

Discussion Paper

# 2022 REVIEW OF WARDS AND REPRESENTATION



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# 1 BACKGROUND

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The City of Karratha (the “**City**”) has three wards covering its entire district and has resolved to undertake a review of its ward system to comply with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 1995* (the “**Act**”).

Schedule 2.2 of the Act requires local governments with wards to carry out reviews of their ward boundaries and the number of representative Councillors for each ward so that no more than 8 years elapses between successive reviews. The review shall consider the five prescribed factors:

- community of interest;
- physical and topographical features;
- demographic trends;
- economic factors; and
- the ratio of Councillors to electors in the various wards.

The review requires certain processes to be carried out under the Act including community engagement and Council consideration before a report is submitted to the Local Government Advisory Board (the “**Board**”) for its assessment and recommendation to the Minister for Local Government (the “**Minister**”).

Concurrent with this review being undertaken by the City, a review of the Act is also underway by the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries. The Minister has foreshadowed a number of changes in relation to ward boundary reviews. The main two issues are:

1. Band 3 and 4 local governments (smallest local governments) will have their ward systems abolished, and
2. a tiered number of elected representatives based on a local government’s population.

The City is not impacted by the first issue however the second issue will have an impact if the reforms are passed by Parliament. Where the district population is between 5,000 – 75,000, there will be a capping on the number of councillors from between 5 – 9 councillors inclusive of the Mayor. The review of the Act and any legislative changes are likely to come into effect in the first quarter of 2023 to take effect for the October 2023 local government elections. The Board’s view and deliberation may weigh on the City of Karratha’s ultimate recommendation.

## 1.1 Past Ward Boundary Reviews

Over the past two decades, reviews were conducted in 2001, 2002, 2004 and 2006. On each occasion the Council recommended to the Board that the status quo be retained, that is, to keep the same number of Councillors and ward structure.

The Board repeatedly rejected the Council’s recommendation insisting the imbalance in representation, primarily based on the Councillor/Elector ratios not aligning within the Board’s preferred +/-10% variance across all the wards. Council had acknowledged the disparity in ratios but deemed that this was appropriate and necessary to adequately represent the constituents within wards which have very distinct communities of interest. The Council was successful in its stance and retained the four ward system with 11 councillor representatives.

2014 was the last review undertaken that coincided with the renaming of the local government from the Shire of Roebourne to the City of Karratha. It was evident, based on the evolution of our communities, that retaining the existing ward structure based on the Board’s criteria would be more challenging. Consideration was given to removing the ward system but this was not supported owing to the perception that outlying towns would lack a voice on Council should this occur.

A three ward structure was proposed merging the Wickham/Point Samson Ward with the Roebourne and Pastoral Ward. At the same time there was strong community sentiment to retain the name Roebourne in the ward name and hence become a significantly long ward name. The resultant proposal was sufficient to ensure retention of 11 councillors for the District however this meant that a councillor representative redistribution was necessary for each ward. The resultant effect was that the

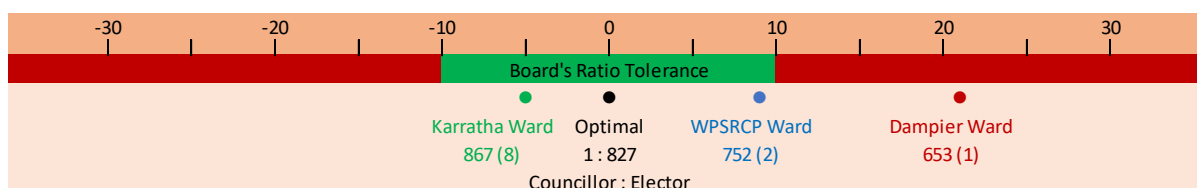


newly merged ward reduced its representation from 3 to 2 councillors, the Dampier Ward reduced from 2 to 1 councillor, and the Karratha Ward increased from 6 to 8 councillors.

Table 1 - 2014 Ward Boundary Distribution

Ward	Total Population	Number of Electors	Number of Councillors	% electors per ward population	Councillor /Elector Ratio	% Ratio Deviation
Dampier	1,366	653	1	48 %	1 : 653	21 %
Karratha	16,490	6,939	8	42 %	1 : 867	-5 %
Wickham/Point Samson/ Roebourne/Cossack/Pastoral	5,136	1,503	2	29 %	1 : 752	9 %
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>22,992</b>	<b>9,095</b>	<b>11</b>		<b>AVE = 827</b>	

Figure 1 - Ward Representative Deviations (2014)



The City was able to successfully demonstrate to the Board and to the Minister the desire to retain a three ward structure despite the Dampier Ward being outside of the Board's councillor/elector tolerance limits. On 5 November 2014, the City was advised that the Minister had approved the recommendations of the Board in relation to the City's wards and representation proposal and this was subsequently published in the WA Government Gazette on 21 April 2015.

## 1.2 The current landscape

The economy of the Pilbara has proven to be resilient and continues to be a driving force in keeping Australia economically viable during and post the Covid-19 pandemic period. The Council's vision to be "Australia's most liveable regional city" is providing dividends by encouraging differing businesses to set up and establish in the Pilbara and exploring options to encourage investment in housing and land development to make rentals and building construction more affordable.

The past eight years has also seen significant investment by the City in building a new regional recreation centre in Karratha, airport upgrades and a new arts precinct. In addition to significant facility upgrades in each town, new community hubs have been built in Dampier and Wickham to support local community needs. In Dampier a foreshore redevelopment has been completed and agreement reached with Rio Tinto regarding transfer of recreational assets to the City for the benefit of the community. Investments have also been made at the airport and The Quarter to reduce reliance on rates income and to provide additional capacity to lease commercial and retail floor space to state government agencies and businesses.

Over this time the population has remained relatively stable and the economy has rebounded from tough times as it works through the recovery phase of a Covid-19 conscious community.

Table 2 - District Population and Elector Distributions

WARD	CATEGORY	2014	2021	% CHANGE
Dampier	POPULATION <sup>1</sup>	1,366	1,275	- 6.7%
	ELECTORS <sup>2</sup>	653	775	+ 18.7%
Karratha	POPULATION <sup>1</sup>	16,490	17,018	3.2%
	ELECTORS <sup>2</sup>	6,939	9,732	+ 40.2%
Wickham / Point Samson / Roebourne / Cossack / Pastoral	POPULATION <sup>1</sup>	5,136	3,891	-24.2%
	ELECTORS <sup>2</sup>	1,503	1,555	+ 3.4%
TOTAL DISTRICT POPULATION <sup>1</sup>		22,992	22,184	-3.5%
TOTAL NUMBER OF ELECTORS <sup>2</sup>		9,095	12,062	+ 32.6%

<sup>1</sup> Population Data Source: REMPLAN – Australian Bureau of Statistics 2021 Census Population and Housing

<sup>2</sup> WA Electoral Commission: 2021 Local Government Elections

## 2 CURRENT SITUATION

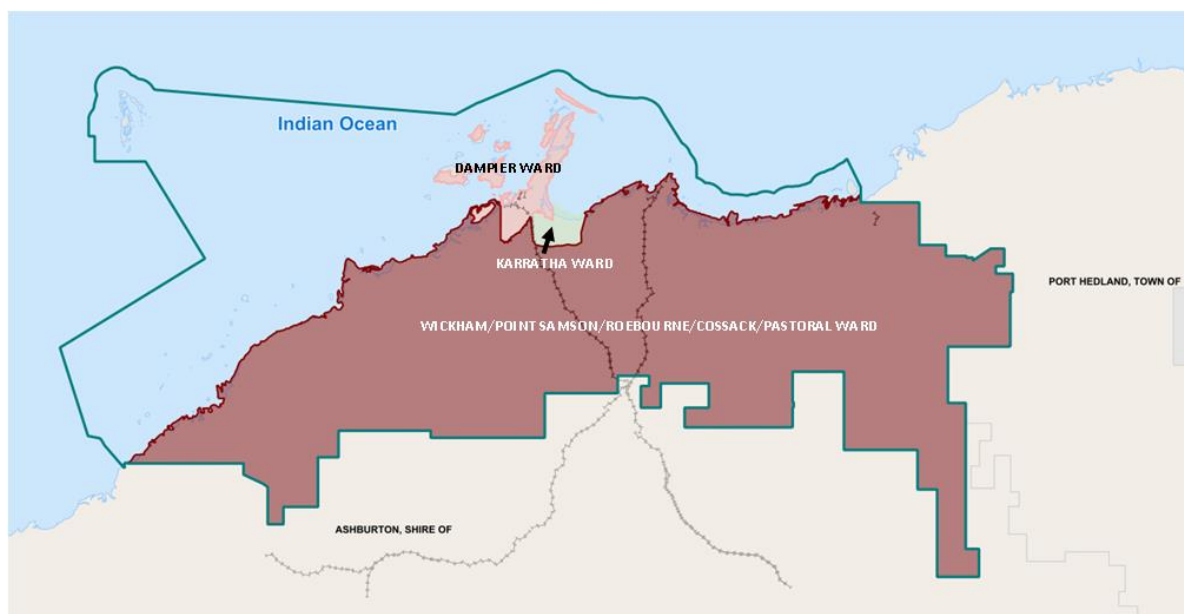
The City of Karratha is an expansive regional local government area covering 15,278 km<sup>2</sup>. Located on the north west coast of Western Australia approximately 1,500kms from Perth, the City is one of four local government authorities which make up the Pilbara Region. It is bordered by the Town of Port Hedland to the east and the Shire of Ashburton to the south.

The Ngarluma and Yindjibarndi Aboriginal people are the original inhabitants of the Roebourne area with European settlement dating back to the 1860s. Data released from the 2021 Census indicates that the City had a total population of 22,184, a 3.5% decrease on the 2014 ABS population data.

Within the local government district, there are three wards:

- Dampier Ward
- Karratha Ward
- Wickham/Point Samson/Roebourne/Cossack/Pastoral Ward

Figure 2 - City of Karratha Ward Boundaries



The City is a major service hub for the Pilbara minerals and energy sector. Each ward and town offers its own unique character and contribution to the greater City.

