



Clearing Permit Decision Report

1. Application details and outcomes

1.1. Permit application details

Permit number:	11192/1
Permit type:	Purpose permit
Applicant name:	Northern Star Resources Ltd
Application received:	30 April 2025
Application area:	940 hectares
Purpose of clearing:	Mineral production and associated activities
Method of clearing:	Mechanical removal
Tenure:	Mining Lease 53/155, 53/156, 53/182, 53/197, 53/221, 53/228, 53/229, 53/247, 53/248, 53/347, 53/441, 53/589, 53/611
Location (LGA area):	Shire of Wiluna
Colloquial name:	Ramone and Vause Gourdis Project

1.2. Description of clearing activities

Northern Star Resources Ltd proposes to clear up to 940 hectares of native vegetation within a boundary of approximately 2,885.94 hectares, for the purpose of mineral production and associated activities (Northern Star, 2025a). The project is located approximately 56 kilometres east of Wiluna, within the Shire of Wiluna.

The application is to allow for the extraction of gold at the Ramone and Vause Gourdis mining projects (Northern Star, 2025b).

1.3. Decision on application and key considerations

Decision:	Grant
Decision date:	16 June 2026
Decision area:	940 hectares of native vegetation

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 Mines, Petroleum and Exploration (DMPE) advertised the application for a public comment for a period of 21 days, and no submissions were received.

In making this decision, the Delegated Officer had regard for the site characteristics (Appendix B), relevant datasets (Appendix G), supporting information provided by the applicant, the clearing principles set out in Schedule 5 of the EP Act (Appendix C), proposed avoidance and minimisation measures (Section 3.1), relevant planning instruments and any other matters considered relevant to the assessment (Section 3.3).

The assessment identified that the proposed clearing may result in:

- the potential introduction and spread of weeds into adjacent vegetation, which could impact on the quality of the adjacent vegetation and its habitat values;
- the loss of native vegetation that is suitable habitat for conservation significant flora;
- the loss of native vegetation that is suitable habitat for conservation significant fauna;
- the loss of native vegetation that is suitable habitat for greater bilby (*Macrotis lagotis*);
- the loss of native vegetation that is suitable for brush-tailed mulgara (*Dasyercus blythi*);
- the loss of native vegetation that is suitable habitat for long-tailed dunnart (*Antechinomys longicaudatus*);
- the loss of native vegetation that is suitable foraging and nesting habitat for southern whiteface (*Aphelocephala leucopsis*); and
- potential land degradation in the form of water erosion.

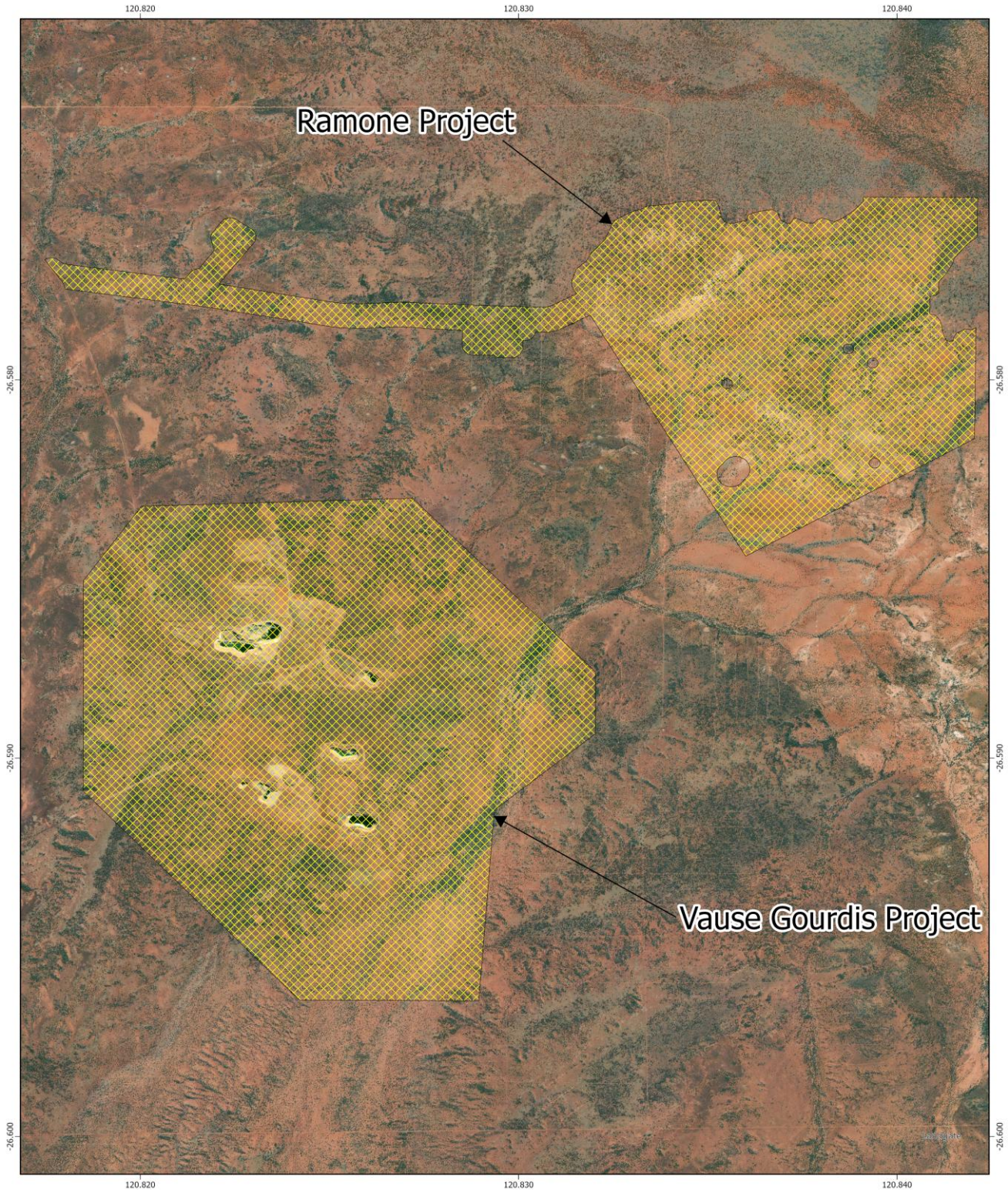
After consideration of the available information, as well as the applicant's minimisation and mitigation measures (Section 3.1), the Delegated Officer determined the proposed clearing can be minimised and managed to be unlikely to lead to an unacceptable risk to environmental values.

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;
- undertake slow, progressive one-directional clearing to allow terrestrial fauna to move into adjacent habitat ahead of the clearing activity;
- a flora management (*Tribulus adelacanthus*) condition requiring that prior to any clearing, a botanist shall be engaged to conduct a targeted flora survey for *Tribulus adelacanthus*. These plants will be flagged and a ten metre buffer will be erected to ensure the preservation of identified individuals;
- a fauna management (brush-tailed mulgara) condition requiring areas proposed to be cleared be inspected to identify brush-tailed mulgara, and to maintain a 10 metre buffer around identified active mulgara burrows;
- a fauna management (long-tailed dunnart) condition requiring areas proposed to be cleared to be surveyed for signs of long-tailed dunnart; and to relocate identified individuals;
- a fauna management (greater bilby) condition requiring areas proposed to be cleared be inspected to identify greater bilby;
- a fauna management (southern whiteface) condition requiring areas proposed to be cleared between 1 July and 31 October are inspected to identify active (in use) southern whiteface nests, and to maintain a 50 metre buffer around identified active nests' and
- commence construction no later than three months after undertaking clearing to reduce the risk of erosion.

1.5. Site map


A site map of proposed clearing is provided in Figure 1 below.



LEGEND

 CPS 11192/1

GCS: GDA2020
Datum: GDA2020
Map Units: Degree


0 0.5 km
Scale: 1:10,000



GOVERNMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Figure 1. Map of the application area. The yellow area indicates the area within which conditional authorised clearing can occur under the granted clearing permit. Ramone and Vause Gourdis Project areas labelled respectively.

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 (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
- the polluter pays principle

Other legislation of relevance for this assessment include:

- *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* (WA) (BC Act)
- *Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act 2007* (BAM Act)
- *Conservation and Land Management Act 1984* (WA) (CALM Act)
- *Contaminated Sites Act 2003* (WA)
- *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth) (EPBC Act)
- *Mining Act 1978* (WA)
- *Rights in Water and Irrigation Act 1914* (RIWI Act)

Relevant agreements (treaties) considered during the assessment include:

- Japan-Australia Migratory Bird Agreement
- China-Australia Migratory Bird Agreement
- Republic of Korea-Australia Migratory Bird Agreement

The key guidance documents which inform this assessment are:

- *A guide to the assessment of applications to clear native vegetation* (DER, December 2014)
- *Procedure: Native vegetation clearing permits* (DWER, October 2021)
- Technical guidance – *Flora and Vegetation Surveys for Environmental Impact Assessment* (EPA, 2016)
- Technical guidance – *Terrestrial Fauna Surveys for Environmental Impact Assessment* (EPA, 2020)

3. Detailed assessment of application

3.1. Avoidance and mitigation measures

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. The applicant has provided the following avoidance and mitigation measures (Northern Star Resources, 2025b).

Air quality

Fugitive dust generated from clearing activities and topsoil stripping and handling can have detrimental impacts on surrounding flora and fauna. Excessive dust generation is minimised by implementing the following controls:

- Monitoring of weather conditions and restricting clearing activities during high winds.
- Provision of watercarts for wetting down soils as required.

Land and soils

Land and soil resources may be negatively impacted during clearing including via spills of hydrocarbons from mobile plant and poor topsoil stripping and handling practices. Potential impacts to land and soil resources are managed by:

- Regular maintenance and daily pre-start inspections on all mobile plant used in clearing activities.
- Provision of spill response kits on service trucks and strategic locations around site (i.e. go-lines and laydowns).
- Minimising timeframes between clearing, topsoil stripping and handling, and construction of infrastructure to prevent erosion of topsoil resources.

Fauna

Fauna impacts (vehicle strike) during clearing activities may result in injury or death of native fauna or livestock. Whilst not all incidents are avoidable, impacts are minimised through:

- Maintaining speed limits on site and utilising existing cleared areas where possible.
- Reporting and investigating all incidents of fauna injury or death.
- Undertaking pre-clearance surveys for Brush-tailed Mulgara within habitat identified as Spinifex Plain.
- Undertaking pre-clearance surveys for Long-tailed Dunnart within habitat identified as Low rocky hills with outcropping. Limiting clearing activities within habitat identified as Low rocky hills with outcropping.

Surface water

Surface water resources including ephemeral watercourses which intersect the proposed clearing footprint

- Minimising clearing within watercourses as far as practicable.
- Maintaining existing surface water flows and downstream hydrological regimes via drainage diversion and erosion control where any watercourses are impacted.

