

# ENVISION 20 29

■ SHIRE OF DANDARAGAN

ECONOMIC AND TOURISM  
DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY



# DOCUMENT CONTROL

VERSION	DATE	COUNCIL ENDORSEMENT
Version II	13 October 2023	28 September 2023





# SHIRE PRESIDENT'S FOREWORD

When the Shire of Dandaragan delivered its Strategic Community Plan, Envision 2029, it committed to being an active participant in driving community prosperity which translates to business success, jobs growth and new investment opportunities. This Economic and Tourism Development Strategy outlines the key strategic approaches the Shire of Dandaragan will undertake in the pursuit of this prosperity.

Envision 2029 sets the strategic prosperity objective of broad economic and population growth with decreasing economic barriers, diversified agriculture and fisheries output and a vibrant visitor economy. This will be achieved through four key areas:

- 1) Planning
- 2) Marketing and Promotion
- 3) Investment Attraction
- 4) Advocacy and Infrastructure Development



Effective Local Government participation in economic development will ultimately improve the opportunities and liveability for our communities. With strong partnerships and collaboration with other levels of government and the private sector we look forward to bright future as a thriving modern coastal and agricultural region.

Cr Leslee Holmes  
**Shire President**

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Existing Economic and Tourism Context

The Shire of Dandaragan's economy is relatively small and focused around the traditional industries of beef cattle, sheep, rock lobster, broadacre farming as well as tourism and mining. Combined, these sectors make up more than half of the local economy. More recently, the construction of renewable energy projects in the Shire has also provided a considerable economic boost. These export-orientated industries have been a strength for the Shire, outperforming the State average in terms of employment growth, harnessing the Shire's locational advantages. While the Shire demonstrates diversity across these sectors, it is also very reliant upon them, which makes the local economy susceptible to various shocks (i.e. changes in prices, drought, bushfire, pandemics). The strong reliance on tourism also means that the economy in Cervantes and Jurien Bay is very seasonal.

The population of the Shire is also small (3,266 in 2019) and spread across four main towns (Badgingarra, Cervantes, Dandaragan and Jurien Bay). Population growth across the Shire has slowed dramatically over the last decade, averaging just 0.2% per year. The population is also older than the State average and ageing at a faster rate than the State. The lack of population growth and the ageing population will have implications for the local economy and community. The population is expected to grow around 1% per year until 2031, however, based on the previous ten years, new catalysts will be required in order to achieve this future population growth. Prior to the onset of COVID-19, the Shire has a low level of unemployment and high employment self-sufficiency levels, indicating good access to local employment opportunities. Future growth in the working age population will need to be catalysed by industry growth or new industry that attracts new residents to the region.

Tourism is important to the Shire of Dandaragan as it injects \$96 million into the local economy, supporting over 500 local jobs (both directly and indirectly).

In 2019, an estimated 560,000 people visited the Shire of Dandaragan, which represents solid average annual growth of 6% over the last three years. The market is dominated by drive, leisure visitors, mostly day-trippers from Perth. The Nambung National Park is the main attraction in the Shire (often combined with the Lobster Shack in Cervantes). The beaches, coastline, skydiving, sea lion tours, rock lobster tours and numerous other activities including sand boarding, 4WD trails, wildflower tours and numerous other natural offers provide a variety of visitor experiences and attractions. However, many of these experiences are not well known nor associated with the destination. At the same time, while most visitors come to the region to relax, they often find a lack of local activities or 'things to do'.

The current provision of accommodation in the Shire is considerable (relative to the population) with a combined 800 rooms, caravan sites and vacation homes available. While the market is very full during peak periods, it is estimated to operate at an annual occupancy of around 50%. There is a lack of branded, high quality resort style accommodation as well as more moderately priced motel and affordable backpacker establishments. However, at the same time, there may not currently be sufficient demand in the market to justify these developments, given the highly seasonal nature of the local accommodation market and the significant supply of holiday homes.

### Key Issues and Risks:

- Low population growth
- Ageing population
- Volatile economic growth and seasonal economy
- Economy reliant upon agriculture, rock lobsters and tourism



## Key Opportunities:

- Tourism
- Agriculture (agricultural growing, value-adding production, aquaculture)
- Renewable energy
- Small business development

## Economic and Tourism Development Strategy

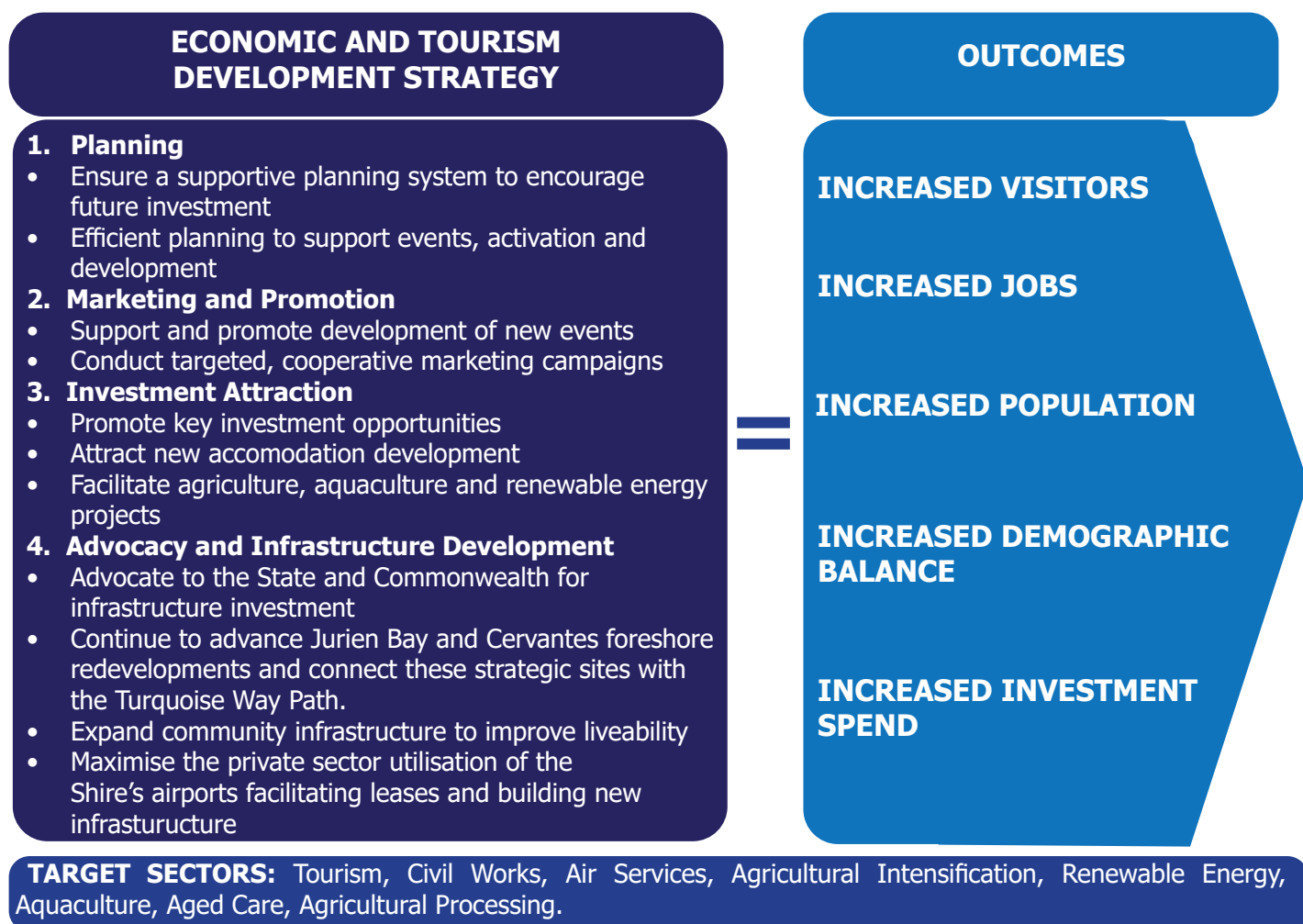
The purpose of this Economic and Tourism Development Strategy is to address the key issues identified and show how the Shire of Dandaragan can secure the right kind of economic growth and who can play a role in achieving this. It has been developed having regard to the best available evidence in terms of economic and tourism indicators and the views and ideas of local stakeholders.

