



SHIRE OF WICKEPIN

Growth Strategy



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Developing the people of rural WA so *they* can create change in their communities.

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Executive Summary

The Wickepin Growth Strategy outlines a comprehensive plan to stimulate sustainable economic and population growth in the Shire of Wickepin. With a current population of approximately 701 and a projected gradual decline, the strategy aims to reverse this trend by leveraging local assets, enhancing infrastructure, and fostering liveability.

The strategy identifies seven key priorities:

1. **Unlocking Shire-owned residential land** to address housing shortages, support population and business growth and economic development.
2. **Developing diverse accommodation options** to attract and retain workers and residents.
3. **Unlocking industrial land** to support business expansion and attract new industries for economic development
4. **Securing investment in digital connectivity**, including mobile and internet infrastructure, to support modern living and business operations.
5. **Enhancing tourism through noctourism and caravan park development**, by promotion of natural attractions (Lake Yealering, Lake Toolibin and endemic wildflowers and bushland) and capitalizing on Wickepin's status as an Astrotourism destination.
6. **Investing in townscape improvements** to boost community pride and visitor appeal.
7. **Renewable energy**.

The Shire of Wickepin's economy is predominantly agricultural, contributing \$95.5 million in output, with emerging opportunities in mining (kaolin), tourism, and renewable energy. The Shire's Gross Regional Product (GRP) has grown by 14% over the past decade, reaching \$70.7 million in 2024.

Challenges and Opportunities

- **Population Decline:** The population has decreased by 8% over the past decade, with an aging demographic.
- **Housing Shortage:** Limited availability of rental and purchase properties across all towns.
- **Digital Infrastructure:** Limited fibre upgrades; reliance on satellite and wireless services.
- **Freight and Logistics:** Strategic location near Narrogin and CBH grain sites offers potential for logistics and industrial development.
- **Tourism:** Opportunities in night time tourism, promotion of existing local natural attractions.
- **Renewable Energy:** Proximity to the SWIS network positions Wickepin for future energy projects.

The strategy is heavily underpinned by the Town Planning Scheme and we recommend that the Shire positions itself *as a residential lifestyle and commercial satellite town to Narrogin; where agriculture, mining, and downstream processing co-exist and are supported by local natural attractions and nighttime tourism and events.*

1. Rational

1.1 THE HISTORY

The Shire of Wickepin is situated in the wheatbelt of Western Australia, rich in history and made up of 5 local areas: Wickepin, Yealering, Harrismith, Tincurrin and Toolibin. The town of Wickepin is just 30 minutes from the regional town of Narrogin and two and a half hours southeast of Perth CBD. It boasts impressive sporting and recreational facilities for a wheatbelt town and a great mix of people with a real country lifestyle.

The Wickepin area was one of several agricultural districts opened up in the 1890's and with the opening of the Great Southern Railway in 1889 and subsequent growth of Narrogin and its surrounds, led to the constitution of the Wickepin Road District on 22 January 1909.

The commercial side of Wickepin grew quickly with three banks, blacksmiths and many other businesses, boasting one of the biggest Ford dealerships in the southern hemisphere. The brick railway station, the stationmaster's house, the hotel, the post office and most of the present shops were all constructed before the end of 1913/ resident police officers and a town doctor arrived in 1911 and the Memorial Hospital was opened in 1923. The first sections of the Town Hall were built in 1920 with various additions taking place up until 1963. Electricity and piped water were connected to the town in 1964.

Cricket and football clubs were very popular from early days in Wickepin and there was a racetrack out of town that held an annual race meeting around New Year. Community activities and interests continue to form the fabric of country communities and during the 1980's, the Wickepin District Sports Club became the main venue for the community's social and sporting functions. Today, the Wickepin Community Centre, which was opened in 1997, provides excellent facilities for the various community functions held in Wickepin.

The Albert Facey Trail provides a fascinating insight into Wickepin's past and the town's well known author of "A Fortunate Life", Albert Facey. His house, which was originally built in 1924, has been relocated to the centre of town and fully restored. The house is connected by a walk trail through the Wickepin Heritage Precinct and recent upgrades to the playground and newly completed skatepark has added to the vibrancy of the centre of town.

Wickepin is also home to the highly regarded Facey Group, a not-for-profit agricultural grower-led group steering relevant and localised research, extension, information and networking aimed to build the profitability and sustainability of broadacre farming in the region.

To the north of Wickepin lies the town of Yealering on the banks of Lake Yealering, which supports a large variety of birdlife and is a popular summer recreation and picnic spot for locals and tourists. Overlooking the lake are modern sporting facilities including tennis courts, bowling green and cricket oval and an 18-hole gold course that surrounds the lake. The Town Hall and caravan park are also located on the lake shore.

To the south, you will find Toolibin Lake, one of the last remaining freshwater wetlands in the southwest of Australia and further east, Harrismith boasts a wonderful wildflower walk trail. In spring, the Tincurrin area has a stunning display of wildflowers and is especially renowned for its verticordias.



Wickepin Township Map. Source: Google Earth

1.2 POPULATION

Estimated Resident Population (ERP) is the official Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) measure of the population of areas in Australia according to a usual residence population concept. Wickepin's estimated resident population as of 30 June 2023 is 701.

Between 2001 and 2012 there was a gradual upward trend in the population. Since that time the population has been in steady decline, reducing by 8% between 2013 and 2023.

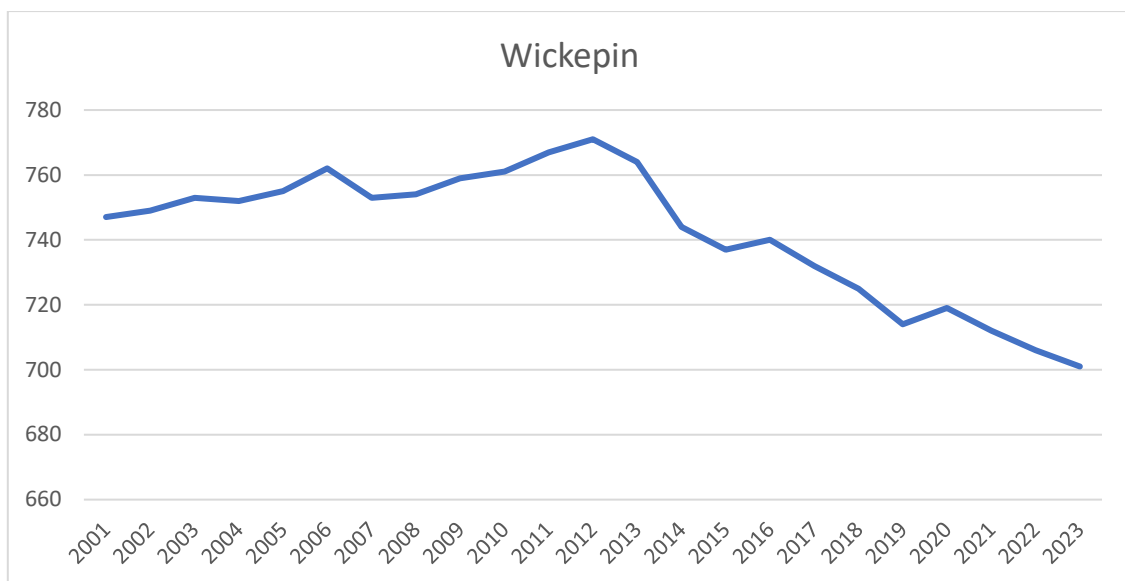


Figure 1 Estimated Resident Population of Wickepin as of 30 June each year from 2001 - 2023. Source: ABS Population Estimates by LGA [Regional population, 2022-23 financial year | Australian Bureau of Statistics](#)

The WA Tomorrow Population Report 12 median forecast is for the Shire of Wickepin to experience an average annual growth rate of -0.2% over the next decade, declining to a total population of 685 by 2036.

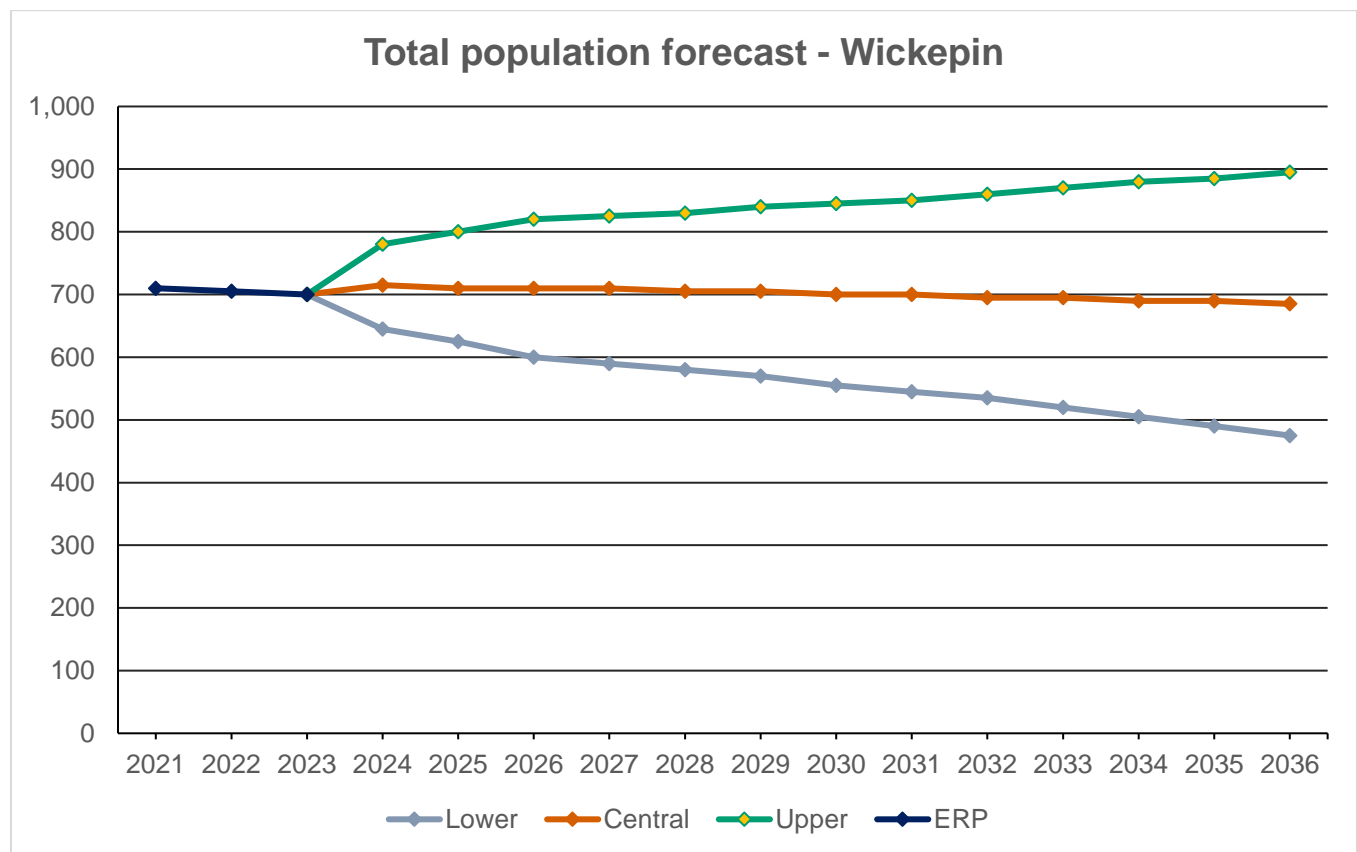


Figure 2 Population forecast for Wickepin. Source: WA Tomorrow Population Report 12

2. Objectives

Following a Council session in December 2024, the following objectives were agreed to for the Growth Strategy:

- ✓ Develop and release serviced land as per the Town Planning Scheme;
- ✓ Enable population growth and economic development; and
- ✓ Provide essential local services to stop economic leakage.

