



9 August 2013

Dear Sir/Madam

MAIN ROADS WA - GASCOYNE REGION: APPLICATION FOR A PURPOSE PERMIT TO CLEAR NATIVE VEGETATION (FORM C2)

Main Roads WA - Gascoyne Region is proposing to widen the road formation along the entire length of North West Coastal Highway, SLK 620.5 – 767.44 (Minilya-Exmouth Road to Yannarie River Bridge). The objective of this project is to provide a safer trafficable surface for the road users especially road trains and to make the road a more consistent width.

The North West Coastal Highway (H007) provides connection between Geraldton and Carnarvon to Karratha, Exmouth and Port Hedland. The road primarily services pastoral, mining and tourist activities as well as community access.

As a result of the increasing commercial growth throughout the region and the associated rise in traffic volumes, it is now essential that the North West Coastal Highway be improved. The primary concern is the narrow seal which contributes to the increase in risk of accidents occurring due to the interactions between higher speed passenger vehicles and slower moving road users like road trains and tourist traffic.

Main Roads also intends to establish new material sites outside the road reserve for use in this project for which digital maps and shape files have been included with this application.

The Biological Survey conducted on the proposed materials and project areas by GHD in the Spring of 2012 identified the following:

- The Southern Section of the Project Widening Area occurs in a buffer area of the Priority 4 PEC. The PEC forms a part of the Carnarvon Basin (CB) buffers including CB 76, CB 77, CB78 and CB 79. This PEC covers the invertebrate assemblages on Lake MacLeod. Lake MacLeod is located 19 km to the west of the Project Area. The Biological survey has found Lake MacLeod and the associated PEC will not be impacted by the proposed works;
- A total of two Priority Flora taxa were recorded from the Project Area during the field survey. They include:
 - *Acacia startii* Priority 3; and
 - *Eremophila youngii* subsp, *lepidota* Priority 4;

- Vegetation Associations 11, 95, 98, 264, 307, 1162, 1322, 1601 & 2675. (**Refer Table 1.**) All of these are categorised as 'Least Concern'.

While assessing the 10 clearing principles GHD found that the proposed works may be at variance with principle a), due to a small proportion of the 1200+ plants located within the project area that are priority species potentially being impacted (**Refer Table 2 & Figure 3c - Sheets 3, 4, 6, 10, 13 & 15 – GHD Biological Survey, North West Coastal Highway SLK620.5-767, April 2013**).

The priority species that may be impacted will be associated with road construction.

There will be approximately 649Ha clearing for materials required. This will be Temporary Clearing over a four to five year period (approximately 130Ha/year) for which a revegetation plan will be produced.

There will be approximately 163Ha of project related Permanent Clearing which will include the reinstatement of the maintenance zone.

Potential Offset areas have already been identified including the rehabilitation of old disused material pits and can be conducted as a method to negate the effects of this clearing.

Table 1:**Beard Vegetation Associations within the Project Area**

11	Medium woodland; coolabah (<i>Eucalyptus microtheca</i>) - Northern Section – 99.92% State Wide.
95	Hummock grasslands, shrub steppe; acacia & grevillea over <i>Triodia basedowii</i> - Middle & Southern Sections – 99.92% State Wide.
98	Hummock grasslands, shrub steppe; kanji over soft spinifex & <i>Triodia basedowii</i> - Northern & Middle Section, Material Pit SLK 770 – 99.99% State Wide.
1162	Hummock grasslands, grass steppe; hard spinifex <i>Triodia wiseana</i> & <i>t. basedowii</i> – Material Pit SLK 808 – 99.97% State Wide
264	Low woodland; <i>Acacia victoriae</i> & snake wood - Southern Section – 100.00% State Wide.
307	Low woodland; bowgada & <i>Acacia subtressarogona</i> - Middle Section – 100.00% State Wide.
1322	Shrublands; <i>Acacia sclerosperma</i> , <i>A. victoriae</i> & snake wood scrub - Middle Section – 100.00% State Wide.
1601	Mosaic: Shrublands; snake wood & <i>A. Victoria</i> scrub/ Hummock grasslands; grass steppe, hard spinifex, <i>Triodia basedowii</i> - Northern Section & Material Pit SLK 770 – 100.00% State Wide.
2675	Hummock grasslands, low tree & shrub steppe; scattered eucalypts, kanji over <i>Triodia pungens</i> & <i>T. basedowii</i> - Northern Section, Material Pit SLK 740, SLK 743(1) & SLK 743(2) – 100.00% State Wide.

Table 2:

Species	Total Plant Count	Most Likely Impacted	Possibly Impacted	% Most Likely Impacted	% Possibly Impacted
<i>Acacia startii</i> (Priority 3)	952+	9	10	<0.95%	<1.05%
<i>Eremophila youngii</i> subsp. <i>lepidota</i> (Priority 4)	213+	5	26	<2.23%	<12.21%
