



Dandaragan Economic and Tourism Development Strategy

Report prepared for

Shire of Dandaragan

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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. 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.

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 Dandaragan¹, 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

¹ Year ending June.

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.

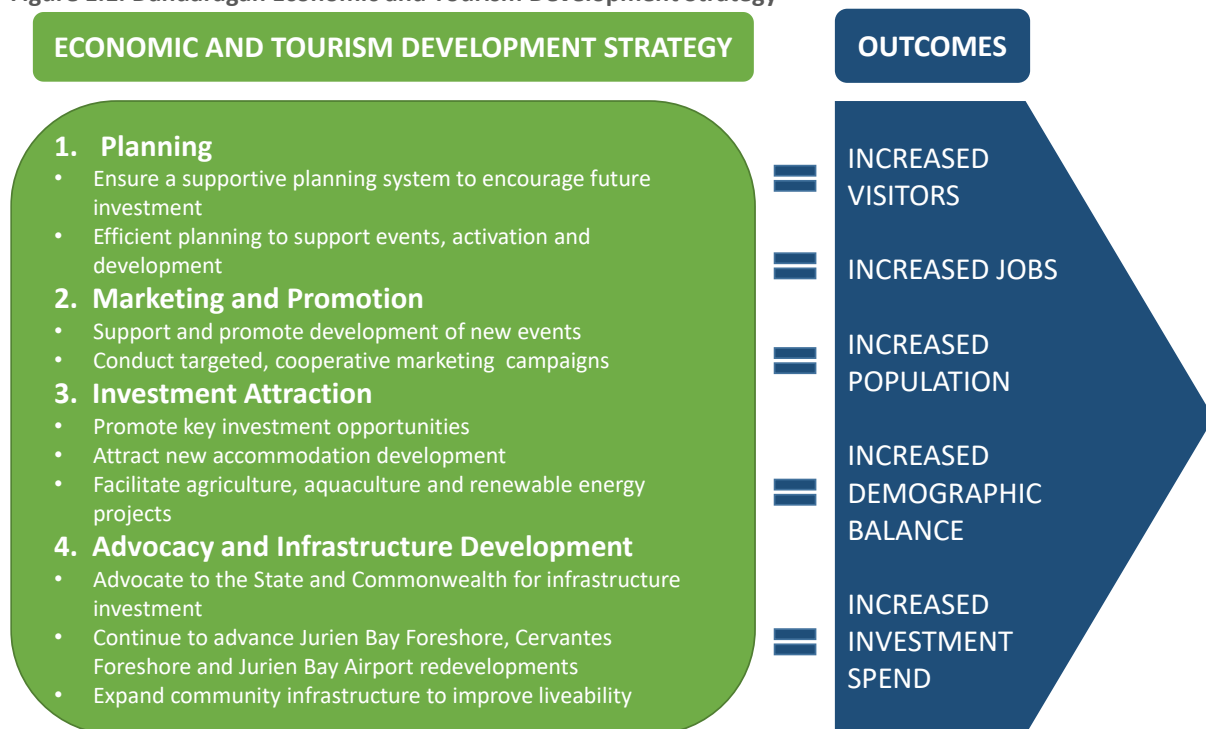
All activities and initiatives will create outcomes that link to long term strategic goals of the Shire of Dandaragan, described in the *ENVISION 2029 Strategic Community Plan* and the Shire's Corporate Business Plan 2020-29.

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.

Figure E.1. Dandaragan Economic and Tourism Development Strategy



Source: Lucid Economics

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 budget estimates.

