



## 1. Application details

### 1.1. Permit application details

Permit application No.: 219/1  
Permit type: Area Permit

### 1.2. Proponent details

Proponent's name: Forest Products Commission

### 1.3. Property details

Property: LOT 5395 ON PLAN 206225  
Local Government Area: Shire Of Gingin  
Colloquial name: Cowalla Road, 40km from Gingin

### 1.4. Application

| Clearing Area (ha) | No. Trees | Method of Clearing | For the purpose of: |
|--------------------|-----------|--------------------|---------------------|
| 120                |           | Mechanical Removal | Timber Harvesting   |

## 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   |
|--|---|--|---|
| Hedde: Caladenia Complex and Karrakatta Complex North - predominatly low open forest and low woodland of Banksia species, Eucalyptus tottiana, less consistently open forest of E. gomphocephala and Banksia species. (Hedde et al. 1980)<br>Beard vegetation association:<br>1014 = Mosaic: low woodland; banksia/shrublands; tea-tree thicket.<br>1949 = Low woodland; banksia on low sandhills, swamps in swales with tea tree and paperbark<br>(Hopkins et al. 2000, Shepherd et al. 2000) | Monoculture of grass trees (Xanthorrhoea), some banksia species and Christmas trees (Nuytsia floribunda). Non-native pasture was identified between the grass trees.<br>Melaleucas and sedges were associated with wetland areas (site visit 15/02/05) (DAWA 2004). | Degraded: Structure severely disturbed; regeneration to good condition requires intensive management (Keighery 1994) | Site visit was also conducted by DoE staff, including Joanna Tonge, Vi Saffer and Ryan Vogwill on Tuesday 15th February 2005. |

## 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 at variance to this Principle**  
One of the areas under application in the north-west section of the property encompasses a Conservation Category Wetland with fringing vegetation in 'very good' condition (Keighery 1994). This vegetation is to remain with the proponent agreeing to create a buffer by not clearing within 100m of this CCW. The other areas under application have been previously parkland cleared with the remaining vegetation consisting of native grass trees, Christmas trees and veldt grass species (site visit 15/02/05) (CALM 2005, DAWA 2004). Therefore this Principle is not at variance.

**Methodology** Keighery (1994)  
CALM (2005)(Trim reference EI235)  
DAWA (2004) (Trim reference EI238)  
Site visit 14/02/05 (Trim refernce EI442)

**(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 Specially Protected species Carnaby's Black Cockatoo (*Calytorhynchus latirostris*) is known to occur within a 10km radius of the areas under application. However CALM advise that the proposed clearing would pose a negligible impact on this species and any other fauna present (CALM 2005).

**Methodology** CALM (2005) (Trim reference EI235)

**(c) Native vegetation should not be cleared if it includes, or is necessary for the continued existence of, significant flora.**

**Comments Proposal is not likely to be at variance to this Principle**

The following priority species are known to occur within the local area (10km radius) surrounding the area under application: *Dillwynia dillwyniodes* (Priority 3), *Verticordia lindleyi* subsp *lindleyi* (Priority 3), *Myriocephalus appendiculatus* (Priority 3), *Grevillea evanescens* (Priority 1) and *Dodonara hackettiana* (Priority 4). CALM advises that due to the little remnant vegetation present, there is a low probability of these species being present. Therefore due to the degraded nature of the vegetation within the areas under application, this Principle is not likely to be at variance.

**Methodology** CALM (2005) (Trim reference EI235)

GIS Databases:

- Declared Rare and Priority Flora List - CALM 13/08/03
- Threatened Plant Communities - DEP 06/95
- Threatened Ecological Communities - CALM 15/07/03

**(d) Native vegetation should not be cleared if it comprises the whole or a part of, or is necessary for the maintenance of a significant ecological community.**

**Comments Proposal is not likely to be at variance to this Principle**

Given that the areas under application have been previously parkland cleared and there are no records of TECs in the local area (10km radius) (CALM 2005) it is unlikely that this Principle is at variance.

**Methodology** CALM report 2005 EI235

GIS Databases:

- Threatened Ecological Communities - CALM 15/07/03
- Threatened Plant Communities - DEP 06/95

**(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**

The State Government is committed to the National Objectives Targets for Biodiversity Conservation which includes a target that prevents clearance of ecological communities with an extent below 30% of that present pre-European (Department of Natural Resources and Environment 2002, EPA 2001). The vegetation types contained within the areas under application including the Beard association 1014 are above this 30% target (Shepherd et al 2001, Hopkins et al 2001). The Beard association 1949 is below 30%, however the vegetation within the areas under application are not a pristine example of this vegetation association. Therefore this Principle is not at variance.

|                                   | Pre-European area (ha) | Current extent (ha) | Remaining %* | Conservation Status** | % in reserves/CALM-managed land |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|--------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------|
| IBRA - Swan Coastal Plain         | 1,529,233              | 657,450             | 43           | Depleted              |                                 |
| Shire - Gingin                    | 315,560                | 177,688             | 56.3         | Least concern         |                                 |
| Beard vegetation association 1014 | 48,359                 | 25,871              | 53.5         | Least concern         | 39.7                            |
| Beard vegetation association 1949 | 32,958                 | 34,012              | 25.6         | Vulnerable            | 24.4                            |

**Methodology** Shepherd et al. (2001)  
Hopkins et al. (2001)  
Department of Natural Resources and Environment (2002)  
EPA (2001)

**(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 at variance to this Principle**

The area under application in the north-west portion of the property is bordered by a Conservation Category Wetland which is in good condition. Upon negotiations with the proponent, a 100m buffer will be retained with no clearing within this 100m area. The other wetlands located within the remaining areas of the property are degraded and retain little wetland characteristics (Site visit 15/02/05).

