that, of the nine Beard vegetation associations occurring in the GRFVS area, three Beard vegetation associations (371, 387 and 675) have less than 10% remaining in the GRFVS area, and two have approximately 10% remaining in Western Australia (35 and 371), which is the level at which a vegetation association is regarded as 'endangered'. Any treatment strategies that may be required in natural areas that contain environmentally sensitive flora, fauna or ecological communities will be conducted in direct consultation with Department of Fire and Emergency Services, DBCA - Parks & Wildlife and the City's Environmental Planning Officers.

There are areas within and adjacent to town sites that contain dense vegetation which present a substantial bushfire risk while also containing environmentally sensitive flora and fauna values. If bushfire mitigation works are required in these areas relevant stakeholders will need to be consulted. This aims to ensure that any impacts on these species are minimised and does not compound soil erosion, removal of vegetation or loss of habitat occurring in the area. In these areas a range of mitigation activities can be investigated to ensure that it ensures species richness and biodiversity are not negatively impacted.

Important species and communities

Under the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*, native species are listed as threatened when they face a high to very high risk of extinction in the wild, and ecological communities are listed as threatened when they face a high to very high risk of collapse.

Conserving and protecting threatened species and threatened ecological communities is a key element of the biodiversity conservation responsibilities. The Greenough River Flats have been identified as a Threatened and Collapsed community with the following species of *Acacia rostellifera* low forest with scattered *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* (river red gum) on Greenough Alluvial Flats.

The community occurred on the Greenough alluvial flats. It consisted of two sub-communities the front flats sub-community (close to the river), believed to have comprised *Acacia rostellifera* (summer scented wattle) and *Melaleuca sp.* thickets with scattered *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* (river gum) over an understory that included *Drosera bulbosa* (red-leaved sundew) *Pauridia glabella* var. *leptantha*, *Wurmbea densiflora*, *W. tubulosa* (long-flowered Nancy), *Marsilea drummondii* (common nardoo) and *Amphibromus nervosus*. The back flats sub-community (further from the river) is believed to have comprised *Acacia rostellifera* thickets with scattered *Eucalyptus camaldulensis*, *E. loxophleba* (York gum) and *Banksia sp.* scrub over an understory that included *Pauridia glabella* var. *leptantha*, *Panicum decompositum* (native millet), *Rhodanthe chlorocephala*, *Schoenus sp.*, *Wurmbea monantha* and *Amphibromus nervosus*.²⁰

²⁰ Retrieved from the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (May 2026)
[Threatened species and communities | Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions](#)

Historical bushfire occurrence

Between 1 July 2021 and 1 April 2026, a total of 1102 landscape fire incidents occurred within the City of Greater Geraldton with an average of almost 220 per year. Deliberate (suspicious) was the major source of ignition (~31%) and the number started by lightning was relatively negligible (~1.81%). Most landscape fire incidents over this period occurred in the Geraldton area (~89%) and Mullewa (~11%) The average hectares loss of these fires is 2310 hectares.

The frequency of fires in different the different planning areas over the last 2 years show that the Hills and Mullewa have the highest occurrence of reported fires. This is to be expected as these are the largest, least developed planning areas predominately made up of agriculture land uses. Combined with agricultural farming practices (header fires) and the areas being susceptible to the seasonal storm events that typically bring dry lightning. These often result from fronts that traverses the coast near Kalbarri and heads in a South Easterly direction through Yuna-Tenindewa and head towards Mingenew.

Potential fire paths include the Chapman River Regional Park, which runs through the Rural Urban Interface and encompasses the suburbs of Sunset, Spalding, Strathalbyn, Deepdale and Woorree, and the coastal dune area on the Greenough River Walk Trail in Cape Burney, which has the potential to impact adjacent residential and farming properties.

There have been four significant fires in the City of Greater Geraldton between 2019 and 2025. All fires occurred under severe fire weather conditions (high temperatures, low humidity and dry fuels) and were driven by high winds ranging from East Northeast to Easterly, with unstable atmospheric conditions.

The Utakarra fire (2019) was suspicious in nature and occurred in Unallocated Crown Land near the residential suburb of Utakarra and Karloo. The 30 km/hr easterly winds, relative humidity of ~12% and an ambient temperature of 39°C saw the fire quickly develop. The fire raced through the landscape with rates of spread of approximately 9.7km/h, impacting several outbuildings and resulting in considerable damaged to the natural environment. The Glenfield fire (2019) occurred in the suburb of Glenfield on the same day as the Utakarra fire. The fire ignited at around half hour after the Utakarra fire in vacant land that contained natural grasses, stands of black wattle (*Acacia rostellifera*) and widely spaced Tuart gums. Even though the fire was extremely fast moving, at times on steep western slopes and quite intense, there was no loss of life or property associated with the fire incident.

