



1. Application details

1.1. Permit application details

Permit application No.: 1543/1
 Permit type: Area Permit

1.2. Proponent details

Proponent's name: Vasse Felix Pty Ltd

1.3. Property details

Property: LOT 3992 ON PLAN 206457 (House No. 221 HARMANS WILYABRUP 6280)
 Local Government Area: Shire Of Busselton
 Colloquial name:

1.4. Application

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

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
Mattiske vegetation complex Cowaramup (C2): Open forest of Eucalyptus marginata subsp. marginata-Corymbia calophylla-Banksia grandis on lateritic uplands in perhumid and humid zones.	The original proposal was for approximately 9.4 hectares of vegetation for viticulture however after site visits it was determined that a majority of the vegetation were not native and consisted of plantings from approximately 15 years ago and that there is 1.2ha of native vegetation.	Completely Degraded: No longer intact; completely/almost completely without native species (Keighery 1994)	Condition of vegetation determined through DEC site visit (2007) and DAFWA advice (2007)
Beard vegetation association 3: Medium forest; jarrah-marri	The vegetation consists of native vegetation in groups or clumps of trees plus individual trees spread over the proposed area. The remnant vegetation is in a degraded condition with no understorey (Keighery 1994). The areas are open to livestock grazing and its impact and the impact is demonstrated by the absence of a diverse understorey and the presence of pasture grasses. Given the Completely Degraded condition of the vegetation, the areas are not likely to self-regenerate. Other areas of remnant vegetation which are not part of this clearing application are fenced to exclude livestock.		

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
 The proposal is for clearing of 1.2 hectares of native vegetation for the purpose of viticulture.

The application area is in a completely degraded and fragmented state (Keighery, 1994, DAFWA 2007). The vegetation consists of native vegetation in groups or clumps of trees plus individual trees spread over the proposed area with no understorey (Keighery 1994). The areas are open to livestock grazing and the impact is demonstrated by the absence of a diverse understorey and the presence of pasture grasses.

The clearing is unlikely to comprise a high level of biological diversity due to the lack of flora species and habitat for fauna. Due to the condition and area of the vegetation the clearing is unlikely to adversely impact on the biological diversity values of the local areas.

Methodology DEC site visit (2007)
DAFWA advice (2007)
Keighery (1994)
GIS databases:
-Busselton 50cm Orthomosair DL104
-CALM Managed Lands and Waters - 1/07/05
-PEC SAC Bio Datasets - 28/05/07

(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**
The proposal is for the clearing of approximately 1.2 hectares of native vegetation for viticulture. The vegetation consists of groups or clumps of trees plus individual trees spread over the proposed area and, as such, are completely degraded (Keighery, 1994). Within the local area (10km radius from the proposed area for clearing) there are 13 known records of Declared Threatened Fauna and six known records of Priority fauna. The Declared Threatened Fauna include one bird, two mammals and one invertebrate species, while the priority species included one bird and two mammal species.

Given the proposal is to clear 1.2ha of degraded native vegetation in small areas including individual trees it unlikely be significant habitat for fauna indigenous to Western Australia.

Methodology Keighery (1994)
GIS Database:
- DEFL SAC Bio Datasets- 28/05/07
- Busselton 50cm Orthomosair DL104

(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**
A desktop study found 9 known records of the Declared Rare Flora (DRF) species *Caladenia excelsa* and 19 records of 13 Priority flora species occurring in the local areas (10km radius). The closest occurrence of the *C. excelsa* is approximately 3.5km south west of the application area.

Given that the area to be cleared approximately 1.2ha of small clumps of native vegetation and individual trees, and that the application site is completely degraded (Keighery, 1994) with little or no vegetation, it is not likely that the vegetation supports any rare flora.

Methodology GIS Database:
- DEFL SAC Bio Datasets- 28/05/07
- Busselton 50cm Orthomosair DL104

(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**
Records indicate there are no known threatened ecological communities within a twenty kilometre radius of the areas under application, therefore it is unlikely that the proposed clearing will impact on any TECs.

Methodology GIS databases:
-TEC SAC Bio Datasets 28/05/07
- Busselton 50cm Orthomosair DL104

(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**

	Pre-European	Current extent	Remaining	Conservation	% In
	(ha)*	(ha)*	(%)*	Status	reserves/CALM
					managed land
					Page 2

IBRA Bioregions - Warren	834,053.950	657,114.138	78.8	Least Concern	46.7
Shire of Busselton	145,966	64,905	44.5	Depleted	
Vegetation type: Beard: Unit 3	2,661,514.99	1,863,982.73	70.0	Least Concern	18.4
Mattiske: Cowaramup (C2)	128,733	44,578	34.6	Depleted	

* (Shepherd et al. 2001)

** (Department of Natural Resources and Environment 2002)

*** Within the Intensive Landuse Zone

The area under application is located in the Warren Bioregion. The extent of pre-European vegetation within this area is 78.8% (Shepherd et al., 2001).

The proposal site falls within the Shire of Busselton which has 44.5% remaining of pre-European vegetation (Shepherd et al., 2001). The Beard Vegetation Associations of the area under application have 70% of remaining pre-European vegetation (Hopkins et al., 2001).

