Department of Environment and Conservation

Clearing Permit Decision Report

1. Application details

1.1. Permit application details

Permit application No.: 2017/1

Permit type: Purpose Permit

1.2. Proponent details

Proponent's name: B & J Catalano Pty Ltd

1.3. Property details

Property: ROAD RESERVE (COWARAMUP 6284)

Local Government Area: Shire Of Augusta-Margaret River

Colloquial name:

1.4. Application

Clearing Area (ha)	No. Trees	Method of Clearing	For the purpose of:
0.7		Mechanical Removal	Extractive Industry

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 3: Medium forest; jarrah-marri (Hopkins et al. 2001; Shepherd et al. 2001).	The vegetation under application is open forest dominated by jarrah with interspersed marri. A disturbed understorey of Melaleuca sp. exists, including numerous pasture grasses and weeds (DEC Site Visit 2007).	Degraded: Structure severely disturbed; regeneration to good condition requires intensive management (Keighery 1994)	Vegetation condition assessed through aerial photography, and site visit (TRIM Ref: DOC16702)
Mattiske Vegetation Complex Cowaramup (C2): Open forest of Eucalyptus marginata subsp. marginata-Corymbia calophylla-Banksia grandis on lateritic uplands in perhumid and humid zones (Mattiske Consulting 1998).	The vegetation under application is an isolated patch of remnants within a landscape largely cleared for agriculture. The area has been historically logged and the impacts of stock grazing over many years is evident.		

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 proposed for clearing comprises a small area of jarrah-marri woodland in degraded to good condition. There is heavy evidence of historical grazing, logging and industrial activities on the property.

The area also comprises a low level of biodiversity in comparison to other conservation areas in close proximity (DEC site visit 20/02/2007).

It is therefore unlikely that the proposed clearing is at variance with this principle.

Methodology DEC site visit (20/02/2007)

(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

There are 4 Threatened mammals, 2 Priority mammals, 3 crustaceans and 1 Threatened Bird, Fish, Arachnid

and Reptile known to occur in the local area (10km Radius). Within the local area there is one National Park (Bramley) and two state forests (N/E Margaret River and Keenan).

Approximately 35% of the local area (10Km radius) is uncleared, approximately 10% of the property is uncleared and the proposed area consists of approximately 5% of the remaining vegetation on the property.

Given that the small area of fragmented jarrah-marri woodland in degraded to good condition (DEC site visit 20/02/2007) proposed to be cleared (0.7ha), it is unlikely that the application area comprises the whole or a part of, or is necessary for the maintenance of, a significant habitat for fauna.

Methodology DEC site visit (20/02/2007)
GIS Database:
- CALM Managed Lands and Waters - CALM 1/06/04
- Sacbiodata Sets 311207

(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**
There is one known Declared Rare Flora (DRF), one Priority 2 and four priority 3 flora populations recorded within the a 10km radius of the proposed clearing.

None of the above populations are associated with the same vegetation complex as the area under application, and due to the degraded nature of the vegetation under application it is considered unlikely to be at variance with this principle.

Methodology GIS Database:
- Sacbiodata Sets 311207

(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 closest known priority ecological communities (PEC's) are low shrubs on acidic grey-brown sands of the Gracetown soil-landscape system. Theses PEC's area recorded 10kms from the proposed clearing area. They are found on coastal dunes, with soils predominately of calcareous sand. The soil structure of the proposed clearing area differs to that of the PEC's, consisting of acid grey earth and ironstone.

Given there a no threathened ecological communities within the local area (10km radius) of the application area, it is unlikely that the proposed clearing will be at variance to this principle.

Methodology GIS Databases:
- Sacbiodata Sets 311207

(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 proposed clearing is located in the Shire of Augusta-Margaret River and within the Jarrah Forest Bioregion. The extent remaining within these areas is 69.0% and 53.4% respectively.

The vegetation is a component of the Beard Vegetation Association 3 of which 69.4% of Pre-European vegetation is remaining. In addition it is a component of Mattiske Vegetation Complex C2 (Cowaramup) of which 23.0% is remaining (Mattiske, 2002).

The EPA recognises ecological communities with a vegetation complex extent below 30% excelerates biodiversity decline (EPA 2000).

Given the condition of vegetation and the well represented landscape, it is unlikely the area under application represents a significant remnant in an extensively cleared landscape.

