

8 September 2023

Native Vegetation Clearing Branch
Department of Water and Environmental Regulation
Locked Bag 10
JOONDALUP DC WA 6919

Email: info@dwer.wa.gov.au

Dear Sir / Madam,

CLEMENTS PLACE, JANDAKOT – ELECTRICAL SUBSTATION ACCESS TRACK

1. Background

Construction of the Thornlie to Cockburn Rail Link (TCL) commenced in 2020 and includes an existing freight rail line and corridor whereby an additional rail link is being installed to house a dual public rail system. The change in the use of this future rail will impede Western Power to access a future electrical substation to be built adjacent to Hope Road in Jandakot (Figure 1).

Currently access to this future site can be gained from the western end of Hope Road, however operational rail safety processes and fencing of the rail corridor will prevent this access once the Thornlie to Cockburn Rail Link becomes operational in late 2023.

To accommodate Western Power and the future substation that will support electrical supply to the surrounding community and industrial areas, the Public Transport Authority (PTA) is proposing to construct an access track at the end of Clements Place. The proposed access track will commence at the end of Clements Place (a no through road), along the property boundary of Lot 27 Clements Place, to Hope Road in the north (Figure 1). This land is in the process of being acquired by the PTA with agreement from the landowner.

The Native Vegetation Clearing Permit (NVCP) attached to this letter is being submitted by NEWest Alliance (NWA) on behalf of the Public Transport Authority. NWA will be constructing the access track if the permit to clear vegetation is supported.

Consulting Engineers investigated other potential access points to the future substation, however due to site constraints such as site levels and remnant vegetation, other options were not deemed suitable. This is further discussed in Section 2.8.

The access track will provide access to the substation by Western Power officers. NWA would like to commence construction of the access track in October 2023.

The TCL project was previously assessed by the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) under Part IV of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* with environmental approval provided and conditions outlined in Ministerial Statement 1114. The works proposed in this application are not required for the operation of the TCL project, as the access track will provide Western Power with access to a future electrical substation site they will build, to support the electricity supply to the surrounding community. The electrified public railway will be fenced for safety reasons which will remove current access to the Western Power site via Hope Road.

As this proposal is not a part of the TCL project as assessed and approved by the EPA and is not required by the project, the PTA considers it appropriate to seek approval for the clearing

of native vegetation via a Part V native vegetation clearing permit. The proposal area is shown in the Figure 1 below.



Figure 1. Proposed access track to be cleared as part of this NVCP to access the future Western Power Substation

2. Scope

The scope of this NVCP application includes the following:

- Land acquisition
- Vegetation assessments
- Black Cockatoo assessment
- Site visit
- Native Vegetation Clearing Permit
- EPBC referral
- Vehicle access track
- Other options explored
- Environmental management

2.1 Land Acquisition

Land to accommodate the vehicular access track (approximately 13 X 150 m) is being acquired by the PTA from the landowner at Lot 27 (6) Clements Place, Jandakot. The property owner is in agreement with the land acquisition and has allowed officers and contractors to access the site many times including consultants to perform a vegetation survey in Spring 2022. Appendix 3 is a signed letter from the property owner approving NEWest to lodge this application. As a portion of the site includes the removal of vegetation from the verge, the City of Cockburn has also provided authority to lodge an application – Appendix 3.

Appendix 1 – Certificate of Title – Lot 27 Clements Place

Appendix 2 – Land Acquisition Area

Appendix 3 – Authority to lodge an application for a NVCP

2.2 Vegetation Assessments

In support of the native vegetation clearing permit for the proposed construction of the access track, a vegetation survey was performed.

A Spring Survey 2022 (*NEWest Alliance Thornlie Cockburn Line Basic Flora Survey and Black Cockatoo Habitat Assessment Additional S45 Survey Sites Part B V2' by Natural Area Holdings, Spring 2022*) was performed in accordance with *Technical Guidance-Flora and Vegetation Surveys for Environmental Impact Assessment* (Environmental Protection Authority, 2016). A summary of the survey results is listed below, and the shape files are attached.

- One vegetation type of *Banksia attenuata* and *Banksia menziesii* over mixed understory was present
- Vegetation condition ranged from good to degraded
- No conservation significant flora was identified during the survey
- No weeds of national significance were identified on site
- Plant species recorded include 31 weeds and 38 native species.
- One Marri tree – *Corymbia callophylla* at DBH of 500mm
- A small proportion of the site (0.0215 ha) potentially contains:
 - *Banksia* Woodlands of the Swan Coastal Plain, listed as a threatened ecological community (TEC) under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act*.