All activities and initiatives will create outcomes that link to long term strategic goals of the Shire of Dandaragan, described in the Envision 2029 Strategic Community Plan and the Shire's Corporate Business Plan.

The overall vision for the Shire of Dandaragan is "a dynamic, diverse and desirable region delivering sustainable growth and socially connected communities".

A more detailed vision for the Shire's prosperity has been articulated in the Strategic Community Plan; that "the Shire will experience broad economic and population growth with decreasing economic barriers, diversified agriculture and fisheries output and a vibrant visitor economy".

This strategy will improve the Shire's prosperity by attracting more visitors and creating more local jobs, which will then attract new residents. An influx of working-age residents will help address the current demographic imbalance and provide more local labour. Increasing the population creates demand for products and services which can also attract new businesses who will need staff and increase the Shire's employment base. An increase in the population will increase year round expenditure, making many local businesses more sustainable.



## Implementation and Monitoring Progress

The Strategy will be implemented through a detailed Action Plan that will specifically guide Shire activities. For each of the tasks, the Action Plan will outline measurements for success and indicative budgets.

This Strategy proposes that a yearly report be produced to keep the Shire and the community updated on how the region is progressing towards the identified vision of prosperity. To help monitor progress and measure whether the Shire of Dandaragan is achieving sustainable economic growth, the Strategy proposes to track the following key metrics:

- Tourism visitation and expenditure
- Population (growth)
- Jobs and unemployment
- Gross Regional Product



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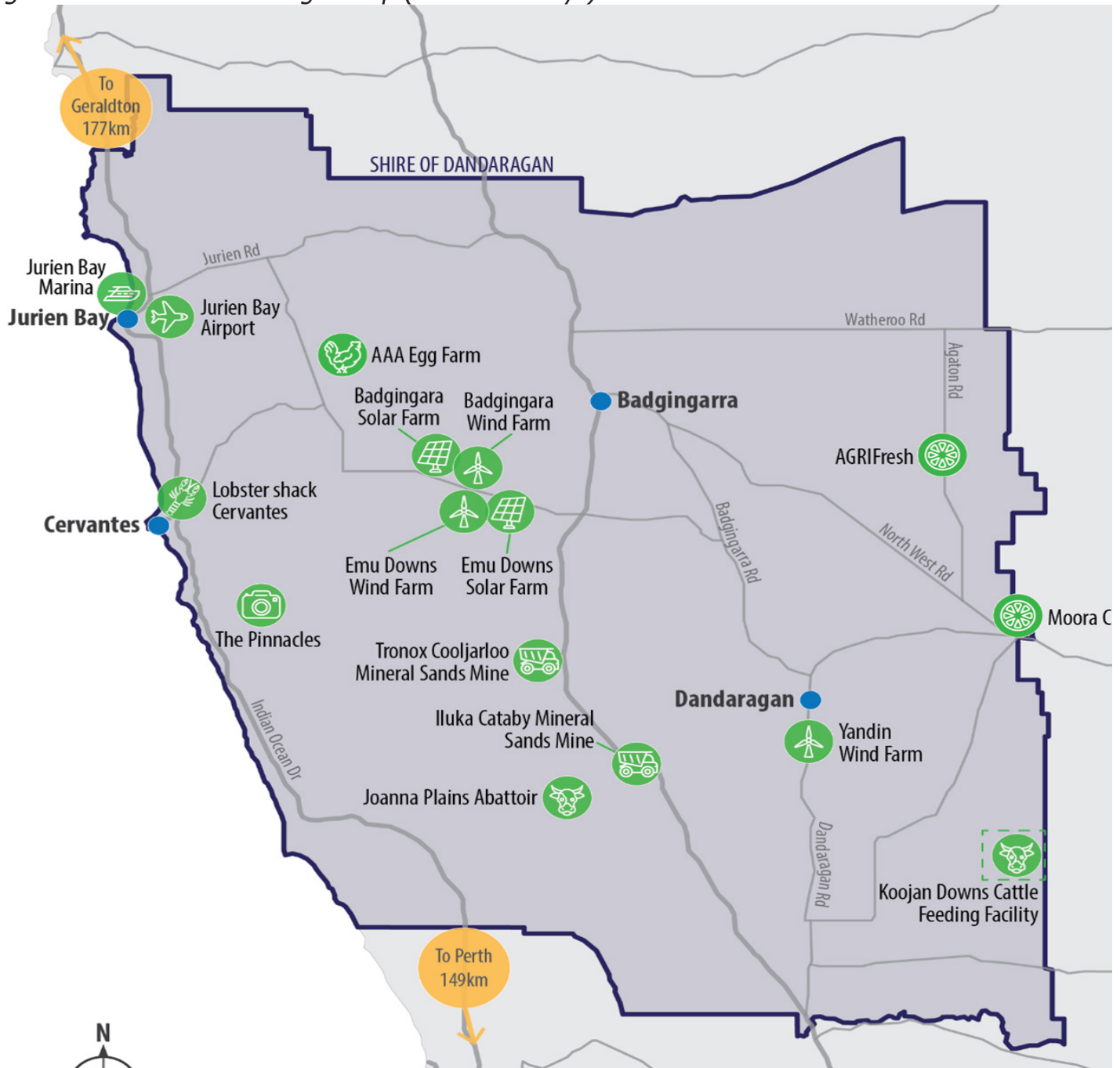
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# 1. INTRODUCTION

The Shire of Dandaragan is located 1-2 hours drive north of the Perth Metropolitan region, taking in both coastal and agricultural hinterland areas, and including the key centres of Badgingarra, Cervantes, Dandaragan and Jurien Bay (Figure 1.1). Jurien Bay and Cervantes are already established tourism destinations and tourism currently makes an important contribution to the local economy in addition to the more prominent agriculture, rock lobster and mining industries.

Figure 1.1: Shire of Dandaragan Map (Source: Pracsys)



Extensive background reports were compiled that provide an in-depth analysis of the local tourism sector and broader economy. A consultation summary was also prepared that summarised the outcomes of the stakeholder engagement that was conducted for this project. This strategy should be read in the context of these supporting documents.

The process to develop this strategy is highlighted in Figure 1.2.

Figure 1.2: Strategy Development Process



## COVID-19 Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic emerged during the development of this Strategy. On 31 December 2019, the World Health Organisation (WHO) was alerted to a pneumonia of unknown causes detected in Wuhan, China. The outbreak spread quickly and was declared a Public Health Emergency of International Concern on 30 January 2020 and a Pandemic on 11 March 2020. The WHO named the new disease COVID-19.

There have been millions of cases and hundreds of thousands of deaths across the world. In Australia, there have been over 27,000 confirmed cases and 900 deaths.

Restrictions brought in by the Commonwealth and State Governments have changed the way that people live and work. The current crisis will have a lasting effect on the lives of people living through it and it will likely become a defining element of the current generation, similar to those from the Great Depression or World War II.



## 2. CURRENT ECONOMIC AND TOURISM PROFILE

The economy of the Shire is small and focused around traditional industries.

The Shire of Dandaragan's Gross Regional Product (GRP) was \$361 million in 2018-19, which is an increase of 0.2% from the previous year. The largest industries by value are agriculture (beef cattle and sheep farming, rock lobster and broadacre farming) and construction. The local economy has been volatile and has grown at an average rate of 1.5% per annum over the past decade, well below the WA average of 3.5%.

The region was originally founded through agriculture expansion, specifically through Dandaragan and Badgingarra. The impacts of drought and fluctuation in prices has meant that the sector (and its impact on the local economy) is subject to volatility. Agriculture and fishing (rock lobster) is by far the largest industry in the Shire, representing nearly 40% of the total economy. While traditional industries of beef cattle, sheep and rock lobsters dominate the local agricultural sector, a wide variety of crops are grown in the Shire. The construction of the Yandin wind farm has provided a significant boost to the economy over the last two years, demonstrating the significant (and temporary) value these large projects can have on the local economy. Agriculture will continue to provide strength and resilience to the Shire's economy into the future and there are growing opportunities for increasing intensification and improving efficiency in rural enterprises.

