

Frequently asked questions - Rockingham Strategic Centre – Precinct Structure Plan and Scheme Amendment

Why is the City undertaking this project when there are already planning documents that exist for the City Centre?

The existing planning documents that make up the planning framework for the Rockingham Strategic Centre were prepared over 10 years ago. It is good practice to review planning documents over time to ensure that they are responding to the current opportunities and challenges of a place.

In more recent years, the State Government released State Planning Policy 7.2 – Precinct Design (SPP 7.2) which sets out the guidelines and process for how planning in activity centres such as Rockingham should occur.

The Rockingham Strategic Centre Precinct Structure Plan is the new document that will guide planning, land use and development in the Rockingham Strategic Centre for the next 10 years. The Rockingham Strategic Centre Precinct Structure Plan has been prepared in accordance with relevant State Planning guidelines.

What is a precinct structure plan?

State Planning Policy 7.2 defines a precinct structure plan as:

‘a document prepared and approved under the provisions of a local planning scheme. Precinct structure plans outline land use, density and development (including built form), access arrangements, infrastructure, environmental assets and community facilities at a precinct scale to facilitate future subdivision and development.’

Simply put, the Precinct Structure Plan helps to guide future subdivision and development on private land and inform how the public spaces function.

Note – previously, a precinct structure plan was referred to as an ‘activity centre plan’.

Why does the Rockingham Strategic Centre need a precinct structure plan?

Rockingham is identified as a Strategic Centre under State Planning Policy 4.2 – Activity Centres for Perth and Peel (SPP4.2). This policy and SPP 7.2 both require the City to prepare a precinct structure plan to guide future growth.

Why are changes being proposed to the Town Planning Scheme?

The City of Rockingham Town Planning Scheme No. 2 is the overarching planning document that provides the rules for land use and development within the City. All planning documents made under it (e.g. local planning policies and precinct structure plans) must comply with the Town Planning Scheme.

Changes to Town Planning Scheme No. 2 are proposed to enable implementation of the Precinct Structure Plan. The primary focus of the changes is to simplify the existing framework within the Rockingham Strategic Centre.

What are the main changes being made to Town Planning Scheme No.2?

The key changes are:

- Consolidating the existing six Primary Centre zones into one Strategic Centre zone, with one set of objectives.
- Rezoning three small portions of land to Strategic Centre zone, those being:
 - Development zone abutting the southern side of Patterson Road;
 - Residential zone to the north of Patterson Road and south of Houston Street;
 - Light Industrial zone to the north of Dixon Road.
- Land use is controlled through a separate zoning table for the Precinct Structure Plan area, with the introduction of five 'sub-zones':
 - C1 – Mixed Use
 - C2 – Commercial
 - C3 – Residential
 - C4 – Private Clubs, Institutions and Places of Worship
 - C5 - Service Commercial

Note: These sub-zones are identified on the Precinct Structure Plan Map.

- Introduction of a new clause 'Additional site and development requirements for areas covered by a structure plan, activity centre plan, precinct local development plan or local development plan'. This clause includes a table which gives the Precinct Structure Plan its statutory effect.
- A minimum building height of two (2) storeys applies to all land the subject of the Precinct Structure Plan, except for development proposals for interim uses on sites within 'PLDP1 and PLDP2'.

What are the main differences between the new planning framework and the existing planning documents?

The main difference between the documents is simplification of the framework. The number of documents that need to be reviewed when preparing a planning application has reduced. Most of the information needed when preparing a planning application is all contained in one document - the Precinct Structure Plan.

The development requirements have been set out in a user-friendly manner, which includes 'general requirements' for all land and 'sub-precinct requirements' for specific locations in the centre.

The image below illustrates the key differences between the existing and proposed frameworks.

CURRENT FRAMEWORK

Town Planning Scheme No. 2

Six Primary City Centre zones (these do not comply with current State Government's 'model zones'). Each zone has its' own objectives and provisions



Rockingham Strategic Regional Centre - Centre Plan

Is a 'due regard' strategic planning document which guides future development specifically within the Rockingham Strategic Centre. This document requires review to address current State Government planning frameworks.