Weeds

Weeds can be introduced into areas following disturbance of vegetation and soils. Weed and seed hygiene protocols are utilised to prevent weeds from being transported into clearing areas by:

- Requiring mobile plant to be thoroughly cleaned prior to entering the Project.
- Undertaking inspections on mobile plant before entering the Project area.
- Restricting mobile plant access to proposed clearing areas and existing roads.

3.2. Assessment of impacts on environmental values

In assessing the application, the Delegated Officer has had regard for the site characteristics (Appendix B) 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 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 (flora) - Clearing principle (a) and (b)

Assessment

A detailed flora and vegetation survey was undertaken by Stantec Australia Pty Ltd (Stantec) in April 2018 (26 April to 1 May) over the Ramone project (Stantec, 2018). Botanica Consulting Pty Ltd (Botanica) undertook a detailed flora/vegetation survey over the Vause Gourdis project area in March 2023 (12 to 15 March) (Botanica, 2023a). It should be noted both flora surveys were undertaken during dry conditions which may have impacted the detectability of flora (Botanica, 2023a; Stantec, 2018).

Flora known within the application area

Supporting documentation provided by Northern Star Resources Ltd identified two priority flora species; *Aristida jerichoensis* var. *subspinulifera* (P3) and *Eremophila pungens* (P4) within the Ramone area of the application area (Northern Star, 2025b; Stantec, 2018). These areas have since been excised from the application area with a 50 metre buffer placed around quadrat locations where individuals have been recorded. Suitable habitat for both these species extends within the application area, however given both species are known from multiple bioregions and have records within conservation estate, potential impacts to unknown individuals within the application area is unlikely to be significant.

Priority flora within the local surrounds

The application area contains suitable habitat for *Aristida jerichoensis* var. *subspinulifera* (P3), *Eremophila arguta* (P1), *Eremophila jamesiorum* (P2), and *Eremophila* sp. long pedicels (G. Cockerton 1975) (P2), *Jacksonia lanicarpa* (P1), and *Stackhousia clementii* (P3). These species typically occur along drainage lines and plains. Potential impacts to these species can be reduced through the implementation of a vegetation management condition.

Eremophila sp. long pedicels (G. Cockerton 1975) inhabits dark red hardpan mulga shrublands and mulga drainage lines over palaeochannels (WA Herbarium, 1998-). All records of *Eremophila* sp. long pedicels (G. Cockerton 1975) have been recorded over the Carey palaeochannel, which does not intersect the application area (GIS Database). As the application area is not located over a palaeochannel, it is unlikely to provide suitable habitat for this species.

Eremophila arguta (P1) inhabits loamy soils on floodplains and creeks, often in association with *Eucalyptus* (Chinnock, 2007; WA Herbarium, 1998-). The application area has multiple ephemeral watercourses and mulga drainage areas (AaAtS?sEs?bSeEe and ApAaAcEIIeEffFd vegetation communities). Some densely vegetated mulga drainage lines contain *Eucalyptus* species (Stantec, 2018). While areas with eucalypts may provide suitable habitat, the general absence of eucalypts across the application area reduces overall habitat suitability. Potential impacts to this species can be reduced through the implementation of a vegetation management condition.

The application area also contains suitable rocky habitat for *Eremophila pungens* (P4), *Hemigenia exilis* (P4), *Tribulus adelacanthus* (P3) and *Xanthoparmelia nashii* (P3). Both *Tribulus adelacanthus* and *Xanthoparmelia nashii* were identified as likely to occur within the application area (Botanica, 2023a; Northern Star, 2026; Stantec, 2018).

Xanthoparmelia nashii is a lichen which inhabits rocky habitats, including breakaways, stony scree, outcrops and plains within arid and sub-arid Western Australia (Elix et al., 1986; WA Herbarium, 1998-). This species inhabits rocky habitats within Avon Wheatbelt, Gascoyne, Geraldton Sandplains, Little Sandy Desert, Mallee, Murchison, Pilbara, Yalgoo bioregions (WA Herbarium, 1998-; GIS Database). There is a historic record within the local surrounds, and multiple records at Lorna Glen Station (now Matuwa Kurrara Kurrara National Park, approximately 77 kilometres northwest of the application area) (GIS Database). In Elix et al. (1986), *Xanthoparmelia nashii* was considered as very rare, known from two records at the time, however now this species is known from a wider distribution and increased records. Whilst suitable habitat is present, given this species broad distribution and known records within conservation estate in the Murchison bioregion, it is unlikely the proposed clearing will have a significant impact at a local or regional level.

Tribulus adelacanthus is a small prostrate herb which inhabits rocky or stony slopes and plains. This species has been recorded at 19 locations within the Murchison and Gascoyne IBRA regions and has no records within conservation estate (Western Australian Herbarium, 1998-; GIS Database). This species was considered likely to occur within the Ramone project area, and

rocky habitat which is potentially suitable is present within the Vause Gourdis project area (Botanica, 2023a; Stantec, 2018). Stantec (2018) identified that dry seasonal conditions and the small habit of *Tribulus adelacanthus* may have made this species not being detected during the flora survey. Botanica (2023a) also identified that dry seasonal conditions may have impacted detectability of flora.

Whilst both *Xanthoparmelia nashii* and *Tribulus adelacanthus* are likely to occur within the application area, the proposed clearing is likely to have a significant impact to *Tribulus adelacanthus* if present, given its limited known distribution and lack of records within conservation estate. To reduce potential impacts to this species, a targeted pre-clearance survey within suitable habitat for this species should be undertaken to confirm its presence / absence.

The application area also contains some suitable habitat for *Hemigenia exilis* (P4). *Hemigenia exilis* is an erect multi-stemmed shrub, 0.5 - 2 metres high that inhabits laterite breakaways and slopes and has also been recorded within stony plains and drainage habitats within the Murchison bioregion (WA Herbarium, 1998-). There is one historic record of this species within the local surrounds (50 kilometres), located at the northern extent of this species known range, approximately 36 kilometres west of the application area (WA Herbarium, 1998-; GIS Database). The application area contains stony plains, however none of these are adjacent to breakaways or ridges, making habitat less suitable for this species. If this species were to be present the proposed clearing would likely have an impact at a local scale only.

Introduced species

Three introduced flora species are known within the application area, none of these species are considered weeds of national significance (DPIRD, 2026b; Stantec, 2018). The proposed clearing may contribute to the spread of invasive weed species within the application area and negatively impact biodiversity within and adjacent to the application area. Impacts can be reduced by implementing a weed management condition.

Conclusion

Locations of two priority species have been excised from the application area. While suitable habitat extends into the application area, impact to these species are unlikely to be significant. There is suitable habitat for six priority flora species known to inhabit drainage line habitats; potential impacts to these species can be reduced by implementing a riparian vegetation management condition on the permit. The application area contains suitable rocky or stony habitat for four priority species, two of which were considered likely to occur within the application area. Impacts to *Eremophila pungens*, *Hemigenia exilis* and *Xanthoparmelia nashii* are unlikely to be significant, as described above. However, impacts to *Tribulus adelacanthus* are likely to be significant if present within the application area, given lack of records within conservation estate and apparent restriction to rocky and stony habitats, and small growth form, which may have limited detectability during previous surveys. A targeted pre-clearance survey for *Tribulus adelacanthus* should be conducted to determine its presence / absence within the application area.

Conditions

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

- avoid, minimise to reduce the impacts and extent of clearing;
- take hygiene steps to minimise the risk of the introduction and spread of weeds;
- vegetation management – avoid riparian vegetation and where a watercourse is to be impacted by clearing, the permit holder shall ensure that the existing surface flow is maintained or reinstated downstream into existing natural drainage lines; and
- flora management (*Tribulus adelacanthus*) condition requiring that prior to any clearing, a botanist shall be engaged to conduct a targeted flora survey for *Tribulus adelacanthus*. These plants will be flagged and a ten metre buffer will be erected to ensure the preservation of identified individuals.

3.2.2. Biological values (fauna) - Clearing principles (a) and (b)

Assessment

A level 1 vertebrate fauna assessment was undertaken by Stantec Australia Pty Ltd (Stantec) in March 2018 (20 to 23 March) over the Ramone project (Stantec, 2018). Botanica Consulting Pty Ltd (Botanica) undertook a basic fauna survey over the Vause Gourdis project area in March 2023 (12 to 15 March) (Botanica, 2023a).

Fauna within application area

The area proposed to be cleared contains suitable habitat for brush-tailed mulgara (*Dasycercus blythi*, P4) and long-tailed dunnart (*Antechinomys longicaudatus*, P4). The brush-tailed mulgara is known to occur in spinifex plain habitat within the application area (Stantec, 2018). The long-tailed dunnart has not been recorded within the application area; however, the application area provides suitable habitat within low rocky hills with outcropping habitat (Stantec, 2018). The applicant has stated in their avoidance and minimisation measures that pre-clearance surveys for mulgara and dunnart will be undertaken.

Conservation significant fauna within the local surrounds

Fork-tailed swift (*Apus pacificus*, M1)

The fork-tailed swift is a non-breeding migratory species to Australia (Commonwealth of Australia, 2008). This species is an almost exclusively aerial species, however, when on-ground it occupies a wide range of habitats and is largely independent of terrestrial habitats and landforms (Commonwealth of Australia, 2008).

Greater bilby (*Macrotis lagotis*, VU)

The bilby inhabits a wide range of substrates and vegetation types across northern Western Australia, including residual (laterite rises), fluvial and sand plain landforms with low shrub cover of *Acacia* spp. with hummock (*Triodia* spp.) and tussock grasses (DBCA, 2017; Northover et al., 2023). Bilby distribution is limited by soil suitability for burrowing, with sandy substrates generally preferred for burrow excavation, this species is also known to utilise loams, sandy loams, light clays and red earths (DCCEEW, 2023b). Bilbies occur across a range of fire age stages including recently burnt and long-unburnt vegetation (Northover et al., 2023). Stantec (2018) identified that there is suitable habitat for the greater bilby, however the species was unlikely to occur as the application area was outside of this species known range.

However, the greater bilby has been successfully reintroduced into Matuwa Kurrara Kurrara National Park (Matuwa) approximately 30 kilometres northeast of the application area. Camera monitoring indicates the bilby population has established within Matuwa and now extends beyond the national park (Lohr et al., 2021). In 2015 and 2017, two records of the bilby were recorded by camera trapping 50 kilometres west of Matuwa NP, near Wiluna (Lohr et al., 2021).

Given the application area contains suitable habitat for this species and updated data indicates the application area is now within this species known range, management measures should be put in place to minimise the risk to this species. Within the Ramone application area spinifex plain and mulga over spinifex on low hill habitat will likely provide suitable habitat for the bilby, the Vause Gourdis application area provides very marginal habitat for this species.