The Moonyoonooka fire (2025) occurred as a result of a power line fault and occurred in cropped farmland near the residential suburbs of Moonyoonooka and Deepdale. The hot easterly winds, saw the fire quickly develop. The fire raced through the landscape with high rates of spread, impacting the river system and resulting in considerable damaged to the natural environment. The Spalding fire (2025) occurred in the suburb of Spalding on the same day as the Utakarra fire. The fire ignited around three hours after the Moonyoonooka fire in the Chapman Regional Park that contained natural grasses, stands of black wattle (*Acacia rostellifera*). Even though the fire was extremely fast moving, at times on the steep slopes of the Chapman River and quite intense, there was no loss of life. One property was destroyed and three more sustained minor damage associated with this incident. Due to the fire burning in the Rural Urban Interface there were considerable resources deployed to this fire (more than 15 appliances) and also resulted in several main roads being closed.

Bushfire risk controls

Table 4 – Current bushfire risk controls in the City of Greater Geraldton.

Table 4 – Current bushfire risk controls in the City of Greater Geelong					
Control		Action or Activity Description	Lead Agency	Other Stakeholder(s)	Notes and Comments
1	Firebreak Notice (s33 <i>Bush Fires Act 1954</i>)	Annual LG Firebreak and Fuel Reduction Notice.	LG	Landowners	Delivered annually normally with rates notice and advertised in local newspapers. Non- compliance may result in the issuing of Fines and/or Invoices for works undertaken to ensure compliance in accordance with the <i>Bush Fires Act 1954</i> (S33).
2	Prohibited, Restricted Burning Times and Total Fire Bans. (<i>Bush Fires Act 1954</i>)	Annual LG Firebreak Booklet and Fuel Reduction Notice.	LG, DFES	Landowners, Community	Prohibited and restricted burn periods are designed to reduce the risk during the Bushfire Season. Notice reviewed annually and dates can be subject to change as required by the City. Total Fire Bans are issued by DFES subject to weather conditions.
3	Mitigation works (Works Plan)	City carries out programs to reduce fuel load and remove hazards.	LG	Community	Work includes; spraying, slashing, mulching and other mechanical treatments also including prescribed burning.
4	DFES UCL/UMR land management	Preparedness, mitigation work conducted on lands owned by Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage (DPLH) and managed by DFES.	DFES	DBCA, LG, Fire brigades	Budgeting and cooperation being developed to include mitigating risk on UCL/UMR.
5	DBCA Annual Burn Plans	DBCA have a seasonal burn program.	DBCA	Community, Local brigades, DFES, LG	The plan will be provided and will; be accessible by sharing shape files (BRMS/GIS) and be communicated at BFAC and Batavia LEMC.
6	DBCA mitigation works	DBCA conduct mulching and other mechanical treatments to reduce fuel load or provide fire access.	DBCA	DFES, LG	No formal plan exists however, works are completed as required, upon request or when identified.
7	Public preparedness and education campaigns	Community (preparedness, education and information), Council and DFES Website, Community events.	LG, DFES	Community Groups	Bushfire Brigade Recruitment Drives and Street meet, TV and Radio. One source of information re. Bushfire mitigation.
8	Harvest and Vehicle Movement Bans	Restricting the movement of vehicles in the Bushfire Season.	LG	Landowners, Community	Enforced during the Bushfire Season in accordance with the <i>Bush Fires Act 1954</i> (Section 27).

The City of Greater Geraldton has eight Volunteer Bush Fire Brigades, two Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service Brigades (Geraldton and Mullewa), and one Career Fire & Rescue Service strategically positioned throughout the City of Greater Geraldton. The Bush Fire Brigades house two 4.4, six 3.4, one 1.4 and two Light Tanker appliances. The Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service house one country pump, one HAZMAT Structural Rescue appliance and two Light Tankers. The Career Fire & Rescue Service house one Urban Pump Heavy Rescue, one 3.4 appliance and two light tankers. Initial suppression is supported throughout the farming areas of the City by local farmer response units. Private appliances range in sizes from 500L upwards.

It is a widespread perception held by communities that firefighting resources will be readily available to respond to calls for assistance during significant fire events. When resources are being committed it is also vital that the community have adequately prepared their properties and are ready to enact their bushfire plans if required, as multiple demands for assistance at the same time has the potential to quickly exceed the capacity of available resources.

