

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY · OCTOBER 2026

Bremer Bay Cultural & Civic Precinct

A proposal to co-locate civic, community, cultural and visitor services in Bremer Bay

Shire of Jerramungup
Discover Diversity

BLUESALT CONSULTING

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Shire of Jerramungup is seeking **$15.75 million** in external capital funding to build the Bremer Bay Cultural and Civic Precinct. The Precinct is a shared facility that brings the town's civic, community, cultural and visitor services together in one building. The Shire will contribute $3.5 million of its own. An independent cost benefit analysis gives the project a benefit cost ratio of 1.64, and the Shire has already commenced preparation of tender-ready drawings.

Proponent	Shire of Jerramungup
Location	21 Seadragon Avenue, Bremer Bay Town Centre (Shire-owned, serviced lot)
Facility	Shared civic and community building of approximately 1,809m²
Total project cost	$19.25 million excluding GST (independent estimate, HW & Associates, November 2025)
Shire contribution	$3.5 million ($1.0 million from reserves and $2.5 million in borrowings)
External funding sought	Approximately $15.75 million
Economic return	Benefit cost ratio 1.64, net present value $11.55 million, economic rate of return 10% (Stantec)
Building users	Shire of Jerramungup, Bremer Bay Community Resource Centre and, subject to final agreements, Wagyl Kaip Southern Noongar Aboriginal Corporation and the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA)
Project status	Feasibility study, community engagement, concept design, cost estimate, cost–benefit analysis and business case complete

Why Bremer Bay Needs It

Bremer Bay is on Western Australia's south coast, 180 kilometres east of Albany and 500 kilometres south-east of Perth. It is classified as Remote Australia. When the nearest regional centre is that far away, the services a town can offer locally matter.

Most of those services currently operate from the Shire's ageing buildings on Mary Street, but the buildings limit what is on offer:

- The library has about 40 square metres and no room for children's activities or programs. It still recorded 2,096 loans in 2024–25.
- Five to six Shire staff share one office on a rotating basis. Ranger, planning and community development services are largely run from Jerramungup, 100 kilometres away.
- Visitor information is provided from an enclosed walkway between buildings.
- People using Services Australia through the Community Resource Centre (CRC) have no private space to do so.
- The hall is cold and poorly lit. It is inefficient for small meetings and cannot properly host the larger events and training the community has asked for.
- Emergency welfare arrangements rely on the Sports Club, which is outside the town centre and reached by a one-way road.

Demand for these services also changes through the year. Bremer Bay's population rises well above its permanent resident count over summer and the school holidays, and the town's services, events

and emergency arrangements need to cope with those peaks. No existing building in town could take on this mix of services.

Two organisations with growing responsibilities in the area have nowhere to work from. Since the Mamang Maambakoort Marine Park was established in November 2024, Wagyl Kaip Southern Noongar Aboriginal Corporation and DBCA have managed it jointly. Neither has an office or meeting space in Bremer Bay.

The Project

The Precinct will sit on a Shire-owned lot at 21 Seadragon Avenue, next to the civic square, playground and skate park the Shire has already built as part of the Bremer Bay Town Centre. The roads, services, parking and public spaces are in place. The civic building is the last major piece of the Town Centre plan.



Concept render of the proposed Precinct. Source H+H Architects, 2025

The building, designed by H+H Architects, would house:

- Shire administration, with space for Ranger, planning and community development staff to work locally
- the CRC, library, Post Office and Services Australia access
- a visitor information centre with cultural and environmental interpretation
- office and meeting space for Wagyl Kaip and DBCA, subject to lease agreements
- bookable offices, meeting rooms and public computers for remote workers, students and small businesses
- a community hall seating 170 for dinners or 186 in theatre style, with a commercial kitchen
- accessible toilets and showers so the building can serve as an evacuation and welfare centre.

Office areas can be locked off so the hall, kitchen and meeting rooms can be used at night and on weekends. Because reception, meeting rooms, amenities and parking are shared, each organisation avoids building and running a facility of its own.

What It Will Deliver

Better access to everyday services. Accessible, private and comfortable spaces for using the library, Post Office, CRC and Shire services. This matters most to older residents and people with limited mobility, in a town where the median age is 53.

More Shire services delivered in town. More staff time spent in Bremer Bay and less time on the road to and from Jerramungup. Stantec values the travel savings alone at $2.9 million over the life of the project.

A stronger visitor economy. A proper visitor centre and a venue that can host events, exhibitions and workshops. Additional visitor spending is the largest benefit in the cost benefit analysis, valued at $15.9 million.

A local base for Traditional Owners. A permanent place for Wagyl Kaip to carry out its joint-management role, with Noongar culture and knowledge part of a building residents and visitors use every day.

