GOVERNMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

CLEARING PERMIT

Granted under section 51E of the Environmental Protection Act 1986

Purpose Permit number:	CPS 11119/1
Permit Holder:	Regional Power Corporation, Trading as Horizon Power
Duration of Permit:	From 21 December 2025 to 21 December 2030

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 investigative works for renewable energy infrastructure

2. Land on which clearing is to be done

Lot 301 on Deposited Plan 42630, Pippingarra
Lot 252 on Deposited Plan 238657, Strelley
Great Northern Highway Public Road (PIN 11996151),Strelley
Lot 414 on Deposited Plan 37092, Strelley
Lot 252 on Deposited Plan 238657, Strelley
Great Northern Highway Public Road (PIN 11996081),Strelley
Lot 417 on Deposited Plan 37093, Strelley
Lot 200 on Deposited Plan 220785, De Grey
Lot 104 on Deposited Plan 220785, De Grey
Goldsworthy Road Public Road (PIN 12133222), De Grey
Lot 606 on Deposited Plan 422324, Pardoo
Goldsworth Road Public Road (PIN 12133221), Pardoo
Lot 26 on Deposited Plan 241374, Pardoo
Lot 104 on Deposited Plan 220785, Marble Bar
Lot 100 on Deposited Plan 238025, Marble Bar
Lot 42 on Deposited Plan 241586, Marble Bar
Lot 40 on Deposited Plan 241646, Marble Bar
Lot 110 on Deposited Plan 238018, Marble Bar
Unallocated Crown Land (PIN 1011653), Telfer
Unallocated Crown Land (PIN 1012471), Telfer

3. Clearing authorised

The permit holder must not clear more than 93.3 hectares of *native vegetation* within the areas cross-hatched yellow in Figures 1A-1I of Schedule 1.

PART II – MANAGEMENT CONDITIONS

4. 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.

5. 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.

6. Fauna Management – timing and directional clearing

The permit holder must:

(a) restrict clearing activities to day-light hours to avoid the possibility of injury to fauna; and

(b) conduct clearing activities in a slow, progressive manner in one direction towards adjacent native vegetation to allow fauna to move into adjacent vegetation

7. Fauna Management - backfilling

The permit holder must:

(a) fence all test pits on the day of drilling/excavating with fine mesh to prevent fauna access; or

(b) cover all test pits on the day of drilling/excavating with a cover which prevents entry to the pits by fauna species and backfill upon completion;

(c) cover all boreholes at the end of each day and backfill upon completion; and

(d) cover all groundwater boreholes at the end of each day and seal them upon completion of works.

8. Fauna Management – pre-clearance survey

(a) Within 14 days prior to undertaking any clearing authorised under this permit, the permit holder must engage a *fauna specialist* to undertake pre-clearance surveys in the areas to be cleared within the areas cross-hatched yellow on Figures 1A-1I of Schedule 1 for the following fauna species, including the identification and inspection of burrows, and determination of whether burrows are being utilised:

(i) Northern Quoll (*Dasyurus hallucatus*)

(ii) Bilby (*Macrotis lagotis*)

(iii) Brush-tailed Mulgara (*Dasycercus blythi*)

(b) Where evidence of recent burrow use is identified under condition 8(a) of this permit, the permit holder shall:

(i) engage a *fauna specialist* to flag the location of the burrow(s) showing signs of recent use;

(ii) not clear within five (5) metres of the flagged burrow(s);

(iii) engage a *fauna specialist* to monitor with cameras, the flagged burrow/s for a maximum of five days, or until such time that the fauna species identified under condition 8(a) have been observed to independently move on from the burrow/s; and

(iv) prior to clearing, engage a *fauna specialist* to re-inspect any flagged burrow/s for the presence of the fauna species identified under condition 8(a).

(c) If species identified under condition 8(a) of this permit are utilising any flagged burrow(s) under condition 8(b) and cannot be avoided in accordance with condition 4 of this permit, the permit holder shall:

(i) engage a *fauna specialist* to remove and relocate the individual(s) to an area of suitable habitat; and

(ii) any removal and relocation of Northern Quoll and Bilby under condition 8(c)(i) of this permit must be conducted in accordance with a section 40 authorisation under the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*.

(d) Where active burrows for species identified under condition 8(a) of this permit are identified and/or species identified under condition 8(a) of this permit are relocated in accordance with condition 8(c), the permit holder shall include the following in a report submitted to the CEO within two (2) months of undertaking any clearing authorised under this Permit:

(i) the location of any active burrows identified using a Global Positioning System (GPS) unit set to Geocentric Datum Australia 2020 (GDA2020), expressing the geographical coordinates in Eastings and Northings or decimal degrees;

(ii) the gender of each individual captured under condition 8(c) of this permit;

(iii) the dates, times, vegetation types and weather conditions at each location where species listed under condition 8(a) of this permit are captured from and relocated to under condition 8(c)(ii) of this permit;

(iv) the name of the *fauna specialist* that relocated fauna under condition 8(c) of this permit; and

(v) a copy of the fauna licenses authorising the relocation of fauna under condition 8(c)(i) of this permit.

9. Revegetation and Rehabilitation (temporary works)

The permit holder must:

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;

(a) as soon as is practicable, and no later than 12 months following clearing authorised under this permit, revegetate and rehabilitate the areas that are no longer required for the construction (*temporary works*) activities by:

(i) re-shaping the surface of the land so that it is consistent with the surrounding five metres land;

(ii) ripping the ground on the contour to remove soil compaction; and

(iii) laying the vegetative material and topsoil retained under condition 9(a) on the cleared areas; and undertake *weed* control activities on an 'as needed' basis to reduce weed cover within the cleared areas to no greater than the weed cover within the adjacent native vegetation

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

1. engage an *environmental specialist* to determine the species composition, structure and density of the area *revegetated* and *rehabilitated*; and
2. 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.

10. Land Management

The permit holder must:

(a) demarcate and identify the areas to be cleared using a GPS unit set to GDA20, expressing the geographical coordinates in Eastings and Northings or decimal degrees; and

(b) commence the investigation works within 9 weeks of any authorised clearing.

PART III - RECORD KEEPING AND REPORTING

11. 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	(a) the species composition, structure, and density of the cleared area; (b) the location where the clearing occurred, recorded using

No.	Relevant matter	Specifications
	generally	a GPS unit set to 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); and (e) actions taken to avoid, minimise, and reduce the impacts and extent of clearing in accordance with condition 4; and (f) actions taken to minimise the risk of the introduction and spread of *weeds* in accordance with condition 5; and (g) actions taken to manage and mitigate impacts to fauna during clearing in accordance with condition 6.
2.	In relation to fauna management pursuant to condition 7 and 8	(a) action and result of the backfilling undertaken in accordance with condition 7 of this permit; (b) results of the pre-clearance surveys undertaken in accordance with condition 8 of this permit; and (c) a copy of the fauna specialist's report.
3.	In relation to revegetation and rehabilitation of areas pursuant to condition 9 of this permit:	(a) the location of any areas *revegetated* and *rehabilitated*, recorded using a GPS unit set to GDA2020, expressing the geographical coordinates in Eastings and Northings or decimal degrees; (b) a description of the *revegetation* and *rehabilitation* activities undertaken; (c) the date that the area was revegetated and rehabilitated; (d) the size of the area *revegetated* and *rehabilitated* (in hectares); and (e) any weed control activities undertaken within the area *revegetated* and *rehabilitated*

12. Reporting

The permit holder must provide to the *CEO* the records required under condition 11 of this permit when requested by the *CEO*.

DEFINITIONS

In this permit, the terms in Table 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 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)
fauna specialist	means a person who holds a tertiary qualification specialising in environmental science or equivalent, and has a minimum of 2 years work experience in fauna identification and surveys of fauna native to the region being inspected or surveyed, or who is approved by the *CEO* as a suitable fauna specialist for the bioregion, and who holds a valid fauna licence issued under the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*.
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.
rehabilitate/ed/ion	means actively managing an area containing native vegetation in order to improve the ecological function of that area.
suitable habitat	means habitat known to support the northern quoll (*Dasyurus hallucatus*), greater bilby (*Macrotis lagotis*), brush tailed mulgara (*Dasycercus blythi*) and western pebble-mound mouse (*Pseudomys chapmani*) within the known current distribution of the species
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
weeds	means any plant – (a) that is a declared pest under section 22 of the *Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act 2007*; or

