Strategic Plan

2016-2019

GREENBUSHES | BRIDGETOWN | MANJIMUP | NANNUP

WARREN BLACKWOOD ALLIANCE OF COUNCILS

Shire of Bridgetown-Greenbushes .... simply beautiful

SHIRE OF MANJIMUP

Shire of Nannup rest • connect • grow

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Foreword

The Warren Blackwood Alliance of Councils ("the Alliance") is a Voluntary Regional Organisation of Councils, with members from the Local Government Authorities of Bridgetown-Greenbushes, Manjimup and Nannup. It was formed in 2001 following the restructure of the timber industry to work as a collective body on issues affecting those areas in the Warren and Blackwood catchments.

The Warren Blackwood is a jewel in the South West crown. It has unsurpassed beauty and is a green haven with magical waterways and forests in what is largely a very dry state.

Its people work hard and enjoy a lifestyle that is hard to match. There can be few better places to raise children who have room to play, learn, explore and thrive.

Our communities welcome newcomers in contributing their experiences to the region's various businesses, sports and social organisations and we encourage everyone to embrace those local clubs and organisations which are related to their interests.

It is intended that this document be widely read and understood. It is presented in a format that's easy to follow and the more local people that have an appreciation for what we are striving to achieve, the better it will be for all. The essential point is that the collective weight of opinion all conveying the same message has far great power than a host of individual voices pushing different points of view.

On that theme, this strategic plan aligns with bigger picture strategies and does not conflict with other major plans. On the contrary, this body of work supports broader activities albeit on a local scale.

It is important to acknowledge that the dominant drivers of change are ourselves. We have the power to make positive change and if we wait for outsiders to fix our problems then we might be in for a very long wait. Having said that, there are some things we simply cannot fund so the mission will be to advocate and present sound arguments for investment.

Where we can make a difference is show leadership – and that means to engage fully, broadly and to therefore exert influence. The Alliance and its member councils will be pushing uniform agendas in a range of action areas. Our imperatives must be those activities that support the growth of our region economically so we can support jobs and pursue actions that enable us to build population and share our wealth.

This strategic plan is presented on behalf of the Shires of Bridgetown-Greenbushes, Manjimup and Nannup. I am pleased to endorse it.

Cr Tony Pratico
Chair, Warren Blackwood Alliance of Councils

Vision

The Warren Blackwood Alliance of Councils will highlight and progress key issues impacting the Region and will be a voice for the Warren Blackwood and lead the way in partnership development, relationship building and progressing projects by establishing a respected reputation with key stakeholders.

Mission

We will achieve our Vision by acting as an advocacy group supporting regional projects and issues.

Mandalay Beach, Walpole.

Executive summary

The information contained in this plan highlight the fundamental changes effected by the gradual decline of the timber industry within the Region and recognises the importance of closely monitoring existing and potential industries to ensure planning for the future is structured, defined and successful.

Significant investment in the Region is the key to our economic prosperity and Alliance members must be proactive in the promotion of the Warren Blackwood area to secure investment in order that our communities remain positive in the years to come. Many of the growth indicators contained in this Plan, highlight the areas that need to be addressed to maintain a healthy growth pattern for the Region.

Of particular significance is the Region's low socio economic status which stretches across all three Shires. The exodus of young people has been recognised for some time, which in itself is not a major issue if that demographic returns to the Region and brings additional skills. The current statistics however indicate this is not occurring and a focus in this area would be beneficial.

There is no doubt there are significant opportunities for growth in the area which has been shown in the past, but impediments to this investment, such as lack of necessary infrastructure, suitable land and labour resources continue to impede development. The Megatrends forecast on pg. 8-11 shows the Region is well placed to capitalise on future trends, in both the health sector and Agribusiness. This plan focuses on the South West Regional Blueprint, released by the South West Development Commission in 2015, and aligning activities for maximum benefit.

The inception of the State Government's Supertowns program saw the Manjimup Shire attract investment of more than $12million. There were two separate projects; the Town Revitalisation project and the Agricultural expansion project, which entailed three elements; the development of the Manjimup Agricultural Strategy, the formation of the Southern Forests Food Council and the Agricultural Education program. Interest in the Region has been increased and the flow on effects of this program will be experienced by Alliance member Councils. The Agricultural Expansion program also places the Region in a prime position to further capture emerging trends in Agribusiness development.

Further investment by the Member LGA's of the Alliance has been directed to the development of the Tourism Sector and a project is currently underway to form a Local Tourism Organisation to unify the Sector, streamline marketing and promotional activities, eliminate duplication and develop more effective strategies. The identification and promotion of regional trails (walk, bridle, canoe, mountain bike, etc.) and the creation of a regional events website have also been recent projects of the Alliance.

A major focus in recent times has been on a regional approach and the Alliance therefore offers an excellent opportunity for the Member Councils to work together collaboratively and deliver tangible benefits for the Region.

Background

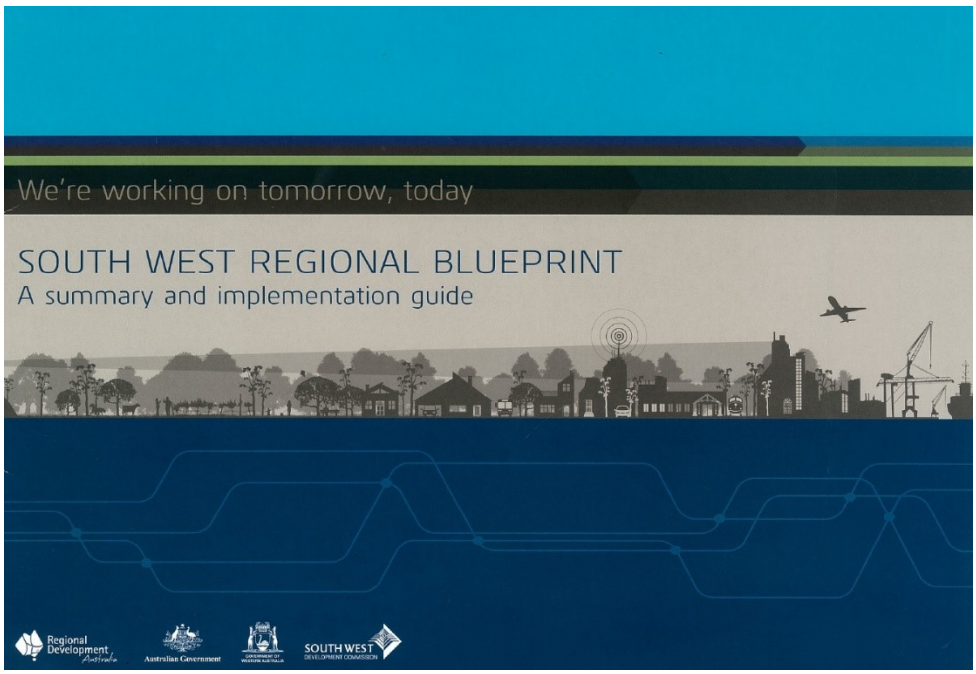
This plan works within a hierarchy of South West economic development planning and seeks to prioritise sub-regional activities within the scope of broader regional planning. It is acknowledged that the SW Regional Blueprint sits at the apex and other plans feed into a structure that seeks to rationalise investment and activities.

