GOVERNMENT OF
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

CLEARING PERMIT

Granted under section 51E of the Environmental Protection Act 1986

Purpose Permit number:	CPS 10909/1
Permit Holder:	Regional Power Corporation T/A Horizon Power
Duration of Permit:	From 1 June 2025 to 1 June 2035

The permit holder is authorised to clear *native vegetation* subject to the following conditions of this permit.

PART I – CLEARING AUTHORISED

1. Clearing authorised (purpose)

The permit holder is authorised to clear *native vegetation* for the purpose of geotechnical investigation and renewable energy infrastructure.

2. Land on which clearing is to be done

Lot 330 on Deposited Plan 402361 (Crown Reserve 19291), Onslow
Lot 886 on Deposited Plan 42083 (Crown Reserve 38264), Onslow
Lot 881 on Deposited Plan 402361 (Crown Reserve 47957), Onslow
Lot 880 on Deposited Plan 402083 (Crown Reserve 51992), Onslow
Lot 882 on Deposited Plan 402083, Onslow
Lot 893 on Deposited Plan 402083 (Unallocated Crown Land PIN 12166709), Onslow
Lot 330 on Deposited Plan 402361 (Crown Reserve 19291), Onslow
Lot 282 on Deposited Plan 219235, Onslow
Lot 283 on Deposited Plan 219235, Onslow
Unallocated Crown Land (PIN 12160548), Onslow
Onslow Road Reserve (PINs 11788844 & 11732962), Onslow
Lot 331 on Deposited Plan 402361 (Clandon Road Reserve PIN 12316985), Onslow

3. Clearing authorised

The permit holder must not clear more than 51.16 hectares of *native vegetation* within the area cross-hatched yellow in Figure 1 of Schedule 1.

4. Period during which clearing is authorised

The permit holder must not clear any *native vegetation* after 1 June 2030.

PART II – MANAGEMENT CONDITIONS

5. Avoid, minimise, and reduce impacts and extent of clearing

In determining the *native vegetation* authorised to be cleared under this permit, the permit holder must apply the following principles, set out in descending order of preference:

(a) avoid the clearing of *native vegetation*;

(b) minimise the amount of *native vegetation* to be cleared; and

(c) reduce the impact of clearing on any environmental value.

6. Weed management

When undertaking any clearing authorised under this permit, the permit holder must take the following measures to minimise the risk of introduction and spread of *weeds*:

(a) clean earth-moving machinery of soil and vegetation prior to entering and leaving the area to be cleared;

(b) ensure that no known *weed*-affected soil, *mulch, fill*, or other material is brought into the area to be cleared; and

(c) restrict the movement of machines and other vehicles to the limits of the areas to be cleared.

7. Wind erosion management

The permit holder must commence proposed activities relating to the proposal no later than three (3) months after undertaking the authorised clearing activities to reduce the potential for wind erosion

8. Directional clearing

The permit holder must conduct clearing activities in a slow, progressive manner toward adjacent *native vegetation* to allow a reasonable time for fauna to move into adjacent *native vegetation* ahead of the clearing activity.

9. Revegetation and rehabilitation (temporary works)

The permit holder must:

(a) Retain the vegetative material and topsoil removed by clearing authorised under this permit and stockpile the vegetative material and topsoil in an area that has already been cleared.

(b) at an *optimal time* within 12 months following clearing authorised under this permit, *revegetate* and *rehabilitate* the area(s) that are no longer required for the purpose for which they were cleared under this permit (*temporary works*) by:

  i. ripping the ground on the contour to remove soil compaction; and

  ii. laying the vegetative material and topsoil retained under condition 9(a) on the cleared area(s);

(c) within 24 months of laying the vegetative material and topsoil on the cleared area in accordance with condition 9(b) of this permit:

  i. engage an *environmental specialist* to determine the species composition, structure and density of the area *revegetated* and *rehabilitated*; and

ii. where, in the opinion of an *environmental specialist*, the composition structure and density determined under condition 9(c)(i) of this Permit will not result in similar species composition, structure and density to that of pre-referral clearing vegetation types in that area, *revegetate* the area by deliberately *planting* and/or *direct seeding* native vegetation that will result in a similar species composition, structure and density of native vegetation to pre-clearing vegetation types in that area and ensuring only local provenance seeds and propagating material are used.

PART III - RECORD KEEPING AND REPORTING

10. Records that must be kept

The permit holder must maintain records relating to the listed relevant matters in accordance with the specifications detailed in Table 1.

Table 1: Records that must be kept

No.	Relevant matter	Specifications
1.	In relation to the authorised clearing activities generally	(a) the species composition, structure, and density of the cleared area; (b) the location where the clearing occurred, recorded using a Global Positioning System (GPS) unit set to Geocentric Datum Australia 2020 (GDA2020), expressing the geographical coordinates in Eastings and Northings; (c) the date that the area was cleared; (d) the size of the area cleared (in hectares); (e) the date that the geotechnical activities were commenced; (f) actions taken to avoid, minimise, and reduce the impacts and extent of clearing in accordance with condition 5; (g) actions taken to minimise the risk of the introduction and spread of *weeds* and *dieback* in accordance with condition 6; (h) actions taken to minimise wind erosion in accordance with condition 7; and (i) actions taken to minimise impacts on fauna in accordance with condition 8.
2.	In relation to the revegetation and rehabilitation or areas pursuant to condition 9 of the permit	(a) The size of the area *revegetated* and *rehabilitated* (b) The date(s) on which the *revegetation* and *rehabilitation* was undertaken; and (c) The boundaries of the area *revegetated* and *rehabilitated* (recorded digitally as a shapefile).

11. Reporting

The permit holder must provide to the *CEO* the records required under condition 10 of this permit when requested by the *CEO*.

DEFINITIONS

In this permit, the terms in Table 2 have the meanings defined.

Table 2: Definitions

Term	Definition
CEO	Chief Executive Officer of the department responsible for the administration of the clearing provisions under the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*.
clearing	has the meaning given under section 3(1) of the EP Act.
condition	a condition to which this clearing permit is subject under section 51H of the EP Act.
department	means the department established under section 35 of the *Public Sector Management Act 1994* (WA) and designated as responsible for the administration of the EP Act, which includes Part V Division 3.
direct seeding	means a method of re-establishing vegetation through the establishment of a seed bed and the introduction of seeds of the desired plant species.
environmental specialist	means a person who holds a tertiary qualification in environmental science or equivalent and has a minimum of 2 years work experience relevant to the type of environmental advice that an environmental specialist is required to provide under this permit, or who is approved by the CEO as a suitable environmental specialist
EP Act	*Environmental Protection Act 1986* (WA)
fill	means material used to increase the ground level, or to fill a depression.
local provenance	means native vegetation seeds and propagating material from natural sources within 50 kilometres and the same IBRA subregion of the area cleared.
mulch	means the use of organic matter, wood chips or rocks to slow the movement of water across the soil surface and to reduce evaporation.
native vegetation	has the meaning given under section 3(1) and section 51A of the EP Act.
optimal time	means the period from November to December for undertaking direct seeding and no planting without irrigation for undertaking planting.
planting	means the re-establishment of vegetation by creating favourable soil conditions and planting seedlings of the desired species
rehabilitate/ed/ion	means actively managing an area containing native vegetation in order to improve the ecological function of that area.
revegetate/ed/ion	means the re-establishment of a cover of local provenance native vegetation in an area using methods such as natural regeneration, direct seeding and/or planting, so that the species composition, structure and density is similar to pre-clearing vegetation types in that area.
temporary works	means access tracks, spoil areas, side tracks, site offices, storage areas, laydown areas, extraction sites, camps, project surveys, pre-construction activities, and similar works associated with a project activity that are temporary in nature

Term	Definition
weeds	means any plant – (a) that is a declared pest under section 22 of the *Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act 2007*; or (b) published in a Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions species-led ecological impact and invasiveness ranking summary, regardless of ranking; or (c) not indigenous to the area concerned.

