



Department of  
Regional Development and Lands



# NORTHAM REGIONAL CENTRE GROWTH PLAN



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# Northam Regional Centre Growth Plan

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NORTHAM

*GATEWAY OF THE AVON*

*COUNTRY LIFESTYLE  
ON THE CITY'S DOORSTEP*

# Vision & Objectives

## Northam Regional Centre Growth Plan

### **Department of Regional Development and Land's SuperTowns Vision**

"To have balanced, well-connected regional communities, with lifestyle options and access to services – SuperTowns will have affordable, quality housing and a growing and diverse range of job opportunities. They will offer more choices for people living in regional areas and an attractive alternative to living in the metropolitan area."

### **Department of Regional Development and Land's Strategic Objectives**

"To target sustainable regional economic development and stimulate diverse employment and investment opportunities."

"To assist in managing the State's projected population expansion in key regional towns."

"To plan and invest in town development and growth within an integrated strategic planning and implementation framework."

## Premier and Minister Grylls' message

Northam is entering an exciting growth phase. As one of a network of nine SuperTowns, it has been identified to play a key role in the future development of regional Western Australia.

The State's population is set to double over the next 40 years to almost 4.5 million people. We want to ensure regional areas can accommodate some of this population growth to ease pressure on metropolitan Perth and create strong, vibrant regional communities.

The Regional Centres Development Plan (SuperTowns) is a Royalties for Regions initiative aimed at encouraging regional communities in the southern half of Western Australia to plan and prepare for growth.

Through Royalties for Regions, 25 per cent of the State's mining and onshore petroleum royalties is being returned to regional areas each year as an additional investment in projects, infrastructure and community services to build regional communities. Royalties for Regions has delivered more than 3,000 projects and programs since the program commenced in late 2008.

As part of this broader focus on regional development, SuperTowns aims to help communities become more desirable places to live, work and invest. The program encourages towns to build on their unique character and economic drivers

to support the development of industry, services and infrastructure.

Nine towns – Boddington, Collie, Esperance, Jurien Bay, Katanning, Manjimup, Margaret River, Morawa and Northam – were identified as strategically located towns with the potential for significant growth. Each SuperTown was required to prepare a Growth Plan, which now set out a shared vision and a format around which all sectors and levels of government can to work together to support and prepare for growth.

Growth Plans reflect the extensive work undertaken by key SuperTown partners including the Shire of Northam, Wheatbelt Development Commission and state agencies, in consultation with local and neighbouring communities. The Growth Plan is vital in identifying the needs of the community and addressing current barriers to growth.

The completion of the SuperTowns Growth Plans marks a key milestone for regional development in WA.

I encourage businesses, families and individuals to take advantage of the opportunities SuperTowns offer and look forward to a bright future of growth for Northam.



Hon Colin Barnett MLA  
Premier



Hon Brendon Grylls MLA  
Minister for Regional Development; Lands

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## Northam Regional Centre Growth Plan

### Foreword – Wheatbelt Development Commission

In this exciting time of growth in our state and in our region, the Wheatbelt Development Commission is pleased to be involved in the SuperTowns initiative and is committed to planning for the Avon's future.

As a regional development organisation the Wheatbelt Development Commission played the role of ensuring the Northam Growth Plan clearly recognized the importance of the Avon sub-region in realising its full growth potential.

The Regional Centres Development Plan (SuperTowns) will greatly assist in the expansion of necessary industry, services and infrastructure to ensure the Avon sub-region's readiness to support a population growth to 50,000. The Northam Growth Plan also ensures that Northam plays its important role as the sub-region's centre.

In developing this document there has been extensive consultation with the eleven local governments in the sub-region. This consultation will continue, as it is vital that the Avon sub-region is committed to working together, ensuring the unique character and economic drivers of each town are maximised.

With strong links to the global economy, the future is bright for our state and for the Avon. Through the SuperTowns initiatives, private and public investment will enhance liveability of communities, increasing opportunities to live, work and invest. The Wheatbelt Development Commission looks forward to further collaboration with the state government, Shire of Northam and the sub-region's local governments to facilitate the growth of Northam and the Avon.



Mr Tim Shackleton  
Chair, Wheatbelt Development Commission



Ms Wendy Newman  
CEO, Wheatbelt Development Commission

## Shire of Northam – President Foreword

With the announcement of the 2011 Regional Centres Development Plan (Super Town) initiative by the State Government, the future of Northam is being planned to accommodate an increase in population to 20,000 over the next 20 years as the regional centre of the Avon sub region. The Shire of Northam wholeheartedly supports this State initiative, and is determined to play its part in the successful achievement of the growth. The Northam Growth Plan, endorsed by the Shire in 2012, will set Northam on a journey designed to transform it from a small service centre to a significant regional town. Northam's role in the context of the Avon sub region requires it to work closely with neighbouring towns to achieve population growth to 50,000 in the Avon sub region.

Economic growth is the key to population growth in Northam and the Growth Plan embraces the need to diversify the economic base from which we start.

Developing a regional centre is a complex process, involving many individuals, organisations and different layers of government. However, the most important part is to get the planning right and a lot of effort has gone in to understanding our strengths and weaknesses/opportunities and threats which need to be managed to guide the way forward.

Northam is not starting from scratch as the Northam Development Plan adopted in 2011 recognised many of the planning opportunities and gaps.

The Growth Plan is the one key document that provides the necessary foundation for Northam to achieve the goal of becoming a significant Regional Centre in Western Australia.

It provides a sustainable Growth Plan to guide Northam on its journey from a town with a permanent population of over 7,000 people through to a town in excess of 20,000 people and its regional role in a Sub Region of 50,000 residents. The Growth Plan, which covers the Northam town site and its role in the sub region, provides the necessary information and direction to allow the Shire of Northam to conclude a new local planning strategy and local planning scheme, both of which will be necessary to provide the necessary administrative instruments to accommodate Northam's revitalised direction.

When developing a townsite - the location of growth areas, the community facilities and services that meet the growing population needs, and when it is all going to happen have to be undertaken. The five key themes of the Growth Plan are Economy, Community, Environment, Public Realm & Built Environment and Infrastructure & Resources. The Growth Plan

includes an implementation plan showing what should be delivered, where and in what sequence.

I look forward to the general community, the public and private sectors, and the Federal and State governments working collaboratively with us on this exciting journey.



Steven Pollard  
President  
Shire of Northam



An expanding community which boasts a rich heritage, cross pollination of cultures and vibrancy that is consolidating Northam's status as the primary regional centre of the Central Wheatbelt. With a relaxed country lifestyle and situated on the outskirts of Perth, the town meets all expectations and is the envy of other communities.



# Executive Summary

## Where we are now?

In recent years, a combination of robust migration-led population growth and increasingly constrained metropolitan housing markets has led to an increase in median house prices across the Perth urban area and a significant deterioration in housing affordability. The lack of population decentralisation in Western Australia has limited the capacity for the State as a whole to accommodate new residents without rapid price growth, due to limited genuine alternate residential centres outside of the metropolitan area. To provide greater levels of residential housing choice for a growing population capitalise on existing infrastructure and capture a greater share of increased business investment in primary industries, the Department of Regional Development and Lands, through the Royalties for Regions program, established the Regional Centres Development Plan. In this Plan, nine regional centres or "SuperTowns" were identified, including Northam.



Northam is unique in its close proximity to the Perth Metropolitan Area; with an estimated town site population of over 7,000 Northam is under pressure for a variety of reasons. In summary these are:

- **Population growth:** which can support demand for a range of services including education, health care, construction and personal services; and
- An aging population: which will influence demand for health care services and the available workforce of the area;
- Grain export demand: which will influence the viability of the agriculture sector, a key industry in the local economy;
- Mining sector investment: which will influence demand for machinery and equipment, accommodation, transport and logistics services as part of the broader industry supply chain;
- State and national growth: which will influence local business confidence and investment; and
- Regional and local drivers: these can influence the broader opportunities that can be leveraged.

In considering the future of Northam there are a number of key competitive strengths which will need to be leveraged in order to generate meaningful economic development and employment outcomes. These include:

- An existing and well-established agricultural sector with strong existing inward and outward supply chains, experienced skilled labour and strong linkages to local educational facilities;
- Strategic location on major east-west/north-south multi-modal trade routes, with the ability to capture supply chain benefits of the growing WA mining sector;
- Strong infrastructure connections to Perth and mining centres providing key trade opportunities;
- Strong population growth which will support demand for services in the region, particularly education, health and personal services ; and
- The presence of educational and health assets within the region which could expand over time to meet the needs and requirements of the growing economy and population base, including the broader Avon region.

## So where do we want to be?

Northam – Regional Centre 20,000 with the Avon sub Region 50,000

What are the fundamental moves that we will need to take to allow Northam to evolve into a diverse and sustainable regional centre?

Key steps that need to be made are as follows:

- An expanded, more diverse economy, which offers a broader selection of job opportunities;
- A revitalised centre that responds to the environmental conditions of the Wheatbelt and exhibits a strong sense of place;
- Greater housing diversity that meets the needs of a broader demographic profile;
- Infrastructure that meets the needs of the townsite, and allows for growth;
- More industrial, commercial and residential land supply and allow for medium density to aid the development of partially developed or underdeveloped land parcels;
- Maintain housing affordability through the encouragement of strong private sector presence;
- A modern vibrant and attractive town centre which offers more opportunities to shop and socialise, as well as attract tourists;
- Provision of services at a standard that meets the expectations of the sub regional community;

- Excellent connectivity and transport linkages throughout the centre; and
- A partnership approach that facilitates the coordination and investment required to achieve the revitalisation.



## How do we get there?

Northam SuperTowns Growth Plan

The approach to the provision of soft and hard infrastructure has been by the State Government and a wide range of State agencies and Government Trading Enterprises (GTE's), each with a different focus, timing and often without coherence. Super Towns recognises that a new governance approach is needed for Northam. That is the challenge if we are to deliver good outcomes consistent with population growth over time.

**Economic Diversification:** Should the population of the Avon sub-region increase to the anticipated scale, a significant increase in jobs will be needed to support the resident community. This in turn will require increased diversification of the local economy, which means working closely with industry to find ways of developing a more robust, flexible and adaptable local economy.

**Improving the Quality of Life:** Although Northam has both the natural and economic attractions, there is a level of dissatisfaction with the level of service provision, facilities and amenities. The urban form, quality of the built form, and range of housing does not generally make a positive contribution to the quality of life for Northam residents. There is a strong perception within the Northam community that key areas such as health, education, utilities infrastructure, transport and community amenities are deficient and that additional population growth will only exacerbate the situation, unless significant changes occur.

There is a real need to achieve an improvement in the level of service provision whilst accommodating increased population.

## Methodology

The approach to the development of the growth plan as part of the Regional Centres Development Plan (SuperTowns) initiative is not unique. The involvement of government to encourage a greater than average population expansion is



not unheard of in various areas of the world. Without government assistance the full potential to facilitate population and economic growth, a regional centre is unlikely to utilise full potential of infrastructure and community assets. The more important places become through nation building initiatives, there is the need to be efficient and effective with public expenditure.

Northam is well located, within ninety minutes by road from the state capital, Perth, linked by arterial road and rail connections that sees it now under increasing pressure to respond to the needs of the private sector but also to promote the level of service for the existing community since the 2007 amalgamation of the former Town of Northam and former Shire of Northam. Furthermore, in recent years the Shire in consultation with the community has made serious attempts to develop partnerships, facilitate redevelopment and to develop strategies and policies to strengthen growth opportunities. Accordingly the SuperTown opportunity and the latest round of consultations build upon past work. The intensity of the project delivery timeframe, which was mostly over the lead up to the Christmas 2011 period, has allowed the consultant team outcomes of this project to be utilised to develop business cases, at the state, federal and private sector levels. The development of the Townsite Plan is a key element of the overall Northam Growth Plan that represents a holistic and cohesive approach to community and economic development based on a shared vision for how we can create a vibrant and liveable SuperTown.

Our approach is based on the creation of a shared growth plan fostered through community engagement and the building of partnerships with key stakeholders. Northam is now well placed to undertake important and needed projects. This will be implemented through strategically targeted projects that address current concerns and issues, while also realising available opportunities. With specific reference to the process used to develop the Growth Plan, the following are the key steps taken to achieve this plan:

1. Drawing from past work to develop the growth plan's vision and objectives;
2. Aligning with a Regional Centres Development Plan (SuperTowns) Framework 2011/12;
3. Understanding context (particularly testing the validity of the role of Northam in relation to the Avon Sub-region and the relationship between the surrounding settlements and the existing Northam town centre);
4. Undertaking analysis of the centre in relation to structure, land use, community infrastructure etc;
5. Developing key planning and urban design principles to guide scenario development;
6. Developing two population growth scenarios for consideration by stakeholders (Doubling Population 3.3% and Aspirational 20,000 Northam Townsite Population 5.2%) by 2031;

7. Testing growth scenarios with key stakeholders, including landowners to inform centre growth/development plans;

8. Conducting informative sessions with key stakeholders, focus groups and the broader community to inform and refine the elements of the growth plan;

9. Further refining the growth plan to reflect consultative feedback received; and

10. Submission to local project team, local government, Western Australian Planning Committee, Regional Development Council, steering committee, Minister and Cabinet for approval.



## Growth Plan

The SuperTowns Framework and Toolkit was used by the project team to assess the current situation, opportunities, and derive aspirational goals and project objectives. The community reference group used this framework to workshop a vision for Northam. This enabled strategies to be identified, which were then developed by the project team, and then tested at a variety of workshops with the Northam community and key stakeholders.

The Northam Growth Plan identifies a series of neighbourhood precincts (Figure 49), which set out how and when land should be used and developed, what infrastructure and services are needed, how community wellbeing can flourish and how the environment should be protected.

It identifies at a range of levels, key facilitating actions that over time will have flow on effects, ensuring that Northam and its surrounding communities are vibrant, safe and are places that people will be born into, active living as well as attractive for retirement years.

The Growth Plan has made a fundamental shift away from past approaches to development by adopting a growth model that accommodates a much more diverse housing typology that will ensure there are choices in housing to facilitate a diverse demographic. Importantly it will be important to focus on infill growth of

Northam to enable these outcomes in the short to medium term whilst still retaining a major attractor being housing affordability.

This Growth Plan provides an overview of the strategies including the “non-spatial” strategies that together provide the roadmap to realise the project vision. The strategies and projects identified have been determined for their ability to effect the greatest change, not only in terms of government funded projects, but also to attract private sector investment into the future.

The detailed implementation projects, actions and steps are described in more detail in Chapter 6. It is an adaptive management plan and is to be continually reviewed in the light of progress, and updated accordingly.

The Northam Growth Plan highlights Shire of Northam resolve for increased sustainable development and serves to increase State Government, Industry and Community commitment to an acceptable standard. The Growth Plan requires a majority investment from the Federal and State governments and Private Sector/Industry and a significantly lower investment from the local government in the first instance. This Growth Plan is a roadmap for the journey towards the SuperTown and the creation of a Regional Centre that will provide the diverse range of services and amenities commensurate of a future population of 20,000

in the townsite and 50,000 in the region. It represents a new approach aimed at unifying strategies, initiatives and actions that combine, maybe for the first time, spatial planning and infrastructure with the economy and community. The intention is that this is to be a “living” document for the Shire and the State government through the partnership between the Department of Regional Development and Lands, Landcorp, Department of Planning, Wheatbelt Development Commission and Shire of Northam, to realise the joint vision for a Super Town of 20,000 people.

“It represents a new approach aimed at unifying strategies, initiatives and actions that combine, maybe for the first time, spatial planning and infrastructure with the economy and community”

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# Introduction

The State Government has a vision to revitalise towns selected under the Regional Centres Development Plan (“SuperTowns”) Framework. With its SuperTowns Vision, it aims to have balanced, well connected regional communities, with lifestyle options and access to services – SuperTowns will have affordable, quality housing and a growing and diverse range of job opportunities. They will offer more choices for people living in regional areas and an attractive alternative to living in the metropolitan area.

Northam is reaffirmed as a Regional Centre under the State Government’s ground breaking SuperTowns Initiative to encourage more people to settle and live in the regional areas. Similarly, the Shire of Northam, through the Northam Development Plan (2011), has articulated the desire for Northam to continue to grow sustainably and support local economic activity. Concern has been expressed in a large number of studies that current practices are reactive and not leading to the development of sustainable local communities.

Northam has historically had a mono economy based on the agriculture service industry, constrained by inadequate infrastructure and poor quality of amenity which has led to not fulfilling its current potential.

A strong strategic planning framework is required and one that will elevate Northam, capable of delivering key outcomes through a collaborative partnership arrangement between public and private sectors. Together the Shire of Northam and State Government have embarked on the preparation of the Northam Growth Plan for future development of the townsite with positive impacts for the Avon Sub-Region as whole.

The Shire of Northam is responsible for the delivery of local services, infrastructure and facilities to meet the needs and aspirations of the local community. State Government is responsible for providing infrastructure and services to meet the regional community’s needs and aspirations. Private enterprise and local businesses represent the third arm of the development partnership.

A concerted approach involving the private and public sectors is essential to achieving a holistic approach to deliver the Super Towns vision of reaffirming Northam as a Regional Centre. As part of the governance arrangements there was a need for community engagement to include all communities, particularly reflecting culturally sensitive approaches for Aboriginal Communities. It was pleasing to see that in parallel to the SuperTowns process the formation of Northam Elders as a representative and authoritative voice on behalf of the Aboriginal Community.

A review of the current industry structure reveals its economy has moved from its historical mono economy phase to one that is increasingly characterised by population serving sectors. It is also characterised by natural competitive advantages in freight and logistics, associated with its strategic location relative to Perth and national and State significant freight routes and infrastructure and the obvious economic prosperity of the State led by the mining sector. A recent example is the establishment of a prefabrication business that provides accommodation units and buildings for the mining sector.

The State Government believes the strategic importance of the selected SuperTowns warrants significant investment to create vibrant regional centres that can support and deliver a skilled workforce, while offering a high standard of living to local communities.

The principles of the SuperTown Vision are:

- Strategic alignment, coordination and collaboration;
- Sustainable development;
- Place making – strong community engagement;
- Those communities, including surrounding communities, affected by decisions should be a key part of decision making processes;
- Shared and owned processes and outcomes; and
- Proactive, implementation focus.

The Northam Growth Plan provides a framework for the future growth of the Northam town site. The document defines appropriate locations for future land use based on a total population for Northam of 20,000 residents and 50,000 for the Avon sub-region. The Growth Plan provides a strategic basis for the future growth of the town site, which will be used by decision makers in assessing rezoning, subdivision and development applications and with respect to the provision of infrastructure, services and community facilities.

The Northam Growth Plan takes into account:

- Land capability and environmental factors;
- Buffer requirements to sensitive land uses;
- Land tenure and vacant / under developed State Government and private land holdings;
- Aboriginal heritage implications;
- A community desire to see a mix of dwelling sizes and types, with apartments and townhouses being located around the town centre and larger single residential lots on the periphery of the town site;
- Commercial, retail, community, industrial and residential needs;
- Amenity;
- Education;
- Health; and
- One future school site location, if required.

The Growth Plan has been through a comprehensive Sustainability Framework assessment, to ensure that the plan provides an appropriate and sustainable response to the current and future needs and requirements of the town and its residents and visitors.



## PROJECT APPROACH

This Growth Plan embraces the principles articulated in the Northam Development Plan (May 2011) which is:

### ENVIRONMENT

**Rivers** - Recognise the Avon and Mortlock River environments as valued assets and attractions and the importance of the river and drainage system as a natural amenity resource.

**Town Setting** - Protect and enhance the unique Northam town setting in the surrounding rural landscape.

### ACTIVITY

**Tourism** - Encourage tourism in the Avon Sub Region. Build on both Aboriginal and European history, including the Northam Army Camp, handled by the Visitors Centre in Northam. Improve the quality, quantity and range of short stay accommodation and services available in Northam. Promote a coordinated approach to the Avon Region's tourism product.

**Retail** - Encourage consolidation of retail within the town centre along Fitzgerald Street. Consider the retail potential of the town centre as a whole and locate major retail anchors to provide opportunities for smaller shops and businesses to locate between them.

**Industrial** - Encourage industry development in a way that limits the visual and adverse amenity impact of industrial and light industrial activity while recognising the regional service function. This is particularly important on the town approach roads and around the river. Recognise the opportunities for light industry development in surrounding Avon Shires to support Northam and development at the Avon Industrial Park.

**Residential** - Encourage both infill and expansion of residential areas to provide increased supply of a range of lots and a greater diversity of housing types. This is with a view of achieving a population of 20,000 in the townsite of Northam and 50,000 in the Avon.

**Offices** - Co-locate Government Agencies in Northam, adhere to the policy of 15 square metres of floor-space per person of Northam, standardise office fit-out and share facilities in major buildings and enhance environmental sustainability of Government office buildings. This is relevant given the proposed movements of Government Departments by the Department of Treasury and Finance. Northam will be established as the Avon's Central Business Area.

**Education** - Ongoing refurbishment is occurring through Federal and State Government grants. Northam will continue to develop as an education precinct to provide upper secondary school and higher education and training for the Avon Sub Region. Redevelopment/refurbishment of the existing High School is required as is exploration of the viability of the proposed future school site on Throssell Street.

**Health** - Co-location of health and emergency services should occur. Several key projects (such as the GP super clinic, UWA rural GP, RFDS Telehealth and nursing training and FESA) require coordination, possibly in the form of a master plan. Sub regional health planning will be based around the services that will be provided in Northam.

**Activity nodes** - Locate activities in a series of nodes that respond to the historic urban structure focused on Fitzgerald Street. Each node should have a different character and function and there should be good pedestrian connections between them.

**Open Space** - Complete the open space network to provide active open space within walking distance of all residential lots of R30 density or above.

**East End** - Foster regeneration and revitalisation of the Fitzgerald Street east end precinct (retail main street precinct) as the primary focus of retail activity in the town.

**Minson Precinct** - Encourage residential development through amendment to the scheme and provide incentives such as relaxation of setbacks. Enhance and develop business and community connections with the Avon River by coordinating development of the area with environmental improvements.

**Gairdner Precinct** - Encourage concentration of office commercial activity around a node centred on Gairdner Street, extending to the river and including the Old Hospital site. This precinct could become the Central Business Area of the Avon region.

**West End** - Foster regeneration of the west end with a range of residential densities, improved community facilities and amenity and better connections to and across the river.

## MOVEMENT

**Train** - Lobby Public Transport Authority to provide increased rail services for commuters to Perth and visitors to Northam as well as an additional train set. This would involve increasing the weekday service from 2 services to 4 services in each direction. Further weekend train services would facilitate Northam resident's travelling to Perth and tourists to reach the town. It has been suggested early morning services with the opportunity to return mid-afternoon would be welcomed by day tripping families.

**Bus** - Review the bus transport strategy that incorporates scheduling, regional connections, school bus routes and the feasibility of a town or community bus route connecting the town's activity nodes. It is noted that community buses currently bring people from surrounding towns to Northam for shopping and entertainment.

Investigate intra regional public transport options over time to make the services and amenities in Northam more accessible to people throughout the Region and to link Avon people to the train stations in Northam, Cunderdin, Meckering and Toodyay.

**Walking and cycling** - Improve the pedestrian (and cycle) experience and connectivity (walkability) within the town, encourage active transport options to improve community health and sustainability. This includes cycle to school initiatives and locating car parking at the edges of the Fitzgerald Street activity centre area.

**Parking** - Adopt a town centre wide strategy for parking. Limit parking provision within the town centre that impacts on the cohesiveness of the urban form. Manage parking with time limits and provide safe and attractive walking connections from car parking areas to Fitzgerald Street.

## LANDSCAPE

### Protect visual amenity

- Define hill top visually sensitive area, for further development conditions/guidelines (Landscape Protection Areas), to maintain and enhance the town setting.
- Adjacent to entry roads, propose aims and objectives for future Design Guidelines to preserve natural and rural scenic qualities, to preserve and articulate a sense of arrival.
- Promote new forms of rural residential to complement scenic values and avoid sub-suburban forms in visually sensitive areas.
- Introduce advertising signage policy.



### Enhance river connection

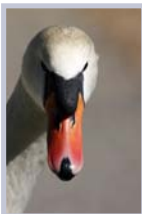
- Explore future pedestrian and or road bridges, particularly on the west end and Central Business Area.
- Introduce (fill in the grid) over the old rail land at the west end.
- Enhance river connection through the existing street grid.
- Extend Special Control Area 1 or include similar controls to valley floor (anticipated through the amalgamation and review of the two Local Schemes).
- Expand or introduce new control areas for drainage lines to rivers for future catchment management, potentially to include detention basins and revegetation.

### Contain development within natural boundaries and avoid sub-suburban sprawl

- Northern boundary is Great Eastern Highway.
- Explore implementing a natural southern boundary e.g. road with shelterbelt planting.
- Maintain bush setting to areas between the town and the Army Camp.

### Provide active recreation within 5minutes walk/400m of all R15 and denser residential development.

- Provide complementary and diverse uses for Public Open Space.
- Provide public access to school recreation facilities outside school hours.



### Explore themes to unify and give character to future subdivision, such as:

- Aviation
- Equestrian
- Peaceful bush retreat

### URBAN FORM

**Historic town setting** - Celebrate and enhance Northam as an important historical town in an attractive setting - 'contain' and differentiate the town from its setting.

**Landscape setting** - Enhance the landscape approaches to town extending out to the Great Eastern Highway and the landscape character of development on surrounding hills.

**River setting** - Recognise the river and its environment as a focus and framework for town attractions with all its attributes and challenges.

**Consolidate the town** - Concentrate and intensify urban form in the walkable area around Fitzgerald Street. In this area encourage mixed use buildings that can adapt to changing uses over time. Building form and scale should respect heritage built form while optimising the activity potential of development sites.

**Settlement character** - Encourage settlement and housing typologies that respond to microclimate and setting including raised floor levels for flooding and sloping sites and clustered buildings in hillside settings to evoke traditional rural settlement patterns.

### RESOURCE CONSERVATION

Adopt a sustainable, environmentally responsive approach to infrastructure and land use planning when considering the Avon and Mortlock Rivers, Trails, Native Vegetation, Sustainability and Conservation.

## PROJECT METHODOLOGY

The Growth Plan was prepared in partnership by the Shire of Northam and state government agencies, working with local communities to secure lasting improvements to the Northam townsite and the Avon sub Region. It takes a holistic and long term approach to simultaneously facilitate economic prosperity whilst creating vibrant, liveable, affordable and sustainable towns and local communities.

The Growth Plan provides an overall framework for future development. It aims to co-ordinate the work of the Shire of Northam, State Government and other key stakeholders in a coherent plan to improve the quality of life for all people living in the town and Avon Sub-Region. Preparation of the Growth Plan has taken into account the challenges of the existing social, economic and environmental conditions, and the implications these have for revitalisation and growth. The adopted methodology recognises that Northam cannot be considered in isolation and so considers economic and social development for the Wheatbelt region as a whole. Further work is being undertaken by the Wheatbelt Development Commission on the Avon Sub-Region Growth Strategy. The Plan sets out a framework for how land should be used, what infrastructure and services are needed, how community wellbeing can flourish and how the environment should be protected for the Northam townsite specifically.

This is a project plan for delivering the Northam Development Plan vision. It is not a plan just for the Shire of Northam or a singular State Government department. Rather, it describes an integrated approach for local, state and federal governments, the private sector and the community to transcend conventional sectoral boundaries to think and act holistically. This has been an issue that has constrained development in the town. It is an implementation-oriented plan, which is specific in terms of responsibilities, time and costs to ensure delivery can be coordinated and monitored. The plan goes well beyond a list of projects.

The Growth Plan calls for a whole of government response involving partnerships with private sector and other key stakeholders to deliver a sustainable community – a place where people choose to settle on a



permanent basis, a place to bring up families with access to education, health and diverse employment and career opportunities.

The Growth Plan has been developed as an adaptive management plan and is to be continually reviewed in the light of progress, and updated accordingly.

The approach to the revitalisation of the nine towns as part of the Super Towns initiative is not unique. It is widely recognised around the world that some places require interventions, without which they are unlikely to reach their potential. The more important these places are, the more urgent the need will be to identify exactly what is required to be most effective.

Northam is increasingly recognised as an inland freight and logistics transport hub (Avon Rail Yards – West Industrial Precinct). With recent increase in investment and job creation in the Shire with Federal Government investment in the Yongah Hill Immigration Detention Centre and business development at the Avon Industrial Park such as Hutchinson's Builders and Light Industrial areas, Northam will be under increasing pressure to respond to not only the needs of the private sector but also to elevate the level of service for the existing community including Health and Education. There is an opportunity to market Northam as a place for companies coming to WA to base themselves.

Further, places like Northam have over the years made serious attempts to develop partnerships, facilitate redevelopment and to develop strategies and policies that will cause or seek to cause change where required or needed. This preliminary work has had limited success due to a lack of commitment to the projects from a number of key stakeholders.

Accordingly, this Growth Plan process was commenced on a principle of building upon past work.

This was also important from the community's perspective, as there is anecdotal evidence that the community was feeling over consulted. Similarly the project delivery timeframe, of which was mostly over the Christmas/New Year 2011/12 period was condensed to enable the outcomes of this project to be utilised to seek appropriate funding, at the state, federal and private sector levels.

The development of the Northam Growth Plan represents a holistic and cohesive approach to community and economic development based on a shared vision for how we can create a vibrant and liveable regional centre.

With specific reference to the process used to develop the Growth Plan, the following are the key steps taken to achieve this plan:

1. Drawing from past work to develop the growth plan's vision and objectives;
2. Aligning with a Regional Centres Development Plan (SuperTowns) Framework 2011/12;
3. Understanding context (particularly testing the validity of the role of Northam in relation to the Avon region and the relationship between it and surrounding settlements);
4. Undertaking analysis of the Northam townsite in relation to structure, land use, community infrastructure etc;
5. Developing key planning and urban design principles to guide scenario development;
6. Developing two population growth scenarios for consideration by stakeholders; and
7. Testing growth scenarios with key stakeholders, including landowners to inform centre growth/ development plans.

8. Conducting informative sessions with key stakeholders, focus groups and the broader community to inform and refine the elements of the growth plan;
9. Further refining the growth plan to reflect consultative feedback received; and
10. Submission to local project team, local government, regional development council, steering committee, minister and cabinet for approval.

## PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND DECISION MAKING

Teams of substance with clear purpose and well-defined relationships are a prerequisite for the success of any major development or revitalisation project. The Shire of Northam, Wheatbelt Development Commission, Department of Planning and LandCorp established a partnership to prepare the Northam Growth Plan. The Shire of Northam assembled a multidisciplinary team to prepare the planning projects that would assist in the creation of the Growth Plan. The team comprised consultants in the disciplines of Town Planning; Urban Design; Civil Infrastructure Engineering; Transport Engineering; Environmental Engineering; Community Development and Economic Analysis Development. A project decision-making structure was put in place, to oversee the project as it evolved - refer to figure 1, for the details on the structure, roles and functions.



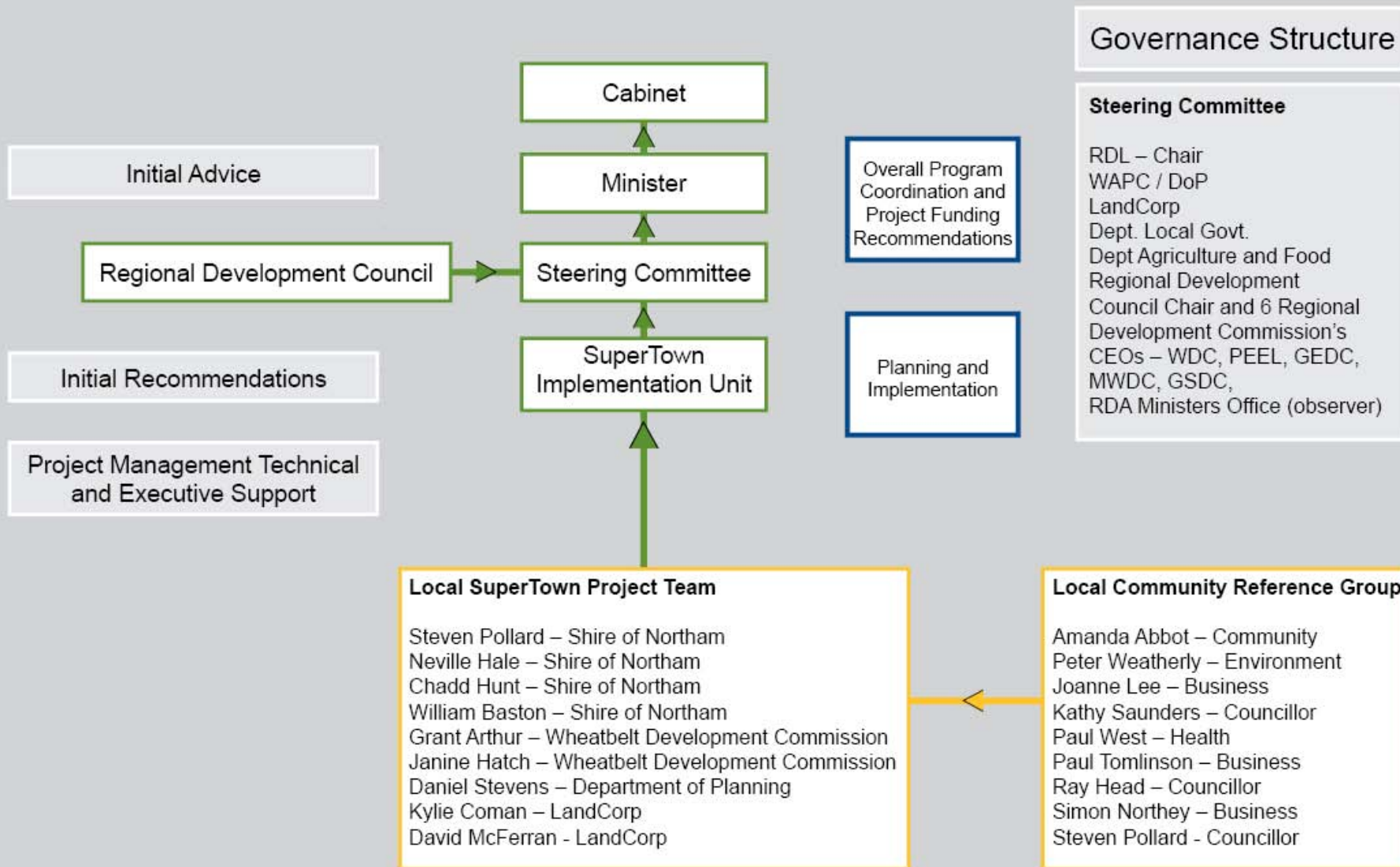


Figure 1. Growth Plan Decision Making Structure

## CONSULTATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

There has been considerable consultation with stakeholders and the Northam community over the past three years regarding the development of the town, which has informed many aspects of the current revitalisation planning. A comprehensive consultation process has also been undertaken throughout the development of the Growth Plan.

The objectives for the community and stakeholder engagement processes undertaken during the development of the Growth Plan were to:

- Identify actions that will enable inclusive and effective stakeholder engagement, as well as clear communication with the project team and the community reference group.
- Determine stakeholder opinions and areas of interest in order to provide accurate feedback to inform the planning process.
- Discover synergies and potential for networks between participants.
- Build stakeholder ownership.

In summary the key elements of the consultation process were:-

- **Community Reference Group Meetings.** Involving a cross representation of the community from Environmental, Business, Health, Community and Local Government Elected Members.
- **Focus Group Workshops.** Involving a range of invited stakeholders from across government, non-government agencies, business, community and industry. These workshops included the review of initial town site and town centre spatial planning concepts.
- **Project Design Forum.** A presentation of the proposed town site and town centre designs were presented by the consultant to participants (Government Agencies, Non-Government Organisations, Businesses and Community).
- **Council Briefings.** Ongoing town site briefings were conducted to inform Councillors of progress being made in the development of town site growth plans and town centre plans.

- **Youth Consultation and Visioning.** A session was held with primary school students to discuss the development of the town centre and what could be provided to make it a more attractive and vibrant place for young people.
- **Focus Group Meetings.** Group meetings were held with stakeholders to discuss and inform the project planning process. The groups were:
  - Infrastructure Service Providers;
  - Community Service Providers;
  - Environmental;
  - Indigenous Community and
  - Business and Economic Development.

A comprehensive list of stakeholders was developed with over 90 members from local residents, community organisations, Aboriginal groups, business and industry organisations, and government agencies (local and State) (see Figure 2).

The plan will guide the development of future housing, open spaces, commercial activities, short stay accommodation, entertainment and retail areas, as well as service infrastructure, transport, education and community facilities.

The Shire of Northam will partner with the Wheatbelt Development Commission to liaise with surrounding Avon communities to assist sub regional economic drivers. This activity will contribute to a Regional Investment Blueprint identifying key actions to facilitate and drive population growth in the Avon to 50,000 people.



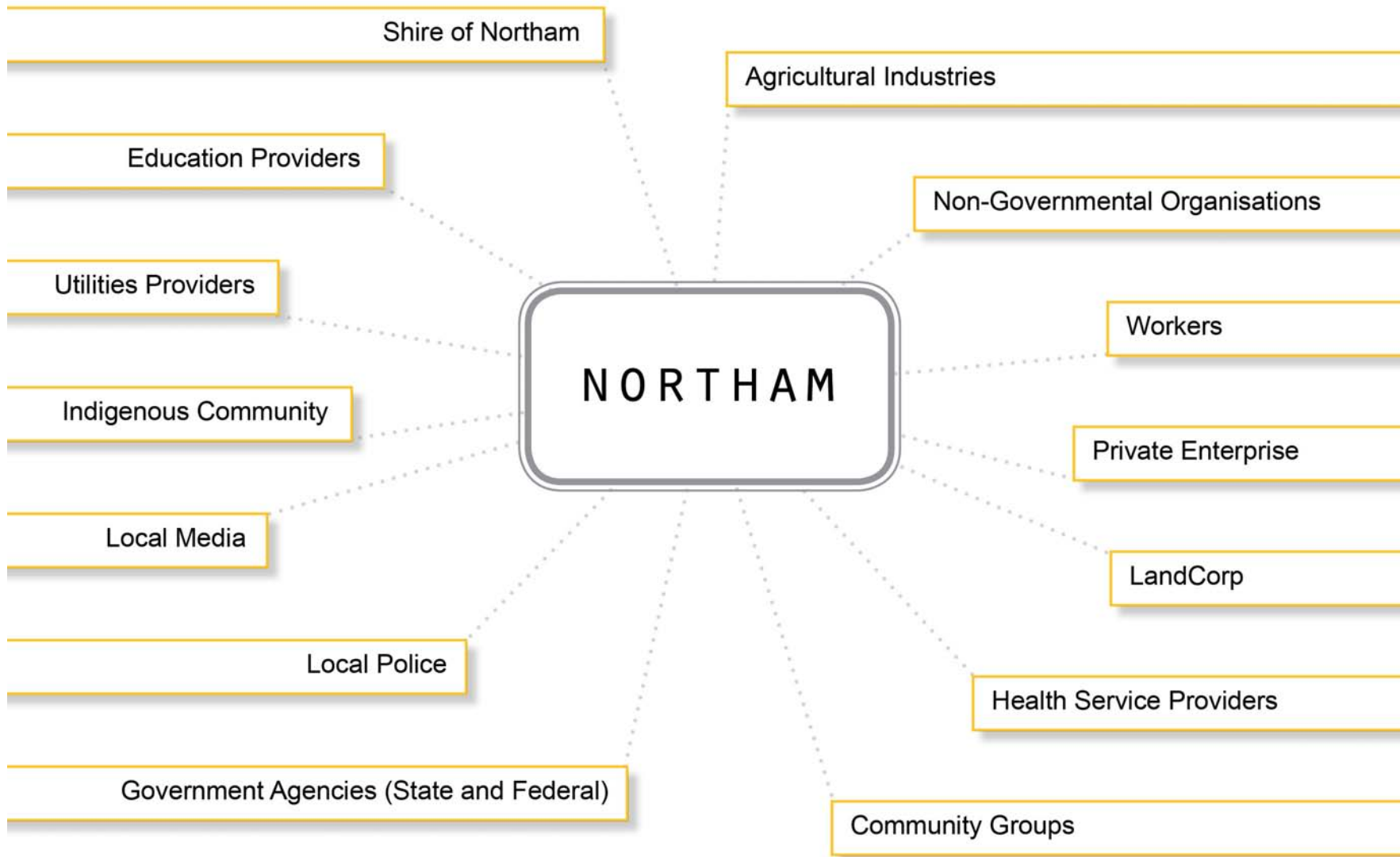


Figure 2. Stakeholders

# Context Analysis

## STRATEGIC PLANNING

The direction and aspirations for the future growth of Northam have been articulated in collection of strategic documents prepared over the last decade by both State and Local Government organisations such as the Shire's *Northam Development Plan 2011*, *Draft Local Planning Scheme No.6* and *Strategy 2011, Plan for the Future 2010 – 2020* and the Western Australian Planning Commission (WAPC)'s *Northam Surrounds Structure Plan*, *Avon Arc Sub Regional Strategy* and the WAPC endorsed *Northam South Local Structure Plan*.

These documents identify a range of visions, strategies and actions which together seek to modernise and transform Northam to support long term economic activity in the region, improve the quality of life for existing residents and attract and retain new residents. The control of land use and development is governed by the Shire of Northam's current *Town Planning Scheme No. 5* (the 'Scheme'). This section reviews existing documents and current planning in order to describe the current situation, key drivers, pressures and implications facing the future growth of Northam as a regional centre with a population of 20,000 people supporting a sub-regional population of 50,000 people.



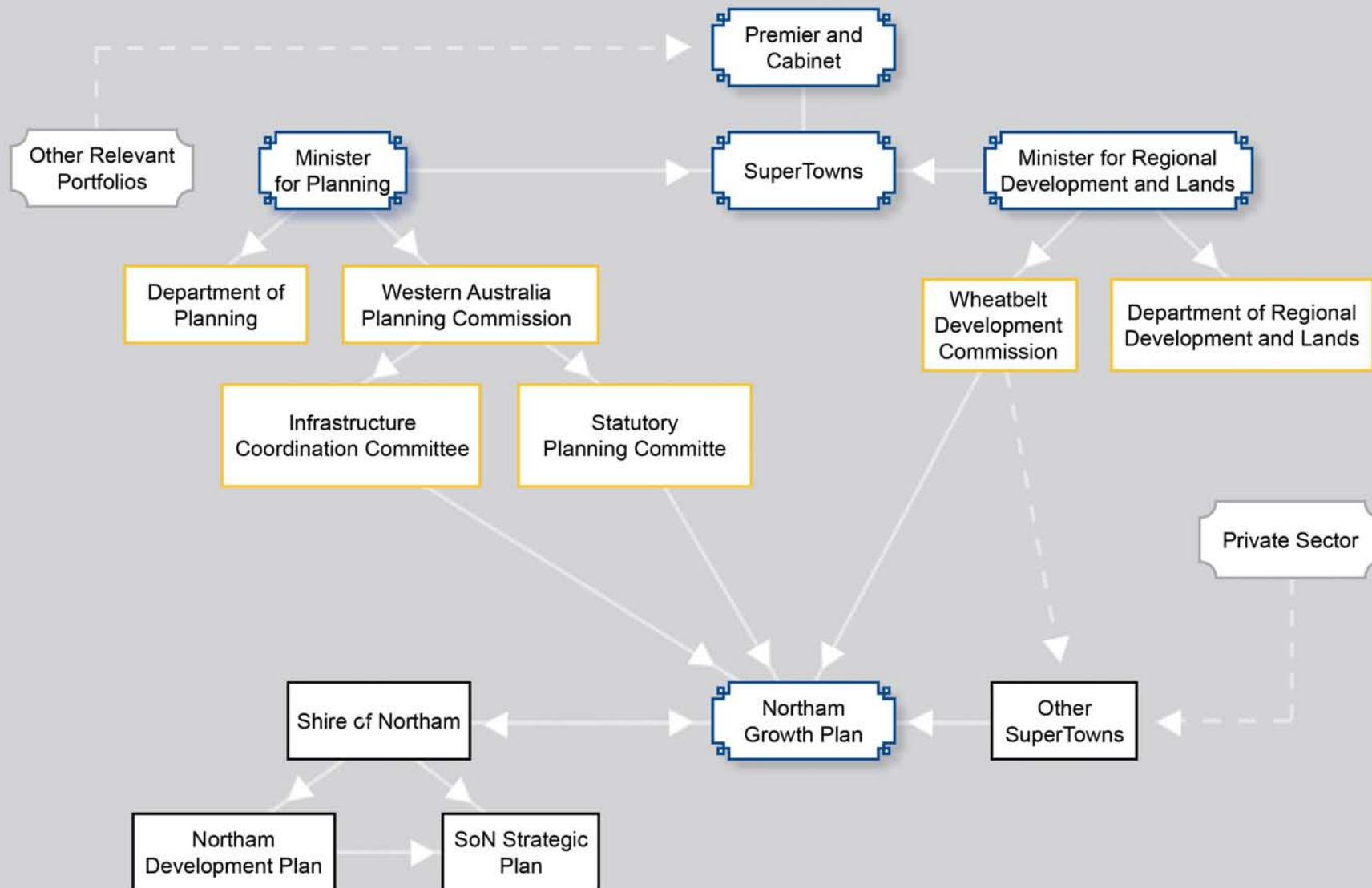


Figure 3. Existing Strategic Planning Framework

### State Planning Strategy (1997)

The *State Planning Strategy* recognises Northam as a priority area of the Avon Arc region, and identifies the facilitation of settlement growth and infrastructure as the key priorities for this area.

*This growth plan seeks to guide and inform the latest Draft State Planning Strategy.*

### Avon Arc Sub Regional Strategy

The purpose of the Avon Arc Sub-Regional Strategy is to provide a regional framework for long-term land use within the Avon Arc (Brookton, Beverley, York, Northam, Toodyay, Chittering and Gingin).

The Strategy acknowledges the Avon's proximity to the Perth Metropolitan Region and the resultant demands on settlement patterns, transport, the environment and land uses. There are demands to accommodate future development whilst maintaining a regional identity.

The Strategy provides a schematic land use plan to guide the use, development and management of land within the Avon. In that regard, the Northam townsite is identified as a Consolidated Urban Settlement which is intended to accommodate the majority of the projected population growth in the Avon and should grow in a compact and consolidated way.

The Great Eastern Highway is located on the northern boundary of the townsite. The strategy recognises it to be a Strategic Road link within the network that is an integral part of the freight and transport linkage within the Avon sub-region.

The Strategy notes that Northam is the 'Regional Service Centre' for the Avon Arc, functioning as a service centre for much of the region and the remaining Wheatbelt. Regional health, education and employment training facilities are located within the town as well as regional government offices.

Development within Northam will have to take account of planning guidelines for the 1:100 year floodway along the Avon River that dissects the town.

The principal planning implications identified for Northam are:

- Long term planning for urban growth is required;
- Funding to improve human services provided;
- Retention of heritage and character;
- Planning guidelines for Avon River 1:100 year floodway.

The Strategy outlines measures to meet the demands for growth in the area, including:

- Support the development and consolidation of existing nodal urban settlements;
- Encouraging tourism;
- Encourage industry development;
- Improved road and rail accessibility; and,
- Promote opportunities for economic development.

*This growth plan seeks to build upon the strength of this Strategy and incorporate the recommendations contained within the document.*

## Wheatbelt Country Land Development Program – Annual Review 2006 (WAPC)

This report was the apparent profile of the Wheatbelt Region in 2006 and includes the following relevant points:

- The Wheatbelt Region is forecast to grow at 0.98% between 2007 and 2012 in comparing Shire of Northam to the State average of 1.51%;
- Residential development in the Town of Northam contributed to a great deal of the residential activity in the Wheatbelt at that time; and
- A total population for the amalgamated Shire of Northam of 11,700 was forecast to be reached by 2017. This growth is actually being achieved in 6 years rather than the WAPC's 2.15% predicted growth rate between 2007 and 2017, with 11,100 people already in the Shire by 2011.

*It is noted that this review under estimated the actual growth between 2006 and 2011 and that the impact of growth was not predicted at that point in time. This growth plan seeks to provide the latest information on growth rates.*

## Town Planning Scheme No.5 (2004)

Currently the Shire administers two separate town planning schemes. The current Town Planning Scheme No. 5 applies to all land within the gazetted Northam townsite.

The scheme provides for a range of zones that accommodate a range of uses generally in keeping with the objectives of each zone. Of particular note is the fact that grouped dwellings are not permitted within the Town Centre, however multiple dwellings are a discretionary use. The proposed new town planning scheme will address this.

*This growth plan seeks to guide and inform the latest Draft Local Planning Scheme No. 6 that will replace the current town planning Scheme No. 5. In addition to the scheme, the Shire currently has local planning policies prepared and adopted under the scheme to guide development. These will need to be reviewed in relation to the recommendations of this growth plan.*

## Draft Shire of Northam Local Planning Strategy (2011)

As part of their Scheme review, the Shire has prepared a new Local Planning Strategy which is released for public consultation. The intention of the Strategy is to set out the long term planning directions for land use and development within the Shire.

The Strategy contains the most recent information available in terms of:

- Population – for instance population projections by the WAPC indicate that the total population in the townsite is currently over 7,000 persons. It is anticipated that the population of the Shire as a whole will increase to 12,300 persons by 2021 which is an increase of 27.5%.
- Housing – There are 273 Department of Housing properties in the Northam townsite which represents 11.5% of the total current housing stock in the town, used to cater for social housing and government workers.
- Economic Development – The latest figures indicate that retail is the predominant employment type with 14% of workers employed in this sector, closely followed by the government sector at 12% and agriculture decreasing over time to 7%.
- Tourism – the need to continue to develop and promote the sustainable development of cultural, heritage and nature based tourism in the Shire.

The Strategy mentions the presence of a substantial amount of low density (R15/30) residential development in the central part of the townsite, and large tracts of undeveloped residential zoned land in the southern and western portions of the townsite that may have subdivision potential. In addition special residential development occurs in the south-eastern part of the townsite on lots comprising an average area of approximately 5,000 square metres.

Finally, the draft Strategy identifies the following areas as having significant potential for revitalisation and redevelopment:

- Minson Avenue, Fitzgerald Street and Wellington Street East in the town centre area including the old Northam hospital site on the corner of Wellington and Gardiner Streets;
- The area surrounding the Northam railway station along Peel Terrace;
- The old St Christopher's Hostel on Inkpen Street;
- The old railway station and disused railway land located at the western end of Fitzgerald Street and Wellington Street West;
- The old Victoria Oval;
- Numerous serviced residential lots with dual road frontage in West Northam;
- A number of old public housing areas through the townsite;
- The Northam aquatic centre on Mitchell Avenue; and
- Numerous small rural smallholdings located adjacent to the Northam aerodrome and Northam race course.

*This growth plan seeks to review and incorporate the recommendations contained within the draft Strategy. Specific reference has been made within the growth plan to the key infill sites mentioned within that document.*

### Northam Surrounds Structure Plan (2005)

The Northam Surrounds Structure Plan was prepared by Cardno BSD for the Department of Planning and relates to the area immediately surrounding the developed townsite. The Structure Plan was developed following the finalisation of the Avon Arc Regional Strategy and is intended to guide the future development and provide a framework for the coordinated long term planning requirements for the study area. The Northam Surrounds Structure Plan identifies and accommodates the long term planning requirements for Northam and sets the direction for future consolidation and expansion of uses beyond the townsite.

Key elements of the Structure Plan include:

- Assessment of existing and anticipated future supply and demand for land and the recommendation of suitable areas for single residential, special residential, special rural and industrial land use expansion and consolidation;
- Protection of the natural environment and rural amenity;
- Protection of regional facilities such as the Northam Airstrip, Northam Race Course, landfill waste site and wastewater treatment plant;
- Comment on the potential land use development of particular portions of land within the Town of Northam however outside the Northam Surrounds Structure Plan study area; and
- Recommendations regarding the future regional and local road network.

