



Clearing Permit Decision Report

1. Application details and outcomes

1.1. Permit application details

Permit number:	11582/1
Permit type:	Purpose permit
Applicant name:	Genesis Minerals Pty Ltd
Application received:	5 May 2026
Application area:	122.44 hectares
Purpose of clearing:	Mineral Production
Method of clearing:	Mechanical removal
Tenure:	Mining Leases 37/25, 37/251, 37/55, 37/622, 37/689 Miscellaneous Licences 37/263, 37/290
Location (LGA area):	Shire of Leonora
Colloquial name:	Tower Hill Project

1.2. Description of clearing activities

Genesis Minerals Pty Ltd proposes to clear up to 122.44 hectares of native vegetation within a boundary of approximately 135.35 hectares, for the purpose of mineral production. The project is located adjacent the town of Leonora, within the Shire of Leonora.

The application is to allow for facilitation of stage two of the Tower Hill Project (GM, 2026a; GIS Database).

1.3. Decision on application and key considerations

Decision:	Grant
Decision date:	30 September 2026
Decision area:	122.4 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 A), relevant datasets (Appendix D), supporting information provided by the applicant (GM, 2026b) including the results of a flora and vegetation survey (NVS, 2022), the clearing principles set out in Schedule 5 of the EP Act (Appendix B), proposed avoidance and minimisation measures (Section 3.1), relevant planning instruments and any other matters considered relevant to the assessment (Section 3.3). The Delegated Officer also took into consideration the purpose of the clearing to facilitate mineral production and associated activities.

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;
- potential land degradation in the form of water and wind erosion;
- the loss of native vegetation that is suitable habitat for southern whiteface (*Aphelocephala leucopsis*); and
- potential impacts to adjacent Melita calcrete groundwater assemblage type on Raeside palaeodrainage on Melita (Sons of Gwalia) Station priority ecological community.

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:

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- 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 with a fauna spotter present to allow terrestrial fauna to move into adjacent habitat ahead of the clearing activity;
- a fauna management (southern whiteface) condition requiring area proposed to be cleared between 1 July and 31 October are inspected to identify active (in use) southern whiteface nests, and to maintain a 10 metre buffer around identified active nests;
- commence construction no later than six months after undertaking clearing to reduce the risk of erosion; and
- watercourse management to avoid riparian vegetation and maintain existing water flow.

