



**Review of Wards
and Representation**

Discussion Paper

September 2022

Background

The Shire of Broome completed a review of ward boundaries and the number of Councillors for each ward in 2020. Council made a recommendation to the Local Government Advisory Board (LGAB) to retain the current two (2) ward structure with seven (7) Councillors in the Broome Ward and two (2) Councillors in the Dampier Ward.

Following the review, the LGAB whose major function is to assess proposals to change local government boundaries and their systems of representations issued the following advice to Council:

“The Board considers that the ratio of councillors to electors is particularly significant. It is expected that each local government will have similar ratios of electors to councillors across its wards, generally falling within a deviation of plus or minus 10%.

While the Board acknowledges the particular characteristics of the Shire of Broome’s geography, population, and representation profile, they would like to recommend that the Shire undertakes a further ward review ahead of the 2023 local government elections to encourage further consideration of either:

- ***a revised ward structure (to return to a plus or minus 10% councillor to elector ratio), or***
- ***to potentially consider the discontinuance of the two-ward system.”***

Since the LGAB advice, the Minister for Local Government has also announced several changes that will impact the use of wards and the requirement to publicly elect the Shire President at the next ordinary local government elections in October 2023. Further details of these changes are provided below.

Therefore, Council has resolved to undertake a further review of its ward system to comply with the requirements of the Local Government Act 1995 (the Act), the advice from the LGAB and the direction from the Minister for Local Government.

Current situation

Currently the Shire of Broome has nine (9) Councillors elected from two (2) wards as follows:

The table below shows the Councillor to elector ratios at the time of the October 2021 local government election.

WARDS AND REPRESENTATION

WARD	Number of Councillors	Number of Electors	Councillor to Elector Ratio	% Ratio Deviation
Broome	7	7,073	1:1010	-11%
Dampier	2	1,117	1:558	+39%
Total	9	8,190	1:910	

(Source: District Roll provided by WAEC for the October 2021 Ordinary Local Government Election)

The % ratio deviation gives a clear indication of the % difference between the average Councillor/Elector ratio for the whole local government and the Councillor/Elector ratio for each ward.

The Local Government Advisory Board has expressed the view that it will tolerate a plus or minus 10% deviation in the Councillor to elector ratio. The above table shows that the Dampier Ward has a significant deviation above that. A balanced representation would be reflected in the % ratio deviation being within plus or minus 10%. A change to ward boundaries or the ward system should be considered to address the imbalance in representation across the Shire.

Historical – Councillor to Elector Ratio

As the below table indicates, the Councillor to Elector Ratio in the Shire of Broome has progressively declined between the Broome Ward and the Dampier Ward over the last decade. Essentially a redistribution is required to bring the Councillor to Elector Ratio within the acceptable deviation of +/- 10%.

Shire of Broome Councillor to Elector Ratio 2009 - 2021								
Election	Broome Ward				Dampier Ward			
	No. Electors	No. Councillors	Councillor: Elector Ratio	% Ratio Deviation	No. Electors	No. Councillors	Councillor: Elector Ratio	% Ratio Deviation
2021	7,073	7	1:1010	-11%	1,117	2	1:558	+39%
2019	7,191	7	1:1027	-10%	1,189	2	1:594	+36%
2017	7,401	7	1:1057	-10%	1,270	2	1:635	+34%
2015	7,057	7	1:1008	-8%	1,369	2	1:684	+27%
2013	7,248	7	1:1035	-8%	1,355	2	1:677	+29%
2011	6,400	7	1:914	-6%	1,351	2	1:675	+22%
2009	6,309	7	1:901	-6%	1,308	2	1:654	+22%

Local Government Reforms – No Wards for Small Councils

The Local Government Minister, John Carey has announced that he intends to legislate to abolish wards for small councils (Band 3 and 4), prior to the October 2023 ordinary local government elections. The Shire of Broome is a Band 2 Council. This enables Council to retain a ward structure however local governments have been encouraged to review their need.