Development Policy Plans

These have the same statutory effect as a local planning policy. There are seven operational Development Policy Plans and two in draft form. They provide specific guidance on preferred densities, heights and frontages.



Integrated Development Guide Plans

In specified locations, an Integrated Development Guide Plan must be prepared prior to any subdivision applications being made.

PROPOSED FRAMEWORK

Town Planning Scheme No. 2

One Strategic Centre zone. Sub-zones to guide land use only. The Strategic Centre zone has one set of objectives, and most planning provisions are now defaulted into the Rockingham Strategic Centre Precinct Structure Plan.

Primary Change: More simplified Scheme Approach



Rockingham Strategic Centre Precinct Structure Plan

Is a 'due regard' strategic planning document which guides future development specifically within the Rockingham Strategic Centre. Two-part document: Part One - Implementation and Part Two - Background Information.

Primary Change: Contemporary document which aligns with State Planning Policies



Precinct Local Development Plans

These provide more specific guidance to help guide future subdivision and development in specific locations.

Primary Change: Rather than all sites requiring an Local Development Plans prior to subdivision, only selected strategic sites are required to do so, however Local Development Plans may be required as per clause 2.3.2.

Why has the previous planning boundary for the Rockingham Strategic Centre changed?

State Planning Policy 7.2 – Precinct Design, recommends that every structure planning project should include a boundary definition process. It provides guidance and criteria for why / how a precinct boundary should be defined. In undertaking this process for the Rockingham Strategic Centre, two primary changes from the previous Centre Plan Boundary were recommended:

- The scope of a Precinct Structure Plan is to focus primarily on where and how change will occur. Through the initial site and context analysis, it was determined that the planning intent for the existing light industrial area between Ennis Avenue and Patterson Road was unlikely to change through this process. It was therefore removed from the boundary.
- Through the Precinct Structure Plan design process, the proposed Rockingham City Centre Transit System Route was changed to better align with existing road corridors, which in turn increased the amount of land in the Waterfront Village Sub-Precinct that was within a short walk of the route. The boundary was therefore extended to include more of this residential land.

How will my property be impacted?

Once approved, the Precinct Structure Plan will be used to guide all future subdivision and development proposals. If your property is located within the Rockingham Strategic Centre, the requirements of the Precinct Structure Plan will apply to your property.

There are eight sub-precincts within the Rockingham Strategic Centre. There are some requirements within the Rockingham Strategic Centre that are the same for all sub-precincts (general requirements) and some that are specific to that sub-precinct. Depending on where your property is located, the rules may be a slightly different.

Download the Sub-Precinct Fact Sheet to learn more about the sub-precincts.

Will the whole precinct structure plan area be redeveloped?

The Precinct Structure Plan does not mandate or force development to occur, therefore there may be areas where no change occurs. However, if property owners wish to develop their land, the requirements of the new Precinct Structure Plan will apply. This means you might see differences in the types of buildings, height of buildings and activity that occurs in the precinct from what has previously occurred.

Whilst the Precinct Structure Plan does promote increased development and density, replacing or renovating a single house is still possible, subject to complying with the two storey minimum building height requirement.

Will the new planning framework bring more jobs?

Improving employment opportunities remains a priority and core objective of the project. Under the new framework, substantial areas of land within the Rockingham Strategic Centre will be capable of providing land for jobs and employment. It should be noted that delivery of employment will ultimately be market-driven.

Are there any changes that may incentivise or encourage development?

The new framework has been simplified to ensure a more legible and contemporary framework, which should encourage development. Additionally, the new framework includes a number of initiatives to help incentivise different types of development:

- In the City Centre, new rules will allow short-term development opportunities to be delivered to try and promote use of vacant land and encourage activity.
- In the City Centre and Waterfront Village, performance criteria will allow certain sites to achieve additional development opportunities such as increased building heights.
- In residential areas, minimum site area requirements have been reduced meaning more sites can now be developed without needing amalgamation.
- See Infill Development Fact Sheet for more information.

How does the Precinct Structure Plan address sustainability?