From an economic development perspective it is noted that the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) agreed a set of determinants that support regional economies:

- Human capital, particularly education and skills;
- Sustainable (economically, environmentally and socially) communities and population growth;
- Access to international, national and regional markets;
- Comparative advantage and business competitiveness; and
- Effective cross-sectoral and intergovernmental partnerships (including through place-based approaches) and integrated regional planning.

These COAG determinants provide an analytical framework from which it is possible to identify strengths and areas that require more work. Importantly, it is this analysis that will provide a justification for priorities and funding required to ensure regional economic progress.

Further, it must be recognised that integrated approaches are the most successful, i.e., it is imperative that all levels of government, communities and key stakeholders are fully engaged so that the effort is both top down and bottom up.



The global context – megatrends and futures

Megatrends are global scale shifts that will affect the way we live and work in the future. Six key trends have been identified that are already impacting the South West. *Our future world: Global megatrends that will change the way we live* (CSIRO Futures, 2012) is the most contemporary analysis available. The six megatrends that emerge are summarised:

1. **Asian century**
   The coming decade will see the world economy shift as the 'economic centre of gravity' moves eastward from its European and North American hotspot and by 2030 is forecast to sit firmly between India and China with an increasing focus on emerging economies of Vietnam, Indonesia, Myanmar and Cambodia (Boston Consulting 2012).

   This trend will result in increased consumption of goods and services through an increasingly prominent middle class. This will include health and education services, food, tourism and various consumer goods. The Warren Blackwood region is well positioned in relation to Asia. Common time zones, direct flights between China and Perth and a growing interest in food, wine, tourism and minerals are all attractive to the market.

2. **Fiscal uncertainty**
   The ongoing uncertainty following the 2008 global financial crisis remains even though many markets have improved. There is a need for industry to build resilience in its operations and adapt rapidly to changing market circumstances. Regional business will need to build strong alliances and seek markets that have the potential to support growth.

3. **Ageing population**
   People are living longer - especially in the developed world. In 1950, 8% of the world's people were over 65 years old, increasing to 11.2% by 2011 and is forecast to reach 22% by 2050 (CSIRO Futures). By 2011 Australia's 65 years plus population was already 14% and that is predicted to rise to 23-25% by 2056. The proportion of people older than 65 is expected to increase by the year 2026 from 13.2% to 19.3% of the total South West population – an increase of 6.1%.

   The ageing population is an economic and social opportunity as well as a cost. In the medium term we will need to support people within their community, access services and centralise services in key locations.

4. **Digital age**
   Digital technology has already transformed the way we communicate and is fundamentally changing the way we do business. Employees no longer have to live in the places they work and many businesses rely on digital technology to improve supply chain logistics, asset utilisation, improved customer service, asset utilisation and innovation. The digital world also influences opinion and brings together shared values so it's no longer a matter of doing business – it's how you do business and the legacy you leave for future generations.

5. **Environment, climate and water**
   Climate change and land clearing have three impacts on future development of the South West:
   - Clearing threatens habitat;
   - Climate change results in storm events and potential sea level rise; and
   - Drying climate impacts on water sourcing and forest health.

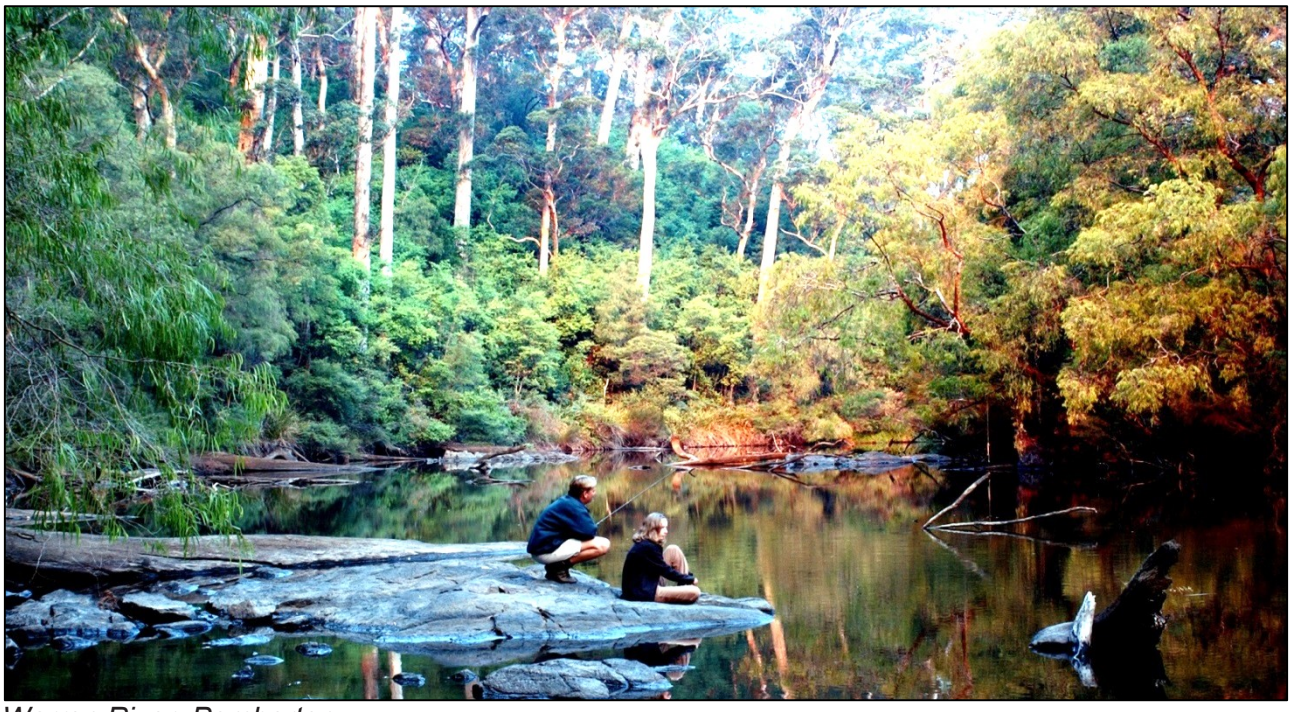
   Land clearing is addressed through the South West Planning and Infrastructure Framework (Department of Planning 2014). There is a general presumption against further clearing of native vegetation outside of planned areas unless clearing is required for critical infrastructure.