Term	Definition
	(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

Juraj Galba
MANAGER
GREEN ENERGY

Officer delegated under Section 20
of the Environmental Protection Act 1986

28 November 2025

Schedule 1

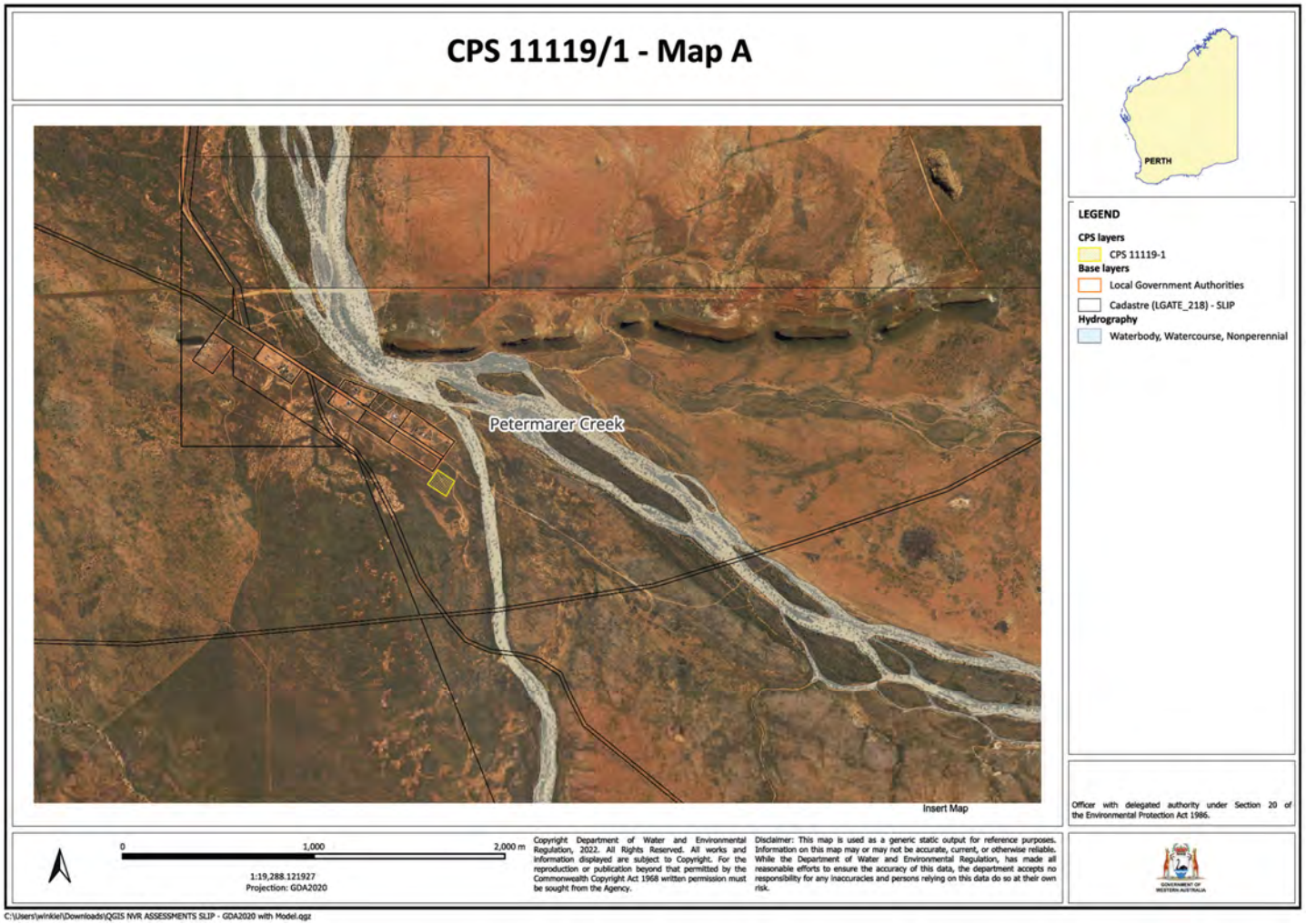

Figure 1A: Map of the boundary of the area within which clearing may occur

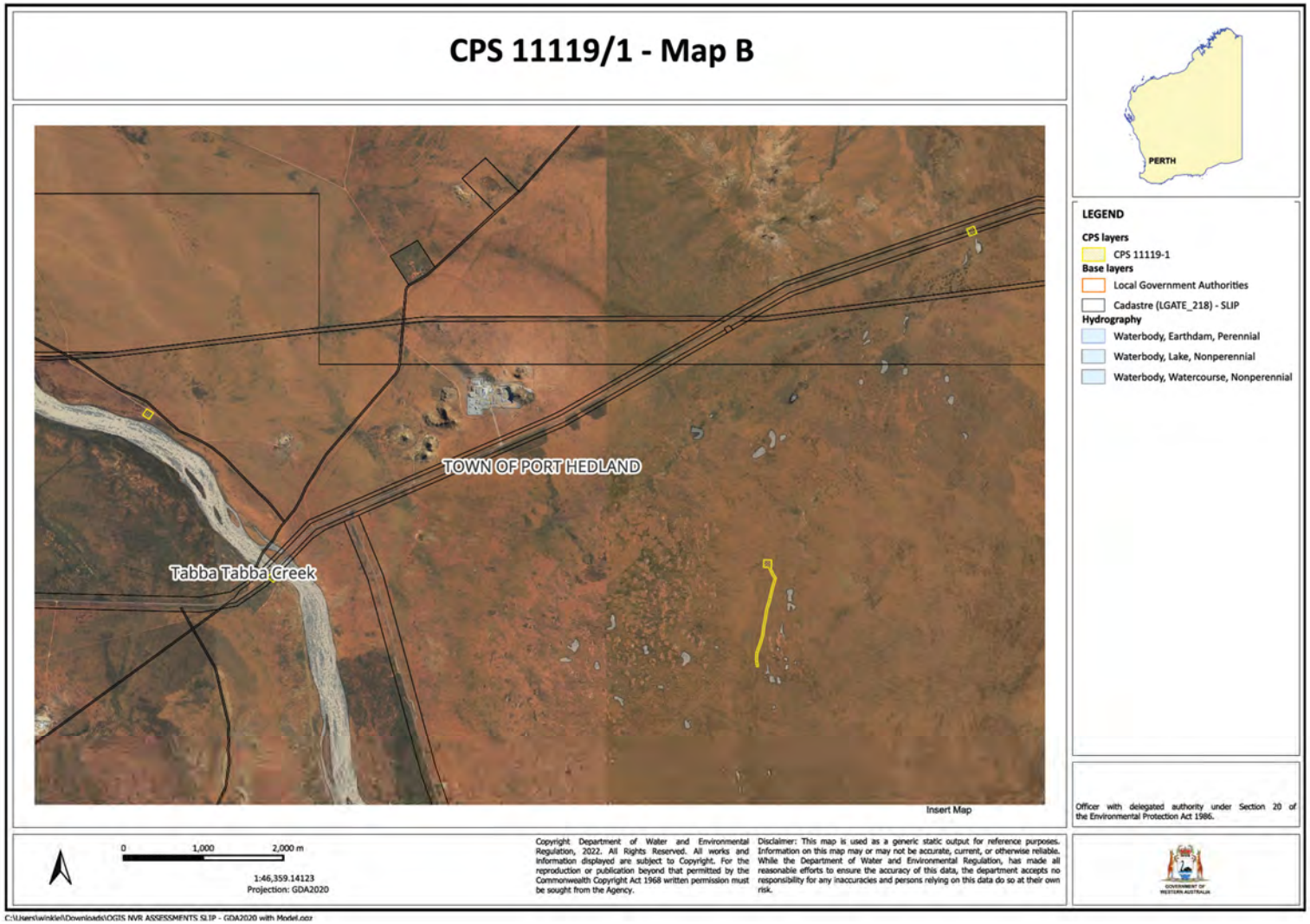

Figure 2B: Map of the boundary of the area within which clearing may occur

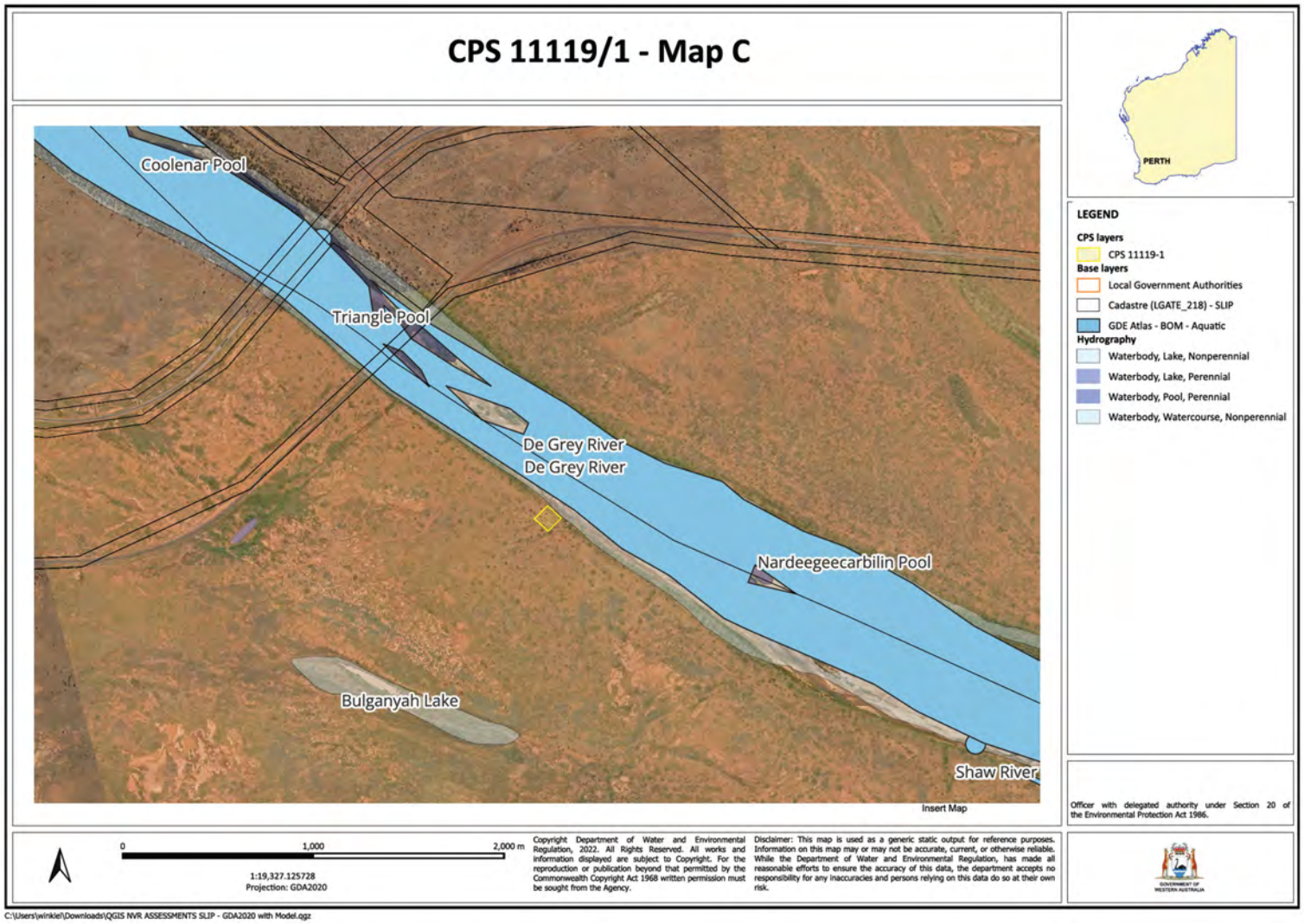

Figure 3C: Map of the boundary of the area within which clearing may occur

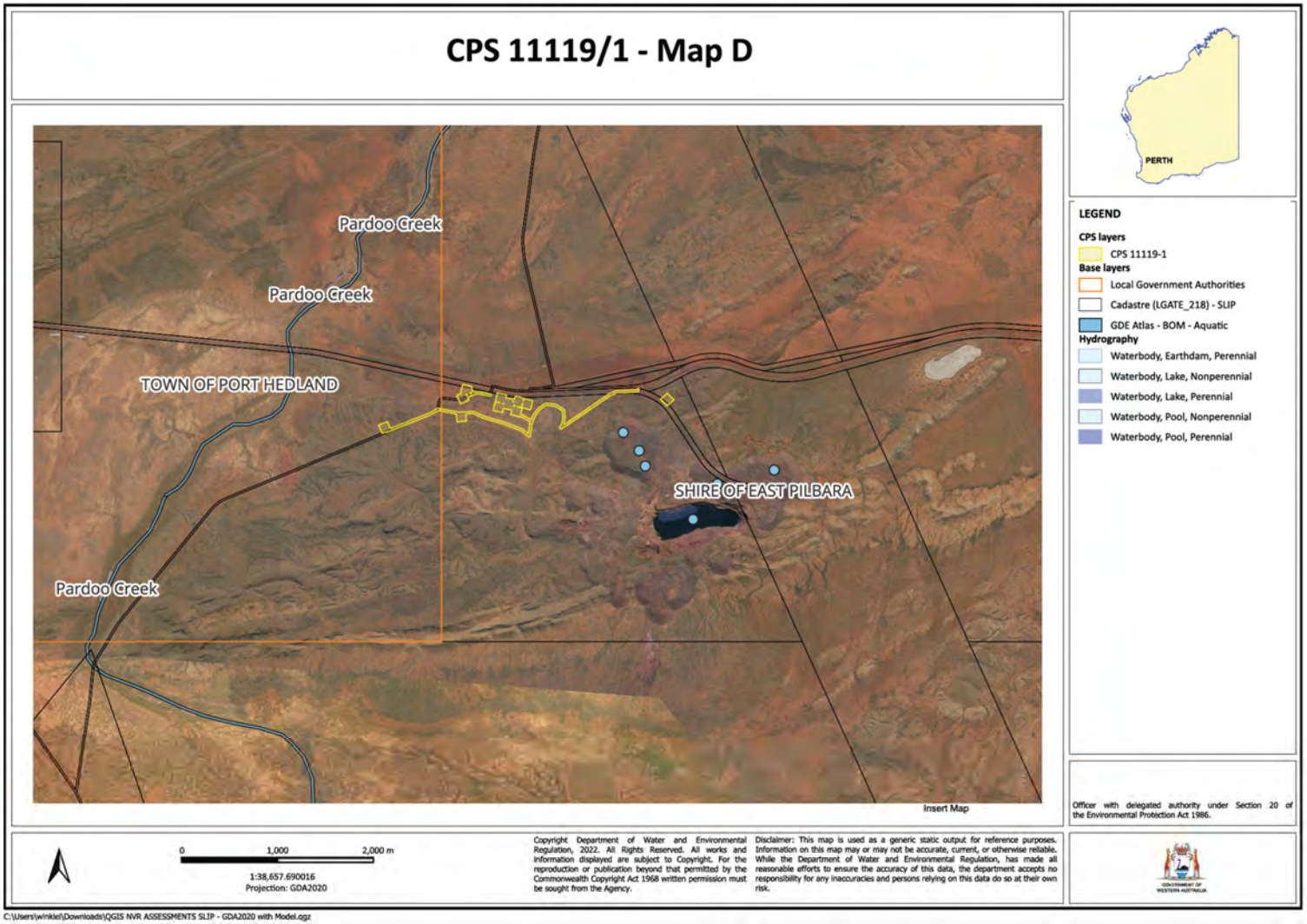

Figure 4D: Map of the boundary of the area within which clearing may occur

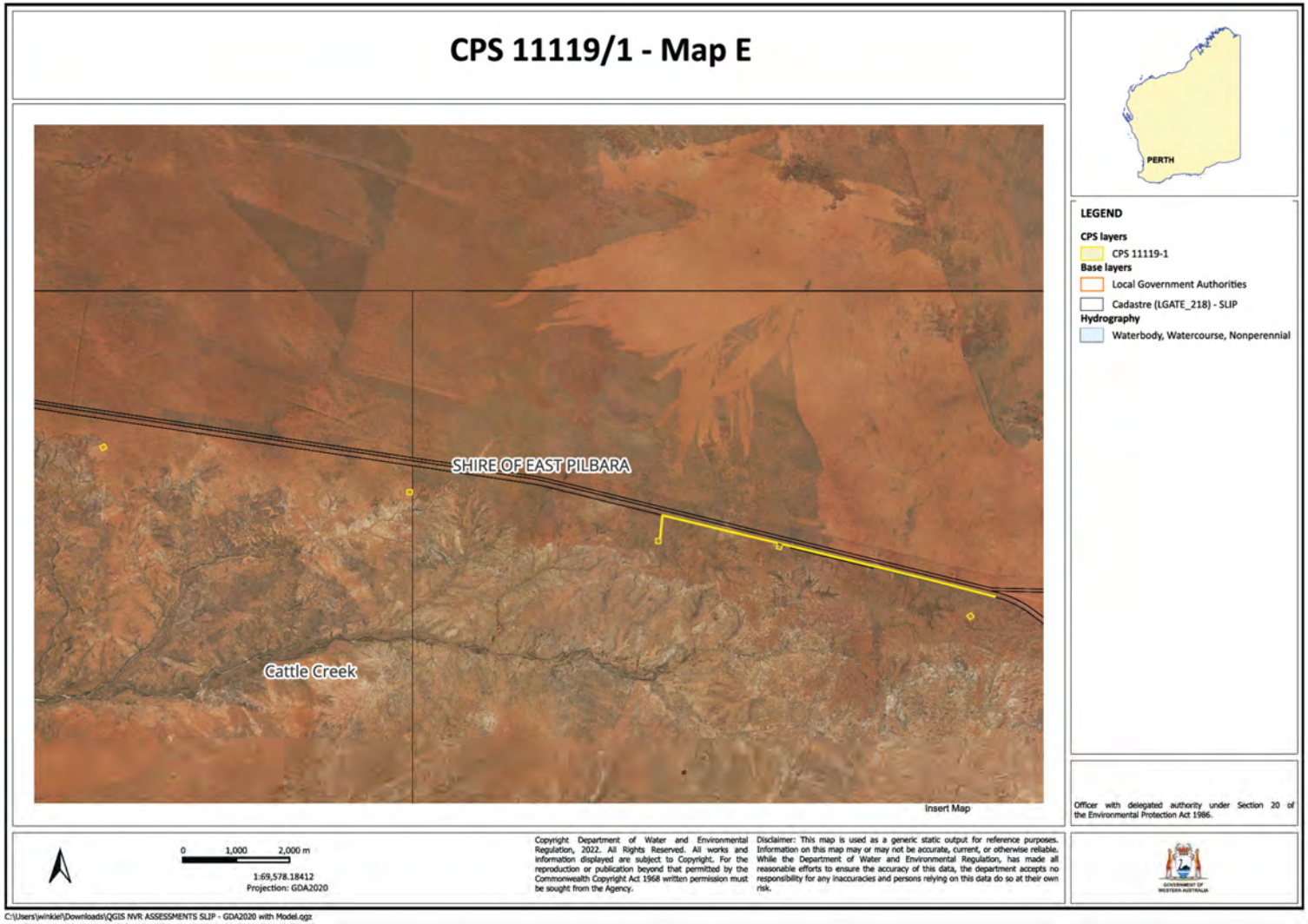

Figure 5E: Map of the boundary of the area within which clearing may occur

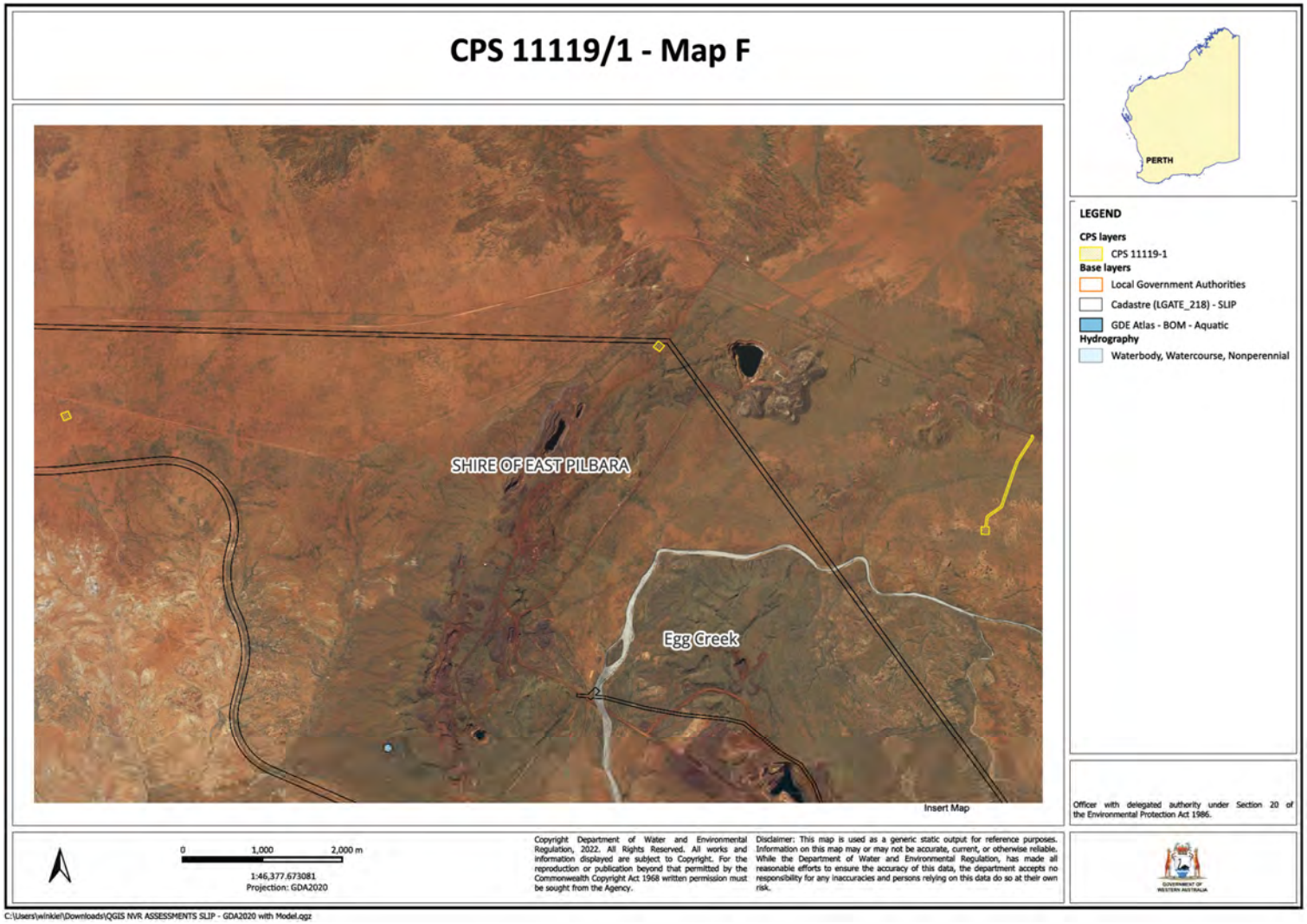

Figure 6F: Map of the boundary of the area within which clearing may occur

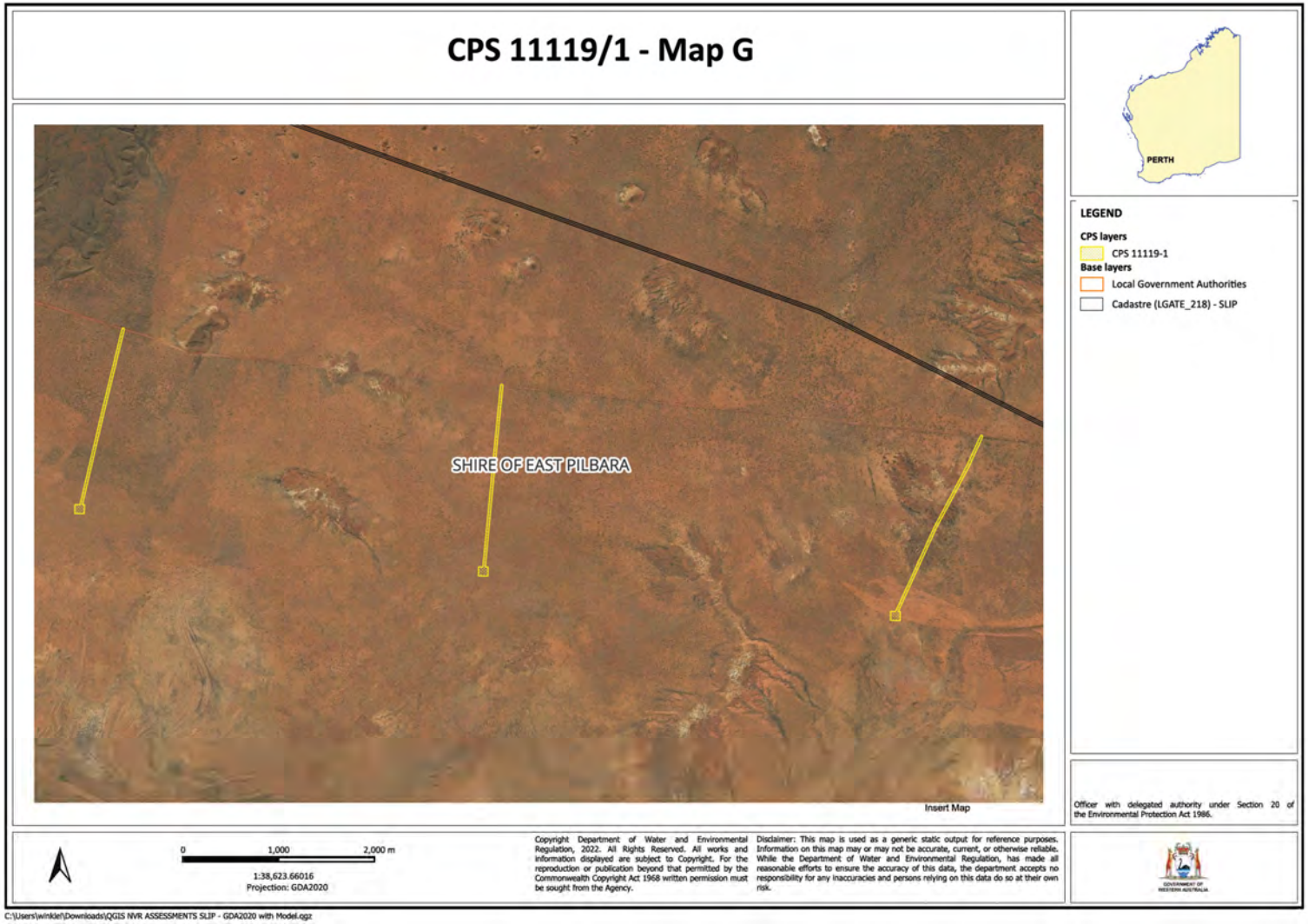

Figure 7G: Map of the boundary of the area within which clearing may occur

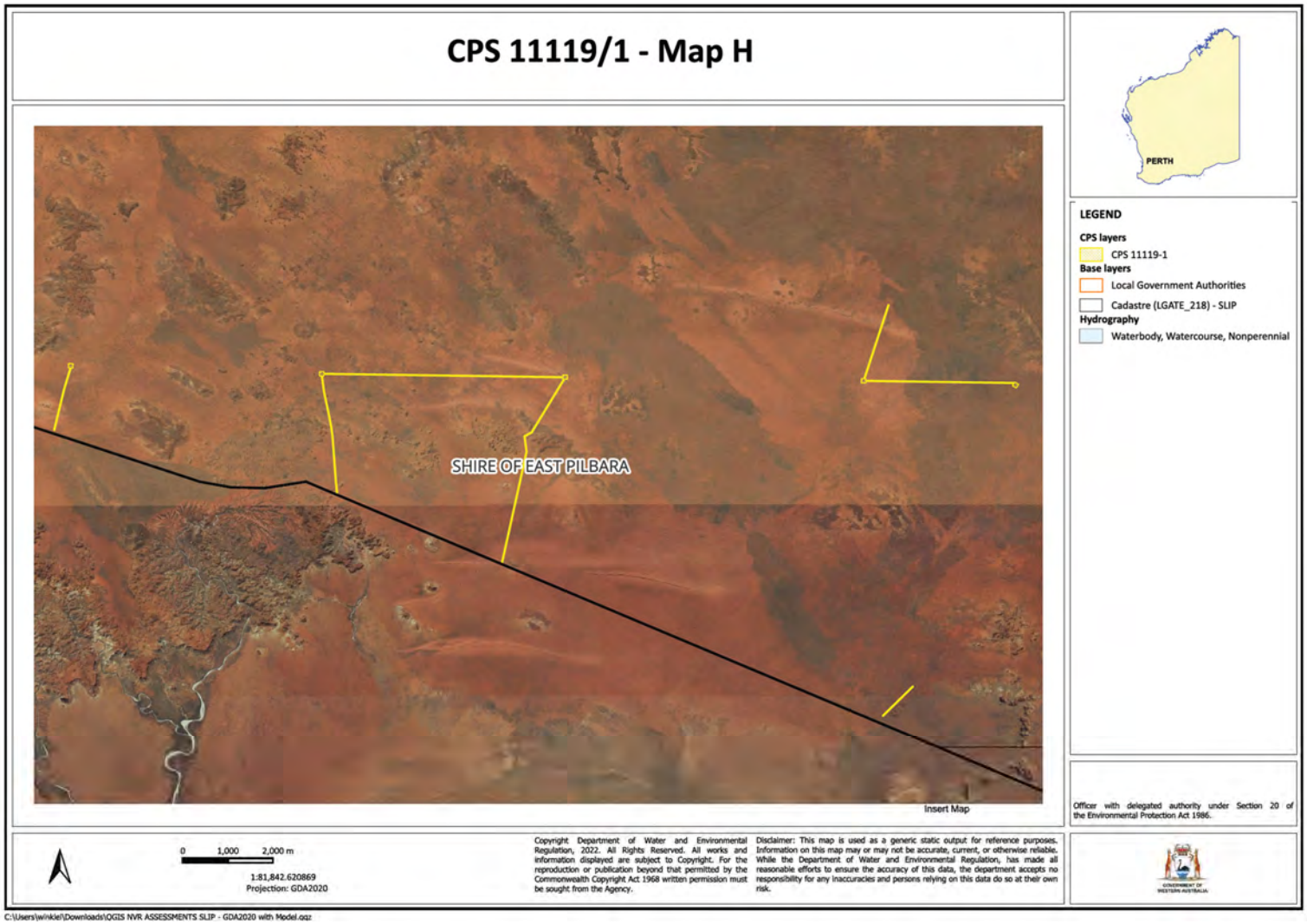

Figure 8H: Map of the boundary of the area within which clearing may occur

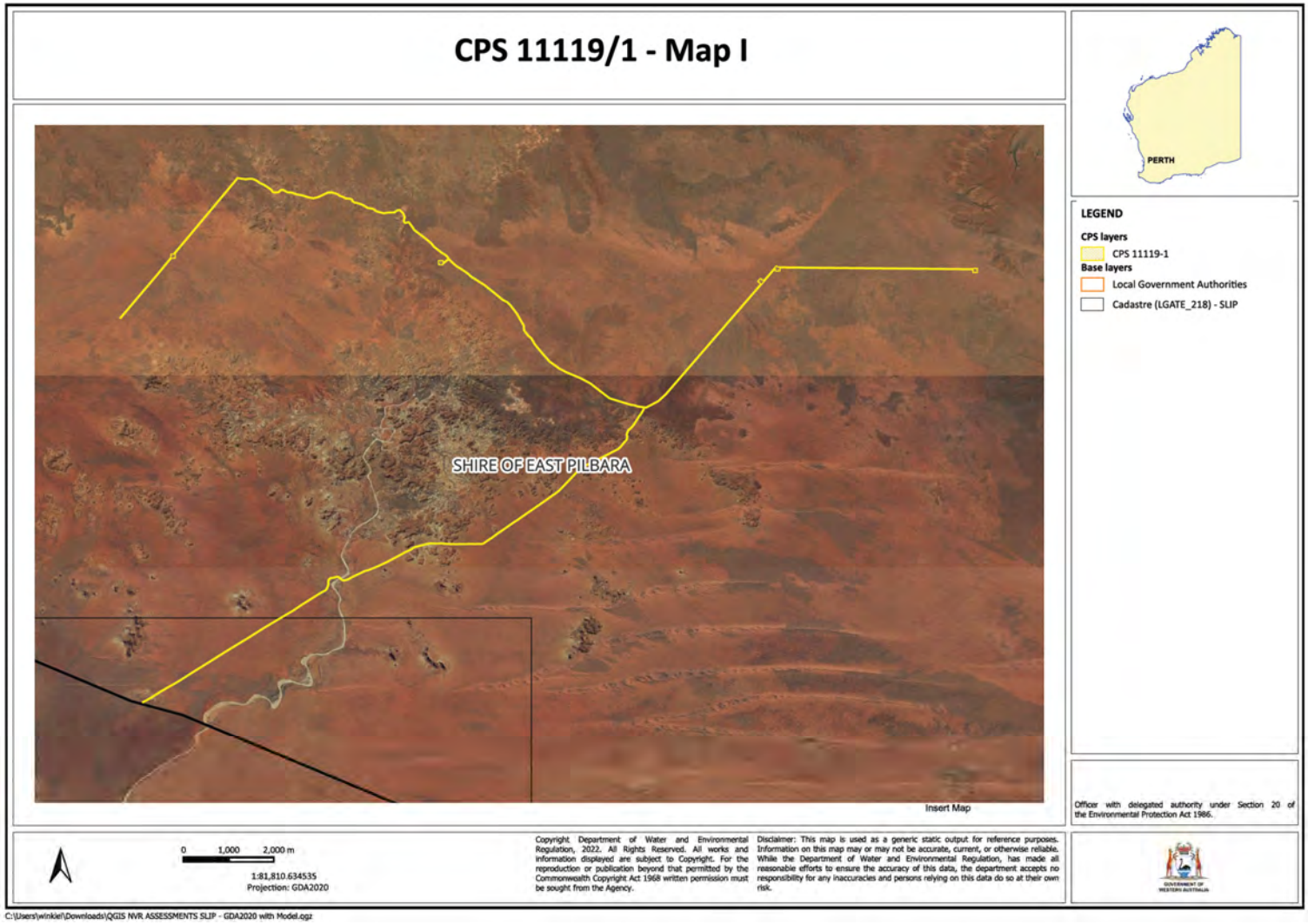

Figure 9I: Map of the boundary of the area within which clearing may occur

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 11119/1
Permit type:	Purpose permit
Applicant name:	Regional Power Corporation, trading as Horizon Power
Application received:	6 June 2025
Application area:	93.3 hectares (ha) of native vegetation within a 232.6-ha application area
Purpose of clearing:	Investigative works for renewable infrastructure
Method of clearing:	Mechanical clearing
Property:	Property list in Appendix F
Location (LGA area/s):	Town of Port Hedland, Shire of East Pilbara
Localities (suburb/s):	Pippingarra, Strelley, De Grey, Pardoo, Marble Bar, Telfer

1.2. Description of clearing activities

The application is to clear up to 93.3 ha distributed across 38 sites within a 232.6-ha clearing footprint (see Figure 1, Section 1.5). The purpose of clearing is to facilitate the preliminary geotechnical and groundwater investigations to inform the final and detailed design of the Pilbara Green Link (PGL) Project. The PGL Project includes the construction of a 330kV transmission line that will interconnect existing Horizon Power (the applicant) infrastructure at Port Hedland with the Australian Renewable Energy Hub (AREH). The planned transmission line extends approximately 275 km. The project is in support of the State of Western Australia's commitment to the transition to renewable energy in the Pilbara region.

