

CLEARING PERMIT

Granted under section 51E of the Environmental Protection Act 1986

Purpose permit number: CP

CPS 2418/1

Permit holder:

Jameson Farms Pty Ltd

Duration of permit:

23 January 2009 - 23 January 2014

The permit holder is authorised to clear native vegetation subject to the following conditions of this Permit.

PART I - CLEARING AUTHORISED

1. Purpose for which clearing may be done

Clearing for the purpose of fence line construction and maintenance

2. Land on which clearing is to be done

Lot 56 on Plan 300159 (MOCARDY)

Lot 55 on Plan 300159 (MOCARDY)

Lot 18228 on Plan 229675 (MOCARDY)

Lot 18229 on Plan 229675 (MOCARDY)

Lot 9130 on Plan 125398 (MOCARDY)

Lot 11648 on Plan 130639 (MOCARDY)

Lot 8250 on Plan 121446 (NORTHAM-PITHARA MOCARDY)

Lot 11775 on Plan 130637 (MOCARDY)

Lot 18226 on Plan 229675 (MOCARDY)

Lot 10278 on Plan 127360 (NORTHAM-PITHARA MOCARDY)

Lot 18225 on Plan 229675 (MOCARDY)

Lot 7934 on Plan 120979 (KALGUDDERING WEST LAKE NINAN)

Lot 8249 on Plan 121449 (LAKE NINAN)

Lot 4 on Plan 24873 (LAKE NINAN)

Lot 1582 on Plan 130631 (LAKE NINAN)

Lot 2548 on Plan 229675 (LAKE NINAN)

Lot 2550 on Plan 229675 (LAKE NINAN)

Lot 1588 on Plan 130145 (LAKE NINAN)

Lot 1267 on Plan 130143 (LAKE NINAN)

Lot 1523 on Plan 130142 (LAKE NINAN)

Lot 1587 on Plan 130144 (LAKE NINAN)

Lot 2552 on Plan 229675 (LAKE NINAN)

Lot 2551 on Plan 229675 (LAKE NINAN)

Lot 1581 on Plan 130636 (LAKE NINAN)

Lot 102 on Plan 32918 (CALINGIRI-WONGAN HILLS WONGAN HILLS)

Lot 1426 on Plan 127427 (WONGAN HILLS)

Lot 1425 on Plan 127426 (WONGAN HILLS)

CPS 2418/1, 23 December 2008

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Lot 562 on Plan 301406 (WONGAN HILLS)
Lot 1372 on Plan 130630 (LAKE NINAN)
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Lot 1371 on Plan 130629 (LAKE NINAN)

Lot 561 on Plan 301402 (LAKE NINAN)

Lot 562 on Plan 301406 (LAKE NINAN)

Lot 1294 on Plan 118843 (LAKE NINAN)

Lot 1293 on Plan 118842 (LAKE NINAN)

Lot 1373 on Plan 130146 (LAKE NINAN)

Lot 1243 on Plan 115517 (LAKE NINAN)

Lot 2556 on Plan 229675 (LAKE NINAN)

Lot 2038 on Plan 229675 (LAKE NINAN)

Lot 2554 on Plan 229675 (WELLS LAKE NINAN)

Lot 2553 on Plan 229675 (LAKE NINAN)

Lot 2032 on Plan 87768 (LAKE NINAN)

Lot 2555 on Plan 137718 (LAKE NINAN)

Lot 1712 on Plan 130706 (LAKE NINAN)

Lot 2195 on Plan 137718 (LAKE NINAN)

Lot 1972 on Plan 136201 (KONNONGORRING)

Lot 220 on Plan 301401 (WONGAN HILLS)

Lot 1407 on Plan 124244 (WONGAN HILLS)

Lot 2586 on Plan 87873 (WONGAN HILLS)

Lot 1767 on Plan 133699 (WONGAN HILLS)

Lot 1768 on Plan 133700 (WONGAN HILLS)

Lot 1450 on Plan 125682 (ELPHIN-KORRALING WONGAN HILLS)

Lot 2082 on Plan 137452 (WONGAN HILLS)

Lot 3064 on Plan 148772 (WONGAN HILLS)

Lot 1812 on Plan 134350 (WONGAN HILLS)

Lot 1811 on Plan 134349 (WONGAN HILLS)

Lot 1791 on Plan 133709 (WONGAN HILLS)

Lot 373 on Plan 142521 (NORTHAM-PITHARA WONGAN HILLS)

Lot 375 on Plan 142518 (WONGAN HILLS)

Lot 374 on Plan 142520 (WONGAN HILLS)

Lot 13426 on Plan 138359 (WONGAN HILLS)

Lot 102 on Plan 32918 (CALINGIRI-WONGAN HILLS WONGAN HILLS)

Crown Reserve 16319 (WONGAN HILLS)

Crown Reserve 18672 (WONGAN HILLS)

Crown Reserve 25808 (WONGAN HILLS)

Crown Reserve 26405 (WONGAN HILLS)

Crown Reserve 39145 (WONGAN HILLS)

Crown Reserve 42375 (WONGAN HILLS)

Callingiri-Wongan Hills Road Reserve

Commercial Road Reserve

Conway Road Reserve

Danubin Road Reserve

Elphin-Korraling Road Reserve

Ffoulkes Road Reserve

Kalguddering East Road Reserve

Kalguddering North Road Reserve

Kalguddering West Road Reserve

Korraling Road Reserve

Northam-Pithara Road Reserve

Old Ballidu Road Reserve
Serio Road Reserve
Strickland Road Reserve
Waddington-Wongan Hills Road Reserve
Wells Road Reserve
Wilding Road Reserve
Various Un-named Road Reserves in the Shire of Wongan-Hills

3. Vegetation Retention

The permit holder shall not clear trees that have a diameter, at human chest height, greater than 25 centimetres.

4. Area of Clearing

The permit holder must not clear more than 10 hectares of native vegetation within the areas cross-hatched yellow on attached Plan 2418/1a, Plan 2418/1b and Plan 2418/1c.

5. Restrictions on Clearing

The permit holder shall not clear more than 1 meter inside the cadastral boundary of any Crown Reserves or Road Reserves outlined in condition 2 of this Permit.