The Growth Strategy uses the Town Planning Scheme as its main enabler and framework. At the time of this Strategy the Town Planning Scheme had been submitted to WA Planning for adoption.

Additional enablers for the Shire of Wickepin in working towards the vision of this Strategy include:

- The Wickepin Community Resource Centre ('soft infrastructure' and alignment to DPIRD's Service Level Outcomes for CRCs)
- Ignite Wicky (Wickepin Town Team that supports local placemaking)
- Local progress associations

Based on the information presented in this Strategy, the Shire of Wickepin should position itself as:

A residential lifestyle and commercial satellite town to Narrogin; where agriculture, mining, and downstream processing co-exist and are supported by local natural attractions and nighttime tourism and events.

3. Context Analysis

3.1 THE WHEATBELT TODAY

The top 5 industries by regional economic output in the Wheatbelt (total output is \$17.4B)

1. Agriculture \$4,997.244
2. Mining \$4,237.905
3. Construction \$1,234.345
4. Manufacturing \$1,166.057
5. Rental and hiring \$1,042.877

The [Wheatbelt Development Commission](#) has emphasised the following foundations for economic growth across the region:

1. Digital connectivity: data demand is rising fast
2. Freight and logistics: efficient supply chains are vital to regional competitiveness
3. Liveable communities: regional migration is accelerating and occurring across the central coast. To sustain growth, towns must offer services, infrastructure and a high quality of life.

The Shire of Wickepin should note these foundations and acknowledge these will influence the Growth Strategy and will also be priorities.

The Wheatbelt Development Commission has also identified the following opportunities and challenges for the Wheatbelt:

Opportunities	Challenges
Agriculture Downstream Processing Mining Downstream Processing Manufacturing and construction services Renewable energy and biofuels Tourism and visitor economy Lifestyle and liveability Transport and logistics (freight hubs and networks)	Workforce shortages Infrastructure gaps (insufficient industrial land and utility services are constraining business growth) Supply chain vulnerabilities driving up costs and reducing regional competitiveness

3.2 WHEATBELT SOUTH SUB-REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

In 2014, the Wheatbelt Development Commission engaged economists RPS to develop the Wheatbelt South Sub-Regional Economic Development Plan¹. This plan was intended as a framework to guide investment and decision making to support economic and population growth in this sub-region of the Wheatbelt.

This plan identified three key areas of economic opportunity for the Shire of Wickepin:

- 1) *Agriculture, Livestock and Food Supply Chain*: Opportunity to capture increased activity, businesses and employment from broadacre cropping and livestock production and in particular

¹ RPS, 2014. Wheatbelt South Sub-Regional Economic Development Plan

from the upgraded (2013) sale yards. The development of agritourism to showcase local attractions could also be supported.

- 2) *Lifestyle, Amenity and Retirement*: Close proximity to Narrogin (30km) presents an opportunity for Wickepin to be marketed as a satellite community. Trail experiences and interpretation could improve townscape amenity and increase the range of recreation options.
- 3) *Mining*: The presence of the Kaolin mine site presents an opportunity for mining to become a greater economic contributor.

The following actions were identified as requiring implementation in order for the Shire of Wickepin to effectively leverage these economic opportunities:

- Continue to promote the new sale yard facility for sub regional use, including sale events.
- Support Kaolin mine in exploration opportunities and expansion plans.
- Investigation into the expansion of residential zoned land, including lifestyle lots.
- Investigation into the development of light industrial zoned land and available lots.
- Investigate the development of an additional 4-6 Key Worker Housing Units.
- Implement the Wickepin Walk trails Master Plan

Progress to date on the above implementation strategies:

- Sale yards were upgraded in 2021
- Construction of four new independent living units was completed in October 2024

3.3 STRATEGIC COMMUNITY PLAN

The Shire of Wickepin Strategic Community Plan 2023-2033 identifies four key priorities:

- 1) Attracting new populations and retaining our current population
- 2) Growing our local economy and providing opportunities that benefit local businesses across the Shire
- 3) Protecting, enhancing and receiving value from our natural environment
- 4) Ensure positive financial positions in Councils budget

The Plan is structured around four strategic pillars, each with a set of defined goals:

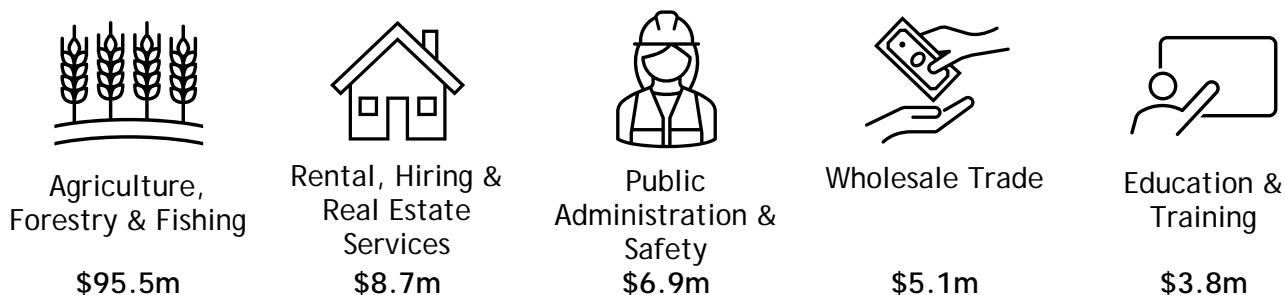
Infrastructure	Economy	Community	Governance
<i>Roads are a key economic driver across the Shire</i>	<i>We are an agricultural hub that innovates and leverage opportunities</i>	<i>Our communities are engaged, have a healthy lifestyle and are safe</i>	<i>Our organisation is well positioned and has capacity for the future</i>
<i>Improve the amenities and aesthetics of townsites</i>	<i>New businesses are attracted, and existing businesses grow</i>		<i>We are proactive about collaboration and forward planning our future success</i>
<i>The Shire of Wickepin Caravan Park amenities are of a high standard</i>	<i>Residents and visitors can access reliable telecommunications services</i>		<i>Our communities are informed via multiple channels at regular intervals</i>
<i>Maintain Shire owned facilities in a strategic manner and also to meet community needs</i>	<i>Tourism opportunities create value to our communities</i>		

4. Economic Overview

Of the total \$17.794 billion output generated in Wheatbelt region, \$135.858 million is generated in the Wickepin Shire (0.8%). Of the \$8.694 billion value added in the Wheatbelt Region \$68.643 million value is added by Wickepin.

The local economy is underpinned by agriculture. Agriculture, forestry and fishing is the Shire's largest output (gross revenue) generating sector, supporting an estimated output of \$95.510 million (70.3% of all output generated in the Shire). The agriculture, forestry and fishing industry is also the Shires largest exporter (generating exports estimated at \$84.834 million) and importer (spending an estimated \$36.7 million on regional imports).

Top 5 Output Generating Industry Sectors across the Shire of Wickepin



The districts estimated Gross Regional Product (GRP) for 2024 is \$70.707 million. GRP is a measure of the value of goods and services produced in a region. The Wheatbelt region's GRP for 2024 is estimated at \$8.865 billion, which means that 0.8% of the value of goods and services produced in the Wheatbelt, come from the Wickepin Shire. As per Figure 7., the Shire of Wickepin's GRP has grown by 14% over the last decade.

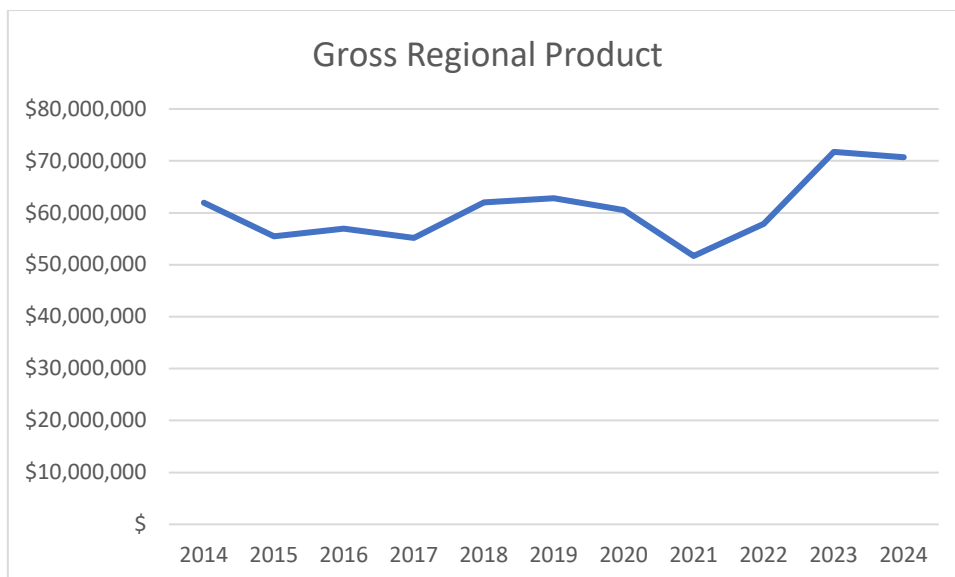


Figure 4 Real Gross Regional Product for the Shire of Wickepin 2014-2024. Source: REMPLAN

Using the Wheatbelt Development Commission's three foundations for economic growth, the following is an assessment of the Shire of Wickepin's current status in these areas.

4.1 DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY STATUS

Connectivity matters because:

- Regional businesses, education, healthcare and emergency services all depend on fast reliable internet
- Digital connectivity drives the economic growth and job creation. A critical component of regional attraction strategies.
- The demand for higher speeds and more reliable connections continues to grow.

According to the NBN, the average WA home/business on the nbn network used 461.65 GB per month over 2024, slightly higher than the national average.

One of the top 5 'data hungry' local government areas included nearby Narrogin (387.72 GB average monthly data usage per household) which signifies the development occurring in the regional centre, this helps to define the role of the Shire of Wickiepin.

The nbn has indicated Wickiepin is a satellite community and does not have any fibre upgrades planned. Residents and businesses can currently access Starlink and an alternative WA provider – Crisp Wireless.

Mobile Connectivity

The National Audit of Mobile Coverage aims to better identify mobile coverage black spots across Australia to help target future investment, and to provide an independent resource that better reflects on ground experiences of mobile coverage provided commercially by mobile providers.