The proposed clearing within the respective clearing footprint is for the following activities:

- 28 test pits, consisting of 12 geotechnical test pits only and 16 co-located with groundwater or geotechnical boreholes or both totalling:
  - 0.5 ha of geotechnical test pits
  - 0.8 ha of geotechnical boreholes
  - 7.8 ha of groundwater boreholes
  - 84.1 ha of access tracks, approximately 79.8km long and up to 10 metres (m) wide.

The required access tracks will be mostly located within existing tracks. The investigation pads, test pits and groundwater bores are co-located, and the proposed clearing area (9.1 ha) includes a 5% contingency for flexibility which will allow for further avoidance of impact on environmental values. As such, the actual extent of clearing is likely to be less than the proposed extent. Parts of proposed clearing are temporary in nature. In post investigation works, the existing tracks and tracks associated with groundwater bores will be retained, while new tracks cleared for other temporary and investigation works will be rehabilitated.

Clearing for geotechnical and groundwater investigations to inform the design of the PGL has also been authorised under Clearing Permit CPS 10940/1. This permit authorises clearing of 23.88 hectares of native vegetation. The investigation areas were separated into two applications as the investigations needed to be conducted in distinctive areas. The cumulative impacts of both applications were considered in this assessment.

1.3. Decision on application

Decision:	Granted
Decision date:	28 November 2025
Decision area:	93.3 ha.

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)
- the clearing principles set out in Schedule 5 of the EP Act, including cumulative impacts of geotechnical and groundwater investigations to inform the design of the PGL (see 0B)
- the findings of biological surveys (Biota, 2024, Biota 2025) (Appendix D)
- relevant datasets (see Appendix F)
- relevant planning instruments and other matters considered relevant to the assessment (see Section 3).

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

The assessment identified that the proposed clearing may result in:

- removal native vegetation that is suitable habitat for conservation significant fauna including the *Macrotis lagotis* (bilby), *Dasyurus hallucatus* (northern quoll) and *Dasycercus blythi* (mulgara). However, the clearing is considered unlikely to significantly impact on the conservation significant fauna species. Fauna management conditions on the permit include requirements for pre-clearing surveys and rehabilitation of temporary cleared areas will effectively mitigate any potential impacts.
- constructed test pits and bores potentially trapping fauna if uncovered. Covering of the pits and bores immediately after use will mitigate this impact and is required as a condition in the Permit.
- the potential introduction and spread of weeds into adjacent vegetation, which could impact on the quality of the adjacent vegetation and its habitat values. Weed control and management is required as a condition in the permit to mitigate this impact.
- potential land degradation from wind erosion where cleared areas remain bare for extended periods. This can be minimised by limiting bare soil exposure and rehabilitating temporary work areas and is conditioned on the permit.

After consideration of the above, available information, as well as the applicant's minimisation and mitigation measures (see Section 3.1), the Delegated Officer determined the proposed clearing can be minimised and managed such that it is unlikely to lead to an unacceptable risk to environmental values. The applicant has suitably demonstrated avoidance and minimisation measures (see Section 4).

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
- undertake slow, progressive one directional clearing to allow terrestrial fauna to move into adjacent habitat ahead of the clearing activity
- undertake pre-clearing survey for conservation significant fauna
- revegetate and rehabilitate areas cleared for temporary works by laying stockpiled vegetative material and topsoil on the cleared area
- backfilling, fencing or covering all test pits and bore holes to prevent fauna access and potential injuries; and
- commence investigation and construction works within nine weeks of authorised clearing.

Government of Western Australia
Department of Water and Environmental Regulation

Clearing Permit Decision Report

1.5. Site map

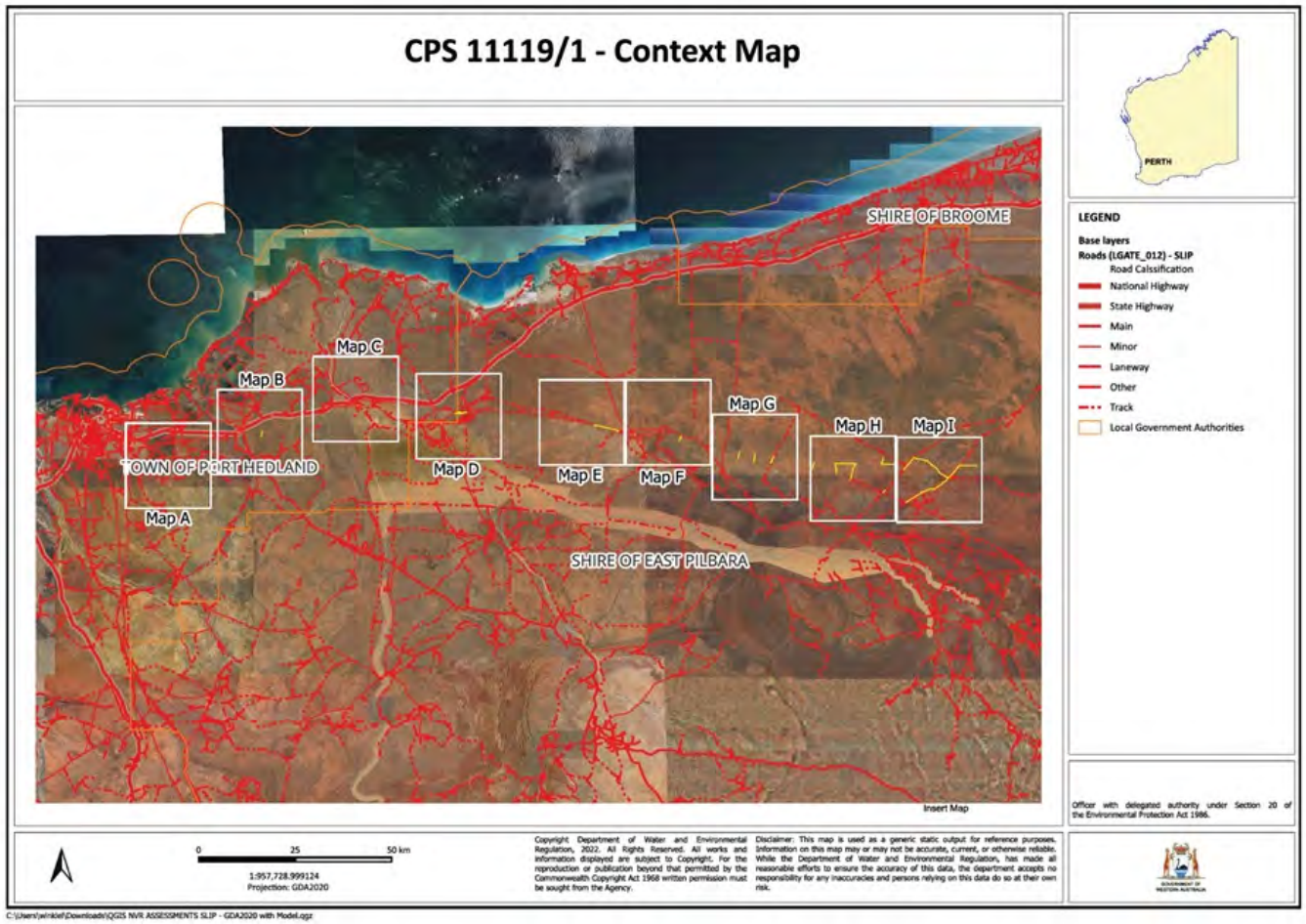

Figure 1: Map of the application area. The areas crosshatched yellow indicate the areas authorised to be cleared under the granted clearing permit.

CPS 11119/1 - Map A

Insert Map

LEGEND

CPS layers

CPS 11119-1

Base layers

Local Government Authorities

Cadastre (LGATE_218) - SLIP

Hydrography

Waterbody, Watercourse, Nonperennial

Officer with delegated authority under Section 20 of the Environmental Protection Act 1986.

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Projection: GDA2020

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GOVERNMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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CPS 11119/1 - Map B

Insert Map

LEGEND

CPS layers
- CPS 11119-1

Base layers
- Local Government Authorities
- Cadastre (LGATE_218) - SLIP

Hydrography
- Waterbody, Earthdam, Perennial
- Waterbody, Lake, Nonperennial
- Waterbody, Watercourse, Nonperennial

Officer with delegated authority under Section 20 of the Environmental Protection Act 1986.

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GOVERNMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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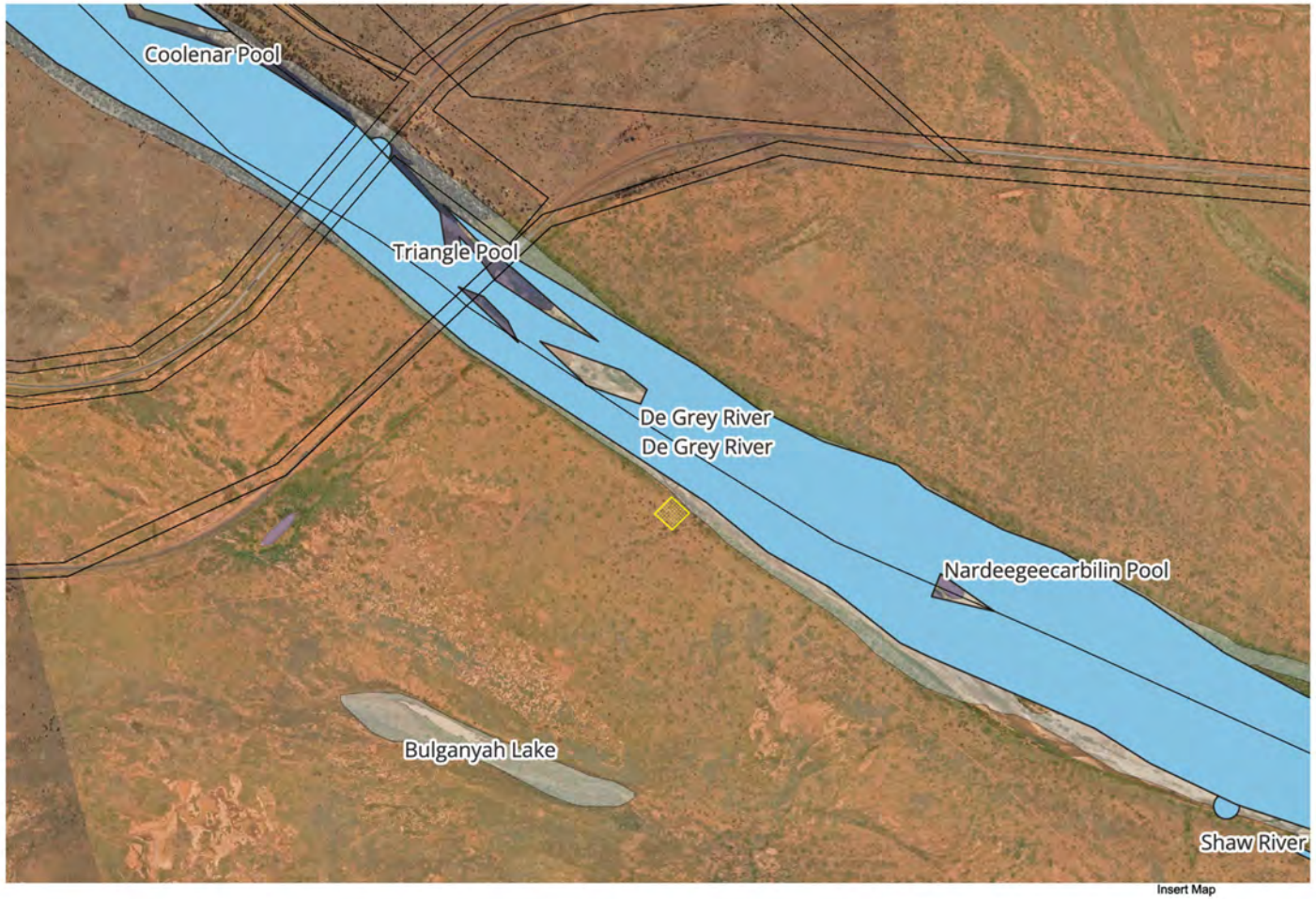
CPS 11119/1 - Map C



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LEGEND

CPS layers
- CPS 11119-1

Base layers
- Local Government Authorities
- Cadastre (LGATE_218) - SLIP
- GDE Atlas - BOM - Aquatic

Hydrography
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- Waterbody, Lake, Perennial
- Waterbody, Pool, Perennial
- Waterbody, Watercourse, Nonperennial

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GOVERNMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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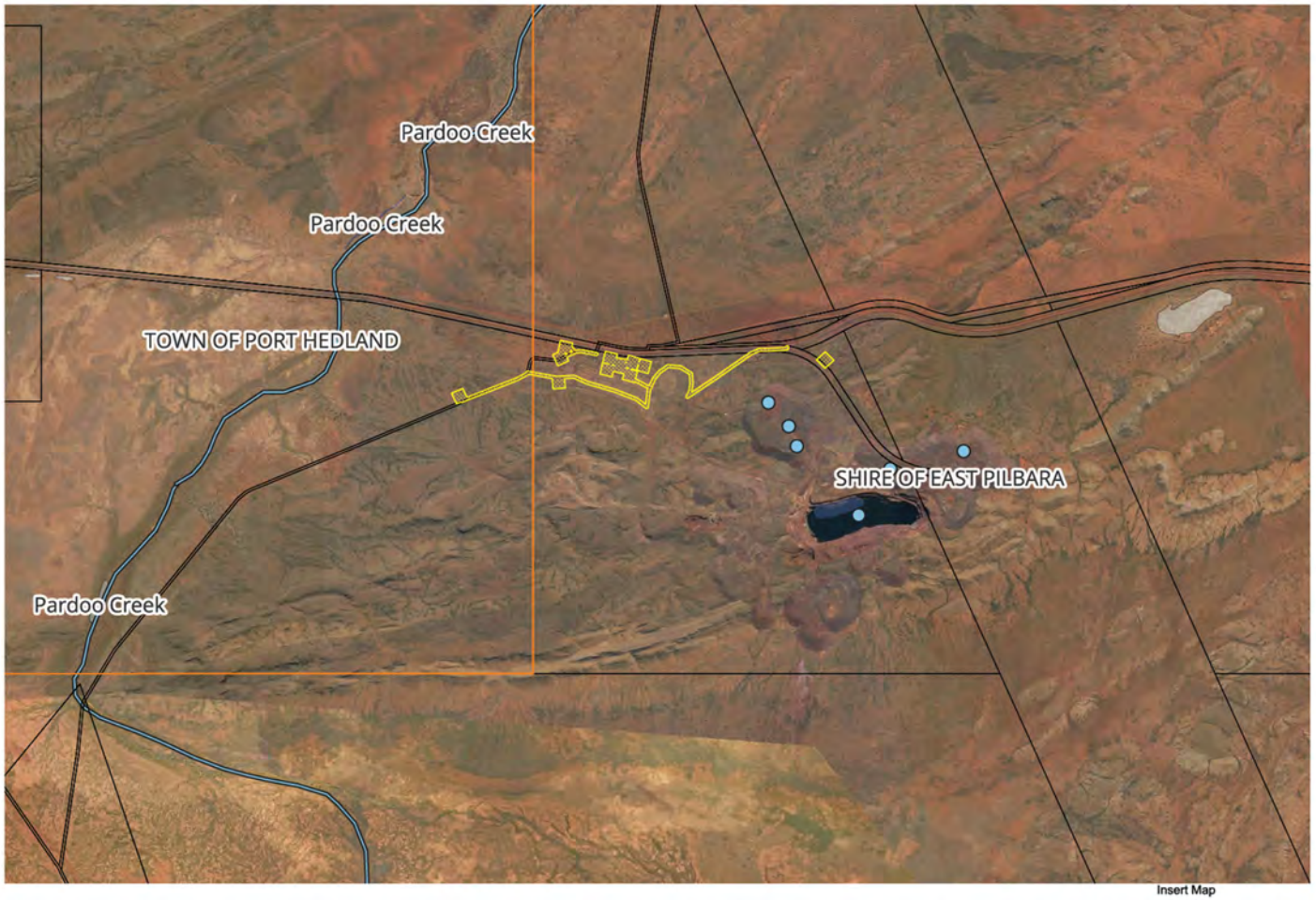
CPS 11119/1 - Map D



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LEGEND

CPS layers
- CPS 11119-1

Base layers
- Local Government Authorities
- Cadastre (LGATE_218) - SLIP
- GDE Atlas - BOM - Aquatic

Hydrography
- Waterbody, Earthdam, Perennial
- Waterbody, Lake, Nonperennial
- Waterbody, Lake, Perennial
- Waterbody, Pool, Nonperennial
- Waterbody, Pool, Perennial

Officer with delegated authority under Section 20 of the Environmental Protection Act 1986.

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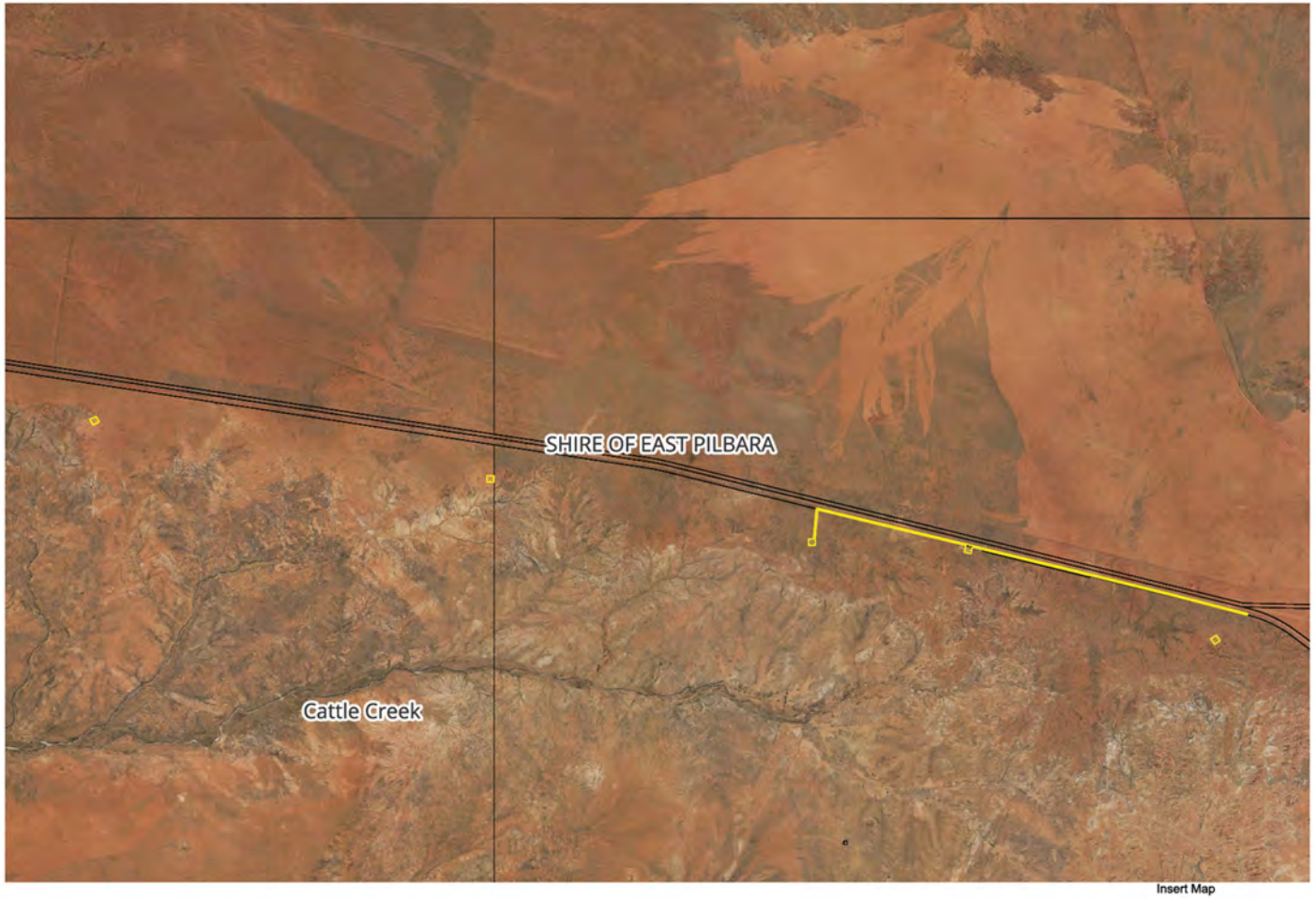
CPS 11119/1 - Map E



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LEGEND

CPS layers
- CPS 11119-1

Base layers
- Local Government Authorities
- Cadastre (LGATE_218) - SLIP

Hydrography
- Waterbody, Watercourse, Nonperennial

Officer with delegated authority under Section 20 of the Environmental Protection Act 1986.

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GOVERNMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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CPS 11119/1 - Map F

Insert Map

LEGEND

CPS layers
- CPS 11119-1

Base layers
- Local Government Authorities
- Cadastre (LGATE_218) - SLIP
- GDE Atlas - BOM - Aquatic

Hydrography
- Waterbody, Watercourse, Nonperennial

Officer with delegated authority under Section 20 of the Environmental Protection Act 1986.

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Projection: GDA2020

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GOVERNMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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CPS 11119/1 - Map G

Insert Map

LEGEND

CPS layers

CPS 11119-1

Base layers

Local Government Authorities

Cadastre (LGATE_218) - SLIP

Officer with delegated authority under Section 20 of the Environmental Protection Act 1986.

