



1. Application details

1.1. Permit application details

Permit application No.: 412/1

Permit type: Area Permit

1.2. Proponent details

Proponent's name: Paddington Gold Pty Ltd

1.3. Property details

Property: M24/29

Local Government Area: City Of Kalgoorlie/Boulder

Colloquial name: Ora Banda Mining Area

1.4. Application

| Clearing Area (ha) | No. Trees | Method of Clearing | For the purpose of: |
|--------------------|-----------|--------------------|---------------------|
| 10 | | 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 |
|--|--|--|---|
| Beard vegetation association 2901 - Mosaic; Medium woodland; Allocasuarina cristata and Goldfield blackbutt / shrublands; Acacia quadrimarginea thicket (Shepherd et al 2001, Hopkins et al 2001). | A flora study was provided by the proponent which covered 14ha and included the 10ha under application. There are three distinct vegetation units on the site. The first unit covers about 2.5ha of the northern section of the study area. This unit is characterised by an upper story of Eucalypts (<i>E. transcontinentalis</i> , <i>E. salmonophloia</i>). A middle to upper storey of <i>E. celastroides</i> , <i>E. salubris</i> growing along an old shallow creek line. A pocket of <i>Casuarina pauper</i> is present. There is a sparse middle story of <i>Acacias</i> , <i>Eremophilas</i> , <i>Dodonaeas</i> and <i>Atriplex nummularia</i> . The second unit covers about 3ha of the southern section of the study area. The unit is situated along a rocky slope with very little topsoil present. It is characterised by an upper story of <i>E. clelandii</i> , <i>E. celastroides</i> , <i>E. griffithsii</i> and <i>E. transcontinentalis</i> with <i>Casuarina pauper</i> also present. There is a middle story of <i>Acacias</i> (<i>acuminatum</i> , <i>hemiteles</i> , <i>tetragonophylla</i>), <i>Eremophilas</i> (<i>oldfieldii</i> , <i>latrobei</i> , <i>scorparia</i>), <i>Dodonea lobulata</i> , <i>Scaevola spinescens</i> and <i>Exocarpus aphyllus</i> . The lower story consists of the <i>Chenopods</i> (<i>atriplex</i> , <i>maireana</i> , <i>sclerolaena</i>) with <i>Ptilotus obovatus</i> . The third unit covers about 8.5ha of the middle section of the study area. It is growing on a hardpan like surface with shallow soils. The upper story has <i>Eucalypts</i> (<i>cleandii</i> , <i>transcontinentalis</i>) which are restricted to a few individual specimens. The middle story consists of <i>Acacias</i> (<i>acuminatum</i> , <i>hemiteles</i> , <i>erinaceae</i> , <i>tetragonophylla</i>), <i>Eremophilas</i> (<i>granitica</i> , <i>latrobei</i> , <i>oldfieldii</i>) and <i>Grevillea berryanna</i> . There is a sparse lower story of <i>Chenopods</i> (<i>atriplex</i> , <i>maireana</i> , <i>sclerolaena</i>) with <i>Ptilotus obovatus</i> (Mine Site Rehabilitation Services 2005, TRIM ref ND724). | Excellent: Vegetation structure intact; disturbance affecting individual species, weeds non-aggressive (Keighery 1994) | The proponents intend to rehabilitate the area (except for any pits). |

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**
 A survey carried out by Minesite Rehabilitation Services (2005, TRIM ref ND724) reported that there were 60 species of flora identified in the 10ha area proposed to be cleared. The area is typical of Goldfields Eucalypt woodlands and does not have high biodiversity values. Therefore the proposal is not likely to be at variance to this Clearing Principle.

Methodology Minesite Rehabilitation Services (2005) (TRIM ref ND724)

(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 vegetation is typical of the Goldfield's woodlands. Given the intactness of the vegetation in the region and local area, the small area to be cleared, and the rehabilitation to be undertaken to most of the area (except the pits), it is not likely that the clearing will be at variance with this Clearing Principle. In addition, Placer Dome has listed procedures for minimising the impact of clearing on fauna in its draft management plan.

Methodology Placer Dome (TRIM ref AD160)

(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**
 A flora and vegetation survey carried out for the area indicates that there is no significant flora likely to be affected by the clearing. The proposal is not likely to be at variance to this Clearing Principle.

Methodology Minesite Rehabilitation Services (2005) (TRIM ref ND724)

(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**
 A flora and vegetation survey of the area does not indicate that there are any significant ecological communities likely to be affected by the clearing. There are no known Threatened Ecological Communities occurring in the local area (50 km radius). The proposal is not at variance with this Clearing Principle.