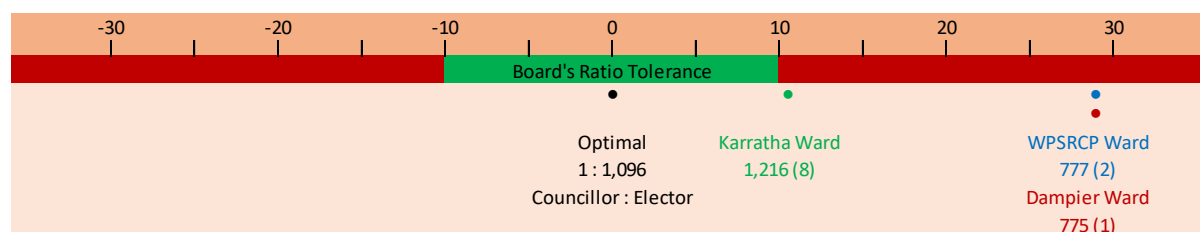
Table 3 is a summary of the City's current position in terms of wards and representation. What is noticeable since the last review (Table 1) is that the Karratha Ward has seen an increase of 2,793 electors that has subsequently impacted the ratio balance with the other two wards. The councillor ratio for the Wickham/Point Samson/Roebourne/Cossack/Pastoral Ward and the Dampier Ward are now under represented to their proportion of electors for those wards whilst maintaining a Council of 11 elected councillors.

Table 3 - Current Ward and Representations (2021)

Ward	Total Population	Electors	Councillors	% Electors per Ward Population	Councillor /Elector Ratio	% Ratio Deviation
Dampier	1,275	775	1	60.8 %	1:775	29.3 %
Karratha	17,018	9,732	8	57.2 %	1:1,216	-10.9 %
Wickham/Point Samson/Roebourne/Cossack/Pastoral	3,891	1,555	2	40.0 %	1:777	29.1 %
TOTALS	22,184	12,062	11		AVE = 1,096	

The task now is if a ward system is to be maintained, identifying a viable Councillor to Elector ratio that conforms to the Board's  $\pm 10\%$  deviation limits for each ward. Considering Figure 3 below, the Board would not be supportive of the current imbalance.

Figure 3 - Current Ward Representative Deviations



### 3 THE REVIEW PROCESS

A local government with a ward system is required to carry out a review of:

- its ward boundaries; and
- the number of offices of councillor for each ward,

to ensure that not more than eight years elapse between successive reviews.

The purpose of the review is to assess the current structure and arrangements and to evaluate a range of options to find a system of wards and representation that best suits the characteristics of the district and its people. Any of the following may be considered:

- ❖ Creating new wards in a district already divided into wards;
- ❖ Changing the boundaries of a ward;
- ❖ Abolishing any or all of the wards into which a district is divided;
- ❖ Changing the name of a district or a ward;
- ❖ Changing the number of offices of councillor on a council; and
- ❖ Specifying or changing the number of offices of councillor for a ward.

The review process involves a number of steps outlined in Schedule 2.2 of the Act:

- ❖ Council resolves to undertake the review;
- ❖ Public submission period opens;
- ❖ Information is provided to the community for discussion;
- ❖ Public submission period closes (after 6 weeks);
- ❖ Council considers all submissions and relevant factors and makes a decision;
- ❖ Council submits a comprehensive report to the Board for its consideration; and
- ❖ If a change is proposed, the Board submits a recommendation to the Minister and if approved will be in place for the next ordinary election where possible.

Further administrative and statutory steps are then completed, including preparation of Orders by the Parliamentary Counsel's Office, drawing up of deposited plans by Landgate (if ward boundary changes have been proposed), approval by Executive Council, then culminating in the final stage of the process, where any changes are published in the WA Government Gazette.

After gazettal, the WAEC will have a number of administrative and statutory requirements to undertake prior to any changes being introduced ahead of the next local government elections in October 2023. The WAEC processes can also take a few months to complete.

## 4 FACTORS TO BE CONSIDERED

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When considering changes to wards and their representation, Schedule 2.2 of the Act specifies the following factors that must be taken into account as part of the review process:

1. Community of interest;
2. Physical and topographic features;
3. Demographic trends;
4. Economic factors; and
5. Ratio of Councillors to Electors in the various wards.

The Local Government Advisory Board has provided the following interpretation for these factors.

### 4.1 Community of interest

The term community of interest has a number of elements. These include a sense of community identity and belonging, similarities in the characteristics of the residents of a community and similarities in the economic activities. It can also include dependence on the shared facilities in an area as reflected in catchment areas of local schools and sporting teams, or the circulation areas of local newspapers.

Neighbourhoods, suburbs and towns are important units in the physical, historical and social infrastructure and often generate a feeling of community and belonging.

### 4.2 Physical and topographic features

These may be natural or man-made features that will vary from area to area. Water features such as rivers and catchment boundaries may be relevant considerations. Coastal plain and foothills regions, parks and reserves may be relevant as may other man made features such as railway lines and freeways.

### 4.3 Demographic trends

Several measurements of the characteristics of human populations, such as population size, and its distribution by age, gender, occupation and location provide important demographic information. Current and projected population characteristics will be relevant as well as similarities and differences between areas within the local government.

### 4.4 Economic factors

Economic factors can be broadly interpreted to include any factor that reflects the character of economic activities and resources in the area. This may include the industries that occur in a local government area (or the release of land for these) and the distribution of community assets and infrastructure such as road networks.

### 4.5 Ratio of Councillors to Electors in the various wards

It is expected that each ward will have similar ratios of Electors to Councillors across its district. An acceptable representation would be reflected in the ratio deviation being within  $\pm 10\%$  for all wards.

## 5 WARD ANALYSIS

This section examines the current characteristics associated with each of the existing wards taking into account all the factors identified in the previous section. Data is based on the latest Australian Bureau of Statistics data for 2014 with 2021 Census results. Electoral data is based on the last local government elections held in October 2021. The City uses a commercial software product REMPLAN to analyse census data by region and locality.

### 5.1 Karratha Ward

Figure 4 – Map of Karratha Ward with locality boundaries

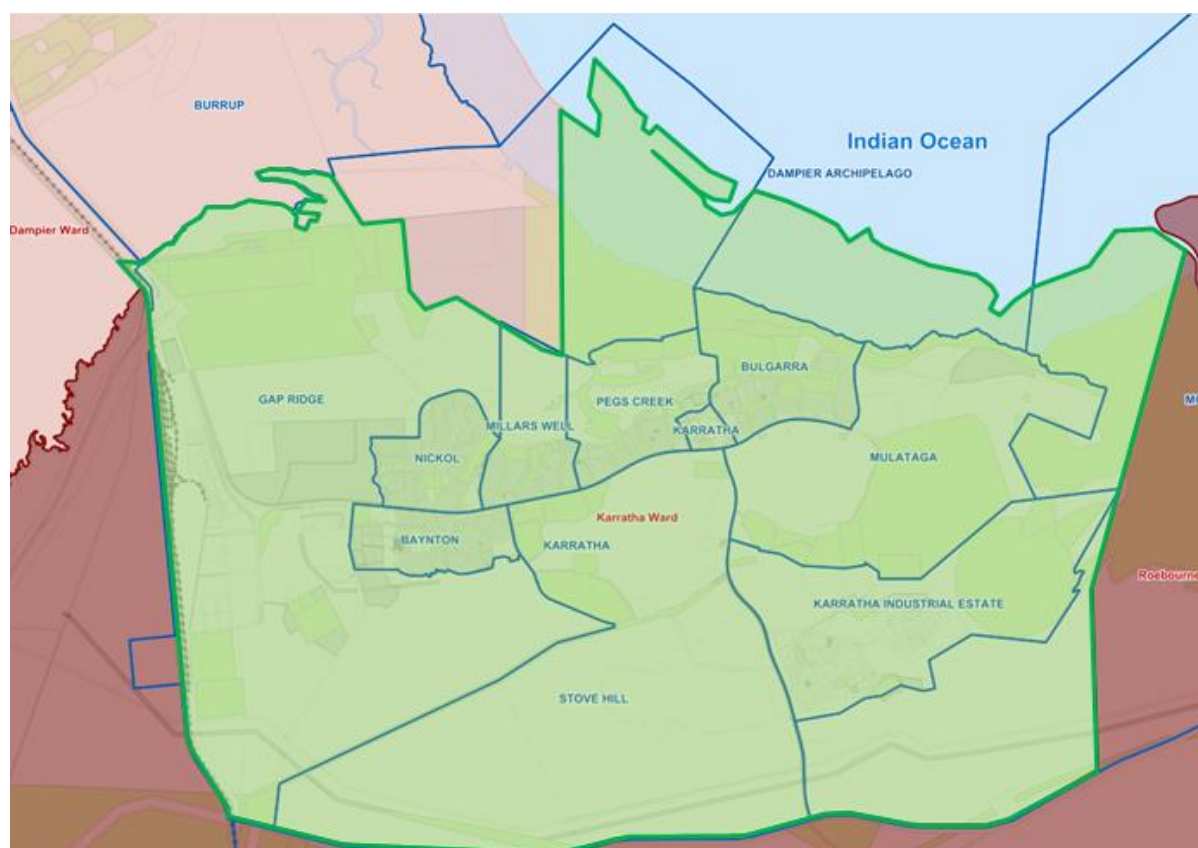


Table 4 Karratha Ward Statistical Data

Ward Localities	2021 (Today)		2014 (Last Review)		% Change	
	Population	Electors	Population	Electors	Population	Electors
Baynton	4,495	2,453	2,482	1,452	81%	69%
Bulgarra	2,983	1,749	3,467	1,475	-14%	19%
Gap Ridge	177	4	1,354	7	-87%	-43%
Karratha	93	41	109	12	-15%	242%
Karratha Industrial Estate	167	52	504	119	-67%	-56%
Pegs Creek	2,053	1,243	1,952	905	5%	37%
Millars Well	2,117	1,206	2,183	998	-3%	21%
Mulataga	0	0	4	0	-100%	0%
Nickol	4,929	2,869	4,409	1,893	12%	52%
Stove Hill	4	5	26	3	85%	67%
Section 51B (Confidential)		110		75		47%
<b>Total Population Figures</b>	<b>17,018</b>		<b>16,490</b>		<b>3%</b>	
<b>Total Elector Figures</b>		<b>9,732</b>		<b>6,939</b>		<b>40%</b>
<b>Number of Councillors</b>	<b>8</b>		<b>6</b>		<b>33%</b>	



### 5.1.1 Community of Interest

Karratha is the largest of the three wards in terms of population and as such takes on the role of the primary service centre for the district as well as being the major regional service centre for the West Pilbara. Comprising of a town centre with a range of commercial, civic and community facilities, Karratha has several residential suburbs extending both east and west from the centre. Suburbs include Baynton, Bulgarra, Pegs Creek, Millars Well, Nickol, Baynton, and Karratha. Further afield, Karratha Industrial Estate and Stove Hill, to the south east and the Gap Ridge Industrial Estate to the west of the town provide general and light industry land.

