

# REVIEW OF SHIRE OF CUNDERDIN LOCAL PLANNING SCHEME NO. 3

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## Introduction

As a first step towards preparing a Regional Local Planning Strategy for the Shires of Cunderdin, Quairading and Tammin and a new Local Planning Scheme for each Shire, a Local Planning Scheme Review Report has been drafted following each Shire's resolution to formally initiate a Scheme review in order to formulate the new Local Planning Schemes and the accompanying Regional Local Planning Strategy.

The Scheme Review Report provides a summary assessment of what is presently known of the existing Scheme's performance in light of current conditions and circumstances, the likely issues and emerging trends that affect land use planning in the Shires in the future and a justification for how they should be addressed by the Regional Local Planning Strategy and new Schemes.

This Report represents the beginning of the Scheme review procedure with further knowledge being obtained throughout the Scheme review process identifying the full extent of key issues and emerging trends, which must be addressed, and the possible solutions that can be formulated in response to the identified challenges. Importantly this process will be informed from the outset by the participation of the community and other stakeholders.

## Background

The Shire of Cunderdin has an estimated population of 1,457 people (ABS 2016) and covers an area of 1,872km<sup>2</sup>. It contains the localities of Cunderdin, Meckering, Warding East, Wyola West and Younegin. The administrative centre of the region is the town of Cunderdin, which is located approximately 158km east of Perth.

Historically a broad hectare agricultural region, over recent years the economy has diversified with the population residing primarily in the town area, 23.3% of the population are still employed in Sheep, Beef Cattle and Grain Farming. Other major industries of employment included School Education 11.1%, Hospitals 3.5%, Local Government Administration 3.0% and Supermarket and Grocery Stores 2.3%. (Statistics obtained from the 2011 Census. Note: 2016 Census statistics available October 2017)

The Cunderdin Airstrip was built early in the Second World War – designed as a bomber and RAAF flying school base, which is still active today and currently being redeveloped as an alternate landing site for international flights.

There are a number of schools in the Shire, including the Cunderdin Agricultural College that provides day and boarding facilities for Year 11 and 12 students, which occupies the site of the RAAF flying school.

## Scheme details

The Shire of Cunderdin Local Planning Scheme No. 3 was originally gazetted on 14 May 2007. Four (4) amendments have been gazetted to date, including the 3<sup>rd</sup> amendment that updated the Scheme as a result of the introduction of the Deemed Provisions of the *Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015*.

Council records indicate that the Scheme has not been formally reviewed or consolidated since its gazettal.

## Strategic Context

### Scheme amendments

The following table provides a summary of the amendments to the Shire of Cunderdin's Local Planning Scheme No. 3.

Amendment No.	Amendment summary	Gazettal date
1.	Added new Schedule; Schedule 13. Inserted "No. 1 – RR1" Lot 1 and part Location 2195 Coronation Street, Cunderdin. Into Schedule 13.	8/2/11
2.	Rezoning Lot 6110 (Reserve 9224) Great Eastern Highway Cunderdin from 'Conservation' reservation to 'General Agriculture' zone.	14/11/14
3.	Updating the Scheme Text to reflect the introduction of the Deemed Provisions set out in the <i>Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015</i> , Schedule 2.	24/5/16
4.	Re-introduction of land use definitions and land uses for into Schedule 1 and Table 1. Renumbering the Land Use Table to reflect the inclusion of the new land uses.	25/10/16

### Local planning strategy amendments

There have been no amendments to the Shire of Cunderdin Local Planning Strategy since it was endorsed by the Western Australian Planning Commission in 2006.

## Development activity in the local government area

The Local Planning Strategy identifies future declining and aging population as issues for the future in the Shire. The population numbers have remained relatively steady with a gradual aging of the population. There are many initiatives locally and regionally to address this issue to enable aging in place with sufficient services, such as the Cunderdin Primary Health Care Centre and Independent Living Units.

