Equine Strategy

Shire of
Serpentine
Jarrahdale

Perth

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**Shire of
Serpentine Jarrahdale**

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10   **Peel Region**

1..............	State Equestrian Centre
2..............	Ascot Racecourse
3..............	Gloucester Park
4..............	Belmont Racecourse
5..............	Byford Trotting Complex
6..............	Kwinana Horse Beach
7..............	Lark Hill Thoroughbred Training Complex
8..............	Pinjarra Paceway
9..............	Pinjarra Park
10............	Murray Regional Equestrian Centre
●...........	Regional equine facilities
●............	Shire equine facilities

Contents

Executive summary

The Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale is the leading Equine Region in Western Australia. The celebration of this identity would ensure the reputation become widely known, and that external funding and business investment equitably support the local equine community.

The Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale has long had a rich and diverse equine culture. From the days of early settlement where horses were used in the timber industry to haul logs and used by farmers to work the land, through to the present day where rural land, equine facilities and an abundance of trail networks contribute to make Serpentine Jarrahdale an attractive region for both enthusiasts and a multimillion dollar equine industry.

The Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale Equine Strategy 2018 (the Strategy) seeks to understand the nature of the equine sector in the Shire, its position in relation to the Peel Region and the State, and to establish goals and strategic actions to achieve to ensure there is continued support and development of the sector into the future. Importantly through the examination of statistics provided by associations such as Racing and Wagering WA (RWWA) and Equestrian WA, the Strategy has uncovered that not only is the equine sector strong within the Shire but that the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale is the leading equine hub in both the Peel and the State.

The Strategy has uncovered that the strength of the equine sector in the Shire lies within the diversity of the sector, the location and accessibility of strategic facilities, available land and a genuine commitment from horse owners, enthusiasts and businesses across the sector. The equine sector can be broadly defined by the equine activity in registered disciplines, unregistered equine activity, and the equine industry and businesses.

Equine activity – horses in registered disciplines

In consolidating the total number of registered horses/members across the key equine disciplines, the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale is estimated to be home to 3,876 horses. With decidedly more horses than any other LGA in the State, **this makes the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale the leading Equine Region in Western Australia.** This requires formal recognition, to ensure the local equine community is equitably and rightfully supported by external funding and business investment.

Local Government Area	Racing		Equestrian disciplines				Total
	Standardbred horses	Thoroughbred horses	Equestrian horses	Pony club horses	Polocrosse horses	Polo horses	
Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale	1085	445	792	963	333	258	3876
City of Swan	250	514	1251	1200	342	174	3731
City of Greater Geraldton	0	442	99	510	843	36	1930
Shire of Murray	496	225	258	387	183	0	1549
City of Rockingham	22	739	138	342	0	0	1241
Shire of Capel	202	299	132	318	162	0	1113
Shire of Mundaring	26	15	477	585	0	0	1103
City of Armadale	153	13	198	726	0	0	1090

Racing and Wagering Western Australia record the specific number of registered horses in racing disciplines. The number of horses represented in the table are those that were active during 2017, based on the assumption that the horses are located with the trainer (according to postcode).

The Equestrian disciplines hold data on the number of registered members (people) only. To determine the number of horses, a multiplier is used for the differing equestrian disciplines. Polo riders for instance, are estimated to have six horses per rider, while Polocrosse riders, Equestrian and Pony Club members tend to own three horses/ponies per rider. The multipliers were determined via the stakeholder consultation process and data obtained via the equine community survey. The member information and the estimated number of horses are based on the location of the club.

Both Thoroughbred and Standardbred (Harness) racing disciplines have a strong presence in the Shire. Figures provided by RWWA indicate that Serpentine Jarrahdale is the most significant Standardbred hub in Western Australia with 30.2%[1] of the State's Standardbred horses kept in the Shire. Protecting opportunities that allow for ease of access to the Byford Trotting Training Complex will be key to the continuing strength of this sector in the Shire.

Thoroughbred racing also has a strong presence in the Shire. RWWA figures indicate 445 of the State's registered Thoroughbred horses are kept within the Shire, along with 42 of the State's registered trainers living within the Shire. The continued strength of this sector will be influenced by access to appropriately sized rural land and access to the Lark Hill Thoroughbred training complex in the City of Rockingham.
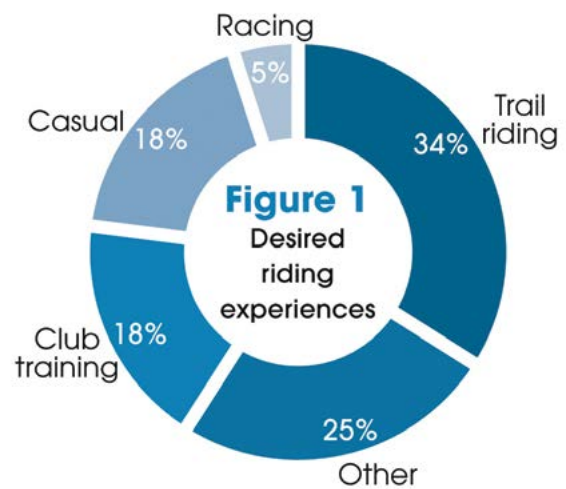
Equestrian sports have a very strong presence in the Shire with the second largest Equestrian

WA membership base in Western Australia. A number of private and publicly established facilities support the strong presence of Polo WA, Polocrosse WA, Pony Club WA[2,] and other disciplines across the Shire. Despite being some distance from the State Equestrian Centre and associated facilities in the Shire of Swan, this sector is significantly established in the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale.

Equine activity - horses in unregistered disciplines

The Shire also has a strong community of horse owners who do not participate in the registered disciplines. 54% of the total horses recorded in the local equine survey belong to owners that did not associate with racing or equestrian associations and/or clubs, with this message reconfirmed by 52% of the respondents primarily seeking trail and/or casual riding experiences as demonstrated in Figure 1[3]. If this is extrapolated, it equates to an additional 4,499 horses owned by Shire residents not currently registered with any of the mentioned racing and equestrian disciplines.

This reaches a total of 8,375 horses estimated within the local government area. As the survey pertained specifically to the local Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale equine community, the number of unregistered horses has not been extrapolated and remains unknown for the other local government areas. This number provides a solid indication of the number of horses within the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale boundaries for further localised industry and economic analysis.

Racing 5%

Trail riding 34%

Casual 18%

Figure 1
Desired riding experiences

Club training 18%

25%
Other

Equine businesses

A range of equine businesses and services support the equine activities in the Shire. Each horse necessitates a binding commitment to adequate care, feed, land and shelter, gear, veterinary services and facilities, as well as the retention of skills or education amongst individual owners. The estimated cost of keeping a horse is $10,000 per horse per year, whereby the community had indicated that 80% of the expenditure is on local goods and services. A wide array of equine supplies and services are located in the northern areas of the Shire. Agistment and breeders are generally located in the south due to land availability, while equestrian education and trainers are widespread. There are over eighty equine related businesses identified within the Shire, with a sample participating in a business survey. These business owners communicated that majority of their sales were not necessary local but from the wider region. This contributed to an overall local equine economy in the proximity of $168 million.

In closing, the Equine Strategy identifies a range of initiatives and opportunities to position and celebrate the local equine culture via three strategic goals:

• To strengthen and enhance the Shire's reputation and identity as the leading Equine Region in WA.

• To support and develop the diversity of equine disciplines within the Shire, through participation and celebration.

• To consider the embedded equine culture when planning and improving the built environment and advancing economic development opportunities.

In having these strategic goals, the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale is positioned to clearly demonstrate an ongoing commitment to the equine community and associated industry within the local, regional and state context.

Background

There is a genuine, value-based equine culture in the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale. The Shire's equine reputation has emerged naturally over many years due to availability of suitable land, local facilities and the community going about their everyday activities and interests.

Broadly, the predominant interest areas for horse ownership (as identified via consultation) are:

- Racing (training and competitions).
- Equestrian disciplines (training and competition).
- Leisure and trail riding.
- Keeping of retired and companion horses[4].

The local community have a long-standing history of equine culture. This had led the establishment of a variety of equine businesses, including local expertise and alternative therapies. The area boasts a range of facilities, including the iconic Byford Trotting Training Complex. This anchor facility has created a super hub, with 30% of the State's active harness horses located within the local government boundaries.

The Shire is also ideally located next to the largest thoroughbred hub, anchored by the Lark Hill Complex and positioning the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale as host to the fourth largest number of active Thoroughbred horses in the State. Collectively (between both Standardbred and Thoroughbred racing) the Shire is the largest racing hub in the State, with twice as many horses than the next LGA.

The Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale already has a reputation for extensive trail networks that support trail riding and tourism, and local facilities that attract people from the region for events. The Shire has a large number of recreational riders that train and compete in disciplines under Equestrian WA, Pony Club WA, and Polocrosse. There is also a privately established Polo club and numerous riding schools. Activities are not limited to dressage, driving, endurance, eventing, interschool, jumping para equestrian, reining, show horse, vaulting and general riding programs. The Shire's facilities also support charitable organisations such as Riding for the Disabled Association.

This report will cover the comparative advantages within the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale, already known to those with local knowledge, and reveal why this is the ideal location to live an equine lifestyle, and invest in equine facilities and businesses.

ANNUAL EQUINE EXPENDITURE RETAINED LOCALLY IN SERPENTINE JARRAHDALE[A]:

$168 million

WE HAVE

8,375 horses
ACROSS ALL ACTIVITIES AND DISCIPLINES

739
EQUESTRIAN COMPETITION RIDERS

396+
EVENTS ANNUALLY

80+
LOCAL EQUINE BUSINESSES

[A] This is based on a conservative estimate cost of $10,000 per horse per annum. If the horse is agisted, this increases the cost by at least another $5,000 per horse per annum. In the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale there are an estimated 8,375 horses whereby their owners spend 80% of their annual horse ownership cost ($10,000) on local supplies and services. The economic impact of locals spending locally therefore equates to $67 million. The local equine businesses indicate that 40% of their sales were to local residents, and 60% to the Peel and wider region. This equates to $100.5 million worth of expenditure by the Peel and wider region made to local equine businesses. The economic impact of owning horses, excluding the purchase/sale of horse, therefore totals to $168 million in the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale.

Context

The equine user and business community is widespread across the local government area. The draft Local Planning Strategy has identified two 'Residential and Stables' areas, as key anchor areas to protect the equine identity.

These are noted by the yellow hatching on Figure 2. This does not exclude equine activities elsewhere, it simply sets out character areas in the northern and southern parts of the Shire.

The areas with known horse ownership are predominantly properties ranging between 4,000m2 to 40ha in size. These areas, inclusive of a 1-kilometer buffer (highlighted blue – Figure 2). This creates two distinct equine hubs.

Northern Equine Hub

This includes the existing and future equine communities in Darling Downs, Oakford and Cardup localities, and the Byford Trotting Training Complex area in central Byford. The Northern Equine Hub has the highest density of horse ownership in various disciplines, and benefits from close proximity to Perth city (approximately 25 – 35 minutes, as per Google maps). This equine catchment is therefore recommended to be broadly characterised as **Training and Racing.**
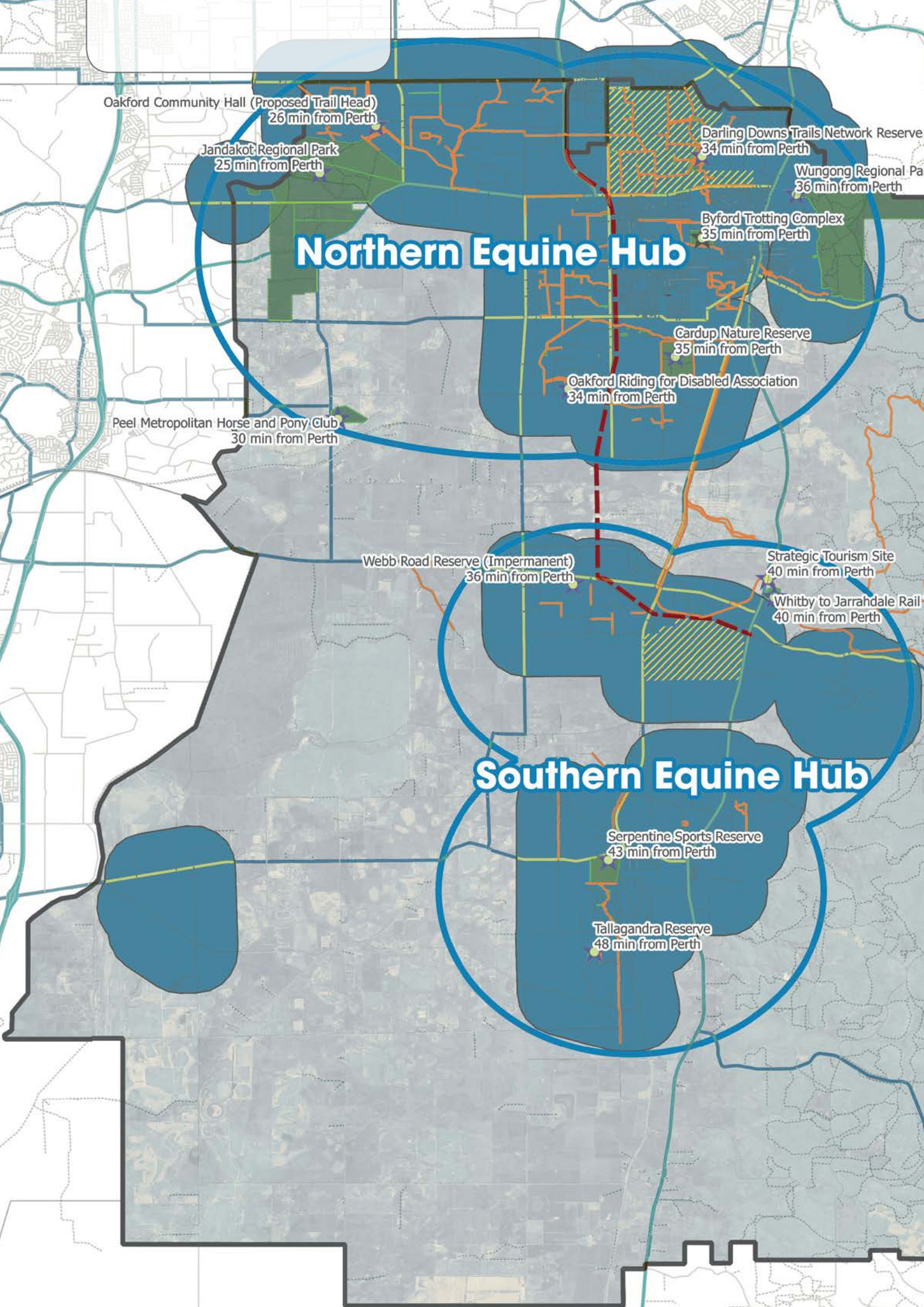
Southern Equine Hub