Karratha accommodates all of the major service industries for the district, such as a regional health campus, three medical centres, a regional TAFE, two high schools, seven primary schools, sporting precincts, arts and culture precincts. From a commercial perspective, Karratha has two shopping centres, a shopping village, cafés, restaurants, fast food outlets, offices and showrooms. Karratha is also home to a number of Commonwealth and State Government departmental agencies and regional offices.

### 5.1.2 Physical and topographical features

Karratha is located between the coastline of Nickol Bay and the North West Coastal Highway and to the south east of the Burrup Peninsula. Karratha Road and Madigan Road run north from the North West Coastal Highway to provide access to the Karratha town centre. Karratha can also be accessed from Dampier via Dampier Highway. The town centre of Karratha is located approximately 14 kilometres driving distance south east of the Karratha Airport. Karratha extends to the coastal mangroves at its north east and borders the Karratha Hills to the south.

### 5.1.3 Demographic trends

Based on ABS Census data (2016 unless stated) the Karratha Ward has the following demographics:

Population	<p>Based on 2021 Census data, resident numbers have remained relatively stable with 17,018 people residing in the Ward. The most significant growth in population numbers has occurred in the suburb of Baynton that recorded a 81% increase resulting from subdivisional and building developments. Reductions were noted in Gap Ridge, Millars Well, Karratha, Bulgarra and the Karratha Industrial Estate with the closure of transient worker accommodation and caretaker accommodation.</p> <p>With the opening up of more subdivisional areas around Karratha and high density housing reviews within the City Centre precinct, it is expected that there will be a continued growth in population numbers.</p>
Age	<p>Karratha is characterised as having a young population. 53% of the population is aged between 20 and 50 years, with 68% aged between 20 and 69 years. It is worth noting that the Karratha Ward has the highest number of children under the age of 19 years in the City at 4,958.</p>
Nationality	<p>Australian citizens make up 66% of the Karratha Ward population, with 5% of the population emigrating from New Zealand and 4% from the United Kingdom.</p>
Qualifications	<p>38% of the Karratha Ward have a tertiary qualification, the majority of which are vocational at 27%.</p>
Employment	<p>8,039 residents are employed of which 73% are in full time employment. 3% of residents are unemployed. The top six industry sectors of employment include Mining (9.5%); Construction (5.2%); Education &amp; training (4.0%); Public Administration &amp; Safety (3.5%); Retail (3.5%); and Transport, postal &amp; warehousing (3.4%)</p>
Accommodation	<p>78% of dwellings within the Ward are individual houses. The Karratha Ward continues to transition to more modern housing in the western suburbs from older dwellings, particularly in the suburbs of Millars Well, Pegs Creek and Bulgarra. One quarter of these older dwellings were built before 1979 and half prior to 1987. Another 9% of residents live in medium or high density housing with 2.4% in caravans or cabins (workforce accommodation units).</p>
Income	<p>Median weekly personal income is \$1,326 per week, family income is \$2,734 per week and household income is \$2,295 per week.</p>

#### 5.1.4 Economic factors

Karratha has a diverse employment base, predominately to support services to the mining and construction sectors and growth of services to support modern families. Most retail and commercial land uses are contained within the town centre; while civic, community and recreational land uses are located throughout both the town centre and residential areas.

#### 5.1.5 Ratio of Councillors to Electors

The optimum balance for this review is 1 councillor to 1,096 electors across the district. The current ratio of councillors to electors is 1:1,216 for the Karratha Ward and falls narrowly outside the Board's permitted range of a  $\pm 10\%$  deviation compared to other wards.

Table 5 Karratha Ward Ratio

Total Population	Electors	Councillors	% Electors per ward Population	Councillor/Elector ratio	% Ratio Deviation
17,018	9,732	8	57.2 %	1:1,216	-10.9 %

## 5.2 Dampier Ward

Figure 5 - Map of Dampier Ward

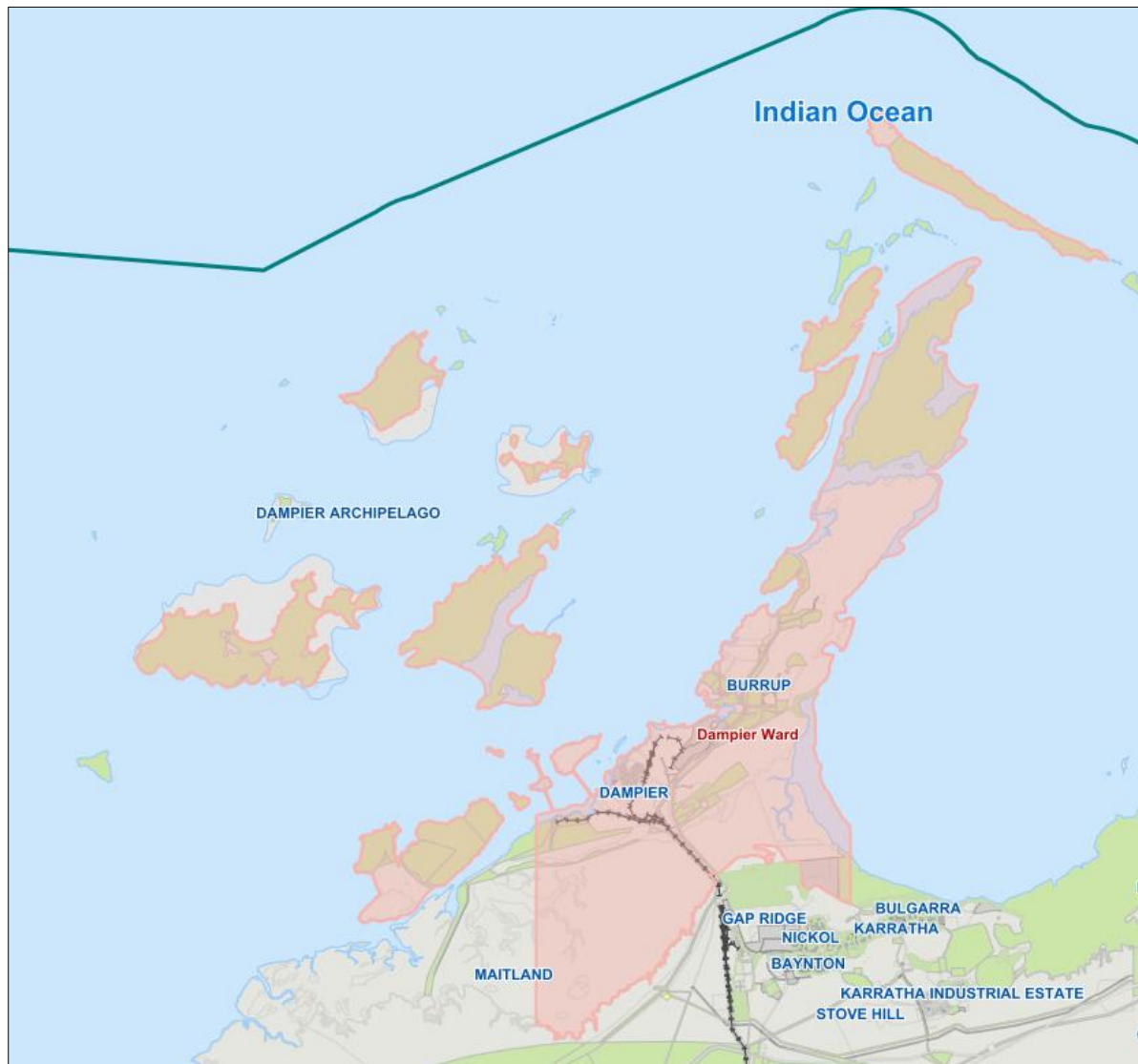


Table 6 - Dampier Ward Statistical Data

Ward Localities	2021 (Today)		2014 (Last Review)		% Change	
	Population	Electors	Population	Electors	Population	Electors
Burrup	0	1	83	2	-100%	-50%
Dampier	1,275	770	1,283	649	-0%	19%
Dampier Archipelago	0	0	0	0	0%	0%
Section 51B (Confidential)		4		2		100%
<b>Total Population Figures</b>	<b>1,275</b>		<b>1,366</b>		<b>-7%</b>	
<b>Total Elector Figures</b>		<b>775</b>		<b>653</b>		<b>19%</b>
<b>Number of Councillors</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>2</b>		<b>-50%</b>	

### 5.2.1 Community of interest

Dampier is predominantly a mining town that is transitioning from under a State Agreement to the responsibilities of the City of Karratha. Dampier's existence historically has been to provide facilities to support port and industry surrounding the townsite and on the Burrup Peninsula. With a newly built foreshore, the Dampier town is predominantly residential containing a mix of individual housing and high density housing/units surrounding a small central hub of education, commercial, civic and community facilities to support the local community. Civic and community facilities within the town centre consist of a library and community hub, pharmacy and allied health services, a small community shopping centre with cafes, bars and restaurants, sports facilities, playing fields, a skate park, local primary school, child care services, St Peter's Catholic Church, state and federal police plus Australian Border Force.

Recently the Dampier Masterplan was endorsed by Council to guide the future enhancement and upgrades of the Dampier townsite for at least the next ten years. This follows on from works to the foreshore, Dampier Palms and the Hampton Oval redevelopment. Dampier also serves the community as a safe area to launch water craft.

### 5.2.2 Physical and topographic features

Dampier is an island joined by a causeway to the mainland via Dampier Highway. Located 21 kilometres north-west of Karratha, on the north-west coastline of the City and south of the Burrup Peninsula and the Dampier Archipelago. Dampier is geographically setup as the gateway to major industry and tourism opportunities located on the Burrup Peninsula (such as the Aboriginal rock art) and provides access to the 42 islands of the Dampier Archipelago. The settlement is physically constrained by its surrounding coastal landscape and industrial development.