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Projection: GDA2020

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GOVERNMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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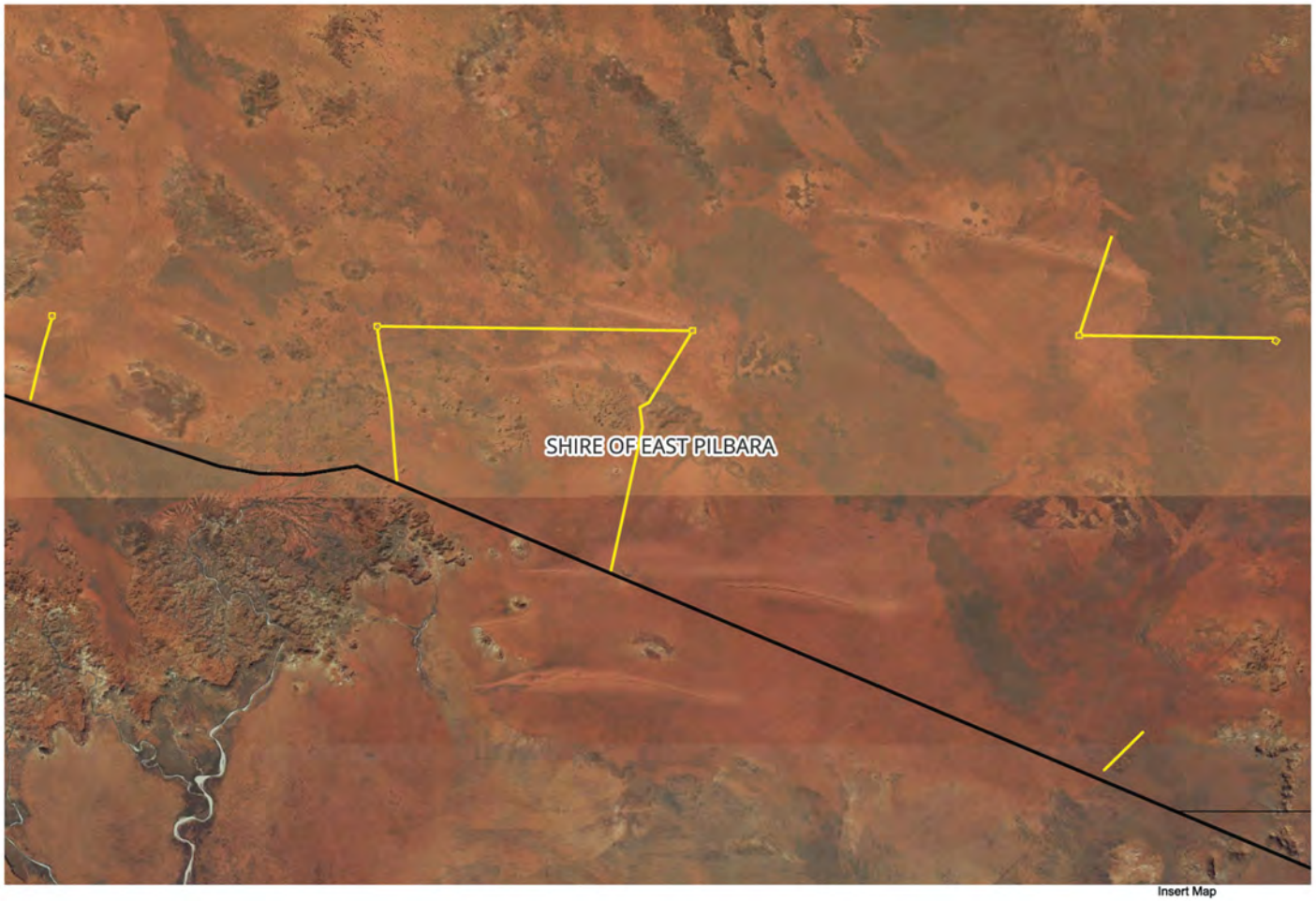
CPS 11119/1 - Map H



Insert Map

LEGEND

CPS layers
- CPS 11119-1

Base layers
- Local Government Authorities
- Cadastre (LGATE_218) - SLIP

Hydrography
- Waterbody, Watercourse, Nonperennial

Officer with delegated authority under Section 20 of the Environmental Protection Act 1986.

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Projection: GDA2020

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GOVERNMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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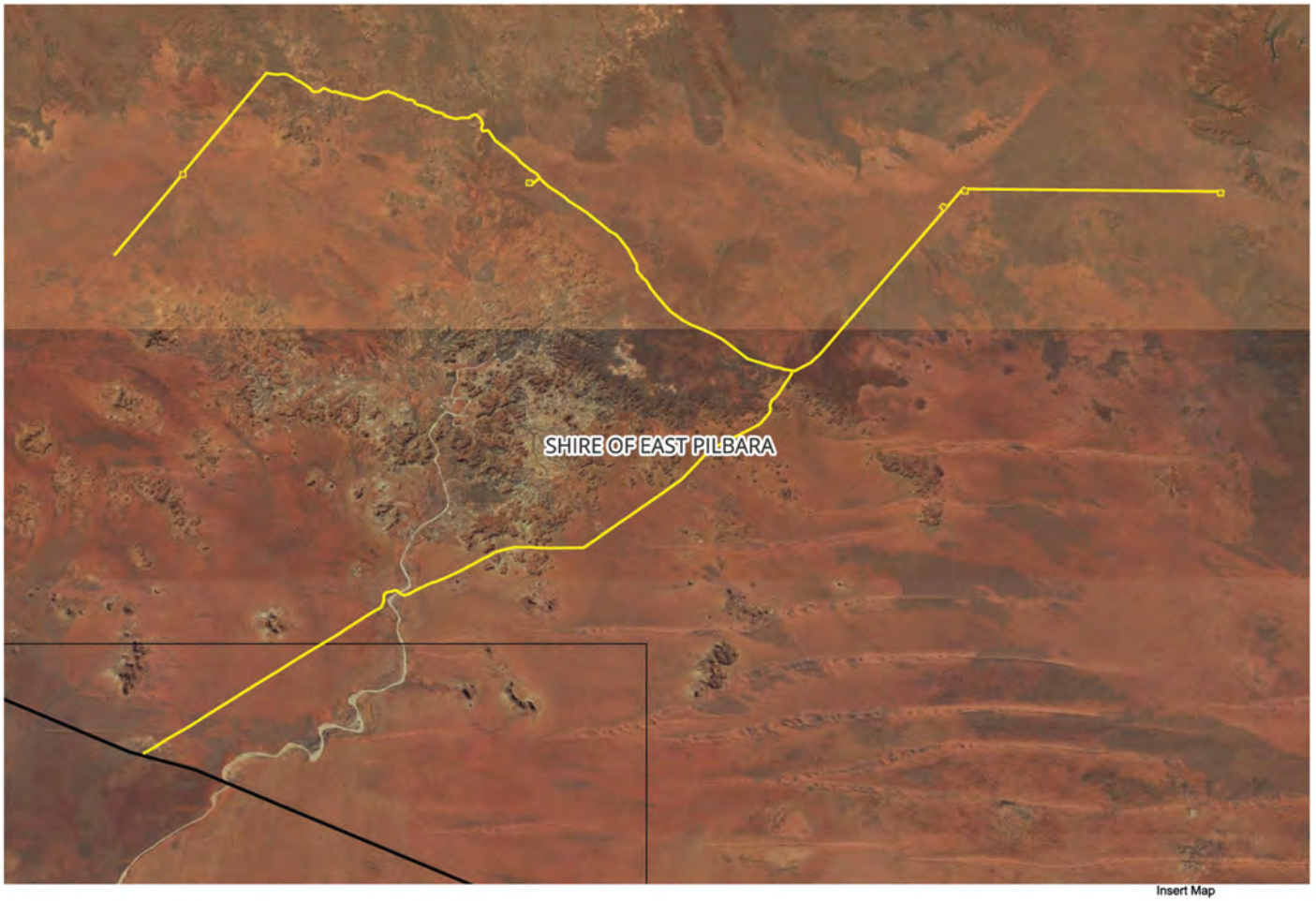
CPS 11119/1 - Map I



LEGEND

CPS layers

CPS 11119-1

Base layers

Local Government Authorities

Cadastre (LGATE_218) - SLIP

Officer with delegated authority under Section 20 of the Environmental Protection Act 1986.

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GOVERNMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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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 polluter pays principle
- 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)
- *Country Areas Water Supply Act 1947* (WA) (CAWS Act)
- *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth) (EPBC Act)
- *Planning and Development Act 2005* (WA) (P&D Act)
- *Soil and Land Conservation Act 1945* (WA)
- *Rights in Water and Irrigation Act 1914 (WA)*
- *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972*
- *Energy Operators (Powers) Act 1979*

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)
- *Environmental Offsets Guidelines* (August 2014)
- 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

The applicant submitted that the avoid, minimise and mitigate measures have been applied throughout the design processes and will continue to be applied during the works (GHD, 2025). These measures include:

- optimised siting of project components that avoid and minimise impacts on Priority flora, environmentally sensitive areas (ESA) including wetlands of national significance, national park, heritage sites, critical fauna habitat and riparian vegetation (groundwater dependant vegetation) units;
- commitment to pruning and leaving rootstocks in place where feasible;
- commitment to stockpile topsoils and vegetative materials for progressive rehabilitation and rehabilitation of cleared areas no longer required for the project;
- utilise existing tracks and roads where possible. New tracks will be established using the shortest appropriate distance from an existing track;
- caping off boreholes and the cleared drill pad area;
- stockpiling topsoils and vegetative materials to be used in rehabilitation and promote ground stability;
- adherence to contractor prepared environmental management plan, incorporating clearing permit requirements and conditions, which has further minimisation and mitigation measures to follow during the life of project (GHD, 2025).
- the two water-dependent vegetation types (D1 and D2) will be avoided during investigation works and clearing to minimise impacts within the application area.

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 0) 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 D**Error! Reference source not found.**) identified that the impacts of the proposed clearing present a risk to biological values (fauna, 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 - Clearing Principles (a)

Assessment
Due to the wide range and disjunct nature of the proposed clearing, the application area crosses several terrestrial habitats and ecotypes and may impact a large number of biological values ranging from groundwater dependent ecosystems (GDEs) to threatened and priority flora and fauna. It is noted that across respective bioregions and local communities the overall footprint of clearing is very low with these areas retaining high amounts of comparable intact vegetation communities. Impacts to fauna habitat discussed in section 3.2.2.

Priority Flora
Desktop assessment identified 26 conservation significant flora species as potentially occurring within the application area. Of these 18 had a high likelihood of occurrence.

Biota's (2024 and 2025) flora survey did not identify any threatened flora species under the BC Act or EPBC Act, but recorded two Priority 3 species, namely *Croton Aridus* and *Triobulopis marliesiae,* in areas designated as access tracks.

Croton Aridus
Characterised as a multi-stemmed evergreen shrub up to 1.5m tall *Croton aridus* occurs on deep red sands on sandplains, ridges and spinifex sandplains ranging from Port Hedland and north into the Kimberly region as well as East into Northern Territory with prominence within the McLarty subregion East of Port Hedland. Northern Territories Department of Environment and Natural Resources also has records of a broad extent across the southern range of the Territory (Flora Atlas NT 2020).

While *Croton aridus* may be impacted by access tracks and less likely to survive being driven over its relative abundance in recorded occurrence across the survey area as well as its broader extent indicate it is unlikely to be significantly impacted by the proposed activities. This coupled with a much larger indicative impact for access tracks than what is realistically likely to occur suggests that the proposed activities are unlikely to significantly impact the species persistence in the area.

Tribulopis marliesiae
This species is characterised by a corky perennial stem base with erect branchlets bearing pinnate leaves. It's range in Western Australia appears to be constrained to the coastal plain areas persisting on plains areas as well as low stony rises between Port Hedland and Broome. The corky base of the plant has been described as a perennating organ allowing the plant to persist during unfavourable conditions to later resprout and the genus is described as geocarpic where flowers aerial flowers penetrate the soil post pollination for the development of carpic structures (Keighery, 1982).

Tribulopis marliesiae is known from records across Shires of Broome, Derby-West Kimberley and East Pilbara. Based on the physiology and the known perennate adaptations inherent in the genus the species is unlikely to be impacted by vehicle drive over and impacts to the species would be due to removal of the entire plant during clearing. In addition, vehicle access for clearing tracks will require driving over low vegetation, with actual clearing limited to areas needed for vehicle passage. The proposed access tracks are shown as having a maximum width of 10 meters to accommodate larger equipment, but most tracks beyond these zones will generally be narrower, between 3 and 4 meters wide. Additionally, a 5% contingency has been included for the indicated area of access tracks to address potential GPS inaccuracies. Noting this, and that the local area contains intact native vegetation providing similar habitat to that in the application area, the proposed clearing is unlikely to have significant impacts on this species.

Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems
The application area has minor overlap with boundaries associated De Grey River and Tabba Tabba Creek, these areas pose a high likelihood of occurrence for GDE vegetation. These overlaps are relatively minor in relation to the larger riparian systems and micro siting of tracks and investigation pads are proposed to minimise potential

clearing of vegetation associated with GDEs with 50m buffers to riparian areas. Survey and report photographs show a relatively close proximity of identified GDE species to the banks of the riparian systems, as such a buffer of 50m and condition to avoid clearance of riparian vegetation should be sufficient to mitigate impacts to GDEs. Impacts to watercourses are discussed in section 3.2.3.

Conclusion
The proposed clearing does not constitute a significant residual impact to biodiversity. Clearing will impact up to 93.3 ha of native vegetation within the context of an extensively vegetated area of similar condition. Limited clearing which avoids significant vegetation values is not expected to significantly impact the biodiversity or conservation values of the native vegetation in this context. Clearing, however, can spread and introduce weeds into the adjacent vegetation which in turn may reduce its quality and habitat values. Weed control and management measures can mitigate this potential impact and are required as conditions on the permit.

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

- weed control and management; and
- revegetation and rehabilitation of areas cleared for temporary works.

3.2.2. Terrestrial Fauna - Clearing Principles (b)

Assessment
The application area consists of multiple areas spread across a 250km line and as such intersects potential fauna habitat at multiple points.

A review of available databases (GIS Database) indicate that conservation significant fauna species have been recorded from the local area (50 km radius of the application area) (see Appendix A5). Biota Environmental Science (Biota, 2024-2025) conducted a detailed fauna survey over the same areas surveyed for flora and vegetation, inclusive of the proposed clearing areas. The survey identified nine fauna habitats, with the Acacia shrubland on spinifex sandplain identified as the dominant habitat (approximately 65.3% of the survey areas). The following mapped habitat types are:

- Acacia shrubland on spinifex sandplain
- Granite boulders
- Gorges and gullies
- Claypan
- Minor/moderate drainage line
- Rocky outcrops
- Low stony rises
- Major drainage line
- Cleared areas, and
- Sand dunes (Biota, 2024-2025).

None of the identified fauna habitats within the proposed clearing areas were considered critical habitat for any conservation significant species but may constitute broad foraging habitat for conservation significant fauna. The survey identified through direct and indirect evidence that the following conservation fauna species may occur in the application area and its vicinity:

- *Dasyurus hallucatus* - Northern Quoll (EN under both the EPBC Act and the BC Act)
- *Macrotis lagotis* - Bilby (VU under both the EPBC Act and the BC Act)
- *Rhinonicteris aurantia* (Pilbara form) - Pilbara Leaf-nosed Bat (VU under both the EPBC Act and the BC Act)
- *Dasycercus blythi* - Brush-tailed Mulgara (P4 under the BC Act)
- *Pseudomys chapmani* - Western Pebble-mound Mouse (P4 under the BC Act)

Several protected species are listed as potentially having habitat in the proposed area. The proposed area is unlikely to impact habitat that comprises significant roosts for protected species. However, given the suitability of habitat for ground dwelling species there is potential for dens to occur within areas proposed for clearing which could potentially constitute a significant impact to protected or priority terrestrial fauna.

Dasyurus hallucatus - Northern Quoll

Northern quolls are nocturnal, opportunistic foragers that use a variety of habitats including open, rocky outcrops and also occur along drainage lines, riparian zones and are known to travel long distances across their home ranges (HP, 2025). A review of available database indicate that the species has been recorded in the local area (50 km radius of the application area) frequently with over 1800 records. The Biota (2024) field survey confirmed the presence of the species within the survey area through the detection of scats and tracks. Although no active dens were observed, suitable habitat is present within the survey area. This habitat is representative of the greater Pilbara region, where habitats area interconnected and extend 46,676.4 ha of suitable habitat are present within the survey area (Biota, 2024 & 2025). The placement of the application areas has avoided areas where Northern quolls were recorded (Biota, 2024 & 2025). The proposed clearing areas, however, contain open rocky habitat and near to drainage lines which are considered suitable for denning, foraging and dispersal of young. There is a maximum of 92.2ha of such habitats within the application area or approximately 0.2% of the combined suitable denning, foraging and dispersal habitats mapped within the surveyed area. Given the availability of similar habitat in excellent conditions surrounding the application areas and the extent of clearing in each site, the overall connectivity between the habitats will not be severed by the clearing; and a loss of this proportion of habitat is unlikely to pose a significant risk to the survival of the local population. Mitigation measures, including pre-clearance surveys and limiting clearing and investigation works during the day can further reduce risks to individuals if present during clearing.

***Macrotis lagotis* – Bilby**

Bilbies are nocturnal, omnivorous foragers that occupy extensive home ranges, often in sandy loam soils supporting spinifex and Acacia shrublands (Hill and Ward, 2010). The threatened fauna species has been well recorded in the region (PGL, 2025). During the Biota (2024) survey no bilby individuals were directly identified, but secondary evidence including fresh and old burrows indicated the likely occurrence of bilbies within the survey area. The survey also mapped 32,811.2 ha of suitable habitat for bilby in the form of the Acacia shrubland on spinifex sandplain within the survey area, of which 75 ha (0.2%) is within the application area. The Recovery Plan for Greater Bilby suggests that habitat critical to the survival of bilby includes any area where the species is known or likely to occur as shown in the distribution map (DCCEEW, 2023). The definition of critical habitat in the recovery plan is noted as being interim, therefor requiring case-by-case analysis and consideration. The placement of the application areas has avoided the locations with recorded burrows and direct impact to bilby individuals is unlikely. It is recognised that the greater bilby is mobile, able to move between burrows up to 5km apart on a given night (DCCEEW, 2023) and this presents the risk of greater bilby entering vegetated areas proposed for clearing. Noting the limited scale of disturbance at each clearing site and the occurrence of similar vegetation surrounding them, clearing is unlikely to sever movement corridors and prevent access to habitat resources supporting the greater bilby population locally and regionally. The disturbance of 0.2% of suitable habitat for bilby within the surveyed area is considered unlikely to pose a significant risk to the survival of the local population. Mitigation measures including pre-clearance surveys to identify active burrows, avoidance of burrow areas, limiting timing of activities to daylight hours, and staged clearing to allow for natural dispersal can further minimise the potential impacts on bilby if present and when moving through the environment.

Rhinonicteris aurantia (Pilbara form) - Pilbara Leaf-nosed Bat

The Pilbara leaf-nosed bat typically roosts in caves, mines, or rocky crevices and forages over large areas of open woodland (PGL, 2025). The conservation advice for the species highlights the importance of protecting roost sites and managing foraging habitat (TSSC, 2016). While no individuals were identified during the Biota (2024) survey, ultrasonic recordings consistent with this species were detected, confirming likely use of the area for foraging. However, no roosting or breeding sites were identified. Within the survey area, there are 44,171.1 ha of suitable foraging habitat, of which only 0.2% (75.1 ha) will be impacted. Since no roosting sites were identified and the foraging habitat is widespread both within the PGL area and regionally, the proposed clearing is not expected to significantly impact the species. Mitigation measures including limiting clearing and work timings to daylight can further minimise potential impact to this nocturnal fauna species.

***Dasycercus blythi* – Brush-tailed Mulgara**

Brush-tailed Mulgara has been widely recorded in the region (PGL, 2025). The species typically inhabits spinifex dominated sandplains and is semi-nomadic in behaviour. The Biota (2024) field survey did not identify direct evidence of the occurrence of the species in the application area. Although no active burrows were recorded, suitable habitat for the species is widely distributed within the survey area. Of the 36,361.8 ha of suitable habitat

available in the surveyed area, approximately 0.2% (75.4) will be impacted by the proposed clearing (Biota, 2024). Given its wide regional distribution, the limited footprint of the proposed development, and availability of similar habitat in largely 'Very Good' to 'Excellent' condition (Trudgen, 1991) surrounding the proposed clearing areas, impacts of clearing on movement and ecological connectivity for the species are expected to be negligible. Mitigation measures including targeted pre-clearing surveys and staged clearing will further reduce the potential impact on individuals if present.

***Pseudomys chapmani* – Western Pebble-mound Mouse**

Western pebble-mound mouse is well recorded and widespread in the Pilbara region including in the survey area (PGL, 2025). The species is well known for the extensive mounds of small stones it constructs, which are the most obvious indication of the species' occurrence in an area. The Pebble-mound Mouse has limited mobility and a strong reliance on habitat structure, so any loss of active mound clusters could result in localised declines (Biota, 2024). No direct evidence of this species was recorded during the survey i.e. on camera or observed (Biota, 2024). However, a total of 39, 289.6 ha of suitable habitat for the species occurs within the survey area with the proposed clearing affecting only 0.2% (91.7 ha). The proposed development areas were designed to avoid known mound locations, thereby significantly reducing potential impacts. Given the species widespread distribution in the Pilbara and Gascoyne, the limited extent of clearing, and the targeted avoidance, it is considered unlikely that the proposed clearing will have significant impact to the species and its conservation status. Pre-clearing survey and the presence of fauna specialist during clearing can further mitigate the potential impact on individuals, if present.

Short Ranged Endemic (SRE) Invertebrate Fauna

The fauna survey included a survey for SRE invertebrates, which identified 11 mygalomorph spiders, 17 camaenid snails, two buthid scorpions, two pseudoscorpions, 12 isopods, three centipedes and one Selenopid spider (Biota, 2024). Eight habitat types that contain various microhabitats that are prospective for SRE fauna were also identified in the survey. None of these habitats, however, were identified as being isolated to the survey area or specific sites including the proposed clearing sites (Biota, 2024). Clearing is considered unlikely to have significant impact on SRE fauna.