END OF CONDITIONS

Belinda Walker
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
GREEN ENERGY

Officer delegated under Section 20
of the Environmental Protection Act 1986

9 May 2025

Schedule 1

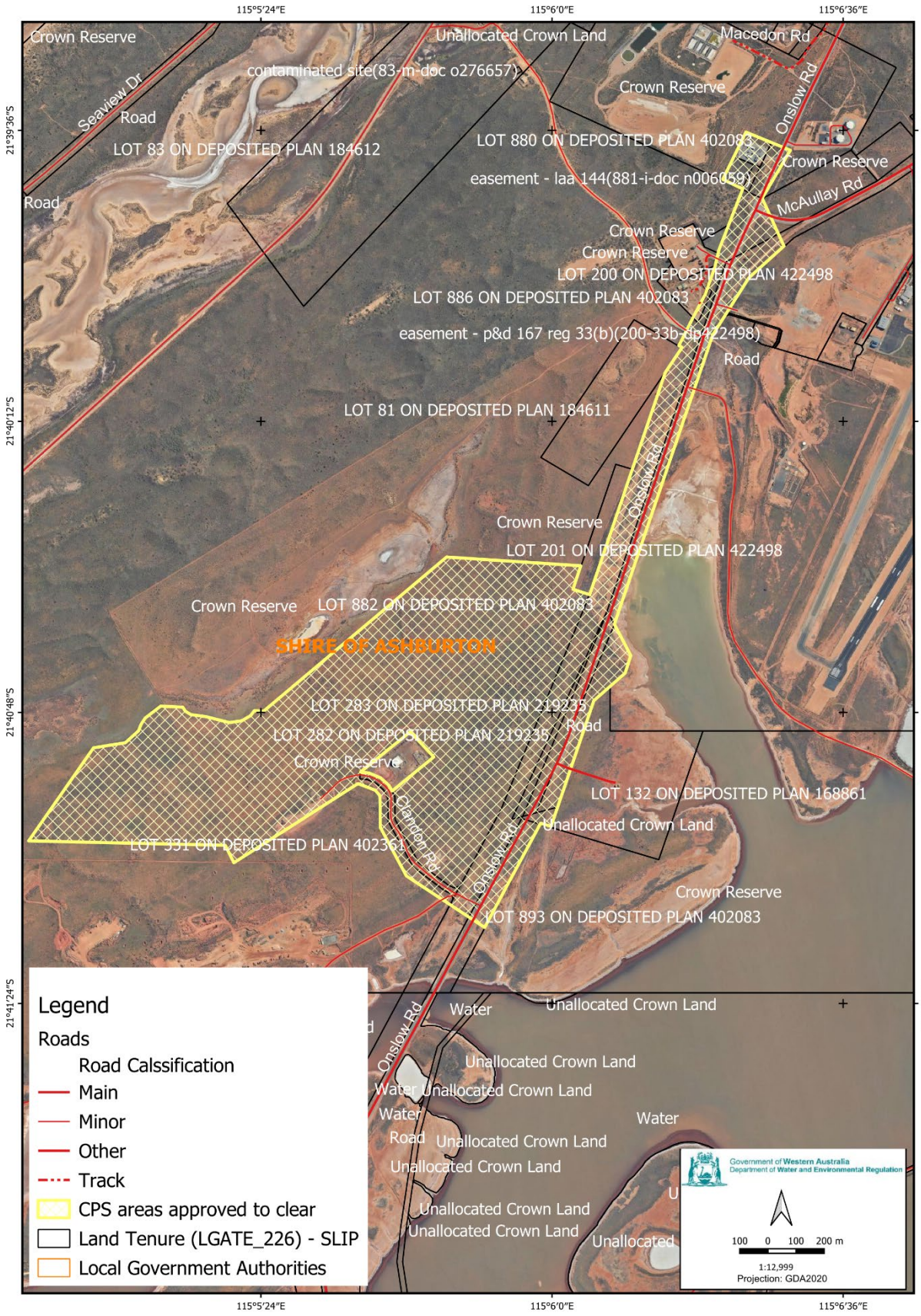

Figure 1: Map of the boundary of the area within which clearing may occur

Government of Western Australia
Department of Water and Environmental Regulation

Clearing Permit Decision Report

1 Application details and outcome

1.1. Permit application details

Permit number:	CPS 10909/1
Permit type:	Purpose permit
Applicant name:	Regional Power Corporation TA Horizon Power
Application received:	19 December 2024
Application area:	51.16 hectares (ha) of native vegetation in a 162.26-ha development envelope
Purpose of clearing:	Renewable energy infrastructure
Method of clearing:	Mechanical clearing
Property:	Lot 330 on Deposited Plan 402361 (Crown Reserve 19291) Lot 886 on Deposited Plan 42083 (Crown Reserve 38264) Lot 881 on Deposited Plan 402361 (Crown Reserve 47957) Lot 880 on Deposited Plan 402083 (Crown Reserve 51992) Lot 882 on Deposited Plan 402083 Lot 893 on Deposited Plan 402083 (UCL PIN 12166709) Lot 330 on Deposited Plan 402361 (Crown Reserve 19291) Lot 282 on Deposited Plan 219235 Lot 283 on Deposited Plan 219235 Unallocated Crown Land (PIN 12160548) Onslow Road Reserve (PINs 11788844 & 11732962) Lot 331 on Deposited Plan 402361 (Clandon Road Reserve PIN 12316985)
Location (LGA area/s):	Shire of Ashburton
Localities (suburb/s):	Onslow

1.2. Description of clearing activities

The proposal is to clear 51.16 ha of native vegetation within a 162.26 ha development envelope (DE) across multiple land parcels for the purpose of renewable energy infrastructure. The clearing extent consists of:

- 1.11 hectares of temporary clearing for geotechnical investigations and necessary vehicle access
- 0.55 hectares of temporary clearing for laydown areas; and
- 49.5 hectares of permanent clearing for solar infrastructure.

The proposal will generate approximately 16 megawatts of solar power, along with the development of a connection corridor, access tracks, and fire breaks (see Figure 1, Section 1.5).

1.3. Decision on application

Decision:	Granted
Decision date:	9 May 2025
Decision area:	51.16 hectares of native vegetation within a 162.26 hectares development area, as depicted in Section 1.5, below.

1.4. Reasons for decision

This clearing permit application was submitted, accepted, assessed and determined in accordance with sections 51E and 51O of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* (EP Act). The Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER) advertised the application for 21 days and no submissions were received.

In making this decision, the Delegated Officer had regard for the:

- site characteristics (see Appendix A)
- relevant datasets (see Appendix E.1)
- findings of a flora, fauna and vegetation survey (AECOM, 2024) which did not identify any conservation significant flora, ecological communities or evidence of conservation significant fauna within DE (see Appendix D)
- clearing principles set out in Schedule 5 of the EP Act (see Appendix B); and
- relevant planning instruments and any other matters considered relevant to the assessment (see Section 3).

The Delegated Officer also took into consideration that the purpose of the clearing is to support an increase in the supply of renewable energy in Onslow, and is aligned with the State's objective to develop a cleaner, more diverse, and affordable electricity network in Western Australia.

Noting the information above, the Delegated Officer determined that the proposed clearing will result in the:

- loss of habitat for conservation significant fauna which is not considered significant at the local or regional scale
- potential introduction and spread of weeds into adjacent vegetation; and
- potential land degradation in the form of wind.

After consideration of the available information, as well as the applicant's minimisation and mitigation measures (see Section 3.1), the Delegated Officer determined the proposed clearing is unlikely to lead to appreciable or long-term adverse impacts on environmental values including fauna and adjacent vegetation. The potential impacts from the proposed clearing can be minimised and managed to unlikely lead to an unacceptable risk to the environmental values.