### 5.2.3 Demographic trends

Based on ABS Census data (2016 unless stated) the Dampier Ward has the following demographics:

Population	Based on 2021 Census data, Dampier is the smallest ward in the City with 1,275 residents, a decrease of 7% from the previous census figures. 54% are male and 46% are female. 3% Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people.
Age	The Dampier Ward, with a median age of 35 years old, consists of 46% of residents aged between 20 and 49, with 61% aged between 20 and 59. 26% are school aged.
Nationality	Australians make up 78% of the residents in the Dampier Ward, with 5% from the UK and 3% from New Zealand.
Qualifications	Approximately 39% of the Dampier Ward have a tertiary qualification, the majority of which are vocational at 30%.
Employment	614 residents are eligible for the workforce with only 6% of the population unemployed. 66% of the workforce are engaged in full time employment and 20% in part time employment. 24% of residents provide volunteer services to the community.  12% are engaged as technical or trade workers, 8% in professional industries, 7% clerical and administration and 7% machinery operators and drivers.  17% of the workforce is engaged in mining, oil and gas, 8% in road freight transport, 4% in construction and 4% in education.
Accommodation	The Dampier Ward has the highest percentage of residents in the City living in a free standing house at 89%.  35% of properties are rented, 17% are owned outright and 32% are mortgaged.  Median rent is \$420 per week and mortgages about \$3,200 per month.
Income	Median personal weekly income is \$1,525 per week, family income is \$3,507 per week and household income is \$3,284 per week. These are the highest indicators for all wards.



## 5.2.4 Economic factors

The Dampier town centre contains a small variety of commercial facilities, including a supermarket, a service station, a hotel, cafes, restaurants and a community hub.

Dampier is surrounded by around 11,000 ha of Strategic Industry zoned land containing Pilbara Ports Authority, Woodside's North West Shelf Venture gas refinement plant, Yara Pilbara's Ammonia and Fertiliser Plant, Rio Tinto's Dampier Salt operations and Rio Tinto Iron Ore. The Dampier Port is the second highest volume port in Australia, acting as a major export port for the resources industry of the West Pilbara. It also operates King Bay Supply Base, which services the offshore oil and gas industry.

The oil and gas that is mined and refined in this area is significant to the Western Australian and National economy.

## 5.2.5 Ratio of Councillors to Electors

The optimum balance for this review is 1 councillor to 1,096 electors across the district. The current ratio of councillors to electors is 1:775 for the Dampier Ward and is outside of the Board's permitted range of a  $\pm 10\%$  deviation compared to other wards. An adjustment is necessary to comply with the Board's councillor/elector ratio tolerance limits. The Dampier Ward is currently indicating a 29.3% deviation caused by an increase in electors to the Karratha Ward over the past 8 years and a reduction in the electors for the Dampier Ward.

Table 7 - Dampier Ward Ratio

Ward	Total Population	Electors	Councillors	% Electors per Ward Population	Councillor /Elector Ratio	% Ratio Deviation
Dampier	1,275	775	1	60.8 %	1:775	29.3 %

## 5.3 Wickham – Point Samson – Roebourne – Cossack – Pastoral Ward

Figure 6 - Map of Wickham - Point Samson - Roebourne - Cossack - Pastoral Ward

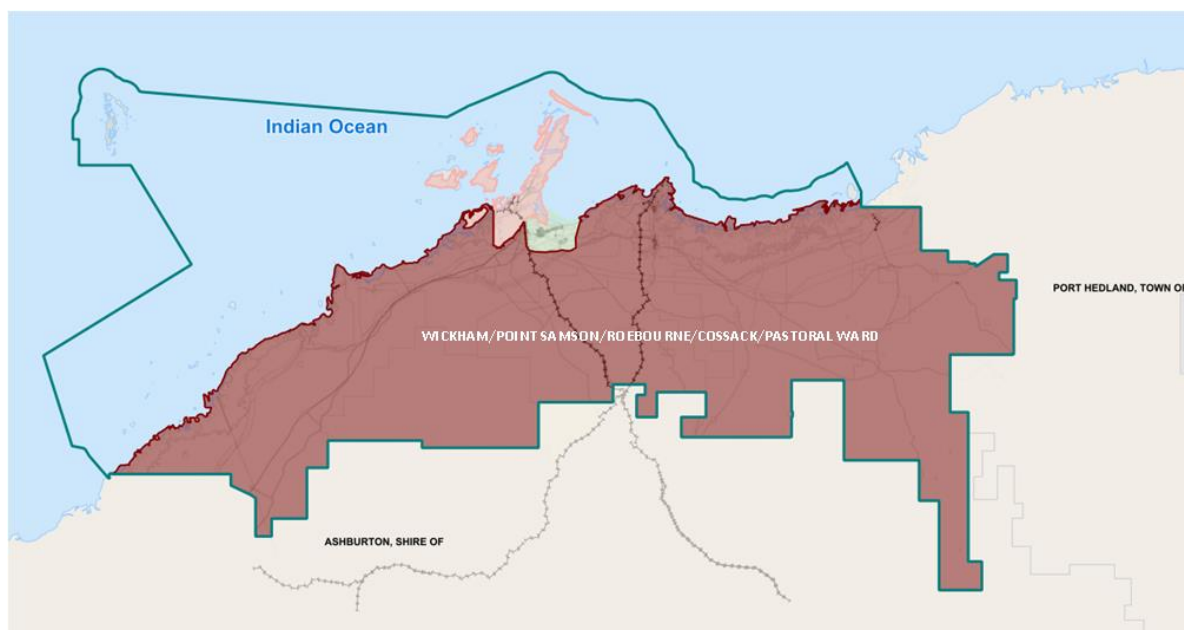


Table 8 - Wickham - Point Samson - Roebourne - Cossack - Pastoral Ward Statistical Data

Ward Localities	2021 (Today)		2014 (Last Review)		% Change	
	Population	Electors	Population	Electors	Population	Electors
Antonymyre	0	0	0	0	0	0
Balla Balla	0	2	0	2	0	0
Cleaverville	4	0	12	0	-33%	0
Cooya Pooya	0	2	0	2	0	0
Cossack	15	0	0	2	0	-100%
Gnoorea	3	0	25	0	-88%	0
Maitland	16	1	80	7	-80%	-86%
Mardie	605	3	1,579	4	-62%	-25%
Mount Anketell	0	0	0	0	0	0
Point Samson	239	117	654	152	-63%	-23%
Roebourne	980	295	1,108	556	-12%	-47%
Sherlock	0	4	0	4	0	0
Whim Creek	4	1	10	1	-60%	0
Wickham	2,025	1,120	1,668	760	18%	47%
Section 51B (Confidential)		10		13		-23%
<b>Total Population Figures</b>	<b>3,891</b>		<b>5,136</b>		<b>-25%</b>	
<b>Total Elector Figures</b>		<b>1,555</b>		<b>1,503</b>		<b>3%</b>
<b>Number of Councillors</b>	<b>2</b>		<b>2</b>		<b>0</b>	

### 5.3.1 Community of interest

This Ward is the largest in terms of land mass stretching from the western boundary of the district to the east and southern boundaries. The Ward includes the towns of Wickham, Roebourne, Point Samson, the historic town of Cossack and a number of pastoral leases including Mardie Station, Sherlock Station, Pyramid Station, Mallina Station, Karratha Station, Mt Welcome Station and Warambie Station. It is the traditional home of the Ngarluma people and also accommodates Yindjibarndi and Banyjima people from surrounding stations. Each town is self-sustaining and provides support to its local communities. Wickham has a small number of recreational, retail and commercial offerings for its local communities with more expansive services available in Karratha.

Wickham is a mining townsite that provides accommodation and community facilities that support Rio Tinto's nearby iron ore processing, rail and shipping operations at Cape Lambert. The town accommodates a portion of Rio Tinto's FIFO operational workforce as well as providing permanent

housing and services for the Cape Lambert workforce. Wickham has a small shopping complex with a supermarket, liquor store, pharmacy, cafe, newsagency and post office. Community facilities consist of a primary school, a St John's Ambulance Post, a police station, community hub offering child care and library services, a sports oval and parks, aquatic centre and gymnasium, restaurant and bar.

Point Samson is a popular small coastal tourist destination, offering quality fishing, boating and swimming spots, along with a variety of accommodation options, restaurants and tavern. It is also known for its 'coastal lifestyle' residential living, with a significant focus on the coastal environment and marine recreation.

Cossack is a historical town site established in 1872 as the first port in the north west of Australia and the home of Western Australia's first pearling industry. Cossack does not have a residential population or the associated services to support a residential community. Declared a historical town in 1979, Cossack has a specialised strategic and functional role as a unique heritage and tourism destination. Activation of the town is being considered by the State Government to generate greater tourism potential and to highlight Aboriginal history, culture and arts of the region.

Roebourne is the oldest township in the district and the oldest active town between Geraldton and Darwin. It has the most significant population centre of Aboriginal people in the local government area and acts as a centre for Aboriginal culture and enterprise. The town includes a small store, petrol station, post office, medical centre and a small district hospital, interpretive museum and art gallery, public library, several churches, fire station, police station and Centrelink services. It is also home to several of the local Aboriginal corporations' offices.

### 5.3.2 Physical and topographical features

Wickham by road is located 8.4kms from Point Samson, 8.5kms from Cossack, 13 kilometres north of Roebourne and about 50 kilometres north east of Karratha. Wickham is located inland from the coast and is accessed via Point Samson-Roebourne Road, which connects to the North West Coastal Highway at Roebourne. The main road through the town centre is Wickham Drive.

Point Samson by road is located 8.4kms from Wickham, 15kms from Cossack, approximately 18 kilometres north of Roebourne and 57 kilometres north east of Karratha and is at the eastern tip of the Dampier Archipelago. Point Samson is located on the coast and provides operational and recreational maritime opportunities. Point Samson can be accessed by travelling north on the Point-Samson-Roebourne Road into the town centre.

Cossack by road is located 8.5kms from Wickham, 15kms from Point Samson, approximately 52 kilometres driving distance east of Karratha and 14 kilometres north east of Roebourne. It is situated on the coast at the mouth of the Harding River, to the south of Point Samson and east of Wickham. Cossack is built around tidal flats and is accessed by a single causeway road to the Point Samson-Roebourne Road.