1.5. Site map

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

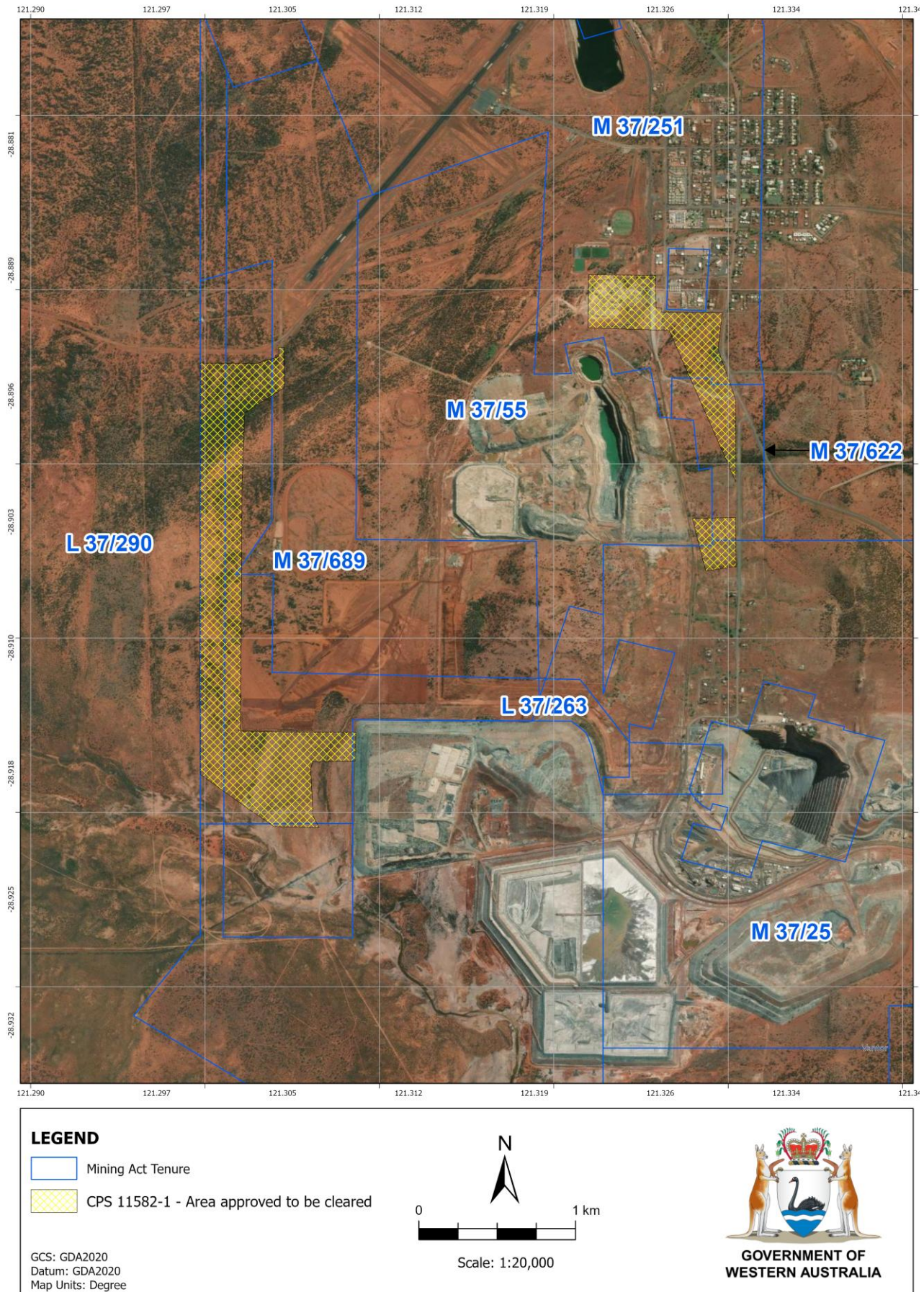


Figure 1. Map of the application area. The yellow area indicates the area within which conditional authorised clearing can occur under the granted clearing permit.

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

Other legislation of relevance for this assessment include:

- *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* (WA) (BC Act)
- *Conservation and Land Management Act 1984* (WA) (CALM Act)
- *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth) (EPBC Act)
- *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, 2014)
- Procedure: Native vegetation clearing permits (DWER, 2021)
- Technical guidance – Flora and Vegetation Surveys for Environmental Impact Assessment (EPA, 2016)
- Technical guidance – Terrestrial Fauna Surveys for Environmental Impact Assessment (EPA, 2020)
- Technical guidance – Subterranean fauna surveys for Environmental Impact Assessment (EPA, 2021)
- Guideline for Cumulative Impact Assessment (EPA, 2026)

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 following environmental management measures will be employed at the site (Genesis, 2026):

- Where possible, mining activities will be planned to utilise historic disturbances, access tracks, and pipeline corridors to minimise clearing of additional vegetation;
- Cleaning of earthmoving machinery prior to entering and leaving the area to be cleared;
- Ensure that no known weed-affected soil, mulch, fill or other material is brought into the area to be cleared; and
- Restrict the movement of machines and other vehicles to the limits of the areas to be cleared.

3.2. Assessment of impacts on environmental values

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

The assessment against the clearing principles identified that the impacts of the proposed clearing present a risk to biological values (groundwater assemblages and associated stygofauna communities).

The consideration of these impacts, and the extent to which they can be managed through conditions applied in line with sections 51H and 51I of the EP Act, is set out below.

3.2.1. Biological values (biodiversity) - Clearing principle (a)

Assessment

The Priority 1 Priority Ecological Community 'Melita calcrete groundwater assemblage type on Raeside palaeodrainage on Melita (Sons of Gwalia) Station' is located less than one kilometre south of the application area, with the buffer zone for this PEC overlapping the west section of the application area (GIS Database). This PEC is host to a unique assemblage of stygofauna present within the groundwater, with the population considered adaptable to anthropogenic influences following a century of mining at the Gwalia site and tolerant of high salinity levels (Bennelongia, 2026a).