   Risk of loss of infrastructure through sea level rise is being addressed through modelling and incorporation of design guidelines into infrastructure planning. A drying climate is affecting the ability

to source potable surface water supplies placing increased reliance on ground water. Salt water intrusion is beginning to affect coastal underground sources. Climate change can place South West agricultural production at risk. This may drive investment in more efficient irrigation options, together with improved water storage and distribution systems. A third implication is the potential for increased bushfire risk.

6. Urbanisation

Urbanisation is a world trend as people move from rural areas towards cities. Urbanisation concentrates markets and distribution points for trade and the scale of development in Asia represents significant opportunities for international trade. It is possible to capitalise on this through targeting high income areas for premium sales including wine, food and tourism. Smaller communities can also benefit by attracting those making lifestyle choices.



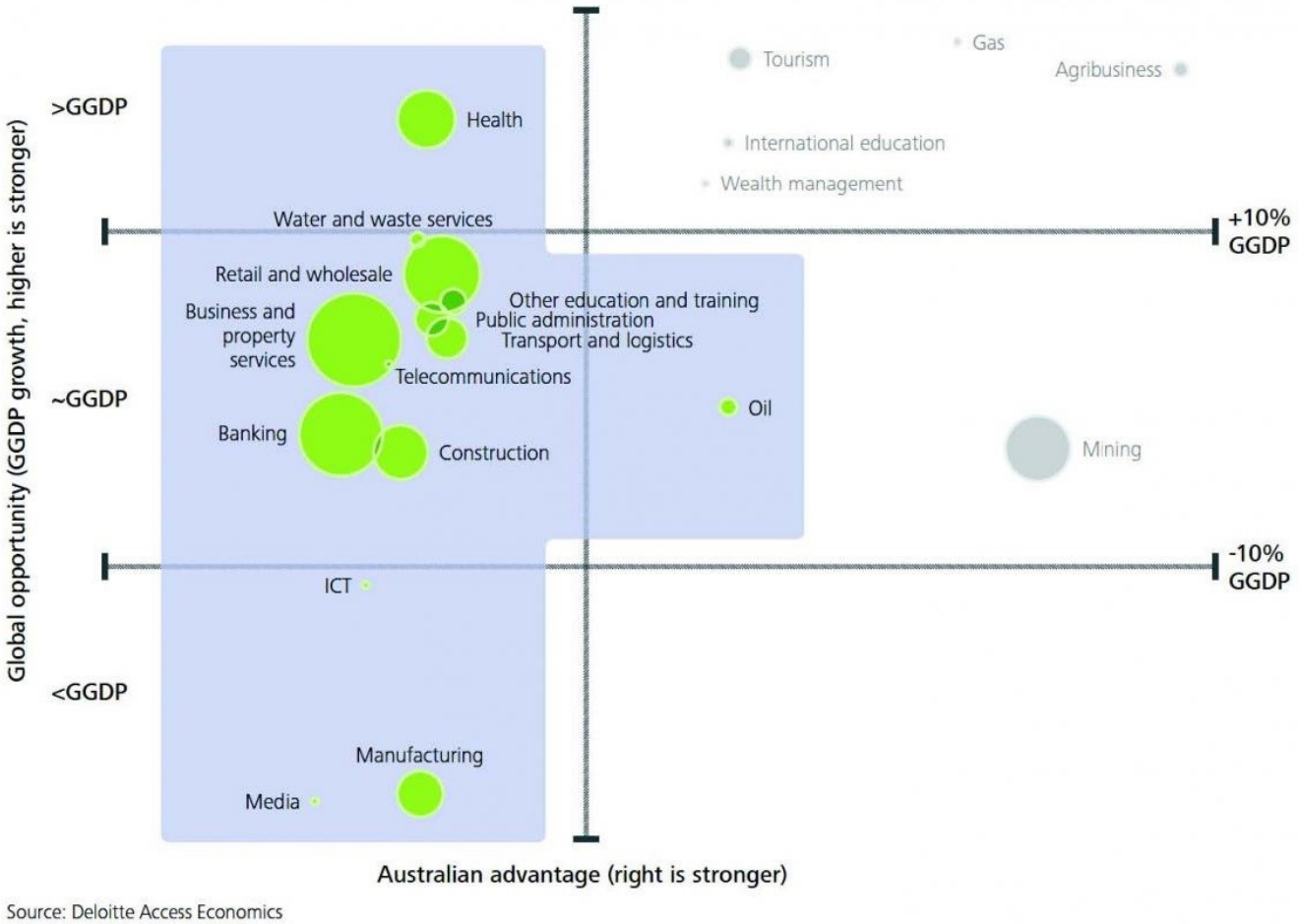
Warren River, Pemberton

The Australian context

Positioning for Prosperity (Deloitte 2014) looks beyond the boom to emerging sectoral opportunities i.e., those industries where local advantage and prospects intersect. Leading output growth of more than 10% global gross domestic product is seen in:

1. Gas
2. Tourism
3. Agribusiness
4. Health
5. Wealth Management

Australia is exceptionally well placed in terms of the agriculture sector which enjoys an international reputation that filters down to Western Australia and to the South West specifically.



Source: Deloitte Access Economics

Australia's current, next and future waves of growth 2013-33.

