Department of Environment and Conservation

Clearing Permit Decision Report

1. Application details

1.1. Permit application details

Permit application No.: 1683/1
Permit type: Area Permit

1.2. Proponent details

Proponent's name: Thompson McRobert Edgeloe on behalf of J & P Metals Pty Ltd

1.3. Property details

Property: LOT 1 ON PLAN 17429 (PICTON EAST 6229)
Local Government Area: Shire Of Dardanup
Colloquial name:

1.4. Application

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

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: 1000 - Mosaic: Medium forest; jarrah-marri/ Low woodland; banksia / Low forest; tea-tree (Melaleuca spp.) (Hopkins et al. 2001; Shepherd et al. 2001).	The application consists of isolated pockets of remnant Melaleuca rhaphiophylla with scattered Marri and Jarrah. The understorey is almost exclusively absent, with the exception of introduced pasture grasses and annual weeds (DEC, 2007).	Completely Degraded: No longer intact; completely/almost completely without native species (Keighery 1994)	The area under application is completely degraded, due to historical grazing and industrial activities (DEC, 2007).
Heddle Vegetation Complex - Southern River Complex No.42 Open woodland of E. calophylla - E. marginata - Banksia species with fringing woodland of E. rudis - M. rhaphiophylla along creek beds. (Heddle et al. 1980).			

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 area under application is in a completely degraded condition (Keighery, 1994).

The vegetation consists of scattered and isolated Melaleuca rhaphiophylla (Swamp Paperbark), Eucalyptus marginata (Jarrah) and Corymbia calophylla (Marri). The vegetation understorey has been highly modified and consists mainly of introduced pastoral grasses and annual weeds. The property appears to have been heavily grazed over many years, and more recently modified, through the impacts of heavy machinery working on the northern half of the property (DEC, 2007).

Given the small scale (0.5ha) and the completely degraded condition under application, it is unlikely the proposed clearing will be at variance to this principle.

Methodology DEC (2007)
Keighery (1994)

(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 area under application is in a completely degraded condition (Keighery, 1994).

The vegetation consists of scattered and isolated Melaleuca rhaphiophylla (Swamp Paperbark), Eucalyptus marginata (Jarrah) and Corymbia calophylla (Marri). The vegetation understorey has been highly modified and consists mainly of introduced pastoral grasses and annual weeds. The property appears to have been heavily grazed over many years, and more recently modified, through the impacts of heavy machinery working on the northern half of the property (DEC, 2007).

There are 6 records of 4 'Endangered', 7 occurrences of 3 'Vulnerable' and 12 records of 7 'Priority' fauna species within the 10km local area. The closest record, Black Bitten, Lxobrychus flavicollis australis, is approximately 2.9km west, south-west of the application area (SAC Bio Datasets 310507).

Aerial photography shows that there are areas of remnant native vegetation remaining within the 10km local area that appear to be in similar or better condition than the application area. Therefore, fauna species within the 10km local area are likely to find habitat of equal or better condition within nearby remnants.

The vegetation under application comprises isolated remnants containing limited diversity and a high degree of degradation (DEC, 2007).

Given the small scale (0.5ha) and the completely degraded condition of the application area, this proposal is unlikely to be at variance to this Principle.

Methodology

Keighery (1994)
DEC (2007)
SAC Bio Datasets (310507)

(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

The area under application is in a completely degraded condition (Keighery, 1994).

The vegetation consists of scattered and isolated Melaleuca rhaphiophylla (Swamp Paperbark), Eucalyptus marginata (Jarrah) and Corymbia calophylla (Marri). The vegetation understorey has been highly modified and consists mainly of introduced pastoral grasses and annual weeds. The property appears to have been heavily grazed over many years, and more recently modified, through the impacts of heavy machinery working on the northern half of the property (DEC, 2007).

There are 6 records of 3 Declared Rare taxa and 99 records of 24 Priority flora species occurring in the 10km local area (SAC Bio Datasets 310507). The closest record, Verticordia attenuata (Priority 3), is approximately 340m south east of the application area (SAC Bio Datasets 310507).

Given the small scale (0.5ha) and the completely degraded condition of the application area, this proposal is unlikely to be at variance to this Principle.

Methodology

Keighery (1994)
DEC (2007)
SAC Bio Datasets (310507)
GIS Databases:
-SOUTH_WEST Pre-European Vegetation

(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

The area under application is in a completely degraded condition (Keighery, 1994).