Grey falcon (*Falco hypoleucos*, VU)

The grey falcon occurs in low densities across arid and semi-arid inland Australia (Threatened Species Scientific Committee, 2020). This species frequents timbered lowland plains particularly acacia shrublands that are crossed by tree-lined watercourses, however has also been observed in open woodlands, treeless areas and tussock grasslands (Threatened Species Scientific Committee, 2020). Grey falcons nest in the tallest trees along watercourses particularly in River Red Gum (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis*) and Coolibah (*Eucalyptus coolabah*), or in old nests of other large birds (Threatened Species Scientific Committee, 2020). The application area likely contains suitable foraging habitat for this species, however is unlikely to contain suitable breeding habitat. The habitat is not restricted to the application area and is widespread in the regional area (Botanica, 2023a; Stantec, 2018).

Peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*, OS)

The peregrine falcon is widespread throughout much of Australia, with its preferred habitat being coastal and inland cliffs, or open woodlands near waterbodies and watercourses (Australian Museum, 2019). The peregrine falcon nests on ledges of cliffs, rocky outcrops, quarries and tall trees (Australian Museum, 2019). The application area contains suitable foraging habitat for this species, however, lacks suitable breeding habitat. Foraging habitat for the Peregrine falcon is widespread and not restricted to the application area.

Malleefowl (*Leipoa ocellata*, VU)

Malleefowl occur in semi-arid to arid shrublands and low woodlands dominated by mallee and associated habitats, such as broombush (*Melaleuca uncinata*) and native pine (*Callitris* spp.) scrub, as well as scrubs of acacia in central Australia (DEWHA, 2017). For breeding, malleefowl require a dense canopy cover and an abundance of shrubs for food, for mound construction sandy or loamy soils and an abundance leaf litter is required (DCCEEW, 2024; National Malleefowl Recovery Team, 2016). The application area is located towards the northern extent of this species known range. The species has been recorded approximately 61 kilometres east in 2003, and secondary evidence has been recorded approximately 85 kilometres west in 2007; however there are no recent records within the local surrounds (50 kilometres) (Stantec, 2018; GIS Database). The application area provides some suitable foraging habitat, however, generally lacks suitable breeding habitat. Denser vegetation is present within drainage lines and in low rocky hill areas, however neither of these habitats would likely support mound construction. Some areas of the Vause Gourdis application area provide marginally suitable habitat for malleefowl, however this species is unlikely to be present (Botanica, 2023a).

Given the lack of recent records within the local surrounds and presence of marginally suitable breeding habitat, it is unlikely the proposed clearing will have a significant impact on this species. Malleefowl may use areas of the application area for foraging and traversing, to minimise impacts to potential impacts within the application area a slow directional clearing condition should be implemented on the permit.

Night parrot (*Pezoporus occidentalis*, CR)

The night parrot is a cryptic species which inhabits semi-arid grasslands with long unburnt spinifex hummocks for roosting and nesting (Northover et al., 2023). Night parrots will travel large distances to floodplains, drainage lines and run-off areas to forage on key seed-producing flora (e.g., grasses, herbs and forbs). Night parrot records are often associated with drainage lines, particularly paleodrainage lines (Northover et al., 2023). The closest recent record of the night parrot is 28 kilometres north of the application area, however records from 2017 and 2019 are known within Matuwa National Park (GIS Database). The application area contains long unburnt spinifex within spinifex plain habitat (Stantec, 2018).

To minimise potential impacts to night parrot, approximately 114.32 hectares of spinifex habitat has been excised from the application area (Figure 4,5; Northern Star, 2026; GIS Database). The application area still contains 35.84 hectares of spinifex habitat; however, this habitat is adjacent to disturbed areas and is considered less suitable for this species to inhabit (Figure 4,5; Northern Star, 2026; GIS Database).

Southern whiteface (*Aphelocephala leucopsis*, VU)

The southern whiteface occurs across most of mainland Australia, within open woodlands and shrublands where there is an understorey of grasses, shrubs or both (DCCEEW, 2023a). These areas are usually in habitats which are dominated by acacias

or eucalypts on ranges, foothills and lowlands, and plains (DCCEEW, 2023a). This species forages on the ground amongst leaf litter, and nests within tree hollows or crevices and in low bushes (DCCEEW, 2023a). The application area likely contains suitable foraging and breeding habitat for this species. Given the extent of the proposed clearing, if this species were to be breeding within the application area, it is likely the proposed clearing would have a significant impact on breeding habitat. To reduce impacts, a fauna management (southern whiteface breeding season) condition will be implemented on the permit.

Conclusion

Based on the above assessment, the proposed clearing will result in the loss suitable habitat which is suitable for brush-tailed mulgara, long-tailed dunnart, and loss of potentially suitable habitat for the greater bilby and southern whiteface. The application area contains suitable habitat for the grey falcon, peregrine falcon, malleefowl and night parrot, however suitable habitat for these species extends beyond the application area, suitable habitat for malleefowl and night parrot are marginal within. Impacts to conservation significant fauna can be reduced through the implementation of a slow directional clearing condition, allowing fauna to move into adjacent vegetation. Impacts to brush-tailed mulgara, long tailed dunnart, greater bilby and southern whiteface can be reduced by fauna management conditions listed below.

Conditions

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

- avoid, minimise to reduce the impacts and extent of clearing;
- undertake slow, progressive one-directional clearing to allow terrestrial fauna to move into adjacent habitat ahead of the clearing activity;
- a fauna management condition (brush-tailed mulgara) condition requiring areas proposed to be cleared be inspected to identify brush-tailed mulgara, and to maintain a 10 metre buffer around identified active mulgara burrows;
- a fauna management (long-tailed dunnart) condition requiring areas proposed to be cleared to be surveyed for signs of long-tailed dunnart; and to relocate identified individuals;
- a fauna management condition (greater bilby) condition requiring areas proposed to be cleared be inspected to identify greater bilby; and
- a fauna management (southern whiteface) condition requiring areas proposed to be cleared between 1 July and 31 October are inspected to identify active (in use) southern whiteface nests, and to maintain a 50 metre buffer around identified active nests.

3.3. Relevant planning instruments and other matters

The clearing permit application was advertised on 9 September 2025 by the Department of Mines, Petroleum and Exploration inviting submissions from the public. No submissions were received in relation to this application.

There is one native title claim over the area under application (DPLH, 2026). This claim has been registered with the National Native Title Tribunal and determined by the Federal Court on behalf of the claimant group. The mining tenure has been granted in accordance with the future act regime of the *Native Title Act 1993* and the nature of the act (i.e. the proposed clearing activity) has been provided for in that process, therefore, the granting of a clearing permit is not a future act under the *Native Title Act 1993*.

There are no registered Aboriginal Sites of Significance within the application area (DPLH, 2026). It is the proponent's responsibility to comply with the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972* and ensure that no Aboriginal Sites of Significance are damaged through the clearing process.

The application area intersects Contaminated Site ID No. 18217, under the *Contaminated Sites Act 2003*, this site has been classified as "contaminated - remediation required" (DWER, 2019; GIS Database). The identified spill areas are not located within the proposed clearing area; however, the land has been subject to potentially contaminating activities (DWER – Contaminated sites, personal communication, 4 February 2026). It is recommended that the proposed clearing and works be carried out in accordance with an internal management plan, including an unexpected finds protocol should any contaminated materials be encountered (DWER – Contaminated sites, personal communication, 4 February 2026).

It is noted that the proposed clearing may impact on greater bilby (*Macrotis lagotis*) and southern whiteface (*Aphelocephala leucopsis*) which are protected matters under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (the EPBC Act). The proponent may be required to refer the project to the (Commonwealth) Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water for environmental impact assessment under the EPBC Act. The proponent is advised to contact the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water for further information regarding notification and referral responsibilities under the EPBC Act.

Other relevant authorisations required for the proposed land use include:

- A Mining Development and Closure Proposal approved under the *Mining Act 1978*

It is the proponent's responsibility to liaise with the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation and the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, to determine whether a Works Approval, Water Licence, Bed and Banks Permit, or any other licences or approvals are required for the proposed works.

End

Appendix A. Additional information provided by applicant

Summary of comments	Consideration of comment
Shapefiles provided by the applicant to exclude known locations of priority flora species <i>Aristida jerichoensis</i> var. <i>subspinulifera</i> and <i>Eremophila pungens</i> .	Information provided was considered during the assessment of Principle (a) and Section 3.1 Avoidance and mitigation measures.
Shapefiles provided by the applicant to exclude spinifex plain habitat to reduce potential impacts to night parrot (<i>Pezoporus occidentalis</i>).	Information provided was considered during the assessment of Principle (b) and Section 3.1 Avoidance and mitigation measures.