This includes the existing and future equine communities in Serpentine, Mardella and Jarrahdale (approximately 35 – 50 minutes from Perth city as per Google maps). There are large number of events held across both private and public facilities in these localities, and there is further potential to activate camping and trails connections towards Jarrahdale. This equine catchment is therefore recommended to be broadly characterised by **Events and Tourism.**

The purpose of highlighting this within the Equine Strategy is to broadly describe key areas of horse ownership. Whilst the characteristics are not exclusive to the identified hubs, it is useful in shaping future promotional messages and materials, or when considering opportunities and strategic locations for investment.

At this time, it is unlikely that the northern and southern hubs will be connected via trail networks or similar infrastructure due to the future Tonkin Highway, MetroNet and industrial areas identified for development. For this reason, the networks and connections within the hubs themselves will be key in shaping potential equine projects and opportunities. Some of these are described within other sections of the Equine Strategy (such as equine trails).

Northern Equine Hub

Oakford Community Hall (Proposed Trail Head)
26 min from Perth

Jandakot Regional Park
25 min from Perth

Darling Downs Trails Network Reserve
34 min from Perth

Wungong Regional Pa
36 min from Perth

Byford Trotting Complex
35 min from Perth

Cardup Nature Reserve
35 min from Perth

Oakford Riding for Disabled Association
34 min from Perth

Peel Metropolitan Horse and Pony Club
30 min from Perth

Webb Road Reserve (Impermanent)
36 min from Perth
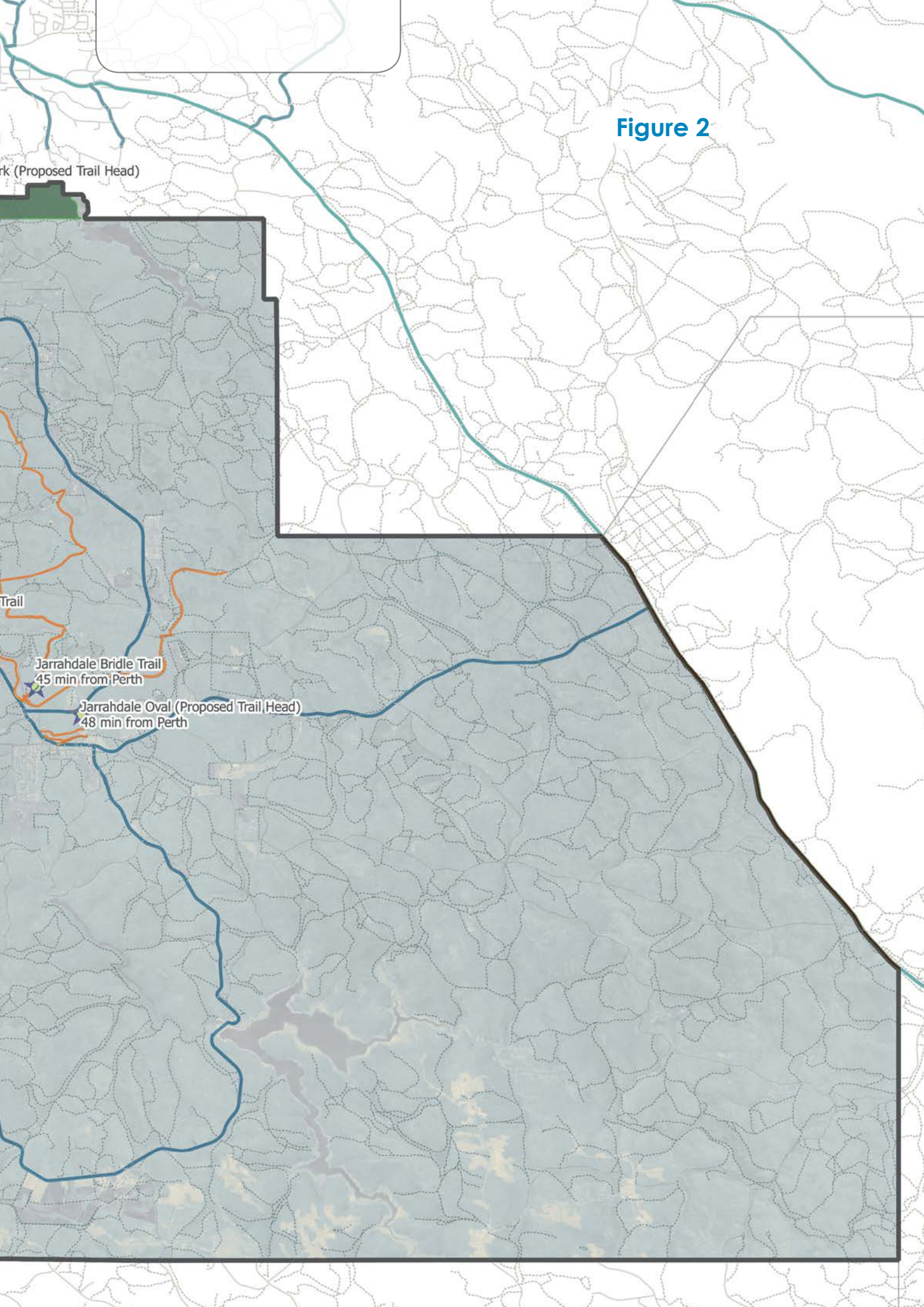
Strategic Tourism Site
40 min from Perth

Whitby to Jarrahdale Rail
40 min from Perth

Southern Equine Hub

Serpentine Sports Reserve
43 min from Perth

Tallagandra Reserve
48 min from Perth

Figure 2

rk (Proposed Trail Head)

Trail

Jarrahdale Bridle Trail
45 min from Perth

Jarrahdale Oval (Proposed Trail Head)
48 min from Perth

Facilities and Reserves

There are numerous existing facilities and reserves utilised for equine-based activities within the Shire. These all contribute to a broad range of recreational opportunities, each with their own unique characteristics. This breadth of amenity, accessibility and proximity to equine enthusiasts sets Serpentine Jarrahdale apart from other areas.

The following reserves and facilities are listed in alphabetical order. Additional information on individual sites may be found in subsequent sections of the Equine Strategy. All opportunities identified would be subject to further analysis outside of this report.

Byford Trotting Training Complex (RWWA)

The Byford Trotting Training Complex is an integral part of the heritage of Byford. The facility is focused on harness racing and is owned by Racing and Wagering Western Australia. There are 200 properties surrounding the complex that are protected through the Local Planning Scheme. The Byford Trotting Club would benefit from improved traffic management to minimise conflict between riders and cars. The Byford Trotting Training Complex is responsible for their own investment, however would be interested in creating partnerships to support family-friendly events and improve youth participation. They currently run trials on Sunday mornings, where they encourage community attendance.

Cardup Nature Reserve

This 71ha nature reserve is situated in Cardup and accommodates walkers and equestrian riders along the perimeter firebreaks (estimated to be approximately 5km in length). The site is managed by the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions.

Darling Downs Trails Network Reserve

The uniqueness of this 21ha site is that the space is free and accessible for users from the wider region. To remain appealing, it is key to keep it functioning as public open space with a friendly and welcoming feel. Under Management Order to the Shire and maintained via a community based partnership, opportunities to book the site for events could be considered to further activate the area in the future. This site is central to the existing horse ownership areas of Darling Downs, Oakford and Cardup and is linked to an immediate 26km of trail networks that allow residents to ride to/from the area. With its close 34 minute proximity to Perth via Tonkin Highway, it makes for a great location for a range of training and leisure riding activities through well maintained trails and arenas.

Jandakot Regional Park

This 370ha nature reserve is situated in Oakford and accommodates walkers and equestrian riders. There is estimated to be over 10km of sand based trails, and the Jandakot Regional Park connects with the 26km trail network in Oakford. This site is managed by the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions.

Jarrahdale Bridle Trail

An existing trail leaves Jarrahdale and forms a 28km loop through the forest. An opportunity exists for this to promoted to a broad audience, particularly for tourism and leisure riding activities. This will be subject to further investigation on vesting and management, with Jarrahdale Oval identified as the ideal location for a trailhead (see below).

Jarrahdale Oval
(proposed trailhead)

The oval itself is currently identified as an events space, however facilities and amenity to capitalise on the use of this area as a trailhead are recommended. There is ample space for float parking, with multiple opportunities existing for equine based activities in the areas surrounding Jarrahdale Oval.

Multi-use Rail Trail
(Whitby to Jarrahdale)

A heritage rail line and service corridor connects Whitby to Jarrahdale. An opportunity exists for this to become a multi-use rail trail that could accommodate a range of activities including horse riding, subject to further investigation on vesting and management. It is suggested this would need to be realigned to finish at Jarrahdale Oval (see also Jarrahdale Oval (trailhead) and Strategic Tourism Site).

Oakford Community Hall
(proposed trailhead)

Oakford Community Hall is conveniently located at the west end of the trail networks. Whilst the site is currently restricted in its ability to provide equine friendly amenity (such as float parking) the opportunity for equine accessible facilities could be considered in the future to activate this as a trailhead.

Oakford Riding for the Disabled Association

Riding for the Disabled is a charitable organisation providing a riding program for children and adults with disabilities. The assocation operates on Shire land with an exclusive lease and independently run their services. They have a covered arena built on site, which could be hired to external parties if agreeable under the terms of their lease. This could raise revenue to sustain their operations further. The Association has identified that they would benefit from yards and shelters for their horses. Furthermore, they aspire to run further programs such as early intervention and walking with horses.

Peel Metropolitan Horse and Pony Club

This site is under an exclusive lease arrangement and is effectively managed by the Peel Metropolitan Horse and Pony Club. Under this arrangement, maintenance and repair are the responsibility of the Club, who have identified as being a self-sufficient group. A future project identified by the group is to surface their purpose built cross-country training complex. This would require external sponsorship or grant funding.

Serpentine Sports Reserve

The Serpentine Sports Reserve is the long-term home of the popular Serpentine Horse and Pony Club and Serpentine Foothills Polocrosse Club. The grounds and clubhouse are commonly referred to as the best facilities in the State, and as a result attract a wide range of equine related bookings. The area is public open space and as part of the facility principles adopted by Council, is intended to be multi-use. The current booking schedule indicates that there is capacity for more use.

Given the financial cost invested by the Shire to maintain the site, increased usage through additional licenses and/or bookings should be encouraged, subject to further operational advice such as maintaining turf condition. The existing clubs have indicated the need for an upgrade of the Polocrosse field over a three-year term to enable usage over the winter period, and the repair of an existing enclosed arena as priority projects.

Strategic Tourism Site

At the start of the Multi-use Rail Trail there are few sites in Shire ownership as well a site owned by National Trust that could provide a strategic entryway for the trail. The Shire has proposed to arrange a management order across the National Trust site, to attract a tourism operator. It is strategically located along South Western Highway, with a projected population of 50,000 people in Mundijong-Whitby at its doorstep.

Tallagandra Reserve

Tallagandra Reserve is a natural equestrian area tucked away in the south of Serpentine, freehold to the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale. While only 6ha, it has activation potential and could be developed based on community aspirations. Landcare has rehabilitated the site to an improved condition, also providing wind breaks with vegetation. It is suggested that the site could potentially be booked for events, and accommodate any overflow for equestrian activities if designed appropriately.