The Audit is a component of the Government's Better Connectivity Plan for Regional and Rural Australia. The Audit will run until 30 June 2027. Accenture Australia has been contracted to undertake the Audit on behalf of the Government.

The current mobile coverage across the Shire of Wickiepin (through crowd sourced data) is as follows:

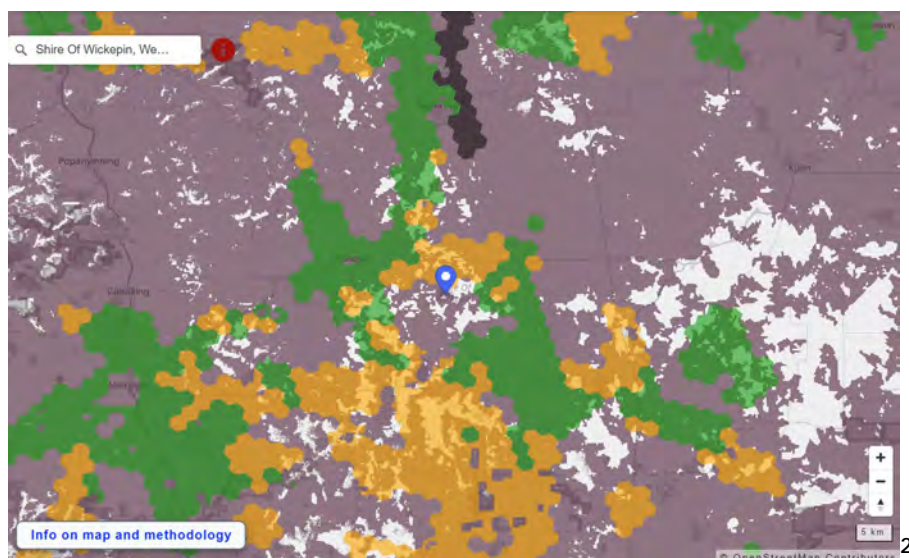


Figure 5 Green - Acceptable | Yellow - Modest | Purple - 4G coverage (based on ACCC information)¹³ | White - Insufficient data to indicate coverage

² National Audit of Mobile Coverage April 2025

³ This dataset provides data on mobile sites and coverage maps within Australia and is sourced from information collected under the ACCC's Audit of Telecommunications Infrastructure Assets – Record Keeping Rules (Infrastructure RKR). The information is collected from the three national Mobile Network Operators (MNOs), Singtel Optus Pty Limited (ACN 052 833 208) (Optus), Telstra Corporation Limited (ACN 051 775 556) (Telstra), TPG Telecom Limited (ACN 093 058 069) (TPG).

Internet Connectivity

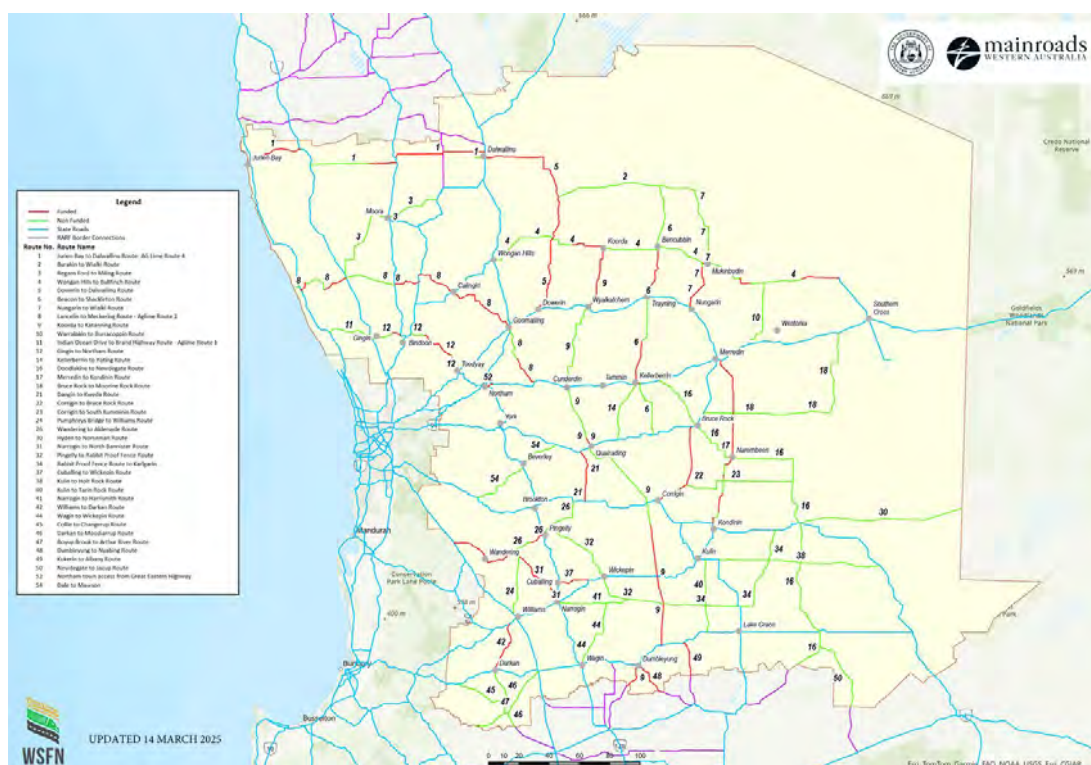
On the horizon for residents and businesses in the Shire of Wickepin regarding internet coverage is nbn is launching low earth orbit satellite solutions (like Starlink) before Sky Muster satellites reach end of life in the coming years.

4.2 FREIGHT AND LOGISTICS

Wheatbelt Secondary Freight Network

The Wheatbelt Secondary Freight Network (WSFN) is a jointly funded program between Commonwealth, State and 42 Wheatbelt Local Governments working together to strategically improve the regional road freight safety and efficiency across the key transport routes that support the region's major industries. Through this collaboration, a total of 4,400km of high priority routes will be upgraded in a rolling works program.

Identified routes that are within or that will benefit the Shire of Wickepin include the Wagin to Wickepin route (not funded) and Cuballing to Wickepin route (funded)



CBH and Rail Network

Co-Operative Bulk Handling operate three grain receival sites within the Shire of Wickepin. The Wickepin site has a total storage capacity of 243,975 tonnes and consists of seven open bulk heads and three silos. As one of the 100 strategic network sites for CBH, upgrades including the installation of open bulk heads, new conveyor loading systems, new truck marshal areas and improvements to traffic flow, were undertaken over 2018 and 2019. At Yealering and Tincurrin there are non-network sites.

*Please note, the ACCC has aggregated the frequency band coverage maps submitted by the MNOs to create additional technology level coverage maps which are available below (where the technology level maps were not provided by the MNOs). Further information on this is provided in the data interpretation guide (below) that supports this data release.

In January 2025, the State Government announced it would enter negotiations to secure control of Western Australia's freight rail network. This decision represents a pivotal moment for regional communities, where rail infrastructure is a critical lifeline for agriculture, industry, and the local economy.

If regional centres like Narrogin, in close proximity to the Shire of Wickepin, reclaim their role as a central player in servicing and expanding the rail network across the region and supporting rail operations, from maintenance to logistics, this also presents an opportunity for Wickepin as a satellite town to Narrogin.

WA Kaolin

WA Kaolin has an established Ore Reserve Estimate of more than 64 million tonnes of high-grade, easy access kaolinite at a site near the town of Wickepin. This represents one of the largest known remaining premium primary resources of kaolin in the world. Commercial operations have been established at the Wickepin site and produces kaolin products which are shipped to major producers and customers through the ports of Fremantle and Bunbury. The Wickepin site has an 80yr lifespan across 3,500 acres. Currently the operation is seeking 6 additional staff for 5 shifts as it moves towards 24/7 operation (currently it is 24hrs 5 days a week). The mine processes 230,000 tonnes and has a market for the raw materials, with a view to increasing to 450,000 tonnes.

From the Wickepin site the business exports 60 containers a week, but this will significantly increase as the business moves to 24/7 operations.

For the mine to increase to these production levels will require additional staff (most come from neighbouring communities as drive in and drive out), improvements to roads to meet the freight task and local accommodation.

Livestock Sales

The Wickepin sheep saleyards which are owned by the Shire of Wickepin, were upgraded in 2021 with loading/unloading ramps and fixed platforms and walkways to meet Australian Standards. The Shire's 2024/25 budget indicates a sale yard fee per head of \$0.55.

A decade ago (2015-2016) there were an estimated 97,692 sheep and lambs and 28 agricultural businesses supported by this industry, in the Wickepin Shire⁴. The ABS agricultural commodities report released in July 2022⁵ indicates that this number had grown to 120,262 sheep and lambs and 35 businesses by 2021. The ABS have ceased the release of statistics on agricultural commodities so there is no recent data to reflect current stock numbers in this area.

The Western Australian Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, Sheep Industry update from April 2025 reported that "industry confidence is low due to tough seasonal conditions, poor prices and changes in government policy. This had led to very high rates of turn-off as producers reduce the size of their sheep enterprise. This has likely resulted in significant flock decline between 2022 and 2024 and will likely continue into 2025 unless the rate of sales slows significantly and seasonal conditions are favourable". DPIRD estimate that the WA sheep flock may have declined to around 9.5 million in July 2024, down from 12.4 million in July 2022, and if current levels of turn-off are sustained for the remainder of 2024-25 the flock may decline further to between 8 and 8.5 million.

Although no area-specific data is available, it is assumed that flock numbers in Wickepin have declined in line with the broader state trend. Declining stock numbers will reduce the volume of

⁴ Agricultural commodities, Australia and state/territory and LGA regions - 2015-16, Australian Bureau of Statistics, 30 October 2018

⁵ Agricultural Commodities by Local Government Areas 2020-21, Australian Bureau of Statistics, July 2022

livestock passing through the saleyards and directly impact on the Shires ability to generate revenue from this facility.

Agroforestry

A development proposal was submitted in 2025 for a agroforestry/tree planting carbon project at Wyoming Downs. The project proponents, Wheatbelt Connect are proposing to establish a native vegetation carbon project covering approximately 450 hectares and to register the project under the Federal Government’s Emissions Reduction Funding, to deliver carbon abatement through Australian Carbon Credit Unites over a minimum 25 year period.

4.3 LIVEABLE COMMUNITIES

Energy

Demand for energy is growing at pace.

By 2030 the Federal and State Governments seek to have achieved a phase out of coal. There is however a generation capacity shortfall with further investment in generation and network capacity required to meet future shortfalls.

