Department of Environment
Government of Western Australia

Clearing Permit Decision Report

1. Application details

1.1. Permit application details

Permit application No.: 152/1
Permit type: Area Permit

1.2. Proponent details

Proponent's name: **Hamersley Iron Pty Ltd**

1.3. Property details

Property: AML70/4
Local Government Area: Shire of Ashburton
Colloquial name: ML4SA

1.4. Application

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

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
Vegetation Association 567 - Hummock grasslands, shrub steppe; mulga and kanji over soft spinifex and T. basedowii	The site has been cleared previously and only partially rehabilitated. There are signs of disturbance and numerous exotic species including Cenchrus ciliaris, Cenchrus setigerus, and Malvastrum americanus.	Good: Structure significantly altered by multiple disturbance; retains basic strucure/ability to regenerate (Keighery 1994)	Consultant's report (Pilbara Iron 2004).

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 is not likely to be at variance to this Principle

Most of the area to be cleared has been previously disturbed and only partially rehabilitated. Due to the pre-existing disturbance, exotic species are present within the site (Pilbara Iron, 2004).

It is unlikely that the area represents an area of greater biodiversity than other less disturbed areas in the region.

Methodology

(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 is not likely to be at variance to this Principle

As the site demonstrates an existing level of disturbance (Pilbara Iron, 2004), it is unlikely that the clearing of the vegetation will significantly impact on the fauna of the local area.

Methodology

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

Comments

Proposal is not likely to be at variance to this Principle

There are no known Declared Rare or Priority flora species on the site.

Methodology Pilbara Iron (2004).
GIS database:
- 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 significant ecological community.

Comments **Proposal is not at variance to this Principle**
There are no known Threatened Ecological Communities within the area of proposed clearing.

Methodology GIS databases:
- Threatened Ecological Community Database - CALM 15/07/03.
- Threatened Plant Communities - DEP 06/95.

(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 is not at variance to this Principle**
The vegetation of the site is Vegetation Association 567 of which there is ~100% of the pre-European extent remaining (848,590ha). Over 20% of the remaining vegetation association is protected within the conservation reserve system.

Methodology Shepherd et al. (2001).
GIS database:
- 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 at variance to this Principle**
The vegetation is not associated with a watercourse or a wetland.

Methodology Aerial photograph.
GIS database:
- Hydrography, linear - DOE 01/02/04.

(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**
The vegetation clearing is unlikely to be a land degradation risk as ground disturbance will be confined to a previously disturbed area.

Methodology LCO DAWA Advice

(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 is not at variance to this Principle**
There are no conservation reserves adjacent to the area proposed for clearing.

Methodology GIS database - CALM Managed Lands and Water – CALM 01/08/04.

(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 vegetation clearing is unlikely to have a significant impact on surface or ground water quality. Wastewater from the construction camp will be managed in accordance with EP Act operating requirements.

Methodology Correspondence from Hamersley Iron (27/08/2004)

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

Comments **Proposal is not likely to be at variance to this Principle**
This site has been subject to previous disturbance (Pilbara Iron, 2004). Clearing of the vegetation is unlikely to have any significant effect on flooding in the area.

Methodology

(k) Planning instrument or other matter.

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

The subject area is not within a Town Planning Scheme area. The land is subject to a State Agreement Act (Mining Lease AML70/4) and was previously cleared and utilised as a construction camp. Partial rehabilitation followed this use and the site still shows evidence of disturbance.

Methodology Pilbara Iron (2004)

GIS database - Town Planning Scheme Zones - MFP 08/98.

4. Assessor's recommendations

The recommendations of the Department of Environment to the CEO of the Department should be made consistent with the outcomes of the assessment by each of the agencies. Any conditions on the approval should also be outlined. These may be developed in consultation with such other agencies as required.

Purpose	Method	Applied area (ha)/ trees	Decision	Comment / recommendation
Mining	Mechanical Removal	10	**Grant**	Rehabilitation of the site following closure of the construction camp (approximately 3 years) must seek to eliminate all exotic species.

5. References

Hamersley Iron (27/08/2004), Hamersley's Brownfields Developments - Outline of Accommodation Requirements at Tom Price, Paraburdoo and Karijini Lodge (TRIM Ref KTI3780)

Keighery, BJ (1994) Bushland Plant Survey: A Guide to Plant Community Survey for the Community. Wildflower Society of WA (Inc). Nedlands, Western Australia.

Pilbara Iron (2004) Botanical Survey Advice, Environment Department, Project No 2004/39, Docs # 102. DoE TRIM ref IN17856.

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.