A breakdown of the proposed clearing area is summarised in **Table 1** below. This information is based on GIS data (shapefiles attached) and also is presented in **Figure 2**. A 'construction buffer area' has been applied to the site and forms part of the NVCP application, which is further discussed in Section 2.7. Percentages are calculated on the entire area (0.176ha). The un-surveyed areas not included in the Spring Survey 2022 have been classed as Degraded, as their proximity to the house and property entrance means they have been disturbed and modified as the vegetation contains weed species and exotic plantings. These areas can be partially viewed in the site images numbers 2 and 3 – Appendix 4.

Table 1. Summary of the proposed clearing area

Area (ha)	Disturbance Type	Vegetation Condition (ha)		TEC	
		Good	Degraded	ha	%
Land Acquisition / Access Track					
0.1495	Spring Survey 2022 – Lot 27 Clements only	0.057	0.0924	0.0206	12.08
0.0056	Not Surveyed		0.0056	0	
0.1551	Sub Total				
Construction Buffer Area					
0.0082	Spring Survey 2022 – Lot 27 Clements only	0.0054	0.0028	0.0009	0.53
0.0072	Not Surveyed		0.0072	0	
0.0154	Sub Total				
Verge Construction Area					
0.0055	Spring Survey 2022 – Lot 27 Clements only	0	0.0055	0	
0.0055	Sub Total				
0.176	Total Native Vegetation Clearing Permit Area	0.0624	0.1135	0.0215	12.22%

