GOVERNMENT OF
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

CLEARING PERMIT

Granted under section 51E of the Environmental Protection Act 1986

Purpose Permit number:	CPS 11312/1
Permit Holder:	Acker Pty Ltd
Duration of Permit:	From 05 May 2026 to 05 May 2031

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 limestone extraction.

2. Land on which clearing is to be done

Mining Lease MCI 70/2

3. Clearing authorised

The permit holder must not clear more than 1.5 hectares of *native vegetation* within the area cross-hatched yellow in Figure 1 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;

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

(d) at least once in each 12 month period for the term of this permit, the permit holder must remove or kill any *weeds* growing within areas cleared under this permit; and

(e) prior to leaving the area cross-hatched yellow in Figure 1 of Schedule 1, the permit holder must clean earth-moving machinery of soil and vegetation.

6. Fauna management - directional clearing

The permit holder must:

(a) conduct *clearing* under this permit in one direction towards adjacent *native vegetation* and away from existing cleared areas;

(b) allow reasonable time for fauna present within the area being cleared to move into adjacent *native vegetation* ahead of the clearing activity.

7. Fauna management – robber crab (*Birgus latro*)

The permit holder must:

(a) engage a *fauna specialist* to traverse the areas cross-hatched yellow in Figure 1 of Schedule 1, to identify the robber crab immediately prior to, and for the duration of clearing activities; and

(b) where the robber crab is identified under condition 7(a), ensure the *fauna specialist* removes and relocates robber crabs to an area located 50 metres or more outside of the areas to be cleared, prior to commencing clearing.

8. Fauna management – red crab (*Gecarcoidea natalis*)

Prior to undertaking any *clearing* authorised under this permit between 1 December and 28 February of each year, the permit holder must

(a) liaise and reach agreement with *Parks Australia* to determine the most appropriate timing for clearing.

(b) liaise with *Parks Australia* generally regarding agreed management measures to minimise the mortality to red crabs during migration and periods of high crab activity.

PART III - RECORD KEEPING AND REPORTING

9. Records that must be kept

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

Table 1: Records that must be kept

No.	Relevant matter	Specifications
1.	In relation to the authorised clearing activities generally	(a) the species composition, structure, and density of the cleared area; (b) the location where the clearing occurred, recorded using a Global Positioning System (GPS) unit set to Geocentric Datum Australia 2020 (GDA2020), expressing the geographical coordinates in Eastings and Northings; (c) the date that the area was cleared; (d) the size of the area cleared (in hectares); (e) the direction of clearing; (f) actions taken to avoid, minimise, and reduce the impacts and extent of clearing in accordance with *condition* 4; (g) actions taken to minimise the risk of the introduction and spread of *weeds* in accordance with *condition* 5; and (h) actions taken in accordance with *conditions* 7 and 8.

10. Reporting

The permit holder must provide to the *CEO* the records required under condition 9 of this permit when requested by the *CEO*.

DEFINITIONS

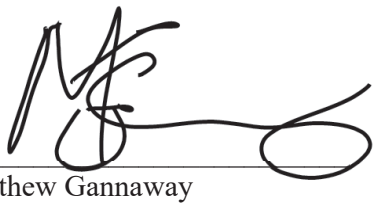
In this permit, the terms in Table 2 have the meanings defined.

Table 2: Definitions

Term	Definition
CEO	Chief Executive Officer of the department responsible for the administration of the clearing provisions under the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*.
clearing	has the meaning given under section 3(1) of the EP Act.
condition	a condition to which this clearing permit is subject under section 51H of the EP Act.

Term	Definition
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.
EP Act	*Environmental Protection Act 1986* (WA)
fauna specialist	means a person who has appropriate training in fauna identification and surveys of fauna native to Christmas Island, or who is approved by the *CEO* as a suitable fauna specialist.
fill	means material used to increase the ground level, or to fill a depression.
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.
Parks Australia	means the Commonwealth Parks Australia corporation, established under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.
weeds	means any plant – (a) that is a declared pest under section 22 of the *Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act 2007*; or (b) published in a Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions species-led ecological impact and invasiveness ranking summary, regardless of ranking; or (c) not indigenous to the area concerned.

END OF CONDITIONS



Mathew Gannaway
SENIOR MANAGER
NATIVE VEGETATION REGULATION

Officer delegated under Section 20
of the Environmental Protection Act 1986

10 April 2026

Schedule 1

The boundary of the area authorised to be cleared is shown in the map below (Figure 1).