Pastoral area is bounded by the Shire of Ashburton to the south and the Town of Port Hedland to the east. To the north and west is the Indian Ocean and the Dampier Archipelago. The majority of the land is pastoral or unallocated crown land and provides a boundary to the Millstream National Park to the south.

Roebourne is located on the banks of the Harding River approximately 40 kilometres by road east of Karratha and 13kms from Wickham. Roebourne is the only town within the City district that is situated directly on that national highway Route 1 - the North West Coastal Highway.

### 5.3.3 Demographic Trends

Based on ABS Census data (2016 unless stated) the Wickham - Point Samson – Roebourne – Cossack – Pastoral Ward has the following demographics:

Population	<p>Based on 2021 Census data, 3,891 residents live in the Ward which is a drop of 12% from the 2016 census figures and a 25% drop when the last ward review was conducted in 2014. The only increase has been in the townsite of Wickham that experienced a growth of 18% on previous census statistics with an additional 357 people moving into the area and supported through the introduction of the Wickham South residential development and additional high density accommodation for Rio Tinto workers. Point Samson had a significant fall to 239 persons (a fall of 63% on previous data). Roebourne has seen a decrease in population by 12%. Areas of Maitland and Mardie have also experienced falls in population as they previously would have recorded workers on mining camps during the regions construction and development boom. The 2021 Census data would now be capturing population in a time when mining sites are in a care and maintenance phase and strategic construction programs are on hold. It is expected in the next decade that strategic projects will ramp up again following the global recession caused through Covid.</p> <p>This Ward has the highest proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders representing 25% of the total Ward population with 75% living in Roebourne and 17% in Wickham.</p> <p>This Ward also has the highest disparity between males and females with 65% of the population being male.</p>
Age	58% of constituents are between the age of 20 and 49, while 71% are aged between 20 and 59. There are also 1,080 children accounting for 24% of the ward population. The median age is 44 years old, higher than the other two wards at 35 years old.
Nationality	Australians make up 68% of the residents with 5% from New Zealand and 4% from the UK.
Qualifications	Approximately 33% of the population have a tertiary qualification, the majority of which are vocational at 26%.
Employment	<p>60% of the eligible working population is employed of which 77% are in full time employment. 4% of the population is unemployed with Roebourne registering a higher rate of 10%.</p> <p>35% of the working population are engaged in the Mining sector; Administration and Clerical (2.6%); Health (2%) and Accommodation (2%).</p> <p>14% of the population are Technicians and Trades Workers and a further 9% Machinery Operators.</p>
Accommodation	Characterised by minimal freehold land, home ownership in Wickham is exceptionally low (8%), with the majority of dwellings being owned by Rio Tinto. 40% of residents live in a free standing house and 10% in medium density accommodation (the highest figure in the City for medium density). The highest number of residents living in a caravan or cabin (8%) reside in this Ward.
Income	The lowest incomes in the City are located in this Ward with only 30% of the residents earning over \$1,500 per week. Median weekly personal income is \$1,106 per week, family income is \$2,330 per week and household income is \$1,804 per week.



### 5.3.4 Economic Factors

This Ward has a mix of residential and commercial town sites to pastoral and mining land.

Wickham is a mainly residential settlement, with dedicated transient worker accommodation. It has limited commercial to service the community. Commercially, Wickham has a gross lettable retail floor area of 2,600 m<sup>2</sup>. Industries are predominately mining and construction. To the north lies Cape Lambert, a major rail and port operation exporting iron ore overseas. Significant expansion is underway at Cape Lambert with the prospect of a deep water port at Anketell also being proposed a short distance to the west of Cape Lambert.

Point Samson is primarily residential and tourism focused, with only about 1,200 square metres of gross lettable retail floor area. Industries include tourism, hospitality and a commercial fishing industry that supplies seafood around Australia.

The Cossack town centre is zoned for tourism. The main attractions consist of a museum and craft centre. The settlement contains very minimal traditional retail or commercial uses. Budget tourist accommodation is available and a café. Plans are being considered by the State Government to increase tourism activation for the historic townsite.

Roebourne is the only townsite located directly on the North West Coastal Highway route. Roebourne acts as a service centre to passing traffic. The town presently has very limited commercial and retail offering, with approximately 1,350 square metres of gross lettable retail floor area. Land uses in Roebourne are primarily residential and community related with some emphasis on tourism. A large amount of land has also been reserved for conservation and recreation purposes.

Pastoral areas further afield support cattle and an increasing interest in mining for salt, gold, nickel and rare earth minerals such as copper and zinc. Offshore there is expansion into oil and gas ventures.

### 5.3.5 Ratio of Councillors to Electors

The optimum balance forming this review is 1 councillor to 1,096 electors across the district. The current ratio of councillors to electors for this Ward is 1:778 that is outside of the Board's permitted range. An adjustment will be necessary to comply with the Board's councillor/elector ratio tolerance limits. The Ward is currently indicating a 29.1% deviation caused by an increase in electors to the Karratha Ward over the past 8 years and a 23% reduction in the electors for the Wickham/Point Samson/ Roebourne/Cossack/Pastoral Ward.

Ward	Total Population	Electors	Councillors	% Electors per Ward Population	Councillor /Elector Ratio	% Ratio Deviation
Wickham/Point Samson/ Roebourne/Cossack/Pastoral	3,891	1,555	2	40.0 %	1:777	29.1 %

## 6 OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

The Ward review shall consider the following:

- ❖ Creating new wards in a district already divided into wards;
- ❖ Changing the boundaries of a ward;
- ❖ Abolishing any or all of the wards into which a district is divided;
- ❖ Changing the name of a district or a ward;
- ❖ Changing the number of offices of councillor on a council; and
- ❖ Specifying or changing the number of offices of councillor for a ward.

The current legislative review of the Act and the proposed outcomes will limit the options available to Council and to the community in terms of maintaining a ward system that meets the Board's factors. The one factor that is the greatest test is the Elector to Councillor ratio being within 10% for each Ward. Based on the existing number of electors at the City, by reducing the councillor representation from 11 to 9, with 9 being the maximum number proposed for a Tier 1 local government, this will mean an optimal representation ratio of 1,340 electors to each councillor per ward. Outside of the Karratha Ward, the only townsite that gets close to the optimal ratio is Wickham with an elector base of 1,120 electors or if it were to also include the community of Point Samson would have a combined 1,237 electors.

The Table below indicates the effect on the ratio as the number of councillors decrease making it increasingly difficult to retain Wards as the number of councillors reduces without exceeding the Board's tolerance limits of 10%.

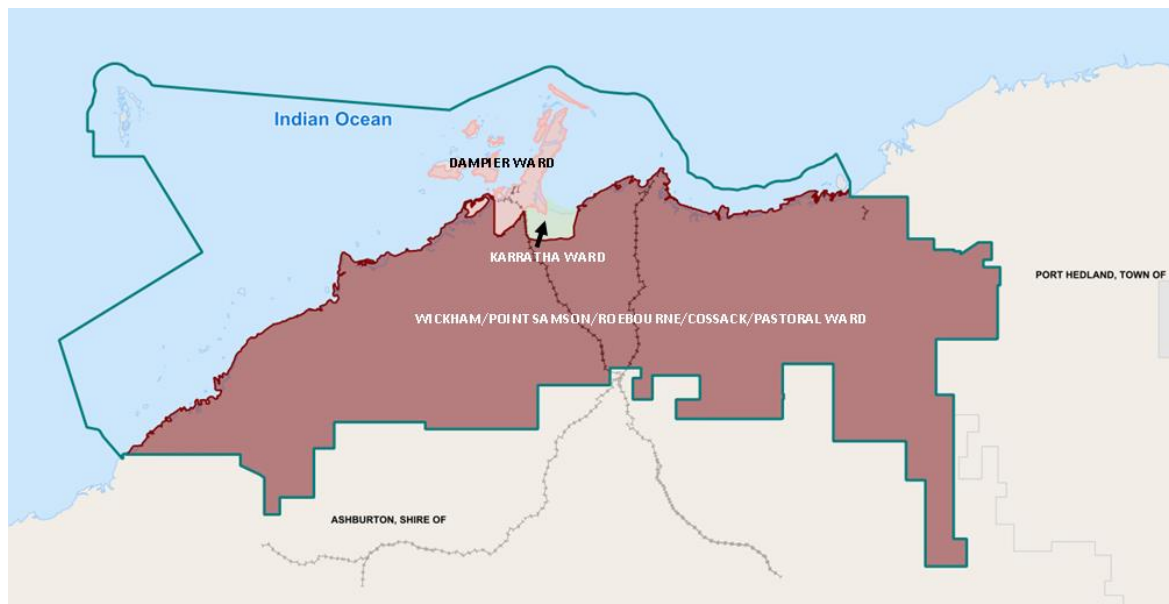
Number of Electors	Number of Councillors	Elector:Councillor ratio
12,062	11	1,096:1
12,062	9 (maximum permitted for Tier 1 LGs under proposed legislative reform)	1,340:1
12,062	8	1,508:1
12,062	7	1,723:1
12,062	6	2,010:1
12,062	5 (minimum permitted for Tier 1 LGs under proposed legislative reform)	2,412:1

The naming of Wards proposed in the Options below are essentially the main town or towns. It has been suggested by the WA Electoral Commission that the current Wickham-Point Samson-Roebourne-Cossack-Pastoral Ward be renamed to be shorter and more succinct in length. For the purposes of some Options below where numerous townsites are to be contained in a new ward, an alternative and temporary ward name has been given for the purpose of discussion.

The following options are presented for consideration. Members of the community may suggest other options during the consultation phase.

## 6.1 Option 1 – Status Quo - No ward change – 3 wards and 11 councillors

This option is retaining the current status quo of 3 wards and 11 councillors. This option is **not realistic** as it does not fit within the Board's parameters. This Option meets 4 of the 5 factors set by the Board.