Diversification of employment and the associated opportunities have been identified for the Shire in the Avon Sub-Economic Strategy (2013) due to the competitive advantage of the Shire's location and access to infrastructure, being the highway, railway and airport.

Stage 1 of the Cunderdin Light Industrial Area developed in conjunction with Landcorp's Regional Development Assistance Program has been fully developed, including construction of a new Shire depot, transfer station and expansion of CBH's grain receival facility.

In 2015, there were 187 businesses in the Shire, with 109 non-employing and 100 of these being described as agricultural. Manufacturing, construction and retail were also notable statistically.

The Cunderdin Agricultural School has expanded its agricultural program operating at full student capacity, together with the Cunderdin District High School and the Woodthorpe School, Cunderdin is well catered for from an education viewpoint.

Subdivision activity in the Shire, particularly in the Cunderdin townsite and in the agricultural areas, has been steady with an average of 3 – 4 applications being determined by the WAPC annually.

An average of 5 to 6 new dwellings have been constructed in the Cunderdin townsite over the past 3 years (2014-2016) with an average cost of \$500,000 each, which could be described as sizeable dwellings for a rural location. The development has been generally infill on vacant sites.

During the review period, the Shire has also improved many of their community facilities, including the establishment of the Community Resource Centre and redevelopment of the Cunderdin Recreation and Sporting Precinct, providing a centralised location for sporting activities in Cunderdin as part of the Royalties for Regions Program.

There are a number of major developments proposed in the near future that will contribute to the economic development of the Shire, generate employment and increase housing demand, notably the redevelopment of the Cunderdin Airfield, the Cunderdin Primary Health Care Precinct, the Cunderdin Solar Farm and the Meckering Kaolin Mine.

## Population Change

In the 2016 Census, there were 1,457 people in the Cunderdin (S) (Local Government Area) of these 55.3% were male and 44.7% were female. Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people made up 1.9% of the population. The median age of people was 37 years. Children aged 0 - 14 years made up 19.3% of the population and people aged 65 years and over made up 15.4% of the population.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census\\_services/getproduct/census/2016/quickstat/LGA52450?opendocument](http://www.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2016/quickstat/LGA52450?opendocument)

From 2006 to 2011 there was an increase in the population of 60 persons (or 4.58%) and from 2011 to 2016 there was an increase of 147 persons (or 10.089%).

The following graph depicts the population growth from 1996 to 2016.

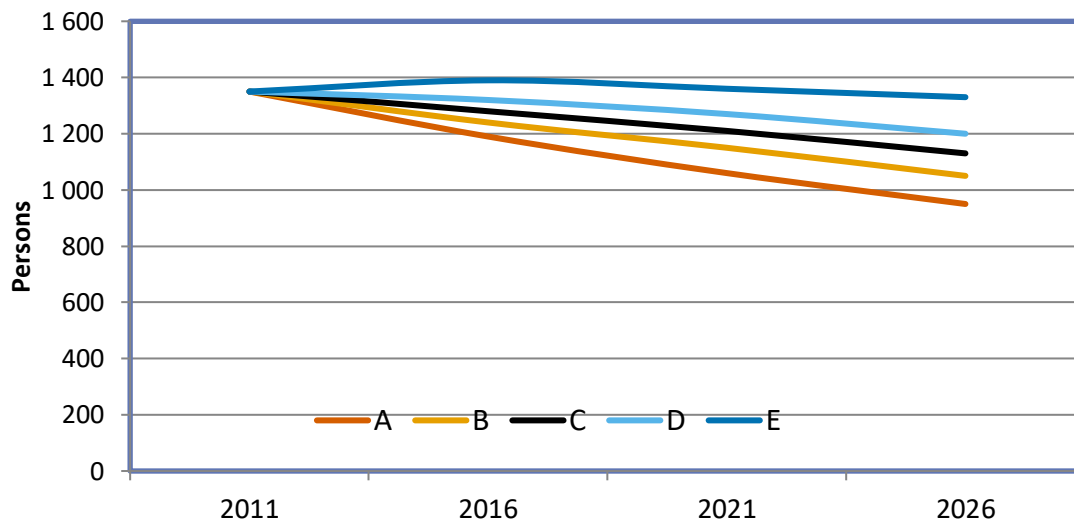
Name	Status	Population Census 1996-06-30	Population Census 2001-08-07	Population Census 2006-08-08	Population Census 2011-08-09	Population Census 2016-08-09
Cunderdin	Shire	1,437	1,389	1,249	1,310	1,457
Area: 1,862.45 km <sup>2</sup> - Density: 0.8 inh./km <sup>2</sup> [2016] - Change: +2.15%/year [2011 → 2016]						