Bennelongia undertook field surveys of the PEC and the Raeside palaeochannel surrounding it in March 2023 and August 2025, with a total of 60 bores sampled (Bennelongia, 2026a). Of these, 23 were within the Melita calcrete, and out of the total bores sampled only 18 recorded stygofauna (Bennelongia, 2026a). One of these bores occurs within the application area, which recorded three different stygofauna species at the very south west section of the application area (Bennelongia, 2026a). A

further five bores that recorded stygofauna are located adjacent to the application area, with between one and three stygofauna species recorded at each of these sites.

The Melita PEC may extend into the application area, as in addition to the stygofauna recorded within/adjacent to the application area, the Raeside palaeovalley within which the calcrete has formed intersects the west section of the application area (GIS database). While the species recorded in the boreholes within the PEC do not match those recorded within or adjacent to the application area, the subsurface of the application area still plays host to multiple subterranean fauna species, increasing the potential for the proposed clearing to have an impact on subterranean fauna.

The greatest impacts to this PEC and subterranean fauna as a result of the proposed clearing will most likely take the form of changes to water table depth as a result of clearing flora species that utilise groundwater such as *Acacia burkittii* and *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* subsp. *obtusa* recorded within the creekline vegetation units identified by the September 2022 NVS survey of the area (NVS, 2022). There are three instances of either the *Acacia burkittii* creekline vegetation or creekline vegetation occurring within the application area, with only one of these instances intersecting the PEC buffer zone.

Groundwater within and immediately adjacent to the application area is close to the surface, ranging in depth from 1.46 to 13.25 metres below ground level based on bores records. These shallow groundwater levels are more likely to be utilised by riparian or adapted vegetation when surface water is unavailable (DPI, 2016).

While the proposed clearing may result in impacts on the water table, there is generally a lack of flora species that are known to utilise groundwater within the application area, and surface flows will be redirected around site infrastructure and reinstated downstream, maintaining interactions between surface water and groundwater. Additionally, there are multiple observation bores in place within and outside the PEC buffer zone so that groundwater levels can be continually monitored as site activities are undertaken.

Conclusion

While there is stygofauna inhabiting the calcrete habitat within the application area, these species do not match those recorded within the Melita PEC. Additionally, the majority of the vegetation proposed to clear is unlikely to utilise groundwater, and thus the removal of this vegetation is unlikely to have an effect on the stygofauna within the application area. Surface water flows will be diverted around site infrastructure and reinstated downstream, minimising potential effects on the Melita PEC as a result of surface flows.

3.2.2. Biological (fauna) - Clearing principle (b)

Assessment

Multiple fauna surveys have been conducted over the application area and its surrounds by Spectrum Ecology and Spatial in November 2021, Terrestrial Ecosystems in September 2022, and two surveys by Bennelongia in March 2023 and August 2025. While none of these surveys identified any priority species within the application area, they have identified suitable habitat for multiple priority species likely to occur in the surrounding area. Additionally, the Bennelongia SRE survey conducted in 2023 identified eight invertebrate species, four of which were identified as potential or likely SREs (Bennelongia, 2026b).

Suitable habitat for the following species has been identified within the application area:

- *Aphelocephala leucopsis*, VU;
- *Leipoa ocellata*, VU;
- *Falco peregrinus*, OS;

There are also records of multiple migratory birds in the surrounding area, however most of these occur at a nearby dam and suitable habitat for these species is not present within the application area.

Southern whiteface

Aphelocephala leucopsis (southern whiteface), Vulnerable under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act), is a small bird similar to thornbills but with a stockier build, with brownish-grey upperparts with a pale white underside (Commonwealth of Australia, 2008). This species is widespread across the south of Australia but patchily distributed throughout its range, preferring woodlands and tall shrublands with grassy understorey or low shrub layer (Commonwealth of Australia, 2008). While there is only one record of this species within 50 kilometres of the application area, the species was only listed in March 2023 and its distribution is not yet well understood (Commonwealth of Australia, 2008; GIS Database).

The open mulga woodland present in the vegetation within the application area provides suitable foraging and breeding habitat for this species, with most of the mulga woodland within the application area being in good condition. The proposed clearing is likely to impact suitable habitat for the southern whiteface, and if the species is present within the application area, then the proposed clearing may result in local impacts to suitable habitat.

