



CLEARING PERMIT

Granted under section 51E of the Environmental Protection Act 1986

Purpose Permit number:	CPS 5823/1
Permit Holder:	Atlas Iron Limited
Duration of Permit:	21 December 2013 – 21 December 2018

The Permit Holder is authorised to clear native vegetation subject to the following conditions of this Permit.

- 1. Purpose for which clearing may be done**
Clearing for the purpose of an intersection upgrade, including an acceleration and deceleration lane.
- 2. Land on which clearing is to be done**
Lot 332 on Deposited Plan 217385, Indee (Great Northern Highway)
- 3. Area of Clearing**
The Permit Holder must not clear more than 10 hectares of native vegetation within the area cross hatched yellow on attached Plan 5823/1.
- 4. Application**
This Permit allows the Permit Holder to authorise persons, including employees, contractors and agents of the Permit Holder, to clear native vegetation for the purposes of this Permit subject to compliance with the conditions of this Permit and approval from the Permit Holder.

M Warnock
MANAGER
NATIVE VEGETATION CONSERVATION BRANCH

*Officer delegated under Section 20
of the Environmental Protection Act 1986*

21 November 2013

Plan 5823/1



LEGEND

- Road Centrelines
- Clearing Instruments
- Areas Approved to Clear
- Cadastre

- Local Government Authorities

Western Australia Landsat
Mosaic 25m - AGO 2006



Scale 1:25532

(Approximate when reproduced at A4)

Geocentric Datum Australia 1994

Note: the data in this map have not been projected. This may result in geometric distortion or measurement inaccuracies.

M Warnock Date 21/11/13

M Warnock

Officer with delegated authority under Section 20 of the Environmental Protection Act 1986

Information derived from this map should be confirmed with the data custodian acknowledged by the agency acronym in the legend.



Government of Western Australia
Department of Environment Regulation

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* Project Data is denoted by asterisk. This data has not been quality assured. Please contact map author for details.



Clearing Permit Decision Report

1. Application details

1.1. Permit application details

Permit application No.: 5823/1
Permit type: Purpose Permit

1.2. Proponent details

Proponent's name: Atlas Iron Limited

1.3. Property details

Property: LOT 332 ON PLAN 217385 (INDEE 6721)
Local Government Area: Town of Port Hedland
Colloquial name:

1.4. Application

Clearing Area (ha)	No. Trees	Method of Clearing	For the purpose of:
10		Mechanical Removal	Road construction or maintenance

1.5. Decision on application

Decision on Permit Application: Grant
Decision Date: 21 November 2013

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 93: Hummock grasslands, shrub steppe; kanji over soft spinifex (Shepherd et al, 2001).	Clearing 10 hectares of native vegetation within Lot 332 on Deposited Plan 217385, Indee, Town of Port Hedland for the purpose of an intersection upgrade.	Very Good: Vegetation structure altered; obvious signs of disturbance (Keighery 1994). To Excellent: Vegetation structure intact; disturbance affecting individual species, weeds non-aggressive (Keighery 1994)	The area under application is a mid to open sparse shrubland of mixed Acacia species including A. inaequilatera, A. colei var. colei and A. ancistrocarpa over low open shrubland dominated by Acacia stellaticeps over low hummock grassland dominated by Triodia epactia and/or T. lanigera on red sandy loams on lower slopes, flats and plains (Woodman, 2011) The vegetation under application is considered to be in a very good to excellent (Keighery, 1994) condition (Woodman, 2011). The structure and condition of the vegetation under application was obtained from a Flora and Vegetation Assessment undertaken by Woodman Environmental Consulting Pty Ltd, 2011.

3. Assessment of application against clearing principles

Comments

The application is to clear 10 hectares of native vegetation over a linear distance of 1.8 kilometres approximately 65 kilometres south of the town site of Port Hedland.

The vegetation under application is in a very good to excellent (Keighery, 2013) condition (Woodman, 2013).

One priority flora species has been recorded with 20 kilometres of the area under application, mapped approximately 14 kilometres away from the proposed clearing area. There has been no rare flora recorded within 20 kilometres of the area under application.

A Flora and Vegetation Assessment undertaken by Woodman Environmental Consulting Pty Ltd (2013) identified that six individuals of a priority 1 taxa will be impacted upon from the proposed clearing. The survey also recorded an additional 7,052 individuals of the taxa across a total of 520 locations outside of the proposed clearing area (Atlas Iron Limited, 2013a). The removal of six individuals of this priority 1 taxa is unlikely to

impact on its conservation status given the high numbers recorded outside the proposed clearing area.