Additionally, the way we generate electricity is changing. As can be seen in the figure below the SWIS generation output % by calendar year and fuel shows how generation is changing:

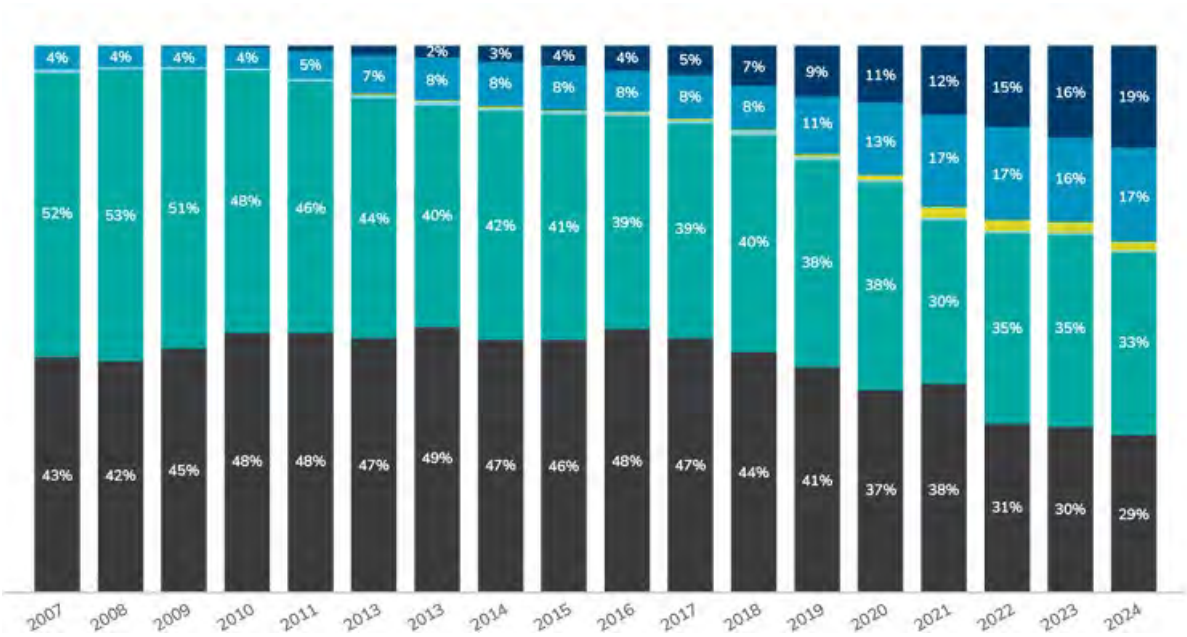


Figure 6: SWIS generation output % by calendar year and fuel
Source: Department of Energy, Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety
Key:



As industry and government move towards net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, it is expected demand for renewable energy supplied through the State's main electricity network, the South West Interconnected System (SWIS), will increase significantly.

Initial modelling suggests that if 7.2 GW of new industrial loads were to connect to the SWIS by 2042, the level of electricity required could grow to be five times greater than it was in 2022.

Supplying this level of demand with electricity generated largely from renewable energy sources would require almost 10 times the amount of generation capacity currently on the SWIS.

The [SWIS Demand Assessment](#) 2023 - 2042 indicates that investment in transmission infrastructure is essential to enable the supply of low-emissions electricity to all SWIS users.



Figure 7 SWIS nodal map. Source: Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety

Since the 2020 Whole of System plan modelling was conducted, the scale of the potential renewable energy requirements has shifted. The industry-wide focus on decarbonisation is driving a substantial increase in demand for renewable generation.

Some of Western Australia's best solar and wind resources are located outside the reaches of the existing transmission network. Communities along or near transmission lines (such as Wickiepin) should be prepared for renewable energy proponents (see map below of the SWIS network). Transmission refers to energy infrastructure that works in a similar way to the highway of the state's road network, taking very large amounts of power, up to the voltage of 330kV from big generators, and transferring it via towers and wires to the network to reach customers.

In the network there is more than 7,600km of transmission circuit feeding power into the SWIS.

The transmission system takes power from coal and gas generators and renewable sources like large wind and solar farms and transfers it in bulk to several substations. From there energy is transferred into the distribution system, with voltage being reduced at each stage to a safe level suitable for properties and appliances.

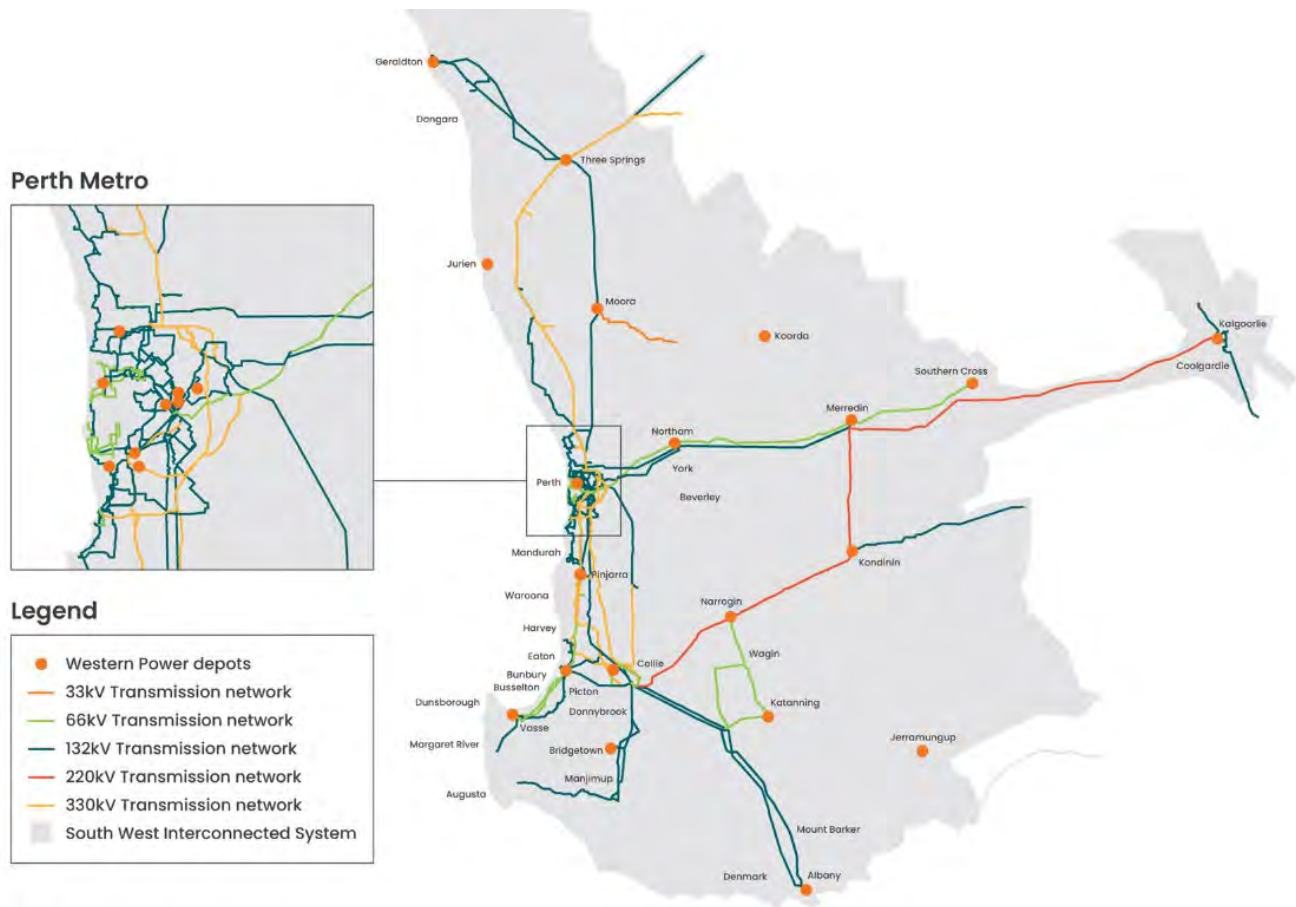


Figure 8 SWIS Network. Source: Western Power

Many of the new renewable energy generation and storage projects the State needs will be built in regional locations, often in areas that are unfamiliar with hosting large-scale energy infrastructure projects. There are a number of renewable energy projects operating in the Wheatbelt with more in the pipeline. In close proximity to the Shire of Wickiepin is the future projects: Kulin West Wind Farm and the Bellwether Wind Farm in the Shire of West Arthur.

Housing

According to REIWA⁶ as of December 2024, there are three residential properties for sale in Wickepin and zero properties to rent. The median house price in Wickepin is \$260,000. The median house price has increased at an average annual rate of 4.3% over the past 10 years.

In Yealering, Harrismith and Tincurrin there are no houses available to rent or purchase as of December 2024.

The majority of residential properties in the Shire are houses and are either fully owned or being purchased (i.e., owned with a mortgage).

Ownership Types	Wickepin	Yealering	Harrismith
Fully owned	48.6%	62.4%	46.6%
Being purchased	22.6%	37.6%	26.7%
Being rented	28.8%	0%	26.7%
Other	0%	0%	0%
Property Types	Wickepin	Yealering	Harrismith
House	93.4%	100%	100%
Apartment/unit	2.6%	0%	0%
Duplex/villa	2%	0%	0%
Other	2%	0%	0%

Figure 9 Residential ownership and property types. Source: REWIA Suburb Profiles

Value

At the 2021 Census, around 97.4% of Shire of Wickepin residents live in separate detached dwellings, which is above the WA average of 79.7%. There is limited range of housing choice in the Shire.

Land

	Serviced residential lots available	Un-serviced residential lots available
Wickepin	2	1
Yealering		
Harrismith		
Tincurrin		2
	Serviced industrial lots available	Un-serviced industrial lots available
Wickepin	1	4
Yealering		
Harrismith		
Tincurrin		

⁶ [Wickepin Suburb Profile | Property Market, House Prices and More - REIWA](#)

List of Council Owned Vacant Land

Lot Number	Address	Town	Lot Size	R-Code	Land Type	Owner	Any Known Site Restrictions	Serviced	Any Other Comments from Shire
3119	Keeping Street	Tincurrin		R2	Residential	Council		Unsure	Unknown details
100451	Keeping Street	Tincurrin		R2	Residential	Council		Unsure	Unknown details
218	Central Avenue	Wickepin		R2	Reserve	Council	Vested - Public Recreation	Unsure	
8	Collins Street	Wickepin	1103 m2	R2	Residential	Council		Yes	Proposed for new Shire House
9001	Curlew Way	Wickepin	91.247ha	RR	Rural Residential	Council		No	English Land for Subdivision - Has been in development phase. Growing Better Regions grant was going to be applied for. Missed Round 1 and Round 2 the scope changed and headworks were no longer eligible.
600	Johnson Street	Wickepin		C2	Commercial	Council		No	Civic/ Cultural. This is an area behind the medical centre and beside the town hall. Is used for car parking. Was looked at a couple of years ago to seal as a carpark but then that was rejected because of cost
41	Moss Parade	Wickepin	1601 m2	R2	Residential	Council		Yes	Executive / Group Housing
46	Moss Parade	Wickepin		R3	Reserve	Council	Drainage Reserve 39623	No	
207	Peters Street	Wickepin		R3	Reserve	Council	Vested Recreation	Unsure	No direction or ideas about options for this block
73	Richter Street	Wickepin	1012 m2	I1	Industrial	Council		Yes	No direction or ideas about options for this block
209	Richter Street	Wickepin		I1	Industrial	Council		No	Current Parking for Sheep Yards
48	Richter Street	Wickepin		I1	Industrial	Council		No	Current Parking for Sheep Yards
47	Richter Street	Wickepin		I1	Industrial	Council		No	Current Parking for Sheep Yards
69	Richter Street	Wickepin	1043m2	I1	Industrial	Council	Prone to flooding	No	
57	Wogolin Road	Wickepin	1032 m2	T1		Council	This has a drainage channel in it	Yes	Town Centre. This and lot 59 Wogolin Rd
99	Connor Street	Yealering		R3	Reserve	Council	Reserve 31560	Unsure	Dept of Planning lands and Heritage
3217	Dalton Street	Yealering		R3	Reserve	Council	Vested as reserve	Unsure	No direction or ideas about options for this block
100458	Dalton Street	Yealering		R3	Reserve	Council	Vested as reserve	Unsure	No direction or ideas about options for this block

Tourism

Of the \$345.036 million tourism output generated in the Wheatbelt region \$2.222 million is generated in the Wickepin Shire.

