



1. Application details

1.1. Permit application details

Permit application No.: 417/1
Permit type: Area Permit

1.2. Proponent details

Proponent's name: **W.M.C. Resources Limited**

1.3. Property details

Property: ML15/149
Local Government Area: Shire Of Coolgardie
Colloquial name: Kalgoorlie Nickel Smelter

1.4. Application

Clearing Area (ha)	No. Trees	Method of Clearing	For the purpose of:
2		Mechanical Removal	Mineral Production

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 Associations 9 - Medium woodland; coral gum (<i>E. torquata</i>) and Goldfields blackbutt (<i>E. lesouefii</i>) (Shepherd et al 2001, Hopkins et al 2001).	The area under application consists of 2ha of native vegetation for the extension of a Run of Mine (ROM) Pad. It is located adjacent to the existing ROM Pad and includes vegetation that is degraded due to previous land uses.	Good: Structure significantly altered by multiple disturbance; retains basic structure/ability to regenerate (Keighery 1994)	Condition information was provided by the applicant and checked using air photos (Air photo Sept 2004 TRIM ref AI766).

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 area under application consists of 2 ha of native vegetation adjacent to a currently operational Run of Mine (ROM) Pad. The clearing as proposed is to extend this ROM Pad.

The area in which the mine is located has a history of disturbance from previous timber cutting for mining and other mining activities. In addition the vegetation association within the area under application (Beard Vegetation Association 9) is well represented with 99% remaining (Shepherd et al 2001, Hopkins et al 2001).

Given the above, it is considered unlikely that the small, previously disturbed area under application is of greater biodiversity value than the surrounding less disturbed areas.

Methodology Information provided by the proponent (DoE Trim Ref AI766)
Shepherd et al (2001)
Hopkins et al (2001)

(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**
A fauna survey of the Kambalda Nickel Leases was conducted by Ninox in 1995. This survey only recorded one species of conservation significance as occurring within the mining leases, the Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*). Given that the clearing as proposed is adjacent to an area that has previously been cleared and contains existing infrastructure, the small size of the proposed clearing and the nomadic nature of most desert specialist species including the Peregrine Falcon, it is unlikely that the clearing as proposed would have a significant impact on endemic fauna in the area.

Methodology Information provided by the proponent (DoE Trim Ref AI766)

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

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

There are no Declared Rare Flora (DRF) species within 50km of the proposed clearing. The nearest recording of a DRF occurring is approximately 76km from the area under application.

Methodology GIS Databases:
Declared Rare and Priority Flora List - CALM 13/08/03

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

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

There are no Threatened Ecological Communities (TECs) within 50km of the proposed clearing. The nearest recording of a TEC occurring is approximately 96km from the area under application.

Methodology GIS Databases
Threatened Ecological Communities- CALM 15/7/2003

(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 within the area under application consists of Beard Vegetation Association 9 (Shepherd et al 2001, Hopkins et al 2001). This vegetation association has approximately 99.7% or 250,183 ha of its pre-European extent remaining (Shepherd et al 2001, Hopkins et al 2001).

The State Government is committed to the National Objectives and Targets for Biodiversity Conservation which prevents clearance of ecological communities with an extent below 30% of that present pre-European (Department of Natural Resources and Environment 2002, EPA 2000). In relation to this application, the vegetation association representation is substantially above this 30% target (Shepherd et al 2001, Hopkins et al 2001).

Methodology Shepherd et al (2001)
Hopkins et al (2001)
Department of Natural Resources and Environment (2002)
EPA (2000)

(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

There are no wetlands or watercourses within the area under application. The vegetation under application is not considered to be an environment associated with a wetland or watercourse.

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

Given the small size of the area under application, it is unlikely that the clearing as proposed would cause appreciable on or off site land degradation. The proponent has outlined surface water management strategies for the mining enterprise that includes an extensive drain network which would help to mitigate any water erosion risks.

Methodology Information provided by the proponent (DoE Trim Ref A1766)
GIS Databases:
Hydrography, linear - 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 Kambalda Nature Reserve is located 7km from the area under application. However, the large distance between the area under application and the conservation reserve, in addition to the small size of proposed clearing makes it unlikely to have a significant effect on the conservation reserve.

Methodology GIS Databases:
CALM Managed Lands and Waters - CALM 01/08/04

(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**

The area around the site under application contains a ROM Pad, roadways and a network of stormwater drains. The drains direct water to a holding pond where the stormwater is harvested and used within the processing plant. The area to be cleared will be incorporated into the existing drainage network.

The operation is close to Lake Lefroy which is a large salt lake with all natural drainage lines in the area flowing into this lake. The removal of 2ha of vegetation as proposed is unlikely to impact on the surface water quality of this lake, as the drain network will manage any excess surface water.

In addition, the groundwater within the area under application is hypersaline (>35,000mg/L).

Therefore it is considered that the clearing as proposed is unlikely to impact on surface and groundwater quality.

Methodology Information provided by the proponent (DoE Trim Ref AI766)
GIS Databases:
Hydrography, Linear - DOE 01/02/04
Groundwater Salinity, Statewide - 22/02/00

(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 area under application is not prone to flooding under normal climatic conditions given the low annual rainfall (300mm). The proponent has provided information outlining how they intend to manage surface water run-off including a network of drainage systems that would divert flow in stormwater drainage ponds. It is considered that given the above and the small area under application, that the clearing as proposed is unlikely to be at variance to this Principle.

Methodology Information provided by the proponent (DoE Trim Ref AI766)
GIS Databases:
Rainfall, Mean Annual - BOM 30/09/01

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

Comments

There is a Native Title Claim over the area under application by the Widji people. 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.

The Department of Industry and Resources have no objection to the proposal.

There is no other RIWI Act Licence, Works Approval or EP Act Licence that will affect the area that has been applied to clear.

Methodology DOIR (2005) (DoE TRIM Ref NI 994).

4. Assessor's recommendations

Purpose	Method	Applied area (ha)/ trees	Decision	Comment / recommendation
Mineral Production	Mechanical Removal	2	Grant	The application has been assessed and the clearing as proposed is not likely to be at variance to any of the Clearing Principles. Therefore, the assessing officer recommends that this permit be granted.

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.
- 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.

6. Glossary

Term	Meaning
CALM	Department of Conservation and Land Management
DAWA	Department of Agriculture
DEP	Department of Environmental Protection (now DoE)
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 DoE)