Ward	Total Population	Electors	Councillors	% Electors per Ward Population	Councillor /Elector Ratio	% Ratio Deviation
Dampier	1,275	775	1	60.8 %	1:775	29.3 %
Karratha	17,018	9,732	8	57.2 %	1:1,216	-10.9 %
Wickham/Point Samson/Roebourne/Cossack/Pastoral	3,891	1,555	2	40.0 %	1:777	29.1 %
TOTALS	22,184	12,062	11		AVE = 1,096	

### 6.1.1 Community of Interest

Dampier and Karratha have their own discrete communities of interest whereas there is a greater disparity in the Wickham/Point Samson/Roebourne/Cossack/Pastoral Ward in terms of community issues, demographics and available facilities. There are however similarities in terms of industries, employment and income levels.

### 6.1.2 Physical and Topographical Features

Each ward is identified by significant townsites with Dampier being separated by a causeway joining the mainland. The natural boundary between Karratha and the Wickham/Point/Samson/Roebourne/Cossack/Pastoral Ward is wide open pastoral land encompassing the townships of Roebourne, Point Samson and Wickham and serviced by the North West Coastal Highway.

### 6.1.3 Demographic Trends

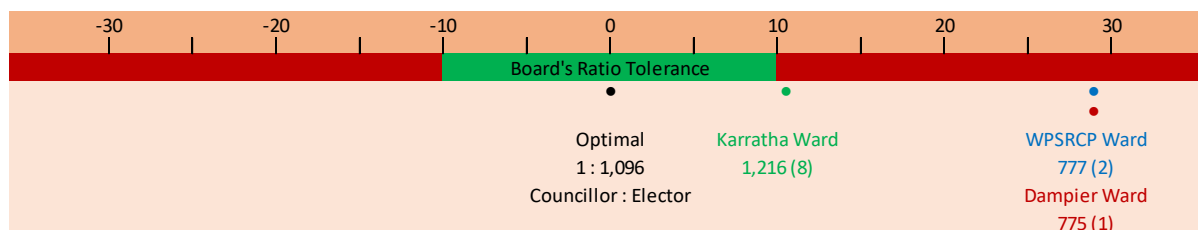
Population projections are expected to increase in all towns with major resource companies expected to ramp up operations and construction works in the next 5 years with many awaiting financial investment approvals. Housing is still in limited supply so there is a high probability of many of the major resource companies using camps in Karratha, Dampier, Wickham and Pastoral regions. Population and elector movements will have a direct impact on Councillor to Elector ratios.

### 6.1.4 Economic Factors

Karratha will continue to be the main hub for residential, recreational, entertainment, retail, commercial and industrial supplies to support the community workforces and their families. Tourism and hospitality is equally distributed across all the Wards.

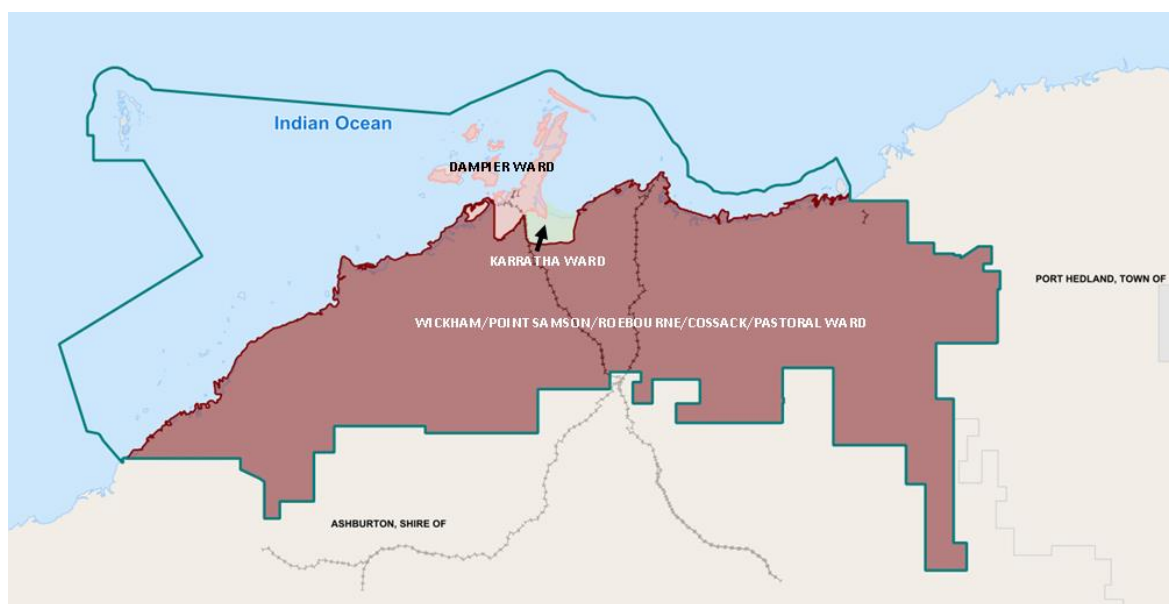
### 6.1.5 Ratio of Councillors to Electors

The current structure of Wards and Councillor distributions have been in place since the last ward review in 2014. As noted earlier, the councillor to elector ratio would not satisfy the Board's minimum standards as all Wards exceed the 10% threshold.



## 6.2 Option 2 – No ward change – 3 wards and 9 councillors

This option is a variation to Option 1 with 9 councillors representing the 3 wards. This option is **not realistic** as it does not fit within the Board's parameters. This Option meets 4 of the 5 factors set by the Board.



Ward	Total Population	Electors	Councillors	% Electors per Ward Population	Councillor /Elector Ratio	% Ratio Deviation
Dampier	1,275	775	1	60.8 %	1:775	42.2 %
Karratha	17,018	9,732	7	57.2 %	1:1,390	-3.7 %
Wickham/Point Samson/Roebourne/Cossack/Pastoral	3,891	1,555	1	40.0 %	1:1,555	-16.0 %
TOTALS	22,184	12,062	9		AVE = 1,340	

### 6.2.1 Community of Interest

Dampier and Karratha have their own discrete communities of interest whereas there is a greater disparity in the Wickham/Point Samson/Roebourne/Cossack/Pastoral Ward in terms of community issues, demographics and available facilities. There are however similarities in terms of industries, employment and income levels.

### 6.2.2 Physical and Topographical Features

Each ward is identified by significant townsites with Dampier being separated by a causeway joining the mainland. The natural boundary between Karratha and the Wickham/Point Samson/Roebourne/Cossack/Pastoral Ward is wide open pastoral land encompassing the townships of Roebourne, Point Samson and Wickham and serviced by the North West Coastal Highway.



### 6.2.3 Demographic Trends

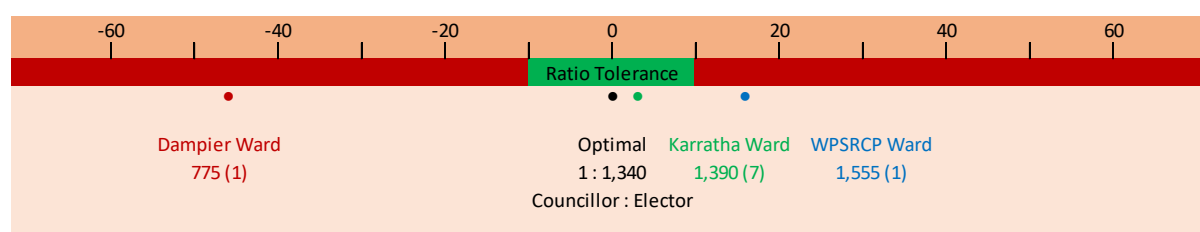
Population projections are expected to increase in all towns with major resource companies expected to ramp up operations and construction works in the next 5 years with many awaiting financial investment approvals. Housing is still in limited supply so there is a high probability of many of this major resource companies using camps in Karratha, Dampier, Wickham and Pastoral regions. Population and elector movements will have a direct impact on Councillor to Elector ratios.

### 6.2.4 Economic Factors

Karratha will continue to be the main hub for residential, recreational, entertainment, retail, commercial and industrial supplies to support the community workforces and their families. Tourism and hospitality is equally distributed across all the Wards.

### 6.2.5 Ratio of Councillors to Electors

This option enables one of the three wards to satisfy the Board's minimum standards with 9 councillor representatives. The Dampier Ward having only 1 representative has a greater deviation due to the lower elector representation.

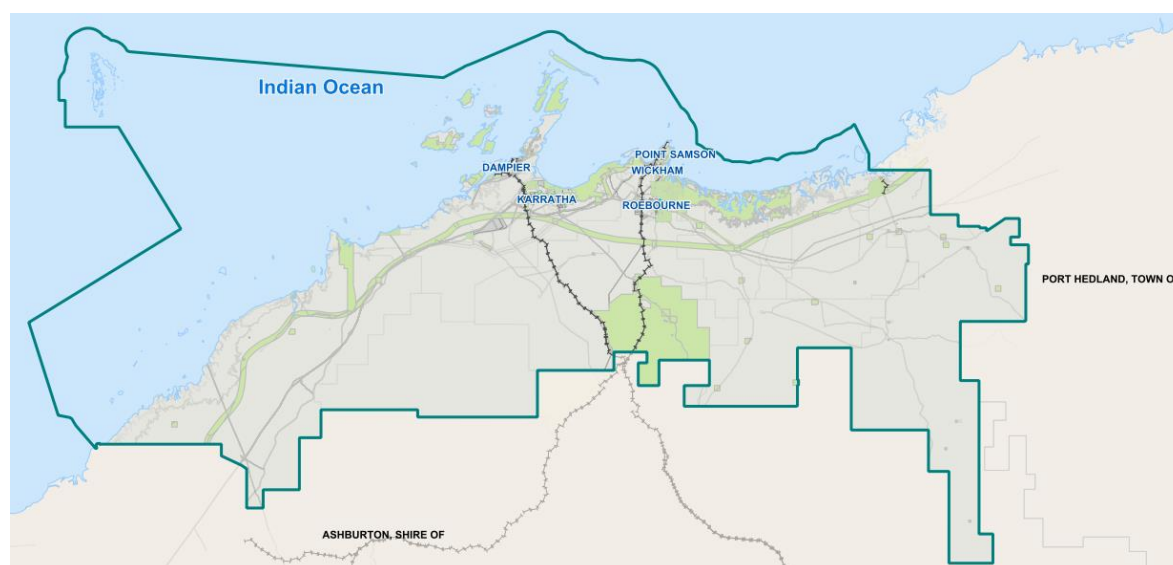


## 6.3 Option 3 – No Wards – 9 Councillors

This Option is a **viable option** which eliminates the ward system completely and all councillors represent the entire district. The number of councillors is not a limiting factor.