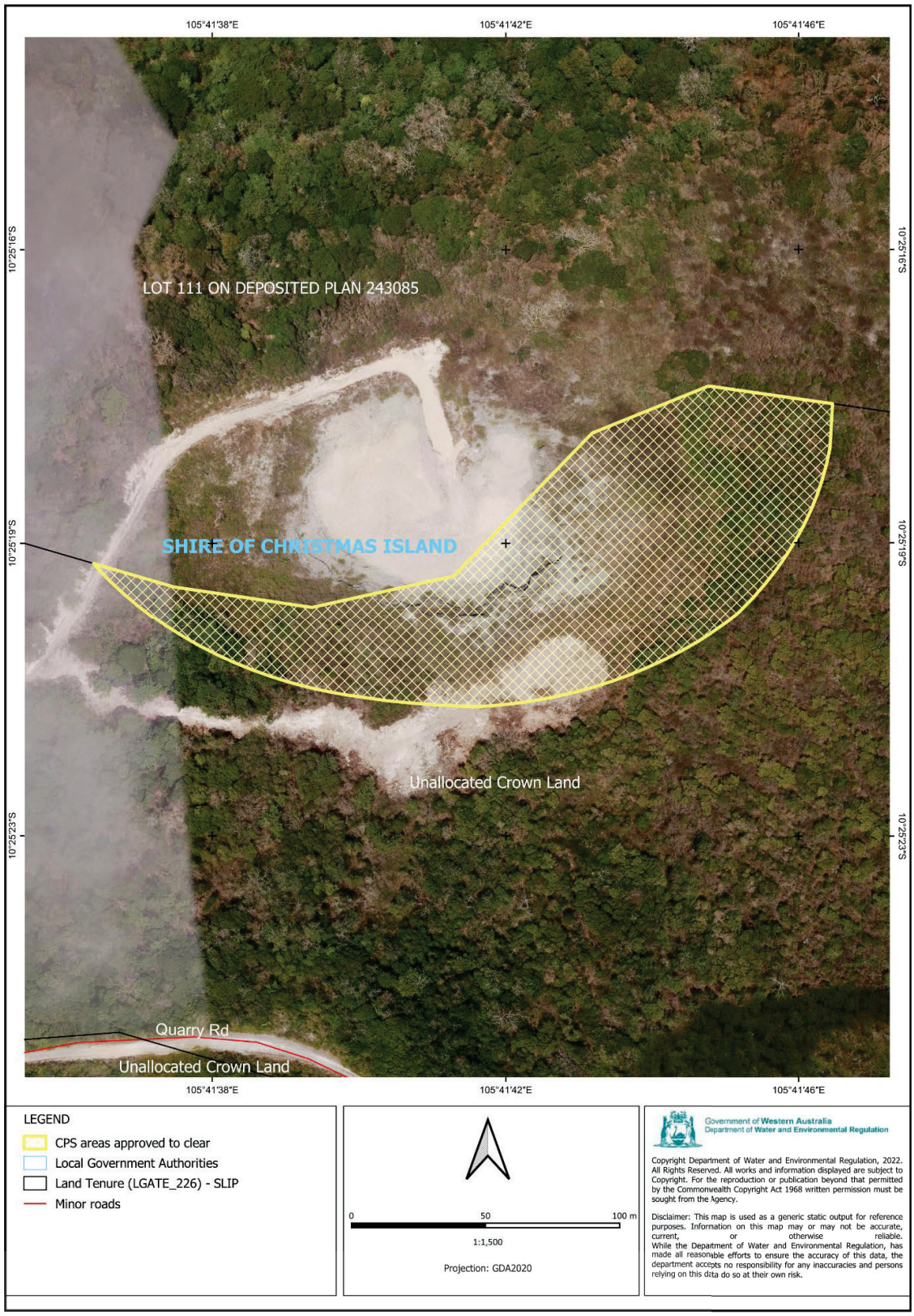


Figure 1: Map of the boundary of the area within which clearing may occur.

Government of Western Australia
Department of Water and Environmental Regulation

Clearing Permit Decision Report

1 Application details and outcome

1.1. Permit application details

Permit number:	CPS 11312/1
Permit type:	Purpose permit
Applicant name:	Acker Pty Ltd
Application received:	30 October 2025
Application area:	1.5 hectares of native vegetation
Purpose of clearing:	Limestone extraction
Method of clearing:	Mechanical clearing
Property:	Mining tenement MCI 70/2
Location (LGA area/s):	Shire of Christmas Island
Localities (suburb/s):	Christmas Island

1.2. Description of clearing activities

The application proposes the clearing of 1.5 hectares of native vegetation on Christmas Island. The proposed clearing relates to a previous clearing permit issued by the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (department) (CPS 7585/1), which expired on 23 July 2022. Acker Pty Ltd (applicant) has re-applied for approval to clear native vegetation to support ongoing operational requirements within the same area (Acker, 2025).

The application area is located adjacent to an active industrial operations and infrastructure depots. The surrounding land use is predominantly industrial and has been subject to historical clearing and stockpiling activities (Acker, 2025).

The flora survey (2025) recorded a total of 36 plant species within the application area, comprising 21 native species including two Christmas Island endemics, *Arenga listeri* and *Grewia insularis*, and 15 introduced weed species. Vegetation condition across the site ranged from good to completely degraded (Keighery, 1994). Portions of the proposed 1.5 hectare application area include areas that have been previously cleared, with the majority of the application area described as ‘previously cleared with weed regrowth’ (Christmas Island Environmental Services, 2025).

1.3. Decision on application

Decision:	Granted
Decision date:	10 April 2026
Decision area:	1.5 hectares of native vegetation as depicted in Section 1.5, below.

1.4. Reasons for decision

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

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

- avoidance and minimisation actions implemented by the applicant;
- the site characteristics (see Appendix B);
- relevant datasets (see Appendix F);
- supporting information provided by the applicant, including:
    - Flora and Vegetation Assessment (2017) undertaken by Range to Reef Environmental; and
    - Flora and Vegetation Assessment (2025) undertaken by Christmas Island Environmental Services.
- the 10 clearing principles set out in Schedule 5 of the EP Act (see Appendix C); and
- relevant planning instruments and other matters relevant to the assessment (see Section 3.3).

In addition to the above, the Delegated Officer also took into consideration that:

- the application area is within the confines of the applicants mining lease, which is valid until 2036;
- the Acker quarry is the only facility on the island which provides aggregate and concrete for roads and other building purposes and that the existing quarry area needs to be expanded to continue to provide material; and
- the application area was previously approved by the department in 2017, which also had consideration for the 10 clearing principles set out in Schedule 5 of the EP Act.

The assessment identified that the proposed clearing will result in:

- the potential introduction and spread of weeds into adjacent conservation areas and primary rainforest, including the Christmas Island National Park, which could impact on the quality of the adjacent vegetation and its habitat values; and
- a risk of injury / mortality to native fauna during clearing operations, including the robber crab (*Birgus latro*) and the red crab (*Gecarcoidea natalis*).