Impact of geotechnical investigation

Geotechnical investigation, as a part of the project, involves excavation of the ground for test pits. The pits may pose risks to the fauna species in the local area. Fauna species can fall into the pits and be trapped within. The potential impact can be mitigated by ensuring that test pits are covered during the process and backfilled after use.

Conclusion

Based on the above assessment and survey details (Biota 2024 & 2025), the proposed clearing will remove some suitable habitat for conservation significant fauna species including the northern quoll, bilby, Pilbara leaf nosed bat, brush-tailed mulgara and western pebble-mound mouse. The impact, however, is considered unlikely to be significant, and can be managed to be environmentally acceptable through permit conditioning that will mitigate the potential impacts on conservation significant fauna. Having considered the above, the Delegated Officer determined that the proposed clearing does not constitute a significant residual impact to conservation significant fauna species. The applicant may have notification responsibilities under the EPBC Act for impacts to The Greater Billby and Northern Quoll and their habitats, as set out in the EPBC Act. The applicant has been advised to contact the federal Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) to discuss EPBC Act referral requirements.

Conditions

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

- weed control and management
- slow and progressive one directional clearing to allow fauna to move into adjacent vegetation ahead of the clearing activity
- undertake targeted pre-clearance surveys for bilby, brush-tailed mulgara, quoll, and western pebble-mound mouse prior to any clearing
- a fauna specialist will monitor evidence of fauna to ensure avoidance of used burrows and allow independent movements of fauna away from habitat prior to clearing
- a fauna specialist will relocate targeted fauna to suitable habitat that do not independently move away from habitat that cannot be avoided
- restrict any clearing to daylight hours

- backfilling or covering all the test pits and bore holes to prevent fauna access; and
- revegetation and rehabilitation of areas cleared for temporary works.

3.2.3. Envrionmental Values - Clearing Principles (f and i)

Assessment

Land Resources

Soil systems mapped in areas of the PGL project area are prone to degradation. Predominantly in a dry climate of the semi-arid region, loose soils and dust pose impacts to adjacent vegetation as well as increased risk of erosion resulting from the removal of vegetation. Land management measures can mitigate potential impacts. Management measures include limiting the time of soil exposure and rehabilitation of cleared areas no longer required for the purpose of the project works. This will be imposed on the permit as conditions.

Water Resources and Riparian Vegetation
The application areas area located within the Pilbara and Canning-Kimberly groundwater and the Pilbara surface water areas proclaimed under the *Rights in Water and Irrigation Act 1914*.

The proposed clearing intersects areas associated with the DeGrey River and Tabba Tabba Creek. Disturbance of riparian vegetation or banks has the potential to impact these habitats through increased erosion, sedimentation or alteration of hydrological flows in a landscape with infrequent rainfall.

In accordance with the *Rights in Water Irrigation Act 1914*, groundwater abstraction and disturbance to the bed and banks of a watercourse in the area require licences. The applicant indicated that groundwater will be required for dust suppression, concrete batching, and camp water supply for the future PGL project, but none will be required for the purpose of the investigation works for which the clearing permit is proposed.

As a P1 area in the vicinity of the De Grey River, it is advised that the compatible conditions under the Water Quality Protection Note 25 (WQPN) be applied notably, conditions 6, 10 and 24. Further relevant conditions should also be sought under WQPN's:

- WQPN 6: Vegetation buffers to sensitive water resources
- WPQN 10: Contaminant Spills- emergency response
- WQPN 65: Toxic and hazardous substances- storage and use
- WQPN 83: Infrastructure corridors near sensitive water resources

Within the De Grey Water Reserve, the De Grey River wellfield, is drawing groundwater from the alluvial deposits of the Grey River and used to supply water for Port Hedland. Noting the nature of works required (e.g. geotechnical investigation), the relatively small amount of clearing in each site, and the conditions of vegetation surrounding the sites, it is unlikely that the proposed clearing will impact on the quality of the groundwater and surface water in the area. The activities for which the clearing is proposed will not involve the storage and use of toxic and hazardous substances. The DO sought advice from DWER water licencing experts for the region; advice supported the applicant's measures of avoidance of disturbance in areas around minor and major drainage habitats and protecting surface water channels where riparian vegetation is present with an exclusion buffer of 50m.

Surveys over the local area identified two groundwater dependent vegetation (GDV) types. These GDVs are likely to be associated with infrequent surface water caused by sporadic weather events like seasonal cyclones. The area proposed to be cleared avoids these two GDV including a buffer of 50 m.

Noting the limited extent of clearing and the nature of vegetation impacted, temporary nature of clearing, and the 50m buffer from ephemeral waterways and riparian vegetation, clearing is not expected to have impact on the riparian vegetation or lead to appreciable water quality and flow impacts at the local and regional extents. Rehabilitation will be a condition imposed on the permit to further mitigate potential impacts.

Conclusion

Based on the above assessment, the proposed clearing is considered unlikely to result in appreciable or long-term land and water degradation. The potential impacts of the proposed clearing can be managed to be environmentally acceptable by applying management measures which are required as conditions on the permit.

Conditions

To address the above impacts Management conditions will be required as conditions on the clearing permit:

- Demarcation of clearing area to ensure that clearing does not intersect riparian vegetation
- Commencement of associated works within 9 weeks of the authorised clearing
- Rehabilitation and revegetation of temporary cleared area.

3.3. Relevant planning instruments and other matters

DWER North West Regional team advised that the proposed clearing is unlikely to impact the water quality if:

- the best practice management of riparian vegetation and erosion are implemented during any development or investigations stage
- the applicant adhere to the departments' Water Quality Protection Guidelines and Water Quality Protection Notes; and
- relevant approvals under the *Rights in Water and Irrigation Act 1914* are obtained.

The applicant continues liaising with DWER on the potential approvals required to drill groundwater bores and abstract groundwater.

The Town of Port Hedland advised that local government approvals are not required, and that the proposed clearing is exempt from the need to obtain development approval under the *Planning and Development Act 2005*, given they are public works under the *Public Works Act 1902*. The Shire advocated for the avoidance of clearing of riparian vegetation in the proximity of the De Grey River and Tabba Tabba Creek.

The applicant advised they do not intend to exercise powers under the *Energy Operators (Powers) Act 1979*.

Several Aboriginal sites of significance have been mapped within the application area but not within indicative clearing. 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

C.1. Site characteristics

Characteristic	Details
Local context	The areas proposed to be cleared are collectively 93.3 hectares over a 232.6 ha range part of an expansive tract of native vegetation in the extensive land use zone of Western Australia. It is surrounded by predominantly uncleared land in a rough alignment with the Great Northern Highway and the Port Hedland Shay Gap Railway. The proposed clearing areas are relatively minor and disjunct over a 250km span of intact and predominantly excellent condition vegetation. Aerial imagery and spatial data indicates the local area (50-kilometre radius from the centre of the area proposed to be cleared) retains >90 per cent of the original native vegetation cover.
Ecological linkage	Given the projects location within the Pilbara Region ecological linkages are likely to predominantly follow drainage and ephemeral water lines.
Conservation areas	No conservation areas within the application area
Vegetation description	Vegetation survey (2025) indicates the vegetation within the proposed development area consists of predominantly, hummock grassland of *Triodia* species with shrub and overstorey varying between subregions with some riparian habitat subcoastal plains. The full survey descriptions and maps are available in **Error! Reference source not found.**. The mapped vegetation type(s) occurring over the application areas include: • Beard Vegetation Association 93, which is described as Hummock grasslands, shrub steppe; kanji over soft spinifex (10.5 ha) • Beard Vegetation Association 101, which is described as Hummock grasslands, shrub steppe; *Acacia pachycarpa* over soft spinifex (72.3 ha) • Beard Vegetation Association 117, which is described as Hummock grasslands, grass steppe; soft spinifex (147.8 ha) • Beard Vegetation Association 589, which is described as Mosaic: Short bunch grassland – savanna / grass plain (Pilbara) / Hummock grasslands, grass steppe; soft spinifex (1.0 ha) • Beard Vegetation Association 93, which is described as Hummock grasslands, dwarf shrub steppe; *Acacia translucens* over soft spinifex (1.0 ha) This is consistent with the DPIRD (2019) mapped vegetation landforms consisting of: • Clay Plains • Plains • Low Stony Rises; and • Rocky Outcrops and Breakaways The full survey descriptions and maps for the application area are available in Appendix D.
Vegetation condition	Vegetation survey (2024-2025) indicates the vegetation within the proposed clearing area is in Excellent (Trudgen, 1991*)* condition, described as: • 87 % Excellent condition • 2.9 % Very Good to Excellent condition • 9.1 % Very Good condition • <0.1% Poor to Good condition • 0.9 % Cleared The full Trudgen (1991) condition rating scale is provided in 0. The full survey descriptions and mapping are available in **Error! Reference source not found.**.

Characteristic	Details
Climate and landform	The Pilbara region is characterised by a climate of very hot summers, mild winters and low rainfall year-round. The proposed area is characteristic of hot grassland climate of the north-west Pilbara. The DE intersects 3 Sub regions within the greater Pilbara and Great Sandy Desert Bioregions varying from Roeburn PIL4 (Alluvial and older colluvial coastal and sub coastal plains); Chichester PIL1 (Undulating granite and basaltic ranges) and; McLarty GSD1 (Tree steppe grading to shrub step with open hummock grassland over red longitudinal sand dune fields).
Soil description	The soil is mapped as: • Nita Sandplain Zone: Sandplains and dunes on cretaceous canning basin sedimentary rocks with red deep sands and some red sandy earths. • Nullagine Hills Zone 280: Hills and ranges (with some stony plains) on volcanic and sedimentary rocks of the Pilbara craton (including the Hamersley Basin) with stony soils and red shallow loams and sands. • De Grey-Roebourne Lowlands Zone: Alluvial plains and sandplains on alluvial and marine deposits over the northern Pilbara craton with red deep sandy duplexes, red loamy earths, red/brown non-cracking clays, cracking clays, red sandy earths and red deep loamy duplexes
Land degradation risk	The application area has a moderate risk for salinity and high to extreme risk for wind erosion, water erosion and phosphorous export
Waterbodies	The desktop assessment and aerial imagery indicated that the proposed clearing would intersect areas in proximity to the De Grey River and Tabba Tabba Creek as well as intersecting a drainage channel.
Hydrogeography	Part of the DE falls within the De Grey River Water Reserve proclaimed under the CAWS Act but outside of the wellhead protection zone
Flora	No threatened species were recorded in the area. Eleven priority species were recorded in proximity of the of the proposed area including one P2 species and ten P3 species. For two priority 3 species recorded in surveys (*Bonamia oblongifolia* and *Euphorbia inappendiculate* var. *queenslandica)* records represent significant range extensions. Seven more priority species were not recorded by surveys but listed as likely to occur in the area due to presence of habitat linked to respective species. Eight priority species were listed as moderate chance of occurrence due to small amounts of related habitat present in the survey area or due to being recorded infrequently recorded in the area.
Ecological communities	The applicant notes the Protected Matters Search Tool (PMST) identified no TEC's and one Priority Ecological Community that was misclassified and does not occur in the area surveyed. Riparian vegetation within the De Grey River area is highly likely to be a Groundwater Dependent Ecosystem due to the presence of phreatophytic species; *Eucalyptus camaldulensis, Eucalyptus victrix* and *Melaleuca argentea*
Fauna	A number of conservation significant fauna were recorded as known in proximity to the proposed clearing: • *Dasyurus hallucatus* (Endangered) • *Macrotis lagotis* (Vulnerable) • *Petrogale lateralis lateralis* (Endangered) • *Rhinonicteris aurantia* Pilbara form (Vulnerable) • *Macroderma gigas* (Vulnerable)

Characteristic	Details
	• *Liasis olivaceus barroni* (Vulnerable) • *Falco hypoleucos* (Vulnerable) • *Apus pacificus* (Migratory) • *Lerista seperanda* (Priority 2) • *Lagorchestes conspicillatus* (Priority 4) • *Dasycercus blythi* (Priority 4) • *Pseudomys chapmani* (Priority 4)

C.2. Flora analysis table

With consideration for the site characteristics set out above, relevant datasets (see Appendix E.1), and biological survey information (Biota 2024), impacts to the following conservation significant flora required further consideration.

Species name	Conservation status	Suitable habitat features? [Y/N]	Suitable vegetation 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. Pritzelianum (S. van Leeuwen 5095)	P3	Y	Y	<3	35	Y
Acacia monticola x tumida var. kulparn	P3	Y	Y	<49	1	**Y**
Aponogeton queenslandicus	P1	Y	Y	<25	2	Y
Atriplex eremitis	P1	Y	Y	<25	3	Y
Bulbostylis burbidgeae	P4	Y	Y	<2	12	
*Corchorus sp. Yarrie (*J. Bull & D. Roberts CAL 01.05)	P1	Y	Y	<21	3	Y
Croton aridus	P3	Y	Y	0	11	Y
Eremophila maculata subsp. filifolia	P1	Y	Y	<24	3	Y
Euphorbia clementii	P3	Y	Y	<2	8	Y
Euphorbia inappendiculata var. inappendiculata	P3	Y	Y	<33	2	Y
Euploca mutica	P3	Y	Y	<1	41	Y
Euploca parviantrum	P1	Y	Y	<13	2	Y
Fimbristylis sp. Shay Gap (K.R. Newbey 10293)	P1	Y	Y	<7	1	Y
Gomphrena leptophylla	P3	Y	Y	<11	1	Y
Gomphrena pusilla	P2	Y	Y	<14	5	Y
Goodenia hartiana	P2	Y	Y	<3	2	Y
Gymnanthera cunninghamii	P3	Y	Y	<12	6	Y
Heliotropium murinum	P3	Y	Y	<24	3	Y
Indigofera ammobia	P3	Y	Y	<19	1	Y
Nicotiana umbratica	P3	Y	Y	<4	2	Y
Ptilotus mollis	P4	Y	Y	<21	2	Y
Rothia indica subsp. australis	P3	Y	Y	<4	15	Y
Tephrosia rosea var. Port Hedland (A.S. George 1114)	P1	Y	Y	<5	34	Y
Tribulopis marliesiae	P3	Y	Y	0	6	Y
Triodia chichesterensis	P3	Y	Y	<12	8	Y
Triodia degreyensis	P1	Y	Y	<2	3	Y

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

C.3. Fauna analysis table

Species name	Conservation status	Suitable habitat features? [Y/N]	Suitable vegetation type? [Y/N]	Are surveys adequate to identify? [Y, N, N/A]
Dasyurus hallucatus	EN	Y	Y	Y
Macrotis lagotis	V	Y	Y	Y
Rhinonicteris aurantia	V	Y	Y	Y
Falco Hypoleucos	V	Y	Y	Y
Dasycercus blythi	P4	Y	Y	Y
Pseuodmys chapmani	P4	Y	Y	Y
Macroderma gigas	V	Y	Y	Y
Liasis olivaceus barroni	V	Y	Y	Y
Petrogale lateralis lateralis	EN	Y	Y	Y
Lerista separanda	P2	Y	Y	Y
Leggadina lakedownesis	P4	Y	Y	Y
Lagorchestes conspicillatus	P4	Y	Y	Y

C.4. Land degradation risk table

Risk categories	*Land Unit 1*
Wind erosion	99% of the map unit has a high to extreme hazard
Water erosion	99% of the map unit has a very high to extreme hazard
Salinity	99% of the map unit has a moderate Hazard
Subsurface Acidification	0% of the map unit has a high susceptibility
Flood risk	99% of the map unit has a moderate to high hazard
Water logging	99% of the map unit has a moderate to very high to risk
Phosphorus export risk	99% of the map unit has a high to extreme hazard

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 unlikely contains regionally significant flora, fauna, habitats, assemblages of plants. However, the proposed clearing may impact on priority flora and habitat for conservation significant fauna. The vegetation proposed to be cleared does not represent TECs or PECs, or provides ecological linkage values. Some proposed areas intersect riparian vegetation types associated with the De Gey River and its tributaries. All proposed clearing is relatively small in the context of the broader local and regional habitat and unlikely to result in a significant reduction in biological values.	May 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 area proposed to be cleared constitutes a relatively minor loss of habitat for a number of conservation significant species in the context of the broader local habitat remaining intact in comparable condition predominantly for forage and dispersal. Given that most clearing will be temporary it is unlikely to have a significant impact on available habitat for conservation significant fauna. Regard should be given to conservation significant fauna in the context of possible occurrence of dens in proposed areas.	May be at variance	Yes *Refer to Section 3.2.2, 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 has not been identified as containing any Threatened flora species. The indicative area for clearing is relatively minor in an area of vegetation that is largely contiguous and of similar condition.	Not likely to be at variance	No
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: There are no records of threatened ecological communities within the application area. The areas proposed to be cleared do not contain species that indicate a threatened ecological community.	Not at variance	No
Environmental value: significant remnant vegetation and conservation areas		

Assessment against the clearing principles	Variance level	Is further consideration required?
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. The clearing of 93.3 hectares, in addition to the 23.88 hectares previously approved under CPS 10940/1, will impact approximately 0.004% of the local area (50-kilometre buffer). This level of impact is not considered significant.	Not at variance	No
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: The proposed area intersects borders associated with the De Grey River a Nationally Important Wetland but will buffer riparian areas by 50m and plan micro siting of impact areas to minimise clearing vegetation associated with riparian areas and potential Groundwater Dependent Vegetation.	May be at variance	Yes *Refer to Section 3.2.3, 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 highly susceptible to wind & water erosion. Noting the extent of the application area occurs in relatively small discrete patches across relatively intact vegetation communities, the proposed clearing is not likely to have an appreciable impact on land degradation.	May be at variance	Yes *Refer to Section 3.2.3, above.*
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: Given the separation distance, the proposed clearing is unlikely to impact the environmental values of adjacent or nearby conservation areas.	Not likely to be at variance	No
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: Three of the proposed clearing sites are located on the border of waterways. The application areas are also within the mapped De Grey River Water Reserve. Given, the extent of the proposed clearing, this environmental value is unlikely to be significantly impacted.	Not likely to be at variance	Yes *Refer to Section 3.2.3, above.*
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 indicate the proposed clearing is likely to contribute to increased incidence or intensity of flooding. A number of water courses are recorded within the application area; however, the proposed clearing is unlikely to contribute to waterlogging. Interception of these water course areas is relatively minor, and micro siting	Not likely to be at variance	Yes *Refer to Section 3.2.3, above.*

Assessment against the clearing principles	Variance level	Is further consideration required?
will be developed to avoid areas of high erosion potential (near rills or gullies). Most clearing near watercourse areas is proposed as temporary in nature		

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 Excerpts (Biota, 2024 & 2025)

Horizon Power engaged GHD to assist with the application for the clearing permit. GHD had engaged Biota Environmental Sciences Pty Ltd (Biota, 2024) to undertake biological surveys to inform the application. The biological surveys were conducted over the Link 1 corridor of the project which is approximately 2 km wide and 275 km long, measuring a total of 50,199.4 ha in area (See Figure 3. Below). The scopes and timing of the surveys are:

- Reconnaissance and targeted flora and vegetation survey (2 – 13 May 2024)
- Basic and targeted fauna survey, with short-range endemic (SRE) fauna sampling (2 – 13 May 2024) and:
- Gap Areas Biological Assessment (May 2025).

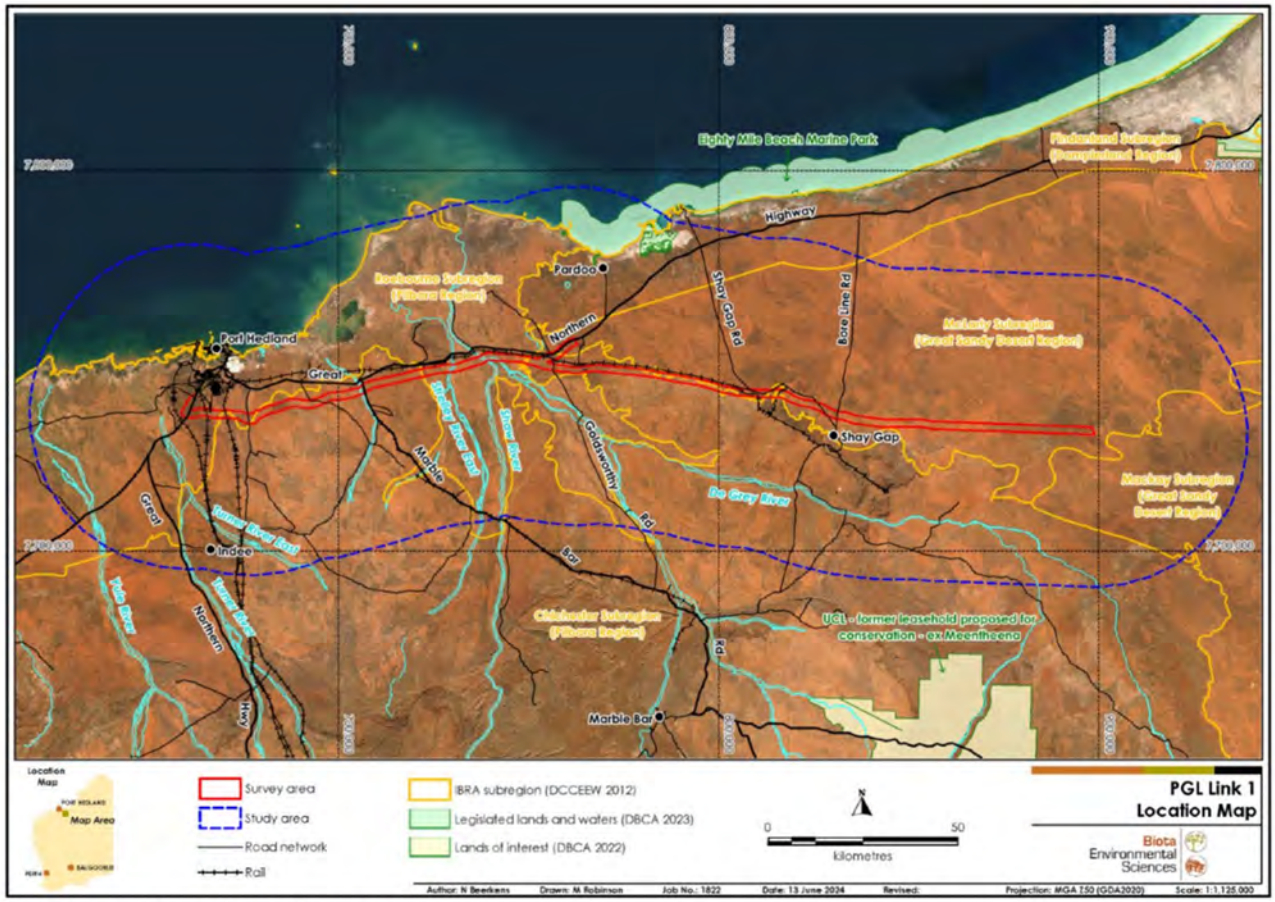


Figure 2.1: Location of the survey area and study area.

