



## 1. Application details

### 1.1. Permit application details

Permit application No.: 1229/1  
 Permit type: Area Permit

### 1.2. Proponent details

Proponent's name: Thompson McRobert Edgeloe PTY LTD (TME)

### 1.3. Property details

Property: LOT 73 ON PLAN 32355 (House No. 115 BUSSELL GELORUP 6230)  
 Local Government Area: Shire Of Capel  
 Colloquial name: Bunbry Cathedral Grammar - Sporting facilities

### 1.4. Application

Clearing Area (ha)	No. Trees	Method of Clearing	For the purpose of:
3.2		Mechanical Removal	Recreation

## 2. Site Information

### 2.1. Existing environment and information

#### 2.1.1. Description of the native vegetation under application

Vegetation Description	Clearing Description	Vegetation Condition	Comment
Beard Vegetation Association 6 - Medium woodland: tuart & jarrah (Hopkins et al. 2001, Shepherd et al. 2001). Heddie Vegetation Complex - Karrakatta Complex-Central and South; open-forest of turart-jarrah-marri including B. attenuata, B. grandis, C. fraserana & A. flexuosa (Heddie et al. 1980).	The proposal is to clear 3.2ha of disturbed regenerating forest. The vegetation under application is an Open forest of mixed tuart-jarrah-marri, including Xylomelum occidentale, Zamia spp., Hardenbergia comptoniana, Hibbertia spp., and several shrub species. Other noted species include wildflowers eg. Caladenia flava (DEC Site Visit, 2006).	Good: Structure significantly altered by multiple disturbance; retains basic structure/ability to regenerate (Keighery 1994)	Observed during site visit: Approximately a third of the area is semi-cleared in degraded condition - the other half was in good to very good condition with several mature marri-jarrah habitat trees observed.

## 3. Assessment of application against clearing principles

### (a) Native vegetation should not be cleared if it comprises a high level of biological diversity.

**Comments**      **Proposal may be at variance to this Principle**

The vegetation under application is considered to contain some level of biodiversity as the condition varies between good and very good (Keighery 1994, DEC site visit 2006) and is comprised of both a Mattiske vegetation type and a Heddie vegetation complex, both of which are below the 30% 'threshold level' recognised in the National Objective and Targets for Biodiversity Conservation 2001-2005 (AGPS 2001). Approximately one-third of the area under application is semi-cleared with the remaining vegetation in degraded condition (Keighery 1994). The remaining vegetation under application displays some level of disturbance (logging and weed invasion), however is one of the last remaining remnants (vegetation type) within the local area. The site is surrounded by residential properties, some containing remnant vegetation.

A submission received by the Department outlines the area has a high level of diversity in excellent condition; however no Declared Rare Flora and only a single Priority Flora species have been identified in the local area.

There is a high likelihood that several threatened and priority fauna species known to occur in the area utilise the vegetation under application. A nearby System 6 Conservation Area is approximately 1km from the proposed clearing, increasing the likelihood that these species occur within the vegetation under application.

Conditions have been placed on the permit to mitigate the potential loss of biodiversity including reduce and avoid clearing as practicable and dieback prevention conditions.

Based on the above information, the proposal may be at variance with this principle.

**Methodology** DEC site visit (2006);  
Keighery (1994);  
GIS databases:  
- Declared Rare and Priority Flora List - CALM 13/08/03  
- Heddl Vegetation Complexes - DEP 21/06/95  
- Pre European Vegetation - DA 01/01.

**(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 indigenous to Western Australia.**

**Comments Proposal may be at variance to this Principle**

The native vegetation under application is made up of several vegetation complexes and community types (DEC Site Visit 2006). One concern raised in a submission received relates to the proposed clearing reducing the local availability of foraging areas for red and white tailed cockatoos. The submission also indicated that Ringtail and Honey possums are known to occur in the area.

The proposed area may provide suitable habitat and foraging value the above mentioned bird species , however the System 6 Conservation area, located approximately 1.0km to the south-west, is considered to be preferred habitat as it is less disturbed and is a larger, more intact remnant.

Based on the above factors, it is possible that red and white tailed cockatoos and possums may utilise the habitat present within the area under application and therefore the proposal may be at variance to this principle.

**Methodology** DEC site visit (2006);  
GIS Database:  
- System 6 Conservation Reserves - DEP 06/95

**(c) Native vegetation should not be cleared if it includes, or is necessary for the continued existence of, rare flora.**

**Comments Proposal is not likely to be at variance to this Principle**

There are no known records of Declared Rare Flora (DRF) within the local area (10km radius).

One Priority 4 species is found approximately 1km north-west of the proposed area, however is not within the same vegetation complex as the area under application.

It is therefore unlikely that the proposed clearing is at variance with this principle.