The Delegated Officer decided to grant a clearing permit subject to conditions to:

- avoid, minimise to reduce the impacts and extent of clearing
- take hygiene steps to minimise the risk of the introduction and spread of weeds
- commence construction activities within three months of the cessation of clearing being undertaken
- undertake slow, progressive one directional clearing to allow terrestrial fauna to move into adjacent habitat ahead of the clearing activity; and
- revegetate and rehabilitate areas cleared for temporary works.

1.5. Site map(s)

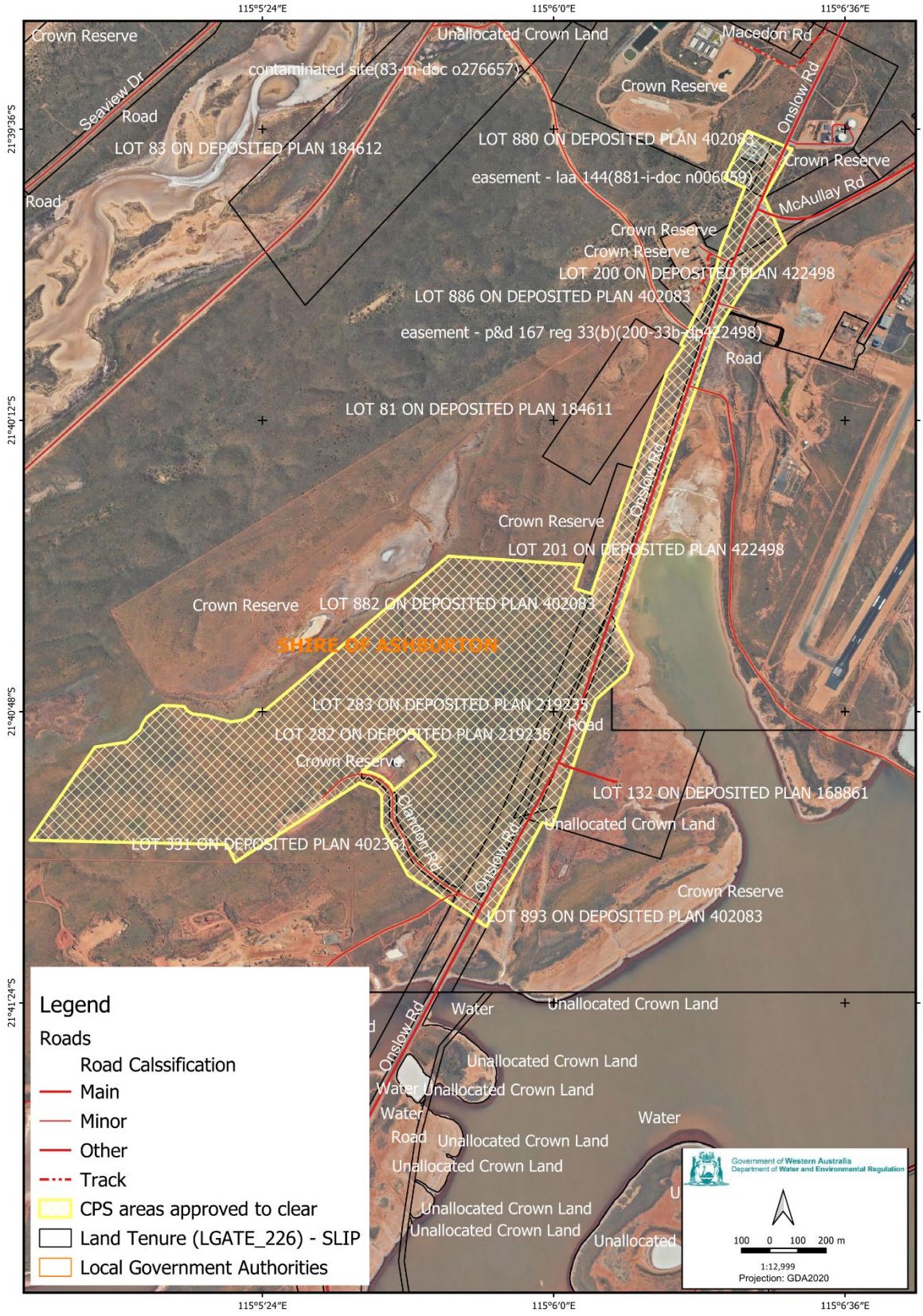

Figure 1: Map of the application area. The area cross-hatched yellow indicates the DE within which native vegetation clearing is authorised.

Government of Western Australia
Department of Water and Environmental Regulation

Clearing Permit Decision Report

2 Legislative context

The clearing of native vegetation in Western Australia is regulated under the EP Act and the *Environmental Protection (Clearing of Native Vegetation) Regulations 2004* (Clearing Regulations).

In addition to the matters considered in accordance with section 51O of the EP Act (see Section 1.4), the Delegated Officer has also had regard to the objects and principles under section 4A of the EP Act, particularly:

- the precautionary principle
- the principle of intergenerational equity
- the principle of the conservation of biological diversity and ecological integrity.

Other legislation of relevance for this assessment include:

- *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* (WA) (BC Act)
- *Conservation and Land Management Act 1984* (WA) (CALM Act)
- *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth) (EPBC Act)
- *Contaminated Sites Act 2003* (CS Act)
- *Rights in Water and Irrigation Act 1914* (RIWI Act)
- *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972*

The key guidance documents which inform this assessment are:

- *A guide to the assessment of applications to clear native vegetation* (DER, December 2013)
- *Procedure: Native vegetation clearing permits* (DWER, October 2019)
- Technical guidance – *Flora and Vegetation Surveys for Environmental Impact Assessment* (EPA, 2016)
- Technical guidance – *Terrestrial Fauna Surveys for Environmental Impact Assessment* (EPA, 2016)

3 Detailed assessment of application

3.1. Avoidance and mitigation measures

Initial avoidance and minimisation was undertaken during site selection, including placement of the proposed infrastructure close to existing assets to reduce the clearing associated with the connection corridor. This included avoidance of the seasonally inundated/intertidal fauna habitat and potential to connect to the existing underground cable (Horizon Power, 2024).

In addition, a construction management plan (CEMP) was prepared, demonstrating further avoidance, minimisation and mitigation measures (Horizon Power, 2024). The CEMP includes the following mitigation measures:

- no clearing is permitted outside of the DE
- clearing will be minimised where possible by placing assets in existing cleared locations
- clearing locations will be demarcated prior to clearing activities commence
- an Environmental Specialist or Site Supervisor prior to clearing to ensure no more than 51.16 ha of clearing is undertaken
- clearing of native vegetation will be undertaken in a slow, progressive manner in one direction to allow fauna to move away from the clearing area
- the connection corridor will be positioned to avoid the Seasonally Inundated/Intertidal fauna habitat where possible
- clearing will be minimised through placement of assets in existing cleared locations where possible, including placement of new connection cables adjacent to existing ones. No more than 1.36 ha of the Seasonally Inundated/Intertidal Areas habitat type will be cleared for the connection; and
- restoration of cleared areas which are no longer required for the purpose for which they were cleared.

The Delegated Officer was satisfied that the applicant has made a reasonable effort to avoid and minimise potential impacts of the proposed clearing on environmental values.

3.2. Assessment of impacts on environmental values

In assessing the application, the Delegated Officer has had regard for the site characteristics (see Appendix A) and the extent to which the impacts of the proposed clearing present a risk to biological, conservation, or land and water resource values.

The assessment against the clearing principles (see Appendix B) identified that the impacts of the proposed clearing present a risk to biological values (fauna, adjacent flora and vegetation). The consideration of these impacts, and the extent to which they can be managed through conditions applied in line with sections 51H and 51I of the EP Act, is set out below.

3.2.1. Biological values (Biodiversity, fauna and flora) - Clearing Principles (a, b and c)

Assessment

Flora and vegetation

The application is located in the Carnarvon IBRA bioregion and the Cape Range sub-region. Two Pre-European Beard vegetation association are mapped within the DE:

- Cape Yannare Coastal Plain Association (676); and
- Cape Yannare Coastal Plain Association (127).

