

LANDMARK POSTCODE

6472



Image courtesy of the Beacon Central Community Resource Centre.

Story: Sheryl Allen

LOCATION: Beacon
4 hours northeast of Perth

POPULATION: 100

INDUSTRIES: Agriculture, services

CLIMATE: Temperate
Summer: 18.1°C – 34.5°C
Winter: 6.0°C – 16.4°C
Rainfall: 313mm

Located on the most northeasterly edge of Western Australia's Wheatbelt region, Beacon is a small town that's big on personality and country lifestyle.

To the east, grazing country gives way to desert. To the north, Lake Moore and the Karroun Hill Nature Reserve lead on to sheep station country.

Splicing east-west is the vermin-proof fence, built in the 1950s to keep goats, emus and wild dogs out of the pastoral areas.

After the early explorers, the first Europeans here were the sandalwood cutters who carved out tracks between the water points and the early settlers.

Land was not opened up for selection until 1926 and it wasn't until the railway arrived in 1931 that things really started happening.

That same year, the Beacon Progress Association was formed and is still active today. Over the years, the spirited group has been a focal point for securing services and facilities such as water, telephone, power and roads for Beacon. The

Association owns and manages Beacon Central, the community centre which is the heart of the town.

Community facilities are important to small towns. Beacon boasts a youth centre, library, country club, medical clinic, primary school, botanical park and sporting complex.

Beacon is part of the Shire of Mount Marshall which is known as the Sandalwood Shire and covers an area of 10,134 square kilometres. The shire population of around 650 is serviced by the two main towns, Bencubbin and Beacon. Nearby are the larger centres of Merredin, 142km to the southeast, and Wongan Hills, 140km to the southwest.

Beacon's bulk grain handling facility and farm machinery outlet are sure signs of the rural economy's agricultural base in wheat and mixed grains.

Broadacre dryland farming is the mainstay of the Central Wheatbelt, with around 40% of Western Australia's grain harvest derived from the region. There is also extensive grazing of sheep for both wool and wheat.

Tourism also contributes to the local economy. Beacon's caravan park and motel units are popular with travellers exploring the wheatbelt region, which offers country lifestyle experiences through farm stays, B&Bs and country pubs.

The region is punctuated by market days, local events, heritage sites and museums that interpret the development of the rich grain industry.

With its locale on the edge of native bushland,

Beacon offers easy access to the brilliant wildflower displays that characterise the landscape after good rains from July to October.

Birdwatching is also a popular pursuit. Locals will tell you there are more cockatoos than people in Beacon but there are also many rarer species to be spied along the trails, granite outcrops and diverse landscapes within easy reach of the town.

Billiburning Rock, Crimpy's Tank, Beagley's Breakaway and the Karroun Hill Nature Reserve are all favourites with birdwatchers and picnickers.

The nature reserve occupies over 300,000 hectares of remnant vegetation, protecting diverse plant, animal and birdlife populations.

Beacon is often hailed as a typical wheatbelt town – a proud rural community, firmly anchored in its agricultural industry and country spirit.

CONTACT:

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PROPERTY GUIDE:

Rural: Broadacre cropping country
\$460 – \$620 per hectare