Key issues identified by the Structure Plan include:

- Future use of land between the townsite and the Great Eastern Highway Northam Bypass and the impact of the bypass in terms of the potential need for buffering of any land uses associated with freight traffic, demand for land uses requiring high exposure, vehicle movements, and severing of farming properties;



- Environmental constraints associated with the Avon / Mortlock River system;
  - Use of rail;
  - Impact from the airport (Northam airstrip);
  - Impact of buffers associated with the existing wastewater treatment plant and refuse disposal site;
  - The availability of serviced industrial land;
  - The demand for development around the Northam racecourse and road train assembly area
  - The extent and appropriateness of special residential zoned land within the Northam townsite;
  - Review of current residential structure plan for the area south of Throssell Street, especially in terms of the demand for a range of residential lots and the proposed movement networks; and
  - The impact and appropriateness of lineal development along major roads in the study area.
- The structure plan area includes facilities and services such as the Great Eastern Highway, Northam airstrip, freight and passenger Avon Link rail services, waste water treatment plant and landfill site. A range of land uses including agriculture, special rural and special residential development, industrial land, Northam racecourse, cemetery, quarry and the Avon Yards take place in the locality as well as the Avon and Mortlock Rivers.
- The following key issues were examined as part of the process:
- Development around the Northam Race Course in the form of an "equine precinct";
  - Demand for additional commercial, light and service industrial land in the context of supply within the townsite – commercial uses should remain in a town centre location, with industrial activity to be contained to designated zones;
  - Review of current heavy vehicle route through the townsite – mitigated by the bypass;
  - Possible wastewater treatment plant expansion and need for protective buffers – a 500m buffer was agreed upon;
  - Future land use development constraints in regards to other existing and potential buffer requirements within the Structure Plan area;
  - Potential land use development surrounding the Avon Yards in the north western portion of the Structure Plan area;
  - Protection of the natural environment and rural amenity, in particular development along Avon and Mortlock Rivers;
  - Demand for land uses requiring high exposure and vehicle movements, which will not sever farming properties;
  - Review of current local structure planning for development of residential land south of Throssell Street with particular emphasis on lot size and co-ordination of proposed movement networks – the existing townsite should accommodate future demands for residential development.;
  - Review of existing road network in the vicinity of Goomalling Road and Irishtown Road in the northern portion of the Structure Plan area and given potential intensification of land uses in this area;
  - Identification of suitable areas for expansion and or consolidation of future single residential development;
  - The extent and appropriateness of special residential zoning within the Town of Northam;
  - Demand for rural residential "hobby farm" land within the Structure Plan area;
  - Airstrip/airport development potential and impact on surrounding land uses;
  - Improvements to the commuter rail service; and
  - The impact of developing a crematorium at the cemetery.

The Surrounds Structure Plan recommends that future single residential subdivision and development should occur in the existing designated area south of Throssell Street. Furthermore, infill development of existing low density residential areas (e.g. West Northam), and consolidation of areas designated for urban development (i.e. land immediately to the north of the Northam Country Club) within the Northam townsite, but outside the Structure Plan area, should be encouraged prior to planning for new residential areas within Northam's hinterland.

*This growth plan seeks to build upon this work and consolidate recommendations contained within that document where appropriate.*

#### Northam South Local Structure Plan (2009)

In April 2009 the WAPC adopted a Local Structure Plan over a large vacant residential zone land to the south of the townsite, known as the Northam South Local Structure Plan area which is the land located on the southern side of Throssell Street. The Structure Plan is majority R15 lots with a 4 ha school site and associated recreation / drainage reserve.

The site has a long history of planning proposals and similarly this latest iteration has not resulted in any recent development construction activity. This is likely due to the high construction costs that will be experienced due to the rocky nature of the ground and the high cost of development.

*This growth plan seeks to reflect the recommendations contained within that document and inform future integrated plan making processes of the Shire's Strategic Community Plan.*

#### Shire of Northam Plan for the Future 2010 – 2020

The Plan for the Future is a 10 year outlook (financial plan and strategic goals) for the Shire and the planned services and facilities that can be provided over the next 5 years in terms of funding estimates.

- Forecasts 26% growth in population over the next 20 years.
- Growth assisted by decline of other regional towns to north and east.
- Identifies the following precincts which are integral to long term planning – Railway, Cultural, Central, Recreation as well as Wundowie and Bakers Hill.
- Outlines key initiatives planned for the next 5 years such as:
  - 2011 – New Northam Recreation Centre– Completed
  - 2011 – Soundshell – Completed
  - 2011 – George Nuich Park and associated drainage works – Commencing
  - 2011 – 2012 – Rationalisation and relocation of Shire of Northam Works Depot – Subject to Funding
  - 2011 – 2012 – Killara Respite and Adult Day Care Centre – Subject to Funding
  - 2012 – 2013 – Northam Cultural Precinct Development – Subject to Funding
  - 2013 – 2014 – Northam Recreation Centre Stage 2 (inclusive of leisure pool) – Subject to Funding
  - 2014 – 2015 - Shire of Northam Administration Centre / Council Chamber extensions– Subject to Funding

#### Wheatbelt Regional Strategic Framework

The Wheatbelt Development Commission has undertaken a Wheatbelt Region Strategic Framework in partnership with Regional Development Australia – Wheatbelt. While this is a high level document, it will be considered in the formulation of strategies and priorities in this document.

*This Strategic Framework is a high level regional document that guides this growth plan at the Strategic Level only.*

## ECONOMY

### Current Situation

The townsite of Northam was established as an inland agricultural town nestled on the Avon River in 1836 to provide food for the fledging Swan River Settlement. The centre has observed the rise and fall of the rail industry within the state, being a primary rail service centre for the past 100 years. Northam is influenced by the influxes of migrants that have arrived in periodic waves since European settlement; the influences continue to shape the community today. These agricultural origins continue to underpin the economy of the community, with Northam the Regional Centre of the Western Wheatbelt Region.

The Northam economy, while still focussed on agriculture is diversifying. Due to its location and existing transport infrastructure its attractiveness is becoming apparent. Encouraging further development of the Avon Industrial Park and serviced light industry land parcels throughout the subregion is a major part of the economic growth strategy. Jobs growth in service industries such as retail, health and education have resulted in a rapid reduction in local unemployment rates to levels comparable with the State average. Northam is and will continue to function as a key administration, business, industry and service centre of the broader Avon region and will therefore naturally represent a significant concentration of jobs. The relationships and interconnections between Northam and surrounding towns and communities is critical to ensuring the economic benefits of Northam's progression to a SuperTown are shared by local and regional residents alike.

As the Avon's Central Business Area, Northam must focus on increasing the size of the professional services sector in Northam. Currently, the town and the wider Avon Sub Region lack a significant white collar workforce, which is constraining professional services businesses and employment growth in the town. Growth in dedicated commercial office accommodation, coupled with growth in the skilled labour force will assist in addressing this issue in the medium term and help to offset the current Drive-In/Drive-Out (DIDO) travel patterns identified as part of consultation with key business and community stakeholders.

### Population and Demographic Profile

The Northam town site has experienced acceleration in population growth in recent years, which is impressive in light of the comparatively large size of the township. The demographic profile of Northam is characterised by an older rural population catchment surrounding a younger profile in the town itself. However the Shire as a whole appears to be losing young and middle aged individuals and families potentially in response to a lack of high quality local secondary and tertiary education facilities and professional services sector employment opportunities. As a service centre for the growing Avon Sub Region this growth will continue. While current Northam population is 7,000, it already services a regional population well over 20,000.

This strong growth in population appears to be the result of moderately competitive socio-economic characteristics of local residents. While exhibiting education and occupation profiles characteristic of regional service centres, above average shares of service workers in the local labour force suggests Northam is already progressing along the evolutionary path of a town from its mono-economy foundations to one with a strong population involved in service industries.

Income levels in Northam appear low at first glance, particularly in comparison to Perth and WA levels. However, this can be misleading as Northam incomes levels are broadly comparable with national averages and are, in most occupations, at or above State averages. The major driver of the lower average individual income levels appears to be in professional service sector occupations, reinforcing the need for this sector to be the focus of Northam's progression into a SuperTown.

When income levels are compared to a median house price less than half that of metropolitan Perth, the median multiple indicator highlights the existence of strong affordability characteristics in the Northam housing market. This is a key competitive advantage for Northam - given its peri-urban location and interrelationship with the Perth housing market - to support the town's growth as a SuperTown into the future.

## Employment

Unemployment rates in Northam, which have been historically above that of the State, have declined markedly in recent quarters to now be below State unemployment levels. This strong decline in unemployment has happened at a time when local labour force growth has accelerated; suggesting the employment demand is currently growing at a faster rate than labour force supply. If this trend continues, Northam will soon experience skill and labour shortages which will impede economic development, increase wages and rental prices and undermine its progress to SuperTown status.

Employment growth appears to have been driven by a strong business environment. Review of business registrations data reveals above average shares of business numbers in agriculture, retail, transport, manufacturing, health care, accommodation and food, education and training and other services industries and comparable shares in construction. This illustrates an industry structure which can be broadly broken into three categories:



Figure 4. Industry Structure, Northam (Source: AEC Group)

The major industry gaps appear to be in professional services industries such as finance, insurance and rental and hiring and property related services. This needs to be an area of focus of Northam and the entire sub region. To ensure future economic development and diversification population attraction activities must be enhanced so that labour force scarcity does not become a major constraint to medium and light industry development.

A review of business size reveals the expected below average share of large business with 50 or more employees. However, Northam also has a below average share of non-employing businesses (commonly associated with self-employed and contract workers) despite having a strong construction sector. This reflects the fact that businesses in Northam, while small, appear to have strong growth potential and commonly have up to 20 staff. This employment generation capacity is critical to support Northam's growth as a major economic centre in the Avon sub-region and as a SuperTown.

## Regional Context

Northam currently represents the single largest concentration of population in the Avon region, with the Toodyay and York LGAs the next largest with 4,700 and 3,638 residents respectively. Northam has a younger population than the Avon Sub Region average with several smaller Local Government Areas (LGAs) already having over one fifth of their populations aged 65 and over. Despite this, it has a significantly lower fertility rate than the region, suggesting the demographics of Northam are more akin to an urban area than that of its regional/rural setting.

Investment in residential and non-residential building in Northam is considerably larger than other locations in the Avon Sub-Region. In 2010/2011, there were more dwellings approved in Northam (S) than

Toodyay and York combined. Despite this, Northam's share of residential approvals in the Avon Sub Region is lower than its share of population, suggesting that other locations in the Avon Sub Region continue to experience comparatively strong housing property development levels. However, in terms of non-residential approvals, Northam is the standout with average investment levels in Northam representing almost half that of the Avon Sub Region over the past decade. This indicates that Northam's role in the Avon Sub Region is more defined by the concentration of commercial activity than housing investment.

Northam's growth into a SuperTown will invariably impact the region. However, the nature of this impact will likely vary across the economy and community. Northam is already the primary service centre of the Avon Sub Region, supporting a large local and regional catchment. This concentration of services, particularly employment generating activity, is likely to continue to define Northam's role over the next 20 years. The concentration of regional facilities and services (particularly education and health), will further reinforce this relationship, benefiting Avon Sub Region residents by reducing travel times for services currently accessed in metropolitan Perth.

Residential population growth projected for Northam will undoubtedly impact the growth of surrounding communities. However, the degree of acceleration in population growth rate required by Northam to double its population over the next 20 years is comparatively minor, as it has already been experiencing strong growth in recent years. This growth (since 2007) has not detracted from population growth in surrounding communities of the Avon Sub Region. In fact, communities such as Toodyay and York also experienced strong growth during that time. This suggests that the communities in the Avon Sub Region share a range of residential attraction drivers – namely proximity to and relative affordability compared to

metropolitan Perth – which will likely continue to underpin growth in the future. The growth of the Avon Sub Region as a whole, in conjunction with the establishment of Northam as a SuperTown, is therefore achievable, with households and residents in the broader region benefiting from the increase in employment, facilities and service critical mass in Northam in the future.

## Opportunities and Constraints

The Avon Sub-Region has a number of competitive strengths which will need to be leveraged in order to generate meaningful economic development and employment outcomes. These include:

- An existing and well-established agricultural sector with strong existing inward and outward supply chains, experienced skilled labour and strong linkages to local educational facilities;
- Strategic location on major east-west/north-south multi-modal trade routes, with the ability to capture supply chain benefits of the growing WA mining sector;
- Strong infrastructure connections to Perth and mining centres providing key trade opportunities;
- Strong population growth which will support demand for services in the region, particularly education, health and personal services;
- The presence of educational and health assets within the region which could expand over time to meet the needs and requirements of the growing economy and population base, including the broader Avon region.
- A range of lifestyle and tourism opportunities across the Avon, making marketing the regions attractiveness easier.
- The assessment also highlighted some relative weaknesses, where improvement could increase the Avon's overall competitiveness. These include:
  - An underrepresentation of skilled labour in the region, presenting capacity constraints to local business and industries growth and resulting in the inability to leverage the opportunity to become a major service centre. It is essential to attract a diverse and plentiful population to ensure labour supply does not become a constraint to development.
  - High business costs (including overheads and transport) which are limiting the area's ability to attract new business
  - Lack of understanding of the impacts of the Carbon Tax for local industries and a broader nervousness of businesses (not only in the Shire of Northam) with regards to global economic volatility.

Broadband telecommunication was identified as the single most important infrastructure to the future growth of the Northam economy – not only in relation to doing business, but to improving the attractiveness of the region as a place for young professionals to live. This reflects the need for increased diversification of the economy through growth in professional and personal services and white collar industries.

This was followed by road transport and core utilities of water and power. Interestingly, Arts and Recreation and Accommodation and Food Services industries were identified as the most infrastructure dependent sectors of the economy. The first reflects the importance of public amenity and sports and community facilities, while the latter is dependent on a wider range of traditional and community infrastructure reflecting the role of 'Accommodation and Food Services' businesses in supporting tourism activity. This was followed by education and training, public administration and manufacturing. Skills shortages in the Avon Sub-Region are already problematic. It is estimated that the shortage of skills will worsen over the coming 10 and 20 years if high-skilled labour is not attracted into the region. By 2031, over 8,000 managers and professionals will be in demand in the Avon, primarily working within Northam's Central Business Area. Strategies to assist in changing perceived and real relative disadvantages to living and working in the region are essential.

Nine areas of opportunity for the Northam LGA have been identified and should be pursued in order to grow and diversify the local economy whilst leveraging broader economic growth. These nine areas are:

- Transport & Storage: Particularly logistics operations;
- Professional Services: Both population-related and business related;
- Agriculture Related Manufacturing and Processing: Based on local agricultural production (livestock and cereals);
- Mining-Related Manufacturing: There is current interest in expanding the production of prefabricated accommodation in the Avon. There is demand for manufacturing and fabrication products in the Wheatbelt Region as well as the regions to our

North and East. The transport and logistics advantages of this area will see such industrial development expand in this area.

- Agriculture: Building on existing industry strengths and support services;
- Education: High quality secondary schooling and trade-oriented tertiary education;

- Retail: Food and other retailing;
- Health & Community: Health services, allied health care and aged care;
- Tourism: Promoting the development and diversification of tourism.

These opportunities are further detailed in Table 1.

Table 1. Economic Opportunities for Northam LGA

Opportunity/ Growth Sector	High Value-Adding Activity	Point of Differentiation	Why Northam LGA?
<b>Transport &amp; Storage</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Logistics operations (warehousing and distribution operations servicing a variety of clients and customers for both import and export to and from the region, predominantly housing, manufacturing and mining)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advantageous geographical location with proximity to Perth and key mining locations.</li> <li>• Established presence of the Avon Industrial Park with recent investments by major tenants supporting attraction.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Geographic location: Geographically well placed for transport and logistics due to its location along the Great Eastern Highway and national east west rail freight route.</li> <li>• Land Availability: Industrial land supply in Northam LGA is currently sufficient to meet the demands of transport and storage businesses. Proactively ensuring sufficient supply of marketable serviced land will be necessary to ensure continued demand over the long term.</li> <li>• Population and business demand: Future population and economic growth in the region (and further abroad) is likely to support demand for transport and logistics services in the future.</li> <li>• Existing workforce: Transport and storage is currently an existing and growing employer in the region, suggesting availability of relevant skills in Northam LGA.</li> </ul>
<b>Professional Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Population-related professional services (accounting, banking, legal, property, centralised office functions)</li> <li>• Business-related professional services (project management, design, architecture, consultancy services)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Position as a future services centre for the mining sector as well as the local region and strong population growth.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High degree of local imports: There is currently a high degree of these services being imported to the region.</li> <li>• Strong economic growth: Regional and local economic growth is anticipated to support the demand for new business services in the region.</li> <li>• Large secondary catchment: with population-related professional services required to service the broader Avon region.</li> <li>• Small existing workforce: Northam LGA has a small existing workforce in these industries which can be leveraged and further expanded over time.</li> </ul>

Opportunity/ Growth Sector	High Value-Adding Activity	Point of Differentiation	Why Northam LGA?
<b>Agricultural Related Manufacturing and Processing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Manufactured cereal products</li> <li>Livestock products</li> <li>Organic food and produce</li> <li>Production of Agricultural implements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing and well-established agricultural industry.</li> <li>Large lot sizes throughout the region for production of such products as tillage equipment and grain storage.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Geographic location: Geographically located in close proximity to large population centres and potential markets (such as Perth) and key export points (such as the Perth Airport and Fremantle port).</li> <li>Land Availability: Industrial land supply in Northam LGA is currently sufficient to meet the demands of manufacturing businesses.</li> <li>Population growth: Population growth in key centres is expected to continue, increasing demand for food products.</li> <li>Food security: Concerns for oil prices (and high transport costs being passed on to consumers) could support demand for locally-produced foods and value-added goods.</li> <li>Increasing social awareness of pesticides and food: Population awareness of pesticides in food growing could support demand for organic food produce.</li> <li>Existing industry: The region has well-established supply chains and workforce.</li> </ul>
<b>Mining-Related Manufacturing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Machine and equipment manufacturing (computer and electronic equipment manufacturing, communication equipment manufacturing)</li> <li>Primary metal and metal produce manufacturing (iron and steel casting, pipe and tube manufacturing, other downstream processing)</li> <li>Prefabricated accommodation manufacturing (building on existing investment)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leveraging mining activities in other regions.</li> <li>Position on the geographical route between mining centres and export channels.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Geographical location: Geographically located within close proximity to key supply chains (mining sector and export channels).</li> <li>Strong mining activity growth: Expectations for Western Australia's mining activities to continue to expand and grow will support supply of mining outputs and demand for manufactured goods demanded by the mining sector.</li> <li>Existing industry: Northam LGA has an existing, though small, industry of manufacturers. Accommodation of manufacturing at Avon Industrial Park.</li> </ul>
<b>Agriculture</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agriculture (livestock and cereals)</li> <li>Agriculture services (machinery and equipment services, agriculture engineering, pest and weed management services, livestock services such as veterinary &amp; genetics / breeding services)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing and well-established agricultural industry.</li> <li>Greater levels of product diversification with more non-broadacre crops grown in Northam than in the surrounding region, supporting value add opportunities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strong agriculture sector: The Avon Region has a strong agriculture sector.</li> <li>Global demand for product: Global demand for food products is increasing as population continues to grow. As such, demand for fresh foods from agriculture production will continue to grow in the future.</li> <li>Established supply chain: The region has an existing supply chain to support industry such as transport, wholesale trade and food processing sectors.</li> <li>Population growth: Regional and national population growth will increase demand for the local agricultural production.</li> <li>Existing skills base: There is an existing resident workforce which supports the sector.</li> </ul>



Opportunity/ Growth Sector	High Value-Adding Activity	Point of Differentiation	Why Northam LGA?
<b>Education</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High quality secondary schooling (including private boarding schools)</li> <li>Trade-oriented tertiary education (including further investment into the existing TAFE)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing and future population growth.</li> <li>Large secondary regional catchment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Geographic location: Geographically located in close proximity to large population centres and potential markets (such as Perth)</li> <li>Growing population base: The regional population is expected to increase over time, supporting increased demand for education facilities in the region. While education services will be spread across the region, Northam will offer regionally significant facilities like a growing Senior High School, Regional TAFE facility, higher education, a redeveloped Muresk.</li> <li>Growing demand for skilled workers: As the structure of the economy changes, demand for new skills will be required, supporting demand for higher education in the region.</li> </ul>
<b>Retail</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Food retailing (supermarkets, greengrocers, farmers markets)</li> <li>Other Retailing (clothes, bulky goods, etc)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing and future population growth.</li> <li>Large secondary regional catchment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Growing population base: The Avon Region's population is expected to increase over time, supporting demand for all retailed goods. Northam will be the location for those types of retail offering that require and sub regional population of greater than 20,000.</li> <li>Consumerism: Consumerism remains strong in Australia, supporting the long-term trends in retail sales growth.</li> </ul>
<b>Health &amp; Community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Health services (public and private hospitals, general practitioners (GPs)</li> <li>Aged care services (retirement villages, respite and hospice care, in-home care services)</li> <li>Allied health services (physiotherapy, general practitioners, diagnostic facilities, occupational therapy, dentists, mental health care)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing and future population growth.</li> <li>Existing facilities.</li> <li>Proposed investments by St John's Ambulance.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ageing demographic: The ageing population trend will result in increased demand for health services, particularly aged care. In addition, the ageing of existing healthcare practitioners is expected to leave a gap in the provision of services.</li> <li>Increasing quality of service: Quality of health care is increasing and with population growth, there will be increasing demand for healthcare services.</li> <li>Critical mass: As the population of Northam LGA increases, demand for additional healthcare services will increase.</li> </ul>
<b>Tourism</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recreational aviation</li> <li>Heritage Tourism</li> <li>Adventure Tourism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Well established recreational aviation sector.</li> <li>Second largest collection of heritage buildings, behind Fremantle, in Western Australia.</li> <li>Close to Perth and containing a variety of environments conducive to adventure activities.</li> <li>Substantial sub regional product.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Geographical Location: Geographically located in close proximity to large population centres and potential markets (such as Perth).</li> <li>Strong, well preserved heritage: The presence of historic buildings add to the attraction value of the townsite which in turns assist with population and economic growth. Substantial heritage product throughout the region, such as York, Toodyay and Avondale near Beverley.</li> <li>Favourable physical environment and conditions: The Avon Sub Region's setting is an asset and conducive to a wide range of activities.</li> </ul>

## RETAIL AND COMMERCIAL ASSESSMENT

Planning for the development of Northam as a regional centre of 20,000 residents, in a sub-region of 50,000, demands an estimation of the required levels of floor space across a range of planning land use categories so that the local planning framework and the master planning for the regional centre has the capacity to both reflect and accommodate demand for floor space. Moreover, the provision of such space not only reflects demand, it also influences economic development and, to some extent, drives demand. If the master planning of the future Northam has not sufficiently catered for demand for floor space, it is likely that economic development and activation of the town may be constrained.

Estimates of retail floorspace requirements are essential in informing the town revitalisation and master planning processes as this data provides planners with the best estimates of required floorspace for each industry category, which in turn can be distributed throughout the town and in specific precincts. It is noted that currently there is a leakage of retail spend to Metropolitan Perth Centres such as Midland and Morley, for higher order goods. Whilst it is assumed that there will always be some leakage to Perth, it will be reduced through the increase of population in the SubRegion and increase of higher order retail products on offer in Northam as a direct result.

In an analysis of the demand for retail and commercial space in Northam, the Northam Commercial and Employment Strategy recently reported:

*“Retail demand is projected to experience strong growth over the next 20 years in line with the doubling of the population. Current floor space supply appears to be broadly in line with demand, though projected growth will result in the need for an additional 28,000sq.m Gross Lettable Area – Retail by 2031.*

This is illustrated in the adjacent figure (Figure 5).

*This level of floor space demand growth is representative of the following additional retail formats:*

- 2-3 full-line supermarkets;
- 10 takeaway food restaurants or 8 formal dining cafes/restaurants;
- 1 full-line or 2 mid-size Discount Department Stores;
- 2-3 Mini Major/Bulky Goods Retailers in sports, home wares, hardware and electronics;
- 30-40 Specialty Shops across all categories.

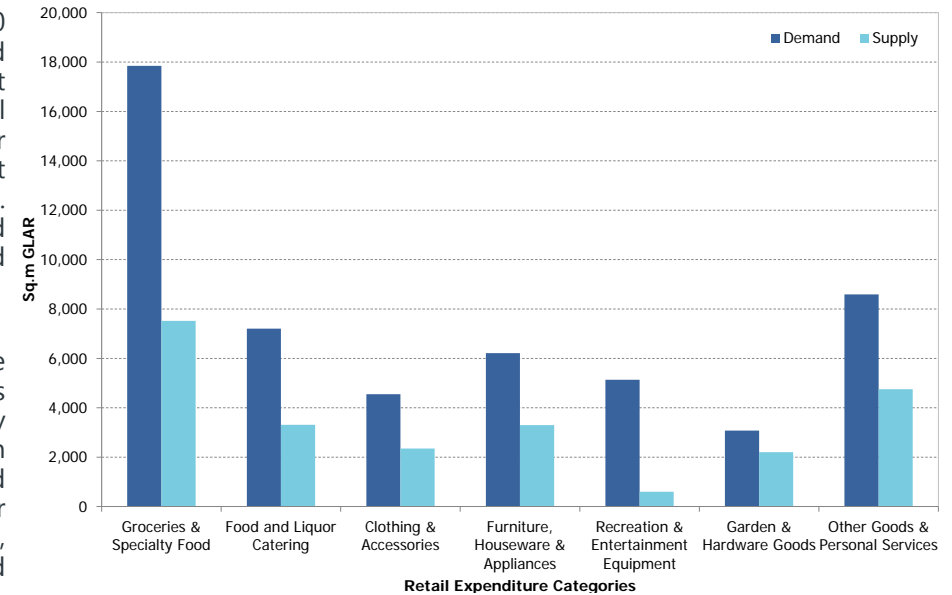


Figure 5. Current Retail Floorspace Supply and Future Demand, Northam Town, 2031 (Source: AEC Group)



Figure 6. Retail Assessment Locations (Source: RPS Group)

*Even with this supply, servicing both local and regional catchments, Northam will continue to experience strong competition from Midland and other eastern metropolitan Perth centres, particularly as the urban growth front continues to push eastwards."*

Source: AEC Group January 2012

### Floor Space Requirements For Northam

Current retail floor space (Gross Lettable Area – Retail or GLAR) is estimated at 24,045 m<sup>2</sup>. This is comprised of two neighbourhood size centres, strip retail shops (primarily along Fitzgerald Street) and select individual shops and local centres within the broader township. The majority of which is within the groceries and specialty food and food and liquor catering categories, mainly as a result of the two full-line supermarkets within Northam Town. Residents can therefore avail themselves of a relatively extensive food retail offering within the catchment. However, there are various large retail centres and destinations located outside the catchment (in particular Midland) that also service local residents' retail needs. These centres and localities are all located en route to Perth or within the Perth metropolitan area itself, influencing the spending patterns of Northam and Avon residents, particularly those located west of the town site.

The adjacent figure (Figure 7) proposes floor space increases over time.

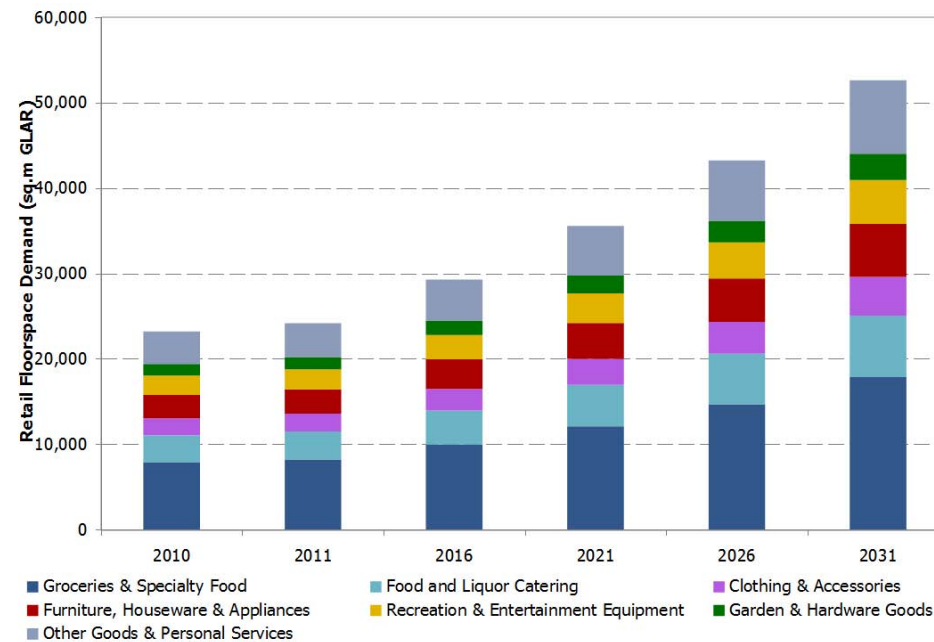


Figure 7. Floor space increases over time (Source: AEC Group)

Opportunity/Constraint	High Value-Adding Activity	Why Northam LGA?
<b>Increase in Retail / Commercial Expenditure based on Population Growth</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Construction (in line with further demand there will be a need to construct more retail/commercial floor space)</li> <li>Employment (increase in the retail employment sector)</li> <li>Retail / Commercial Expenditure (\$131.7 million in 2011 to \$193.7 million in 2021 and then to \$286.6 million in 2031)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Geographic location: Geographically well placed for transport and logistics due to its location along the Great Eastern Highway and national east west rail freight route.</li> <li>Land Availability: Retail / Commercial land supply in Northam LGA is underutilised to its full potential to meet the growing demands of retail and commercial businesses. Proactively ensuring sufficient supply of marketable serviced land will be necessary to ensure continued demand over the longer term.</li> <li>Population and business demand: Future population and economic growth in the region (and further abroad) is likely to support demand for retail and commercial services in the future. Demand for retail floorspace is expected to more than double reaching 35,570m<sup>2</sup> by 2021 and 52,627 m<sup>2</sup> by 2036.</li> <li>Existing workforce: Northam is a Retail and Commercial Centre of the Avon Sub-Region, suggesting availability of relevant skills in Northam LGA.</li> </ul>
<b>Discount Department Store (DDS)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Construction of a mid-sized DDS (floorspace 3,000-4,000 m<sup>2</sup>)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing small DDS: Scope for expansion of current Target Country into a full Target DDS to meet current demand.</li> <li>Population demand: Estimated demand for a DDS of approximately 5,000-6,000 m<sup>2</sup> within the catchment by 2021 and 7,500 by 2031.</li> </ul>
<b>Global Online Shopping Trend</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Level of Impact upon physical retail / commercial requirements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Growing population base: The Northam LGA population is expected to increase over time, supporting demand for all retailed goods.</li> <li>Consumerism: Consumerism remains strong in Australia, supporting the long-term trends in retail sales growth.</li> </ul>

Table 2. Retail and Commercial Opportunities and Constraints for Northam LGA

## HOUSING AND LAND SUPPLY

Strong population growth in recent years, coupled with increased economic and commercial activity from local businesses and major investments has, and will continue to drive growth in the Northam economy in the short-term. Northam has experienced a steady increase in residential building approvals and a sharp increase in non-residential approvals over the last decade, in response to increases in demand for housing and business accommodation.

Growing confidence in the State and in particular the regional economy has encouraged investment in the Avon Sub Region including major industrial, public administration and food and beverage projects. These investments will further intensify economic activity in Northam in the short-term and induce further public and private sector investment due to a lower risk profile and strong service demand.

The Department of Planning's Northam Townsite Density Review 2012 has established that Northam has a very high level of undeveloped and underdeveloped land that provides significant capacity for growth. Despite a lack of data available to project density capacity for several areas known as precincts (Figure 35), the density review undertaken within a limited timeframe, established that within the inner residential precincts and southern residential expansion area (Hillman precinct), there is a current capacity for 9,610 dwellings. Although this figure has been based on gross developable land, it does provide a clear picture of Northam's capacity to accommodate growth within existing inner residential precincts.

A density review was undertaken by the Department of Planning in partnership with the Shire of Northam in recognition of the need to expand the diversity in housing stock in Northam, and to determine the potential population that could be housed in the designated townsite area. This Density Review project has identified the areas within the Northam townsite that have capacity to absorb Northam's potential population increase to 20,000 people. The challenge is to change the current development pattern of Northam townsite from 666m<sup>2</sup> lots to 330m<sup>2</sup> lots as a consequence of affordable housing and offering a diverse range of lot sizes in close proximity to the town centre.

There is a need to establish precincts within the townsite that are most suited to an increase in residential densities, whilst ensuring the character and unique natural and built environments are not adversely affected.

Whilst the Review has identified locations which have the capacity to accommodate population growth and change, there will be the need for future planning work in addition to this density review, to ensure Northam is developed in a manner that is both accommodating to change, and respectful of the history and rural character of the town.

In order to further the Department of Planning's Density Review it is recommended that the following actions be taken:

- In conjunction with the Department of Planning, the Shire assists in developing development potential datasets for all Northam precincts;
- Progressing the Density Review into a Northam Housing Strategy that includes:
  - Promotion of sustainable residential design through introduction of incentives, promotional materials and demonstration projects;
  - Explore and plan for projected demographics through encouraging mixed development that offer housing diversity and choice;
  - Establishing a staged approach to future rezoning, to ensure the orderly and proper planning of the town;
- Developing design guidelines to facilitate the development of high quality multiple dwellings;
- Preparing streetscape policy to be applied at development assessment stage to promote high quality development;
- Investigating sustainable residential building design guidelines to encourage sustainable building design;
- Undertaking detailed Precinct Planning for the entire Fitzgerald Precinct;
- Preparing Detailed Area Plans and Urban Design Guidelines for Government owned super-lots;
- Identifying focus areas for streetscape improvements and exploring contributions for streetscape improvements; and
- Establishing Landscape Guidelines that aim to protect visually sensitive areas from inappropriate development, in order to maintain and enhance amenity of the town.

Other Avon Shires are investigating options to increase the number and type of housing in their respective areas. Much of this is driven by the need for worker and healthy aged accommodation demand.

**Note:**  
 Mapping from various planning documents including  
 Northam Surrounds Structure Plan  
 Shire of Northam Local Planning Strategy  
 Northam Development Plan

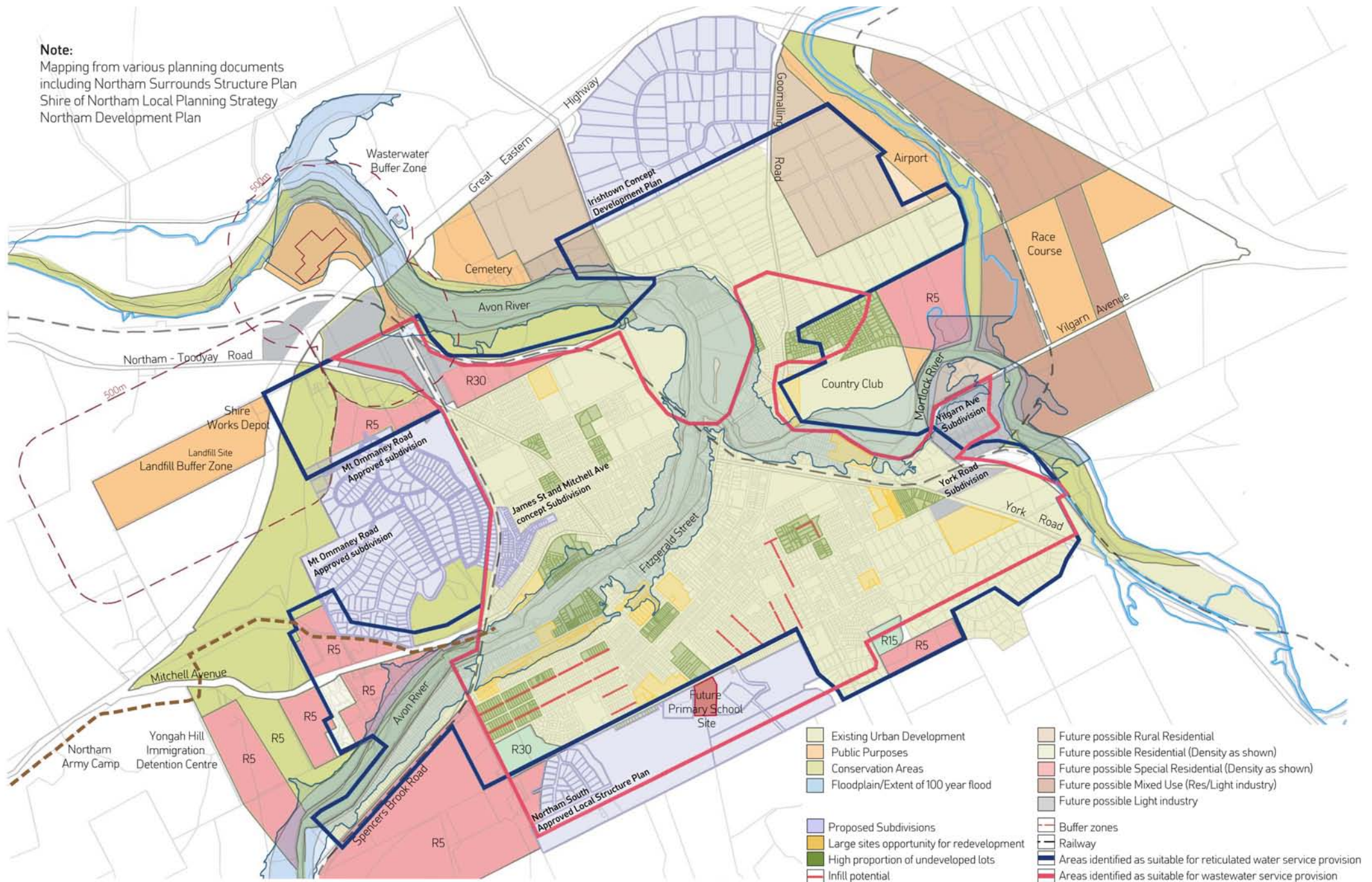


Figure 8. Existing Development Potential

## ENVIRONMENT

The importance of the environment to lifestyles and amenity in the Wheatbelt is well recognised in numerous planning documents. Protection of remnant vegetation, revegetation and waterway enhancement are all important considerations in all developments. Wheatbelt NRM have been involved in discussions in the development of this Growth Plan and will continue to be consulted in development of projects development and implementation.

### Climate

The Avon sub-region is located in a Mediterranean climatic region which is characterised by cool, wet winters and warm to hot, dry summers. The average maximum temperatures range from 34 degrees in January to 16.7 degrees in July, while average minimum temperatures range from 17.4 degrees in February to 5.6 degrees in August. Northam receives an average of 428 millimetres of rainfall each year of which 353 millimetres falls between May and November.

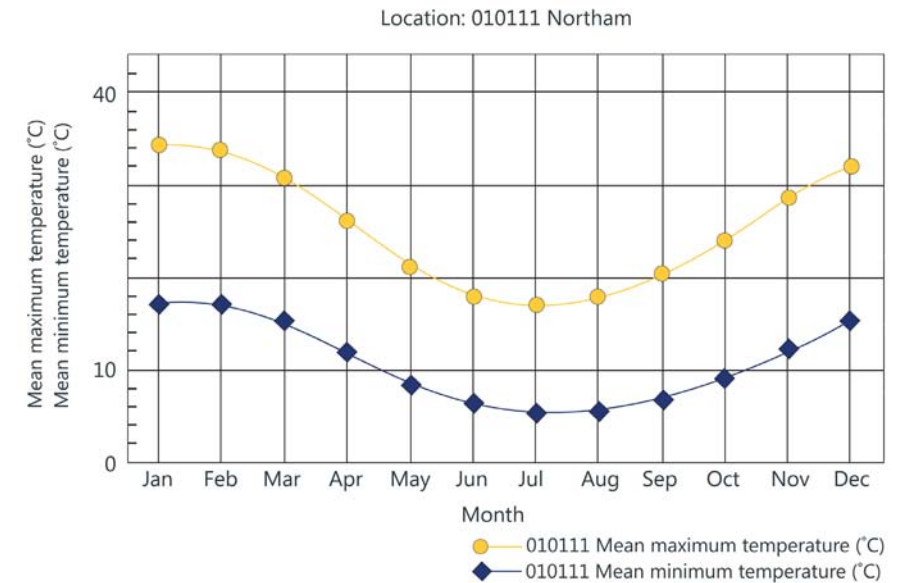


Figure 9. Mean Minimum and Maximum Temperature Source: Bureau of Meteorology

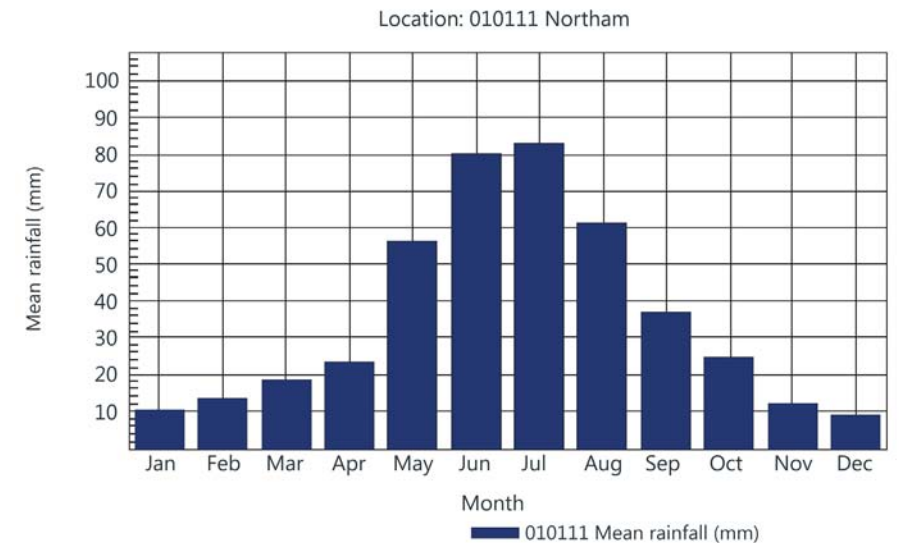


Figure 10. Mean Rainfall Source: Bureau of Meteorology

## Landform, Topography and Geology

The Avon sub-region is situated on the Yilgarn Block which is over 2500 million years old. As such much of the Avon sub-region is underlain by ancient granite rock covered by lateritic soils usually no more than a few metres thick comprising sand, loam and clay with areas of lateritic gravel and occasionally granite outcrops at the surface. The Avon sub-region contains two broad physiographic zones (Darling Range Zone and Zone of the Rejuvenated Drainage), each containing characteristic landforms, soil landscapes and vegetation.

## Flora and Fauna

With the advent of European settlement a significant proportion of land and vegetation in the Shire of Northam has been cleared for broad acre agricultural production. It is now estimated that approximately 14 percent of the Avon sub-region's total land area remains covered by original native vegetation, some of which is known to comprise a number of Declared Rare and Priority Flora species.

The clearing of vegetation, land degradation, introduction of domestic and feral animals and changes to fire regimes have had a direct impact upon native animal species in the Avon. Of the 43 mammal species originally recorded, 17 are now extinct.

Many reserves in the Avon that are vested in the Conservation Commission of Western Australia for the purpose of the protection of flora and fauna and are managed by the Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC). Northam is located within the Avon Natural Resources Management Region. The Wheatbelt Natural Resource Management Incorporated (Wheatbelt NRM) is an independent community based group providing community leadership for natural resource management in the Wheatbelt. It works in partnership with all tiers of government, regional organisations, industry, land owners, researchers, environmental and community groups to implement key projects and other initiatives that bring benefit and improvement to natural resources within the Avon River Basin. The Wheatbelt NRM has developed a regional strategy and investment plan that addresses significant environmental issues within the Avon River Basin and incorporates the environmental, social and economic aspects of natural resource management.

## Contaminated Sites

There are four parcels of land on two sites in Northam that have been registered on the Department of Environment and Conservation's Contaminated Sites Register.

The nature and extent of the contamination relates to petroleum and diesel hydrocarbon plumes which has caused groundwater and soil contamination. Local knowledge suggests that there are additional potentially contaminated sites within the townsite which have not been documented on the DEC's website. These sites represent development opportunities due to their strategic locations within the townsite.

## Climate Change Impacts

Records indicate a decline of average rainfall from May to November during the period 1925 to 1975 compared to 1976 to 2011. Recent years have experienced unusual summer rainfall and thunderstorm events resulting in localised flooding and building and infrastructure damage.



Table 3. Environmental Opportunities and Constraints for Northam LGA

Opportunity/Constraint	High Value-Adding Activity	Why Northam LGA?
<b>Climate Change</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Climate Sensitive Design of buildings, water storage and drainage systems to cope with increased rainfall from storm events as well as to provide water in times of drought.</li> <li>Heat mitigation and impact minimising designs and strategies in regard to buildings and streetscape to reduce cooling needs whilst providing a comfortable environment for residents.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Location away from the temperature moderating coast creates hotter temperature extremes.</li> <li>Flooding has always been a threat to Northam, greater rainfall in one-off storm events further increases the risks.</li> </ul>
<b>South West Seismic Zone</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Earthquake resistant design and construction of buildings, using current best practice in the process.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Need to consider seismic risk in the Avon sub-region given its location in the South West Seismic Zone.</li> </ul>
<b>Clearing of native vegetation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Protection of remnant vegetation through the planning process and improving the quality of the vegetation that remains.</li> <li>Remediation of existing degraded areas, avoidance of any further land degradation problems including rising groundwater, increased soil salinity and acidity, loss of biodiversity, wind and water erosion, soil compaction, sedimentation and water logging by implementing land management measures aimed at protecting and rehabilitating the Avon sub-region's natural environment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Wheatbelt region has suffered large amounts of native vegetation clearing for broadacre agricultural pursuits. This makes remaining vegetation extremely valuable for biodiversity and amenity.</li> </ul>
<b>Inappropriate land use and development within areas that influence all waterways</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Flooding prevention by locating development outside of designated floodways.</li> <li>Eutrophication of water can be reduced through sensible location of development, as well as through measures to reduce nutrient rich runoff into river and wetland systems.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Northam has existing development within flood-prone areas. In future limiting this development to the bare minimum is seen as desirable to prevent occurrences such as those in Queensland.</li> <li>Water contamination can be reduced by preventing development in sensitive areas.</li> </ul>





## COMMUNITY

Northam is forecast to support a significant increase in population. This will place demand on existing and planned community infrastructure, both in terms of the facilities and services provided. The challenge will be to respond in a timely and comprehensive manner to the community's needs and requirements, noting regional differences and through the continued monitoring of socio-demographic trends and community characteristics.

The Community Infrastructure Audit has highlighted that Northam benefits from a sound base of community facilities and services; the Avon sub-region is considerably less disadvantaged than other regional areas. This is not to say however, the current and planned level of infrastructure will be sufficient for future generations and residents, particularly in light of the aspirational growth figures forecasted.

Provision of infrastructure, particularly relating to health, and education will benefit from the Government endorsed figure of 20,000 for Northam and 50,000 for the sub region, as current planning is based on growth rates that are far less than that entertained by the SuperTowns initiative.

There are a number of opportunities for the consolidation of services within identified precincts, such as health, education, recreation and community. There is a need to encourage and support organisations in relocating and redevelopment initiatives to achieve a preferred spatial layout and efficiency in service delivery.

### Age Structure

The population in the Shire of Northam had an average age of 38.0 years in 2010, which is slightly above the average age of 36.4 years in Perth Statistical District (SD) and 36.5 years in Western Australia. Northam Town had a comparatively younger age profile compared to the remainder of the Shire, with a higher proportion of young adults in the 20-34 years age bracket. This is likely a result of the concentration of job opportunities and various educational facilities in Northam Town.

The Northam Shire Statistical Local Authority (SLA) has an older population profile with 45-54, 55-64 and 65-74 age cohorts better represented than in the Northam Town. This ageing of Northam's catchment area suggests that demand for age-related services (health, retirement, aged care, community services) will be driven in the future from this source.

Table 4. Demographic Snapshot of Northam compared with Regional WA

		Area	
		Northam (S)	Regional WA
Population	2006 Census	9,803	508,025
	2009 ERP	11,044	586,100
	Average Household Size	2.5	2.6
	No. of Households	4,418	225,423
	Median Age (years)	39	37
	Pre work/child Stage 0-14	22%	22%
	Working life Stage 15-64	64%	66%
Households	Post work/retirement stage 65+	14%	12%
	Couple families with children	40%	43%
	Couple families without children	43%	42%
	One parent families	16%	14%
	Separate Houses	93%	82%
Dwelling Types	Semi-detached, townhouses, Terraces	4%	7%
	Flats, Units, Apartments	2%	5%
	Caravan, houseboat, shop/office flat	1%	6%
	Fully owned	37%	36%
Tenure	Being purchased	38%	32%
	Rented	24%	32%
Median Weekly income	Individuals	\$381	\$465
	Households	\$773	1,005
Median housing Payments	Weekly Rent	\$113	\$130
	Monthly Mortgage Repayments	\$855	\$1,083
Commitment Level	Rent: Household income	15%	13%
	Mortgage: Household income	26%	25%

Source: ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2006 & Table Builder tool. ABS Cat. 3218.0 Regional Population Growth Australia, March 2010

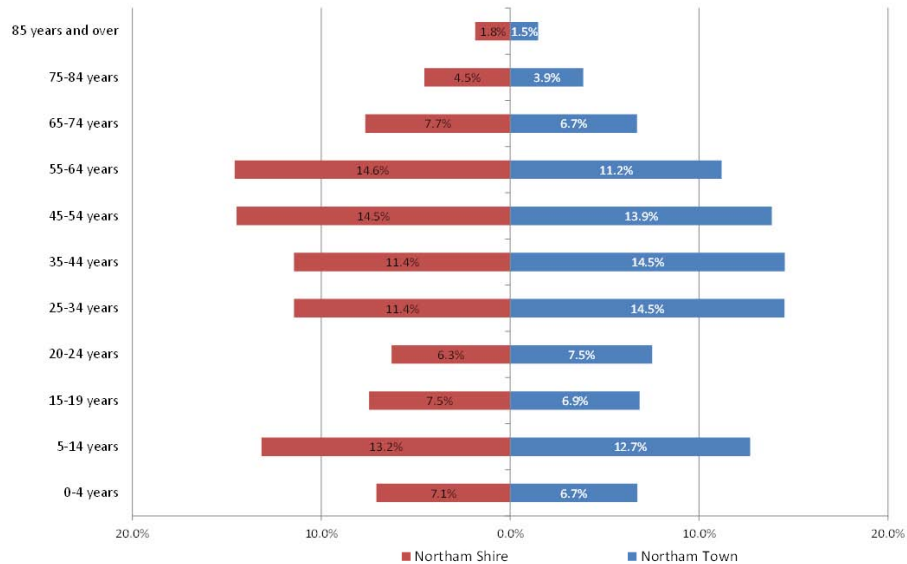


Figure 11. Age Distribution, Northam Town and Northam Shire (Source: ABS 2011)

The residents of the Northam Shire SLA impacts Northam LGA's age profile. The LGA has a larger proportion of adults over 45 compared to Western Australia. Conversely, Northam LGA has a significantly lower proportion of adults aged 25-44, which reflects a trend of young and middle aged adults leaving Northam LGA to seek post-school education opportunities or find employment.

Education and employment opportunities must be improved in the future, to slow down or reverse the outwards migration of young and middle aged adults that is currently occurring. Retaining a larger proportion of these residents will bring significant economic and community benefits to the Northam townsite and the broader region. This trend reversal would not only expect to yield a meaningful contribution to the economy in terms of labour, productivity and spending patterns, but it is also likely to contribute to the vibrancy and innovative capacity of the community.

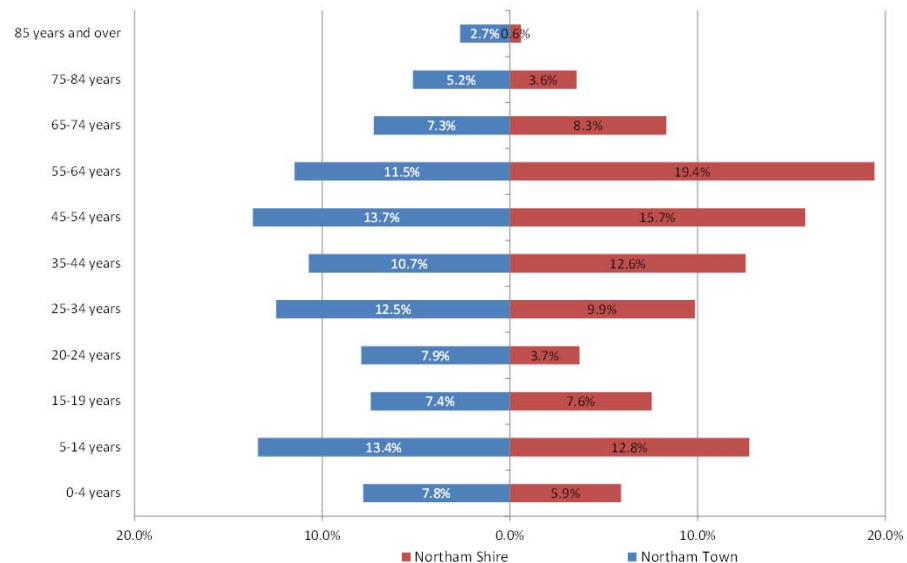


Figure 12. Age Distribution, Northam LGA and Western Australia (Source: ABS 2011)

## SOCIAL SERVICE AND INFRASTRUCTURE GAPS AND REQUIREMENTS

### Family/Household Types

According to ABS's most recent data, the ABS Census (2006), the Northam LGA has a larger proportion of family with no children households (43%) compared to Perth SD (37%) and Western Australia (38%). This proportion is even higher in Northam Shire and in Avon SSD (47%). The likely reason for this is children in rural areas moving away from home for secondary schooling, as well as young adults leaving to seek job opportunities/further studies outside the region. Therefore, most of these households are expected to comprise older adults, or empty nesters.

