



1. Application details

1.1. Permit application details

Permit application No.: 1055/1

Permit type: Area Permit

1.2. Proponent details

Proponent's name: Peter C Horne

1.3. Property details

Property: LOT 1409 ON PLAN 227567 (BOYERINE 6316)

LOT 789 ON PLAN 257418 (BOYERINE 6316)

LOT 786 ON PLAN 100765 (BOYERINE 6316)

Local Government Area: Shire Of Woodanilling

Colloquial name:

1.4. Application

Clearing Area (ha)	No. Trees	Method of Clearing	For the purpose of:
4		Mechanical Removal	Drainage

2. Site Information

2.1. Existing environment and information

2.1.1. Description of the native vegetation under application

Vegetation Description	Clearing Description	Vegetation Condition	Comment
Beard: Unit 1023 - Medium woodland; York gum, wandoo & salmon gum (E. salmonophloia)	Vegetation to be cleared is either dead or dying due to high salinity levels. There is almost no understorey and sheep use the area for shelter and grazing. Only vegetation requiring clearing to excavate the drain will be cleared. The drain will be approximately 15ft wide and 3-4km long.	Completely Degraded: No longer intact; completely/almost completely without native species (Keighery 1994)	Vegetation condition established through site visit.

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 area proposed to be cleared is Completely Degraded (Keighery 1994) with all vegetation within the area either dead or dying from the effects of waterlogging and dryland salinity. It has little to no mid or understorey due to the salinity problem and constant grazing pressures. The vegetation under application currently has a low level of species diversity and environmental value and is therefore not likely to be at variance to this principle.

Methodology Site visit report (2006) TRIM ref SWO29628
Keighery (1994)

(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 area proposed to be cleared is Completely Degraded (Keighery 1994) with all vegetation within the area either dead or dying from high salinity levels. The area has little to no mid or understorey due to the salinity problem and constant grazing pressures.

Given the condition of the vegetation and lack of ground cover, the area is unlikely to provide significant habitat for native fauna.

Methodology Site visit report (2006) TRIM ref SWO29628

(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

There are no Declared Rare or Priority Flora found within the local area (10km radius) of the proposed clearing.

It is therefore unlikely the proposed clearing would be at variance to this Principle.

Methodology GIS databases:

- Declared Rare and Priority Flora List - CALM 13/08/03

(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 Threatened Ecological Communities or Threatened Plant Communities found within the local area (10km radius) of the proposed clearing.

It is therefore unlikely the proposed clearing would be at variance to this Principle.

Methodology GIS databases:

- Threatened Ecological Communities - CALM 15/7/03

- Threatened Plant Communities - DEP 06/95

(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 may be at variance to this Principle

The application is located in the Avon Wheatbelt Bioregion in the Shire of Woodanilling. The extent of native vegetation in these areas is 10.3% and 12.9% respectively (Shepherd et al. 2001).

The vegetation under application is a component of Beard Unit 1023 (Hopkins et al. 2001) of which there is 5.5% (Shepherd et al. 2001) of the pre-European extent remaining, and therefore of 'endangered' status for biodiversity conservation (Department of Natural Resources and Environment 2002).

The vegetation proposed for clearing is considered to be in a Completely Degraded condition (Keighery 1994) with the majority of the vegetation either dead or dying from the effects of dryland salinity. Given this, the vegetation is no longer considered to be performing the majority of its riparian functions and is therefore not a good representation of the identified vegetation complex.

The salinity problem may begin to effect the surrounding unaffected vegetation on the property unless the issue is addressed (LCDC Submission 2006). The proposed drainage channel should prevent further damage to an already depleted vegetation complex by preventing waterlogging. The Wagin/Woodanilling Landcare Zone Manager advised that 'The purpose of the clearing is to gain access to the creekline to complete necessary desilting work to protect the creekline remnant and surrounding land from waterlogging and dryland salinity.'

It is acknowledged that 4 hectares of this vegetation complex is significant due to there only being 5.5% of the pre European vegetation remaining, however the proposed area is severely affected by salinity and its condition is not likely to improve unless the issue is addressed.

