



1. Application details

1.1. Permit application details

Permit application No.: 186/6
Permit type: Purpose Permit

1.2. Applicant details

Applicant's name: Water Corporation
Application received date: 3 February 2021

1.3. Property details

Property: The State of Western Australia
Localities: Statewide

1.4. Application

Clearing Area (ha)	No. Trees	Method of Clearing	Purpose category:
N/A		Mechanical Removal	Infrastructure Maintenance

1.5. Decision on application

Decision on Permit Application: Granted
Decision Date: 31 March 2021

Reasons for Decision: This clearing permit amendment application was received on 3 February 2021 and has been made in order to:

- amend the permit conditions, to bring them in line with current departmental policies and procedures; and
- extend the permit duration from 3 April 2021 to 3 April 2022.

The Delegated Officer took into consideration that the proposed amendment relates only to extending the permit duration from 3 April 2021 to 3 April 2022.

The Delegated Officer also took into consideration the requirement for Water Corporation to maintain water services infrastructure and that majority of the clearing undertaken under this permit occurs within previously cleared areas around existing water services infrastructure, in order to maintain the efficacy of the infrastructure.

The Delegated Officer determined that majority of the clearing activities undertaken through the permit would not likely be at variance to any of the clearing principles and that any environmental impacts associated with clearing activities can be appropriately managed through the conditions imposed on the permit.

2. Site Information

Clearing Description: The proposed amendment to Clearing Permit CPS 186/5 is for the purpose of extending the permit duration to 3 April 2022 and relates to clearing of native vegetation for the maintenance, removal and decommissioning of existing water services infrastructure, and prevention of imminent danger to human health, including within ESAs.

Vegetation Condition As clearing is to occur state-wide, the condition of native vegetation to be cleared under this permit is likely to range from Completely Degraded to Excellent (Keighery, 1994) condition, described as:

- Completely Degraded: The structure of the vegetation is no longer intact, and the area is completely or almost without native species;
- Degraded: Basic vegetation structure severely impacted but disturbance. Scope for regeneration but not to a state approaching good condition without intensive management;
- Good: Vegetation structure significantly altered by very obvious signs of multiple disturbance. Retain basic vegetation structure or ability to regenerate to it;
- Very Good: Vegetation structure altered, obvious signs of disturbance; and
- Excellent: Vegetation structure intact; disturbance affecting individual species, weeds non-aggressive (Keighery, 1994).

However, noting majority of the clearing undertaken under this permit occurs within previously cleared areas around existing water services infrastructure, in order to maintain the efficacy of the infrastructure, the native vegetation to be cleared is less likely to be in Very Good to Excellent condition.

3. Assessment of application against clearing principles and planning instruments and other matters

This assessment recognises the requirement for Water Corporation to maintain water services infrastructure as provided for under the *Water Agencies (Powers) Act 1984*. It is considered that majority of the clearing undertaken under this permit occurs within previously cleared areas around existing water services infrastructure, in order to maintain the efficacy of the infrastructure.

Further, in determining the amount of native vegetation required to be cleared for maintaining an existing water services infrastructure, the Water Corporation is required to have regard to three principles as outlined under condition 5 of the permit, being, avoid the clearing of native vegetation, minimise the amount of native vegetation to be cleared and reduce the impact of clearing on any environmental value.

Given the above, it is considered that majority of the clearing activities undertaken for maintenance of water services infrastructure would not likely be at variance to any of the clearing principles. However, as clearing for project activities will occur state-wide, it is likely that some areas proposed to be cleared will be in close proximity to biological, conservation, or land and water resource values designated within mapped Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs).

Where areas proposed to be cleared occur within a mapped ESA, and the proposed clearing activities are identified by Water Corporation's environmental assessment as being likely to cause land degradation or deterioration in water quality, Water Corporation is required to prepare, implement and adhere to a management strategy in accordance with condition 7 of the clearing permit. The management strategy must be designed by an environmental specialist, in consultation with the Commissioner of Soil and Land Conservation, to avoid, mitigate or manage the land degradation or deterioration in water quality that has been identified.

Under conditions 8 and 9 of the clearing permit, Water Corporation will also be required to undertake weed and dieback management measures, including implementing a dieback management plan developed in consultation with the Department of Biodiversity Conservation and Attractions where movement of soil in wet conditions is necessary, and to revegetate and rehabilitate areas that have been temporarily cleared when undertaking the proposed clearing, to reduce impacts.

The permit does not authorise clearing for any project activities if the clearing is likely to be seriously at variance with one or more of the clearing principles. If Water Corporation's environmental impact assessment determines that part or all of the clearing for a project is likely to be seriously at variance with one or more of the clearing principles, Water Corporation is required to apply to the CEO for a clearing permit in respect of that clearing.

Planning instruments and other relevant matters.

Clearing Permit CPS 186/1 was granted to the Water Corporation on 3 March 2006 by the then Department of Environment. The clearing permit authorises the clearing of native vegetation for maintenance, removal and decommissioning of existing water services infrastructure, including within ESAs; and prevention of imminent danger to human health, including within ESAs. The permit has since been amended four times, with CPS 186/5 being the latest amendment.

CPS 186/5 was due to expire on 3 April 2021. This amendment was made by the applicant to extend the permit duration until 3 April 2022.

The clearing permit amendment application was advertised on the DWER website on 13 March 2021 with a 14-day submission period. No public submissions were received in relation to this application.

4. References

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