A South West regional context

Bridgetown-Greenbushes and Manjimup consist of a total land mass of 11,672km², with 7 town sites, a population of 14,764 people and a combined coastline (Nannup and Manjimup Shire's) of approximately 170km. The Shire's of Manjimup and Nannup's land mass is made up of approximately 85% and 87% respectively of State Forest and National Parks, with the Shire of Bridgetown Greenbushes comprising 45%.

The key guiding documents are the South West Blueprint (SWDC, RDA-SW 2014) and South West Regional Planning and Infrastructure Framework (WAPC 2014). The Blueprint establishes a roadmap to the development of the whole region while the Framework provides Department of Planning context, identifying Manjimup as the Warren-Blackwood's centre. This is significant in terms of government support for developing sub-regional services and facilities.

Overall, the South West enjoys a diverse economy which gives it regional strength as a whole. However, individual parts may be more specialised and the region's strong population growth has been along the coastal corridor – particularly the Bunbury-Busselton axis. The strength of the South West's key centres are fundamentally important to the hinterland which can access health and other services that might otherwise only be available in Perth.

As themes develop through this document there is consideration of the sub-region within the setting of the South West as well as big picture views of national opportunity and world trends.
The strategic challenges for the region have been identified as:

- Infrastructure provision, especially transport gateways
- Securing high capacity broadband to all communities
- Water as a future constraint
- Industry competition and a need to transition to high quality, high value products
- Being Asia-capable and accessing Asian markets
- Changing demographics, particularly the ageing population
- Addressing low per capita incomes
- Patchy population growth

The Warren Blackwood

It is important to point out the differences between what government agencies consider the Warren Blackwood area to comprise of i.e., the four shires of Bridgetown-Greenbushes, Manjimup, Nannup and Boyup Brook. The Shire of Boyup Brook has been offered membership on the Alliance but sees it direction and focus more affiliated with the Bunbury-Wellington area, rather than to its southern neighbours.

Economy

The Warren Blackwood comprises predominantly agriculture-based industries and communities, although mining is significant and timber and tourism add extra value. In 2010-11, Manjimup generated $126.5m in agricultural production, marking it as the second largest food production locality in Western Australia.

While the halcyon days of the timber industry have gone, timber from regrowth hardwood forests and softwood plantations remains significant for the sawmill and woodchip industries.
Lithium and Tantalum production at Greenbushes has enjoyed a world demand for those elements used in rechargeable batteries and electronic components.

After peaking in June 2013, ABS figures show unemployment has been falling with the March figures demonstrating below State (5.5%) and national (6.1%) averages: Bridgetown-Greenbushes (3.4%), Manjimup (4.4%) and Nannup (3.9%).

Leading employment sectors, ABS Census 2011

	Bridgetown-Greenbushes	Manjimup	Nannup	Australia	Western Australia	
					2014 data	5-year change
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	10.0	17.7	19.9	2.5	3.0	8.0
Health care and social assistance	11.7	8.1	10.2	11.6	11	26.3
Manufacturing	7.4	8.9	14.1	9.0	6	-9.5
Mining	10.7	2.5	3.6	1.8	7	46.1
Retail trade	8.6	10.2	7.2	10.5	10	16.9
Education and training	8.2	8.0	7.5	8.0	8	7.7
Construction	8.0	6.5	8.4	8.2	11	18.7
Accommodation and food services	7.1	8.6	8.4	6.5	6	18.7
Public admin and safety	6.1	7.8	6.8	6.9	6	19.9

These figures highlight the relative differences of the Warren Blackwood Region to the rest of the Country and show the high reliance on the Agricultural sector to the whole Region and therefore opportunities for growth.

Nannup's particularly high manufacturing figure can be attributed to the Nannup Timber processing facility with both Manjimup and Bridgetown figures comparative with the National average but higher than the State average. Similarly Bridgetown Greenbushes high Mining figure is attributed to the operations at the Greenbushes Mining operations.

SWOT Snapshot

STRENGTHS

Safe Communities
Agribusiness
Growing reputation for quality products
Lifestyle and region's natural beauty
Affordable housing for families
Cultural diversity
Diversity of Events
Recognition of the importance of the Region by State and Federal Governments
Educational opportunities

WEAKNESSES

State Forest constraints impacting revenue
Demographic trough in 20-35 year-olds
Below average salaries
New investment initiatives

OPPORTUNITIES

Lifestyle and heritage
Agribusiness jobs growth
Processing and value-adding food
Developing high value economic opportunities
Create jobs to attract population growth
Tourism growth
Manjimup Airport expansion
Transport opportunities for Air & Road linkages are explored and improved
Biomass energy production
Business innovation

THREATS

Withdrawal of Government services
Lack of Employment growth
Spike in ageing demographic
Lack of shovel ready industrial land
Climate change
Short term Forestry Management Plans
Changing Government Policy on Industry sectors