The proponent has also agreed to fence the area from stock once works are completed, giving the riparian area a chance to re-establish.

The area proposed to be cleared also lies within the agricultural zone of EPA position statement No. 2. The EPA do not support the further reduction in native vegetation through clearing for agriculture and support active management by landholders to maintain environmental values of remaining vegetation.

The proposed clearing is for the installation of a drainage system, to help prevent the spread of salinity throughout the rest of the property and local area.

The proposed drainage is supported by the DAFWA through the Notice of Intention to drain (NOID) issued to the applicant 'for the purpose of controlling salinity'.

The proposed drainage is also supported and partly funded through the Wagin/Woodanilling Landcare Zone who believe the drainage is 'necessary to protect the creekline remnant and surrounding land from waterlogging and dryland salinity.'

Given the above the proposed clearing may be at variance to this principle.

Methodology Wagin/Woodanilling Landcare Zone advice TRIM ref DOC3221
NOI to Drain from DAFWA TRIM ref SWD46401
Department of Natural Resources and Environment (2002)
EPA (2000)
Hopkins et al. (2001)
Shepherd et al. (2001)
Keighery (1994)
GIS databases:
- Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation of Australia - EM 18/10/00
- Local Government Authorities - DLI 8/07/04
- 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 likely to be at variance to this Principle

There are no wetlands, EPP lakes or EPP areas found within the local area (10km radius) of the proposed clearing.

The area proposed to be cleared is mapped as a minor non-perennial watercourse. This watercourse is extremely saline and as a result all the vegetation associated with it is dead or dying.

The applicant is proposing to install a drain through the watercourse to alleviate the salinity problem and prevent it from further encroaching to remaining vegetation on the property.

The local Landcare Group has offered funding for the drain installation and has also offered to assist with construction works. Once the drain is completed the applicant has committed to fencing the area from stock, allowing regeneration of the riparian zone.

In its present state the riparian vegetation proposed for clearing has little environmental value because it is being severely impacted by high salinity levels. DEC officers rated the vegetation's condition to be Completely Degraded (Keighery, BJ 1994).

DAFWA also issued a Notice of Intent to Drain, indicating support that the proposed drain will help minimise local salinity problems.

Given the above reasons, it is considered the proposed clearing is not likely to be at variance to this principle.

Methodology Wagin/Woodanilling Landcare Zone advice TRIM ref DOC3221
NOI to Drain from DAFWA TRIM ref SWD46401
Keighery (1994)
GIS databases:
- ANCA, Wetlands - CALM 08/01
- EPP Areas - DEP 06/95
- EPP Lakes - DEP 28/07/03
- Hydrography Linear - DoE 1/2/04
- RAMSAR, Wetlands - CALM 21/10/02

(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

DAFWA provided the following comments:

"The risk of salinity causing land degradation is low. The risk of wind erosion causing land degradation is low. Due to low gradients and that only a small amount of living native vegetation will be removed, the risk of water erosion causing land degradation is low. The risk of waterlogging causing land degradation is low."

DAFWA also issued a Notice of Intent to Drain, indicating support that the proposed drain will help minimise local salinity problems.

Therefore, it is considered that the proposed clearing is not likely to be at variance to this principle.

Methodology DAFWA report (2006) TRIM ref CRN219245
NOI to Drain from DAFWA TRIM ref SWD46401

(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 nearest conservation area (King Rock Nature Reserve) is located 8.2km east of the area proposed to be cleared. There are no vegetation links between the area under application and the King Rock Nature Reserve. It is therefore unlikely the proposed clearing would impact on nearby conservation areas or be at variance to this Principle.

Methodology GIS database:

- CALM Managed Lands and Waters - CALM 1/06/04
- Register of National Estate - EA 28/01/03
- System 6 Conservation Reserves - DEP 06/95
- System 1-5 and 7-12 Areas - DEP 06/95
- Wagin 1.4m Orthomosaic - DOLA 01

(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 at variance to this Principle

The area proposed to be cleared is within the Hardy Estuary-Coblinine River Hydrographic Catchment area and is not within a Public Drinking Water Source Area or any RIWI areas.

