



## 1. Application details

### 1.1. Permit application details

Permit application No.: 261/1  
Permit type: Area Permit

### 1.2. Proponent details

Proponent's name: Hamersley Iron Pty Ltd

### 1.3. Property details

Property: AML70/246  
AML70/4  
AG70/14  
L47/130  
AG70/4

Colloquial name: Paraburdoo Gas Pipeline

### 1.4. Application

Clearing Area (ha)	No. Trees	Method of Clearing	For the purpose of:
45		Mechanical Removal	Mining

## 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
Vegetation Association # 82 - Hummock grasslands, low tree steppe; snappy gum over <i>Triodia wiseana</i> (Shepherd et al., 2001).	The vegetation of the site comprises lower storey native species, spanning five different types of vegetation of hummock grasslands and shrublands.	Very Good: Vegetation structure altered; obvious signs of disturbance (Keighery 1994)	The proposal area is within a mining lease area, so is either currently subject to or surrounded by significant disturbance. The project area is a long, narrow section of the land being only 45ha, and the flora found within the area are generally wide spread within the surrounding local area and hold no particular local or regional significance.
Vegetation Association # 162 - Shrublands; snakewood scrub (Shepherd et al., 2001).			
Vegetation Association # 163 - Shrublands; eremophila and cassia dwarf scrub (Shepherd et al., 2001).			
Vegetation Association # 181 - Shrublands; mulga & snakewood scrub (Shepherd et al., 2001).			
Vegetation Association # 567 - Hummock grasslands, shrub steppe; mulga & kanji over soft spinifex & <i>T. basedowii</i> (Shepherd et al., 2001).			

## 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 vegetation of the site retains mixed hummock grasslands and shrublands, which are well represented in the area surrounding the project area. The area is unlikely to represent an area of outstanding biological diversity.

**Methodology** GIS Database: Pre-European Vegetation - DA 01/1

**(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**

Hummock grasslands and shrublands may provide some habitat for fauna species, however the application area is a long, narrow strip thus only removing a small amount of each of five different vegetation associations (Shepherd et al., 2001). The vegetation to be cleared will be slashed, and be reused with any removed topsoil in the rehabilitation process.

**Methodology** Shepherd et al., 2001;  
GIS Database: Pre-European Vegetation - DA 01/01

**(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**

There are no known Declared Rare and Priority Species within the area proposed for clearing.

**Methodology** GIS Database: Declared Rare and Priority Flora List - CALM 13/08/04

**(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**

There are no known Threatened Ecological Communities within the area proposed for clearing.

**Methodology** GIS Database: Threatened Ecological Communities - CALM 15/07/03

**(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 vegetation under application consists of five different Associations. These are Beard Vegetation Association numbers 82, 162, 163, 181 and 567 (Hopkins et al., 2001). There is ~100% of the pre-European extent of all five Beard Vegetation Associations remaining (Shepherd et al., 2001).

**Methodology** Hopkins et al., 2001;  
Shepherd et al., 2001;  
GIS Database: Pre-European Extent - DA 01/01

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

The vegetation to be cleared is not associated with a wetland or watercourse.

**Methodology** GIS Database: Hydrology, linear - DOE 1/2/04;  
GIS Database: RAMSAR, Wetlands - CALM 21/10/02

**(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**

From the information provided, the likely land degradation risks posed by the clearing of vegetation are minimal.

**Methodology** Permit application

**(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 project area is not adjacent to any existing or proposed conservation areas.

**Methodology** 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**

It is unlikely that the vegetation clearing will have a significant impact on ground or surface water quality.

**Methodology** GIS Database: Hydrography, linear - DOE 1/2/04;  
GIS Database: Groundwater Subareas - WRC 10/10/00;  
GIS Database: RIWI Act, Surface Water Areas – WRC 18/10/02

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

Flooding impacts are unlikely to occur as a result of the proposed clearing due to its location and rainfall levels in the area. The region within which the project area is located receives an average annual rainfall of 300mm. The elevation of the area is gradually sloping, ranging from 320m to 480m. It is considered that the removal of vegetation would have no impact on peak flood height or duration.

**Methodology** GIS Database: Rainfall, Mean Annual - BOM 30/09/01;  
GIS Database: Topographic Contours, Statewide - DOLA 12/09/02

**Planning instrument or other matter.**

**Comments** The Shire of Ashburton has raised no objections to the proposed clearing.

The pipeline project was referred to the Environmental Protection Authority on 26/5/04. The Environmental Protection Authority set the level of assessment as 'Not Assessed - Public Advice Given' on 12/7/04.

The Pilbara Native Title Service raised concerns that the clearing of significant areas of vegetation may be a matter which affects native title, through the future act processes of the Native Title Act 1993.

**Methodology** Shire of Ashburton Submission (2004);  
Environmental Protection Authority (2004);  
Pilbara Native Title Service Submission (2004)

**4. Assessor's recommendations**

Purpose	Method	Applied area (ha)/ trees	Decision	Comment / recommendation
Mining	Mechanical Removal	45	Grant	Assessable criteria have been addressed and no objections were raised. The assessing officer therefore recommends that the permit should be granted.  The concern of the Pilbara Native Title Service is clarified by advice received from the State Solicitor's Office that indicate the granting of the permit would not be invalidated by the Native Title Act 1993.

**5. References**

- Environmental Protection Authority (12 July 2004) Customer Reference Number 206754.  
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.