Webb Reserve

Webb Reserve (commonly referred to as Webb Road Reserve) is under Management Order to the Shire for equine purposes and currently accommodates the Mundijong Thoroughbred and Standardbred Trainers Association. The group has a small member

base with limited resources to maintain the site. The small membership is largely attributed to quality training facilities within close proximity, and as such there is limited infrastructure on the site. As this 50ha site is located close to the future Tonkin Highway and will be split by the proposed Mundijong Railway, the site is not viable for the group long term. It is assumed that nearby facilities such as the Byford Trotting Training Complex or Lark Hill Training Complex hosts sufficient infrastructure to meet the members' needs; however further consultation would be required to quantify this. Until relocation is required, it is expected that the group will be able to continue to train at the site.

Multi-use Undercover Arena

Is there demand for an undercover arena? Yes. All equestrian groups have indicated the need and support for an undercover/indoor arena. When the community was asked what they would like to see the Shire plan for in the future, **16% of the suggestions were relating to a multi-use undercover* arena.**

Where is the best location for an undercover arena? The answer is not clear, and any location would require further interrogation and analysis outside of this report. All sites suggested below have immediate population catchments with an equine interest, and are accessible for the wider region:

- Oakford Riding for the Disabled Association has an undercover arena. If this is currently at standard or requires minimal upgrade, an option for the Association to hire this for a fee could be explored. This would allow them to raise revenue to support their services, and/or reinvest for continual facility improvements. Volunteers maintain the site to a high standard, and this would provide a great venue for a great cause.

- Oakford Community Hall/Reserve could be a beneficial site for further activation such as an undercover arena, as it does host existing facilities. The investment could provide the Oakford community with an activated central community hub.

- Darling Downs Reserve is an existing equestrian site with multiple trails and an open arena. A complementary undercover arena would activate this site further and enhance multi-useability.

Who should invest in an undercover arena?

The Shire is supportive of groups and private facilities funding their own undercover arenas. The use of municipal funds for a multiuse undercover arena would be subject to further investigations on asset sustainability, to ensure the correct level investment (both initial and ongoing) is effected. The Shire has identified a District Equine Facility in the Community Infrastructure Implementation Plan for 2026/27 that would explore the feasibility of a multiuse undercover arena. Exploration around increasing access to the Oakford Riding for the Disabled Association could result in broader accessibility to community amenity in the interim.

*Variations suggested by the survey included dressage arena, undercover arena, indoor arena, arena/equestrian and covered arena.

Equine community

The Shire conducted an equine survey[B], as part of a broader process identified as Shaping SJ. The results confirm that the equine community in Serpentine Jarrahdale is diverse with a broad range of interests.

As part of the equine survey, the community were asked to respond on their involvement in equine disciplines over the past 12 months, with the ability to select multiple options. The top responses were:

- **Trail Riding**   **62%**
- **Recreational riding**   **54%**
- Dressage   49%
- Showing jumping   36%
- Cross Country   35%
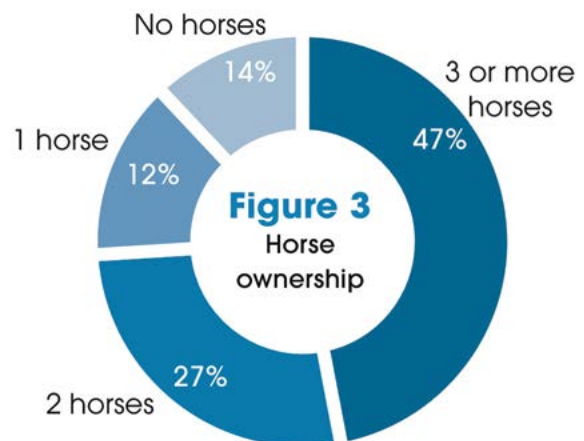- Pony and Horse Club   33%

The demographic of the respondents were:

- **50-64 age bracket**   **33%**
- **40-49 age bracket**   **29%**
- 30-39 age bracket   19%
- 19-29 age bracket   13%

Many of the respondents are likely to be parents, corresponding to the family demographic across the Shire. Based on the verbal consultation undertaken with stakeholders, there appears to be a significant amount of family involvement in equine activities.

Most of the respondents have the land and financial capacity to own a horse, with 87% indicating they own at least one horse. Of those that owned a horse, 80% keep it on their property within the Shire, 16% agist elsewhere in the Shire, and 4% agist their horses outside the Shire.

Figure 3
Horse ownership

Overwhelmingly, the majority of the horse owners have three or more horses.

The local equine facilities were an important part of the riding experience, with 55% indicating they used the facilities daily or weekly and a further 20% using them on a monthly basis. The participation appears to be dependent on the management structure of the facility. The Darling Downs Reserve (public open space) was used by 66% of the respondents, Serpentine Sports Reserve (shared use Shire managed facility) by 44%,

[B] There were 175 respondents to the survey, giving a 95% confidence level that the results are within ±8% of the results shown (calculated via survey system)

and Peel Metropolitan Horse and Pony Club (exclusive lease) was used by 23%. There were a variety of comments made on the accessibility of the reserves and further interest to utilise sites. There were also comments about safety raised, particularly around intolerance of non-equine users, trail bikes, and crossing of roads.

The barriers to using the facilities most often included:

- Lack of information   33%
- Poor quality trails   23%
- Lack of parking   21%
- Quality of facilities   15%

What can community members do to address our equine needs? The Equine Strategy identifies facilities and reserves within the area, many with opportunities to improve or enhance usability based on stakeholder consultation and engagement. The Equine Strategy can be used to leverage funding from State and Federal grant sources, as well as provide an advocacy tool for local clubs and organisations. Wherever possible for identified projects, groups and community members should fundraise, co-contribute, and demonstrate alignment with their strategic plans. This demonstrates a commitment to actively partner in community development opportunities.

How will the Shire address our equine needs? The Shire aims to support the equine community through the development and endorsement of the Equine Strategy. All associated actions and recommendations will be considered via budgetary processes, including the maintenance of trails and promotion of activities.

The following quotes
were received from the
community survey and
reflect the community's
response to the planning
of equine facilities in the
future.

Note: Comments provided may have minor edits (such
as spelling corrections) that do not change the intent of
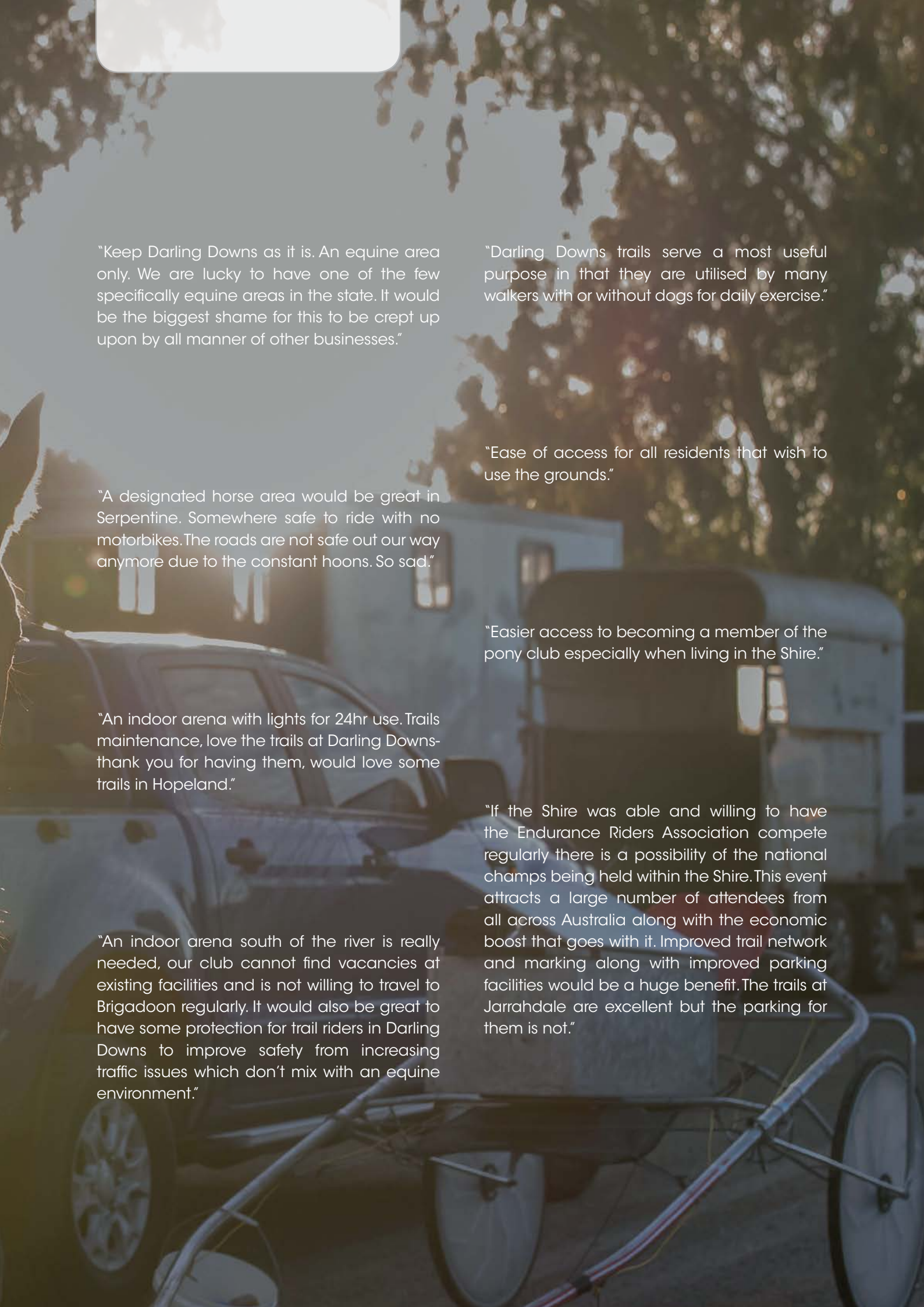feedback.

"Suggest running an equestrian 3 day event
that incorporates eventing - all levels - and
other disciplines, eg hacks, dressage, breed
show. Make it a show for everyone rather than
just one discipline repeated."

"Open the gates at Serpentine Pony Club."

"Provide indoor arena open to public use, not
just when attending the club."

"We are extremely grateful for Darling Downs.
My girls enjoy all the facilities there. Arenas,
track and bridle paths. Thank you."

"Dedicated trails in Serpentine with good
advertising."

"Provide watering facilities along bridle trails.
More bridle trails safe from motorbikes and off
road vehicles."

"Would love an area reserved in Byford/
Cardup/Mundijong that could be used for
Adult Riding Club etc that I would be happy
to help organise."

"Create an equine hub in Mundijong. Create
different lot types for people to buy into the
area. My mum and dad love horses and
want to be near horses but not wanting to
live on a large block to main the property. So
create apartments, retirement villages, small
lot estate, larger ones like 2-3ha providing a
range of housing types for people of all age
groups to be able enjoy living near horses.
If you look at Melbourne Cup, there are lots
of high rise apartments overlooking the race
course."

"Keep Darling Downs as it is. An equine area only. We are lucky to have one of the few specifically equine areas in the state. It would be the biggest shame for this to be crept up upon by all manner of other businesses."

"Darling Downs trails serve a most useful purpose in that they are utilised by many walkers with or without dogs for daily exercise."

"Ease of access for all residents that wish to use the grounds."

"A designated horse area would be great in Serpentine. Somewhere safe to ride with no motorbikes. The roads are not safe out our way anymore due to the constant hoons. So sad."

"Easier access to becoming a member of the pony club especially when living in the Shire."

"An indoor arena with lights for 24hr use. Trails maintenance, love the trails at Darling Downs- thank you for having them, would love some trails in Hopeland."

"If the Shire was able and willing to have the Endurance Riders Association compete regularly there is a possibility of the national champs being held within the Shire. This event attracts a large number of attendees from all across Australia along with the economic boost that goes with it. Improved trail network and marking along with improved parking facilities would be a huge benefit. The trails at Jarrahdale are excellent but the parking for them is not."

"An indoor arena south of the river is really needed, our club cannot find vacancies at existing facilities and is not willing to travel to Brigadoon regularly. It would also be great to have some protection for trail riders in Darling Downs to improve safety from increasing traffic issues which don't mix with an equine environment."

Equine economy

There is a niche equine cluster within the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale. Numerous competitive advantages (existing market, growing population and demand, land availability, large workforce, high business confidence) make this the ideal location to invest in equine facilities and businesses.

The Shire conducted a business survey for all known equine businesses in the local government area. Out of the 80 identified equine businesses, 52 respondents participated in the survey. The sample provides a solid outline of the local equine economy and its associated significance, as the 52 businesses alone aggregated an annual turnover of $21 million.

Given the local equine community spends at least $84 million on horses per year and 80% of this is on local suppliers and services, the outcomes from this sample size is expected to be only a representative share of the existing market. The outcomes of the business survey are nonetheless impressive.