Source: <https://www.citypopulation.de/php/australia-census-admin.php?adm2id=52450>

The figures for both periods exceed the rate predicted in the Avon Sub-Economic Strategy (2013) of 2.9% and are substantially higher than the most optimistic prediction by the Western Australian Planning Commission's Tomorrow Series where it is predicted, in all scenarios (A = most conservative and E = most optimistic), that the population would decrease as depicted in the following chart.

### Cunderdin (S)

Source: WA Tomorrow Population Report No. 10



Using the current growth rate of 10.089% and the typical period of 10 years for a Local Planning Strategy, the population may increase to 2,927 residents by 2027. Using the previous growth rate of 4.58%, the total population could be 2,124 and more conservatively, using the annual growth rate of 2.9% proposed in the Avon Sub-Regional Economic Strategy, the population could increase to 1,880 residents.

The comparison of population numbers between the towns of Cunderdin and Meckering, and the rural areas, indicate that the population is increasing in the townsite of Cunderdin by and decreasing and Meckering and the rural areas.

Whilst reviewing the Local Planning Strategy it will be imperative to ensure that all components of the Shire's demographics are considered, including the increasing trend of an aging population. The 2016 Census indicates that 15.4% of the population is over 65 years when compared to 15.3% in 2011 and 13.3% in 2006.

The Local Planning Strategy must ensure a sufficient supply of suitably zoned and serviced residential land in the Shire's two main settlements through the use strategies to redevelop and consolidate the existing residential areas using appropriate residential density codes, opportunities for affordable aged accommodation and the creation of rural lifestyle opportunities.

### **Cunderdin**

The 2016 Census indicates that the population of the townsite area of Cunderdin is 876 persons, which is an increase of 195 persons from the 2011 Census (22.26%). Using the current growth rate, an average of 2.5 persons per household and acknowledging the population growth has been in the Cunderdin townsite, an additional 588 lots may be required to accommodate the predicted population growth.

In the Cunderdin townsite the current stock of Residential zoned (i.e. infill development) could create approximately 211 new lots. A large number of these lots are serviced by reticulated sewer and water services and if recoded to a higher density will facilitate further infill development in the townsite. The current trend for construction of larger new dwellings (5+ bedrooms) must also be acknowledged and considered in any strategy for the development of the townsite.

There is a small area on Cubbine Street on the edge of the existing townsite that contains smaller lots, which is currently zoned Rural and needs addressing to provide more appropriate development controls. If this area was rezoned to Residential and Rural Residential, another 45 lots could be created (if it was fully developed).

It is anticipated that no new greenfield areas will be required to cater for the anticipated population increase over the next 10 to 15 years.

The Shire has an aging population and to cater for these needs a new primary health care centre is being constructed in Cunderdin. Adjacent to the centre, independent living units will be constructed to enable residents to age in place with additional units are planned in the future as part of the Wheatbelt Integrated Aged Care Plan.

Short-term accommodation, including worker's accommodation, will be required to accommodate for the proposed major future developments in Cunderdin. The former hospital site and surrounds now owned by the Shire may provide opportunities for this type of accommodation.