Malleefowl

Leipoa ocellata (malleefowl) occurs 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 (DCCEEW, 2024). Malleefowl can also occur in scrubs of acacia in central Australia however this is less frequent (DCCEEW, 2024). Nesting habitat occurs in light sandy soil and where leaf litter is abundant, for the construction and heating of the incubation mound (DCCEEW, 2024). This species forages on the ground in leaf litter or among low vegetation, such as herbs and shrubs (DCCEEW, 2024).

Malleefowl tracks were recorded within the survey area during the Terrestrial Ecosystems survey, however there was no evidence of recent activity or malleefowl mounds within the area (TE, 2023). It is likely that malleefowl utilise the application area as transitory habitat moving between areas of more suitable habitat for foraging and breeding. As such, the proposed clearing is unlikely to result in any impacts to the conservation of malleefowl.

Peregrine falcon

Falco peregrinus (peregrine falcon) is widespread but rare throughout Australia, and found across all continents with the exception of Antarctica. The preferred habitat of this species is coastal and inland cliffs or open woodlands near water, and has also been recorded nesting on skyscrapers and abandoned mine pits.

While there are two records of this species within 50 kilometres of the application area, the area is likely to provide only marginal foraging habitat and lacks suitable breeding habitat. As such, the proposed clearing is unlikely to result in any impacts to the conservation of the peregrine falcon.

Invertebrates

A short-range endemic (SRE) fauna survey was carried out over the application area by Bennelongia Environmental Consultants from 28 to 31 March 2023. The survey covered a large area to the northwest, southwest and south of the townsite of Leonora, with the southwest section covering the proposed Tower Hill expansion. There were 11 sites sampled for SREs during the field survey; three sites were sampled for SREs for the Tower Hill project, all three of which occur immediately adjacent to, but outside, the application area, with sample sites 01 and 06 adjacent to the southwest section of the application area and sample site 05 adjacent to the northeast section of the application area (Bennelongia, 2026b).

Of these three sites, only one species of potential SRE was identified, the mygalomorph spider *Aname* 'BMYG222' 'Melloso group'. A second potential SRE species was identified at site 06 at the time of the survey, however it has since been genetically matched with another species recorded at the WAM with a linear range of 290 kilometres (Bennelongia, 2026b).

Aname 'BMYG222' 'Melloso group'

The 2023 survey represents the first known record of this species, identified from sites 05 and 06 adjacent to the application area, and site 04 approximately two kilometres north of the application area. Morphological and molecular identification confirm that it does not match any described *Aname* species (Bennelongia, 2026b). The species was recorded in only one of the fauna habitats identified by the survey, stony plains with bluebush shrubland. As a result, this species was categorised as an unlikely potential SRE by Bennelongia as its known habitat is widespread throughout the wider area and thus the species is expected to have a wider distribution than the records from the survey (Bennelongia, 2026b).

Conclusion

Based on the above assessment, the proposed clearing may have impacts on suitable habitat for southern whiteface, and it is recommended that conditions should be implemented to mitigate the impacts from the proposed clearing. As the majority of the suitable habitat for this species occurs in the western section of the application area, it is this area that will be conditioned.

The proposed clearing is unlikely to result in impacts to suitable habitat for the other vertebrate species listed above, however they may still utilise the application area as transitory habitat. As such, a slow directional clearing condition will be implemented to allow any fauna to move into adjacent vegetation ahead of the clearing machinery.

No confirmed SRE species have been identified within or adjacent to the application area, and the one species identified as a potential SRE species is considered unlikely to be an SRE species as the habitat it was recorded in is widespread in the area. As such, it is considered unlikely that the proposed clearing will impact on the conservation of SRE species.

Conditions

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

- undertake slow, progressive one-directional clearing with a fauna spotter present to allow terrestrial fauna to move into adjacent habitat ahead of the clearing activity; and
- a fauna management (southern whiteface) condition requiring area 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 24 July 2026 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 (WCD2022/002) over the area under application (DPLH, 2026). This claim has been registered with the National Native Title Tribunal 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 is one registered Aboriginal Site 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.