The City of Greater Geraldton issues an annual Fire Break Notice which details the requirements for residents to maintain and construct fire breaks, asset protection zones and undertake other fire mitigation activities. There are currently two Bushfire Ready Groups operating in the central zone of the City of Greater Geraldton. Supported by DFES, this program is run by volunteers and provides residents with additional advice and information to assist them to prepare for bushfire events. The City's bush fire brigades also run community events to promote bushfire awareness and preparedness activities. These include group run kiosks at local events as well as education sessions during individual brigade fund raising events.

The intent of the WA Government's Bushfire Prone Planning Policy is to implement effective risk-based land use planning and development to preserve life and reduce the impact of bushfire on property and infrastructure. The State Planning Policy 3.7 - Planning for Bushfire Prone Areas ensures bushfire risk is given due consideration in all future planning and development decisions. As the policy does not apply retrospectively and focuses on individual developments and buildings, the BRM Plan focuses on identifying existing bushfire risk and establishing an effective treatment plan to manage unacceptable community risks.

The City of Greater Geraldton has land designated as being in a Bushfire Prone Area as per the Fire and Emergency Services Act 1998. Bushfire Prone Areas are subject to increased planning and construction requirements in accordance with the deemed provisions contained in the Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Amendment Regulations 2015 which forms part of the City's Local Planning Scheme No. 1, State Planning Policy 3.7: Planning in Bushfire Prone Areas and it's the supporting Guidelines and Australian Standard 3959: Construction of Buildings in bushfire-prone areas.

Throughout the bushfire season, the City of Greater Geraldton enforces Restricted Burning Times (RBT), PBT and Harvest and Vehicle Movement Bans. Total Fire Bans (TFB) are declared by DFES, in consultation with the City of Greater Geraldton. These measures are used to prevent the outbreak of bushfires in accordance with the Bush Fires Act 1954. The RBT are in place from the 1 March to 1 October (Geraldton CBD and Semi-Rural Areas), between the 1 March and 1 October (Broadacre or Commercial Farm). The PBT is between the 1 October and 28 February¹⁹.

¹⁹ City of Greater Geraldton – First & Final Firebreak Annual Notice.

Chapter 4 Asset identification and risk assessment

Assets at risk from bushfire in the City of Greater Geraldton are recorded in the *Asset Risk Register* in the BRMS. Assets are divided into four categories: human settlement, economic, climate, and cultural. Each asset has been assigned a bushfire risk rating between low and extreme based on the risk assessment methodology described in the Guidelines and Handbook.

For the BRM Plan, the City of Greater Geraldton has been divided into the seven (7) planning areas of Champion Bay, Chapman, Geraldton Port, Hills, Mullewa, Tarcoola and Willcock. The planning areas were determined using the existing City of Greater Geraldton ward boundaries and geographical features. Attached in Appendix 1a is a map illustrating the boundaries of each planning area.

4.1 Local government asset risk profile

A summary of the risks assessed in the City of Greater Geraldton is shown in **Table 5**. This table shows the proportion of assets at risk from bushfire in each risk category at the time the BRM Plan was endorsed. This table was correct at the time of publication but may become outdated as risks are treated or additional risks are identified and assessed. A report may be generated from the BRMS to provide the most current risk profile.

Table 5 – Local Government Asset Risk Summary

Asset Category	Risk Rating					
		Low	Medium	High	Very High	Extreme
	Human Settlement	1.47%	7.94%	33.82%	12.64%	21.76%
	Economic	0.58%	5%	12.35%	16.47%	5%
	Environmental	0%	0.29%	9.41%	7.35%	0%
	Cultural	0%	0.29%	0.88%	0.58%	1.17%

Priorities for Asset Identification and Assessment

The Planning Area Assessment Tool is being applied to each planning area to determine the priorities for asset identification and assessment. Using the tool, each planning area was rated against six risk factors, with the highest scoring planning area being the priority for asset identification and risk assessment. Assets were identified and assessed in each planning area, based on the results of the planning area assessment outlined in **Table 6**.

