Merredin

'Growing Our Community'

An Economic Development and Implementation Strategy

(Executive Summary)

Executive Summary

'Growing Our Community' – An Economic Development and Implementation Strategy for Merredin (the Plan) provides a vision and the guiding principles to enable economic growth, prosperity and wellbeing for the community of Merredin. The Plan includes actions, projects and initiatives to promote and share the benefits of growth throughout the town and across the region and accommodate a population of approximately 4,800 in Merredin by 2050. This Plan has been prepared by the Wheatbelt Development Commission and LandCorp in collaboration with stakeholders and the communities of the region.

Vision for Merredin

'Merredin will become a more innovative, diverse and attractive regional centre, actively engaged in building a diverse population and economic base, underpinned by sustainability principles.'

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Guiding Principles

The Plan identifies six key areas to focus on to achieve the vision.

Economy

Merredin will comprise diverse and thriving business, industry and service hubs where innovative opportunities are actively pursued and fostered. This will be achieved by the following:

- Being proactive in attracting new business to the region and encouraging existing businesses to grow.
- Improving the level and range of local employment opportunities.
- Attracting and retaining knowledge and investment, people and skills.
- Supporting business environments.
- Ensuring sustainable growth supported by innovative industry.

Community

The region will comprise relaxed, family friendly communities with healthy lifestyles and a wealth of activities for all. This will be achieved by the following:

- Creating a healthy, active, safe and informed community.
- Encouraging community participation and involvement.
- Creating affordable and accessible services that meet community expectations.
- Founding a high quality of life for the people of Merredin.
- Enjoying a diverse range of social, recreational and volunteer opportunities.
- Respecting diversity and being inclusive of all peoples.
- Celebrating Merredin's rich cultural heritage.
- Building on the Central East's emerging arts and cultural following.

Built Form and Housing

The built form and housing in Merredin will capture the character and setting of the region; connecting people and places and integrating sustainable infrastructure that meets the needs of the growing community and economy. This will be achieved by the following:

- Creating active and vibrant spaces.
- Developing well connected and liveable communities.
- Encouraging design elements to celebrate communities.
- Supporting sustainable building and infrastructure design.

Infrastructure

Merredin will pursue the delivery of timely, sustainable, integrated and high quality modern infrastructure to meet the social, economic and environmental needs that will create well connected, liveable communities with sustainable employment opportunities. This will be achieved by the following:

- Enhancing Merredin's appeal for lifestyle and business development.
- Encouraging energy efficiency and sustainability.
- Adopting a whole-of-government approach towards infrastructure provision to meet the current and future needs for growth.
- Providing quality regional infrastructure to facilitate appropriate population growth.
- Improving investment in regional infrastructure to ensure greater prosperity, productivity and growth of the communities.
- Supporting public-private partnerships and other arrangements to deliver efficient and timely infrastructure projects.

Natural Environment

The environmental values and natural resources of the region need to be protected for the benefit of current and future generations while providing appropriate development opportunities. This will be achieved by the following:

- Maintaining and enhancing the natural environment, addressing risk areas.
- Achieving environmentally sustainable and economically viable management of waste.
- Ensuring the sustainable development of Merredin, integrating natural elements and connecting the community to the environment.
- Ensuring responsible access, use and enjoyment of the natural environment.
- Having a strong connection with the environment.

Governance

The region will embrace collaborative and proactive leadership delivering on the values and aspirations of the community. This will be achieved by the following:

- Effective resourcing and management of Local Government activities.
- Providing positive leadership within the sub-region.
- Becoming a customer focused community.
- Ensuring open and representative decision-making processes.
- Achieving community support for the region's strategic plans and growth planning.
- Ensuring a cross-organisational approach delivered through strategic partnerships.
- Focusing on delivering shared outcomes.
- Monitoring triggers in the Plan.

Priority Projects and Initiatives

Several key projects and initiatives have been identified for both Local and State Governments and will help to implement the Plan's vision. The Merredin Community Reference Group in conjunction with the Shire of Merredin have identified 5 priority projects and initiatives for the growth period of 2015 to 2020. They are:

- *CBD Revitalisation - Redevelopment of Barrack and Bates Streets (Stage 1A)*
- *Central East Aged Care Alliance – Merredin Land Assembly*
- *Central East Aged Care Alliance – Independent Living Units Development (Stage 1)*
- *Residential & Industrial Marketing*
- *C.Y. O'Connor Institute Campus - Training Facility and Accommodation Expansion*

Refer to the Implementation Plan in Appendix 3 for more information on these priority projects and initiatives. These projects will be monitored on an on-going basis.

Introduction

The Purpose of 'Growing Our Community'

The Plan:

- Sets the vision and guiding principles for the development of Merredin until 2050.
- Identifies actions, projects and initiatives to guide the Plan's aspirations to achieve growth.
- Acts as a framework to enable the sub-region to achieve sustainable economic growth, increase and strengthen community capacity and shape the places in which people live, work and play in.
- Is an opportunity for improved collaboration across stakeholders working towards a shared vision for the future.
- Is designed to guide decisions on a wide range of issues such as transport, infrastructure planning, cultural heritage, land-use planning and environment and resource protection, in the interest of supporting investment decisions and promoting economic prosperity.
- Works with existing frameworks to provide direction to create and sustain attractive happy, healthy and safe communities that meet people's needs and aspirations throughout their lives.
- Will ensure that Merredin and the surrounding communities will be the focus for quality community infrastructure and services and provide a vision to guide its implementation.

Central East Wheatbelt Sub-Region

The Central East Sub-Region is made up of 10 Local Government Authorities (11 when including Koorda from the Avon Sub-Region):

- Shire of Bruce Rock
- Shire of Kellerberrin
- Shire of Koorda (Avon Sub-Region)
- Shire of Merredin
- Shire of Mount Marshall
- Shire of Mukinbudin
- Shire of Narembeen
- Shire of Nungarin
- Shire of Trayning
- Shire of Westonia
- Shire of Yilgarn

Figure 1: The Central East Sub-Region

The Central East represents the heart of dryland broadacre grain production in the Wheatbelt. Home to 10,153[1] people in 2011, the Central East is the largest sub-region in the Wheatbelt by land area. Its population is primarily concentrated in the major township of Merredin (approximately 32.3%) as well as Southern Cross and Kellerberrin, which act as service centres for the sub-regional economy[1].

Merredin

The Shire of Merredin covers approximately 3,294km² [2] and includes the towns of Hines Hill, Burracoppin, South Burracoppin, Goomarin, Korbel, Merredin, Muntadgin, Nangeenan, Nokanning, Tangedin, Nukarni and Norpa[3]. The Merredin townsite is situated approximately 260 kilometres east of Perth and is the major commercial and retail centre in the Central East.

Figure 2: Merredin Townsite Aerial Map (Source: Landgate, 2012)

Key Infrastructure:
- Great Eastern Highway
- Eastern Goldfields Railway (Passenger & Rail Freight – Interstate & Intrastate)
- C.Y. O'Connor Pipeline
- Key Transformer Substation/Major Transmission Line Connections
- Collgar Windfarm (111 Vestas V90 turbines, production potential of 206MW)

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[1] RPS, 2015. Central East Sub-Regional Economic Strategy
[2] Australian Bureau of Statistics. 2011. Shire of Merredin Basic Community Profile
[3] RPS, 2015. Central East Sub-Regional Economic Strategy

Social Infrastructure:

- C.Y. O'Connor Institute
- Merredin Aerodrome
- Merredin Regional Hospital
- Merredin Regional Community and Leisure Centre
- St Mary's Primary School
- Merredin College
- Cummins Theatre

A diverse industrial, commercial, office and retail base has developed with shops, offices and small to medium enterprises located across the townsite providing goods and services to the local and sub-regional population.

Demographics

- Shire of Merredin represents 32.3% of the sub-regional population.
- Shire of Merredin population is 3,282, with 52.9% male and 47.1% female.
- Median age within the Shire of Merredin is 36; this is significantly younger than the median age of the Wheatbelt region (42) but is consistent with Western Australia as a whole.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Merredin (Town)[4], Merredin (Shire)[5], Central East (including Koorda)[6] & Western Australia[7]

	Merredin Townsite[4]	Shire Of Merredin[5]	Central East Wheatbelt[6]	Western Australia[7]
People	2,586	3282	10153	2,239,170
Male	1,371	1737	5490	1,126,178
Female	1,215	1545	5643	1,112,992
Median Age	35	36	42	36
Families	623	831	2615	585,311
Average Children Per Family	1.9	2	2.0	1.9
Private Dwellings	1,297	1616	5372	960,717
Average People Per Household	2.3	2.4	2.4	2.6
Median Weekly Household Income	$1,066.00	$1,099.00	$983.27	$1,415.00
Median Monthly Mortgage Repayments	$1,100.00	$1,144.00	$809.55	$1,950.00
Median Weekly Rent	$140.00	$130.00	$80.55	$300.00
Average Motor Vehicles Per Dwelling	1.70	1.90	2.20	1.90
Children Aged 0-14 Years (%)	21.2	21.4	21.32	19.7

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[4] Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011. Quickstats Merredin Townsite (Urban Centre Locality)
[5] Australian Bureau of Statistics. 2011. Quickstats Shire of Merredin
[6] RPS, 2015. Central East Sub-Regional Economic Strategy
[7] Australian Bureau of Statistics. 2011. Quickstats Western Australia

'Growing Our Community' – An Economic Development and Implementation Strategy for Merredin

Growth Scenarios (Annual Average Growth Rates (AAGR))

Merredin Townsite

- Since 2001, the population of the Merredin Townsite has declined by -7.7% to 2,586[8].
- A 0.7% AAGR will result in the Merredin Townsite reaching roughly 3,400 people by 2050, and at a 1.2% AAGR, 4,100 people will reside in the Merredin Townsite by 2050.

Shire of Merredin

- Since 2001, the population of the Shire of Merredin has declined by -9.6% from 3,630 to 3,282[9].
- Western Australian Planning Commission (WAPC) Band C (middle) projections indicate the population will decline to around 3,000 in 2026[10].
- A 0.5% AAGR will result in the Shire of Merredin reaching roughly 4,000 people by 2050, and at a 1% AAGR, 4,800 people will reside in the Shire of Merredin by 2050.

Central East Sub-Region

- Since 2001 the population of the sub-region overall has declined by -9.7% (1,099 people) from 11,252 to 10,153 people[11].
- WAPC Band C (middle) projections indicate the population of the sub-region will decline to around 8,780 in 2026[12].
- A 0.5% AAGR will result in the Central East Sub-Region reaching roughly 12,300 people by 2050, and at a 1% AAGR, 15,000 people will reside in the Sub-Region.
- In the 1% AAGR scenario, the Shire of Merredin by 2050 will be responsible for 32% of the sub-region's population, decreasing its current share by only 0.3%.

