# **Clearing Permit Decision Report**

# 1. Application details

1.1. Permit application details

Permit application No.: Permit type:

Arcel Relmi

1.2. Proponent details

Proponent's name:

THEHENEG TrangtionEduyab@Yew

# 1.3. Property details

Property:

Local Government Area: Colloquial name:

1.4. Application

Clearing Area (ha)

No. Trees

Method of Clearing

For the purpose of: Horticulture

2.2

ig Area (na)

Mechanical Removal

# 2. Site Information

# 2.1.1. Description of the native vegetation under application

**Existing environment and information** 

# Vegetation Description

Beard vegetation association 1949: Low woodland; banksla on low sandhills, swamps in swales with tea-tree and paperbark.

(Hopkins et al. 2001, Shepherd et al. 2001)

Heddle vegetation complexes: Bassendean Complex - Central and South: vegetation ranges from woodland of E. marginata - C. fraseriana - Banksia spp. to low woodland of Melaleuca species, and sedgelands on the moister sites. This area includes the transition of E. marginata to E. todtiana in the vicinity of Perth.

Bassendean Complex North-Transition vegetation
complex: a transition
complex of low open forest
and low woodland of
Banksia species - E.
todtiana on a series of high
sand dunes. The
understorey species reflect
similarities with both the
Bassendean-North and
Karrakatta-North
vegetation complexes.
(Heddle et al. 1980)

# Clearing Description

The six areas under application (total area of 2.2ha) are located within Lot 9 (Zoned rural and rural-water protection), which is a 7.7 ha property. The clearing is to change the land use from a disused poultry farm to market garden. One area abutting the northern boundary totals 2.1ha and the remaining five small areas total 0.1 ha.

The vegetation within the areas under application include Banksia spp. (B. attenuata; B. menziesii; B. ilicifolia), blackbutt (Eucalyptus todtiana), Baeckea spp., Corynotheca sp., Hibbertia sp., Jacksonia sp., Macrozamia riedlei, Xanlhorrhoea preissii, paperbark (Melaleuca sp.) and weeds African lovegrass (Eragrostis curvula), pigface (Carpobrotus edulis), rose geranium (Pelargonium capitatum) and Geraldton Carnation weed (Euphorbia terracina) (Site Inspection 2007).

# Vegetation Condition

Degraded: Structure severely disturbed; regeneration to good condition requires intensive management (Kelghery 1994)

### Comment

The condition of the native vegetation under application was sourced from the Site Inspection (2007).

# 3. Assessment of application against clearing principles

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#### Comments

## Proposal is not likely to be at variance to this Principle

The six areas under application (total area of 2.2ha) are located within Lot 9 (Zoned rural and rural-water protection), which is a 7.7 ha property.

The vegetation under application is considered to be in a degraded condition (Site Inspection 2007). The areas to be cleared comprise predominantly Banksia spp. with minimal native mid-storey and understorey, and numerous weeds (Site Inspection 2007). This vegetation includes Banksia spp. (B. attenuata; B. menziesii; B. ilicifolia), blackbutt (Eucalyptus todtiana), Baeckea spp., Corynotheca sp., Hibbertia sp., Jacksonia sp., Macrozamia riedlei, Xanthorrhoea preissii, paperbark (Melaleuca sp.) and weeds African lovegrass (Eragrostis curvula), pigface (Carpobrotus edulis), rose geranium (Pelargonium capitatum) and Geraldton Carnation weed (Euphorbia terracina) (Site Inspection 2007).

Given the lack of species diversity and the high level of weed invasion, it is considered that the areas under application are unlikely to comprise a high level of biological diversity.

#### Methodology

### Reference:

- Site Inspection (2007) (TRIM Ref ED1823)

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### Comments

# Proposal is not likely to be at variance to this Principle

The following species are known to occur within a 5km radius of the proposed clearing (with the closest being 1.2km south):

- Quenda, Isoodon obesulus fusciventer (P5) State, WC Act 1950. This species prefers areas with dense understorey vegetation, particularly around swamps and along watercourses, that provides ample protection from predators.
- Carnaby's Black-Cockatoo, Calyptorhynchus latirostris (EN) State, WC Act 1950. This species moves around seasonally in flocks to feeding areas in proteaceous scrubs and heaths and eucalypt woodlands as well as pine plantations. Breeding occurs in winter/spring, mainly in the eastern forests and wheatbelt where they can find mature hollow-bearing trees to nest in.
- Australasian Bittern, Botaurus poiciloptilus (VU) State, WC Act 1950. This species inhabits beds of tall dense reeds and sedges in freshwater swamps.
- Little Bittern, ixobrychus minutus (P4) State, WC Act 1950. This cryptic species inhabits dense reeds and rushes bordering swamps, lakes and watercourses.