6. Application

This Permit allows the permit holder to authorise persons, including employees, contractors and agents of the permit holder, to clear native vegetation for the purposes of this Permit subject to compliance with the conditions of this Permit and approval from the Permit Holder.

7. Compliance with Assessment Sequence and Management Procedures

Prior to clearing any native vegetation under conditions 1, 2 and 4 of this Permit, the permit holder must comply with the Assessment Sequence and the Management Procedures set out in Part II of this Permit.

PART II - ASSESSMENT SEQUENCE AND MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES

8. Avoid, minimise etc clearing

In determining the amount of native vegetation to be cleared for the purposes of fence upgrades the Permit Holder must have regard to the following principles, set out in order of preference:

- (a) avoid the clearing of native vegetation;
- (b) minimise the amount of native vegetation to be cleared; and
- (c) reduce the impact of clearing on any environmental value.

9. Dieback and Weed Control

- (a) When undertaking any clearing or other activity pursuant to this Permit, the Permit Holder must take the following steps to minimise the risk of the introduction and spread of weeds and dieback:
 - (i) clean earth-moving machinery of soil and vegetation prior to entering and leaving the area to be cleared:
 - (ii) ensure that no *dieback* and *weed*-affected materials, *mulch*, *fill* or other material is brought into the area to be cleared; and
 - (iii) restrict the movement of machines and other vehicles to the limits of the areas to be cleared.

(b) At least once in each 12 month period for the *term* of this Permit, the Permit Holder must remove or kill any *weeds* growing within areas cleared under this Permit.

10. Flora Management

- (a) Prior to undertaking clearing within the area described in condition 1, 2 and 4 and depicted on Plan 2418/1a, Plan 2418/1b and Plan 2418/1c; the areas shall be inspected by a *flora specialist* who shall identify rare flora and *priority flora taxa*.
- (b) Where rare flora or *priority flora taxa* are identified in relation to condition 10(a) the Permit Holder shall ensure that:
 - (i) All records of rare flora and priority flora taxa are submitted to the CEO
 - (ii) No clearing occurs within 50m of identified rare flora, unless approved by the CEO
 - (iii) No clearing occurs with 10m of identified priority flora taxa, unless approved by the CEO.

11. Offsets

- (a) Determination of offsets
 - (i) If part or all of the clearing to be done is or may be at variance with one or more of the clearing principles, then the permit holder must implement an *offset* in accordance with Conditions 11 (a) and 11 (b) of this Permit with respect to that native vegetation.
 - (ii) In determining the *offset* to be implemented with respect to a particular area of native vegetation proposed to be cleared under this Permit, the permit holder must have regard to the offset principles contained in condition 11 (b) of this Permit.
 - (iii) Once the permit holder has developed an offset proposal, the permit holder must provide that offset proposal to the CEO for the CEO's approval prior to undertaking any clearing to which the offset relates, and prior to implementing the offset.
 - (iv) Clearing may not commence until and unless the CEO has approved the offset proposal.
 - (v) The permit holder shall implement the offset proposal approved under condition 11 (a) (iii).
 - (vi) Each offset proposal shall include a direct offset, timing for implementation of the offset proposal and may additionally include contributing offsets.

(b) Offset principles

For the purpose of this Part, the offset principles are as follows:

- (i) direct offsets should directly counterbalance the loss of the native vegetation;
- (ii) contributing offsets should complement and enhance the direct offset;
- (iii) offsets are implemented only once all avenues to avoid, minimise, rectify or reduce environmental impacts have been exhausted;
- (iv) the environmental values, habitat, species, ecological community, physical area, ecosystem, landscape, and hydrology of the *offset* should be the same as, or better than, that of the area of native vegetation being *offset*;
- (v) a ratio greater than 1:1 should be applied to the size of the area of native vegetation that is offset to compensate for the risk that the *offset* may fail;
- (vi) offsets must entail a robust and consistent assessment process;
- (vii) in determining an appropriate *offset*, consideration should be given to ecosystem function, rarity and type of *ecological community*, vegetation *condition*, habitat quality and area of native vegetation cleared;
- (viii) the *offset* should either result in no net loss of native vegetation, or lead to a net gain in native vegetation and improve the condition of the natural environment;
 - (ix) offsets must satisfy all statutory requirements;
 - (x) offsets must be clearly defined, documented and audited;
 - (xi) offsets must ensure a long-term (10-30 year) benefit; and
- (xii) an environmental specialist must be involved in the design, assessment and monitoring of offsets.

PART III - RECORD KEEPING AND REPORTING

12. Records must be kept

The Permit Holder must maintain the following records for activities done pursuant to this Permit, as relevant:

- (a) In relation to the clearing of native vegetation undertaken pursuant to conditions 1,2 and 4:
 - (i) The species composition, structure and density of the cleared area;
 - (ii) the location where the clearing occurred, recorded using a Global Positioning System (GPS) unit set to Geocentric Datum Australia 1994 (GDA94), expressing geographical coordinates in Eastings and Northings;
 - (iii) the date that the area was cleared; and
 - (iv) the size of the area cleared (in hectares).
- (b) In relation to Flora Management pursuant to condition 10:
 - (i) The location of each rare flora and priority flora recorded using a Global Positioning System (GPS) unit set to Geocentric Datum Australia 1994 (GDA94), expressing geographical coordinates in Easting and Northings; and
 - (ii) The species of each Rare Flora and Priority Flora identified.
- (c) In relation to the offsets of areas pursuant to condition 11:
 - (i) The location of any area of offsets recorded using a Global Positioning System (GPS) unit set to Geocentric Datum Australia 1994 (GDA94), expressing geographical coordinates in Eastings and Northings;
 - (ii) A description of the offset activities undertaken; and
 - (iii) The size of the offset area (in hectares).

13. Reporting

- (a) The Permit Holder must provide to the CEO, on or before 30 June of each year, a written report of records required under condition 12 of this Permit and activities done by the Permit Holder under this Permit between 1 January and 31 December of the preceding year.
- (b) Prior to 23 October 2013, the Permit Holder must provide to the CEO a written report of records required under condition 12 of this Permit where these records have not already been provided under condition 13 (a) of this Permit.