The AECOM (2024) survey identified vegetation condition ranging from 'Very Good' to 'Completely Degraded', with the majority of the vegetation within the DE classed as 'Very Good'.

The following six native vegetation communities were defined in the survey area:

- TaEf (3.59 ha) - Saltbush Shrubland. This community represents riparian/groundwater dependent vegetation, dominated by *Tecticornia* and *Neobassia* species.
- EvTdSm (0.16 ha) - Emergent *Eucalyptus victrix* Woodland situated slightly higher in the landscape than the nearby saltlake.
- AgTe (109.46 ha) – Triodia Hummock Grasslands community with isolated shrubs. This community was common throughout the survey area and recorded on undulating terrain.
- GsTe (23.93 ha) - Grevillea and Acacia Shrubland, situated on deep red sand dunes throughout the landscape.
- SmPr (2.59 ha) – Drainage Grassland community, situated within low-lying areas that are likely seasonally inundated.
- Salt Lakes (1.29 ha) - Natural low-lying areas containing salt lakes.

Vegetation within the survey area was consistent with the surrounding landscape. Flora diversity was considered low, likely due to below-average rainfall, previous grazing, and the homogeneity of vegetation across the area.

The landforms include undulating red sand dunes. A shallow ephemeral drainage line intersects the northwest, forming a 2.59 ha Drainage Grassland (SmPr) that drains into a saltlake outside the area. Saltbush Shrubland (TaEf), totalling 3.59 ha, occurred in isolated patches along saltlake edges, often disturbed by infrastructure and showing low diversity. Triodia Hummock Grassland (AgTe) dominated the sandy flats, covering 109.46 ha, with scattered shrubs, termite mounds, and occasional surface limestone. Scattered sand dunes featured as Grevillea and Acacia Shrubland (GsTe) with groundcover dominated by Triodia grasses, extending 23.93 ha. These had more bare ground compared to surrounding Triodia Grasslands. A small and isolated Eucalyptus Woodland (EvTdSm) was identified in the north-east edge of the survey area (0.16 ha), is in Degraded condition due to isolation and disturbance (AECOM, 2024).

A desktop assessment identified 23 Threatened and Priority flora species as potentially occurring within the survey area. Of these, the following two species were considered likely to occur within the application area:

- *Eremophila forrestii* subsp. *viridis* (Priority 3) is typically found on red sands and sandy loams. A record from 2011 exists just over 10 km from the survey area.
- *Triumfetta echinata* (Priority 3) is associated with red sandy soils and sand dunes (WAH, 1998). A 2009 record is located 10 km from the survey area.

The AECOM (2024) survey recorded a total of 68 flora species in the survey area, representing 48 genera and 23 families. Two of the recorded species were introduced and common weed species; however, none were listed as Declared Pests or Weeds of National Significance.

No threatened ecological communities (TECs) listed under the EPBC Act or BC Act, or priority ecological communities (PECs) listed by the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) were identified

within the DE (AECOM, 2024). Likewise, no conservation significant flora was identified. *Triumfetta echinata* was specifically targeted during the survey, particularly on the red sand dune systems. *Eremophila forrestii* is relatively easy to detect but was not identified (AECOM, 2024).

No significant limitations were identified that may have influenced the outcome of the field survey (AECOM, 2024).

Fauna

Three main fauna habitat types were identified throughout the survey area (AECOM, 2024):

- Undulating Dunes and Flats (130.46 ha, 90%)
- Seasonally Inundated/Intertidal Areas (13.68 ha, 9%)
- and Modified (1.38 ha, 1%).

A total of 40 fauna species were identified within the survey area. This comprised 27 bird, six mammal, and seven reptile species. The mapped habitat types provide habitat for conservation significant fauna, but none of them, including the following species which were considered most likely using the application area, were observed during the survey (AECOM, 2024):

- The Northern Quoll (*Dasyurus hallucatus*) (Endangered under both the EPBC and BC Acts)
- The Northern Short-tailed Mouse (*Leggadina lakedownensis)* (Priority 4 species)
- Maryan's Keeled Slider (*Lerista planiventralis maryani*) (Priority 1). There is one Western Australian Museum vouchered record of the species from 1990, located approximately 3 km to the north of the survey area.

A post-survey likelihood assessment was conducted for the 69 threatened species identified as potentially occurring within the survey area. Many species from the desktop assessment were listed as Marine and Migratory under the EPBC Act, due to the area's coastal proximity and Thevenard Island's known migratory bird breeding and roosting sites (AECOM, 2024). The habitat in Onslow provides suitable conditions for many of the migratory waterbirds and is located in an area which would be utilised as a non-breeding area.

A total of nine birds listed as Marine and Migratory under the EPBC Act are considered to have a high post survey likelihood of occurrence. These include:

- the Sharp-tailed Sandpiper *Calidris acuminata*, listed as Vulnerable under the EPBC and BC Acts, Migratory and Marine under the EPBC Act,
- the Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*, listed as Critically Endangered under the EPBC and BC Acts, Migratory and Marine under the EPBC Act,
- the Gull-billed Tern *Gelochelidon nilotica*, listed as Migratory and Marine under the EPBC Act, Migratory under the BC Act,
- the Little Curlew *Numenius minutus*, listed as Migratory and Marine under the EPBC Act, Migratory under the BC Act,
- the Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*, listed as Migratory and Marine under the EPBC Act, Migratory under the BC Act,
- the Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*, listed as Migratory and Marine under the EPBC Act,
- the Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus*, listed as Migratory and Marine under the EPBC Act, Migratory under the BC Act,
- the Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*, listed as Vulnerable, Migratory and Marine under the EPBC Act,
- the Grey-tailed Tattler *Tringa brevipes*, listed as Migratory and Marine under the EPBC Act, Migratory under the BC Act, Priority 4 by DBCA.

The application area includes 1.36 ha of potential suitable foraging and/or roosting habitat for the above species, comprised of the Seasonally Inundated/Intertidal Areas habitat type along the connection corridor. This habitat is unlikely to provide suitable breeding habitat for bird species, and was predominantly in Completely Degraded or Very Good condition.

This habitat is not considered unique to the DE (AECOM, 2024) and represents 4.9% of the DE. Clearing up to 1.36 ha of Seasonally Inundated/Intertidal Areas within the DE, represents approximately 0.83% of the DE and 0.01% of potential habitat available within 10 km of the DE. Further, there is evidence of habitat in equal or better condition is available in close proximity to the DE, including mapped salt lakes and non-perennial lakes

This habitat will only be cleared if the existing cable connection cannot be utilised by the project, and a new cable connection is required. In such an eventuality, the new cable would be laid in the same corridor as the existing cable, approximately 50 cm from the existing cable for safety reasons. The disturbance area for the new cable

would be limited to past disturbance areas for existing infrastructure, which was constructed under Clearing Permit CPS 4587/2.

Conclusion
Given the absence of conservation significant flora and ecological communities, as well as significant habitat for conservation significant fauna, the application area does not comprise a high level of biodiversity.

Conditions
To address the above impacts, the following mitigation measures will be required as conditions on the clearing permit:

- Avoidance and minimisation to reduce the impacts and extent of clearing
- implement weed management strategies
- rehabilitate and revegetate temporary cleared areas; and
- conduct clearing in a slow, one-directional manner to allow any fauna individuals present to move into adjacent vegetation ahead of the clearing activity.

3.2.2. Land and water resources (watercourse and land degradation) - Clearing Principles (f and g)

Assessment
The application area occurs in an area with a semi-arid climate, characterised by low rainfall, high evapotranspiration, hot dry summers, and cold winters. The DE Area does not intersect any wetlands of international importance (RAMSAR) or nationally important wetlands, and no watercourses were identified within the DE during the desktop assessment. However, several minor, non-perennial lakes are mapped within 1 km of the DE. A review of aerial imagery suggests that some of the mapped salt lakes and non-perennial watercourses likely extend to areas directly adjacent to the DE, which was confirmed during the field survey (AECOM, 2024). The application area can therefore contain native vegetation which grows in association with a wetland or a watercourse.