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. Site characteristics

A.1. Site characteristics

Characteristic	Details
Local context	The area proposed to be cleared is located immediately southwest of Leonora on mixed allocations of crown land within the shire of Leonora in the extensive land use zone of Western Australia (GIS Database). The application area is split into three sections surrounding the Tower Hill mine site and is bounded to the north and south by other mining developments, to the east by the townsite of Leonora and by native vegetation and Lake Raeside to the west (GIS Database). The predominant land uses in the region are unallocated Crown land (UCL), Crown reserves, grazing-native pasture leasehold, freehold, conservation and mining leases (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 application area does not form part of any known or mapped conservation areas. The closest record is the Dundas Nature Reserve located approximately 12 kilometres east South-east of the area proposed to be cleared (GIS Database).
Vegetation description	The vegetation of the application area is broadly mapped as the following Beard vegetation associations: • Laverton_18: Low woodland, open low woodland or sparse woodland; • Laverton_28: Low woodland, open low woodland or sparse woodland; • Laverton_39: Scrub, open scrub or sparse scrub; and • Laverton_676: <i>Tecticornia</i> spp. Communities in saline areas (GIS Database). A flora and vegetation survey was conducted over the application area by Native Vegetation Solutions during September 2022. The following vegetation associations were recorded within the application area (NVS, 2023): • <i>Acacia burkittii</i> creekline vegetation; • creekline vegetation; • existing disturbance; • mulga woodland; • mulga over chenopod shrubland; • mulga over <i>Melaleuca interiosis</i> and <i>Eremophila miniata</i> sand dune; • open low chenopod shrubland; and • <i>Tecticornia</i> shrubland.
Vegetation condition	Vegetation surveys of the application area found the vegetation to be in very good to completely degraded condition (Keighery, 1994). The full Keighery (1994) condition rating scale is provided in Appendix C.
Climate and landform	The climate of the Eastern Murchison subregion is described as arid, with the nearest weather station recording an average rainfall of approximately 236.7 millimetres per year (BoM, 2026; CALM, 2002). The application area is mapped within elevation areas of 360 to 380 meters Australian Height Datum (GIS Database).
Soil description and land degradation risk	The soil is mapped as part of the following land systems and soil descriptions (Gilligan et al., 1994; Waddell and Galloway, 2023; GIS Database): • Carnegie land system – lake floors, unvegetated and consisting only of salt lake soils. Salinity makes this land system in its natural state susceptible to high erosion rates, but a lack of slope causes erosion and deposition to be localised, resulting in dynamic equilibrium for this land system. • Gundockerta land system – extensive, gently undulating, calcareous plains, supporting bluebush shrublands. Soils associated with this land system are calcareous shallow loam, shallow non-cracking clay, red shallow loam, alkaline red shallow loamy duplex, calcareous loamy earth, alkaline red shallow sandy duplex, shallow non-cracking clay, saline soil, red-brown hardpan shallow loam, alkaline red shallow loamy duplex, cracking clays in gilgai area, very shallow calcrete soil and very shallow ironstone soil. Where not protected by a stony mantle, saline stony plains and adjacent lower alluvial landforms are susceptible to water erosion. • Leonora land system – low greenstone hills and stony plains supporting mixed chenopod shrublands. Soils associated with this land system are lithosols or shallow red earth on greenstone, calcareous red earth on greenstone or red stone on calcrete, shallow duplex on greenstone, shallow red earth on greenstone and red clay. Drainage tracts are highly susceptible to water erosion, particularly where perennial shrub cover has been substantially reduced or if the soil surface is disturbed. Stony lower footslopes rely on mantles for soil protection against erosion.

Characteristic	Details
	Rainbow land system – hardpan plains supporting mulga tall shrublands. Soil systems associated with this land system are shallow red earth or sand on hardpan and deep red earth. This system is generally not susceptible to soil erosion. Impedance of sheet flow can initiate soil erosion and cause water starvation and consequent loss of vigour in vegetation downslope.
Waterbodies	The desktop assessment and aerial imagery indicated that three minor, non-perennial watercourses transect the area proposed to be cleared (GIS Database). The nearest Wetland of National or International Importance is Lake Ballard located approximately 65 kilometres south southeast of the application area (GIS Database).
Hydrogeography	The nearest Public Drinking Water Source Area is the Leonora Water Reserve located approximately 10 kilometres north of the application area (GIS Database). The application area is located within the Goldfields Ground Water Area proclaimed under the <i>Rights in Water and Irrigation Act 1914</i> (GIS Database). The groundwater salinity is mapped as 3,000 to 35,000 milligrams per litre total dissolved solids which is described as brackish to hypersaline (BoM, 2019; GIS Database). A subterranean fauna survey conducted over the application area recorded groundwater salinity up to 138,000 µS/cm, which equates to approximately 88,320 milligrams per litre total dissolved solids (Bennelongia, 2026).
Flora	There are records of three priority flora within 20 kilometres of the application area (GIS Database).
Ecological communities	The closest recorded Priority Ecological Community (PEC) is the priority 1 Melita calcrete groundwater assemblage type on Raeside palaeodrainage on Melita (Sons of Gwalia) Station, located approximately 570 metres south of the western section of the application area (GIS Database).
Fauna	There are records of 13 conservation significant fauna species within 50 kilometres of the application area (GIS Database).
Fauna habitat	The following fauna habitats were identified within the application area (TE, 2023): - bare salt lakes; - ephemeral creek lines; - tall shrublands; - low shrublands; and - open mulga woodlands.