Tourism is also an important sector, representing approximately 9% of the total economy and like many tourism regions, the Shire's businesses are reliant upon the seasonal boost provided by visitors. Tourism not only benefits accommodation and tour operators but also has a significant impact on the Shire's retail businesses, cafes, restaurants, making all of these businesses seasonal. Mining is also important to the local economy with Iluka Resources' Cataby mine opening in 2018 which joins the long operating Tronox Cooljarloo Mine extracting mineral sands in the region.

The population of the Shire is small (3,266 in 2019) and spread across the four main towns (Badgingarra, Cervantes, Dandaragan and Jurien Bay). Population growth across the Shire has slowed dramatically over the last decade, averaging just 0.2%. The population is also older than the State average and ageing at a faster rate than the State. The lack of population growth and an ageing population will have implications for the local economy. Population drives approximately one third of the local economy, so if the population is not growing, growth will need to be generated from other areas. At the same time, the ageing of the population will change local expenditure patterns as older households do not spend as much as younger families.

The population is expected to grow around 1% per year until 2031. This population growth would generate an increase in year round household expenditure, which could be spent at local cafes, restaurants and other shops, and provide more labour, particularly younger people for tourism businesses. However, new catalysts will be needed into the future to achieve the growth forecasted, as historical analysis shows growth well below the 1% level. These catalysts may originate from current projects in planning such as WA Dairy and Energy, Koojan Beef, Joanna Plains abattoir, new renewable energy projects, aquaculture and new horticulture zones.

Median house prices in the Shire provide considerable affordability compared to the Perth Metropolitan region, ranging from 30%-60% lower. The lower prices and decline in building approvals are symptomatic of the low rates of population growth. At the same time, there is a considerable number of holiday homes in the area, particularly in Jurien Bay. The growth in tourism in recent years has meant that owners prefer to have their property available for holiday let instead of available in the local residential rental market, which reduces the stock available for potential future residents.

# Towns in the Shire of Dandaragan

## **Badgingarra** (2019 estimated population: 196)

Badgingarra is renowned for its picturesque National Parks and wildflower season which complements the diverse agricultural sector throughout the area. The town contains a primary school, tavern and post office, roadhouse and other businesses. It has several recreational facilities at its Community Centre including tennis courts, bowling green, football oval, golf course, parks and playgrounds. The town is situated on the Brand highway which provides it with strong transport and freight advantages for local industry.

## **Cervantes** (2019 estimated population: 536)

Cervantes had a population of 536 at Census time. The town was named after a ship that was wrecked nearby. The principal industry in the town is fishing, principally rock lobster. This industry provides the Shire with a strong local export. The town is situated just off the Indian Ocean Drive which makes it an easy drive from Perth for visitors, particularly those who have been attracted to the region to visit the Nambung (Pinnacles) National Park.

## **Dandaragan** (2019 estimated population: 346)

Dandaragan boasts lush pastures and abundant crops produced from fertile farming land. It is home to award-winning Dandaragan Organic Beef and a range of significant horticultural enterprises which service domestic and international markets. Dandaragan has strong links to the local mineral sand mines at Cataby and boasts a strong community spirit and desire for growth and innovation.

## **Jurien Bay** (2019 estimated population: 1,790)

Jurien Bay is the largest town in the Shire of Dandaragan. Located on Indian Ocean Drive, it provides many of the services that people across the region require. It has the main shopping precinct with a selection of outlets providing food, clothing and specialty items. The town is the primary location for medical services within the Shire and has a growing retirement village which has been developed in recent years. The town has the services and land available to cater for significant growth with strategic documents indicating a future population of 20,000 can be accommodated.



# Economic Stats

## 2018-19 GROSS REGIONAL PRODUCT

\$361 MILLION

## TOP INDUSTRY SECTORS



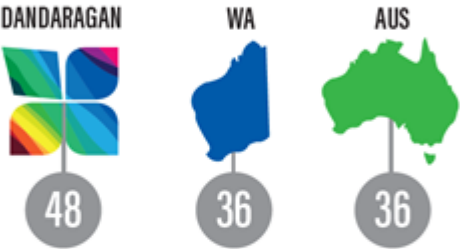
Source: NIEIR (2020)

## POPULATION



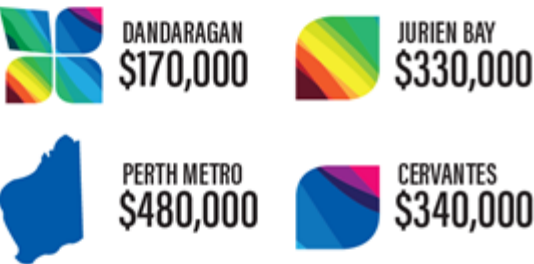
Source: ABS (2017); ABS (2020); Lucid Economics

## MEDIAN AGE



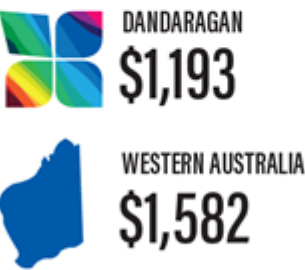
Source: ABS (2017)

## MEDIAN HOUSE PRICE (2019)



Source: REIWA (2020)

## MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME 2016 (\$/WEEK)



Source: ABS (2017)





Tourism is important to the Shire of Dandaragan injecting \$96 million into the local economy while supporting 580 local jobs (both direct and indirect), which represents one-third of all jobs in the Shire.

An estimated 560,000 people visited the Shire of Dandaragan in 2019 , which represents solid average annual growth of 6% over the last three years. The market is dominated by drive, leisure visitors that make up 80% of total visitors. The market is evenly split across domestic day-trip, domestic overnight and international visitors, however, the majority of international visitors (85%) are day-trip visitors from Perth. The combined day-trip market (i.e. domestic and international) currently makes up 64% of all visitors. The overnight visitor market is dominated by domestic visitors (87%), predominately made up of families and older visitors (i.e. caravan travellers), largely from the Perth Metropolitan region. The international overnight market is relatively small, making up only 13% of total overnight visitors, which is dominated by the international backpacker market that is typically travelling through the region.

## Key Tourism Market Segments

- Families: families make up over a quarter of all visitors to the Shire and a greater proportion of overnight visitors.
- Grey Nomads: grey nomads make up almost a third of visitors to the Shire and typically use the Shire as a stopover location (i.e. average length of stay of 1-3 nights) as opposed to a destination (i.e. average length of stay of a week or more).
- International: the international market makes up a third of all visitors and 85% of international visitors are day trip visitors staying and day tripping from Perth.
- Young Singles and Couples: while a relatively smaller segment for overnight visitors, young singles and couples from Perth make up a quarter of day-trip visitors, presenting an opportunity to convert these visitors to overnight stays, with sufficient local attractions and activities.

The main geographic source market for the Shire is the Perth region. While the northern suburbs account for 50% of day trip visitors, the central region accounts for proportionally more visitors than the northern suburbs. While the southern suburbs and Peel region account for less visitors, the contribution to both day trips and overnight visitation is still meaningful.

The Nambung National Park (the Pinnacles Desert) is the main attraction in the Shire, receiving an estimated 400,000 visitors per year. An estimated 150,000 international visitors travel to the region to experience the Pinnacles (as well as the Lobster Shack in Cervantes) and return to Perth. The beach and the coastal town of Jurien Bay are also key features and attractions for domestic visitors. The area benefits from many returning visitors every year during school holiday periods. Skydiving, sea lion tours, rock lobster tours and numerous free or very affordable activities including sandboarding, 4WD trails, bike paths, the caves as well as other natural offers at North Head and Sandy Cape, provide a variety of visitor experiences and attractions. However, many of these experiences are not well known nor associated with the destination.