"The provision of adequate and appropriate physical infrastructure together with the various social services (soft infrastructure) is essential if Northam is to achieve the objective of becoming a SuperTown. If the infrastructure is needed to be upgraded, it cannot be expected that a developer will pay for all of the headworks required because it would then run the risk of making land too expensive to buy, which in turn would eliminate a current competitive advantage for Northam. Therefore, a partnership approach between the public and private sectors is likely." – Mike Allen 2012

Based on the consultation undertaken with the various stakeholders and the review of all existing and planned infrastructure in Northam, gaps have been identified. These gaps are based on the future aspirational population projections and where facility standards exist, these have been identified.

For where there is no specific provision ratio for specific community infrastructure items, a more detailed analysis will be required.

The following outlines high level infrastructure strategies across the various themes, recognising the issues identified through stakeholder consultation and the need for such facilities and services to support and encourage population growth.

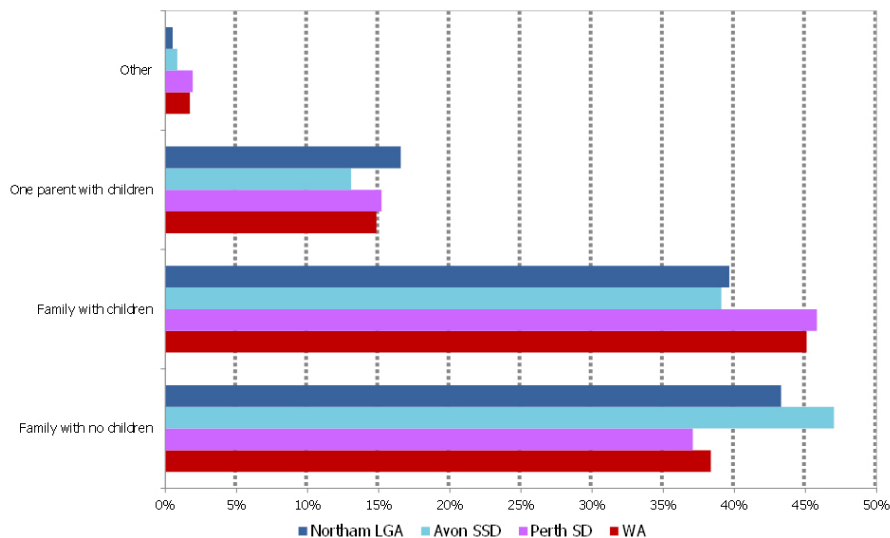


Figure 13. Family Type (Source: ABS 2006)



## SOFT INFRASTRUCTURE

The Avon Sub Region has always housed a multi-cultural, diverse population. It is an area of peri urban growth with affordable housing attracting a wide variety of new residents, to add to the diversity of the existing population. It is imperative that the needs of such a peri urban growth area be recognised in terms of social services delivery. As the service centre Northam will attract residents who require regular access to social services. Planning for social services and infrastructure provision must be forward looking and take into account the aspirational population targets.

Social services must be in place for new and existing residents, especially those with the most need such as the local Aboriginal population, the elderly and new lower socio-economic residents. Services planning should recognise Northam as the regional centre and design service delivery so that the sub region has access to key social services.

Recognition of the Avon as a peri urban growth area will assist those allocating resources and planning social services to pre-empt demand and have a preventative rather than a reactive approach to inevitable social issues.

## HIERARCHY

Community Infrastructure can service needs for local, sub-regional and regional catchments, and can also provide a State-wide purpose. To assist in understanding the types of facilities required and the standard of services required, this hierarchy is defined as follows:

### Local

The 'Local' catchment area is generally classified as a single locality boundary. Items of infrastructure are generally for local uses.

### Sub-Regional

Items of infrastructure that are likely to attract use from the entire Shire district would be classified as sub-regional items;

Level	School	Enrolments	% of Total People Enrolled
Primary Schools	Avonvale Primary	189	
	Bakers Hill Primary	199	
	Northam Primary	440	
	St Joseph's Primary	344	
	West Northam Primary	143	
	Wundowie Primary	106	63.6%
Sub-Total		1421	
Secondary Schools	Northam District High School	604	
	Avonvale Education Support Centre	12	
	St Joseph's Middle School	197	
	Sub-Total	813	36.4%

Table 5. Enrolment Data

### Regional

A regional catchment services the wider Avon region, encompassing the Shire of Northam, inclusive of neighbouring local government areas.

### State

Items of infrastructure that due to their uniqueness, attract users from across Western Australia, beyond the Shire's neighbouring local government boundaries.

Relating this hierarchy to a policy context, it is generally consistent with the Western Australian Planning Commission's State Planning Policy 3.6

## Implications for Infrastructure Provision

### Catering for Youth

The Wheatbelt Youth Strategy (2010-2012) prepared by Region Development Australia identified that the recreational facilities in the region are predominately in the form of sporting facilities (e.g. hockey fields, basketball / netball courts, football ovals, swimming pools, etc.) and that other entertainment and recreational facilities that are not necessarily sporting-based (i.e. catering for cultural / artistic mediums) are very limited. A coordinated approach across the region including meeting public transport needs to ensure accessibility is required to be considered when developing regional youth facilities.

### Catering for Seniors

An above average proportion of 'baby boomers' means that there is a need to plan and diversify the provision of community facilities, programs and activities to meet the specific needs of this group. Investment in aged care, public transport and support services will be required.

### Attraction and Retention

The region's natural environment, relative affordability, proximity to the Perth Metropolitan area and lifestyle options, are factors that are forecasted to encourage continued population growth. The issue of retention however is paramount, and is largely reliant on the region being able to cater for a high quality of life. Central to this is access to community facilities and amenities. The challenges, particularly in light of an anticipated growth rate of 5.22% per annum, is to respond to the needs and requirements of the community through the provision of necessary infrastructure. This continuum will ensure that people continue to be attracted to the region, and are able to settle, with access to a range of services as necessary throughout the lifecycle.

### Education and Training

Sustained population growth, retention of residents and diversification of the economic base are all related to the need for adequate educational and training opportunities. A lack of options for 'senior school' education (i.e. Years 11 and 12) remains an issue for the region, with limited choice currently available. This is not unusual however for regional areas of Australia, noting population decline and consolidation of schools.

It should be recognised that the provision of secondary education in the Avon region is not at a crisis point, however the capacity of the system to cater for:

- a) Senior High school education;
- b) Specialist education (i.e. those with learning difficulties); and
- c) Variety of streams into Tertiary / Vocational / Training, needs to be regularly monitored by education providers.

Given the nature of the population spread and education offering in the region it is imperative that education providers work together to coordinate design and delivery of programs that work for this region. Preliminary investigation through research for this growth plan has highlighted an opportunity for greater cooperation between education and training organisations and employment service organisations to maximise the outcomes for Avon residents.



## Integration

The opportunity exists to better reflect the Aboriginal culture in the region and to better engage with the Aboriginal community through targeted approaches that foster interaction, pride and respect.

It is recognised that the Aboriginal population in Northam is made up of a number of families between whom there is occasional conflict. This makes simple engagement mechanisms difficult, often meaning that wide representation of local Aboriginal views is not available.

Attempts are being made by the local Aboriginal community, supported by Avon Youth, to bring the local Elders together and develop a united approach on selected topics, while providing a point of reference for decision makers. This is in its embryo stage but is being supported by the Wheatbelt Development Commission and being engaged by an increasing number of decision makers.

The focal project for Aboriginal development in the Northam Growth Plan is a joint Aboriginal and environmental cultural centre building. The design and feasibility studies for this building will be undertaken in the first phase of Supertowns implementation.

While this work is being undertaken, it is imperative that projects put forward by the Elders group are supported. This will enable them to develop their activities slowly, strengthening the group and maximising Aboriginal involvement once the cultural centre is established.

The Elders group have identified a number of key focus areas as a first round of development activity. These are designed to provide benefits to all of Northam's Aboriginal people and to facilitate youth engagement.

These key areas include:

- Partnering with training and employment groups to maximise the success of Aboriginal employment.
- Developing some small tourism opportunities to allow the Elders and their families to help interpret their culture and the natural environment for visitors to the area.

The key areas developed by the Elders will require support until self sufficiency for the group is achieved. In the implementation plan, such support will be termed Aboriginal engagement and interpretation.

With regards to other settlements in the region, it is important to develop a holistic approach to the growth of Northam and the surrounding towns. The challenge is to ensure that the services and facilities of each town are suitable for local access and that the focus on the growth of Northam as the regional centre is not detrimental to the viability and liveability of other towns.

Opportunities for resource sharing and coordination of services across the Avon sub-region can be explored. Developing Northam as the 'regional-hub', with a range of networks (both physical and digital) will ensure that service provision is coordinated and not at the disadvantage to outlying areas of the region.

## Facility Standards

Upon analysing the numerous benchmarks used across the industry, a preferred set of standards have been developed for community infrastructure relating to items that are the responsibility of the Shire of Northam. These have been refined in context of the demographic and population characteristics, using the base line ratios outlined in State Planning Policy 3.6 Development Contribution to Community Infrastructure.

However, it is still recommended that these standards be used as a guide only, as specific local needs and issues need to be fully considered at the time facility provision is sought, recognising that demographic characteristics may change significantly over time.

Where the provision ratio is not stated, the requirement for infrastructure items will be based on a specific population and demand model developed by the responsible authority, particularly in the provision of health facilities and services. As guidance however, RPS has provided some generic ratios and additional comment for where such infrastructure may be required.

The standards outlined in this report are population based. It should however be recognised that population will not necessarily be the primary driver in all circumstances. Areas relating to social services and health services, for example, will be looking at other socio-economic statistics in service delivery assessment and planning.

Table 6. Community Opportunities and Constraints for Northam LGA

Opportunity/Constraint	Activity	Why Northam?
<b>Education</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Redevelopment of Northam Senior High School, with vision to become the Avon College, providing quality and diverse education options with strong linkages to tertiary, vocational and workforce opportunities.</li> <li>Expansion of local schools in the area, particularly the Year 11 and 12 education streams in Northam and encouraging the use of school facilities across the wider community (i.e. Performing Arts Centres / Trade Training Centres).</li> <li>Tertiary training centres within major infrastructure facilities. This means maintaining Muresk as a location of a regional university and further development of Directions and CY O'Connor Institute.</li> <li>Development of structures and initiatives that encourage greater collaboration between education and training service providers and employment service providers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Northam is a regional centre and has experienced demographic shifts similar to other regional areas. This is most apparent in terms of the outflow of young people for education and work opportunities. The provision of greater education opportunities within Northam and the Avon sub-region is the first step to retaining this key demographic.</li> </ul>
<b>Health &amp; Emergency Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a Health and Emergency Services precinct based around the existing Northam Regional Hospital, supporting sustainable primary health / general practice. This precinct will include co-location of ambulance services.</li> <li>Develop community transport and access to and between health facilities across the region. To improve the viability of Avon sub-regional health services support for the Southern Inland Health Initiative is a part of this.</li> <li>Initiate planning and act upon opportunities for the development of Retirement / Aged Care facilities in Northam.</li> <li>Expansion of Emergency Services (FRS, FESA, Police, Ambulance) to respond to population growth and reduce reliance on volunteers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of health and emergency services within Northam will improve efficiency and offer cost and service delivery benefits for the Avon sub-region.</li> <li>Integration of the Avon sub-region's health provision through use of effective transportation and strategy option will also provide service delivery benefits.</li> <li>Retirement and aged care facilities can attract the retiree population to the area.</li> </ul>
<b>Social Services &amp; Housing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased integration and coordination of community services in Northam, taking the population of the region into account.</li> <li>Promote and encourage the activities of Share and Care and Killara.</li> <li>Upgrade and redevelopment of Department of Housing accommodation.</li> <li>Development of short-term accommodation within the Town Centre.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Northam has large amounts of social housing and a segment of the population that requires social services for various reasons. Improving housing quality and coordinating social service provision creates a more vibrant community.</li> </ul>
<b>Public Amenities including Sports and Recreation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Active Recreation Opportunities: Development and maintenance of public open space which also caters for lifestyle recreation opportunities in appropriately located areas and the consolidation of regional indoor and aquatic facilities and services.</li> <li>Community Safety: Community Safety Action Plan (i.e. CCTV / lighting in Northam). Also the provision of a suitable and accessible path network throughout Northam.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improving public amenities provides lifestyle opportunities for the Northam community.</li> <li>Improving safety and the quality of pedestrian related infrastructure will assist in a more active population.</li> </ul>
<b>Arts, Culture &amp; Community Engagement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community facilities (i.e. community centres) to be identified in new urban areas and developed as multi-purpose.</li> <li>Construction of a community and cultural centre located in Northam with adjacent areas of uniqueness, celebrating cultural heritage including Aboriginal heritage.</li> <li>Support local Aboriginal people to develop programs and initiatives that assist them to work together, improve employment outcomes, interpret their culture for visitors and play a greater role in local decision making.</li> <li>Promote interest in local arts and cultural events, especially in regards to a potential cultural centre in the townsite.</li> <li>Redevelopment and upgrade of Youth facilities to support non-sporting recreation alternatives.</li> <li>Integration of Northam Senior High School Performance Centre which will have a capacity of several hundred. Will also be usable for the staging of local plays and visiting performers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Constructing a vibrant cultural scene within the Northam community will encourage a more engaged community that contributes to society productively as opposed to antisocially.</li> </ul>
<b>Community Transport &amp; Infrastructure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop public transport between settlements in the region and within the Northam townsite to ensure the widest possible access to regional services and activities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved public transport will increase the flow of people amongst Avon sub-region communities bringing benefits to all communities.</li> </ul>

## PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Northam's growth will place demand on existing and planned physical infrastructure, both in terms of the infrastructure assets and services provided. The challenge will be to respond in a timely and comprehensive manner to the development pressure.

It has been determined that light and medium industry development based on comparative advantages in transport and logistics will be a major driver of economic and population growth in the Avon sub region. This will be partly driven by the access to transport infrastructure and the availability of large land parcels for such development in this region.

For this development potential to be reached constraints must be removed. It has been identified that more serviced light industrial land and serviced residential land will be required throughout the region. For example, there is an identified short term need for serviced industrial land in the town of Northam.

Diversity of Housing is required to attract a labour force. Increased density housing requires investment in infrastructure.

The information presented in this section was the best that could be captured at the time of production. As the Supertowns program has gained momentum, more agencies have been engaging to plan for the region's future growth to 50,000 people. Staged infrastructure investment plans are required for power, water, telecommunications and sewerage. To allow Northam to diversify its housing stock and to develop the river area commercially, support is required to implement existing drainage plans. The Shire of Northam and the Wheatbelt Development Commission will work with State agencies and Government Trading Enterprises to encourage regional, strategic, staged investment plans.

This section of the growth plan focuses on Northam town. Comments on physical infrastructure for the sub-region appear in the Avon Region section.

The Physical Infrastructure Audit has highlighted that the level of infrastructure provided to the town is inhibiting development due primarily to the cost of the infrastructure on potential projects which currently makes some development unviable in the current market place. It needs to be noted that it is beneficial to develop infrastructure from an overall strategic point rather than an individual developer upgrading infrastructure to suit their needs.

### Water

The Water Corporation have advised that development in Northam can be supported by increases in capacity of water infrastructure (i.e. there are no obstacles to increasing capacity that can't be overcome with reasonable amounts of capital expenditure).

Potable water is provided under license by the Water Corporation via the Goldfields and Agricultural Water Supply Scheme (GAWSS). Treated water is sourced from an integrated system that includes the

Mundaring weir which is supplied by runoff with the majority from the Greater Perth area which is supplied from a combination of desalination plants, Hills dams and groundwater. Various transfer pump stations in the metropolitan area can bring water from these diverse sources and supplement Mundaring Weir as required. Treated water is then delivered to Northam by the Mundaring to Kalgoorlie Pipeline.

The Water Corporation have indicated that there is currently a deficit in storage capacity of 50ML in the storage tanks in Sawyers Valley along the main conduit. Upgrading is expected to cost approximately \$37.6 million. The existing planning, last undertaken by Water Corporation in 2004, does not cater for the accelerated growth of Northam which would bring forward the need to upgrade the Mundaring Water Treatment Plant and pump stations at Chidlow and Wundowie. Water Corporation have indicated that tank number 2 in Northam currently needs its roof replaced with an approximate cost of \$1.05 million. There is currently no funding available for this to occur.

**'The challenge will be to respond in a timely and comprehensive manner to the development pressure.'**



Within the town site of Northam there is currently no planning for the water reticulation network and no information available as to constraints in the existing water reticulation network. It is recommended that a review be carried out of the existing network to identify current constraints and planning for the anticipated growth.

The surrounding areas of Northam currently have development proposed and each town currently has limited information available. From the information available the Physical Infrastructure Audit noted the following constraints:

- Wundowie requires a storage tank and a transfer pump station to deliver water to the North-West development precinct which is just north of Wundowie. The estimated cost of this project is \$6 million.
- Toodyay is expanding and currently has 4 rural residential developments occurring on the fringe of town and two residential developments which are likely to result in 700 residential lots. The developments, which are on higher ground, are not able to be serviced off the existing tanks. To allow for further development of the town to occur over the next 10 years there will need to be \$52 million spent on infrastructure ranging from tanks, pipelines and pumps. Currently there is no funding in place to allow for the expansion.
- York is currently constrained due to the capacity of the gravity water main and 4ML storage capacity of the tank. The anticipated cost to upgrade this tank is \$6.8 million. Currently there is no funding available for the upgrade. It has been recognised that new planning needs to occur in York. This has commenced and is due to be completed in 2013.

These water supply improvement works require further investigation and verification to ensure priority and detail costing. There are a number of existing bores in the Northam town site that provide underground water, however the quantity and quality of this water is limited. Stormwater harvesting currently occurs around the Northam town and there have been some reports completed that identified some existing dams that could be increased in size to allow better supply for irrigation water of parks and recreational areas in summer months.

Stormwater harvesting in the form of rainwater collected off roofs into tanks can provide water for toilet and garden and reduce the need for potable water from Water Corporation scheme. Tanks can be incorporated into new buildings as part of development requirements.

The quantity and quality of water in the Avon River varies from summer to winter and in summer it usually stops flowing. It is not a reliable water source for any reticulation (due to its salinity content) or recreational uses. Consideration should be given to the damming of Waterfall Gully, Kings Creek and / or Hillman Creek to provide additional water for the Avon in summer months.

#### Power

Western Power is the operator of the power supply and distribution grid. This is in the form of overhead and underground power lines. Western Power indicated that they have enough supply in the grid for approximately another 6,500 people from a transmission level. They were not able to provide any constraints or limitations in regards to high or low voltage lines and transformers to work out current restraints. In Northam, there are some proposed developments that are currently unable to proceed based on inadequate electrical supply. This occurs in the East industrial Precinct which contains Yilgarn Avenue and Old York Road. An electrical distribution audit needs to be carried out by Western Power to identify any constraints in the electrical supply and power distribution network based on the proposed increased residential zoning of the Northam townsite and meeting the industry requirements so that constraints can be identified and hopefully funding sourced to remove these problems. Currently there is no funding for the audit to occur.

At a high level, Western Power believes they can cater for the growth organically and that capital spends will match growth, unless a very sharp step increase, prompted by an event, project etc. Occurs. A possible alternative could be increased installation of Solar Panels which could help reduce the reliance on the transmission grid.

## Gas

Northam currently has no reticulated gas supply into town. The closest gas supply is near Midland/Swan View area. It has been estimated by ATCO gas that if a high pressure pipeline was built it would cost \$1,000,000 per kilometre and you would need a gas fired power station which could provide additional power to Avon Industrial Park near Northam or a similar usage to justify the expense. LPG gas can be sourced in Northam Shire and Avon Industrial Park in the form of gas bottles, however it is much more expensive than the equivalent supplied Perth from a pipeline.

## Telecommunications

Northam LGA currently has access to analogue and digital television provided by sites located in the Shire of Toodyay and Mt Ommaney. Certain locations within the town and the Shire are not adequately catered for in terms of line of site and signal strength. Given Northam is the largest inland town it should be provided with a tower that allows for all digital channels to be transmitted, however, there are no current funds available to build and operate full service digital retransmission facilities in the Northam Shire which would eliminate the need for the satellite dish. If digital retransmission facilities were available in the Shire of Northam it would ensure that digital television is available to more people. It has been suggested that Mt Ommaney tower could be fitted with a Digital translator which would provide coverage to channel 7, 9 and 10. This should be further investigated with Digital providers and Mt Ommaney tower operator to determine if this option will provide complete coverage to Northam. There is a need to determine the extent and quality of digital TV coverage in Northam with proposed transmission changes.

Mobile phone coverage is patchy in Northam if you are not with Telstra or Optus and there are gaps. The state government has planned to spend additional money to improve mobile phone coverage in regional Western Australia. Four towers will be built/ upgraded as part of this process. Clackline, and Woottating in the Shire of Northam, Flint in the Shire of Beverley, and Koorda.

Currently in the Shire of Northam there is a mixture of ADSL, ADSL2+, wireless and Satellite that vary dramatically in speed of operation. A large number of residents viewed telecommunications services to not be satisfactory. As part of the NBN rollout it is not known whether Northam will be provided with fibre to the premise.



Flood Northam 1926



Flood Northam 2011



For any potential developments larger than 100 lots it is expected these would be serviced by the NBN to provide broadband. There is very limited information in regards to the existing infrastructure in place for optic fibre locations and capacity of the existing reticulation. A detailed audit of the existing telecommunication infrastructure needs to be completed to identify what existing infrastructure is present so that a design could be completed to allow for appropriate NBN infrastructure to be planned and built for the town and the sub-region. It is important to keep monitoring the NBN rollout information as it becomes available and to influence where possible to ensure the Avon sub region gets the best possible result.

## Drainage

The townsite falls within the Avon River catchment with portions of the townsite located within the floodway. A significant portion of the townsite is within the floodplain of the Avon and Mortlock Rivers (please refer to figure15 on P69). Storm water drainage is managed by a combination of pipes, culverts and open drains.

Northam is located on clay soils which have very limited infiltration. The majority of the drainage is transferred overland in the road network. There are also some limited underground drainage networks near the town centre and some creek lines that have been modified over time and the existing culverts under the roads may not have been upgraded (i.e. King Creek). These drainage systems transfer stormwater towards the Avon and Mortlock River system.

Northam has a number of drainage problems which results in flooding in parts of the Town. Minson Avenue will flood in a 1 in 5 year ARI (most recently on the 6th December 2011). Chidlow Street, Fitzgerald Street and parts of other roads are prone to flooding. The current drainage network will not adequately cater for the conveyance for storms of up to a 1-in-100 Year ARI.

Some flood analysis work has been completed which includes King Creek catchment, Minson Avenue catchment, Chidlow Street hydro assessment and some more work is ongoing. This information is indicating that any new

development would require storm water detention and some additional detention may be required to limit the flow of the upstream stormwater to the capacity of the downstream structures. In some cases there may be a requirement to upgrade the downstream structures. Detention basins could be oversized and lift the outlet pipe so some permanent water is available for topping up the town pool during the summer months.

There is some existing drainage infrastructure around town which has limited information in terms of size, capacity, level, location and strategy. A detailed drainage audit needs to be completed to determine what drainage pumps are in place and its current condition and capacity throughout the Townsite. Recent efforts to develop Design Guidelines for flood prone areas, such as the Minson Avenue Design Guidelines, assist with development of commercial, office and residential land uses within the floodplain of the Town Centre.



Indicative view of Minson Avenue river front adjacent to Bernard Park and Avon River Town Pool with improved drainage to allow for redevelopment opportunities.

### Avon River Front– Minson Avenue

The Avon River, particularly the Avon Town Pool, presents major long term opportunities to promote public and business interaction in Northam. However, some issues need to be overcome to unlock these opportunities.

The pool is currently shallow from silt deposits. Periodic removal of this silt is not considered an effective long term solution due to resilting processes. Part of the Northam Supertown planning process was to have an environmental analysis of the town pool completed, involving community consultation. The outcomes of this work have provided guidance to the Growth Plan. It is important that works start now to improve river health if this area is to reach its potential.

The area along Minson Avenue sometimes floods from high river levels, especially since the levee banks were established. There is potential for serious flooding from the river and this must be taken into account when planning development in the area between Fitzgerald Street and the river. While the levee banks provide protection from high river levels during major rain events, they also act as a barrier for run-off water getting into the river. During storms it is not uncommon for Minson Avenue and the businesses on the river side of Fitzgerald Street to experience flooding.

While not insurmountable, investigation and consultation show that these challenges require a coordinated and long term approach.

Managing storm run-off is a priority project for the Shire of Northam. The King Creek drainage project is the first of these works to be proposed. The possibility of damming some of the run-off water as part of this drainage management is also being investigated. Slowing runoff and capturing the water will enable it to be fed into the town pool slowly and when needed. Further drainage works are proposed in the environmental report done as part of this project.

The Shire has planning guidelines established to allow safe development along Minson Avenue. In summary, this amounts to multi level development with the ground level being parking. This will minimise damage and

financial loss during flooding. The Shire is proactively working with land owners and developers in the area to encouraging businesses to “turn around” to face Minson Ave rather than Fitzgerald Street.

While flood mitigation and river health projects are being planned and undertaken, the areas immediately adjacent to the river, such as Bernard Park, are being developed as high value public open space. The recently constructed sound shell, the development of playgrounds and constant improvement of these areas will lead to increased use.

In the long term, as the river health and flood mitigation activities achieve their desired results, the river area will become a major focal point for the sub region.

### Wastewater

The residential areas of the Northam Town are serviced by the Water Corporation’s wastewater network that gravitates to pump stations which transfer sewage to a wastewater treatment plant (WWTP). A number of the existing pump stations use a rising main to discharge into the existing downstream gravity network. One of the pump stations discharges into the WWTP. The WWTP consists of primary treatment to remove most of the solids followed by a pond system. The primary treatment consists of sedimentation tanks and sludge digestors. Overflow from the sedimentation tanks flows to biological ponds which break down the organic matter and reduce the concentration of bacteria and nutrients before this water is used as irrigation water or discharged into the Avon River.

A planning review completed in 1999 by the Water Corporation found that a number of the existing sewer gravity mains have inadequate capacity for the current population. Upon further investigation these lines were found to be Vitreous Clay pipe that has been installed at extremely flat grades. As part of the expansion of Northam it was proposed to have further infill of the Town Centre and surrounding areas. If this is to occur

the main sewer backbone from the Town Centre to the existing WWTP will need to be upgraded or duplicated or additional pump stations with rising mains to cater for the extra fixtures will need to be constructed. As part of the process there are constraints along the way which include the Avon River crossing, existing services and depth of pump station at end of the sewer line. Unfortunately this planning did not identify any trigger points for population and did not take into account increasing the population in and surrounding the Town Centre. It is recommended that a review be undertaken of the sewer for the increased population. At the moment there is no current funding available for the planning and capital works.

The existing waste water treatment plant (WWTP) is currently at capacity as it can treat 900KL/day. There are plans to retrofit the existing plant to provide increased capacity. This would involve a WWTP screen and sludge digester which would increase capacity to 1150KL/day which is the current discharge into the plant. The anticipated cost of the project is \$721,000. To provide further capacity for development the WWTP would need amplification (to be made bigger), Treated Waste Water Management (TWWM) improvements and Odour control to get the plant to 1500KL/day capacity. This would allow for approximately another 2100 people in Northam. The anticipated cost to get the additional capacity is \$18.2 million. Currently there is funding for the WWTP screen and sludge digester. There is no funding to allow for the other upgrades to occur. There are no space constraints and buffer issues with the current location of WWTP.

At present, the surrounding areas of Northam have development proposed and there is limited information available. York has been identified as requiring a WWTP upgrade and also land acquisition for Treated Waste Water Management (TWWM). The anticipated cost of this is \$7 million dollars and at this time there is no funding available. It would also be recommended that further investigation work be undertaken to investigate current constraints and provide planning to allow development to occur.

Northam currently irrigates their recreational facilities (ovals, parks etc.) using 120ML of treated wastewater from WWTP over the summer period.

During winter, the excess wastewater which is approximately 325ML is discharged into the Avon River.

There is a project to construct storage dams near the Northam Racecourse which will allow waste water and collected runoff to be stored during winter. This runoff can then be used to irrigate the racecourse in summer. This would allow a more sustainable outcome as the race course spent approximately \$350,000 on potable water for irrigation in 2009/10 race season due to a below average rainfall and the existing bores drying up.

The Shire of Northam also has some dams that are used to store stormwater during winter and irrigate during summer. It was found that a dam located just north west of Bert Hawke Oval could be increased in size by 30% with minimal expense to supply a more reliable water supply for irrigation. The State, through Royalties for Regions, currently has \$3.59 million of funding Avon Water Reuse Project to construct the bulk earthworks for the expansion of dams at race course, pipework from WWTP, pumps and reconfiguration of pipework and other associated infrastructure. At this stage the bulk earthworks and pipework reconfiguration is at tender and it is not known if additional funding will be required to allow the project to be completed.

If the treated waste water from the Yongah Hill Immigration and Detention Centre (YHIDC) was connected to the pipeline that transfers waste water to various areas that get irrigated through Northam, it would allow for a more reliable source of irrigation water as well as scope to increase irrigation on recreational areas.

The cost of sewerage provision causes sub-dividers to press for larger residential lots with onsite waste water disposal systems. If the town is encircled by larger unsewered lots this could adversely affect future developments.

The Water Corporation has advised that any major population growth will require capital expenditure on upgrades to the wastewater plant.

## Waste

The Shire of Northam has implemented several of the steps outlined in the Strategic Waste Minimisation Plan (SWMP) 2008 including improvements to the community town and regional recycling depots, the mulching of green waste for local use, the crushing of some demolition wastes, the recycling of waste oil, vehicle tyres, printer cartridges, mobile phones and house hold batteries.

The Shire of Northam does not currently have a resource recovery facility and all recyclable materials are transported to Perth for processing at substantial cost.

There are drop-off facilities for commingled recycling materials at 7 locations throughout the Shire of Northam. The materials are collected from their locations and are transported to York by the Shire of Northam's waste contractor, Avon Waste, where they are compacted into a large bin for transport to Perth for processing.

The Shire of Northam has a kerbside 240L general waste collection for all town sites, Rural Small Holdings properties, and some agricultural areas where it is economically viable.

The Shire of Northam currently promotes its refuse collection and recycling initiatives through local media such as the local newspapers, the Shire's website and community newsletters.

The Shire of Northam has two waste management facilities located within its boundaries.

### **Old Quarry Road Waste Management Facility**

The facility accepts approximately 23,000 tonnes of waste per annum which includes the refuse from the Northam townsite and areas to the east of the Northam townsite, as well as the adjoining Local Governments, Shire of Toodyay and the Shire of York. The site is equipped with a manned gatehouse and computerised weighbridge system.

The life span of the site is estimated at approximately 20 years and there is also capacity to expand the site into the adjoining Shire reserve, to allow a further approximately 30 years life.

### **Inkpen Road Waste Management Facility**

The Inkpen Road Waste Management Facility is generally utilised by the Shire residents from the areas of Wundowie, Bakers Hill and Clackline which are to the west of the Northam town site. The facility accepts approximately 2,500 tonnes of waste per annum and only has very basic infrastructure.

The life span of the site is estimated to be approximately 10 years. An application has been submitted to the Department of Environment and Conservation to increase the landfill height above two meters and should this application be approved the life of the site would be increased by another 50 years. It is anticipated that as part of SWMP this will reduce the amount of waste being transferred to landfill.

## Road

Northam has a road network which comprises of a network of Main Roads WA and also Shire controlled roads. The structure of this network has mainly been influenced by physical constraints which have influenced how the town has grown.

The road network that has been controlled by the Shire is old roads that have been maintained by the Shire to a good standard and has adequate pavement depth. The existing roads within the Northam townsite are wide and could allow for additional parking in the future as the townsite and Avon-Sub Region grows. A road condition audit and asset plan needs to be undertaken for the existing roads to determine what condition, widths, speed limit, etc. are in place. From this it can be determined what redevelopment, car parking, especially around retail areas, and road functional hierarchy can be allowed. In the townsite there are a number of laneways and the wide roads would allow for future subdivision.

Lockyer and Croke Avenues, for example, are existing narrow roads in Northam which would provide a better level of service if they were one way roads.

There are a number of existing rail crossings in town which provide good access. To allow future expansion of the town a desirable location for a rail

crossing would be on Suburban Road. The anticipated cost of this project is yet to be determined and will require further detailed assessment and design if funding could be sourced.

There are a number of existing old bridges in the Northam area which include 638 Newcastle, 612 Peel Terrace, 613 Yilgarn Ave, 752 and 753 Northam Pithara and 276 Northam Cranbrook. These bridges are maintained by Main Roads WA and a number of these bridges are in need of repair or replacement. As the Town and Avon sub-region grows the bridges will require higher levels of maintenance. Currently there is no funding for new bridge construction works.

On Pithara Road, near Ballidu there is a 26km stretch of road that is controlled by Main Roads WA which is in need of repair/upgrade and it needs to be widened to allow suitable road train access for wide loads from Avon Industrial Park to Great Northern Highway. This quality, heavy haulage route joining Northam to Great Northern Highway has been identified by the Wheatbelt Development Commission and the Shire of Northam as one of the highest strategic priorities for the entire region. This may include upgrades to lime routes and Great Northern Highway. This section of road is part of a road network that is heavily used and has increasing traffic volumes for goods travelling through the Shire of Northam to the Pilbara and beyond. There is currently no funding in place to upgrade this road and an estimated cost would be around \$24 million to reconstruct the road to a suitable standard.

In the longer term, works will be required to confirm and upgrade a heavy haulage route linking Northam, Great Northern Highway and Brand Highway. This is likely to take advantage of existing lime routes. There has been discussion with respect to a long term heavy haulage link between Brookton and port developments at Kwinana.

A stretch of the Great Eastern Highway through Bakers Hill is in need of an upgrade. There are currently concept plans being refined. Once this plan has been finalised detailed design can commence and a joint funding arrangement can occur between Main Roads WA and the Shire of Northam. Currently there is no funding available. There are a number of federal and state funded roads controlled by Main Roads WA which run through the Northam Shire. These roads have varying conditions and are upgraded as

seen necessary and as funding becomes available. Sometimes part of the road can deteriorate into a substandard condition before funding becomes available. If more funding was available then more preventative works could stop parts of crucial roads becoming substandard in condition.

When entering the edge of Northam by the road network it would be desirable to visually improve the entries into the town. Part of the Yongah Hill Detention Centre is visible on the entry from Perth. It is not known if screening will be provided by trees or a wall from Mitchell Avenue. If screening is not provided then this will be required to protect appearance from the road.

### Pedestrian and Cyclist Facilities

Northam has a network of footpaths concrete and asphalt which are old. Widths are inappropriate for amount of use and have deteriorated over the years. There are issues with discontinuity of the existing footpath network (i.e. Central Business Area to Train station). The footpaths that have been constructed in the last 5 years are adequate. The Shire is in the process of completing a footpath plan which will identify width, material type, location, existing or proposed footpaths.

From this plan a hierarchy will be able to be developed to allow for linkages between critical activity centres as well as to identify existing footpaths that need to be upgraded so that when funding is sourced the plan can be implemented throughout Northam. The retail streetscape has been identified as an area that is in need of visual amenity improvements.



## Public Transport Service

There are bus services to Northam from East Perth via Midland on a daily basis and there is also a school bus network that takes children to and from school from surrounding localities. There is a limited bus service for the aged around Northam townsite and also to the surrounding towns. It would be desirable to expand the bus service and provide an expanded timetable where there is adequate usage to other parts of the Avon Sub Region. A local bus route would provide access to the retail centre, hospital, educational facilities and recreational facilities of the townsite for local residents. Currently there is no funding to allow for the expansion and increase of frequency of the existing bus network in Northam and to surrounding areas.

In the Avon Industrial Park a new business, which manufactures modular transportable accommodation units/offices that will employ 200 plus people is proposing to use a bus service to transport employees to and from Northam and possibly York. It is understood they are funding this themselves. This is likely to be evaluated once they reach full employee numbers.

Northam currently has access to Perth by rail via the Prospector, Avonlink and Merredin Link services. These trains provide approximately 34 services each week between Perth and Northam. It has been proposed by the Public Transport Authority to increase services provided by the Avonlink from 10 services per week to 24 services per week. This would also allow the train to go to East Perth Terminal instead of terminating at Midland. Future development will require purchase of additional train sets to further increase service frequency.

An improvement to the Public intermodal transport hub located at the train station would allow the public to change to a different transport service.

In the longer term it will be important for the Avon sub region to have improved public transport to the centre of Northam. It is important that any regional facilities and services in Northam be accessible to all in the sub region especially for those lacking private transportation options.

## Airport

Northam currently has an existing airport to the north east of the town. Its use is primarily recreational. It is especially popular with those interested in small, recreational aircraft such as ultra lights. Some flight training is carried out from this location. The existing runway is 1248 metres long and 15 metres wide. The condition of the pavement and tarmac is good.

There are no current plans to further expand the existing airport outside the recreational / emergency services that it currently performs. This is due to topographical issues and the proximity of residential development. The closest regional airport to Northam that could be further developed to service the Avon area is Cunderdin. There is growing interest in Cunderdin by businesses requiring a larger airstrip. Cunderdin is on major transport routes, has plans for residential and light industrial land upgrades, is upgrading the emergency water supply at the airport and is undertaking a pavement analysis. This work is attracting interest from potential external investors.

## Rail

The existing rail network from Northam to Midland is dual line. Each line has two gauges. The condition of the line is thought to be good and has concrete sleepers as well as optical fibre network for communication. Brookfield Rail is the current lease holder of the track and controls the condition of the infrastructure and speeds of trains. Currently the train service takes longer to travel to Perth from Northam than to drive which is primarily due to the line travelling via an indirect route via Toodyay and conflicts with the current timetables of other trains using this line. To provide a better level of service and quicker travel time it would be beneficial if an audit and study was completed to see what could be done and the associated cost to speed up the train and provide a better level of service which if implemented would increase demand from passengers as the town grows. It is likely from this audit that improvements will be required to the train station and modify scheduling of trains as well as an additional train and carriages.



CBH is located at the Avon Marshalling Yards which uses the railway to transport its grain to port, the CBH port complex at Kwinana. This facility is the major handling facility of grain in the region. This complex consists of grain bunkers, grain sheds, silos, weigh bridges, loading and unloading facilities for grain on the railway sidings, as well as some railway workshops.

Below is a table that provides details on constraints on Physical Infrastructure:

Service / Utility	Current Situation	Solution Required to allow for growth
<b>Water Supply</b>	50ML deficit in storage of main conduit and existing storage tank 2 at Northam requiring new roof	Provide additional tank and new roof costing approximately \$37.6 and \$1.05 million
<b>Water reticulation</b>	No Planning and information on constraints	Complete planning to identify constraints and required upgrades
<b>Power reticulation</b>	No Planning and information on existing infrastructure and constraints	Complete planning to identify constraints and required upgrades
<b>Telecommunication reticulation</b>	No Planning and information on existing infrastructure and constraints	Complete planning to identify constraints and required upgrades
<b>Drainage</b>	No Planning and limited information on existing infrastructure and constraints. Existing drainage has inadequate capacity	Complete planning to identify constraints and required upgrades for entire town
<b>WWTP</b>	Inadequate capacity by 250KL/Day	WWTP screen and sludge digestors costing \$721,000
<b>Sewerage Reticulation</b>	Inadequate capacity and no planning	Complete planning to identify constraints and required upgrades
<b>Local Roads</b>	No Planning and information on existing infrastructure	Complete an audit and planning to identify appropriate road use
<b>Main Roads</b>	26km stretch of Ballidu Pithara road needs upgrading to carry heavy traffic from Avon to North West. This may also involve upgrades to Great Northern Highway Identify and upgrade a heavy haulage route linking Northam to Great Northern Highway, through to Brand Highway.	Undertake a detailed analysis of works required close to Northam on the route north, and on the Pithara – Ballidu section. Analyse existing road links and cost upgrading required.
<b>Footpaths</b>	Missing links between critical activity centres	Construct these missing links when this has been identified on footpath plan.
<b>Railway</b>	Level of service and long-time taken to travel to Perth	Complete an audit to identify factors that could be changed to provide a better level of service.

Table 7. Current Situation of Physical Infrastructure

## BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC REALM

Northam is located in the central part of the Avon sub-region approximately 96 kilometres north east of Perth at the confluence of the Avon and Mortlock Rivers. The area around Northam was first explored around 1830 and subsequently founded in 1833. Boundaries for the townsite were officially adopted in 1836, but it was 1847 before any lots were surveyed, and 1849/50 before the first lots were sold.

In 1891 the State Government announced that Northam would become the point of departure for the Eastern Goldfields Railway Line to Kalgoorlie. Northam soon became the gateway to the eastern Goldfields and centre of development as railway lines, roads and the Goldfields Water Supply Scheme pipeline passed through the town. During the 1940s and 1950s extensive camps were established in Northam to accommodate displaced European refugees and immigrants.

Northam now has a residential population of over 7000 people and contains more than 2800 dwellings.

Notable features and characteristics of the town include:

- Its general rectangular shape comprising a total area of approximately 24 square kilometres;
- Its location on the banks of the Avon and Mortlock Rivers divide the town into three distinct segments;
- The location at the junction of a number of standard, narrow and dual gauge railway lines and major distributor roads that radiate outward from the town in a north south and an east west direction;
- The townsite is contained by the Great Eastern Highway Bypass along the northern boundary, the recently constructed Federal Government Immigration detention centre on the western side, the airport on the eastern side and the uprising topography surrounding the town;
- The Great Eastern Highway Northam Bypass provides a much safer east west transport route for heavy vehicles travelling within the region;
- Predominantly grid pattern development layout north, south and east of the Avon River;

- Ribbon type commercial development along the town's main street (Fitzgerald Street) with a distinct and recognisable town centre area;
- A wide variety of buildings and styles reflecting the distinct phases of development over the last 150 years including the second largest collection of heritage buildings within Western Australia after Fremantle;
- A variety of light and service industry type uses in the eastern part of the townsite within a designated light industrial area with significant potential for subdivision development;
- A substantial amount of low density residential development in the central part of the town site on lots generally ranging in size from 750 to 1250 square metres with a prevailing density code of R15;
- A disparity between coding and actual densities within the townsite;
- Large tracts of undeveloped residential zoned land in the southern and western portions of the townsite with significant potential for further subdivision development;
- Large lot residential development in the south eastern part of the townsite comprising an average area of approximately 5000 square metres;
- A significant number of rural residential land holdings in the north eastern segment of the townsite on previously cleared lots ranging in size from 2 to 6 hectares;
- Its proximity to Cooperative Bulk Handling's Northam grain handling and storage facility, the Water Corporation's Northam Water Treatment Plant, Ready mix's hard rock quarry and the local governments regional landfill site, all of which are located adjacent to the town's north western boundary; and
- Broad acre agricultural land of varying productive capacity immediately adjacent to the town's boundaries.

Figure 14 on the next page shows the locations of Aboriginal and European heritage within the Northam townsite and surrounds.

Figure 15 shows recreation and open space in the townsite as well as the floodplain and recreation tracks and lookouts.



# Context Analysis

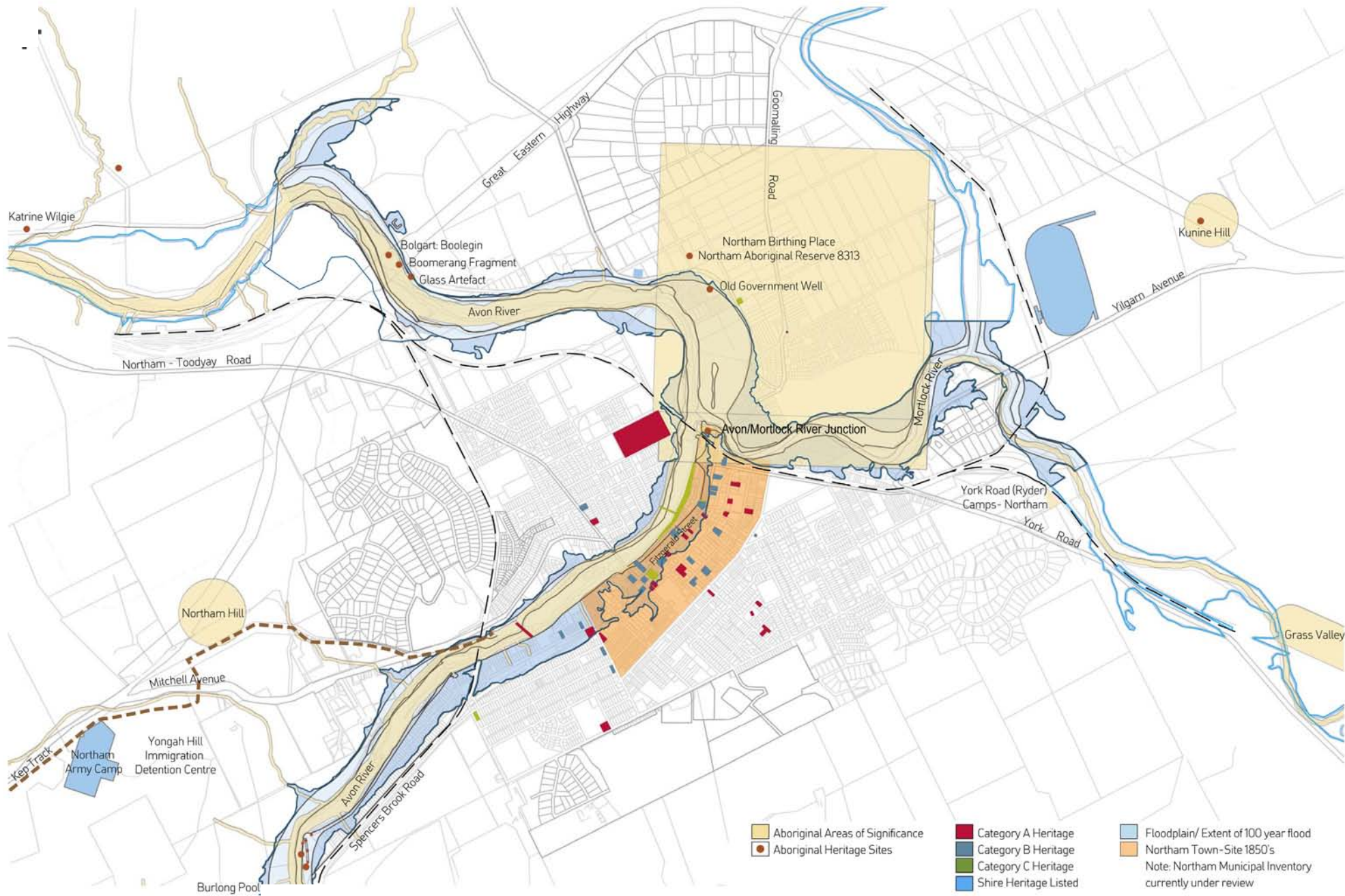


Figure 14. Aboriginal and European Heritage

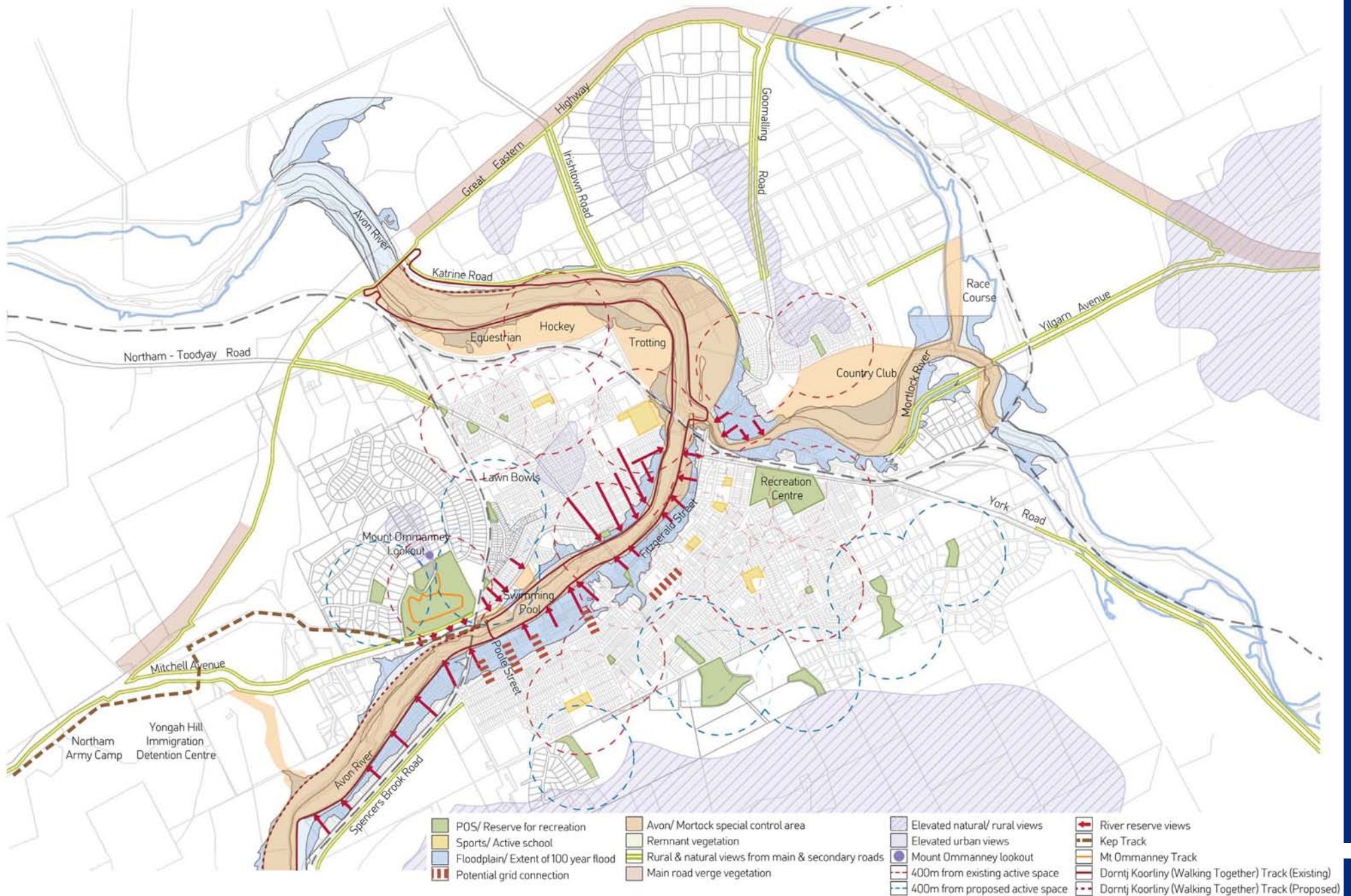


Figure 15. Open Space and Recreation Analysis

## A REVITALISED REGIONAL CENTRE

### In Summary

The key points to come from the context analysis include:

- The identification of key planning documents that influenced Northam and the sub regions planning and development.
- That Northam and the Avon benefit from significant competitive advantages and opportunities, especially in terms of geographic location and transport and logistics infrastructure, which suggest strong potential for economic and population growth over the next 20 years.
- Industry diversification is a key goal of the region to provide greater economic opportunities to the communities of the sub-region. Population growth and economic growth are highly interrelated.
- The importance of a vibrant, contemporary regional centre in Northam for labour force attraction across the region. It is imperative that the regional centre develops, and that relationships and interactions with sub regional areas are clarified and strengthened, if labour force is not to become a constraint to investment.
- The analysis of the key demographic features of the Northam townsite has revealed the following:
  - Population growth – which has accelerated in Northam in recent years, but must also increase further to meet SuperTowns aspirations;
  - Employment by sector and value – which has identified that Northam’s key industries are government services, professional services, construction and agriculture service related industries, and that these industries will continue to be important to Northam, yet transport and industrial activities may have strategic potential also;
  - There is a large outflow of younger working age people (15-24) as they go to larger centres for work and education reasons;
- The analysis of the key demographic features of the Avon Sub-Region has revealed the following:
  - Employment by sector and value – which has identified that Avon Sub Region’s key industries are agriculture, tourism, and manufacturing.

- Northam benefits from strong local supply chains, particularly for long-standing industries such as agriculture. Significant gaps in the supply chain are evident in business services which are currently underrepresented in comparison with similar communities.

These key points and the vision for the Northam townsite helped to realise where Northam and the Avon sub-region is at and what is needed to achieve aspirational growth that is faster than long term trends for the area. The identified aims have become objectives for Northam to strive to achieve or continue to achieve as the sub-region grows.

These objectives are:

- Economy - Providing opportunities for regional and local employment generation to address the gaps and drive diversification of employment outcomes. Providing favourable conditions for robust economic growth to occur across a range of industries, chosen based on advantages of the area determined through sub regional planning;
- Community - Fostering the development of safe, friendly and inclusive communities. Providing places and spaces that reflect and enhance the unique character, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal heritage and identity of the area. Building resilience within the community and providing services and facilities for a range of diverse community needs and interests. Building the service sector in the regional centre and designing service delivery models to suit the sub region’s population distribution.;
- Environment - The protection and enhancement of natural environmental and cultural assets, biodiversity, air and water quality and building resilience against the long term effects of climate change. Plan for balanced enhancement and development of natural assets, while using their amenity as a population attractor. ;
- Public Realm and Built Environment - Economically efficient infrastructure for industry and households designed for efficient use of energy, water, materials and transport. Providing an orderly and adequate supply of land along with increased choice in housing to cater for a diverse population and workforce.;

- Infrastructure and Resources - Strategic and urban transport, utilities and communications infrastructure are provided in a timely, sustainable and efficient manner to cater for a growing resident population as well as increasing strategic and business activity.

