



## 1. Application details

### 1.1. Permit application details

Permit application No.: 1004/1  
Permit type: Purpose Permit

### 1.2. Proponent details

Proponent's name: APT Pipelines (WA) Pty Ltd

### 1.3. Property details

Property: LOT 12453 ON PLAN 221090 ( ARROWSMITH 6525)  
LOT 12251 ON PLAN 244036 ( MOUNT ADAMS 6525)  
LOT 12450 ON PLAN 219518 ( MOUNT ADAMS 6525)  
LOT 11456 ON PLAN 185714 ( MOUNT ADAMS 6525)  
VICTORIA LOCATION 12369 ( ARROWSMITH 6525)  
VICTORIA LOCATION 12368 ( MOUNT ADAMS 6525)

Local Government Area: Shire Of Irwin  
Colloquial name: Westlime Gas Lateral Project

### 1.4. Application

|                    |           |                    |                      |
|--------------------|-----------|--------------------|----------------------|
| Clearing Area (ha) | No. Trees | Method of Clearing | For the purpose of:  |
| 0.0086             |           | Mechanical Removal | Petroleum Production |

## 2. Site Information

### 2.1. Existing environment and information

#### 2.1.1. Description of the native vegetation under application

**Vegetation Description**  
Beard Vegetation Association 378: Shrublands; scrub-heath with scattered *Banksia* spp., *Eucalyptus tottiana* & *Xylomelum angustifolium* on deep sandy flats in the Geraldton Sandplain Region. (Hopkins et al., 2001; Shepherd et al., 2001)

**Clearing Description**  
The proposal will involve clearing of 0.0086ha of native vegetation for the purposes of construction of 125m of gas pipeline (Agility, 2005) which will connect the Westlime Gas Lateral to the Parnelia Pipeline. Thirty two metres of the construction corridor contains native vegetation, with the remaining 93m within existing cleared areas.

The new connection will run parallel and in the same corridor as the existing PL32 pipeline (Agility, 2005). This corridor has previously been cleared during installation of the PL32 pipeline. The vegetation and photographic survey which was undertaken on the 7 December 2005, indicates that the vegetation is comprised of regrowing scrub-heath with a vegetative cover of 15 to 20% (Hayes, 2005). This has limited species diversity due to the apparent multiple disturbance in the corridor. Low regrowing shrub species dominate in the corridor, and include *Beaufortia elegans*, *Conospermum wycherleyi*, *Pileanthus filifolius*, *Scholtzia* aff. *laxiflora* and *Melaleuca leuropoma* (Jodi Hayes, Consultant, KD.1 Pty Ltd (pers comm, 31/01/2006) ref: 608.KF).

**Vegetation Condition**  
Degraded: Structure severely disturbed; regeneration to good condition requires intensive management (Keighery 1994)

Good: Structure significantly altered by multiple disturbance; retains basic structure/ability to regenerate (Keighery 1994)

**Comment**  
The condition of the vegetation has been determined through review of the Purpose Permit Application document (Agility, 2005), which both describes the vegetation and provides a photographic survey of the vegetation to be cleared in the pipeline corridor.

The vegetation proposed to be cleared very broadly matches Beard Vegetation Association 378 (Shepherd et al., 2001), but due to the apparent multiple disturbance of the corridor (Agility, 2005), it has limited diversity, and it is unlikely that it will be able to regenerate to a good condition without management.

## 3. Assessment of application against clearing principles

### (a) Native vegetation should not be cleared if it comprises a high level of biological diversity.

**Comments** **Proposal is not likely to be at variance to this Principle**  
The proposal will involve clearing of a very small (0.0086ha) area within the corridor of the existing PL32 pipeline (Agility, 2005). This corridor has previously been cleared during installation of the PL32 pipeline, and has subsequently been subjected to multiple disturbances. As such, the regrowing scrub-heath vegetation has

limited species diversity, and it is unlikely that it will be able to regenerate to a good condition without management.

No Declared Rare Flora or Priority flora are known to occur within the application area (GIS database).