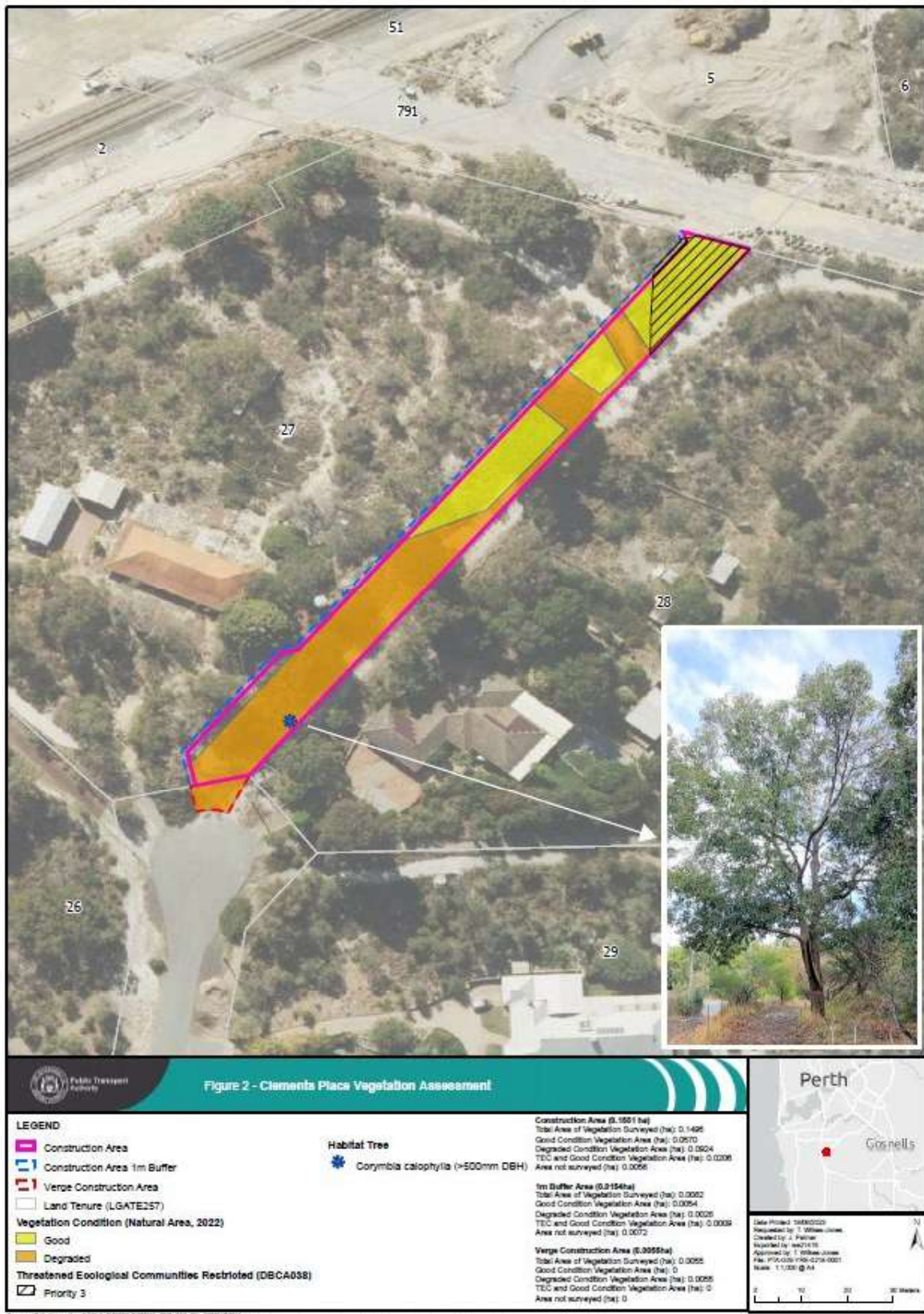


Figure 2. Clements Place Vegetation Assessment

A vegetation survey in the northern area of Lot 27 Clements Place (including the TEC) and Hope Road was performed in spring 2020 by GHD - Appendix 5. At this time the vegetation condition was rated as Very Good and the most recent Spring Survey 2022 now rates this as Good condition, indicating there has been a decline in the condition of the potential TEC and some of the surrounding area.

Attachment 1 – NEWest Alliance Thornlie Cockburn Line Basic Flora Survey and Black Cockatoo Habitat Assessment Additional S45 Survey Sites Part B V2' by NAH, Spring 2022

Attachment 2 – Shape files – land acquisition area, degraded and good vegetation types, cockatoo habitat tree and buffer area, representing the clearing permit area.

Appendix 5 – Vegetation Condition Survey extract from: PTA Thornlie Cockburn Link Biological Assessment for additional areas 2 – December 2020 by GHD.

2.3 Black Cockatoo Assessment

A Black Cockatoo habitat assessment was undertaken concurrently with the Spring Survey 2022, for the proposed access track. The survey outcomes along with further data obtained from Birdlife Australia is summarised below.

- Clements Place is within the buffer of a Black Cockatoo roosting site – (DBCA-064). Recent data from Birdlife (2021) and the Great Cocky Count within the above buffer area recorded the follow:
 - o Presbyterian Church roost site on Verna Court, 2.8km south of Clements Place, contained seven black cockatoos.
 - o The following roost sites were found to be not active:
 - Ramsay Park on Parkway Road, 1.2km away to the west
 - Brandwood Reserve and surrounds, 806 m away to the northwest
 - Dean Park, 5.5km to the south
 - Melville Glades Golf Club roost site 1.4km to the north
- Clements Place is situated in the Carnaby's Cockatoo areas foraging habitat of the Swan Coastal Plain (DBC-057) and includes the surrounding remnant vegetation in the area.
- One potential cockatoo habitat tree is present at Lot 27 Clements Place, which is a Marri – *Corymbia calophylla* with a DBH slightly greater than 500mm and contains no hollows – see Figure 2.

The foraging area of the Carnaby's Cockatoo (DBC-057 noted above) corresponds with the Banksia Woodland and potential TEC mapping at this site and is applicable to the 0.0215 ha that is proposed to be cleared.

The Cockatoo foraging quality scoring tool (*Referral Guideline for 3 WA threatened Black Cockatoo Species - Commonwealth of Australia 2022*) is not applicable to this site and only applies to sites of one hectare and above. The area including the Marri tree present on site was investigated for cockatoo foraging evidence at the time of the Spring Survey 2022 and a site visit in April 2023. As no evidence was found on both occasions, the site is considered to be of low-quality foraging value.

2.4 Site Visit

A site visit was conducted by a PTA Environment Advisor on the 24 April 2023 to better understand the site conditions, the vegetation proposed to be cleared and the vegetation surrounding the area. Images of the area proposed to be cleared at Lot 27, the neighbours' property, and a nearby property of the same vegetation type for comparison are presented in Appendix 4 and 6.

Other than the small proportion of land classed as Good condition and potentially a TEC on Lot 27, most of the property has been modified to some degree, as is evident by the presence of weeds, exotic plantings, and potential Dieback (*Phytophthora cinnamomi*). The presence of Dieback, as evident by the dead Banksia's, appears as a front that is spreading down slope and is of concern, whereby the PTA will be seeking further evidence to confirm its presence. Images 8 to 11 in Appendix 4 provide strong evidence of its presence which most likely explains the decline in vegetation condition from the 2020 survey performed by GHD compared to the Spring Survey 2022 by NAH.

This small proportion of good TEC vegetation is surrounded by firebreaks on two sides, Hope Street to the north and Degraded vegetation to the west on Lot 27. This offers little buffer protection to this small proportion which is open to negative impacts of edge effects which are noted further in the Ten Clearing Principles Assessment - Appendix 7.