Merredin Townsite Projection

Merredin Town - 1.2% AAGR   Merredin Town - 0.7% AAGR
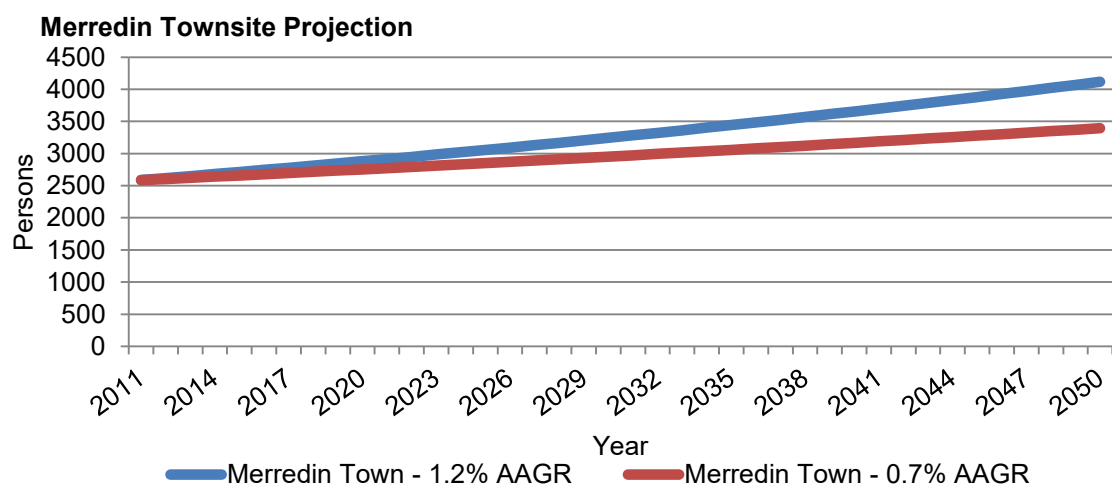
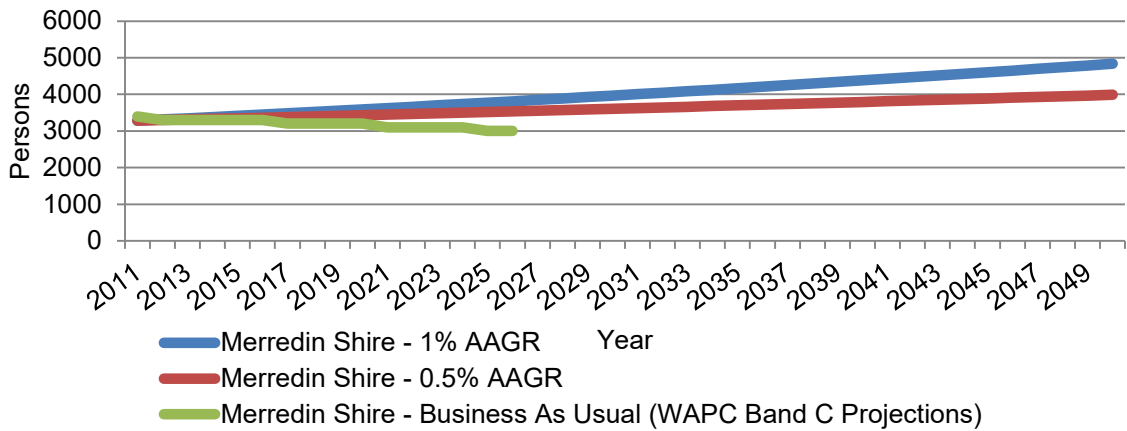8 Australian Bureau of Statistics. 2011. Merredin (UCL) Time Series Profile
9 Australian Bureau of Statistics. 2011. Shire of Merredin (S) Time Series Profile
10 Department of Planning & Western Australian Planning Commission, 2012. WA Tomorrow – Population Report Forecast Profile
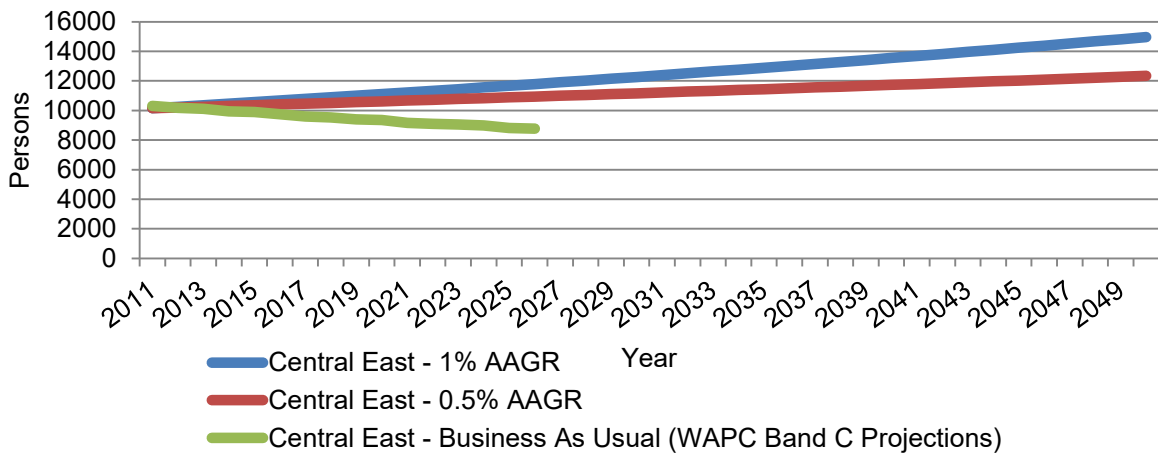   - Shire of Merredin
11 Wheatbelt Development Commission. 2011. Unpublished Collated ABS Time Series Profile Data (11 LGAs)
12 Wheatbelt Development Commission. 2011. Unpublished Collated WAPC WA Tomorrow Data (11 LGAs)

'Growing Our Community' – An Economic Development and Implementation Strategy for Merredin

Shire of Merredin Projection

- Merredin Shire - 1% AAGR
- Merredin Shire - 0.5% AAGR
- Merredin Shire - Business As Usual (WAPC Band C Projections)

Central East Sub-Region Projection

- Central East - 1% AAGR
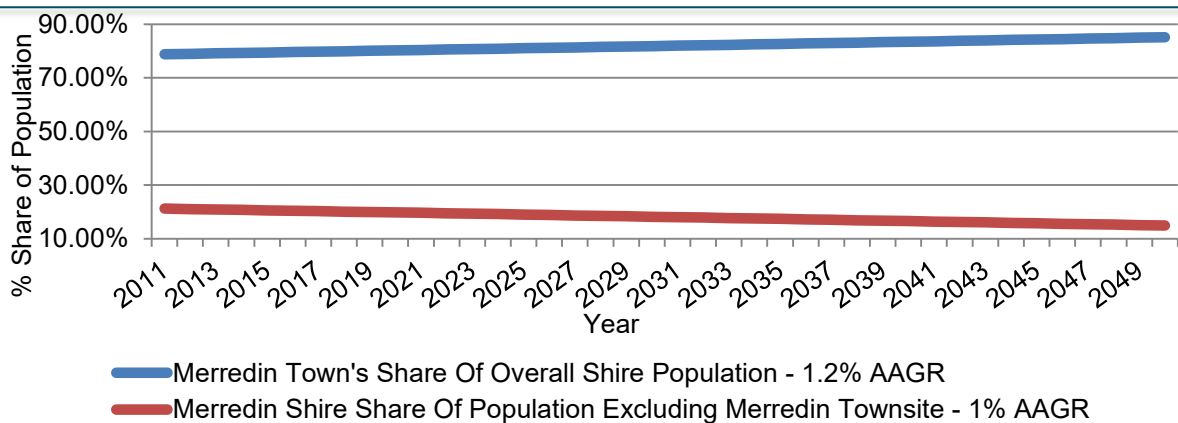- Central East - 0.5% AAGR
- Central East - Business As Usual (WAPC Band C Projections)

Figure 3: Population Projections (Source: WDC)

The Town of Merredin has been modelled for a slight increase in the proportional share of the Shire's population over time. This indicates a 0.2% growth over the Shire's 1% AAGR rate at 1.2% per annum. These figures are consistent with and support the projections identified within the Central East Sub-Regional Economic Strategy.

- Merredin Town's Share Of Overall Shire Population - 1.2% AAGR
- Merredin Shire Share Of Population Excluding Merredin Townsite - 1% AAGR

Figure 4: Proportional Share of Projected Population Growth (Source: WDC)

Employment

Shire of Merredin (2011 ABS Census):

- Worked full-time: 65.3%[13]
- Worked part-time: 24.7%[13]
- Away from work: 5.7%[13]
- Unemployed: 4.2%[13]

Merredin's economy is underlined by an employment self-sufficiency rate of 96%[14] (in 2011). This, coupled with a low unemployment rate of 4.2%[13], indicates that the majority of residents work and reside in the Shire. The percentage of unemployed persons was lower than the Western Australia and Australia averages which were 4.7%[15] and 5.6%[16] respectively.

Labour Force Size

As of 2011, the labour force in the Shire of Merredin was 925 people[17]. This has seen a steady decline of -10.9% over the past 10 years.

Table 2: Size of Total Labour Force (Persons)

Location	2001	2006	2011	% change (2001-2011)
Shire of Merredin[17]	1039	942	925	-10.9%

Education Levels

Amongst Merredin (town) residents aged 15 and over, 67% have no tertiary qualification, compared to 55% of all WA residents aged 15+. The most common tertiary qualification of Merredin residents is certificate level (19%); 5% have an advanced diploma or diploma; and 9% have a bachelor degree or higher[18] [19].
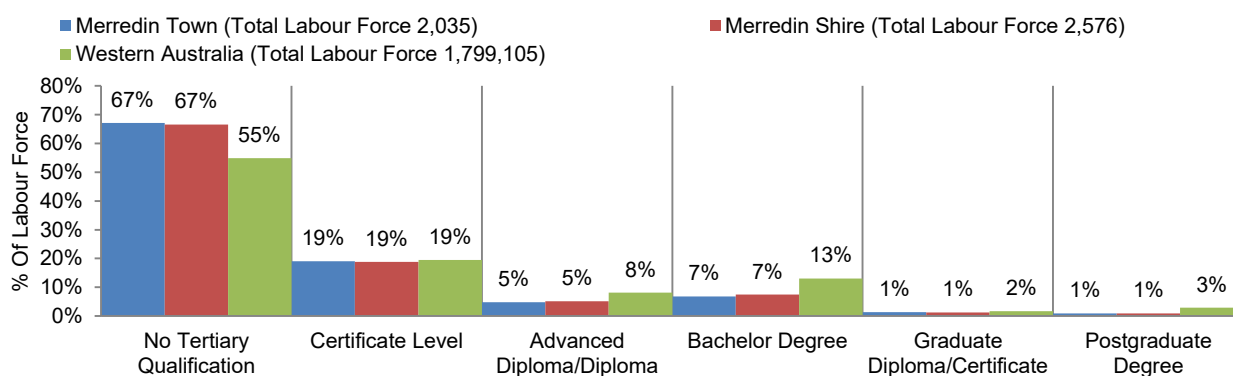
Figure 5: Levels of Educational Qualification - Merredin Shire/Town Population vs Western Australia

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[13] Australian Bureau of Statistics. 2011. Quickstats Shire of Merredin
[14] RPS, 2015. Central East Sub-Regional Economic Strategy
[15] Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011. Western Australia Basic Community Profile
[16] Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011. Australia Basic Community Profile
[17] Australian Bureau of Statistics. 2011. Shire of Merredin (S) Time Series Profile
[18] Australian Bureau of Statistics. 2011. Western Australia Basic Community Profile
[19] Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011. Merredin (S) Basic Community Profile & Merredin (UCL) Basic Community Profile

Employment Industries

Agriculture is Merredin's primary economic contributor, accounting for a total gross value of $65.8m in the 2005-06 financial year (12% of the sub-region gross value of production) and $51.0m in the 2010-11 financial year (18% of the sub-region gross value of production)[20]. These returns occur from an agricultural land area of 342,818ha which represents 11% of the sub-regions agricultural land holdings.

Figure 6: Employment By Industry - Merredin S/T Population vs Western Australia

Farming and related industries make up the key industry of employment in the Shire. With regards to the Merredin Townsite, the most common industries of employment are retail, education/training and transport/postal/warehousing. Together, these three industries employ 33% of Merredin's working population[21] [22]. With the anticipated growth of the region, the Shire of Merredin believes the following industries could be key employers:

- Education and Training
- Health Services
- Transport and Logistics
- Government Services
- Agricultural & Mining Support Servicing
- Light Fabrication & Engineering

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[20] RPS, 2015. Central East Sub-Regional Economic Strategy
[21] Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011. Western Australia Basic Community Profile
[22] Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011. Merredin (S) Basic Community Profile & Merredin (UCL) Basic Community Profile

Property

The Merredin property market has been characteristically slow in recent years. There is a distinct lack of diversity in the town's housing stock with most houses in the town being 3 bedroom separate homes built more than 30 years ago. However, at 79.9% (1,215 of 1,520 dwellings) Merredin's dwelling occupancy rate is quite high, well above the sub-regional average of 73.8%[23].

Residential Property Market

The median price of houses sold in Merredin reached $185,000 in 2010 but has since fallen to $160,000 in 2014[24]. The median personal income for Merredin ($41,537) is comparable to the sub-regional average ($41,490); but below the Perth Metropolitan Region ($53,864) and WA ($53,227) averages[23]. Accordingly, when compared with median house prices, Merredin's local housing market is very affordable, with a median multiple of 2.72 (sub-regional average 2.61, WA average 5.98)[23].

Other market statistics include:

- The number of properties listed for sale has increased over the last two years (both houses and vacant lots)[25].
- There are more than twice as many houses and lots currently listed for sale than have been sold annually in recent years.
- Accordingly, the time that a property typically remains on the market prior to selling is around one year for houses and two years for vacant lots[25].

Established House Sales

The number of established houses sold has remained low over the last five years, with an average of 35 homes sold annually (down from a peak of 126 sales in 2004). Considering the Shire had 1,520 dwellings as of 2011, this sales figure represents 2.6% per annum of housing stock in the Shire[23]. Half of all the established properties sold in Merredin from 2000 to 2014 were on lots between 1,000-1,099m^2. The majority of sales were of homes more than 30 years old [24].

Figure 7 highlights a significant change in the number of sales during the 2003-2007 period. This is due to the development of Westonia's Edna May Gold Mine in the region, the construction of Collgar Windfarm and significant upgrades during the period to Great Eastern Highway.