The vegetation under application is considered to be in a degraded condition (Site Inspection 2007). The areas to be cleared are predominantly Banksia spp. with minimal native mid-storey and understorey, and numerous weeds (Site Inspection 2007).

Given the lack of species diversity and the level of introduced flora, it is considered that the vegetation to be cleared is unlikely to comprise a significant number of hollows or significant nesting or feeding habitat for these species of conservation significance, or for other fauna indigenous to Western Australia. Therefore, the clearing is considered not likely to be at variance to this Principle.

### Methodology

### References:

- Site Inspection (2007) (TRIM Ref ED1823)
- DEC Conservation Officer (2007) (TRIM Ref ED143)
- DEC Fauna habitat notes xls February 2007

**GIS Databases:** 

- SAC Bio Datasets 120507

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### Comments

### Proposal is not likely to be at variance to this Principle

There are no known records of Declared Rare Flora (DRF) in the local area (5km radius). The nearest recorded DRF (Grevillea curviloba subsp. curviloba) is located approximately 8.5km north-east of the areas under application, on the same soils and within the same Beard vegetation type and Heddle vegetation complex (Bassendean Complex North and Transition only) as those under application.

Although these populations occur generally on the same soil and vegetation type, Grevillea curviloba subsp. curviloba typically occurs with other shrubs in open heath in winter-wet, deep peaty sand over limestone, near Bullsbrook (Brown et al 1998).

Cyathochaeta teretifolia (Priority 3) is the only Priority species known to occur within a 5km radius of the area

under application, and is located 500m south-east of the areas under application.

Cyathochaeta teretifolia is described on DEC's Florabase (WA Herbarium 1998-) as a rhizomatous, clumped, robust perennial, grass-like or herb (sedge), which grows up to 2 m high and up to 1.0 m wide, occurs on grey sands and sandy clays within swamps and creek edges.

Given the descriptions and habitat requirements as outlined above, it is considered unlikely that the vegetation to be cleared includes, or is necessary for the continued existence of, rare flora.

### Methodology

#### References:

- Brown et al (1998)
- DEC Conservation Officer (2007) (TRIM Ref ED143)
- WA Herbarium (1998-).

#### **GIS Databases:**

- SAC Bio Datasets 120507
- Pre-European Vegetation DA 01/01
- Heddle Vegetation Complexes DEP 21/06/95
- Soils, Statewide DA 11/99

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## Comments

# Proposal is not likely to be at variance to this Principle

There are 12 occurrences of Threatened Ecological Communities (TECs) located within the local area (5km radius). The nearest recorded TECs are located approximately 2.4km and 2.5km south south-east of the areas under application. These TECs have been identified as being Banksia attenuata woodlands over species rich dense shrublands (Gibson et al. 1994). Typical native species that are associated with the TEC include Banksia attenuata, Hibbertia hypericoides, Petrophile linearis, Stirlingia latifolia, Burchardia umbellata, Alexgeorgea nitens, Daviesia nudiflora and Mesomelaena pseudostygia (Gibson et al. 1994).

The vegetation within the areas under application includes Banksia spp. (B. attenuata; B. menziesii; B. ilicifolia), blackbutt (Eucalyptus todtiana), Baeckea spp., Corynotheca sp., Hibbertia sp., Jacksonia sp., Macrozamia riedlei, Xanthorrhoea preissii, paperbark (Melaleuca sp.) and weeds African lovegrass (Eragrostis curvula), pigface (Carpobrotus edulis), rose geranium (Pelargonium capitatum) and Geraldton Carnation weed (Euphorbia terracina) (Site Inspection 2007).

Given that the limited species present within the areas under application are not representative of the two nearby TECs, the clearing as proposed is not likely to comprise the whole or part of a TEC. Furthermore, given the distance to the nearest TECs the vegetation under application is unlikely to be necessary for the maintenance of the TECs.

### Methodology

### References:

- DEC Conservation Officer (2007) (TRIM Ref ED143)
- Site Inspection (2007) (TRIM Ref ED1823)
- Gibson et al. (1994)

#### GIS Databases:

- Environmentally Sensitive Areas DOE 08/03/05
- SAC Bio Datasets 010607

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### Comments

# Proposal is not likely to be at variance to this Principle

The State Government is committed to the National Objectives and Targets for Biodiversity Conservation which includes a target that prevents the clearance of ecological communities with an extent below 30% of that present Pre-European settlement (Commonwealth of Australia 2001). Two of the vegetation types within the area under application (Beard Unit 1949 and Heddle Bassendean Central and South) are below the recommended minimum of 30% representation.