The Mattiske vegetation complex Cowaramup (C2) that occurs within the notified area is described as Open forest of Eucalyptus marginata subsp. marginata-Corymbia calophylla-Banksia grandis on lateritic uplands in perhumid and humid zones. 34.6% of the Pre-European extent of Cowaramup is remaining.

Given that the areas under application are completely degraded (Keighery, 1994), and that the area to be cleared is collectively approximately 1.2ha, the vegetation under application is not considered to be significant as a remnant of native vegetation in an area that has been extensively cleared.

The proposal is not likely to be at variance to this principle.

Methodology Shepherd et al. 2001
Mattiske et al. 1998
GIS datasets:
- Busselton 50cm Orthomosair DL104
- Pre-European vegetation - DA 01/01
- Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation of Australia - EA 18/10/00
- Mattiske Vegetation - CALM 24/3/98

(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**
There are no watercourses or wetlands within the area under application. The closest watercourse is a minor perennial watercourse approximately 60m west of the area under application.

Methodology DEC (2007) Site Visit
GIS Databases:
- Hydrography, Linear - DOE 1/2/04
- ANCA Wetlands - CALM 06/95
- EPP Area - DEP 06/95
- EPP Lakes - DEP 1/12/92
- RAMSAR, Wetlands - CALM 14/02/03

(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**
DAFWA Land Degradation Assessment Report (2007) raises no potential land degradation issues for this proposal. The risk of salinity, eutrophication, wind erosion and water erosion causing land degradation are considered to be low. Therefore the area under application is considered no likely to be at variance to this proposal.

Methodology DAFWA advice (2007)

(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 likely to be at variance to this Principle**
The areas proposed to be cleared do not lie within or adjacent to areas set aside for conservation. Given that the area under application is in a completely degraded condition and consists of semi to parkland cleared and small groups and single trees, the proposed area is highly unlikely to function as ecological linkages to nearby conservation areas.

The proposal is not at variance with this principle.

Methodology DEC site visit (2007)
Keighery (1994)
GIS databases:
- CALM Managed Lands and Waters - CALM 1/07/05
- Register of National Estate EA 28/01/03
- System 1-5 and 7-12 Boundaries - DEP 06/05
- System 6 Conservation Reserves - DEP 06/05

(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 application sites lie within the Wilyabrup Brook Catchment in the Busselton Coast Basin. This area has a mean annual rainfall of 1100mm with a medium evaporation rate with reasonably well drained lateritic soils. Groundwater salinity varies from 1000mg/L to 3000mg/L TDS (total dissolved solids). Due to the low slope gradients, short slope lengths, soil types and pasture cover the risk of water erosion affecting surface water is greatly reduced (DAFWA 2007).

Due to the small area proposed to be cleared, it is unlikely that the clearing of native vegetation will cause deterioration in the quality of surface water or groundwater within the local area.

Methodology DAWFA advice (2007)
GIS databases:
- Hydrographic Catchments, Catchments DOW
- Rainfall, Mean Annual BOM 30/09/01
- Public Drinking Water Source Areas (PDWSA) DOW

(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 and nature of the proposed clearing, it is unlikely to cause or exacerbate flooding within the local area.

Methodology DAFWA advice (2007)

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

Comments
There are two Native Title Claims over the area under application, as the property is privately owned the granting of the clearing permit is a secondary approval and does not constitute a future act under the Native Title Act 1993.

The Shire of Busselton stated that they have no objections to the clearing application and have issued approval for an irrigation dam on the property.

Methodology Shire of Busselton Submission 2007 TRIM ref DOC10268
Shire of Busselton Approval TRIM ref DOC25168
GIS databases:
- Town Planning Scheme Zones - MFP8/98
- Native Title Claim

4. Assessor's comments

Purpose	Method	Applied area (ha)/ trees	Comment
Horticulture	Mechanical Removal	1.2	The assessable criteria have been addressed, and the proposal is not likely to be at variance to Principles (a), (b), (c), (d), (e), (f), (g), (h), (i) and (j).

5. References

- DAFWA (2007) Land Degradation Assessment Report. Office of the Commissioner of Soil and Land Conservation, Department of Agriculture and Food Western Australia. TRIM ref DOC21336
- Department of Environment and Conservation, DEC (2007). Site Visit Report. TRIM ref DOC24446
- Keighery, B.J. (1994) Bushland Plant Survey: A Guide to Plant Community Survey for the Community. Wildflower Society of WA (Inc). Nedlands, Western Australia.
- Mattiske Consulting (1998) Mapping of vegetation complexes in the South West forest region of Western Australia, CALM.
- 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.
- Shepherd, D.P., Beeston, G.R. and Hopkins, A.J.M. (2001a) Native Vegetation in Western Australia, Extent, Type and Status. Resource Management Technical Report 249. Department of Agriculture, Western Australia (updated 2005).

6. Glossary

Term	Meaning
BCS	Biodiversity Coordination Section of DEC
CALM	Department of Conservation and Land Management (now BCS)
DAFWA	Department of Agriculture and Food
DEC	Department of Environment and Conservation
DEP	Department of Environmental Protection (now DEC)
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 DEC)