Appendix B. Site characteristics

B.1. Site characteristics

Characteristic	Details
Local context	The area proposed to be cleared is surrounded by native vegetation and other mining operations within the extensive land use zone of Western Australia (GIS Database). The predominant land use in the Eastern Murchison subregion is native pastures, UCL and Crown Reserves, conservation and mining activities (CALM, 2002).
Ecological linkage	According to available databases, the application area does not contain any known or mapped ecological linkages (GIS Database).
Conservation areas	The nearest conservation area is Matuwa Kurrara Kurrara National Park, located approximately 30 kilometres northeast of the application area (GIS Database).
Vegetation description	<p>The vegetation of the application area occurs within the Murchison IBRA bioregion in the Eastern Murchison (MUR01) subregion (GIS Database). The vegetation of the application area is broadly mapped as the following Beard vegetation associations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wiluna 18: Low woodland; mulga (<i>Acacia aneura</i>); and • Wiluna 39: Shrublands; mulga scrub (Government of Western Australia, 2019; GIS Database). <p>A flora and vegetation survey was conducted over the Ramone application area by Stantec during April to May, 2018. The following vegetation associations were recorded within the application area (Stantec, 2018):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AaApEf: <i>Acacia aptaneura</i> and <i>Acacia pteraneura</i> open low woodland over <i>Eremophila fraseri</i> open shrubland; • AaApEs?b.Ee: <i>Acacia aneura</i> and <i>Acacia aptaneura</i> open tall shrubland over <i>Eremophila spectabilis</i> subsp. <i>?brevis</i> open low shrubland over <i>Eragrostis eriopoda</i> open tussock grassland; • AaAtS?sEs?bSeEe: <i>Acacia aneura</i>, <i>Acacia tetragonophylla</i> and <i>Santalum ?spicatum</i> tall open shrubland over <i>Eremophila spectabilis</i> subsp. <i>?brevis</i> and <i>Sida ectogama</i> low open shrubland over <i>Eragrostis eriopoda</i> open tussock grassland; • AaEcTm: <i>Acacia aneura</i> tall shrubland over <i>Eremophila citrina</i> open low heath over <i>Triodia melvillei</i> very open hummock grassland; • AaEffTb: <i>Acacia aneura</i> tall open shrubland over <i>Eremophila forrestii</i> subsp. <i>forrestii</i> low open shrubland over <i>Triodia basedowii</i> hummock grassland; • AiEIIAt: <i>Acacia incurvaneura</i> tall shrubland over <i>Eremophila latrobei</i> subsp. <i>latrobei</i> and <i>Acacia tetragonophylla</i> open low shrubland; • ApAaAcEIIIEffFd: <i>Acacia pteraneura</i> and <i>Acacia aneura</i> open scrub over <i>Acacia craspedocarpa</i> and <i>Eremophila latrobei</i> subsp. <i>latrobei</i> open shrubland over <i>Eriachne flaccida</i> and <i>Eragrostis falcata</i> closed tussock grassland over <i>Fimbristylis dichotoma</i> very open sedgeland; • ApAiEcTm: <i>Acacia pruinocarpa</i> low open woodland over <i>Acacia incurvaneura</i> tall open shrubland over <i>Eremophila citrina</i> low shrubland over <i>Triodia melvillei</i> hummock grassland; • EIAcSeMsp: <i>Eremophila linearis</i> and <i>Acacia craspedocarpa</i> tall shrubland over <i>Ptilotus obovatus</i> herbland over <i>Sclerolaena eriantha</i> and <i>Maireana</i> sp. open chenopods; and • SMSeSc: <i>Senna</i> sp. Meekatharra (E. Bailey 1-26) hybrid open low shrubland over <i>Sclerolaena eriantha</i> and <i>Sclerolaena cuneata</i> (<i>Maireana</i> sp.) very open herbland. <p>A flora and vegetation survey was conducted over the Vause Gourdis Project application area by Botanica during March 2023. The following vegetation associations were recorded within the application area (Botanica, 2023a):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CLP-AFW1: Low woodland of <i>Acacia incurvaneura</i> over mid open shrubland of <i>Acacia tetragonophylla</i> <i>Psyrax latifolia</i> and low shrubland of <i>Eremophila margarethae</i> on clay-loam plain; • DD-AFW1: Low forest of <i>Acacia incurvaneura</i> over tall open shrubland of <i>Acacia aptaneural</i> <i>A. tetragonophylla</i> and low open shrubland of <i>Eremophila forrestii</i> subsp. <i>forrestii</i> / <i>Eremophila margarethae</i> in drainage depression;

Characteristic	Details
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • QRP-AFW1: Low forest of <i>Acacia incurvaneura</i> over mid open shrubland of <i>Eremophila fraseri</i> / <i>E. jucunda</i> / <i>E. margarethae</i> and low hummock grassland of <i>Triodia basedowii</i> on quartz-rocky plain; • RH-AFW1: Low forest of <i>Acacia incurvaneura</i> over mid open shrubland of <i>Eremophila jucunda</i> / <i>Eremophila linearis</i> / <i>Senna</i> sp. Meekatharra (E. Bailey 1-26) and low open shrubland of <i>Ptilotus obovatus</i> on rocky hillslope; and • SLP-AFW1: Low forest of <i>Acacia incurvaneura</i> over mid open shrubland of <i>Acacia balsamea</i> / <i>Eremophila forrestii</i> subsp. <i>forrestii</i> and low hummock grassland of <i>Triodia basedowii</i> / <i>T. melvillei</i> on sand-loam plain. <p>Mapping and photographs of flora associations are provided in Appendix E.</p>
Vegetation condition	The vegetation survey (Botanica, 2023a; Stantec, 2018) and aerial imagery indicate the vegetation within the proposed clearing area is in Excellent to Completely Degraded (Trudgen, 1991).
Climate and landform	The climate for Eastern Murchison region is arid with an annual rainfall of 260.5 millimetres (BoM, 2026; CALM, 2002). The application area is mapped within elevations of 530 to 560 meters Australian height datum (GIS Database).
Soil description and land degradation risk	<p>The soil is mapped as a part of the following land systems (DPIRD, 2026a; GIS Database):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jundee system (279Ju): Hardpan plains with variable gravelly mantles and minor sandy banks supporting weakly groved mulga shrublands, associated with WA Soil Group 522; • Sherwood system (279Sh): Breakaways, kaolinised footslopes and extensive gently sloping plains on granite supporting mulga shrublands and minor halophytic shrublands, associated with WA Soil Group 522; • Violet land system (279Vi): Gently undulating gravelly plains on greenstone, laterite and hardpan, with low stony rises and minor saline plains; supporting groved mulga and bowgada shrublands and occasionally chenopod shrublands, associated with WA Soil Group 522; • Wiluna land system (279Wi): Low greenstone hills with occasional lateritic breakaways and broad stony slopes, lower saline stony plains and broad drainage tracts; supporting sparse mulga and other acacia shrublands with patches of halophytic shrubs, associated with WA Soil Group 522; and • Yanganoo land system (279Yg): Almost flat hardpan wash plains, with or without small wanderrie banks and weak groving; supporting mulga shrublands and wanderrie grasses on banks, associated with WA Soil Group 523. <p>WA Soil Group 522 (red shallow loam) and 523 (red-brown hardpan shallow loam) are both susceptible to water erosion on sloping land and drainage lines (Schoknecht and Pathan, 2013).</p> <p>Soil samples taken from the Vause Gourdis and Ramone application areas indicated the soils within the application area are strongly acidic non-saline soils, have low nutrient levels and variably dispersive depending on gravel content (Botanica, 2023b; Soilwater, 2018).</p>
Waterbodies	The desktop assessment and aerial imagery indicated that there are no permanent watercourses or water bodies that intersect the application area, however there are records of multiple minor ephemeral watercourses that transect the area proposed to be cleared (GIS Database).
Hydrogeography	The application area is located within the East Murchison Ground Water Area proclaimed under the <i>Rights in Water and Irrigation Act 1914</i> (GIS Database). The nearest Public Drinking Water Source Area is Wiluna Water Reserve located approximately 48 kilometres west of the application area (GIS Database). The nearest Wetland of National Importance is Lake Carnegie System located approximately 125 kilometres east of the application area (GIS Database). The groundwater salinity is mapped as 1,000 to 3,000 milligrams per litre total dissolved solids which is described as brackish (BoM, 2019; GIS Database).
Flora	There are no known threatened flora species within the application area or local surrounds (50 kilometres) (Botanica, 2023a; Stantec, 2018; GIS Database). There are records of two priority flora within the application area, and records of 12 priority flora species within the local surrounds (50 kilometres) (Botanica, 2023a; Stantec, 2018; GIS Database).
Ecological communities	There are no Threatened Ecological Communities or Priority Ecological Communities within the application area or local surrounds (20 kilometres) (GIS Database).
Fauna	There is one conservation significant fauna species known to occur within the application area (Stantec, 2018). There are records of 19 conservation significant fauna within the local surrounds (50 kilometres) (GIS Database).
Fauna habitat	<p>A basic vertebrate fauna assessment was conducted over the Ramone application area by Stantec during March, 2018. The following fauna habitats were recorded within the application area (Stantec, 2018):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eremophila shrubland; • Low rocky hills with outcropping;

Characteristic	Details
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mulga drainage; Mulga over spinifex on low hill; Mulga on stony plain; Mulga over grasses; and Spinifex plain. <p>A basic vertebrate fauna assessment was conducted over the Vause Gourdis Project application area by Botanica during March 2023. The following vegetation associations were recorded within the application area (Botanica, 2023a):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clay-loam plain, Acacia woodland; Drainage depression, Acacia woodland; Rocky plain/ hillslope, Acacia woodland; and Sand-loam plain, Acacia woodland. <p>Mapping and description of fauna habitat provided in Appendix F.</p>

B.2. Vegetation extent

	Pre-European area (ha)	Current extent (ha)	Extent remaining (%)	Current extent in all DBCA managed land (ha)	Current extent in all DBCA Managed Land (proportion of pre-European extent) (%)
IBRA Bioregion - Murchison	28,120,586.77	28,044,823.42	99.73	2,185,987.96	7.77
Beard vegetation associations - State					
Veg Assoc 18.	19,892,306.46	19,843,148.07	99.75	1,317,179.00	6.62
Veg Assoc 39.	6,613,567.48	6,602,578.44	99.83	795,070.69	12.02
Beard vegetation associations - Bioregion					
Veg Assoc 18.	12,403,172.30	12,363,252.47	99.68	614,964.13	4.96
Veg Assoc 39.	1,148,400.30	1,138,064.63	99.10	40,834.41	3.56

Government of Western Australia (2019)

B.3. Flora analysis table

With consideration for the site characteristics set out above, relevant datasets (Appendix G.1), and biological survey information, impacts to the following conservation significant flora required further consideration (Botanica, 2023a; Chinnock, 2007; Stantec, 2018; WA Herbarium, 1998- ; GIS Database).

Species name	Suitable habitat features? [Y/N]	Suitable vegetation type? [Y/N]	Suitable soil type? [Y/N]	Distance of closest record to application area (km)	Number of known records (total)
Priority 1					
<i>Eremophila arguta</i>	Y	Y	Y	44	7
<i>Jacksonia lanicarpa</i>	Y	Y	Y	49	12
<i>Tecticornia enodis</i>	N	N	N	46	19
<i>Tecticornia</i> sp. Lake Way (P. Armstrong 05/961)	N	N	N	46	8
Priority 2					
<i>Eremophila jamesiorum</i>	Y	Y	Y	21	15
<i>Eremophila</i> sp. long pedicels (G. Cockerton 1975)	N	Y	Y	39	4
<i>Triodia infesta</i>	N	N	Y	30	8
Priority 3					
<i>Aristida jerichoensis</i> var. <i>subspinulifera</i>	Y	Y	Y	0	49
<i>Stackhousia clementii</i>	Y	Y	Y	29	23
<i>Tribulus adelacanthus</i>	Y	Y	Y	30	19

Species name	Suitable habitat features? [Y/N]	Suitable vegetation type? [Y/N]	Suitable soil type? [Y/N]	Distance of closest record to application area (km)	Number of known records (total)
<i>Xanthoparmelia nashii</i>	Y	Y	N	20	18
Priority 4					
<i>Eremophila pungens</i>	Y	Y	Y	0	46
<i>Frankenia confusa</i>	N	N	N	50	29
<i>Hemigenia exilis</i>	Y	Y	Y	37	45

B.4. Fauna analysis table

With consideration for the site characteristics set out above, relevant datasets (Appendix G.1), and biological survey information, impacts to the following conservation significant flora required further consideration (Botanica, 2023a; Commonwealth of Australia, 2008; Stantec, 2018; GIS Database).