The supporting information shows that the proposal involves the clearing of a very small area of already degraded vegetation therefore the potential impact on the environmental values of the area is likely to be minimal (CALM, 2006).

**Methodology** Agility 2005  
CALM 2006

GIS database:  
- Declared Rare and Priority Flora List - CALM 01/07/05

**(b) Native vegetation should not be cleared if it comprises the whole or a part of, or is necessary for the maintenance of, a significant habitat for fauna indigenous to Western Australia.**

**Comments Proposal is not likely to be at variance to this Principle**

The proposal will involve clearing of a very small (0.0086ha) area within the corridor of the existing PL32 pipeline (Agility, 2005). This corridor has previously been cleared during installation of the PL32 pipeline, and has subsequently been subjected to multiple disturbances. As such, the regrowing scrub-heath vegetation has limited species diversity, and is unlikely to be a significant habitat for fauna.

The supporting information shows that the proposal involves the clearing of a very small area of already degraded vegetation therefore the potential impact on the environmental values of the area is likely to be minimal (CALM, 2006).

**Methodology** Agility 2005  
CALM 2006

**(c) Native vegetation should not be cleared if it includes, or is necessary for the continued existence of, rare flora.**

**Comments Proposal is not likely to be at variance to this Principle**

No Declared Rare Flora or Priority flora are known to occur within the application area (GIS database). It has been found that within the general area surrounding the clearing application, CALM's Declared Rare and Priority Flora databases give a poor reflection of the actual locations of significant species. For example, a recent Declared Rare and Priority Flora survey undertaken of the broader area surrounding the current application found a total of 18 significant plant species (Western Botanical, 2005) which had not been located on CALM's databases. These included 11 listed as Priority species (one species with P1 status, one species with P2 status, five species with P3 status and three species with P4 status), three undescribed species, and one species of Declared Rare Flora. Four species are of additional conservation significance occurring at the limits of their known distribution or known to be geographically restricted.

The Declared Rare Flora species which is known from the broader area surrounding the application is *Stawellia dimorphantha* (Anthericaceae - Arrowsmith Stilt-Lily) (GIS database). The closest recording of this species is 1.4 km to the east of the application area. *Stawellia dimorphantha* is relatively common within the three mining tenements which surround the application (E70/1592, E70/2347 and E70/2263), with populations exceeding many tens of thousands (Ray Hart, 2002). However, it is readily missed in surveys due to its small stature and the high density of associated vegetation. It is a stilt-rooted perennial herb which grows to between 0.05 and 0.2m high (Western Australian Herbarium, 1998-2006). The purple or cream flowers are usually present between June and November.

The proposal will involve clearing of a very small (0.0086ha) area within the corridor of the existing PL32 pipeline (Agility, 2005) which has been subjected to multiple disturbance as evidenced by the photographic survey presented in the clearing permit application document. Furthermore, the vegetation cover is 15 to 20% and has a low floral diversity. As such, there is a very low risk that rare or priority species may be cleared. Given that the area to be cleared is small and degraded, it is not likely to be necessary for the continued existence of significant species.

Under Section 23F of the *Wildlife Conservation Act* 1950, it is illegal to take Declared Rare Flora in Western Australia. As it is unknown whether the Declared Rare Flora species, *Stawellia dimorphantha*, is present within the application area, it will be necessary to place a condition on the clearing permit with regard to survey of this species.

CALM supports the requirement for a survey prior to clearing, given that several *Stawellia dimorphantha* plants have been found in the vicinity of the clearing (2006). However, the CALM Regional Office advises that it is a difficult plant to identify when not in flower. If a botanist of suitable experience is employed, who is familiar with the species, then it would be acceptable to survey prior to spring. If DRF is found within the proposed clearing area the proponent would need to apply to CALM for a permit to remove. In particular, with reference to conditions on the permit, CALM advised that if a specimen of *Stawellia dimorphantha* is found within the

proposed clearing area then the proponent must first inform the CALM District Office and then apply for a permit to take DRF.

