Department of Mines, Petroleum and Exploration

GOVERNMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Clearing Permit Decision Report

1. Application details and outcomes

1.1. Permit application details

Permit number:	5855/2
Permit type:	Purpose permit
Applicant name:	Process Minerals International Pty Ltd
Application received:	25 August 2025
Application area:	95 hectares
Purpose of clearing:	Camp operations, decommissioning, rehabilitation, and closure activities.
Method of clearing:	Mechanical removal
Tenure:	Mining Leases 47/1359-I and 47/1421-I; Miscellaneous Licences 47/336 and 47/554; and *Iron Ore (Yandicoogina) Agreement Act 1996*, Mining Lease 274SA (AM70/274)
Location (LGA area):	Shire of East Pilbara
Colloquial name:	Phil's Creek Iron Ore Project

1.2. Description of clearing activities

Process Minerals International Pty Ltd proposes to clear up to 95 hectares of native vegetation within a boundary of approximately 250.29 hectares, for the purpose of camp operations, decommissioning, rehabilitation, and closure activities (PMI, 2025a; 2026). The project is located approximately 85 kilometres northwest of Newman, within the Shire of East Pilbara (GIS Database). A total cumulative area of land cleared to date is approximately 84.7 hectares that was undertaken between 2013 to 2015 (PMI, 2025b). Rehabilitation activities have not yet commenced.

Clearing permit CPS 5855/1 was granted by the Department of Mines and Petroleum (now the Department of Mines, Petroleum and Exploration) on 9 January 2014 and was valid from 1 February 2014 to 1 February 2026. The permit authorised the clearing of up to 139 hectares of native vegetation within a boundary of approximately 250.41 hectares, for the purpose of mineral production and associated activities.

On 25 August 2025, the permit holder applied to amend CPS 5855/1 to extend the duration of the permit by 10 years and reduce the reporting requirements to biannual (PMI, 2025a). Additionally, during the assessment, the permit holder requested to amend the purpose from 'mineral production and associated activities' to 'camp operations, decommissioning, rehabilitation, and closure activities', extend the duration in which clearing is authorised by five years and reduce the amount of authorised clearing by 44 hectares from 139 hectares to 95 hectares (PMI, 2026).

1.3. Decision on application and key considerations

Decision:	Grant
Decision date:	29 January 2026
Decision area:	95 hectares of native vegetation

1.4. Reasons for decision

This clearing permit application was submitted, accepted, assessed, and determined in accordance with sections 51KA(1) and 51O of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* (EP Act). The Department of Mines, Petroleum and Exploration (DMPE) advertised the application for a public comment for a period of 21 days, and no submissions were received. The application was re-advertised on 20 January 2026 for 7 days to include details regarding the application that were amended during the assessment period.

In making this decision, the Delegated Officer had regard for the site characteristics (Appendix B), relevant datasets (Appendix F), supporting information provided by the applicant (Appendix A), including the results of a flora and vegetation survey, the clearing principles set out in Schedule 5 of the EP Act (Appendix C), proposed avoidance and minimisation measures (Section 3.1), relevant planning instruments and any other matters considered relevant to the assessment (Section 3.3).

The assessment identified that the proposed clearing may result in:

- the potential introduction and spread of weeds into adjacent vegetation, which could impact on the quality of the adjacent vegetation and its habitat values;
- potential impacts to conservation significant flora;
- potential impacts to conservation signifcant fauna habitat; and
- impacts to riparian vegetation at major watercourse (Phil's Creek) and ephemeral drainage lines, and consequently on surface water flow.

After consideration of the available information, as well as the applicant's minimisation and mitigation measures (Section 3.1), the Delegated Officer determined the proposed clearing can be minimised and managed to be unlikely to lead to an unacceptable risk to environmental values.

The Delegated Officer decided to grant a clearing permit subject to conditions to:

- avoid, minimise to reduce the impacts and extent of clearing;
- take hygiene steps to minimise the risk of the introduction and spread of weeds;
- undertake slow, progressive one-directional clearing to allow terrestrial fauna to move into adjacent habitat ahead of the clearing activity;
- restricted clearing condition within Phil's Creek riparian vegetation;
- avoid riparian vegetation and where a watercourse is to be impacted by clearing, the permit holder shall ensure that the existing surface flow is maintained; and
- retain cleared vegetation and topsoil and respread this on a cleared area of equivalent size within the application area within 12 months of clearing to ensure vegetation and fauna habitat is not permanently lost.