The rationale provided for the decision to abolish wards in smaller councils was:

- Wards increase the complexity and cost of elections;
- In smaller local governments, the population of wards can be very small;
- These wards often have councillors elected unopposed or elect a councillor with a very small number of votes. Some local governments have ward councillors elected with less than 50 votes; and
- There has been a trend in smaller local governments to reduce the use of wards.

Currently 70% of Councils in Western Australia operate with no wards and this will increase to over 80% when the above legislation comes into effect.

Examples of Councils, which have chosen to do away with wards in the last 2 years include the City of Greater Geraldton, City of Rockingham, Shire of Narrogin, Shire of Bridgetown and the Town of Mosman Park.

The below table provides the Shire of Broome elector participation by ward history over the last decade. This shows an improving participation rate in the Broome Ward and a declining level of engagement from the Dampier Ward. There is also a large variance between the number of votes required to be elected in each ward which aligns with the rationale provided by the Minister.

Shire of Broome Elector Participation by Ward 2009 - 2021						
Election	Broome Ward			Dampier Ward		
	Votes Cast	Turnout Rate	Minimum Votes to be elected	Votes Cast	Turnout Rate	Minimum Votes to be elected
2021	2,157	30.57%	999	167	15.04%	109
2019	1,954	27.28%	776	Elected unopposed		
2017	1,809	24.48%	784	Elected unopposed		
2015	1,853	26.29%	1,048	293	21.62%	125
2013	2,490	34.44%	1,382	689	27.38%	216
2011	2,601	40.64%	1,246	326	24.92%	123
2009	2,099	33.44%	821	286	22.17%	155

Local Government Reforms – Public Vote to Elect the Mayor or Shire President

The Local Government Minister, John Carey has also announced that he intends to legislate to require a public vote to elect the Mayor or Shire President in Band 1 and 2 local governments at the October 2023 local government elections.

The transition to a popularly elected Shire President will apply to the Shire of Broome and add further complexity to addressing the Councillor to Elector ratio should a ward structure be retained.

Under the reforms the Shire President will not be aligned to a ward as this position will be elected by the entire electors of the district. Therefore the number of ward councillors **must** reduce to 8.

Currently the Broome Ward has 7 Councillors and the Dampier Ward 2. If the Broome Ward was reduced to 6 Councillors the Councillor to Elector Ratio will deteriorate further. If the Dampier Ward is reduced to 1 Councillor, the Councillor to Elector Ratio will fall within the LGAB's desired target range of +/- 10%. This is outlined in the table below based on 2021 electoral roll details.

**Shire of Broome
Councillor to Elector Ratio
Public Vote – Shire President
8 Ward Councillors**

Ward Reduced	Broome Ward				Dampier Ward			
	No. Electors	No. Councillors	Councillor: Elector Ratio	% Ratio Deviation	No. Electors	No. Councillors	Councillor: Elector Ratio	% Ratio Deviation
Broome	7,073	6	1:1178	+15%	1,117	2	1:558	-45%
Dampier	7,073	7	1:1010	-1%	1,117	1	1:1117	+9%

Review process

The review process is set out in the *Local Government Act 1995* schedule 2.2.

1. To begin a review, a local government must pass a resolution at Council to this effect. Council made this resolution on the 29 September 2022.
2. Prior to carrying out a review, a local government must give local public notice advising that the review is to be carried out and that submissions may be made to the local government. The public submissions period is to be not less than 6 weeks after the notice is first given.
3. A local government is encouraged to provide several options as a basis to generate discussion.
4. Public submission closes and the submissions received are collated and reviewed.
5. Council considers all submissions received.
6. Council reaches a decision based on an assessment of the options against a number of established criteria as contained in schedule 2.2 clause 8 of the *Local Government Act 1995*.
7. A report is then submitted to the Local Government Advisory Board.
8. If a change is proposed and the Board is satisfied with the recommendation, then the Board submits the recommendation to the Minister for Local Government.

Factors to be considered

Under schedule 2.2 clause 8 of the *Local Government Act 1995*, a number of criteria have been established upon which a local government is to assess any changes proposed to be made to the ward system. These criteria include;

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 offers the following interpretation of these factors:

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.

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 highways.