**Methodology** CALM 2005  
Hart 2002  
Western Botanical 2005  
Western Australian Herbarium 1998-2006

GIS database:  
- Declared Rare and Priority Flora List - CALM 01/07/05

**(d) Native vegetation should not be cleared if it comprises the whole or a part of, or is necessary for the maintenance of a threatened ecological community.**

**Comments** **Proposal is not likely to be at variance to this Principle**  
There are no records of Threatened Ecological Communities (TECs) in the application area (GIS database). The nearest known TEC is approximately 7 km from the application area. Therefore this proposal is unlikely to be at variance to this clearing principal.

The supporting information shows that the proposal involves the clearing of a very small area of already degraded vegetation therefore the potential impact on the environmental values of the area is likely to be minimal (CALM, 2006).

**Methodology** CALM 2006  
  
GIS database:  
- Threatened Ecological Communities - CALM 12/4/05

**(e) Native vegetation should not be cleared if it is significant as a remnant of native vegetation in an area that has been extensively cleared.**

**Comments** **Proposal is not at variance to this Principle**  
The State Government is committed to the National Objectives Targets for Biodiversity Conservation which includes a target that prevents clearance of ecological communities with an extent below 30% of that present pre-European settlement (Department of Natural Resources and Environment, 2002; EPA, 2000). Beyond this value, species extinction is believed to occur at an exponential rate and any further clearing may have irreversible consequences for the conservation of biodiversity and is, therefore, not supported.

The vegetation proposed to be cleared very broadly matches Vegetation Association 378 mapped by Beard. The benchmark of 15% representation of Vegetation Association 378 in conservation reserves (JANIS Forests Criteria, 1997) has been met. Additionally, as 60% of the pre-European extent of this association remains, it is therefore of 'least concern' with respect to biodiversity conservation (Department of Natural Resources and Environment, 2002).

|                                    | Pre-European area (ha) | Current extent (ha) | Remaining %* | Conservation Status** | % in IUCN Class I-IV reserves |
|------------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|--------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| IBRA Bioregion                     |                        |                     |              |                       |                               |
| Geraldton Sandplains               | 4,026,769*             | 2,215,659*          | 55.0%        | Least concern         |                               |
| Landcare District - Irwin          | 238,088*               | 115,612*            | 48.6 %       | Depleted              |                               |
| Beard Vegetation Association - 378 | 109,796                | 68,049              | 62 %         | Least concern         | 21.1 %                        |

\* Shepherd et al. (2001)

\*\* Department of Natural Resources and Environment (2002). Least concern means that >50 % of the pre-European extent exists and subject to little or no degradation over a majority of this area.

The supporting information shows that the proposal involves the clearing of a very small area of already degraded vegetation therefore the potential impact on the environmental values of the area is likely to be minimal (CALM, 2006).

**Methodology** CALM 2006  
Department of Natural Resources and Environment 2002  
EPA 2000  
Hopkins et al. 2001  
JANIS Forests Criteria 1997  
Shepherd et al. 2001

GIS databases:  
- Pre- European Vegetation - DA 01/01

**(f) Native vegetation should not be cleared if it is growing in, or in association with, an environment associated with a watercourse or wetland.**

**Comments Proposal is not at variance to this Principle**

There are no watercourses or wetlands within the area proposed to be cleared (GIS database). Consequently, the clearing under this application will not impact upon any creek systems or watercourses, and is not likely to be at variance to this principle.

**Methodology** GIS databases:  
- Hydrography, Linear - DOE 01/02/04  
- Rivers, 1M-GA 01/06/00  
- Topography Contour, Statewide-DOLA 12/09/02

**(g) Native vegetation should not be cleared if the clearing of the vegetation is likely to cause appreciable land degradation.**

**Comments Proposal is not likely to be at variance to this Principle**

The proposal will involve clearing of a very small (0.0086ha) area within the corridor of the existing PL32 pipeline (Agility, 2005). Considering the limited spatial extent of the proposed areas to be cleared, it is unlikely that the application is at variance to this principle.