Definitions

The following meanings are given to terms used in this Permit:

condition means the rating given to native vegetation using the Keighery scale and refers to the degree of change in the structure, density and species present in the particular vegetation in comparison to undisturbed vegetation of the same type;

contributing offsets has the same meaning as is given to that term in the Environmental Protection Authority's Position Statement No.9 Environmental Offsets, January 2006;

dieback means the effect of Phytophthora species on native vegetation;

direct offsets has the same meaning as is given to that term in the Environmental Protection Authority's Position Statement No.9 Environmental Offsets, January 2006;

environmental specialist means a person who is engaged by the permit holder for the purpose of providing environmental advice, who holds a tertiary qualification in environmental science or equivalent, and has experience relevant to the type of environmental advice that an environmental specialist is required to provide under this Permit;

fill means material used to increase the ground level, or fill a hollow;

flora specialist means a person with specific training and/or experience in the ecology and taxonomy of Western Australian flora;

mulch means the use of organic matter, wood chips or rocks to slow the movement of water across the soil surface and to reduce evaporation;

offset means an offset required to be implemented under Condition 9 of this Permit;

priority flora taxa means those plant taxa listed as Priority flora classes 1, 2, 3 or 4 in the Declared Rare and Priority Flora List for Western Australia, Department of Environment and Conservation and, as amended.

weed means a species listed in Appendix 3 of the "Environmental Weed Strategy" published by the Department of Conservation and Land Management (1999), and plants declared under section 37 of the Agricultural and Related Resources Protection Act 1976.

Robert Atkins

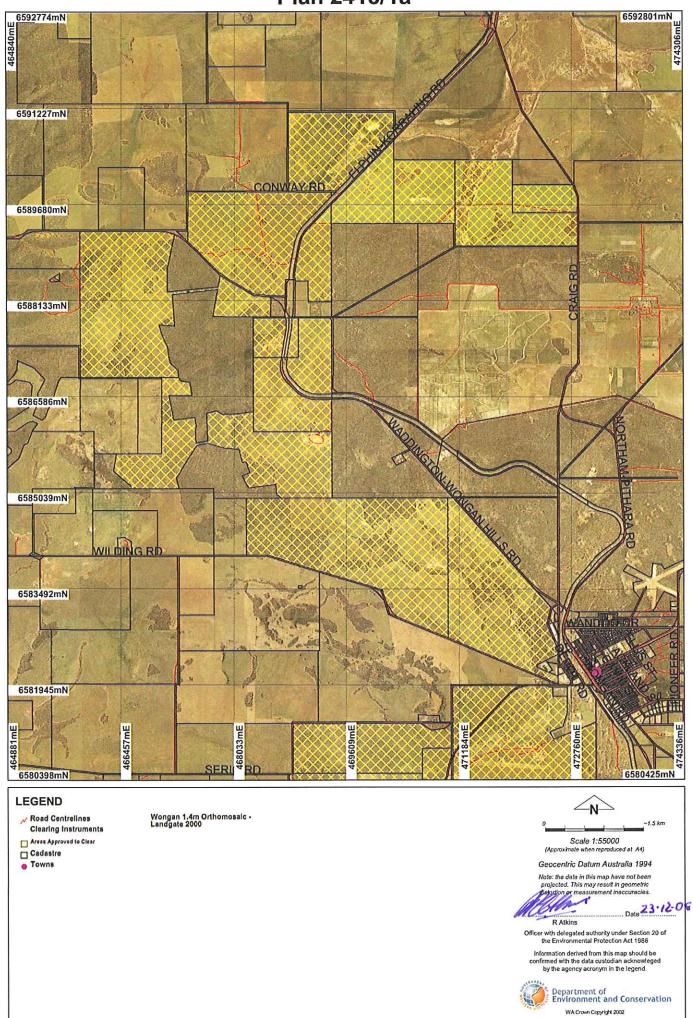
A/DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL

ENVIRONMENT

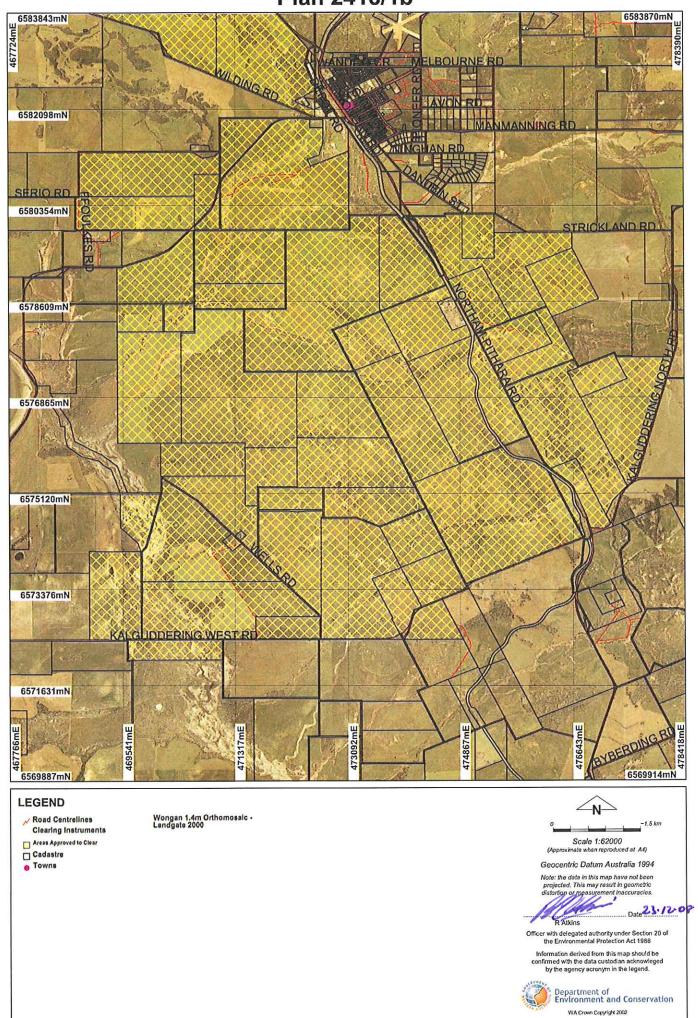
Officer delegated under Section 20 of the Environmental Protection Act 1986