The soils within the DE are part of the Western Coastlands and Coastal Dunes. The Western Coastlands are described as coastal wave dominated deposits on beaches, beach ridges, barrier bars and lagoons, and back-beach dunes, coastal cliffs and other erosional features. The Coastal Dunes are described as beach sand, sand dunes, coastal dunes, beaches, and beach ridges; calcareous and siliceous, locally shelly and/or cemented (beach rock). Soils of this nature have high permeability and are well draining and therefore are unlikely to contribute to offsite/ on-site run-off or erosion (AECOM, 2024).

The DE is not mapped as having a risk of Acid Sulfate Soils (GIS). The AECOM (2024) survey identified that most of the DE contains red, large grained, sandy dune topsoil. This sand is unlikely to pose a risk of water and wind erosion or contribute to runoff, considering the minimal elevation of the DE dunes.

There is evidence of periodic flooding within parts of the DE, suggesting that vegetation in these areas is well adapted to waterlogging and high salinity. The removal of vegetation may lead to a minor increase in salinity or surface water accumulation. However, given the existing high salinity levels and seasonal flooding patterns, this is unlikely to result in significant land degradation, as the remaining vegetation and surrounding areas are already adapted to these natural conditions.

Most of the DE is not at risk of erosion. While clearing and construction poses a risk of wind and water erosion to a small percent of the DE, this can be managed with standard erosion controls (e.g. only clearing immediately prior to construction, soil stabilisation methods) as part of a management plan. The proposed clearing has the potential to cause land degradation, although unlikely and on a small scale.

Conclusion
Based on the above, soils in the application area, typical of semi-arid regions present a minor erosion risk. However, as the proposed clearing is relatively small compared to the extent of native vegetation remaining within the region, and partly temporary for geotechnical investigations, it is unlikely to cause significant long term degradation. The risk can be effectively managed with appropriate mitigation measures.

Conditions
To address the above impacts, the following mitigation measures will be required as conditions on the clearing permit:

- rehabilitate and revegetate temporary cleared areas; and
- commence construction activities within three months of the cessation of clearing being undertaken.

3.3. Relevant planning instruments and other matters

No comments from the Shire of Ashburton have been received on the proposed clearing.

The project is located within the proclaimed Pilbara Groundwater and Surface water area under the *Rights in Water and Irrigation Act 1914* (RIWI Act). However, the proposal did not indicate that water supplies were required for the proposed clearing, therefore no licences under the RIWI Act is required.

No comments have been received from the Native title holder (Thalanyji People) regarding the proposed clearing.

An Aboriginal site of significance has been mapped within the application area. It is the permit holder's responsibility to comply with the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972* (WA) and ensure that no Aboriginal Sites of Significance are damaged through the clearing process.

End

Appendix A. Site characteristics

A.1. Site characteristics

<table>
<tr><th>Characteristic</th><th>Details</th></tr>
<tr><td>Local context</td><td>The area proposed to be cleared is 51.16 ha of native vegetation within an application area of 162.26 ha located approximately 4 km from the centre of the coastal Onslow town and 11.5 km east-northeast of the Chevron LNG Wheatstone Project with the Shire of Ashburton in the Pilbara region (figure 1).

It is mapped within the Carnarvon (CAR) IBRA region and the Cape Range subregion, described as ‘Rugged tertiary limestone ranges and extensive areas of red aeolian dunefield, Quaternary coastal beach dunes and mud flats, Triodia hummock grasslands with sparse Eucalyptus trees and shrubs on the Cape Range. Extensive hummock grasslands (Triodia) on the Cape Range and eastern dune-fields. Tidal mudflats of sheltered embayments of Exmouth Gulf support extensive mangroves. Beach dunes with Spinifex communities. An extensive mosaic of saline alluvial plains with samphire and saltbush low shrublands along the eastern hinterland of Exmouth Gulf. Islands of the Muiron, Barrow, Lowendal and Montebello groups are limestone-based (Kendrick and Mau, 2002).

Spatial data indicates the local area (50-kilometre radius from the centre of the area proposed to be cleared) retains approximately 96 per cent of the original native vegetation cover.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Ecological linkage</td><td>No mapped ecological linkages in the vicinity.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Conservation areas</td><td>The application area does not intersect with any DBCA managed lands. The nearest conservation area is unmanaged reserves, 37453 which is approximately 1 km north from the application area.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Vegetation description</td><td>Vegetation survey (AECOM, 2024) indicates the vegetation within the proposed clearing area consists of two Pre-European Vegetation Associations, Cape Yannare Coastal Plain System 676 and 127. The full survey descriptions and maps are available in Appendix D.

<table>
<tr><th>Vegetation Association</th><th>System</th><th>Description</th></tr>
<tr><td>127</td><td>Cape Yannare Coastal Plain</td><td>Bare aeas; Tidal mud flats</td></tr>
<tr><td>676</td><td>Cape Yannare Coastal Plain</td><td>Succulent steppe; Samphire; Tecticornia spp. communities in saline areas</td></tr>
</table>

Six native vegetation communities were defined and mapped in the survey area. This included (AECOM Onslow, 2024):
• TaEf (3.59 ha) - Saltbush Shrubland. This community represents riparian/groundwater dependent vegetation, dominated by Tecticornia and Neobassia species.
• EvTdSm (0.16 ha) - Emergent Eucalyptus victrix Woodland situated slightly higher in the landscape than the nearby saltlake.
• AgTe (109.46 ha) – Triodia Hummock Grasslands community with isolated shrubs. This community was common throughout the survey area and recorded on undulating terrain.
• GsTe (23.93 ha) - Grevillea and Acacia Shrubland, situated on deep red sand dunes throughout the landscape.
• SmPr (2.59 ha) – Drainage Grassland community, situated within low-lying areas that are likely seasonally inundated.
• Salt Lakes (1.29 ha) - Natural low-lying areas containing salt lakes.</td></tr>
</table>

<table>
<tr><th>Characteristic</th><th>Details</th></tr>
<tr><td>Vegetation condition</td><td>The vegetation survey (AECOM, 2024) identified six native vegetation types, which were defined and mapped in the DE. The survey also indicates the vegetation ranging from ‘Very Good’ to ‘Completely Degraded’ (Trudgen, 1988) condition as follows (AECOM, 2024):

<table>
<tr><th>Vegetation type</th><th>Condition</th><th>Extent (ha) within DE</th><th>Extent (%) within DE</th></tr>
<tr><td>TaEf</td><td>Very Good</td><td>0.46</td><td>0.28%</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>Completed Degraded</td><td>3.13</td><td>1.93%</td></tr>
<tr><td>EvTdSm</td><td>Very Good</td><td>0.16</td><td>0.1%</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="4">AgTe</td><td>Very Good</td><td>95.33</td><td>58.75%</td></tr>
<tr><td>Good</td><td>1.80</td><td>1.11%</td></tr>
<tr><td>Poor</td><td>11.9</td><td>7.33%</td></tr>
<tr><td>Degraded</td><td>0.42</td><td>0.26%</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">GsTe</td><td>Very Good</td><td>22.86</td><td>14.09%</td></tr>
<tr><td>Degraded</td><td>1.06</td><td>0.65%</td></tr>
<tr><td>SmPr</td><td>Very Good</td><td>0.01</td><td>0.01%</td></tr>
<tr><td>Saltlakes</td><td>Very Good</td><td>1.29</td><td>0.8%</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Paddock</td><td>4.49</td><td>2.77%</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Cleared</td><td>19.34</td><td>11.92%</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Total</td><td>162.26</td><td>100%</td></tr>
</table>

The full Trudgen (1991) condition rating scale is provided in Appendix C. Representative photos and mapping are available in Appendix D.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Climate and landform</td><td>The survey area is in Onslow, which has a semi-arid climate, characterised by low rainfall, high evapotranspiration, hot dry summers, and cold winters. Temperature variations in cold semi-arid regions can reach up to 20°C between day and night.