3. Demographic trends

Several measurements of the characteristics of human populations, such as population size, and its distribution by age, sex, 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. 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.

5. Ratio of Councillors to Electors in the various wards

It is expected that each local government will have similar ratios of Electors to Councillors across the wards of its district. It is the Board's preference for the ratio between wards to fall between the plus or minus 10% range.

Options to consider

The Council will consider the following options and members of the community may suggest others:

Option 1 - Status Quo (Contrary to Ministerial Direction)

Maintain the current ward system and ward boundaries, and current number of Councillors.

The Minister for Local Government has indicated that if the Shire does not voluntarily move to a public vote for Shire President, legislation will be enacted that will force this change.

A consequence of this would be that all existing council positions would be declared vacant, wards abolished and the resulting October 2023 ordinary election being for all councillor positions.

Option 2 - Retain current ward boundaries**Shire President – public vote by whole district****Dampier Ward – 1 Councillor (reduced by 1)****Broome Ward – 7 Councillors (no change)****Total – 9 Councillors (no change)**

This achieves the recommended 10% variance in representation as preferred by the Local Government Advisory Board and facilitates the election of the Shire President by public vote by the electors of the whole district.

WARD	Number of Councillors	Number of Electors	Councillor to Elector Ratio	% Ratio Deviation
Broome	7	7,073	1:1010	-1%
Dampier	1(-1)	1,117	1:1117	+9%
Total Ward Councillors	8(-1)	8,190	1:1023	N/A
Shire President	1	8,190	Elected by electors of the whole district.	

Option 3 - Retain current ward boundaries**Shire President – public vote by whole district****Dampier Ward – 2 Councillors (no change)****Broome Ward – 6 Councillors (reduced by 1)****Total – 9 Councillors (no change)**

This would facilitate the election of the Shire President by public vote but does not achieve the recommended 10% variance in representation as preferred by the Local Government Advisory Board.

WARD	Number of Councillors	Number of Electors	Councillor to Elector Ratio	% Ratio Deviation
Broome	6 (-1)	7,073	1:1178	+15%
Dampier	2	1,117	1:558	-45%
Total Ward Councillors	8	8,190	1:1023	N/A
Shire President	1	8,190	Elected by electors of the whole district.	

Option 4 - Amend Broome Ward Boundary to include Coconut Well, 12 Mile & Skuthorpe

Shire President – public vote by whole district

Dampier Ward – 1 Councillor (reduced by 1)

Broome Ward – 7 Councillors (no change)

Total – 9 Councillors (no change)

This principally achieves the recommended 10% variance in representation as preferred by the Local Government Advisory Board and facilitates the election of the Shire President by public vote by the electors of the whole district.

It also addresses the previous community of interest concerns raised by residents from Coconut Well, 12 Mile & Skuthorpe communities. Whilst the Dampier Ward would continue to be marginally over represented, the Federal Government has recently announced a campaign to increase electoral roll registration in the Dampier Peninsula which may lead to increased electors in the Dampier Ward.

WARD	Number of Councillors	Number of Electors	Councillor to Elector Ratio	% Ratio Deviation
Broome	7	7,315 (+242)	1:1045	+2%
Dampier	1 (-1)	875 (-242)	1:875	-14%
Total Ward Councillors	8	8,190	1:1023	N/A
Shire President	1	8,190	Elected by electors of the whole district.	

Option 5 - Abolish Wards

Shire President – public vote by whole district

8 Councillors – public vote by whole district.

This option involves the dissolution of all existing ward boundaries.

The Shire President would be elected for a four-year term commencing in October 2023. The 8 Councillor positions would similarly be elected for four-year terms with half of the Councillor positions being up for election every two years.

The Councillor to Elector Ratio under a no ward system is 1:1023 across the entire district.

This option reduces complexities, delivers administrative efficiencies, and conforms with the voluntary pathway to publicly elect the Shire President.

As previously indicated members of the public may suggest other options for consideration.

To assist, the following Locality elector numbers are provided.