The objectives led to several key priorities being identified within the growth plan as areas that should be promoted as important. It should be noted that most of these are related to Northam as the regional centre. This plan supports further work on sub regional investment priorities being carried out over the next 2 years by the Wheatbelt Development Commission. This includes sub regional aged care and accommodation

planning, and analysis of sub regional economic drivers and priorities. A summary of the necessary projects, studies and actions for each element of the Growth Plan is set out in the five tables on the following pages. These tables assume implementation will be governed through the arrangements set out in Growth Plan. Planning, funding and development of the aims set out on the following pages are vital to realising Northam's future potential as the centre of the Avon. These include the measures to be undertaken and the stakeholders involved. They are further explained within the spatial plans chapter which also utilises mapping and tables to represent the plans in further detail.



## Vision and Objectives

*Vision: A compact liveable, Regional Centre of 20,000+ inhabitants serving the Avon sub-regional catchment of 50,000+ people with a diversified economy, a vibrant and well balanced community which boasts affordability, high quality amenity, and infrastructure - a choice place to live, work, visit, and enjoy life.*

*Goal: Northam as the regional centre of the Avon Sub-Region will grow to 20,000+ residents in size and serve a population of 50,000+ of the Avon sub-region. To guide Northam's growth in a sustainable manner a series of goals have been identified. Goals have been grouped into Economy, Community, Environment, Built Environment & Public Realm and Infrastructure. However, many of the objectives apply to more than one group.*

The vision and goals of the Growth Plan are further developed and broken down into five key objectives; Economy, Community, Environment, Public Realm and Built Environment as well as Infrastructure and Resources. The Growth Plan's vision, goals and objectives form the key elements of the Growth Plan's sustainability framework. As shown in Figures 16 - 21.



- generation to address the gaps and drive diversification of employment outcomes. Providing favourable conditions for robust economic growth to occur across a range of industries;
- Community - Fostering the development of safe, friendly and inclusive communities. Providing places and spaces that reflect and enhance the unique character, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal heritage and identity of the area. Building resilience within the community and providing services and facilities for a range of diverse community needs and interests;
- Environment - The protection and enhancement of the natural environmental and cultural assets, biodiversity, air and water quality, to improve the area's assets and attractiveness and to build resilience against the long term effects of climate change;
- Public Realm and Built Environment - Economically efficient infrastructure for industry and households designed for efficient use of energy, water, materials and transport. Providing an orderly and adequate supply of land along with increased choice in housing to cater for a diverse population and workforce; and
- Infrastructure and Resources - Strategic and urban transport, utilities and communications infrastructure are provided in a timely, sustainable and efficient manner to cater for a growing resident population as well as increasing strategic and business activity.



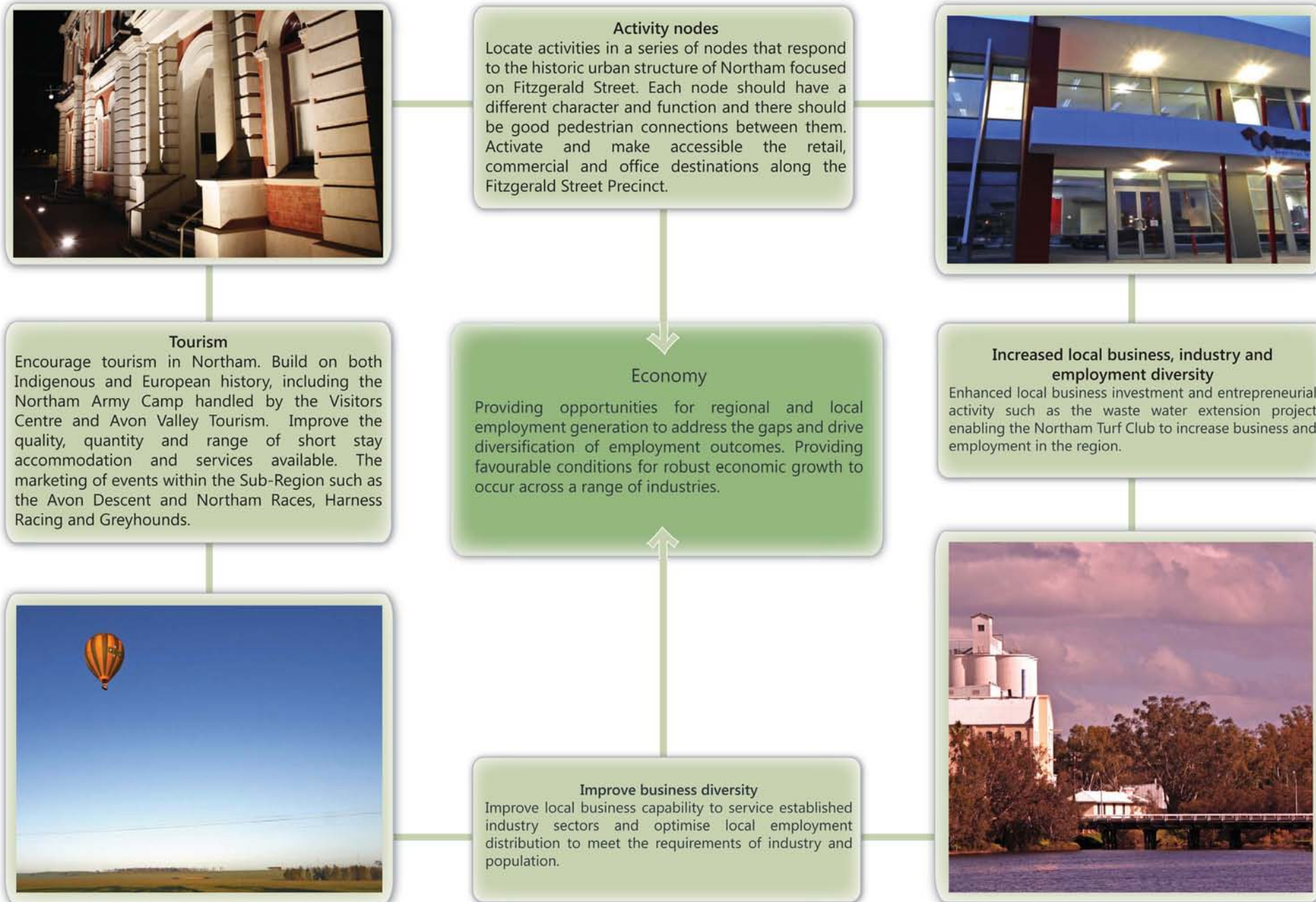


Figure 16. Economy



**Cultural Heritage**  
 Acknowledgement of cultural heritage through built form, public art, and community art and community activities



**Community facilities**  
 Provision of a full range of community services and facilities with good access to work, services and amenities.



**Community**

Fostering the development of safe, friendly and inclusive communities. Providing places and spaces that reflect and enhance the unique character, Indigenous and Non-Indigenous heritage and identity of the area. Building resilience within the community and providing services and facilities for a range of diverse community needs and interests.



**Community cohesion and involvement**  
 A community that is characterised by vitality and involvement. There will be strong cross cultural relationships encouraging settlement to the region and involvement in community. Community participation in goal setting and decision-making processes. Aim for the integration of the workforce with local community, if contractors are necessary.



**Affordable accommodation and living**  
 Attract a variety of people to live and stay within the region

Figure 17. Community

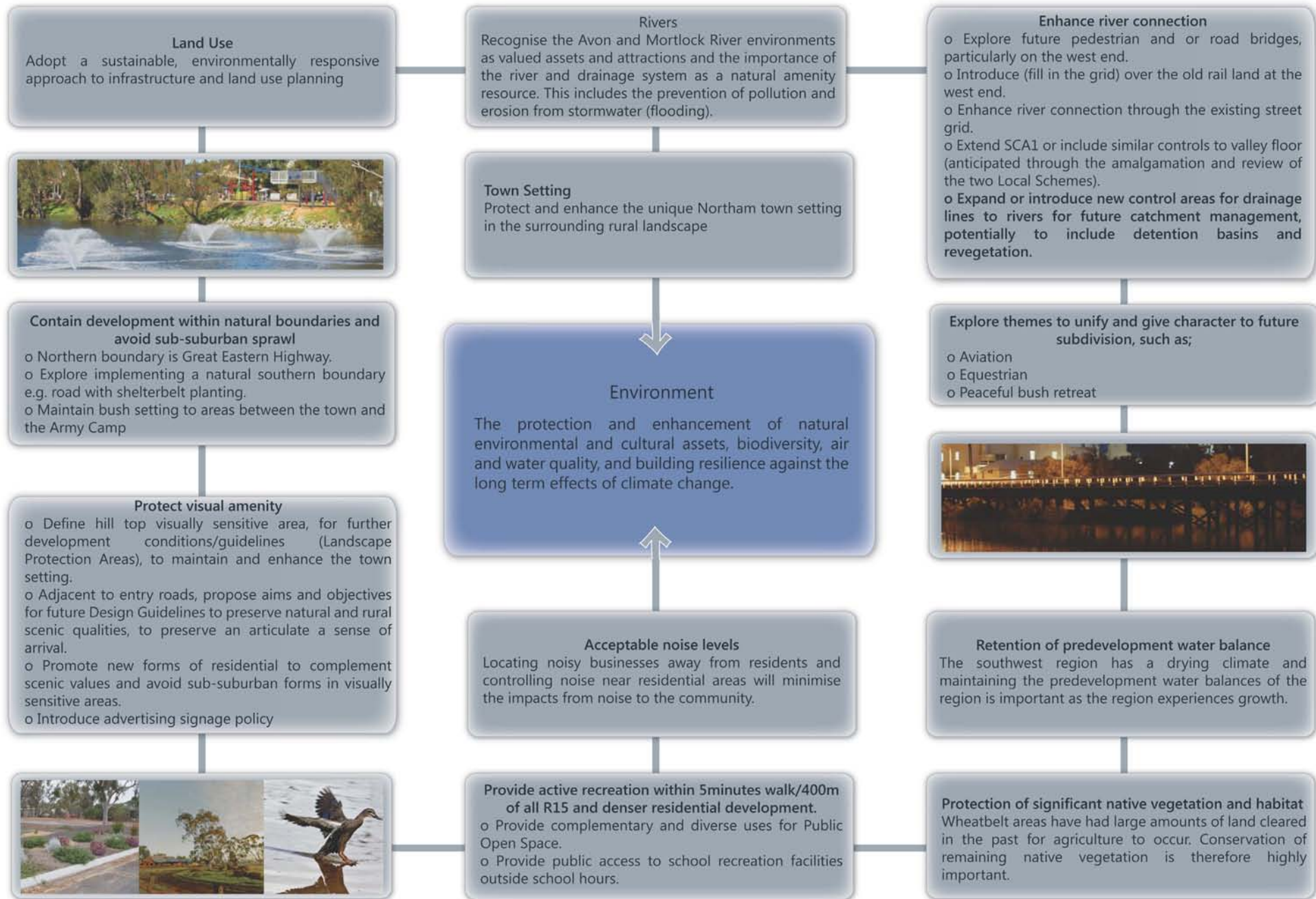


Figure 18. Environment

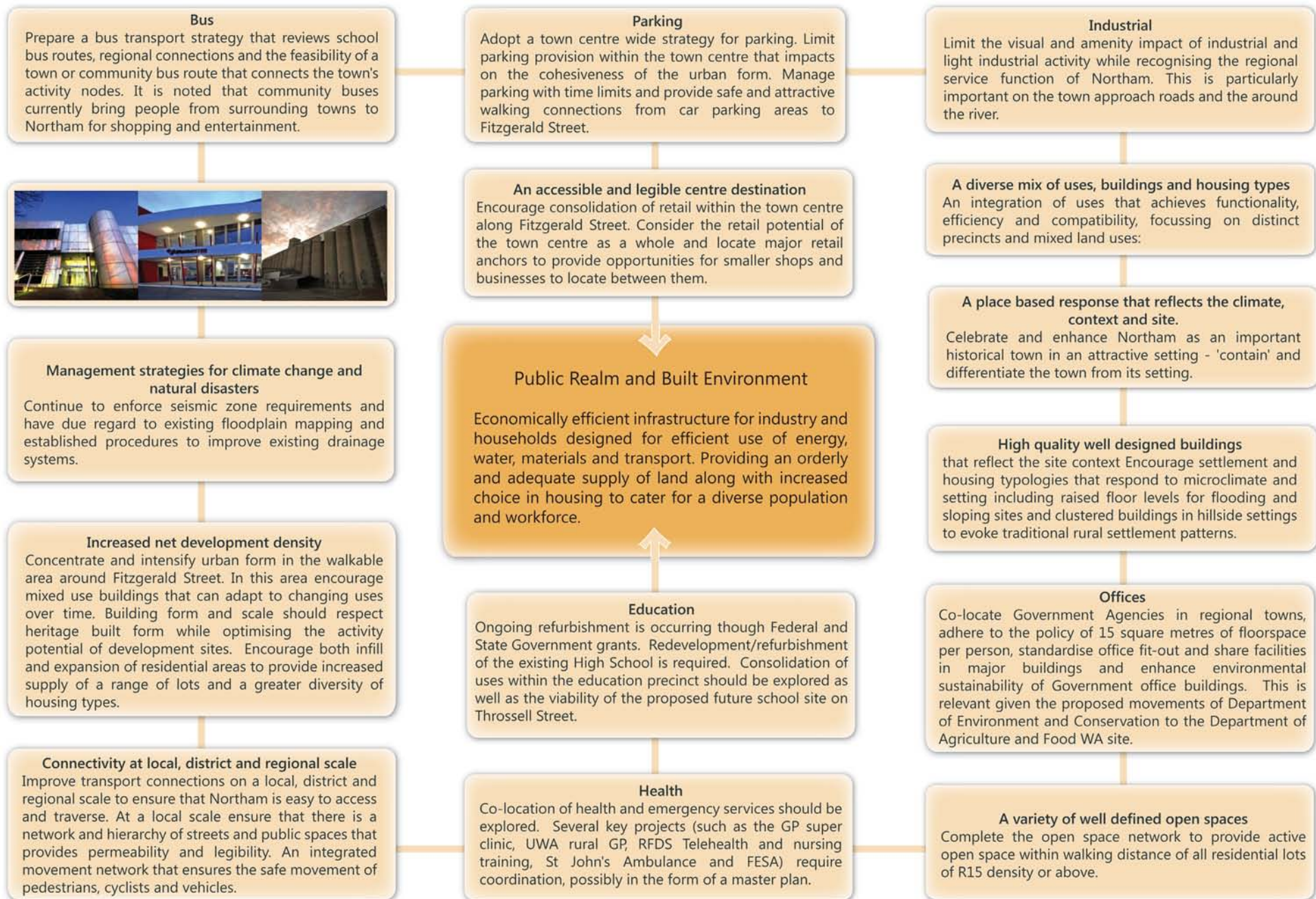


Figure 19. Public Realm and Built Environment

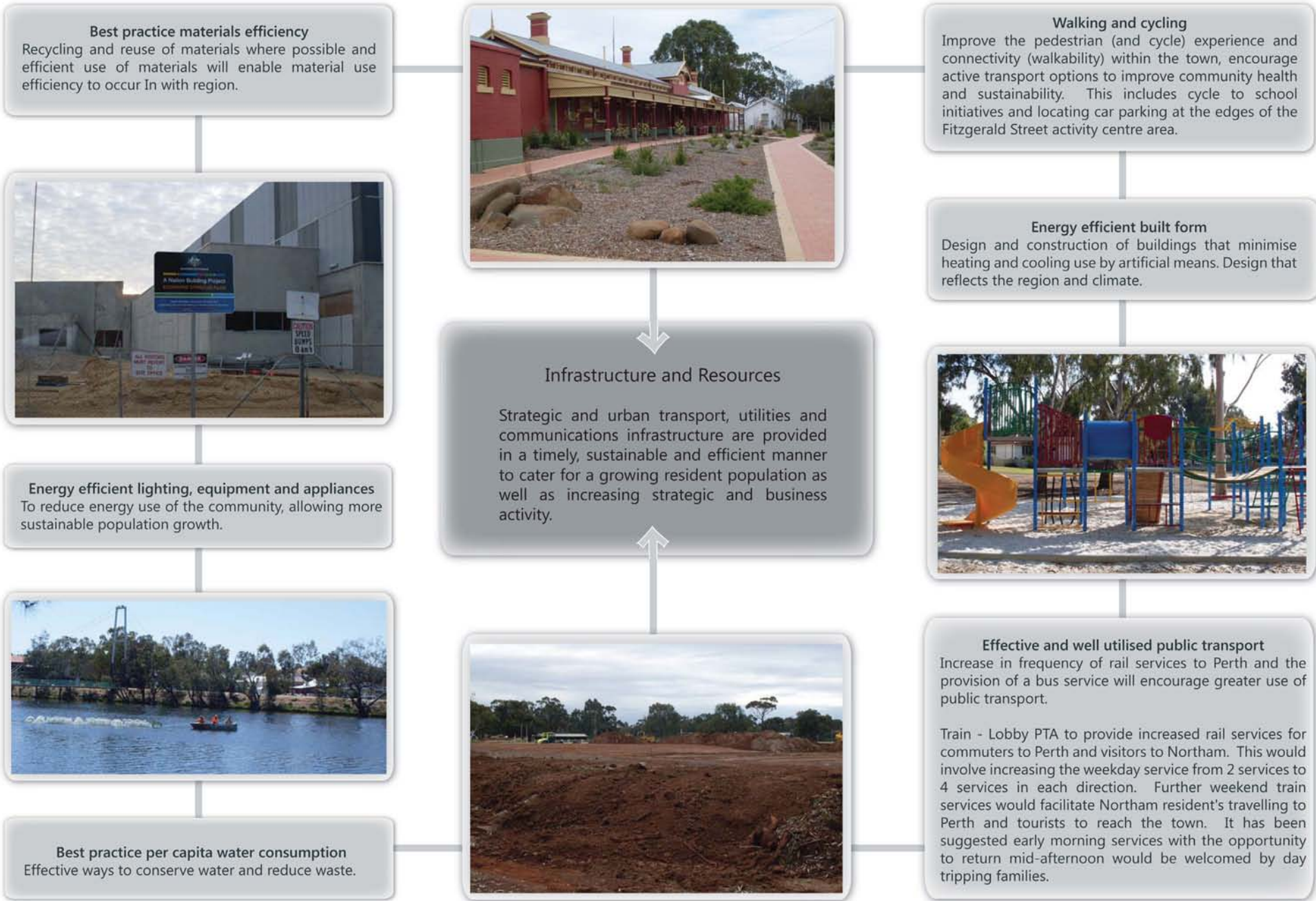


Figure 20. Infrastructure and Resources

## WHAT IS NEEDED TO UNDERSTAND WHEN PREPARING THE GROWTH PLAN'S POPULATION POTENTIAL?

**Population targets** - Northam's population may fluctuate - the town should thrive regardless. We have to plan for sustainable development, rather than growth at any cost. It is believed that a catchment population of 50,000 people is a long term sustainable target. Northam townsite currently has a population over 7,000 people. In the medium term we see that it is likely to grow to approximately 10,000 people as a result of the current proposals for residential and industrial expansion discussed earlier. (In the long term the townsite could reach around 20,000 people). This long term population target will only be catered for with increased densities within the inner precincts, key sites and also further consolidation via mixed use development in the Fitzgerald Street Precinct (that is housing above other street level uses). If we assume that the catchment doubles in population over the long term then a total population level in the 45-50,000 range will be reached. As discussed earlier and subject to more detailed study, retail and commercial service provision levels will at this milestone require expansion.

**Regional function** - Foster activity and development in the town to enable Northam to fulfil its role as the primary regional service centre in the Wheatbelt. Understanding the type and quantity of floor space, services and transport required in Northam now and in the future to fulfil this role is important. Understanding the proximity influences of Midland and Perth will allow for a more integrated approach for the Avon sub region. Understand the needs of the Avon sub region to ensure Northam fulfils its role as this region's central business area.

**Local community** - Improve the amenity, lifestyle, housing, services and facilities for the local community of people living within the town of Northam and those who will choose to live there in the future. Understand what ingredients are needed to offer a sustainable country town lifestyle.

### POPULATION TRAJECTORY

The potential future growth of Northam is calculated using three growth scenarios for Northam, described as:

**BUSINESS AS USUAL:** Assumes population growth aligns with estimates from the Northam Development Plan with growth at 2.9% per annum to 2031

**STIMULATED GROWTH:** Assumes population growth aligns with SuperTown target of population doubling, at 3.25% per annum to 2031

**ASPIRATIONAL AND VISIONARY:** Assumes population growth aligns with aspiration for Northam Town of 20,000 by 2031, at 5.2% per annum.

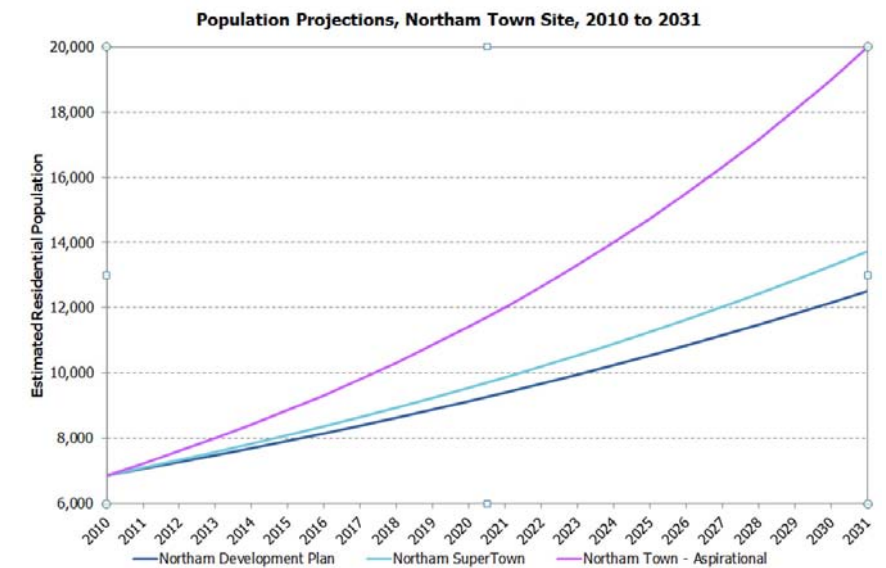


Figure 21. Population Projections

The future economic outlook for Northam is dependent on a diverse range of local, regional, State-wide, national and international drivers. Some of these drivers can be influenced (to a degree) by Local Government, such as population growth and an aging population. However, many overarching macro socio-economic trends will need to be accommodated and strategically planned for and the private sector has a role in achieving these aims.

Northam is well-placed to benefit from projected growth and investment in the Western Australian economy. Investment in the mining sector, while not expected to directly impact Northam, will present significant opportunities to the local economy through the mining sector supply chain. Much of the Avon sub region is within two hours drive of Perth airport. This is proving to be attractive to Fly In Fly Out workers. In the longer term there may be potential to accommodate smaller planes to cater for Fly In Fly Out workforce demands of smaller, more remote mine sites from this sub region. The strategic location of Northam provides manufacturing, transport and logistics companies with the opportunity to service mining projects and other companies in the Pilbara and South West regions. This driver has already been demonstrated through the investment by Hutchinsons Builders.

The future economic growth path is not set and will depend greatly on the degree to which new residents are attracted to the region and the extent to which economic growth opportunities are pursued. Economic modelling suggests the economy could expand by an average annual rate of 4.7% to 9.8% between 2011 and 2031. The labour force requirement to service this growth could expand by between 5.3% and 9.7% over the same forecast horizon.

Achieving the SuperTowns population growth target or the aspirational target of 20,000 within 20 years will require significant strategic planning and investment attraction. Targeting specific sectors of economic opportunity can assist in channelling funds and activities into sectors of best fit for Northam, with more efficient outcomes.



## TARGETS AND INDICATORS

Given our recognised connection to the State's economy it is important to monitor world economic conditions. Perth's growth and economic investment at the State level as a predictor of economic activity is required. Through the Avon Sub Regional Planning process some high level

economic indicators will be identified and monitored to guide investment timeframes in the future. In the context of the sustainability framework, the goals and objectives are interlinked and require periodic assessment and review. The following table outlines the targets and indicators for the

Table 8. Targets and Indicators

Theme	Targets	Indicators	Measured	Source
Total Avon River Catchment Management	Having a healthy town pool Having a full town pool	Decrease in nutrients and sediments within Town Pool.	Annually	Water sampling Dept of Water
Population and Demographics	Northam Population to be 20,000 by 2031	Estimated Residential Population (ERP) of 13,700 for Northam Town SLA	Annually	ABS 3218.0
		Average ERP Growth Rate greater than 5.2% pa	Annually	ABS 3218.0
		Residential Building Approvals above 125 pa	Annually	ABS 8731.0, Council
	Increase in Youth and Young Worker Retention	Share of Population Aged 15-34 above WA State Average	Annually	ABS 3235.0
Socio-Economics	Improvement in Local Resident Qualifications	Share of Population Aged 15+ with Bachelor Degrees as their Highest form of Qualifications above 10%	5 Yearly	ABS Census
	Increase in Size of Professional White Collar Workforce	White Collar Worker Share of Resident Labour Force in Northam LGA greater than 40%	Annually	ABS 5673.0
	Increased Individual Incomes	Individual Income above National average	Annually	ABS 6524.0
		Individual incomes in Manager and Professional Occupations above 80% of Perth SD average	Annually	ABS 5673.0
	Maintaining Housing Affordability	Maintain Median House Price to Household Income Ratio below 4.5	Annually	REIWA, ABS 5673.0, ABS Census
Employment and Business Activity	Reduce Unemployment	Unemployment Rate reduces to below WA State average	Quarterly	DEEWR
	Grow Labour Force Size	Labour Force Growth above 2.5% pa on average	Quarterly	DEEWR
	Employment	Employment Growth to 20,000 jobs by 2031	5 Yearly	ABS Census
		Growth in number of businesses employing 50 or more workers with registered address in Northam LGA	Annually	ABS 8165.0



Growth Plan as well as outlining when they are measured and the data that is utilised to measure them. It is proposed that the implementation team is to utilise this governance framework to assist with the assessment of business cases for every year of the implementation of the Growth Plan.

Theme	Targets	Indicators	Measured	Source
Investment Growth	Increase Business Accommodation	Growth in Commercial Office Floorspace to minimum of 15,000sq.m in 2031	5 Yearly	Survey
		Growth in retail floorspace to minimum of 50,000sq.m in 2031	5 Yearly	Survey
		Maintenance of Non-Residential Building Approvals Value above an average of \$7.5m pa	Annually	ABS 8731.0, Council
		Increase in Businesses located within the Light Industrial areas and the Avon Industrial Park.	Annually	Shire of Northam
Local Economy	Grow Local Economy	Increase in Gross Regional Product (GRP) per resident above national average	Annually	Custom modelling
	Increase Economic Diversification	Increase Transport & Logistics and Manufacturing Share of GRP above 2009/10 levels	Annually	Custom modelling
		Increase Professional Services Sector Share of GRP above 2009/10 levels	Annually	Custom modelling
		Growth in Commercial Office Floorspace to minimum of 15,000sq.m in 2031	5 Yearly	Survey
		Growth in retail floorspace to minimum of 50,000sq.m in 2031	5 Yearly	Survey
		Increase in White Collar Share of Total Employment	5 Yearly	ABS Census
		Increase in Health Care and Social Assistance Share of Total Employment	5 Yearly	ABS Census
Reduce Retail Spend Leakage to Other Centres	Increased Retail Spend for High Order Goods	5 yearly	ABS Census	
Regional Relationships	Increase Integration of Northam and Avon Economies	Decrease share of Avon residents working in Perth SD	5 Yearly	ABS Census
		Increase share of Avon residents working in Northam LGA	5 Yearly	ABS Census
		Population growth rates of LGAs in Avon outside of Northam	Annually	ABS 3218.0

The objectives outlined in the Growth Plan will assist the Northam townsite to develop in a manner that caters for residents of the greater Avon Sub-Region. It has to be acknowledged that the Avon sub region's proximity to Perth will have an effect on many of the towns and each will play a different role, depending on their location and potential for growth.

The different functions of settlements will be decided by their location in relation to hard and soft infrastructure, and the availability and accessibility of services and requirements to the community. Some settlements may only grow by a handful of residents, yet those in favourable locations in terms of service and infrastructure or in desirable locations for lifestyle or employment reasons may see large amounts of growth. The Northam Development Plan 2011 recognises large centres such as Cunderdin, Goomalling, Northam, Toodyay and York (referred to as being part of a Hinterland) will be where most growth will occur due to them having well established infrastructure already in existence.

## AVON SUB-REGION

Over the past decade Northam and the Avon sub region have experienced considerable economic, social, and demographic change as a result of significant peri-urban growth. While the region was once dominated by agriculture and related industries, it now incorporates a diverse mix of enterprises spanning tourism, minerals extraction, manufacturing, aviation and services. It should be recognised that, with favourable international and state economic conditions, the Avon sub region is set to become a powerful economic unit based on its transport and logistics comparative advantages and its lifestyle amenity.

Continued growth is likely to be driven by:

- Ongoing construction stimuli;
- Availability of residential, commercial and industrial land;
- Improved access to Perth (highway quality upgrades to Midland – 1 hour drive time);
- High rural amenity in the Avon Valley;

- Western Australia's growing labour force requirements (particularly mining fly-in / fly-out);
- Increasing commercial and industrial investment from outside the region;
- Attracting industrial activity, providing relief from space constraints and rising property prices in the metropolitan area;
- Federal investment in the development and operation of the YHIDC (predicted to be a long term facility); and
- Ongoing peri-urban growth in communities within 2 hours of Perth.

The Northam SuperTowns project team worked closely with the Wheatbelt Development Commission and RPS Consulting to look at the economic drivers for the Avon sub region surrounding Northam. This helped guide the development of this section.

## ROLE OF THE NORTHAM IN RELATION TO THE AVON SUB REGION AND THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE SURROUNDING SETTLEMENTS AND THE EXISTING TOWN CENTRE

Northam is the regional centre of the Avon sub region providing a high level of retail, commercial, administrative services and facilities. As Northam townsite develops to a population of 20,000 or more people it will further reinforce that it is the primary focus for the sub region. A regional centre is expected to provide a range of residential housing, shopping, community, recreation, education and health facilities for the region as well as incorporating a diverse local economy. Northam's role as a sub regional centre, providing those services unable to be delivered in smaller towns, will be further consolidated and reinforced as the Avon sub region develops to a population of 50,000.

The role of Northam has previously been described in the State Planning Strategy prepared by the Western Australian Planning Commission in 1997 as a priority area of the Avon-Arc Region and identifies the facilitation of settlement growth and infrastructure as the key priority for this area.

The current State Government in its (October 2011) Regional Centres Development Plan (SuperTowns) framework 2011-12, outlines its vision to prepare the selected SuperTown communities for their population expansion and to give them the capacity, vibrancy, as well as a commercial and industry base, that will provide an attractive choice for people who desire to live outside metropolitan Perth. Northam's development as a SuperTown is important as an attractor for the desired sub regional population growth to 50,000.

**"A regional centre is expected to provide a range of residential housing, shopping, community, recreation, education and health facilities for the region as well as incorporating a diverse local economy."**

The 2011 framework envisions that Northam will be the regional centre of the Avon sub-region supporting an increased population with permanent employment, facilities and services such as modern medical facilities, primary, secondary and tertiary education facilities, diverse entertainment opportunities, retail precinct, affordable living opportunities, employment and Aboriginal initiatives.

The Shire has also recognised the regional role that Northam plays as well as the need to transform and revitalise Northam with particular projects articulated through its Northam Development Plan. This plan seeks to provide the direction for the sustainable growth of the Northam townsite to 2020 and beyond. This plan is the foundation for the development of the Northam Growth Plan.

The current and future projected population of the Avon sub region means that Northam has retail outlets and services that may not be experienced in other regional towns of its size (e.g. Coles, Target Country, Woolworths, and McDonalds). It is imperative that planning and infrastructure development in Northam enables growth and an increased service centre role to cater for a Sub-Regional population of 50,000.

Several townsites are located within a 50 kilometres radius of Northam, specifically the towns of Toodyay, Goomalling, Cunderdin, York, the national trust town of Wundowie, the lifestyle towns of Bakers Hill, Spencers Brook, Seabrook, Grass Valley, Clackline and Meckering.

Other townsites / local authorities that are outside the 50 kilometre radius yet will still rely on Northam to an extent for the provision of goods and services include Koorda, Wyalkatchem, Dowerin, Tammin, Beverley, Wongan Hills and Quairading.

The following is a description of Northam Shire townships.

### Wundowie

The town of Wundowie is a National Trust listed, State founded iron foundry settlement. As the closest townsite in the sub-region to the Perth Metropolitan Region there is immense potential for growth to occur.

### Bakers Hill

Bakers Hill is primarily a rural lifestyle settlement within the Shire of Northam. The townsite is situated approximately 20 kilometres west of Northam. A major constraint to the further growth of the townsite is the lack of reticulated sewerage provision. This may be something that is required if the town to absorb a proportion of the 50,000 residents that are envisaged to move to the region.

### Grass Valley

Grass Valley is a small settlement located 13 kilometres to the east of Northam. Growth is likely to occur due to the close proximity of the townsite to the Avon Industrial Park. As Northam develops into a major transportation hub to the industrial development will drive employment nearby. As a result Grass Valley may experience a substantial amount of growth and service provision and the settlement will need to be examined to determine whether major constraints will negatively affect this potential growth. One potential growth limiting factor is the lack of reticulated sewerage for the townsite.

### Clackline

Clackline is located between Northam and Bakers Hill and also represents an opportunity for lifestyle living. The residents of this town and surrounding rural residential development will have the opportunity to use either Perth or Northam for their provision of services and employment. The town should retain its predominantly residential function; however, future growth will potentially be limited due the constraints posed by the physical landscape. Consideration should be given to how the town's physical appearance can be enhanced in a manner that can be maintained over time.

### Spencers Brook

As a small settlement located between Northam and York, the Spencers Brook community has the potential to experience some population growth in coming years. The town is likely to retain its primarily residential function, relying on Northam and to some extent, York, for its commercial and work related needs.

### Seabrook

Seabrook is a former rail siding settlement that is just 7 kilometres from Northam. It is to remain small in size with the growth taking place in the existing lots.

The Avon Sub-Region includes the following Local Government Areas:

- Northam
- Beverley
- Cunderdin
- Dowerin
- Goomalling
- Koorda
- Quairading
- Tammin
- Toodyay
- Wyalkatchem
- York

This is illustrated in the adjacent figure.

### Avon-Sub Regional Future

The Avon sub region offers diverse lifestyle opportunities and a range of economic opportunities. People can choose to live in the regional centre or a wide range of other communities such as the other following centres in the Avon Sub Region. Sub Regional Diversity is characterised by the following examples.

- Northam, Toodyay and York offer larger towns with historic buildings and undulating country side;
- Cunderdin and Wyalkatchem have an increasing focus on general aviation;
- Recreational aviation including sky diving, gliding and ultra-lights is region wide, but especially active in York, Beverley, Cunderdin, Northam and Wyalkatchem
- Northam, Meckering, Cunderdin and Tammin are on the major east west road and rail transport routes;

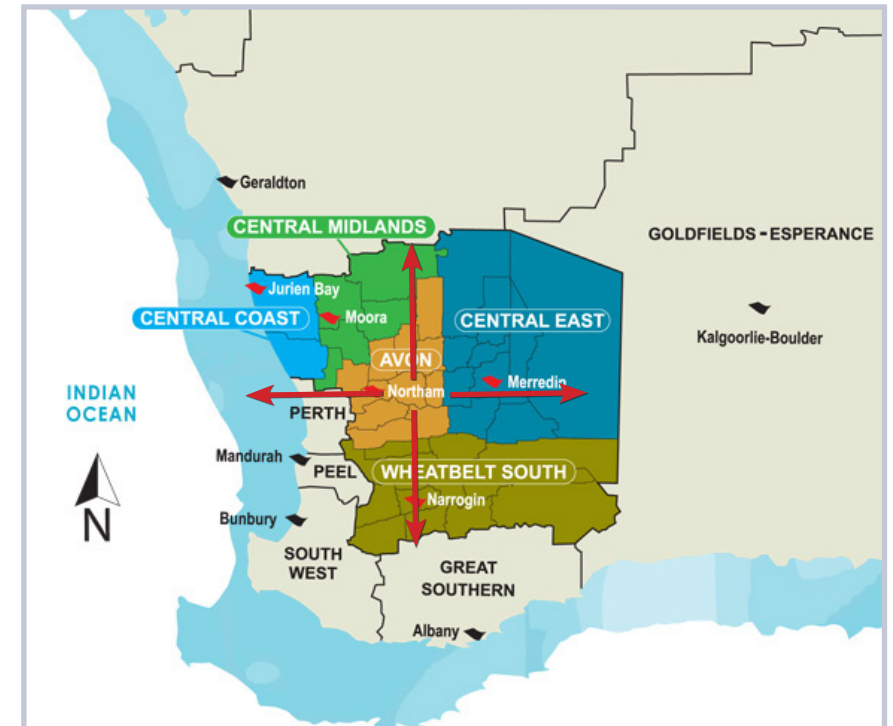


Figure 22. Sub-Regions, Wheatbelt

- Goomalling has developed as a desired destination for RV enthusiasts;
- Northam, York, Cunderdin and Goomalling all have strong vintage and performance car enthusiasts;
- Quairading and York are popular destinations for self-retirees; and
- There is a strong equestrian sector between Toodyay, Northam and York.

## POPULATION SUMMARY

### AVON POPULATION

In 2011 the Avon Statistical Sub Division had a population of 25,286 (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2012). For the purposes of this summary, the Avon (as determined by the Wheatbelt Development Commission) includes the 11 local governments of Beverley, Cunderdin, Dowerin, Goomalling, Koorda, Northam, Quairading, Tammin, Toodyay, Wyalkatchem and York. It has grown by 4.7% between 2006 and 2011 (ABS, 2012), with potential for the non Northam areas to grow to over 25,000 by 2031 due to a number of driving factors, one of which is growth resulting from the Northam SuperTown plan. The population growth in the Avon offers many economic and social benefits and also presents pressures that need to be managed.

Prior to the SuperTown plan, Avon local governments (excluding Northam) were already planning towards an additional 20,500 people in the region by 2021, anticipating the majority of growth in population to occur through an increase in Fly-In Fly-Out and Drive-In Drive-Out workers (amongst Avon local governments and between the metropolitan and Avon), employees of industries relocating into the Avon, 'Tree Changers' and retirees. It is highly likely that with the SuperTown development in Northam (as well as other developments including the Yongah Hill Immigration Detention Centre) the population in Avon (excluding Northam) will increase to 25,000 by 2031, giving the region including Northam a total population around 50,000.

Through local planning strategies, local governments have mapped out a number of zones and strategically identified residential land in the Avon for 20,500+ persons and for 20,000 people in the Northam townsite. This

land will allow the Avon to grow over time. The current identified growth areas in each local government have been selected through local planning processes.

In addition, a number of local governments have identified a variety of available accommodation already in place, some of which requires upgrading. A greater variety of housing options will be required to suit the increase in households and to accommodate the needs of an ageing population in the Avon.

Based on what local governments have already planned for 2021, there is an adequate supply of residential land in the region for the next 10 years – the question raised however is whether it has been developed and how quickly it will be released. While vacant land may either be identified or actually zoned residential, a majority of the land is not 'development ready'. The region needs an adequate supply of serviced land across the region available to accommodate this population growth.

## POPULATION BY LOCAL GOVERNMENT

With the onset of the Northam SuperTown, sub regional and local planning needs to consider how to accommodate a potential Avon population of 25,000+ by 2021 and beyond. Considerations have been given to various scenarios - growing in and up, growing out and shared growth – with the majority of local governments considering outward growth for both residential and industrial land to accommodate their projected population increases.

Table 9 outlines current populations and a possible geographic distribution scenario for an Avon sub regional population of 50,000 generated from estimates from Local Governments, Department of Planning, and Australian Bureau of Statistics population projections.

Table 9. Table 4: Avon Local Government Population – Current and predictions

Local Government	Current Population (ABS, 2011)	WAPC Projection 2021 (Highest simulations - Western Australia Tomorrow)	Population increase if WAPC Projection 2021 is Achieved	Local Government Projection 2021	Distribution (WDC suggested)	Population increase if suggested distribution is achieved	Local Government total predicted population increase 2011-2021 (LG PROJECTION 2021 – ABS 2011)
Beverley	1567	2200	40.40%	1800	1900	21.25%	45
Cunderdin	1310	1000	-23.66%	1400	1700	29.77%	130
Dowerin	678	750	10.62%	744	1000	47.49%	0
Goomalling	985	1500	52.28%	1,300	2000	103.05%	236
Koorda	437	610	39.59%	490	500	14.42%	0
Quairading	1043	1300	24.64%	1,200	1600	53.40%	100
Tammin	404	450	11.39%	469	500	23.76%	0
Toodyay	4387	6300	43.61%	6,500	8000	82.36%	2260
Wyalkatchem	522	530	1.53%	570	800	53.26%	20
York	3396	5600	64.90%	6,000	7000	106.12%	2362
Northam	10557	15100	43.03%	25,000	16,000	51.56%	13742
Total	25,286	35,340	39.76%	45,473	41,000	62.15%	18,895

Source: Wheatbelt Development Commission 2012

## AVON SUB REGION ECONOMIC DRIVERS

The Avon sub-region and its economic growth and development are inexorably linked to global trends. Increased demand for food products due to rising population and income levels in developing countries will underpin the future of agriculture in the region. Similarly, the strategic position of the Avon on major rail and road freight transport routes to metropolitan Perth and major mining regions provides the sub-region with a distinct, nationally recognized competitive advantage. Finally, the ageing of the western world and its impacts on service demand will invariably influence the development of the Avon sub-region, which currently has an older population profile than State and national averages.

The Avon sub-region is and will continue to be an export-oriented sub-regional economy generating quality employment opportunities and providing a high and affordable standard of living for current and future residents alike.

### POPULATION AND SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHICS

The Avon Sub-Region was home to 27,384 people in 2011, making it one of the most populous sub-regions of Western Australia outside of metropolitan Perth. This population is primarily concentrated in the major townships of Northam, Toodyay and York, the Local Government Areas (LGAs) of which collectively account for almost three in every four Avon residents.

The sub-region has experienced only moderate population growth over the past decade, averaging 0.9% per annum compared to 2.1% for Western Australia as a whole. The WA Tomorrow Population Estimates from the Western Australian Planning Commission project that this trend will continue, with only another 3,500 residents predicted to call the Avon home by 2021. However, this likely understates the population and residential growth potential of the region for a range of factors:

The WA Tomorrow projections do not take into consideration the recent identification of Northam as a SuperTown by the Department of Regional Development and Lands and the associated planning and funding support designed to facilitate increased residential population in the town;

The identification of Northam as a SuperTown is likely to have second

round impacts, incentivising increased residential migration to other towns in the Avon sub-region, particularly Toodyay and York;

Major recent investments in the Avon sub-region, namely the Federal Government’s Immigration Detention Centre and Hutchinson Builders modular housing plant at the Avon Industrial Park, will increase demand for labour at a time when local unemployment rates are decreasing fast; and

Affordability and proximity factors make the Avon sub-region highly attractive to Baby Boomers seeking to downsize the family home, cash-out their equity to fund their retirement and relocate to a more rural setting.

Instead, the Avon sub-region is expected to experience a more robust and sustained rate of population growth over the next decade. Estimates by the Wheatbelt Development Commission suggest that the sub-region will add more than 13,500 residents over the next decade and exceed 41,000 by 2021, on its way to 50,000 by 2031. In light of the socio-demographic, economic, policy and market drivers of the region, such growth is readily supportable.

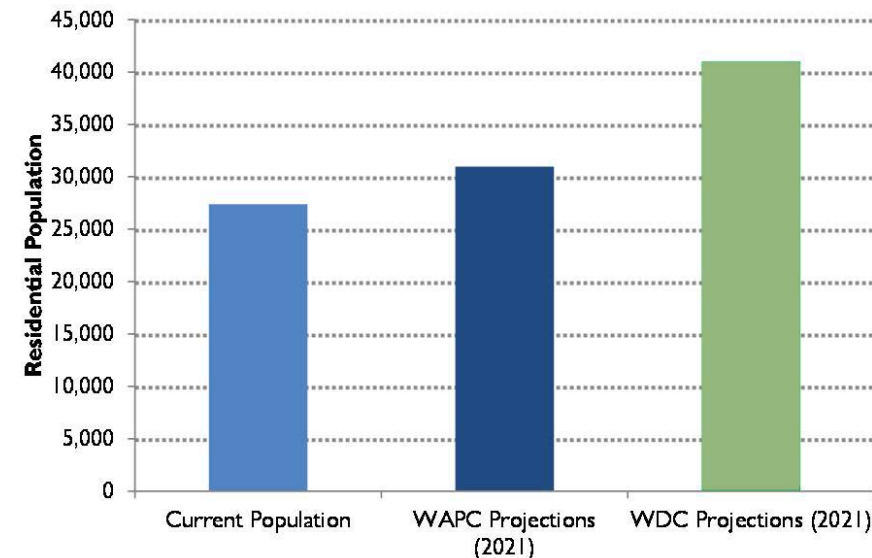


Figure 23. Current and Future Residential Population

The population of the Avon sub-region is also expected to age rapidly over the next decade. This reflects the fact the sub-region and associated population centres already possess comparatively older population profile. According to the results of the 2011 Census of Population and Housing, the residential populations of all LGAs in the Avon sub-region have higher proportions of people aged 65+ than the State Average (12.2%). And towns such as Wyalkatchem (27.3%), Beverley (24.5%) and Quairading (21.4%) all have more than one fifth of their current populations aged 65 and over.

### LABOUR FORCE AND SKILLS

A significant driver of current and future residential population growth in the Avon is the increasingly constrained nature of local labour markets. In 2011, the Avon region had an average annual unemployment rate of 3.6%, below the comparative state average of 4.1%. In fact, no LGA in the Avon sub-region had an unemployment rate above 6% in 2011 and 7 LGAs had rates below the sub-regional average.

This low unemployment has supported a labour force participation rate comparable with the State average (67.7%). However, a number of towns have rates above 80%, which is a common characteristic among smaller, agricultural communities. With a low unemployment rate and solid participation rate, any major employment growth in the Avon sub-region in the future will need to be accommodated by growing the region's population.

### EMPLOYMENT, INDUSTRY AND INVESTMENT

The Avon sub-region had a Gross Regional Production in 2010/11 of approximately \$1.1b. The major drivers of this economic activity are industrial uses, professional services, agriculture and construction, which collectively accounted for 54% of local industry value add. This is illustrated in the adjacent figure.

This economic activity has underpinned local employment and business activity. In 2006, there were 8,290 jobs in the Avon sub-region, representing an employment self-sufficiency rate (ESS - ratio of local jobs to local workers) of 81%. This is a strong ESS rate for a region located directly adjacent the metropolitan Perth area with its associated economic gravity.

Employment in the Avon is highly concentrated with approximately 45% located in Northam and a further 20% in Toodyay and York. This concentration of employment mirrors the distribution of population in the sub-region.

A review of business registrations data for the sub-region reveals a slightly different industry composition than indicated by Gross Regional Product analysis. In 2009, agriculture businesses accounted for 39% of locally registered businesses, despite accounting for 11% of industry value add. In contrast, the Transport, logistics & manufacturing sector accounts for 6.8% of locally registered businesses but collectively contributes 21% of sub-regional value add.

The Avon sub-regional economy over the next decade will be driven by a range of major investments including the recent Immigration Detention Centre and Hutchinson Builders Modular Housing Plant at Avon Industrial Park. These activities are not only major generators of local employment in their own right but are already generating second-round expenditure benefits for businesses across the Wheatbelt region.

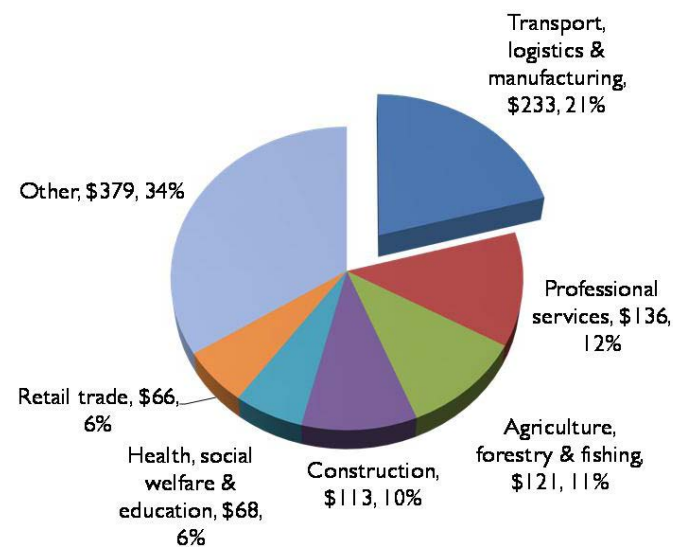


Figure 24. Industry Value Add, Avon Sub-Region, 2010/11



## HOUSING AND AFFORDABILITY

The current housing stock is predominantly comprised of detached housing, which accounted for 94.4% in 2011.

Over the past five years, the Avon Sub-Region and the broader Western Australian housing market has experienced volatile conditions, with prices rising and falling during the period. This reflects the impact that the Global Financial Crisis (GFC) and subsequent depressed level of consumer confidence has had on housing market activities and therefore prices. Despite this the Avon market experienced price growth over the period, with median house prices increasing from \$191,000 in 2006 to \$235,000 in 2011. This represents growth of 22.5% over the period, ahead of the State average growth of 15.2%. This is illustrated in the figure below.

Almost all towns over this period experienced positive price growth, though the level of growth varies dramatically. Towns like Quairading and Dowerin experienced an almost doubling in prices over the period, while Toodyay and Northam experienced more moderate growth (albeit off higher price bases).

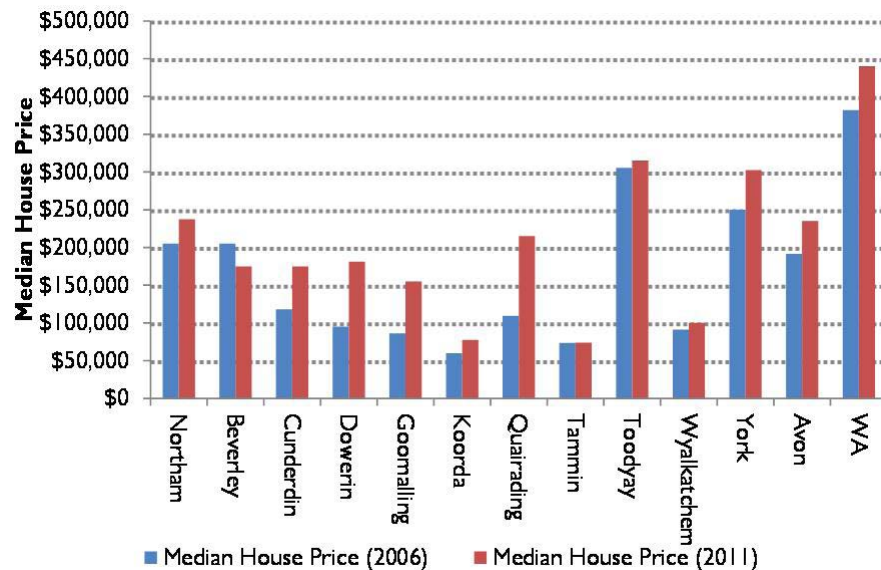


Figure 25. Median House Prices, Avon Sub-Region, 2006 and 2011

Moderate price growth is generally regarded as positive as it contributes to the wealth and affluence of a region. However, for the Avon sub-region, with its relative proximity to Perth, maintaining affordable housing options is critical to underpinning employment and lifestyle based migration required to increase local population critical mass.

## COMMUNITY SERVICES AND FACILITIES

The growth in the residential population in the Avon has and will continue to underpin demand for community services and facilities in the sub-region. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Child care services;
- Primary, secondary and tertiary education;
- Aged Care and Retirement Villages; and
- Hospitals and health services.

The current offering and drivers of these community services and facilities are examined below.

### CHILD CARE

Fertility rate data is an effective leading indicator of the level of demand for child care services. In 2010, all towns in the Avon sub-region had fertility rates above replacement levels (2.1 children) and were well above the average for Perth SD (1.9). Interestingly, the fertility rates of the major Avon population centres – Northam, Toodyay and York – are among the lowest for the sub-region. In contrast, Wyalkatchem, Tammin and Quairading all have fertility rates approaching 4.

This high fertility rate, coupled with low unemployment and strong labour force participation, will generate demand for child care services. There are currently 15 Child Care centres in the Avon sub-region, with over half (8) located in Northam. This distribution appears to be more concentrated than the distribution of population, potentially reflecting the agglomeration of employment and business activity in Northam. However, as the population of the Avon grows, increased demand for child care outside of Northam will necessitate a more distributed network, particularly in Toodyay and York.