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

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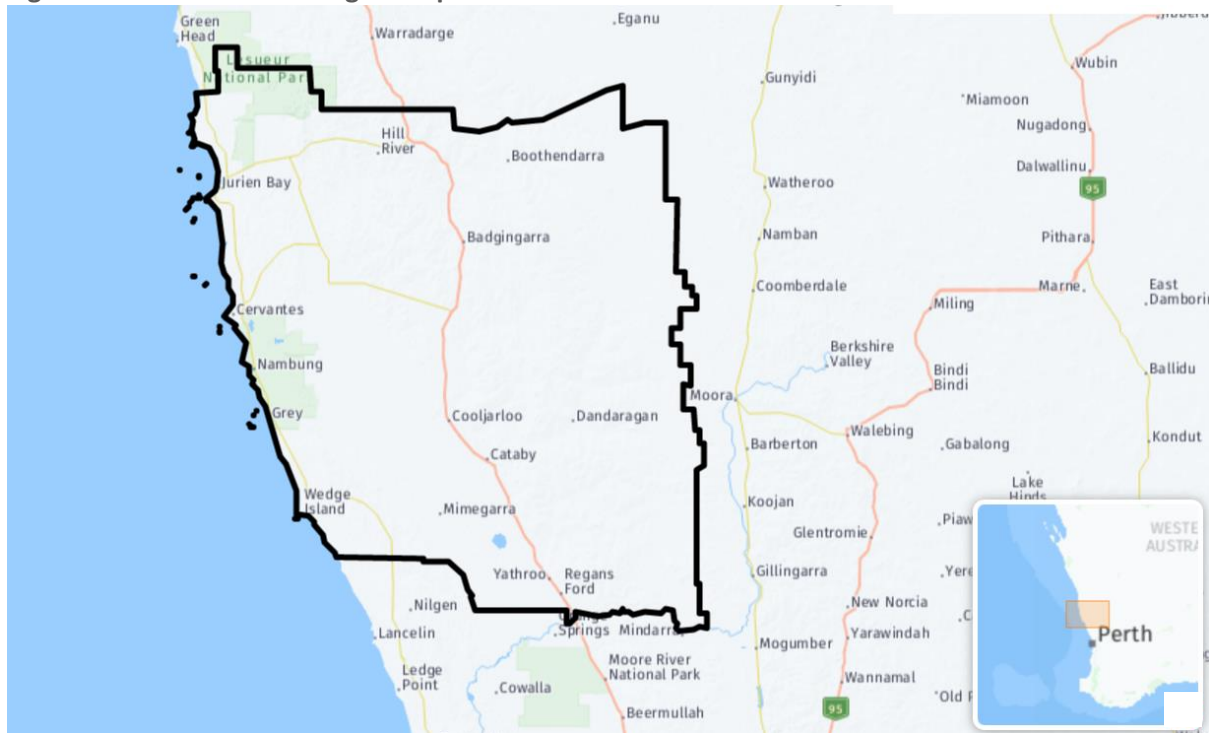
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1. Introduction

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 agriculture, rock lobster and mining industries.

Lucid Economics Pty Ltd (Lucid Economics) has been engaged by the Shire of Dandaragan to create this Economic and Tourism Development Strategy.