The Marri tree - *Corymbia callophylla* recorded at 500mm DBH was inspected for Black Cockatoo foraging and there was no evidence of foraging or chewing on the nuts situated on the ground.

Images attached in Appendix 6 also include photos of the Banksia Woodland TEC vegetation in the neighbour's property Lot 28 Clements Place and a nearby property at 8 Lakes Way 550m away (*Government Flora and Vegetation Map (GIS) Layer*). The purpose of these images is to demonstrate what an intact and healthy Banksia Woodland TEC looks like, in comparison to Lot 27. The difference can clearly be seen and strongly suggests that the 0.0215 ha of TEC in Lot 27 proposed to be cleared may no longer be classed as a TEC. Due to the size of the potential TEC impacted by this proposed native vegetation clearing permit and the patch size, the PTA has decided not to pursue a detailed flora analysis to determine if it meets the TEC criteria.

Appendix 4 – Site Images: Lot 27 Clements Place

Appendix 6 – Images: Comparison to nearby Banksia Woodland sites

Appendix 7 – Ten clearing principles assessment

2.5 Native Vegetation Clearing Permit

Attached is an "Application for a new permit to clear native vegetation" for a purpose permit - Attachment 3, whereby NWA seeks permission under section 51E of the *Environmental Protection Act (1986)* to clear up to 0.176 ha of native and non-native vegetation located at Lot 27 Clements Place Jandakot. The vegetation is proposed to be cleared though mechanical means with the aid of a forestry mulcher.

The information in this letter and attachments aims to provide context of the proposed works and the environmental matters to guide DWER in their assessment process. In support of this application, an assessment of the proposed clearing against the Ten Clearing Principles is provided as Appendix 7.

Attachment 3 – Application for a new permit to clear native vegetation

2.6 EPBC Referral

The proposed clearing activities covered by this NVCP application have not been referred to the Commonwealth Department of Climate Change, Energy the Environment and Water. The action due to the size of the area being less than 2 ha of a TEC and less than 1 hectare of cockatoo foraging habitat, was deemed not to have a significant impact on a matter protected under the EPBC Act (*EPBC Approved Conservation Advice 2016*). This application will not be requested to be assessed under the bilateral agreement or an accredited assessment.

2.7 Vehicle Access Track

The proposed vehicle access track will commence at the end of Clements Place and traverse along the eastern boundary of Lot 27 and intersect with Hope Road. The track will provide access for third party, Western Power and Main Roads personnel for asset management purposes. The PTA may from time to time also use this track to access the corridor. Access to the track will be managed via a locked gate system and use is expected on average 1 to 2 times per day.

The track will be approximately 10 m wide, consisting of an 8 m wide asphalt surface, and a one-meter shoulder (both sides) of crushed compacted limestone. Water will drain off the access track into a table drain on the Lot 27 side, that will be lined with rock pitching. Water runoff will infiltrate into the soil while in the table drain and rainfall exceeding a 5-year event will exit the drain at either end of the access track: Clements Place and Hope Road. This means no water runoff will enter the neighbouring properties, nor the adjacent Banksia Woodlands. See Attachment 4 - Access Track Concept Design and Land Requirement Boundaries

The access track will be constructed to Australia Road Standards and City of Cockburn local government standards. The outer sections of the track will be battered to align with existing ground levels.

Construction of the access track can be contained within the land acquisition area, however a 1 m wide area beyond the land acquisition boundary, inside Lot 27 has been included as a 'construction buffer area'. This buffer is included in the NVCP application in case construction activities require this additional space – Figure 2. Construction is planned to commence later this year pending the approval of a NVCP and will be for a duration of up to 2 years. The access track upon completion will be fenced on both sides, which is currently being negotiated with the landowners.

Attachment 4 – Access Track Concept Design and Land Requirement Boundaries - Revision B

2.8 Other options explored

An existing nearby road network (Karel Avenue and Berrigan Drive) was explored as an access option to Hope Road. Access from the existing roundabout on Berrigan Drive was not deemed safe due to the steep topography, impact to existing public shared path and the amount of battering and vegetation clearing that would have been required. Appendix 8 provides a map and series of images to highlight some of these constraints.

The preferred option at the end of Clements Place satisfies access requirements, represents best case scenario based on constructability, long term access solution and provides for minimal impact to existing native vegetation including the vegetation in Lot 28 which is being avoided and is in better condition than what is proposed to be cleared in Lot 27.