**Methodology** Agility 2005

**(h) Native vegetation should not be cleared if the clearing of the vegetation is likely to have an impact on the environmental values of any adjacent or nearby conservation area.**

**Comments Proposal is not likely to be at variance to this Principle**

The Yardanogo Nature Reserve (C Class Reserve), situated 3.5km west of the application area is the closest CALM managed conservation reserve (GIS database). Arrowsmith Lake Area (Red Book System 5 Conservation Area, and Registered on the Register for National Estate) is located to the south of the application area at a distance of 12km (GIS databases). Considering the limited scale of the proposed clearing, it is unlikely that vegetation associated with the proposal would be significant in providing an ecological linkage with regional conservation areas.

The supporting information shows that the proposal involves the clearing of a very small area of already degraded vegetation therefore the potential impact on the environmental values of the area is likely to be minimal (CALM, 2006).

**Methodology** CALM 2006  
  
GIS databases:  
- CALM Managed Lands and Waters - CALM 01/07/05  
- Register of National Estate - EA 28/01/03  
- System 1 to 5 and 7 to 12 Areas - DEP 06/95

**(i) Native vegetation should not be cleared if the clearing of the vegetation is likely to cause deterioration in the quality of surface or underground water.**

**Comments Proposal is not likely to be at variance to this Principle**

There are no watercourses or wetlands within or immediately adjacent to the areas proposed to be cleared (GIS database). As the surface topography is relatively flat, the clearing under this application will not impact upon surface water quality, and is not likely to be at variance to this principle in this respect.

The quality of groundwater is also unlikely to be affected because of the limited spatial extent of the proposed clearing.

**Methodology** GIS databases:  
- Hydrography, Linear-DOE 1/2/04  
- Topography Contour, Statewide-DOLA 12/09/02

**(j) Native vegetation should not be cleared if clearing the vegetation is likely to cause, or exacerbate, the incidence or intensity of flooding.**

**Comments Proposal is not likely to be at variance to this Principle**

Flooding impacts are unlikely to occur due to the limited spatial extent (0.0086 ha) of the proposed clearing. Furthermore, the areas proposed to be cleared are not associated with any watercourses (GIS database). Therefore, the clearing is unlikely to cause or exacerbate the incidence or intensity of flooding and is unlikely to be at variance to this principle.

**Methodology** GIS databases:  
 - Hydrography, Linear-DOE 1/2/04  
 - Topography Contour, Statewide-DOLA 12/09/02

**Planning instrument, Native Title, Previous EPA decision or other matter.**

**Comments**

There is a current native title claim over the area under application; WC04/002. This claim has been registered with the National Native Title Tribunal on behalf of the Amangu claimant group. However, the petroleum title has been granted in accordance with the future act regime of the *Native Title Act* 1993 and the nature of the act (ie. the proposed clearing activity) has been provided for in that process, therefore the granting of a clearing permit is not a future act under the *Native Title Act* 1993.

There are no sites on the Register of Aboriginal Sites within the application area (GIS database).

The proponent does not have a current EP Licence or Works Approval for this project (DoE 2005). This pipeline is not subject to Part V (EP Licence of Works Approvals) regulation and is not likely to impact on any licensed premises.

The proponent does not have a current ground or surface water licence for this project, and there is no current application for one of these licences (DoE 2005).

The Shire of Irwin has no objection to APT Pipelines (WA) Pty Ltd being issued with a clearing permit for the area (2006).

The Environmental Impact Assessment database (GIS database) indicates two proposals which are currently under assessment. The Environmental Protection Authority Services Unit (2006) advised the following:

- \* CRN 205035 - This was correspondence only, and did not require that a level of assessment be set. The correspondence was regarding onshore drilling operations proposed by ARC Energy; and
- \* CRN 185626 - This was a referral under Section 48 of the *Environmental Protection Act* 1986 by the Shire of Irwin for Amendments to District Zoning under Town Planning Scheme 5. The Scheme amendment was not assessed, but advice was given.

Note that clearing must not commence until all other environmental approvals have been obtained. This may include approvals under other acts, such as the *Mining Act* 1978 or various *Petroleum Acts*.