Figure 3: Survey and study area (Biota, 2024)

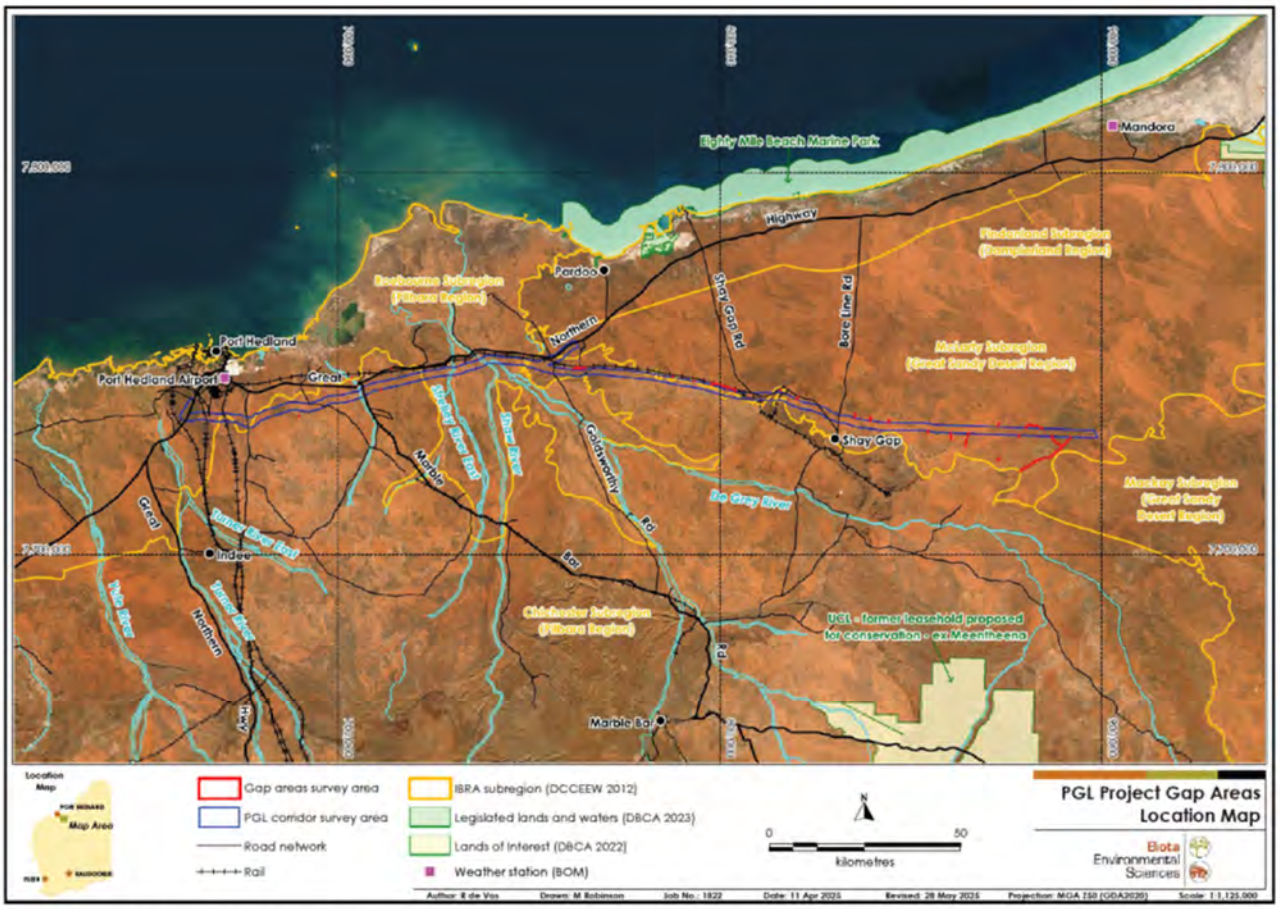
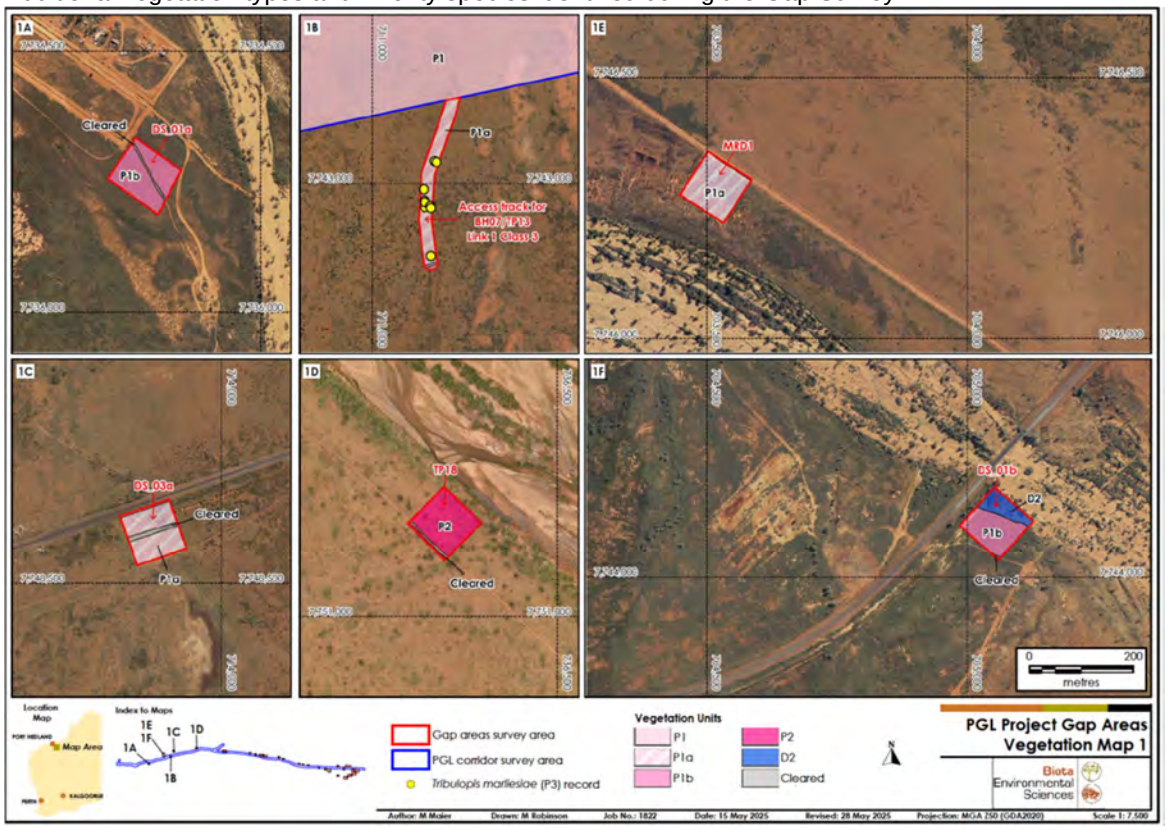
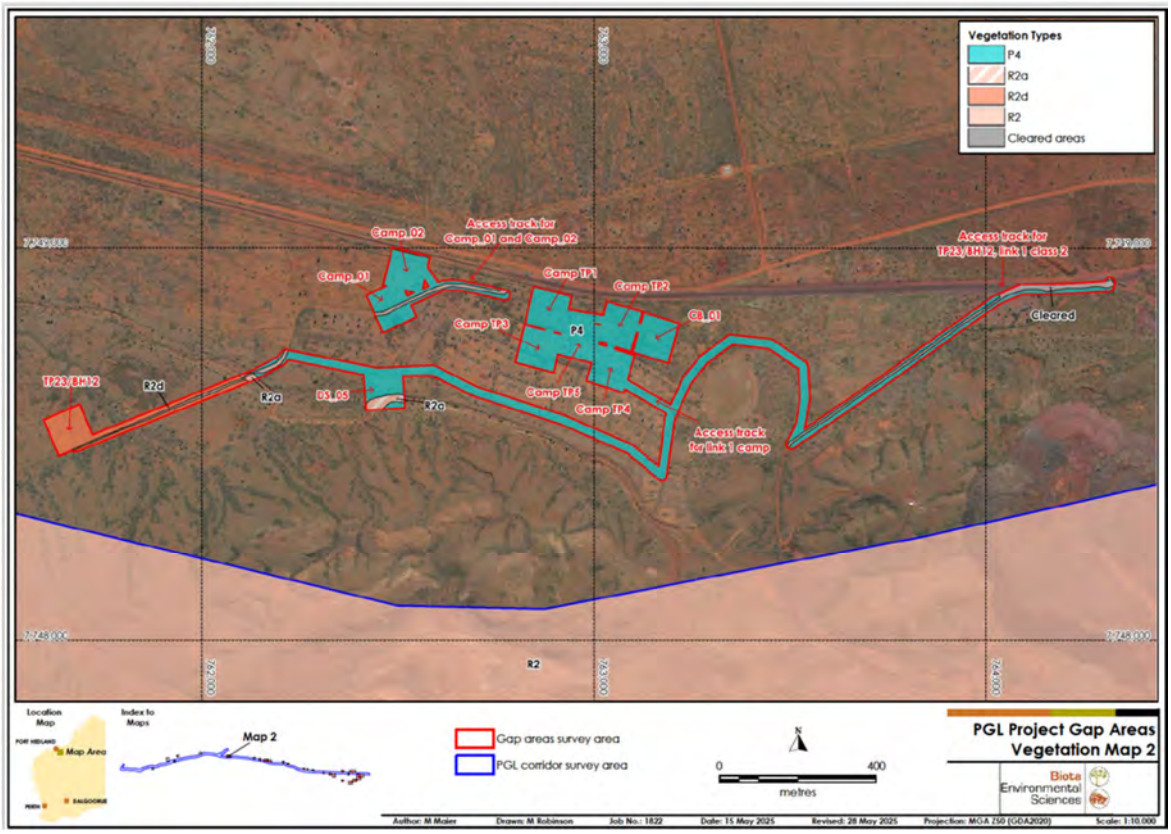


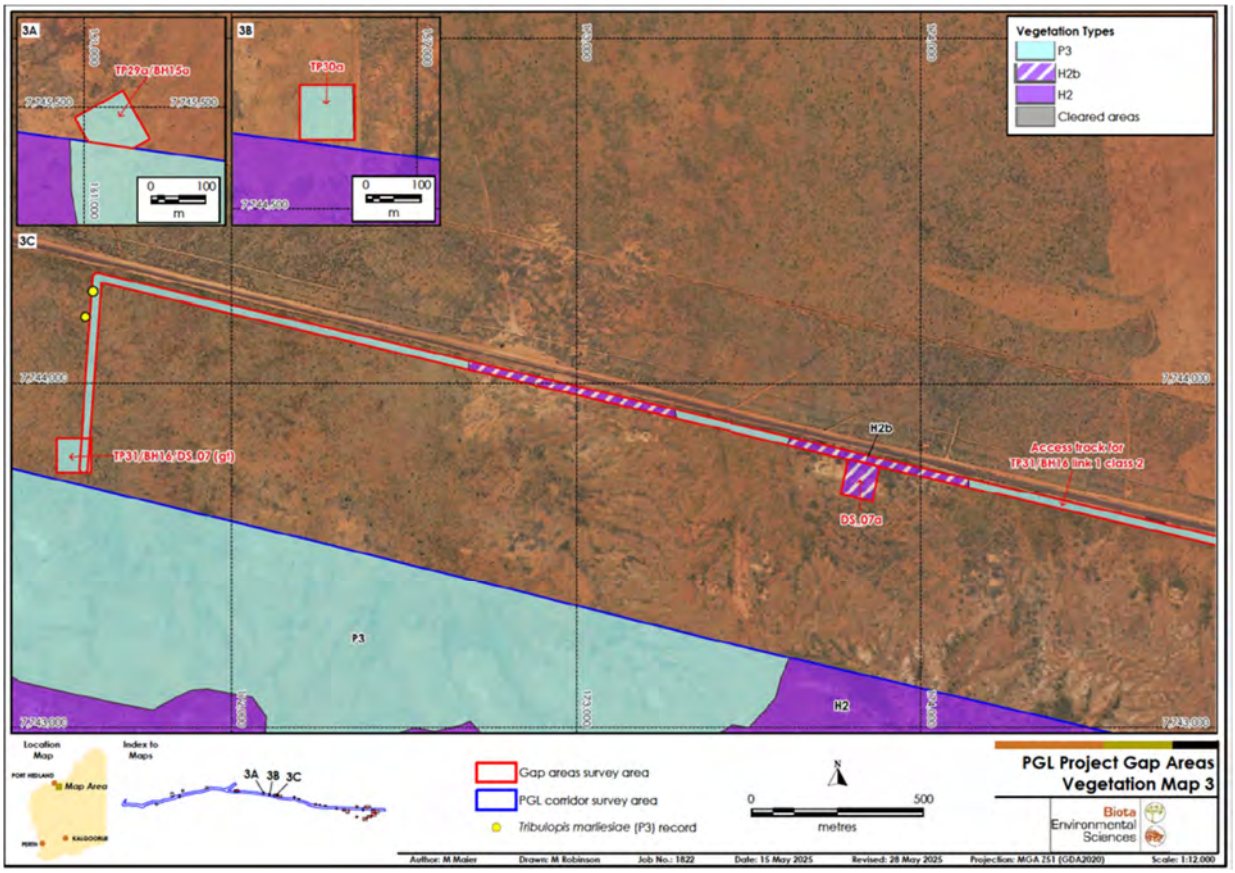
Figure 2.1: Location of the survey area.

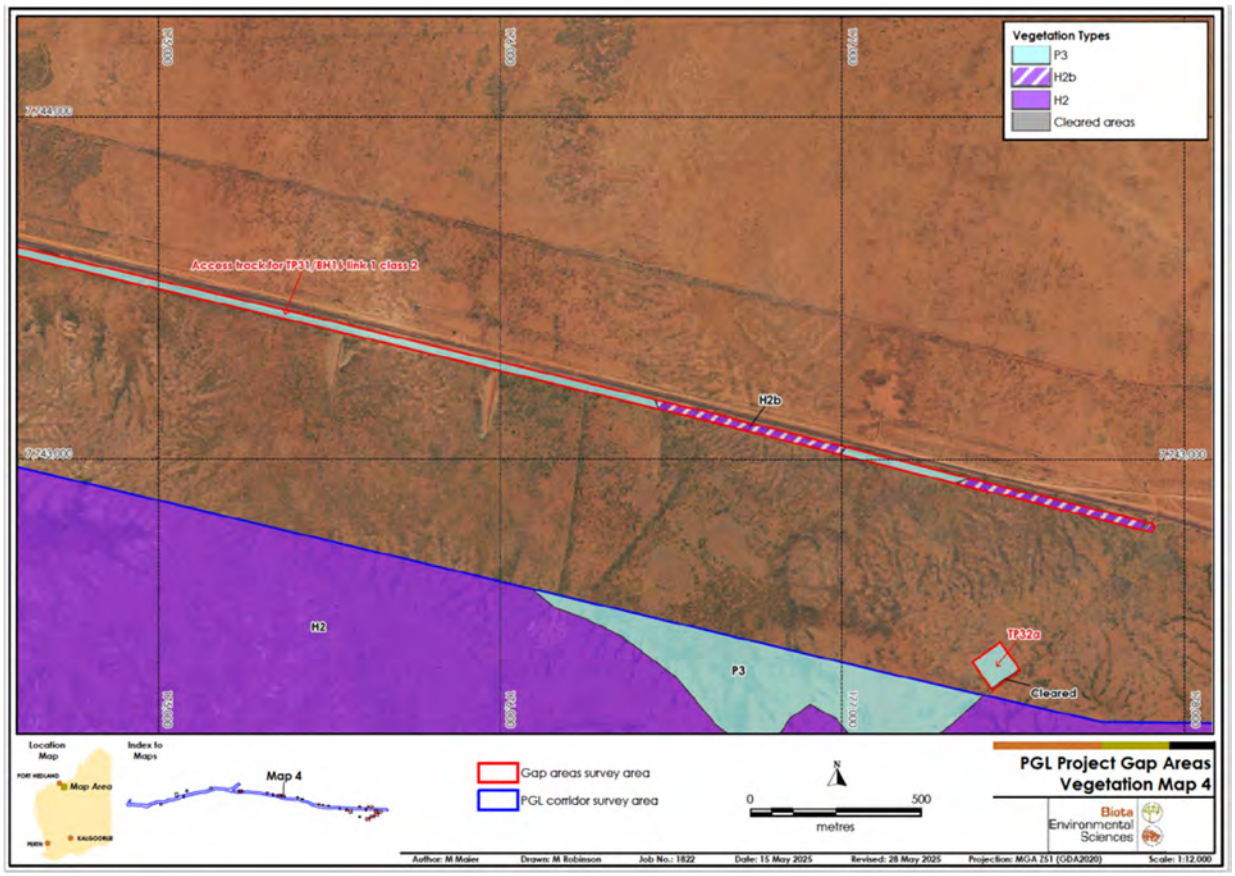
Figure 4: Gap Survey Areas (Biota 2025)

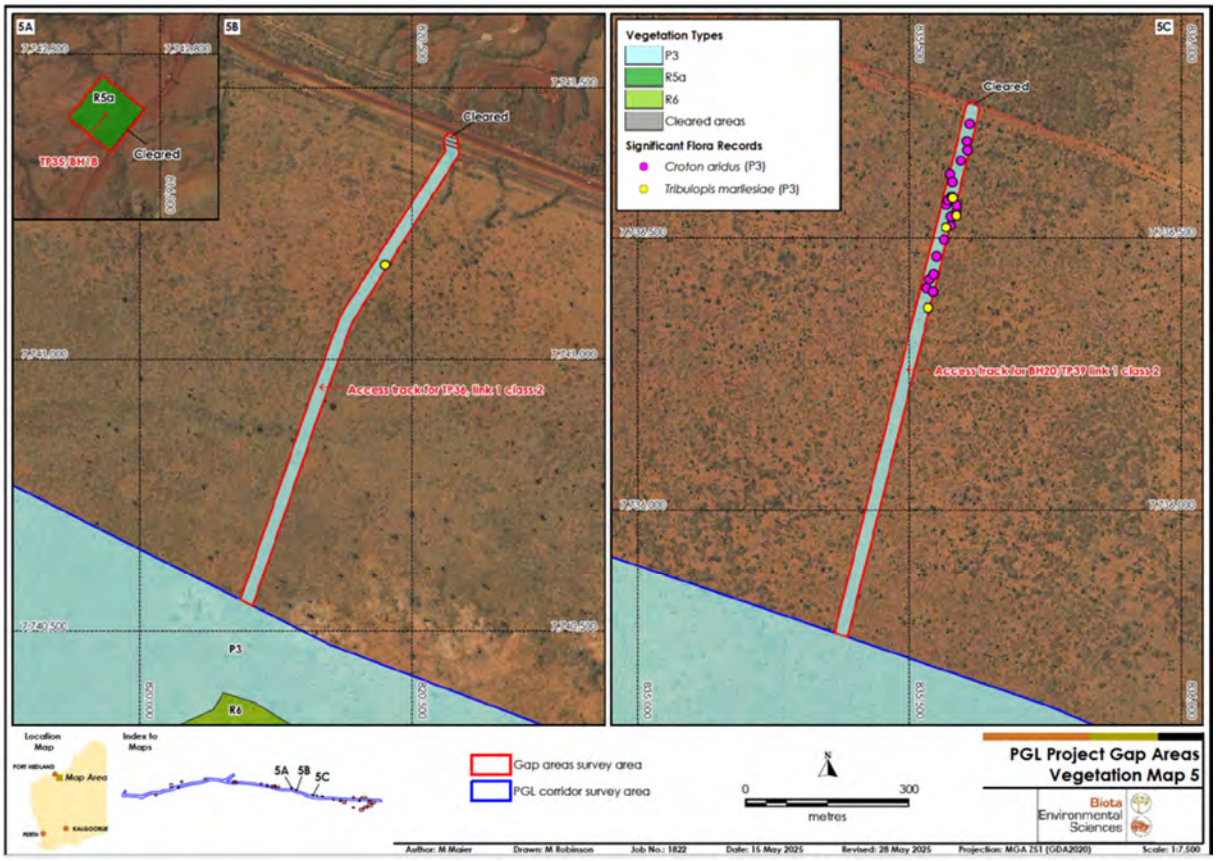
Additional vegetation types and Priority species identified during the Gap Survey