Population

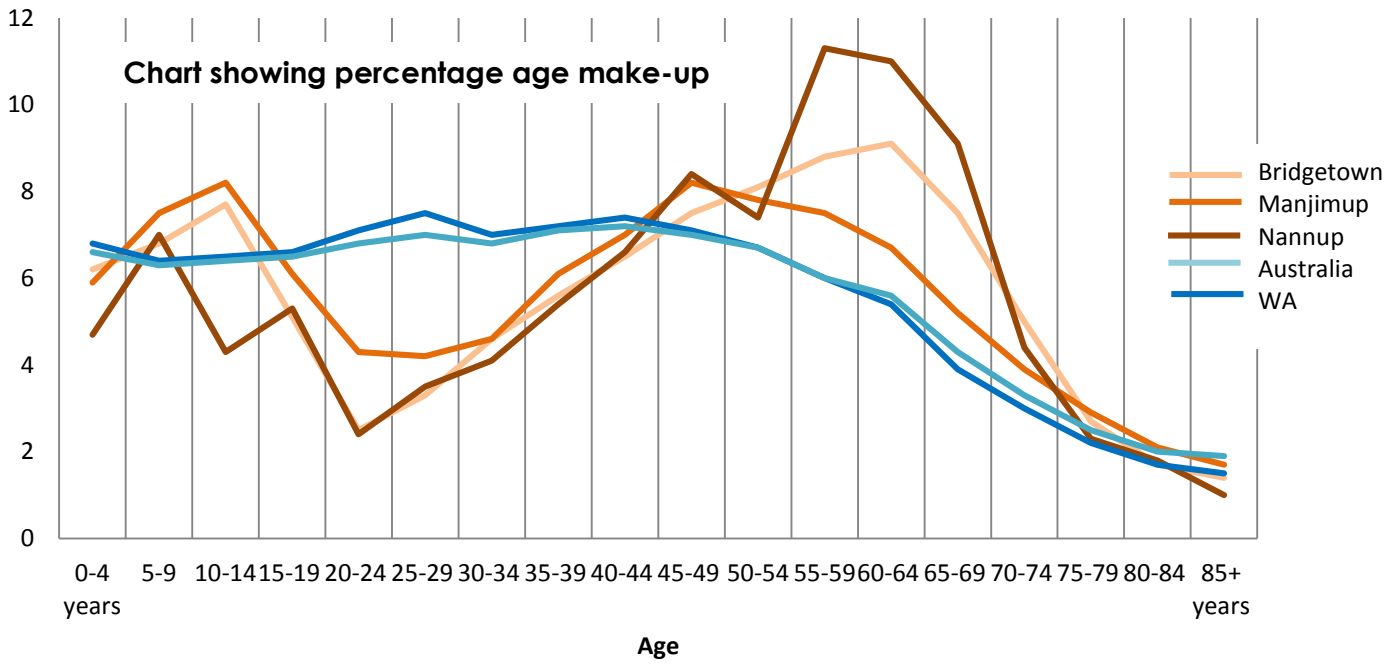
Population discussion in regional planning is fraught with problems. While the raw data is plainly unalterable, there is an argument that demonstrating low growth/static population forecasts is simply a self-fulfilling prophecy as stable populations fail to encourage investment which stymies growth. Nevertheless, the statistics are what they are and it remains a challenge to pursue strategies that will grow populations. These can include:

- Encouraging leavers to return later, bringing their experiences and knowledge with them (Pathways to Settlement, RAI 2014);
- Create fully inclusive communities that people want to live in;
- Offer unprecedented community, recreation and social lifestyles;
- Maintain health and education standards that are attractive to families;
- Provide environments for ageing in place; and
- Exploit migrant opportunities.

Census figures from 2011 provide a population reference point:

	2011 Census	2014 Estimated
Bridgetown-Greenbushes	4,319	4,643
Manjimup	9,183	9,445
Nannup	1,262	1,319
	14,764	**15,407**

The telling figures are less about population totals and more about composition. The chart shows strong birth rates but a loss of 20-35-year-olds and spike of 50-70-year-olds. These are reflected in media ages: Australia 37, WA 36, Bridgetown 46, Manjimup 42, Nannup 49.



Cambray Cheese, Nannup

Silkwood Winery, Pemberton

South West Avocados

Community

Economic development is the development of the wealth of countries or regions for the well-being of their inhabitants. So, economic development can be defined as efforts that seek to improve the economic well-being and quality of life for a community by creating and/or retaining jobs. This also means providing lifestyle.

A key component of go-ahead communities is human capital ie education and skills which directly impact ion incomes and add to the milieu of sustainability which has economic, environmental and social components. The creation of educated workforces and communities that have jobs, disposable incomes and lifestyle underpin sustainable populations.

The Australian Early Development Index (AEDI) acknowledges the importance of childhood development and gathered information through a targeted census looking at first year students only.

Australian Early Development Index

	% of children developmentally vulnerable (below 10th percentile)				%of children developmentally at risk (10th-25th percentile)			% of children on track (above 25th percentile)		
	WA	BG	M	N	BG	M	N	BG	M	N
Physical health and wellbeing	9.8	15.5	16.7	0.0	34.5	17.5	0.0	50.0	65.9	100
Social competence	8.4	5.2	11.9	0.0	22.4	12.7	20.8	72.4	75.4	79.2
Emotional maturity	8.3	5.2	11.9	8.3	12.1	15.9	29.2	82.8	72.2	62.5
Language and cognitive skills	8.6	8.6	11.1	4.2	20.7	19.0	8.3	70.7	69.8	87.5
Communication skills and general knowledge	9.1	1.7	16.7	4.2	32.8	17.5	4.2	65.5	65.9	91.6

**Note: The Nannup figures relate to 2009 while all others are 2012. The Manjimup results do not include Walpole.*

Vulnerability in two or more domains: Bridgetown-Greenbushes 10.3%, Manjimup15.9%, and Nannup 4.2%.

Socio Economic Indices for Areas: ABS Data Cube July 2013, 2033.0.55.001

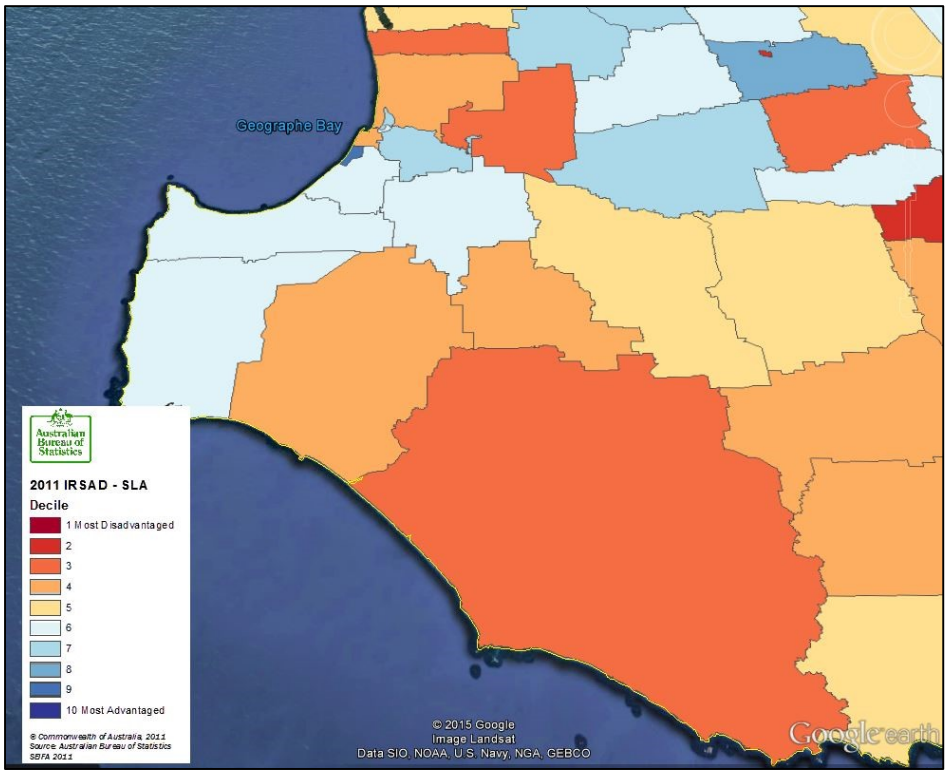
	Index of relative socio-economic Advantage and Disadvantage		Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage		Index of Economic Resources		Index of Education and Occupation	
	Score [Top 1144]	Rank Aust/WA	Score [Top 1126]	Rank Aust/WA	Score [Top 1115]	Rank Aust/WA	Score [Top 1202]	Rank Aust/WA
Bridgetown	968	291 / 52	979	291 / 54	1003	386 / 74	961	294 / 54
Manjimup	946	215 /30	958	212 / 33	980	268 / 40	931	368 / 24
Nannup	968	294 / 51	978	285 / 51	993	336 / 59	994	409 / 88