As the fastest growing local government in Western Australia (ABS 2018), there is a significant and increasing resident base seeking local jobs. As identified in the Shire's Economic Development Strategy, there is currently a jobs deficit with 79% of the local residents leaving the Shire for employment. There is a large available workforce for any business looking to establish in the area. The existing equine culture and growing population provide a competitive advantage specific to the equine industry.

[c] Based on a sample of 52 respondents from an identified 80 businesses locally, without extrapolation therefore only represents a section of equine economy.

ANNUAL EQUINE BUSINESS TURNOVER IN SERPENTINE JARRAHDALE[c]:

$21 million

CONSISTING OF

2,800
CUSTOMERS PER WEEK, 60% FROM OUTSIDE OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA

190+
EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS

12 horses
PER PROPERTY ON AVERAGE

81% have confidence
IN FUTURE EQUINE OPPORTUNITIES FOR THEIR BUSINESS (DEGREE OF CONFIDENCE VARIES)

The major concern for businesses was urban development. The Shire's planning documents aim to accommodate the significant growth pressures within the urban cells of Byford and Mundijong-Whitby, to support agricultural lifestyles in the surrounding areas.
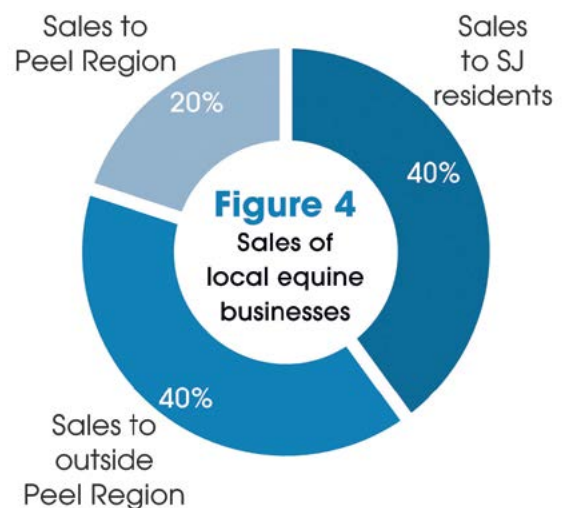
The Shire has a strong existing agricultural cluster, including the niche equine cluster. As the area continues to grow and evolve, the various individual clusters will become more specialised. Cluster development leads to increased levels of competitiveness, resulting in the growth of businesses and flow-on benefits such as skills attraction/retention, employment generation and increasing levels of economic activity. At the same time, their importance to the economy will also grow, contributing investment, value and jobs to the local economy.

The numerous competitive advantages (existing market, growing population and demand, land availability, large workforce, high business confidence) make this the ideal location to invest in equine facilities.

In the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale, there are two distinct areas of equine businesses. In the south, **Serpentine and Hopeland** provide a cluster of businesses, particularly in the areas of agistment and breeding. These are established on larger properties. In **Oakford, Oldbury and Darling Downs** to the north, there is a wide array of equine suppliers and services. Equestrian education and trainers are present in both the northern and southern areas.

Local stakeholders indicated **80% of suppliers and services required for owning a horse is derived from businesses within the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale,** highlighting the self-sufficiency and strength of the equine economy. **The sales of local equine businesses are predominantly outside the Shire,** indicating an injection of new money that further strengthens the local economy.

Compared to this time last year, the majority of respondents indicated their turnover, profitability, number of employees and customers were down (average across the categories was 54%). However, respondents were quite optimistic about the next 12 months with the majority of respondents expecting their turnover, profitability, number of employees and customers to increase over the next 12 months (average across the categories 72%). When asked about their confidence about future opportunities, **81% were optimistic.**

Figure 4
Sales of local equine businesses

Sales to Peel Region 20%

Sales to SJ residents 40%

Sales to outside Peel Region 40%

Small businesses with less than a handful of employees form the majority of the market. The breakdown of businesses by their 2016/17 annual turnover is as follows:

- 52% of respondents reported a turnover less than $100,000
- 40% of respondents reported a turnover between $100,000 and $1 million
- 8% of respondents reported a turnover between $1 million and $5 million

Local businesses

EQUINE BUSINESSES WITHIN THE SHIRE OF SERPENTINE JARRAHDALE[4]:

158
OFFICIAL TRAINERS (RACING ONLY)

11
VETS/EQUINE HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

11
RACECOURSE/RACE TRAINING FACILITY

7
FARRIERS

12
RIDING SCHOOLS/EQUESTRIAN FACILITIES

18
BREEDERS

20
EQUESTRIAN SKILLS TRAINING/EQUINE EDUCATION

20
FORMAL AGISTMENT CENTRES

17
EQUINE SUPPLIERS/SERVICES (EG. FEED)

9
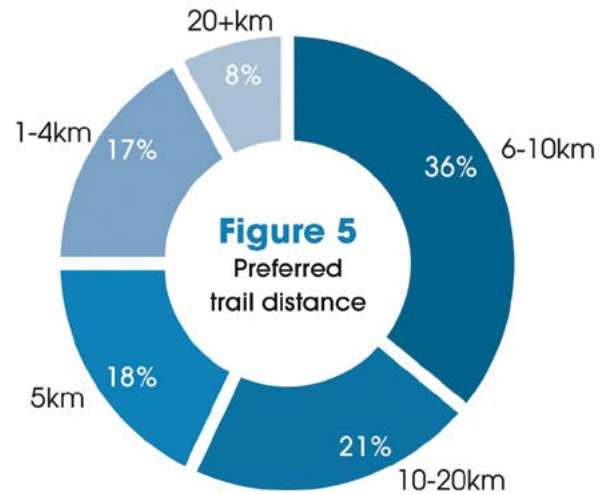EQUINE TOURISM/RECREATIONAL RIDES (EG. TRAIL RIDES)

Equine trails

The Shire has an extensive trail network totaling more than 150km. The top equine activities of those surveyed are Trail Riding (62%) and Recreational Riding (54%). 70% of the respondents from outside the Shire had used the Shire's trails in the last 12 months, highlighting it as a clear attraction.

As part of the equine community survey, respondents indicated the most frequently used trail networks as:

- Darling Downs Trail Network   56%
- Jarrahdale Trails   24%
- Oakford Trails Network (North)   24%
- Cardup Trail Network   18%
- Other forest trails   16%
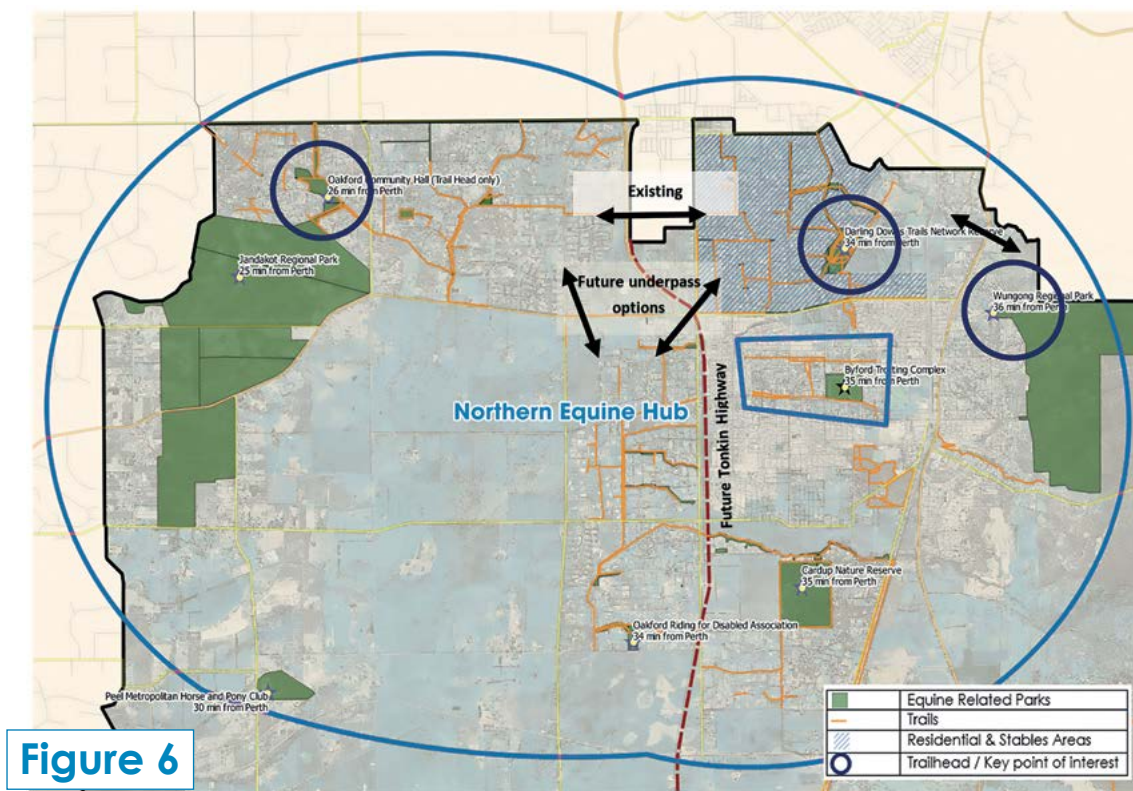- Oakford Trail Network (South)   15%
- Other trails*   14%

(*including Serpentine and Hopeland)

Figure 5
Preferred trail distance

- 20+km 8%
- 6-10km 36%
- 10-20km 21%
- 5km 18%
- 1-4km 17%

Northern Hub (Figure 6)

The Northern Hub consists of:

- 26km of trails in Darling Downs
- 26km North of Thomas Road in Oakford
- 13km South of Thomas Road in Oakford
- 10km+ trails in Jandakot Regional Reserve
- 9km in Cardup
- 4km in Cardup Nature Reserve

Figure 6

The Shire recognises there are a number of other trails and trail opportunities on land owned by Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions in Wungong Regional Park.

The Darling Downs Trail network makes a great trailhead with float parking facilities. The Reserve is free to use and has facilities such as arenas, a trotting track, jumps and bridle paths. Comments were received to improve accessibility to the bridle trails in Oakford, thus enabling users not living adjacent to the trails access to the area. Subject to further analysis, the Oakford Community Hall gates could potentially be opened to create a trailhead for equine users, so long as access for incompatible activities was restricted (such as motorised vehicles). Alternatively, there is access along Jandakot Regional Park. With the Tonkin Highway extension, planning will need to consider an underpass option to connect the North and South of Thomas Road trails.

Southern Hub (Figure 7)

The Southern Equine Hub includes 6km of trails in Serpentine and the Jarrahdale Bridle Trail that heads north and covers a 28km loop through the forest. Slightly off South Western Highway, with a population of 50,000 (people) on the doorstep, is a site that can be activated as trailhead. This is the Strategic Tourism Site at the starting point of the Multi-use Rail Trail (16km return from Whitby to Jarrahdale along the servicing corridor of an old railway line). Both the Jarrahdale Bridle Trail and the Whitby to Jarrahdale Rail Trail should be realigned to start/finish at the Jarrahdale Oval.

The Jarrahdale Oval is intended to be an events space (with no riding on the oval permitted), however can easily function as a trailhead location with parking facilities.

As further development occurs, additional trail connections will be created. This is particularly relevant to the 'Residential and Stables' area just south of Watkins Road in Mardella, and for areas in Serpentine.
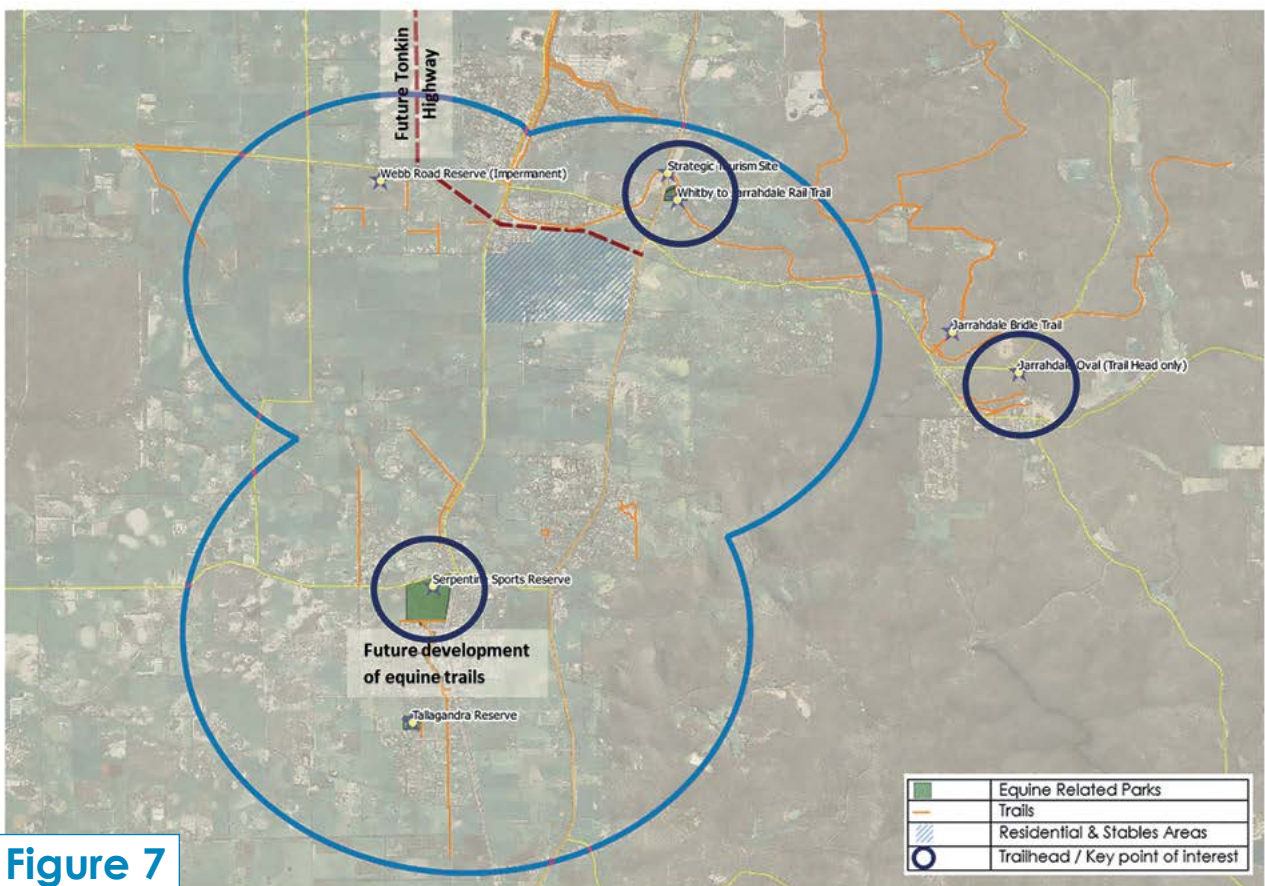