The industry sector in the Shire which captures the most value from visitor expenditure is accommodation and food services. It is estimated that this sector captures \$0.67 for every dollar spent by visitors to the Shire of Wickepin. In the Wickepin Shire, tourism supports 10 jobs.

The average stay of domestic overnight visitors as of 2023, was 3 nights and international visitors is 17 nights. The average spend per trip for domestic day visitors is \$190, for domestic overnight visitors it is \$635 and for international visitors it is \$857. The average spend per night for domestic overnight visitors is \$186 and for international visitors is \$56⁷.

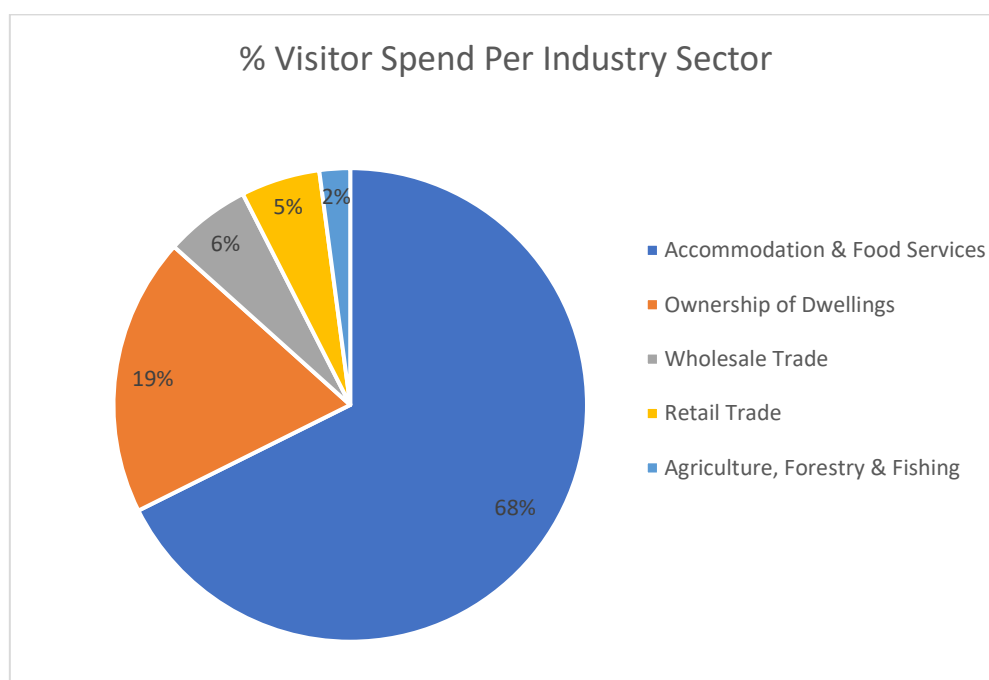


Figure 6 Percentage of visitor spend per industry sector in the Shire of Wickepin. Source: REMPLAN Economy

Noctourism

Star-gazing, nude solstice swims and spectacular light shows are part of a growing travel trend known as "noctourism" that's injecting hundreds of millions of dollars into Australia's economy each year.

A global survey of more than 27,000 travellers found noctourism was a top travel trend for 2025, according to booking.com, with a growing demand for night experiences.

Wickepin became an Astrotourism Town in August 2020. The Shire have invested in several Astrotourism initiatives including events and infrastructure. The Shire installed a concrete viewing platform at Lake Yealering along with a giant Planisphere and Stargazing for Beginners sign. The Wickepin Community Centre has also been established as a stargazing site. In 2024, the Shire of Wickepin in collaboration with the WA Parks Foundation and Astrotourism WA hosted a stargazing weekend, which attracted around 80 people to the area.

⁷ [Wheatbelt Region Economy, Jobs, and Business Insights | Visitor Expenditure, Tourism | REMPLAN](#)

Astro tourism as a night time activity increases overnight stays and as such has the potential to capture increased visitor spend. Astrotourism is also a year round activity so has the potential to increase visitation in “off-peak” seasons.

Aged Care

The Shire of Wickepin currently has two independent living unit (ILU) complexes in Wickepin - Cottage Homes and Woodland Court ILUs - with a total of three single bedroom units, one two-bedroom unit and four three bedroom units. The ILUs are owned and managed by the Shire of Wickepin with Council staff responsible for day to day operations under the guidance of policies and procedures established by Council.

In September 2019, the Minister for Regional Development, Agriculture and Food, announced that \$2.8m (of a \$5.09m project) would be contributed towards an aged housing project that would deliver 14 independent living units across four local governments in the Wheatbelt south - Wickepin, Cuballing, Kondinin and Corrigin. Of the 14 units being constructed, four would be built in Wickepin. The construction of the Woodland Court ILU's in Wickepin, which was also supported by funding through the Australian Governments Drought Communities Program and the Shire of Wickepin, was completed in October 2024.

WA Country Health Service operates a Commonwealth Home Support Program from the Wickepin health centre on Mondays and Tuesdays. Services available include domestic assistance, home maintenance, transport and personal care.

Older residents of Wickepin are also supported by the Staying in Place initiative. This initiative, which was pioneered by the Pingelly Community Resource Centre, provides local place-based care services for seniors in Pingelly, Wandering, Cuballing and Wickepin. The initiative provides the necessary physical supports (e.g., meal preparation, cleaning, etc.) alongside the social support that enables seniors to maintain their mental well-being through connection to people and community.

5. Planning

Key Takeaways from Local Planning Strategy - Land Development and Optimisation

Opportunity / Project	Action	Rationale	Timeframe
Crown land: land release / development Promote land release in townsites.	Negotiate with State Government agencies for assistance in creating a variety of lot sizes in and around the townsites through the Town Planning Scheme.	Support development in appropriate locations.	Short Term
Increase industrial land availability. Currently there is limited industrial zoned land.	Nominate secure and develop industrial areas to the south and south-west of the Wickepin townsite. Based on reviewing opportunities in and around the Wickepin townsite, landowner advice, feasibility considerations and land suitability, an area to the south of Wickepin townsite plus formalising the current use of land east of Dumbleyung Road are the preferred new light industrial areas. Additionally, there are opportunities for general industrial development to the south-west of the Wickepin townsite (east and south of the CBH facility).	Industrial and light industrial areas are focused on the Wickepin townsite. Landowners near the current industrial area in Wickepin do not support expanding the inadequate industrial estate. The site selection process reveals Shire owned land to the south of the Wickepin townsite, adjoining the Wickepin-Harrismith Road plus land to the east of Dumbleyung Road (used by the Shire) are suitable for industry-light uses. Land to the east and south of the CBH facility is well suited for general industry uses.	Short Term
Wickepin residential expansion	The following technical studies to be considered in any applications for structure planning and/or rezoning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drainage and water management; • Movement and access arrangements; • Land use compatibility; • Bushfire risks; • Environmental (fauna) impacts; and • Utilities and servicing capacity. 	Residential land is strategically important for the Shire's Economic Development and for the growth of the businesses and towns.	Commence in 2025/26
Existing public open space and reserves Review community needs, location of public open space and opportunities.	Review existing parks and recreation reserves and public open space in the townsites including tenure, usage and management. This could include a fit-for-purpose Public Open Space Strategy.	Possible scope to better utilise public open space. The Council seeks to consolidate its recreational resources in fewer, but better serviced areas of public open space.	Draft to be completed by December 2025
Yealering residential expansion	Retain residential zoning of unallocated Crown lots on western edge of town (fronting Connor Street and Baxter Street) and on northern edge of town (fronting Hill Street). Extend residential zoning east of Baxter Street (fronting Connor Street).	There is limited land for residential expansion in the Yealering townsite. The unallocated Crown lots are adjacent to existing residential lots and can be easily serviced.	Activate next 1 - 2 years

Land Development and Optimisation - Other

Opportunity / Project	Action	Rationale	Timeframe
Council land availability Understanding what land is already available	Staff to undertake a review of records of ownership and purpose of Council owned land, to be completed in format provided by 150Square.	To gain a clear understanding of what land Council currently owns, the land type, R-Code, any restrictions and designated purpose.	To be completed by June 2025
Land activation Increase land availability	Develop Business Case for headworks	Increase attraction opportunities for residential and light industrial land development within the Shire	Draft to be completed by October 2025
Key Worker Housing Business case for increased key worker housing in Wickepin	Liaise with the Wheatbelt Development Commission for the development of an audit, business case analysis, cost benefit analysis and proposed action plan for the activation of land and funding needs for delivery of key worker housing.	Advocate to local industry and government to seek funding to assist in provision of increased key worker housing for the Shire. These documents will assist in developing a funding application.	2025/26

6. Regional Centre – Shire of Narrogin

It would be remiss to not include information on the nearby regional centre of Narrogin. Understanding the future direction of the Shire of Narrogin is integral to determining the role the Shire of Wickepin plays in the sub region.

The Shire of Narrogin is home to about 5,000 residents and is the regional centre for nearby communities including Cuballing, Wickepin, Wagin and Williams, all of which provide a feeder population of more than 10,300 people.

Narrogin's infrastructure, health, education facilities and specialty retail outlets also regularly attract more than 9,000 residents from the outlying Shires of Brookton, Corrigin, Dumbleyung, Kulin, Kondinin, Lake Grace and Pingelly, providing a total catchment of over 20,000 people.

Agriculture is the dominant industry in the region, however Narrogin's position as a key transport hub for the area, its big population base, shopping options, facilities and services and its close proximity to Perth make it an attractive location for new business and industry.

With a steadily growing population and a newly established future industries park, the Shire of Narrogin is planning for the future by opening large parcels of land for new industries.

Narrogin is a regional road transport hub with heavy haulage routes surrounding the town. The Great Southern Rail Line is a designated Tier 1 rail line which extends from Perth through Northam and south to Albany. The Narrogin Airstrip is five kilometres from the town.