The wildflowers are the biggest attraction for the inland portion of the region. While relatively small, this niche market commands a strong following and the biodiversity on offer from Dandaragan, through to Badgingarra (and including the Lesueur National Park) is exceptional and provides a much extended viewing season than the traditional 'wildflower' season in Western Australia, which focuses on the pink and yellow Everlasting flowers.

The current provision of accommodation in the Shire is considerable (relative to the population) with a combined 800 rooms, sites and vacation homes available. Considering the significant potential capacity available in holiday homes as well as the overflow caravan park areas, the total likely accommodation capacity would be between 2,000 and 2,400 visitors at one time, which would represent between 61% and 74% of the Shire's population. At the same time, the overall accommodation market is estimated to operate at an annual occupancy of just 49.7%, highlighting considerable availability, mostly during off-peak times. The accommodation market is very reliant upon the make-up of the local market, with peak times including school holiday periods in April and September as well as the typical December and January holiday periods. There is a lack of branded, high quality resort style accommodation as well as more moderately priced motel and affordable backpacker establishments. However, at the same time, there may not currently be sufficient demand in the market to justify these developments, given the highly seasonal nature of the local accommodation market and the significant supply of holiday homes.

## Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic

In reaction to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Australian Government and the Western Australian Government took drastic action and implemented a series of restrictions that have severely changed the economic landscape, including:

- Forced social distancing and self-isolation rules
- Cancellation of all events and limiting gatherings to ten people
- Closure and/or restrictions placed on most businesses
- People are required to stay at home (unless they have to leave for an essential purpose)
- Both the State and intrastate borders were closed

The ABS has conducted surveys of Australian businesses to identify the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and found:

- 72% of businesses have had less income
- 74% of businesses have changed how they operate
- 24% of all businesses have reduced the number of employees and over 50% have reduced employee hours
- 64% of businesses have experienced a reduction in demand
- 48% of businesses have reported an impact from Government restrictions
- 29% of businesses experienced difficulty in sourcing new stock or raw materials



# Tourism Stats

## TOTAL VISITORS (2019)

560,000



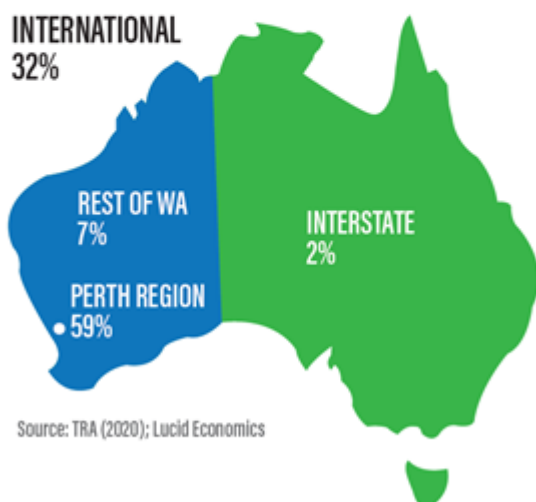
Source: TRA (2020); Lucid Economics



Over 15,000  
VISITORS FOR EVENTS PER YEAR

Source: TRA (2020); Lucid Economics

## SOURCE MARKET



Source: TRA (2020); Lucid Economics

## ACCOMMODATION PROFILE



TOTAL: 787

ANNUAL MARKET OCCUPANCY: 49.7%

Source: Lucid Economics

## ECONOMIC VALUE OF TOURISM (2019)



Source: Lucid Economics



## 3. STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK

### 3.1 Engagement Process

The development of this Strategy included consultation and engagement with a wide range of stakeholders, including:

- Acacia B&B
- Amblin Inn
- Ardross Group
- Advance Dandaragan
- Badgingarra Community Association
- Badgingarra Roadhouse & Tourist Park
- Bettyvan Coffee
- BSC Energy
- Central Agri Group
- Cervantes Visitor Centre
- Cervantes Chamber of Commerce
- Choice Beds
- CMCPL Consulting
- Comen Fuel
- Coomallo Park Chalets
- Coral Coast Tourism
- Dandaragan CRC
- Dandaragan Organic Beef
- Department of Transport
- Development WA
- Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions
- Hi Vallee Farm
- Home Hardware Jurien Bay
- Innovation Central Midlands
- Jolin Consulting
- Jurien Bay Country Golf Club
- Jurien Bay CRC
- Jurien Bay Motel Apartments
- Jurien Bay Oceanic Experience
- Jurien Bay Chamber of Commerce
- Jurien Bay Visitor Centre
- Jurien Bayview Realty
- Jurien Beach Front Units
- Jurien Signs
- Lobster Shack
- Member for Moore
- MLC Members for Agricultural Region
- New Energies Shell
- Node One Internet
- Optimal Health
- Professionals Jurien Bay
- RAC Cervantes Caravan Park
- Ray White Jurien Bay
- Responsive Environments
- Sea Lion Charters
- Sky Dive Jurien Bay
- Summerstar Caravan Park
- Tourism Council WA
- Tourism WA
- Turquoise Safaris
- WA Country Health Service
- WA Dairy & Energy
- West Midlands Group
- Wheatbelt Business Network
- Wheatbelt Development Commission

Engagement occurred through a workshop, survey, individual interviews and written submissions. The workshop addressed and identified key issues and opportunities for the region moving forward and the interviews explored individual stakeholder's perspectives on the strengths and weaknesses of the area as well as future growth opportunities.

### 3.2 Stakeholder Feedback

Feedback from stakeholders provided a clear understanding of the Shire’s advantages and weaknesses, as well as various opportunities to grow tourism and the broader economy in the area.

Stakeholders were also asked to identify the appropriate role that the Shire should play in regard to economic and tourism development. The following specific roles emerged as clear functions of the Shire, including:

- Cut red tape and provide supportive planning
- Support events in the Shire
- Attract investment into the Shire
- Marketing and promotion of the area for tourism as well as for business
- Advocacy

Further consultation identified other important issues and opportunities influencing local businesses. While some issues are beyond the direct control of the Shire, the results highlighted areas where economic and tourism development actions can be best targeted to support businesses. The Jurien Bay Airport, Jurien Bay Marina, Jurien Bay Foreshore and the Cervantes Foreshore were identified as presently underutilised infrastructure assets. The local labour market and local infrastructure were highlighted as critical to local business. Many businesses, including agricultural enterprises, identified the difficulty to find, attract and retain staff, placing a major constraint on businesses. Place activation was identified as an important consideration to improve the quality of local places to encourage residents to stay (especially young ones) and encourage visitation.

Figure 3.1: Key Issues and Opportunities (Feedback from Stakeholder Engagement)

PRIORITY	ISSUES	OPPORTUNITIES
High	Power supply Labour retention Visitor and worker accomodation	Tourism marketing Education and training Infrastructure asset development
Medium	Healthcare and aged care facilities Streetscape amenity Skilled labour access	Youth facilities Renewable energy Sustainable agriculture
Low	Industrial land availability Public transportation Community facilities	Natural attractions signage School to business links Business incubation



Figure 3.2: Tourism Strengths and Weaknesses (Feedback from Stakeholder Engagement)



## 4. COMPETITIVE ASSESSMENT AND OPPORTUNITIES

The Shire already has a number of recognised strengths that provide a strong competitive position to grow tourism and the broader economy over the next 10-20 years. There are a number of competitive strengths that can be leveraged to deliver a wide variety of valuable economic and tourism opportunities. Through the development and implementation of these opportunities, many of the location's challenges can be addressed and other future threats mitigated.