**Methodology** DoE 2005  
 Filtering Officer, EPASU (pers comm 28/02/06)  
 Shire of Irwin 2006

GIS Databases:  
 - Aboriginal Sites of Significance - DIA 28/02/03  
 - Environmental Impact Assessments - DOE 24/02/06  
 - Native Title Claims - DLI 7/11/05

**4. Assessor's recommendations**

| Purpose              | Method             | Applied area (ha) | Decision     | Comment / recommendation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|----------------------|--------------------|-------------------|--------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Petroleum Production | Mechanical Removal | 0.0086            | <b>Grant</b> | <p>The assessing officer advises that the permit be granted. All of the ten Clearing Principles have been addressed and the proposed clearing is either not or not likely to be at variance with them.</p> <p>The Declared Rare Flora species <i>Stawellia dimorphantha</i> (Anthericaceae - Arrowsmith Stilt-Lily) is known from the broader area surrounding the application. It is unknown whether this species is present within the application area, and as such, the clearing permit is subject to the following conditions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Prior to clearing, the areas marked in red on Plan 1004/1 A, shall be walked, inspected and surveyed by a qualified botanist who shall identify if the species <i>Stawellia dimorphantha</i> is present within the area to be cleared, in accordance with "Guidance Statement No 51 Terrestrial Flora and Vegetation Surveys for Environmental Impact Assessment in Western Australia", June 2004, Environmental Protection Authority.</li> <li>2. The Permit Holder shall record the following prior to each instance of clearing:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) findings of the qualified botanist as described under condition 1;</li> </ol> </li> </ol> |

b) locations of the species *Stawellia dimorphantha*.

3. The Permit Holder shall upon completion of the above survey, provide a report to the Director, Environment Division, of the Department of Industry and Resources setting out the records required under condition 2 of this permit, prior to the commencement of clearing.
4. In this Permit, qualified botanist means a person who has had formal training and/or experience in ecology and taxonomy of the Australian flora. They shall have had a minimum of 3 years experience in the survey of WA flora and vegetation, with suitable experience in the identification of *Stawellia dimorphantha*.

The Permit Holder should note that under Section 23F of the *Wildlife Conservation Act 1950*, it is illegal to take Declared Rare Flora in Western Australia unless Ministerial approval has been sought. This can be done by lodging an "Application for approval to take declared rare flora in management operation (Pursuant to Section 23F of the *Wildlife Conservation Act 1950*, as amended)". CALM (2006) advise that if a specimen of *Stawellia dimorphantha* is found within the proposed clearing area then the Permit Holder must first inform the CALM District Office and then apply for a permit to take DRF.

## 5. References

- Agility (2005). *Westlime Gas Lateral Pipeline Variation PL32 7P\_05-6. Native Vegetation Clearing Purpose Permit Application*. Report prepared for Australian Pipeline Trust (Agility Document No: WGL-P-L-00007). Agility Management Pty Ltd, Perth.
- Department of Natural Resources and Environment (2002) *Biodiversity Action Planning. Action planning for native biodiversity at multiple scales ; catchment bioregional, landscape, local*. Department of Natural Resources and Environment, Victoria.
- DoE (2005). *DoE EP Licence, Works Approvals and Water Allocation checks*. Advice to the Native Vegetation Branch, Department of Industry and Resources. Department of Environment, Western Australia.
- EPA (2000) *Environmental protection of native vegetation in Western Australia. Clearing of native vegetation, with particular reference to the agricultural area. Position Statement No. 2*. December 2000. Environmental Protection Authority.
- Hopkins, A.J.M., Beeston, G.R. and Harvey J.M. (2001) *A database on the vegetation of Western Australia. Stage 1. CALMScience after J. S. Beard, late 1960's to early 1980's Vegetation Survey of Western Australia*, UWA Press.
- JANIS Forests Criteria (1997) *Nationally agreed criteria for the establishment of a comprehensive, Adequate and Representative reserve System for Forests in Australia*. A report by the Joint ANZECC/MCFFA National Forest Policy Statement Implementation Sub-committee. Regional Forests Agreement process. Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra.
- Keighery, BJ (1994) *Bushland Plant Survey: A Guide to Plant Community Survey for the Community*. Wildflower Society of WA (Inc). Nedlands, Western Australia.
- Landcare Services (2002). *Review and Conservation Significance of Flora and Vegetation of the Magnetic Minerals Dongara Prospect, October 2002*. Landcare Services, York.
- Ray Hart (2002). Ray Hart pers comm. Recorded in Landcare Services (2002).
- Shepherd, D.P., Beeston, G.R. and Hopkins, A.J.M. (2001) *Native Vegetation in Western Australia, Extent, Type and Status*. Resource Management Technical Report 249. Department of Agriculture, Western Australia.
- Shire of Irwin (2005). *Direct interest letter. Re: Application to clear native vegetation under the Environmental Protection Act 1986 (GN/nr/DI.1)*. Shire of Irwin, Dongara.
- Western Australian Herbarium (1998-2006). *FloraBase - The Western Australian Flora*. Department of Conservation and Land Management. <http://florabase.calm.wa.gov.au/>. Accessed 23 February 2006.
- Western Botanical (2005). *DRF and Priority species survey on proposed drill lines for the Dongara Area tenements (E70/1592, E70/2347 and E70/2263): Hebe and Dionysus infill drilling*. Report prepared for Magnetic Minerals Pty Ltd WB323. Western Botanical, Mundaring.