Figure 7

Equine events

The local polocrosse club attracts as many as 45 teams to the local grounds with at least 6 participants per team and multiple horses (2-3) per team member. Upwards of 270 participants, 540 horses and 675 spectators visit the Shire for polocrosse events two to three times per year.

Regular Events

Equine clubs and associations use various facilities in the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale boundaries to stage regular events – competition, training events and leisure rides. Some of the competition and training events are multi-day events that attract a significant number of visitors, including those that require overnight stays.

Impact on accompanying horses

These equine events and activities are not the same as traditional sporting and festival events given the addition of horses. This influences visitor spending. It is not uncommon for equine participants to be accompanied by multiple horses depending on the equine discipline.

Impact of Serpentine Jarrahdale events

To understand the economic impact of equine events on the local economy, the Equine Strategy considered major activity centres across the Shire and the types of events hosted.

[D] Based on the outcomes of the event impact model calculator by Economy ID.

IMPACTS[D] OF SERPENTINE JARRAHDALE EQUINE EVENTS ANNUALLY:

$12 million

CONSISTING OF

396+ events
EQUIVALENT TO 8 PER WEEK

42,804+ riders
EQUIVALENT TO 823 PER WEEK

53,044+ horses
EQUIVALENT TO 1,020 PER WEEK

74,930+ spectators
EQUIVALENT TO 1,441 PER WEEK

90+ FTE employees

Three local clubs that utilise Shire facilities stage events/activities most weekends of the year:[6]

- Serpentine Horse and Pony Club.
- Peel and Metropolitan Horse and Pony Club.
- Foothills Serpentine Polocrosse Club.

Serpentine Polo Club and the Oakford Equestrian Centre operate from private facilities. They stage numerous events/activities during the year including:

- Tournaments and training during the Polo season.
- National/international coaching clinics attracting hundreds of riders.

Serpentine Jarrahdale Grammar School stage a number of events/activities during the year for students within the school participating in state/national interschool equestrian championships.

Much of the Shire's routine equine activity is centred around the Byford Trotting Training Complex. The daily training and weekend trials necessitates riders, trainers and horses use of the facility on a regular basis.

Event tourism and economic benefit

Participants at equine events spend much more per visit/stay due to the costs of looking after their horse(s). Visitors regularly spend locally to meet both their needs, and the needs of their horse.

For example, consultations confirmed that many equine event participants are not able to bring all the horse feed required for multi-day events, opting to top-up locally.

Case Study One[5]: Visitors to the Boddington Rodeo could inject as much as $2.6m into the local economy:

- 4000 attendees across three days
- $250 per overnight stay – $2,000,000
- $150 per day visit – $600,000

It is therefore worthwhile for the local equine business community and the local economy as a whole, to encourage and support local equine groups/associations to stage multi-day local, zone/regional, state and national events.

These local events regularly attract a large number of participants (as well as two to three spectators per participant, mostly family and friends) and could have a positive impact on the local food and beverage outlets, equine related businesses and accommodation providers.

Visitor impact

During 2011 Victoria's Bass Coast Shire published the results of their visitor impact on the local economy . Bass Coast used the following values to calculate the local impact of events:

- $281/overnight visitor; and
- $163/day visitor.

Tourism Research Australia's 2016/17 figures are also instructive in analysing the impact of visitors on the local economy.

- $53   Accommodation
- $232   Transport
- $405   Food and Drink
- $174   Retail
- $64   Entertainment

Equine disciplines

The following section provides detail on the various equine disciplines identified throughout the Serpentine Jarrahdale region. It aims to further clarify the individual features of each discipline, and the statistical information contributing to our diverse equine culture.

Standardbred Racing

The Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale is the most significant Standardbred hub in WA, with 1,085 Active Standardbred (harness) horses. This is equivalent to 30.2 % of the State's Standardbred horses.

The Byford Totting Complex is a significant anchor facility with 443 Active Standardbred (Harness) Horses in Byford alone.

Racing Industry

Racing and Wagering Western Australia (RWWA) is the governing body of the racing industry. The racing sector assets are over 40 years old and their capacity far exceeds the current participation numbers. With attendances in decline, there is a need to upgrade facilities and promote the racing product. There is a recent focus to involve the wider community and to ease barriers to participation. These initiatives include community events, and consideration towards on-course stabling at key sites.

Byford Trotting Training Complex

RWWA owns the Byford Trotting Training Complex and is committed to its ongoing success. The equine facility surrounded by equine properties was the first development of its kind in the Southern Hemisphere, built in the 1970s. To bring the track up to standard, significant investment has been made in recent years by RWWA. RWWA now employs a number of staff and financially subsidise the operations of the Byford track. The Byford track is open from sunlight to sundown, closing between noon and 4 pm for routine maintenance. The track is used for training during the week and trials every Sunday morning, where horses and drivers alike are tested under normal race conditions.

Byford offers a fast track, a slow/jog track along with a pool for rehabilitation. Some trainers use all the facilities, while others with larger properties and their own facilities may use Byford for fast work and/or Sunday trials. Both elite trainers as well as hobbyist on a part-time basis use the Byford Training track.

State overview

According to Racing and Wagering WA (RWWA), there are 3,597 active Standardbred horses in Western Australia. Across the State, the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale is by far the most significant Standardbred hub with 30% of the State's active harness horses. This is equivalent to 1,085 active horses and 116

trainers, which is more than double that of the next local government area.

1. Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale - 1,085 horses
2. Shire of Murray – 496 horses
3. City of Swan - 250 horses
4. Shire of Capel – 202 horses
5. City of Wanneroo – 185 horses

Regional overview

The Peel Region has almost half of all active Standardbred horses in Western Australia (46%) making it a strong region. It is anchored by key facilities:
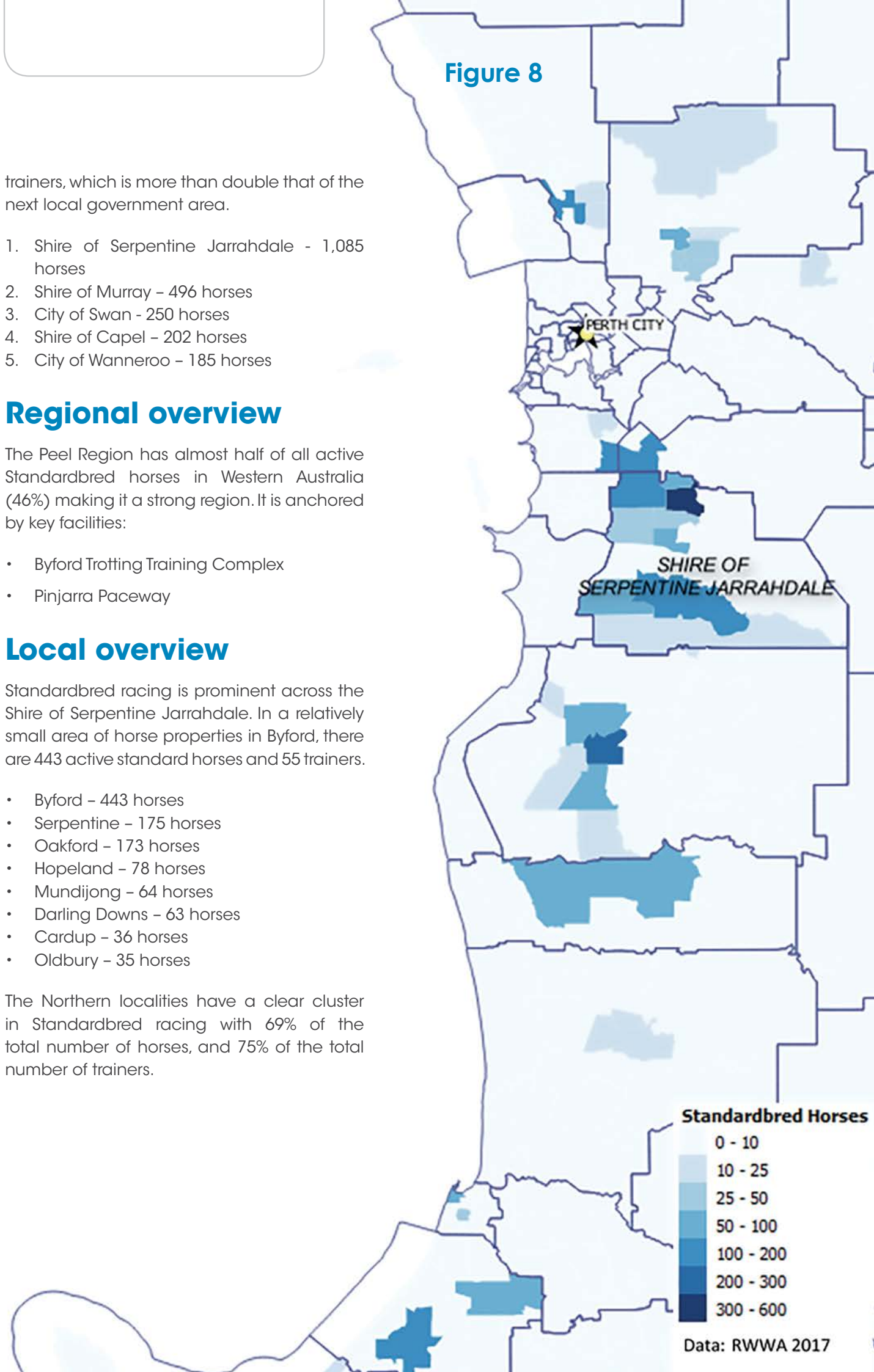
• Byford Trotting Training Complex

• Pinjarra Paceway

Local overview

Standardbred racing is prominent across the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale. In a relatively small area of horse properties in Byford, there are 443 active standard horses and 55 trainers.

• Byford – 443 horses
• Serpentine – 175 horses
• Oakford – 173 horses
• Hopeland – 78 horses
• Mundijong – 64 horses
• Darling Downs – 63 horses
• Cardup – 36 horses
• Oldbury – 35 horses

The Northern localities have a clear cluster in Standardbred racing with 69% of the total number of horses, and 75% of the total number of trainers.

Figure 8

PERTH CITY

SHIRE OF SERPENTINE JARRAHDALE

Standardbred Horses

0 - 10
10 - 25
25 - 50
50 - 100
100 - 200
200 - 300
300 - 600

Data: RWWA 2017

Thoroughbred Racing

The most significant Thoroughbred (Racing) Hub is within our neighbouring local government area, the City of Rockingham, with 739 Thoroughbred Horses and 13.3% of the State's total.

There is a future opportunity for a slow track for thoroughbred trainers/horses in the areas of Serpentine and/or Hopeland, either as an investment or for more promotion/accessibility to existing facilities.

Lark Hill - Thoroughbred Training Complex

Lark Hill Thoroughbred Training Complex in the City of Rockingham performs the same function for Thoroughbred trainers, as Byford Trotting Training Complex does for Standardbred trainers. The concentration of Thoroughbred horses and trainers in the vicinity of Lark Hill is significant. There are clear cross-boundary impacts, with the western areas of the Shire showing a clear concentration of Thoroughbred horse ownership and equine businesses.

Webb Reserve

Within the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale, a 50 ha Reserve is occupied by the Mundijong Thoroughbred and Standardbred Trainers Association. This presently has around 15 members and 60 horses with the members and activities insured through RWWA. The facility supports slow track work for both Standardbreds (who use Byford Trotting Training Complex for fast work), and Thoroughbreds, (who use Lark Hill for their fast work).