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[23] RPS, 2015. Central East Sub-Regional Economic Strategy
[24] Landgate. 2015. Established Residential Property Sales (to 3,000sqm) 2004-2014.
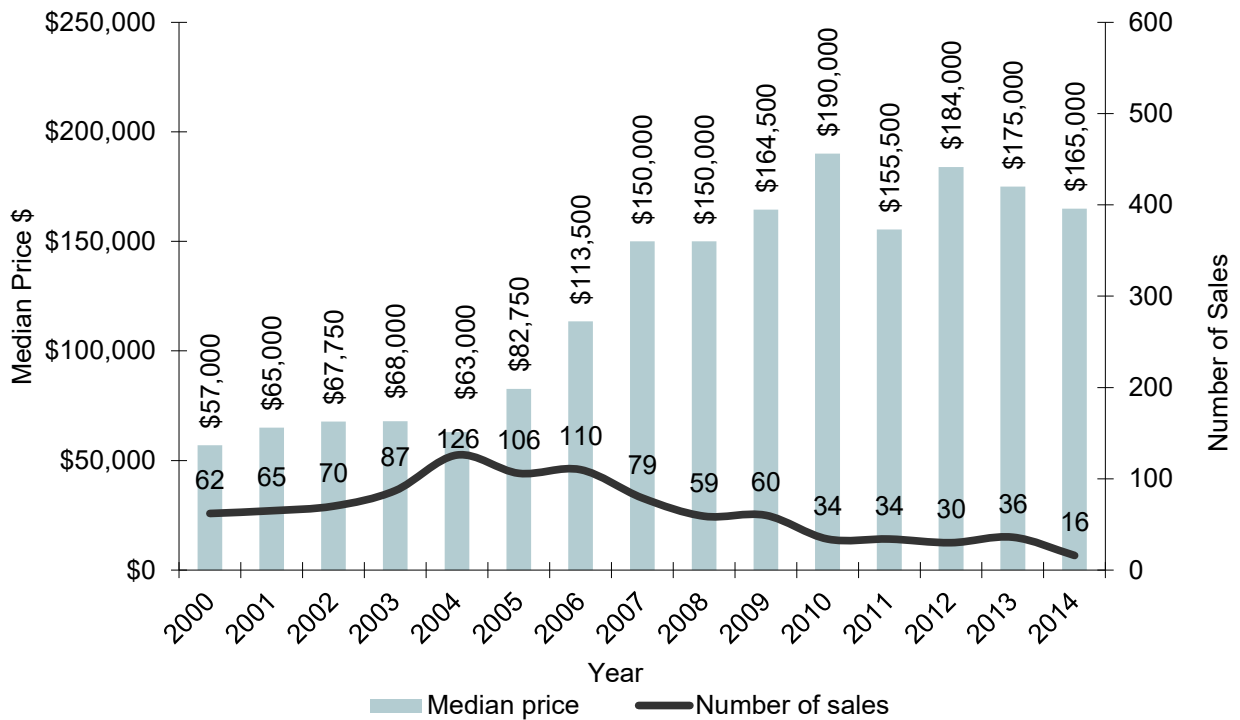[25] RP Data. 2015. On The Market Report.

Figure 7: Established House Sales 2000-2014 (Source: Landgate)

Housing Stock

As at 2011 there was a total of 1,297 dwellings in Merredin. Of these homes, 967 were occupied, 248 unoccupied and 82 unclassified[26].

Dwelling Types

Nine in ten Merredin occupied private dwellings were separate houses. Just 1% were flats/units/apartments, and 7% were semi-detached. In comparison, 8% of all WA dwellings were flats/units/apartments, and 11% semi-detached[26].
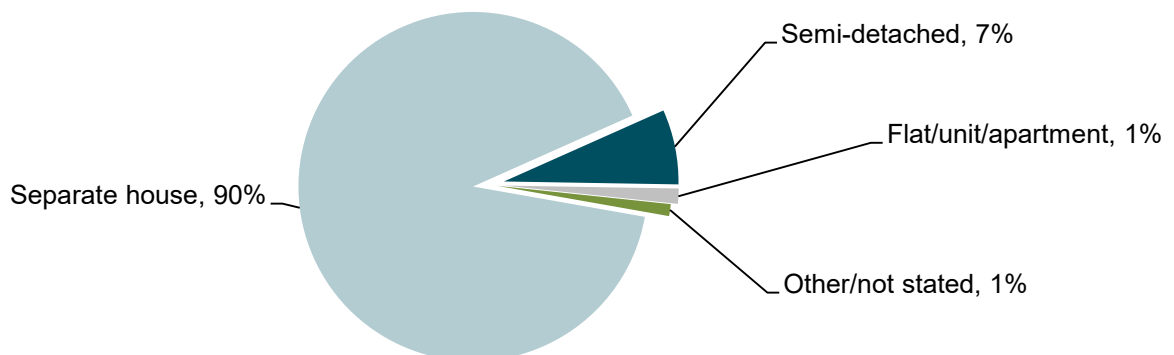

Figure 8: RP Data On Merredin's Housing Market (Source: RP Data)

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[26] Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011. Merredin (UCL) Basic Community Profile.

Number of Bedrooms

Three-bedroom separate houses are the most common housing type, making up half of all occupied dwellings in the town. The next most common occupied dwelling type was four-bedroom separate houses (24% of all occupied dwellings), followed by two-bedroom separate houses (11% of all occupied dwellings)[27].
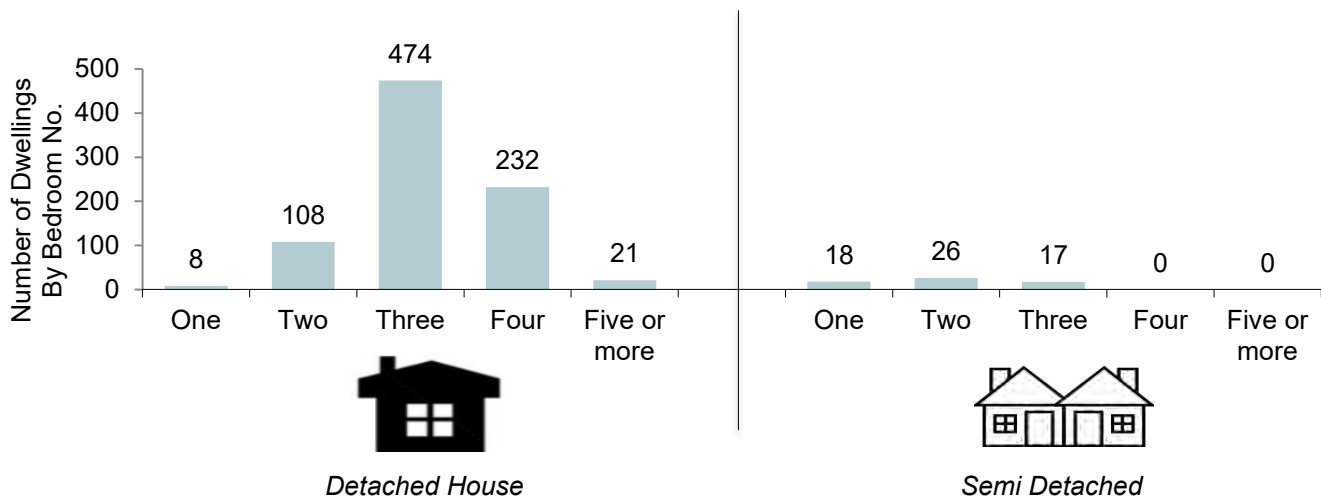
Figure 9: Merredin Dwelling Type Breakdown (Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics)

Dwelling Tenure

As at 2011, six in ten Merredin dwellings were owner-occupied (lower than the WA average of 68%). Private rentals made up just 14% of Merredin dwellings (lower than the WA average of 22%).[27 28]

Employer-provided housing and public housing makes up a larger proportion of housing in Merredin (7% and 11% respectively) compared to the WA average (2% and 4% respectively).[27 28]
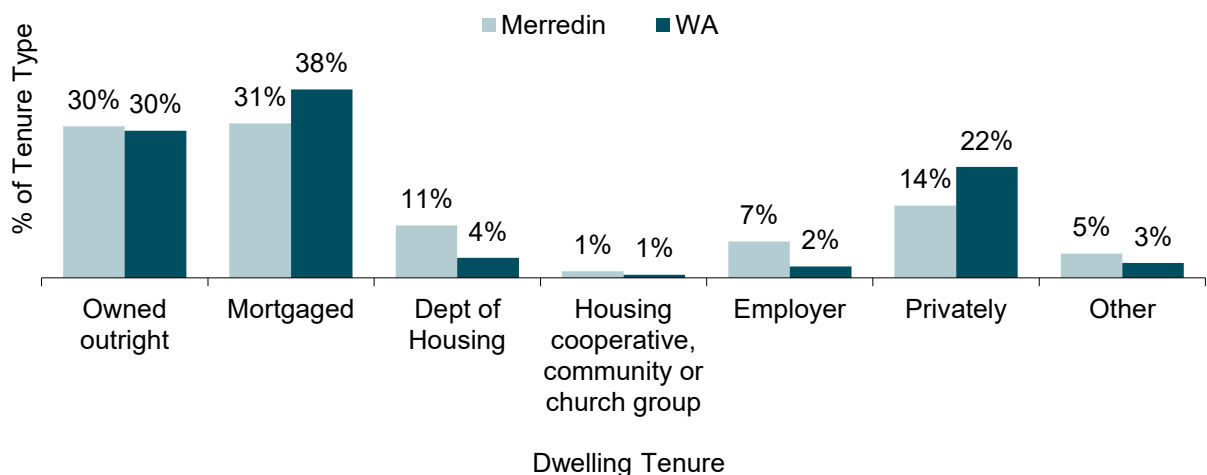
Dwelling Tenure

Figure 10: Dwelling Tenure in Merredin & Western Australia

[27] Australian Bureau of Statistics. 2011. Shire of Merredin Basic Community Profile
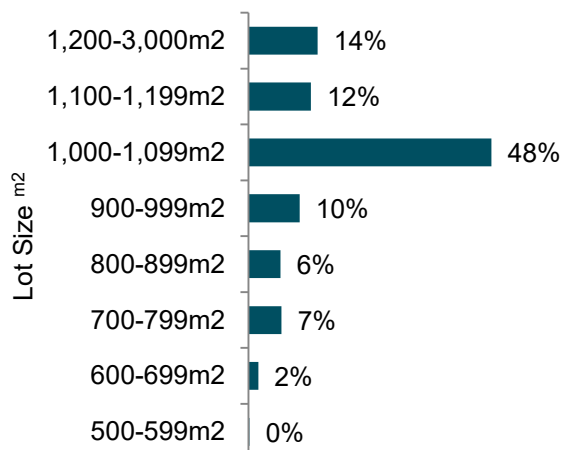[28] Australian Bureau of Statistics. 2011. Western Australia Basic Community Profile

Lot Sizes

There is a distinct lack of diversity in sizes of residential blocks in the town.

The vast majority of residential dwellings are built on allotments of 1,000-1,099m^2, representative of the prevalence of traditional quarter acre blocks in the townsite (1,012m^2).
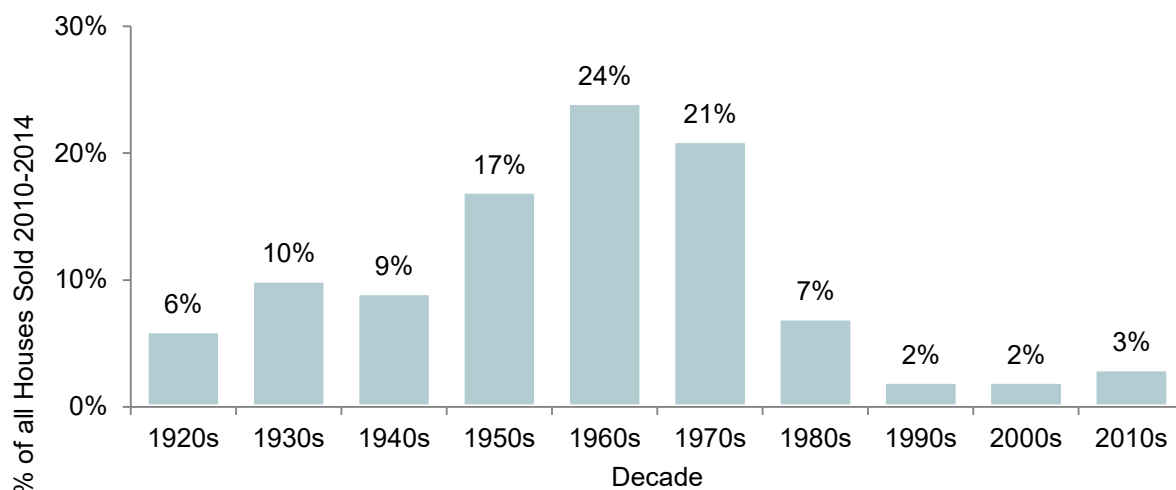
Larger lots are more prevalent than smaller higher density lots.

Figure 11: Breakdown of Merredin Lot Sizes (Source: Landgate)

Housing Age

Figure 12: Housing Age by Year of Construction (Source: Landgate)

Figure 13: Examples of Typical Merredin Housing (Source: Landgate)

The majority of Merredin's housing stock is more than 30 years old. In total, 62% of homes sold in the last five years were built between 1950s-1970s, while 24% were built between 1920s-1940s. Just 13% were built since the 1980s.   Most of the homes built between 1950s-1970s have two or three bedrooms, while most homes built between 1920s-1940s have two bedrooms[29].

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[29] Landgate. 2015. Established Residential Property Sales (to 3,000sqm) 2004-2014.

Residential Land

There were 125 vacant residential lots sold in Merredin between 2000 and 2014 (an average of 8.3 lots sold per year)[29]. The price per square metre has fluctuated year to year due to low turnover, but for lots sold in 2013 and 2014 it averaged $36/m^2 [29].

The majority of residential land introduced to the market in the last two decades has been quarter acre block style parcels. Seven in ten vacant residential lots sold between 2000 and 2014 were over 1,000m^2 [29].

Table 3: Merredin Housing Data on Residential Land (Source: Landgate)

	YEAR										
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
No. of sales	16	0	8	8	7	22	14	8	6	3	7
Avg price ($/m^2)	$15	-	$10	$13	$29	$54	$70	$41	$11	$46	$26
Median size (m^2)	1,012	-	1,088	1,031	1,012	1,041	860	1,012	962	1,012	1,012
Median price	$11k	-	$12k	$14k	$30k	$49k	$46k	$36k	$10k	$55k	$36k

Industrial and Commercial Property Market

The industrial land market has experienced little movement recently with one vacant lot being sold in the general industrial area in 2013[30].