Council may choose to recommend 11 councillors or reduce the representative number as advocated by the Minister for Local Government as part of the current legislative review. Advice from the LGAB has indicated that they will not be supportive of Council retaining 11 councillors despite existing legislation not being an impediment to this.

This Option meets all 5 factors set by the Board.



Ward	Total Population	Electors	Councillors	% Electors per Ward Population	Councillor /Elector Ratio	% Ratio Deviation
Karratha District	22,184	12,062	9	54%	1:1,340	0%

### 6.3.1 Community of Interest

With no ward boundaries and just a single district boundary, the communities of interest are not impacted from this change. The City and its residents are some distance away from neighbouring local governments. All electors and residents have a common interest and unity to their own local government for work or place of residence.

### 6.3.2 Physical and Topographical Features

The district boundary does not allow any distinction in physical or topographical features.

### 6.3.3 Demographic Trends

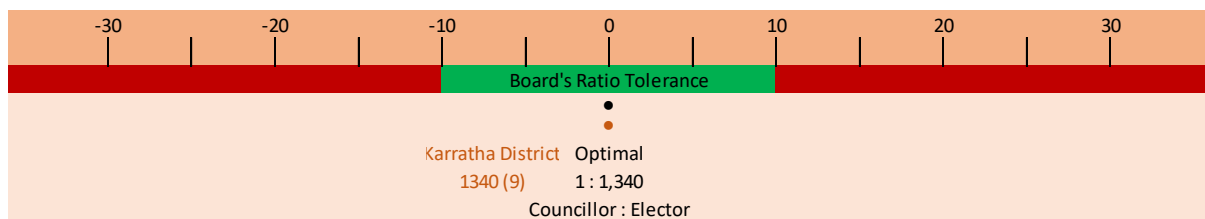
The current population forecasts indicate an increase across all townsites. Under a No Ward system, the demographic variations will not be an influencing factor.

### 6.3.4 Economic Factors

Economic factors will not be an issue with a single district boundary encompassing raw material extraction and transportation to wharves and businesses that support the resources industry in the district and even the wider region. Individual and family needs for social, retail, recreation and education are accessible to all persons.

### 6.3.5 Ratio of Councillors to Electors

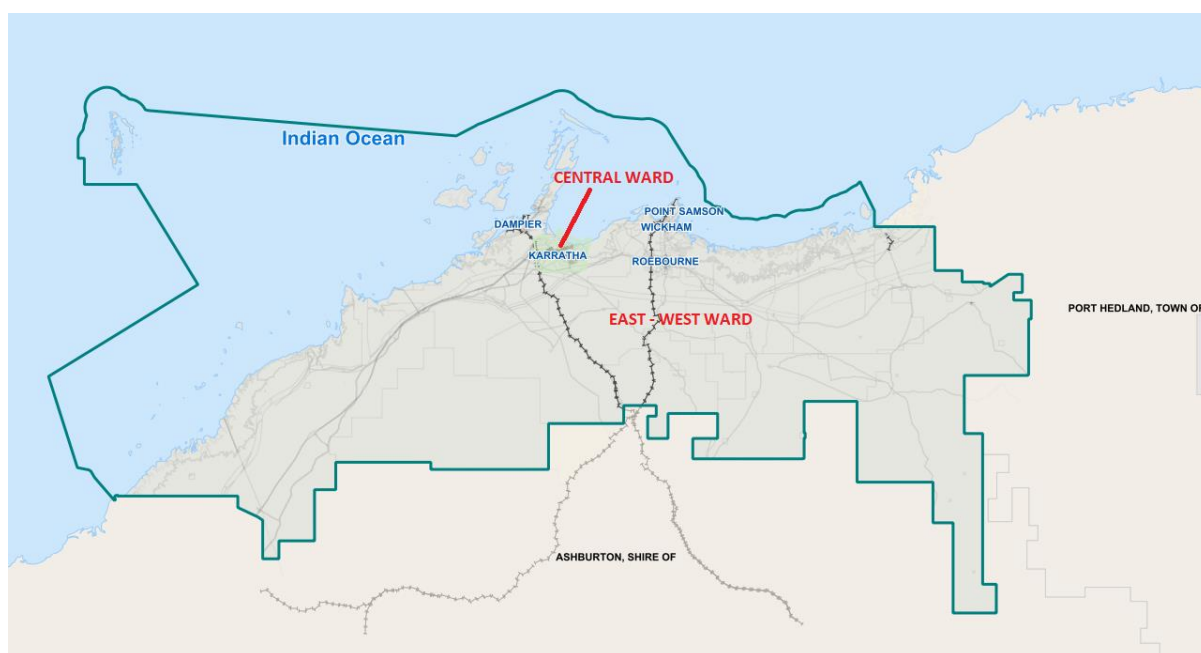
This Option provides an even representation of electors to councillors across the district. The proposed representation suggests a maximum of 9 councillors to comply with future legislative amendments, however the representation will work for any number of councillors.



## 6.4 Option 4 – 2 Ward System – Retain 11 Councillors

This Option considers a two ward system - a Karratha ward and a ward comprising all other towns. The Karratha ward has temporarily been named Central Ward and the balance has been temporarily named East-West Ward. This is a **viable option** however it combines all of the towns with the exception of Karratha.

This Option meets all 5 factors set by the Board. Advice from the LGAB indicates that the Minister will not support this option because of the higher councillor representation despite meeting the current legislative framework.



Ward	Total Population	Electors	Councillors	% Electors per Ward Population	Councillor /Elector Ratio	% Ratio Deviation
Central	17,018	9,732	9	57.2 %	1:1,081	1.4 %
East-West	5,166	2,330	2	45.1 %	1:1,165	-6.2 %
TOTALS	22,184	12,062	11		AVE = 1,096	

### 6.4.1 Community of Interest

The Central Ward remains unchanged however the East-West Ward has a mix of non-Karratha residents with individual communities of interest within this amalgamated ward concentrated by local townships. The only clear community of interest would be the Central Ward. The East-West Ward is a combination of residential and industrial land uses with workers mainly engaged in the resources industry by Rio Tinto and Woodside Energy.

### 6.4.2 Physical and Topographical Features

Central Ward incorporates the Karratha townsite and adjoining suburbs whilst the East-West Ward is a mix of pastoral, coastal and islands off the mainland.

### 6.4.3 Demographic Trends

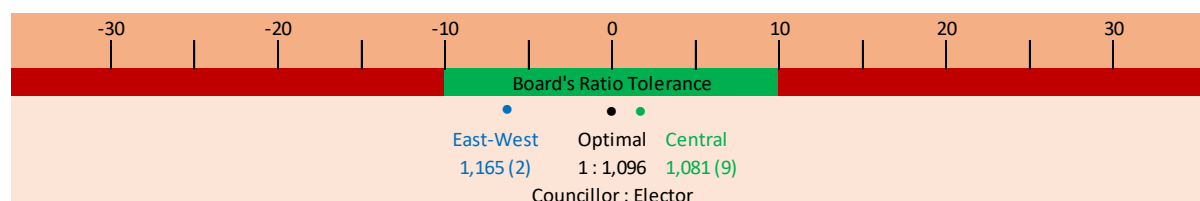
73% of the population reside in the Central Ward with the balance in the East-West Ward. 42% of the East-West Ward population comprises of Aboriginal people. Growth in population is expected in both areas as new projects and construction works come on stream in the next five years. Elector distributions are expected to follow a similar path.

#### 6.4.4 Economic Factors

Housing is expected to increase in both areas as accommodation continues to be in short supply. Economic development is expected to increase more in the East-West Ward with increasing projects and construction than in the Central Ward.

#### 6.4.5 Ratio of Councillors to Electors

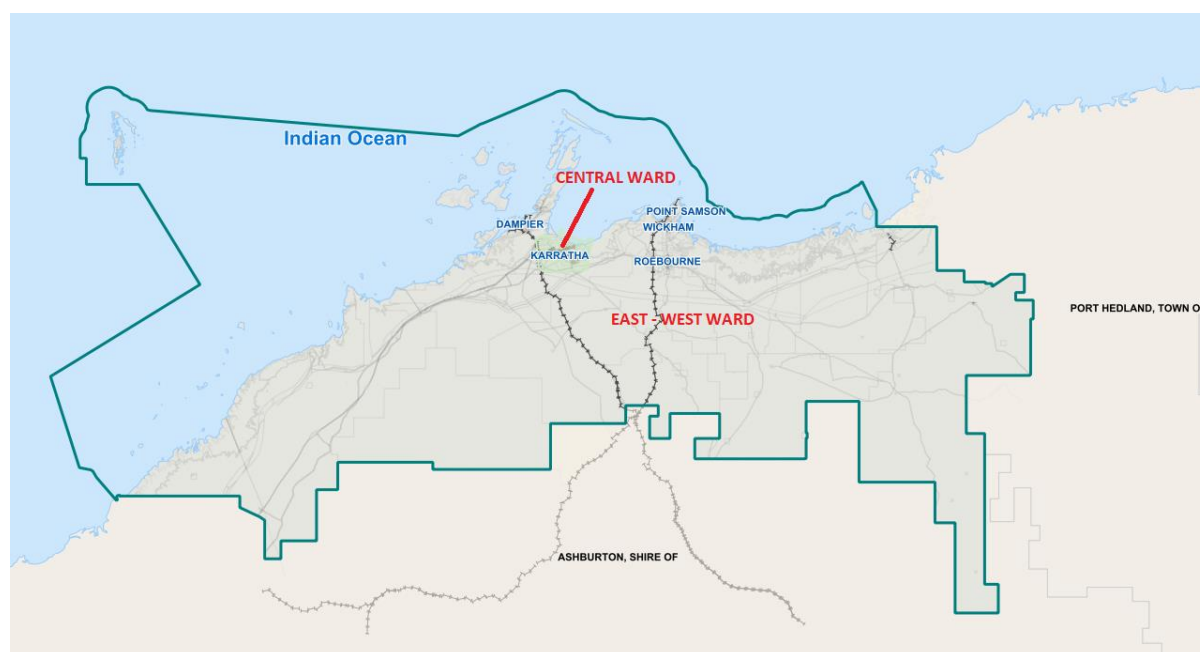
This option distinguishes Karratha from the adjoining townsites and by retaining the 11 councillors, enables the ratios to remain within the Board's parameters.