The vegetation consists of scattered and isolated Melaleuca rhaphiophylla (Swamp Paperbark), Eucalyptus marginata (Jarrah) and Corymbia calophylla (Marri). The vegetation understorey has been highly modified and consists mainly of introduced pastoral grasses and annual weeds. The property appears to have been heavily grazed over many years, and more recently modified, through the impacts of heavy machinery working on the northern half of the property (DEC, 2007).

There are 17 occurrences of 6 Threatened Ecological Communities (TEC's) within the 10km local area. The closest of the records, community type SCP08 (herb rich shrublands in clay pans) is approximately 3.5km west north-west of the application area (SAC Bio Datasets 310507).

From GIS Database analysis, 5 of the TEC's have attributes similar to portions of the application area including soil and vegetation associations.

Given that, the application area is completely degraded this proposal is not likely to be at variance to this principle.

Methodology Keighery (1994)
DEC (2007)
SAC Bio Datasets (310507)

(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 likely to be at variance to this Principle**
The area under application is in a completely degraded condition (Keighery, 1994).

The vegetation consists of scattered and isolated Melaleuca rhaphiophylla (Swamp Paperbark), Eucalyptus marginata (Jarrah) and Corymbia calophylla (Marri). The vegetation understorey has been highly modified and consists mainly of introduced pastoral grasses and annual weeds. The property appears to have been heavily grazed over many years, and more recently modified, through the impacts of heavy machinery working on the northern half of the property (DEC, 2007).

The vegetation within the application is a component of the Beard No. 1000 and Pinjarra No. 968 vegetation association of which 25.7% and 32.7% (Shepherd et al. 2006) of the pre-European extent is remaining therefore a 'Vulnerable' and 'Depleted' status for biodiversity conservation (Department of Natural Resources and Environment, 2002) respectively.

The vegetation under application is also within the Swan Coastal Plain Bioregion and Dardanup Shire of which there is 23.9% (Shepherd et al, 2006) and 52.2% (Shepherd et al. 2001) of pre-European extent remaining respectively.

The vegetation is also associated with the Southern River complex No.42 and Guildford complex No.32 of which there is 18.5% and 4.6% (Heddle et al. 2002) of pre-European extent remaining therefore 'Vulnerable' and 'Endangered' status for biodiversity conservation (Department of Natural Resources and Environment, 2002) respectively.

The National Objective and Targets for Biodiversity Conservation 2001-2005 (AGPS, 2001) recognises that the retention of 30% or more of the pre-clearing extent of each ecological community is the target.

Given the application area is highly modified and in a completely degraded condition it is unlikely that it represents a 'significant' remnant of native vegetation. Therefore, the application is unlikely to be at variance to this principle.

Methodology Keighery (1994)
DEC (2007)
Department of Natural Resources and Environment (2002)
Shepherd et al. (2006)
Shepherd et al. (2001)
Heddle et al. (2002)
AGPS (2001)
GIS Databases:
-Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation of Australia - EM 18/10/00
-Local Government Authorities - DLI 8/07/04
-Pre European Vegetation - DA 01/01
-Heddle Vegetation Complexes - DEP 21/06/95

(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 may be at variance to this Principle**
GIS Database analysis indicates that the application area is associated with a dampland and a palusplain.

A major drain runs through the northern section of the application area. The closest record of a wetland is an EPP wetland approximately 800m west, north-west of the application area.

Sections of the application are associated with a dampland and a palusplain. The native vegetation within the application is completely degraded (Keighery, 1994). The vegetation understorey has been highly modified and consists mainly of introduced pastoral grasses and annual weeds. The property appears to have been heavily

grazed over many years, and more recently modified, through the impacts of heavy machinery working on the northern half of the property (DEC, 2007).

Given the above, the proposal maybe at variance to this principle as the application is associated with a dampland and a palusplain, however, the completely degraded (Keighery, 1994) condition of the application has significantly modified the value of the native vegetation and therefore the association with these geomorphic wetlands.

Methodology Keighery (1994)
DEC (2007)
GIS Databases:
-ANCA, Wetlands - CALM 08/01
-EPP Areas - DEP 06/95
-EPP Lakes - DEP 28/07/03
-Geomorphic Wetlands (Mgt Categories) Swan Coastal Plain - DoE 15/9/04
-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**
Due to the small scale (0.5ha) of the proposed clearing it is unlikely to be any land degradation issues (DAFWA 2007).