There are currently 6 lots for sale in the Light Industrial development on McKenzie Crescent ranging from 4,680-10,000m^2. These lots are also available to lease for business establishment opportunities. There is also one large light industrial lot on the market outside of the Light Industrial area for $290,000 with an existing shed and house. As of September 2015, no further industrial subdivisions are proposed in the near future as land supply is considered to be sufficient for current and short term requirements.

Commercial properties currently on the market include retail shop space at 52 Barrack Street and 13 Bates Street, 82 Mitchell Street (tenanted) and vacant land zoned Highway Service on Todd Street.

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[30] Landgate. 2015. Vacant Industrial Lot Sales (to 100,000sqm) 2004-2014.

Properties on the Market

Table 4: Properties on the Merredin Market (Source: RP Data On The Market Report)

	Houses			Vacant Residential Land		
	Sept 2013	Sept 2014	**Sept 2015**	Sept 2013	Sept 2014	**Sept 2015**
No. for sale	69	77	**83**	9	11	**12**
Median price	$219,000	$199,000	**$191,000**	$48,900	$46,500	**$52,500**
Lowest price	$98,000	$85,000	**$75,000**	$33,000	$20,000	**$17,500**
Highest price	$550,000	$787,500	**$690,000**	$85,000	$290,000	**$90,000**

The number of residential properties listed for sale, both houses and vacant lots, has increased over the last two years. The median listing price of houses has fallen over time. The vacant residential land currently on the market ranges from 727m^2 to 2,428m^2 with little correlation between block size and listing price (inconsistently ranging between $17,500 and $90,000)[31].

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[31] RP Data. (2013, 2014, 2015). On The Market Report (All Properties In Merredin).

Key Economic Opportunities

Three key areas of economic opportunity that will impact the future economic growth and dynamism of Merredin and the Central East have been identified. The analysis of these three themes complements the analysis undertaken in the Central East Sub-Regional Economic Strategy. The themes represent areas where the Central East has a distinct competitive advantage or where socio-demographic, investment or infrastructure-based drivers underpin current and future demand.

The key themes include:

- Broadacre Agriculture;
- Mining & Support Services; and
- Population Services.

Broadacre Agriculture

Broadacre agriculture is a major economic driver for Merredin and its hinterland. Merredin provides a pivotal role in agricultural R&D through the Department of Agriculture and Food WA, Merredin Office and its nearby Merredin Research Station. Merredin's strategic location in relation to freight networks has afforded it an advantage in servicing the sub-regional agricultural industry[32]. This centralised location is also seen to be attractive to fabrication, engineering and freight and logistics companies.

A regional base for agricultural service related businesses has developed in Merredin; which includes farm machinery dealerships, fabricators, agribusiness and agricultural industry consultants. This presents the opportunity for Merredin to further develop its strategic position as an agricultural engineering and freight & logistics servicing centre and hub for the surrounding districts.

Mining & Support Services

Merredin is already providing mining support services to the sub-region. Engineering companies, fabricators and smaller ancillary industries provide mining support servicing to mining operations in the sub-region.[32] There is the potential for further development, particularly in heavy and light industry dependent on global markets and commodity prices. Large affordable industrial lots provide the potential for securing heavy machinery, transport and logistics and mining based companies.

Existing power and water infrastructure as well as proximity to both interstate road and rail links give Merredin an advantage in the development of mining support services [32] . Expansion of the mining industry in the Central East provides the opportunity for both mining and mining support service growth and the potential of facilitating expanded training opportunities through the Merredin C.Y. O'Connor Institute.[32]

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[32] RPS, 2015. Central East Sub-Regional Economic Strategy

Population Services

Merredin serves as the regional centre for the majority of health, education, government services, retail, high quality public amenities and recreational facilities. Merredin provides strategically important health and education services that are of regional significance, with the healthcare sector forming strategic ties with the sub-region and Kellerberrin and its Dryandra Residential Community Care establishment.[33] The healthcare industry provides strong employment growth potential, which will be required to adequately deliver services to an increasing proportion of those aged 65+ both within the Shire of Merredin as well as for the Central East.

Education establishments within Merredin such as Merredin College (K-12 school with boarding facilities), Merredin C.Y. O'Connor Institute and St Mary's Private School afford Merredin and the sub-region the ability to expand and strengthen the skill set of the labour force.[33] The education establishments provide Merredin with the ability to become a centre for educational pursuits and the development of innovation. The China Southern West Australian Flying College (CSWAFC) is a unique educational establishment, providing theoretical and practical training in the aviation industry.

There is a distinct emergence of a knowledge economy within Merredin. Evidence of this is identified through the Department of Agriculture and Food Western Australia at the Merredin Dryland Agricultural Research Facility. The development and enhancement of educational services and innovative training facilities will depend on essential upgrades to digital infrastructure and ICT capabilities. This will provide new opportunities for service delivery (commercial services, health and education), local tertiary training opportunities and growth within the region's emerging knowledge economy. Expanding digital infrastructure will also support the extension of social services and telecommuting potential.

Tourism will provide an important value adding role to the local economy providing networking services to surrounding tourism sites. The expansion of tourism services and accommodation will enhance population servicing capabilities, as well as ensuring the tourism industry develops a sustainable economic base to value add to local businesses.

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[33] RPS, 2015. Central East Sub-Regional Economic Strategy

Table 5: Summary of Challenges & Opportunities for Growth

Economy	
Challenges	**Strategies**
• Skills and labour shortage. • Low unemployment rates – difficulty filling vacancies due to lack of suitable applicants and retaining labour force.	• The expansion of training programs delivered through C.Y. O'Connor Institute. • Promotion of the region and employment opportunities. • Collaboration with business and industry to develop stronger apprenticeship and traineeship opportunities. • Cross sector training to fill skill shortages. • Improve rental accommodation variation & quality.
• Ability to capture tourists and increase expenditure in the local economy.	• Provide a reason to stop. • Plan and promote local recreation and tourism through tourism planning. • Identify alternative markets such as business or environmental tourism. • Plan for increased accommodation. • Development of tourism linkages with the wider region.
• Impacts of financial downturns - local, state and abroad. • Sustainability of economy under threat (mono-economy). • Attracting private investors.	• Diversify the economy into identified economic opportunities. • Expand the healthcare and healthcare service sector • Conduct research and development. • Provide strong education and training programs. • Attract private investment. • Promote the area to external private investors. • Facilitate the introduction and assistance with growth planning.
• Mitigation of environmental impacts on agriculture.	• Research and innovation to develop measures for adaptation. • Foster community understanding of agricultural practices.
• Start-up/capitalisation costs in locating or building business enterprises (cost of infrastructure, BCA requirements). • Low return on investment compared to metropolitan areas.	• Development of business incubator units to reduce initial investment. • Enhanced marketing program to identify opportunities in business growth/development in relocating. • Development and attraction of businesses requiring proximity and excellent access to markets (mining & support services due to the region's strong mining industry and transport sector).
• Competition from the metropolitan area and online retail on local businesses.	• Provide Digital & ICT training to access regional and global trade markets.

Communities	
Challenges	**Strategies**
• Retention of existing population with an emphasis on the 15-34 age groups.	• Develop activities and facilities for youth. • Provide local educational and employment opportunities to maintain a strong labour force. • Improve education possibilities and links to local industry. • Develop strategies to attract younger generations back to the region after travel, university, training or when starting families.
• Education quality and educational servicing – (perceptions of quality).	• Continue to engage in the development of childcare services and the expansion of the education precinct. • Provide opportunities for cross sector training and development of cultural programs and the arts. • Improve stakeholder and community liaison between educational institutions to improve public perception.

Communities (continued)

Challenges	Strategies
• Attraction and retention of new residents.	• Promote quality of life with a focus on community. • Promote amenity and access to essential services such as health. • Promote recreational infrastructure and community amenities.
• Providing quality housing, diversity of accommodation types and residential land of varying size.	• Identification of new residential land. • Encourage mixed use and higher density living. • Promotion of private investment in the region to improve current housing stock. • Provide suitably zoned land for future development.
• Service delivery.	• Planning for the development of digital service provision where appropriate to enable high quality service access. • Provide high quality access to telecommunications and digital infrastructure.
• Development of a socially inclusive community. • Equal employment opportunities.	• Focus on projects, facilities and services in areas such as health, education and environment that cater for all. • Community engagement. • Improve accessibility to childcare services and flexible working arrangements.
• Indigenous disadvantage.	• Support 'closing the gap' initiatives. • Develop educational support services such as Clontarf. • Facilitate the identification and protection of sites of aboriginal heritage or significance.
• Access to health services.	• Further improve health services through capital investment and by implementing contemporary service delivery models. • Attract and retain health professionals. • Improve mental health and wellbeing services. • Improve aged care service linkages between Kellerberrin and Merredin.

Built Form and Housing

Challenges	Strategies
• Public open spaces lack cultural influences.	• Participate in wider stakeholder engagement to enhance public open space areas to benefit different age cohorts and cultures. • Merredin CBD Revitalisation project will provide a shared space for the public and private sectors to enhance the form and function of Merredin.
• High cost of headworks and infrastructure development in land assembly.	• Provide for the consolidation of residential areas. • Utilise sustainable urban design practices to reduce resident and Shire costs (ongoing costs).
• Limited variation in housing stock. • Limited low maintenance accommodation (professionals/tradespeople).	• Development of additional accommodation types and configurations to provide a wider profile of housing suitable to various age cohorts/lifestyles and occupations.
• Industrial land separated, requires clear identification and justification of function.	• Market industrial areas specific purposes related to power use, water use and lot sizes for industry development.
• Impact of floodplain on Merredin's development.	• Assess locations suitable for development and plan for their development accordingly. • Identify infrastructure solutions to mitigate impacts on the townsite.

Infrastructure

Challenges	Strategies
• Maximise the benefit of passenger rail services.	• Develop tourism and accommodation options or improvements. • Improved transfer links to rail station. • Effective timetabling of rail services. • Increase density in proximity to town centre.
• Development constraints (headworks, floodplain). • Water pressure implications for firefighting purposes.	• Look for alternative development opportunities such as increased infill, mixed used and higher density living around the town centre. • Development of sustainable infrastructure to reduce resource use or cost of water/power upgrades. • Identify potential cost sharing exercises to reduce cost constraints on development of infrastructure. • Conduct buffer planning as per planning requirements.
• Capacity constraints related to ADSL/ADSL+2 telecommunications infrastructure.	• Seek opportunities to test new technologies and implement them (high speed broadband infrastructure).
• Limited access to rail freight market.	• Potential for the development of an intermodal terminal to facilitate rail-road transport.
• Impact of tier 3 grain network closure.	• Prioritise maintenance of local road network. • Identify and mandate Great Eastern Highway corridor improvements.
• Equitable access to metropolitan and regional electricity markets.	• Promote renewable energy projects and supply. • Upgrade high voltage transmission lines to the Perth metropolitan market.
• Waste management.	• Further promote waste elimination, recycling and reuse opportunities. • Expansion of waste management infrastructure. • Implementation of regional waste plan.
• Ageing community & social infrastructure.	• Investigate opportunities for co-location and shared facilities and services.
• Population growth outstrips infrastructure and service provision.	• Good planning and monitoring of population requirements. • Secure and develop infrastructure prior to new development. • Good communication between local government and service providers. • Effective project management to deliver new services on time.

Environment

Challenges	Strategies
• Climate change risks. • Mitigate and reduce implications of climate change.	• Opportunity to undertake risk assessments and planning. • Support the use of sustainable technologies to reduce resource use/optimise resource use. • Utilise renewable technologies to decrease costs to the community (ongoing) and increase savings (environmental/economic).
• Maximise community benefit from environmental assets.	• Education and awareness of the environmental assets. • Encourage sustainable developments.
• Natural resource management. • Balance land use and conservation.	• Identify and understand the extent of local natural resources to protect them for future use or conservation. • Protection and maintenance of native vegetation and wildlife habitats.
• Increased salinity/rising groundwater table.	• Improve townsite water management. • Upgrade drainage basin to reduce salinity. • Utilise saline water for non-potable users through treatment and water re-use.