**Methodology** GIS databases:  
- Declared Rare and Priority Flora List - CALM 13/08/03

**(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.**

**Comments Proposal is not likely to be at variance to this Principle**

Twelve occurrences of 4 Threatened Ecological Communities (TECs) occur within the local area (7km radius). The nearest is located 3km north-east from the notified area and therefore, it is not expected that this proposal will impact upon any of these known occurrences.

Biodiversity Coordination Section, DEC (2006) advised that 'the vegetation that is proposed to be cleared is unlikely to constitute a TEC' and 'the proposed clearing is unlikely to impact upon those occurrences of TECs that are identified'.

It is therefore unlikely that the proposed clearing is at variance with this principle.

**Methodology** Biodiversity Coordination Section, DEC (2006);  
Hopkins et al. (2001);  
Havel (2002);  
Shepherd et al. (2001);  
GIS databases:  
- Mattiske Vegetation - CALM 24/3/98  
- Heddl Vegetation Complexes - DEP 21/06/95  
- Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation of Australia - EM 18/10/00  
- Pre European Vegetation - DA 01/01.

**(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.**

**Comments Proposal may be at variance to this Principle**

The application is located on the Swan Coastal Plain Bioregion within the Shire of Capel. The extent of native vegetation in these areas is 41.8% and 35.9% respectively (Shepherd et al. 2001). There is approximately 25% of native vegetation remaining in the local area. Much of the surrounding area has been cleared for agriculture, industry or residential development.

The vegetation proposed to be cleared is part of the Beard vegetation association 6 (Hopkins et al. 2001), with approximately 23.3% of this association remaining (Shepherd et al. 2001).

The condition of the vegetation under application is considered to vary between good and very good (DEC site visit 2006), and a submission received outlines concerns that the vegetation is some of the best in the region. However mapping indicates that several other larger remnants of the same vegetation type occur in the local area and are considered to be in better condition than the area under application.

Due to the scale of the proposal and the percentage of areas of similar vegetation types remaining in the local area, in better condition, the proposal is not likely to be at variance to this principle.

**Methodology**

Hopkins et al. (2001)  
Havel (2002)  
Shepherd et al. (2001).  
GIS databases:  
- Mattiske Vegetation - CALM 24/3/98  
- Heddle Vegetation Complexes - DEP 21/06/95  
- Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation of Australia - EM 18/10/00  
- Pre European Vegetation - DA 01/01.

**(f) Native vegetation should not be cleared if it is growing in, or in association with, an environment associated with a watercourse or wetland.**

**Comments Proposal is not likely to be at variance to this Principle**

A small, intermittent, man-made diversion drain is located approximately 400m east of the proposed clearing and several large damplands are situated 500m east and 600m north-west of the area under application. Several multiple use wetlands surround the area, the closest being 1km south of the proposed area.

A 300m vegetated buffer between the area under application and the diversion drain is to be maintained, which will decrease the potential for degradation of these areas.

The proposed clearing, therefore, is not likely to be at variance to this principle.

**Methodology**

WRC (1996).  
GIS databases:  
- ANCA, Wetlands - CALM 08/01  
- EPP Areas - DEO 06/95  
- EPP Lakes - DEP 28/07/03  
- Geomorphic Wetlands (Mgt Categories) Swan Coastal Plain - DoE 15/9/04  
- Geomorphic Wetlands, Augusta to Walpole - DoE 18/6/03  
- Hydrography Linear - DoE 1/2/04  
- RAMSAR, Wetlands - CALM 21/10/02.

**(g) Native vegetation should not be cleared if the clearing of the vegetation is likely to cause appreciable land degradation.**

**Comments Proposal is not likely to be at variance to this Principle**

There is a low risk of salinity and a class 3 risk (no known risk) of acid sulphate soils within the proposed clearing.

The gradient of the land or slope is 15m over 25m, soils are sandy-loamy. The area under application will be grassed and revegetated around the perimeter, therefore soil erosion is unlikely to cause further land degradation.

**Methodology**

GIS databases:  
- Acid Sulfate Soil Risk Map, SCP - DoE 01/02/04  
- Salinity Mapping LM 25m - DOLA 00  
- Salinity Monitoring LM 50m - DOLA 00  
- Salinity Risk LM 25m - DOLA 00.

**(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.**

**Comments Proposal may be at variance to this Principle**

A large System 6 Conservation Area is located approximately 850m west of, and appears to contribute to an ecological linkage to the area under application, although a major highway splits the two areas.

It is not expected that this proposal will have significant long-term impacts on the conservation area, however, due to the lack of surrounding vegetation to the east linking the conservation area to the north-east, and the density of surrounding residential development, the area under application may provide an important ecological linkage to the Conservation Area, thus the proposal may be at variance with this principle.

**Methodology GIS database:**

- CALM Managed Lands and Waters - CALM 1/06/04
- Register of National Estate - EA 28/01/03
- System 6 Conservation Reserves - DEP 06/95.