Appendix 8 – Map and images of surrounding site constraints

2.9 Environmental Management

NWA will ensure the following management measures are implemented to minimise impacts to environmental values during the proposed clearing works and access track construction works. NWA will implement their Construction Environmental Management Plan, which has been used for delivery of Yanchep Railway Extension and Thornlie to Cockburn Link 2019 (Attachment 5).

Below is an example of the measures that will be implemented:

- Dieback assessment (visual and soil samples) and a Hygiene Management Plan
- Survey personnel will flag and demarcate the footprint area prior to clearing works commencing.
- Machinery and equipment will be inspected at the site entry point to confirm it is soil and vegetation free to prevent the introduction of weeds and disease.
- An internal ground disturbance permit and a Permit to Clear Land or Vegetation (NWA procedure) will be issued prior to any clearing works.
- Pre-start meeting to be held with machinery operators to highlight the requirements and importance to stay within approved clearing areas and minimise impacts to vegetation.
- All clearing and survey works will be supervised by environmental personnel.
- Licensed fauna spotters to be present during clearing of native vegetation to supervise dispersal and the relocation of any fauna and identification of any potential injured fauna. Any injured fauna will be taken to a wildlife carer for treatment.

Attachment 5: Construction Environmental Management Plan METRONET – Delivery of the Thornlie to Cockburn Link 2022

Existing non vegetated areas on Hope Road will be utilised as a temporary construction area for the storage of materials and parking of machinery and equipment. Access to this point will be achieved from the west end of Hope Road and not Lot 27 Clements Place.

The property owner at Lot 27 has also been provided with advice to contact the City of Cockburn and apply for a firebreak variation, as the access track, if constructed, effectively acts as a firebreak. Variations of this kind can be applied to a properties fire control notice and in environmental sensitive areas and means no firebreak vegetation clearing will be required.

Should you require any further information regarding the above, please contact Martin von Kaschke, Environment and Sustainability Manager at NEWest Alliance, on martin.vonkaschke1@newest-wa.com.au or 0455 915 102.

Yours sincerely



Martin von Kaschke

Environment and Sustainability Manager
NEWest Alliance

Summary of Appendices and Attachments

Appendix 1	Certificate of Title – Lot 27 Clements Place	Attachment 1	NEWest Alliance Thornlie Cockburn Line Basic Flora Survey and Black Cockatoo Habitat Assessment Additional S45 Survey Sites Part B V2' by Natural Area Holdings, Spring 2022
Appendix 2	Land Acquisition Area	Attachment 2	Shape files – land acquisition area, degraded and good vegetation types, cockatoo habitat tree and buffer area, representing the clearing permit area.
Appendix 3	Authority to lodge an application for a NVCP	Attachment 3	Application for a new permit to clear native vegetation
Appendix 4	Site Images: Lot 27 Clements Place	Attachment 4	Access Track Concept Design and Land Requirement Boundaries - Revision B
Appendix 5	Vegetation Condition Survey extract from: PTA Thornlie Cockburn Link Biological Assessment for additional areas 2 – December 2020 by GHD	Attachment 5	Construction Environmental Management Plan METRONET – Delivery of the Thornlie to Cockburn Link – Dec 2022
Appendix 6	Images: Comparison to nearby Banksia Woodland sites		
Appendix 7	Ten clearing principles assessment		
Appendix 8	Map and images of surrounding site constraints		

References

[Banksia Woodlands of the Swan Coastal Plain: a nationally protected ecological community Department of the Environment and Energy, 2016](#)

Birdlife Australia – Great Cocky Count information 2021

Construction Environmental Management Plan METRONET - Delivery of the Thornlie to Cockburn Link Dec 2022

[City of Cockburn – Natural Area Management Strategy 2021-2022](#)

[Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 \(s 266B\) Approved Conservation Advice \(incorporating listing advice\) for the Banksia Woodlands of the Swan Coastal Plain ecological community, August 2016](#)

Government Flora and Vegetation Map Layer: Threatened and Priority Flora Redistricted (DBCA036), Threatened Ecological Communities Restricted (DBCA038).

[Jandakot Airport Conservation Management Plan Feb 2022](#)

NEWest Alliance, Thornlie Cockburn Line Basic Flora Survey and Black Cockatoo Habitat Assessment Additional Survey S4C Survey Sites Part B V2, by Natural Area Holdings, Spring 2022

Public Transport Authority Thornlie Cockburn Link Project Flora and Fauna Survey by GHD March 2019B

Public Transport Authority Thornlie Cockburn Link Biological Assessment for additional areas 2 by GHD December 2020

[Referral guideline for 3 WA threatened black Cockatoo species – Commonwealth of Australia 2022](#)