Current Ward	Locality	# of Electors
Broome	Bilingurr	654
Broome	Broome	1,936
Broome	Cable Beach	2,835
Broome	Djugun	1,518
Broome	Minyirr	84
Broome	Roebuck (Broome Ward)	46
Dampier	Dampier Peninsula	538
Dampier	Eighty Mile Beach	28
Dampier	Gingerah	3
Dampier	Lagrange	296
Dampier	Roebuck (Dampier Ward)	180
Dampier	Waterbank	72
	TOTAL	8,190

The attached maps indicate the current Wards and localities within each Ward.

Number of Councillors

As provided in the options, also under consideration will be the number of Councillors for each ward and the district.

The Minister for Local Government has recently provided the below guidance in relation to the number of electors based on population. Councils that currently operate outside the below tier have been advised that Councillor numbers will reduce at the October 2023 local government elections.

- Up to 5,000: 5 – 7 Councillors (Including Shire President).
- Between 5,000 and 75,000: 5 – 9 Councillors (Including Mayor/President)
- Above 75,000: 9 – 15 Councillors (Including Mayor)

The Shire of Broome currently operates within the tier above. The 2020 Ward and Representation Review supported the retention of the current 9 Councillors.

Public submissions

Members of the community are invited to make a written submission about any aspect of ward boundaries and representation.

A submission form is provided at the end of this document for your convenience. You do not have to use this form for your written public submission.

Your written submission should be addressed to the Chief Executive Officer and clearly marked "Ward and Representation Review" and can be lodged by any of the following methods:

Online Submission: www.broome.wa.gov.au

Email to: shire@broome.wa.gov.au

Hand deliver to: Shire of Broome
Cnr Weld and Haas Streets
BROOME WA 6725

Post to: Shire of Broome
PO Box 44
BROOME WA 6725

All submissions must be received by 4pm on Friday 25 November 2022.

Thank you for your interest and involvement in this review. Council welcomes your comments on any matters that may assist it to make informed and responsible decisions for the benefit of the people of the Shire of Broome.

Cr H N Tracey
Shire President

S C Mastrolembo
Chief Executive Officer

**PUBLIC SUBMISSION PRO FORMA
SHIRE OF BROOME
REVIEW OF CURRENT WARD BOUNDARIES AND THE NUMBER OF
OFFICES OF COUNCILLOR 2022**

Note: This form is provided for your convenience. Written public submissions do not have to be made on this form.

To: Chief Executive Officer
Shire of Broome
PO Box 44
BROOME WA 6725

Email: shire@broome.wa.gov.au

I support the following Ward Boundary/ number of Offices of Councillor:

Option 1: Status Quo (Contrary to Ministerial Direction)
Maintain the current ward system and ward boundaries.
Maintain 9 Councillors
Broome Ward – 7 Councillors
Dampier Ward – 2 Councillors

Yes No

Or

Option 2: Retain current ward boundaries
Shire President – public vote by whole district
Dampier Ward – 1 Councillor (reduced by 1)
Broome Ward – 7 Councillors (no change)
Total – 9 Councillors (no change)

Yes No

Or

Option 3: Retain current ward boundaries
Shire President – public vote by whole district
Dampier Ward – 2 Councillors (no change)
Broome Ward – 6 Councillors (reduced by 1)
Total – 9 Councillors (no change)

Yes No

Option 4: Amend Broome Ward Boundary to include Coconut Well, 12 Mile & Skuthorpe

Shire President – public vote by whole district

Dampier Ward – 1 Councillor (reduced by 1)

Broome Ward – 7 Councillors (no change)

Total – 9 Councillors (no change)

Yes No

Option 5: Abolish Wards

Shire President – public vote by whole district

8 Councillors – public vote by whole district.

Yes No

Or

I propose the following Ward boundary/Councillor structure:

The Shire of Broome should have Wards and Councillors.