Narrogin is also a hub for aged care services with Narrogin home care providing in home services, Narrogin Cottage Homes and Dillon's providing a range of residential care and a new dementia facility provided at Narrogin Cottage Homes.

7. Growth Strategy Priorities

GROWTH STRATEGY	PRIORITY	IMPACT	DETAILS	SHIRE ROLE	ENABLING PARTNERS
1. Unlock Shire owned residential land	High	High	a) Town Planning Scheme adoption b) Shire of Wickepin Housing Study and include shovel ready options to activate Shire owned land	Deliver	WA Planning Wheatbelt Development Commission
2. Accommodation options and development	High	High	a) Shire of Wickepin Housing Study	Deliver	Wheatbelt Development Commission CBH WA Kaolin
3. Unlock industrial land in Wickepin	High	High	a) Town Planning Scheme adoption b) Business case for industrial land headworks	Deliver	WA Planning
4. Secure investment in enabling infrastructure - digital connectivity	High	High	a) Telstra back up power to exchanges and towers	Advocate	Telstra
5. Enhance liveability - tourism	Medium	High	a) Astro-tourism international accreditation b) 'Dark sky' lamp investment c) Caravan Park development (all towns) d) Noctourism event plan e) Promote natural local attractions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lake Yealering - Lake Toolibin (DBCA) - Seasonal Wildflowers 	Deliver	WA Parks Foundation Astrotourism WA Western Power
6. Enhance liveability - enhance heritage and townscape	Medium	Medium	a) Public Open Space Strategy. b) Main street activation plan for each town for future townscape improvements and enhancing heritage buildings and places.	Deliver	Ignite Wicky and Town Team Movement
7. Enhance liveability	Medium	Low	a) Develop a Community Benefit Framework for Renewable Energy Projects	Deliver	WALGA

8. Appendices

Community Profile

Age profile

The Wickepin Shire has a median age of 47 compared to the state and national average of 38. Between the 2011 and 2021 ABS Census the Shire has experienced some significant shifts in its population profile.

- Several age groups have experienced significant **decline**:
 - Persons aged 45 - 49 years have declined by 47% (76 in 2011 down to 40 in 2021)
 - Persons aged 0-4 years have declined by 45% (77 in 2011 down to 42 in 2021)
 - Persons aged 40-45 years have declined by 40% (53 in 2011 down to 32 in 2021)
 - Persons aged 50 - 54 years have declined by 33% (63 in 2011 down to 42 in 2021)
- Several age groups have experienced a significant **increase**:
 - Persons aged 80 - 84 years have increased by 91% (up from 11 in 2011 to 21 in 2021)
 - Persons aged 85 and over have increased by 80% (up from 10 in 2011 to 18 in 2021)
 - Persons aged 75 - 79 years have increased by 54% (up from 24 in 2011 to 37 in 2021)
 - Persons aged 55 - 59 years have increased by 54% (up from 46 in 2011 to 71 in 2021)
- The percentage of the population aged 55-64 years is higher than both state and national averages (18.2% compared to 11.8% for WA and 11.9% Australia).
- The percentage of the population aged 75 - 84 is higher than both state and national averages (8.3% compared to 4.9% at state level and 5.4% at a national level).

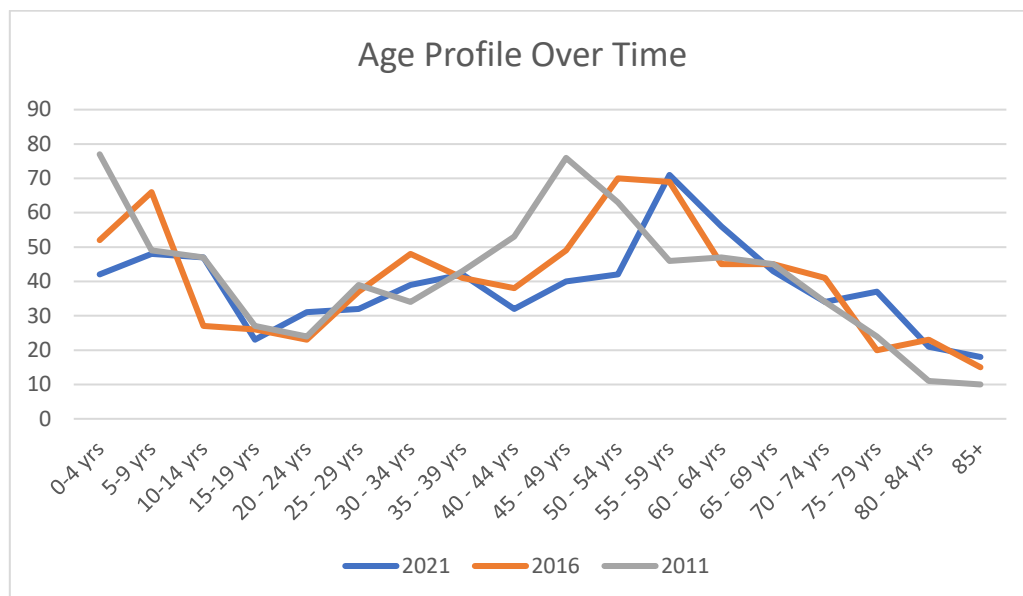


Figure 3 Age Profile of the Shire of Wickepin 2011 to 2021. Source: ABS Census 2011, 2016 and 2021 Quick Stats

The forecast age profile for the Shire of Wickepin suggests that the largest age cohort in the Shire will be 55 - 59 year olds by 2036. This age group will represent 8% of the total population by 2036 based on the latest population forecast modelling.

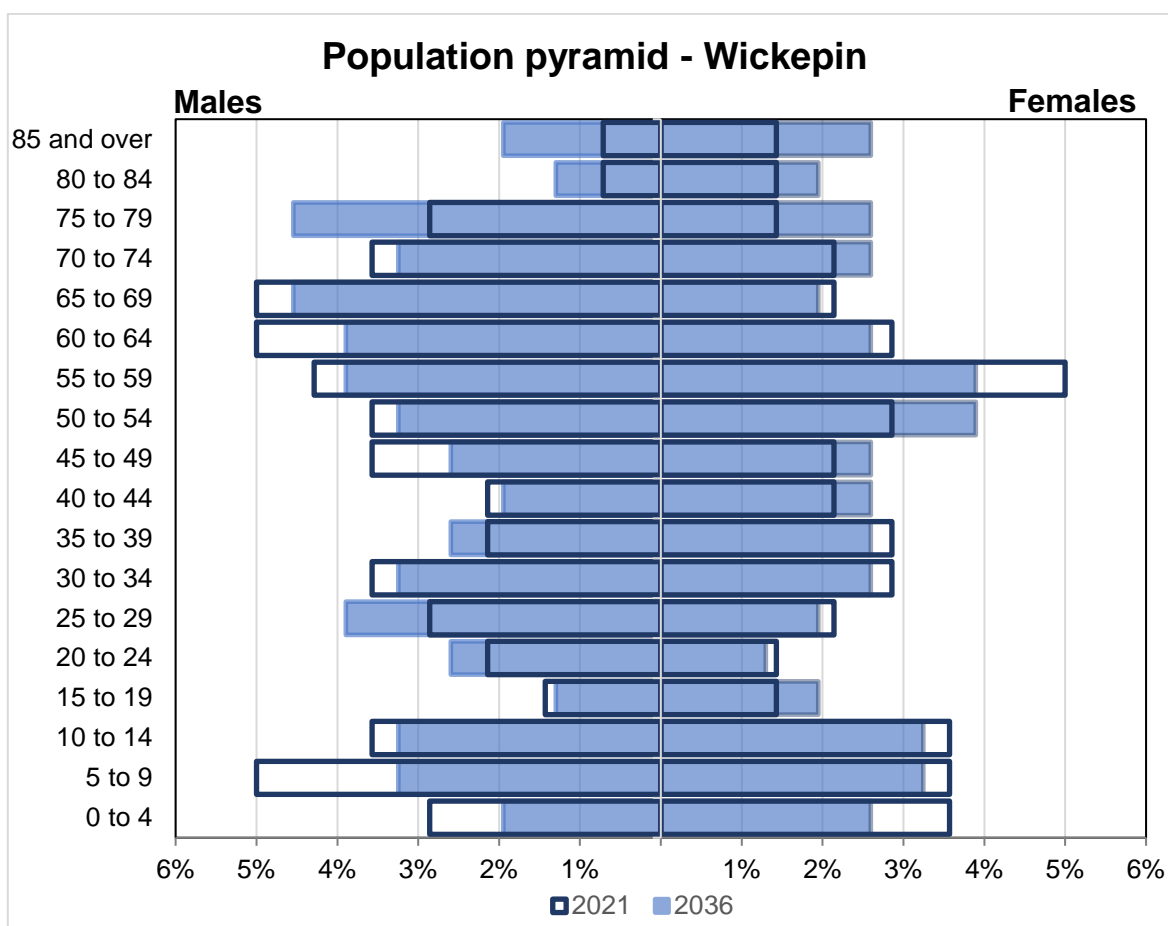


Figure 4 Forecast Age & Sex Profile for Shire of Wickepin 2021 - 2036. Source: WA Tomorrow Population Report No. 12⁸

CULTURAL DIVERSITY

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) population of Wickepin Shire is small, with just 20 people (2.9% of the population) identifying as ATSI at the time of the 2021 Census. Almost half (46.1%) of all Wickepin residents are of Australian ancestry. This is much higher than the state average of 29.7% and national average of 29.9%. Residents are predominately English speaking (82.8%).

	Wickepin		Western Australia		Australia	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	20	2.9%	88,693	3.3%	812,728	3.2%
Non-Indigenous	562	81.4%	2,431,204	91.4%	23,375,949	91.9%
Indigenous status not stated	105	15.2%	140,128	5.3%	1,234,112	4.9%

ATSI Population of Shire of Wickepin. Source: ABS Census 2021 Quick Stats

⁸ WA Tomorrow Population Report 12, released February 2025

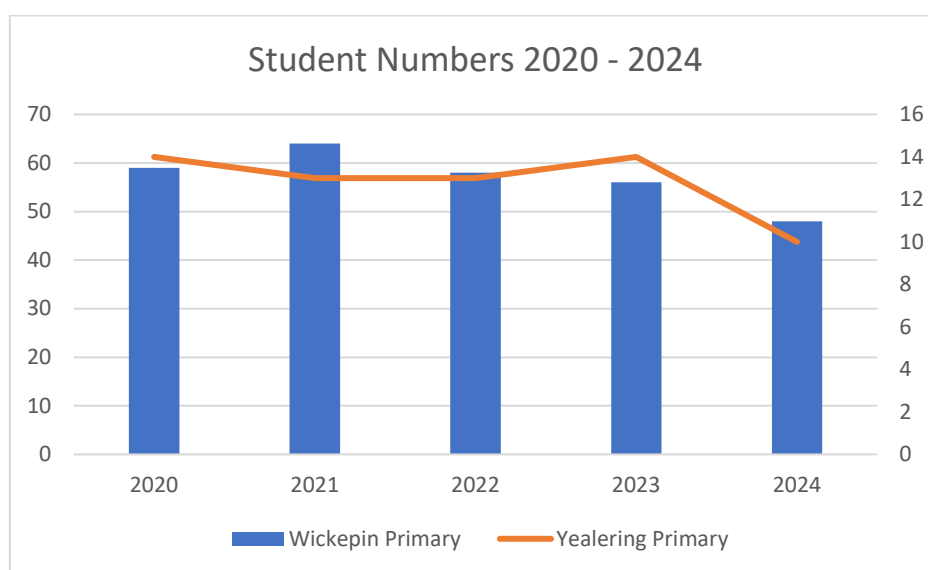
	Wickepin		Western Australia		Australia	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Australian	318	46.1%	789,282	29.7%	7,596,753	29.9%
English	286	41.4%	1,000,796	37.6%	8,385,928	33%
Scottish	67	9.7%	232,541	8.7%	2,176,777	8.6%
Irish	66	9.6%	233,323	8.8%	2,410,833	9.5%
Italian	32	4.6%	137,255	5.2%	1,108,364	4.4%

Source: ABS Census 2021 Quick Stats

EDUCATION

Wickepin Primary School is a Level 3 Public School, catering to students from Kindergarten to Year 6. Yealering Primary School is a small school likewise catering to students from Kindergarten to Year 6. Student numbers at Wickepin Primary have declined by 19% over the last five years (down from 59 in 2020 to 48 students in 2024). Yealering Primary student numbers remained fairly steady from 2020 to 2023 before experiencing a fairly significant drop in 2024 when numbers declined from 14 to 10 students.