After consideration of the available information, as well as the applicant's minimisation and mitigation measures (see Section 3.1), the Delegated Officer determined the proposed clearing is unlikely to lead to appreciable land degradation or have long-term adverse impacts and can be minimised and managed to unlikely 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;
- liaise with Parks Australia to implement management measures to minimise crab mortality, prior to clearing during the red crab migration period; and
- engage a fauna spotter to remove (if necessary) and relocate robber crabs (*Birgus latro*) from the application areas ahead of clearing.

1.5. Site map

Figure 1 Map of the application area

The area crosshatched yellow indicate the area authorised to be cleared under the granted clearing permit.

2 Legislative context

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

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

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

Other legislation of relevance for this assessment include:

- *Mining Act 1978*
- *Environment Protection (Impact of Proposals) Act* 1974
- *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act* 1999 (Cth) (EPBC Act)

The key guidance documents which inform this assessment are:

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

3 Detailed assessment of application

3.1. Avoidance and mitigation measures

The applicant previously applied to clear native vegetation within the application area in 2017 and was granted a clearing permit on 23 June 2017 for the same area. As that permit has since expired, the applicant has now re-applied to undertake clearing within the existing footprint (Acker, 2025).

Based on the supporting information available to the department (Range to Reef Environmental, 2017), it appears that the applicant has sought to avoid the clearing of native vegetation in excellent condition (Keighery, 1994).

The applicant advises that vegetation clearing will be undertaken only as required to support operational needs within the application area, with measures in place to ensure that unnecessary clearing is avoided. Weed control will be undertaken annually through targeted spraying to prevent the spread of weeds to surrounding areas. Upon cessation of operations, the pit will be rendered safe in accordance with the approved pit closure plan (Acker, 2025).

The areas subject to this application will form part of the current open-pit quarry. Due to the ongoing nature of quarry operations, revegetation within the clearing area will not be feasible. Vegetation management during operations will focus on minimising clearing and ensuring that disturbance is limited to what is operationally necessary (Acker, 2025).

3.2. Assessment of impacts on environmental values

The assessment against the clearing principles (see Appendix C) identified the impacts of the proposed clearing are limited and able to be managed to be environmentally acceptable with standard management conditions.

3.2.1.Biological values - Clearing Principles (a and b)

Assessment

In June 2025, Christmas Island Environmental Services undertook a flora and vegetation survey within Mining Lease MCI 70/2 on Christmas Island. The survey recorded a total of 36 flora species, comprising 21 native species including the Christmas Island endemics *Arenga listeri* and *Grewia insularis* and 15 introduced weed species (Christmas Island Environmental Services, 2025).

Vegetation condition varied across the ten surveyed waypoints. Three sites were assessed as being in good condition, while the remaining sites were classified as completely degraded, primarily due to extensive weed invasion (Christmas Island Environmental Services, 2025).

Weed dominance was assessed using percentage foliage cover estimates collected during field surveys. At degraded sites (Waypoints 4–10*),* weed cover ranged from approximately 50 per cent to 96 per cent, with native vegetation comprising only a minor component of total cover. In contrast, Waypoints 1–3 supported a higher proportion of native

vegetation, with native species accounting for approximately 50–58 per cent of total foliage cover (Christmas Island Environmental Services, 2025).

Table 1: vegetation condition (Keighery, 1994) and the vegetation type within each of the waypoints.

Waypoint number	Condition	Vegetation type recorded
1	Good – 50% of the cover is invasive weeds	Semi-deciduous scrub with 50 per cent weed cover
2	Good – approximately 60% cover is invasive weeds	Semi-deciduous scrub
3	Good – approximately 80% of cover is invasive weeds	Semi-deciduous scrub
4	Completely degraded – over 90% cover is invasive weeds	Weedy vegetation and pioneer regrowth
5	Completely degraded – approximately 90% cover is invasive weeds	Weedy vegetation and pioneer regrowth
6	Completely degraded – approximately 70% cover is invasive weeds	Weedy vegetation and pioneer regrowth
7	Completely degraded – over 90% cover is invasive weeds	Weedy vegetation and pioneer regrowth
8	Completely degraded – approximately 75% cover is invasive weeds.	Weedy vegetation and pioneer regrowth
9	Completely degraded – approximately 90% cover is invasive weeds.	Weedy vegetation and pioneer regrowth
10	Completely degraded – approximately 75% cover is invasive weeds	Weedy vegetation and pioneer regrowth

The application area has also previously been subject to a flora and vegetation field investigation undertaken on 18 February 2016 by Range to Reef Environmental (Range to Reef Environmental, 2025). The investigation included ground-truthing to identify vegetation type and structure, assess vegetation condition, and determine the presence of any conservation-significant flora species. The survey area extended beyond the current application boundary. Based on the survey results, the vegetation within the application area was described as follows:

- Totally cleared;
- Exotic shrubland 2-4 metres dominated by * *Tecoma stans* var. *stans* with the condition of the vegetation rated as completely degraded in a landform that is described as gentle limestone terrace with 80 per cent rock;
- Exotic shrubland 1-4 dominated by * *L. leucocephala with *Tecoma stans* var. *stans* and *Ipomoea hederifolia* with condition of the vegetation rated as degraded in a landform that is described as gentle limestone terrace with 80 per cent rock.

The investigation recorded 56 flora taxa from 32 families within the survey area. Of these 25 were native, including four endemic species, and 31 (55 per cent) were introduced (Range to Reef Environmental, 2017).

Three threatened flora species (under the EPBC Act) are known to occur on Christmas Island, being *Asplenium listeri, Pneumatopteris truncata* and *Tectaria devexa* var. *minor*.