**Methodology** Site visit (15/02/05) (Trim EI442)  
Letter to FPC outlining draft permit conditions (Trim reference ED460)  
Email from Lindon Piggott agreeing to conditions (Trim reference EI806)  
GIS Databases:  
- Geomorphic Wetlands (Mgmt Categories) SCP - DOE 15/09/04  
- Environmentally Sensitive Areas - DOE 22/10/04

**(g) Native vegetation should not be cleared if the clearing of the vegetation is likely to cause appreciable land degradation.**

**Comments Proposal may be at variance to this Principle**

The report from DAWA (2004) identifies the potential for wind erosion, but indicated that this risk would be addressed by the pine seedling planting. There is a low Acid Sulfate Soils (ASS) risk for the areas under application in the southern portion of the property. No data is available for the northern portion of the property.

**Methodology** DAWA (2004) (Trim reference EI238)  
GIS Databases:  
Acid Sulphate Soil risk map, SCP - DOE 01/02/04

**(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 Moore River National Park and the Gngangara-Moore River State Forest occur within a 10km radius of the property, with the Moore River Nature Reserve located adjacent (to the north) (CALM 2005). Due to the degraded nature of the vegetation within the areas under application, it is unlikely that the proposed clearing would have a significant effect on these conservation areas. The proponents have also agreed to sell CALM 930ha of pristine bush located on the property for inclusion in the conservation estate (CALM 2005).

**Methodology** CALM (2005) (Trim reference EI235)

**(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 may be at variance to this Principle**

The areas under application are not located within a Public Drinking Water Source Area (PDWSA) or a groundwater catchment area. Concern has been raised over the lack of hydrological monitoring at the site and the impacts of changing land uses on the wetlands on the property (Ryan Vogwill pers coms 08/02/05).

**Methodology** Ryan Vogwill pers coms 08/02/05  
GIS Databases:  
- Public Drinking Water Source Areas (PDWSAs) - DOE 04/11/04

**(j) Native vegetation should not be cleared if clearing the vegetation is likely to cause, or exacerbate, the incidence of flooding.**

**Comments Proposal is not at variance to this Principle**

Flooding impacts are unlikely to result from the proposed clearing. Much of the property remains vegetated and there are no major waterbodies near by. It is considered that the removal of vegetation would have no impact on peak flood height or duration.

**Methodology** Site visit 15/02/05  
GIS Databases:  
- Topographic Contours, Statewide - DOLA 12/09/02

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

**Comments**

The Shire of Gingin have no objections to the proposed clearing

**Methodology** Submission from Shire of Gingin (Trim reference NI206)

#### 4. Assessor's recommendations

| Purpose           | Method             | Applied area (ha)/ trees | Decision | Comment / recommendation   |
|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|----------|--|
| Timber Harvesting | Mechanical Removal | 120                      | 119      | <p>The assessable criteria have been addressed and the proposed clearing is at variance to Principle f and may be at variance with Principles g and i.</p> <p>For Principle f, the proponent has agreed to the permit condition that no clearing will occur within 100m (totalling 0.6ha) of the Conservation Category Wetland located in the northern portion of the property. The wetlands scattered throughout the remaining areas of the property are in a degraded condition.</p> <p>In relation to Principle g, DAWA anticipates that the potential for wind erosion would be reduced by the future landuse (planting of pine seedlings).</p> <p>The proponent has agreed to revegetate the area between the three wetlands in the south-eastern portion of the property and the adjacent vegetation (totalling 0.4ha). The revegetation shall be established and maintained to an average planting density of 1000 plants per hectare. The species shall consist of overstorey, midstorey and understorey species that are native to the area. Seed shall be sourced from within a 5km radius of the property.</p> <p>The proponent applied to clear 120ha; based on the above, the assessing officer deems that the Department grant 119ha.</p> <p>A hydrological monitoring program developed by a staff member from the DoE Hydrological group has been suggested to the proponent to monitor groundwater and surface water levels of the Conservation Category Wetland in the northern portion of the property.</p> |

#### 5. References

- CALM (2005) Land clearing proposal advice. Advice to A/Director General, Department of Environment (DoE). Department of Conservation and Land Management, Western Australia. DoE TRIM ref EI235.
- DAWA (2004) Land degradation assessment report. Office of the Commissioner of Soil and Land Conservation, Department of Agriculture Western Australia. DoE TRIM ref EI238.
- 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.
- Heddl, 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, BJ (1994) Bushland Plant Survey: A Guide to Plant Community Survey for the Community. Wildflower Society of WA (Inc). Nedlands, 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.