



CHAPTER 1 - BACKGROUND

This proposal is in response to an invitation by the City of Melville to undertake an update and review of its Local Commercial Strategy. In 1993 the City of Melville engaged Shrapnel Urban Planning to prepare the new Local Commercial Strategy. This strategy has guided commercial development in the City over the past eight years. It is due for review. The strategy was to the year 2006 but has become outdated to a certain extent in the light of recent initiatives in the City, particularly at the Melville City Centre.

The factors that must be taken into account in updating the current strategy can be summarised as follows:

- The current Local Commercial Strategy is based on population projections by Shrapnel Urban Planning and the (then) Ministry for Planning derived from the 1991 Census. It needs updating. The results of the 2001 census have recently become available. Moreover, current population projections by the Department for Planning and Infrastructure have been revised to show an increased population growth for Melville and Cockburn and other inner and middle metropolitan local authorities and slower growth in the outer corridor local authorities such as Kwinana, Rockingham and Mandurah.
- The current Local Commercial Strategy had a time horizon to 2006. The brief for the current review requires a time horizon of 25 years – to 2026. In this period Melville will begin to transform into an inner metropolitan suburb, with the characteristics of increasing residential density now becoming evident in South Perth. Melville will also assume the social profile characteristics of inner city areas. The commercial and retailing structures in Melville should also expand over the next 20 years in response to these changes.
- There has been considerable new commercial development in Melville since the work was done for the current Local Commercial Strategy in 1993. This new development should be included in this update and review of the strategy.
- The commercial data used in the Local Commercial Strategy (1993) was based upon the (then) Ministry for Planning 1991 Commercial Survey. Since then further surveys were undertaken in 1993 and 1997. Data from the latest Department for Planning and Infrastructure Commercial Survey completed in 2002 has been used in this review.
- The current Local Commercial Strategy (1993) is based on the Metropolitan Centres Policy (1991). This policy has now been superseded by the Metropolitan Centres Policy (2000) and given statutory status as Statement of Planning Policy No. 9.

The City of Melville is approaching maturity. It is a well-established middle suburban area with a slowing, but steady, population growth. The potential for commercial expansion will be through a process of redevelopment rather than new development.

The City has a balanced shopping hierarchy comprising Melville City Centre which is a large regional centre, supplemented by strategically located district centres and larger neighbourhood centres and a fairly even distribution of smaller neighbourhood and local centres. Myaree is an important mixed business and light industrial area that is strategically located with good prospects for continuing commercial development. It has become the focus of office development in the City. Melville City Centre has a substantial office



component comprising Council and Alcoa offices, banks, post office and a number of commercial service offices. Canning Bridge, being a prestigious location area is an embryonic office area which is in the process of evolving into higher order land uses – reflecting the very high land values. It is unlikely that it will attract a major retailing component to reach its full size as a district centre.

The purpose of this review is to prepare a Local Commercial Strategy that meets the aspirations of the City of Melville and its community and is to a standard required for the endorsement of the Western Australian Planning Commission.

1.1 STUDY AREA

The *Guidelines for the Preparation of Local Commercial Strategies* requires that the study area for Local Commercial Strategy comprise two parts. The core study area is normally the local authority for which the strategy is being prepared. Then there is a ‘frame’ study area that is the sphere of influence for commercial activity into and out of the target local authority. This is an obvious necessity because the shopping hierarchy in any local authority within a metropolitan area is part of a wider commercial system that transcends local authority boundaries.