- *Asplenium listeri* (Christmas Island spleenwort) (critically endangered) – The species occurs within limestone rock crevices in dry, exposed areas. Habitat critical to the survival of the species includes all limestone rock crevices and adjacent known occurrences, as well as taller vegetation located on the island-facing side of cliff-top sites (Butz M, 2024).

- *Pneumatopteris truncata* (Christmas Island fern) (critically endangered) – is known from only two localities on the southwest side of the island where it occurs on permanently moist sites associated with groundwater seepage in semi-deciduous closed forest (Commonwealth of Australia, 2014).

- *Tectaria devexa* var. *minor* (cave fern) (endangered) – occurs mainly on the plateau in primary rainforest (tall and largely undisturbed) above 80 metres elevation. Habitat critical to this species survival includes all areas within 50 metres of the area occupied by the species (Butz M, 2024a).

The flora and vegetation survey undertaken by Christmas Island Environmental Services (2025), did not identify any of the above species. The 2017 survey also did not find any of these species (Range to Reef Environmental, 2017). Based on the desktop assessment, there are no known populations of the threatened flora species close to the application area. The vegetation within the application area is not likely to provide suitable habitat for these threatened species that occur on Christmas Island.

Fauna

During a site inspection undertaken by Range to Reef Environmental in 2017, fauna observations were recorded across all survey locations. Four species of conservation significance were identified within the vicinity of the application area: the Christmas Island thrush, Christmas Island white-eye, red crab, and robber crab (Range to Reef Environmental, 2017). These species are widespread across many of the island's twelve recognised terrestrial fauna habitats, most of which occur within the Christmas Island National Park.

The majority of the application area itself is highly degraded (Keighery, 1994) and is not considered to provide suitable habitat for these species, except for infrequent and transitory use. Notwithstanding this, the department has further considered the potential impacts of the proposed clearing on these fauna species, as outlined below.

Robber crab (*Birgus latro)*

Robber Crabs are found on most parts of Christmas Island, from the shore terrace to the highest plateau areas. Robber Crabs are habitat generalists, and all areas of previously uncleared rainforest comprise high quality habitat for this species (Director of National Parks, 2014).

While this species was recorded near the site, it was recorded within the vegetation type 'semi deciduous forest 10-15 metres' that is in excellent to very good condition (Keighery, 1994). This type of vegetation was not recorded within the application area where clearing is proposed to occur. Given the extent of higher quality habitat that exists for this species within surrounding areas of primary rainforest in Christmas Island National Park, the habitat within the application areas is unlikely to be significant for this species.

There is, however, a risk of robber crab mortality resulting from fauna strike during clearing operations, should individuals be present within the application area at the time of clearing. The implementation of measures to detect, remove, and relocate robber crabs from the application area prior to and during clearing activities would assist in minimising this risk.

Island thrush (*Turdus poliocephalus erythropleurus*)

Christmas Island thrush is listed as Endangered under the EPBC Act. This species is confined to Christmas Island, where it is considered to be widespread. The extent of occurrence is estimated to be 137 kilometres squared (DoE, 2014)

The Island thrush (Christmas Island) is widespread across most habitats on Christmas Island. It is most frequently found in tall, closed evergreen rainforest and open semi-deciduous rainforest on the coastal and higher terraces, as well as on the central plateau. Its presence is lowest in areas that have been disturbed (DoE, 2014). Analysis of the ten waypoint datasets indicates that no trees taller than 20 metres were recorded (Christmas Island Environmental Services, 2025).

Based on the above, the application area is unlikely to provide significant habitat for these species, and it is considered there is a low risk of the above species using the application area for nesting. This is noting the modified habitat present within the application area, known ecology of the above species, survey findings and availability of nesting habitat with nearby primary rainforest and surrounds. Regarding the availability of suitable nesting habitat, Christmas Island is 75 per cent vegetated (comprising 10,125 hectares) of which 84 per cent (8,505 hectares) occurs in Christmas Island National Park.

Red Crab *(Gecarcoidea natalis)*

Red crabs are a keystone species on Christmas Island and are abundant in the moist environments of the rainforest. They also occupy a range of other habitats, including areas of primary forest and secondary regrowth (Director of National Parks, 2014). The only areas where red crabs are absent are those where rainforest has been cleared and soil removed for phosphate mining. Each year, at the beginning of the wet season (typically October to December), adult red crabs undertake a mass migration from the forest to the coast to breed and spawn.

Based on the databases available to the department at the time of this assessment, the application area is not known to coincide with major red crab migration pathways, nor is any red crab migration infrastructure located in close proximity. However, because the species was recorded near the application area during the survey (Range to Reef

Environmental, 2017), it is likely that red crabs may occasionally traverse the site. If individuals are present during clearing, the risk of mortality could increase.

Therefore, it is recommended that Parks Australia be consulted to determine the most appropriate timing for clearing within the application area, to ensure red crabs are not indirectly impacted during these activities.

Christmas Island white eye (*Zosterops natalis)*

The Christmas Island white-eye is not listed as threatened under State legislation, nor is it listed under the EPBC Act. This classification reflects the species' estimated population size of at least 20,000 individuals, with no evidence of historical population decline or indications that a decline is likely to occur in the future (DCCEEW, 2021).

The Christmas Island white-eye is endemic to Christmas Island and occupies all forested habitats across the island, with an estimated extent of occurrence of approximately 135 square kilometres. Although historically confined to Christmas Island, the species has since been introduced to the Cocos (Keeling) Islands (DCCEEW, 2021).

Given the absence of tall forest within the application area, and the availability of suitable nesting and foraging habitat within nearby primary rainforest and surrounding areas, it is unlikely that the proposed clearing would result in a significant impact on this species.