23 December 2008

Plan 2418/1a

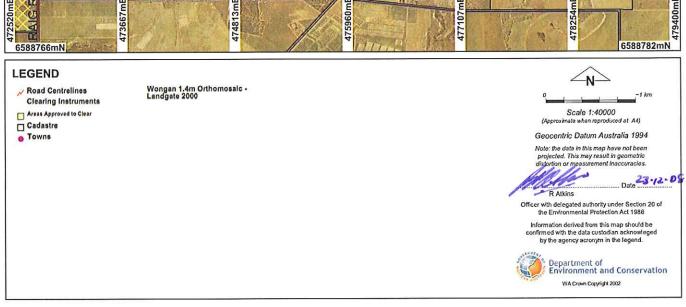


Plan 2418/1b



Plan 2418/1c





Clearing Permit Decision Report

1. Application details

1.1. Permit application details

Permit application No.:

2418/1

Permit type:

Purpose Permit

1.2. Proponent details

Proponent's name:

Jameson Farm Pty Ltd

1.3. Property details

Property:

LOT 56 ON PLAN 300159 (MOCARDY 6603)

LOT 55 ON PLAN 300159 (MOCARDY 6603)

LOT 18228 ON PLAN 229675 (MOCARDY 6603)

LOT 18229 ON PLAN 229675 (MOCARDY 6603)

LOT 9130 ON PLAN 125398 (MOCARDY 6603)

LOT 11648 ON PLAN 130639 (MOCARDY 6603)

LOT 8250 ON PLAN 121446 (House No. 8604 NORTHAM-PITHARA MOCARDY 6603)

LOT 11775 ON PLAN 130637 (MOCARDY 6603)

LOT 18226 ON PLAN 229675 (MOCARDY 6603)

LOT 10278 ON PLAN 127360 (House No. 8642 NORTHAM-PITHARA MOCARDY 6603)

LOT 18225 ON PLAN 229675 (MOCARDY 6603)

LOT 7934 ON PLAN 120979 (Lot No. 7934 KALGUDDERING WEST LAKE NINAN 6603)

LOT 8249 ON PLAN 121449 (LAKE NINAN 6603)

LOT 8249 ON PLAN 121449 (LAKE NINAN 6603)

LOT 4 ON PLAN 24873 (LAKE NINAN 6603)

LOT 1582 ON PLAN 130631 (LAKE NINAN 6603)

LOT 2548 ON PLAN 229675 (LAKE NINAN 6603)

LOT 2550 ON PLAN 229675 (LAKE NINAN 6603)

LOT 1588 ON PLAN 130145 (LAKE NINAN 6603)

LOT 1588 ON PLAN 130145 (LAKE NINAN 6603)

LOT 1267 ON PLAN 130143 (LAKE NINAN 6603)

LOT 1523 ON PLAN 130142 (LAKE NINAN 6603) LOT 1587 ON PLAN 130144 (LAKE NINAN 6603)

LOT 1587 ON PLAN 130144 (LAKE NINAN 6603)

LOT 2552 ON PLAN 229675 (LAKE NINAN 6603)

LOT 2551 ON PLAN 229675 (LAKE NINAN 6603)

LOT 1581 ON PLAN 130636 (LAKE NINAN 6603)

LOT 102 ON PLAN 32918 (House No. 3628 CALINGIRI-WONGAN HILLS WONGAN HILLS

6603)

LOT 1426 ON PLAN 127427 (WONGAN HILLS 6603)

LOT 1426 ON PLAN 127427 (WONGAN HILLS 6603)

LOT 1425 ON PLAN 127426 (WONGAN HILLS 6603)

LOT 562 ON PLAN 301406 (WONGAN HILLS 6603)

LOT 562 ON PLAN 301406 (LAKE NINAN 6603)

LOT 1372 ON PLAN 130630 (LAKE NINAN 6603)

LOT 1371 ON PLAN 130629 (LAKE NINAN 6603)

LOT 561 ON PLAN 301402 (LAKE NINAN 6603)

LOT 562 ON PLAN 301406 (LAKE NINAN 6603)

LOT 1294 ON PLAN 118843 (LAKE NINAN 6603)

LOT 562 ON PLAN 301406 (LAKE NINAN 6603)

LOT 1293 ON PLAN 118842 (LAKE NINAN 6603)

LOT 1373 ON PLAN 130146 (LAKE NINAN 6603)

LOT 1243 ON PLAN 115517 (LAKE NINAN 6603)

LOT 2556 ON PLAN 229675 (LAKE NINAN 6603) LOT 2038 ON PLAN 229675 (LAKE NINAN 6603)

LOT 2554 ON PLAN 229675 (House No. 223 WELLS LAKE NINAN 6603)

LOT 2553 ON PLAN 229675 (LAKE NINAN 6603)

LOT 2032 ON PLAN 87768 (LAKE NINAN 6603)

LOT 2555 ON PLAN 137718 (LAKE NINAN 6603)

LOT 1712 ON PLAN 130706 (LAKE NINAN 6603)

LOT 2195 ON PLAN 137718 (LAKE NINAN 6603)

LOT 1972 ON PLAN 136201 (KONNONGORRING 6603)

LOT 220 ON PLAN 301401 (WONGAN HILLS 6603)

LOT 1407 ON PLAN 124244 (WONGAN HILLS 6603)

LOT 2586 ON PLAN 87873 (WONGAN HILLS 6603)

LOT 1767 ON PLAN 133699 (WONGAN HILLS 6603)

LOT 1768 ON PLAN 133700 (WONGAN HILLS 6603)

LOT 1450 ON PLAN 125682 (House No. 77 ELPHIN-KORRALING WONGAN HILLS 6603)

LOT 1450 ON PLAN 125682 (House No. 77 ELPHIN-KORRALING WONGAN HILLS 6603)

LOT 2082 ON PLAN 137452 (WONGAN HILLS 6603)

LOT 2082 ON PLAN 137452 (WONGAN HILLS 6603)

LOT 3064 ON PLAN 148772 (WONGAN HILLS 6603)

LOT 1812 ON PLAN 134350 (WONGAN HILLS 6603)

LOT 1811 ON PLAN 134349 (WONGAN HILLS 6603)