### PRIMARY, SECONDARY AND TERTIARY EDUCATION

Despite the ageing of the population in the Avon, many towns in the sub-region also have above average shares of residents aged 0-14. This reflects the long-term impact on the Avon's demographic profile of structurally high fertility rates. A review of the results of the recent Census reveals that, with the exception of Beverley, Toodyay and York, all other towns in the sub-region have 0-14 shares above the average for Perth SD.

There are currently 20 primary schools in the Avon sub-region, comprised of 17 public schools and 3 private schools. Primary school distribution is relatively dispersed, with all major towns having a primary school, though school sizes vary considerably (e.g. 47 students in Koorda to 390 students in York).

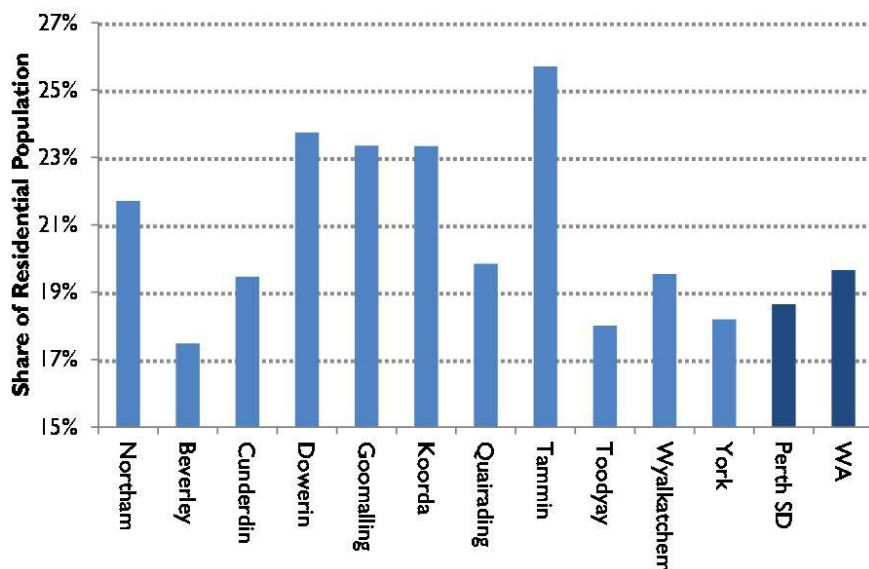


Figure 26. Share of Residential Population Aged 0-14, Avon Sub-Region, Perth SD and WA, 2011

Secondary school distribution is similarly dispersed, with 10 secondary schools comprising 8 public schools and 2 private schools. Anecdotal evidence from consultation with the Avon community indicates the existence of two travel trends:

That secondary students in the eastern half of Avon regularly attend secondary school in Northam; and

that local secondary school demand, particularly in the western areas of the sub-region is tempered by the propensity for some parents to send their children to metropolitan Perth for their secondary education, either in the form of boarding school or daily travel.

The provision of quality secondary schooling in the Avon is critical to the attraction and retention of working age families necessary to support local economic development. Increased residential population will underpin demand for increased size and diversity of local secondary education provision.

The labour force in the Avon sub-region is characterised by an expected concentration of applied tertiary education qualifications (i.e. formal training and TAFE). This is reflected both in the local employment mix but also local tertiary education provision. The C.Y. O'Connor Institute is the primary tertiary education and training facility in the Avon region with locations in Northam, and Muresk<sup>14</sup>. A wide range of practical courses are offered with a strong focus on administration, tourism, agricultural and manufacturing related qualifications. Opportunities exist to strategically diversify offerings into mining-related occupations to support increased cross-industry mobility of the Avon labour force, in response to macro-economic opportunities and decreased unemployment levels.

Opportunities exist to expand the negligible tertiary offering in the region. C.Y. O'Connor Institute is investigating possibilities of providing higher education by partnering with external providers.

The facilities at Muresk offer opportunities for further development of higher education with multiple providers utilising the accommodation and conference and lecture facilities.

### AGED CARE, HOSPITALS AND HEALTH SERVICES

The older age profile of the Avon will underpin continued demand for aged care and retirement village offerings. In 2012, there were 16 registered Aged Care facilities offering 153 dedicated aged care beds (residential high and low care only). The distribution of these beds is concentrated in Northam and York, though Beverley, Cunderdin and Quairading also provided aged care services.

<sup>14</sup> C.Y. O'Connor Institute accessed via <http://www.cyoc.wa.edu.au> on 23 August 2012

In 2012, there were 92 public hospital beds in the Avon<sup>15</sup>, spread across Northam, Beverley, Cunderdin, Goomalling, Quairading, Wyalkatchem and York. All hospital facilities in the Avon are small, with Northam home to the largest facility with 30 beds. This facility is expected to undergo significant growth as a result of recent announcements of both SuperTown's funding for the Avon Health and Emergency Services Precinct and Federal Government funding for a GP Super Clinic.

The concentration of health and medical services in Northam likely explains the current concentration of aged care services in the town and its servicing of older populations in surrounding communities (such as Toodyay). However, current hospital bed distribution and accelerated population ageing, presents opportunities for aged care bed capacity to be increased in locations such as Goomalling, Toodyay and Wyalkatchem going forward.

## KEY ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

RPS has identified a series of key economic themes for the Strategy, which will define the future economic growth and dynamism of the Avon sub-region. These themes represent areas where the Avon has a distinct competitive advantage or where socio-demographic, investment or infrastructure-based drivers underpin current and future demand.

The key themes identified for the Avon Sub-Regional Economic Strategy include:

- Broadacre Agriculture and Animal Husbandry;
- Transport, Logistics and Mining-Support Industry;
- Health and Ageing Care;
- Retail and Lifestyle; and
- Tourism.

These themes and associated actions and locations are explored in the sections below.

Also included in each section is a spatial representation of advantages and industry concentration.

Each town can have three possible relationships with the whole-of-sub-region opportunities:

<sup>15</sup> AIHW (2012), Australian Hospital Report, 2012/11, Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, Canberra.

The town already has an above average competitive advantage in the relevant industry/sector and/or has existing activity leveraging this opportunity (represented as a solid circle in the matrix);

The town has the potential to have an above average competitive advantage in the relevant industry/sector (due to either changing or emerging drivers) over the next decade (represented as a dotted circle in the matrix); or

The town does not have an above average competitive advantage in the relevant sector.

## *Broadacre Agriculture & Animal Husbandry*

### RATIONALE

Avon, as part of the Wheatbelt region, is one of the major wheat producing areas in the country. Wheat production, along with animal husbandry, is likely to continue to underpin agricultural activity in the Avon along with associated storage and processing activity.

### DRIVERS AND TRENDS

The global market is projected to experience an increased demand for food, particularly from the developing countries where increased urbanisation and disposable incomes are driving greater per capita food consumptions. Bulk food commodity producers like Australia are therefore uniquely positioned to meet the needs of domestic and international markets, through continue and increased production of meat and crops like wheat.

According to the latest Agricultural Production data from the ABS, the largest concentration of agricultural holdings is in Koorda LGA with a total 250,000ha of land or 15% of the sub-region total. In contrast, Northam (106,000ha or 6%), Toodyay (90,500ha or 5%) and Tammin (109,800ha or 6%) represent the smallest concentrations of agricultural land holdings in the sub-region. In the case of Northam and Toodyay, this may reflect the more urban nature of the LGAs, though this is not reflected with York which has 136,100ha or 8% of the sub-region's holdings<sup>16</sup>.

However, the size of agricultural land holdings does not necessarily translate to production value. For example, Cunderdin, Dowerin Goomalling, Quairading and York all have proportionally higher production values than areas under crop. This reflects a combination of different crops and varying yields.

<sup>16</sup> ABS (2008), Agricultural Commodities: Small Area Cat No 7125.0, Australian Bureau of Statistics, Canberra.

## Transport, Logistics & Mining-Support Industry

### INTRODUCTION

The Avon sub-region is ideally located for transport and logistics activities due to its proximity to metropolitan Perth, major mining regions and inter and intrastate transport infrastructure. This can include leveraging the proximity to the mining investment activity to attract and retain mining-support manufacturing and fabrication industries.

The availability of large size land parcels is proving to be an enhancement to the competitive advantage presented by Transport and Logistics infrastructure, especially for business unable to expand in the metropolitan area.

### SUB-REGIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

The Avon sub-region will continue to be a hub for transport and logistics. It is ideally located, relative to major mineral resource regions (Pilbara, Goldfields and South West), Perth (the fastest growing metropolitan region in the country) and access to major national and state significant transport infrastructure. This will continue to be supported locally by increased and diversified agricultural production though will be increasingly driven by structural macro-economic drivers of commodity demand.

Within the Avon, the Avon Industrial Park represents the largest concentration of zoned industrial land, with 203ha of land either occupied or available. This is complimented locally by industrial land provision adjacent to or in close proximity to the Northam township which currently accommodates service, light industry and agricultural transport activities.

Cunderdin represents the next largest concentration of industrial land in the sub-region. LandCorp and other private parties are currently active in the market, supplying small lot volumes. In the future, the role of Cunderdin in the sub-region industrial land network will likely be enhanced by greater integration of land supplies with the Cunderdin Airport, the major airport of the sub-region. Increased regional airport and activity investment is likely to support future development of the airport precinct, given growing worker mobility associated with the mining boom. This will provide additional choice and diversity of industrial land supply in the sub-region.

The concentration of wheat production raises issues as to the diversity of agricultural activity in the sub-region. Opportunities to leverage continued R&D investments to diversify crops mix need to be investigated to help improve the sustainability of the agricultural production in the region. In addition, continued trials of dry and heat conducive crop species, improved farm management practices

As expected, broad acre agriculture represents the most distributed economic opportunity in the Avon and is likely to remain the foundation industry of the sub-region in the medium and long-term. Local reliance on the industry is greatest in the east part of the region, with towns closer to metropolitan Perth playing greater roles in the storage, transportation and administration of agricultural product

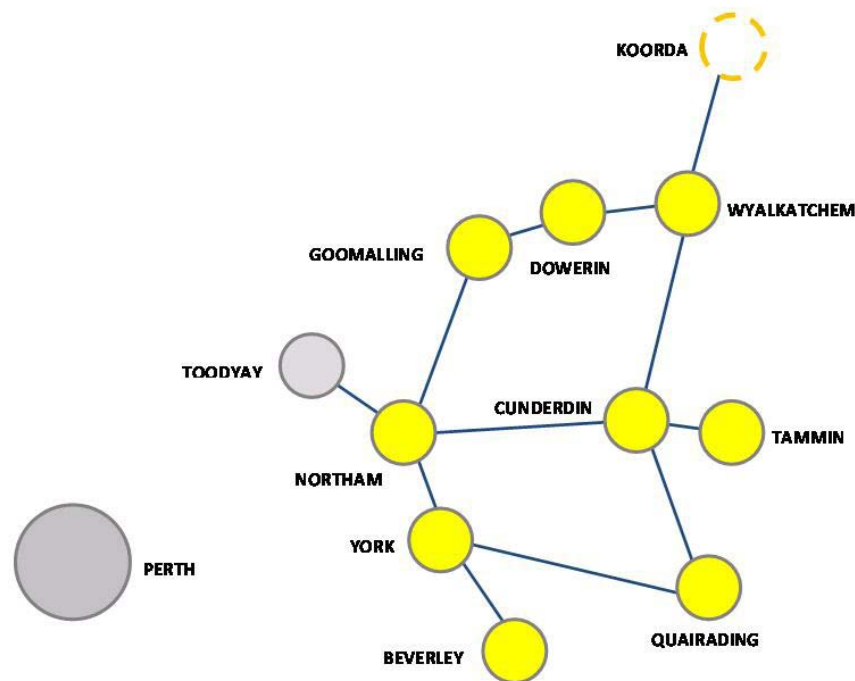


Figure 27. Spatial Distribution, Broadacre Agricultural & Animal Husbandry, Avon Sub-Region

Secondary nodes of zoned industrial land supply already exist in Dowerin, Goomalling, Quairading and Toodyay, with small tertiary nodes in Koorda. In Dowerin, the active development of this land is likely constrained by infrastructure and development costs as well as local labour availability which limit inward investment attraction opportunities.

Goomalling Council is currently developing industrial land up to Cemetery Rd along Goomalling Wyalkatchem Road. This houses Council Supply Depots. Land assembly, including dealing with some Aboriginal land issues, is required prior to further release of industrial land in Goomalling.

Toodyay's industrial activity appears to be accommodated wholly in land zoned for mixed use commercial activity, making supply identification and analysis difficult. However, activity seems to be split between in-town (with local servicing and warehousing activity predominant) and out-of-town. The out-of-town industrial activity comprises 22 lots developed by Council. It includes construction support (landscaping, earthmoving, cement) and fabrication, though almost half of lots remain vacant. It is likely that Toodyay will restrict its light industry to business servicing this town and Shire, with larger or more sub regional businesses being located in Goomalling.

In the future, zoning activity is scheduled to increase supply in Beverley and elevate its role in the sub-regional industrial land network. This is being facilitated in the short-term by the release of approximately 14 lots on De Lisle St and in the long-term by the development of Crown land south of the townsite. However, development is likely to be constrained by flood lines and the expense of drainage.

Additionally, Wyalkatchem appears to be developing new industrial land supplies in town in an attempt to diversify away from current agricultural-oriented activity. Again, development activity is slowed by the existence of Aboriginal title constraints on relevant parcels though considerable progress continues to be made on this issue. Infrastructure capacity in the short-to-medium term appears sufficient to meet expanding industrial

needs. Long-term planning will be required however, if activity extends towards Cunderdin. Reopening of the Wyalkatchem airport would provide a potential anchor for further industrial development and leverage potential aviation school activity.

Strong drivers exist to support transport, logistics and light industry investment and activity in the Avon sub-region. Spatial analysis identifies a "ring" of industrial opportunities comprising Northam, York, Quairading, Cunderdin, Dowerin and Goomalling. The dotted circle around York highlights the need for transport infrastructure investment to facilitate increased truck movements through this town.

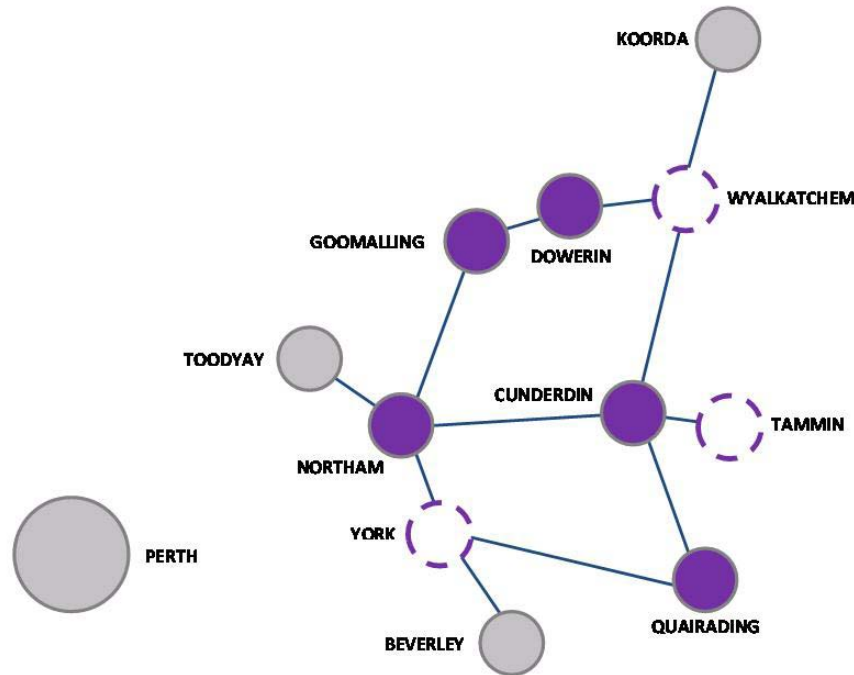


Figure 28. Connection to Major Transport/Logistics Regions, Avon Spatial Distribution, Transport, Logistics & Mining-Support Industry, Avon Sub-Region.

## Health & Aged Care

### DRIVERS AND TRENDS

The Avon currently has an older population, with 17.1% of the residential population aged 65+, which is well above the State average of 12.1%. However, not all towns have uniformly aged populations with towns such as Wyalkatchem (27.3%), Beverley (24.5%) and Quairading (21.4%) having more than one fifth of their current populations aged 65 and over<sup>17</sup>.

In addition to demand for general and acute hospitalisation, population ageing also increases the intensity of local demand for pharmacy, radiation oncology, cardiology, pathology and other primary and ancillary support services. This includes residential aged care services.

### SUB-REGIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

Hospital and aged care bed capacity is currently concentrated in Northam, within the Avon Health and Emergency Services Precinct. Funding for expansion of this precinct has recently been secured from both the State Government's Royalties for Regions program (SuperTowns) and the Federal Government (for the establishment of a GP Super Clinic).

However, other towns within the sub-region are also home to local level health care facilities including but not limited to:

- Hospitals: Beverley, Cunderdin, Goomalling, Quairading, Wyalkatchem and York; and
- Aged care: Beverley, Cunderdin, Goomalling, Quairading, Wyalkatchem and York.

The distribution of hospital and aged care facilities are highly aligned, reflecting the interrelationship between the different levels of health care provision in the sub-region. This distribution does appear to align with those towns with above average 65+ populations, though total population size within a town's broader catchment appears to be the major driver of facility location.

The expanded Avon Health and Emergency Services Precinct will fulfil the primary role in health care provision in the sub-region. However, the geographical size and distribution of population and ageing in the Avon supports a dispersed health care delivery model, with local facilities tailored to the needs of their catchments. The Wheatbelt Development

<sup>17</sup> ABS (2012), Census of Population and Housing, 2011, Australian Bureau of Statistics, Canberra.

Commission will work with local governments to complete health and aged planning in the Avon to develop supported investment priorities.

Affordability of the sub-region relative to metropolitan Perth, along with population ageing and regionally significant health care provision, will also underpin demand for retirement housing. Quality, affordable lifestyle villages in the region, particularly in centres with strong health care provision and strong natural amenity, are required. Niche village types need to be targeted, such as recreational vehicle-conducive villages, which leverage existing sub-region comparative advantage. This will help differentiate the Avon from outer metropolitan and regional markets.

The distribution of economic opportunities in health and aged care is primarily determined by a combination of current and short-term population ageing and the distribution of existing health facilities. Toodyay's population is increasingly ageing, but average age currently lags behind the rest of the Avon due to the lifestyle-based nature of local migration patterns. As this population ages further, local health and aged care opportunities will increase the need for a combination of local services in addition to strong transport connectivity to Northam.

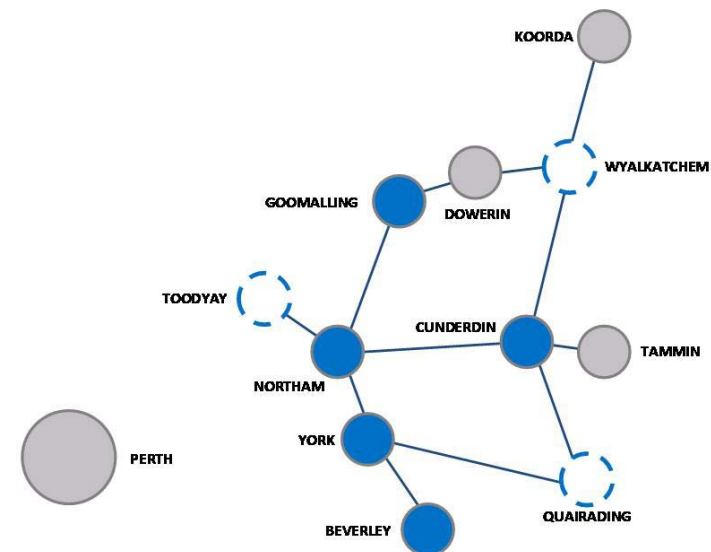


Figure 29. Spatial Distribution, Health & Aged Care, Avon Sub-Region.

## Retail & Lifestyle Rationale

The need to increase residential population of the Avon, in order to provide sufficient workforce for major industries, necessitates an enhancement in the sub-region's lifestyle. While blessed with natural lifestyle characteristics and affordable housing options, improvements are required to the diversity and quality of retail offering, public realm, housing mix and social infrastructure. This will also improve the local tourism offering by increasing the attractiveness of the sub-region as a tourism destination.

In all locations, retail viability and sustainability can be enhanced through improvements to local public realm amenity. Improvements in pedestrian permeability and amenity will promote greater retention of local retail expenditure and help leverage increased visitor expenditure through improvements to the consumer environment. It can also enhance the work environment for service workers, which improves the attractiveness of the location for professional services sector businesses. Local amenity improvements, including land and street scaping can be augmented through consolidation of land parcels and uses in the town centre, to provide for the logical collocation of uses and activities. This can enhance the viability of centre uses, by decreasing visitor travel and providing a single concentration of activity.

Housing diversity is also an important contributor to local lifestyle. Regional communities traditionally have low housing diversity levels, instead exhibiting a concentration of separate detached housing. This has been due to the availability of lower cost service residential land. However, rising construction and engineering costs, along with improved construction methods, have led to medium density development becoming more viable in regional communities. The ability of towns to retain younger age groups, students, retirees and key workers is increasingly dependent on the diversity of housing offered in the local market. Providing greater levels of exposure to different housing product can also assist in increasing local community acceptance of higher density living, providing genuine choice to existing and new residents.

### SUB-REGIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

Towns in the Avon sub-region have experienced below average growth in household incomes over the past decade. According to the most recent Census, income growth has varied between 2.2% in Wyalkatchem to 5.5%

per annum in Toodyay. These rates are well below the State Average of 6.1% per annum since 2001. As a result of this growth, household income levels in the Avon in 2011 remained below the State average of \$73,580. Lower incomes however do not necessarily translate to lower retail expenditure levels if local costs of living are below average. This appears to be the case for the Avon. In 2011, all towns in the sub-region had house prices below the median for Perth and, with the exception of Toodyay and York, were more affordable relative to local income levels. This lower housing cost level means proportionally greater levels of disposable income for Avon households.

Anecdotal evidence suggests the existence of two distinct expenditure patterns in the Avon. Those communities west of Northam, including those in the Perth hinterland, generally fall within the gravity well of Midland and associated concentration of district and sub-regional expenditure. Conversely, those communities to the east of Northam rely primarily on Northam for sub-regional shopping.

Analysis by AEC Group indicated that there was sufficient demand in Northam's primary and secondary catchments to support an increase in the town's retail offering of 28,000 square metres by 2031<sup>19</sup>. This is supported by increased household expenditure and incomes as well as population growth. In addition to this, increased retail floorspace supply is expected in Toodyay and York, in response to both local and visitor expenditure pool increases.

Outside of these major population centres, increased retail offering will respond to growth in residential population and incomes. The concentration of higher order retail in Northam will lead to other communities likely accommodating predominantly local service retail. The mix and scale of such retail services will also be dependent on the local market critical mass, with larger towns like Beverley, Cunderdin and Quairading able to sustain larger retail offerings than smaller communities.

<sup>19</sup> AECgroup (2011) Retail and Commercial Investment Strategy, Northam SuperTown Growth Plan, AECgroup, Brisbane.

The sub-regional retail network is, and will continue to be, centred in Northam, with the largest concentration of population and floorspace in the Avon. York, Beverley and Toodyay will continue to experience both population and visitor led increases in local retail demand, with lifestyle and tourism drivers underpinning growth. Outside of these areas, the size and quality of convenience retail offering will be dependent on population critical mass.

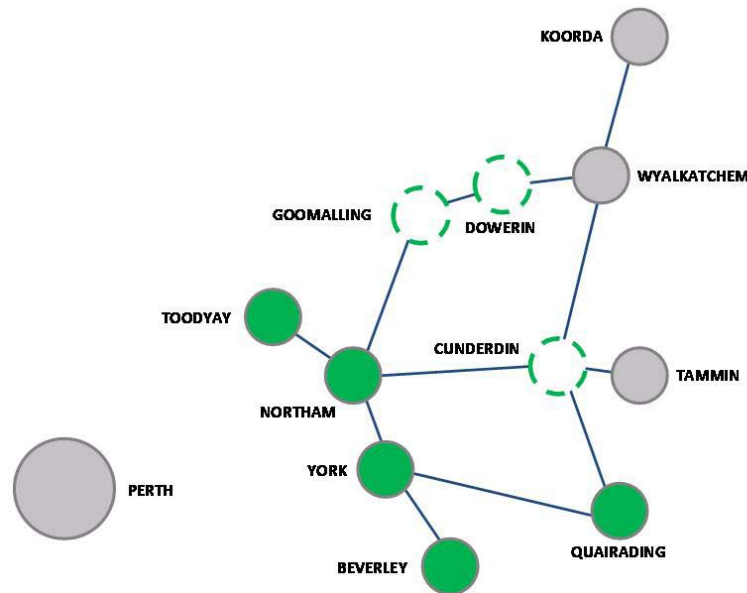


Figure 30. Spatial Distribution, Retail & Lifestyle, Avon Sub-Region

<sup>20</sup> TRA (2012), Online Data Sets NVS and IVS, Tourism Research Australia, Canberra.

<sup>21</sup> TRA (2012), Online Data Sets NVS and IVS, Tourism Research Australia, Canberra.

## Tourism

### DRIVERS AND TRENDS

Between 2006 and 2011, the Avon region attracted an average 638,000 tourists/short-term visitors per year<sup>20</sup> representing an average 23 visitors per resident. This is well above the State average of 8 visitors per resident, highlighting the strong performance of the sub-region in spite of the small population. This reflects the fact that tourism in the Avon is characterised predominantly by day trip visitors. Between 2006 and 2011, approximately 80% of visitors to the Avon were day trip visitors, with the domestic overnight visitors accounting for 19%<sup>21</sup>. This is illustrated in the figure below

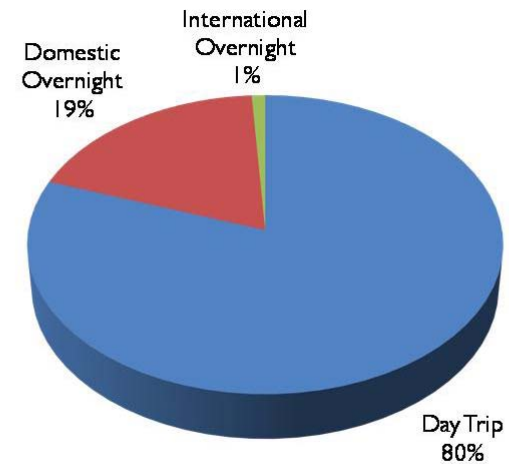


Figure 31. Breakdown of Visitors to Avon Sub-Region, by Type, 2006 to 2011

### Sub-Regional Characteristics

The Avon was one of the earliest settled regions of Western Australia, with early migrants taking advantage of the area's high agricultural fertility to produce export crops for the British market. The pioneering heritage of the



sub-region is reflected local architecture, attractions (e.g. Newcastle Gaol) and a number of historical and agricultural museums (e.g. Wyalkatchem CBH Museum). Avondale Farm in Beverley provides an historic agricultural experience.

The varied agricultural production of the region also provides tourism attractions, particularly relating to wine and olive production in Toodyay and York and the Toodyay International Food Festival. Farm stays are also increasingly common.

The outdoor lifestyle of the sub-region is a competitive advantage, with the Avon Valley National Park and rural setting supporting a range of activities. This includes the Avon Descent, which is the most prominent event in the sub-region with the largest overnight, interstate and international visitor attraction. The TargaWest also leverages the outdoor lifestyle of the area, with a stage undertaken in Toodyay. Other formal outdoor attractions include skydiving and balloon rides, as well as the Beverley Aeronautical Museum, which celebrates the aviation heritage of the region. The outdoor lifestyle also supports a range of passive activities including motorcycling, bushwalking, camping and caravanning.

There are limited tourism accommodation establishments in the sub-region and current offerings are concentrated in Northam, Toodyay and York. This in part reflects the recent consolidation of Avon-wide tourism events from smaller Towns to the major sub-regional centres (namely Northam). Additionally, accommodation mix and quality is also limited, with convenience-level accommodation (e.g. motels, caravan parks) the most common. The proximity of the Avon-sub-region to metropolitan Perth generally incentivises high levels of daytrip travel which reduces overall demand for overnight visitation. Nevertheless, it is highly likely that a lack of diversity of accommodation in the Avon is constraining the capture and/or conversion of travellers into overnight visitors, with associated increases in local expenditure and economic impacts. At this stage York offers the largest offering of quality short stay accommodation in the sub region.

There is a strong spatial relationship between retail and tourism opportunities, reflecting the role that lifestyle, amenity and Perth proximity drivers play in the distribution of this economic activity. While it is expected that the daytrip market will continue to dominate local tourism activity, the sub-region possesses a strong current and potential exposure to “Grey Nomad” based domestic tourism. This will underpin opportunities in Goomalling particularly, but also in other local towns. The whole Avon possesses a diverse range of tourism offerings that collectively provide considerable choice for local visitors and should therefore be promoted in a single cohesive fashion.

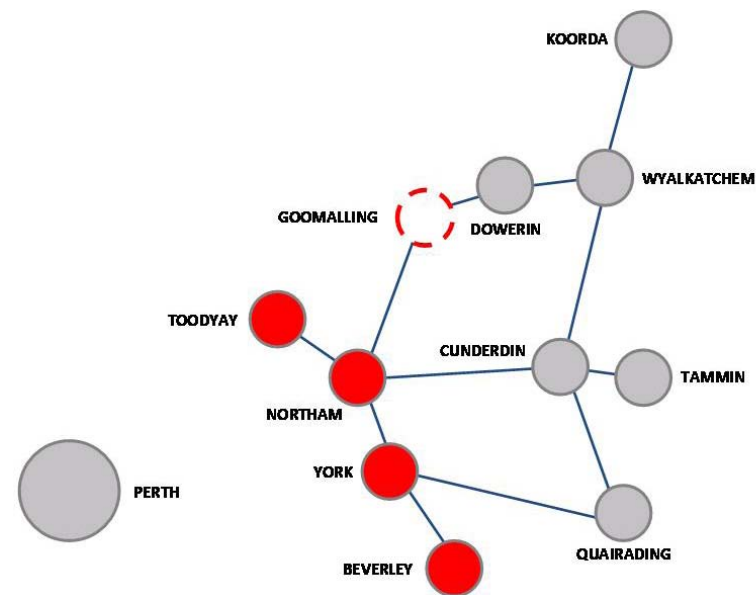


Figure 32. Spatial Distribution, Tourism, Avon Sub-Region

## Summary – Town by Town

### BEVERLEY

The Shire of Beverley is home to a population of 1567 (ABS, 2012), with the future population growth of the Shire anticipated by the WDC to reach 1800 people by 2012. The Shire predicts future local demographics to include an increased proportion of persons in the 65+ age group due to an ageing population and also due to the migration of Perth retirees. Driving the increase in Beverley's population will be retirees from Perth and the Avon which will move to Beverley due to its lifestyle and services, as well as cheaper land and housing prices and its close proximity to Perth.

The Shire of Beverley is working towards supporting the Avon region through the provision of good health and aged care, attracting light to medium industry (from Perth) and supporting the development of tourism activities.

Beverley has a strong health and aged care sector, providing a wide range of aged care and medical services. The aging demographic of Beverley has prompted much of the town's current healthcare infrastructure, as well as providing a basis for the expansion of aged care accommodation for the town. Beverley currently has a number of independent retiree units, and is looking to expand the number of these units to provide for increasing demand for such types of accommodation. The town hospital is also geared towards the servicing of an aging population with a frail aged lodge located on the hospital grounds. Beverley is further looking to expand hospital services to include a small dementia wing.

Tourism in Beverley is an expanding sector, with the Avondale Farm as a significant regional heritage and agri-tourism attraction. Opportunity exists to co-locate the various motor sports already operating in the Shire and attracting popular noisy metropolitan sports forced from their current Perth metropolitan locations. A growing arts and cultural precinct, including an outdoor Platform Theatre at the Heritage Railway station will service local and regional communities and support the developing Wheatbelt Rail project.

### CUNDERDIN

The Shire of Cunderdin is populated by 1310 people, with the WDC suggesting an increase in population to 1700 persons by 2021. The town has a strong light industry base.

The Shire of Cunderdin sees its advantage in the region as its proximity to Northam and to Perth, and its established light industrial sector.

Cunderdin also has the largest airstrip in the subregion. The upgrading and further utilising the airstrip is a major focus for the town.

Recent developments in Cunderdin's light industry development include subdivision of industrial zoned land, expansion of CBH, and emergence of new light industrial businesses in the town. Cunderdin's active role in the development of light industry aids in further cementing the town's competitive advantage in light industry.

The Cunderdin Airfield is currently being upgraded further and will play an important role in terms of transport and logistics in the Avon region. The upgrading of the airfield provides the opportunity for Cunderdin to help attract investment in aviation related activities with recent interest in the strip by the private sector. Northam has formally adopted a policy that major aviation industry should be located at Cunderdin.

Cunderdin's position on the Great Eastern Highway further supports its competitive advantage in its role in the transport and logistics sector.

## DOWERIN

The Shire of Dowerin has a population of 678 (ABS, 2012), with the WDC suggesting an increase in population to 1000 by 2021. The Shire of Dowerin's population is ageing, a trend amplified with an influx of retirees moving from Perth to the Shire. There has also been an outmigration of the 18 to 25 year old age bracket, with many of these young people not returning to the Shire.

The Shire of Dowerin sees its regional role in the Avon as focusing on its potential for modest population increase and lifestyle improvement. Dowerin is seeking to capitalize on partnering with Northam in order to provide improved education services and fostering a drive-in-drive out (DIDO) population. It is also keen to expand its aged care accommodation, expand its tourist base, and make improvements to its recreation and sporting grounds.

Dowerin's plans for population increase are aimed at increasing the proportion of young people remaining in the town, and also by retaining and attracting those in the 65+ age bracket. Dowerin is planning to improve secondary and tertiary education services in coordination with Northam to assist in the attraction and retention of youth in Dowerin and the Avon. To retain and attract retiree age population Dowerin is also planning development of retiree suited housing. In addition Dowerin hopes to attract a DIDO population of people willing to make the relatively short commute to Northam for employment.

Currently, the Shire is looking to add value to the Dowerin Field Days and is updating its sporting facilities including the sports pavilion and the amalgamation of the football oval, tennis courts and bowling green. There is also a great Shire focus on supporting and contributing to the development of the Wheatbelt Heritage Rail Trail tourism project.

## GOOMALLING

The Shire of Goomalling currently has a population of 985, with population estimated by the WDC of 2000 people Shire by 2021. The Shire has an aging demographic akin to much of the Avon region, however Goomalling's ambition of developing a dementia hospital may see the median age of the Shire increase.

According to the Shire of Goomalling, it sees its role in the Avon as providing complementary health and accommodation services to Northam and the Avon sub-region. The Shire is working on maintaining and adding to its current health care services and aged care accommodation. It is also supporting light industry attraction and leveraging off the Wheatbelt Heritage Rail Trail project and further developing its popular caravan park.

Goomalling anticipates an increase in its population through DIDO Northam workers attracted by the town's cheap accommodation and close proximity to Northam and Midland. It also expects that the population will grow through the attraction of people from other areas of the Wheatbelt due to medical facilities and services which are complementary to those in Northam. The Shire sees the establishment of a dementia hospital as a regionally significant project, which will provide for the care of elderly residents disinclined to making the move to Perth for specialist care.

The Shire owns a substantial amount of commercial and industrial land which provides development opportunities and minimum impediments to reaching an increase in population to 1,500 people by 2022.

Goomalling is actively involved with the tourism sector, and has joined with other towns to assist with the development of the Wheatbelt Heritage Rail Trail tourism project. Goomalling has heavily invested in its caravan park which has resulted in its auspicious reputation amongst caravan and motorhoming clubs. This has led to a large increase in numbers of tourists to the town. Goomalling will further invest in its caravan park to continue the improvement of the town's tourist visitor numbers.

## KOORDA

The Shire of Koorda has a population of 437 (ABS, 2012), with the WDC suggesting a small increase in population to 500 by 2021.

The Shire is anticipating a stable population, going against predictions made by the WA Planning Commission in 2011 that it will decline. The Shire predicts limited growth but does predict future local demographics to include an increased proportion of persons in the 65+ age group due to an ageing local population.

According to the Shire of Koorda, it sees itself playing a limited role in the Avon and suffers leakages to surrounding Shires that have a greater proximity to Northam and Perth. Koorda acknowledges that it is not on a major transport route, which has affected the attraction of industry and population. Despite this Koorda is looking toward small scale local industrial recreational and healthcare development.

The Shire of Koorda is working towards attractive industrial units for light industry. Social and cultural services for existing residents are planned, including a drive in theatre and improvement to Recreation grounds and services. The Shire is also seeking to attract an increase in medical services, in conjunction with the Shire of Wyalkatchem.

The effects of the growth of Northam through the SuperTowns project is anticipated to have only a small effect on Koorda, due to the lack of direct road route to Northam and the resultant large distance between the two towns. Koorda is more likely to be subject to the knock on effects of the nearby towns of Dowerin and Wyalkatchem as they develop in response to their close proximity to Northam.

## QUAIRADING

The Shire of Quairading has a population of 1043, with a WDC suggested population of 1600 by 2021. The majority of the Shire's population reside in the town site of Quairading. The Shire predicts future local demographics to include an increased proportion of persons in the 65+ age group due to an ageing population and also due to the migration of Perth/other regions retirees.

Quairading sees its role in the Avon as supporting the region by providing accommodation for retirees and seniors with a proposed new aged care facility, attracting agricultural supplies and services and also providing a multi-Shire recycling service.

Quairading will be establishing a Global Care accommodation and health care facility for retirees and seniors (26 bed aged care facility, 37 independent living units). It is anticipated that this will lead to an increase in population through Perth retirees seeking out the high quality accommodation and healthcare services as well as country lifestyle and community groups which Quairading has on offer. This development will also give the Shire the opportunity to further develop the lifestyle and amenity of the town, with enhancements of social and cultural infrastructure (new Community Resource Centre and Meeting Facility, Town Hall)

There is an increase in agricultural services within the town, fuelled by the expansion of CBH, as well as the proposed relocation of machinery manufacturer Ausplow Farming Systems from Perth to the town. The expansion of agricultural service business is anticipated to increase the employment opportunities for Quairading.

Quairading currently has a regional role in waste management services, providing recycling for 5 Wheatbelt towns, and looking to further expand to providing these services to the east. As the recycling facility's scope increases Quairading's waste recycling will be further expanded, providing additional local and regional employment opportunities.

## TAMMIN

The Shire of Tammin is home to a population of 404 (ABS, 2012), with the future population growth of the Shire anticipated by the WDC to reach 500 people by 2021. The distribution of the current population is a majority of persons residing outside the town site of Tammin. The Shire predicts future local demographics to include an increased proportion of persons in the 65+ age group due to an ageing population but also an increase in a transient population (backpackers working in agriculture) and a migration of workers for the planned upgrades to the Abattoir on Great Eastern Hwy.

The Shire of Tammin sees its role in the region as a transport hub, centred on the value adding transport and logistics sector. Tammin sees its role in the Avon increasing in the future as it moves away from broadacre agriculture as its only substantial economic driver. The Shire of Tammin is planning development which capitalises on the Great Eastern Hwy, as well as accommodation for families / workers, social and cultural services for existing residents. It is also looking to develop its abattoir to further its economic diversification.

The Shire of Tammin has potential to further develop transport and logistics due to the locational advantage of its placement on the Great Eastern Highway and Prospector passenger rail line. Tammin has given support to a grain exporting company locating in the town. The Shire also is undertaking a subdivision of land which will enable the development of industrial lots. The Shire intends to support this development and facilitate worker accommodation to sustain the population growth resulting from employment generated.

## TOODYAY

The current population of the Shire of Toodyay is 4387 (ABS 2012) with the WDC suggesting that the Shire will more than double to 8000 by 2021. The Shire of Toodyay is predicting future residential growth will be in rural residential lots and within the town. The Shire is experiencing an ageing population. Many students leave the Shire after years 7, 10 or 12. The Shire is predicting future demographics to include tree changers/lifestylers and professionals moving from the busy Perth life to the community lifestyle of Toodyay.

Toodyay sees its role in the Avon as being a tourist destination and an attractive place for people to move to for a lifestyle change. The Shire also sees potential of the town to promote itself as a 'green' town which is focused on maintaining the natural amenity of the town. Toodyay is the closest town in the Avon to Perth serviced by passenger rail.

Toodyay is keen to take advantage of the natural amenity and heritage of the town to attract tourists to the Shire. This motivates the town to help reinvent itself as an environmentally conscious 'green' town.

There has been a heavy emphasis on triple bottom line in regards to development within the Shire, with consideration of environmental protection especially prominent. A bypass has been touted for the townsite; however this is yet to come into effect. The Shire is working towards improving the availability of service industry within the Shire and reducing the amount of heavy industry present, especially within the townsite, in order to further enhance the town as a one of relaxed lifestyle and environmental amenity. Toodyay supports locally servicing light industry, with the majority of light industry development in this part being based in Goomalling.

Toodyay has a great ability to welcome new residents to the town, with approximately 975 lots available for future development. The Shire is aiming for a growth rate of 3% per annum, resulting in 30 new lots per annum over the next 10 years. This planned release of residential lots will help the region to maintain a gradual increase in the population of the Avon.

Further planning on water and waste water infrastructure is required for Toodyay, along with staged investment plans to facilitate residential development undertaken.

## WYALKATCHEM

The current population of the Shire of Wyalkatchem is 522 (ABS 2012) with the future population of the Shire anticipated by the WDC to reach 800 people by 2021. The Shire predicts that there will be an increasingly expanding proportion of people in the 65+ age bracket. However modest entrance of younger aviation and service business workers related to its planned development may counteract this demographic trend to some extent. Wyalkatchem airstrip is used for pilot training.

According to the Shire of Wyalkatchem, it sees its role in the Avon through the North East Regional Organisation of Councils (NEWROC) and its regional projects. There is also a Community Health Plan with the Shire of Koorda, which they are keen to see aligned with the Avon health model. Other involvements include the Wheatbelt Heritage Rail Trail and Pioneer Pathways.

Over the next 10 years the Shire is aiming for 60 lots of residential land development. Following current aged care planning it is envisaged that a future development will be a 26 bed high dependency facility.

Development of trade units is being encouraged by the Shire, which is releasing small light industrial lots suitable for location of small industry based businesses.

The Shire is currently working towards developing the airport, with \$3.5million of funding invested in the upgrade. Plans are to continue to develop an weather airport, a venue for navigation training, cross country exercises for student pilots and potential venue for international aviation pilots. The airport is being developed as a significant piece of transport infrastructure for the Avon and Wheatbelt.

Wyalkatchem is keen to contribute to the Wheatbelt Heritage Rail Trail which it hopes will encourage more visitors to the area.

## YORK

Currently the estimated population of the Shire of York is 3396 (ABS 2012), with the 2021 population of the Shire anticipated by the WDC to reach 7000. The distribution of the current population is approximately 50/50 of persons residing in the town site and rural areas of York. The Shire predicts future local demographics to include an increased proportion of FIFO and DIDO residents, government agencies and the professional population attached to this, along with 'Tree Changers' and retirees.

York sees its role in the Avon as a residential growth area, which makes good use of its health and aged care infrastructure and retail and lifestyle amenity. The Shire anticipates that this role will develop from York's planned release of new accommodation and residential land. For the development of the town, the Shire of York is keen for a bypass route to be developed to cater for increasing transport traffic. This is important as the current route endangers heritage buildings, which is one of the reasons why York is celebrated as a tourist town. York also sees itself as a service centre in the region.

The future residential growth is predicted to be in the town site of York and surrounding rural residential area, specifically in the current estate of Balladong (aged accommodation and care) and the new estates of Deliak and Grass Vale. High demand for rural residential and aged care is being driven by families and seniors respectively.

York has a role in the Avon as a location for some services not available in all towns. It has a major CBH grain receival point, a District High School, demand for childcare places from surrounding areas and aged accommodation and care. York will also play a major role in providing services through the RTG and DIDO between Perth and the Avon (Northam and York particularly).

## SUMMARY

- Local governments neighbouring the Shire of Northam (York, Cunderdin, Goomalling and Toodyay) see a positive relationship developing with the SuperTowns development e.g. DIDO workforce, cheaper accommodation and reciprocal relationships developing. The Wheatbelt Development Commission has commenced a regional planning strategy to clarify sub regional economic drivers and constraints to development.
- Overall local governments with access to good arterial or collector roads anticipate population growth.
- Timely development and infrastructure approvals (land, headworks), guided by sub regional planning, will aid population growth in the Avon.
- Some local governments in the Avon have experienced difficulty in marketing and selling existing vacant land (GFC, slow economy).
- Some local governments in the Avon are possibly not anticipating a large influx of people over a short period of time (5 – 7yrs). Rather they are anticipating a longer term, steady growth.
- Councils observed to be proactively pursuing planning across a variety of areas with diverse developments and industries in their districts are expected to see a population growth.
- It is quite reasonable to expect the Avon sub-region's population (excluding Northam) to reach 25,000+ people, with continued growth dispersed across local governments that are already growing in population (according to ABS and Shire) and have the necessary infrastructure and services, in particular York, Toodyay, Goomalling and Beverley.
- The Avon Industrial Park is positioned to facilitate employee travel from Cunderdin, Meckering, York, Toodyay, Northam, Goomalling and other Avon towns.
- Northam and Toodyay are serviced by the Avon Link train and those communities along Great Eastern Highway are serviced by the Prospector. As the area grows, intra sub-regional public transport will become important.

- Overall local governments believe the drivers in population growth across the Avon will be employment opportunities, access to medical and education services, lifestyle and security, access to major transport routes or options and quality accommodation options.
- Overall the local governments in the Avon are expecting an aging population, either existing or moving to their district and hence are planning for services and infrastructure to target this demographic.

Further information and planning for this sub region around the central SuperTown of Northam will occur in the next two to three years. Information gathered to date supports the 50,000 Sub-Regional population target as being realistic.

It is recommended that a regional planning strategy be prepared, incorporating each town to clarify their regional roles, as well as their future land use and development for the Avon Sub-Region.





## AVON INDUSTRIAL PARK

Established in the early 1990's as the direct result of a community initiative, the Avon Industrial Park (AIP) is attracting increasing business attention as more industries commit to its occupancy. The AIP has the potential to create employment opportunities for more than 2,500 people. 300 new jobs will be created during the 2012-13 financial year from one major national occupant alone. Interest in establishing new businesses at the AIP is escalating.

The multipliers of capital investment and job creation already have a marked impression on the sub region's economy. With this also comes population building and the associated demands on social infrastructure.

The AIP is recognised as a major economic driver for the Avon Sub Region; both in direct job creation and associated support businesses attracted to light industry and service areas in the region. The AIP is strategically positioned to attract businesses servicing not only Wheatbelt oriented businesses, but also the resources sector throughout the State. The interest in this park is directly related to its proximity to Perth, the large lot sizes and surrounding transport and logistics infrastructure.

Taking into account current demand, it is expected that there will be a need for infrastructure upgrades to release Stage 3 within the next two years. Funding approvals to put this in place are likely to be required by the end of 2013 to allow for planning and implementation.

The economic consultants for the Northam SuperTowns project have identified industry development as a major driver of growth in the Avon Sub Region. While this includes sub regional town light industry sites, for general industry the AIP is a critical part of this segment.





# Vision and Objectives

## Growth Planning Strategies

Planning and development in a sustainable manner has become of paramount importance in recent years as environmental awareness coupled with better understanding and respect for communities has occurred. The three key features of sustainable development are the equal consideration of economic, social and environmental matters. "People, planet and profit" succinctly describes the triple bottom lines and the goal of sustainability. For a truly sustainable community or region strategies supporting these three aspects are necessary. Following on the aspirational vision, the goals are set which clearly define the objectives of the Northam Growth Plan; these elements of the plan allow for the development of five key focus areas that cover the three sustainable aspects, these being economic, community, environmental, public realm and built environment and infrastructure and resources.

This Growth Plan is premised on an aspirational vision and population with the notion of developing Northam as a modern regional centre supported by all the services and facilities enjoyed by other Australian regional centres. Accordingly, this plan outlines detailed interventions aimed at helping to revitalise Northam and guide the sustainable growth of the town towards a regional centre over the next 20 years. The Shire of Northam and the Wheatbelt Development Commission will support sub regional planning and the development of sub-regional investment blueprints to ensure that public and private investments are made to maximise growth potential in the surrounding communities. It is recognised that this is imperative

**"People, planet and profit" succinctly describes the triple bottom lines and the goal of sustainability.**

if the Avon is to reach 50,000 people. The Shire of Northam, conscious of the needs of the sub regional communities, will ensure that planning for the regional centre's growth enables Northam to play its rightful place in this sub regional growth. This document comprises non spatial strategies and actions and a spatial future plan to guide the delivery of land and infrastructure for the creation and maintenance of a diverse and sustainable community. The Plan is intended to inform all levels of government, servicing agencies, community providers and members of the community as to where the future growth of Northam is to occur, what is required in order to facilitate development and what the desired vision and objectives for each area are.

Specifically this section sets out the strategies that identify the long-term vision and objectives for Northam, context, key issues and opportunities, strategies for how sustainable growth of the town should occur. This includes a social infrastructure framework, which aligns the population growth trajectory, corresponding social and physical infrastructure requirements to meet the needs of that growth, and the thresholds at which it should be provided. This document also provides the detail for the delivery of the State Government's SuperTowns Framework, and will provide the Shire with a platform for seeking funding through State Government (including the Royalties for Regions programme), the private sector and other funding programmes. This document identifies the roles and responsibilities of both public and private sector organisations in order to realise the vision for Northam.

The Growth Plan recommends a way forward to accommodate growth of up to 20,000 people within the town and 50,000 within the region. The Growth Plan is based upon known context analysis, opportunities and constraints however, in some cases assumptions have had to be made to deliver this plan and these have been identified in the precinct sections of this report. This plan should be considered in this context as the potential upper limit to growth and development in most cases. It is anticipated that as a result of more detailed planning such as preparation of development plans (structure plans), policy development and additional strategy work, refined estimates for growth will evolve. Notwithstanding this, the intent for the Growth Plan should always drive development decisions in the first instance, with implications affecting the overall growth objectives being analysed and clearly articulated.

The following sections detail how the Growth Plan responds to the key economic, community, environmental, public realm and built environment and infrastructure and resources objectives. The tables covering each of the themes relate to specific issues and solutions for Northam and the Avon sub-region when considering growth and implications. It should be noted that the intention is to work with State Government Agencies and GTE's post completion of this growth plan to develop staged investment plans for core infrastructure. The Supertowns program is encouraging involvement by State agencies and over the next few years such staged and costed, investment plans will be possible around the population targets outlined here.