Emergency readiness. A central welfare and evacuation centre close to emergency services, able to support the much larger number of people in town during peak periods.

A completed Town Centre. The civic building makes full use of the roads, parking and public spaces the Shire has already paid for. It also frees the Mary Street site for other community uses in future.

Keeping Bremer Bay a Place to Live, Work, Raise a Family and Invest

Small towns keep people when the basics are there. Families look for somewhere for their children to learn and play. Professionals need a decent place to work. Small businesses need somewhere to meet clients, run a workshop or cater an event. Bremer Bay's current civic buildings offer little of this.

The Precinct gives the town a library with room for story time and school-holiday programs, right beside the playground and skate park. It gives DBCA, Wagyl Kaip and the Shire a workplace in town, so more roles can be based in Bremer Bay rather than serviced from Albany, Esperance or Jerramungup. Its bookable offices and meeting rooms suit remote workers and visiting professionals. The hall and commercial kitchen create work for caterers, tour operators and event organisers. Relocating services from Mary Street also makes that site available for future health or childcare services, subject to separate planning. Families weigh these services heavily when deciding where to live.

With a median age of 53, Bremer Bay needs to hold on to younger households and attract new ones if it is to keep its workforce, businesses and volunteer emergency services going. Funding the Precinct helps make sure Bremer Bay remains an attractive place to live, work, raise a family and invest.

Value For Money

Stantec's independent cost benefit analysis compared the full Precinct with keeping the current arrangements, over 30 years at a 5% real discount rate.

ECONOMIC MEASURE	RESULT
Present value of benefits	$29.43 million
Present value of costs	$17.90 million
Net present value	$11.55 million
Benefit cost ratio	1.64
Economic internal rate of return	10%

The benefit cost ratio stays above 1.0 if capital costs rise by 40% (1.17) or if benefits fall by 20% (1.31). Several benefits are not given a dollar value in the model, including better accessibility, cultural participation and community connection, and these add to the case.

The $19.25 million estimate is realistic for a remote site. It includes a 30% Bremer Bay locality allowance, design and construction contingencies, professional fees and 12 months of escalation.

Options Considered

The business case tested four options.

OPTION	CAPITAL COST	RESULT
Keep the current buildings	No new capital	Services stay constrained and Wagyl Kaip and DBCA remain without a local base.
Reduced Precinct	About $16.5 million	Permanently drops the hall and commercial kitchen. Event and welfare capacity is lost and the old Mary Street hall must keep running.
Staged Precinct	About $16.5 million for Stage 1	Defers the hall and kitchen to a second project that would need its own funding, at future construction prices.
Full Precinct (preferred)	$19.25 million	Delivers every function in one build and allows the Shire to consolidate its Bremer Bay facilities.

For around $2.75 million more than the reduced or staged options, the full Precinct delivers the complete facility in a single build and leaves no unfinished stage for a later funding round.

Strategic Fit

LEVEL	ALIGNMENT
Australian Government	Regional Investment Framework: locally informed, place-based investment in people, places and services, delivered with local government, Traditional Owner and State partners.
State Government	State Infrastructure Strategy (Foundations for a Stronger Tomorrow), which calls for co-located, place-based regional services. WA Visitor Economy Strategy 2033, which supports Aboriginal tourism, regional events and visitor servicing.
Region	Great Southern Development Commission priorities for social infrastructure, cultural assets and tourism, and its concern about an ageing population and young people leaving the region.
Shire of Jerramungup	Strategic Community Plan, Local Planning Strategy and Bremer Bay Town Centre Structure Plan, which identify the Civic Precinct as the community focus of the Town Centre.

Ready To Deliver

The project has been planned and tested in stages over several years:

- a Shire-owned site with roads, services, parking and the surrounding public realm already built
- a feasibility study completed in January 2026, informed by a community survey, a workshop and interviews with service providers and partners
- a concept design by H+H Architects and an independent cost estimate by HW & Associates
- an independent cost–benefit analysis by Stantec and a full business case by BlueSalt Consulting
- tender-ready drawings now in preparation.

The Shire will lead delivery and procure construction through a public tender. A Project Steering Group of the Shire, CRC, Wagyl Kaip and DBCA will guide design and set-up. Lease, operating and cost-sharing arrangements with partners will be finalised as the design develops.

The Funding Request

The Shire of Jerramungup has set aside $3.5 million for the Precinct. This is a large commitment for a small rural local government.

It is seeking approximately **$15.75 million** in external capital funding to complete the project. Suitable programs include the Regional Precincts and Partnerships Program and the Growing Regions Program.

This funding would let the Shire complete the Bremer Bay Town Centre and give the town a civic building that will serve it for decades.

Prepared by:

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