LOT 1450 ON PLAN 125682 (House No. 77 ELPHIN-KORRALING WONGAN HILLS 6603)

LOT 1767 ON PLAN 133699 (WONGAN HILLS 6603)

LOT 1791 ON PLAN 133709 (WONGAN HILLS 6603)

LOT 1791 ON PLAN 133709 (WONGAN HILLS 6603)

LOT 373 ON PLAN 142521 (House No. 10301 NORTHAM-PITHARA WONGAN HILLS 6603)

LOT 375 ON PLAN 142518 (WONGAN HILLS 6603)

LOT 374 ON PLAN 142520 (WONGAN HILLS 6603)

LOT 13426 ON PLAN 138359 (WONGAN HILLS 6603)

LOT 102 ON PLAN 32918 (House No. 3628 CALINGIRI-WONGAN HILLS WONGAN HILLS 6603)

Local Government Area: Colloquial name:

Shire Of Goomalling & Shire Of Wongan-Ballidu

1.4. Application

Clearing Area (ha)

No. Trees

Method of Clearing Mechanical Removal For the purpose of: Fence Line Maintenance

2. Site Information

2.1. Existing environment and information

2.1.1. Description of the native vegetation under application

Vegetation Description Beard Associations:

128 - Bare areas; rock outcrops.

694 - Shrublands; scrubheath on yellow sandplain banksia-xylomelum alliance in the Geraldton Sandplain & Avon-Wheatbelt Regions.

936 - Medium woodland; salmon gum.

988 - Succulent steppe with thicket; Melaleuca thyoides over samphire.

1024 - Shrublands; mallee & casuarina thicket.

1049 - Medium woodland; wandoo, York gum, salmon gum, morrel & gimlet.

Clearing Description

The proposal is to clear up to 10ha of native vegetation over 5 years for fence line maintenance and construction on 3 farms managed by Jameson Farms Pty Ltd within the Shire of Wongan-Ballidu. The 3 farms area known as 'Jameson Fam' (~6700ha), 'Rogers Farm' (~2500ha) and 'Yorks Farm' (~680ha).

Clearing for the fence lines will vary from a width of 1,5m - 7m depending on the vegetation present along and adjacent to the fence line.

Disturbances include grazing, clearing for previous maintenance works (fire breaks, fence maintenance or road maintenance) and various degrees of weed invasion.

Vegetation Condition

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

Comment

The vegetation description was obtained from a site inspection conducted by DEC in 2008.

The condition of the vegetation ranged from Completely Degraded to Good. The majority of the vegetation under application is considered to be in Good to Degraded condition.

It is noted that the majority of vegetation in good or better condition occurs in road reserves and adjacent conservation areas.

The vegetation under application on 'Jameson Farm' varies and is best described as:

Completely Degraded:

- Areas of no native species with a groundcover of weeds.
- Isolated Eucalypts (Mallees or Salmon Gums) or native shrubs over weeds
- Low Open Shrubland of Saltbush and grass weeds.

Degraded to Good: Tall Open Woodland of Salmon Gum over Mallee.

Good:

- Medium Eucalypt Woodland over Mallee.
- Tall Open Eucalypt Woodland over Mallee with Open Shrubland.
- Shrubland dominated by Acacia and Casuarina over grass weeds.

The low lying areas and area associated with watercourses have vegetation which is best described as:

Degraded to Good:

- Low Shrubland dominated by Samphire and Saltbush.
- Open Eucalypt Woodland over Samphire and Saltbush.

Beard Associations:

694 - Shrublands; scrubheath on yellow sandplain banksia-xylomelum alliance in the Geraldton Sandplain & Avon-Wheatbelt Regions.

936 - Medium woodland; salmon gum.

1024 - Shrublands; mallee & casuarina thicket.

1049 - Medium woodland; wandoo, York gum, salmon gum, morrel & gimlet.

2047 - Shrublands; tamma & dryandra thicket.

The vegetation under application on 'Rogers Farm' varies and is best described as:

Completely Degraded:

- Areas of no native species with a groundcover of weeds.
- Isolated Eucalypts or native shrubs over weeds.

Good:

 Medium Eucalypt Woodland over Low Shrubland.

Very Good:

 Mallee and Casuarina thicket. Good: Structure significantly altered by multiple disturbance; retains basic structure/ability to regenerate (Keighery 1994) The vegetation description was obtained from a site inspection conducted by DEC in 2008.

The condition of the vegetation ranged from Completely Degraded to Excellent. The majority of the vegetation under application is considered to be in Good condition.

Very Good to Excellent:
- Tall Open Woodland of Salmon Gum over Mallee and Open Heath.

Beard Association: 1024 - Shrublands; mallee & casuarina thicket. The majority of the vegetation under application on 'Yorks Farm' is considered to be Completely Degraded and best described as:

- Areas of no native species with a groundcover of weeds.
- Isolated Eucalypts or native shrubs over weeds.

There may be some areas along the proposed fence lines where vegetation is in Degraded to Good condition comprising Shrublands of mallee and casuarina thicket.

Completely Degraded: No longer intact; completely/almost completely without native species (Keighery 1994) The vegetation description was obtained using Beard Vegetation Association mapping of the local area and examining aerial photography.

The majority of the areas proposed for the fence line maintenance do not appear to be heavily vegetated and therefore are considered to be Completely Degraded.

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 at variance to this Principle

The vegetation under application is located within an extensively cleared agricultural area within the Shire of Wongan-Ballidu, which has only 5.2% pre-European vegetation extent remaining (Shepherd et al. 2001). Given the low vegetation representation within the Shire, it is considered that vegetation in a degraded or better condition, although thin and linear, can significantly contribute to the conservation of biodiversity. It is therefore considered that the vegetation under application may comprise a high level of biodiversity, especially in a local context.

Vegetation under application ranges from completely degraded to excellent condition (DEC, 2008a). Vegetation under application in good to excellent condition, containing a dense shrub layer, has the potential to provide suitable habitat for ground dwelling fauna. In addition, some of the vegetation under application is adjacent to and within the road reserves. These road reserves are in a Shire that has been extensively cleared for agriculture, and therefore, the vegetation, although thin and linear, is considered to be significant in providing ecological corridors for fauna species of conservation significance.