The Shire’s Wards should have the following names and number of Councillors:

Name	No of Councillors
Ward 1.....
Ward 2.....
Ward 3
Ward 4

The Shire’s Wards should contain the following suburbs/localities and/or physical/topographic features:

- Ward 1
- Ward 2
- Ward 3
- Ward 4

Comments in support of my preferred option:

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Submitted by:

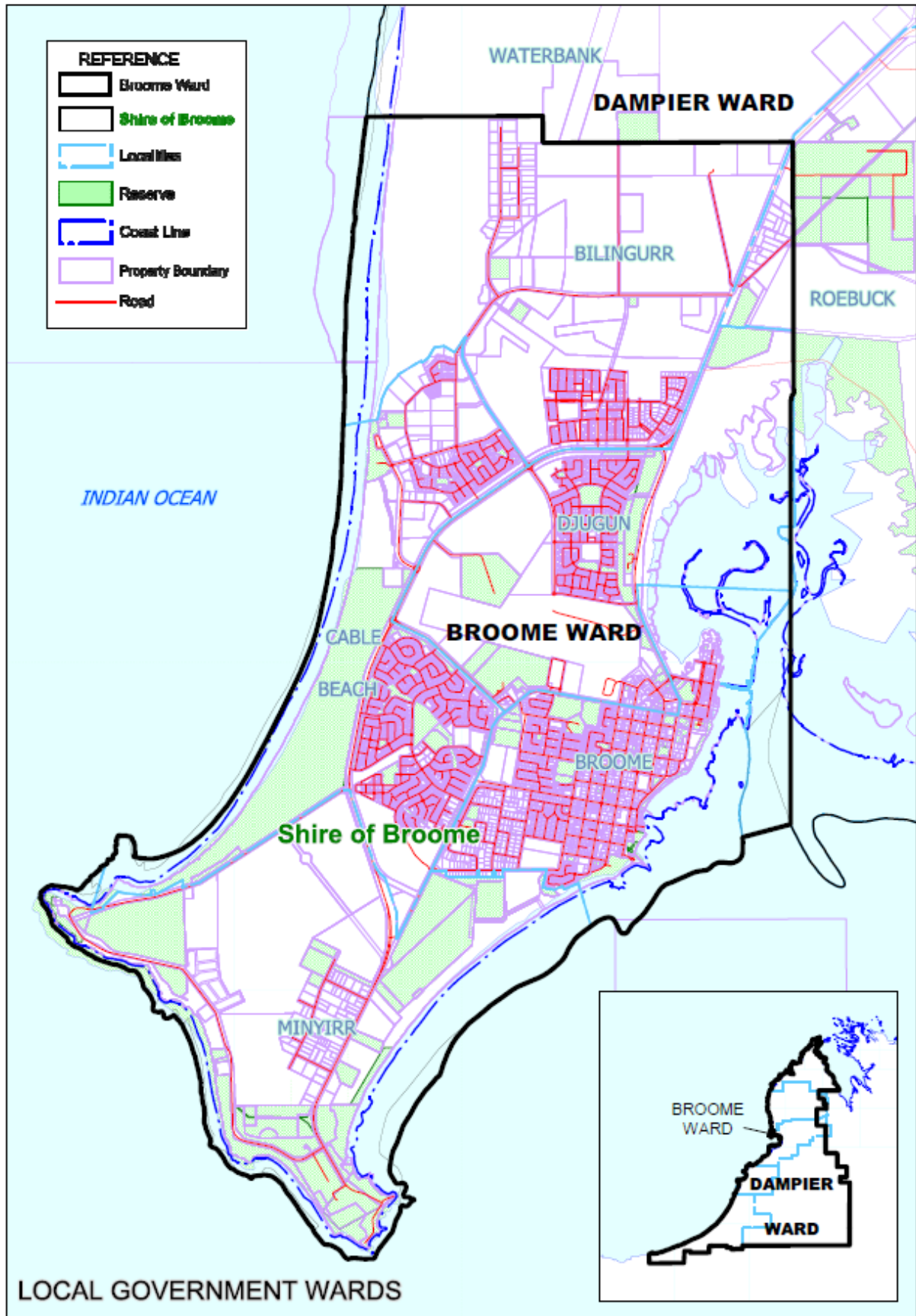
Name:

Address:

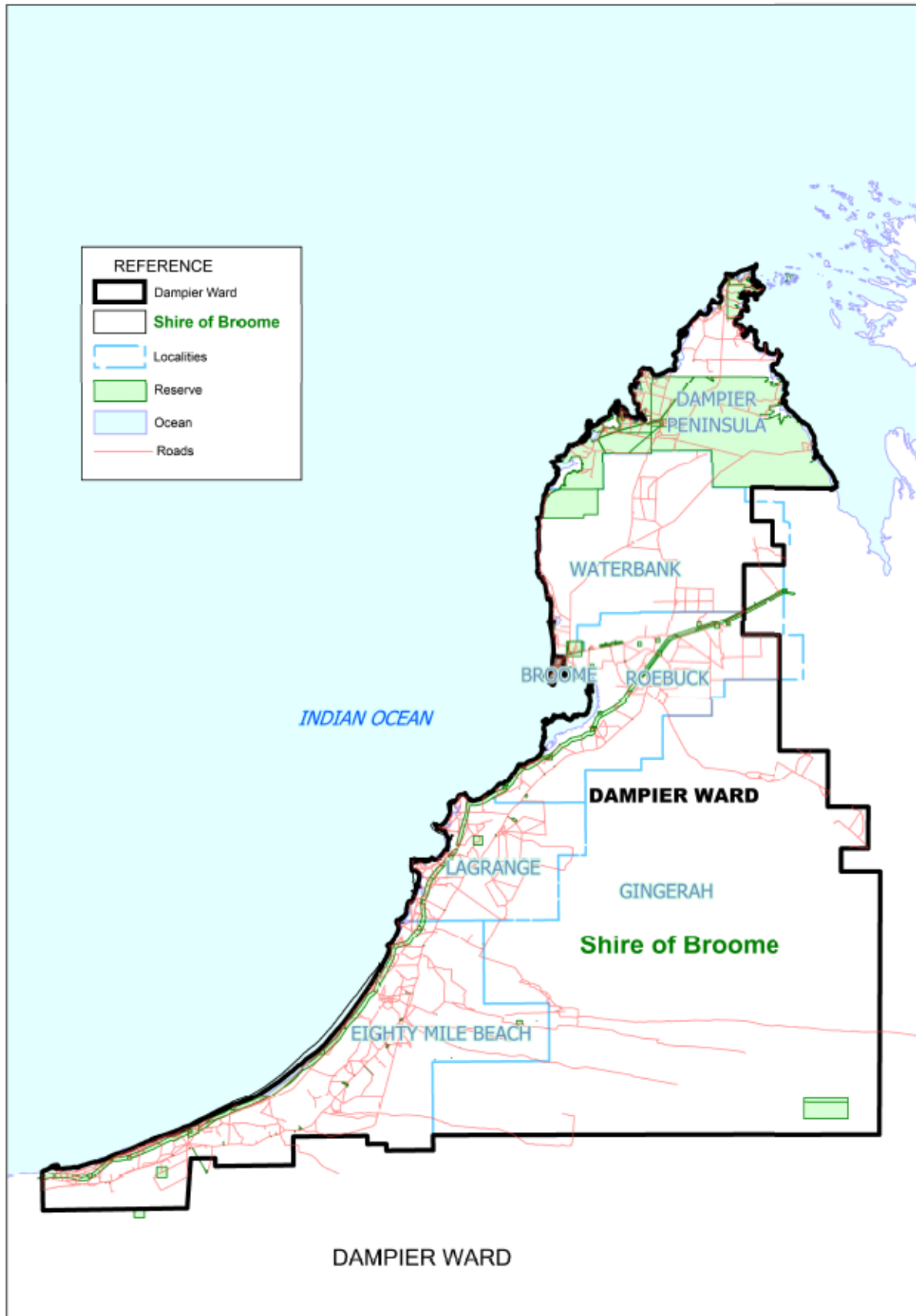
Contact details:

The Shire of Broome thanks you for your submission.