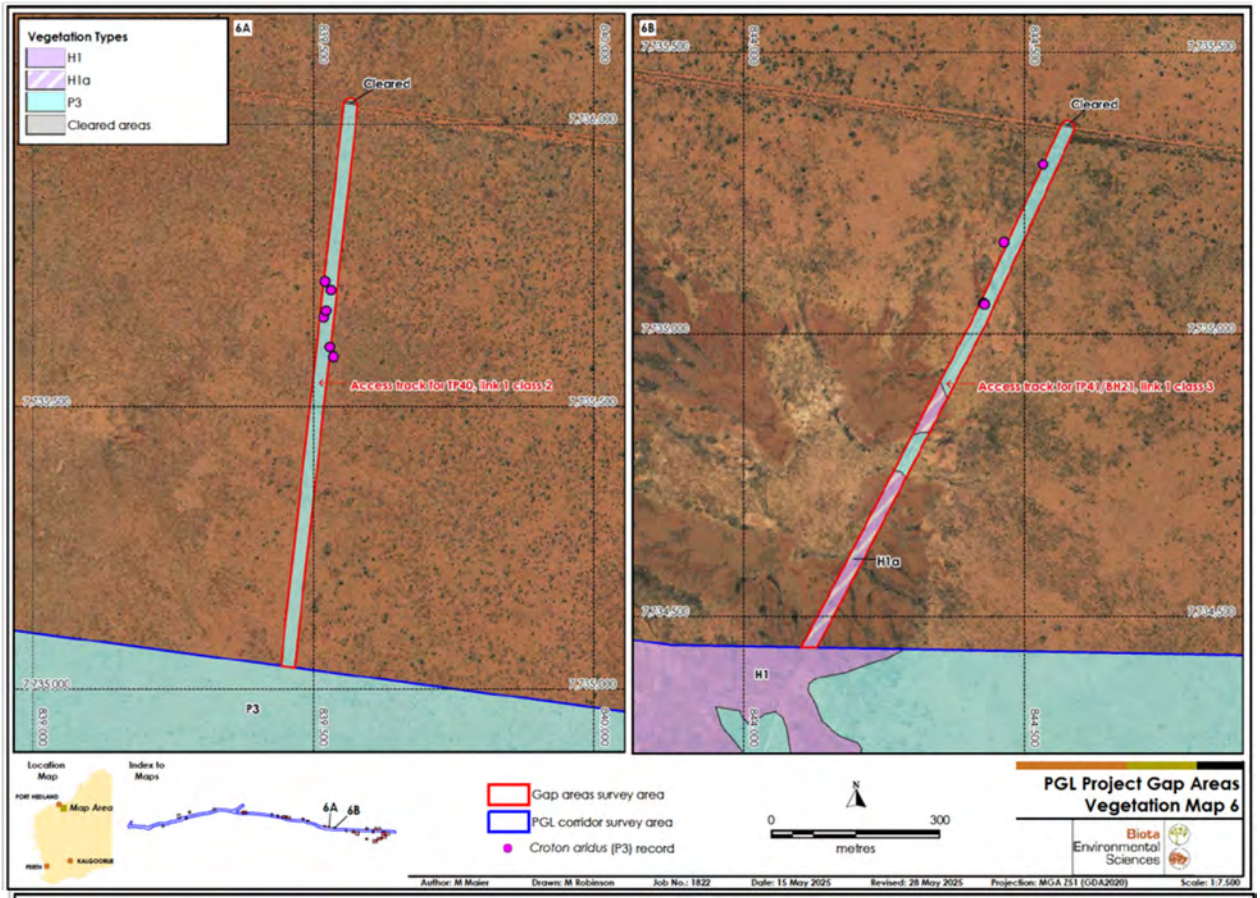


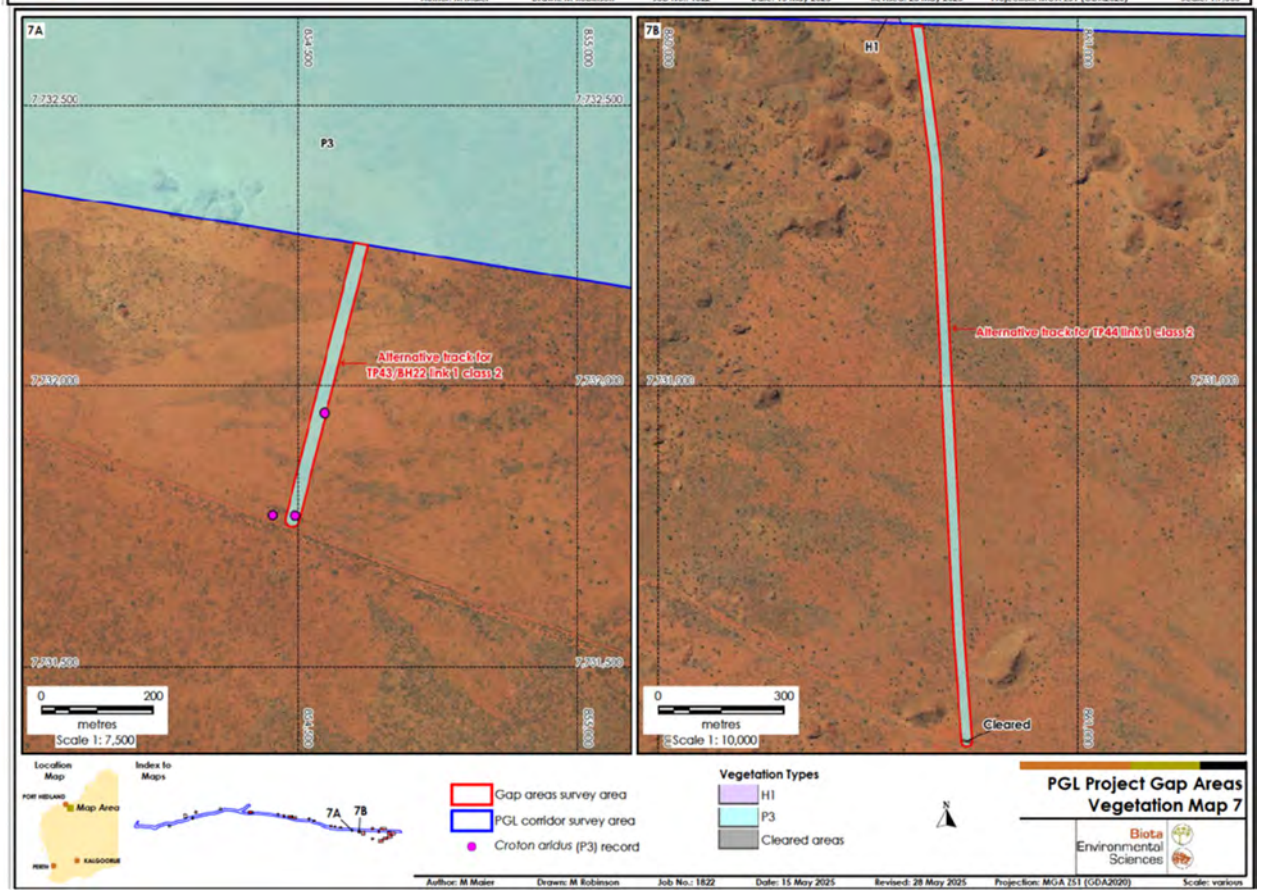


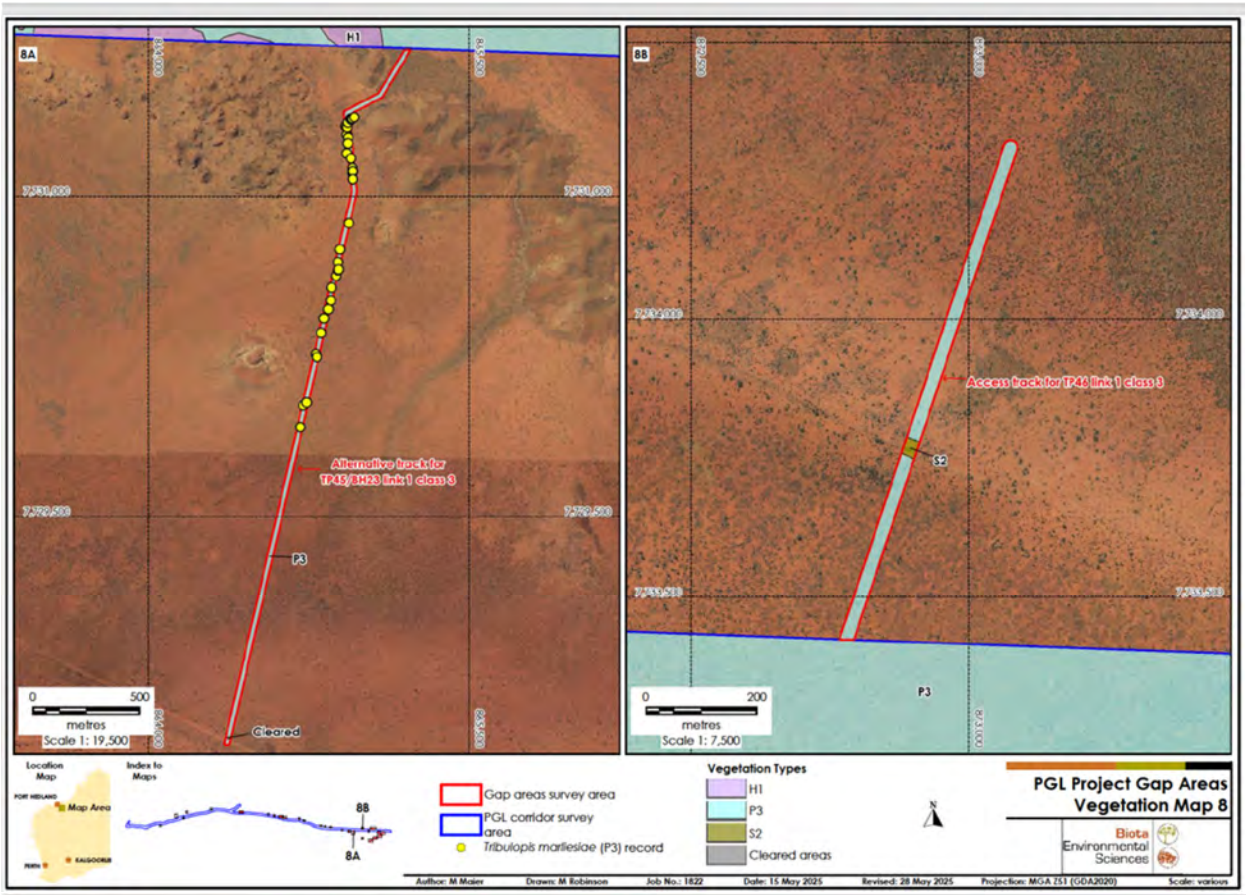

3A
3B
3C
TP29a/BH15a
TP30a
TP31/BH16/DS.07 (gl)
H2b
DS.07a
Access track for TP31/BH16 link 1 class 2
P3
H2
Vegetation Types
P3
H2b
H2
Cleared areas
Location Map
Index to Maps
Map Area
Gap areas survey area
PGL corridor survey area
Tribulopis marliesiae (P3) record
metres
PGL Project Gap Areas
Vegetation Map 3
Biota Environmental Sciences

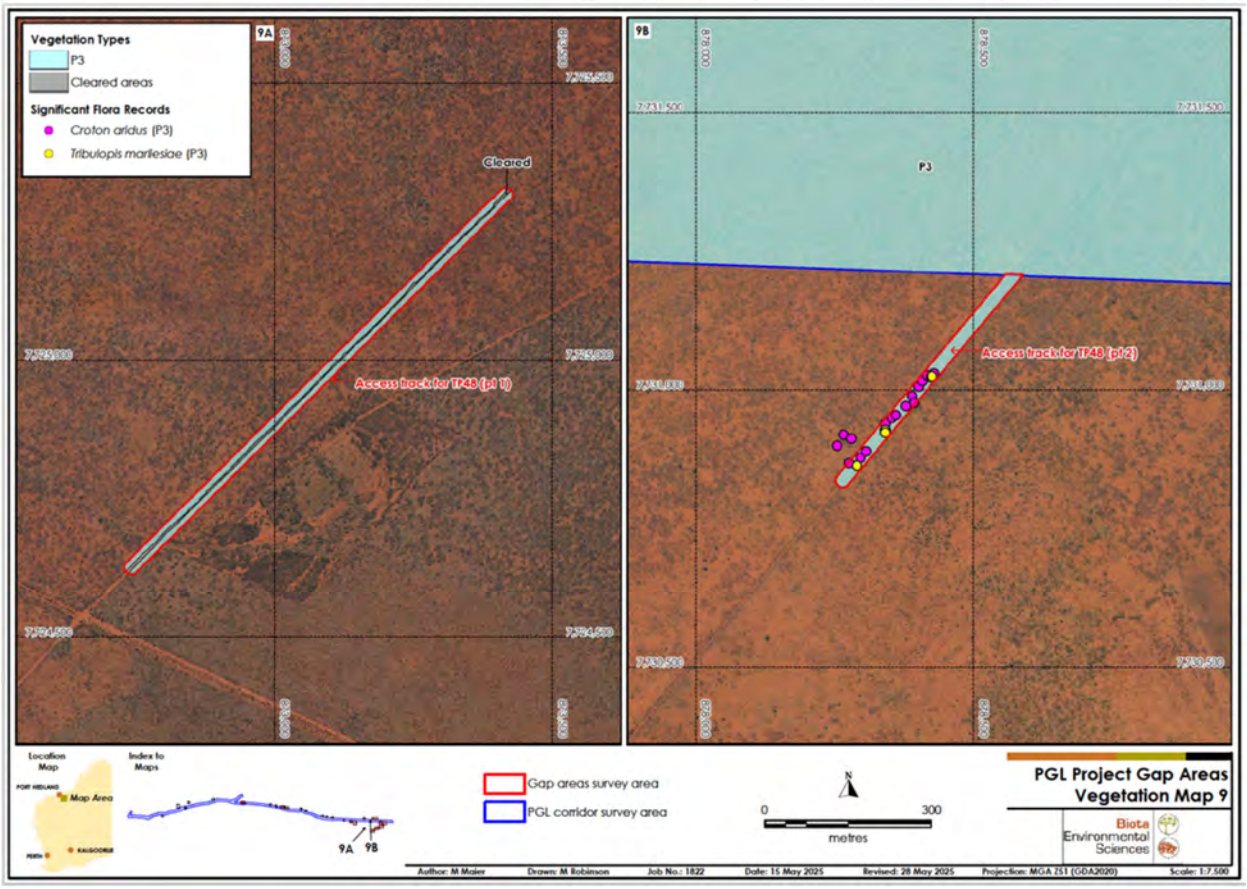

Access track for TP31/BH16 link 1 class 2
H2b
H2
P3
TP32a
Cleared
Vegetation Types
P3
H2b
H2
Cleared areas
Location Map
Index to Maps
Map 4
Map Area
Gap areas survey area
PGL corridor survey area
metres
PGL Project Gap Areas
Vegetation Map 4
Biota Environmental Sciences


5A
5B
5C
R5a
TP39/BH18
Cleared
Access track for TP36_link 1 class 2
Access track for BH20/TP39 link 1 class 2
P3
R6
Vegetation Types
P3
R5a
R6
Cleared areas
Significant Flora Records
Croton aridus (P3)
Tribulopis marlieslae (P3)
Location Map
Index to Maps
Map Area
Gap areas survey area
PGL corridor survey area
0
300
metres
PGL Project Gap Areas
Vegetation Map 5
Biota Environmental Sciences
Author: M Maier
Drawn: M Robinson
Job No.: 1822
Date: 15 May 2025
Revised: 28 May 2025
Projection: MGA 251 (GDA2020)
Scale: 1:7,500


Vegetation Types
H1
H1a
P3
Cleared areas
6A
6B
Cleared
Access track for TP40, link 1 class 2
Access track for TP41/BH21, link 1 class 3
H1a
H1
P3
Location Map
Index to Maps
Map Area
6A
6B
Gap areas survey area
PGL corridor survey area
Croton aridus (P3) record
0
300
metres
PGL Project Gap Areas
Vegetation Map 6
Biota Environmental Sciences
Author: M Maier
Drawn: M Robinson
Job No.: 1822
Date: 15 May 2025
Revised: 28 May 2025
Projection: MGA 51 (GDA2020)
Scale: 1:7,500


7A
7B
P3
H1
Alternative track for TP43/BH22 link 1 class 2
Alternative track for TP44 link 1 class 2
Cleared
0
200
metres
Scale 1: 7,500
0
300
metres
Scale 1: 10,000
Location Map
Index to Maps
Map Area
7A
7B
Gap areas survey area
PGL corridor survey area
Croton aridus (P3) record
Vegetation Types
H1
P3
Cleared areas
PGL Project Gap Areas
Vegetation Map 7
Biota Environmental Sciences
Author: M Maier
Drawn: M Robinson
Job No.: 1822
Date: 15 May 2025
Revised: 28 May 2025
Projection: MGA 51 (GDA2020)
Scale: various


8A
H1
Alternative track for TP45/BH23 link 1 class 3
P3
Cleared
0
500
metres
Scale 1: 19,500
8B
Access track for TP46 link 1 class 3
S2
P3
0
200
metres
Scale 1: 7,500
Location Map
Index to Maps
Map Area
8B
8A
Gap areas survey area
PGL corridor survey area
Tribulopis marliesiae (P3) record
Vegetation Types
H1
P3
S2
Cleared areas
PGL Project Gap Areas
Vegetation Map 8
Biota Environmental Sciences
Author: M Maier
Drawn: M Robinson
Job No.: 1822
Date: 15 May 2025
Revised: 28 May 2025
Projection: MGA 251 (GDA2020)
Scale: various


Vegetation Types
P3
Cleared areas
Significant Flora Records
Croton aridus (P3)
Tribulopis marliesiae (P3)
9A
Cleared
Access track for TP48 (pt 1)
9B
P3
Access track for TP48 (pt 2)
Location Map
Index to Maps
Map Area
9A
9B
Gap areas survey area
PGL corridor survey area
0
300
metres
PGL Project Gap Areas
Vegetation Map 9
Biota Environmental Sciences
Author: M Maier
Drawn: M Robinson
Job No.: 1822
Date: 15 May 2025
Revised: 28 May 2025
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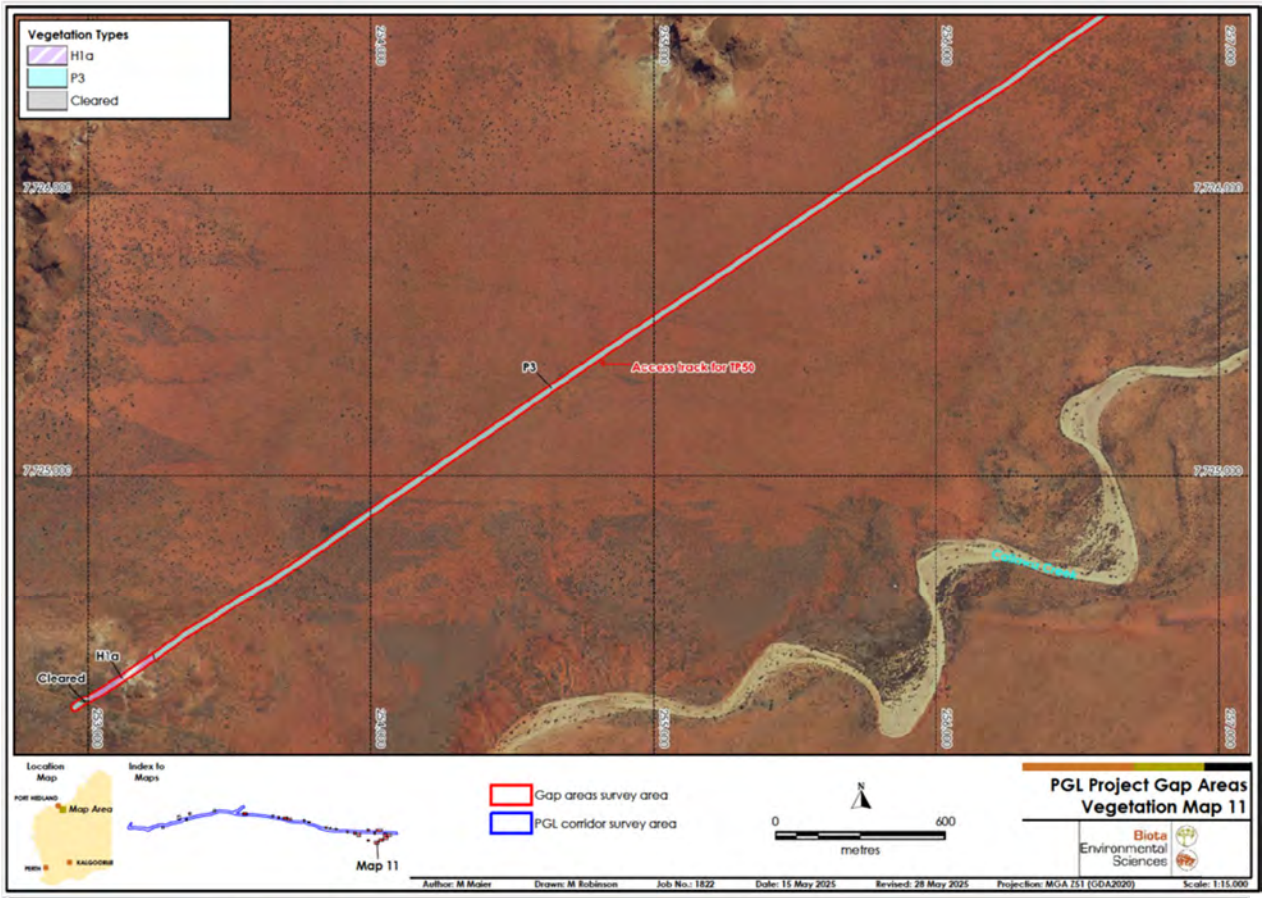
Scale: 1:7,500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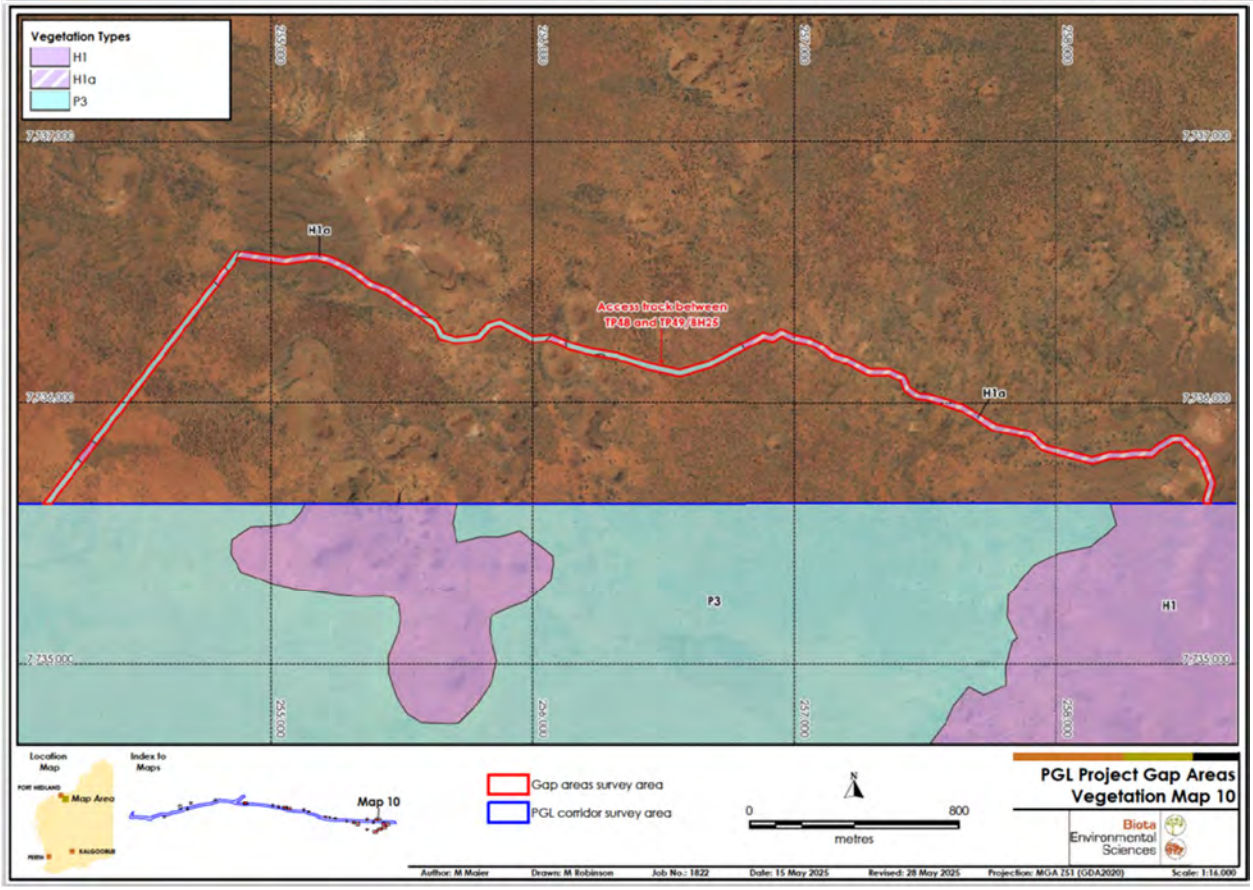
H1a
P3
Cleared
P3
Access track for TP50
H1a
Cleared
Location Map
Index to Maps
Map Area
Map 11
Gap areas survey area
PGL corridor survey area
0
600
metres
PGL Project Gap Areas
Vegetation Map 11
Biota Environmental Sciences
Author: M Maier
Drawn: M Robinson
Job No.: 1822
Date: 15 May 2025
Revised: 28 May 2025
Projection: MGA 251 (GDA2020)
Scale: 1:15,000