Species name	Conservation status	Suitable habitat features? [Y/N]	Suitable vegetation type? [Y/N]	Distance of closest record to application area (km)
Birds				
Common greenshank (<i>Tringa nebularia</i>)	MI	N	N	30
Common sandpiper (<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>)	MI	N	N	30
Fork-tailed swift (<i>Apus pacificus</i>)	MI	Y	Y	30
Glossy ibis (<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>)	MI	N	N	30
Grey falcon (<i>Falco hypoleucos</i>)	VU	Y	Y	35
Gull-billed tern (<i>Gelochelidon nilotica</i>)	MI	N	N	30
Long-toed stint (<i>Calidris subminuta</i>)	MI	N	N	30
Night parrot (<i>Pezoporus occidentalis</i>)	CR	Y	Y	28
Oriental plover (<i>Charadrius veredus</i>)	MI	N	N	30
Oriental pratincole (<i>Glareola maldivarum</i>)	MI	N	N	30
Pacific golden plover (<i>Pluvialis fulva</i>)	MI	N	N	30
Pectoral sandpiper (<i>Calidris melanotos</i>)	MI	N	N	30
Peregrine falcon (<i>Falco peregrinus</i>)	OS	Y	Y	52
Red-necked stint (<i>Calidris ruficollis</i>)	MI	N	N	30
Sanderling (<i>Calidris alba</i>)	MI	N	N	30
Sharp-tailed sandpiper (<i>Calidris acuminata</i>)	MI	N	N	30
Southern whiteface (<i>Aphelocephala leucopsis</i>)	VU	Y	Y	73
Western grasswren (<i>Amytornis textilis textilis</i>)*	P4	Y	Y	24
Wood sandpiper (<i>Tringa glareola</i>)	MI	N	N	30
Mammals				
Brush-tailed mulgara (<i>Dasycercus blythi</i>)	P4	Y	Y	0
Greater bilby (<i>Macrotis lagotis</i>)	VU	Y	Y	41
Long-tailed dunnart (<i>Antechinomys longicaudatus</i>)	P4	Y	Y	52

T: threatened, CR: critically endangered, EN: endangered, VU: vulnerable, MI: migratory, CD: conservation dependent, OS: other specially protected, P: priority

* denotes species likely absent from the area given age of record and known distribution (Shark Bay)

Appendix C. Assessment against the clearing principles

Assessment against the clearing principles	Variance level	Is further consideration required?
Environmental value: biological values		

Assessment against the clearing principles	Variance level	Is further consideration required?
<p><u>Principle (a):</u> <i>“Native vegetation should not be cleared if it comprises a high level of biodiversity.”</i></p> <p><u>Assessment:</u></p> <p>The area proposed to be cleared contains suitable habitat for conservation significant flora and fauna.</p>	May be at variance	Yes <i>Refer to Section 3.2.1, above.</i>
<p><u>Principle (b):</u> <i>“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.”</i></p> <p><u>Assessment:</u></p> <p>The area proposed to be cleared contains known records of priority fauna; brush-tailed mulgara (<i>Dasyercus blythi</i>), and contains potential habitat for conservation significant fauna.</p>	May be at variance	Yes <i>Refer to Section 3.2.1, above.</i>
<p><u>Principle (c):</u> <i>“Native vegetation should not be cleared if it includes, or is necessary for the continued existence of, threatened flora.”</i></p> <p><u>Assessment:</u></p> <p>The area proposed to be cleared is unlikely to contain habitat for flora species listed under the BC Act. There are no known records of threatened flora within the local surrounds (50 kilometres) (GIS Database).</p>	Not likely to be at variance	No
<p><u>Principle (d):</u> <i>“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.”</i></p> <p><u>Assessment:</u></p> <p>There are no known Threatened Ecological Communities (TECs) located within or the local surrounds (20 kilometres) (GIS Database). The area proposed to be cleared does not contain species that can indicate a threatened ecological community.</p>	Not likely to be at variance	No
Environmental value: significant remnant vegetation and conservation areas		
<p><u>Principle (e):</u> <i>“Native vegetation should not be cleared if it is significant as a remnant of native vegetation in an area that has been extensively cleared.”</i></p> <p><u>Assessment:</u></p> <p>The extent of the mapped vegetation type is consistent with the national objectives and targets for biodiversity conservation in Australia (Commonwealth of Australia, 2001; Appendix B.2.). The vegetation proposed to be cleared is not considered to be part of a significant ecological linkage in the local area (GIS Database).</p>	Not at variance	No
<p><u>Principle (h):</u> <i>“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.”</i></p> <p><u>Assessment:</u> Given the distance to the nearest conservation area, the proposed clearing is not likely to have an impact on the environmental values of nearby conservation areas (GIS Database).</p>	Not likely to be at variance	No
Environmental value: land and water resources		
<p><u>Principle (f):</u> <i>“Native vegetation should not be cleared if it is growing in, or in association with, an environment associated with a watercourse or wetland.”</i></p> <p><u>Assessment:</u></p> <p>Given there are a number of ephemeral water courses within the application area, the proposed clearing is likely to impact on vegetation growing within watercourses. The vegetation associated within these ephemeral watercourses within the Vause Gourdis project area are DD-AFW1 and ApAaAcEIIeEfFd and AaAtS?sEs?bSeEe within the Ramone area (Botanica, 2023a; Stantec, 2018; GIS Database). Potential impacts to vegetation associated with this watercourse can be minimised by the implementation of a watercourse management condition.</p>	At variance	No
<p><u>Principle (g):</u> <i>“Native vegetation should not be cleared if the clearing of the vegetation is likely to cause appreciable land degradation.”</i></p> <p><u>Assessment:</u></p>	May be at variance	No

Assessment against the clearing principles	Variance level	Is further consideration required?
<p>The mapped soils are susceptible to water erosion on sloping land and around drainage lines (Schoknecht & Pathan, 2013). Noting the extent and location of the application area, and the condition of the vegetation, the proposed clearing is likely to have an appreciable impact on land degradation. Potential erosion impacts as a result of the proposed clearing can be minimised by the implementation of a staged clearing condition to ensure large areas are not void of vegetation cover for extended periods.</p> <p>Additionally, the application area is intersected by a contaminated site. The identified spill area is not located within the application area, however the land has been subject to potentially contaminating activities (DWER – Contaminated sites, personal communication, 4 February 2026). It is recommended that the works are carried out in accordance with an internal management plan including an unexpected finds protocol should any contaminated materials be encountered (DWER – Contaminated sites, personal communication, 4 February 2026).</p>		
<p><u>Principle (i):</u> <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.”</i></p> <p><u>Assessment:</u></p> <p>Given the application area contains multiple ephemeral minor drainage lines and drainage depressions, the proposed clearing may impact surface or groundwater quality (Botanica, 2023a; Stantec, 2018; GIS Database). Impacts of the proposed clearing can be minimised through the implementation of a watercourse management condition to avoid the clearing of riparian vegetation and maintain surface flow where practicable.</p> <p>Additionally, the application area is intersected by a contaminated site, the identified spill area is not located within the application area, however the land has been subject to potentially contaminating activities (DWER – Contaminated sites, personal communication, 4 February 2026). It is recommended that the works are carried out in accordance with an internal management plan including an unexpected finds protocol should any contaminated materials be encountered (DWER – Contaminated sites, personal communication, 4 February 2026).</p>	May be at variance	No
<p><u>Principle (j):</u> <i>“Native vegetation should not be cleared if the clearing of the vegetation is likely to cause, or exacerbate, the incidence or intensity of flooding.”</i></p> <p><u>Assessment:</u></p> <p>The application area contains multiple ephemeral drainage lines which are prone to flooding during high rainfall events (Northern Star, 2025b; Stantec, 2018; GIS Database). It is unlikely the proposed clearing of vegetation will significantly exacerbate the intensity of flooding. Potential impacts can be minimised through the implementation of a watercourse management condition, to ensure riparian vegetation is avoided where practicable and surface water flow is maintained. Additionally, Northern Star Resources (2025b) has stated drainage diversion infrastructure will be installed to ensure that flood risks are mitigated during mining operations whilst preserving natural surface water flows.</p>	Not likely to be at variance	No

Appendix D. 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.

Condition	Description
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 E. Vegetation associations - mapping and photographs

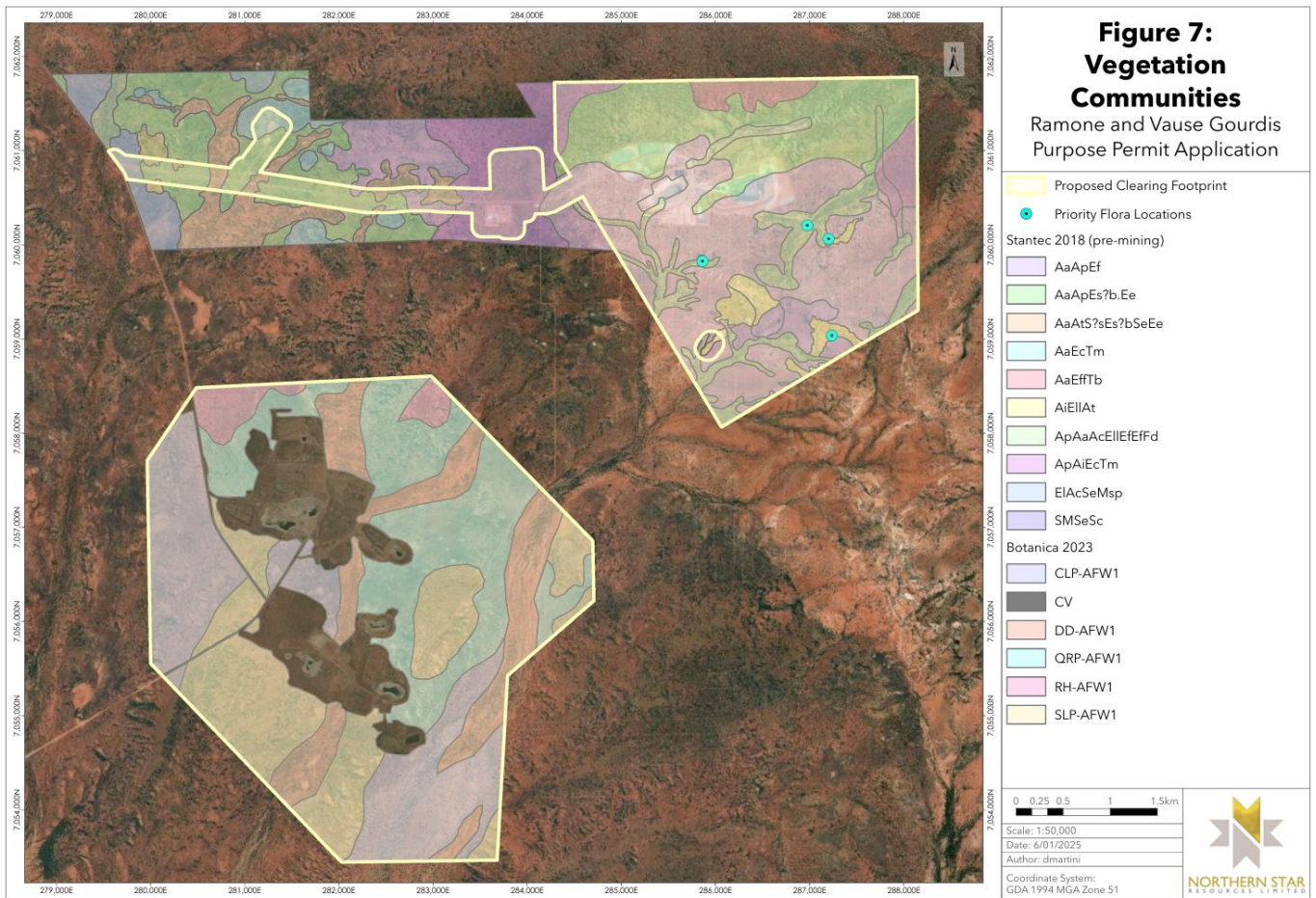





Figure 2. Vegetation communities mapped within the application area (Northern Star, 2025b; Botanica, 2023; Stantec, 2018).