With proposed industrial rezoning and excision of parcels of land for road reserves, it has been difficult for the group to plan or have certainty around the future of this facility. Furthermore, the lessee and its members do not have the capacity/resources to improve the condition of the facility in order to attract new members. To get the track to a quality standard, further work needs to be undertaken such as weed spraying, fencing and track maintenance/top-up.

As this site will be split by the future Mundijong Railway and is located at the future Tonkin Highway, this site will not be viable for the Association in the long term. Until relocation is required however, it is expected that the group can continue to train at the site.

State overview

As per RWWA registrations, there are 5,549 active Thoroughbred horses in Western Australia. The Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale has a relatively large share of the Thoroughbred horses in the State with 445 registered horses and 42 registered trainers. These statistics are not far behind areas with a high level of Thoroughbred infrastructure. The most significant Thoroughbred hub is in the neighbouring local government to the west, City of Rockingham. Facilities and services
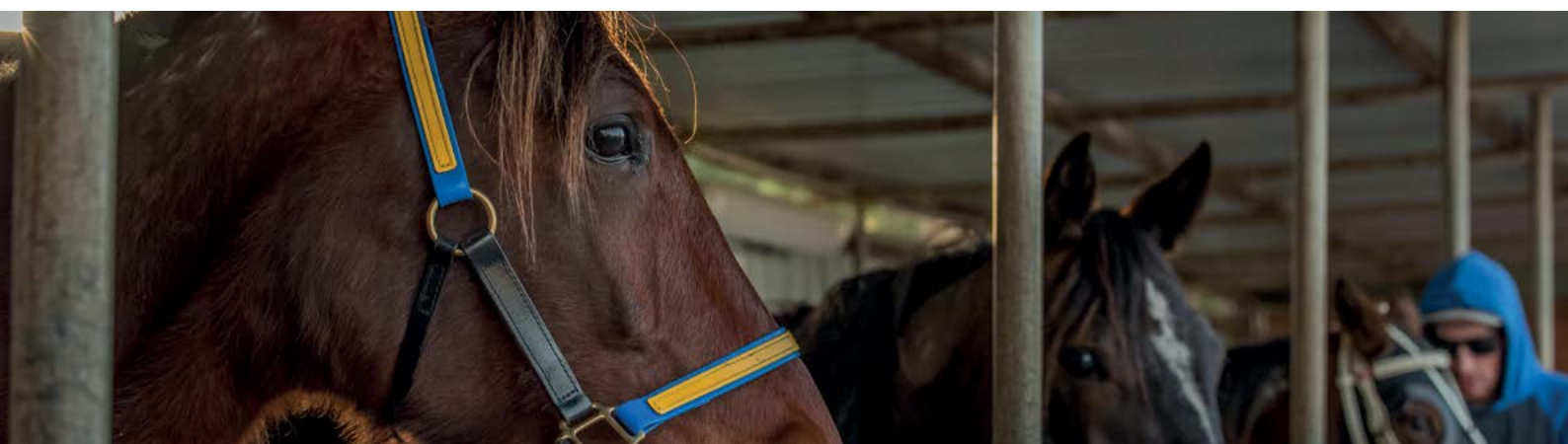
Figure 9

are shared seamlessly across this east western area. While the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale community benefits from the Lark Hill Throughbred Training Complex and veterinary services, the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale area more generally provides agistment opportunities and a wide range of equine services.

1. City of Rockingham – 739 horses
2. City of Belmont – 659 horses
3. City of Swan - 514 horses
4. Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale – 445 horses
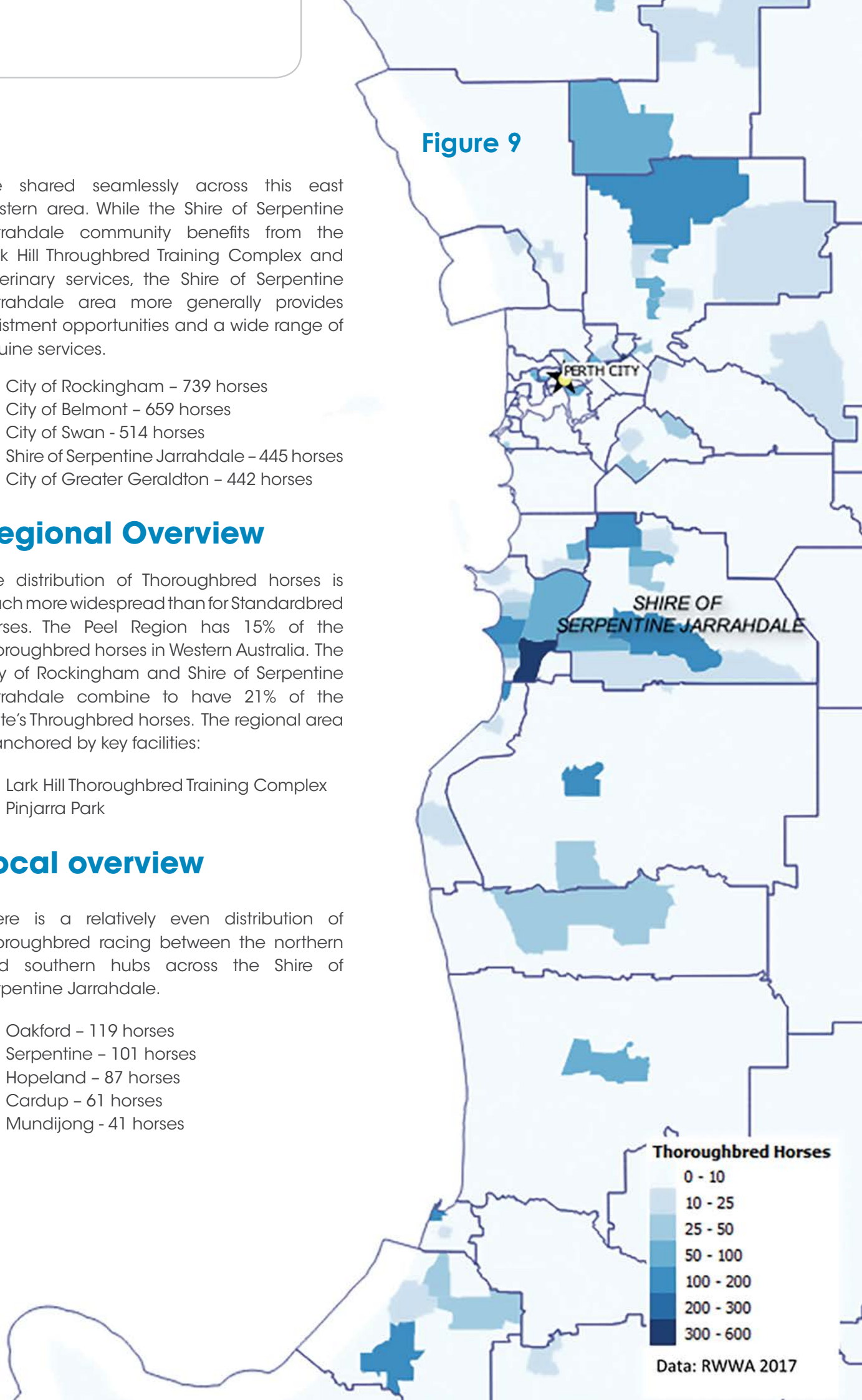5. City of Greater Geraldton – 442 horses

Regional Overview

The distribution of Thoroughbred horses is much more widespread than for Standardbred horses. The Peel Region has 15% of the Thoroughbred horses in Western Australia. The City of Rockingham and Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale combine to have 21% of the State's Throughbred horses. The regional area is anchored by key facilities:

• Lark Hill Thoroughbred Training Complex
• Pinjarra Park

Local overview

There is a relatively even distribution of Thoroughbred racing between the northern and southern hubs across the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale.

• Oakford – 119 horses
• Serpentine – 101 horses
• Hopeland – 87 horses
• Cardup – 61 horses
• Mundijong - 41 horses

Thoroughbred Horses
0 - 10
10 - 25
25 - 50
50 - 100
100 - 200
200 - 300
300 - 600

Data: RWWA 2017

Equestrian WA

The greatest number of Equestrian WA members are in the City of Swan, attributed to the location of the State's Equestrian Centre in Brigadoon. The second greatest number of Equestrian WA members are in the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale, with 264 members. This is equivalent to 11.5% of the State.

State Equestrian Centre

Equestrian WA oversees a range of equestrian disciplines and is located at the State Equestrian Centre in Brigadoon. The facilities and reserves are co-located with an estimated replacement cost of $43million[7]. This significant investment has created an equestrian super hub in the City of Swan and immediate surrounds. The facilities have significant maintenance and replacement costs, requiring reliance on external funding to sustain operations. It is understood that the land is in freehold ownership by the City of Swan.

Equestrian WA Disciplines include dressage, driving, endurance, eventing, interschool, jumping, para-equestrian, reining, show horse, and vaulting.

Case Study Two[8]: With the CBD skyline as its backdrop, Sydney's Centennial Parklands provides a range of facilities including five riding schools with some 100 horses:

- Covered arena (75m x 40m).
- Outdoor supporting arena.
- Stables and horse wash bays.

- Agistment provider.
- Farrier's workshop.
- Veterinarian.

The Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale has the second largest Equestrian WA membership in Western Australia[9]. A range of public and privately established facilities distributed across the local government area supports the equine community in the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale. There has been limited financial support from government of all levels, highlighting the strength of the equine user and business community in the Shire area. The equine culture has been fostered within Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale historically - with land, facilities, business, expertise and culture passed on for many generations.

Commercial opportunity

There may be an opportunity for a large scale, commercially funded equestrian centre within the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale in the future. This privately initiated proposal would need to seek commercial occupancy arrangements to cover the cost of providing the facility. Community consultations supported the development of a covered arena for equestrian style activities, particularly highlighting the need for a facility of that nature south of the river.

State overview

There are 2,297 Equestrian WA Members (people) in Western Australia. The Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale has a significant proportion, with 264 members actively competing in Equestrian WA disciplines. Respondents to the Equine Community Survey provided horse ownership information averaging three horses per member, which would equate to 792 horses in the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale.

Figure 10

- City of Swan – 417 members
- Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale – 264 members
- Shire of Mundaring – 159 members
- City of Wanneroo – 91 members
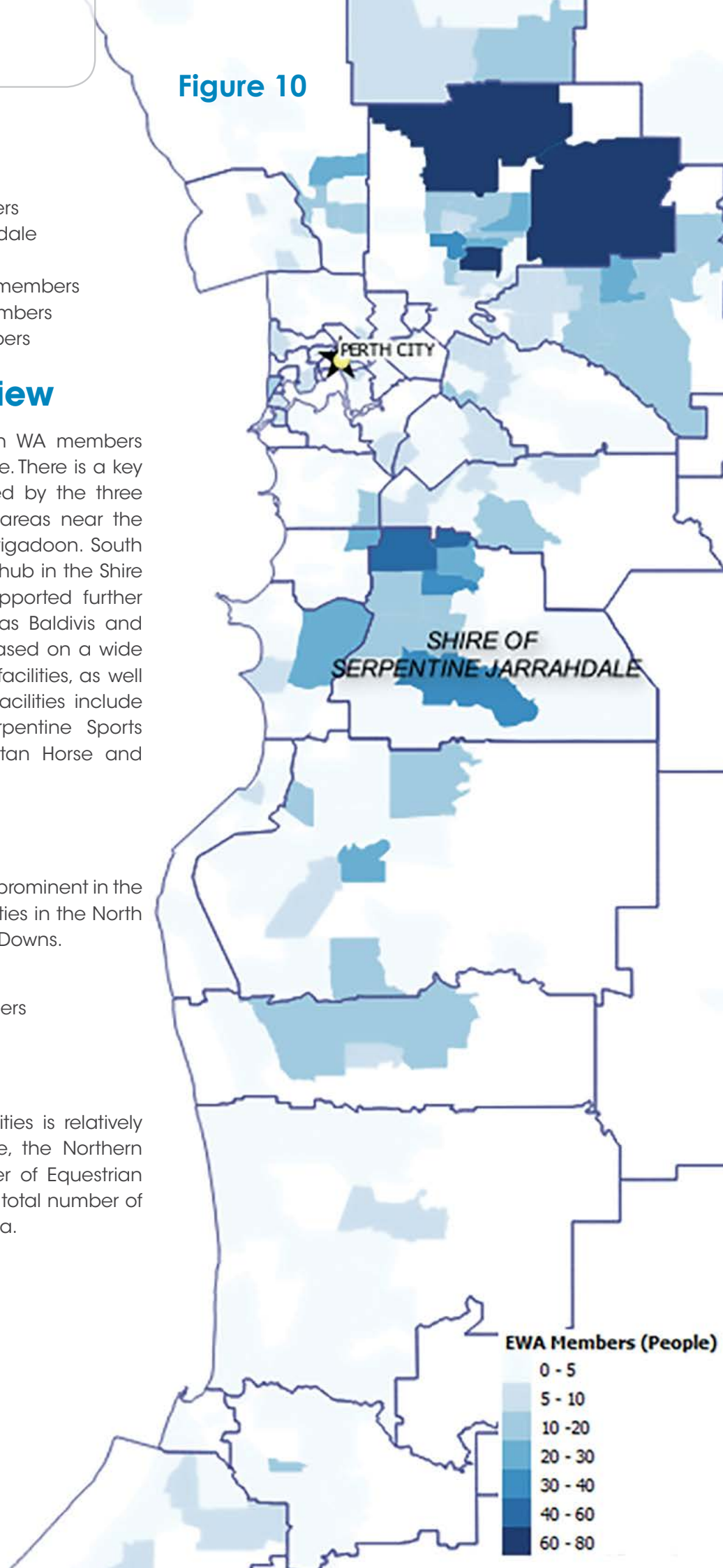- Shire of Murray – 86 members

Regional Overview

The distribution of Equestrian WA members is widespread across the State. There is a key hub north of the river formed by the three adjacent local government areas near the State Equestrian Centre in Brigadoon. South of the river, there is a distinct hub in the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale supported further by adjacent localities such as Baldivis and Wandi. This equine hub is based on a wide range of public and private facilities, as well as riding schools. Key Shire facilities include Darling Downs Reserve, Serpentine Sports Reserve, and Peel Metropolitan Horse and Pony Club.