## 6. Glossary

|             |                                                                    |
|-------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>CALM</b> | Department of Conservation and Land Management, Western Australia. |
| <b>DAWA</b> | Department of Agriculture, Western Australia.                      |
| <b>DIA</b>  | Department of Indigenous Affairs                                   |
| <b>DLI</b>  | Department of Land Information, Western Australia.                 |
| <b>DoE</b>  | Department of Environment, Western Australia.                      |
| <b>DoIR</b> | Department of Industry and Resources, Western Australia.           |

|                 |                                                                                                                           |
|-----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>EPBC Act</b> | Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Federal Act)                                               |
| <b>GIS</b>      | Geographical Information System.                                                                                          |
| <b>IBRA</b>     | Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation for Australia.                                                                      |
| <b>IUCN</b>     | International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources – commonly known as the World Conservation Union |
| <b>TECs</b>     | Threatened Ecological Communities.                                                                                        |

## 7. Definitions:

{Atkins, K (2005). *Declared rare and priority flora list for Western Australia, 22 February 2005*. Department of Conservation and Land Management, Como, Western Australia} :-

- P1**      **Priority One - Poorly Known taxa:** taxa which are known from one or a few (generally <5) populations which are under threat, either due to small population size, or being on lands under immediate threat, e.g. road verges, urban areas, farmland, active mineral leases, etc., or the plants are under threat, e.g. from disease, grazing by feral animals, etc. May include taxa with threatened populations on protected lands. Such taxa are under consideration for declaration as 'rare flora', but are in urgent need of further survey.
- P2**      **Priority Two - Poorly Known taxa:** taxa which are known from one or a few (generally <5) populations, at least some of which are not believed to be under immediate threat (i.e. not currently endangered). Such taxa are under consideration for declaration as 'rare flora', but are in urgent need of further survey.
- P3**      **Priority Three - Poorly Known taxa:** taxa which are known from several populations, at least some of which are not believed to be under immediate threat (i.e. not currently endangered). Such taxa are under consideration for declaration as 'rare flora', but are in need of further survey.
- P4**      **Priority Four – Rare taxa:** taxa which are considered to have been adequately surveyed and which, whilst being rare (in Australia), are not currently threatened by any identifiable factors. These taxa require monitoring every 5–10 years.
- R**      **Declared Rare Flora – Extant taxa (= Threatened Flora = Endangered + Vulnerable):** taxa which have been adequately searched for, and are deemed to be in the wild either rare, in danger of extinction, or otherwise in need of special protection, and have been gazetted as such, following approval by the Minister for the Environment, after recommendation by the State's Endangered Flora Consultative Committee.
- X**      **Declared Rare Flora - Presumed Extinct taxa:** taxa which have not been collected, or otherwise verified, over the past 50 years despite thorough searching, or of which all known wild populations have been destroyed more recently, and have been gazetted as such, following approval by the Minister for the Environment, after recommendation by the State's Endangered Flora Consultative Committee.