**The rankings are out of 563 (Australia) and 139 (WA).*

SEIFA analyses a number of socio-economic factors to form indexes in four categories. It broadly defines relative socio-economic advantage and disadvantage in terms of people's access to material and social resources, and their ability to participate in society. Greater advantage means higher disposable incomes and a higher level of society engagement (buying goods to participation in recreation/sports which is discretionary spending). The more money that circulates the better it is for all.

SEIFA helps provide assessment of the welfare of Australian communities and helps in determining areas that require funding and services. For Bridgetown-Greenbushes, Manjimup and Nannup, SEIFA scores show those local governments areas in the bottom half of the rankings with particular issues in education and occupation.

Mapping SEIFA disadvantage, ABS 2011



This SEIFA index is reflected in general ABS census statistics which show Warren Blackwood residents having lower incomes than most Australians. However, housing costs are lower which helps offset cost of living strain.

A study of relative wealth in the community paints a varied picture across the Alliance member areas. While Manjimup has almost a third of its population with families weekly incomes below $600 (compared to 23.7% Australia-wide) it also has more than a fifth of its population with family incomes of $3,000+ (compared to11% for Australia).
This demonstrates a very significant gap between the haves and have-nots which is not desirable in a community sense and means that a whole section of the community is less engaged.

Bridgetown and Nannup have their problems too, with about 35% of their populations on gross family incomes below $600 and less than 5% above $3,000. Marrying this data with the demographic chart shows very high levels of retirees and low levels of people aged 19-35 years.

Relative wealth in the community: ABS QuickStats 2011

	Median weekly income			Gross family income		Median dwelling expenses	
	Personal	Family	Household	<$600	>$3,000	Monthly mortgage	Weekly rent
Bridgetown	$467	$1,117	$883	34.6%	4.6%	$1,500	$180
Manjimup	$493	$1,122	$912	32.1%	21.1%	$1,300	$150
Nannup	$459	$984	$821	35.4%	3.7%	$1,620	$116
WA	$662	$1,772	$1,415	21.1%	14.1%	$1,950	$300
Australia	$577	$1,481	$1,234	23.7%	11.2%	$1,800	$285

Environment

The Warren Blackwood forms a part of the South West Botanical Province, an area from Shark Bay in the north to Israelite Bay on the south coast. The region is one of only 34 recognised biodiversity "hotspots" in the world and the only one in Australia. This reflects both the rich diversity of its flora, which represents one of "the richest and most threatened reservoirs of plant and animal life on earth" (WA Department of Parks and Wildlife).

A large variety of vegetation formations and flora species exist across the South West with approximately 3500 species having been recorded, of which 50% are endemic. More than 70 species are Declared Rare Flora. The SW also has a rich fauna with about 50 species of mammals, 135 species of reptiles and amphibians and more than 330 species of birds. Fifty-seven of the region's animals (including aquatic animals) are listed as threatened and another 71 are listed as priority fauna, largely as a result of extensive land clearing.

In 2010, the Commonwealth Scientific and Research Organisation (CSIRO) looked at the South West (which runs from Gingin Brook through to Albany) and completed the most comprehensive assessment of water yield ever undertaken in Australia. CSIRO describe the South West as "one of the most water-challenged parts of the country, experiencing Australia's highest rates of climate change amid rapid population growth". May-July rainfall has decreased 15% since 1975 and the Gnangara Mound groundwater storages have fallen by 45GL every year for more than 20 years.

Bridgetown-Greenbushes

Encompassing the historic towns of Bridgetown and Greenbushes, mining, agriculture and tourism figure prominently in the shire's economy. Bridgetown has been recognised as a "Heritage Town" which makes it attractive to locals and visitors alike.

Talison Lithium has operated out of Greenbushes for more than 25 years (mining has been occurring at the Talison site for over 100 years) and exports about 350,000 tonnes of lithium annually. The identified mineral reserve is 0.2mt proven and 31.3mt probable giving a mine life to about 2033 and estimated forecast cashflow rate of $1.8bn before tax (Greenbushes Lithium Operations NI 43-1-1 Technical Report 2011).

Agriculture is extremely important, as it is across the whole Warren Blackwood, and Bridgetown-Greenbushes also recognises tourism as a very strong part of the local economy. Many old buildings in Bridgetown have been restored to their former glory, and there is a shift towards arts and culture. The Bridgetown Blues Festival is known across the state.

Quick facts

- Towns and communities: Bridgetown, North Greenbushes, Greenbushes, Yornup, Hester, Catterick, Winnijup, Maranup Ford, Hester Brook, Kangaroo Gully, Wandillup, Glennlynn, Sunnyside, Kingston
- Size: 1,691 km^2
- Industries: Mining ($151m, 2013), timber, agriculture ($18m, 2011), retail, tourism, crafts and cottage industries
- Agricultural landholdings: 46,009ha

Blues at Bridgetown Festival

Manjimup

Manjimup is the Warren Blackwood's regional administrative centre. It is a designated Supertown under a State Government regional development programme and has attracted funding in line with that status.

The Shire of Manjimup is physically the largest LGA in the South West though its growth is constrained since 85% of the land area comprises State or National Parks which also form a barrier to the stunning south coast and extraordinary beaches over 140km of coastline.