	Pre-European (ha)	Current exten (ha)	t Remaining (%)	Conservation status****	In secure tenure (%)
IBRA Bioregion - Swan Coastal Plain*	1,501,456	571,758	38.1	Depleted	NA
City of Wanneroo**	68,070	34,057	50.0	Depleted	NA
Vegetation type:*** Beard: Unit 1949	132,958	34,012	25.6	Vulnerable	24.4

Heddle:\*\*\*\*

Bassendean Central & Sth 87,477 23,624 27.0 Vulnerable 0.7 Bassendean Nth - Transition 17,675 16,308 92.3 Least Concern 57.8

\* (Shepherd 2006)

\*\* (Del Marco et al. 2004)

\*\*\* (Shepherd et al. 2001)

\*\*\*\* (EPA 2006)

\*\*\*\*\*\* (Department of Natural Resources and Environment 2002)

The vegetation within the areas under application is identified as a component of Beard Vegetation Association 1949 (Hopkins et al. 2001, Shepherd et al. 2001) and Heddle Vegetation Complexes Bassendean Complex Central and South and Bassendean Complex North-Transition Vegetation Complex (Heddle et al. 1980), of which there is 25.6%, 27.0% and 92.3% of Pre-European extent remaining respectively.

Further, the Heddle vegetation complex: Bassendean Complex Central & South is poorly represented in secure tenure (0.7%).

However, the vegetation under application is considered to be in a degraded condition; with the areas applied to be cleared being predominantly Banksia spp. with minimal native mid-storey and understorey, and numerous weeds (Site Inspection 2007). Further, aerial mapping of the local area shows limited connectivity from the areas under application to the surrounding conservation areas. Therefore, the vegetation under application is unlikely to be considered significant as a remnant of native vegetation.

# Methodology

### References:

- Commonwealth of Australia (2001)
- Department of Natural Resources and Environment (2002)
- Del Marco et al. (2004)
- EPA (2006)
- Shepherd et al. (2001)
- Shepherd (2006)
- Heddle et al. (1980)
- Site Inspection (2007) (TRIM Ref ED1823)

GIS Databases:

- Pre-European Vegetation DA 01/01
- Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation of Australia EA 18/10/00
- Swan Coastal-Plain North 20cm Orthomosaic DLI06

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#### Comments

# Proposal may be at variance to this Principle

Wetland mapping of the areas under application identifies a Resource Enhancement Wetland (REW) immediately adjacent to three of the small areas under application, and extending to the nearby Vintage Park (150m south). A REW is described as been partially modified but still supporting substantial ecological attributes and functions, and should be protected (Water and Rivers Commission 2001). Water and Rivers Commission (2001) suggest that a minimum of a 50 m buffer is recommended.

Mapping also identifies wetlands surrounding the areas under application including Gnangara Lake, a Conservation Category Wetland and EPP lake, located 600m south; and Little Dundarbar Swamp, a Conservation Category Wetland, located 1.5km north. Further, there are 11 Multiple Use wetlands and another REW within a 2km radius of the proposed clearing.

Observations during the site inspection (2007) identified the majority of the vegetation under application (2.1ha) comprising upland Banksia spp. with minimal native mid-storey and understorey and numerous weeds, in a degraded condition. Observations also identified numerous weeds in a completely degraded condition within the REW, and one Melaleuca sp. in one of the small areas under application immediately adjacent to the REW. Melaleuca sp. is recognised as being a wetland dependent species. DEC Wetlands advice (2007) suggests that in spite of some cleared areas and development within the REW, the area may still contain pedological and hydrological wetland characteristics.

While the majority of the vegetation applied to be cleared (2.1ha) is representative of upland vegetation, four of the small areas under application (<0.1 ha) are within the 50m buffer to the REW with one consisting of one Melaleuca sp. The clearing as applied therefore, may be at variance to this Principle.

### Methodology References:

- Site Inspection (2007) (TRIM Ref ED1823)
- Water and Rivers Commission (2001)

#### GIS Databases:

- EPP, Lakes DEP 1/12/92
- Geomorphic wetlands (Mgt Categories)- Swan Coastal Plain DEC

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#### Comments

### Proposal may be at variance to this Principle

The Acid Sulphate Soil (ASS) risk mapping indicates the areas under application are mapped as having a Class 2 risk. This classification is defined as having a low risk of shallow (<3m depth) of ASS or potential ASS.

The landscape of the areas under application and surrounds can be described as subdued dune-swale terrain (Northcote et al. 1960). The chief soils are leached sands on the low dunes and small areas of other sandy soils (Northcote et al. 1960).