Methodology Minesite Rehabilitation Services (2005) (TRIM Ref ND724)
 GIS Databases:
 Threatened Ecological Communities - CALM 15/7/03

(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 at variance to this Principle**
 The area under application consists of the Beard vegetation association 2901 which has approximately 100% of the original extent remaining (Shepherd et al 2001). This is above the 30% threshold recommended in the National Objectives Targets for Biodiversity Conservation committed to by the State Government (Department of Natural Resources and Environment 2002). Therefore the clearing is not at variance with this Principle.

| | Pre-European area (ha) | Current extent (ha) | Remaining %* | Conservation status** | % in reserves/CALM-managed land |
|-------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|--------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------|
| IBRA Bioregion-Coolgardie | 12,917,718 | 12,719,084 | 98.5 | Least concern | |
| City of Kalgoorlie/Boulder | | | | Least concern | |
| Beard vegetation association: | | | | | |
| 2901 | 36,103 | 36,103 | 100 | Least concern | 0.0*** |

* Shepherd et al. (2001)

** Department of Natural Resources and Environment (2002)

*** The benchmark of 15% representation in conservation reserves (JANIS, 1997) has not been met for vegetation association 2901

Methodology Shepherd et al. (2001)
 Department of Natural Resources and Environment (2002)
 JANIS (1997)

(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 area contains a minor non-perennial water course that is part of an internally draining system (DoE 2004) and lies within the Salt Lake Basin (DoE 2003). There are no major drainage channels running through the area. The proponent proposes to follow its Exploration Management Plan (TRIM ref AD160) to mitigate impacts of clearing (e.g. minimisation of clearing, avoidance of watercourses and slopes). Given the 10 ha of proposed clearing, adherence to the Exploration Management Plan and subsequent rehabilitation, the proposed clearing is not likely to be at variance to this Principle.

Methodology Placer Dome correspondence TRIM ref AD156, AD160.
GIS datasets:
Hydrographic, linear DoE 1/2/2004
Hydrographic catchments DoE 23/3/05

(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 proposed clearing of 10 hectares for mining purposes is not liable to cause appreciable on and off site land degradation, provided the soil erosion risk is managed through sound surface water management, rehabilitation and maximising retention of vegetative cover. The proponent proposes to follow its Exploration Management Plan (TRIM ref AD160) to mitigate impacts of clearing. The proposed clearing is not likely to be at variance with this Principle.

Methodology Placer Dome correspondence TRIM ref AD156, AD160

(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 clearing associated with this project is unlikely to impact on the environmental values of the conservation areas. The area to be cleared is 19km east of Rowles Lagoon Conservation Reserve and Clear and Muddy Lakes Nature Reserve.

Methodology GIS dataset: CALM managed lands and waters, 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

There are no proclaimed, gazetted or declared water resources in the area. Ground water in the area is hypersaline with salinity of approximately 200,000mg/l TDS (TRIM ref AD159). The local water table is between 6 and 50m below the ground surface. Placer Dome has committed to prevent or reduce impacts by following procedures outlined in its Exploration Drilling: Clearing Management Plan (TRIM ref AD160) to manage drainage and water quality issues. The proposal is not likely to be at variance with this Clearing Principle as impacts are likely to be low.

Methodology Placer Dome correspondence TRIM ref AD156, AD160

(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

The area is not prone to flooding under normal climatic conditions. The applicant has committed to adhere to its Exploration Drilling: Clearing Management Plan which seeks to manage surface drainage so that surface water flows/flooding are unlikely to be different as a result of vegetation clearing. Therefore this proposal is not likely to be at variance with this Clearing Principle.

Methodology Placer Dome correspondence TRIM ref AD156, AD160

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

Comments

There is a Native Title Claim over the area under application by the Central West Goldfields, Maduwongga and Widgi peoples. However mining tenements for purposes consistent with the clearing have been granted and the clearing will be for purposes consistent with the granted leases, so therefore the granting of a clearing permit is not a future act under the Native Title Act.

Methodology

4. Assessor's recommendations

| Purpose | Method | Applied area (ha)/ trees | Decision | Comment / recommendation |
|---------|--------------------|--------------------------|----------|---|
| Mining | Mechanical Removal | 10 | Grant | It is recommended that the Area Permit for clearing of native vegetation be granted (subject to conditions) as the proposal is either not at variance or not likely to be at variance to the Clearing Principles. Conditions relate to reporting on clearing carried out and will be supplied to the Department of Environment when clearing has been completed or permit has expired. |

5. References

- 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.
- 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.
- JANIS Forests Criteria (1997) Nationally agreed criteria for the establishment of a comprehensive, Adequate and Representative reserve System for Forests in Australia. A report by the Joint ANZECC/MCFFA National Forest Policy Statement Implementation Sub-committee. Regional Forests Agreement process. Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra.
- Keighery, BJ (1994) Bushland Plant Survey: A Guide to Plant Community Survey for the Community. Wildflower Society of WA (Inc). Nedlands, Western Australia.
- Minesite Rehabilitation Services (2005) Flora Study for Proposed Clearing Ora Banda, Mining Lease M24/29. Prepared by Minesite Rehabilitation Services for Placer Dome Asia Pacific.
- 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.