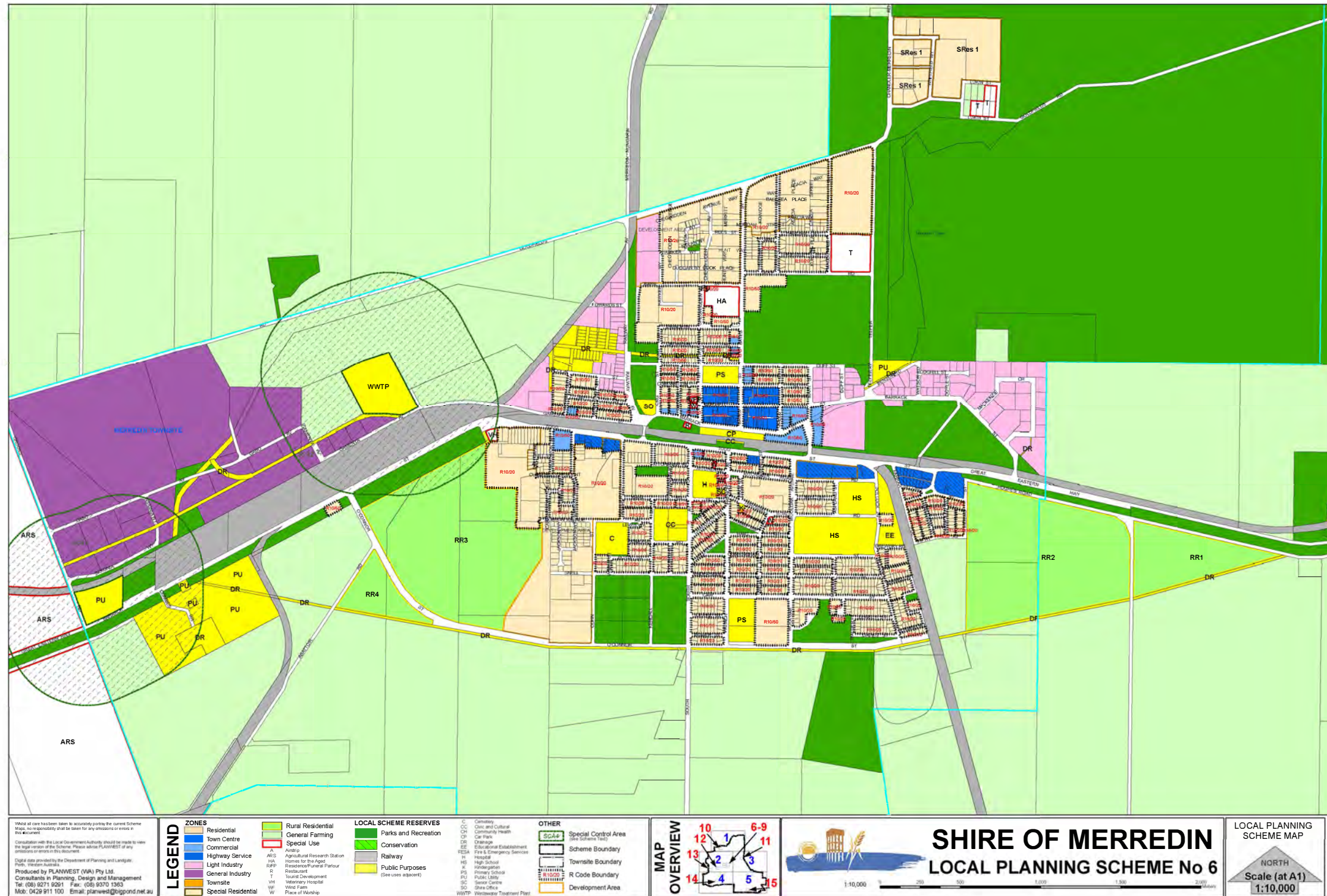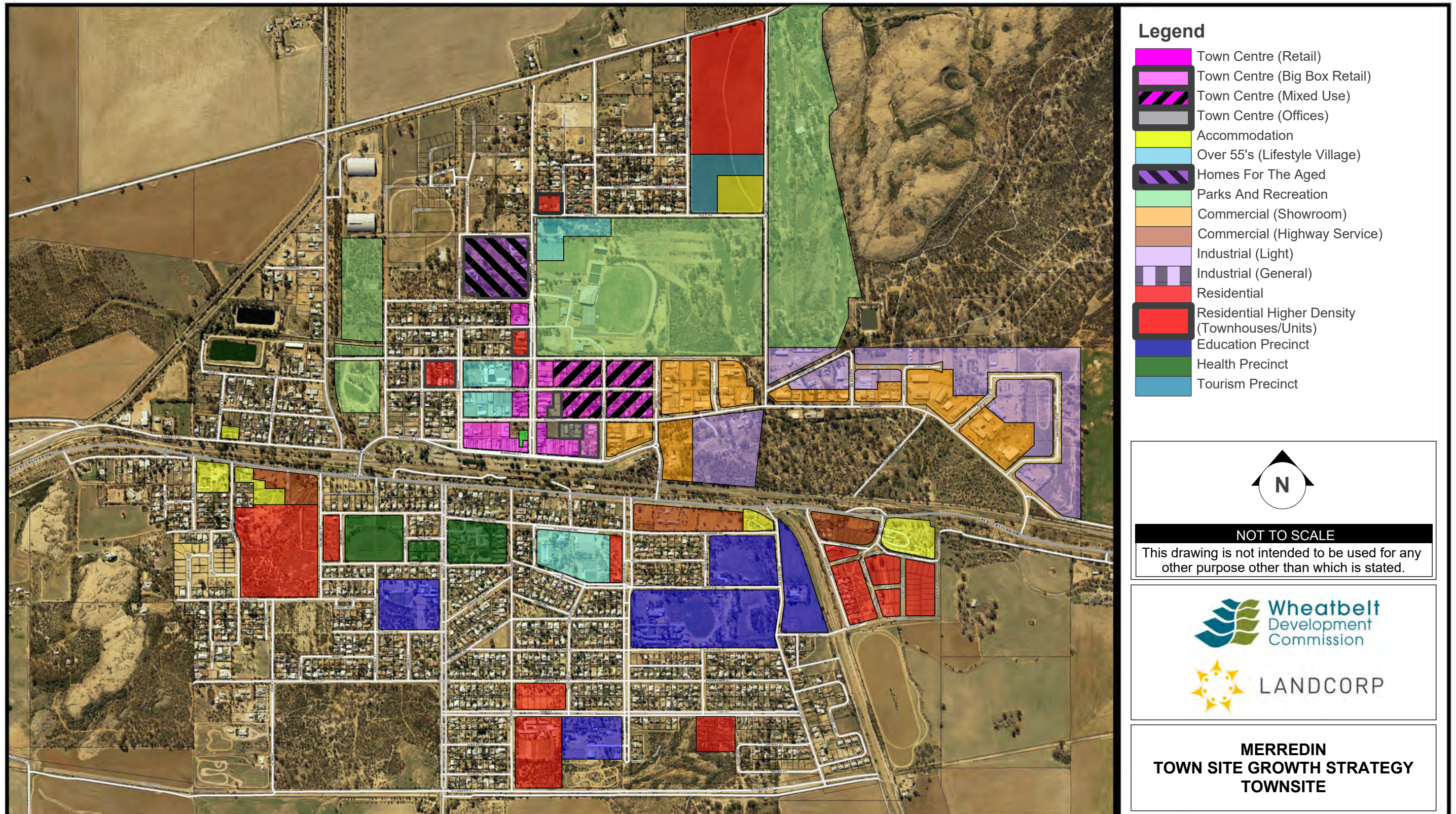| Governance	
Challenges	**Strategies**
• Managing the expectations of the community. • Reduce layers of agencies and organisation and increase co-operation.	• Be honest and transparent. • Participation in day-to-day decision making. • Deliver and implement projects. • Increase stakeholder collaboration and community engagement to build strong & effective rapport.
• Poor perception of the community and Wheatbelt.	• Foster and maintain a positive outlook in the whole community. • Promote this Plan.
• Ensuring strong regional leadership in a growing and changing region (social/economic & environmental).	• Increase collaboration between Local and State Government • Ensure strategic Local Government links are forged. • Identify broad economic development and planning strategies for Merredin and the region.

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Appendices

1.0   Shire of Merredin Local Planning Scheme No.6 Townsite Map

(NOTE: Not To Scale - Utilise Original For Planning Purposes)
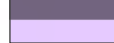
2.0 Merredin Precinct Plan – Townsite

Legend

- Town Centre (Retail)
- Town Centre (Big Box Retail)
- Town Centre (Mixed Use)
- Town Centre (Offices)
- Accommodation
- Over 55's (Lifestyle Village)
- Homes For The Aged
- Parks And Recreation
- Commercial (Showroom)
- Commercial (Highway Service)
- Industrial (Light)
- Industrial (General)
- Residential
- Residential Higher Density (Townhouses/Units)
- Education Precinct
- Health Precinct
- Tourism Precinct

N

NOT TO SCALE

This drawing is not intended to be used for any other purpose other than which is stated.

Wheatbelt Development Commission

LANDCORP

**MERREDIN
TOWN SITE GROWTH STRATEGY
TOWNSITE**

Basemap Source: Landgate. 2015

| 'Growing Our Community' – An Economic Development and Implementation Strategy for Merredin
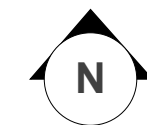
2.1 Merredin Precinct Plan – Industrial Land

Legend

- Current - Industrial (Light)
- Current - Industrial (General)
- Proposed - Industrial (Light)
- Proposed - Industrial (General)

N

NOT TO SCALE

This drawing is not intended to be used for any other purpose other than which is stated.

Wheatbelt Development Commission

LANDCORP

MERREDIN
TOWN SITE GROWTH STRATEGY
INDUSTRIAL LAND

Basemap Source: Landgate. 2015

3.0   Projects & Initiatives Implementation Plan

Delivery & Thresholds			
		Delivery Method	
Action/Activity/Project	**Threshold Indicator**	**Lead Agency & Partners**	**Funding Source**
Project: CBD Revitalisation - Stage 1a: Barrack St & Bates St Redevelopment **Scale:** Local **Description:** Stage 1a: Redevelopment of Barrack St & Bates St (including investigations on the installation of high speed broadband services to businesses). **Scope:** Redevelopment of Barrack St & Bates St (roadworks, streetscape and infrastructure upgrade). **Outcome:** Revitalisation of Barrack St & Bates St to increase amenity, streetscape access/attractiveness, business investment, CBD activity and utilisation and enhanced investment return (increased CBD patronage).	• Short: Technical investigations complete, approvals signed and project funded.	• Lead: Shire of Merredin • Partners: Private Sector and High Speed Broadband Provider	TBC (actively seeking capital works funding)
Project: CEACA Merredin Land Assembly **Scale:** Local **Description:** Planning, site design & construction and headworks to enable the development of Independent Living Units (ILUs) as a component of the CEACA Merredin Project (Stage 1 of 3). **Scope:** Land assembly to cater to the development of73 lots and 73 ILUs. **Outcome:** Development of 73 lots for the construction of 73 ILUs in two stages.	• Short: Land tenure secured, rezoning undertaken if applicable, site design developed, approvals signed for all land assembly stages and project funded for Stage 1 land assembly. • Medium: Buildout of Stage 1 ILUs are at 85% utilisation, project funded for Stage 2 land assembly. • Long: Buildout of Stage 1 ILUs are at 85% utilisation, project funded for Stage 2 land assembly.	• Lead: Shire of Merredin • Partners: CEACA, RDA Wheatbelt and Wheatbelt Development Commission	TBC (actively seeking capital works funding)
Project: CEACA Merredin ILU Development (Stage 1) **Scale:** Local **Description:** The development of 60 ILUs as part of the CEACA Merredin Project (Stage 2 of 3). **Scope:** Construction of 60 ILUs to meet demand for aged care housing. **Outcome:** Construction of 60 ILUs in Stage 1.	• Short: Stage 1 ILUs are delivered post land assembly, site design/engineering complete and approvals signed and funded for construction of 60 ILUs.	• Lead: Shire of Merredin • Partners: CEACA, RDA Wheatbelt and Wheatbelt Development Commission	TBC (actively seeking capital works funding)
Project: Industrial & Residential Marketing **Scale:** Region **Description:** Development of promotional material, branding and marketing of economic opportunities in relocating to Merredin to increase economic development. **Scope:** Development of a marketing program for Merredin. **Outcome:** The development and implementation of a marketing program for business, industry and potential residents (target marketing) will enable economic development and growth through the expansion in the number of businesses and residents in the townsite. Will provide a multiplier effect if the growth trend is significant.	• Short: Target marketing study for Merredin developed, identifying businesses, industries and families which would be attracted to Merredin based on current and potential programs. • Medium: Target marketing utilised by the local business members to deliver targeted marketing to attract new businesses and industries to town. Marketing reviewed in-line with changes to population trends, townsite formation and economic trends. • Long: Marketing reviewed in-line with changes to population trends, townsite formation and economic trends.	• Lead: Shire of Merredin • Partners: Heartlands WA and Merredin WBN	TBC
Project: C.Y. O'Connor Institute Campus Expansion (Training Facility & Accommodation) **Scale:** Region **Description:** Construction of additional buildings for education and training at C.Y. O'Connor Institute and accommodation options to provide regional access to the institution for off-campus course offerings. **Scope:** Construction of additional site facilities to increase student courses available and cross sector training capacity. **Outcome:** Campus upgraded to provide additional training and accommodation for regional student access.	• Short: Approvals signed and project funded for Campus Expansion. • Medium: Campus enrolments increased by 20%, begin planning for acquisition and purchase of land for onsite accommodation for students. • Long: Funding approved for development of C.Y. O'Connor Institute accommodation.	• Lead: Shire of Merredin • Partners: C.Y. O'Connor Institute and Department of Training & Workforce Development	C.Y. O'Connor Institute
Project: CBD High Speed Broadband Rollout **Scale:** Local **Description:** Rollout of high speed broadband services as part of the CBD Revitalisation with potential examination into cost sharing arrangements to enable deployment of services as part of the CBD works and wider townsite works. **Scope:** Rollout high speed broadband services within the CBD and townsite. **Outcome:** Development of high speed broadband services within the CBD to enable increased digital economy development.	• Short: Barrack, Bates St and CBD Carpark redevelopment funded, liaise with high speed broadband service provider on installation of services to provide connection nodes to businesses in the CBD Revitalisation Area as the Revitalisation project rolls out. • Medium: Continue high speed broadband service rollout in line with CBD Revitalisation Project.	• Lead: Shire of Merredin • Partners: High Speed Broadband Provider and Private Sector	TBC