Given the sandy soils present on site, it is considered that there is the potential for the proposed clearing to result in wind erosion, and without appropriate ground cover, windbreaks or adequate dust suppression on exposed surfaces the proposal may cause appreciable land degradation.

### Methodology

### References:

- Northcote et al. (1960)

**GIS Databases:** 

- Acid Sulphate Soil risk map, Swan Coastal Plain DEC
- Soils, Statewide DA 11/99

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#### Comments

# Proposal is not likely to be at variance to this Principle

There are three conservation reserves within close proximity of the areas under application including Gnangara-Moore River State Forest 0.9km east and Jandabup Nature Reserve (also identified as Bush Forever Site 324 and System 6 Conservation Reserve) 3.3km north-west. Further, Bush Forever Site 193 (also identified as Gnangara Lake, some of Gnangara-Moore River S.F. and System 6 Conservation Reserve) is located 2.6km west north-west; Site 326 (also identified as Little Dunbar Swamp and some of Gnangara-Moore S.F.) is located 1.1km north; Site 463 is located 1.6km south-west; and Site 327 (also identified as a Conservation Category Wetland and System 6 Conservation Reserve) is located 2.2km west of the areas under application. Furthermore, there are an additional ten System 6 Conservation Reserves (also identified as eight Multiple Use Wetlands and one Resource Enhancement Wetland) within 2km of the areas under application.

The vegetation under application is considered to be in a degraded condition (Site Inspection 2007). The areas to be cleared are predominantly Banksia spp. with minimal native mid-storey and understorey, and numerous weeds (Site Inspection 2007).

Aerial mapping of the local area shows limited connectivity from the areas under application to the surrounding conservation areas. Therefore, given the degraded condition and limited species diversity of the areas under application (Site Inspection 2007) and the lack of connectivity it is unlikely that the clearing as proposed will impact on the environmental values of these conservation areas.

### Methodology

#### Reference:

- Site Inspection (2007) (TRIM Ref ED1823)

GIS databases:

- DEC Managed Lands and Waters CALM 1/07/05
- Bushforever MFP 07/01
- Swan Coastal Plain North 20cm Orthomosaic DL106
- System 6 Conservation Reserves DEP 06/95
- Geomorphic wetlands (Mgt Categories)- Swan Coastal Plain DEC

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### Comments

### Proposal is not likely to be at variance to this Principle

There are 11 Multiple Use wetlands, two Resource Enhancement Wetlands (REW), and two Conservation Category Wetlands (CCW) and within a 2km radius of the proposed clearing. There is a Resource Enhancement Wetland (REW) located immediately adjacent to three of the small areas (<0.1 ha) under application; a CCW identified as Gnangara Lake (also mapped as an EPP Lake) located 600m south; and a CCW identified as Little Dundarbar Swamp located 1.5km north of the areas under application.

A CCW is described as supporting a high level of ecological attributes and functions and is considered the most valuable of wetlands; and a REW is described as been partially modified but still supporting substantial ecological attributes and functions, and should be protected (Water and Rivers Commission 2001).

Observations of the REW during the site inspection (2007) identified the wetland as containing a numerous weeds in a completely degraded condition with one Melaleuca sp. within adjacent to REW. Therefore it is considered the REW supports limited attributes and functions.

The areas under application are not located in a Public Drinking Water Source Area or surface water catchment area. A Priority 2 Public Drinking Water Source Area (PDWSA), namely the Gnangara Underground Water Pollution Control Area, is located adjacent to the areas under application (south-east corner of Lot 9). Further there is a Priority 1 PDWSA, which is also the Gnangara Mound Environmental Protection Policy Area, is located 600m south-east areas under application.

The ground water within the local area is considered to have fresh water quality (0-500mg/L).

Given the areas under application are in a degraded condition (Site Inspection 2007) and are located outside of the Public Drinking Water Source Areas, the clearing is unlikely to cause deterioration in the quality of surface and ground water.

#### Methodology

#### References:

- Site Inspection (2007) (TRIM Ref ED1823)
- Water and Rivers Commission (2001)

#### **GIS Databases:**

- EPP, Areas DEP 06/95
- EPP. Lakes DEP 1/12/92
- Geomorphic Wetlands (Mgt Categories), Swan Coastal Plain DEC
- Groundwater Salinity, Statewide DOW
- Public Drinking Water Source Areas (PDWSAs) DOW

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#### Comments

### Proposal is not at variance to this Principle

With an average annual rainfall of approximately 800mm and an annual evaporation rate of approximately 2,000mm there is little surface flow during normal seasonal rains. It is only during major rainfall events that there is a likelihood of flooding. However, given the transmissive nature of the sandy soils identified at the site (Site Inspection 2007), clearing is unlikely to cause or exacerbate the incidence of flooding.