A.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 No.					
18	19,892,306.46	19,843,148.07	99.75	1,317,179.00	6.62
28	395,895.08	392,171.83	99.06	-	-
39	6,613,567.48	6,602,578.44	99.83	795,070.69	12.02
676	2,063,413.95	1,963,881.55	95.18	303,176.00	14.69
Beard vegetation associations - Bioregion					
Veg Assoc No.					
18	12,403,172.30	12,363,252.47	99.68	614,964.13	4.96
28	224,291.84	220,583.71	98.35	-	-
39	1,148,400.30	1,138,064.63	99.10	40,834.41	3.56
676	382,818.77	382,704.49	99.97	8,855.52	2.31

Government of Western Australia (2019)

A.3. Flora analysis table

With consideration for the site characteristics set out above, relevant datasets (Appendix D.1), and biological survey information, impacts to the following conservation significant flora required further consideration (NVS, 2022; GIS Database).

Species name	Suitable habitat features? [Y/N]	Distance of closest record to application area (km)	Number of known records (total)
Priority 3			
<i>Acacia</i> sp. Marshall Pool (G. Cockerton 3024)	N	<5	11
<i>Angianthus prostratus</i>	N	<15	10
<i>Calytrix praecipua</i>	N	<20	28

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

A.4. Fauna analysis table

The following conservation significant fauna species have been recorded within 50 kilometres of the application area (Bennelongia, 2026a; Bennelongia, 2026b; Spectrum, 2022; TE, 2023; GIS Database).

Species name	Conservation status	Suitable habitat features? [Y/N]	Distance of closest record to application area (km)
Birds			
<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i> (common sandpiper)	MI	N	<10
<i>Aphelocephala leucopsis</i> (southern whiteface)	VU	Y	<50
<i>Calidris acuminata</i> (sharp-tailed sandpiper)	MI	N	<10
<i>Calidris canutus</i> (red knot)	EN	N	<50
<i>Charadrius cucullatus</i> (hooded plover, hooded dotterel)	P4	N	<15
<i>Falco peregrinus</i> (peregrine falcon)	OS	Y	<5
<i>Leipoa ocellata</i> (malleefowl)	VU	Y	<10
<i>Pluvialis fulva</i> (Pacific golden plover)	MI	N	<10
<i>Tringa glareola</i> (wood sandpiper)	MI	N	<5
<i>Tringa nebularia</i> (common greenshank)	MI	N	<10
Mammals			
<i>Antechinomys longicaudata</i> (long-tailed dunnart)	P4	N	<50
<i>Bettongia lesueur graii</i> (burrowing bettong (inland), boodie (inland))	EX*	N	<10
<i>Leporillus conditor</i> (greater stick-nest rat, wopilkara)	CD	N	<50

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

*species extinct across previously known range, now restricted to island populations

A.5. Ecological community analysis table

Ecological communities recorded within 20 kilometres of the application area (GIS Database).