The nearest meteorological station, Onslow Airport (Station 005017), is about 700 m east of the survey area. Summer temperatures range from an average high of 36.5°C to a low of 22.5°C, while winter averages 26.3°C to 13.7°C. Annual rainfall averages 303.4 mm, mostly falling between February and June (BOM, 2024).</td></tr>
<tr><td>Soil description</td><td>The soil is mapped as-
Dune Land System – Dune fields supporting soft spinifex ad minor hard spinifex grasslands

<table>
<tr><th>System</th><th>Description</th><th>Landform</th></tr>
<tr><td>Dune Land System (201 Du)</td><td>Dune fields supporting soft spinifex ad minor hard spinifex grasslands</td><td>Coastal plains, beaches, dunes, mudflats and cliffs; Various coastal vegetation</td></tr>
</table></td></tr>
<tr><td>Land degradation risk</td><td>The risks of land degradation in the form of erosion (wind and water), salinity, and flooding (including waterlogging) are very low (GIS database).

The closest contaminated site adjacent to the site (Object ID 81018, CSS Site ID-9809, Classification date – 31 Aug 2017, possibly contaminated – investigation required.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Waterbodies</td><td>The desktop assessment and aerial imagery indicated that there are no wetlands or rivers intersecting the DE. However, multiple minor, non-perennial watercourses pass approximately 1.2 km to the northeast and 2.8 km to the south of the proposed site (GIS database).</td></tr>
</table>

Characteristic	Details
Hydrogeography	According to available databases, the application area: • is mapped within the proclaimed Pilbara Groundwater and Surface water area under the *Rights in Water and Irrigation Act 1914* (RIWI Act) • No Public Drinking Water Source Water Areas (PDWSA) within the DE. The closest PDWSA is the Cane River Water Reserve, located approximately 24 km east of the DE.
Flora	No State or Federally listed flora were recorded within the DE.
Ecological communities	No State or Federally listed Priority or Threatened Ecological Communities were recorded within the Survey Area by AECOM (2024).
Fauna	AECOM (2024) undertook a fauna survey, and no conservation significant fauna listed under the EPBC Act or BC Act, or listed by DBCA were recorded during the survey. A total of 40 fauna species were recorded. Conservation significant fauna identified in the desktop assessment with the potential to occur post-survey based on habitat suitability includes (AECOM, 2024): • Northern Short-tailed Mouse, *Leggadina lakedownensis* (P4) • Maryan's Keeled Slider, *Lerista planiventralis maryani* (P1) • a total of 27 Migratory birds (Including six Vulnerable species and two Critically Endangered species).

A.2. Vegetation extent

	Pre-European extent (ha)	Current extent (ha)	Extent remaining (%)	Current extent in all DBCA managed land (ha)	Current proportion (%) of pre-European extent in all DBCA managed land
IBRA bioregion*					
Carnarvon	8,382,890.35	8,360,801.46	99.74	1,020,434.08	12.17
Vegetation complex					
Beard vegetation association 676 (Cape Yannare Coastal Plain)	51,983.51	51,232.57	98.56	15,035.55	28.92
Beard vegetation association 127 (Cape Yannare Coastal Plain)	102,780.91	101,489.55	98.74	1996.31	1.94

*Government of Western Australia (2019a)

**Government of Western Australia (2019b)

A.3. Flora analysis table

With consideration for the site characteristics set out above, relevant datasets (see Appendix E.1), and biological survey information, impacts to the following conservation significant flora required further consideration.

Species name	Conservation status	Suitable vegetation type? [Y/N]	Suitable soil type? [Y/N]	Distance of closest record to application area (km)	Number of known records (total)	Are surveys adequate to identify? [Y, N, N/A]
Abutilon sp. Onslow (F. Smith s.n. 10/9/61)	P3	Y	Y	17.5	6	Y

Species name	Conservation status	Suitable vegetation type? [Y/N]	Suitable soil type? [Y/N]	Distance of closest record to application area (km)	Number of known records (total)	Are surveys adequate to identify? [Y, N, N/A]
Carpobrotus sp. Thevenard Island (M. White 050)	P3	Y	Y	92.5	1	Y
Triumfetta echinata	P3	Y	Y	10		Y
Abutilon sp. Pritzelianum (S. van Leeuwen 5095)	P3	Y	Y	22	10+	Y
Eremophila forrestii subsp. *viridis*	P3	Y	Y	11	20	Y
Eleocharis papillosa	P3	Y	Y			Y
Stackhousia clementii	P3	Y	Y		30+	Y

T: threatened, CR: critically endangered, EN: endangered, VU: vulnerable, P: priority

A.4. Fauna analysis table

Species name	Conservation status	Suitable habitat features? [Y/N]	Distance of closest record to application area (km)	Number of known records (total)	Are surveys adequate to identify? [Y, N, N/A]
Calidris acuminata (sharp-tailed sandpiper)	MI & VU	Y	0.35	10	Y
Calidris ferruginea (curlew sandpiper)	CR & MI	Y	2.08	5	Y
Gelochelidon nilotica (gull-billed tern)	MI	Y	0.35	10	Y
Numenius minutus (little curlew)	MI	Y	2.58	3	Y
Numenius phaeopus (whimbrel)	MI	Y	4.50	44	Y
Pandion haliaetus (osprey)	MI	Y	6.14	143	Y
Plegadis falcinellus (glossy ibis)	MI	Y	3.14	3	Y
Pluvialis squatarola (grey Plover)	MI	Y	1.92	19	Y
Sternula nereis nereis (australian fairy tern)	MI & VU	Y	3.21	35	Y
Tringa brevipes (grey-tailed tattler)	P4 & MI	Y	1.92	76	Y
Dasyurus hallucatus (Northern Quoll)	EN	Y	2.82	5	Y
Leggadina lakedownensis (Lakeland Downs Shorttailed Mouse, Northern Short-tailed Mouse)	P4	Y	7.68	298	Y
Lerista planiventralis maryani (Maryan's keeled slider (Ashburton))	P1	Y	5	1	Y

T: threatened, CR: critically endangered, EN: endangered, VU: vulnerable, P: priority, MI: migratory

Appendix B. Assessment against the clearing principles

Assessment against the clearing principles	Variance level	Is further consideration required?
Environmental value: biological values		
Principle (a): *"Native vegetation should not be cleared if it comprises a high level of biodiversity."* Assessment: The area proposed to be cleared does not contain locally significant flora, fauna, habitats, or plant assemblages. No Threatened or Priority flora or ecological communities were recorded within the DE. Therefore, it is considered unlikely that the DE contains vegetation of high biological biodiversity.	Not likely to be at variance	Yes *Refer to Section 3.2.1, above.*
Principle (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."* Assessment: The application area provides habitat for conservation significant fauna which is not considered significant. No evidence of conservation significant fauna within the application area was identified during the fauna survey (AECOM, 2024).	Not likely to be at variance	Yes *Refer to Section 3.2.1, above.*
Principle (c): *"Native vegetation should not be cleared if it includes, or is necessary for the continued existence of, threatened flora."* Assessment: The area proposed to be cleared is unlikely to contain habitat for flora species listed under the BC Act (AECOM, 2024). No threatened flora was identified within the application area.	Not likely to be at variance	Yes *Refer to Section 3.2.1, above.*
Principle (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."* Assessment: The area proposed to be cleared does not contain species that can indicate a threatened ecological community. No Threatened Ecological Communities listed under the EPBC Act or BC Act are known to occur within the survey area (AECOM, 2024).	Not at variance	No
Environmental value: significant remnant vegetation and conservation areas		
Principle (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."* Assessment: The extent of the mapped vegetation type is consistent with the national objectives and targets for biodiversity conservation in Australia. The vegetation proposed to be cleared is not considered to be part of a significant ecological linkage in the local area.	Not likely to be at variance	No
Principle (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."* Assessment:	Not at variance	No