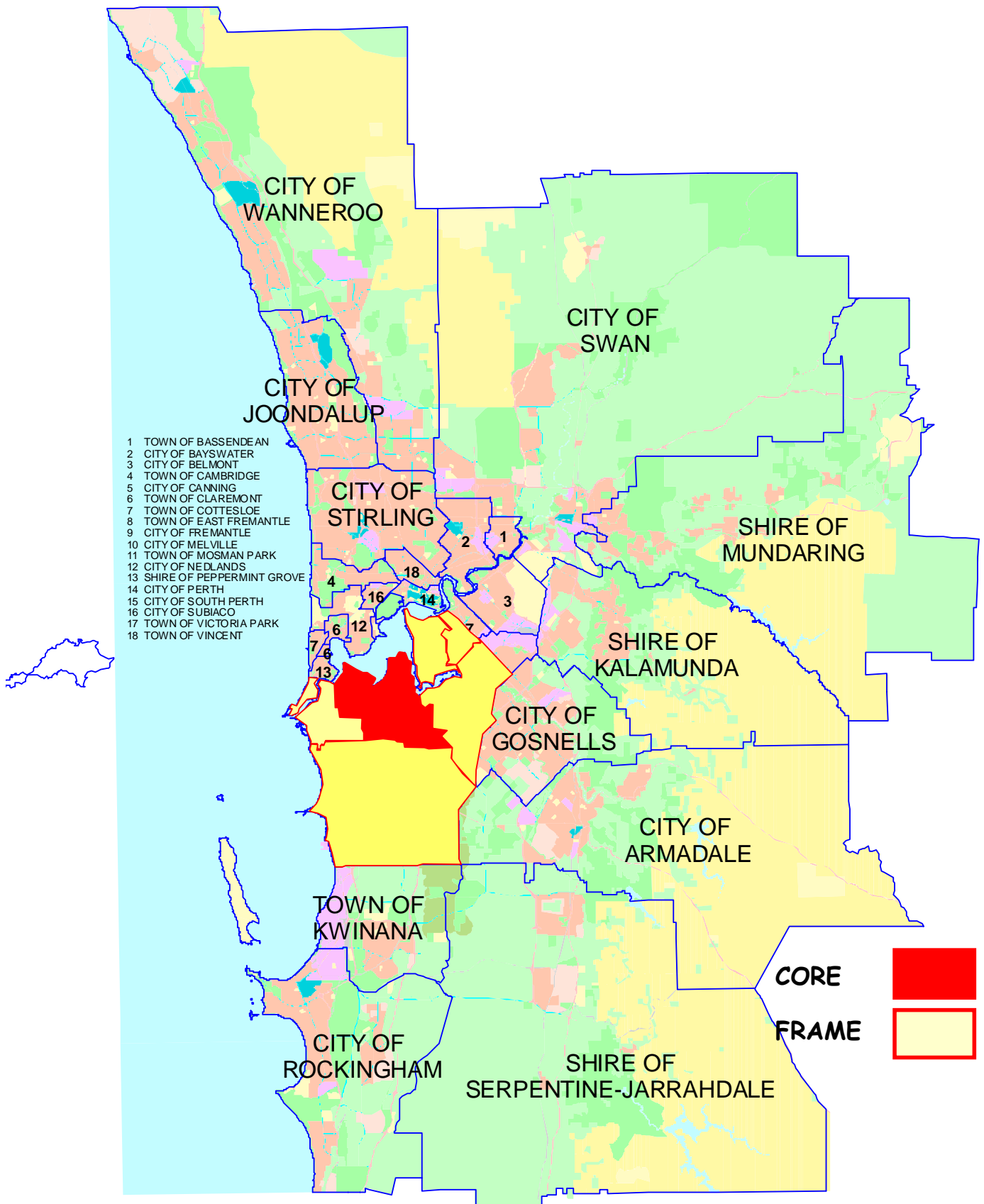
For this review, the same core and frame areas as defined in the 1993 Strategy are adopted. This will allow a better assessment of trends and comparisons between the work by Shrapnel Urban Planning in 1993 and this work. The ‘core’ study area comprises the City of Melville. The ‘frame’ area includes all the local authorities south of the Swan River, as far east as the western half of the Town of Victoria Park and the majority of the City of Canning. The southern extent will include the City of Cockburn. **See Figure 1.1**

Within the study area the basic unit of analysis for population projections as used in the retail modelling will be the new Main Roads WA traffic zones. These are the smallest units of area for which the Department for Planning and Infrastructure make population and land use projections. The retail structures and strategies of all local authorities will form an integral part of the analysis used to formulate the strategy for Melville.

