



For the
community
creators

UDIA ENGAGEMENT TOOLKIT

Structure Plan Fact Sheet



Overview

A structure plan is an essential tool for coordinating future zoning, subdivision, and land development. It can be created for undeveloped areas (greenfield or brownfield) or established areas targeted for increased development (infill). Different types of structure plans cater to these scenarios.

A structure plan outlines the steps, measures, and controls needed to guide its implementation through progressive subdivision and development. It serves as a guiding document in decision-making, although it does not carry legal weight like a local planning scheme, which has statutory effect. However, it is given significant consideration.

The need and purpose for a structure plan in a locality should be established by a planning framework approved by the Western Australian Planning Commission (WAPC) or the Minister, such as:

- A regional planning strategy or framework
- A local planning strategy or district/regional (structure) plan
- A local planning scheme

The planning framework may also specify necessary planning processes to be completed before finalising and submitting the structure plan to the WAPC for consideration. Structure plans are pivotal in shaping the future of our communities, ensuring thoughtful and coordinated development.

Types of Structure Plans

There are two types of Structure Plans described by the Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015 (the Regulations). Refer to Table 1 below for a comparison of these two types:

Table 1: Differences between standard and precinct structure plans

	Precinct Structure Plan	Standard Structure Plan
What does it coordinate?	The future subdivision, zoning, and development of an area	May include development outcomes which only apply within the structure plan area.
What does it provide?	Development guidance for the built-form and the public realm.	May include development outcomes which only apply within the structure plan area.
What planning instrument is used to prepare it?	<i>State Planning Policy 7.2 – Precinct Design</i> (SPP 7.2) guides the preparation and assessment of precinct structure plans.	<i>Liveable Neighbourhoods</i> guides the preparation and assessment of standard structure plans.
What is it prepared for?	Can be prepared for activity centres, station precincts, urban corridors, mixed use, and higher density residential areas.	Can be prepared for urban or industrial areas, and in some instances for rural (rural living) areas.

Source: Adapted from *Western Australian Planning Commission: Guidance for Structure Plans (2023)*

When to Prepare a Structure Plan

The Regulations state that a structure plan can be prepared by a local government, landowner, or an agent of a landowner in the following situations:

- a) When a scheme identifies the area as suitable for urban or industrial development, including zones like Urban Development, Industrial Development, Centre, and Special Use.
- b) When a scheme requires a structure plan before subdivision or development.
- c) If a State Planning Policy requires it, such as SPP 4.2 – Activity Centres for precinct structure plans for strategic, secondary, district, and specialised activity centres.
- d) If neither (a) nor (b) applies, but the WAPC, advised by the local government, deems a structure plan necessary for orderly and proper planning. In this case, the proponent should consult with and obtain the WAPC's consent to initiate the structure plan.

Role of Relevant Planning Authorities

Local Government

- Initiate the preparation of structure plans, engaging with stakeholders, including the community, developers, and other government agencies.
- Assess structure plans to ensure alignment with relevant planning frameworks, policies and community feedback.
- Facilitate public consultation, gathering input from residents and stakeholders to refine the structure plan.
- Make a recommendation to the WAPC and the DPLH, either supporting or opposing the proposed structure plan.
- Oversee the implementation of structure plans within its jurisdiction.

WAPC

- Review the structure plan submitted by the local government, considering the local government's recommendation, public submissions, and alignment with regional and state planning policies.
- The WAPC has delegated several functions related to structure plans to officers of the DPLH.
- Ultimate determining authority for structure plans and associated amendments and may approve, modify, or reject the plan based on their assessment.

Public Advertising

Structure plans must be advertised by the local government (including a structure plan prepared by the local government) for 42 days or for a longer period approved by the WAPC. The purpose of public advertising is to provide stakeholders with the opportunity to comment on the proposed structure plan.

Duration of Approval

Structure plans are valid for 10 years or a longer period approved by the WAPC, after which they will expire. If there are no changes to the terms of the structure plan, an applicant or local government can apply to the WAPC to obtain an extension to the period of approval, before the structure plan expires.

Useful Links

WAPC Planning Manual – Guidance for Structure Plans

[WAPC Planning Manual – Guidance for Structure Plans](#)

Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015

[Planning and Development \(Local Planning Schemes\) Regulations 2015](#)





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