## KEY STRATEGIES AND GOALS FOR NORTHAM AND THE AVON SUB-REGION

Table 10. Economic

Elements	Strategic Goals	Key Focus Areas
A sub-region that is still agriculturally productive whilst supporting a growing diversified economy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By 2031 the Sub-Region's identified key productive agricultural land area is used for predominantly grazing and cropping and has been protected from ad-hoc subdivision, incompatible development and further land degradation.</li> <li>By 2015 recognise opportunities for niche agricultural industries as well as cropping and grazing.</li> </ul>	<p>Protection of fertile agricultural land, particularly to the east of the Northam townsite.</p> <p>Recognise the role that Research and Development can play in increasing the contribution that agricultural land can play in the regional and State economy.</p> <p>Rural Residential and Rural Smallholding development will not be approved on productive agricultural land. Smaller acreage properties to be assisted by DAFFWA to diversify into niche agricultural industries.</p>
A sub-region that promotes commercial and industrial development to drive investment, with a focus on Northam as the sub-regional centre.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By 2017 diversification in the sub-region's economy will lead to the creation of new employment opportunities through the development of a wide range of new commercial and industrial uses. This is to be achieved through the promotion and development of supply chain linkages between light industrial development (Northam and other Avon-Sub Region Centres) and the general industrial development at the Avon Industrial Park. In addition Northam is positioned well to have increased population and business related services.</li> <li>By 2015 the Northam townsite will be established as the administrative and commercial centre of the sub-region. The majority of new commercial and light industrial development to the townsite will have built upon existing infrastructure in this settlement and have maximised efficiencies of operation and economies of scale.</li> </ul>	<p>Attraction of key industries that serve to offer new employment opportunities to the community and improve the employment diversity base.</p> <p>Enhance Northam as the key office based employer for the sub-region. Maximise efficiencies of supply chain linkages between Avon Industrial Park and light industrial developments.</p>
Encourage appropriate zoning and development of commercial and industrial land uses within the sub-region.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Avoid the establishment of commercial or mixed use as it may detract from providing a consolidated activity precinct in the town centre and could attract a discount department store or bulky goods retail outside designated retail area for these uses.</li> </ul>	<p>Government offices shift into a Central Business Area sub-precinct of the town centre.</p> <p>Confine development of commercial retail related services to the town centre where possible, to allow for it to remain a focal point.</p>

Elements	Strategic Goals	Key Focus Areas
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Achieve by 2020 and from then on, continue to support the establishment of a wide range of general industrial uses including manufacturing, processing and distribution activities in the Avon Industrial Park and maintain sufficient amounts of suitably zoned and serviced commercial and industrial land that is provided in appropriate locations within existing established areas.</li> <li>By 2013 there will be new commercial and light and service industrial development in the region's townsites in appropriate locations.</li> </ul>	<p>Ensure adequate light industry land is available in Northam and throughout the sub-region based on sub regional economic planning.</p> <p>Encourage future development providing it is in appropriate locations.</p> <p>Encourage industrial development in designated precinct areas (West Industrial Precinct, East Industrial Precinct and the Avon Industrial Park).</p>
<p>Promote tourism to allow it to develop and contribute to the sub-region economy in a diverse manner, whilst also protecting the heritage of the area.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By 2022 development and diversification of tourism will have led to a vibrant and self sufficient tourism industry that contributes a substantial quantity of capital and employment to the Avon sub-region.</li> <li>By 2017 investing in tourism will be an attractive and simple proposition by recognising tourism as a legitimate land use compatible with a range of existing land uses.</li> <li>By 2013 due consideration will be given as a matter of course to protecting the natural environment and cultural heritage places of value to tourism development.</li> <li>By 2013 all future tourism development will be appropriately located so as to minimise the potential for any land use conflicts and/or any detrimental impacts upon the natural environment or buildings and places of heritage significance.</li> </ul>	<p>Advertise the activities that the Avon sub-region offers to prospective travellers. Seek to improve coordination across the sub region in marketing and visitor servicing.</p> <p>Work with the community to obtain interest and investment in the tourism industry.</p> <p>Include appropriate provisions in draft Local Planning Scheme No.6 to protect natural environment and cultural heritage places.</p> <p>When approving tourism development the Shire of Northam will take care to approve development that does not have a detrimental impact on existing development.</p>

Table 11. Community

Elements	Strategic Goals	Key Focus Areas
To allow for greater efficiency of service and resource provision for the sub-region, the sharing of resources should be encouraged amongst services and communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By 2015 a collaborative approach by service providers will be the norm as will the joint use and co-location of services and facilities.</li> <li>The Wheatbelt Development Commission will coordinate an aged accommodation and care plan for the Avon to guide sub regional investment.</li> <li>To have in place by 2013 a suitable framework to secure development contributions for the provision of community infrastructure as and when required.</li> </ul>	<p>Integration of facilities between local governments and private enterprise is encouraged to offer affordable benefits to the community at large.</p> <p>Promote and encourage the activities of community providers such as Share and Care and Killara.</p> <p>The Shire is in the process of implementing a Development Contributions Scheme for community infrastructure.</p>
Encourage and foster community involvement to understand what facilities are desired and create a feeling of inclusion amongst community members.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By 2015 Northam will have a variety of high quality recreation facilities catering to all groups of the community, including arts, culture and community engagement.</li> <li>Northam shall continue to host regular forums to gauge community ideas and interest in the development of the Avon sub-region.</li> </ul>	<p>Cater for lifestyle recreation opportunities in appropriately located areas. Consolidation of regional indoor and aquatic facilities and services. Stage one of the Recreation Centre has recently been completed and offers high quality recreation. It is hoped that Stage two, once funding is sourced, will truly offer a region benefit.</p> <p>Increased integration and coordination of community services in Northam.</p> <p>Investigate potential for community and cultural centre located in Northam and adjacent areas of uniqueness, celebrating cultural heritage including Aboriginal heritage. Promote interest in local arts and cultural events, especially in regards to a potential cultural centre in the townsite.</p>
An integrated sub-region that promotes growth in Northam as well as surrounding Avon sub-region communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regional integration – all LGAs in the Avon sub-region are to expect growth and develop collectively as a connected region with Northam being the major regional centre.</li> </ul>	<p>The Wheatbelt Development Commission's connected Avon Sub-Regional Strategy will build on the regional strategic competitive advantages.</p>
Provide ample active and passive recreation and ensure it is easily accessible to the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By 2021 all R30 and denser development will be located within a 5 minute or 400 metre walk from active / passive recreation space.</li> <li>By 2015 there shall be a high quality network of walking / multi – purpose paths within the Northam townsite.</li> </ul>	<p>When planning new developments the Shire shall ensure that there is sufficient provision of high quality recreation reserves for the community to utilise. Community facilities (i.e. community centres) to be identified in new urban areas, and developed as multi-purpose.</p>
Provide affordable accommodation and living for the community and prospective members of the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By 2021 there shall be a diversity of housing types to cater for a diverse population. Enough housing is supplied to cater for growth expectations to prevent a shortage of housing and subsequent over-heating of the market.</li> <li>By 2013 the affordability of the town and sub-region for prospective residents in comparison to the nearby Perth metropolitan region shall be highly attractive and sought after.</li> </ul>	<p>The increase of residential density coding in areas that are well serviced by infrastructure will enable a population of 20,000 plus people.</p> <p>Plan and provide residential land in Avon Shires to ensure that availability does not become a constraint to achieving aspirational population growth.</p> <p>Upgrade and redevelopment of Department of Housing accommodation.</p> <p>A marketing campaign targeted at resident attraction is to be undertaken.</p>

Table 12. Environmental

Elements	Strategic Goals	Key Focus Areas
Protect existing / remaining remnant vegetation within the sub-region and revegetate along waterways.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By 2013 existing vegetation corridors along waterways shall be protected and revegetation along waterways where clearing has taken place will be occurring.</li> <li>Remnant vegetation shall be protected from clearing and damage where possible.</li> </ul>	Revegetation of waterways can help to reduce sediment loads in the river systems which are a major problem in the Avon and Mortlock Rivers. This makes revegetation an important project to undertake.
Waste disposal and management is conducted in an environmentally sensitive way that meets the needs of a growing sub-region.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By 2014 waste produced in the Shire shall be minimised and the need for further expanded development of existing waste disposal sites shall be undertaken if needed.</li> <li>All future development and use of land within the buffer areas of existing or proposed waste disposal sites in the Shire is compatible with the long term operation of these facilities.</li> <li>All former waste disposal sites are managed in accordance with the specific requirements of the Department of Environment and Conservation and all relevant legislation.</li> </ul>	<p>Ensure that Shire and sub-region waste goes to designated waste disposal sites.</p> <p>When approving development in buffer areas, ensure that the proposed land use is not one that is sensitive to the buffer's rules and restrictions.</p> <p>Ensure that former waste disposal sites are properly managed and development upon these sites is only allowed to occur if there is no threat posed by doing so.</p>
Encourage climate change adaptation planning as well as mitigation measures where possible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By 2017 the development of a climate change mitigation adaptation strategy and action plan to respond to the issue and potential impacts of climate change in the Shire will be commissioned and undertaken.</li> </ul>	Develop a plan to detail Northam and the Avon sub-region's plans to mitigate climate change impacts.
Employ risk management strategies and measures to protect from natural disasters and environmental impacts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Shire of Northam will ensure that all planning and construction is of cost effective earthquake resistant buildings and infrastructure.</li> <li>By 2017 all development will be sustainable where the risks of fire are minimised.</li> <li>By 2013 the Shire of Northam will ensure there is an increased awareness of Fire Risk within the community.</li> <li>The Shire of Northam shall ensure the potential impact of flooding to all future development and construction is minimised.</li> </ul>	<p>Ensure that development is conducted in a way that promotes earthquake safety measures.</p> <p>Promote development to meet best practice for fire safety including the construction of buildings to AS:3959 where appropriate</p> <p>Develop Community Engagement strategies that provide increased awareness to Emergency Risk.</p> <p>Ensure future development is managed appropriately with the potential impact of flood considered at all stages</p> <p>Ensure appropriate mitigation arrangements are adopted and included in redevelopment and revitalisation activities</p>

Table 12. Environment

Elements	Strategic Goals	Key Focus Areas
<p>Identification of vulnerable environments or areas in need of protection.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By 2013 landscapes with high natural resource values will have been identified and protected. Restoration of degraded landscapes will be encouraged and roads that have landscapes requiring protection will be identified.</li> <li>By 2013 the capacity of landscapes to absorb development shall be well understood. Careful planning, siting and design of new development in a way which is sensitive to local landscape character will be the norm.</li> </ul>	<p>When considering development proposals, ensure that those within fragile locations or of high ecological integrity are well planned to protect the environment.</p> <p>Land Capability Assessments are required prior to rezoning and subdivision of land identified in draft Local Planning Strategy for further intensive development. Furthermore the Visual Landscape Planning Manual produced by the WAPC.</p>
<p>Perform sustainable resource use and land management practices</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By 2013 sustainable use of the Shire's natural resources will be occur through sound planning, protection, management practices.</li> <li>By 2013 the long term protection of areas of local and regional conservation significance in Crown ownership throughout the Shire shall be facilitated.</li> <li>Continue to support land use change and development that demonstrates positive environmental outcomes or reduces the degree of negative impact on the environment.</li> <li>The Shire shall use natural resource management as a tool to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>assist in the protection, management and enhancement of the Shire's natural environment;</li> <li>guide the local government in making decisions that contribute to sustainable outcomes; and</li> <li>encourage community participation and interaction.</li> </ul> </li> <li>A strategic approach for the long term protection of natural areas shall be facilitated by the Shire.</li> </ul>	<p>Promote and support community involvement in environmental groups and rehabilitation of the natural environment.</p> <p>Support and encourage community organisations that promote natural resource management such as catchment groups and land management associations.</p> <p>Target disused sites and inappropriate land uses within the townsite and redevelop / relocate to improve the environment and amenity of the town.</p> <p>Liaise with the appropriate agencies and organisations to assist in achieving this strategy.</p> <p>Recognition of natural areas for long term protection in the draft Local Planning Strategy</p>
<p>Buffer zones to protect sensitive development (residential land uses.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By 2013 all sensitive land uses will be protected from all types of emissions through the use of suitable buffer areas. These will be designated at an early stage in the planning process through the application of one or more appropriate legal, economic and/or town planning mechanisms.</li> </ul>	<p>Recognition of buffer areas within the draft Local Planning Strategy maps.</p> <p>Provisions are to be made in the draft Local Planning Scheme to define permitted development within Buffer Areas and their requirements.</p>



Elements	Strategic Goals	Key Focus Areas
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By 2013 only compatible land uses will be permitted to be developed within defined buffer areas. Buffer areas will reflect the potential of individual enterprises to injuriously affect neighbouring properties.</li> <li>Only support variations to previously defined or recommended buffer area boundaries where it is justified in a scientifically based site specific study and associated report.</li> </ul>	Consider variations to Buffer area boundaries on a case by case basis, when development proposals arise.
Ensure protection of the health and integrity of the natural environment in the sub-region.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By 2021 the long-term health and aesthetic value of the Avon River will be protected through sound environmental management practices and when planning for drainage and environmental works.</li> <li>Vistas will be protected to preserve the visual amenity of the town site.</li> </ul>	<p>An Avon River Town Pool Management Plan and Townsite Drainage Catchment Plan are to be undertaken and adhered to.</p> <p>Recognition of the importance of vistas in the draft Local Planning Strategy.</p>
Ensure stormwater and drainage is provided and maintained to prevent flooding and damage to property and infrastructure. In deficient areas improvements are to be made to alleviate current drainage issues i.e. Minson Avenue.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By 2017 effective and efficient stormwater drainage will be provided throughout the Avon sub-region.</li> <li>By 2017 the quality of stormwater runoff from urban areas will be improved by incorporating the best management practices of water sensitive urban design.</li> <li>By 2017 development will be avoided in areas identified as liable to flooding and water inundation.</li> </ul>	<p>Continue to undertake drainage line improvements like the King Creek Drain Realignment project.</p> <p>Incorporate water management best practices for nutrient stripping within the sub catchments.</p> <p>Identify specific drainage issues around the townsite and rectify them to prevent flooding risks.</p>
Ensure that rivers and waterways in the Avon sub-region are protected and managed to maintain and improve their health and the ecosystem's integrity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By 2013 best practice measures will be in place in regards to the protection of river system health.</li> <li>By 2021 the river systems will be improved when and where possible.</li> </ul>	<p>Undertake a review of the river systems of the sub region and develop strategies and measures that assist in the protection of the waterways.</p> <p>Implement measures and activities that improve the health and ecological integrity of the river systems.</p>

Table 13. Public Realm and Built Environment

Elements	Strategic Goals	Key Focus Areas
<p>Provide facilities and services to the communities of the sub-region in a way that meets the needs identified and encourage engagement and involvement within the community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A wide range of facilities will be provided by 2031.</li> <li>By 2017 a wide range of education and training will be provided and maintained. These facilities will be designed for quality and ease of access for the sub region, and benefit the growth of the whole community. In the short term this will reverse the exodus of late teen and early twenty year old people due to the perceived availability of suitable education and job opportunities. In the longer term it will make Northam the place of choice for sub regional residents to be educated and these services will act as an attractor of population to the area.</li> <li>By 2017 there will be provision of a wide range of appropriately located accommodation, health and care services and facilities to cater for the needs of the Shire's elderly and Aboriginal populations.</li> </ul>	<p>When planning new developments the Shire shall ensure that there is sufficient provision of appropriately located facilities for the community to utilise. An example is the use of school facilities across the wider community (i.e. Performing Arts Centres / Trade Training Centres).</p> <p>Design education services to deliver education and training to the Avon Sub-Region in line with the population growth predictions. Encourage Muresk Facility to be utilised for higher education purposes, encourage expansion of Directions and CY' O'Connor Institute and investigate opportunities for the expansion of Year 11 and 12 education streams in Northam.</p> <p>Encourage and facilitate the continued redevelopment of Northam Senior High School, supporting its vision to become Avon College, providing quality and diverse education options with strong links to Tertiary, Vocational and workforce opportunities. This will involve continuous improvement to school bus services and to school hostel accommodation.</p> <p>Liaison with Federal, State and Local Governments, Private Sector and Community Groups to cater for the needs of the elderly and Aboriginal population.</p> <p>Support the Southern Inland Health Initiative in developing technology to provide services to areas outside Northam.</p> <p>Investigate opportunities for the development of Retirement / Aged Care facilities in the sub region through regional aged care planning.</p> <p>Expansion of Emergency Services (FRS, FESA, Police, Ambulance) to respond to population growth and reduce reliance on volunteers.</p>
<p>Ensure that the legal requirements in regards to development are upheld by the Shire of Northam and private developers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Compliance with local-laws and planning provisions relating to land use and the appearance of property will occur at all times. The preparation and submission of suitable landscape or visual impact assessments will be necessary for development proposals that may impact upon sensitive local landscapes.</li> </ul>	<p>The Local Planning Schemes set out provisions to ensure that land use and property appearance are compatible with the surrounding area.</p>

Elements	Strategic Goals	Key Focus Areas
<p>Create a well-defined sense of place in the sub-region's towns and communities to attract people to live and stay in the communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local community involvement will be encouraged and their feedback used to develop a distinct community that encourages people to relocate to these sub-regional centres.</li> </ul>	<p>Promote and support community involvement in public place making and built environment projects.</p> <p>Identify points of difference between communities and use this in sub regional investment attraction activities.</p> <p>Implementation of Community Safety Action Plan (i.e. CCTV / lighting in Northam).</p>
<p>Activity nodes based upon key themes to attract people to active areas that suit their purpose.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By 2017 town development will be based on themed walkable catchments that encourage people to walk to the nearby activities provided at the centre of the catchments.</li> <li>Use sub regional economic planning to identify community competitive advantages and establish development nodes based on these outcomes.</li> </ul>	<p>Utilise the Northam Growth Plan with townsite precincts assisting in delivering themed walkable catchments. Develop a Dual Use pathway plan with theme walkable catchments through the Precincts.</p> <p>Promote the development of a Health and Emergency Services precinct based around the existing Northam Regional Hospital, supporting sustainable primary health / general practice. Promote co-location of Ambulance services within the Health and Emergency Precinct in Northam.</p> <p>Investigate options for community transport and access to and between health facilities across the region.</p>
<p>The understanding of both European and Aboriginal heritage in the region as well as its acknowledgement and protection where possible.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Heritage understanding and acknowledgment. Protection and / or preservation of heritage sites and history will occur where possible.</li> <li>By 2015 there will be greater Aboriginal recognition, through interpretive activities as well as community education and involvement.</li> </ul>	<p>Develop a Municipal Inventory that categories and describes Built Heritage.</p> <p>Develop a plan to construct or develop an interpretive centre, as well as provide information about local Aboriginal heritage.</p> <p>Pursue opportunities to develop programs which strengthen local Aboriginal engagement and leadership.</p>

Table 14. Infrastructure and Resources

Elements	Strategic Goals	Key Focus Areas
<p>Provide a transportation network that meets the expectations of the communities and businesses of the sub-region, as well as identifying and improving the network as gaps occur and the population grows.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By 2015 the Shire will have identified and provided for the long term protection of significant transport infrastructure and will continue to do so as necessary.</li> <li>By 2015 the efficiency, safety and quality of the Shire's transport network, including rail, will be improved / maintained for the benefit of all users having regard for economic, environmental, social values and transportation needs.</li> <li>Plan for the provision and delivery of transport services and infrastructure in the Shire in close consultation with the State and Federal governments and the local community having regard for the strategies included in the Roads 2025 Regional Road Development Strategy – Wheatbelt North 2007 and the Department of Local Government's Integrated Planning and Framework.</li> <li>Facilitate and accommodate an increase in air traffic volumes at the Northam aerodrome by increasing the services offered, improving utilisation of the existing facilities and creating opportunities for the establishment of complementary land uses subject to due consideration of potential impacts associated with the aerodrome's continued operation to reduce any potential land use conflicts.</li> <li>By 2014 investigate opportunities for freight air logistics at Cunderdin Airport.</li> <li>Identify strategic sub regional transport priorities and encourage investment. Planning for a heavy haulage route to the north and improvements in freight transport infrastructure in York will be investigated as part of enhancing the sub region's transport and logistics competitive advantage.</li> </ul>	<p>Ensure that traffic does not congest networks beyond a reasonable level.</p> <p>Continue to improve road networks throughout the Shire.</p> <p>Encourage investment in road networks by State and Federal Governments including road linkage to Great Northern Highway for freight logistics.</p> <p>Continue to implement the Northam airport management plan and continue its development in accordance with its existing functions.</p> <p>Encourage the use of Cunderdin airport to be utilised as a Regional Air Logistics centre.</p> <p>Investigate opportunities for public transport between settlements in the region and within the Northam townsite to ensure the widest possible access to regional services.</p>
<p>The ability to identify, protect and control the mineral resources in the sub-region through careful development and planning in areas so identified.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By 2013 identify and protect important mineral and basic raw material resources in the sub-region to provide opportunity for their exploration and extraction in accordance with acceptable environmental standards.</li> <li>Development and use of land for the extraction of minerals or basic raw materials will that not adversely affect the environment or amenity in the locality of the operation during or after excavation and that due consideration is given to the rehabilitation and sequential use of extraction areas early in the planning process.</li> <li>The development and use of land in the sub-region for extractive industry purposes shall comply with all relevant legislation, policies, guidelines and codes of practice applicable at the time including any Extractive Industries Local Law.</li> </ul>	<p>Locate key mineral extraction areas that have future potential for development to protect them and future communities from their impacts.</p> <p>Areas already in existence, such as BGC quarrying operations, need to remain in a form that has little negative impact upon communities.</p> <p>Apply the provisions of existing legislative and policy provisions.</p>
<p>Identify wastewater requirements, meet future wastewater requirements, and require development in proximity to facilities to be compatible with required buffers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>From 2012 onwards all future effluent disposals in the sub-region are undertaken in accordance with the objectives and requirements of the Draft Country Sewerage Policy applicable at the time. A major limitation for growth of the Northam townsite is the constrained wastewater treatment plant and aging overcapacity reticulated wastewater infrastructure. The increase in residential densities will exacerbate the current situation.</li> <li>By 2013 all future development and use of land within the odour buffer areas of existing or proposed wastewater treatment plants and other wastewater treatment facilities in the sub-region will be compatible with the long term operation of these facilities.</li> <li>Support the expansion of existing reticulated sewerage headworks infrastructure in the Northam and Wundowie townsites and the installation of infill sewerage in Bakers Hill.</li> </ul>	<p>Plan for the upgrade of the Northam wastewater treatment plant as its capacity is only for 7500 people. The reticulated wastewater infrastructure will be required to upgrade in a staged manner to cater for the anticipated growth.</p> <p>Control development within buffer areas, ensuring that they are compatible land uses with the area and not vulnerable to odour. i.e. residential uses.</p> <p>Push for expansions and upgrades to the wastewater system within the Northam town site and in surrounding communities such as Bakers Hill.</p>

Elements	Strategic Goals	Key Focus Areas
Identify key water supply facilities and infrastructure as well as future requirements, protect current water supply / reticulation infrastructure and provide, as the sub-region needs, further infrastructure..	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By 2013 the long term protection of water supply infrastructure in the sub-region shall be undertaken, including in notional buffer areas, by controlling land use and development within these areas through application of various provisions contained in Local Planning Schemes and any other relevant regulations and policies.</li> <li>By 2014 development of a staged water infrastructure investment plan to inform State Government Budgeting shall have been undertaken.</li> <li>By 2017 additions and upgrades to existing water supply infrastructure throughout the sub-region shall be undertaken to accommodate future development and growth and to guard against the impacts of drought.</li> <li>The Shire shall continue to support the use of treated wastewater on public spaces to reduce reliance upon water supplied from the Goldfields and Agricultural Water Supply Scheme.</li> <li>The sub regional Shires shall continue to promote information and advice to the community to support the efficient use of water.</li> <li>The Shire shall continue to promote additional independent water supply for individual dwellings in addition to reticulated water, i.e. reuse water and rain water runoff from roofed areas.</li> </ul>	<p>Identify and protect water supply infrastructure such as water supply tanks that hold Northam's valuable water supply.</p> <p>Protect and improve the Goldfields Pipeline and show due consideration for it in planning processes.</p> <p>Employ the best water conservation practices whenever it is possible or feasible to do so, and continue to use innovative ways to use less scheme water as the treated wastewater for irrigation achieves.</p> <p>Undertake programs to reduce scheme water use and dependence.</p>
Upgrade the power supply as needed by the sub-region but also encourage renewable options and power conservation where possible. Undergrounding of power network where possible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By 2014 necessary upgrades to existing power supply infrastructure in the Shire will be identified to ensure the provision of sufficient supplies of power to satisfy current and future anticipated demand and ensure integrity of the system, given the bush fire risks</li> <li>Staged investment planning will be undertaken for the sub region post based on population projections and sub regional economic planning.</li> <li>By 2014 the Shire shall encourage and support the development and use of alternative power supply options through a comprehensive strategy.</li> <li>The Shire shall promote energy conservation in the design and development of new urban areas and housing throughout the Shire.</li> <li>The Shire shall encourage and support the conversion of overhead power lines to underground distribution lines in the Shire's established settlements, urban gateways, scenic routes and tourism/heritage precincts.</li> </ul>	<p>Work with Western Power to understand when and where upgrades are needed. Help facilitate upgrades where possible.</p> <p>Pursue alternative energy options and encourage private investment in alternative power sources and supplies.</p> <p>Follow best practice house and business design to achieve energy conservation and savings.</p> <p>Seek to obtain funding and collaboration with Western power to sink power lines below ground when and where possible.</p>
Controlling development to ensure the best outcomes for Northam and the Avon Sub-Region.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development will be avoided in areas that may result in unacceptable environmental damage or negative impacts upon the visual character and qualities of the local landscape.</li> <li>Restrict land uses that have potential to cause land contamination.</li> </ul>	<p>Identify areas that are at risk of environmental damage, and control development in these areas.</p> <p>Apply current statutory planning requirements.</p>
Gas supply / reticulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By 2015 studies will have been undertaken to determine the feasibility of providing gas for the Avon Industrial Park and Residential areas.</li> </ul>	<p>Avon Industrial Park</p> <p>Town Centre</p>
Telecommunications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By 2014 necessary upgrades to telecommunications infrastructure in the Shire will be identified to ensure the provision of sufficient supplies of telecommunication technology to satisfy current and future anticipated demand.</li> <li>Increased bandwidth at the Avon Industrial Park will be provided by 2015.</li> </ul>	<p>Work with Department of Commerce and Telecommunications providers to understand when and where upgrades are needed. Help facilitate upgrades where possible.</p>

# Spatial Planning

## A SPATIAL GROWTH PLAN FOR NORTHAM

While this growth plan recognises the importance of sub regional triple bottom line development to ensure the Avon reaches its population target of 50,000, growth and development of Northam townsite as the Avon’s regional centre is fundamental to this growth. This section deals specifically with spatial planning for the regional centre. Spatial planning outcomes will explain the key activity nodes, the linkages and synergies that work with these nodes. The precincts that make up Northam and the key projects, development and growth strategies will be the causative agents to facilitate this growth and development. The key sustainability framework areas of Economy, Community, Environment, Infrastructure & Resources, and Public Realm & Built Environment will assist in shaping and guiding the plans that are explored. From the understanding of growth potential and existing and future synergies and linkages, an understanding of Northam’s true aspirational growth potential can be measured.

The Spatial Plans set out in the Northam Growth Plan seek to set out the specific projects envisaged by the Shire of Northam, State Government Departments and organisations and other stakeholders as aspirational to the growth of the Avon sub-region’s centre. These plans are described along with visual representations, in this chapter.

### KEY ACTIVITY NODES

Activity nodes within the Northam townsite are based upon key themes relating to the main services or attractions. Activity nodes within the Northam townsite include:



**Health:** This is the site of the Northam Regional Hospital which is a major employer for the surrounding district. There is potential for this area to become a more major activity node as similar employment and activities begin to set up nearby.



**Education:** Within this activity node is the CY O’Connor Institute, Northam Senior High School and Avonvale primary School (incorporating a special education unit). In the future, this activity centre may accommodate some additional tertiary type facility or a remodelled secondary school structure, further expanding its importance. Outside this node there are four other secondary / primary schools, West Northam Primary, Northam Primary and St Josephs’ Secondary and Primary and Muresk Institute.

**Civic:** The civic activity node, recognised by the Northam Development Plan, is currently under-utilised and centres on the Shire of Northam offices in the West End. It does have the potential to move to a more central location within proximity of the Central Business Area. Once the PTA site becomes capable of development it will serve to revitalise the node, which will have flow on effects for the residential development of the area, which is in need of revitalisation.



**Central Business Area:** The Shire of Northam intends to consolidate the townsite’s government offices in this area to reserve the retail node for retail purposes. A designated business zone can act as a central employment area within the townsite, which will make service provision simpler.



**Retail:** The retail node is centred on the eastern end of Fitzgerald Street. This node will remain the focus of retail services in the Northam townsite and will serve to consolidate this role as government offices are moved from the node to the CBA.



**Industry:** The industry node is focused on the eastern industrial precinct; this is the light and service industrial centre of the Northam townsite. This node will act as an employer and service provider for service based industries in the Avon sub-region. This industrial node is connected to future growth of the Avon Industrial Park and the West Industrial (freight and logistics) Precinct.

**Train:** The train activity node centres on the train station. The train node will be a centre of activity for commuters travelling to Perth or Northam by train for work should the frequency of train services on the line are increased. This is the centre's bus port.



The concept of activity precincts could draw life away from the retail centre of the Northam townsite. Care must be taken to ensure that the Fitzgerald Street frontage has viable uses. It would not be possible to fully and intensely activate Fitzgerald Street for commercial purposes for its entire length. This is due to its extremely long length (over 3 kilometres).



**Recreation:** The recreation activity node is centred on the new recreation centre. This node will continue to have its recreation role consolidated as the Northam Swimming Pool will be moved to the site as part of Stage 2 of the Recreation Centre Development.

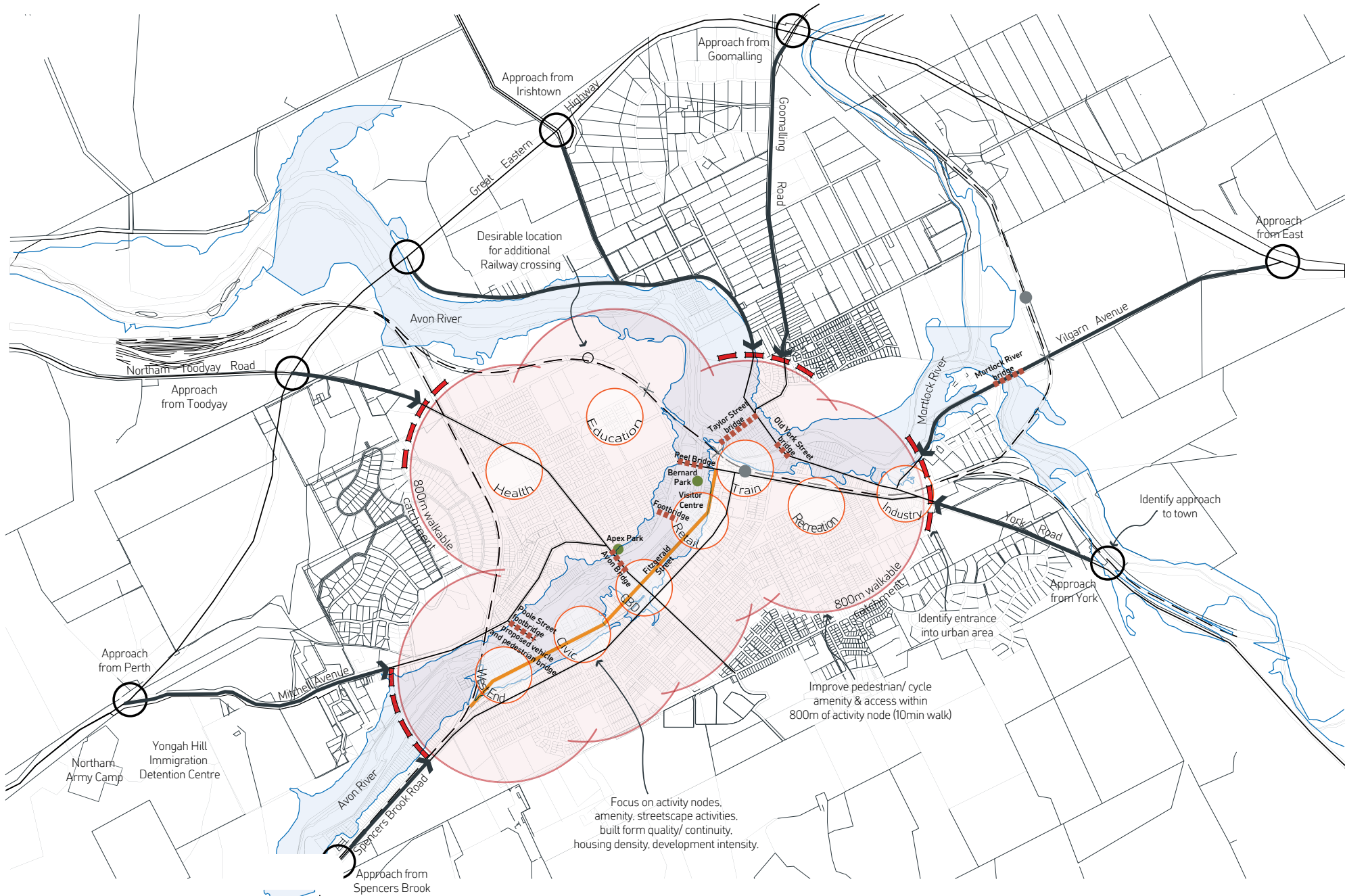


Figure 33. Urban Structure Analysis



## URBAN STRUCTURE

The Growth Plan has analysed the urban structure of the town and its setting and proposes some opportunities for the future on the Urban Structure Analysis. (Figure 33).

There are numerous approaches into the Northam townsite and these approaches are very important to its presence and sense of place. These approaches from other towns could be enhanced with landscape and identification of arrival at the edges of town and entrance into the urban townscape.

The Avon River is the key defining feature of the town setting, but is not celebrated to its full potential.

The main street, Fitzgerald Street runs the full length of the southern part of the town parallel to the river. Full activation of this street as the focus of the town centre will be very difficult due to its length, and therefore a series of activity nodes are proposed along the street. These nodes could have an increased level of development intensity and amenity and eventually be connected by a bus system within the town. For example, this bus route could run from the train station to the old station and across to the education and health precincts on the north side of the town. Each node, while offering a mix of activities could have a different focus and flavour.

The 800 metre walkable catchments around these nodes cover most of the developed part of the town and form logical areas for increased intensity of residential development and increased standards of streetscape and active transport provision (walk/cycle). It is understood that the 800 metres (nominal 10 minute walk) varies in desirability through topography and season climate but it is a starting point for a more sustainable town where people can walk into the centre and children can ride bicycles to school.

## LINKAGES AND SYNERGIES

Movement within Northam will be undertaken by a variety of methods, including:

- **Train** - Increased rail services for commuters to Perth and visitors to Northam. This would involve increasing the weekday service from 2 services to 4 services in each direction. Further weekend train services would facilitate Northam residents travelling to Perth and tourists to reach the town. It has been suggested early morning services with the opportunity to return mid-afternoon would be welcomed by day tripping families.

- **Walking and cycling** - Improve the pedestrian and cycle experience and connectivity (walkability) within the town, encourage active transport options to improve community health and sustainability. This includes cycle to school initiatives and locating car parking at the edges of the Fitzgerald Street activity centre area.
- **Parking** - Adopt a town centre wide strategy for parking. Limit parking provision within the town centre that impacts on the cohesiveness of the urban form. Manage parking with time limits and provide safe and attractive walking connections from car parking areas to Fitzgerald Street.
- **Bus** - Prepare a bus transport strategy that reviews school bus routes, Transwa regional services and considers the feasibility of intra-regional connections and a town or community bus route that connects the town's activity nodes. It is noted that community buses currently bring people from surrounding towns to Northam for shopping and entertainment.

Figure 35 on p123 shows the Northam Precinct Plan and explains their importance in the context of the townsite.

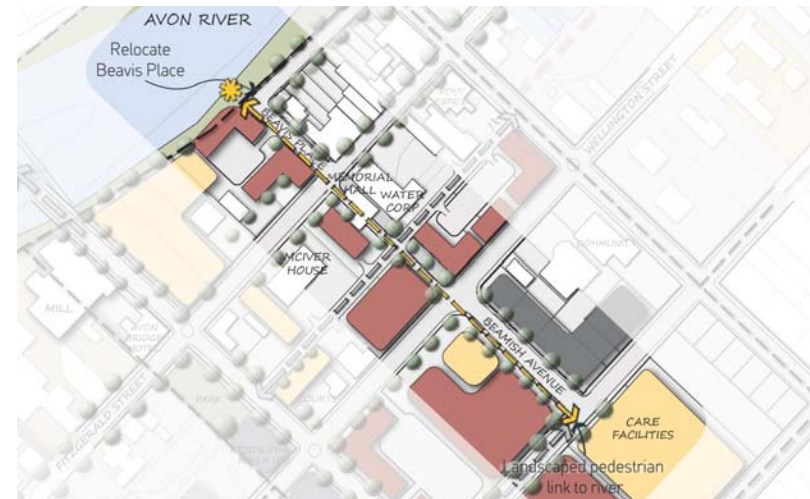


Figure 34. Landscape Walkways

## RURAL EDGE PRECINCTS

- These low density residential or rural residential precincts cover the current and most likely future expansion north of the town.
- Existing planning approvals could be re-evaluated where opportunity for fully serviced traditional development is available close to town.
- These precincts are characterised by a predominance of larger low density residential and rural residential lots. These areas are a significant visual amenity providing the 'town in the valley setting' that is so important to Northam.
- Development controls to maintain the quality of the town setting are required.

### Bushland & natural character themes

- The dominant character for these areas should be of endemic trees or paddocks to avoid visual breakup of the land form by buildings and roads. Bushfire management should be a significant component of any development planning and approval. All building and associated development should visually recede to maintain scenic qualities.

### Habgood

- This area has some existing low density residential development.
- All development should be dominated by endemic trees to protect views from Mitchell Avenue and Mt Ommañney lookout, and to complement the natural areas of the

River and Recreation Precinct.

### Mt Ommañney

- All development should be dominated by endemic trees to protect views from Mitchell Avenue, Mt Ommañney lookout and the town.

### Farm and rural character themes

- The dominant character for these areas should be of paddocks and shelter belt and drainage planting to maintain the rural character.
- Buildings and associated development could be clustered similar to a typical farm homestead and sheds with significant areas of paddock between clusters. Suburban forms of residential development should be discouraged in visually sensitive areas.

### Equine and Farmland

- This area may be suitable for an equestrian residential estate with shared paddocks, training areas and trails under a strata management system.

### Morby

- These areas should be recognised as future growth areas. Structure planning is required.

### Transport Node

- The transport node contains heavy transport.
- If heavy transport requirements change due to implementation of the Mundaring by-pass heavy traffic route (orange route), this area could be considered for a residential- industrial

zoning for home based businesses such as contractors and tradespeople with light to medium vehicles and equipment.

- Views from Great Eastern Highway and Yilgarn Avenue should be protected with retention and regeneration of endemic trees and plants.

### Commonage

- This area contains waste disposal facilities and other municipal activities and includes significant vistas to Northam from Great Eastern Highway.
- Controls should be instigated to maintain the views to Northam and enhance the amenity from Great Eastern Highway.

### Airport

- This precinct is proposed for an aviation estate that allows residential development with private hangars for enthusiasts and the aviation industries.
- Development controls will be required to address noise.
- Due to controls over air space and airfield access this development may require strata titling with strata management control of shared taxi way between airport and private hangars as well as commercial activities and emergency services.

## INDUSTRIAL PRECINCT

### WEST INDUSTRIAL

- The existing wheat silos are a significant visual element in the landscape and a landmark consistent

with rural and rail settings.

- Development guidelines should be prepared to screen small scale industrial elements with endemic planting to avoid visual clutter.
- Enhance the revegetation works to Great Eastern Highway.

### EAST INDUSTRIAL

- Development controls should address visual clutter of signage and unscreened yards.
- Development facing Yilgarn Avenue should retain and expand tree planting for visual amenity, as this is an important tourist entry into Northam.

## RESIDENTIAL EXPANSION PRECINCTS

- These precincts, south of the town, include current and/or likely future residential expansion.
- They are characterised by larger block sizes including low density and rural residential.
- Improved precinct character can be engendered through consistent streetscapes with endemic trees, with smaller non- native trees relating to residential forms.
- Develop open space and catchment management along drainage lines.
- Some low density residential development lacks consistent character.
- Development guidelines for outbuilding grouping, massing and colour schemes for all sheds and tanks would be beneficial.

**WOODLEY**  
Currently developed as low density residential.

**HILLMAN**  
Currently planned for residential expansion.

**BURLONG**  
Ensure residential densities are maintained adjacent to Colonial Precinct and within walking distance of West End amenity.

**INNER RESIDENTIAL PRECINCTS**

**URALIA COLONIAL FORREST**

- The inner precincts, within walking distance of Fitzgerald Street will continue to provide for most of the housing in Northam.
- With the exception of institutional land uses, the character of these precincts will remain predominantly traditional residential.
- Design guidelines are recommended for infill housing to maintain and enhance the identity and consistency of streetscapes that reflect the history of Northam's development.
- Increasing Residential Density will allow for carbon infill opportunities.
- Revitalisation opportunities exist for area with weak housing stock.

**DOCTORS HILL**

- Some of this is within the 1 in 100 flood zone or the airport buffer zone restricting development potential.
- This area may be suitable for development such as an equestrian estate similar to the Equine and Farmland Precinct, subject to suitable environmental controls for the river.

Figure 35. Precinct Plan



**RIVER AND RECREATION PRECINCT**

- The Avon and Mortlock Rivers offer a unique natural resource and scenic setting for the town of Northam.
- The precinct includes most of the Special Control Area 1. in Local Planning Scheme.
- All development should be consistent with catchment management objectives.

Promote trails, parks and recreation facilities. Includes the two most significant passive recreation areas (Bernard Park and Apex Park)

- Connections from the river to all precincts should be enhanced with a coordinated pedestrian and cycle network.
- Poole Street Bridge (vehicle and pedestrian) proposed to provide permeability within the town.

**FITZGERALD PRECINCT**

- Refer to Drawing SD007 Draft Fitzgerald Precinct Plan.

## KEY PROJECTS

Following a full analysis of how the precincts function, coupled with an extensive opportunities and constraints analysis reveals that a number of directions for growth are apparent for Northam. Key projects will be assessed against a number of well understood planning and urban design principles and a range of non-spatial inputs such as economic and community activation drivers.

Key projects and implications explored by the Project Team have the potential to service a sub regional population of 50,000 people and these were endorsed by the Community Reference Group. It was acknowledged that Northam also services a number of adjacent towns and each of these could in most cases accommodate some additional growth, however Northam would be considered the primary regional centre for the Avon sub-region. These projects were developed in the context of the Northam townsite reaching 20,000 people and being the centre for a sub regional population of 50,000.

Part of this Growth Plan explores scenarios and ways of achieving a Northam population of 20,000, through providing residential density and diversifying the economy. The challenge is how this could (or would) be accommodated spatially.

The Growth Plan identifies the following areas as having significant potential for revitalisation and redevelopment:

- Minson Avenue, Fitzgerald Street and Wellington Street in the town centre area including the old Northam hospital site on the corner of Wellington and Gardiner Streets;
- The area surrounding the Northam railway station along Peel Terrace;
- The old St Christopher's Hostel on Inkpen Street;
- The old railway station and disused railway land located at the western end of Fitzgerald Street and Wellington Street West;
- The former Victoria Oval site;
- Numerous serviced residential lots with dual road frontage in West Northam;
- A number of old public housing areas through the townsite;

- The Northam aquatic centre on Mitchell Avenue;
- Numerous disused sites throughout the townsite;
- Inappropriate located light industrial land uses within the town; and
- Numerous small rural smallholdings located adjacent to the Northam aerodrome and Northam race course.

Following an assessment of each of the scenarios against sustainability objectives, a preferred scenario was arrived at by the project team and in consultation with the Community Reference Group which formed the basis for preparation of a detailed townsite Growth Plan.

## DEVELOPMENT AND GROWTH STRATEGIES

The key themes of the Growth Strategies are Economy, Community, Environment, Infrastructure & Resources, and Public Realm & Built Environment.

Some themed plans will require particular prerequisites to be met before they can be implemented. This may range from something as simple as a population threshold to a more complex range of outcomes being met. The key sustainability framework (themes) areas will assist in measuring whether key outcomes are being met. This will allow the Shire of Northam to gauge when and where the development of key projects and strategies is necessary and will obtain the best possible result.

## TIMELINE AND STAGING

The timeline and staging of the projects will be outlined within the Implementation and Governance chapters of the document. All projects will be either short term (up to five years, 7 – 10,000 people in the townsite), medium term (five to ten years, 10 – 14,000 people in the townsite) and long term (ten to twenty years, 14 – 20,000 people in the townsite). The staging of projects is to ensure that projects are begun at appropriate times in terms of population and funding and to achieve the best outcomes for the community. Staging plans for the Growth Plan are contained within Appendix G.