Methodology Sheperd et al. (2001)
Mattiske (2002)
GIS Databases:
- Pre-European Vegetation - DA 01/01
- Mattiske Vegetation - CALM 24/03/98
- Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation of Australia - EA 18/10/00

(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

There are no mapped wetlands present within a 10km radius of the area under application.

The proposed clearing is not on or associated with a watercourse, the nearest being a minor perennial 500m South West. The proposed clearing is not considered to be at variance with this principle.

Methodology

GIS Databases:
- Hydrography, linear - DOE 01/02/04
- EPP, Areas - DEP 06/95
- EPP, Lakes - DEP 28/07/03
- EPP, Wetlands - DEP 21/07/04
- Anca Wetlands - CALM 08/01
- Geomorphic Wetlands - Swan Coastal Plain - DEC

(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 salinity risk is low for the local area and the ground water salinity is 1000-3000mg/L. The relief of the proposed area is low and there is a high rainfall. The soil type is composed of Sedimentary Rocks (Northcote et al., 1960) that have a high permeability so it is considered unlikely to cause soil erosion, waterlogging or increase salinity levels.

Methodology

Northcote et al., (1960)
GIS Databases:
- Acid Sulfate Soil Risk Map, Swan Coastal Plain - DEC
- Groundwater Salinity, Statewide - DOW
- Hydrogeology, Statewide - DOW
- Soils, Statewide - DA 11/99

(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

Nearby the proposed area is the Leeuwin-Naturalist Ridge Area (7Km West), Bramley National Park (2.2Km South), Keenan State Forest (4.5Km South) and North East Margaret River State Forest (6.2Km East). The area is of a degraded condition (DEC site visit 20/02/2007). Given the condition and distance to surrounding conservation areas, clearing is not likely to impact on the values of surrounding conservation areas.

Methodology

DEC site visit (20/02/2007)
GIS Database:
- CALM Managed Lands and Waters - CALM 1/06/04

(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 proposed area is in the Naturaliste (Busselton/Capel) RIWI Act - Groundwater Area and the Margaret River Catchment area. Topography shows the area under application has low relief. The area also has low groundwater salinity (1000 - 3000 mg/L) and an evaporation rate of 1000 mm combined with a rainfall rate of 1050 mm. Soil geology mapping shows that the area has high permeability having sedimentary rock.

Given the size of the area to be cleared, the low relief, groundwater salinity and distance to watercourses the proposed clearing is unlikely to impact on groundwater or surface water quality.

Methodology

GIS Databases:
- Hydrographic Catchments - Catchments - DOW
- RIWI Act, Groundwater Areas - DOW
- Topography

(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

The area is subject to high rainfall and a low relief, however there is also a high evaporation rate and given the soil type in the proposed area is highly permeable it is considered unlikely to cause or exacerbate flooding.

Methodology GIS Databases:
- Topography Contours, Statewide - DOLA 12/09/02
- Evaporation Isopleths - BOM 09/98
- Mean Annual Rainfall Isohyets (1975-2003) - DOW

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

Comments

The proposed area lies within the South West Boojarah Native Title Claim area. As the property is within road reserve, the granting of the clearing permit is a secondary approval and does not constitute a future act under the Native Title Act 1993.

A public submission was received objecting to the clearing due to health concerns to nearby residents, such as inhalation of silica dust, given the purpose of the clearing is extractive industry. Conditions placed on the extractive industry licence (P27187) by the Shire of Augusta-Margaret River address environmental health issues.

A submission was received from the Shire of Augusta-Margaret River supporting the clearing within the road reserve, provided all necessary approvals are obtained. Also B&J Catalano must enter into a written agreement with the Shire to provide gravel retrieved from the road reserve to the shire, or satifactory compensation in lieu of provision of gravel. Furthermore, B&J Catalano must undertake rehabilitation of the site to an approved rehabilitation plan.

A submission was received from the Cape to Cape Catchments Group making recommendations for conditions to be placed on the permit if granted.

Methodology DEC site visit (20/02/2007)
GIS Databases:
- Native Title Claims - DLI 7/11/05
- Aboriginal Sites of Significance - DIA

4. Assessor's comments

Comment

The proposed clearing is not likely to be at variance to any of the principles.

5. References

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DEC Site Visit (20/02/07). Site visit conducted for CPS 1701/1. Department of Environment and Conservation. DEC Trim Ref: DOC16702

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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.

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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.

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)