The Christmas Island white-eye is highly mobile and are therefore unlikely to be at risk of fauna strike. Noting the low likelihood of nesting birds occurring within the application area, as well as the proposed slow, progressive, one-directional clearing approach, which provides opportunities for fauna to move away from the disturbance area, it is unlikely for any impacts to occur on this species.

Conclusion
Based on the above assessment, the proposed clearing is unlikely to result in significant impacts on conservation-significant fauna species. The Island Thrush and the Christmas Island White-eye are highly mobile species and, as such, the risk of fauna strike is considered low.

However, both the Red Crab and the Robber Crab may occasionally transit through the application area, given records of these species in close proximity. The conditions applied to the clearing permit are considered sufficient to mitigate potential impacts on these two crab species.

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

- Slow directional clearing to allow fauna to move into adjacent vegetation ahead of the clearing activity will minimise impact to individuals.
- liaise with Parks Australia generally regarding agreed management measures to minimise the mortality to red crabs during migration and periods of high crab activity.
- engage a fauna spotter to remove (if necessary) and relocate robber crabs from the application area ahead of clearing.

3.3. Relevant planning instruments and other matters

The Shire of Christmas Island was notified of the application, and the Shire did not have any objections to the proposed clearing (Shire of Christmas Island, 2026).

The department sought clarification from the applicant regarding whether any additional approvals, permits, or authorisations are required to undertake the proposed works. The applicant has advised that no other statutory approvals are necessary and confirmed that the proposed activities can proceed following the approval of the clearing permit.

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

End

Appendix A. Additional information provided by applicant

Summary of comments	Consideration of comment
Flora and Vegetation Assessment: Acker Quarry (MCI 70/2) (Christmas Island Environmental Services, 2025)	In June 2025, Level 1 flora and vegetation survey was conducted by Christmas Island Environmental Services within Mining Lease MCI 70/2, Christmas Island. This survey was undertaken to support the clearing permit application CPS 11312/1. The 2025 survey builds upon previous assessments, updating vegetation condition following intense seasonal rainfall and localised weed proliferation.
Flora and Vegetation Assessment Acker Quarry Mining Lease MCI 70/2 (Range to Reef Environmental, 2017)	The flora and vegetation field investigation was undertaken on 18 February 2016 by Range to Reef Environmental. The field survey aimed to provide an assessment adequate to satisfy the requirements of the clearing permit assessment process. A level one survey was undertaken due to the highly degraded nature of the application area.

Appendix B. Site characteristics

B.1. Site characteristics

Characteristic	Details
Local context	Christmas Island retains approximately 75 per cent native vegetation, of which 84 per cent (64 per cent of total island area) is protected within the Christmas Island National Park.
Conservation areas	The northern boundary of the application area adjoins the boundary of Christmas Island National Park. However, a review of recent aerial imagery indicates that the mapped extent of the National Park does not accurately reflect current ground conditions in this location. Areas mapped as National Park immediately north of the application area appear to have been previously cleared of vegetation. Christmas Island National Park does not adjoin the southern boundary of the application area
Vegetation description	Christmas Island was subject to an island wide vegetation mapping project between 2011 and 2014 (Geoscience Australia, 2014). The project largely mapped the application areas as: • Semi-deciduous scrub – native regrowth vegetation with a mixture of native and occasional weed species. Found in less disturbed sections of the lease. • Weedy vegetation and pioneer regrowth – heavily disturbed areas dominated by invasive plant species and early successional vegetation. A review of the survey results indicates that a total of 36 plant species were recorded across the ten survey waypoints. Of these, 21 were native species including two endemics, *Arenga listeri* and *Grewia insularis* and 15 were introduced weed species (Christmas Island Environmental Services, 2025). Weed dominance was evaluated using percentage foliage cover estimates collected during field assessments. At the more degraded sites (Waypoints 4–10), weed cover was high, ranging from 50% to 96%, with native vegetation contributing only a small proportion of total cover. In contrast, Waypoints 1–3 supported a greater proportion of native vegetation, with native species making up 50% to 58% of total foliage cover. Despite native vegetation remaining the primary structural element at these sites, the presence and extent of weeds still indicate an underlying level of ecological degradation.

Characteristic	Details
	 Figure 2: Ten Survey waypoints. A summary of the vegetation type based on a ground truthing reconnaissance survey undertaken by Christmas Island Environmental Services (2025) which include photographs of the application area, is publicly available at APP-0032018 - CPS 11312-1 - Supporting Document - Flora Report 2023.PDF.
Vegetation condition	Vegetation survey indicates the vegetation within the application area ranges from good to completely degraded (Keighery, 1994) (Christmas Island Environmental Services, 2025). Condition ratings are as follows: • Good: Waypoints 1, 2, 3 • Completely Degraded: Waypoints 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 This suggests that only three of the ten survey sites retain reasonable structure and native diversity, while the remaining sites are largely dominated by weeds. A summary of the vegetation type based on a ground truthing reconnaissance survey undertaken by Christmas Island Environmental Services which include photographs of the application area, is publicly available at APP-0032018 - CPS 11312-1 - Supporting Document - Flora Report 2023.PDF. The full Keighery (1994) condition rating scale is provided in Appendix D.
Climate and landform	Christmas Island is the summit of a submarine mountain. It rises steeply to a central plateau dominated by stands of rainforest. The plateau reaches heights of up to 361 metres and consists mainly of limestone with layers of volcanic rock. The Island's 80-kilometre coastline is an almost continuous sea cliff, ranging in height to 20 metres. Christmas Island has a tropical monsoonal climate with a distinct wet season occurring from December to April. The average rainfall is about 2,000 millimetres per annum. Surveyed waypoints ranged from relatively flat terrace land to moderate slopes (5–10%).
Soil description	Largely made up of limestone, with underlying volcanic material. In terms of geology, the landscape consists of stepped limestone terraces with phosphate-enriched soils and areas of exposed limestone pinnacles. The soils are generally shallow, and ecological processes such as organic matter breakdown are strongly shaped by the activity of the island's abundant red crab population. In the application area, limestone is present close to the soil surface.