Figure 1.1: Shire of Dandaragan Map

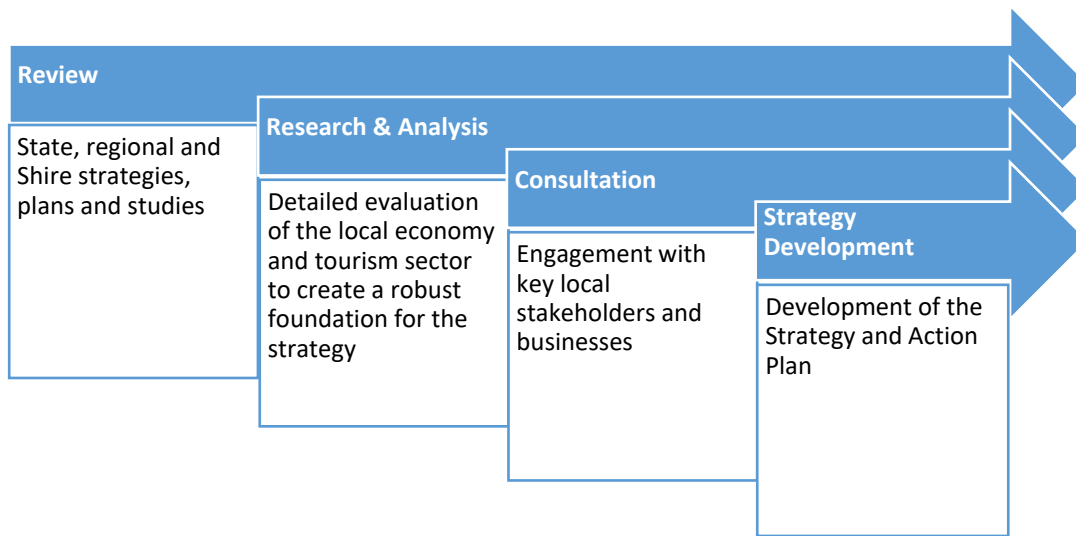


Source: Economy.ID (2019).

An extensive background report was compiled that provides 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 document 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



Source: Lucid Economics

COVID-19 Pandemic (COVID-19)

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 names 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 almost 10,000 confirmed cases and over a hundred 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 the 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) has been volatile. 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.

Tourism is also an important sector, representing approximately 9% of 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 last year.

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.

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.

Main Towns and Centres in the Shire of Dandaragan

Badgingarra (2019 estimated population: 196)

Badgingarra contains a primary school, tavern and post office, roadhouse and other businesses. It has several recreational facilities at its Community Centre including tennis courts, a bowling green, a football oval and a golf course, parks and playgrounds.

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.

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, cold-pressed olive oil, and citrus and stone fruit orchards.

Jurien Bay (2019 estimated population: 1,790)

Jurien Bay is the largest town in the Shire of Dandaragan. 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 special items.

ECONOMIC STATS

2018-19 GROSS REGIONAL PRODUCT

\$361 MILLION

TOP INDUSTRY SECTORS



AGRICULTURE

\$113m | 599 Jobs



CONSTRUCTION

\$73m | 269 Jobs



TOURISM

\$33m | 422 Jobs

Source: NIEIR (2020)

POPULATION



2019
3,266



HISTORICAL GROWTH
2010-19 **0.2% p.a.**



FUTURE GROWTH
2019-31 **1.0% p.a.**

JURIEN BAY: 1,790

CERVANTES: 536

DANDARAGAN: 346

BADGINGARRA: 196

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

MEDIAN AGE

DANDARAGAN



48

WA



36

AUS



36

Source: ABS (2017)

MEDIAN HOUSE PRICE (2019)



DANDARAGAN
\$170,000



JURIEN BAY
\$330,000



PERTH METRO
\$480,000



CERVANTES
\$340,000

Source: REIWA (2020)

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME 2016 (\$/WEEK)



DANDARAGAN
\$1,193



WESTERN AUSTRALIA
\$1,582

Source: ABS (2017)

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

An estimated 560,000 people visited the Shire of Dandaragan in 2019², 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 originating 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 trip 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 other activities including sandboarding, 4WD trails, 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 Badgingarra (and including the Lesueur National Park) is exceptional and provides a much extended viewing season than the traditional 'wild flower' season in Western Australia, which focuses on the pink and yellow Everlasting flowers.

² Year ending June.

