Department of Environment
Government of Western Australia

Clearing Permit Decision Report

1. Application details

1.1. Permit application details

Permit application No.: 315/1
Permit type: Area Permit

1.2. Proponent details

Proponent's name: **MR Paul Camerer**

1.3. Property details

Property:
LOT 2464 ON PLAN 248470 (MINNENOOKA 6532)
LOT 31 ON PLAN 15983 (MINNENOOKA 6532)
PART LOT 2293 ON PLAN 216253 (SANDSPRINGS 6532)
LOT 528 ON PLAN 231874 (SANDSPRINGS 6532)
LOT 1293 ON PLAN 231874 (MINNENOOKA 6532)
LOT 524 ON PLAN 231874 (MINNENOOKA 6532)
LOT 27 ON PLAN 11648 (Lot No. 34 MINNENOOKA MINNENOOKA 6532)
LOT 1396 ON PLAN 247715 (MINNENOOKA 6532)
LOT 28 ON DIAGRAM 57212 (Lot No. 28 MINNENOOKA MINNENOOKA 6532)

Local Government Area: Shire Of Greenough
Colloquial name:

1.4. Application

Clearing Area (ha)	No. Trees	Method of Clearing	For the purpose of:
10		Mechanical Removal	Fence Line Maintenance

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 35: Shrublands; jam scrub scattered with York gum (Hopkins et al. 2001, Shepherd et al. 2001).	The area proposed to be cleared is sparsely vegetated with some Acacia and Eucalyptus species remaining. Understorey has been replaced with weed species including Wild Oats and Patterson's Curse (Site visit DOE Officer).	Degraded: Structure severely disturbed; regeneration to good condition requires intensive management (Keighery 1994)	Observed during site visit: no native understorey remains and the area is littered with dead trees and weed species. Heavy grazing since the 1850s has left only sparse populations of Acacia and Eucalyptus.

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**
The area under application has historically been used for grazing since the 1850s. No native understorey remains and the area is littered with dead trees and weed species. Only sparse populations of Acacia and Eucalyptus remain.

Methodology Site visit DoE Officer December 2004.

(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 intensive grazing of the area under application suggested that the area does not represent a suitable habitat for significant fauna.

Methodology Site visit DoE Officer December 2004.

(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 area under application has historically been used for grazing since the 1850s. No native understorey remains and the area is littered with dead trees and weed species. Only sparse populations of Acacia and Eucalyptus remain. GIS databases indicate that Leucopogon marginatus (extant taxa), Acacia megacephala (Priority 2 species), Wurmbea tubulosa (Priority 2 species), Grevillea bracteosa (Priority 2 species) and Grevillea fililoba (Priority 1 species) have been known to occur within a 10km radius. However, given the condition of the vegetation under application, it is unlikely to support significant flora.

Methodology

GIS Databases: Declared Rare and Priority Flora list - CALM 13/08/03.
Site visit DoE Officer December 2004

(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 at variance to this Principle

There are no records of Threatened Ecological Communities in the vicinity of the area under application.

Methodology

GIS Databases: 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 at variance to this Principle

The State Government is committed to the National Objectives Targets for Biodiversity Conservation 2001-2005 (AGPS 2001) which includes a target that prevent clearance of ecological communities with an extent below 30% of that present pre-1750 (Department of Natural Resources and Environment 2002; EPA 2000). Beyond this value, species extinction is believed to occur at an exponential rate and any further clearing may have irreversible consequences for the conservation of biodiversity and is, therefore, not supported.

There is less than 30% of pre-European vegetation remaining in the Geraldton Sandplains Bioregion, the Shire of Greenough and the Beard vegetation association 34. However, it is noted that the quality of the vegetation under application is severely compromised and not representative of the vegetation as identified pre 1750.

To counter the extensive clearing that has already occurred, the proponent has fenced off an elevated area of vegetation on the property. This area has minimal weed invasion and may contain significant flora and fauna.

Pre-European	Current area (ha)	Remaining extent (ha)	Conservation %*	Reserves/CALM-status**	managed land, %
IBRA Bioregion - Geraldton Sandplains	2,474,401	663,290	26.8	Vulnerable	Unavailable
Shire - Greenough	177,404	26,612	15.0	Vulnerable	Unavailable
Beard veg type - 35	213,685	21,972	10.3	Vulnerable	2.3

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

Methodology

GIS Databases: Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation of Australia - EA 18/10/00, Pre-European Vegetation - DA 01/01, Local Government Authorities - DLI 08/07/04.

(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

The area proposed to be cleared contains a number of indefinite watercourses that would not represent ecosystems of significant environmental value.

Methodology

GIS Databases: Hydrography, linear - DoE 01/02/04

(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

No information was available to make an adequate assessment of this Principle. However, given the linear shape of the areas under application, it is not likely that the clearing as proposed, will cause appreciable land degradation.

Methodology

(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 at variance to this Principle

No conservation areas have been identified near the proposal.

Methodology GIS Databases - CALM Regional Parks - CALM 12/04/02, WRC Estate - WRC 05/99, CALM Managed Lands & Waters - CALM 01/06/04, Proposed National Parks FMP-CALM 19/03/03, Register of National Estate - EA 28/01/03

(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 at variance to this Principle

Proposed clearing is not expected to impact on groundwater tables. The areas under application are not in a Pulic Drinking Water Source Area.

Methodology GIS Databases - Current WIN data sets, PWDSA data sets and Public Drinking Water Source Areas (PWDSAs) - DoE 01/06/04

(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

The relatively small area of clearing would suggest that the impact would be minimal and therefore not at variance to this Principle.

Methodology Assessment in relation to shape and size of areas under application.

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

Comments

The Greenough Shire Council have not indicated that there are any planning requirements/approvals that would affect the clearing.

Methodology

4. Assessor's recommendations

Purpose	Method	Applied area (ha)/ trees	Decision	Comment / recommendation
Fence Line Maintenance	Mechanical Removal	10	**Grant**	The assessable criteria have been addressed and may be at variance with Principle e). Given the degraded nature of the vegetation and the relatively small area under application , the assessing officer recommends that the permit should be granted, subject to the following advice: The proponent shall manage weeds in the fenced off area (31 hectares) on Lot 27 on Plan 11648 to ensure that the nature and density of weeds does not increase.

5. References

AGPS (2001) The national objective and targets for biodiversity conservation 2001-2005. Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra.

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.

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.

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.