At the time of the 2021 Census there were 105 primary school aged children (4 - 12 years) in the Shire⁹ and a total of 77 students enrolled across the two Primary Schools. This indicates that some parents are choosing to educate their children outside of the Shire.



Student Number Trends, as of Semester 2, 2024. Source: Department of Education, Schools Online

In the Shire of Wickepin the highest level of educational attainment for the majority of persons aged 15 and over is Year 10 or Year 12. The percentage of people who have attained a Bachelor Degree or above is significantly lower than the state and national averages.

	Wickepin	Western Australia	Australia
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⁹ ABS 2021 Census Wickepin Community Profile. Age by sex tables.

Bachelor degree or above	9.4%	23.8%	26.3%
Diploma	6%	9.3%	9.4%
Cert III or IV	15.2%	17.8%	16.1%
Year 12	17.8%	15.5%	14.9%
Year 10	19.4%	11.3%	10%
Year 9 or below	7.2%	5.4%	7.2%

Highest Level of Educational Attainment. Source: ABS Census 2021 Quick Stats

FAMILIES

Wickepin Shire has a higher percentage of couple families without children compared to state and national averages. The percentage of couple families with children has gradually been in decline, down from 37.1% in 2011 to 36.6% in 2016 and 34.3% in 2021.

	Wickepin	Western Australia	Australia
Couple family without children	53%	38.8%	38.8%
Couple family with children	34.2%	44.6%	43.7%
One parent family	9.6%	15.1%	15.9%
Other family	2.4%	1.6%	1.6%

Family Composition. Source: ABS Census 2021 Quick Stats

SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE

The Age Pension and Pension Concession Card are the main benefit payments received by residents of the Wickepin Shire. Between 2016 and 2023 there was a 15% increase in the number of pension concession card holders and a 13% increase in those receiving the age pension. The number of residents receiving Family Tax Benefit A (-33%) and B (-37%) has declined over this same period. These trends are consistent with the observed increase in the population of Wickepin that is eligible for the age pension (i.e., aged 67+) and the declining number of couple families with children.

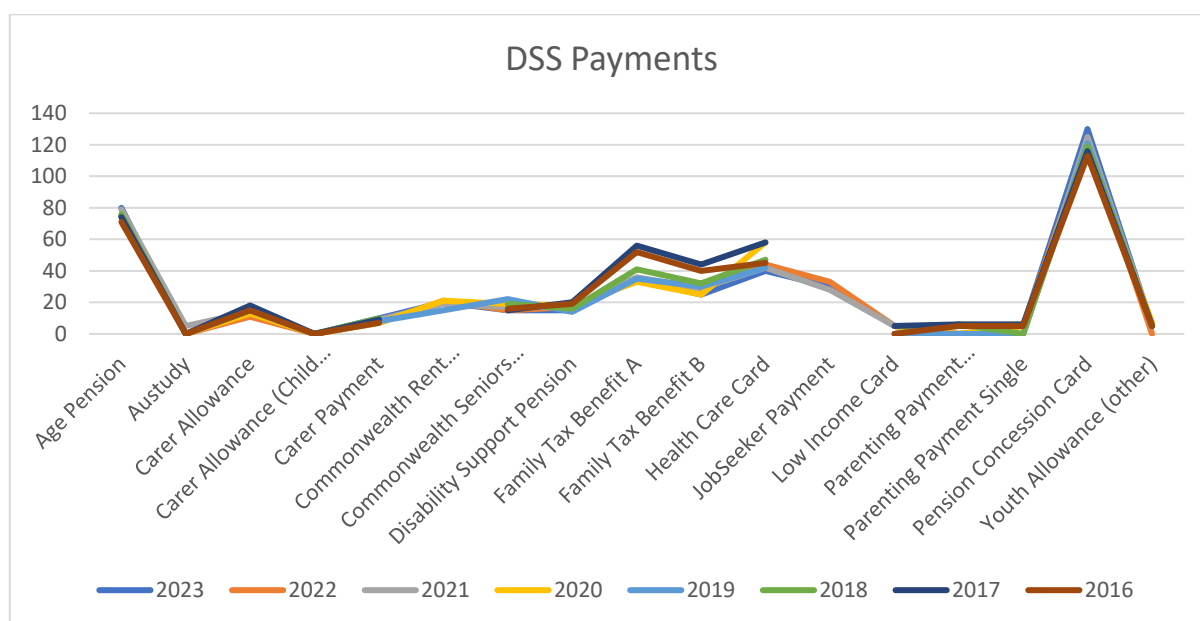


Figure 5 Department of Social Services Payments. Source: [DSS Payments by Local Government Area - Dataset - data.gov.au](#)

On the Local Government Area Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage 2021¹⁰, Wickepin scored 994, which ranks it 75th in terms of relative socio-economic disadvantage out of the 139 Local Government in Western Australia. This indicates that the Wickepin Shire is relatively advantaged, particularly when compared to neighbouring Shires such as Narrogin (ranked 46th), Pingelly (ranked 18th) and Wagin (ranked 30th).

SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

TYPE	EXISTING SERVICES
HEALTH CARE	Centre staffed by a Registered Nurse. Open Monday, Wednesday & Friday 8.30am - 2pm.
AGED CARE	Aged housing - independent living units on Johnston Street, Cottage Homes (owned and administered by the Shire). Commonwealth Home Support Program operates from the health centre on Mondays and Tuesdays. Services include domestic assistance, home maintenance, transport, personal care.
PARKS & GARDENS	Picnic areas in Wickepin, Yealering and Harrismith. Wickepin War Memorial Park. Exercise Park in Wickepin. Wogolin Playground.
SPORT & RECREATION	Wickepin swimming pool. Multi-use oval in Wickepin catering to football, hockey and cricket. Cricket ovals in Yealering and Harrismith. Wickepin Districts Sports Club.

ECONOMY

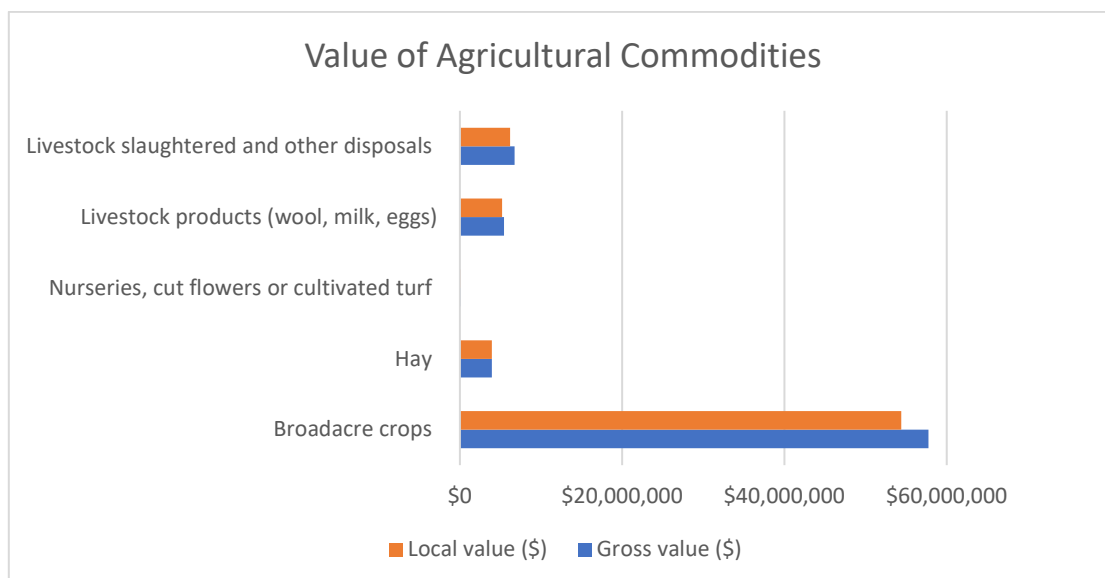
AGRICULTURE

The gross value of all agricultural production in the Wickepin Shire in 2020-21 was \$73,930,329. The local value of agricultural production was \$69,746,447. The major value generating activity is broadacre cropping.

According to the ABS, in 2020-21 there were 120,262 sheep and lambs in the Wickepin Shire which represents 0.18% of the Australian sheep flock¹¹.