Seven species of rare flora are known to occur on the properties under application and a further 17 rare flora species may occur in the areas under application as they occur in similar soils types and vegetation associations. In addition, eight priority flora species are known to occur on the properties under application and a further 20 priority flora species may occur in the areas under application as they occur in similar soils types and vegetation associations.

The areas under application on "Rogers Farm" include vegetation associated with three mapped priority ecological communities (PEC) known as 'Plant Assemblages of the Wongan Hills System' and occur within the mapped buffer to these PEC. The majority of the PEC boundary has previously been fenced; however, some of the fence lines adjacent to the PEC need to be replaced and vegetation associated with this PEC will be removed.

In addition, the Regional DEC office (2008b) has advised that the area under application is within an "Ecoscape" project area. This is the Wongan Hills Ecoscape, a landscape management initiative funded through the Avon Catchment Council. This part of the Wheatbelt has significant biodiversity value with large numbers of rare flora and endemism.

Given vegetation under application may be necessary for the maintenance of rare and priority flora, is associated with part of a PEC, contains a high level of species diversity when viewed in a local context and provides an ecological corridor for fauna in the local area, the areas under application are considered to comprise a high level of biodiversity and the clearing as proposed is considered to be at variance to this Principle.

Methodology

References:

- DEC (2008a)
- DEC (2008b)
- Shepherd et al. (2001)

GIS Databases:

- SAC Bio datasets (Accessed 21/05/2008)
- Soils. Statewide

(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 may be at variance to this Principle

Nine fauna species of conservation significance are known to occur within the local area (~20km radius) of the areas under application.

During the DEC site inspection (2008a) a significant number of mature Eucalypts were observed. These mature Eucalypts, most significantly Eucalyptus salmonophloia (Salmon Gum), did not show signs of hollows that would be considered significant habitat. In addition, some areas along the fence lines which needed to be replaced were completely degraded with areas of no native species with a groundcover of weeds or isolated Eucalypts or native shrubs over weeds and are not considered likely to provide significant habitat for fauna.

However, vegetation under application in good to very good condition, containing a dense shrub layer, has the potential to provide suitable habitat for ground dwelling fauna. There are areas of vegetation under application adjacent to and within large remnants, conservation areas and road reserves. The vegetation under application is in a Shire that has been extensively cleared for agriculture, therefore, vegetation proposed to be cleared along fence lines adjoining remnant vegetation is considered part of that remnant and considered significant habitat for fauna. In addition, the vegetation in the road reserves, although thin and linear, is considered to be significant in providing ecological corridors for fauna species of conservation significance.

It is noted, the proposal includes clearing up to 1.5m of vegetation in adjacent road reserves (DEC, 2008a). In some areas, the proposed clearing of up to 1.5m in the road reserve would remove all remnant vegetation within these sections of the road reserves. The clearing as proposed would sever the connectivity of the ecological corridors, limiting fauna movement to larger isolated remnants of vegetation in the local area. Corridors are especially important for maintaining the values of nearby conservation reserves.

Given the vegetation under application in good to excellent condition has the potential to provide significant habitat and ecological corridors for fauna in an area that has been extensively cleared for agriculture, it is considered the proposed clearing may be at variance to this Principle.

Methodology

References:

- DEC (2008a)

GIS Databases:

- Cadastre
- SAC Bio datasets (Accessed 21/05/2008)

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

Comments

Proposal is at variance to this Principle

There are 22 rare flora species known to occur within the local area of the properties under application. Of these species, Pityrodia axillaris is known to occur within the area under application on "Jameson Farm"; and Acacia Pygmaea, Conostylis wonganensis, Daviesia euphorbioides, Lysiosepalum abollatum, Microcorys eremophiloides and Stylidium coroniforme subsp. coroniforme are known to occur within the area under application on "Rogers Farm".

In addition, it is considered the following rare flora may occur in the areas under application as they are known to occur in similar soil types and vegetation associations:

- Acacia cochlocarpa subsp. velutinosa
- Acacia denticulosa
- Acacia pharangites
- Acacia vassalii
- Conostylis wonganensis
- Daviesia euphorbioides
- Eremophila ternifolia
- Eremophila viscida
- Eucalyptus recta
- Gastrolobium glaucum

- Gastrolobium hamulosum
- Melaleuca sciotostyla
- Microcorys eremophiloides
- Philotheca wonganensis
- Rhagodia acicularis
- Stylidium coroniforme subsp. coroniforme; and
- Verticordia staminosa subsp. staminosa.

It is therefore considered that the vegetation under application includes or is necessary for the continued existence of rare flora and is at variance to this Principle.

In addition, 167 priority flora species are known to occur within the local area of the properties under application. It is considered 20 priority flora species may occur within the areas under application as they are known to occur in similar soil types and vegetation associations. Of these species, Loxocarya albipes (P4) is known to occur within the area under application on "Jameson Farm" and Acacia dura, Verticordia wonganensis (Priority 2), Acacia filifolia, Verticordia huegelii var. tridens (Priority 3), Acacia semicircinalis, Daviesia spiralis, Loxocarya albipes (Priority 4) are known to occur within the area under application on "Rogers Farm".

To ensure all rare and priority flora species are identified and managed accordingly, a condition will be placed on the permit to ensure surveys are undertaken by a flora specialist to identify the presence of any rare or priority species within the areas proposed for clearing. Where rare and priority species are identified the applicant will be required to submit the records to the Department of Environment and Conservation ensure no clearing within 50m of rare flora and 10m of priority flora is undertaken.

Methodology

GIS Databases:

- SAC Bio datasets (Accessed 21/05/2008)
- Soils, Statewide

(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

There area no known threatened ecological communities (TEC) within the local area. The closest TEC known as 'Heath Community on the Chert Hills of Commberdale' occurs ~50km from the areas under application in different soil types and vegetation associations. Given the TEC occurs in different soils and vegetation associations and the distance to the nearest TEC, the proposed clearing is not considered likely to comprise whole or part, or is necessary for the maintenance of this TEC.