Figure 4.1: Shire of Dandaragan, Tourism SWOT Assessment

<b>Strengths</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Nambung (Pinnacles) and Lesueur National Parks</li><li>• Ocean, beach, coastline and sunsets</li><li>• Proximity to Perth</li><li>• Existing attractions (Lobster Shack, Jurien Skydive, Sea Lion tours)</li><li>• Existing events (Indian Ocean Festival)</li><li>• Relaxed/laid back lifestyle (Jurien Bay Time)</li><li>• Snorkelling, diving and other marine activities</li><li>• Islands, caves, Sandy Cape and North Head</li><li>• Turquoise Way Path</li><li>• Family friendly</li><li>• Authentic 'Country' feel</li><li>• Wildflowers, bio-diversity and walking trails</li><li>• History and heritage</li></ul>	<b>Weaknesses</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Perception of 'Nothing to do'/lack of activities</li><li>• Lack of accommodation</li><li>• Lack of awareness/profile in Perth</li><li>• Jurien Bay Marina issues</li><li>• Wind</li><li>• Too much red tape</li><li>• Very seasonal market</li><li>• No interaction with beach/coast</li><li>• Not a destination/people pass through</li><li>• Lack of coordinated marketing approach</li><li>• Need more commissionable product</li><li>• Poor East-West connections</li><li>• Lack of visitor infrastructure</li></ul>
<b>Opportunities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• New accommodation development</li><li>• Increased food and beverage offering</li><li>• Activating and Linking the Foreshores via the Turquoise Way Path</li><li>• More water-based activities / rental hire</li><li>• More gazebos, BBQs and other amenity</li><li>• More events</li><li>• More marketing and promotion</li><li>• Expand activities in the National Parks</li><li>• Apex Redevelopment</li><li>• Marina Development / Redevelopment</li><li>• Increase interaction with the beach</li><li>• Shingle Avenue car park activation</li><li>• Food vans / Pop-ups</li><li>• Caves, Sandy Cape &amp; North Head</li><li>• Rock Lobster Tours</li><li>• Expansion/upgrade of Airport</li><li>• Wildflowers</li><li>• Public Art Trail / Dandaragan Way</li><li>• Heritage experiences</li></ul>	<b>Threats</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lack of breadth and depth of tourism offering</li><li>• Susceptible to major shifts in traditional market segments</li><li>• Reliant upon peak periods for sustainability</li><li>• Remaining a 'pass through' destination</li><li>• Disjointed and disconnected marketing</li><li>• Lack of coherent recognised brand / identity</li></ul>



Figure 4.2: Shire of Dandaragan, Broader Economy SWOT Assessment

## Strengths

- Proximity to Perth
- NorthLink (major infrastructure project that will increase access to the area and reduce travel time for visitors from Perth to the area)
- Unique character of individual towns
- Underutilised groundwater
- Good soils
- Strong renewable energy potential, solar and wind energy generation projects
- Protected offshore waters with pristine/high quality water
- Strong community spirit
- Strong export-oriented industries (agriculture and tourism)

## Weaknesses

- Large geographic area with small population spread across four main towns.
- Geographic separation between eastern and western parts of the Shire (coastal vs. inland)
- Distance to Perth and lack of services (healthcare, education, etc.)
- Seasonal economy based on tourism
- Agricultural industry exposed to drought
- Lack of signage
- Poor telecommunications in some areas
- Stagnant population growth
- Ageing demographics, lack of younger demographic and families
- Shortages across labour force
- Underutilised infrastructure
- Accommodation for workers
- Lack of tertiary education opportunities
- Lack of healthcare facilities and full suite of services for aged care / high care.
- Lack of lifestyle lots around Badgingarra

## Opportunities

- Attracting more agricultural growing opportunities
- Focus on value adding agricultural products
- Small business development
- Aquaculture development
- Improve infrastructure to support business growth
- Increase liveability to increase attractiveness for new residents
- Renewable energy (solar and wind)
- Training opportunities in areas of employment growth
- Attract more FIFO families
- Attract more professionals and office based residents working from home.

## Threats

- Large ageing population compared to working age
- Climate change challenges (e.g. droughts, sea level rise)
- Bushfire dangers
- Pandemics affecting travel and exports
- Younger labour force exiting to larger towns
- Declining business numbers
- Economies of scale – not growing big enough for future significance
- Deoxygenation issue with Jurien Bay Marina making the precinct unattractive for development



This process has identified a variety of key projects across tourism and the broader economy that can act as a catalyst for further growth as highlighted below.

Figure 4.3: Future Economic Development Projects

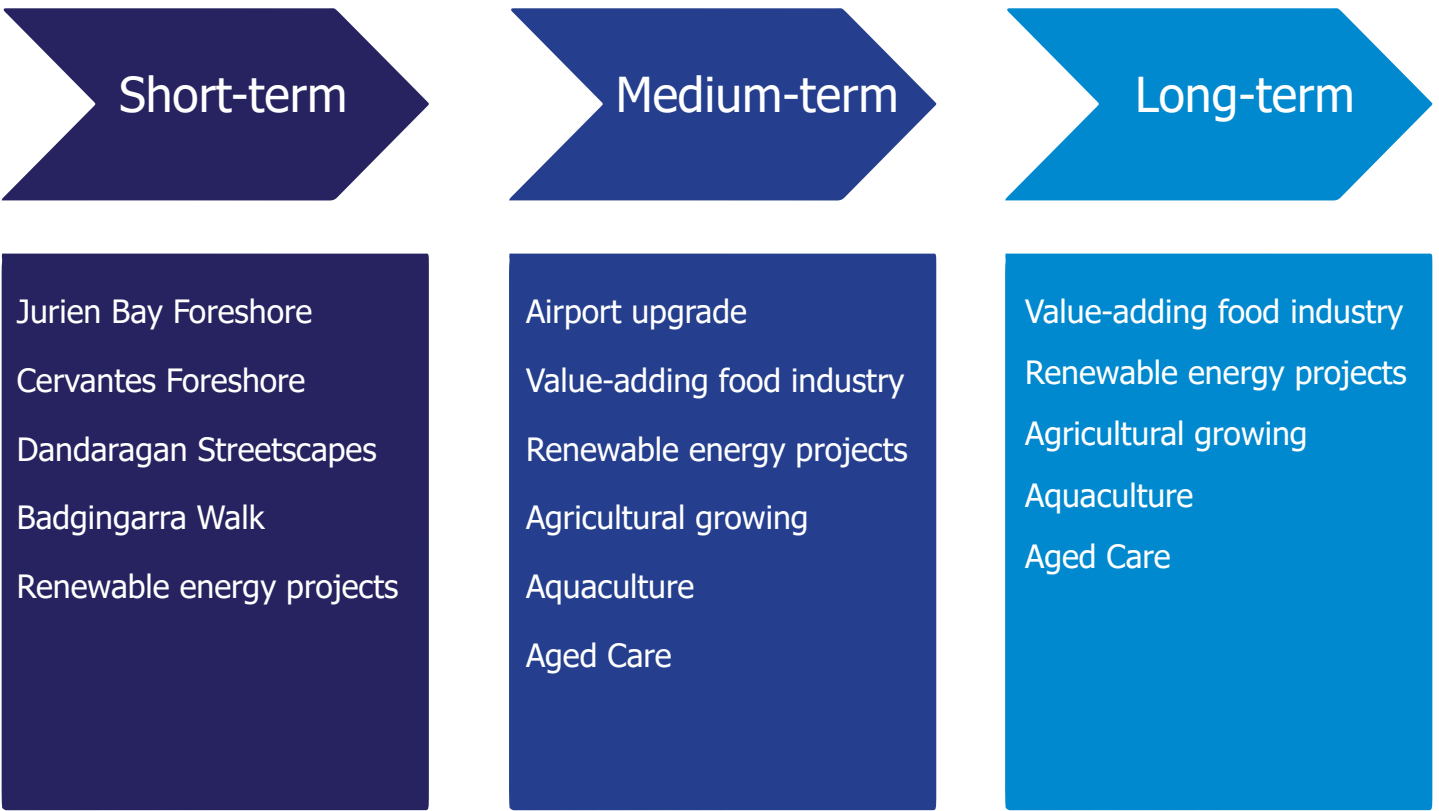


Figure 4.4: Future Tourism Projects





## 5. ECONOMIC AND TOURISM DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

### 5.1 Strategy Overview

The following diagram (Figure 5.1) provides an overview of the Shire of Dandaragan Economic and Tourism Development Strategy. The Strategy responds to some of the key issues identified in the research and consultation and aligns to stakeholder insights into the appropriate role of the Shire.