Particular attention will be paid to the current and possible future roles played by the Melville City Centre in its broader social context with a view to optimising its long term sustainability and social benefit.



FIGURE 1.1 - THE STUDY AREA IN THE METROPOLITAN CONTEXT



Source: MRS Base, Department for Planning and Infrastructure



The Overall Master Plan envisaged a substantial residential component on the South Street/Windelya Road side and a substantial employment area (Science/Technology Park) on the Murdoch Drive side. Part of the plan is to include a retail component that would be ancillary to the functions of the University including the residential component. This would start as a small convenience centre and would expand depending on local demand – which at this stage is difficult to estimate.

To test the impact of what could be an upper limit to the retailing component at Murdoch we have assessed the impact of a hypothetical centre at the Murdoch University by assuming a location adjacent or near South Street near St Ives Retirement Village. Because this centre has no formal status at this stage it is not part of the formal Strategy, however we have modelled the theoretical impact of a neighbourhood centre (4,500m²) on the existing shopping hierarchy in Melville. The details of this modelling are attached in Appendix 2.

1.4 FIONA STANLEY TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT (TOD)

The Government of WA in conjunction with the City and stakeholders are contemplating a future TOD built over the western car parking at the Murdoch railway station. Plans are still in an early conceptual stage. The idea is that the TOD would be an adjunct to the Fiona Stanley Hospital development and the other institutional uses between the Freeway and Murdoch drive, south of South Street. It would include multi-storey residential and office developments. Part of the TOD would be retailing at ground level ancillary to the TOD and adjoining institutional uses.

Plans are too conceptual to evaluate the effects of these ideas on the Local Commercial Strategy. If they eventuate they should be included in any future review of this Strategy.

1.5 DEFINITIONS

For purposes of the recommendations made in this Local Commercial Strategy, floorspace assessments and recommendations are based on the description given in Section 4.5 of the Metropolitan Centres Policy (2000), namely:

'The shopping floorspace referred to in the Shopping Floorspace Guide in Appendix 1 (to the Metropolitan Centres Policy (2000)) and this policy is defined as in Planning Land Use Category 5 (but excludes hotels, taverns and nightclubs) of the WA Standard Land Use Classification (WASLUC). Uses such as banks, real estate agencies, medical practices and showrooms are not included. The list of Category 5 uses is provided in Appendix 4 (of the Metropolitan Centres Policy (2000))

In calculating the shopping floorspace of a centre, the shopping floorspace of the entire centre is to be included. This includes the total shopping floorspace within the retail zone plus any shopping floorspace in other parts of the centre which are not zoned retail.'

No definition is given in the Metropolitan Centres Policy (2000) for the physical extent of a centre. For purposes of this strategy centres have been defined by the extent of zoning in the Town Planning Scheme and are shown superimposed onto aerial photography in Chapter 5 of this report.

It is important to note that the definition of a centre in this Strategy does not necessarily coincide with the configuration of Commercial Complexes used in the Department for



Planning and Infrastructure commercial surveys. The reason is that complexes in the commercial surveys have been compiled for administrative and data collection reasons rather than as functional or economic units.

The reason for raising the question of definitions is that there are significant inexplicable differences in the amount of retail floorspace identified in some centres in the current (1993) Local Commercial Strategy and this work. In this work GIS techniques were used to identify shop floor areas (as defined above) from the 1997 and 2002 Commercial Surveys for the areas falling within the physical extent of centres as defined for this study.

These differences have statutory implications for the maximum retail floorspace limits set in the City of Melville Community Planning Scheme.