Assessment against the clearing principles	Variance level	Is further consideration required?
Given the distance to the nearest conservation area, the proposed clearing is not likely to have an impact on the environmental values of adjacent or nearby conservation areas.		
Environmental value: land and water resources		
Principle (f): *"Native vegetation should not be cleared if it is growing in, or in association with, an environment associated with a watercourse or wetland."* Assessment: AECOM (2024) identified native vegetation in the application area which is growing in association with a wetland or a watercourse.	May be at variance	Yes *Refer to Section 3.2.2, above.*
Principle (g): *"Native vegetation should not be cleared if the clearing of the vegetation is likely to cause appreciable land degradation."* Assessment: The mapped soils are moderately susceptible to wind and water erosion. Noting the location of the application area and the condition of the vegetation, the proposed clearing is not likely to have an appreciable impact on land degradation.	Not likely to be at variance	Yes *Refer to Section 3.2.2, above.*
Principle (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."* Assessment: Given that no watercourses or wetlands intersect the application area, the proposed clearing is unlikely to impact surface or ground water quality.	Not likely to be at variance	No
Principle (j): *"Native vegetation should not be cleared if the clearing of the vegetation is likely to cause, or exacerbate, the incidence or intensity of flooding."* Assessment: The mapped soils and topographic contours in the surrounding area do not indicate the proposed clearing is likely to contribute to increased incidence or intensity of flooding.	Not at variance	No

Appendix C. Vegetation condition rating scale

Vegetation condition is a rating given to a defined area of vegetation to categorise and rank disturbance related to human activities. The rating refers to the degree of change in the vegetation structure, density and species present in relation to undisturbed vegetation of the same type. The degree of disturbance impacts upon the vegetation's ability to regenerate. Disturbance at a site can be a cumulative effect from a number of interacting disturbance types.

Considering its location, the scale below was used to measure the condition of the vegetation proposed to be cleared. This scale has been extracted from Trudgen, M.E. (1991) *Vegetation condition scale* in National Trust (WA) 1993 Urban Bushland Policy. National Trust of Australia (WA), Wildflower Society of WA (Inc.), and the Tree Society (Inc.), Perth.

Measuring vegetation condition for the Eremaean and Northern Botanical Provinces (Trudgen, 1991)

Condition	Description
Excellent	Pristine or nearly so, no obvious signs of damage caused by human activities since European settlement.
Very good	Some relatively slight signs of damage caused by human activities since European settlement. For example, some signs of damage to tree trunks caused by repeated fire, the presence of some relatively non-aggressive weeds, or occasional vehicle tracks.
Good	More obvious signs of damage caused by human activity since European settlement, including some obvious impact on the vegetation structure such as that caused by low levels of grazing or slightly aggressive weeds.
Poor	Still retains basic vegetation structure or ability to regenerate it after very obvious impacts of human activities since European settlement, such as grazing, partial clearing, frequent fires or aggressive weeds.
Very poor	Severely impacted by grazing, very frequent fires, clearing or a combination of these activities. Scope for some regeneration but not to a state approaching good condition without intensive management. Usually with a number of weed species present including very aggressive species.
Completely degraded	Areas that are completely or almost completely without native species in the structure of their vegetation; i.e. areas that are cleared or 'parkland cleared' with their flora comprising weed or crop species with isolated native trees or shrubs.

Appendix D. Biological survey information and photographs

Table 1. Vegetation Community Descriptions and Photographs (AECOM, 2024)

Description	Additional Information	Photograph
AgTe Hummock Grasslands *Acacia gregorii, Diplopeltis eriocarpa* and *Pimelea ammocharis* isolated clumps of shrubs over *Triodia epactia* hummock grassland. This community occurred on red sands in undulating terrain, predominantly in dune swales. Limestone rocks occurred sporadically on the surface.	Survey effort: Q01, Q04, Q10 Extent: 109.46 Native species richness: 27 Weed species richness: 1	
SmPr Drainage Grassland *Sporobolus mitchellii, Triodia epactia* and *?Sorghum plumosum* grassland over *Pluchea rubeliflora, Stemodia* sp. Onslow and *Stemodia* sp. indet sparse forbland. This community occurred on red sandy soil, with occurrences of clay and loam. The terrain for this community was flat or lower slopes, with no rocks or outcrops present.	Survey effort: Q02, Q03, R09, Extent: 2.59 ha Native species richness: 14	
GsTe Grevillea and Acacia Shrubland *Grevillea stenobotrya, Acacia ancistrocarpa* and *Trichodesma zeylanicum* open shrubland over *Triodia epactia* open hummock grassland This shrubland community was situated on deep red sand dunes throughout the survey area. Harder patches of soil dominated by clay occur infrequently.	Survey effort: R05, Q06, R07, Q08 Extent: 23.93 ha Native species richness: 27 Weed species richness: 2	
TaEf Saltbush Shrubland *Tecticornia ?auriculata, Neobassia astrocarpa* and *Salsola australis* open shrubland over *Eragrostis falcata* sparse tussock grassland. This community was located in low-lying flats within the landscape, on red silty sand or sandy clay.	Survey effort: R11, R12, Q13 Extent: 3.59 ha Species richness: 5	
EvTdSm Eucalyptus Woodland *Eucalyptus victrix* open woodland over *Threlkeldia diffusa, Myoporum montanum* and *Acacia ancistrocarpa* open shrubland over *Sporobolus mitchellii*, **Cenchrus ciliaris* and *Eragrostis falcata* open tussock grassland. The community is located on low-lying flats, on red sand with some clay incursions.	Survey effort: R14 Extent: 0.16 ha Native species richness: 18 Weed species richness: 2	