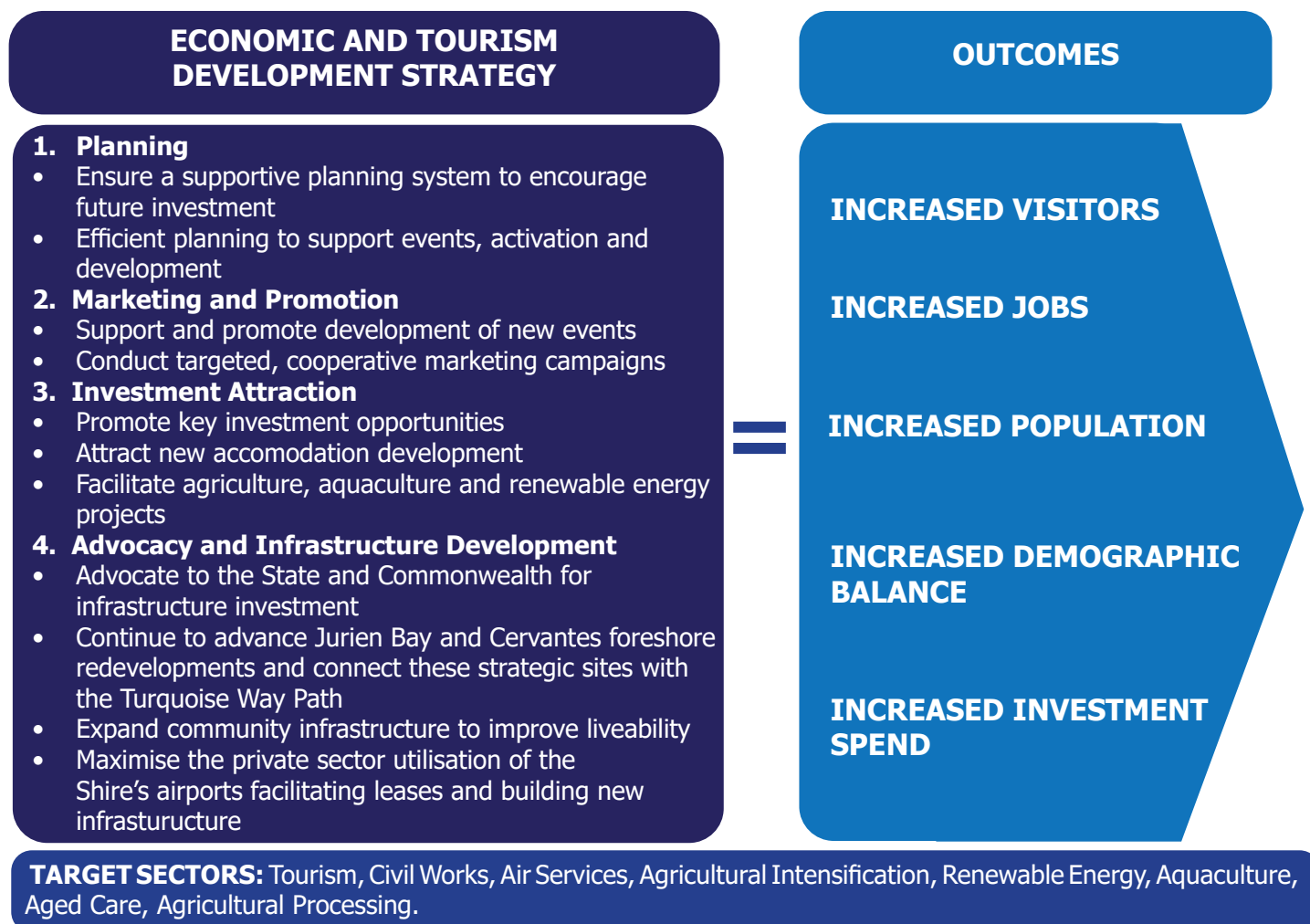
The key barrier revolves around population and how to encourage population growth. The clear goal then is to create more jobs locally, which can then entice population growth through attracting workers. As workers (and their families) move to the area, the local economy will grow, there will be an increase in local household expenditure and demand for a range of services, which will improve the sustainability of many local businesses (who currently rely on the peak tourism periods) as well as provide additional labour across a 12 month period. As more families move to the area for the new jobs, the demographic balance will be improved. Tourism's role will be to contribute new jobs to the economy in the same way that other opportunities have been identified.

The four key strategies have been designed to create a local environment that is conducive to future economic and tourism development that will encourage future growth, investment and job creation. Through these strategies, the Shire of Dandaragan can address the identified issues and weaknesses in the region as well as contribute towards achieving the community's vision, as expressed in the Shire's Envision 2029 Strategic Community Plan. This Strategy provides a pathway to achieving the specific vision under the Prosperity theme:

*The Shire will experience broad economic and population growth with decreasing economic barriers, diversified agriculture and fisheries output and a vibrant visitor economy.*



Figure 5.1: Dandaragan Economic and Tourism Development Strategy



## Response and Recovery from COVID-19 Pandemic

The Shire of Dandaragan implemented a rapid response and recovery plan to manage and combat the impacts from the COVID-19 restrictions, which has been difficult for numerous local businesses and organisations, including:

- **Capital spending:** the Shire is injecting millions into capital works and maintenance programs. Some of this funding is already being spent within the local economy and more will take place over the coming financial year. This money generates considerable economic activity locally, employing people and providing a further stimulus through their expenditure in the broader economy.
- **Licensing:** the Shire has engaged proactively with local food and beverage businesses impacted by current social distancing policies to inquire if permits are required for outdoor seating (to make up for any lost seating indoors). Other required operating licensing will also be fast tracked.
- **Deferment of loans to community groups:** community organisations with loans through the Shire will have payments deferred.
- **Deferment of rates and fees:** residents or businesses having trouble paying rates will have payments deferred at no interest.
- **Information provision:** the Shire has aided local businesses seeking information regarding State government restrictions as well as Commonwealth Government support programs, making referrals to the WA Business Assistance Centre and the Small Business Development Corporation.

These activities constitute the immediate activities of this Strategy in response to the COVID-19 crisis, providing short-term benefits and outcomes for local businesses. The priority actions and key initiatives highlighted in this Strategy will also be conducted as part of the recovery process. Starting in 2021-22, this Strategy will be fully implemented.

## 5.2 Planning

Planning is a central role of local governments and the provision of an efficient and easy to access planning and development system for business will aid the ongoing evolution of tourism as well as the broader development of the economy. Stakeholders highlighted the importance of the local planning process in facilitating investment across tourism and the broader economy as well as supporting the activation of Jurien Bay Foreshore, Cervantes Foreshore and other key precincts around the Shire.

Key Initiatives:

- Ensure efficient planning to support events, activation and development:
  - Create a simple and easy to use permit process for pop-up food and beverage vendors.
  - Consider the creation of pre-approved pop-up spaces around the Shire, including markets, buskers and other temporary activation opportunities.
- Ensure a supportive planning system to encourage future investment:
  - Create an internal expedited development application process to support projects that create new jobs and/or increase future visitor expenditure potential.
  - Ensure sufficient land stocks are available to accommodate demand for new residential (including lifestyle), industrial and commercial development opportunities.

## 5.3 Marketing and Promotion

Marketing and promotion are required in order to raise awareness of the Shire as a visitor destination. Ensuring that people are aware of the opportunities in the Shire will help to generate interest in visiting and potentially relocating to the Shire. Furthermore, stakeholders felt that the current events are very worthwhile and play an important role in attracting visitors to the Shire. There was considerable interest from stakeholders to consider creating further events in periods that are not typically busy in order to increase activity during these periods and increase awareness of the region.

Key Initiatives:

- Support the creation of new events:
  - Work with community groups and partners to create new signature events.
  - Develop a process-friendly event application form and supporting internal staff to facilitate the application process.
  - Provide seed funding and assist event coordinators with funding applications to external bodies to support and build event scale.
- Support targeted and cooperative destination marketing with partners:
  - Working with partners, contribute to specific, industry led destination marketing campaigns to attract key market segments (i.e. grey nomads, families and young singles and couples from the Perth region).