Local Overview

Equestrian WA disciplines are prominent in the Shire, particularly in the localities in the North such as Oakford and Darling Downs.

- Oakford – 59 Members
- Darling Downs – 58 Members
- Cardup – 36 Members
- Serpentine – 35 Members
- Byford – 23 Members

While the distribution of facilities is relatively even-spread across the Shire, the Northern localities have a clear cluster of Equestrian WA Members with 71% of the total number of Shire members within that area.

PERTH CITY

SHIRE OF SERPENTINE JARRAHDALE

EWA Members (People)
- 0 - 5
- 5 - 10
- 10 - 20
- 20 - 30
- 30 - 40
- 40 - 60
- 60 - 80

Pony Club WA

Within the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale there are two existing Horse and Pony Clubs running at full capacity.

Pony Club WA oversees 60 clubs across Western Australia with 4,161 members. This indicates a strong and active community. Their focus is on the participation of youth between the ages of 4 to 25 years of age. The majority of the participants (60%) are between 10 and 16 years old, making it a key pathway to involving new generations in equine disciplines.

Across the State, the highest level of participation in Pony Clubs takes place in:

- City of Swan - 400 members
- Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale – 321 members
- City of Armadale – 242 members
- Shire of Mundaring – 195 members
- City of Greater Geraldton – 170 members[10]

Pony Club WA disciplines inlcude active riding, dressage, eventing, showjumping, and tetrathlon. They also hold festivals, and annual awards.

The Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale currently has two existing Horse and Pony Clubs, being Serpentine Horse and Pony Club (188 members) and Peel Metropolitan Horse and Pony Club (133 members)[11]. There are several more horse and pony clubs within 5-10km proximity of the Shire. Pony Club WA confirmed during consultation that pony club membership was generally trending downwards. The local horse and pony clubs both appear to be doing well however, and attract good membership numbers. The two local horse and pony clubs enjoy very different conditions of occupancy. While one is on an exclusive lease and maintain the facility themselves, the other is on a license arrangement and relies heavily on the Shire for maintenance and upkeep.

Commercial opportunity

There may be scope for new horse and pony clubs to establish in the local area. It was stated throughout consultation that existing Horse and Pony Clubs are at capacity, and have to decline potential memberships. This is limiting accessibility for local youth. However, some feedback indicated this may be due to volunteer capacity, and a desire to ensure membership numbers remain at a manageable level to deliver the expected service. Equine activities are already popular and imbedded in the local youth culture, thus there may be future opportunities for new clubs to establish (or current clubs to grow) if they were able to source the required resources (including labour and/or volunteer assistance).

Polocrosse WA

The Polocrosse Association of WA oversees 16 clubs. There are 942 members across the state with 53% females and 47% males.

The sport has a strong foundation with 600 volunteers, 79 accredited coaches and 123 accredited officials[12]. Within the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale, the Serpentine Foothills Polocrosse Club has their home ground at Serpentine Sports Reserve. There are over 100 members at the club, with half of the members classified as seniors, and the other half almost evenly split between juniors and masters. The group trains every Sunday, and holds 4 to 5 tournaments a year. It has successfully established the Barbara Lyster Cup, an event that attracts people across the State, and the club is growing. At the site, there have been 60 yards installed via a successful grant, with the club clearly indicating a desire to install more. In order to sustain growth and to play all year, a major upgrade of the field will be required. It is expected that these works will need to be staged. Currently the field is too wet for activities in winter months.

Across the State, the highest level of participation in Polocrosse takes place in:

- City of Greater Geraldton - 281 members
- Shire of Kojonup – 131 members
- City of Swan – 114 members
- Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale – 111 members
- Shire of Chittering – 75 members[13]

Polo WA

Polo WA oversees the polo activity in Western Australia. There are six polo clubs across the State and these share three fields: Serpentine, Guildford and Swan Valley.

The Serpentine Polo ground is privately established and is the home ground for Kojonup, Moondyne and Serpentine Polo Club. Teams are not necessarily associated with a particular club.

The sport is growing, and is actively working to engage women and children. In this regard, they are looking to collaborate with schools. The games are divided into 4 lots of 7 minutes, in which a horse cannot participate more than 14-15 minutes per day. This naturally lends itself to requiring several horses per game. Lower grade players tend to have at least 2-3 horses, while higher grade players have around 5-8 horses.

In pre-season, there would be two chukkas (training sessions) per week; in season, 1 chukka and 1 competition per week. The season runs from around October to May. Serpentine is the biggest and most active club (with about 20 members), and the only club with a proper school. Serpentine grounds would host 1 to 4 tournaments in a season, with 15-16 teams attending on the day. That equates to approximately 50-70 players and additional spectators. On a given day, there would be anywhere from 100 to 500 horses per event.

Across the State, the highest level of participation in Polo takes place in:

- Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale – 43 members
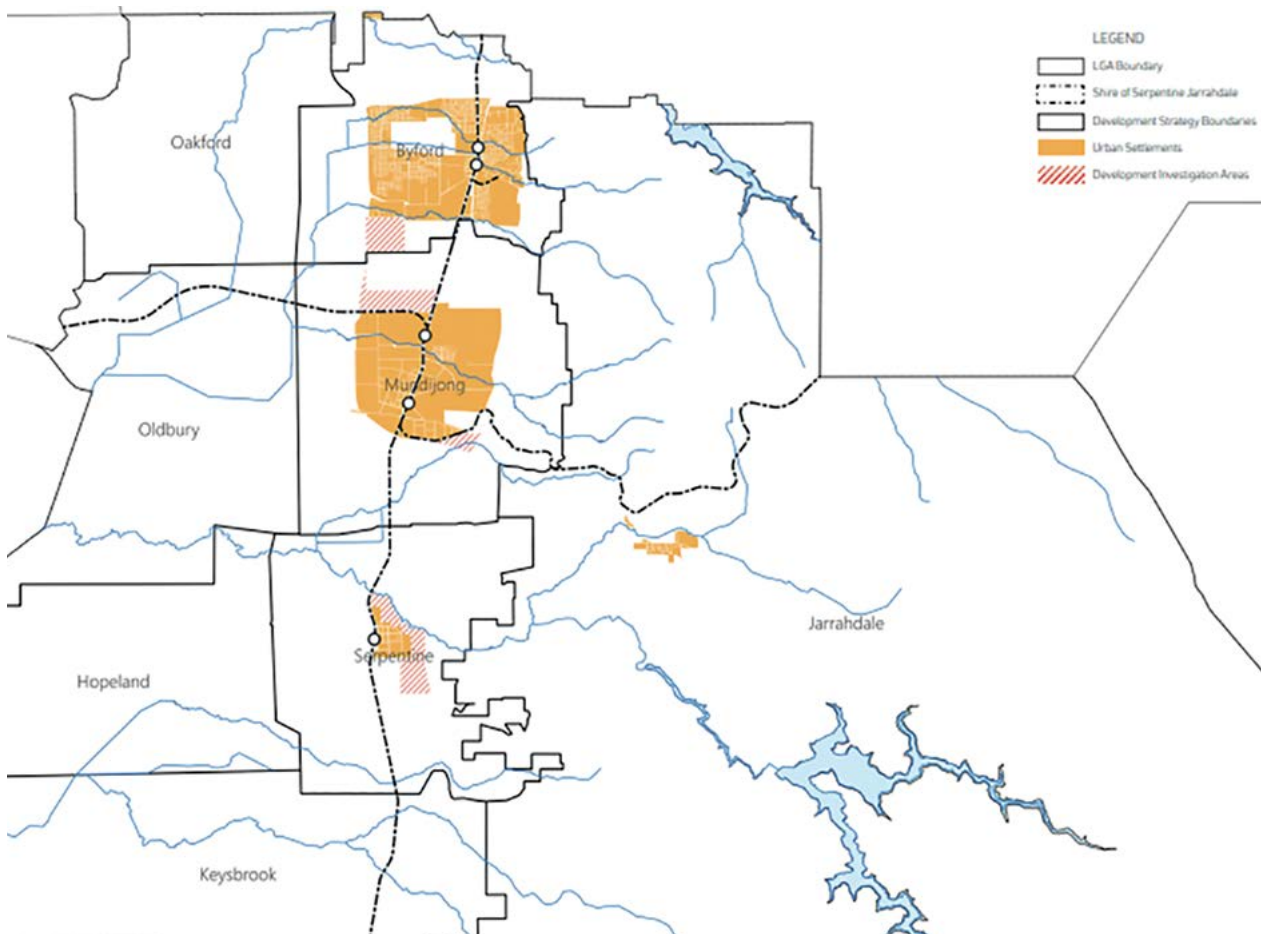- City of Swan - 29 members
- City of Greater Geraldton – 6 members[14]

Riding schools

Affordability of horses and land is likely to remain a challenge when growing local participation in equine activities and pursuits. Riding schools cater for this market by providing more casual riding opportunities in a structured and safe environment.

With Byford and Mundijong-Whitby seeing high population growth in smaller lots, each of these urban cells will (in a built out scenario) cater for approximately 50,000 people. The provision of horses at the riding schools will be key to ensuring equine pursuits remain accessible to all families.

Figure 11 below is obtained from the Draft Local Planning Strategy and shows the urban development areas in orange.

Figure 11

Opportunities

The following five opportunities have been identified as broad areas for consideration. They will each be reliant on further analysis - including feasibility, cost-benefit and community interest. Whilst these do present as current opportunities within the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale, the level of involvement as a local government body (organisation) may be minimal.

Equine business forum

There is a need to support both current and future equine businesses, whilst providing an environment that maximises productivity.

The consultation undertaken for the Equine Strategy revealed:

- There is no local equine representative body (racing and non-racing); and

- Formation of an equine industry body/ network would be beneficial to the local equine community.

The effectiveness of any network to work towards this would hinge on participation and interest from current businesses, and the reputation of the region as an equine centre.

Equine Business Network (EBN)

The formation of an equine business network, or a peer network designed to encourage local equine businesses to collaborate in growing the local equine economic activity should be considered. This type of network may need to be initially supported by the Shire, but if sustainable by the local industry it could provide a forum for discussion and a much-needed voice for the local equine industry.

The network could also be used to inform the direction of the Shire's strategies/policies and future investment decisions for facilities/ services and associated infrastructure.

The Shire's advocacy program and branding/ positioning could also be informed by the Equine Business Network (EBN).

Equine festival

Consultations additionally showed strong support for an annual event to showcase and celebrate all things equine. Some suggested they would be prepared to participate via various exhibitions of horsemanship. Some even proposed a country music feel, similar to Tamworth.

An annual equine event such as a festival/ expo/tradeshow could be developed as a celebration and promotion of the Shire's equine lifestyle and culture. This could be a way to position the Shire as all things equine.

There are three key messages the Shire would aim to get across with an equine festival, celebration or showcase event:

- A feel-good message for the 'local' equine families to fortify the reasons why they moved to, and live in Serpentine Jarrahdale;

- A message to visitors that promotes and showcases all things equine on offer in the Shire (including tourism based initiatives); and

- A message to business investors and commercial enterprises on the strong foundations for equine trade.

Implementation

The Shire's equine reputation was not built on the back of PR campaigns or radio, press and TV advertising. It was built on the back of community's genuine passion for all things equine. Therefore, the Shire's equine branding and positioning should be implemented through a partnership model with local equine stakeholders – community facilities, clubs and businesses.

A festival/event of this nature may therefore be facilitated by the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale as an organisation, or facilitated by the various businesses, community organisations and sporting groups with a fortified standing in the equine field – developed over many years.

Case Study Three[15]: EQUITANA has been running in Australia since 1999. From its European origins this dynamic, multifaceted event has evolved to be regarded as the largest equine showcase in the Southern Hemisphere.