Table 1. Vegetation communities within the application area and associated photograph of vegetation community (Botanica, 2023; Stantec, 2018).

Vegetation Code	Photograph
<p>Ramone Project area</p> <p>AaApEf</p>	
<p>AaApEs?b.Ee</p>	
<p>AaAtS?sEs?bSeEe</p>	

AaEcTm



AaEffTb



AiEIIAt



ApAaAcEIIeEfFd



ApAiEcTm



EIAcSeMsp



SMSseSc



Vause Gordis Project area

CLP-AFW1



DD-AFW1



QRP-AFW1



RH-AFW1



SLP-AFW1



Appendix F. Fauna habitat mapping and descriptions

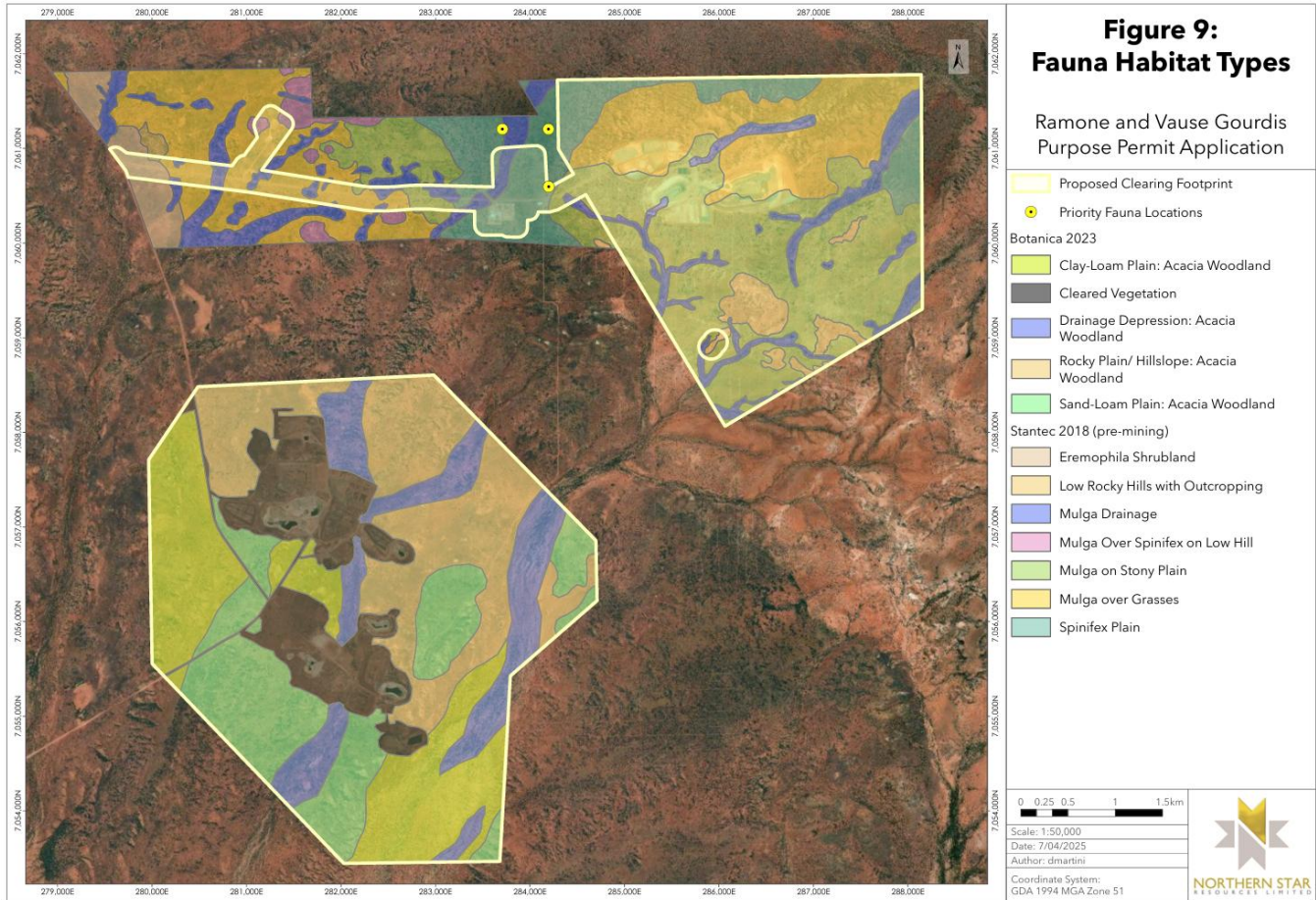














Figure 3. Fauna habitat types mapped within the application area (Northern Star, 2025b; Botanica, 2023; Stantec, 2018).

Table 2. Description of fauna habitats within the application area, table adapted by Northern Star (2025b) from Botanica (2023) and Stantec (2018).

Project Area	Habitat Type	Habitat Description	Habitat Values	Example Image
Ramone (Stantec 2018)	Mulga shrubland over grasses (29%)	Plains with a sparse to moderate upper storey dominated by <i>Acacia aneura</i> interspersed with <i>Acacia pruinocarpa</i> over <i>Eremophila</i> sp., <i>Senna</i> sp., <i>Solanum</i> sp., <i>Ptilotus schwartzii</i> and tussock grasses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grasses provide cover and food sources for small reptiles, mammals and birds. Minimal shelter in the form of woody debris. Impacted by introduced fauna (cattle, rabbit etc.) <p>Widespread, limited significance and low SRE potential.</p>	
	Mulga shrubland on stony plain (31%)	Rocky plains with a sparse to moderate upper storey dominated by <i>Acacia aneura</i> interspersed with <i>Acacia pruinocarpa</i> over a sparse understorey comprising isolated <i>Eremophila</i> sp., <i>Senna</i> sp., <i>Solanum</i> sp. and <i>Ptilotus schwartzii</i> , occasionally with isolated patches of tussock grasses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Abundant rocky substrate. Minimal cover for small mammals and reptiles. Limited woody debris shelter in upper storey. Impacted by introduced fauna (cattle, rabbit etc.). <p>Widespread, limited significance and low SRE potential.</p>	
Project Area	Habitat Type	Habitat Description	Habitat Values	Example Image
Ramone (Stantec 2018)	Mulga drainage (15%)	Drainage lines occurred in locations prone to flooding, and varied in vegetation composition and density. The habitat ranged from relatively open areas dominated by <i>Acacia aneura</i> and tussock grasses to densely vegetated areas with a thick understorey.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fallen trees and dense vegetation provides shelter for reptile, mammal and bird species. Variety of feeding and nesting prospects in dense upper storey. Suitable habitat for amphibians following inundation. <p>Widespread, limited significance and low SRE potential.</p>	
	Mulga over spinifex on low hill (3.5%)	Low hills with a sparse to moderate upper storey largely comprising <i>Acacia aneura</i> interspersed with <i>Acacia pruinocarpa</i> over <i>Eremophila</i> sp., <i>Solanum</i> sp., <i>Ptilotus schwartzii</i> , spinifex hummocks and patchy tussock grasses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited amount of woody debris and peeling bark. Spinifex grasses provide habitat cover for a variety of mammal, bird and reptile species. Impacted by introduced fauna (cattle, rabbit etc.). <p>Widespread, limited significance and low SRE potential.</p>	

Project Area	Habitat Type	Habitat Description	Habitat Values	Example Image
Ramone (Stantec 2018)	Eremophila shrubland (3%)	Plains with a sparse to moderate upper storey dominated by <i>Eremophila sp.</i> with isolated <i>Acacia aneura</i> over <i>Ptilotus sp.</i> , <i>Solanum sp.</i> , <i>Senna sp.</i> and isolated patches of tussock grasses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimal cover for small mammals and reptiles. Woody debris and peeling bark in upper storey provides some shelter. Impacted by introduced fauna (cattle, rabbit etc.). <p>Widespread, limited significance and low SRE potential.</p>	
	Low rocky hills with outcropping (3%)	Outcropping in the southeast contained isolated <i>Acacia pruinocarpa</i> , <i>Eremophila sp.</i> , including the P4 <i>Eremophila pungens</i> , <i>Senna sp.</i> and in some areas <i>Melaleuca sp.</i> , while the western understorey was sparse and comprised <i>Eremophila sp.</i> , <i>Ptilotus schwartzii</i> and isolated tussock and spinifex grasses. The western outcrop also occurred on a relatively high hill with steeper slopes. Both supported an upper storey of <i>Acacia aneura</i> , which was denser in the west.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rocky crevices provide shelter for ground dwelling mammals and reptiles and may provide suitable habitat for Long-tailed Dunnart (P4). Rocky outcrops have medium potential to support SRE invertebrates due to microhabitats available. <p>Limited extent, moderate significance and SRE potential.</p>	

Project Area	Habitat Type	Habitat Description	Habitat Values	Example Image
Ramone (Stantec 2018)	Spinifex plain (13%)	Plains with a sparse upper storey of <i>Acacia aneura</i> and <i>Acacia pruinocarpa</i> over low, long unburnt spinifex hummocks and sparse <i>Eremophila sp.</i> Spinifex plains contained some areas with a moderate upper storey associated with leaf litter, woody debris and peeling bark, also contained large open areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low cover various mammal and reptile species, and the substrate is suitable for foraging and burrowing (foraging evidence and two burrows were observed during the survey). Areas containing a sparse <i>Acacia</i> upper storey with woody debris provides additional shelter for birds, mammals and reptiles. Suitable for species such as the Brush-tailed Mulgara (P4) which was recorded within the habitat at three locations during the survey. <p>Widespread, moderate significance and low SRE potential.</p>	
	Senna shrubland on stony plain (2%)	Very open rocky plains with no upper storey and a sparse mid storey of <i>Senna sp.</i> Meekatharra (Bailey 1-26) hybrid over sparse <i>Sclerolaena eriacantha</i> and <i>Sclerolaena cuneata</i> (<i>Maireana sp.</i>). The substrate largely comprised bare soils and coarse rocky fragments, with minimal leaf litter and woody debris.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimal shelter for birds, mammals and reptiles. Large rocks may provide some level of cover for small mammals and reptiles. <p>Widespread, limited significance and low SRE potential.</p>	