The drainage channel is being constructed to control waterlogging of saline water on the property, thereby protecting vegetation adjacent to the watercourse.

The Wagin/Woodanilling Landcare Zone Manager advised that 'The purpose of the clearing is to gain access to the creekline to complete necessary desilting work... to protect the creekline remnant and surrounding land from waterlogging and dryland salinity.'

The DAFWA advise that the risk of land degradation as a result of the proposed clearing is low. DAFWA also issued a Notice of Intent to Drain indicating approval and support of the proposed drain to reduce local salinity levels.

The proposed clearing will help to minimise degradation of water quality (salinity) and is not considered to be at variance to this Principle.

Methodology Wagin/Woodanilling Landcare Zone Advice TRIM ref DOC3221

DAFWA report (2006) TRIM ref CRN219245

NOI to Drain from DAFWA TRIM ref SWD 46401

GIS databases:

- Hydrographic Catchments, Catchments - DoE 3/4/03
- Public Drinking Water Source Areas (PDWSAs) - DOE 29/11/04
- RIWI Act Groundwater Areas WRC 13/06/00

(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

DAFWA advised that the risk of land degradation occurring as a result of the proposed clearing, is low. Advice from the Commissioner for Soil and Land Conservation stated: 'The proposed clearing of 4 hectares of land within the above Lots is unlikely to cause appreciable land degradation' and that 'The risk of flooding causing land degradation is low.'

Therefore the proposed clearing is unlikely to be at variance to this Principle.

Methodology DAFWA report (2006) TRIM ref CRN219245

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

Comments

The area proposed to be cleared has an 'unknown' zoning in the Town Planning Scheme, although the Department's site visit confirmed property was within a rural area.

Advice was received from the Shire of Woodanilling who raised no objections to the proposed clearing.

Advice was received from the Wagin/Woodanilling Landcare Group who supported the proposal and advised that they will be part funding the associated drain.

A Notice of Intent to Drain has been issued by DAFWA.

Methodology NOI to Drain from DAFWA TRIM ref SWD46401
 Wagin/Woodanilling Landcare Zone advice TRIM ref DOC3221
 Negotiation letter signed and returned TRIM ref DOC1933
 Shire of Woodanilling advice TRIM ref SWD46389
 GIS database:
 - Town Planning Scheme Zones - MFP 8/98

4. Assessor's recommendations

Purpose	Method Applied	area (ha)/ trees	Decision	Comment / recommendation
Drainage	Mechanical Removal	4	Grant	Assessment of the application found the proposal was not at variance to principle (i), not likely to be at variance to principles (a), (b), (c), (d), (f), (g), (h) and (j) and maybe at variance to principle (e). It is recommended the permit be granted with a condition to fence the watercourse from stock once works are complete, to allow the area to regenerate.

5. References

- DAFWA Land degradation assessment report. Office of the Commissioner of Soil and Land Conservation, Department of Agriculture and Food Western Australia. DEC TRIM ref CRN219245.
- DAFWA Notice of Intent to Drain. Office of the Commissioner of Soil and Land Conservation, Department of Agriculture and Food Western Australia. DEC TRIM ref SWD46401.
- 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.
- 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.
- Keighery, B.J. (1994) Bushland Plant Survey: A Guide to Plant Community Survey for the Community. Wildflower Society of WA (Inc). Nedlands, Western Australia.
- 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 Woodanilling advice. DEC TRIM ref SWD46389.
- Site Report (2006) Department of Environment and Conservation. TRIM Ref SWO29628
- Wagin/Woodanilling Landcare Zone advice. DEC TRIM ref DOC3221.

6. Glossary

Term	Meaning
CALM	Department of Conservation and Land Management
DAWA	Department of Agriculture
DEP	Department of Environmental Protection (now DoE)
DoE	Department of Environment
DoIR	Department of Industry and Resources
DRF	Declared Rare Flora
EPP	Environmental Protection Policy
GIS	Geographical Information System
ha	Hectare (10,000 square metres)
TEC	Threatened Ecological Community
WRC	Water and Rivers Commission (now DoE)