Vegetation Types
H1
H1a
P3
H1a
Access track between TP48 and TP49, BH25
H1a
P3
H1
Location Map
Index to Maps
Map Area
Map 10
Gap areas survey area
PGL corridor survey area
0
800
metres
PGL Project Gap Areas
Vegetation Map 10
Biota Environmental Sciences
Author: M Maier
Drawn: M Robinson
Job No.: 1822
Date: 15 May 2025
Revised: 28 May 2025
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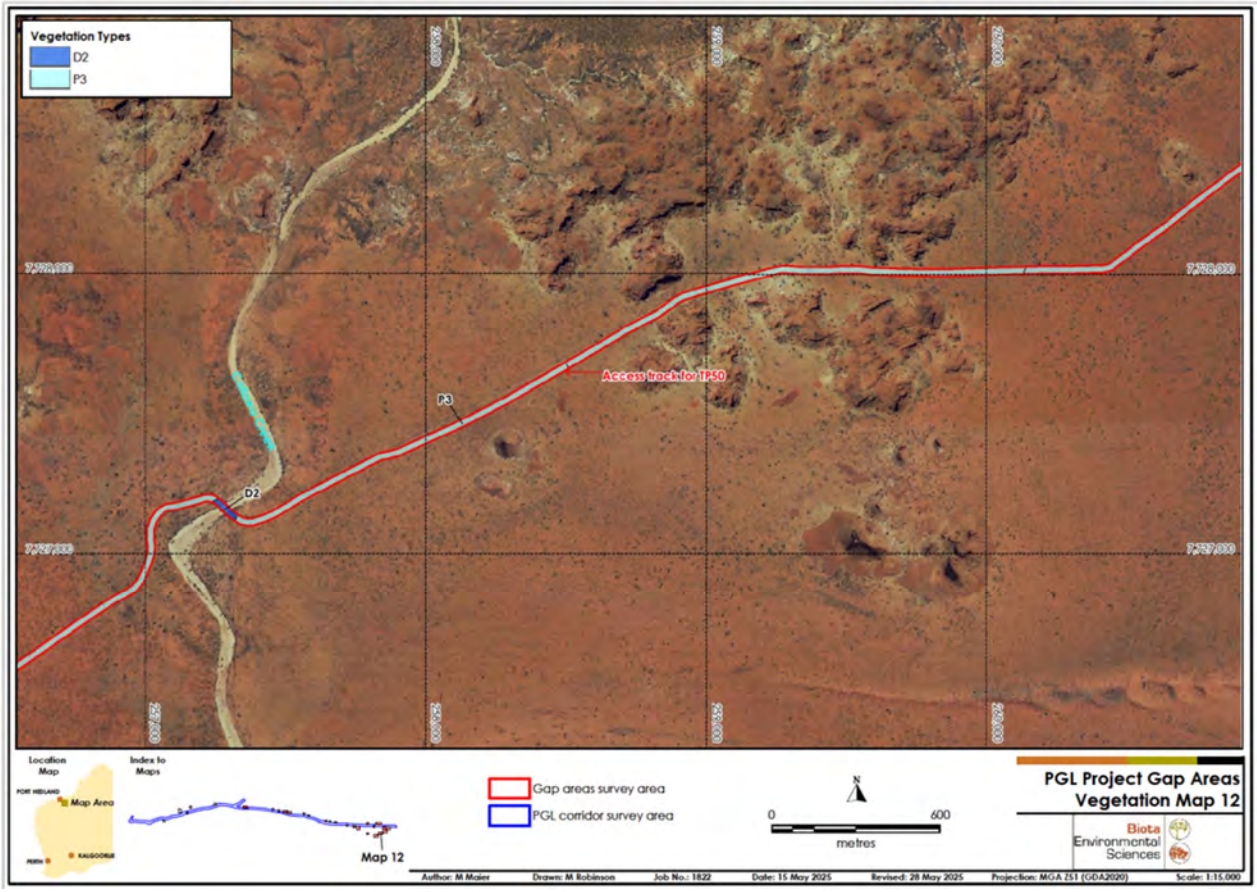
Vegetation Types
D2
P3
Access track for TP50
P3
D2
Location Map
Index to Maps
Map Area
Map 12
Gap areas survey area
PGL corridor survey area
0
600
metres
PGL Project Gap Areas
Vegetation Map 12
Biota Environmental Sciences
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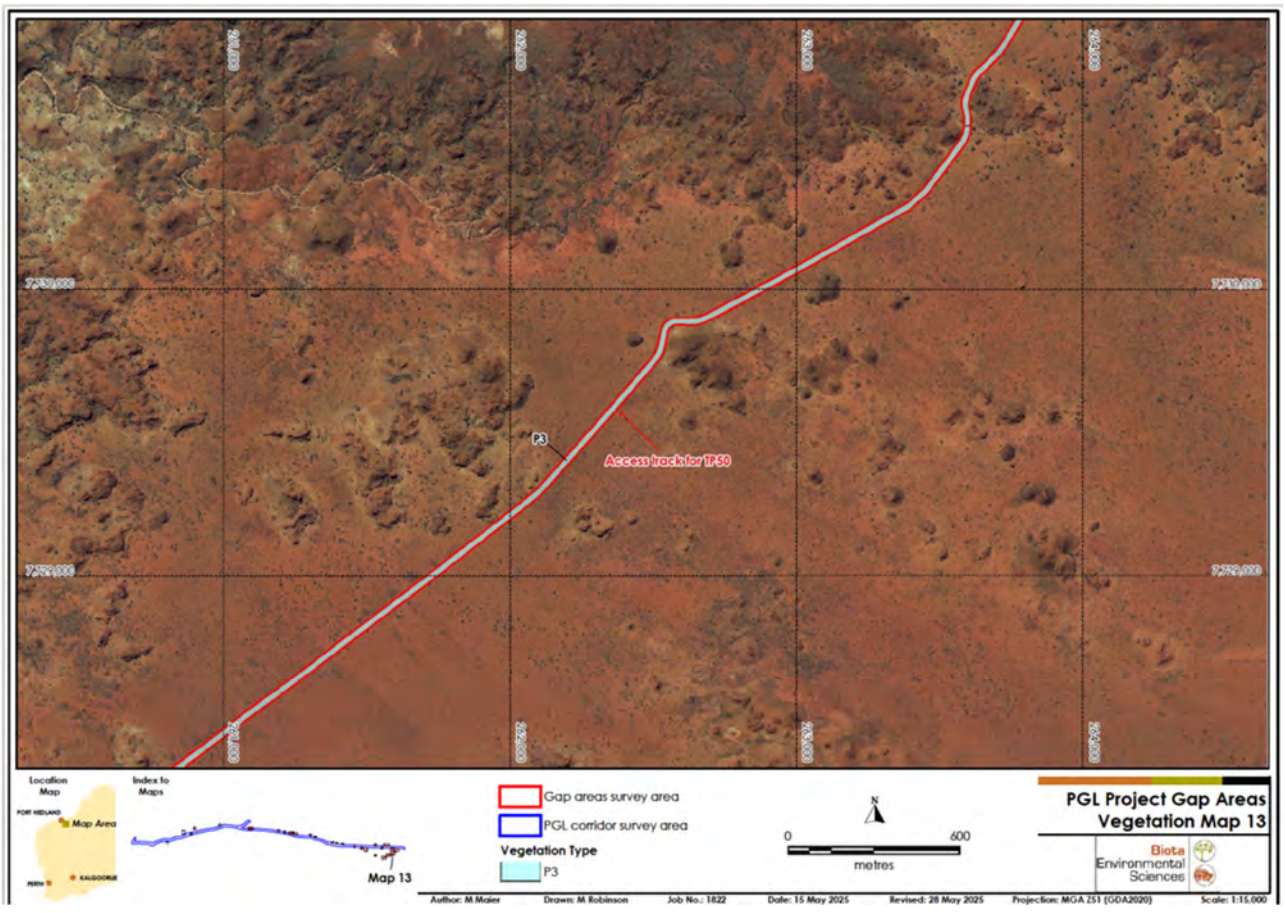
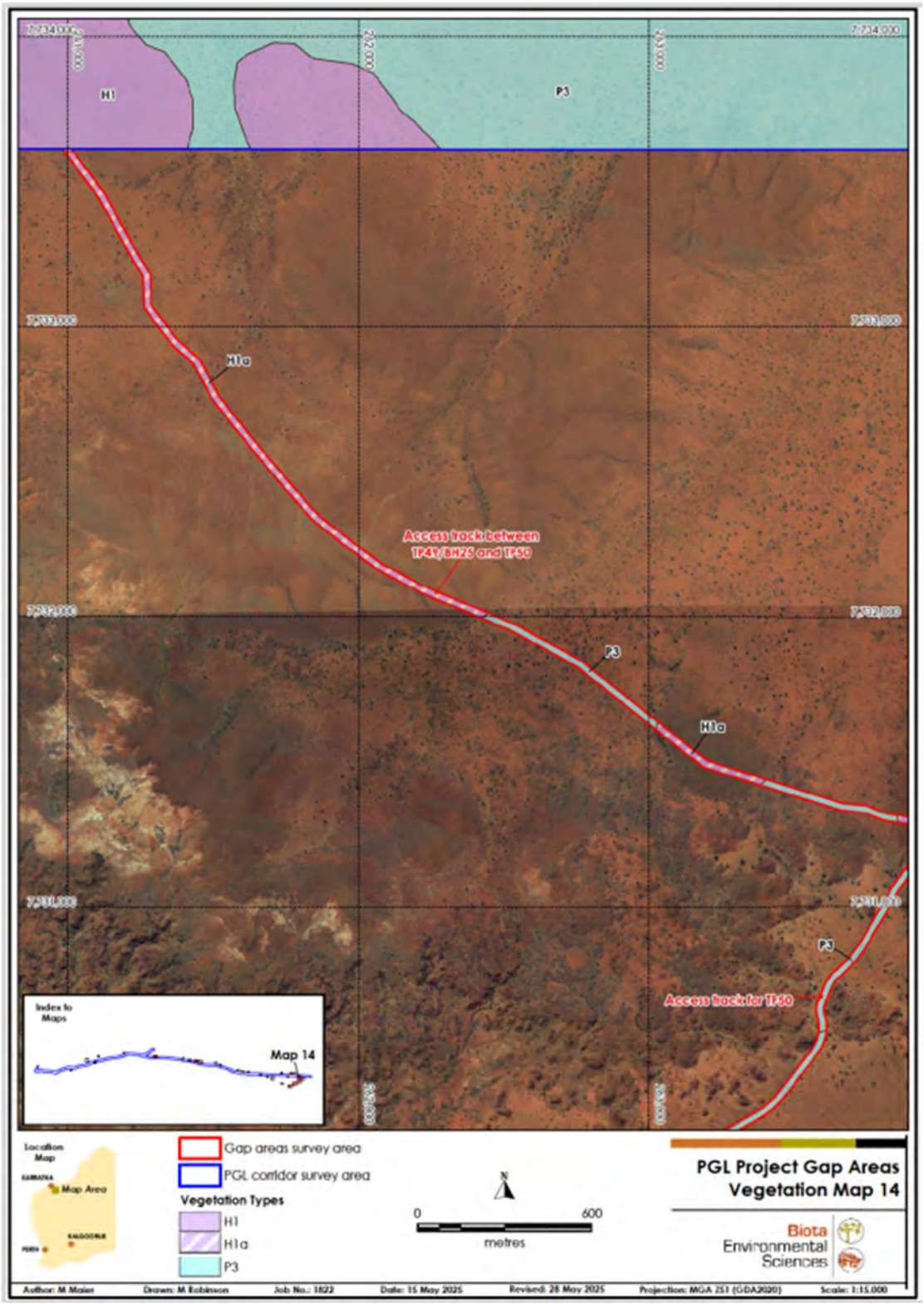
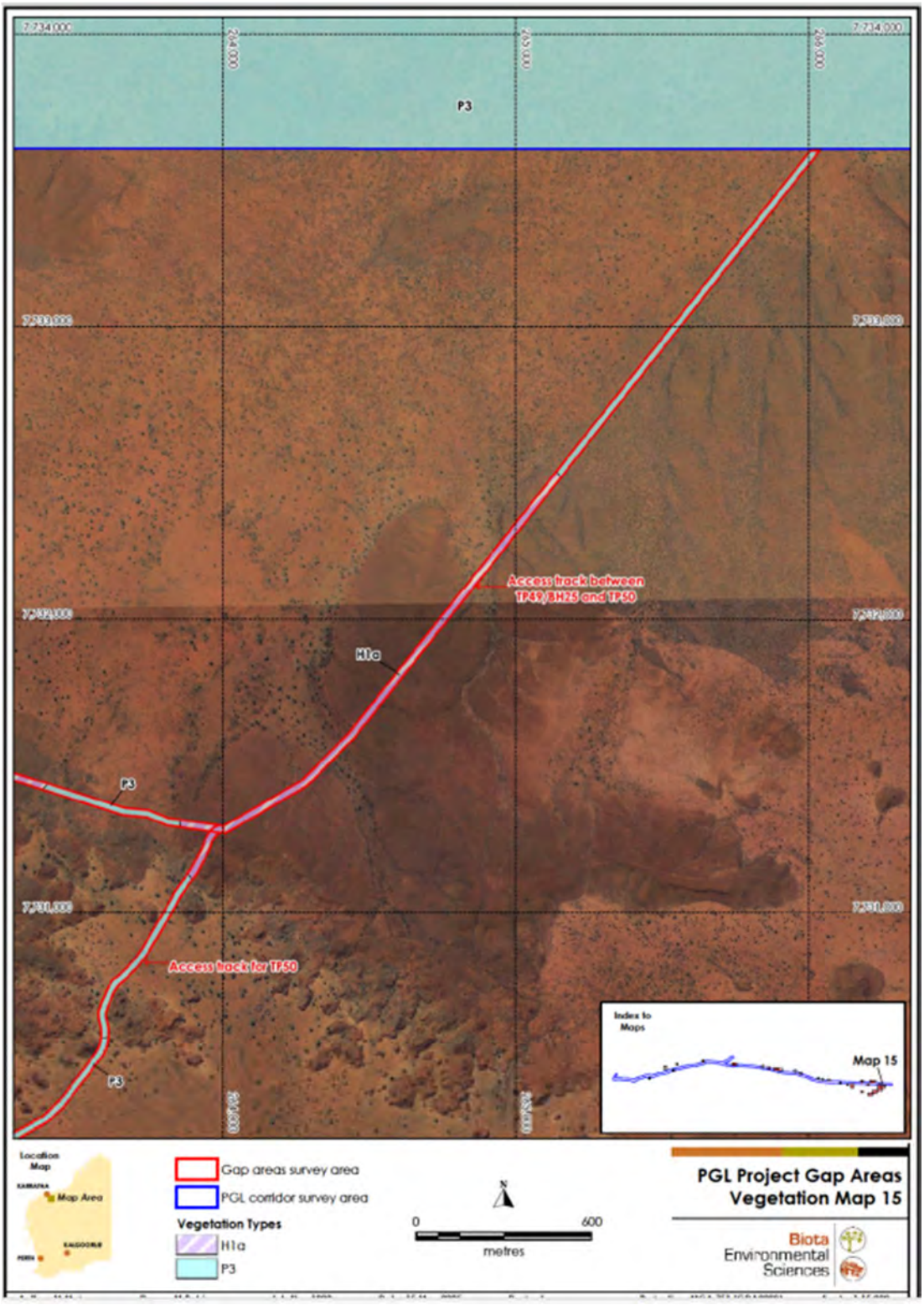
Drawn: M Robinson
Job No.: 1822
Date: 15 May 2025
Revised: 28 May 2025
Projection: MGA 251 (GDA2020)
Scale: 1:15,000


P3
Access track for TP50
Location Map
Index to Maps
Map Area
Map 13
Gap areas survey area
PGL corridor survey area
Vegetation Type
P3
0
600
metres
PGL Project Gap Areas
Vegetation Map 13
Biota Environmental Sciences
Author: M Maier
Drawn: M Robinson
Job No.: 1822
Date: 15 May 2025
Revised: 28 May 2025
Projection: MGA 251 (GDA2020)
Scale: 1:15,000


H1
P3
H1a
Access track between TP49/BH25 and TP50
P3
H1a
P3
Access track for TP50
Index to Maps
Map 14
Location Map
Map Area
Gap areas survey area
PGL corridor survey area
Vegetation Types
H1
H1a
P3
N
0
600
metres
PGL Project Gap Areas
Vegetation Map 14
Biota Environmental Sciences



Appendix E: Property List

Property	Locality	Local Government Authority
Lot 301 on Deposited Plan 42630	Pippingarra	Town of Port Hedland
Lot 252 on Deposited Plan 238657	Strelley	Town of Port Hedland
Great Northern Highway Public Road (PIN 11996151)	Strelley	Town of Port Hedland

Lot 414 on Deposited Plan 37092	Strelley	Town of Port Hedland
Lot 252 on Deposited Plan 238657	Strelley	Town of Port Hedland
Great Northern Highway Public Road (PIN 11996081)	Strelley	Town of Port Hedland
Lot 417 on Deposited Plan 37093	Strelley	Town of Port Hedland
Lot 200 on Deposited Plan 220785	De Grey	Town of Port Hedland
Lot 104 on Deposited Plan 220785	De Grey	Town of Port Hedland
Goldsworthy Road Public Road (PIN 12133222)	De Grey	Town of Port Hedland
Lot 606 on Deposited Plan 422324	Pardoo	Shire of East Pilbara
Goldsworth Road Public Road (PIN 12133221)	Pardoo	Shire of East Pilbara
Lot 26 on Deposited Plan 241374	Pardoo	Shire of East Pilbara
Lot 104 on Deposited Plan 220785	Marble Bar	Shire of East Pilbara
Lot 100 on Deposited Plan 238025	Marble Bar	Shire of East Pilbara
Lot 42 on Deposited Plan 241586	Marble Bar	Shire of East Pilbara
Lot 40 on Deposited Plan 241646	Marble Bar	Shire of East Pilbara
Lot 110 on Deposited Plan 238018	Marble Bar	Shire of East Pilbara
Unallocated Crown Land (PIN 1011653)	Telfer	Shire of East Pilbara
Unallocated Crown Land (PIN 1012471)	Telfer	Shire of East Pilbara

Appendix F: Sources of information

F.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)

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