### 6.5 Option 5 – 2 Ward System – 9 Councillors

This Option is a variation to Option 4 with the sole change being the number of representatives being reduced from 11 councillors to 9 councillors and Central Ward having 7 representatives and the East-West Ward having 2 representatives. This is a **not viable option** because the Councillor/Elector ratio is outside of the LGAB tolerance limits.

This Option meets 4 of the 5 factors set by the Board. Advice from the LGAB indicates that the Minister will not support this option because it does not meet the current legislative framework.



Ward	Total Population	Electors	Councillors	% Electors per Ward Population	Councillor /Elector Ratio	% Ratio Deviation
Central	17,018	9,732	7	57.2 %	1:1,390	-3.7 %
East-West	5,166	2,330	2	45.1 %	1:1,165	13.1 %
TOTALS	22,184	12,062	9		AVE = 1,340	



### 6.5.1 Community of Interest

The Central Ward remains unchanged however the East-West Ward has a mix of non-Karratha residents with individual communities of interest within this amalgamated ward concentrated by local townships. The only clear community of interest would be the Central Ward. The East-West Ward is a combination of residential and industrial land uses with workers mainly engaged in the resources industry by Rio Tinto and Woodside Energy.

### 6.5.2 Physical and Topographical Features

Central Ward comprises the Karratha townsite and adjoining suburbs whilst the East-West Ward is a mix of pastoral, coastal and islands off the mainland.

### 6.5.3 Demographic Trends

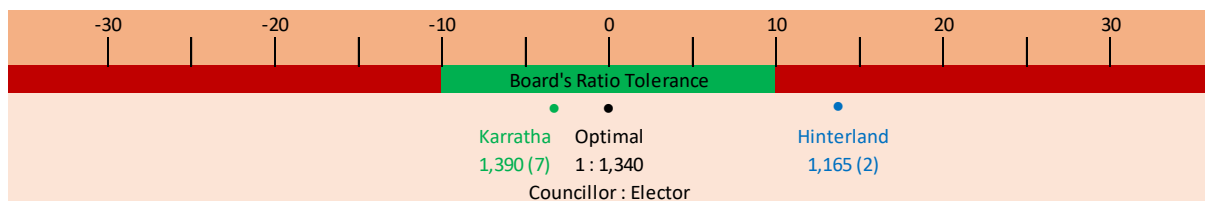
73% of the population reside in the Central Ward with the balance in the East-West Ward. 42% of the East-West Ward population comprises of Aboriginal people. Growth in population is expected in both areas as new projects and construction works come on stream in the next five years. Elector distributions are expected to follow a similar path.

### 6.5.4 Economic Factors

Housing is expected to increase in both areas as accommodation continues to be in short supply. Economic development is expected to increase more in the East-West Ward with increasing projects and construction than in the Central Ward.

### 6.5.5 Ratio of Councillors to Electors

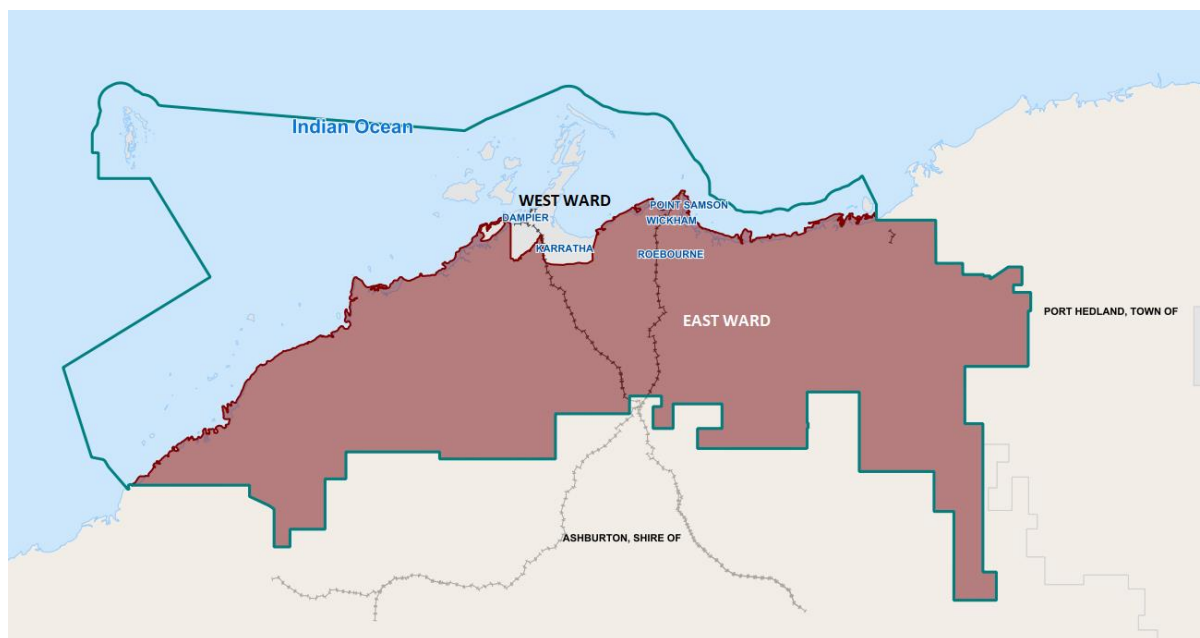
This option considers representation by 9 councillors however the ratios are unable to meet the Board's tolerance limits due to insufficient elector numbers in the East-West Ward.



## 6.6 Option 6 – 2 Ward System – Retain 9 Councillors

This Option considers a two ward system with 9 councillor representatives. The West Ward comprises of Dampier and Karratha represented by 8 councillors and the East Ward comprises Roebourne, Wickham, Cossack, Point Samson and the Pastoral regions represented by 1 councillor.

This Option meets 4 of the 5 factors set by the Board.



Ward	Total Population	Electors	Councillors	% Electors per Ward Population	Councillor /Elector Ratio	% Ratio Deviation
West Ward	18,293	10,507	8	57.2 %	1:1,313	2.0 %
East Ward	3,891	1,555	1	45.1 %	1:1,555	-16.0 %
TOTALS	22,184	12,062	9		AVE = 1,340	

### 6.6.1 Community of Interest

The communities of interest are more traditional and closely aligned simply due to distance and proximity to each other. Dampier and Karratha are bordering communities for the West Ward and the East Ward communities of Point Samson, Cossack, Wickham, Roebourne and Pastoral are to the east of Karratha and Dampier.

Social interactions between Dampier and Karratha are strong whether it be for work, education, shopping or recreation and similar patterns exist for the East ward communities.

### 6.6.2 Physical and Topographical Features

The West Ward communities of Karratha and Dampier are adjacent to each other topographically with a common boundary and within 21kms by road of each other.

40 kms by road to the east of Karratha is the East Ward where all the communities are connected by the Point Samson - Roebourne Road which is about 19 kms in length. This ward also includes the outlying pastoral regions.

### 6.6.3 Demographic Trends

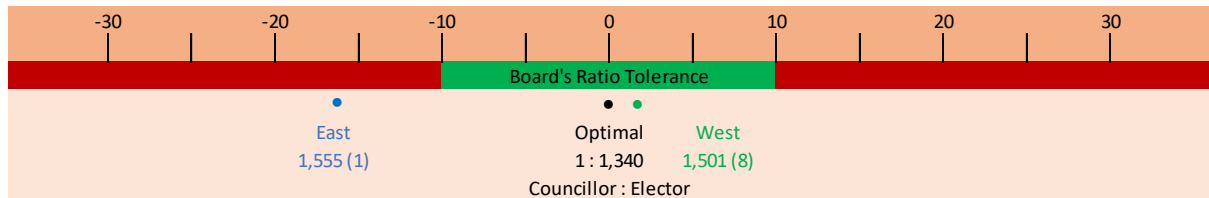
79% of the population reside in the West Ward and 21% in the East Ward. 42% of the East Ward community comprises of Aboriginal people. Growth in population is expected in both areas as new projects and construction works come on stream in the next five years. Elector distributions are expected to follow a similar path.

#### 6.6.4 Economic Factors

Housing is expected to increase in both areas as accommodation continues to be in short supply. Economic development is expected to increase across all Ward areas with increasing capital investment by mining companies in the Burrup area and in parts of the East Ward.

#### 6.6.5 Ratio of Councillors to Electors

This option identifies that whilst the West Ward will comply with the Board's tolerance limits, the East ward is disadvantaged due to the lower number of electors.



## 7 Which option is best?

When determining which Option is best for Council, the Board suggests that each prescribed factor is rated against each Option.

Option	Community of Interest	Physical and Topographical Features	Demographic Trends	Economic Factors	Councillor/Elector Ratio
1	★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★	★
2	★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★	★
3	★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★
4	★★	★★	★★★	★★★	★★★
5	★★	★★	★★★	★★★	★★
6	★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★	★★

Option	Description	Ward Names	Councillor Representation
1	Maintain the status quo	Dampier Ward Karratha Ward Wickham-Point Samson-Roebourne-Cossack-Pastoral Ward <i>Total</i>	1 8 2 <b>11</b>
2	No Ward Change - 9 councillors	Dampier Ward Karratha Ward Wickham-Point Samson-Roebourne-Cossack-Pastoral Ward <i>Total</i>	1 7 1 <b>9</b>
3	No Ward System - one district	Karratha District <i>Total</i>	<b>11 (or 9-5)</b>
4	Two Wards System - 11 councillors	Central Ward East-West Ward <i>Total</i>	9 2 <b>11</b>
5	Two Ward System - 9 councillors	Central Ward East-West Ward <i>Total</i>	7 2 <b>9</b>
6	Two Ward System - 9 Councillors	West Ward East Ward <i>Total</i>	8 1 <b>9</b>

## 8 Submissions Close

The Ward Review is open from 28 September 2022 to 11 November 2022.

Submissions to be addressed to [enquiries@karratha.wa.gov.au](mailto:enquiries@karratha.wa.gov.au) prior to the closing date. Submissions can express support for, or variation to, any or all of the options provided above. New options can also be proposed. Options may be impacted by legislation introduced to amend the *Local Government Act 1995*.