Table 6 – Planning Area Assessment Summary

Risk Factor	Champion Bay	Chapman	Geraldton Port	Hills	Mullewa	Tarcoola	Willcock
1. % of LG Population in Planning Area	20	20	40	20	20	40	40
2. Fuel Structures	60	60	20	40	60	60	40
3. Assets	40	40	60	20	20	40	40
4. Rural Urban Interface	60	80	40	40	40	60	60
5. Suppression response times	20	40	20	60	60	40	20
6. Suppression strategies	40	40	20	60	60	40	20
TOTAL	240	280	200	240	260	280	220
PRIORITY	4	1	7	5	3	2	6

Chapter 5 Risk evaluation

5.1 Risk acceptance criteria

The acceptable level of risk for each asset category is shown in **Table 7**. A risk that is assessed as exceeding these limits will be considered for treatment.

Table 7. Risk acceptance criteria for bushfire risk in the City of Greater Geraldton.

	Asset category			
	Human settlement	Economic	Environmental	Cultural
Acceptable risk level	Medium	Medium	High	High

Chapter 6 Risk treatment

The purpose of risk treatment is to reduce the potential impact of bushfire on the community, economy and environment. This is achieved by implementing treatments that modify the characteristics of the hazard, the community or the environment to make bushfires less likely or less harmful.

6.1 Treatment Priorities

The treatment priority for each asset has been automatically assigned by BRMS, based on the asset's risk rating. **Table 8** shows how likelihood and consequence combine to give the risk rating and subsequent treatment priority for an asset.

Table 8 – Treatment Priorities

Consequence Likelihood	Minor	13Moderate	Major	Catastrophic
Almost certain	3D (High)	2C (Very High)	1C (Extreme)	1A (Extreme)
Likely	4C (Medium)	3A (High)	2A (Very High)	1B (Extreme)
Possible	5A (Low)	4A (Medium)	3B (High)	2B (Very High)
Unlikely	5C (Low)	5B (Low)	4B (Medium)	3C (High)

6.2 Treatment Strategy

The Treatment Strategy describes the overall approach to managing bushfire risk in the medium to long term in the City of Greater Geraldton. The strategy is shaped by factors such as the distribution of risk in the landscape, the community's values and objectives, stakeholders' mitigation programs and constraints on treatment options. The Treatment strategy helps guide the development of integrated annual treatment schedules.

The City's approach prioritises treatments for extreme, very high, and high-risk assets identified in the Bushfire Risk Management System (BRMS), with a life and safety given the first order of priority, followed by critical infrastructure. Where resources are limited, treatments are sequences to address human settlement assets first, followed by economic and environmental assets. Seasonal conditions and operational constraints are recognised, and alternative treatments are identified when planned works cannot proceed.

Treatment placement and selection are influenced by risk distribution, topography, vegetation, and strategic transport routes. Prescribed burning and mechanical fuel reduction are applied where they are safe and effective, whilst sensitive areas such as threatened ecological communities require tailored regimes and seasonal timing to minimise environmental impacts. Physical treatments are followed up with targeted chemical spraying to prevent weed infestation, which can otherwise occur after soil disturbance. If weed control is neglected over many years, invasive species can proliferate, creating dense, highly flammable fuel loads that significantly increase bushfire intensity and spread.

Aboriginal Cultural Heritage must also be considered, and all efforts must be made to liaise and consult with representative bodies. Works are planned in accordance with Bushfire Management Zones – Asset Protection Zones, Hazard Separation Zones, and Land Management Zones.

Unacceptable bushfire risks are concentrated in:

- **Coastal townsites** (Cape Burney, African Reef, Greenough) adjacent to vegetated reserves and dune systems
- **Unallocated Crown Land** abutting the Mullewa and Walkaway Townsites.
- **Vegetation corridors** located within undeveloped public open space in Geraldton and Mullewa townsites.
- **Agricultural zones** with high fuel loads and machinery ignition risk.
- **Remote conservation areas** with limited access and ecological sensitivity.
- **Transport corridors** such as the Northwest Coastal Highway, Brand Highway and Geraldton-Mt Magnet Road, critical for evacuation and freight services.

6.3 Risk Treatment

The purpose of risk treatment is to reduce the likelihood of a bushfire occurring and/or the potential impact of a bushfire on the community, economy and environment. This is achieved by implementing treatments that modify the characteristics of the hazard, the community or the environment.

There are many strategies available to treat bushfire risk. The treatment strategy (or combination of treatment strategies) selected will depend on the level of risk and the type of asset being treated. Not all treatment strategies will be suitable in every circumstance.