Characteristic	Details
Land degradation risk	Christmas Island soils are generally highly permeable, resulting in minimal runoff and low susceptibility to water or wind erosion. During the wet season, intense rainfall can generate short-term runoff, creating some risk of soil erosion and sedimentation; however, these events are typically brief.
Waterbodies	Perennial surface water on Christmas Island is limited to spring fed streams on coastal or sloping areas of the Island. Such areas are confined to Hosnies Spring and The Dales wetland areas, which are both listed as Ramsar wetlands and are listed in the Directory of Important Wetlands in Australia. The closest mapped wetland or watercourse to the application area is the 'The Dales' Ramsar wetland which is located approximately 4.8 kilometres from the application.
Flora	Christmas Island is home to 242 native plant species, including 18 endemic species. Three threatened flora species (under the EPBC Act) are known from Christmas Island. These are *Asplenium listeri, Tectaria devexa* var. *minor* and *Pneumatopteris truncata.* These species have not been previously recorded within the application area. The closest record of these species to the application area is *Tectaria devexa* var. *minor,* recorded around 4.7 kilometres from the application area. Two priority flora species are known to occur on Christmas Island, both listed as Priority 1 by DBCA; *Clerodendrum inerme* and *Acalypha lanceolata* var. *lanceolata.* These species have not been previously recorded within the application area. The closest record of these species to the application area is *Clerodendrum inerme* recorded approximately 9 kilometres from the application area.
Ecological communities	No threatened or priority ecological communities occur on Christmas Island.
Fauna	Christmas Island provides habitat for 14 land bird species and nine seabird species. Four seabird and nine land bird species are endemic to the island. A further 108 migratory or vagrant bird species have been recorded on the island. Six of the island's endemic birds are listed as threatened under the EPBC Act. One endemic native mammal, the Christmas Island flying fox and five endemic reptiles, also occur on Christmas Island. Christmas Island also supports 20 crab species with three species locally significant, being the red, robber and blue crabs. No previous records of any fauna species are identified from the application area. The closest record is of a Giant Gecko identified approximately 500 metres from the application area. The survey by Range to Reef Environmental (2017) identified Christmas Island thrush, Christmas Island white-eye, red crab and robber crab near the proposed clearing area.

B.2. Flora analysis table

There are three threatened flora species and two priority flora species known from Christmas Island, as shown below.

Species name	Conservation status	Suitable habitat present? [Y/N/Potential]
Tectaria devexa var. minor	Endangered; EPBC Act	N
Asplenium listeri	Critically endangered; EPBC Act	N
Pneumatopteris truncata	Critically endangered; EPBC Act	N
Clerodendrum inerme	Priority 1; listed by DBCA	N
Acalypha lanceolata var. *lanceolata*	Priority 1; listed by DBCA	N

B.3. Fauna analysis table

With consideration of the site characteristics set out above, relevant datasets (see Appendix F), and biological survey information, the following conservation significant fauna species were recorded in close proximity to the application area.

Species name	Conservation status	Suitable habitat features? [Y/N]	Identified within the application area? [Y/N]
Christmas Island thrush (*Turdus poliocephalus erythropleurus*)	Endangered; EPBC Act	N	N
Christmas Island white-eye (*Zosterops natalis*)	Not conservation listed	N	N
red crab (*Gecarcoidea natalis*)	Not conservation listed (keystone species)	Y	N
robber crab (*Birgus latro*)	Not conservation listed	N	N

Appendix C. 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 survey recorded 36 flora species in total, comprising 21 native species, including the endemics *Arenga listeri* and *Grewia insularis* and 15 introduced weed species. Foliage cover estimates showed that weeds were dominant at seven of the ten survey waypoints. Only three sites were rated as being in good condition (Keighery, 1994), while the remaining locations were assessed as completely degraded (Keighery, 1994) (Christmas Island Environmental Services. 2025). No conservation significant flora species were likely to occur or identified within the application area and due to the condition of the vegetation, it was unlikely for the application area to provide any significant habitat for fauna species.	Not likely to be at variance	Yes *Refer to Section 3.2.1, above.*
Principle (b): *"Native vegetation should not be cleared if it comprises the whole or a part of, or is necessary for the maintenance of, a significant habitat for fauna."* Assessment: Four conservation significant fauna species were recorded from near the application area where better condition vegetation was present. However, due to the current condition of the application area and the small extent of the proposed clearing, it is unlikely for the application area to provide significant habitat for these species. It is likely for these species to be transient through the application area.	Not likely to be at variance	Yes *Refer to Section 3.2.1, above.*
Principle (c): *"Native vegetation should not be cleared if it includes, or is necessary for the continued existence of, threatened flora."* Assessment: Three threatened flora species (under the EPBC Act) are known to occur on Christmas Island, being *Asplenium listeri, Pneumatopteris truncata* and *Tectaria devexa var. minor.* No threatened flora species are likely to occur or identified within the application area. The proposed clearing is not likely to impact on occurrences of these species.	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: No threatened ecological communities have been recorded on Christmas Island.	Not at variance	No
Environmental value: significant remnant vegetation and conservation areas		
Principle (e): *"Native vegetation should not be cleared if it is significant as a remnant of native vegetation in an area that has been extensively cleared."* Assessment: The national objectives and targets for biodiversity conservation in Australia has a target to prevent clearance of ecological communities with an extent	Not likely to be at variance	No .