**(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.**

**Comments Proposal is not likely to be at variance to this Principle**

The area is part of the Bunbury Groundwater area (Stratham-Gelorup sub-area), proclaimed under the RIWI Act. The aquifer is Perth-Yarragadee South and is fully allocated (C4) (DoW 2006a).

GWL102351(4) was reissued for a period of 9 years and the Department of Water has determined that the water usage of the facility is adequate (DoW 2006b).

A drain exists 300m from the proposed clearing however the area between the proposed sporting grounds and the drain is fully vegetated and should filter any runoff from the proposed ovals appropriately.

Therefore the quality of the ground and surface water resource is not likely to deteriorate as a result of the proposed clearing.

**Methodology DoW, 2006a;**

DoWb, 2006;

GIS databases:

- Evaporation Isopleth - BOM 09/98
- Hydrogeology, statewide - WRC 05/02/02
- Hydrographic Catchments, Catchments - DoE 3/4/03
- PDWSA, Gazetted - WRC 01/11/02
- Public Drinking Water Source Areas (PDWSAs) - DoE 1/6/04
- Rainfall, Mean Annual - BOM 30/09/01
- RIWI Act Groundwater Areas WRC 13/06/00
- Soils, statewide - DA 11/99

**(j) Native vegetation should not be cleared if clearing the vegetation is likely to cause, or exacerbate, the incidence or intensity of flooding.**

**Comments Proposal is not likely to be at variance to this Principle**

Due to the scale of the proposed clearing, flooding impacts are unlikely to occur. Therefore, the proposal is unlikely to be at variance with this principle.

**Methodology GIS databases:**

Topographic Contours, Statewide - DOLA 12/09/02

**Planning instrument, Native Title, Previous EPA decision or other matter.**

**Comments**

Clearing for this development is included in the applicant's long-term plan, that is encompassed in the Town Planning Scheme Zoning. Development approval is therefore endorsed by Council (Shire of Capel 1998). The land is zoned for Educational purposes and the proposal is considered essential for the school's educational curricular and co-curricular programmes.

A water licence has been issued by the Department of Water (DoW) to include the requirements of the proposed sporting facility (DoW 2006b).

No other statutory approvals are required for this proposal.

One submission has been received for this application, strongly opposing the proposal. Three concerns were raised which have been individually addressed in the related principles.

Methodology DoWb 2006;

#### 4. Assessor's recommendations

Purpose	Method	Applied area (ha)/ trees	Decision	Comment / recommendation
Recreation	Mechanical Removal	3.2	Grant	<p>The assessable criteria have been addressed and one submission was received by the Department, regarding the significance of the vegetation and biodiversity value of the area.</p> <p>The assessment of the vegetated area under application revealed that the proposal may be at variance to Principles (a) for biodiversity, (b) for fauna, (e) for remnant vegetation extent and (h) for impact on conservation areas.</p> <p>Offsets could not be negotiated as the entire property is either developed as existing school or the area has planned future developments.</p> <p>Due to the scale of the proposal, current zoning in the Town Planning Scheme and the proposal being part of the school's long-term plan and essential for educational curricular and co-curricular programmes, the assessing officer recommends the clearing permit be granted, with a view to benefit the community.</p>

#### 5. References

- AGPS (2001) The national objective and targets for biodiversity conservation 2001-2005. Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra.
- DEC Site Visit, 2006. Department of Environment and Conservation, Bunbury.
- Department of Natural Resources and Environment (2002) Biodiversity Action Planning. Action planning for native biodiversity at multiple scales; catchment bioregional, landscape, local. Department of Natural Resources and Environment, Victoria.
- DoW, 2006a. Water Resources Licensing System, Aquifer Allocation Report, ran on 02/11/06.
- DoW, 2006b. Extension of water allocation licence for Bunbury Grammar School, Department of Water, Bunbury.
- Heddie, E. M., Loneragan, O. W., and Havel, J. J. (1980) Vegetation Complexes of the Darling System, Western Australia. In Department of Conservation and Environment, Atlas of Natural Resources, Darling System, Western Australia.
- Keighery, B.J. (1994) Bushland Plant Survey: A Guide to Plant Community Survey for the Community. Wildflower Society of WA (Inc). Nedlands, Western Australia.
- Shepherd, D.P., Beeston, G.R. and Hopkins, A.J.M. (2001) Native Vegetation in Western Australia, Extent, Type and Status. Resource Management Technical Report 249. Department of Agriculture, Western Australia.
- Shire of Capel, 1998. Town Planning Scheme No.7.

#### 6. Glossary

Term	Meaning
CALM	Department of Conservation and Land Management
DAWA	Department of Agriculture
DEP	Department of Environmental Protection (now DoE)
DoE	Department of Environment
DoIR	Department of Industry and Resources
DRF	Declared Rare Flora
EPP	Environmental Protection Policy
GIS	Geographical Information System
ha	Hectare (10,000 square metres)
TEC	Threatened Ecological Community
WRC	Water and Rivers Commission (now DoE)