Delivery & Thresholds			
		Delivery Method	
Action/Activity/Project	**Threshold Indicator**	**Lead Agency & Partners**	**Funding Source**
Project: Mining Support Service & Potable/Non-Potable Water Re-Use Industry Development - Business Incubator Development **Scale:** Region **Description:** Facilitate the development of mining support service industries and water re-use industries in the General Industrial area through business incubator development. **Scope:** Development of land and business incubator units for industry to establish and grow to enable churn (on sell) for new enterprise development. **Outcome:** Utilisation of general industrial lots for the development of several water re-use business incubator units to enable industry development.	• Medium: Merredin General Industrial area lot creation complete. Business incubator units developed connected to water re-use infrastructure. • Long: Merredin General Industrial area lot creation complete. Business incubator units developed connected to water re-use infrastructure. Previous industrial units sold to existing businesses or to market to construct new/additional industrial stock.	• Lead: Shire of Merredin	TBC
Project: Merredin Desalination Plant **Scale:** Region **Description:** Installation of a desalination plant to provide potable and non-potable treated wastewater for industrial and agricultural purposes. This is ancillary to existing utilisation of water on the townsites parks and gardens. Builds upon previous work by DAFWA (hydrological studies). **Scope:** Development and installation of desalination plant & related infrastructure for water re-use (saline groundwater). **Outcome:** Construction of desalination plant for industry and agriculture (utilising on & off grid power sources).	• Medium: On construction of dewatering infrastructure and renewables, planning and development of expandable desalination system to be developed subject to approvals and funding. • Long: Desalination upgrade if water available for desalination and demand-supply ratio is at 80% utilisation.	• Lead: Shire of Merredin • Partners: Department of Water and Water Corporation	TBC
Project: Biomass/Biogas Plant **Scale:** Region **Description:** The construction of a biomass/biogas plant to produce energy for use within the townsite - by agriculture, industry and desalination in non-peak periods. **Scope:** Construction of biomass/biogas plant for energy production. **Outcome:** Construction of biomass/biogas plant providing energy for off grid industry and peak energy users.	• Medium: Private sector and/or Government sectors ready to invest.	• Lead: Private Sector • Partners: Shire of Merredin and Department of Agriculture & Food WA	TBC
Project: CBD Townhouse/Unit Development (Worker/Professional Accommodation) **Scale:** Local **Description:** Planning, land purchase/acquisition, site design and construction of townhouses/units/apartments to expand residential market to cater to workers/professionals in Merredin (an increased supply of single/couple housing to reduce demand on family housing). **Scope:** Facilitate planning, land purchase, site design and development of alternative housing for professionals/workers. **Outcome:** Development of young professionals/workers accommodation.	• Short: Acquisition of land for staged project, development of outline development plan for site and scheme amendment where appropriate. • Medium: Housing stock utilisation approaching 90% of available market. Headworks development, lot creation and construction of first stage of townhouses/units delivered. • Long: Housing stock utilisation approaching 90% of available market. Headworks development, lot creation and construction of second stage of townhouses/units delivered.	• Lead: Shire of Merredin • Partners: Department of Housing and Department of Training & Workforce Development	TBC
Project: Digital Technology Training & E-Commerce Development **Scale:** Region **Description:** Implementation of training programs to facilitate uptake of digital technology and implementation of e-commerce platforms. **Scope:** Delivery of an education program to increase digital technology uptake and e-commerce development in Merredin. **Outcome:** Digital technology training programs developed to enhance skillsets of local businesses, industry and residents and enable use of e-commerce platforms by Merredin businesses (online outlet presence).	• Short: Wheatbelt Digital Action Plan implemented, programs developed for educators and trainers in the region. Merredin CRC, Merredin Development Group, C.Y. O'Connor Institute and Merredin College/St Marys Merredin involved as key stakeholders. • Medium: Programs delivered, uptake and usage of digital technology and ICT infrastructure necessitates townsite/regional telecommunications upgrades. Strong e-commerce presence in Merredin, businesses and community aware of and utilise digital technology trends at an above average adoption rate. • Long: Uptake and increased usage of ICT infrastructure.	• Lead: Wheatbelt Development Commission and Heartlands WA • Partners: Regional Development Australia Wheatbelt, Merredin Community Resource Centre, Merredin College, Merredin Development Group and Industry, St Marys Merredin, C.Y. O'Connor Institute and Shire of Merredin	TBC
Project: CEACA Merredin ILU Development (Stage 2) **Scale:** Local **Description:** The development of 13 ILUs as part of the CEACA Merredin Project (Stage 3 of 3). **Scope:** Construction of 13 ILUs to meet demand for aged care housing. **Outcome:** Construction of 13 ILUs in Stage 2.	• Medium-Long: Stage 2 ILUs are delivered post land assembly, site design/engineering complete and approvals signed and funded for construction of 13 ILUs.	• Lead: Shire of Merredin • Partners: CEACA, RDA Wheatbelt and Wheatbelt Development Commission	TBC (actively seeking capital works funding)

Delivery & Thresholds			
		Delivery Method	
Action/Activity/Project	**Threshold Indicator**	**Lead Agency & Partners**	**Funding Source**
Project: CBD Revitalisation - Stage 1b: CBD Carpark & Parklands Redevelopment **Scale:** Local **Description:** Stage 1b: Redevelopment of Merredin CBD Carpark (Barrack St). **Scope:** Merredin CBD Carpark redevelopment (roadworks, streetscape and infrastructure upgrade). **Outcome:** The redevelopment and upgrade of Barrack St CBD Carpark will encourage businesses to reinvest in their businesses and improve access and amenity within this area to serve local and regional residents and visitors effectively.	• Short: Technical investigations complete, approvals signed and project funded.	• Lead: Shire of Merredin • Partners: Private Sector	TBC (actively seeking capital works funding)
Project: CBD Revitalisation - Stage 2a: Mitchell St Redevelopment **Scale:** Local **Description:** Stage 2a: Redevelopment of Mitchell St (including investigations into the installation of high speed broadband services to businesses). **Scope:** Redevelopment of Mitchell St (roadworks, streetscape and infrastructure upgrade). **Outcome:** Revitalisation of Mitchell St to increase amenity, streetscape access/attractiveness, business investment, CBD activity and utilisation and enhanced investment return (increased CBD patronage).	• Medium: Stage 1a & 1b completed. Technical investigations complete, approvals signed and project funded. • Long: Seek major retailer/big box investment when population reaches 4,000 and more than 12,000 in the sub-region.	• Lead: Shire of Merredin • Partners: Private Sector & High Speed Broadband Provider	TBC (actively seeking capital works funding)
Project: CBD Revitalisation - Stage 2b: Government Offices & Corporate Office Development **Scale:** Region **Description:** Stage 2b: Siting, design, costing and construction of Government Offices/Commercial Office space (including investigations into the installation of high speed broadband services to the site for telecommuting purposes). **Scope:** Conduct feasibility study, acquire land, develop services and construct regional Government Offices/Commercial Office building. **Outcome:** Development of major commercial office space with High Speed Broadband connectivity to enable telecommuting opportunities in Merredin and enhanced service efficiencies in Government Office co-location, freeing up existing CBD space for retail/office expansion. Provides existing government services in an economically and professionally justified manner for future growth and service retention.	• Short: Complete feasibility study. • Medium: Available office space suitable for Government and business below 20% triggering approvals process, funding and construction. • Long: Available office space suitable for Government and business between 20-40% triggering examination of land requirements and purchase for development when available office space is less than 20%.	• Lead: Shire of Merredin • Partners: Wheatbelt Development Commission, Department of Commerce, Department of Finance, Department of Housing, Department of Training & Workforce Development and High Speed Broadband Provider	TBC
Project: Southern Inland Health Initiative - Capital Works Program - Merredin Hospital **Scale:** Region **Description:** Upgrade of Merredin Hospital to provide efficiencies in service delivery. **Scope:** Merredin Hospital upgrades including: • Emergency Department • Outpatient Services: Emergency Care, Physiotherapy, Speech Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Counselling, Community Health Nursing, Community Mental Health & Aged Care Support **Outcome:** Merredin Hospital upgraded to provide increased regional health servicing capabilities.	• Short: Approvals signed and project funded.	• Lead: Department of Health & Merredin Hospital • Partners: Department of Regional Development	Southern Inland Health Initiative: $26.4million
Project: Merredin College Extension (100+ beds) **Scale:** Region **Description:** The development of additional boarding capacity at Merredin College (100+beds). **Scope:** Construction and fitout of additional boarding facility to increase student boarding capacity. **Outcome:** Additional boarding capacity for students delivered through upgrades to Merredin College.	• Short: Merredin College boarding capacity is at 90% utilisation, initiating planning, design and construction of additional boarding capacity. • Medium: Upgrade of capacity to be reviewed and upgraded in line with demographic trends in the sub-region. • Long: Sub-regional population reaches 14,000, upgrade reviewed and funded in line with demographic trends.	• Lead: Department of Education • Partners: Merredin College	Department of Education
Project: Merredin Development Group **Scale:** Region **Description:** Development of a group or members within a current organisation to market the town and perform activities in the interest of the private sector in Merredin. **Scope:** Facilitate the development of a local business group to engage in economic development activities. **Outcome:** The establishment of a forum for Merredin businesses will provide a focus group to further the economic development interests of Merredin businesses and provide a single reference point for the Shire of Merredin to establish development priorities.	• Short: Industry stakeholder group developed or incorporated into currently active groups. Framework and key issues and discussions paper established. • Medium: Establishment of membership program once membership numbers exceed 15.	• Lead: Shire of Merredin Or Private Sector • Partners: Private Sector, Shire of Merredin, RDA Wheatbelt, Heartlands WA and Wheatbelt Business Network	TBC

Delivery & Thresholds			
		Delivery Method	
Action/Activity/Project	**Threshold Indicator**	**Lead Agency & Partners**	**Funding Source**
Project: Central East Agricultural Development Strategy **Scale:** Region **Description:** Facilitate the development of a strategy on future agricultural development in the Central East. **Scope:** Development of strategy for agriculture in the Central East to guide investment, research and development. May be developed within a wider Wheatbelt Agricultural Development Strategy. **Outcome:** Strategy developed to guide agricultural investment in research and development and infrastructure investment for the Central East agricultural industry.	• Short: Stakeholder group developed, involving government, business and industry. • Medium: Central East Agricultural Development Strategy delivered, findings encouraged to be implemented by industry. • Long: Ongoing workshops to educate stakeholders in the effective implementation of findings of the strategy to their operations/planning.	• Lead: Department of Agriculture & Food WA • Partners: Central East Sub-Region LGAs and Grains Research Development Corporation	TBC
Project: Cross Sector Skill Training Program (Agriculture & Mining - Health & Disability Care) **Scale:** Region **Description:** Development of cross sector skill training programs in agriculture, mining, health and disability care to be delivered through C.Y. O'Connor Institute, Merredin. **Scope:** Implementation of cross sector skill training programs to diversify the workforces skill base. **Outcome:** Cross sector course offerings developed and delivered in liaison with private sector to enable development in similar industries (cross sector specialisation).	• Short: Private sector is consulted on the development of certifications and training programs (practical & theoretical work). • Medium: C.Y. O'Connor Institute campus expansion complete. Cross sector programs implemented.	• Lead: C.Y. O'Connor Institute • Partners: Department of Training & Workforce Development and Private Sector	C.Y. O'Connor Institute
Project: Intensive Agriculture Pilot Project Development **Scale:** Region **Description:** A pilot project to develop commercial scale intensive agriculture to provide a test case for further development of the industry through water re-use and innovative use of aquaculture/horticulture technologies. **Scope:** Development of intensive agriculture pilot project in Merredin (horticulture/aquaculture) including purchase of land and equipment. **Outcome:** Development of commercial scale horticulture/aquaculture enterprise through water re-use and application of desalination technology.	• Short: Development of water infrastructure to provide resources for project (Merredin Desalination Plant & Water Re-Use Reticulation Upgrades). • Medium: Private sector and/or Government sectors ready to invest.	• Lead: Department of Agriculture & Food WA • Partners: Shire of Merredin and Private Sector	TBC
Project: Kindergarten/Childcare Development (Co-Located Education Precinct) **Scale:** Local **Description:** Development of additional childcare service to enable resource sharing and provide co-located education service provision within the education precinct. **Scope:** Development of additional childcare services and co-located development in proximity to the education precinct. **Outcome:** Additional childcare facility developed to provide parents of young children the opportunity to re-join the workforce and provide children with youth education development.	• Short: Childcare demand exceeds 75% of supply; population trends indicate increase in youth age cohort, family age cohorts. Identify site for additional childcare facility. • Medium: Approvals signed and project funded when population reaches 3,600 or childcare capacity has less than 15% remaining. • Long: Upgrade childcare centre facilities when population reaches 4,200.	• Lead: Shire of Merredin • Partners: Department of Education and Merredin And Districts Childcare And Play School (MADCAPS)	TBC
Project: Townsite High Speed Broadband Rollout **Scale:** Local **Description:** Project will involve the identification of broadband technologies and deployment strategies involving the physical deployment of infrastructure in the townsite. **Scope:** Rollout high speed broadband services within the townsite. **Outcome:** Development of high speed broadband services within the townsite to enable increased digital economy development.	• Short: Identify potential partners and stakeholders to develop a plan to identify and prioritise areas of the townsite to have broadband services delivered in stages. • Medium: Rollout of high speed broadband infrastructure with partners when funding has been secured. • Long: Continue high speed broadband service rollout in line with townsite broadband service rollout prioritisation plan.	• Lead: Shire of Merredin • Partners: High Speed Broadband Provider and Private Sector	TBC
Project: Small Scale Solar/Wind Plant **Scale:** Local **Description:** Small scale renewable production facility developed to produce energy for townsite dewatering and for peak energy usage by industry/commerce. **Scope:** Installation of small generation capacity consisting of solar panels and wind turbines for utilisation by industry, dewatering and desalination. **Outcome:** Small scale energy production sites developed in Merredin's General Industrial Area and Light Industrial Area (solar/wind).	• Medium: Private sector and/or Government sectors ready to invest.	• Lead: Shire of Merredin • Partners: Private Sector	TBC