Methodology

GIS Databases:

- SAC Bio datasets (Accessed 20/03/2008)
- Soils, Statewide

(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 at variance to this Principle

The proposed clearing occurs within the Avon Wheatbelt IBRA Region, where the vegetation remaining is 15.4% (Shepherd, 2006). The clearing is also within the Intensive Land-use Zone (Shepherd et al, 2001) and is located in the area defined in EPA Position Statement No. 2 (EPA, 2000). Significant clearing of native vegetation has already occurred within this area and 'from an environmental perspective the EPA is of a view that it is unreasonable to expect to be able to continue to clear native vegetation from land within the agricultural area'. (EPA, 2000).

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 settlement (Commonwealth of Australia, 2001).

The majority of the properties under application are within the Shire of Wongan-Ballidu which has a current representation level of 5.2%. In addition, a small area under application (~2.5ha) occurs within the Shire of Goomalling which has a current representation level of 4.6%. The majority of the vegetation under application occurs within Beard vegetation associations 1024, 1049 and 142. Of these associations, 1024 and 1049 have current representation levels of 9.4% and 3.6% respectively. The vegetation association 142 has 26.5% remaining. Given the Shires of Wongan-Ballidu and Goomalling and the majority of the vegetation under application is well below the minimum threshold of 30% representation, the proposal is considered to be at variance to this Principle.

To mitigate any potential impacts of the clearing on remnant vegetation, while acknowledging the need to maintain and upgrade fence lines, the proposed clearing will be carried out in accordance with a condition imposed on the permit requiring that clearing of vegetation be avoided, and where this is not possible, minimised. In addition, to address the loss of vegetation within a highly cleared landscape, a condition has been imposed to offset the values of the areas to be cleared.

	Pre-European (ha)	Current extent Re (ha)	maining (%)	% In reserves DEC Managed Land
IBRA Bioregions*				
Avon Wheatbelt [^]	9,517,117	1,468,711	15.4	9.4
LGA**				
Shire of Goomalling	185,768	8,559	4.6	N/A
Shire of Wongan Ballidu	333,908	17,454	5.2	N/A
	·			
Beard Vegetation Type*				
Unit 128	329,872	280,953	85.2	20.0
Unit 694	346,505	60,373	17.4	52.2
Unit 936	698,753	675,658	96.7	3.6
Unit 988	96.638	23.150	24.0	18.2
Unit 1024	742,968	69,885	9.4	9.3
Unit 1049	833,403	30.079	3.6	8.5
Unit 2047	1,462	944	64.6	48.0
O1111 20-77	1,702	011		

- * (Shepherd 2006)
- ** (Shepherd et al. 2001)
- ^ Within the Intensive Landuse Zone

Methodology

References:

- Commonwealth of Australia (2001)
- EPA (2000)
- Shepherd et al. (2001)
- Shepherd (2006)

GIS Databases:

- EPA Position Paper No 2 Agriculture Region
- Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation of Australia
- SAC Bio Datasets (Accessed 15/05/2008)

(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

The Mortlock River North intersects the south west corner of "Jameson Farm" and Gratton Creek intersects the northern properties on the "Jameson Farm". Mortlock Creek and two un-named significant tributaries of the Mortlock River North also occur in the local area.

There are two major lakes in the local area. Lake Ninan and Lake Hinds occur ~1.5km west and ~14.9km north west of the properties under application. There is a further 20 non-perennial lakes in the local area ~2km west of the applied areas.

A further 11 non-perennial watercourses occur within the areas under application. Minor non-perennial watercourses are utilised for drainage flow during significant rainfall events, and thus are generally considered unlikely to contain wetland dependant vegetation.

There are areas of vegetation under application associated with the Mortlock River, Gratton Creek and other significant tributaries which are best described as Low Shrubland dominated by Samphire and Saltbush or Open Eucalypt Woodland over Samphire and Saltbush in degraded to good condition (DEC, 2008a). This vegetation may be considered fringing vegetation to the watercourses and therefore clearing in these areas for fence lines may be at variance to this Principle.

Methodology

References:

- DEC (2008a)

GIS Databases:

- Hydrography, linear
- Hydrography, linear (hierarchy)

(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 soils identified within the areas under application include hilly granitic and gneiss rocky outcrops with hard neutral and alkaline mottled yellow soils, gently sloping flanking ranges with neutral red earths, neutral loamy

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red earths and moderately undulating lands with loamy yellow earths and loamy duplex soils (Northcote et al. 1960-68). These soils generally have a high risk of water erosion.

The majority of the applied area is associated with a low risk of salinity with the exception of areas associated with drainage lines which have a higher risk of salinity. Given the vegetation under application is thin and linear with a total of 10ha over three large farming properties, it is not considered likely that the proposed clearing would have a significant impact on salinity in the local area.

The main land degradation risk associated with the removal of vegetation on the identified soil type is considered to be water erosion. However, given the extent of clearing in the local area for agriculture, it is considered unlikely that the proposed clearing will contribute to a significant increase in runoff and water erosion causing appreciable land degradation.

Methodology

References:

- Northcote et al. (1960-68)

GIS Databases:

- Salinity Risk LM 25m DOLA 00
- Soils, Statewide

(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 may be at variance to this Principle

There are numerous conservation reserves, being DEC managed lands, within 20km of the areas under application, including eleven 'A' Class Reserves and three 'C' Class Reserves.

The areas under application on "Rogers Farm" are adjacent to three 'A' Class Nature Reserves, Rogers Nature Reserve, Elphin Nature Reserve, Fowler Gully Nature Reserve and one un-named 'C' Class Nature Reserve. In addition, the eastern edge of "Rogers Farm" is adjacent to two large remnants known as Crown Reserve 18672 (>550ha) and Crown Reserve 16418 (>850ha). Although the areas under application are thin and linear in nature these areas may provide corridors for fauna movement between isolated remnants and Nature Reserves.

The areas that run parallel to Nature Reserves and Crown Reserves provide buffers to the actual reserves and limit the effects of weeds. The proposed clearing has the potential to indirectly impact the environmental values of the adjacent reserves through the spread or introduction of weed species and dieback by machinery. Given the long linear nature of the clearing it is considered that any localised incidence of dieback may be transferred along the length of the fence by the movement of machinery. This has the potential to spread dieback into unaffected areas, and then into the adjacent reserves. There are serious consequences associated with the spread of such diseases and exotic species into areas reserved for conservation, including the potential local extinction of species.