Methodology DAFWA (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**
There are 5 records of DEC reserves within the 10km local area. The closest record, Un-named Miscellaneous Reserve is approximately 2.2km south west of the application area.

Given, the application area is highly modified and in a completely degraded condition, it is unlikely that it will impact on the values of any conservation area. Therefore, the application is unlikely to be at variance to this principle.

Methodology GIS Databases:
-CALM Estate (Statewide)
-SOUTH_WEST Cadastre (Land Parcels)
-System 6 Conservation Reserves

(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 under application is located within the Leschenault Estuary- Collie River catchment and does not include any Public Drinking Water Source Areas.

Due to the small scale (0.5ha) of the proposed clearing, it is unlikely to be any land degradation issues (DAFWA 2007). The application area was also mapped as having a low to moderate Acid Sulphate Soils risk and a groundwater salinity of 1000-3000mg/L.

Given the small scale (0.5ha) and the modified and completely degraded condition under application it is unlikely the proposed clearing will be at variance to this principle.

Methodology DAFWA (2007)
GIS databases:
-Hydrographic Catchments, Catchments - DoE 3/4/03
-Public Drinking Water Source Areas (PDWSAs) - DOE 29/11/04
-Acid Sulfate Soil Risk Map, Swan Coastal Plain - DEC
-Salinity Risk LM 25m - DOLA 00
-250K Map Series, Groundwater Salinity - 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 small scale (0.5ha) of the proposed clearing, it is unlikely to cause any land degradation issues (DAFWA 2007).

Given the above, the clearing of the vegetation from the area under application is unlikely to significantly increase surface run-off contributing to increased stream flow and the risk of flooding would be negligible. Therefore, the proposal is not likely to be at variance to this principle.

Methodology DAFWA (2007)
GIS databases:
-Topographic Contours, Statewide - DOLA 12/09/02

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

Comments

The property is zoned General Industry within the Shire of Dardanup TPS No.3, and foreseen as Industrial by the EPA under the draft Greater Bunbury Region Scheme of 2004. The Shire advised that the applicant has a planning application to develop the property for a hardstand.

The area under application may be within an identified ecological corridor, currently being assessed under the Preston Industrial Park land use study (WAPC 2000). To mitigate potential impacts the clearing will pose on the identified corridor, revegetation of an equivalent area in the south western corner of the property, to strengthen the existing ecological links should be undertaken. It is noted that the proponent will use the area as an existing buffer screen to be retained and extended.

A public submission received raises a "No Net Loss" policy to be adopted for clearing in the Leschenault catchment. As mentioned above, the proponent will use the south western corner of the property as an existing buffer screen to be retained and extended.

Methodology WAPC (2000)
GIS Databases:
-Town Planning Scheme Zones - MFP 08/98

4. Assessor's comments

Purpose	Method	Applied area (ha)/ trees	Comment
Miscellaneous	Mechanical Removal	0.5	Assessable criteria have been addressed and the assessment of vegetation under application revealed the proposal may be at variance to principle (f) and is not likely to be at variance to all other principles. Recommend granting the areas not likely to contain suitable habitat for rare flora.

5. References

AGPS (2001) The national objective and targets for biodiversity conservation 2001-2005. Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra.

CALM (Department of Conservation and Land Management) (1998). Western Australia's Threatened Flora, CALM. ISBN 0-7309-6875-8

DAFWA Land degradation assessment report. Office of the Commissioner of Soil and Land Conservation, Department of Agriculture and Food Western Australia. DoE TRIM ref XXXXX.

DEC (2007). Department of Environment and Conservation, Western Australia. TRIM Ref: DOC21816.

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.

Heddle, 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 (updated 2002).

Heddle, 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.

Hopkins, A.J.M., Beeston, G.R. and Harvey J.M. (2001) A database on the vegetation of Western Australia. Stage 1. CALMScience after J. S. Beard, late 1960's to early 1980's Vegetation Survey of Western Australia, UWA Press.

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

SAC Bio Datasets (310507) Department of Environment and Conservation, Kensington, 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 (updated 2006).

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.

WAPC (Western Australian Planning Commission) (2000). Industry 2030: Greater Bunbury Industrial Land and Port Access Planning Final Report, WAPC.

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)