## 5.4 Investment Attraction

Investment attraction involves proactively marketing the Shire of Dandaragan as a place of business and investment, promoting its various competitive advantages and key growth opportunities as well as proactively facilitating investment projects. For the Shire to grow, it will require private sector investment across a number of industries. Only through this growth will the Shire be able to generate the required new jobs and attract residents.

It is also important that the Shire work hard to facilitate and encourage employment and investment outcomes using the various mechanisms in its control, namely the planning system, infrastructure provision and other services. Beyond promoting and encouraging investment, the Shire has a



responsibility to ensure that there is sufficient residential land, employment land and other commercial/retail land across the Shire that can accommodate future growth in an efficient and affordable manner. Strong customer service is important when working with project proponents and investors.

Attracting new businesses, jobs and residents is pivotal for economic growth of the region. Seeking new investment into the region from outside will stimulate the economy in numerous ways, creating new jobs and building greater local industry capability. Investment into the key identified growth areas will assist the local economy to grow faster, sooner, providing a stimulus for new job creation and encouraging new residential relocation to the area.

#### Key Initiatives:

- Promote key investment opportunities in the Shire:
  - Developing marketing material to support key investment opportunities in the Shire (i.e. agricultural production, visitor accommodation, aquaculture etc).
  - Produce investment prospectus with compelling content regarding investment opportunities and distribute to potential investors.
- Attract new accommodation investment:
  - Develop an investment prospectus specifically for new accommodation development.
  - Promote the prospectus widely and in partnership with other organisations (i.e. Wheatbelt Development Commission, Tourism WA and others).
- Facilitate agriculture and aquaculture development:
  - Understand and identify future potential growing areas that can leverage underground water sources.
  - Engage proactively with existing growers regarding expansion potential and other growers and aquaculture producers currently outside the Shire regarding investment opportunities.
  - Facilitate collaboration between producers and encourage value-adding/processing and vertical integration within the Shire.
  - Showcase niche market producers and agricultural innovators within the Shire.
  - Support new projects such as the WA Dairy and Energy Project that prioritise a residentially based workforce.
- Support future renewable energy projects
  - Work with project proponents to maximise local content and job creation
  - Promote various recreational and tourism activities to major project crews
  - Investigate community investment in new renewable energy projects
  - Showcase industry and business with off-grid energy solutions
  - Support new projects that prioritise a residentially based workforce.

## 5.5 Advocacy and Infrastructure Development

Council will support and advocate for better infrastructure for local residents, businesses and visitors, including supporting public and private sector grant applications to the State and Commonwealth Government. The Shire will also conduct a variety of initiatives to enhance town centres across the region.

Infrastructure is critical to unlocking economic potential. Ensuring there is sufficient infrastructure (transport, utilities, telecommunications and community infrastructure) will be important to encouraging investment and growth as well as attracting new jobs and new residents.

#### Key Initiatives:

- Advocate to State and Commonwealth agencies for infrastructure investment:
  - Ensure relationships with key agency representative are strong.

- Make submissions to various government funds for infrastructure.
- Lobby the Department of Transport to redevelop the Jurien Bay Marina and resolve existing deoxygenation issues.
- Advocate for funding and support from Federal and State Government for the construction of the Turquoise Way Path link from Hill River to Cervantes.
- Continue to advance key Council projects:
  - Jurien Bay Airport Upgrades.
  - Jurien Bay Foreshore Redevelopment.
  - Cervantes Foreshore Redevelopment.
  - Townsite revitalisation projects to support amenity and enhance business vibrancy.
- Expand and renew community infrastructure across the Shire to improve liveability which supports the attraction and retention of residents.



# 6. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

## 6.1 Annual Action Plan

A detailed Action Plan has been developed to support the implementation of the Strategy (Table 6.1). Given the COVID-19 response and stimulus provided to support local businesses, the Action Plan is scheduled for implementation in the 2020-21 financial year. Parts of this Action Plan contribute to the current response to COVID-19.

Over the coming year, the recovery of the local tourism sector and broader economy will be the focus of this Strategy, which will include the following actions:

- Bringing capital spending forward, including at the Jurien Bay Airport, Jurien Bay Foreshore and Cervantes Foreshore as well as various community infrastructure projects. By injecting this capital into the local economy, jobs will be created fostering the opportunity for these employees to spend further money in the wider economy. Furthermore, these investments will generate future value in their ability to attract/retain visitors or attract new businesses and residents.
- Targeted and cooperative marketing focused on key markets in order to attract visitors back to the area

Priority Outcomes	Actions	Cost	23/24 Budget	Lead
<b>1. PLANNING</b>				
<b>Efficient planning to support development and ensure investments</b>				
Have sufficient land stocks available to accommodate new residential and industrial investment within the Shire.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investigate and identify land parcels suitable for the development of Key Workers' Accommodation solutions in the Shire.</li> <li>• Advocate for and support Development WA projects to increase residential land availability in Badgingarra and Dandaragan.</li> <li>• Progress the introduction of a Rural Enterprise zoning for rural townsites as per the Local Planning Strategy.</li> </ul>	N/A N/A N/A	No No No	EMDS / PPBO EMDS / PPBO PPBO
Identify opportunities to release Shire owned properties for development purposes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement priority elements of the Land Rationalisation Strategy e.g., release of Doust Street lots in Jurien Bay.</li> <li>• Identify essential services requirements and costs vs return on investment (ROI) in the development of business cases e.g. Shingle Avenue.</li> <li>• Identify any required zoning changes and subdivision potential of land identified for development.</li> </ul>	N/A N/A N/A	No No No	EMDS / PPBO PPBO PPBO
Identify airport development opportunities that are consistent with the Jurien Bay Airport Masterplan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investigate opportunities for mixed use development at Jurien Bay Airport including airport services / tourism.</li> <li>• Progress subdivision investigations with Department Planning Lands and Heritage.</li> <li>• Investigate opportunities to establish Jurien Bay Airport as a FIFO hub.</li> <li>• Progress the detailed design and environmental approval works for the future construction of the East West runway.</li> <li>• Utilise grant funding to support the construction of the East West runway.</li> </ul>	N/A N/A N/A \$50K \$500K	No No No Yes Grant	PPBO PPBO EMI / EDM EMI / CESC EMI / CESC
Advocate to State Government and developers the benefits of alternative housing typologies to increase housing supply in the Shire.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage Estate developers to remove constraints that prevent the utilisation of modular home solutions.</li> <li>• Advocate for State Government / Wheatbelt Development Commission support to attract providers of alternative housing types to the Shire for key worker accommodation.</li> </ul>	N/A N/A	No No	EMDS / PPBO EMDS / EDM



## 2. MARKETING AND PROMOTION

2.1 Support and promote development of new events				
Support the establishment of major events on the Jurien Bay Foreshore to capitalise on Council's investment in amenities and electrical upgrades.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Promote the Jurien Bay foreshore as an attractive event location to event management companies and groups interested in hosting major event.</li></ul>	N/A	Grants required	EDM
Promote the Shire of Dandaragan as a desirable destination for events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Engage with event managers and event management companies to highlight opportunities available at Shire of Dandaragan towns and relevant attraction locations.</li></ul>	N/A	No	EDM
Increase annual hire of the Conference Centre by local businesses, industry groups and event managers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Upgrade Conference Centre furniture, audio visual system and catering equipment suited to multi-function and multi-user business purposes.</li><li>Collaborate with local agencies and businesses to develop a calendar of business development / tours / training workshops to meet local needs.</li></ul>	\$47K	Yes / Grant	EDM
		\$16K	Yes	EDM
2.2 Conduct targeted, cooperative destination marketing campaigns.				
Conduct targeted tourist marketing campaign.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Implement 2024 Campaign for shoulder season (May to Aug) for identified key target markets.</li><li>Utilise Indian Ocean Drive billboards to compliment Turquoise Coast destination marketing.</li></ul>	\$10K	Yes	EDM
		\$10K	Yes	EDM
Enhance visitor experiences and improve emergency management and targeted marketing opportunities whilst introducing cashless income from Sandy Cape campground.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Implement new online booking system designed specifically for SoD camping and caravan sites at Sandy Cape and Dandaragan Transit Caravan Park.</li></ul>	\$5k	Yes	EDM
Enhance town entry visitor information boards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Implement maintenance and signage renewal program for tourist information boards and signage.</li></ul>	\$11k	Yes	EDM
3. INVESTMENT ATTRACTION				
3.1 Promote key investment opportunities				
Identify upcoming investment pipeline and leverage construction activity opportunities for local businesses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Advocate for the use of local businesses and contractors with the supply, logistics, products and services required to complete major projects in the shire.</li><li>Facilitate opportunities for local business to provide products and services for major projects in the shire.</li></ul>	N/A	No	EMDS / EDM
		N/A	No	CEO / EDM
Roll out the new Economic Development Grant Program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Seek to attract and support projects that will bring economic benefits to the Shire.</li></ul>	\$30K	Yes	EDM
Promote Jurien Bay Industrial area subdivision expansion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Support Development WA subdivision process for the Coalseam Industrial area expansion.</li><li>Explore opportunities to develop the Jurien Bay Airport / industrial / service area.</li></ul>	N/A	No	EMDS / PPBO
		N/A	No	PPBO
3.2 Attract new accommodation development				