Given that the vegetation under application provides corridors for fauna movement between reserves and there is the potential for the proposed clearing to directly and indirectly impact the environmental values of the conservation reserves adjacent to the applied areas, it is considered the proposal may be at variance to this Principle. To prevent the adjacent conservation reserves from being impacted by the clearing, conditions will be placed on the permit to prevent the spread of weeds and dieback.

Methodology

GIS Databases:

- Cadastre
- CALM Managed Lands and Waters
- Clearing Regulations Environmentally Sensitive Areas
- System 1 to 5 and 7 to 12 Areas

(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

Groundwater salinity in the majority of the areas under application ranges from 14,000 - 35,000mg/L, the northern west extent of "Jameson Farm" has groundwater salinity >35,000mg/L. The areas under application are not located within a Public Drinking Water Source Area.

The Mortlock River North intersects the south west corner of "Jameson Farm" and Gratton Creek intersects the northern properties on the "Jameson Farm". Mortlock Creek and two un-named significant tributaries of the Mortlock River North also occur in the local area. A further 11 non-perennial watercourses occur within the areas under application. Minor non-perennial watercourses are utilised for drainage flow during significant rainfall events.

There are two major lakes in the local area. Lake Ninan and Lake Hinds occur ~1.5km west and ~14.9km north

west of the properties under application. There is a further 20 non-perennial lakes in the local area ~2km west of the applied areas.

Areas associated with these watercourses and lakes have a higher risk of salinity, however, given the extent of clearing in the local area for agriculture, and the thin, linear areas of vegetation under application the proposed clearing is not likely to significantly alter groundwater levels and have a significant affect on the salinity of these watercourses within the local area.

In addition, given the extent of clearing in the local area for agriculture, it is considered unlikely that the proposed clearing will contribute to a significant increase in nutrients, sediment and turbidity in the local waterways, and thus deterioration in surface or underground water quality.

Methodology

GIS Databases:

- Groundwater Salinity, Statewide
- Hydrography, linear
- Hydrography, linear (hierarchy)
- Public Drinking Water Source Areas (PDWSA)
- Salinity Risk LM 25m DOLA 00

(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 Mortlock River North intersects the south west corner of "Jameson Farm" and Gratton Creek intersects the northern properties on the "Jameson Farm". Mortlock Creek and two un-named significant tributaries of the Mortlock River North also occur in the local area. A further 11 non-perennial watercourses occur within the areas under application. Minor non-perennial watercourses are utilised for drainage flow during significant rainfall events.

Given the extent of clearing in the local area for agriculture, and the thin, linear areas of vegetation under application it is not considered likely that the proposed clearing would cause or exacerbate, the incidence or intensity of flooding.

Methodology

GIS Databases:

- Hydrography, linear
- Hydrography, linear (hierarchy)

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

Comments

There are two Aboriginal Sites of Significance listed within the areas under application, the applicant will be advised of their obligations under the Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972.

A submission received advised that:

- The Wongan Hills area is rich in biodiversity and the areas proposed to be cleared may contain rare flora.
- The wheatbelt region has less than 6% of remnant vegetation remaining and the Bush Care Group strongly opposes the unnecessary destruction of vegetation.
- Mallee Fowl are known from the area and the proposed clearing will impact on the habitat for this species.
- The area under application is adjacent to Rogers Nature Reserve and the Mt O'Brien Lookout, which have been promoted state wide as a tourism hotspot.
- The applicant should be encouraged to plant corridors of trees to enhance the survival of the Mallee Fowl.

Some of the vegetation under application occurs in adjacent conservation areas and road reserves. Authorisation from the relevant land owner would need to be obtained to remove any vegetation in these areas. The DEC regional office has advised that clearing of up to 1m in the adjacent Nature Reserves for fence lines is acceptable and consistent with the Department's Good Neighbour Policy (DEC, 2008c). Authorisation from the Shire of Wongan-Ballidu and the Shire of Goomalling to clear in the road reserves was provided on the 17 October 2008 (Jameson Farms, 2008).

The Shire of Wongan-Ballidu has no objection to the clearing of up to 1m within the road reserves and Crown Reserves vested within the Shire for the purpose of fence line maintenance subject to the following conditions:

- The land in question must physically abut the property boundary lines;
- Specific permission must be obtained from the Department Environment and Conservation for any land that contains identified species of Declared Rare flora;
- All care must be taken to avoid the disturbance of fauna habitat;
- All care must be taken to avoid any disturbance that may lead to soil degradation.

Methodology

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

- DEC (2008c)
- Jameson Farms (2008)

- Wongan-Ballidu Bush Care Group (2008)

GIS Databases:

- Aboriginal Sites of Significance
- Native Title Claims

4. Assessor's comments

Comment

The assessable criteria have been addressed and the clearing as proposed is at variance to Principles (a), (c) and (e) and may be at variance to Principles (b), (f) and (h).

5. References

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

DEC (2008a) Site Inspection Report for Clearing Permit Application CPS 2418/1, various properties owned by Jameson Farms in the Shire of Wongan-Ballidu. Site inspection undertaken 11/06/2008. Department of Environment and Conservation, Western Australia (TRIM Ref. DOC57737)

DEC (2008b) Advice received from the Regional Office 30/06/2008. (TRIM Ref: DOC57634)

DEC (2008c) Advice received from the Regional Office 04/08/2008. (TRIM Ref: DOC59559)

EPA (2000) Environmental protection of native vegetation in Western Australia. Clearing of native vegetation, with particular reference to the agricultural area. Position Statement No. 2. December 2000. Environmental Protection Authority, Western Australia.

Jameson Farm (2008) Authorisation from the Shire of Wongan-Ballidu and the Shire of Goomalling; Jameson Farms Pty Ltd.
TRIM Ref DOC65935

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.

Shepherd, D.P. (2007). Adapted from: Shepherd, D.P., Beeston, G.R., and Hopkins, A.J.M. (2001), Native Vegetation in Western Australia. Technical Report 249. Department of Agriculture Western Australia, South Perth. Includes subsequent updates for 2006 from Vegetation Extent dataset ANZWA1050000124.

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.

Wongan-Ballidu Bush Care Group (2008). Submission letter 17/04/2008. (TRIM Ref: DOC49487)

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)