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



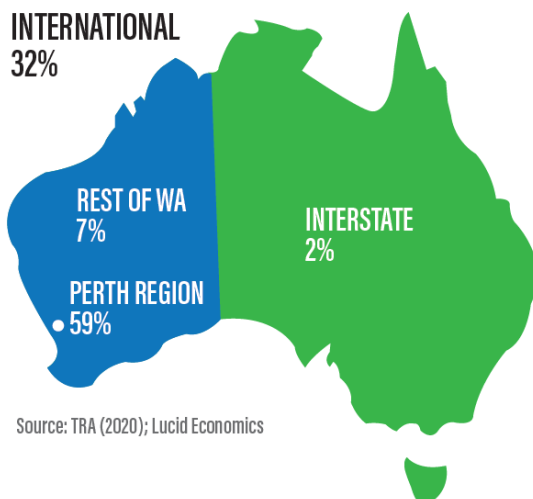
Source: TRA (2020); Lucid Economics



Over 15,000
VISITORS FOR EVENTS PER YEAR

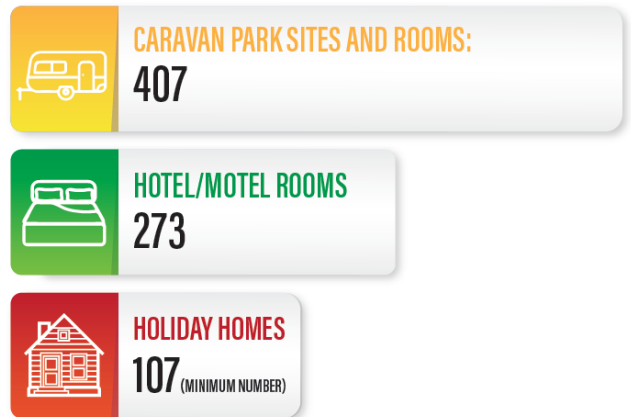
Source: TRA (2020); Lucid Economics

SOURCE MARKET



Source: TRA (2020); Lucid Economics

ACCOMMODATION PROFILE

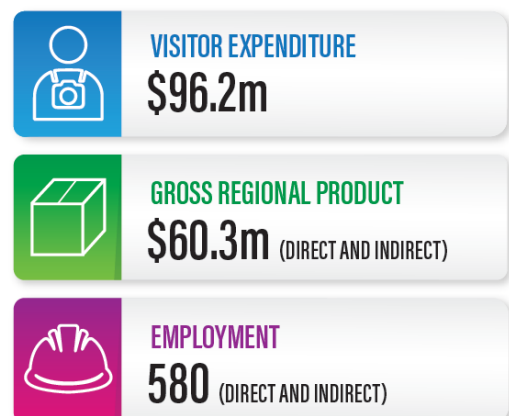


TOTAL: 787

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
- Badgingarra Community Association
- Badgingarra Roadhouse & Tourist Park
- Bettyvan Coffee
- BSC Energy
- Central Agri Group
- Cervantes Visitor Centre
- Choice Beds
- CMCPL Consulting
- Comen Fuel
- Coomallo Park Chalets
- Coral Coast Tourism
- Dandaragan CRC
- Dandaragan Organic Beef
- 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 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 as well as through individual interviews. 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