Historically, Manjimup was a timber town and remains the hub of the South West's timber industry in the South West region. In recent years the volume of hardwood production has decreased as a result of the State's Regional Forest Agreement, addressing the harvesting of native jarrah and other species. The processing of hardwood is now focused primarily on value adding. Plantations have become a significant part of timber production in the area. The total volume of bluegum woodchips exported through the Port of Bunbury was a record 1.4mt in 2013.

The local area is host to many vineyards, horticulture and farming operations which are the shire's lead employer and economic driver. The retail sector is also a significant employer, boosted by the shire's efforts to boost Manjimup and its streetscapes which also buoys tourism visitation. Tourism is recognised as offering a good opportunity for diversification and employment generation through supporting agricultural recognition via food festivals.

Quick facts

- Towns and communities: Manjimup, Pemberton, Northcliffe, Walpole, Deanmill, Palgarup, Jardee, Nyamup, Quinninup, Windy Harbour
- Size: 7,028 km^2
- Industries: Agriculture ($126.5m, 2011), timber, retail and tourism
- Agricultural landholdings: 78,656ha

Manjimup Timber and Heritage Park

Nannup

The Shire of Nannup is nestled in the heart of the Blackwood Valley. Historically Nannup was a timber milling town, and while timber is still a major industry, the area's natural beauty, together with its unique character and heritage makes it a popular tourist drawcard.

Nannup is part of the outstanding Balingup-Nannup-Bridgetown tourist drive, one of the very best in the State. Coastal access, national parks and its close proximity to the Margaret River wine region bring many tourists to the area.

The shire also has a strong agricultural sector with dairy, beef cattle, horticulture, floriculture and viticulture operations in the area.

Quick facts

- Towns and communities: Nannup, Donnelly River Mill, Bidella, Carlotta, Cundinup, Scott River, Lake Jasper, Darradup, Barrabup, Nannup Brook, East Nannup
- Size: 2,953 km^2
- Industries: Agriculture ($37m), timber, agriculture ($18m, 2011), tourism, crafts and cottage industries
- Agricultural landholdings: 27,723ha

Nannup Music Festival

Analysis and discussion

This section relates to the COAG determinants of regional development and is presented as a discussion to stimulate further thought.

Human capital

The traditional definition of human capital is the "stock of knowledge required to produce economic value" but that has broadened to include society, its customs, culture, creativity and wisdom. At its core, human capital is about attitude and skills. An educated population will perform better than one that is not but it must be noted that 'can do' mindsets can overcome barriers.

	Technical or further education	University or tertiary institution
Bridgetown-Greenbushes	8.2	4.1
Manjimup	7.4	2.5
Nannup	7.3	5.5
Bunbury-Wellington	7.5	5.3
Capes	7.6	4.8
Western Australia	7.2	13.5
Australia	7.3	14.3

Rather than try to quantify the abilities by using the figures above it is relevant to note the distribution of employment highlighted in the table on page 15 showing the relative employment sectors are skills based occupations requiring on the job training and generally not outside training.

Warren Blackwood's human capital is therefore reflective of this although emerging trends indicate the growth in other areas, particularly the health and allied services which may in time be reflected in the two tables.

Sustainable communities and population growth (economically, environmentally and socially)

Almost 40% of all regional residents have spent less than 21 years in regional Australia (Living in the Regions 2013) which indicates a willingness among urban residents to pursue lifestyle options. The same study found that education and training opportunities, and employment prospects, were weaker in regions which demonstrates why young people leave for tertiary studies and jobs.

It is not realistic to expect investment in tertiary education centres in small communities, however, technology is driving change that may keep students in their communities for an extra year and;

Living the regions – South West residents' feedback reported lifestyle was ranked highest

People are happier in the regions, they feel more connected, feel safer…

Access to markets

Supply chains have become relatively efficient given the need to get fresh produce to market as quickly as possible.

Comparative advantage and business competitiveness

Agriculture is vital to the future for the Warren Blackwood region. It already has significant influence, is a major employer and has the attention of government.

Agriculture is recognised as a future wave of prosperity (Deloitte 2014) and will add to the Asia region's quality "deli counter" as the China and neighbours transition over a billion people to the middle 'consumer' class (CSIRO Futures, 2012). It is also recognised that global food production will need to double by 2050 (The future of agriculture: a view into the crystal ball, CSIR0 2011.)

However, there are challenges as significant transition in the agriculture sector is inevitable. The data shows that while productivity has increased, the number of farms has declined. So farm operations are generally getting bigger and more efficient.

Farmers are getting older too but the picture is not that simple. There is a decline in farmers under 30 years of age, but there is considerable variation across different farming sectors. For example, dairy and cropping have maintained a relatively young age profile while the majority of those in the beef industry are aged 50-64 years (CSIRO 2011). The adoption of new technologies is common in agriculture which lends importance to high capacity broadband infrastructure.

Agriculture has benefited from investment in the Southern Forest Food Council and Premium Food Centre initiative that will see the promotion of organic produce which underpins the clean, green image of the area. The mood is generally buoyant and investment is being made as consumers show an interest in where their food is coming from, a fact that benefits the region.

Effective cross-sectoral and intergovernmental partnerships

Including through place-based approaches and integrated regional planning.

The Alliance has made efforts to be networked with the South West as a whole, taking part in regional events and ensuring that the Warren Blackwood remains on agendas. Local governments have also sought to be supportive working with the South West Development Commission and Regional Development Australia-South West.

Gloucester Tree, Pemberton

Action agenda

This action agenda is established through consideration of local, regional, national and global context.

It is based on an analysis of opportunities and COAG determinants of successful economic development. The action agenda also aligns with the South West Regional Blueprint, combining items that are a combination of key aspirational and more pragmatic goals. However, the emphasis will be on what is needed rather than what is wanted.

Many items will be ongoing activities to continually drive growth in business, jobs and community, but there are those projects that will be distinct and subject to emerging funding opportunities. It will be incumbent on the Alliance to raise its profile to be the co-ordinating point and remain fully engaged with the region's agencies. This will ensure a deeper level of understanding among agencies which should be reinforced by a level of project preparedness to respond to policy programmes that make actions possible.

Funding bodies favour regionally-focused projects that are backed by a sound rationale. The aim is to prioritise what is important and dispense with wish-lists.

The following action agenda looks extensive but different stakeholders are engaged in the differing areas. It remains for the Alliance to engage in some areas but generally to keep a watching brief on the whole.