¹⁰ Socio-Economic Indexes for Australia (SEIFA) 2021

¹¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics, July 2022. Agricultural Commodities by Local Government Areas 2020-21

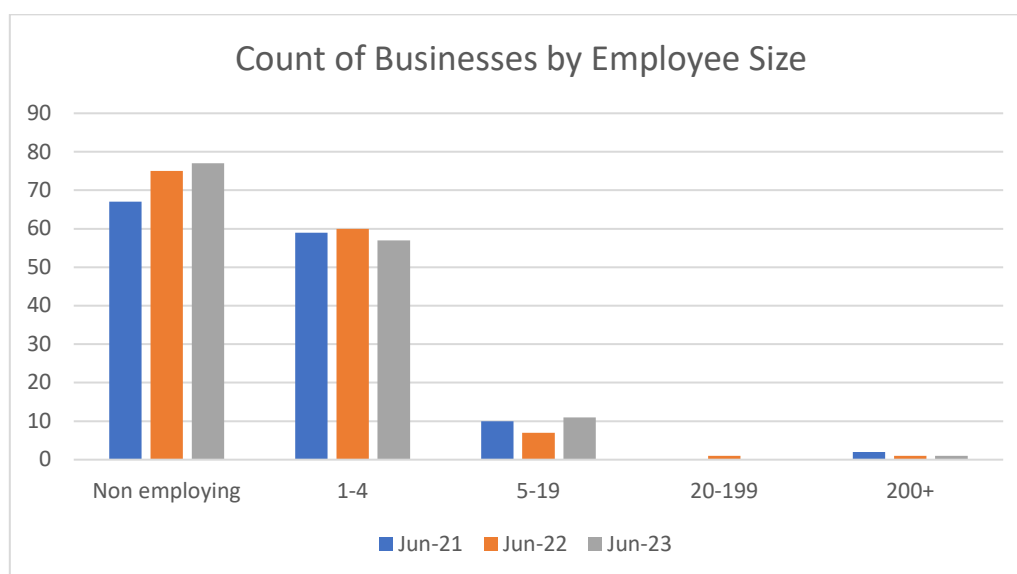


Value of Agricultural Commodities in Wickepin. Source: Agricultural Commodities by Local Government Areas 2020-21, Australian Bureau of Statistics, July 2022

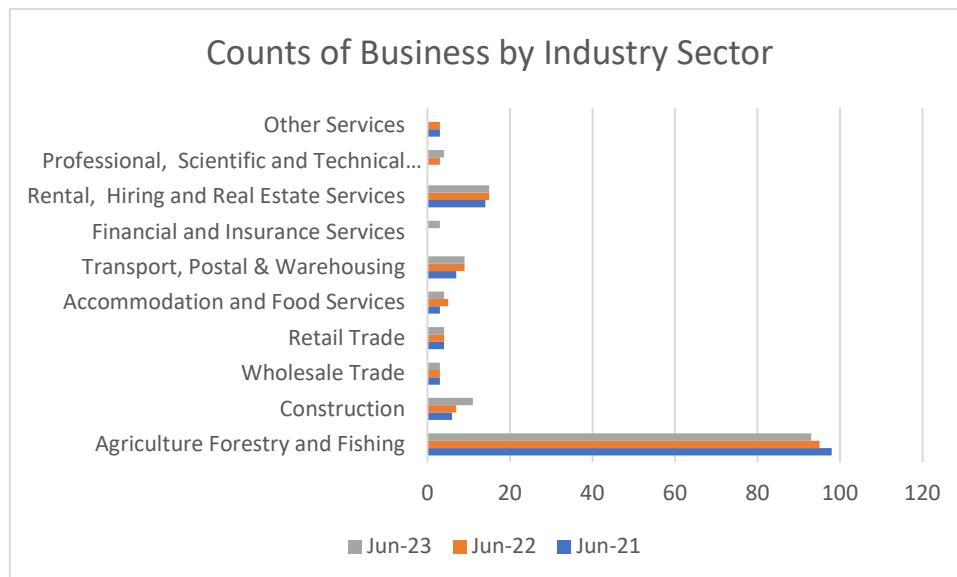
BUSINESSES

As of June 2023, there are 146 registered businesses in the Shire of Wickepin. The number of businesses has increased by 8 since 2021 (up from 138). Over this period businesses were gained in the construction (6 in 2021 up to 11 in 2023), professional, scientific and technical services (0 in 2021 up to 4 in 2023), and financial and insurance services (0 in 2021 up to 3 in 2023) sectors. Businesses were lost in the agriculture, fishing and forestry sector (98 in 2021 down to 93 in 2023) and “other services” sector (3 in 2021 down to 0 in 2023).

The majority of businesses are non-employing (53%) or low employing (39%) and are classified as being in the agriculture, forestry and fishing industry sector (64%).



Count of Businesses by Employee Size from 2021 to 2023. Source: REMPLAN Economy Trends



Count of Businesses by Industry Sector from 2021 to 2023. Source: REMPLAN Economy Trends

WORKFORCE

The Shire of Wickepin economy supports 260 jobs. The majority of employed persons work full-time (57.9%) and the principal occupation of employed persons in Wickepin is “manager” (41%). The largest employing industry is agriculture, with 158 people employed in this industry. Agriculture pays \$4.769m in wages, which is more than any other industry. Despite having a kaolin mine in the Shire, there are only three people employed in the mining industry.

Top 5 Occupations

Manager	Labourer	Technicians & Trades	Machinery Operator	Community & Personal Service
41%	14.3%	9.3%	7.8%	6.8%

Occupation top responses. Source: ABS Census 2021, QuickStats

Industry sector	Number of People Employed	Wages & Salaries Paid
Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	158	\$4,769,332
Education & Training	22	\$2,563,466
Public Administration & Safety	17	\$3,124,818
Wholesale Trade	12	\$1,624,163
Accommodation & Food Services	10	\$494,746
Retail Trade	9	\$552,692
Transport, Postal & Warehousing	8	\$674,202
Other Services	6	\$363,880
Administrative & Support Services	6	\$909,542
Construction	5	\$428,806
Professional, Scientific & Technical Services	4	\$557,898
Mining	3	\$433,380

Number of Employed Persons and Wages & Salaries Paid by Industry Sector. Source: REMPLAN Economy

	2011	2016	2021
Worked full-time	62.4%	57.6%	57.9%
Worked part-time	28.1%	31.1%	28.2%
Away from work	6.2%	7%	8%

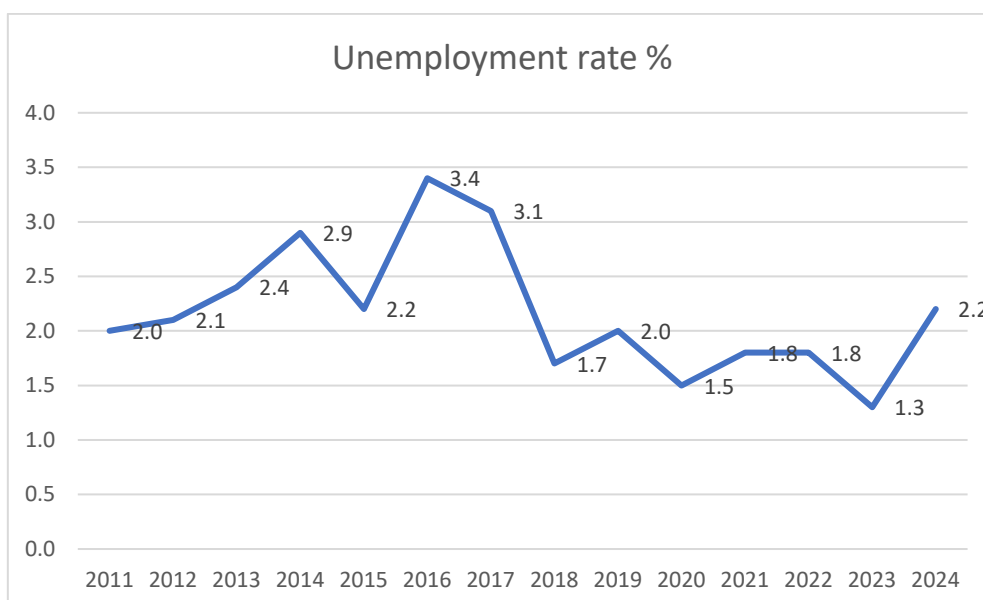
Employment Status. Source: ABS Census QuickStats

UNEMPLOYMENT

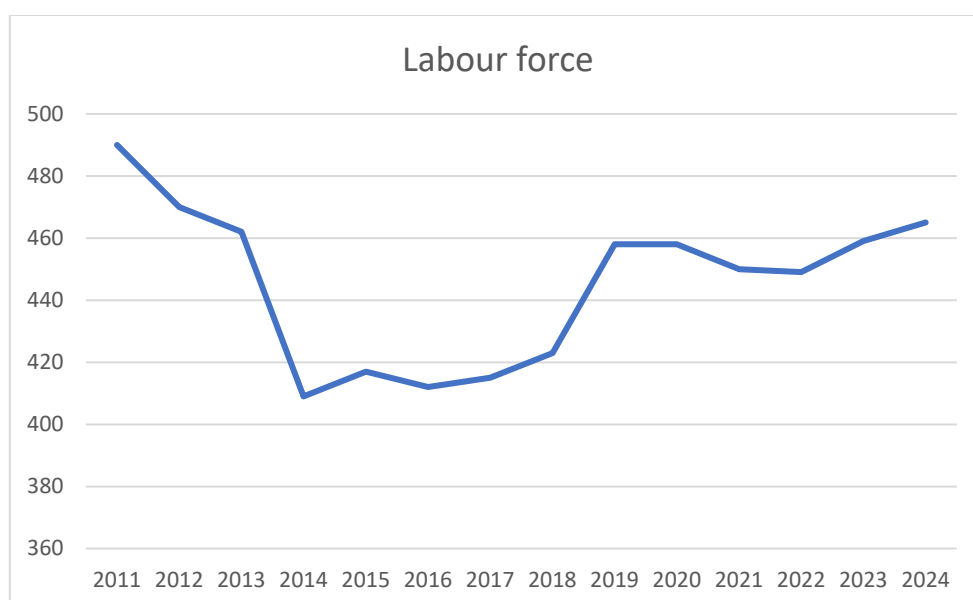
The unemployment rate in the Shire of Wickpin as of the June quarter 2024, was 2.2%. This is much lower than the state unemployment rate of 3.8% and national rate of 4.1%¹². The Shire's unemployment rate has consistently remained low. Unemployment in the Shire peaked at 3.4% in the June quarter of 2016 and was at its lowest (1.3%) in the June quarter of 2023.

The local labour force (i.e., those employed or unemployed but looking for work) has declined from 490 in June 2011 to 465 in June 2024. This is not surprising given that the population overall is declining and aging.

¹² https://www.jobsandskills.gov.au/sites/default/files/2024-07/abs_labour_force_results_-_june_2024.pdf



Shire of Wickepin unemployment rates for June quarters from 2011 to 2024. Source: Jobs & Skills Australia, Small Area Labour Market LGA data tables



Labour Force for June quarters from 2011 to 2024. Source: Jobs & Skills Australia, Small Area Labour Market LGA data tables

INCOME

The median weekly incomes reported at the time of the 2021 Census were lower in the Shire of Wickepin than the state medians across all categories (personal, family and household).

	Wickepin	WA
Personal	\$742	\$848
Family	\$1,662	\$2,214
Household	\$1,256	\$1,815

Median weekly income. Source: ABS Census 2021 QuickStats

Wickepin Recent Achievements

The Shire of Wickepin and Wickepin community have invested in a number of town improvement projects in recent years. A sample of these projects is provided below.



Wogolin Playground
Historically inspired playground, officially opened in November 2021.



Wickepin Skate Park & Basketball Court
A new skate park and half-court basketball were incorporated in to the nature playground within the Wogolin Road Recreation Precinct. The works were completed in December 2023.



Independent Living Units
Construction of four independent living units on Johnston Street was completed in October 2024.



Town Murals
 Wickepin pool mural
 (completed 2015)
 School mural
 (completed 2018)
 Newsagent (completed
 2022)



Astro-tourism
Giant Planisphere and
Stargazing for Beginners
signs at Lake Yealering
Observing Site.



Lake Yealering



Toolibin Lake



Wildflowers



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