Project Area	Habitat Type	Habitat Description	Habitat Values	Example Image
Vause Gourdis (Botanica 2023b)	Clay-Loam Plain: Acacia Woodland (22%)	Clay-loam plain comprising of Mulga woodland over mixed low shrubs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✔ Substrate moderately suited to a variety of burrowing small mammals and reptiles. ✔ Moderately diverse vegetation strata supporting diverse avifauna assemblage. ✔ Limited leaf litter and tree logs / hollows for fauna refuge. <p>Widespread, limited significance and low SRE potential.</p>	
	Drainage Depression: Acacia Woodland (14%)	Drainage depression comprising of Mulga woodland over mixed low shrubs and occasional tussock grassland.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✔ Substrate moderately suited to a variety of burrowing small mammals and reptiles. ✔ Diverse vegetation strata supporting diverse avifauna assemblage. ✔ Moderate leaf litter and tree logs / hollows for fauna refuge. ✔ Freshwater source during periods of high rainfall. <p>Widespread, limited significance and low SRE potential.</p>	
Project Area	Habitat Type	Habitat Description	Habitat Values	Example Image
Vause Gourdis (Botanica 2023b)	Sand-Loam Plain: Acacia Woodland (26%)	Sand-loam plain comprising of Mulga woodland over mixed low shrubs and spinifex grassland.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✔ Substrate very well suited to a variety of burrowing small mammals and reptiles. ✔ Less diverse vegetation strata supporting a less diverse avifauna assemblage. ✔ Limited leaf litter and tree logs/ hollows for fauna refuge. <p>Widespread, limited significance and low SRE potential.</p>	
	Rocky Plain / Hillslope: Acacia Woodland (20%)	Rocky plain/ hillslope comprising of Mulga woodland over mixed low shrubs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✔ Substrate not well suited for burrowing. ✔ Moderately diverse vegetation strata supporting diverse avifauna assemblage. ✔ Limited leaf litter and tree logs/ hollows for fauna refuge. ✔ Rocky substrate providing shelter for small mammals and reptiles. <p>Widespread, limited significance and low SRE potential.</p>	

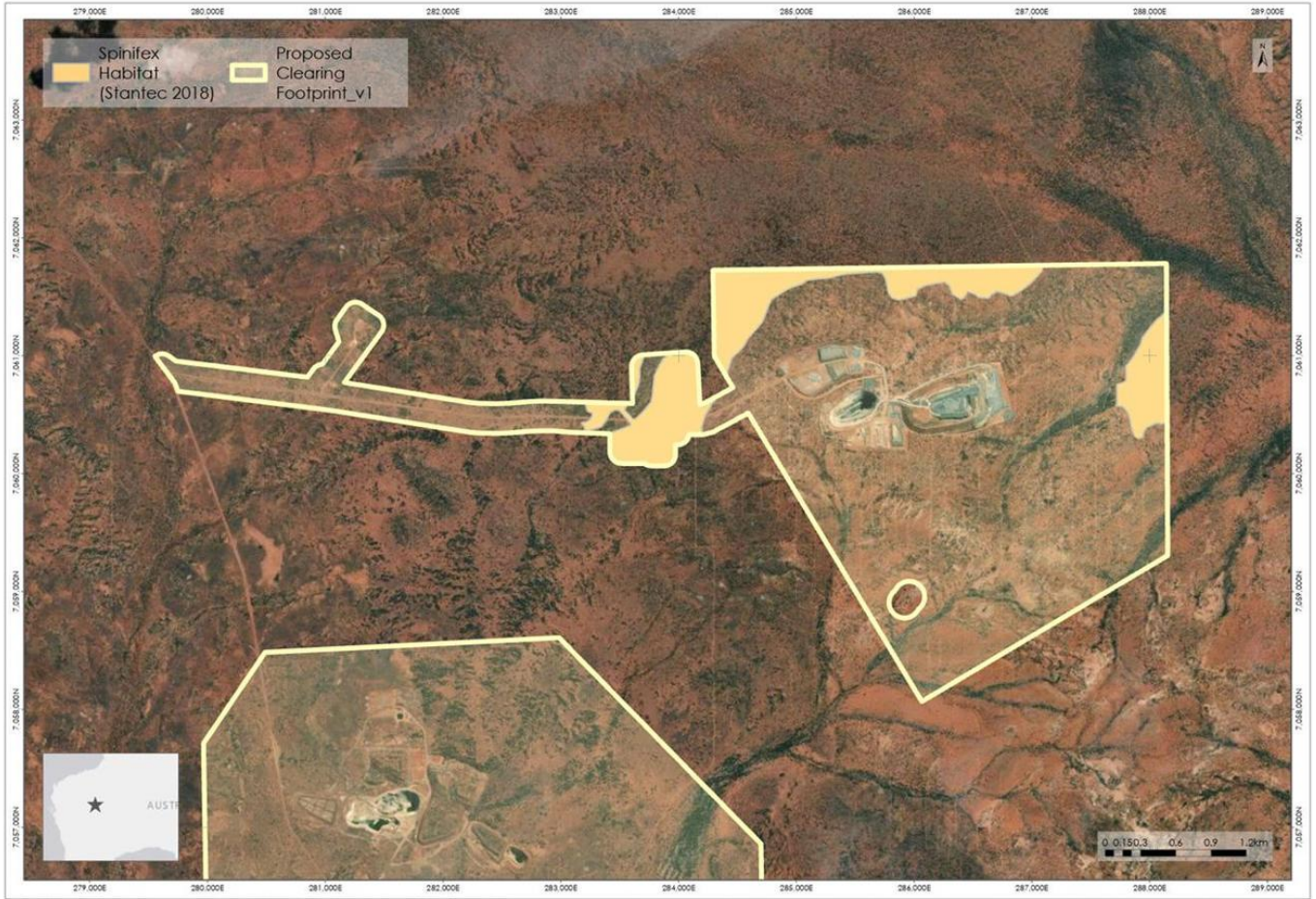


Figure 4. Excised spinifex plain habitat from original application area (Northern Star Resources Limited, 2026).

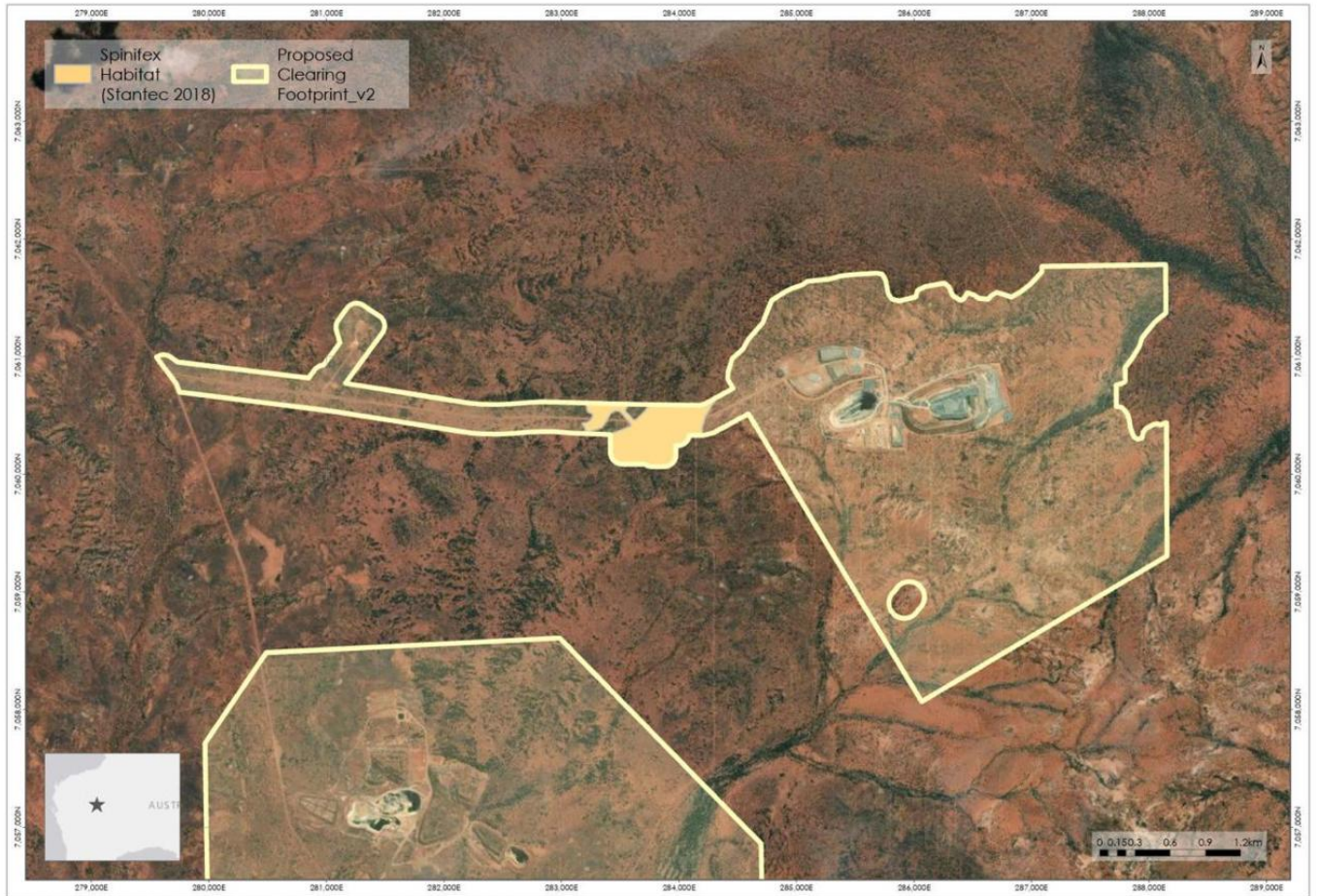


Figure 5. Remaining spinifex plain habitat within the application area (Northern Star Resources Limited, 2026).