Community name	Conservation status	Suitable habitat features? [Y/N]	Suitable soil type? [Y/N]	Distance of closest record to application area (km)	Mapped extent of occurrence (ha)	Are surveys adequate to identify? [Y, N, N/A]
Melita calcrete groundwater assemblage type on Raeside palaeodrainage on Melita Station (Sons of Gwalia)	P1	Y	Y	<5	196	Y

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

Appendix B. Assessment against the clearing principles

Assessment against the clearing principles	Variance level	Is further consideration required?
Environmental value: biological values		
Principle (a): "Native vegetation should not be cleared if it comprises a high level of biodiversity." <u>Assessment:</u> The area proposed to be cleared intersects a Priority Ecological Community (Melita calcrete groundwater assemblage type on Raeside palaeodrainage on Melita (Sons of Gwalia) Station (GIS Database).	May be at variance	Yes <i>Refer to Section 3.2.1, above.</i>
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." <u>Assessment:</u> The area proposed to be cleared contains potentially suitable habitat for conservation significant fauna (GIS Database).	May be at variance	Yes <i>Refer to Section 3.2.2, above.</i>
Principle (c): "Native vegetation should not be cleared if it includes, or is necessary for the continued existence of, threatened flora." <u>Assessment:</u> No threatened flora species have been identified within the application area or its surrounds (NVS, 2022; GIS Database).	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." <u>Assessment:</u> There are no known Threatened Ecological Communities located within the application area (GIS Database). A flora and vegetation survey carried out over the application area did not identify any known TECs of vegetation synonymous with known TECs (NVS, 2022).	Not likely to be 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." <u>Assessment:</u> The extent of the mapped vegetation type in the local area is consistent with the national objectives and targets for biodiversity conservation in Australia (CALM, 2002). The vegetation proposed to be cleared is not considered to be part of a significant ecological linkage in the local area.	Not likely to be at variance	No

Assessment against the clearing principles	Variance level	Is further consideration required?
<u>Principle (h):</u> "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." <u>Assessment:</u> Given the distance to the nearest conservation area (GIS Database), the proposed clearing is not likely to have an impact on the environmental values of nearby conservation areas.	Not likely to be at variance	No
Environmental value: land and water resources		
<u>Principle (f):</u> "Native vegetation should not be cleared if it is growing in, or in association with, an environment associated with a watercourse or wetland." <u>Assessment:</u> There are no permanent waterbodies or watercourses within the application area (GIS Database). Three minor, non-perennial watercourses intersect the application area, with the vegetation of these watercourses identified as 'Acacia burkittii creekline vegetation' and 'creekline vegetation' (NVS, 2023). The site layout has been designed to divert these watercourses around site infrastructure and reinstate them downstream to ensure surface water flows are unimpeded (Genesis Minerals Ltd, 2026). Potential impacts to this vegetation may be minimised through the implementation of a watercourse management condition.	At variance	No
<u>Principle (g):</u> "Native vegetation should not be cleared if the clearing of the vegetation is likely to cause appreciable land degradation." <u>Assessment:</u> The mapped land systems of the application are susceptible to soil erosion where not protected by stony mantles, where perennial shrub cover is substantially reduced, or where there is impedance of sheet flow (Gilligan et al., 1994; Waddell and Galloway, 2023). Potential impacts to land degradation may be managed through the implementation of a staged clearing condition to prevent cleared areas from being exposed for a long period of time.	May be at variance	No
<u>Principle (i):</u> "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." <u>Assessment:</u> Given no permanent watercourses, wetlands, or Public Drinking Water Source Areas are recorded within the application area, the proposed clearing is unlikely to impact surface or ground water quality (GIS Database).	Not likely to be at variance	No
<u>Principle (j):</u> "Native vegetation should not be cleared if the clearing of the vegetation is likely to cause, or exacerbate, the incidence or intensity of flooding." <u>Assessment:</u> There are no permanent watercourses or wetlands within the application area, and while multiple non-perennial drainage lines intersect the application area the proponent has committed to installing infrastructure to divert these drainage lines and reinstate them downstream. The proposed clearing is thus unlikely to contribute to waterlogging or an increased incidence or intensity of flooding.	Not likely to be at variance	No

Appendix C. Vegetation condition rating scale

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

Considering its location, the scale below was used to measure the condition of the vegetation proposed to be cleared. This scale has been extracted from 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.

Condition	Description
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.
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 D. Sources of information

D.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)
- DBCA - Lands of Interest (DBCA-012)
- DBCA - Legislated Lands and Waters (DBCA-011)
- DBCA Fire History (DBCA-060)
- Groundwater Salinity Statewide (DWER-026)
- 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 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)
- Townsites (LGATE-248)

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)

D.2. References

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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.