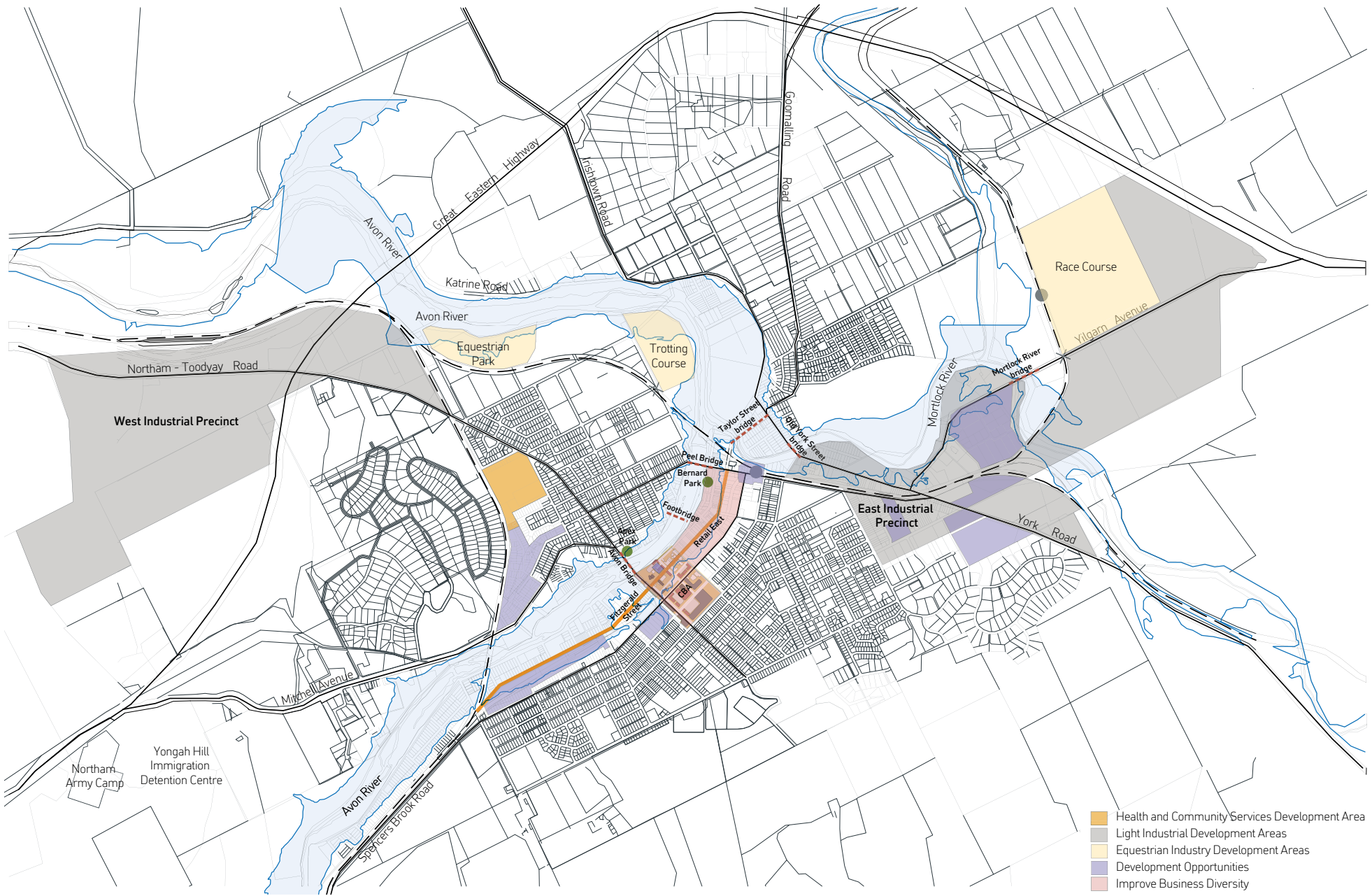


Figure 36. Economy

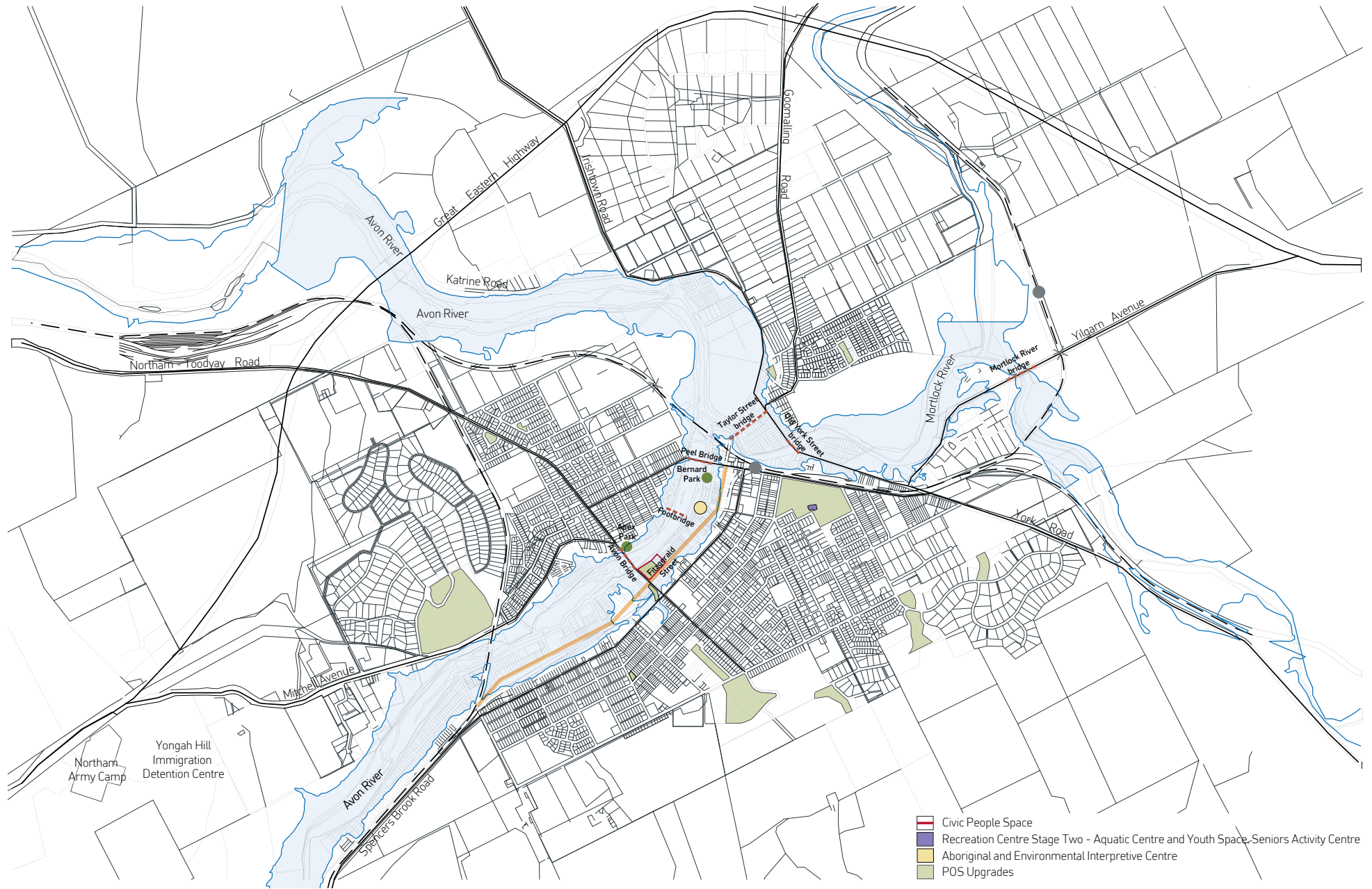


Figure 37. Community

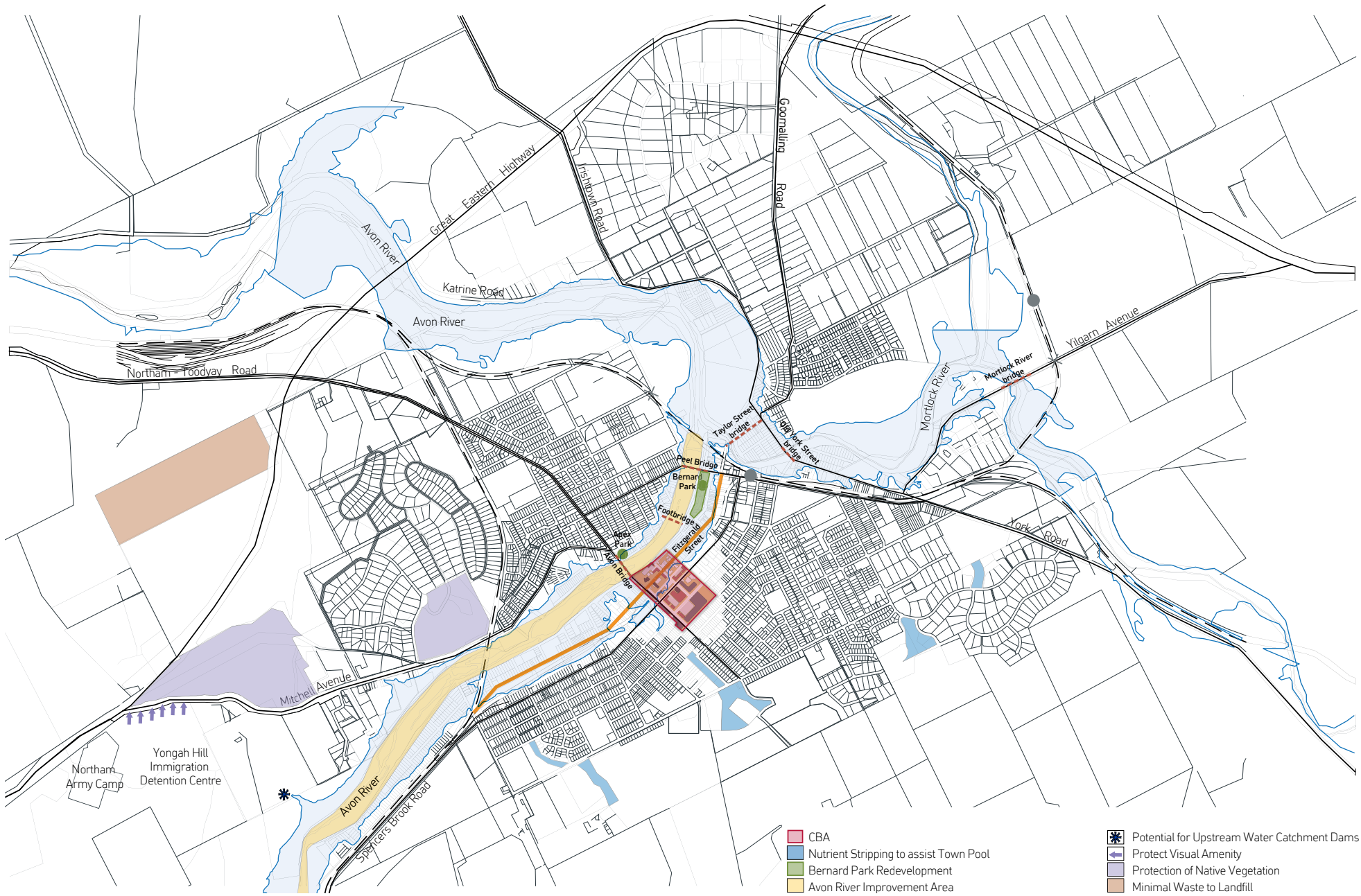


Figure 38. Environment

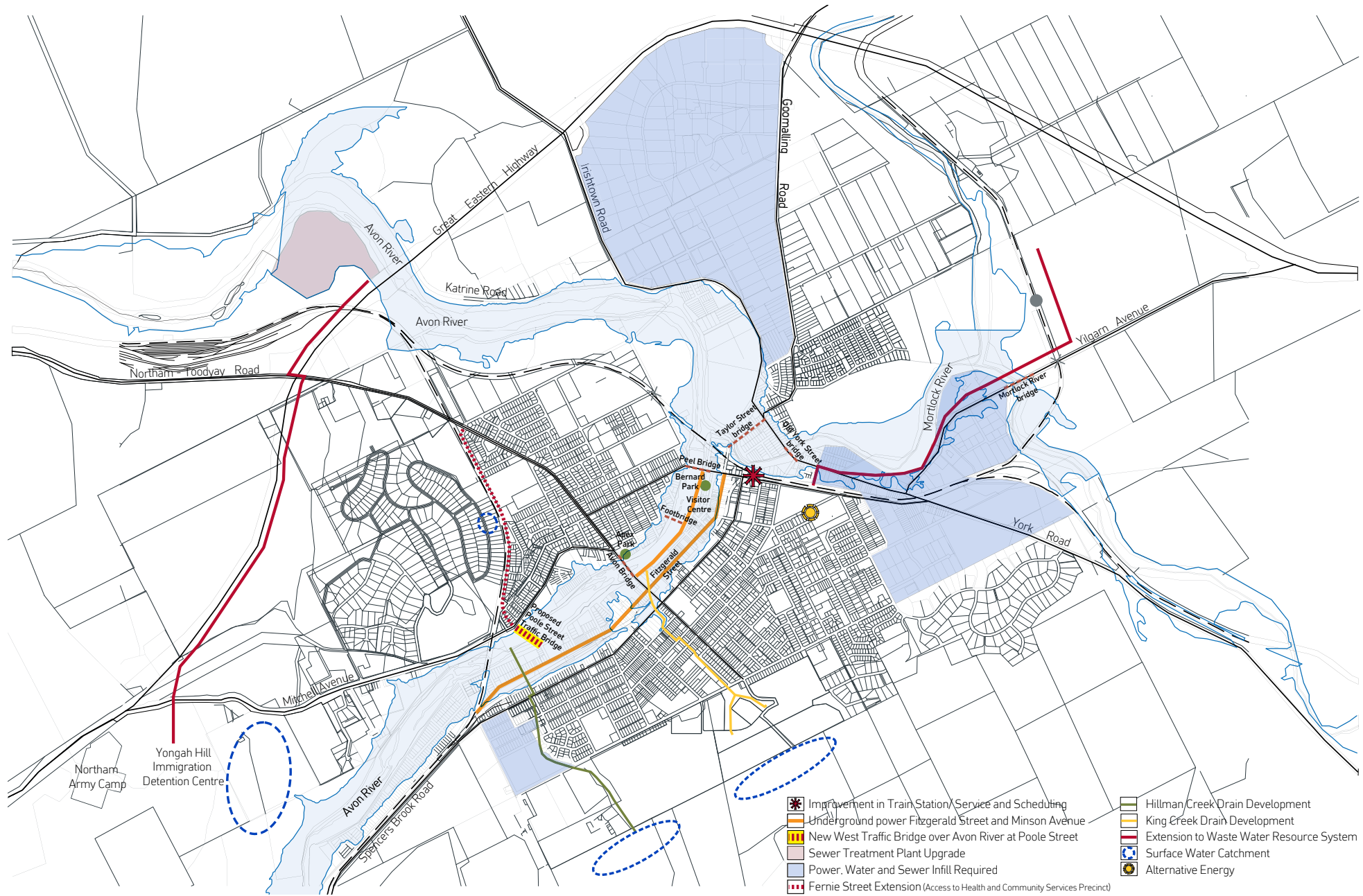


Figure 39. Infrastructure and Resources



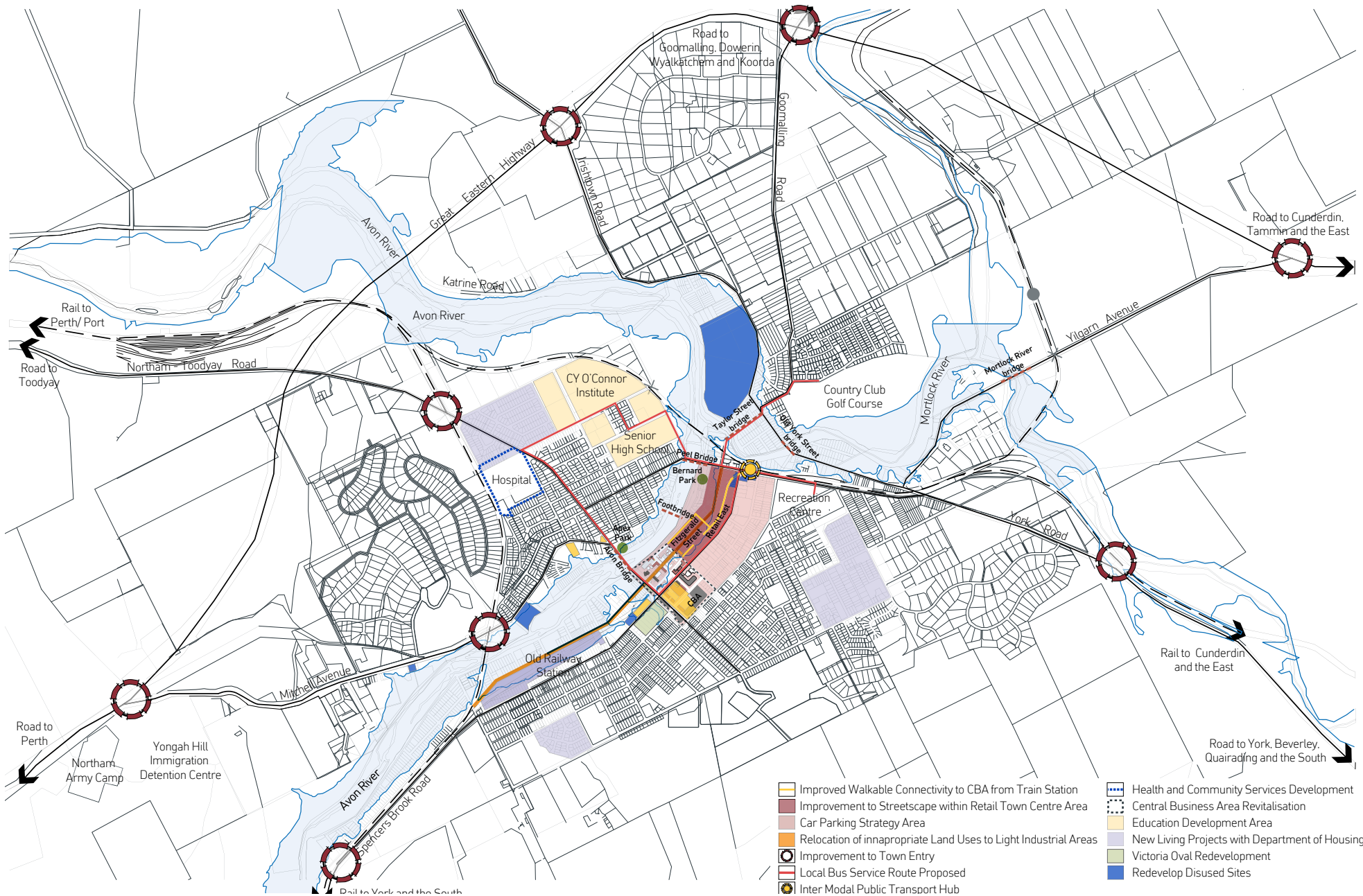


Figure 40. Public Realm and Built Environment

# Town Centre Design and Activation Strategy

The Northam Town Centre will serve as the central hub for the sub-regional population of 50,000 residents. As the hub for the Avon sub-region, the Fitzgerald Street Precinct needs to be active and an excellent example of what the Northam and Avon Sub-Region represents. A vibrant and attractive Town Centre will attract business and acts as the focal point for a region. The centre will serve as a meeting place for the community, be it for shopping, work or for recreational purposes. It will be a place that defines Northam and the community that calls Northam home. To make it this visionary place, the following place making principles will be utilised.

It is acknowledged that focusing on the place and not the design is of the most importance and that the Northam Growth Plan is only one stage of place creation. The making of a place is never complete; it is a progression that relies on strong plans, designs and visions.

The Northam Town Centre Design and Activation Strategy will identify key

- Land uses;
- Precincts;
- Urban form / structural elements;
- Location of social and other infrastructure requirements;
- Key projects;
- Staging; and
- Place activation and management strategies.

Understanding of these factors is required to create a town centre that is legible and cohesive and serves the needs of the Northam townsite and greater Avon sub-region.

The town centre master plan details the plan to activate the Fitzgerald Street Precinct. Fitzgerald Street itself is extremely long and thus difficult to activate for its entire length. The plan is to create three focal activity nodes to create distinct themes and sense of place attributes, whilst ensuring that the most effective land use activities are undertaken.

## Urban form / structural elements

The current urban form is haphazard and contains a number of incompatible land uses and disused sites that detract from the town centre's functionality and amenity.

The future urban form will incorporate a number of developments to provide excellent amenity to the three activity nodes of the precinct. The area will be recognised as the office, business and retail centre of the Avon sub-region. It will be easy to know that you are in the precinct due to innovative and unique designs to follow state benchmarks but have a distinct Northam flavour to it. The requirements for buildings to be designed around potential flooding / flood mitigation purposes are recognised.

Also important will be to plan and develop a built form that compliments and works with the numerous and extensive array of heritage structures that are located within the town centre. The heritage buildings of the Northam townsite are a unique look back into the past of a major agricultural centre and key stopping point for those hoping to make their fortune on the

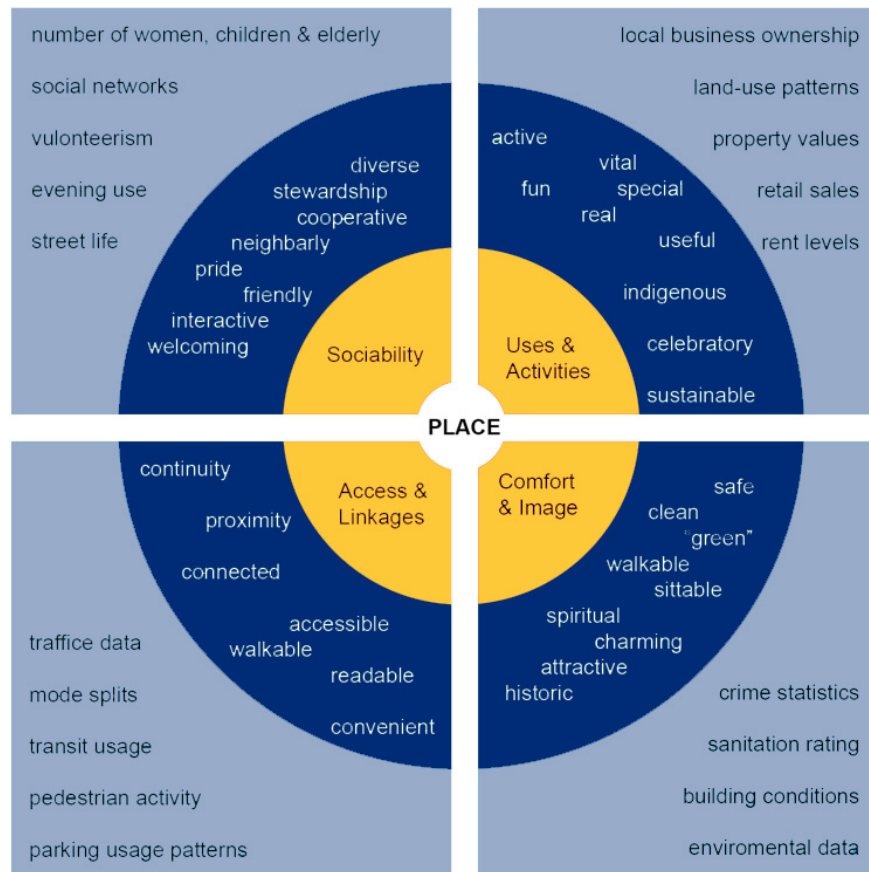


Figure 41. Public Realm and Built Environment

Source: Project for Public Spaces

Goldfields. Key buildings to be retained include The Old Town Hall, Post Office, former Agriculture Department and former Post Office to name a few.

### Land Uses

Separation of retail and offices, consolidation of government services and offices into one precinct will improve the vitality of the town centre precinct. The grouping of like uses will ensure that the built environment that they require is specifically suited to their requirements. The current situation with offices located in buildings designed for retail activities and in former dwellings is less than a desirable outcome.

As the town centre grows and evolves, retail and offices will have areas within the Fitzgerald Precinct where they predominate. At the peripheries of the precinct there will be a greater mixture of development. These peripheral developments will be mixed use in nature, incorporating residential, retail and offices. These outer areas will add a critical mass of population to the inner areas of town to assist in a vibrant and functional towns centre.

### Location of Social and other Infrastructure requirements

Key new structural elements include the construction of a central landscaped spine on the relocated Beavis Place. This will be a landscaped link from the river to the Bethavon Aged Hostel. This will provide key linkages through the Central Business Area, providing a key focal and accessibility spine through the area.

Revitalisation and / or redevelopment of the old hospital site will provide the opportunity to generate a significant amount of office space and short-stay accommodation in the Central Business Area. Modern offices will serve to attract offices out of the East End retail area and assist in the further consolidation of the CBA as Northam's office location.

Activation of the Avon River foreshore and Minson Avenue between the Avon Bridge and the Peel Terrace Road Bridge will assist in attracting tourism and commercial activity into the town site. The challenge to the Northam townsite is to provide facilities that can withstand occasional flooding and to implement strategies to promote long term river health. As part of the river activation there will be an opportunity to redevelop the area centred on the old Northam Town Council Offices and Library. This zone can provide a focal point and high quality living environment to enhance the town centre and CBA.

Minson Ave and the Avon Town Pool frontage is of major importance to the long term development of the Northam Town Centre. While no key, short term place activation strategies are mentioned here, the Shire of Northam has a clear strategy for its development. Stage 1 is covered in the environmental and drainage sections. These strategies apply to improving river health and reducing the propensity of the area to flood. In addition to environmental works the Shire has two strategies to promote staged development to this area. Firstly, works continue to improve the public open space along the river banks. Bernard Park is the location of continual improvement, increasing the number of people using the area on a regular basis. The recently constructed sound shell is an example of this commitment.

Secondly, the Shire has developed planning guidelines for the area to allow for development along Minson Avenue. This would involve elevating living areas and areas above the flood line. One way this can be achieved is by having parking on the ground level and development above the parking. Council consults with any developers wishing to develop the Minson Ave section of their blocks to develop workable solutions.

As river health and flood mitigation works succeed, a greater emphasis on development in this area will be achieved. The King Creek drainage project is just the first step in this strategy.

### Place Activation and Management Strategies

A number of strategies have been floated to create place activation and allow effective management of the Central Business Area. These plans will be implemented as key projects within the Town Centre are undertaken. Community consultation and monitoring and review of key projects and developments will ensure that the strategies are achieving their goals.

### Key Projects

Key town centre projects include:

- Acquisition of St John's Ambulance Site;
- The creation of a central pedestrian movement spine;
- The relocation Beavis Place to create a people place;
- Entering into negotiations with landowners for the acquisition of 2 Gordon Street and 92, 94, 96, 96A and 104 Wellington Street;
- Redevelopment of the Old Hospital Site;
- Development of a civic zone around the old Town Council Offices; and
- Construction of a new mixed use office complex.

## Fitzgerald Precinct

- Fitzgerald Precinct is the centre of activity in Northam, and is focussed on the main street environment of Fitzgerald Street reflecting the historic development of Northam.
- The regional centre role of Northam will be catered for into the future through consolidation and revitalisation.

The precinct is made up of three distinct sub-precincts:

- CBA
- East End Retail
- West End

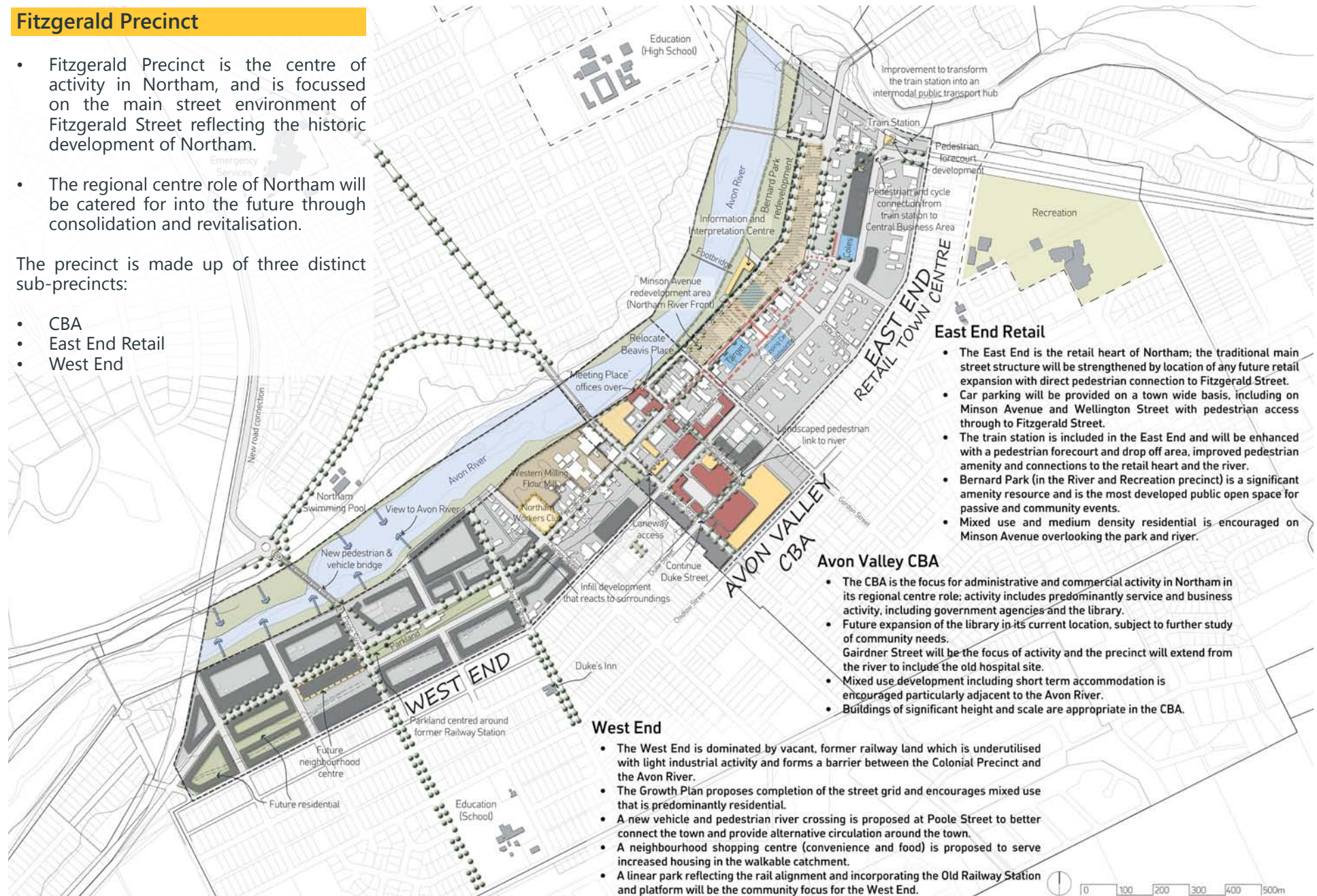


Figure 42. Fitzgerald Precinct

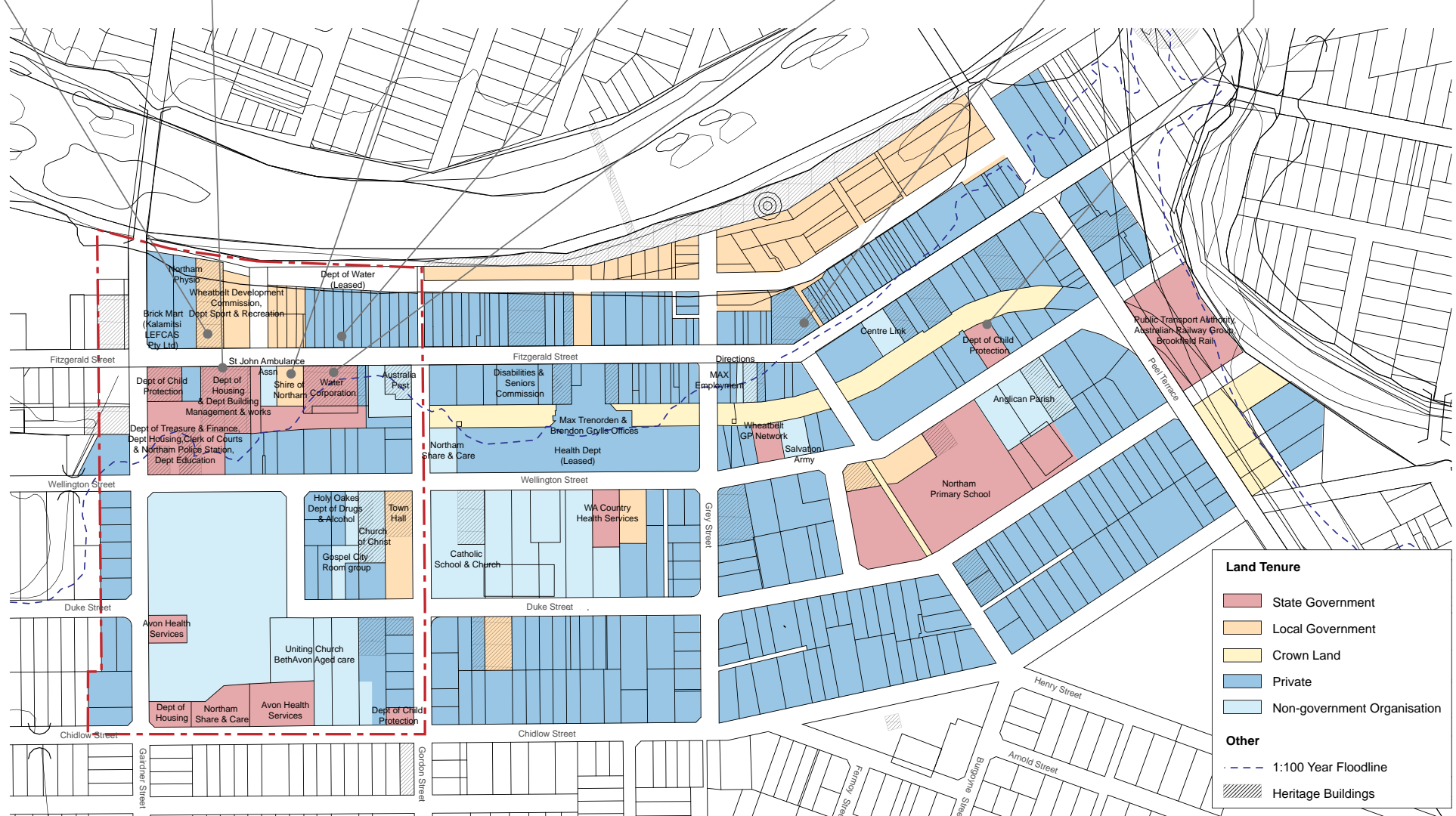


Figure 43. East End - Existing Land Tenure and Occupants

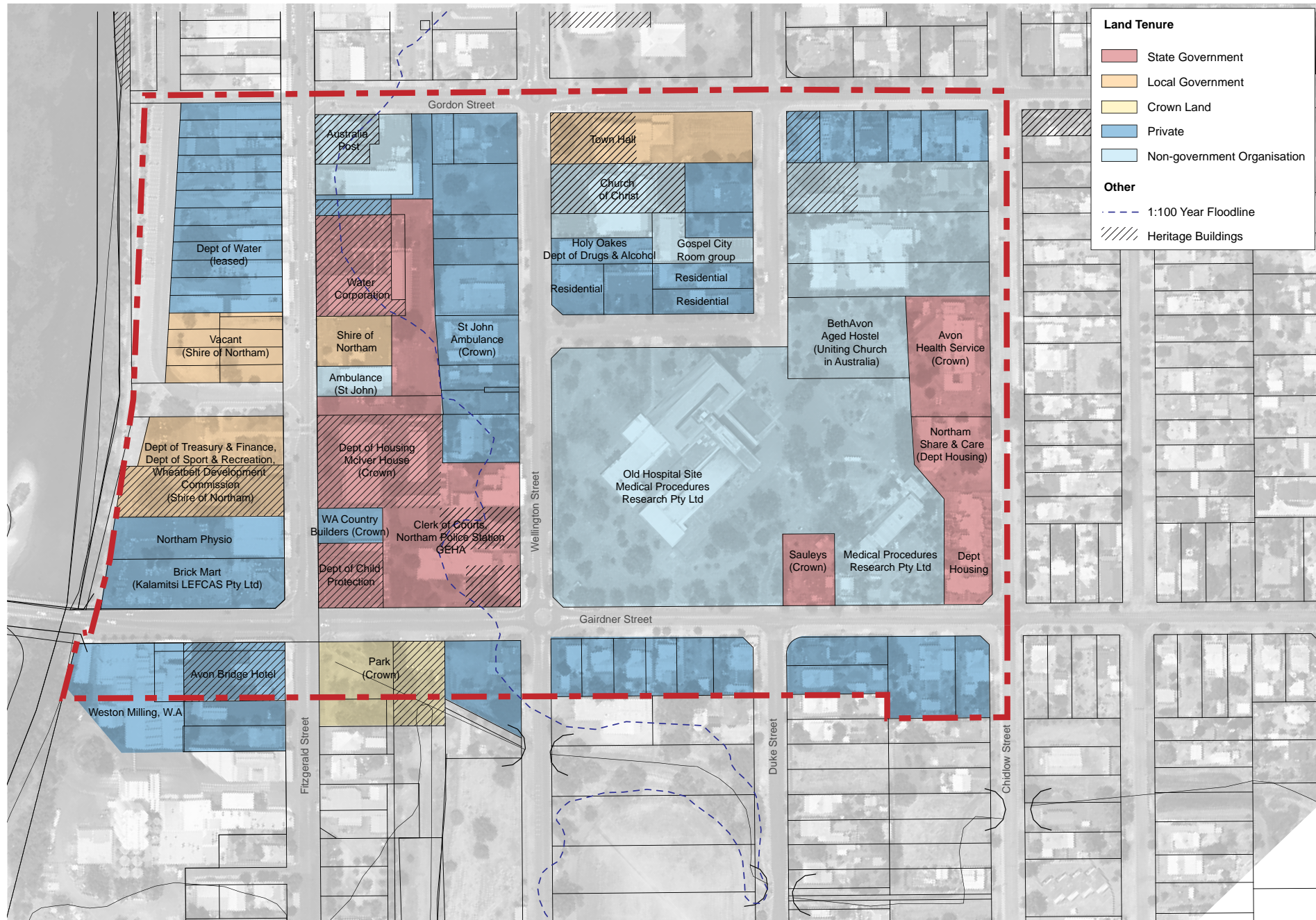
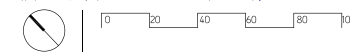


Figure 44. Avon Valley CBA - Existing Land Tenure and Occupants



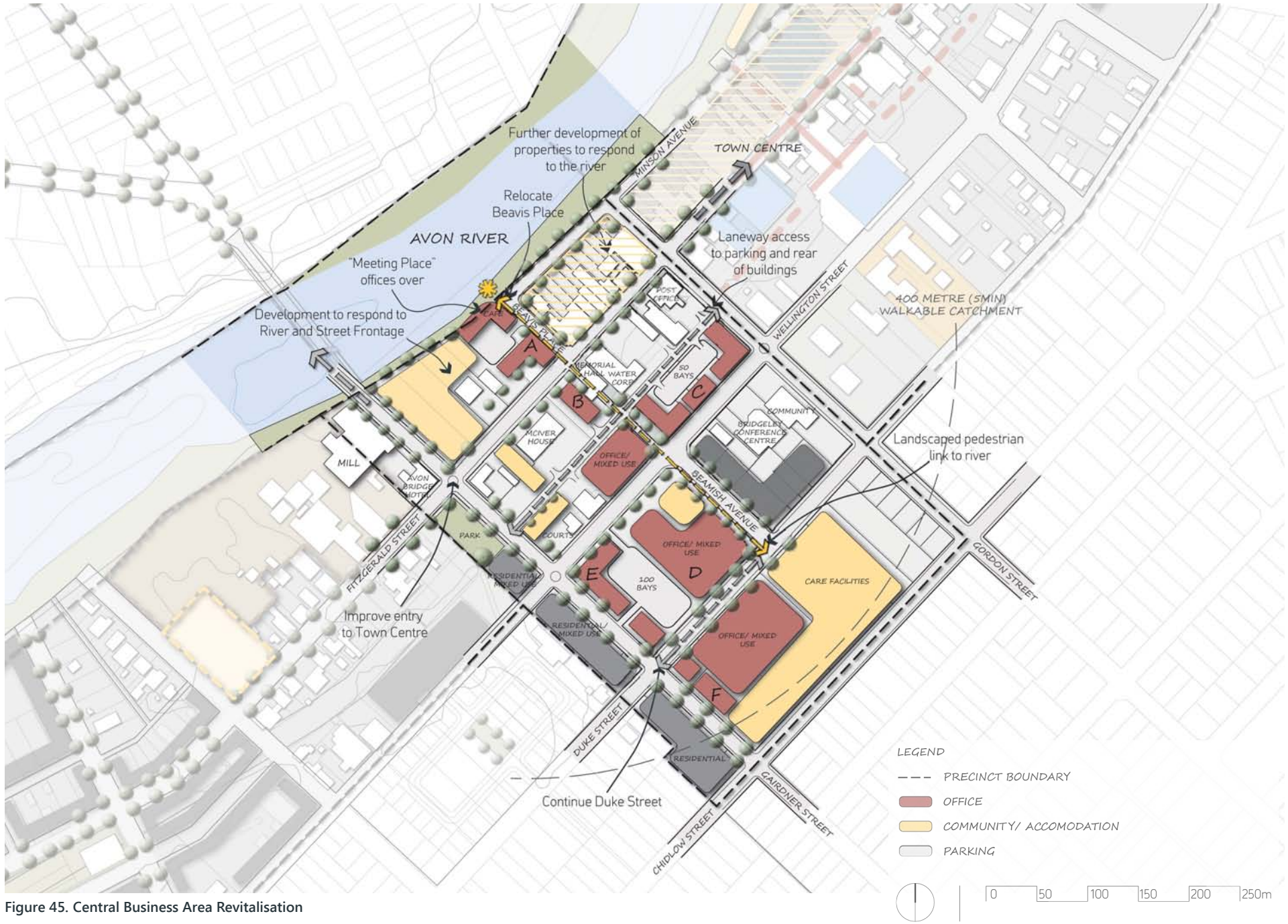


Figure 45. Central Business Area Revitalisation

Table 15. Proposed Office Buildings within CBA

Building	Floor plate GFA (m2 )	No of Levels	Building Area GFA(m2 )	Number of Parking Bays	Year of Provision	Indicative Cost 2012 \$	Indicative Cost Escalated \$	Comments
A	2,400	3	7,200	100	2015	29,050,000	32,536,000	Vacant land Parking at ground level.
B	800	3	2,400	60	2018	9,975,000	12,369,000	Demolition of existing memorial Hall. Parking at ground level.
C	2,500	1	2,500	50	2025	10,293,750	15,646,500	Potential residential over Requires consolidation and demolition of some existing buildings
D	1,000	7	7,000	100	2030	N/A	N/A	Potential Residential over of one level. Requires demolition or reuse of existing old hospital building.
E	2,500	1	2,500	60	2022	8,857,500	12,400,000	Suggested Police facility. Parking at ground level. Costing.
F	1,200	1	1,200	30	2032	4,935,000	8,883,000	Potential Residential.



Table 16. Other Infrastructure Costs with CBA Revitalisation

Details	Year of Provision	Indicative Cost 2012 \$	Indicative Cost Escalated \$	Comments
Realignment of Beavis Place between river and Fitzgerald Street.	2013	396,000	411,840	Should be done in 2012/13 to facilitate future development.
Link Beavis Place with Beamish Avenue. Development and landscaping of visitor link – Beavis Place and Beamish Avenue to Park and Walk.	2022	1,410,000	1,974,000	Requires demolition of St John's ambulance building and Memorial Hall. Pedestrian friendly link with restricted traffic flow

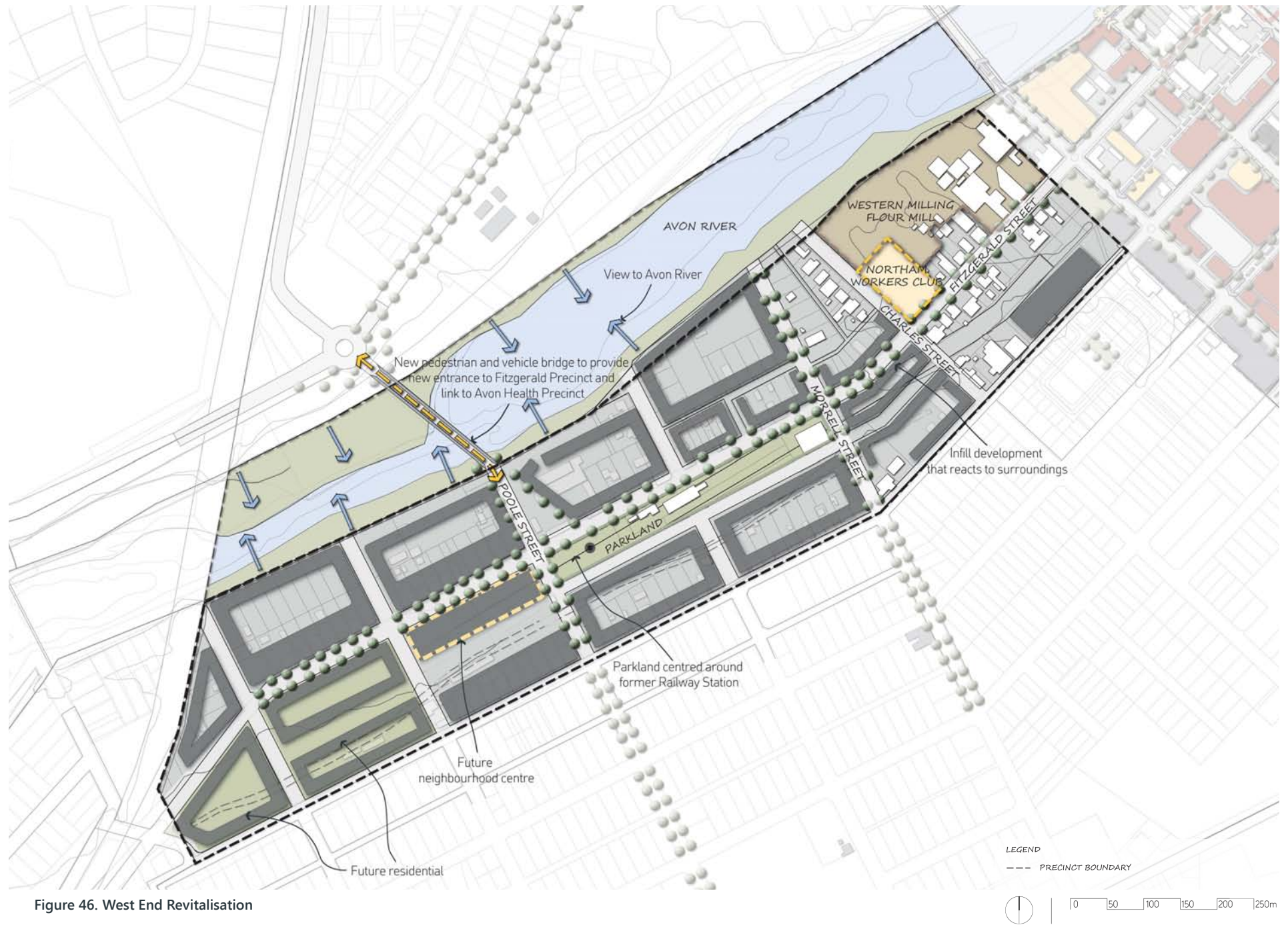


Figure 46. West End Revitalisation



Figure 47. East End Retail Revitalisation

# Infrastructure to Support Growth

An audit of physical and community infrastructure was conducted to identify infrastructure that is currently restricting development of the Northam area. This audit is designed with the vision of Northam townsite to get to a population of 20,000 people within the townsite and to have 50,000 in the Avon Sub Region. Currently the level of infrastructure provided to the Northam townsite is inhibiting development due primarily to the cost of the infrastructure on potential projects which makes development unviable in the current market place. It needs to be noted that it is beneficial to develop infrastructure from an overall strategic point rather than an individual developer upgrading infrastructure to suit their needs. Following this growth plan and the profile raising of the Supertowns Program, utilities will be encouraged to partner with the Shires in the Avon and the Wheatbelt Development Commission to undertake strategic, staged investment plans to ensure infrastructure does not remain a constraint to growth. These partnerships will then be used to source funding to implement these key infrastructure components. An amalgamated regional investment blueprint will be developed to priority list investment based on economic modelling. Known investment for Northam is listed below. This list can be added to as staged investment plans are completed.

## WATER SUPPLY

The existing planning last undertaken by Water Corporation in 2004 does not cater for the accelerated growth of Northam which would bring forward the need to upgrade the Mundaring Water Treatment Plant and pump stations at Chidlow and Wundowie.

Each of the water pump stations will need to be upgraded when demand is nearly at 130ML/day (current demand is 125ML/day) and will come to a price of approximately \$6 million each. The Mundaring Water Treatment plant and outlet works would need to be upgraded at 170ML/day (current demand is 142ML/day) and would cost approximately \$27.7 million dollars. An additional 13000 residents in Northam would consume approximately another 11.3ML/day (this does not take into account any new industry coming to town). There is currently no additional funding available for the capital works upgrades for the Water Corporation. There is the opportunity to stage water supply investment plan.

## WASTEWATER

The existing waste water treatment plant (WWTP) is currently at capacity. To increase capacity to cater for development the WWTP would need amplification (to be made bigger), Treated Waste Water Management (TWWM) improvements and Odour control to get the plant to 1500KL/day capacity. This would allow for approximately another 2100 people in Northam. The anticipated cost to get the additional capacity is \$18.2 million. Currently there is funding for the WWTP screen and sludge digester. There is no funding to allow for the other upgrades to occur. There are no space constraints and buffer issues with the current location of WWTP. There is the opportunity to stage wastewater supply investment plan.

## POWER

### SUPPLY AND POWER DISTRIBUTION

In the centre of Northam from Fitzgerald Street to Minson Avenue there are overhead power lines which, if located below ground, would visually enhance this area of town. A detailed investigation is required to understand limitations and proactive investment opportunities in power transmission and distribution infrastructure to light, medium and heavy industrial sites.

Alternative energy sources such as solar cells are proposed on top of the new recreational centre.

## STREET LIGHTING

An audit of Northam's lighting needs to be completed so that planning can occur to determine what level of lighting is required for expected development.

The cost to upgrade varies depending on what is required. Northam is included in the Western Power's BGR cycle over the next twelve months and so some will be upgraded as part of the natural attrition replacements, but outside that it is by request.

## TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Further investigation is required to ensure that mobile telephone coverage, high speed broadband internet services and digital television coverage is of a consistent and high quality in the Northam townsite. The facilities are key infrastructure that is required to ensure that existing and future residents have access to modern telecommunications.

## GAS

Northam currently has no reticulated gas supply into town and a high pressure pipeline was determined to be cost prohibitive as was the option of a gas fired power station. Until this occurs an alternative could be satellite LPG gas stations which would provide farmers and people in towns with an alternative energy supply to electricity or petrol/diesel. Natural gas is a cleaner and lower cost energy source than other liquid fuels (diesel, and petrol). Gas would provide an alternative form of heating in winter.

## CIVIL WORKS

The areas generally identified for future development in Northam have typically similar ground conditions. The hills adjacent to the townsite generally consist of subsurface rock extending to the surface that is extremely difficult to excavate. It is critical for future development to be sympathetic to the natural landform to allow ease of flood routing, minimize excavation depth of services in rock and to minimise fill.

## ZERO WASTE PLAN DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

The next step to fulfil Northam's SWMP is the implementation of kerbside recycling for approximately 7000 properties that are currently receiving the general waste collection service. In order to progress this step the Shire of Northam will be looking to source funding for the purchase of the recycling bins which will be in the order of \$500,000. Sourcing funding for this waste minimisation initiative will help reduce the cost of implementing the program to the local community.

## REGIONAL RECYCLING INITIATIVES

A resource recovery facility will be required when there is an adequate population and volumes to make the facility viable. It suggested that a business plan be required to determine population and volumes.

When the Northam townsite grows to approximately 20,000 residents (currently 7,000 residents) the Shire will be looking at implementing an Anaerobic Waste Treatment Plant (AWTP) such as a Dicom Composting System as supported by the Strategic Waste Minimisation Plan (SWMP). This system uses microorganisms to break down biodegradable material in the absence of oxygen. The by-products of methane and carbon dioxide can be harvested and utilised as renewable energy. The Shire of Northam may be able to partially fund the project whilst also obtaining grant funding to help implement the project.

## DRAINAGE

To increase the quality of the stormwater discharging into the Avon River some stormwater quality devices could be installed. This could be in the form of gross pollutant traps and sediment traps to intercept upstream solids before entering the river. Devices could also be used to control the amount of Phosphorus and Nitrogen entering the river either by vegetated swales, bio filtration basins, wetlands or pollutant removal devices such as Humes Hydro filter. If the quality of the upstream water could be improved before discharging into the Avon River this would help solve some of the problems that the town pool has in summer which include odour and sediment being trapped in the pool. Another issue to be looked is upstream contamination of the Avon and Mortlock River systems. Deep drainage from farming properties discharging highly saline water into the rivers needs to be considered in any solutions.

These options are an opportunity to highlight the multiple benefits of undertaking this work, i.e. improved river health, improved amenity and ability to unlock residential development. Overall, there are benefits to the Swan River and the larger Avon Mortlock Catchment Area.

## ROAD NETWORK

As part of the redevelopment of the town and providing a higher density in and around the Town Centre an option was put forward to have another bridge to extend Poole Street. This would allow the western end of Fitzgerald Street to be redeveloped and possibly take some traffic off the Avon Bridge. The anticipated price is \$25 million. The location of the proposed bridge is shown in Appendix 6. Again significant detailed engineering, hydrological and environmental design is required.

With the growth and development of the Central Business Area the Gairdner and Fitzgerald Street intersection will be required to carry increased traffic. Traffic signals or a roundabout will likely be required when this occurs.

If aspirational growth targets are met then planning for the upgrade of the Great Eastern Highway to dual carriageway standards, from the Lakes to Northam, will need to occur. Construction of the 'Orange Route' will also need serious consideration.

An upgraded freight route to the north is required to allow freight originating from this area to go north without having to go through Perth. Longer term a freight route linking Northam to Great Northern Highway and then onto Brand Highway will be needed. Linking the agricultural production areas around the Avon and to the east to the more diversified and intensive agricultural areas in Chittering, Gingin, Dandaragan and Moora will facilitate food processing.

## PUBLIC TRANSPORT SERVICE

Redevelopment and improvement of the Public intermodal transport hub at a strategic location near the train station would allow the public to change to a different transport service. Currently this does not exist in town. The narrow gauge network option explained in the 'Rail' section below is also a consideration. The opportunity to improve the intra sub regional connections has been recognised.

## PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLIST NETWORK

Construct or upgrade footpaths identified as in need in the footpath plan currently being developed.

## AIRPORT

There are no plans to further expand the existing airport outside the recreational / emergency services that it currently performs. This is due to topographical issues and the proximity of residential development. The closest regional airport to Northam is Cunderdin. There is growing private interest in Cunderdin for aviation development that could be further developed to service the Avon Sub Region. It should be noted that most towns in the Avon Sub Region are within 2 hours drive of Perth Domestic and International Airports. This is a major advantage and is making this area attractive for Fly In Fly Out workers.

## RAIL

It will be important that there is constant review of the passenger services between Northam and Perth. Northam is only an hour from Midland by rail, a major metropolitan train and bus hub. In the short term improvements to the service can be made with existing rolling stock, with better scheduling and more services. It will, however, be important that there be some trigger to purchasing another set of carriages to allow numerous services both ways from Perth to Northam. These carriages can be designed to enhance the Prospector service. This is important as Kalgoorlie, the east Avon and the Central East, around Merredin, grow.

## TECHNOLOGY OPTIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

With the delivery of the National Broadband Network (NBN) in upcoming years, an abundance of affordable land in the Avon Industrial Park and well connected transportation infrastructure, there is ample opportunity to develop high technology based industries in the area. The NBN will also allow businesses new opportunities through innovation. Technology should also be seen as a major decision factor in future

population and labour force attraction. Availability, quality and access to modern, fast, telecommunications and digital media will become more important in people's decisions about where to live.

### INFRASTRUCTURE OPPORTUNITIES

Northam and the Avon area currently have constraints that are limiting the potential growth of the town and area. Current Constraints limiting potential growth of Northam and the Avon have been identified in the above report as:

- Infrastructure that is not suitably sized
- Lack of a register on current infrastructure to identify what needs to be completed to obtain the desired outcome.

Even more important is the apparent lack of sub regional infrastructure planning and proactive, strategic and staged investment plans by State utilities. It is hoped that the profile of the Supertowns program will encourage strategic planning and investment in at least the following items.

- Upgrading waste water management infrastructure (Short term - the WWTP screen and digester in Northam)
- Audits and planning for drainage, gas, water reticulation, sewerage reticulation, roads, electrical, telecommunications and rail.
- Provide additional storage tank in the Goldfields & Agricultural Water Supply main conduit.

Service/Utility	Solution Required to Allow Growth
Water Supply	Upgrade pump station at Chidlow and Wundowie and Upgrade Mundaring Water treatment plant
Water reticulation	Complete planning to identify constraints and required upgrades
Power reticulation	Install existing overhead lines underground in Town Centre of Northam.
Telecommunication Reticulation	Complete planning to identify constraints and required upgrades
Drainage	Install Gross Pollutant Traps and water quality devices to improve water quality being discharged into River network.
WWTP	Make the existing WWTP bigger and make improvements to odour control to get plant to 1500KL/day
Sewerage Reticulation	Upgrade sewer lines to new planning to enable development
Local Roads	Traffic improvement devices around Town Centre
Main Roads	Bridge over Avon River to extend Poole Street to enable better access to western side of Fitzgerald street.
Footpaths	Construct these missing links and required upgrades when this has been identified on footpath plan.
Railway	Implement the findings of the audit.

Table 17. Summary of Minimum Infrastructure Requirements for Northam Townsite

## Governance and Implementing the Growth Plan

### GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

“The provision of adequate and appropriate physical infrastructure together with the various social services (soft infrastructure) is essential if Northam is to achieve the objective of becoming a SuperTown. If the infrastructure is needed to be upgraded, it cannot be expected that a developer will pay for all of the headworks required because it would then run the risk of making land too expensive to buy, which in turn would eliminate a current competitive advantage for Northam. Therefore, a partnership approach between the public and private sectors is likely.” (Mike Allen, 2012)

### ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The main driver of the Northam SuperTowns projects will be the Shire of Northam. The Wheatbelt Development Commission will play a coordination and facilitation role to make sure sub regional opportunities are included in decision making and will work with sub regional Shires on investment blueprints. Various state government departments and agencies that are involved include:

- Various Governmental Departments;
  - Department of Planning;
  - Department of Building Management and Works;
  - Department of Regional Development and Lands;
- Various Government Organisations;
  - Main Roads WA;
  - Western Power;
  - Water Corporation;
- Non-Government Organisations;
  - Chamber of Commerce;
  - Holyoake;
  - Churches;
  - Sporting Groups;
  - Avon Community Development Foundation; and
- Private Investors and Stakeholders.

The roles of the Shire of Northam and these agencies will also be supplemented with involvement with private firms and individuals to assist in delivery of the projects. The roles and responsibilities structure is best outlined within the Governance that is on the following pages. This framework shows the roles of key organisations and individuals in the planning, staging, delivery and review of townsite and sub-regional projects.

Table 8 on p80: Targets and Indicators will be utilised as the ongoing measurement tool. The monitoring requirements are briefly addressed within the tables as starting on p152. The tables cover the governance arrangements, endorsement, monitoring and review and specific arrangements for each project.

### LOCAL LEVEL PARTNERSHIP GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

Local Government represents the on ground interests of the Avon sub-region and Northam communities in particular. Local government can play a substantial role in the implementation of localised development programs and strategies due to its understanding of the local community. However, other agencies and stakeholders may be better placed to deliver necessary outcomes. The Northam Growth Plan has been prepared by the Shire in partnership with the State Government, industry and the private sector. Partnership in the process is necessary to deliver the best outcomes for Northam and the Avon sub-region.

The Growth Plan aspirationally sees the Avon sub-region growing to 50,000 people and Northam town to 20,000 by 2031. Collaborative partnership between all parties is required to achieve this growth.



## OUTCOMES

The key outcomes of each project will be:

- **Economic:**
  - Light industrial development areas – well designed, and maintained industrial areas that are conducive to business and visually appealing;
  - Equestrian industry development areas – a themed precinct to attract residents and business related to the equestrian industry;
  - Development opportunities – that are diverse and vibrant, and are highly desirable and sought after due to their potential for profit and the desirable nature of the Northam townsite;
  - Improve business diversity – to provide a diverse range of services that reduce the need for Northam residents to travel to Perth and draw customers from the Avon sub-region;
- **Community:**
  - Recreation Centre Stage Two – Aquatic centre and youth space – to provide a modern swimming facility and a youth space to give the youths of the community somewhere to congregate;
  - Aboriginal and Environmental Centre – will provide an insight into Aboriginal heritage and promote understanding and inclusiveness in the community;
  - Public open space upgrades – to provide attractive and functional open space that the community has the desire to utilise;
  - Northam Senior High School Theatre – will attract local and visiting performances to Northam and contribute to the culture of the Avon sub-region;
- **Environment:**
  - Improvement to streetscape within Retail Town Centre Area – to provide an attractive and comfortable shopping environment;
  - Nutrient stripping to assist the Avon River Town Pool – to make the Town Pool more attractive and less odorous during the summer months;
  - Collection of runoff, upstream water capture, enhanced water re-use and improved drainage to make best use of water, reduce reliance upon scheme water and reduce flooding
- Improved walkable connectivity to CBA from Train Station – will encourage commuters to and from Northam for work or for tourist purposes;
- Clean-up of disused sites – will allow development of sites that are unused and dilapidated and serve as dysfunctional eyesores;
- Bernard Park redevelopment – will make Bernard Park the focal passive recreation point of the Northam community;
- **Public Realm and Built Environment:**
  - Relocation of inappropriate land uses to light industrial areas – will allow the townsite to develop these sites in more compatible ways;
  - Improvement to town entry – to provide an entry statement that is attractive and draws people into the region;
  - Improved sub regional public transport planning, including school bus arrangement and local bus service routes to allow people the alternative to using their cars to travel to and around the town;
  - Inter modal transport hub – will attract workers to and from the metropolitan area and the region and possibly serve to turn Northam into a desirable residential community for commuters;
  - Health and Emergency Services development – to be consolidated into one site to provide ease of access and improve the effectiveness of the Health Department's presence in the region. Regional health planning to recognise central health precinct;
  - Central business area revitalisation – will make the central business area more attractive and conducive to business;
  - Education Development Area – will serve to make the precinct the education hub for the Avon sub-region and a viable alternative to Perth;
  - New living projects with the Department of Housing – to beautify social housing areas and help to reduce the social impacts of state housing;
  - Victoria Oval redevelopment – to provide new development near to the town centre;

- **Infrastructure and Resources:**
  - Improvement in Train Station/Service and scheduling – will attract more commuters to and from the Northam area;
  - Underground power Fitzgerald Street and Minson Avenue – to make the town centre more attractive and conducive to business;
  - New west traffic bridge over Avon River at Poole/ Hatton Street – will provide traffic through the West End assisting redevelopment;
  - Sewer treatment plant upgrade – to allow for a greater population in the Northam townsite;
  - Sewerage infill required - to allow for a greater population in the Northam townsite;
  - Hillman Creek Drain Development – to reduce flooding and make the drainage routes through the townsite more attractive and environmentally sound;
  - King Creek Drain Development - to reduce flooding and make the drainage routes through the townsite more attractive and environmentally sound;
  - Extension to waste water resource system - to allow for a greater population in the Northam townsite;
  - Surface water catchment - to make best use of water, and reduce reliance upon scheme water; and
  - Alternative energy – to take advantage of energy sources from the Avon sub-region and reduce dependence on the State Energy Grid.
  - Sub Regional, strategic, staged investment plans for key utilities based on sub regional economic planning and this growth plan.