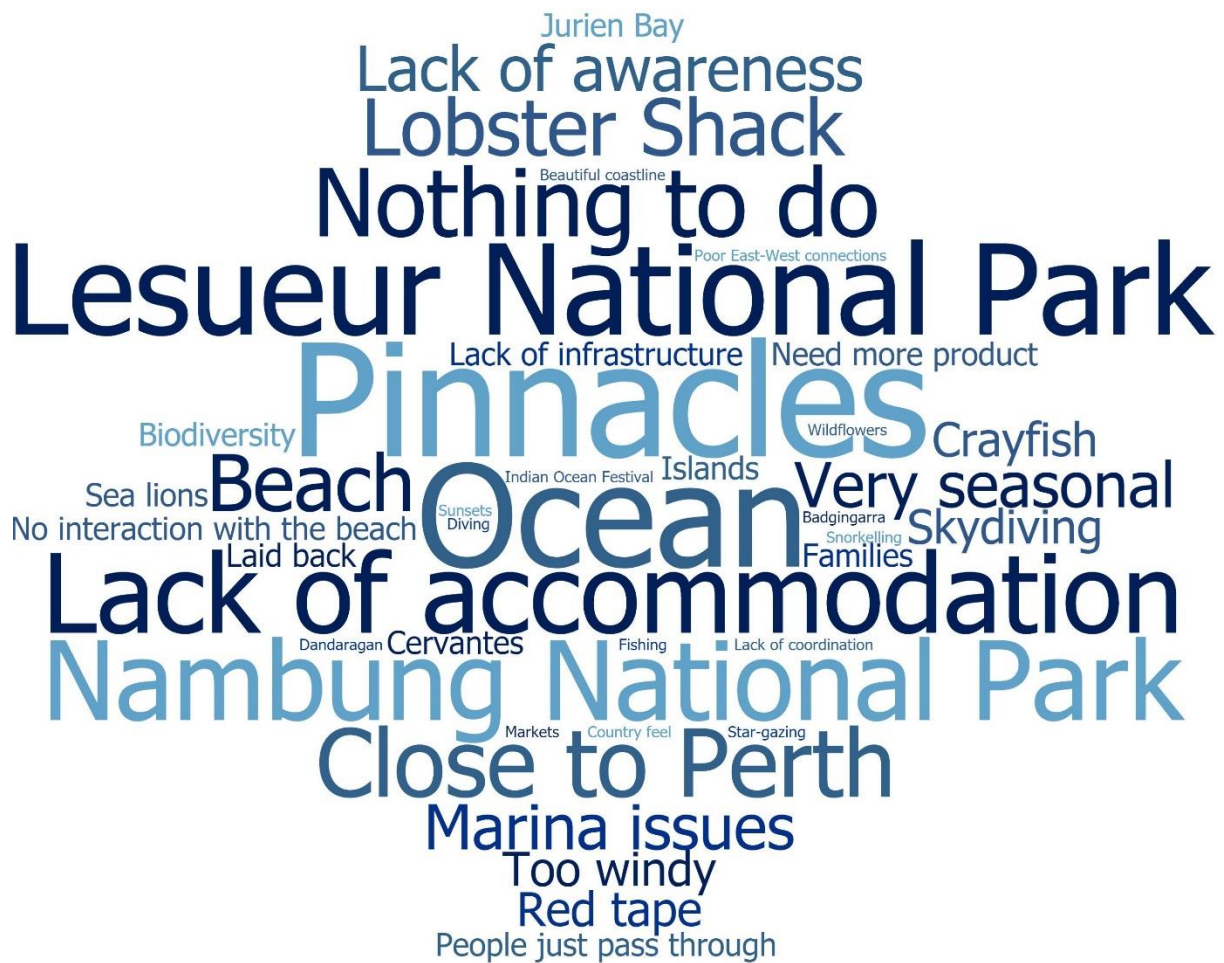
Further consultation identified other important issues and opportunities influencing local businesses. While some issues are beyond the direct control of the Shire, the results highlighted areas where economic and tourism development actions can be best targeted to support businesses. The Jurien Bay 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 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 (Stakeholder Feedback)

Priority	Issues	Opportunities
High	Power supply Labour retention Visitor and worker accommodation	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

Source: Lucid Economics

Figure 3.2. Tourism Strengths and Weaknesses, Stakeholder Feedback



Source: Lucid Economics



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 4.2. Shire of Dandaragan, Broader Economy SWOT Assessment

<p><u>Strengths</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 ground water • 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) 	<p><u>Weaknesses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 services for aged care
<p><u>Opportunities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 	<p><u>Threats</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 • Drainage issue with Jurien Bay Marina making the precinct unattractive for development