With a unique model that presents a fusion of education, competition, entertainment and exhibition EQUITANA allows spectators, sponsors and horse lovers alike to immerse themselves in the world of horses.

Equine tourism

Of the community survey respondents that reside outside the Shire, 70% come to the Shire to enjoy trail rides.

The experiences they seek most specifically pertain to casual riding or trail riding, demonstrating a potential tourism opportunity and offering.

Visitors to the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale have the opportunity to share and celebrate its equine lifestyle and environment.

Any visitor to the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale may be another:

- participant/attendee at a local equine event;
- customer in a local store;
- patron in a local café/restaurant;
- tourist at a local attraction; and
- at times, a guest at a local accommodation facility.

The Victorian Government formalises and promotes this event based activity as its "visitor economy"[16]. Capital cities and regional cities alike are realising the benefits of such an approach and are now investing significantly in attracting visitors.

Case Study Four[17]: The private sector's response is crucial to the success of a unique visitor experience.

As an example of this premise, refer to www. cogbikecafe.com.au whereby a cafe/bike repair shop is catering for bike, horse riders and walkers using the Warburton Rail Trail.

Whilst competitive advantages are to be explored more specifically via the Shire's tourism strategy, generically strengths exist in the provision of:

- A safe environment for visitor experiences.
- Diverse shopping experiences.
- Dining and entertainment experiences.
- Unique and accessible natural attractions.

Equine point of difference

As many of the visitors to Serpentine Jarrahdale (SJ) are accompanied by their horse(s), additional competitive strengths on the event sites (or within close proximity to these sites) would be significantly advantageous:

- Parking for vans.
- Van sites with access to power/water.
- Wash down bays and holding pens for horses.

The Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale could develop a number of unique strengths/offerings based on its lifestyle and natural assets through leadership and partnership with the local equine industry/community. The Shire has invested significantly in local equine facilities and services. The private sector now needs to leverage these opportunities to provide distinct products and services in equine, food and wine, and shopping to deliver on a truly genuine SJ visitor experience (see Case Study Four by way of example).

To encourage and stimulate the local private sector to respond appropriately, strategies to advocate and promote an equine destination amongst local businesses may be required.

Genuine experience – equine offerings

Most destinations talk about providing unique dining experiences. As such, future opportunities within the Shire exist to provide cafes, restaurants or food stalls/trucks along riding trails to encourage riders to have a coffee, drink or meal while enjoying their ride. Case Study Five provides an example of how such offerings have been successful in other regions.

Multi-Use Rail Trail

The Multi-Use Rail Trail could provide a number of opportunities moving forward. Development of some facilities at the start/finish of the trail would be essential – facilities such as access, an entry statement, car parking that accommodates horse floats; along with water, lighting, horse holding pens and even picnic areas would be required.

This may further foster the development of business opportunities such as cafes with associated facilities to enhance the visitor trail riding experience.

Picnic grounds

The Heritage Rail Trail and other key areas may lend themselves to the development of equine friendly picnic grounds.

With the preparation and movement of horses and riders, it may be somewhat of a spectacle for visitors not well acquainted with equine activity.

Case Study Five[18]: Maggie Beer's farm shop and eatery in the Barossa Valley offered picnic hampers for sale rather than the more conventional cafe/dining experience. Visitors are able to select gourmet goodies for your picnic basket and find a spot in the grounds to enjoy your picnic in the sun and fresh air.

SJ equine calendar

Further promoting the vast array of equine events within the Shire could prove be a significant tourism opportunity, whereby Equestrian WA's calendar may be a good model to follow. A calendar would provide easy access to year-round equine experiences for locals and visitors alike and help to showcase the Shire both in WA and further afield. In promoting multi-day and/or weekend equine events and encouraging visitation to the Shire; shops, cafes and restaurants would need to respond accordingly – be open and available for visitors over the weekend or regular business hours.

Successful development and implementation of a specific Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale Visitor or Tourism Strategy will require support from key elements of the Shire's business community – dining, entertainment and retail in addition to equine businesses and clubs.

Equine education and skills training

Consultations identified little formal training/programs for development of equine skills. Many of these equine skills are developed through on-the-job training rather than any formal set of qualifications.

It should be noted that:

- The Shire's Economic Development Strategy promotes the establishment of an innovation centre.
- The local Grammar School is active in engaging youth in equine activities.
- Murdoch University is establishing a campus at Whitby.

Centre of Excellence

There is a need to train future leaders at the technical and university level and a need to connect educational programs with business needs. The Shire is positioned strongly to advocate for the establishment of an Equine Centre of Excellence (C4X). This would be a way of developing and furthering local equine skills, knowledge and experience – adding value to the equine talent working in Serpentine Jarrahdale and creating jobs. There may be opportunity to explore this initiative with the Murdoch University, which is establishing a veterinary campus in Whitby.

Innovation and skills

The C4X connects those working in the equine industry with educational/research institutions to ensure ongoing industry innovation, development of skills, knowledge and experience relevant and responsive to the needs of the local equine industry. It would promote seamless transitions between education and local employment opportunities.

Equine branding and positioning

There is no evidence of proactive equine branding and positioning by the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale - either as an organisation or municipal area. Consultations discovered:

- A lack of coordinated branding effort.
- No real positioning as the equine capital/ destination.

Branding local reflection

Successful branding and positioning is not about 'spinning' fanciful messages. The Shire's equine branding and positioning should reflect the local equine reputation and culture built over many years, steadfastly reflected in the lifestyle offered.

The most successful brands are built on longstanding, genuine values. It is clear that the equine culture within the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale lends itself towards fostering a very successful brand - with the community actively living, participating and identifying with all things equine.

In moving forward, it may be beneficial to tap into the local lifestyle and culture and adopt an equine approach to its branding and positioning.

Critical brand elements

Should the adoption of equine branding and positioning be supported, some of the following elements should be considered:

- Communication – including advocacy documentation and media forums.
- Promotional material – including logos, websites, flags and newsletters.
- Community infrastructure – including signage and entry statements.

Strategic goals and actions

Strategic goals and actions	Responsible team	Strategic Community Plan reference	Action year
1. Develop and strengthen the Shire's identity and reputation as the leading Equine Region in Western Australia.			
Integrate the Equine culture as part of branding and marketing for the Shire, to the community and key stakeholders.	Corporate Communications	1.2.1 & 4.1.2	Ongoing
Where relevant, celebrate and encourage the Northern and Southern Equine Hubs and related characteristics.	Community Services	1.2.1 & 2.1.1	Ongoing
Organise an Equine Festival to celebrate the equine culture within the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale.	Events	1.2.1	2019/20
Incorporate equine culture where appropriate to strategic documentation such as tourism and advocacy materials.	Community Services	1.2.1	As required
Develop business case for federal / state funding in 2026/27 for equine facilities in line with current Community Infrastructure Implementation Plan.	Community Facilities & Projects	4.2.1 & 4.2.2	2024/25
2. Support and enhance the diversity of equine activities within the Shire.			
Investigate Darling Downs Reserve and Tallagandra Reserve as possible venues for future, organised equine activities and events.	Community Services	1.1.1 & 1.1.2	2019/20
Encourage further utilisation of Serpentine Sports Reserve via shared-use arrangements, relevant to equine activities.	Community Services	1.1.2	Ongoing
Advocate for an Equine Business Forum, aimed to further develop the industry within the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale.	Economic Development	3.1.1	2019/20
Explore partnership opportunities with Byford Trotting Training Complex to support family friendly events and to improve youth participation.	Community Services	4.2.1	Ongoing
Support the development and promotion of a range of training and leisure riding activities through well maintained trails and facilities.	Community Facilities & Projects	1.1.1 & 1.1.2	Ongoing
Further promote local equine events via the Shire's website.	Community Development	3.2.1	2018/19
Support, assist and promote local community based equine organisations where possible via ordinary Shire programs and activities.	Community Development	1.1	Ongoing

Strategic goals and actions	Responsible team	Strategic Community Plan reference	Action year
3. Continued planning and protection of key equine assets, and improving the built environment.			
Implement a Trails Maintenance Program based on priorities identified in Community Survey.	Infrastructure / Operations	2.2.1 & 3.3.1	2018/19
Early consideration towards equine connection (including under-passes), with the planning of roads, pathways and trail infrastructure projects.	Planning / Infrastructure	2.1.1	Ongoing
Continued protection and recognition of the key role of the Byford Trotting Complex in Planning Strategy and Schemes.	Planning	2.2.1	Ongoing
4. Support and enhance the diversity of equine activities within the Shire.			
Promote/advocate further equine investment and the establishment of businesses in the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale.	Economic Development	3.2.1	Ongoing
Promote/advocate for equine education and skills training to be established in the Shire, through partnerships with tertiary education institutions, such as TAFE and Murdoch University.	Executive Management	3.4.1	Ongoing
Lobby/Advocate for Federal and State Funding for equine-based projects where appropriate.	CEO/Deputy CEO	4.2	As identified

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Salli Galvin

Serpentine Horse & Pony Club Inc.
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Serpentine Jarrahdale Grammar School
Olivia Sherlock

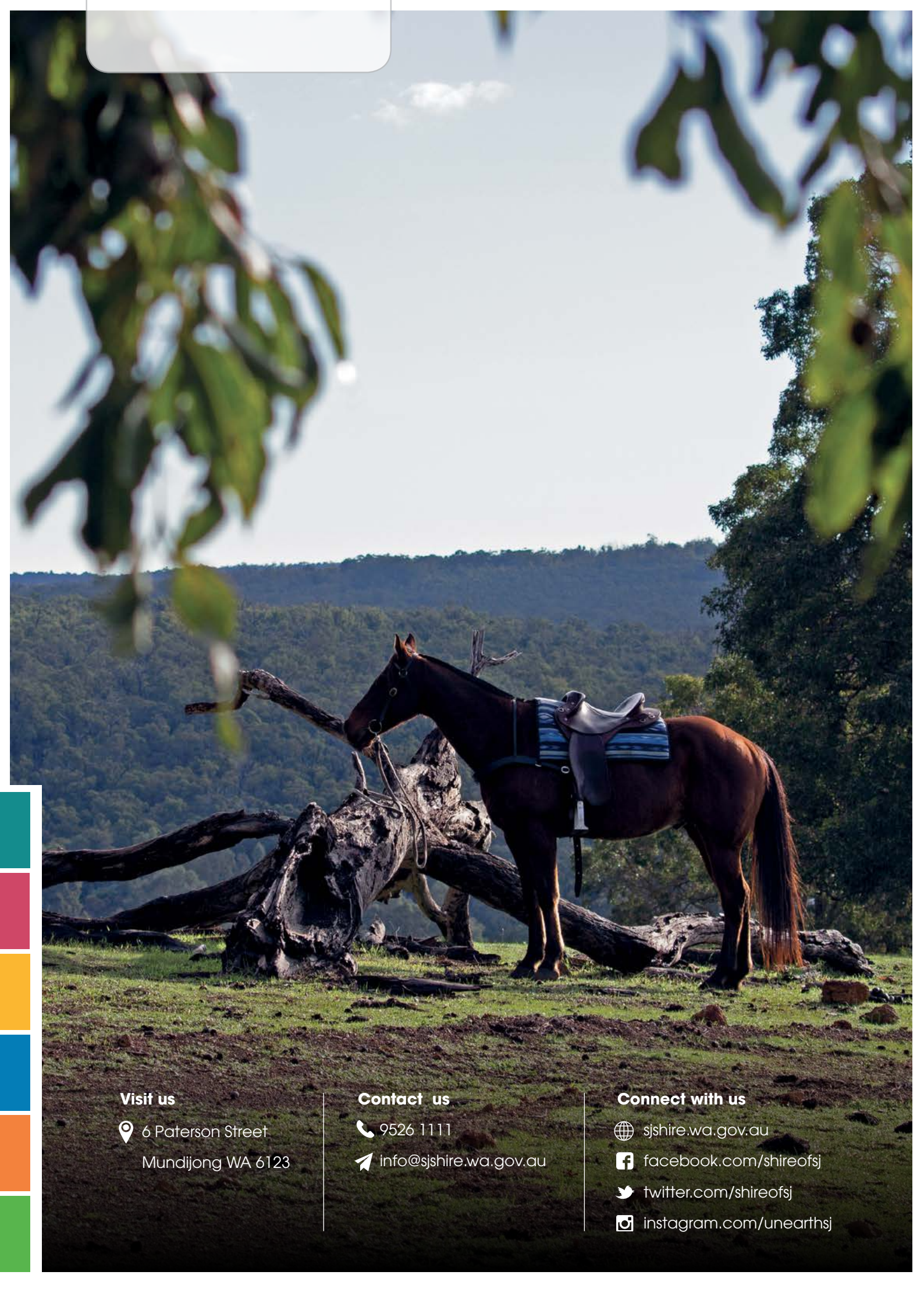**Shire of Murray/Murray Regional Equestrian Centre**
Alan Smith

Images shot by **Creative Fleire Photography**, **Jasmine Crabbe Photography** and **Matthew Boggs**. All photographs used in this document were either commissioned or purchased by the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale.

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