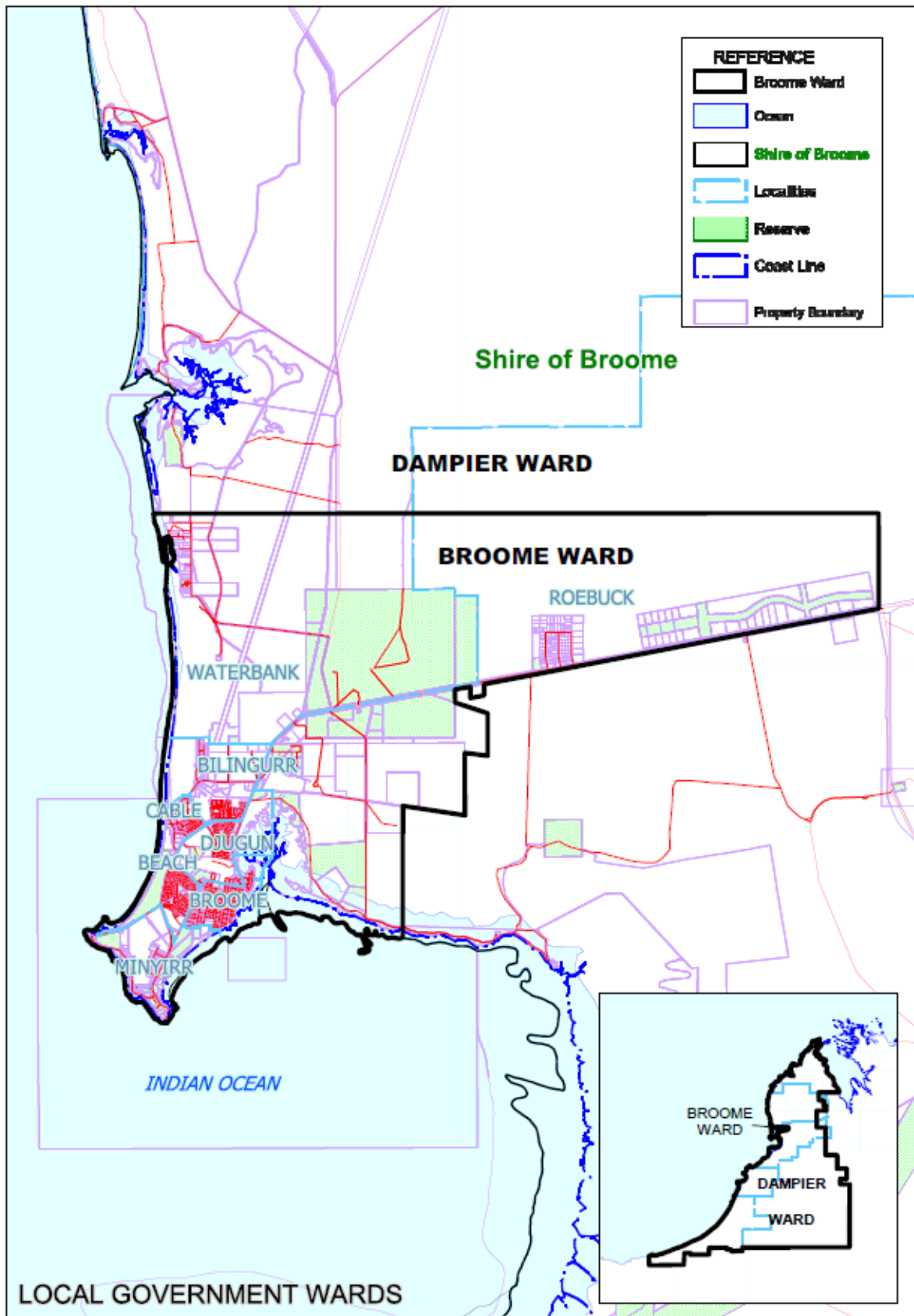
BROOME WARD BOUNDARY - CURRENT



DAMPIER WARD BOUNDARY - CURRENT



**BROOME WARD BOUNDARY AMENDED TO INCLUDE COCONUT WELL, 12 MILE & SKUTHORPE
(OPTION 4)**



NO WARDS – (OPTION 5)

SHIRE PRESIDENT – PUBLIC VOTE BY WHOLE DISTRICT

8 COUNCILLORS – PUBLIC VOTE BY WHOLE DISTRICT