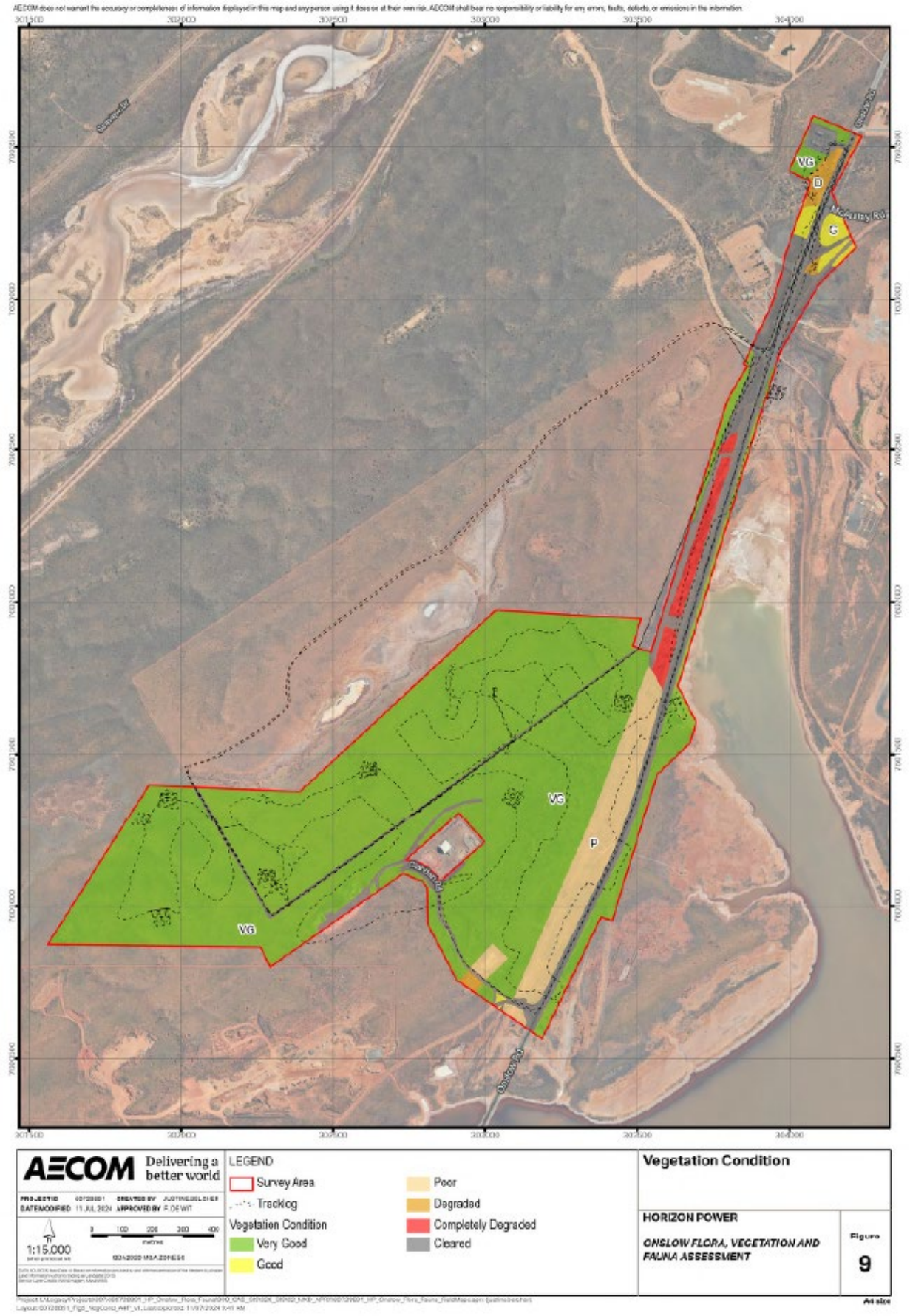

Figure 2: Map of the Vegetation condition in the application area

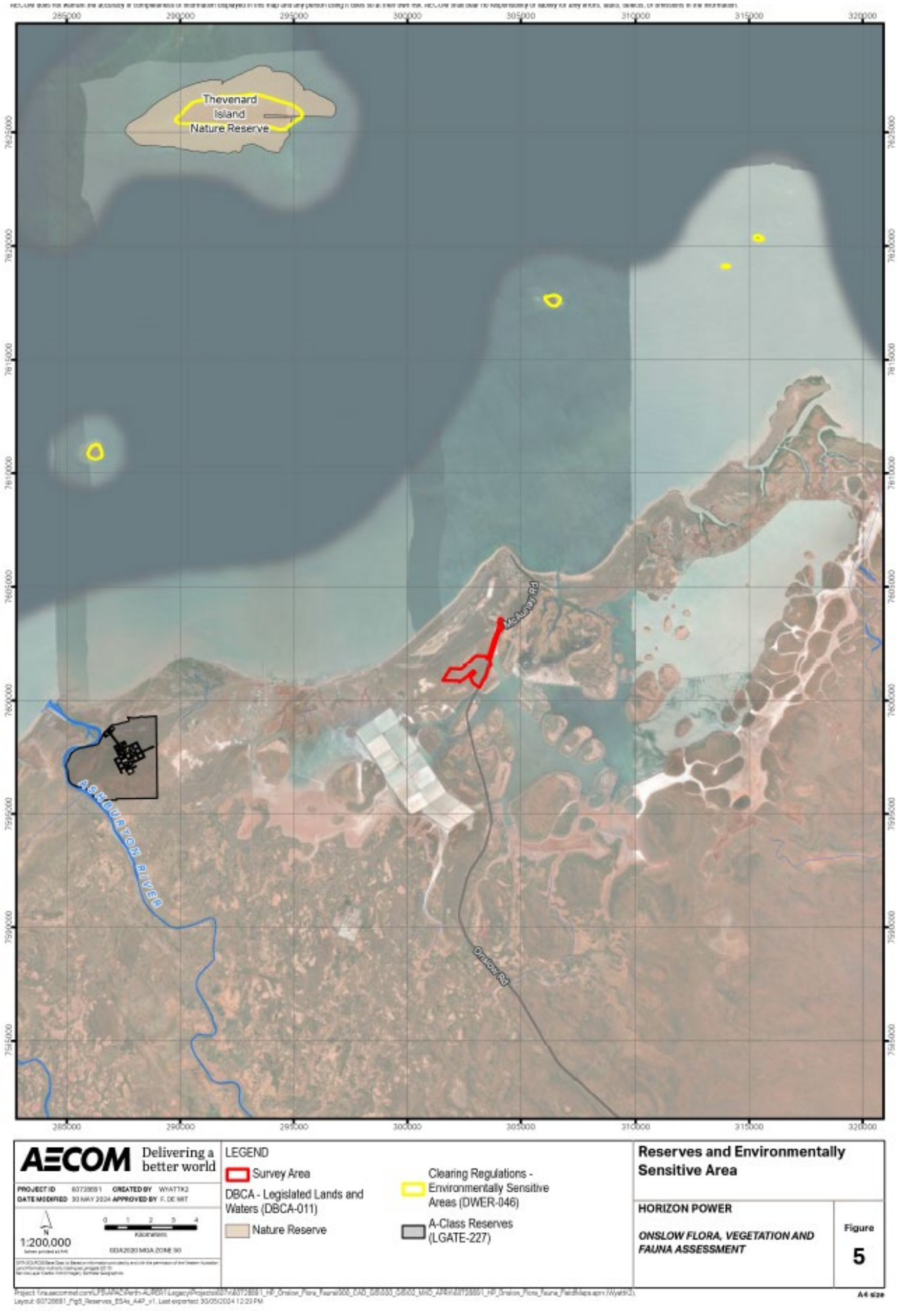

Figure 3: Map of the Reserves and Environmentally Sensitive Area in the application area

Appendix E. Sources of information

E.1. GIS databases

Publicly available GIS Databases used (sourced from www.data.wa.gov.au):

- 10 Metre Contours (DPIRD-073)
- Aboriginal Heritage Places (DPLH-001)
- Aboriginal Heritage Places (DPLH-001)
- Cadastre (LGATE-218)
- Cadastre Address (LGATE-002)
- Contours (DPIRD-073)
- DBCA – Lands of Interest (DBCA-012)
- DBCA Legislated Lands and Waters (DBCA-011)
- Directory of Important Wetlands in Australia – Western Australia (DBCA-045)
- Environmentally Sensitive Areas (DWER-046)
- Flood Risk (DPIRD-007)
- Groundwater Salinity Statewide (DWER-026)
- Hydrography – Inland Waters – Waterlines
- Hydrological Zones of Western Australia (DPIRD-069)
- IBRA Vegetation Statistics
- Imagery
- Local Planning Scheme – Zones and Reserves (DPLH-071)
- Native Title (ILUA) (LGATE-067)
- Offsets Register – Offsets (DWER-078)
- Pre-European Vegetation Statistics
- Public Drinking Water Source Areas (DWER-033)
- Ramsar Sites (DBCA-010)
- Regional Parks (DBCA-026)
- Remnant Vegetation, All Areas
- RIWI Act, Groundwater Areas (DWER-034)
- RIWI Act, Surface Water Areas and Irrigation Districts (DWER-037)
- Soil Landscape Land Quality – Flood Risk (DPIRD-007)
- Soil Landscape Land Quality – Phosphorus Export Risk (DPIRD-010)
- Soil Landscape Land Quality – Subsurface Acidification Risk (DPIRD-011)
- Soil Landscape Land Quality – Water Erosion Risk (DPIRD-013)
- Soil Landscape Land Quality – Water Repellence Risk (DPIRD-014)
- Soil Landscape Land Quality – Waterlogging Risk (DPIRD-015)
- Soil Landscape Land Quality – Wind Erosion Risk (DPIRD-016)
- Soil Landscape Mapping – Best Available
- Soil Landscape Mapping – Systems
- Wheatbelt Wetlands Stage 1 (DBCA-021)

Restricted GIS Databases used:

- ICMS (Incident Complaints Management System) – Points and Polygons
- Threatened Flora (TPFL)
- Threatened Flora (WAHerb)
- Threatened Fauna
- Threatened Ecological Communities and Priority Ecological Communities
- Threatened Ecological Communities and Priority Ecological Communities (Buffers)

E.2. References

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