Assessment against the clearing principles	Variance level	Is further consideration required?
below 30% of that present pre-1750, below which species loss appears to accelerate exponentially at an ecosystem level (Commonwealth of Australia, 2001). Christmas Island retains around 75% native vegetation (10,125 hectares) of which 84% (64% of the total island area) is protected within the Christmas Island National Park. The proposed clearing equates to the loss of around 2.2% of the total remaining vegetation on Christmas Island. The extent of native vegetation on Christmas Island is therefore consistent with the national objectives and targets for biodiversity conservation in Australia.		
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: The northern boundary of the application area is adjacent to the Christmas Island National Park but is separated from National Park vegetation by a buffer created by the existing quarry and tracks which operate in the national park under an exemption. Weed management conditions implemented on the clearing permit, including a requirement to remove or kill any weeds within cleared areas at least once every 12 months for the duration of the permit, are anticipated to mitigate the potential spread of weeds into adjacent vegetation.	Not likely to be 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: Given no water courses or wetlands are recorded within or within close proximity to the application area, the proposed clearing is unlikely to impact on- or off-site hydrology and water quality. The proposed clearing is not growing in or associated with a watercourse or wetland.	Not likely to be at variance	No
Principle (g): *"Native vegetation should not be cleared if the clearing of the vegetation is likely to cause appreciable land degradation."* Assessment: Christmas Island has a high annual rainfall of approximately 2000 millimetres per year. Despite this, the island has very little in the way of natural running water. Approximately 70 per cent of the rainfall is taken up by the island's plants and the remaining infiltrates through the soil to recharge the groundwater. The soil and underlying limestone rock is very porous and there is very little runoff except during torrential wet season downpours. Therefore, the proposed clearing is not likely to cause appreciable land degradation in the form of water erosion. Due to the porous nature of the soils on Christmas Island, waterlogging is unlikely to result from the proposed clearing. The application area may experience occasional wind gusts during the wet season due to the north-west monsoons (Range to Reef Environmental, 2017). Given the already degraded nature of the application area, and the small extent of clearing and the availability of tall forest in the surrounding landscape, it is unlikely that the proposed clearing will cause appreciable wind erosion impacts.	Not likely to be at variance	No

Assessment against the clearing principles	Variance level	Is further consideration required?
Noting the above, the proposed clearing is not likely to result in appreciable land degradation.		
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: Due to high infiltration rates on Christmas Island, erosion and sedimentation is generally localised to compacted areas such as roads and stockpiles. Therefore, the proposed clearing is not likely to cause deterioration in the quality of surface water. Due to the distance between the application area and the RAMSAR wetland, it is unlikely for any surface water impacts to occur from the proposed clearing.	Not likely to be at variance	No
Principle (j): *"Native vegetation should not be cleared if the clearing of the vegetation is likely to cause, or exacerbate, the incidence or intensity of flooding."* Assessment: The proposed clearing is not likely to cause or exacerbate flooding noting the presence of highly permeable soils on Christmas Island, absence of watercourses within the application areas, and presence of extensive vegetation surrounding the application areas.	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 Keighery, B.J. (1994) *Bushland Plant Survey: A Guide to Plant Community Survey for the Community*. Wildflower Society of WA (Inc). Nedlands, Western Australia.

Measuring vegetation condition for the South West and Interzone Botanical Province (Keighery, 1994)

Condition	Description
Pristine	Pristine or nearly so, no obvious signs of disturbance.
Excellent	Vegetation structure intact, with disturbance affecting individual species; weeds are non-aggressive species.
Very good	Vegetation structure altered, with obvious signs of disturbance. For example, disturbance to vegetation structure caused by repeated fires, the presence of some more aggressive weeds, dieback, logging and/or grazing.
Good	Vegetation structure significantly altered by very obvious signs of multiple disturbances. Retains basic vegetation structure or ability to regenerate it. For example, disturbance to vegetation structure caused by very frequent fires, the presence of some very aggressive weeds at high density, partial clearing, dieback and/or grazing.
Degraded	Basic vegetation structure severely impacted by disturbance. Scope for regeneration but not to a state approaching good condition without intensive management. For example, disturbance to vegetation structure caused by very frequent fires, the presence of very aggressive weeds, partial clearing, dieback and/or grazing.

Condition	Description
Completely degraded	The structure of the vegetation is no longer intact and the area is completely or almost completely without native species. These areas are often described as 'parkland cleared' with the flora comprising weed or crop species with isolated native trees or shrubs.

Appendix E. Biological survey information excerpts and photographs of the vegetation (Range to Reef Environmental, 2017); (Christmas Island Environmental Services, 2025)