Appendix G. Sources of information

G.1. GIS datasets

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

- Cadastre (Polygon) (LGATE-217)
- Clearing Instruments Activities (Areas Approved to Clear) (DWER-076)
- Clearing Regulations - Environmentally Sensitive Areas (DWER-046)
- Clearing Regulations - Schedule One Areas (DWER-057)
- Contaminated Sites Database (DWER-059)
- Contaminated Sites Database - Restricted (DWER-073)
- DBCA - Lands of Interest (DBCA-012)
- DBCA - Legislated Lands and Waters (DBCA-011)
- DBCA Fire History (DBCA-060)
- Groundwater Salinity Statewide (DWER-026)
- Hydrological Zones of Western Australia (DPIRD-069)
- IBRA Vegetation Statistics
- Local Government Area (LGA) Boundaries (LGATE-233)
- Localities (LGATE-234)
- Medium Scale Topo Contour (Line) (LGATE-015)
- Mineral Field Boundaries (DMIRS-005)
- Native Title (Determination) (LGATE-066)
- Native Title (Fed Court) (LGATE-005)
- Native Title (NNTT) (LGATE-004)
- Native Vegetation Extent (DPIRD-005)
- Pre-European Vegetation (DPIRD-006)
- Public Drinking Water Source Areas (DWER-033)
- Reserves (LGATE-227)
- RIWI Act, Groundwater Areas (DWER-034)
- RIWI Act, Surface Water Areas and Irrigation Districts (DWER-037)
- Soil Landscape Mapping - Best Available (DPIRD-027)
- Soil Landscape Mapping - Project Areas (DPIRD-070)
- Soil Landscape Mapping - Rangelands (DPIRD-063)
- Soil Landscape Mapping - Soil Sites (DPIRD-071)
- Soil Landscape Mapping - Systems (DPIRD-064)
- Soil Landscape Mapping - Western Australia attributed by WA Soil Group (DPIRD-076)
- Townsites (LGATE-248)
- WA Now Aerial Imagery
- WRIMS - Groundwater Areas (DWER-085)

Restricted GIS Databases used:

- Threatened and Priority Flora (TPFL)
- Threatened and Priority Flora (WAHerb)
- Threatened and Priority Fauna
- Threatened and Priority Ecological Communities
- Threatened and Priority Ecological Communities (Buffers)

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Glossary

Acronyms:

BC Act	<i>Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016</i> , Western Australia
BoM	Bureau of Meteorology, Australian Government
DAA	Department of Aboriginal Affairs, Western Australia (now DPLH)
DAFWA	Department of Agriculture and Food, Western Australia (now DPIRD)
DCCEEW	Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water, Australian Government
DBCA	Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, Western Australia
DEMIRS	Department of Energy, Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety (now DMPE)
DER	Department of Environment Regulation, Western Australia (now DWER)
DMIRS	Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety, Western Australia (now DMPE)
DMP	Department of Mines and Petroleum, Western Australia (now DMPE)
DMPE	Department of Mines, Petroleum and Exploration
DoEE	Department of the Environment and Energy (now DCCEEW)
DoW	Department of Water, Western Australia (now DWER)
DPaW	Department of Parks and Wildlife, Western Australia (now DBCA)
DPIRD	Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, Western Australia
DPLH	Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage, Western Australia
DRF	Declared Rare Flora (now known as Threatened Flora)
DWER	Department of Water and Environmental Regulation, Western Australia
EP Act	<i>Environmental Protection Act 1986</i> , Western Australia
EPA	Environmental Protection Authority, Western Australia
EPBC Act	<i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i> (Commonwealth Act)
GIS	Geographical Information System
ha	Hectare (10,000 square metres)
IBRA	Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation for Australia
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources – commonly known as the World Conservation Union
PEC	Priority Ecological Community, Western Australia
RIWI Act	<i>Rights in Water and Irrigation Act 1914</i> , Western Australia
TEC	Threatened Ecological Community

Definitions:

DBCA (2023) Conservation Codes for Western Australian Flora and Fauna. Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, Western Australia:

Threatened species

T Listed by order of the Minister as Threatened in the category of critically endangered, endangered or vulnerable under section 19(1), or is a rediscovered species to be regarded as threatened species under section 26(2) of the Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 (BC Act).

Threatened fauna is the species of fauna that are listed as critically endangered, endangered or vulnerable threatened species.

Threatened flora is the species of flora that are listed as critically endangered, endangered or vulnerable threatened species.

The assessment of the conservation status of threatened species is in accordance with the BC Act listing criteria and the requirements of [Ministerial Guideline Number 1](#) and [Ministerial Guideline Number 2](#) that adopts the use of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) [Red List of Threatened Species Categories and Criteria](#), and is based on the national distribution of the species.

CR Critically endangered species

Threatened species considered to be “*facing an extremely high risk of extinction in the wild in the immediate future, as determined in accordance with criteria set out in the ministerial guidelines*”.

Listed as critically endangered under section 19(1)(a) of the BC Act in accordance with the criteria set out in section 20 and the ministerial guidelines.

EN Endangered species

Threatened species considered to be “*facing a very high risk of extinction in the wild in the near future, as determined in accordance with criteria set out in the ministerial guidelines*”.

Listed as endangered under section 19(1)(b) of the BC Act in accordance with the criteria set out in section 21 and the ministerial guidelines.

VU Vulnerable species

Threatened species considered to be “*facing a high risk of extinction in the wild in the medium-term future, as determined in accordance with criteria set out in the ministerial guidelines*”.

Listed as vulnerable under section 19(1)(c) of the BC Act in accordance with the criteria set out in section 22 and the ministerial guidelines.

Extinct species

Listed by order of the Minister as extinct under section 23(1) of the BC Act as extinct or extinct in the wild.

EX Extinct species

Species where “*there is no reasonable doubt that the last member of the species has died*”, and listing is otherwise in accordance with the ministerial guidelines (section 24 of the BC Act).

EW Extinct in the wild species

Species that “*is known only to survive in cultivation, in captivity or as a naturalised population well outside its past range; and it has not been recorded in its known habitat or expected habitat, at appropriate seasons, anywhere in its past range, despite surveys over a time frame appropriate to its life cycle and form*”, and listing is otherwise in accordance with the ministerial guidelines (section 25 of the BC Act).

Currently there are no threatened fauna or threatened flora species listed as extinct in the wild.

Specially protected species**SP Specially protected species**

Listed by order of the Minister as specially protected under section 13(1) of the BC Act. Meeting one or more of the following categories: species of special conservation interest; migratory species; cetaceans; species subject to international agreement; or species otherwise in need of special protection.

Species that are listed as threatened species (critically endangered, endangered, or vulnerable) or extinct species under the BC Act cannot also be listed as specially protected species.

MI Migratory species

Fauna that periodically or occasionally visit Australia or an external Territory or the exclusive economic zone; or the species is subject of an international agreement that relates to the protection of migratory species and that binds the Commonwealth; and listing is otherwise in accordance with the ministerial guidelines (section 15 of the BC Act).

Migratory species include birds that are subject to an agreement between the government of Australia and the governments of Japan (JAMBA), China (CAMBA) or The Republic of Korea (ROKAMBA), and fauna subject to the *Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals* (Bonn Convention), an environmental treaty under the United Nations Environment Program. Migratory species listed under the BC Act are a subset of the migratory animals, that are known to visit Western Australia, protected under the international agreements or treaties, excluding species that are listed as Threatened species.

CD Species of special conservation interest (conservation dependent fauna)

Species of special conservation need that are dependent on ongoing conservation intervention to prevent it becoming eligible for listing as threatened, and listing is otherwise in accordance with the ministerial guidelines (section 14 of the BC Act).

Currently only fauna are listed as species of special conservation interest.

OS Other specially protected species

Species otherwise in need of special protection to ensure their conservation, and listing is otherwise in accordance with the ministerial guidelines (section 18 of the BC Act).

Currently only fauna are listed as species otherwise in need of special protection.

Priority species**P Priority species**

Priority is not a listing category under the BC Act. The Priority Flora and Fauna lists are maintained by the department and are published on the department's website.

All fauna and flora are protected in WA following the provisions in Part 10 of the BC Act. The protection applies even when a species is not listed as threatened or specially protected, and regardless of land tenure (State managed land (Crown land), private land, or Commonwealth land).

Species that may possibly be threatened species that do not meet the criteria for listing under the BC Act because of insufficient survey or are otherwise data deficient, are added to the Priority Fauna or Priority Flora Lists under Priorities 1, 2 or 3. These three categories are ranked in order of prioritisation for survey and evaluation of conservation status so that consideration can be given to potential listing as threatened.

Species that are adequately known, meet criteria for near threatened, or are rare but not threatened, or that have been recently removed from the threatened species list or conservation dependent or other specially protected fauna lists for other than taxonomic reasons, are placed in Priority 4. These species require regular monitoring.

Assessment of priority status is based on the Western Australian distribution of the species, unless the distribution in WA is part of a contiguous population extending into adjacent States, as defined by the known spread of locations.

P1 Priority One - Poorly-known species – known from few locations, none on conservation lands

Species that are known from one or a few locations (generally five or less) which are potentially at risk. All occurrences are either: very small; or on lands not managed for conservation, for example, agricultural or pastoral lands, urban areas, road and rail reserves, gravel reserves and active mineral leases; or otherwise under threat of habitat destruction or degradation.

Species may be included if they are comparatively well known from one or more locations but do not meet adequacy of survey requirements for threatened listing and appear to be under immediate threat from known threatening processes. These species are in urgent need of further survey.

P2 Priority Two - Poorly-known species – known from few locations, some on conservation lands

Species that are known from one or a few locations (generally five or less), some of which are on lands managed primarily for nature conservation, for example, national parks, conservation parks, nature reserves and other lands with secure tenure being managed for conservation.

Species may be included if they are comparatively well known from one or more locations but do not meet adequacy of survey requirements for threatened listing and appear to be under threat from known threatening processes. These species are in urgent need of further survey.

P3 Priority Three - Poorly-known species – known from several locations

Species that are known from several locations and the species does not appear to be under imminent threat or from few but widespread locations with either large population size or significant remaining areas of apparently suitable habitat, much of it not under imminent threat.

Species may be included if they are comparatively well known from several locations but do not meet adequacy of survey requirements and known threatening processes exist that could affect them. These species need further survey.

P4 Priority Four - Rare, Near Threatened and other species in need of monitoring

- (a) Rare. Species that are considered to have been adequately surveyed, or for which sufficient knowledge is available, and that are considered not currently threatened or in need of special protection but could be if present circumstances change. These species are usually represented on conservation lands.
- (b) Near Threatened. Species that are considered to have been adequately surveyed and that are close to qualifying for vulnerable but are not listed as a conservation dependent specially protected species.
- (c) Species that have been removed from the list of threatened species or lists of conservation dependent or other specially protected species, during the past five years for reasons other than taxonomy.
- (d) Other species in need of monitoring.

Principles for clearing native vegetation:

- (a) Native vegetation should not be cleared if it comprises a high level of biological diversity.
- (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.
- (c) Native vegetation should not be cleared if it includes, or is necessary for the continued existence of, threatened flora.
- (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.
- (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.
- (f) Native vegetation should not be cleared if it is growing in, or in association with, an environment associated with a watercourse or wetland.
- (g) Native vegetation should not be cleared if the clearing of the vegetation is likely to cause appreciable land degradation.
- (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.
- (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.
- (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.