6.4 Asset Specific Treatment Strategies

Asset-specific treatments are implemented to protect an individual asset or group of assets, identified and assessed in the BRM Plan as being at risk from bushfire. There are six asset specific treatment strategies:

- **Fuel management** - Treatments aim to reduce or modify the bushfire fuel loads through manual, chemical and prescribed burning methods.
- **Ignition management** - Treatments aims to reduce potential human and infrastructure sources of ignition in the landscape.
- **Preparedness** - Treatments aim to improve access and water supply arrangements to assist firefighting operations.
- **Planning** - Treatments focus on developing plans to improve the ability of firefighters and the community to respond to bushfire.
- **Community Engagement** - Treatments seek to build relationships, raise awareness and change the behaviour of people exposed to bushfire risk.

6.5 Treatment Schedule

The Treatment Schedule is a list of bushfire risk treatments recorded in the BRMS. It is developed regarding the outcome of the risk assessment process and Treatment Strategy and in consultation with stakeholders.

A treatment schedule for the City of Greater Geraldton covering the 2026-2028 has been entered into BRMS. This is a live document and will be regularly updated throughout the life of the BRM Plan.

Land managers are responsible for implementing agreed treatments on their own land. This includes costs associated with the treatment and obtaining the relevant approvals, permits or licences to undertake an activity. Where agreed, another agency may manage a treatment on behalf of a land manager.

6.6 Determining the Treatment Schedule

Efforts will be made to finalise the Treatment Schedule within six months of this BRM Plan being approved by Council. The Treatment Schedule will be developed in broad consultation with landowners and other stakeholders. Landowners are ultimately responsible for treatments implemented on their own land. This includes any costs associated with the treatment and obtaining the relevant approvals, permits or licences to undertake an activity. Where agreed, another agency may manage a treatment on behalf of a landowner. However, the onus is still on the landowner to ensure treatments detailed in this BRM Plan are completed.

Chapter 7 Monitoring and review

Monitoring and review processes are in place to ensure that the BRM Plan remains current and considers the best available information.

The City of Greater Geraldton will monitor the BRM Plan and BRMS data to identify any need for change. The Plan and BRMS data will be reviewed at least every two years to ensure they continue to reflect the local context, assets at risk, level of risk and treatment priorities.

Monitoring and review processes are in place to ensure that the BRM Plan remains current and valid. These processes are detailed below to ensure outcomes are achieved in accordance with the *Treatment Schedule*. The CGG Emergency Management team are responsible for managing the monitoring and review process. This process will be undertaken in consultation with the CEO, BLEMC and BFAC. In the event of a cessation of Coordinator, Emergency Management and/or Emergency Operations Officer roles, the Office of the CEO will delegate the responsibility.

7.1 Review

A comprehensive review of this BRM Plan will be undertaken at least once every two years, from the date of Council endorsement. Significant circumstances that may warrant an earlier review of the BRM Plan include:

- Changes to the BRM Plan area, organisational responsibilities or legislation.
- Changes to the bushfire risk profile of the area; or
- Following a major fire event.

Review of the risk evaluations and treatment strategies utilised for assessing important assets with local value depend on the level of exposure to bushfire related risk. The timeframes for routine review are as follows:

- Assets with an Extreme, Very High- or High-risk rating will be reviewed annually.
- Assets with a Medium risk rating will be reviewed every 2 years.
- Assets with a Low-risk rating will be reviewed every 5 years.

In the event of significant changes in circumstances due to construction and development or adversely impacted by natural disasters or emergencies, the review period may alter.

7.2 Monitoring

BRMS will be used to monitor the risk ratings for each asset identified in the BRM Plan and record the treatments implemented. Risk ratings are reviewed on a regular basis. New assets will be added to the *Asset Risk Register* when they are identified.

7.3 Reporting

The City of Greater Geraldton CEO or their delegate will provide OBRM with the outcomes of the two-year review of the BRM Plan. This is required to maintain OBRM endorsement of the Plan.

The City of Greater Geraldton will contribute information about their BRM Program to the annual OBRM *Fuel Management Activity Report*.

The City of Greater Geraldton will submit an annual report to OBRM each year summarising progress made towards implementation of the entire BRM Plan.

The Emergency Operations Officer will document the progress of the BRM plan quarterly to the Executive Management Team (EMT) to the City of Greater Geraldton. The performance and progress of the BRM Plan over the financial year will be presented to BFAC, LEMC and Local Council on an annual basis. The presentations are to be concurrently used as a platform to generate feedback and potential advice on ways to improve the outcomes generated by the BRM Plan. The feedback will be used to inform decision making when selecting the bushfire risk treatments for the next financial year and to ensure the BRM Plan is in line with the City of Greater Geraldton's values and future goals.