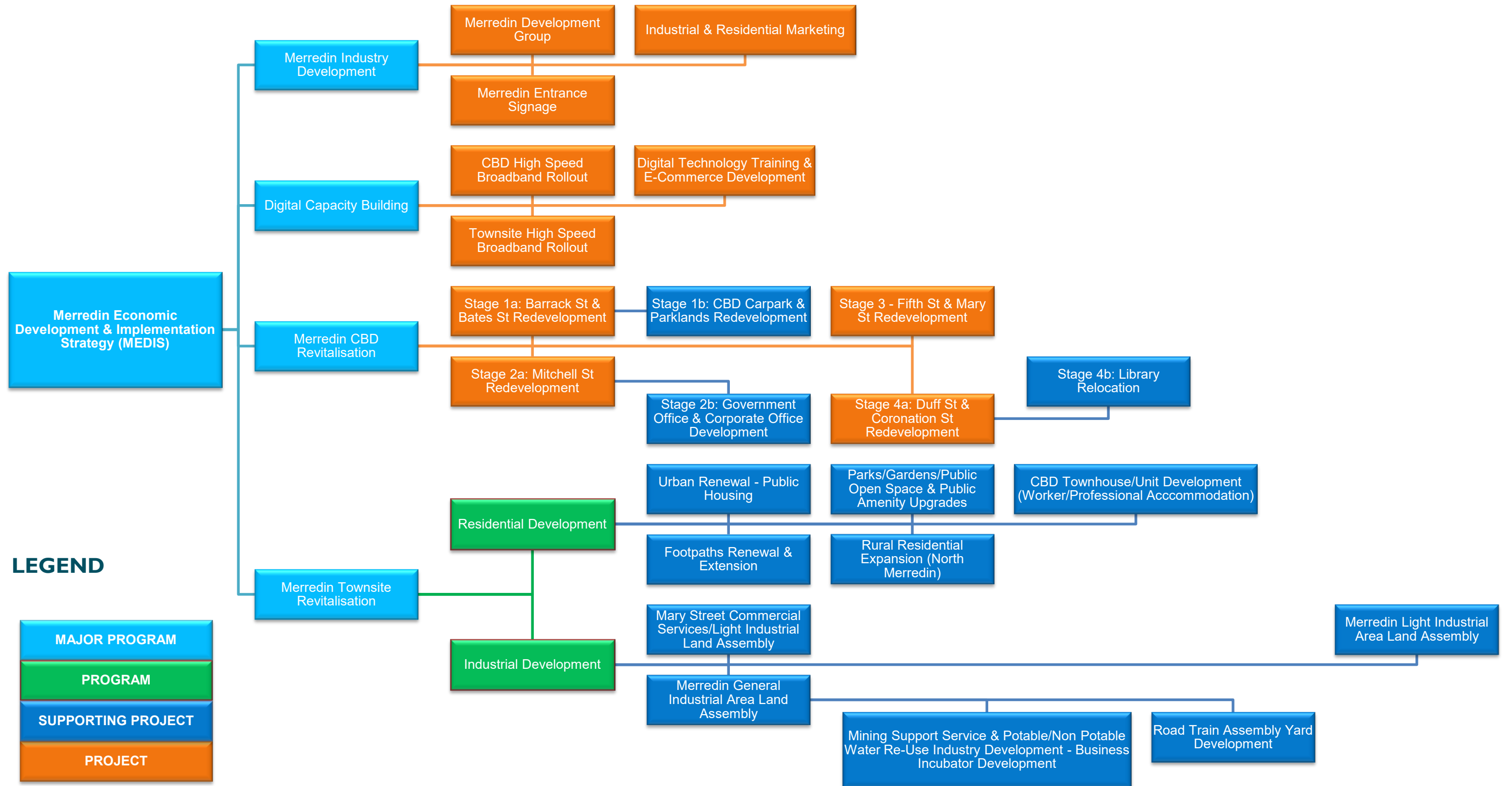| Delivery & Thresholds			
		Delivery Method	
Action/Activity/Project	**Threshold Indicator**	**Lead Agency & Partners**	**Funding Source**
Project: Townsite Dewatering System Extension **Scale:** Local **Description:** Extension of dewatering infrastructure (pipes & bores) to reduce townsite salinity and enable potential desalination and industry development. **Scope:** Development of additional bores for townsite dewatering and pipe system extension to capture water for re-use. **Outcome:** Construction of dewatering bores and pipe system extension for water re-use.	• Short: Findings of Aquifer/Groundwater Abstraction Study project utilised to determine points for the installation of additional dewatering equipment and ancillary infrastructure. • Medium: Dewatering infrastructure constructed, dependent on approvals and funding.	• Lead: Shire of Merredin • Partners: Department of Water and Water Corporation	TBC
Project: CBD Revitalisation - Stage 3: Fifth St & Queen St Redevelopment **Scale:** Local **Description:** Stage 3: Redevelopment of Fifth St/Queen St to Mitchell St (including investigations on the installation of high speed broadband services to businesses). **Scope:** Redevelopment of Fifth St/Queen St to Mitchell St (roadworks, streetscape and infrastructure upgrade). **Outcome:** Revitalisation of Fifth St/Queen St to Mitchell St to increase amenity, streetscape access/attractiveness, business investment, CBD activity utilisation and enhanced investment return (increased CBD patronage).	• Medium: Merredin CBD Revitalisation Stage 2 completed. Technical investigations complete, approvals signed and project funded. • Long: Seek major retailer/big box investment when population reaches 4,000 and more than 12,000 in the sub-region.	• Lead: Shire of Merredin • Partners: Private Sector and High Speed Broadband Provider	TBD (actively seeking capital works funding)
Project: Over 55s Lifestyle Village Development Feasibility Strategy **Scale:** Local **Description:** The development of a feasibility strategy for the development of an over 55s lifestyle village in Merredin. **Scope:** Lifestyle Village Feasibility Strategy developed for Merredin. **Outcome:** Development potential for lifestyle village identified by Strategy including indicative industry support.	• Medium: Consult with private over 55s lifestyle village companies on the development of a feasibility study for such a facility in Merredin. • Long: Private sector and/or Government sectors ready to invest.	• Lead: Private Sector • Partners: CEACA, Shire of Merredin	TBC
Project: Water Re-Use Reticulation Upgrades **Scale:** Local **Description:** Upgrade of the Shire of Merredin's parks and gardens reticulation. **Scope:** Reticulation upgrades to Shire of Merredin parks and gardens. **Outcome:** Reticulation extension to non-reticulated parks and gardens in the townsite.	• Short: Shire of Merredin identifies corridors for infrastructure investment, including related infrastructure for water re-use. • Medium: Shire of Merredin, Department of Water and Water Corporation invest in construction of infrastructure on ongoing basis.	• Lead: Shire of Merredin • Partners: Department of Water and Water Corporation	Shire of Merredin
Project: Rural Residential Expansion (North Merredin) **Scale:** Local **Description:** Planning, land purchase/acquisition, site design and construction of headworks to enable future rural residential development within the townsite. **Scope:** Facilitate planning, land purchase, site design and headworks for lot development. **Outcome:** Development of additional rural residential lots.	• Short: Acquisition of land, development of outline development plan for site and scheme amendment where appropriate. • Medium: Less than 5 lots remaining triggers headworks development and creation of a marketable release of lots. • Long: Less than 2 lots remaining from previous land release triggers headworks development and creation of a marketable release of lots.	• Lead: Shire of Merredin	TBC
Project: Merredin Pump Station Revitalisation Project - Building Restoration **Scale:** Local **Description:** Redevelopment of Merredin Pump Station No.4 to current Building Code of Australia Standards to enable reutilisation for alternative uses. **Scope:** Redevelopment and repurposing of Merredin Pump Station No.4 for alternative uses. Project will involve a repurposing strategy aimed at aligning potential users for the redeveloped structure. **Outcome:** Merredin Pump Station No.4 redeveloped for alternative uses.	• Short: Potential proponents identified for re-use of the existing structure for alternative uses (post redevelopment/clean-up works). • Medium: Technical investigations complete, approvals signed and project funded.	• Lead: Heritage Council of Western Australia and Water Corporation • Partners: Private Sector	TBC
Project: Aquifer/Groundwater Abstraction Study **Scale:** Region **Description:** A study to be undertaken by the Shire of Merredin in conjunction with government agencies and industry to identify potential groundwater sources/aquifers to expand the existing townsite dewatering system. **Scope:** Undertake and deliver a study on groundwater and potential sites of aquifers in the Merredin region. Builds upon previous work by DAFWA (hydrological studies). **Outcome:** Study prepared and delivered on groundwater and aquifer size for Merredin and surrounds, enabling an environmentally and economic justification for water re-use.	• Short: Study prepared for the townsite to identify aquifer/groundwater reserve size and environmentally acceptable abstraction rates. • Medium: Wider study prepared for agriculture and industry to identify aquifer/groundwater reserve size in prioritised locations for environmentally and economically acceptable abstraction rates.	• Lead: Shire of Merredin • Partners: Department of Water and Water Corporation	Water Corporation

Delivery & Thresholds			
		Delivery Method	
Action/Activity/Project	**Threshold Indicator**	**Lead Agency & Partners**	**Funding Source**
Project: Merredin Entrance Signage **Scale:** Local **Description:** Design and installation of signage approved by MainRoads WA to attract passing motorists into the Merredin CBD **Scope:** Design and install CBD entry signage. **Outcome:** The design and installation of CBD entry signage on Great Eastern Highway entrances to town will provide economic development incentive to local businesses through increased trip generation in the CBD and expenditure on goods and services.	• Short: Approval received from MainRoads WA on siting and design. Funding and construction.	• Lead: Shire of Merredin • Partners: MainRoads WA	Shire of Merredin
Project: Sub-Regional Transport Strategy **Scale:** Region **Description:** Planning key infrastructure priorities (formation of working group) for transport in the Shire of Merredin and in the Central East Sub-Region and provide a strategy for key infrastructure priorities and their development out to 2050. **Scope:** Development of strategy to identify key infrastructure priorities of transport in the sub-region for development through to 2050. **Outcome:** Strategy identifying regional transport priority projects out to 2050 developed.	• Short: Stakeholder working group developed, involving government, business and industry. • Medium: Sub-Regional Transport Strategy completed and findings implemented into infrastructure planning.	• Lead: Central East Sub-Region LGA's • Partners: Private Sector, Department of Transport, MainRoads WA and WALGA	TBC
Project: Mary St Commercial Services/Light Industrial Land Assembly **Scale:** Local **Description:** Planning, land purchase/acquisition, site design and construction of headworks to enable future light industrial/commercial services development within the townsite. **Scope:** Facilitate planning, land purchase, site design and headworks for lot development. **Outcome:** Development of 26 commercial service/light industrial lots.	• Short: Acquisition of land, development of outline development plan for site and scheme amendment where appropriate. • Medium: Less than 2 vacant lots remaining/90% stock utilised in light commercial area triggers headworks development and creation of a marketable release of lots. • Long: Less than 2 vacant lots remaining from previous land release triggers headworks development and creation of a marketable release of lots.	• Lead: Shire of Merredin	TBC
Project: Youth Development & Engagement Program - Youth Centre/Youth Services Development **Scale:** Local **Description:** Increase youth services utilisation in Merredin to reduce anti-social behaviour and potentially upskill the youth workforce. **Scope:** Development of youth infrastructure, spaces and youth education and engagement programs. **Outcome:** Development of youth education programs and youth services to mitigate potential antisocial behaviour.	• Short: Shire of Merredin establishes a youth survey to indicate the requirements of the 8-18 age cohort. Findings identify leadership programs and education programs to facilitate youth development. • Medium: When the youth age cohort reaches 15-25% of the Shire's population, plan for the development of appropriate youth centre services to meet demand. Approvals and project funding to be secured for construction.	• Lead: Shire of Merredin • Partners: Merredin College, St Marys Primary School, C.Y. O'Connor Institute and Avon Youth	TBC
Project: Merredin General Industrial Area - Land Assembly **Scale:** Local **Description:** Planning, land purchase/acquisition, site design and construction of headworks to enable future general industrial development within the townsite. **Scope:** Facilitate planning, land purchase, site design and headworks for lot development. **Outcome:** Development of additional general industrial lots.	• Short: Acquisition of land, development of outline development plan for site and scheme amendment where appropriate. • Medium: Less than 2 vacant lots remaining/90% stock utilised in general industrial area triggers headworks development and creation of a marketable release of lots. • Long: Less than 2 vacant lots remaining from previous land release triggers headworks development and creation of a marketable release of lots.	• Lead: Shire of Merredin • Partners: Department of Agriculture & Food WA	TBC
Project: Road Train Assembly Yard Development **Scale:** Region **Description:** Investigate potential development of a Road Train Assembly Area/Yard in Merredin and potential benefits of its development for transport and logistics in the Shire and for the broader Central East Sub-Region. **Scope:** Feasibility study on procuring land adjacent to Great Eastern Highway for the development of a Road Train Assembly yard for heavy vehicles. **Outcome:** Identification of investment and development potential of a road train assembly area to serve the regional and interstate transport industry.	• Medium: Merredin Townsite Haulage Strategy completed, findings utilised in consultation with Department of Transport, MainRoads WA and Private Sector into feasibility of a road train assembly yard being developed.	• Lead: Shire of Merredin • Partners: Department of Transport and MainRoads WA	TBC
Project: Merredin Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade **Scale:** Local **Description:** Upgrade of the Merredin Wastewater Treatment Plant to provide capacity for further development. **Scope:** Develop and upgrade capacity of Merredin Wastewater Treatment Plant. **Outcome:** Increase capacity of the Merredin Wastewater Treatment Plant for additional lots.	• Short: Merredin Wastewater Treatment Plant additional serviceable lot capacity is less than 30 lots triggering acquisition of land, planning, design and approvals process for system extension.	• Lead: Water Corporation • Partners: Department of Water and Shire of Merredin	Water Corporation