Source: Lucid Economics

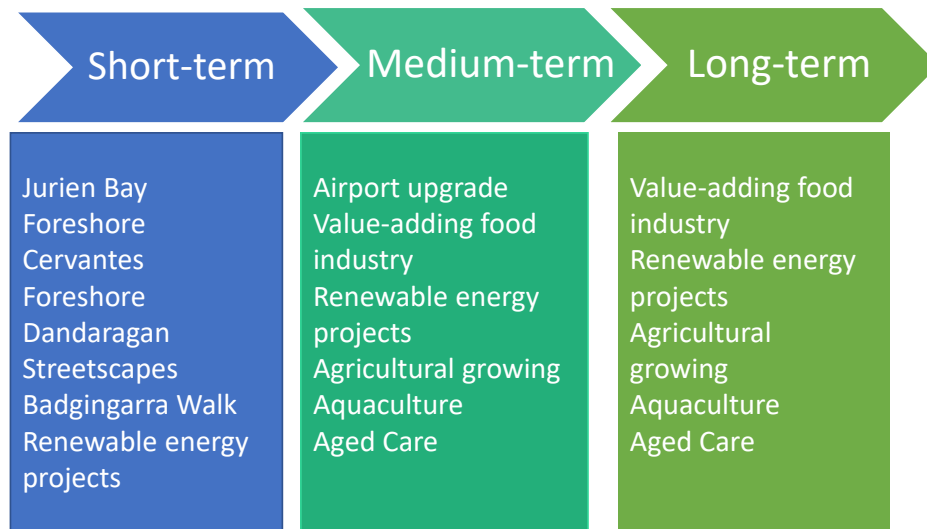
Figure 4.1. Shire of Dandaragan, Tourism SWOT Assessment

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

Source: Lucid Economics

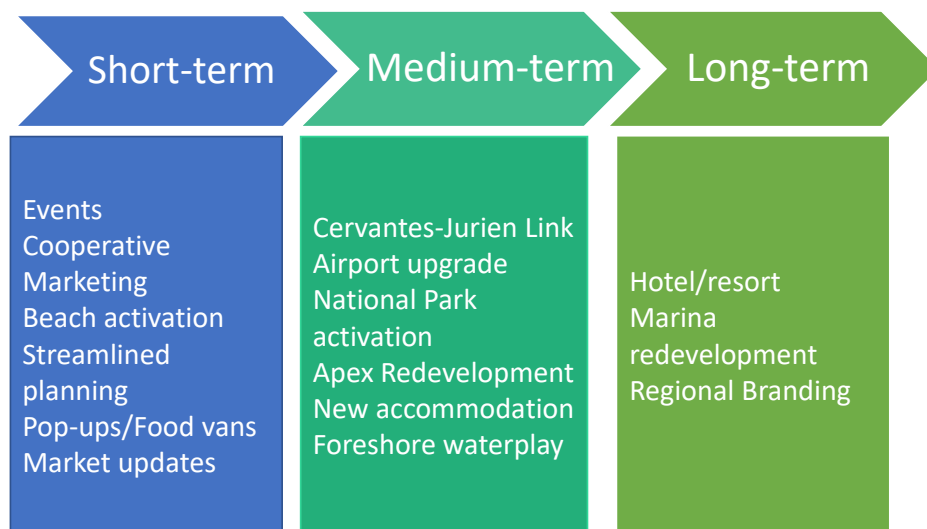
This process has identified a variety of key projects across tourism and the broader economy that can act as a catalyst for further growth as highlighted below.

Figure 4.2. Future Economic Development Projects



Source: Lucid Economics

Figure 4.3. Future Tourism Projects



Source: Lucid Economics

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



Source: Lucid Economics

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 next six months. 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
- Ensure a supportive planning system to encourage future investment
 - Create an internal expedited DA process to support projects that create new jobs and/or increase future visitor expenditure potential
 - Ensure sufficient land to accommodate new residential and commercial investment

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
 - Assist with funding applications to support events
- 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, 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
- 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

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
- Continue to advance key Council projects
 - Jurien Bay Airport Redevelopment
 - Jurien Bay Foreshore Redevelopment
 - Cervantes Foreshore Redevelopment
- Expand community infrastructure across the Shire to improve liveability

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 2021-22 financial year. Parts of this Action Plan contribute to the current response to COVID-19.