Identify and support private initiatives to develop worker accommodation sites.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage private sector development of workforce accommodation solutions in the Shire that are in close proximity to townsites to cater for emerging industries and construction activity.</li> <li>Advocate for Government (incl. Wheatbelt Development Commission) support and funding of key worker accommodation in the Shire.</li> </ul>	N/A	No	EMDS / PPBO
		N/A	No	EMDS / EDM
Advocate for the release of land for residential development in Dandaragan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lobby the State Government to expedite Native Title Settlement processes for the Camm Road subdivision in Dandaragan.</li> </ul>	N/A	No	CEO
Modernise the Shire's existing residential housing stock and release existing stock to the private market.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a business case and funding proposal for a Shire driven housing investment / supply increase in Dandaragan.</li> </ul>	N/A	No	CEO
<b>3.3 Facilitate Agriculture and Aquaculture Development</b>				
Promote the availability of land at the Jurien Bay Boat Harbour for aquaculture to significant industry stakeholders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify and market aquaculture opportunities in the Jurien Bay Boat Harbour precinct to commercial enterprises.</li> <li>Explore further opportunities for development of the land to the north of the Jurien Bay Boat Harbour to increase local economic activity.</li> </ul>	N/A	No	CEO
		N/A	No	CEO
<b>3.4 Support future renewable energy projects</b>				
Encourage for additional renewable energy development in the shire.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assist renewable energy proponents with navigating the State and Local Land Use Planning Framework.</li> </ul>	N/A	No	PPBO
<b>4. ADVOCACY AND INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT</b>				
<b>4.1 Advocate to State and Commonwealth Government and developers for Infrastructure Development</b>				
Consolidate investigations into local aged care services with a dedicated business case to support advocacy and investment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigate and detail the current market and demand gaps for aged care, investment barriers, break-even analysis and requirements for local workforce development.</li> <li>Meet with stakeholder groups to identify barriers / opportunities to ultimately progress a shift towards higher levels of aged care services for the local community.</li> </ul>	N/A	No	CEO / EDM
		N/A	No	CEO / EDM
Extension of Turquoise Way Path from Hill River to Cervantes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to advocate for the State led investment in constructing the Turquoise Way Path from Hill River to Cervantes.</li> </ul>	N/A	No	CEO
Lobby the State Government to fund a remedy for the Jurien Bay Boat Harbour.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to advocate for the State Govt to remedy the deoxygenation and sea wrack ingress issues at the Jurien Bay Boat Harbour.</li> </ul>	N/A	No	CEO
Ensure there are no infrastructure barriers that restrict the effective development of key sites e.g. former Apex Camp site, Jurien Bay, Coalseam Industrial Area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advocate to the Department of Lands for the construction of Ackland Steet to support the residential infill of the area around the former APEX Camp.</li> <li>Advocate for a mixed-use redevelopment of the former APEX Camp site and surrounding undeveloped land.</li> <li>Consult Western Power, Water Corporation and other key headworks agencies to define current</li> </ul>	~400K	No	CEO / EMs
		N/A	No	CEO / EDMs
		N/A	No	CEO / EMs

## 6.2 A Potential Model for Partnership

The Action Plan provides detailed activities to be carried out on an annual basis, which will allow progress to be made on the Strategy and towards the ultimate outcomes of the Strategy. The Action Plan should be reviewed on an annual basis against the success of individual actions as well as the changing conditions within the operating market. In such a way, larger, more long-term projects can be progressed over time and short-term (immediate) activities can be completed.

While there will be a number of activities for the Shire to undertake, a number of partnership models exist where the Shire can partner with industry to carry out and execute individual activities and initiatives. Partnering with industry can provide a number of benefits to the Shire, including co-funding various activities as well as providing an efficient delivery mechanism for certain initiatives.

The local Chambers of Commerce are very active and contribute meaningfully to the local economy. A partnership model with the Chambers of Commerce could see the Chamber(s) take on responsibility for the delivery of various actions outlined in this Strategy.

Any successful partnership should be based on a number of guiding principles:

- Trust and mutual respect: each partner must demonstrate trust in the other as well as respect for the contribution being made by the other partner.
- Clarity of role and function: very clear roles and responsibilities need to be articulated and defined to avoid confusion or any duplication of services/activities.
- Transparency: both partners need to conduct activities in a transparent manner, both in terms of activities as well as financial matters.
- Good governance: a strong and clear contract should form the basis of a partnership, which would articulate roles and responsibilities, key performance metrics as well as establish regular (likely quarterly) reporting on progress against key performance metrics and activities (as well as any financial matters).

For the Shire of Dandaragan, a partnership with the Chambers of Commerce could be in the form of funding provided to the Chamber(s) for agreed economic and tourism projects or a contribution towards a dedicated tourism and economic development officer. The funding could be granted on the establishment of clear roles and objectives with alignment to this Strategy. The progression of the destination marketing campaign provides a suitable platform for which to build this partnership with the Chambers and broader local industry.

6.2. Partnership Model Action Plan	KPI	New Budget Funds
6.2.1. Explore a partnership model where the Shire can partner with industry through local Chambers of Commerce on key projects and business development.	Partnership model developed	\$0
6.2.2. Agree on clear roles, projects and objectives for an external position dedicated to local economic, business and tourism development.	Role proposal developed	\$0



## 7. MONITORING PROGRESS

While it is important to measure and monitor the progress of the economy, it should be noted that local government plays a supporting and facilitating role in economic growth and development. The Shire does not control the economy nor tourism sector but seeks to influence its future development through concerted and targeted actions.

To measure whether the Shire of Dandaragan is achieving sustainable economic growth, the Strategy proposes a set of broad measures (Table 7.1) which mark the current baseline and can be used to track future progress of the economy and its tourism sector over time. Additionally, overall performance relative to the identified actions in this Strategy should also be tracked. Combined, the Shire will be able to understand progress towards the desired outcomes of this Strategy as well as track the efforts to implement it.

The following metrics are measurable and will be reported on and presented in a yearly report to keep the Shire and the community updated on how the region is progressing towards the identified vision. In addition to these metrics, broader economic indicators in terms of gross regional product, employment by industry, major projects and other economic and tourism information should also be reviewed.

*Table 7.1: Key Economic and Tourism Metrics*

Metrics	Sources
Number of visitors and spend	Tourism Research Australia
Population Growth	Australian Bureau of Statistics
Jobs and Unemployment rate	Department of Education, Skills and Employment
Gross Regional Product Data	Australian Bureau of Statistics

In terms of the implementation plan, specific activities should be tracked and results provided. For example, existing (and new) events should track attendance to better understand the impact on visitation. Any destination marketing campaigns should be able to demonstrate their reach in terms of consumers, which can then also be compared to visitation trends.

The implementation plan should be reviewed on an annual basis to adjust specific activities based on their success as well as to account for changes in market conditions. In this manner, the Strategy provides the longer-term guidance and the ability to adapt over time. The overall Strategy should be reviewed in five years to ensure relevance and currency.



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