It is important for the growth of the town to provide opportunities for employment. Stage 1 of the Cunderdin light industrial area is fully developed with the timing of Stage 2 linked to demand. The Cunderdin CBH Grain Receiving Depot that has also been expanding over recent years with the addition of new open bulkheads and associated facilities.

Light industrial activities are also located on West Main Street and Baxter Road with many lots being zoned Mixed Business, and in consultation with the owners, may be more suitably zoned light industrial or service commercial, which may also be suitable for further expansion.

## Meckering

The 2016 Census indicates that the population of the townsite area of Meckering is 236 persons, which is a decrease of 29 persons from the 2011 Census (10.94%).

Although the population of Meckering has been decreasing, a review of the zoning and coding of land in the townsite area is required to correct anomalies and to provide more appropriate development controls. This may result in the creation of additional residential lots suitable for development and to cater for any unexpected population increases, acknowledged the proximity of Meckering to Northam, Midland and Perth.

There are substantive environmental constraints in the Meckering locality, including flooding and bushfire that affects the viability of development, particularly in some of the Rural Residential areas that need to be re-assessed to ensure that any development that occurs does not adversely impact the environment or locality.

If required in the future, an additional 14 residential lots could be created by rezoning an area east of the townsite that is currently zoned Rural and contains numerous smaller lots. The rezoning would also facilitate improved land use planning controls, including more appropriate setbacks and development provisions.

To ensure that there are sufficient employment opportunities in the town, a review of the areas zoned Commercial and Mixed Business should be undertaken to ensure the suitability of the zone and whether any land should be zoned for light industry, rural enterprise or home business / occupation, particularly considering the strategic location of the town on the Great Eastern Highway.

## Consultation

The Shire has recently undertaken community consultation, including workshops and surveys, in conjunction with a major review of the Strategic Community Plan. The findings have been considered in this review and will be built upon during the consultation for the new Regional Local Planning Strategy and Schemes.

A multi-faceted community and stakeholder consultation approach will be used during the development of the Regional Local Planning Strategy. Following the adoption of the RLPS, local planning schemes will be developed for each Shire, again in consultation with the community and stakeholders.

## Officer's comments

The Shire of Cunderdin Local Planning Scheme No. 3 was gazetted in 2007 and has been in operation since that time. There have been 4 amendments since its gazettal, with the last amendment updating the Scheme following the introduction of the Deemed Provisions.

The following conclusions can be made from this review:

- The format of the Scheme is out-dated and not in keeping with the latest standards and provisions prescribed in Schedule 1 – Model Scheme Text of the *Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015*.
- The Scheme text does not incorporate good definitional principals to determine a policy or action, resulting in vague provisions to control and guide land use and development in the local government area.
- The Scheme maps need to be updated to reflect a number of changes to the purpose of various reserves and cadastral boundaries that have occurred as a result of subdivision/ amalgamation approvals issued by the Western Australian Planning Commission.
- The Scheme reflects the pattern of land use and development within the Shire that prevailed in 2007 and does not provide a strategy or concise guidelines for development options in line with anticipated local government and community desires. As such the Scheme does not fulfil ideal development controls or long term planning objectives.
- The Scheme has limitations in terms of land use options and is generally ineffective in terms of development control as there are insufficient provisions within the Scheme to safeguard and enhance the character, amenity, environmental values and natural resources of the Shire and to promote ecologically sustainable land use and development; and
- The Scheme will require updating following the adoption of the new Regional Local Planning Strategy. It does not reflect or assist in the implementation of recent Regional or State Planning Strategies and Policies.

On the basis of the above findings, it is recommended that Council resolve to prepare a new Local Planning Scheme for the whole local government area of the Shire of Cunderdin to be named Local Planning Scheme No. 4, and in conjunction with the preparation of the new local planning scheme, reviews the Cunderdin Local Planning Strategy.

## Recommendation

That Council, pursuant to Regulation 66(3) of the *Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015* recommend to the Western Australian Planning Commission that the Shire of Cunderdin prepares a new scheme and the current one is repealed upon the approval of the new scheme.