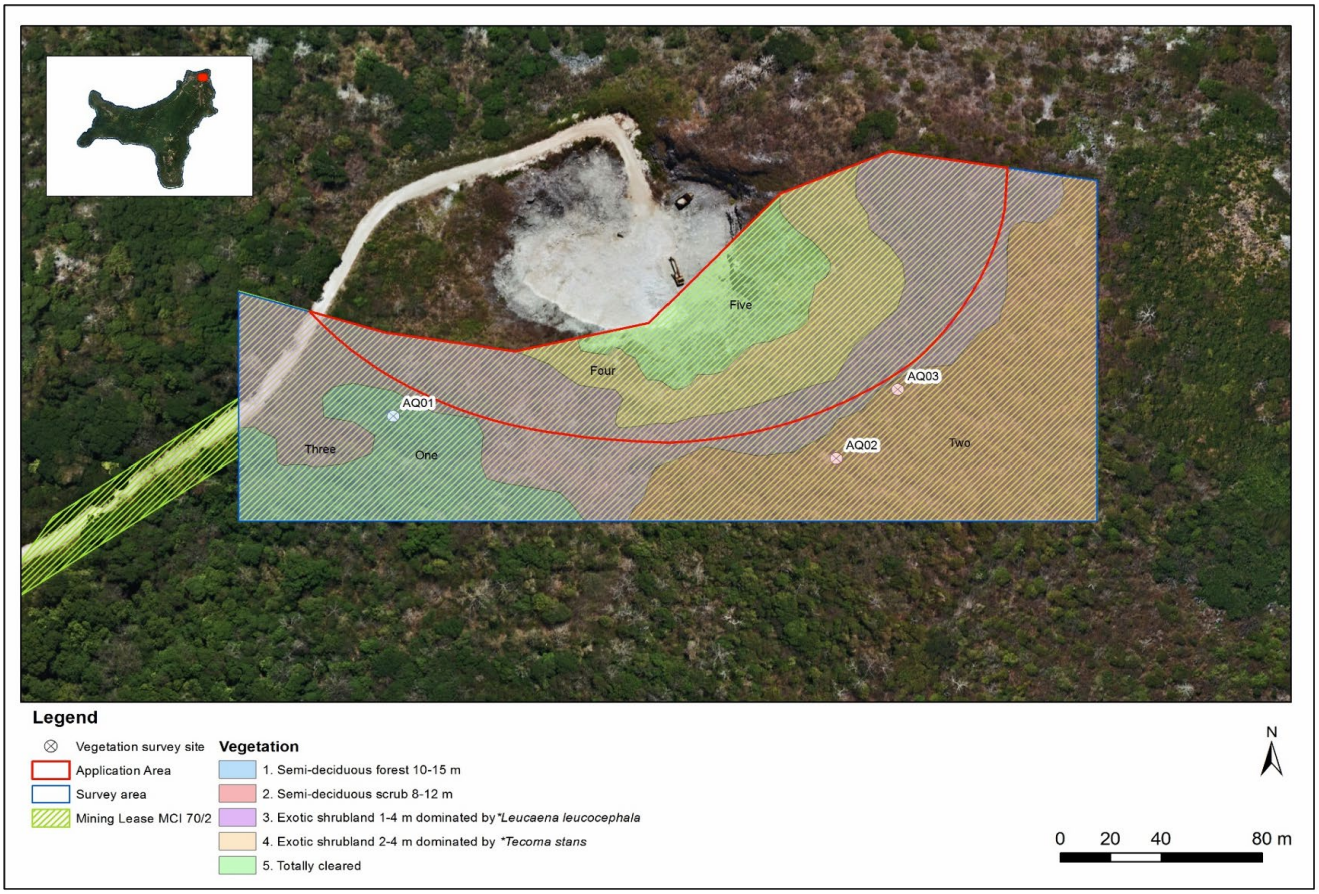
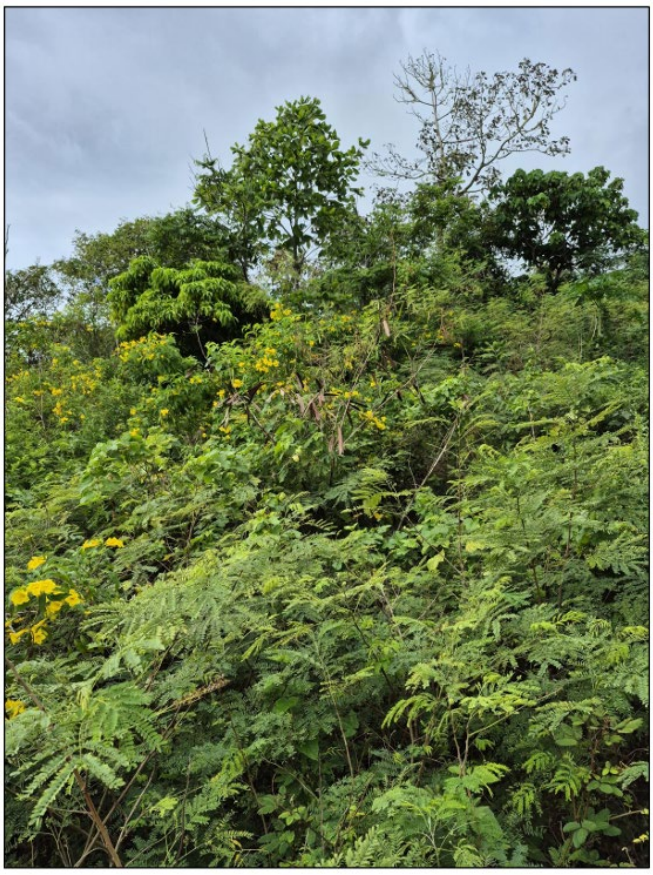


Figure 3: Vegetation type mapped within the survey area. Application area shown in red.

3. Exotic thicket 1-4m (Plate 4) Dominated by **L. leucocephala* with **Tecoma stans* var. *stans* and *Ipomoea hederifolia.*	Gentle limestone terrace 80% rock.	Degraded
4. Exotic thicket/ shrubland 2-4m (Plate 5) Dominated by *Tecoma stans var. stans.*	Gentle limestone terrace 80% rock.	Completely Degraded
5. Exotic grasses and herbs (Plate 6) **Sporobolus fertilis, Ipomoea hederifolia, *Melinis repens, *Tridax procumbens, *Sida acuta, *Euphorbia heterophylla, *Mimosa pudica* and **Mimosa invisa.*	Bare rock and low weeds.	Completely Degraded

Figure 4: Description of each vegetation types and condition found within the application area.

Photographs of the application area



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)

F.2. References

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