SW Blueprint imperatives

Infrastructure	Industry and business – Asia capable	People and place – communities
Water	Industry diversification	Affordable housing
Transport: Road infrastructure Aviation Ports/coastal	Market diversification	Active ageing
	Workforce development	Urban renewal
	Branding and positioning	Education and training
	Inbound investment	Health and wellbeing
Energy	Expansion of capacity	Inclusive communities
Sustainability and climate change	Establishing long term relationships with Asia	Leadership and collaboration with others
Digital ready	Export and tourism readiness	engagement

Infrastructure		
Task	**Delivery**	**Comments**
Water security	Mitigate risk to the agriculture sector by networking water supplies	Support Water for Food initiatives
Transport	Lobby Main Roads WA for MRWA controlled roads in the region to be improved.	Need for main arterial and transport corridors to be upgraded
Energy	Pursue any emerging biomass energy generation opportunities	
Digital ready	Tackle mobile phone blackspots	
	Advocate for NBN roll-out to cover as many communities as possible	
Waste services	Long term solutions required for waste	Common issue for SW LGAs
Aged care accommodation	Broad requirement across the entire region	Promote Regional Aged Housing Strategy

Community		
Task	**Delivery**	**Comments**
Strategic engagement – collaborate and pursue the goal of the Alliance entering into partnerships	Foster and develop relationships and networks with other regional organisations,	Think both internally and regionally, acting as a contributor to positive change Invite other organisations to present at Alliance meetings Build robust relationships and partner with other groups to pursue mutual goals
	Participate as a representative regional body in regional decision making and planning	Take every opportunity to contribute to holistic regional planning gaining a reputation for regional collaboration
	Ensure the Alliance's strategic direction reflects relevant state and regional planning and development documents	Be mindful of any gaps so you can draw attention to important omissions
	Raise awareness of local and regional projects and issues at a State and Federal level	These strategies maximise opportunities to achieve funding success
	Present a united voice encapsulating the needs and concerns of the entire Warren Blackwood region	Review priorities at least annually to be fresh and relevant – and maintain collaborative relationships
Health and education	Support planning that drives greater quality and choice of	
Attract and retain population	Lifestyle is the Warren Blackwood's lead attractor	
	Target former residents who have moved on	Regional Australia Institute research (Returning to Regional Australia 2014) found that young people who left to pursue careers are the most likeliest to return with their own children

Industry and business		
Task	**Delivery**	**Comments**
Boost capability among all businesses and representative industry bodies	Training – formal and informal	Utilise existing knowledge and connect with: Austrade, AusIndustry, SWDC, RDA-South West, Tourism WA, Australia's South West RTO, Small Business Centre, Industry Skills Council, CCIs, SW (WA) China business Relations Association (trading as Bunbury-Jiaxing Business Office)
	Link with agencies and network	
Encourage value adding in all sectors to increase profitability and grow jobs	Access government programmes	Industry needs to be collaborative and work together as a region to maximise potential to attract investment Encourage CCIs to co-operate on a regional directory
	Work through industry bodies and as collectives	
	Promote innovation and research	
Exploit opportunities in the timber industry	Work with the industry to position it as a responsible industry	The timber industry has been a target for activists despite its obvious renewability Appropriate branding can offset concerns and promote Warren Blackwood timbers as preferred sustainable products
Agriculture sector	Look to a future that includes value adding	Costs means that SW production is high value and high quality – compete on reputation and quality not just volume
	Develop niche products	
	Promote innovation and research	Exploit opportunities through the SW Food Centre
	Promote co-operative behaviours across the Warren Blackwood and across sectors	
Support tourism growth	Create a LTO sub-regional plan with agreed actions	Operators must understand that working together benefits everyone Work with neighbouring sub-regional tourism organisations so that key events enjoy a wider reach
	Encourage collaborative behaviours throughout the whole sector and region	
	Brand as a single region – utilise Southern Forests branding to support agriculture	Work with Australia's SW and TWA Review existing marketing to see if there is a better way to utilise funding
	Exploit the Munda Biddi Trail and Bibbulmun Track opportunities	Link in business opportunities
	Add value by creating <u>new</u> trails – equestrian and motorcycle	There is little point creating more walk trails when we already have the best in the world
	Encourage 'industry' tourism	Visitors like to see new things such as a working mill or farm
	Build reputation and use events as triggers for visitation	Ensure that events do not clash with other regional events

Alliance Action Plan

1. **Participate as a representative regional body in regional decision making and planning;**
   Actions:
   - Identify and actively pursue opportunities to engage in regional development decision making;
   - Input directly into key regional planning and development documents;
   - Raise awareness of local and regional projects and issues at a State and Federal level;
   - Present a united voice encapsulating the needs and concerns of the entire Warren Blackwood Region.

2. **Foster and develop relationships and networks with other regional organisations:**
   Actions:
   - Identify other key regional organisations with whom mutually beneficial relationships could be developed;
   - Maintain pro-active and consistent communication with partners, allied organisations and networks;
   - Build robust relationships with key stakeholders and community organisations;
   - Develop a reputation for constructive collaborations.

3. **Ensure the Alliance's strategic direction reflects relevant state and regional planning and development documents**
   Actions:
   - Align with national, state and regional key strategic planning documents (eg: SW Infrastructure Plan, South West Regional Blueprint, etc);
   - Regularly review the Alliance's objectives to assess continued relevance and applicability within wider regional and state frameworks;
   - Identify gaps in state and regional planning and develop a position on these.

4. **Advocate and implement on-going development to improve the capacity, amenity and appeal of the Warren Blackwood area**
   Actions:
   - Identify and consider key regional issues (Infrastructure, industry and community development);
   - Monitor regionally significant projects and their impacts;
   - Send suitable representation to relevant forums, presentations, functions and meetings;
   - Develop and maintain a list of key stakeholders and community organisations and liaise with these regularly;
   - Invite relevant speakers/representatives to Alliance meetings.

5. **Actively pursue funding to achieve a range of key regional outcomes**
   Actions:
   - Identify potential funding sources;
   - Identify potential partners;
   - Investigate and pursue opportunities to improve the economic base of the region – thus increasing the Alliance's financial capacity;
   - Undertake and maintain a summary of all successfully completed Alliance projects to use as leverage for funding applications.

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