The Precinct Structure Plan vision advocates for developing the Rockingham Strategic Centre as a green walkable centre, connecting activity hubs via high-frequency public transport. Sustainability principles are weaved throughout the Precinct Structure Plan objectives to achieve this vision, such as encouraging conservation of resources, creating green centres, prioritising pedestrian and cycle movement and promoting transit-oriented development.

How does the Precinct Structure Plan address movement in the Rockingham Strategic Centre?

As a car dominated centre, a primary focus of the Precinct Structure Plan was to explore how public transport, cyclist, and pedestrian movements can be improved. Some key initiatives include:

- Continued focus on future establishment of the Rockingham City Centre Transit System to enhance public transport connections within the precinct.
- Enhanced (and safer) pedestrian and cyclist connections between the City Centre and Waterfront. This includes:
 - Creation of 'Green Links' which are proposed to be highly attractive and safe pathways with amenity that supports walking and riding.
 - Green Links are supported by 'Green Crossings' which are intended to be either new or upgraded pedestrian /cyclist crossings on major roads.
 - Cycle path upgrades, with Goddard Street and Read Street identified as priorities. Read Street is proposed to support faster movement speeds which would be more suitable for E-Rideables.
- A number of intersections are proposed for upgrades to enhance safety for all road users.
- New road connections are also proposed in 'undeveloped' parts of the Precinct Structure Plan area.

What is the Rockingham City Centre Transit System (RCCTS) and how is it proposed to be implemented?

One of the fundamental elements for guiding planning outcomes in the Rockingham Strategic Centre, is the RCCTS.

This transit system is designed to provide for well-connected links between three major activity nodes starting at the Rockingham Train Station and taking in the Rockingham City Centre, Smart Village Sector and the Rockingham Foreshore.

Through the design process, an alternate route was identified for the RCCTS. It is possible that this new route will first be based on rapid bus movements, with a transition to trackless trams or an alternate mode considered in the future.

No funding has been committed at this stage.

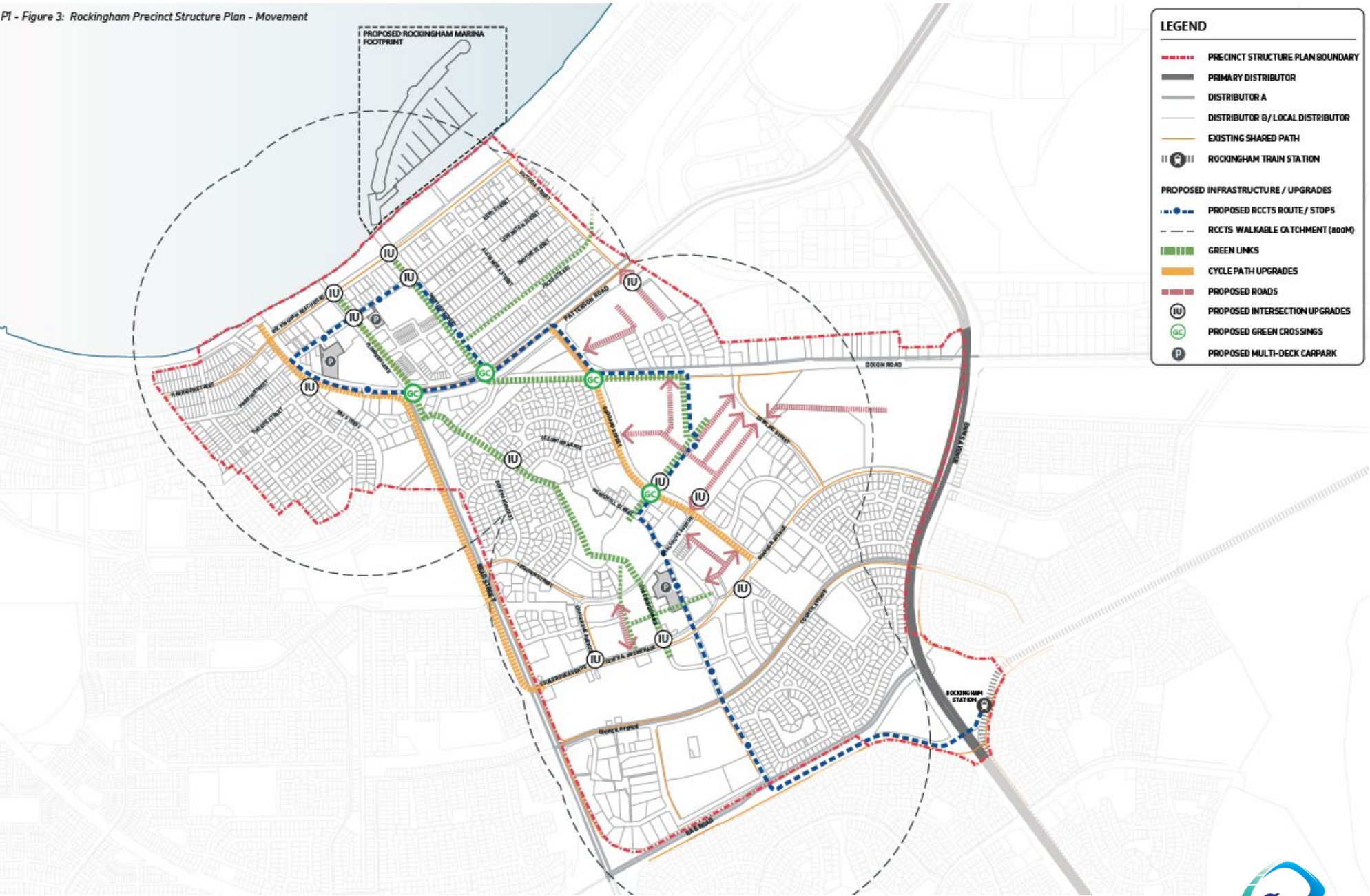
Why has the RCCTS route changed?