#### Methodology

### Reference:

- Site Inspection (2007) (TRIM Ref ED1823)
- **GIS Databases:**
- Evaporation Isopleths BOM 09/98
- Isohyets BOM 09/98

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### Comments

The proposed clearing is for the purpose of Market Garden, this will ensure ground cover on area cleared and mitigate risk of wind erosion.

The area under application is within the Proclaimed Groundwater Area of Wanneroo. Therefore any abstraction of groundwater would require a licence. A Licence to Take Water on Lots 9 and 20 has been Issued by the Department of Water for 30,000 kL, which incorporates the irrigation of 3.7ha of vegetables (TRIM Ref DOC35912).

There is no other RIWI Act Licence, Works Approval or EP Act Licence that affects the areas under application.

Water and River Commission (2001) identifies recommended buffer distances for land uses from wetland areas, with the minimum area being 200 metres on transmissive soils for market gardens. A CCW is located 650m south from the proposed clearing, which is not within this recommended 200m buffer distance. A REW is located immediately adjacent to four small areas under application (0.1ha) and approximately 50m south of two areas under application (2.1ha).

City of Wanneroo granted Development Approval in November 2006 (TRIM Ref DOC13202). Several conditions have been imposed on the Development Approval including:

- Condition 6: The intensive Agriculture area shall be setback 7.5 metres from the front boundary and 4 metres from the side and rear boundaries;
- Condition 7: A 30 metre vegetation buffer area facing Sydney Road [western boundary] as indicated on the approved plans [approximately 0.3ha] is to be planted with native species and thereafter maintained to the satisfaction of the Manager Planning Services.

Condition 6 is a standard condition for general rural areas. Condition 7 was imposed to retain an area of mature trees and to provide a buffer for the caravan park across the road from dust and pesticides.

# Methodology

Reference:

- Water and Rivers Commission (2001)

GIS databases:

- RIWI Act, Groundwater Areas DOW
- RIWI Act, Surface Water Areas DOW

### **Assessor's comments**

Purpose

Method Applied area (ha)/ trees Comment

Horticulture Mechanical

Removal

2.2

The clearing application has been assessed against the clearing principles, planning instruments and other matters in accordance with s510 of the Environmental Protection Act 1986. The clearing as proposed may be at variance to Principles (f) and (g), and is not likely to be at variance to the remaining Principles.

## 5. References

Brown A., Thomson-Dans C. and Marchant N., (1998) Western Australia's Threatened Flora, Department of Conservation and Land Management, Western Australia.

Commonwealth of Australia (2001). National Targets and Objectives for Biodiversity Conservation 2001-2005, AGPS, Canberra.

Del Marco, A., Miles, C., Taylor, R., Clarke, K. and Savage, K. (2004) Local Government Biodiversity Planning Guidelines for the Perth Metropolitan Region - Edition 1. Western Australian Local Government Association, West Perth.

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Environmental Protection Authority (1992), Environmental Protection (Gnangara Mound Crown Land) Policy Approval Order 1992, www.epa, wa.gov.au/. Accessed date 31.07.07

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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.

Northcote, K. H. with Beckmann G G, Bettenay E., Churchward H. M., van Dijk D. C., Dimmock G. M., Hubble G. D., Isbell R. F., McArthur W. M., Murtha G. G., Nicolls K. D., Paton T. R., Thompson C. H., Webb A. A. and Wright M. J. (1960-68); 'Atlas of Australian Soils, Sheets 1 to 10, with explanatory data'. CSIRO and Melbourne University Press: Melbourne.

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Waters and Rivers Commission (2001) Position Statement: Wetlands. Water and Rivers Commission, Western Australia. Western Australian Herbarium (1998-). FloraBase - The Western Australian Flora. Department of Environment and Conservation. http://florabase.calm.wa.gov.au/ (Accessed 19/04/2007).

# 6. Glossary

Term

Biodiversity Coordination Section of DEC BCS

**CALM** Department of Conservation and Land Management (now BCS)

**DAFWA** Department of Agriculture and Food

Department of Environment and Conservation DEC Department of Environmental Protection (now DEC) DEP

Department of Environment DoE

Department of Industry and Resources DoIR

DRF Declared Rare Flora

**Environmental Protection Policy EPP** 

GIS	Geographical Information System
ha	Hectare (10,000 square metres)
TEC	Threatened Ecological Community
WRC	Water and Rivers Commission (now DEC)