The overall outcome will be a revitalised Northam that is the Regional Centre of the Avon sub-region. The townsite will be coherent and well planned with a vibrant, cohesive and involved community.

## ENDORSEMENT

### ENDORSEMENT DIAGRAM

The endorsement diagram (Figure 48 on the next page) outlines the endorsement and approval process for the SuperTowns project. The process requires collaboration across Local and State Governments as well as amongst the project team and steering committee. This collaborative approach is necessary to achieve the aspirational outcomes of the SuperTowns project and Northam Growth Plan.

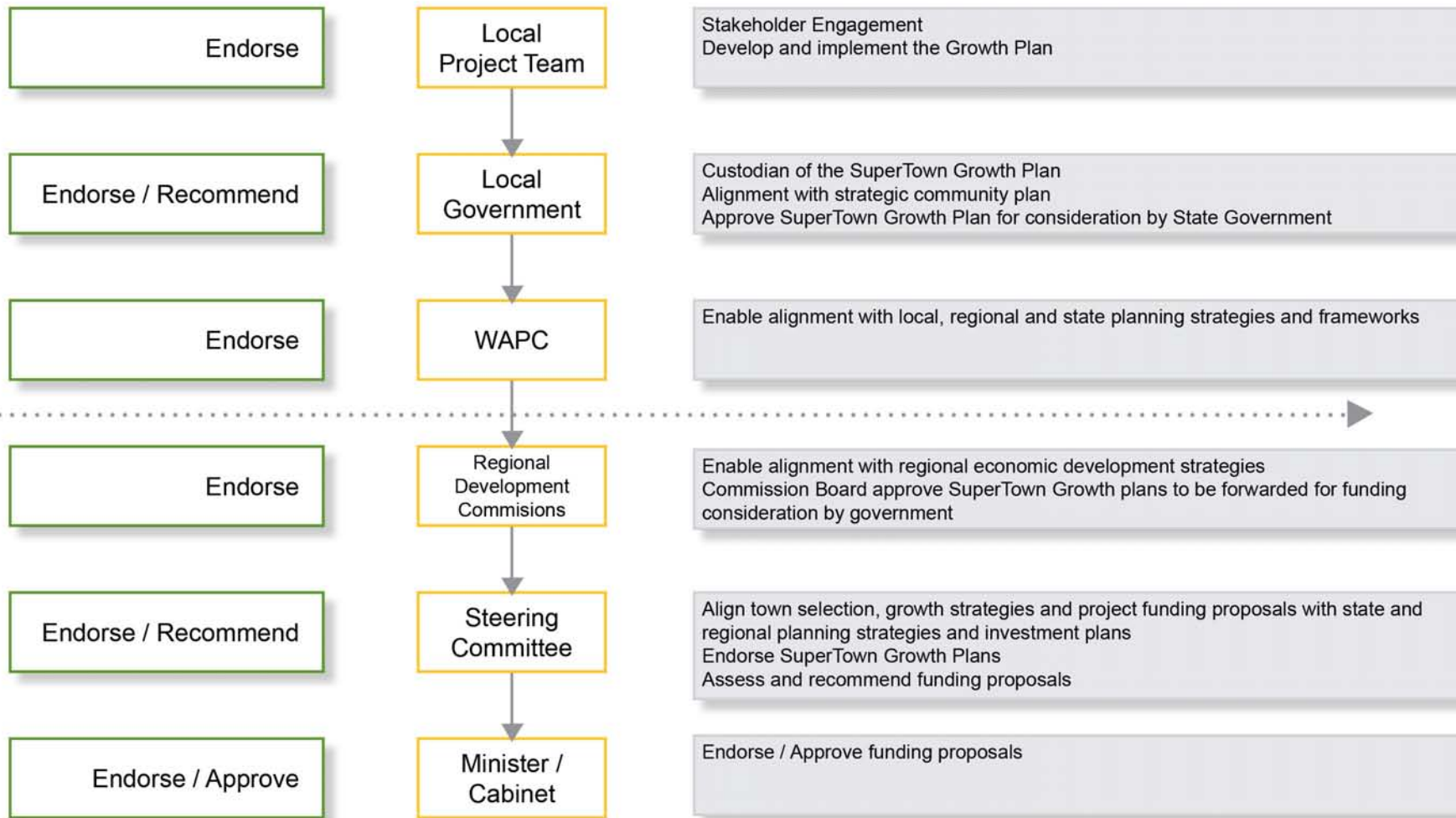


Figure 48. Endorsement Process for the Super Town Growth Plan

## IMPLEMENTING THE GROWTH PLAN

Implementation of the strategies, programs and projects set out in the Northam Growth Plan requires a comprehensive approach to program management. The Northam Growth Plan has, through the context analysis of the townsite and surrounding Avon sub-region, identified a vision and series of attainable aspirational objectives.

### REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMISSIONS, LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Implementation of Growth Plan projects is a multiparty process; however, the key drivers of the endorsement process include the Wheatbelt Development Commission and the Shire of Northam. These two parties work for the region's economic development, to achieve the best growth and development outcomes for the Avon Sub-Region.

#### Wheatbelt Development Commission

The Wheatbelt Development Commission (WDC) has six major objectives and functions:

- Maximise job creation and improve career opportunities in the region;
- Develop and broaden the economic base of the Avon Sub-Region and broader Wheatbelt Region;
- Identify infrastructure service to promote economic and social development in the region;
- Provide information and advice to promote business development within the area;
- Seek to ensure that the general standard of government services and access to those services in the area is comparable to that which applies in the metropolitan region; and
- Generally take steps to encourage, promote, facilitate and monitor the economic development in the area.

#### Local Government

Local governments are increasingly taking on a role in economic development as understanding of the importance of local employment and economic activity increases. The form that such economic development intervention takes varies from local authority to local authority, ranging

form an officer-level position sitting within the CEO's office or Planning Directorate, to designated units devoted specifically to the area. Areas of focus include small business public relations, land use allocation and big picture oriented investment attraction.

#### Strengths

- A defined spatial area of focus with the ability to gather significant information on urban activity through existing sources (e.g. business licensing, health inspections, development approvals);
- The ability to raise revenue directly through initiatives such as developer employment contributions (e.g. The City of Wanneroo Employment Policy); and
- An accessible point of government contact for businesses and industry at a local level.

#### Weaknesses

- Limited capacity to recognise and recruit the essential high level skilled personnel needed to advance strategic economic development;
- Negligible capacity to negotiate with and influence the processes and operations of major corporations (and in some cases, Government Agencies and Enterprises) in regards to their investment patterns, workforce management plans and supply chain operations;
- Influence by elected officials may compromise officer's points of focus, requiring them to attend to activities that are unlikely to generate significant economic development, limiting their ability to focus on big picture, strategic initiatives;
- Economic activity does not stop at municipal boundaries. Local government economic development is heavily influenced by activity in adjacent LGAs. This requires a coordinated approach that can be compromised by differences in priorities, lack of resources, or historical conflicts between municipalities;
- Limitations in public sector salaries and conditions can compromise the attraction and retention of talent with the varied skills and background required to successfully drive economic development in the area; Governance of economic development is by its nature, based on a public sector perspective.

- Initiatives are likely to be therefore driven by public sector decision making considerations; and
- Limited avenues for revenue generation, and limited option for intervention due to statutory requirements.

### Problems with Traditional Approaches to Economic Development Governance

The domination of a centralised governance model within economic development structures has resulted in existing models experiencing five major issues;

- Public sector dominance;
- Expertise of human resources;
- Ability to allocate resources;
- Jurisdictional crossover; and
- Aversion to picking winners.

These factors have limited the effectiveness of these initiatives, reinforcing centralised governance structure's influence as key decision makers for regional economic development.

### LOCAL LEVEL IMPLEMENTATION

At a local level the Shire of Northam needs to consider a range of factors and undertake a series of actions that will advance the development of the Northam Growth Plan and the implementation of projects. The Shire of Northam will partner with the Wheatbelt Development Commission to develop project management structures that ensure project delivery and that the Growth Plan revisions are cognisant of sub regional developments. Specifically the Shire will:

- Restructure organisation to facilitate project implementation and economic development in partnership with the State Government;
- Align the integrated plan making framework with the objectives of the Growth Plan
- Develop Project Steering groups on a project specific basis.
- Continue its close relationship with the WDC on Growth Plan development and review.

- Work with the WDC and other agencies to continue to increase the focus on key needs for growth.

The internal governance and resourcing of an economic development function within the Shire is important to consider. This should entail elevating economic development to an executive function within the Shire and recruiting a suitably qualified and experienced Executive Manager of Avon Economic Development. The establishment of the Avon Economic Development Directorate is likely to be a staged process which will be contingent on resourcing and the balancing of Shire management priorities. Ultimately the function of the Avon Economic Development Directorate may include the operation or oversight of entrepreneurial business activities and potentially a standalone economic development corporate entity. Such activities may include conducting feasibility investigations into service and construction workers' accommodation, tourism development or projects that extend local industry capability such as the establishment of a local building and construction materials supply base. In addition to investigating such feasibilities, the Shire may, through a suitable business vehicle, choose to joint venture the development of such projects with identified partners. It is recognised that the Shire, while it may be able to drive local economic initiatives, cannot do this alone and does not have the resources to put a large effort into sub regional economic management. The Shire will continue to pursue partnerships to ensure a balance sub regional and local approach to economic development is achieved.

The development of a communications and marketing strategy to promote the Avon to private and public sector stakeholders will need to be undertaken. A communication strategy is considered essential to recruiting the local buy-in of key development partners, state agencies, political leaders and private sector investors. The communication strategy may entail building the Avon 'brand'. N.B. communications, marketing, promotion and branding are not economic development and should not be confused with it or substituted for it. They are rather a coordinated series of activities necessary to support the economic development strategy.

### Explanation of Implementation Tables

The implementation tables on the following pages set out the key strategies for growth in Northam and the Avon sub-region. They outline whether the strategy is short, medium or long term and outline the thresholds required to be met before implementation proceeds. Also indicated is who is responsible for the project and the scale in which it is carried out, in the townsite, the Shire or across the Avon sub-region.

Also outlined in the first set of tables is the delivery method. This sets out how the strategies will be achieved.

### DEVELOPMENT AND GROWTH STRATEGIES

By way of a summary, the following actions are proposed under key headings in order to implement the objectives of the Development Plan. Each action outlines the responsible agency and sets out a recommended delivery mechanism. These fall into three categories:

#### Short (0-5 years)

- May be immediately actioned by the Shire and others, with funding required.
- Approximate town site population 7,000 – 10,000.

#### Medium (6-10 years)

- Will involve interagency cooperation, detailed specialist feasibilities or investigations before deciding on the best way forward.
- Planning for an approximate town site population of 10,000 – 14,000.

#### Long (11-20 years)

- Will require additional community input or detailed design, costing and funding sourced before the action can be implemented.
- Planning for an approximate town site population of 14,000 – 20,000 plus.

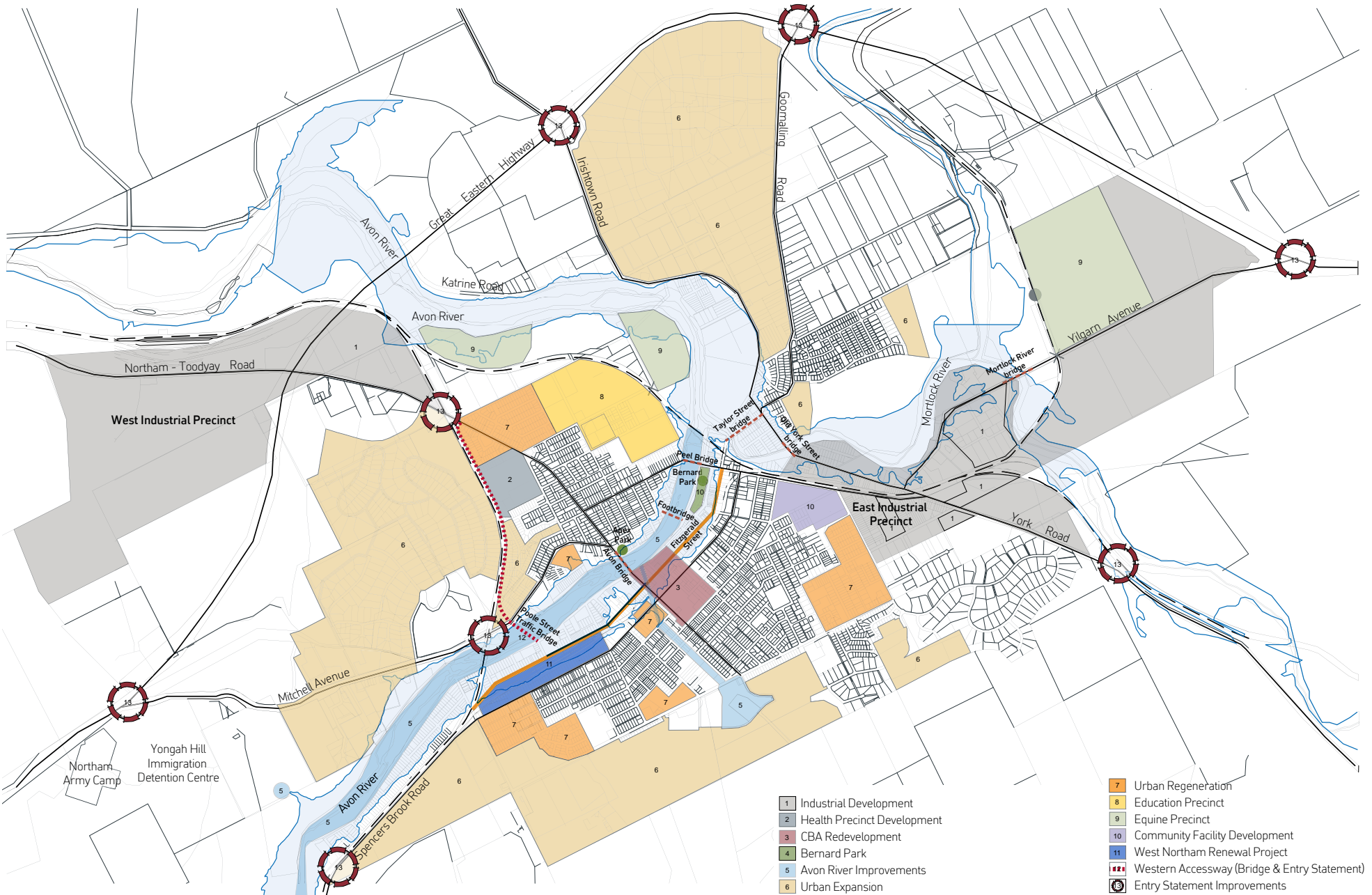


Figure 49. Northam Growth Plan

## FEASIBLE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The feasible implementation program is outlined in Tables 18-21 whilst utilising the key objectives and strategies previously identified in the

plan. Various projects have regional or local significance and are required to be undertaken over a short, medium and / or long term timeframes.

Table 18. Economy - Implementation

Aspirational goal		Providing opportunities for regional and local employment generation to address the gaps and drive diversification of employment outcomes. Providing favourable conditions for robust economic growth to occur across a range of industries.								
Strategy	Region/Local	Action/activity/project	Driver	Timeframe for Delivery / Estimated Cost						
				Short (0-5yr)	Cost (\$m)	Medium (6-10yr)	Cost (\$m)	Long (11-20yr)	Cost (\$m)	Source
Increased local business, industry and employment diversity	Region	Light industrial development areas	SoN, Water Corporation, Western Power	Short	4					Royalties for Regions
	Region	Avon Industrial Park Stage	Landcorp	Short	4	Medium				Royalties for Regions
Activity nodes, tourism	Region	Equestrian industry development areas	Private landowners, Northam Turf Club			Medium	1.5			Private Investors, Northam Race Club
Improve business diversity	Region	Development opportunities - sub regional planning	Chamber of Commerce, ACDF	Short	0.5					Business Owner(s),
	Region	Improve business diversity	Wheatbelt Development Commission, ACDF	Short	0.5					Chamber of Commerce
	Local	Encourage increased Professional Services	Wheatbelt Development Commission, Chamber of Commerce ACDF SoN	Short	Ongoing					Chamber of Commerce
Tourism	Local	Encourage weekend trading and markets	Chamber of Commerce	Short	Ongoing					Chamber of Commerce
	Local	Activate Minson Avenue from Avon Bridge to the Peel Terrace Bridge	SoN	Short	0.5					Royalties for Regions



The tables outline the indicative costs to deliver these projects and identify the source of the investment required for the delivery of the projects. The

secondary function of the tables is to outline the delivery mechanism and the driver responsible. Priority projects are highlighted in bold text.

Strategy	Region/Local	Action/activity/project	Driver	Timeframe for Delivery / Estimated Cost							
				Short (0-5yr)	Cost (\$m)	Medium (6-10yr)	Cost (\$m)	Long (11-20yr)	Cost (\$m)	Source	
Business expansion	Region	Liaise with Coles, Woolworths, private property owners in the town centre and other stakeholders regarding expansion of retail services, or a second DDS	Chamber of Commerce, SoN, WDC	Short	Ongoing						Chamber of Commerce

Delivery and Thresholds			
Action/activity/project	Threshold Indicator	Delivery Method	Driver Responsible
Light industrial development areas	7000 people, short	Undertake a detailed review of key infrastructure requirements, identify shortfalls, funding provided for key Water Corporation, Western Power. (Northam – Northam Shire, Sub Region – WDC-Landcorp)	Water Corporation, Western Power, Shire of Northam, Wheatbelt Development Commission, LandCorp.
Equestrian industry development areas	7000 people	Review previous planning undertaken for the precinct, encourage private investment in the construction of the subdivision. Opportunity to link/ complement equestrian activities in York and Toodyay.	Private landowners, Northam Turf Club.
Development opportunities	7000 – 14000 people, short - medium	Partner with key potential business opportunities within the region.	Chamber of Commerce, ACDF.
Improve business diversity	7000 – 20,000	Develop key strategies for partnerships with new businesses.	Wheatbelt Development Commission, ACDF.
Encourage weekend trading and markets	7000 people, medium	Continue to promote existing markets. Promote 7 day trading and encourage existing businesses to.	Chamber of Commerce.
Activate Minson Avenue from Avon Bridge to the Peel Terrace Bridge	7000 people, medium	Enforce Minson Avenue Design Guidelines, encourage private investment within the precinct, continue improvements to Bernard Park.	Shire of Northam.
Liaise with Coles, Woolworths, private property owners in the town centre and other stakeholders regarding expansion of retail services, or a second DDS	10,000 people, medium	Ensure that inappropriate uses within the existing Retail Precinct are relocated to enable retail expansion opportunities.	Chamber of Commerce, Shire of Northam, Wheatbelt Development Commission

Table 19. Community - Implementation

Aspirational goal		Fostering the development of safe, friendly and inclusive communities. Providing places and spaces that reflect and enhance the unique character, indigenous and non-indigenous heritage and identity of the area. Building resilience within the community and providing services and facilities for a range of diverse community needs and interests.								
Strategy	Region/Local	Action/activity/project	Driver	Timeframe for Delivery / Estimated Cost						
				Short (0-5yr)	Cost (\$m)	Medium (6-10yr)	Cost (\$m)	Long (11-20yr)	Cost (\$m)	Source
Community facilities	Region	Recreation centre Stage Two – Aquatic centre and youth space	SoN, DSR	Short	7					Royalties for Regions, CSRFF
	Local	Active aging strategy to be developed, Seniors activities at the Recreation Centre	Department of Health	Short	0.5					Royalties for Regions, Federal Government
Cultural heritage	Local	Interpretation and Tourism Opportunity (Aboriginal and Environmental Centre)	SoN, AVES, DIA	Short	4					Royalties for Regions, Federal Government
Community facilities	Local	Public open space upgrades	SoN	Short	0.3					CLGF, POS Trust, Royalties for Regions
Community cohesion and involvement	Local	Redevelopment of social housing areas	Department of Housing	Short	4	Medium	2.5			Royalties for Regions

Delivery and Thresholds			
Action/activity/project	Threshold Indicator	Delivery Method	Driver Responsible
Recreation centre Stage Two – Aquatic centre and youth space	7000 people	Revise existing concept plan, engagement with youth to refine youth space plan.	Shire of Northam, DSR.
Active aging strategy to be developed, Seniors activities at the Recreation Centre	7000 people	Improve facilities at Recreation Centre to ensure senior's activities can be accommodated.	Wheatbelt Development Commission, Avon Youth, Shire of Northam
Aboriginal and Environmental Centre	7000 people	Engage architect to prepare concept plans including liaison with local reference groups and aboriginal representatives, develop management plan, tender for construction.	Shire of Northam, AVES, DIA.
Public open space upgrades	7000 people	Upgrading of various parks throughout the townsite in conjunction with water supply upgrades.	Shire of Northam.
Redevelopment of social housing areas	7000 people	In conjunction with Department of Housing under physical improvement works including street scaping, landscaping of public places, playground development. Encourage redevelopment and private ownership of housing with increased investment in new housing stock.	Department of Housing.

Table 20. Environment - Implementation

Aspirational goal	The protection and enhancement of natural environmental and cultural assets, biodiversity, air and water quality and building resilience against the long term effects of climate change.									
Strategy	Region/ Local	Action/activity/project	Driver	Timeframe for Delivery / Estimated Cost						
				Short (0-5yr)	Cost (\$m)	Medium (6-10yr)	Cost (\$m)	Long (11-20yr)	Cost (\$m)	Source
Town setting	Local	Improvement to streetscape within Retail Town Centre Area, as well as car parking and footpath areas	SoN	Short	0.5					Council, Royalties for Regions
	Local	Landscape protection areas to protect vistas	SoN	Short	0.5					Council, Royalties for Regions
Rivers	Region	Nutrient stripping to assist Town Pool	SoN, Department of Water, AVES	Short	1.5	Medium	3.5			Royalties for Regions, Department of Water
	Region	Potential for upstream water catchment dams	SoN, Department of Water, AVES	Short	3.2					Royalties for Region
	Region	Develop strategies to improve river quality	SoN, Department of Water, AVES	Short	0.25					Department of Water
Retention of pre-developmental water balance	Local	Water re-use underground storage tanks	SoN, Department of Water, AVES			Medium	3			Federal Government, Royalties for Regions
Provide active recreation / transport options	Local	Improved walkable connectivity to CBA from Train Station	SoN, TransWA, PTA	Short	0.25					PTA

Strategy	Region/ Local	Action/activity/ project	Driver	Timeframe for Delivery / Estimated Cost						
				Short (0-5yr)	Cost (\$m)	Medium (6-10yr)	Cost (\$m)	Long (11-20yr)	Cost (\$m)	Source
Town setting, active and passive recreation provision	Local	Clean-up of disused sites	SoN, LandCorp	Short	2.5					Royalties for Regions
	Local	Bernard Park redevelopment	SoN, Department of Water, AVE	Short	1.5					Royalties for Regions

Delivery and Thresholds			
Action/activity/project	Threshold Indicator	Delivery Method	Driver Responsible
Improvement to streetscape within Retail Town Centre Area, as well as car parking and footpath areas	7000 people	Continue previous streetscape works within Fitzgerald Street, implement findings of Car Parking Strategy, enforce Design guidelines and scheme provisions.	Shire of Northam
Street tree planting in townsite	7000 people	Continue previous streetscape works, develop program for community ownership of open space areas.	Shire of Northam
Nutrient stripping to assist Town Pool	7000 people initially – 10,000	Further engineering design for stripping basins, environmental approvals, tender construction works.	Shire of Northam, Department of Water, AVES
Potential for upstream water catchment dams	7000 people	Detailed engineering design required negotiations with landowners, tender construction works.	Shire of Northam, Department of Water, AVES
Develop strategies to improve river quality	7000 people	Continue to expand on Environmental Planning Report, source external funding options.	Shire of Northam, Department of Water, AVES
Water re-use underground storage tanks	10,000 people	Detailed engineering and environmental approvals required.	Shire of Northam, Department of Water, AVES
Improved walkable connectivity to CBA from Train Station	7000 people	Continue physical improvement works.	Shire of Northam, TransWA, Public Transport Authority
Clean-up of disused sites	7000 people	Purchase various landholdings from private ownership, undertake remediation works, on-sell properties for private redevelopment.	Shire of Northam, LandCorp
Bernard Park redevelopment		Complete detailed environmental and engineering design, community consultation, tender construction, undertake construction (refer to business case).	Shire of Northam, Department of Water, AVES

Table 21. Public Realm and Built Environment - Implementation

Aspirational goal		Economically efficient infrastructure for industry and households designed for efficient use of energy, water, materials and transport. Providing an orderly and adequate supply of land along with increased choice in housing to cater for a diverse population and workforce.								
Strategy	Region/ Local	Action/activity/project	Driver	Timeframe for Delivery / Estimated Cost						
				Short (0-5yr)	Cost (\$m)	Medium (6-10yr)	Cost (\$m)	Long (11-20yr)	Cost (\$m)	Source
Industrial	Region	Relocation of inappropriate Land uses to light industrial areas	LandCorp, SoN	Short	3					
An accessible and legible centre destination	Local	Improvement to town entry	SoN, MRWA	Short	0.5					
Bus	Region	Local bus service route proposed	PTA	Short	1.2					Royalties for Regions, Department of Transport
Connectivity at local, district and regional scale	Region	Inter modal transport hub	PTA, TransWA			Medium	2			Department of Transport
Health	Region	Health and emergency services development	SoN, LandCorp, Department of Health, (SiHi)	Short	4.5	Medium	1.5			Royalties for Regions, Federal Government, Private investors
Offices, increased net development density	Region	Central business area revitalisation	SoN, LandCorp, Private investors, BMW	Short	2.5	Medium	7			Royalties for Regions, SoN, BMW

Strategy	Region/ Local	Action/activity/project	Driver	Timeframe for Delivery / Estimated Cost							
				Short (0-5yr)	Cost (\$m)	Medium (6-10yr)	Cost (\$m)	Long (11-20yr)	Cost (\$m)	Source	
Education	Region	Education precinct area development	Department of education, Department of Training								Royalties for Regions, Department of Education
High quality well designed buildings, diverse mix of housing types	Local	New living projects with the Department of Housing	Department of Housing, SoN, LandCorp								Department of Housing, SoN
High quality well designed buildings, diverse mix of housing types	Local	Victoria Oval redevelopment including dwelling construction	SoN, LandCorp, private investors	Short	1.5						Royalties for Regions, private investment
	Local	West Northam Redevelopment Precinct	SoN, LandCorp, Brookefield Rail, WaterCorp	Short - Medium	7						Royalties for Regions, Water Corporation, PTA
	Local	Increase in housing density in the townsite	SoN, LandCorp, Department of Housing	Short	2.1						Royalties for Regions, Council, LandCorp, Private Investors
Diverse mix of housing types	Local	Encourage housing diversity	SoN, Planning Department, Department of Housing	Short	1.5						Royalties for Regions, Council, LandCorp, Private Investors

Delivery and Thresholds			
Action/activity/project	Threshold Indicator	Delivery Method	Driver Responsible
Relocation of inappropriate land uses to light industrial areas	7000 people	Develop incentives for relocation of existing businesses to established industrial areas, physical improvements to sites, encourage private investment.	LandCorp, Shire of Northam
Improvement to town entry	7000 people	Continue existing physical improvements.	Shire of Northam, Main Roads WA.
Local bus service route proposed	7000 people	Funding to purchase and operate town bus service with daily services to surrounding towns.	Public Transport Authority
Inter modal transport hub	10,000 people	Expand on proposed bus services to increase number of services and expand further into region.	Public Transport Authority, TransWA
Health and Emergency Services development	7000 people	Ensure sufficient land is available for expansion of services (further information available from Business Case).	Shire of Northam, LandCorp, Department of Health, (SiHi)
Central business area revitalisation	7000 people	Ensure sufficient land and office space is available for the town and regional facilities (further information available from Business Case).	Shire of Northam, LandCorp, Private investors, BMW
Minson Ave	10,000 people	Encourage demonstration building along Minson Ave. Promote detailed precinct concept planning.	SoN, Private Investors
Education Development Area	7000 people	Engagement with stakeholders to develop a master plan for education development, physical improvement works, possible purchase of private property to ensure enough physical area to expand.	Department of Education, Department of Training
New living projects with the Department of Housing	7000 people	Partner with stakeholders to undertake building improvement works on State owned residences, encourage private ownership of existing housing, undertake streetscape improvements, public space landscaping, invest in new public housing stock.	Department of Housing, Shire of Northam, LandCorp
Victoria Oval redevelopment	7000 people	Joint venture arrangements developer to construct demonstration dwelling units.	Shire of Northam, LandCorp, private investors
West Northam Redevelopment Precinct. Redevelopment of disused PTA sites along old rail reserve	7000 people	Undertake de-proclamation of rail corridor, identify contaminated sites, remediate works, relocations of existing industrial uses, site clearing, rezoning and subdivision In partnership with key agencies.	Shire of Northam, LandCorp, Brookfield Rail, WaterCorp
Increase in housing density in the townsite	7000 people	Undertake zoning modifications in Planning Scheme; develop demonstration housing subdivision of key sites in conjunction with government landowners.	Shire of Northam, LandCorp, Department of Housing
Encourage housing diversity	7000 people	Undertake zoning modifications in Planning Scheme, construct demonstration housing units in government owned subdivided areas.	Shire of Northam, Planning Department, Department of Housing



Table 22. Infrastructure and Resources - Implementation

Aspirational goal	Strategic and urban transport, utilities and communications infrastructure are provided in a timely, sustainable and efficient manner to cater for a growing resident population as well as increasing strategic and business activity.									
Strategy	Region/Local	Action/activity/project	Driver	Timeframe for Delivery / Estimated Cost						
				Short (0-5yr)	Cost (\$m)	Medium (6-10yr)	Cost (\$m)	Long (11-20yr)	Cost (\$m)	Source
Effective and well utilised public transport	State	Improvement in Train Station/Service and scheduling	TransWa	Short	12.5					Transport, TransWA, PTA
Effective development of central business district	Local	Underground power Fitzgerald Street and Minson Avenue	SoN, Western, Power			Medium	3.3			Western Power
Improved traffic flows	Regional	New west traffic bridge over Avon River at Poole Street, replace Avon Bridge	SoN, MRWA			Medium	23			Royalties for Regions, Main Roads
Maximum use of waste water	Local	Waste water treatment plant upgrade	Water Corporation	Short	0.72	Medium	18.2			
Increased housing density	Local	Sewerage infill required	Water Corporation	Short	3	Medium	1.5			Water Corporation
River Health and Flood Mitigation	Local	Hillman Creek drain development	SoN	Short	1.5					Royalties for Regions, private investment, Federal, SoN
River Health and Flood Mitigation	Local	King Creek Drain development	SoN	Short	2.1					Royalties for Regions, private investment, Federal, SoN
Maximum use of waste water	Local	Extension to waste water resource system	SoN, Water Corporation, DIAC	Short	2.5					Federal
Flood Mitigation.	Local	Surface water catchment	SoN	Short	Estimated 3.5		3.2			Royalties for Regions

Strategy	Region/ Local	Action/activity/project	Driver	Timeframe for Delivery / Estimated Cost							
				Short (0-5yr)	Cost (\$m)	Medium (6-10yr)	Cost (\$m)	Long (11-20yr)	Cost (\$m)	Source	
Increased power supply	Local	Alternative energy in form of Solar panels	Western Power, SoN			Medium					
Upgrade booster pumps in Goldfields & Agricultural Water Supply	Regional	Booster pumps	Water Corporation			Medium	12				Water Corporation
Audits for planning of drainage, water reticulation, sewerage reticulation, roads, electrical and telecommunications	Local	Audits of existing infrastructure and strategies/ designs implemented for anticipated growth	SoN, Water Corporation, Western Power	Short	Estimated 1.5						Water Corporation, Western Power and Royalties for Regions
To provide adequate water storage	Regional	50ML Tank in Sawyers Valley	Water Corporation	Short	37.6						Water Corporation
Enabling Infrastructure for Industry Development	Regional	Utility Infrastructure required for light industrial precinct development	Water Corporation Western Power SoN	Short	10						Water Corporation Western Power SoN Royalties for Regions

Delivery and Thresholds			
Action/activity/project	Threshold Indicator	Delivery Method	
Improvement in Train Station/ Service and scheduling	7000 people	PTA will rollout increased services and make improvements to train station and new train and carriages when PTA determines that demand warrants the spend on infrastructure	TransWA
Underground power Fitzgerald Street and Minson Avenue	10,000 people	Western Power will install underground lines and remove overhead line	Shire of Northam, Western, Power
New west traffic bridge over Avon River at Poole Street	10,000 people	Detailed engineering feasibility and design, construct new bridge across Avon River	Shire of Northam, Main Roads WA
Waste water treatment plant upgrade	7000 people	Water Corporation will upgrade Waste water treatment plant	Water Corporation
Power, Water and Sewerage infill required	7000 people	Supply and install before development occurs	Water Corporation
Hillman Creek Drain Development	7000 people	Construct design to rectify drainage issues (refer to Business Case for detailed information)	Shire of Northam
King Creek Drain Development	7000 people	Construct design to rectify drainage issues (refer to Business Case for detailed information)	Shire of Northam
Extension to waste water resource system	7000 people	Negotiations required with DIAC, engineering design for water storage dam including surface water catchment, construct pipelines to existing system.	Shire of Northam, Water Corporation, DIAC
Surface water catchment	7000 people	Detailed engineering design for basin, pipeline and pumps, construct basins and associated infrastructure.	Shire of Northam
Alternative energy	9500 people	Supply and install solar panels on roof of recreational building	
Upgrade booster pumps in Goldfields & Agricultural Water Supply	9500 people	Water corporation would supply and install booster pumps	Water Corporation
Audits for planning of drainage, water reticulation, sewerage reticulation, roads, electrical and telecommunications	7000 people	Consultants/Service authorities would undertake audits and planning in their relevant fields. From this constraints could be identified and designs completed to allow for the intended growth in Northam. Detailed investigation required from above agencies.	Shire of Northam, Water Corporation, Western Power
50ML Tank in Sawyers Valley	7000 people	Water corporation would supply and install tank	Water Corporation
Utility Infrastructure required for light industrial precinct development	7000 people	Consultants/Service authorities would undertake audits and planning in their relevant fields. From this constraints could be identified and designs completed to allow for the light industrial precinct.	Water Corporation, Western Power, Shire of Northam.

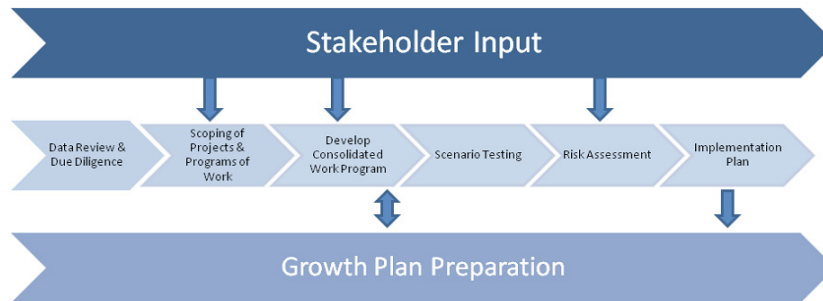


Figure 50. Contingencies and Sequencing

The tables identify the key projects, time scales, costs and the agencies involved to realise them. The Shire of Northam will be the primary driver of the key planning and project management to be undertaken; however other stakeholders will have involvement also.

## MARKETING AND PROMOTION

Marketing within the Avon sub-region will focus on the promotion of tourism, affordable living opportunities, job diversity, industry attraction, the sense of community and the following table and outcomes.

Date	Priority Outcome	Communications Task	Priority Audience
September 2011	Communications strategy developed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish Project Team and Community Reference Group</li> <li>Establish stakeholder database</li> <li>Establish protocols for updating database and calendar.</li> <li>Establish a SuperTowns page on Shire and Commission Websites</li> </ul> <p><i>Operational events:</i>            Fortnightly and then weekly meetings – Project Team            Monthly Community Reference Group Meetings            Engagement with Surrounding LGA's</p>	Shire, Commission and Community Representatives
November / December 2011	Regular Communication established via a number of media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Distribute central Promotional material to relevant stakeholders</li> <li>Local – follow up on planning funding with update on Growth Plans and local activities/community engagement</li> <li>Actively seek additional opportunities for news releases, human interest stories, speaking engagements etc.</li> </ul> <p><i>Operational events:</i>            As above</p>	
January/ February 2012	Growth Plan development and approval	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stakeholder engagement and endorsement of draft Growth Plan</li> <li>General communication to broad stakeholder group re:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Growth Plans submitted for funding</li> <li>Progress to date</li> <li>Call for contributions</li> </ul> </li> <li>Launch of Heartlands WA – Live work and invest in the Wheatbelt</li> </ul> <p><i>Operational events:</i>            As above</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shire of Northam</li> <li>Wheatbelt Development Commission</li> </ul>

Table 23. Schedule of the Marketing and Promotion of the Northam SuperTowns Growth Plan

February/ March 2012	"Champions" published	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Major Ministerial announcement - potential for:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State media announcement or press conference</li> <li>Regional visits with community and/or VIP stakeholder briefings</li> <li>Localised media announcements/interviews/photo opportunities in each town</li> </ul> </li> <li>Sixth stakeholder update prepared and launched. Ezine comprising:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Funding approval announcement</li> <li>Response by town</li> <li>Where to from here?</li> <li>Call for subscriptions.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Presentation opportunities – Expos:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Careers, Education and Employment Expo (Perth)</li> <li>Local Govt. Managers Australia (LGMA) National Congress and Business Expo (Perth)</li> <li>Franchising and Business Opportunities Expo (Perth)</li> </ul> </li> <li>Actively seek additional opportunities for news releases, human interest stories, speaking engagements etc.</li> </ul> <p><i>Operational events:</i>  <i>Monthly communications review meeting</i>  <i>Fortnightly progress meetings – Super Towns Unit etc</i>  <i>Monthly Steering Committee Meetings</i>  <i>April/May: Media announcement Cabinet recommendations on funding submissions.</i></p>	Super Towns Unit Communications consultants SuperTowns – residents, local businesses Local Governments Champions Media outlets Current and prospective subscribers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State</li> <li>Regional</li> <li>Local</li> </ul>
April/ May 2012	Ministerial announcement approval for town growth plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Distribute central Promotional material to relevant stakeholders</li> <li>Local – follow up on planning funding with update on Growth Plans and local activities/community engagement</li> <li>Actively seek additional opportunities for news releases, human interest stories, speaking engagements etc.</li> </ul> <p><i>Operational events:</i>  <i>As above</i></p>	Complete planning to identify constraints and required upgrades
January/ February 2012	Growth development Plan and approval	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Media Statement</li> <li>Community event/celebration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local media</li> <li>Community</li> <li>Surrounding LGA's</li> </ul>
November 2012	Finalisation of Growth Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Media Statement</li> <li>Community event/celebration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local media</li> <li>Community</li> <li>Surrounding LGA's</li> </ul>

## REVIEW

A schedule for local government and community review of the Northam Growth Plan must be developed. Amendments to the plan are based on performance information and changing circumstances.

At a minimum, a desk-top review of the Northam Growth Plan should be undertaken every two years, and a full review and renewed long term visioning process be conducted every five years. This will ensure that community priorities and aspirations are kept up to date and remain relevant.

Ultimately, the Northam Growth Plan will be a driver for all other planning and the integration of asset, service and financial plans means the local government's resource capabilities are matched to communities' needs. Where structural reform is being put in place, this integrated approach to planning will help the new entities identify and meet the requirements of the participating local community.

STRATEGIC COMMUNITY PLAN SUMMARY			
Description	Intent	Roles and Responsibilities	Elements
Principal strategy and planning document that reflects community long term vision, values, aspirations and priorities with consideration to local government Area/Place/Regional Plans, local government strategies, and resourcing.	<p>To involve the community in the establishment of a long term vision for the local government through the identification of strategic priorities and aspirations.</p> <p>To provide the local government with clear direction understanding of the community well-being priorities over a longer time frame (social, economic, environmental and civic leadership) and to understand long term impacts based on research that will translate to service, asset and land use planning requirements.</p> <p>To guide local government priority setting within the Northam Growth Plan.</p>	<p><b>Community</b> Genuine community involvement is essential. Independent and professionally facilitated workshops are preferred.</p> <p><b>Council</b> Approves the process and structure of the community engagement model. Adopts the plan. Adopts the plan following reviews.</p> <p><b>Administration</b> Enables, guides and documents the process. Provides administrative and technical support to the community and council. Understands broad resource implications of Strategic Community Plan. Integrates the priorities and focus areas into Corporate Business Plan deliverables.</p>	<p>Long Term Community Vision.</p> <p>Short, medium and long term community aspiration.</p> <p>Objectives to address community wellbeing issues.</p> <p>Strategies to address the Objectives.</p> <p>Strategic performance Indicators.</p> <p>Means of measurement.</p>

Table 24: Strategic Summary

### Review Schedule

The review of the key projects and goals of the Growth Plan will be required to be carried out in a fashion that is legible and transparent. The following table sets out the manner in which the plan and strategies are reviewed. The intent and roles and responsibilities are explained so that each strategies aims and those responsible are easily recognised.

The key interdependencies, mechanics and outputs are also defined. A sound review strategy is the key to any major projects implementation and ensures that the desired outcomes are met and problems are identified and rectified early. A solid review schedule is paramount to achieve the goals and objectives of the Northam Growth Plan.

STRATEGIC COMMUNITY PLAN SUMMARY (cont.)		
Supporting Processes	Timeframes and Review	Outputs and Interdependencies
<p>Community Engagement strategy outlining stakeholder engagement methods.</p> <p>External analysis identifying trends, impacts.</p> <p>Alignment to State and National legislation and policy where appropriate.</p> <p>Interdependent relationship with local area/place/regional planning, land use planning and local planning scheme.</p> <p>Resourcing implications such as service and asset planning, financial planning.</p> <p>The tool for ensuring local community outcomes identified are considered in any local government, including new and reforming local governments</p>	<p><b>10+ Years</b></p> <p><b>Major Review</b></p> <p>Every five years, council reviews the vision, priorities and aspirations of the plan with full and wide ranging community engagement. Renews the plan in line with contemporary community desires.</p> <p><b>Minor Review</b></p> <p>Every two years following major review. "Desktop review" with community consultation and council endorsement.</p> <p><b>Timing</b></p> <p>Reviews should take place as soon as practicable after council elections with major reviews aligning with mayoral / presidential elections were held.</p>	<p>Outputs</p> <p>Strategic Community Plan.</p> <p>Interdependencies</p> <p>Informing or specific issue strategies e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Safety Strategy</li> <li>• Economic Development Strategy</li> <li>• Active Ageing Strategy</li> <li>• Health and Well Being strategy</li> <li>• Tourism Strategy.</li> </ul> <p>Place Based Strategies.</p> <p>Local Planning Strategies.</p> <p>Strategic Project Business Cases e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performing Arts Centres</li> <li>• Youth Centres</li> <li>• Major Road Projects</li> <li>• City/Town Centre Redevelopments</li> <li>• Recreation centres</li> <li>• Urban renewal.</li> </ul> <p>Corporate Business Plans</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Asset Management Plans</li> <li>• Workforce Plans</li> <li>• Financial Plans</li> <li>• Operational Plans</li> <li>• Services.</li> </ul> <p>Regional Council involvement and activities.</p>

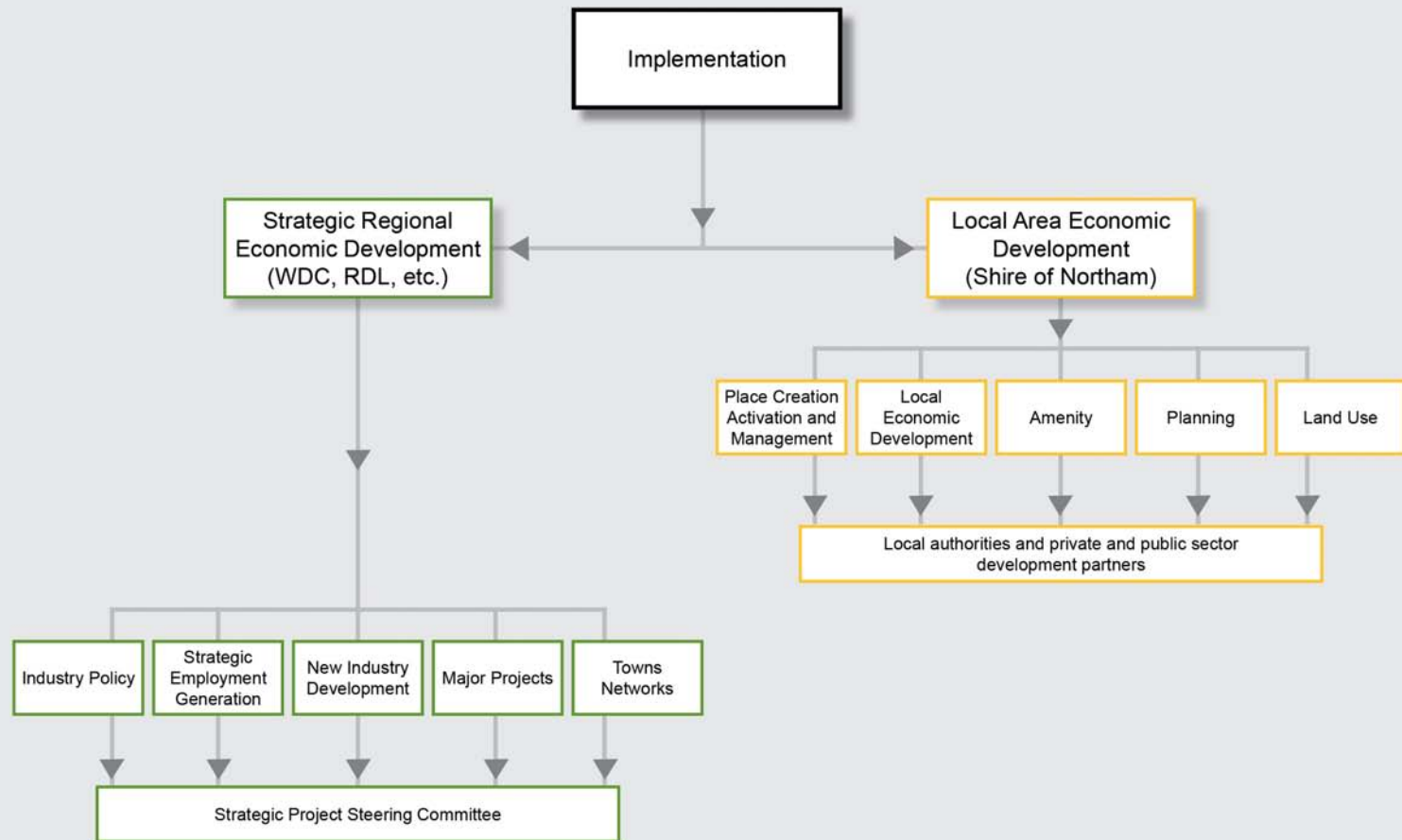


Figure 51. Conceptual Northam Development Implementation Model



## SUMMARY

Northam is a SuperTown and will continue to experience growth. The difference is that now planning for growth is occurring instead of reactive planning to growth. The SuperTowns project has provided a unique opportunity for Northam to achieve above what has been seen in the past. To become a viable alternative to Perth and other larger centres, visionary planning and planning for growth is essential. Planning after growth has occurred as has been done in the past will not deliver the benefits that are needed for the community.

Visionary planning will attract people to reside in Northam and the Avon sub-region as they can see infrastructure being provided and improvements in amenity occurring around them. The collaboration between State Government and its Departments and Agencies along with the Shire of Northam will aim to deliver the real benefits on the ground that facilitate and promote the desired growth. Community involvement will allow the aspirational outcomes to be guided in a way that embraces and acts on community goals and ideas of what Northam and the Avon sub-region should be.

Achieving the aspirational growth targets requires a holistic approach to proposals and projects as well as priority given to projects with a greater positive impact for Northam and the Avon Sub-Region. The Growth Plan is one of the first steps in identifying where Northam is currently at and what is needed to improve the townsite. The sound understanding of the issues and challenges facing Northam and the Avon Sub-Region that are presented in the Growth Plan, as well as the governance and implementation strategies, assist in collaboration between stakeholders in the delivery of key goals.

Measurement of these goals is necessary to understand when growth thresholds have been reached. Measurement of key goals and projects also allow a greater understanding of whether projects are achieving their desired outcomes and allow adjustments as necessary to best reach desired outcomes.

Further sub regional economic planning and investment blueprints will enhance the value of this document and give the government and the private sector quality guidance on investment needs and planning for the future.

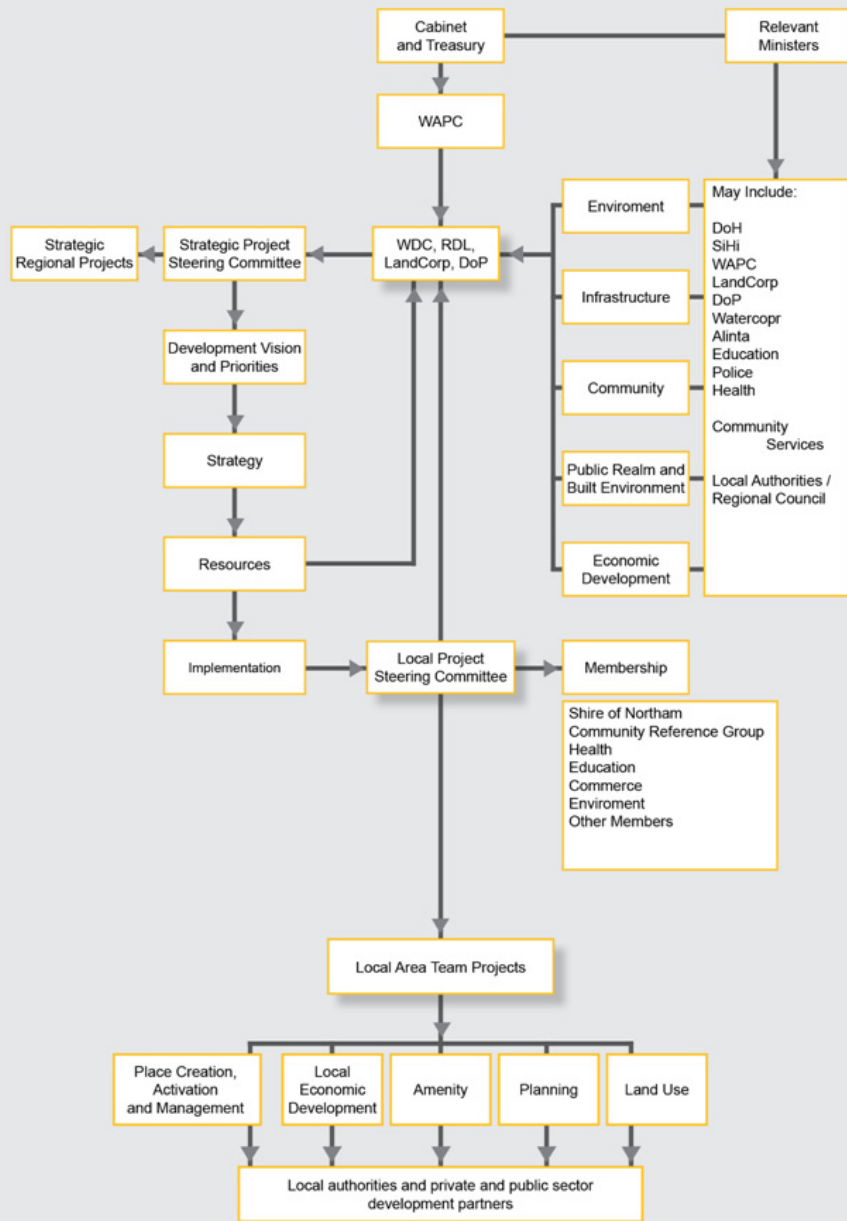


Figure 52. Conceptual Northam SuperTown Governance Model