From an operational and development perspective, the following benefits are identified with this new identified alignment:

- The proposed RCCTS route aims to reduce the number of transit stops along the route, especially along major distributor routes to potentially reduce the journey time while maintaining accessibility.
- The proposed RCCTS route is relocated away from the foreshore (Rockingham Beach Road) to minimise the conflict with pedestrian traffic. New stops on Kent Street provide the impetus to encourage development on Kent Street, and provide new midblock connections (to Rockingham Beach Road).
- The extended coverage along Patterson Road expands the walkable catchment westward, now capturing high amenity residential. It also assists in activating commercial developments between the Waterfront Village and City Centre.
- Flexibility to revert back to extend the route in accordance with the initial alignment (if required).

Refer to the map on the following page to see the RCCTS route.

P1 - Figure 3: Rockingham Precinct Structure Plan - Movement



Will the Precinct Structure Plan result in more traffic in Rockingham?

The Precinct Structure Plan allows for substantial development to occur in the future, with the intention to increase the number of residents and workers. This will result in more traffic occurring in the precinct.

Traffic is proposed to be managed through:

- Implementing measures which increase the amount of people using public transport, walking, and cycling in the precinct instead of using their cars.
- Certain intersections and portions of road which may be impacted in the future have been identified for upgrades.

Does the new framework still allow Cash-In-Lieu of parking?

Under the new framework, payment-in-lieu of parking still applies, however, it has been simplified. Previously the City's Town Planning Scheme had different rules for the Waterfront Village Sub-Precinct. Under the new framework, this has changed and now one set of rules applies to all land within the Structure Plan area.

When will the plan come into effect?

In order for the Precinct Structure Plan to be implemented, changes to the Town Planning Scheme No. 2 must be undertaken first. The City of Rockingham is undertaking the changes to the Town Planning Scheme No. 2 at the same time as the Precinct Structure Plan.

Changes to both the Town Planning Scheme No. 2 and Precinct Structure Plan will be advertised for public consultation for 60 days (between 3 May –3 July 2023).

Once consultation is closed, the City will review all the feedback received and present it to the Council. The City will determine if any changes are proposed to the documents following consultation with the community.

Once the Council has endorsed the final versions of the document, they will be provided to the Western Australian Planning Commission and Minister for Planning for final approval.

It is anticipated that this process will likely be complete in late 2023/early 2024.