Delivery & Thresholds			
		Delivery Method	
Action/Activity/Project	**Threshold Indicator**	**Lead Agency & Partners**	**Funding Source**
Project: Merredin Light Industrial Area Land Assembly **Scale:** Local **Description:** Planning, land purchase/acquisition, site design and construction of headworks to enable future light industrial development within the townsite. **Scope:** Facilitate planning, land purchase, site design and headworks for lot development. **Outcome:** Development of additional light industrial lots.	• Short: Acquisition of land, development of outline development plan for site and scheme amendment where appropriate. • Medium: Less than 2 vacant lots remaining/90% stock utilised in light industrial area triggers headworks development and creation of a marketable release of lots. • Long: Less than 2 vacant lots remaining from previous land release triggers headworks development and creation of a marketable release of lots.	• Lead: Shire of Merredin	TBC
Project: Urban Renewal – Public Housing **Scale:** Local **Description:** Construction and upgrade of public housing building stock within the townsite. **Scope:** Perform public housing upgrades within the townsite. **Outcome:** Increased public housing quality and visual amenity of Merredin.	• Short: Development of public housing renewal register between the Department of Housing and the Shire of Merredin and an asset register with prioritisation on infrastructure age and use for replacement. • Medium: Upgrade infrastructure based on prioritisation.	• Lead: Shire of Merredin • Partners: Private Sector and Department of Housing	Shire of Merredin and Department of Housing
Project: Merredin Townsite Freight Haulage Strategy **Scale:** Local **Description:** Planning key infrastructure priorities (formation of working group) for transport in the Shire of Merredin and Merredin Townsite and provide a strategy for key infrastructure priorities and their development out to 2050. **Scope:** Development of strategy to identify key infrastructure priorities of transport in Merredin for development through to 2050. **Outcome:** Strategy identifying Merredin's transport priority projects out to 2050 developed.	• Short: Shire of Merredin conducts preliminary investigations from a Shire level for information to include in a townsite review of transportation infrastructure requirements. • Medium: Sub-Regional Transport Strategy completed and regional findings used for further work on Merredin. Detailed investigation conducted into the Merredin Townsite and findings implemented into infrastructure planning.	• Lead: Shire of Merredin • Partners: Private Sector, Department of Transport and MainRoads WA	TBC
Project: St John's Ambulance - Sub Centre Upgrade **Scale:** Region **Description:** Relocation of St John Ambulance Merredin Sub-Centre to Merredin Regional Hospital to provide efficiencies in service delivery. **Scope:** Relocation of St John Ambulance Merredin Sub-Centre to Merredin Regional Hospital **Outcome:** Merredin St John's Ambulance Sub-Centre relocated to Health Precinct to provide reforms in emergency health delivery.	• Short: Department of Health and Merredin Hospital liaise with St Johns Ambulance to identify a location for relocating the existing operations. • Medium: Approvals signed and project funded.	• Lead: St Johns Ambulance Merredin • Partners: Department of Health, Merredin Hospital and WACHS	TBC
Project: Co-Located Medical Precinct Development (Ancillary Services & Government (Health Offices) Development **Scale:** Local **Description:** Redevelopment and repurposing of buildings in the Merredin Health Precinct for the expansion of health services and ancillary services. May include the relocation of government departments/agencies. **Scope:** Redevelopment and repurposing of buildings adjacent to Merredin Regional Hospital for health services. **Outcome:** Development of a co-located health precinct for government health services and outpatient servicing.	• Medium: Available space for health services is less than 10% of total stock, land owners contacted about acquiring site. • Long: Funding provided for purchase of adjacent sites for ancillary services.	• Lead: Department of Health, Merredin Hospital, WACHS • Partners: Private Sector, CEACA and St Johns Ambulance Merredin	TBC
Project: Parks/Gardens/Public Open Space & Public Amenity Upgrades **Scale:** Local **Description:** Construction and upgrade of public open spaces including public amenities, parks and gardens within the townsite (infrastructure/plantings). **Scope:** Construct and upgrade public open space areas within the townsite **Outcome:** Increased recreation infrastructure quality, accessibility and visual amenity.	• Short: Development of public open space and recreation area asset register for prioritising works on existing public open space assets/areas and identify construction priority of new public open space and recreational areas. • Medium: Develop/upgrade infrastructure based on prioritisation.	• Lead: Shire of Merredin • Partners: Department of Sport & Recreation	TBC
Project: Footpaths Renewal & Extension **Scale:** Local **Description:** Construction and upgrade of footpaths and extension of footpath network within the townsite. **Scope:** Construct and upgrade footpaths within the townsite. **Outcome:** Increased pedestrian infrastructure quality, accessibility and visual amenity.	• Short: Development of footpaths/cycle ways asset register for prioritising works on footpaths and the construction priority for new footpaths/cycle ways. • Medium: Develop/upgrade infrastructure based on prioritisation.	• Lead: Shire of Merredin	TBC

Delivery & Thresholds			
		Delivery Method	
Action/Activity/Project	**Threshold Indicator**	**Lead Agency & Partners**	**Funding Source**
Project: CBD Revitalisation - Stage 4a: Duff St & Coronation St Redevelopment **Scale:** Local **Description:** Stage 4a: Redevelopment of Fifth St & Queen St to Duff St and Duff St & Coronation Street (including investigations on the installation of high speed broadband services to businesses). **Scope:** Redevelopment of Fifth St & Queen St to Duff St and redevelopment of Duff St and Coronation St between Fifth St & Queen St (roadworks, streetscape and infrastructure upgrade). **Outcome:** Revitalisation of Fifth St & Queen St & Coronation St to Duff St to increase amenity, streetscape access/attractiveness, business investment, CBD activity and utilisation and enhanced investment return (increased CBD patronage).	• Medium: Stage 3 completed. Technical investigations complete, approvals signed and project funded.	• Lead: Shire of Merredin • Partners: Private Sector and High Speed Broadband Provider	TBC (actively seeking capital works funding)
Project: CBD Revitalisation - Stage 4b: Library Relocation **Scale:** Local **Description:** Stage 4b: Relocation of Merredin Regional Library to North Merredin Primary School Administration Centre. **Scope:** Merredin Regional Library relocation to Mitchell St to enable demolition of asbestos library on Queen St. **Outcome:** Library relocation will provide additional space for commercial development within the CBD and improve library functions (existing building deteriorated).	• Short: Approvals signed and project funded. • Medium: Demolition of previous library building when removal/movement complete and funding available to safely demolish (asbestos structure).	• Lead: Shire of Merredin	Shire of Merredin

Projects and Initiatives founded as at 5 July 2015. These Projects and Initiatives for Merredin have been identified from Local, State and Federal Governments, private enterprise and Non-Government-Organisations during the consultation and research phase for this Plan. It is of the view that the Projects and Initiatives will guide the development of Merredin and the broader Central East sub-region. A prioritisation process was undertaken that identifies the priority of 47 projects which will have the most impact on economic and population growth at this point of time. It is of the view that this list is not exhaustive and will evolve as Projects and Initiatives are completed, new Projects and Initiatives identified or changed completely. The list will form part of the Implementation and Monitoring process of which will be reviewed to ensure project information is current and accurately reflects the investment required to meet the infrastructure and service needs of a growing population and economy. The Wheatbelt Development Commission as part of the Implementation and Monitoring of this Plan will be updating this project list on a regular basis.
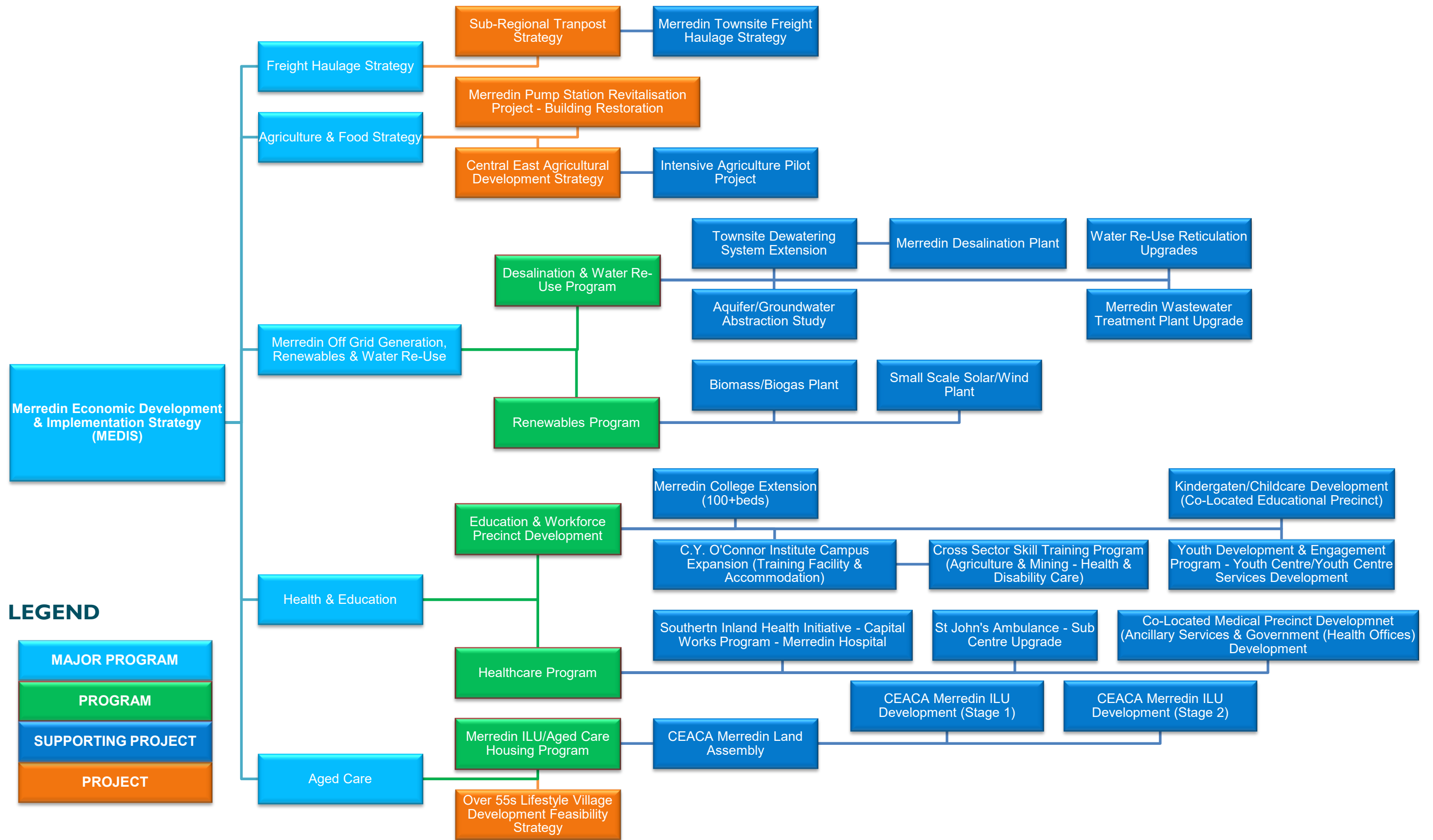
LEGEND

MAJOR PROGRAM
PROGRAM
SUPPORTING PROJECT
PROJECT