Outback Ecology (2013) undertook a fauna assessment of the area under application and surrounding areas and recorded a total of 17 native mammals, 40 birds and 29 reptile species. Of the fauna recorded, five species of conservation significance were recorded, two of these species, Australian bustard (*Ardeotis australis*) and Rainbow bee-eater (*Merops ornatus*), were recorded within similar habitat known to exist within the application area. In addition to the known conservation significant species, it is considered a further three species, Woma (*Aspidites ramsayi*), Greater Bilby (*Macrotis lagotis*) and Brush-tailed Mulgara (*Dasyercus blythi*) have the potential to occur within the vegetation type identified within the clearing area. All of the above species are not considered to be reliant on the habitat identified in the clearing area (Outback Ecology, 2013). Also, given the previous disturbance within the Great Northern Highway road reserve and the applications close proximity to the highway, it is unlikely the proposed clearing will contain significant habitat for fauna indigenous to Western Australia.

There has been no priority or threatened ecological communities mapped within 20 kilometres of the area under application.

The vegetation under application is represented by Beard vegetation association 93 of which there is 99 percent of its pre-European amount remaining. Additionally, the application area is within an extensively vegetated landscape with approximately 95 per cent of vegetation remaining within 20 kilometres of the application. The national objectives and targets for biodiversity conservation in Australia has a target to prevent clearance of ecological communities with an extent below 30 per cent of that present pre-1750, below which species loss appears to accelerate exponentially at an ecosystem level (Commonwealth of Australia 2001). The Beard vegetation is above the national objectives and target level of 30 per cent.

There are no known conservation areas within 20 kilometres of the area under application.

There have been no wetlands or watercourses mapped within the application area and it is not likely the proposed clearing will cause appreciable land degradation, impact water quality, consist of riparian vegetation or cause or exacerbate the intensity of flooding.

Given the above, the proposed clearing is not likely to be at variance to any of the clearing Principles.

Methodology

References:

- Atlas Iron Limited (2013a)
- Commonwealth of Australia (2013)
- Government of Western Australia (2012)
- Keighery (1994)
- Outback Ecology (2013)
- Woodman (2013)

GIS Databases:

- SAC Bio Datasets (Accessed November 2013)
- NLWRA, Extent of Vegetation Remaining
- Hydrography, linear

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

Comments

In a letter dated 6 August 2013, the applicant received a letter of authorisation from Main Roads Western Australia to upgrade the Great Northern Highway - Mt Dove mine site access road intersection (Atlas Iron Limited, 2013b).

No submissions from the public have been received for the proposed clearing.

Methodology

References

- Atlas Iron Limited (2013)

4. References

- Atlas Iron Limited (2013a) Mt Dove and Great Northern Highway Road Reserve Upgrade. Native Vegetation Clearing Permit Application, CPS 5823/1. Email received in relation to Clearing Permit Application CPS 5823/1 - Atlas Iron Limited (DER Ref:A696363).
- Atlas Iron Limited (2013b) Mt Dove and Great Northern Highway Road Reserve Upgrade. Native Vegetation Clearing Permit Application, CPS 5823/1. Additional information within Clearing Permit Application CPS 5823/1 - Atlas Iron Limited (DER Ref:A677632).
- Commonwealth of Australia (2001) National Objectives and Targets for Biodiversity Conservation 2001-2005, Canberra.
- Government of Western Australia. (2013). 2012 Statewide Vegetation Statistics incorporating the CAR Reserve Analysis (Full Report). Current as of October 2012. WA Department of Environment and Conservation, Perth.
- Keighery, B.J. (1994) Bushland Plant Survey: A Guide to Plant Community Survey for the Community. Wildflower Society of

WA (Inc). Nedlands, Western Australia.

Outback Ecology (2013) Atlas Iron Limited. Memo. Mt Dove Intersection - Acceleration / Deceleration Lanes. Additional information within Clearing Permit Application CPS 5823/1 - Atlas Iron Limited (DER Ref:A677632).

Shepherd, D.P., Beeston, G.R., and Hopkins, A.J.M. (2001), Native Vegetation in Western Australia. Technical Report 249. Department of Agriculture Western Australia, South Perth.

Woodman Environmental Consulting (2011) Atlas Iron Limited. Mount Dove Direct Shipping Ore Project. Flora and Vegetation Studies. Additional information within Clearing Permit Application CPS 5823/1 - Atlas Iron Limited (DER Ref:A677632).

Woodman Environmental Consulting (2013) Atlas Iron Limited. Memo. Great Northern Highway Upgrade. Additional information within Clearing Permit Application CPS 5823/1 - Atlas Iron Limited (DER Ref:A677632).