Over the next six-twelve months, 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

Table 6.1. Dandaragan Economic and Tourism Development Strategy Action Plan

Priority Action/Initiative/Task	KPI	Budget
1. Planning		
1.1. Efficient planning to support development and ensure investments		
1.1.1. Create an internal expedited DA process to support projects that create new jobs and/or increase future visitor expenditure potential	DA process created	\$0
1.1.2. Ensure sufficient land to accommodate new residential and commercial investment	Review residential and commercial lands	\$10,000
1.2. Encourage space activation and event facilitation		
1.2.1. Create a simple and easy to use permit process for pop-up food and beverage vendors	Pop-up planning kit completed	\$0
1.2.2. Consider the creation of pre-approved pop-up spaces around the Shire, including markets, buskers	Conduct site assessment and process	\$0

Priority Action/Initiative/Task	KPI	Budget
2. Marketing and Promotion		
2.1. Support and promote development of new events		
2.1.1. Work with community groups and partners to create new signature events	2 new events created	\$20,000
2.1.2. Develop a process-friendly event application form	Form completed	\$0
2.1.3. Assist with funding applications to support and grow existing events	Increasing attendance	\$30,000
2.2. Conduct targeted, cooperative destination marketing campaigns		
2.2.1. Working with partners, contribute to specific, industry led destination marketing campaigns to attract key market segments	Support marketing campaigns	\$50,000
3. Investment Attraction		
3.1. Promote key investment opportunities		
3.1.1. Developing marketing material to support key investment opportunities in the Shire (i.e. agricultural production, visitor accommodation, etc.)	Marketing material completed	\$10,000
3.1.2. Produce investment prospectus and distribute to key potential investors	Investment prospectus completed	\$10,000
3.2. Attract new accommodation development		
3.2.1. Develop an investment prospectus specifically for new accommodation development	Accommodation prospectus completed	\$10,000
3.2.2. Promote the prospectus widely and in partnership with other organisations (i.e. Wheatbelt Development Commission, Tourism WA, etc.)	Distribute to 100 potential investors	\$0
3.3. Facilitate agriculture and aquaculture development		
3.3.1. Understand and identify future potential growing areas that can leverage underground water sources	Investigation undertaken	\$50,000
3.3.2. Engage proactively with existing growers regarding expansion potential and other growers and aquaculture producers currently outside the Shire regarding investment opportunities	Meet with 20 growers	\$5,000
3.3.3. Facilitate collaboration between producers and encourage value-adding/processing	Meet with 20 local growers	\$5,000

Priority Action/Initiative/Task	KPI	Budget
3.4. Support future renewable energy projects		
3.4.1. Work with project proponents to maximise local content and job creation	Value of local content	\$5,000
3.4.2. Promote various recreational and tourism activities to major project crews	Distribute marketing material	\$0
3.4.3. Investigate community investment in new renewable energy projects	Complete assessment	\$40,000
4. Advocacy and Infrastructure Development		
4.1 Advocate to State and Commonwealth Government for infrastructure investment		
4.1.1. Ensure relationships with key agency representatives are strong	10 meetings per year	\$3,000
4.1.2. Develop business cases and make submissions to various government funds for infrastructure	3 submissions made	\$50,000
4.1.3. Lobby the Department of Transport to redevelop the Jurien Bay Marina	2 submissions per year	\$0
4.2 Continue to advance the Airport Masterplan and masterplans for Jurien Bay Foreshore and the Cervantes Foreshore		
4.2.1. Jurien Bay Airport Masterplan – East-West Runway Development	Detailed Design Completed	\$600,000
4.2.2. Jurien Bay Airport Masterplan – New Skydive Drop Area	Project Completed	\$20,000
4.2.3. Jurien Bay Foreshore Masterplan – Pavilion and Playground Development	Project Completed	\$850,000
4.2.4. Jurien Bay Foreshore Masterplan – Skate Park and Youth Precinct Development	Project Completed	\$1,400,000
4.3 Expand community infrastructure to improve liveability		
4.3.1. Dandaragan Streetscape Enhancement	Project Completed	\$150,000
4.3.2. Dandaragan Recreation Reserve BMX/Pump Track	Project Completed	\$100,000
4.3.3. Badgingarra Truck Bay (incorporating CBH sampling station)	Project Completed	\$235,000
4.3.4. Badgingarra Cricket Practice Nets	Project Completed	\$15,000
Total		\$3,048,000

Source: Lucid Economics

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.

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

Source: Lucid Economics

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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