The Delegated Officer determined that reducing the reporting requirements to a biannual schedule was not appropriate, and therefore the reporting requirements will remain annual.

The assessment has not changed since the assessment for CPS 5855/1, except in the case of Principle (c) with consideration for the recently listed threatened flora species *Synostemon hamersleyensis,* that occurs within seven kilometres of the application area. The Delegated Officer determined that the proposed extension in permit duration and period in which authorised clearing is authorised, amended purpose and reduction in amount of authorised clearing is not likely to lead to an unacceptable risk to environmental values.

2. Legislative context

The clearing of native vegetation in Western Australia is regulated under the EP Act and the Environmental Protection (Clearing of Native Vegetation) Regulations 2004 (Clearing Regulations).

In addition to the matters considered in accordance with section 51O of the EP Act (Section 1.4), the Delegated Officer has also had regard to the objects and principles under section 4A of the EP Act, particularly:

- the precautionary principle
- the principle of intergenerational equity
- the principle of the conservation of biological diversity and ecological integrity

Other legislation of relevance for this assessment include:

- *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* (WA) (BC Act)
- *Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act 2007* (BAM Act)
- *Conservation and Land Management Act 1984* (WA) (CALM Act)
- *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth) (EPBC Act)
- *Mining Act 1978* (WA)
- *Rights in Water and Irrigation Act 1914* (RIWI Act)
- *Iron Ore (Yandicoogina) Agreement Act 1996*

Relevant agreements (treaties) considered during the assessment include:

- Japan-Australia Migratory Bird Agreement
- China-Australia Migratory Bird Agreement
- Republic of Korea-Australia Migratory Bird Agreement

The key guidance documents which inform this assessment are:

- *A guide to the assessment of applications to clear native vegetation* (DER, December 2014)
- *Procedure: Native vegetation clearing permits* (DWER, October 2021)
- Technical guidance – *Flora and Vegetation Surveys for Environmental Impact Assessment* (EPA, 2016a)
- Technical guidance – *Sampling of Short-Range Endemic Invertebrate Fauna for Environmental Impact Assessment* (EPA, 2016b)
- Technical guidance – *Terrestrial Fauna Surveys for Environmental Impact Assessment* (EPA, 2020)

3. Detailed assessment of application

3.1. Avoidance and mitigation measures

The Delegated Officer was satisfied that the applicant has made a reasonable effort to avoid and minimise potential impacts of the proposed clearing on environmental values. The initial application included several management measures for fauna, weeds, surface water and erosion (PMI, 2013).

During the assessment, the applicant proposed a reduction of 44 hectares in authorised clearing from 139 hectares to 95 hectares (PMI, 2026).

3.2. Assessment of impacts on environmental values

A review of current environmental information (Appendix B) reveals that the assessment against the clearing principles has not changed significantly from the clearing permit decision report CPS 5855/1, except in the case of Principle (c) with consideration for the recently listed threatened flora species *Synostemon hamersleyensis,* that occurs within 7 kilometres of the application area (as detailed in Appendix C).

3.3. Relevant planning instruments and other matters

The clearing permit amendment application was advertised on 7 October 2025 by the Department of Mines, Petroleum and Exploration inviting submissions from the public. The application was re-advertised on 20 January 2026. No submissions were received in relation to this application.

There is one native title claim (WCD2014/001) over the area under application (DPLH, 2026). This claim has been determined by the Federal Court on behalf of the claimant group (Banjima People). The mining tenure has been granted in accordance with the future act regime of the *Native Title Act 1993* and the nature of the act (i.e. the proposed clearing activity) has been provided for in that process, therefore, the granting of a clearing permit is not a future act under the *Native Title Act 1993*.

There are four registered Aboriginal Sites of Significance within the application area (DPLH, 2026). It is the proponent's responsibility to comply with the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972* and ensure that no Aboriginal Sites of Significance are damaged through the clearing process.

Phil's Creek Iron Ore Project (2009/5107) was referred to the Commonwealth Department of Environment, Water, Heritage, and the Arts (now Department of Climate Change, Energy, Environment and Water) on 25 September 2009. On 23 July 2010, the Department of Environment, Water, Heritage, and the Arts decided under Section 75 and Section 87 of the *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* the proposed action is a controlled action. The project was conditionally approved on 23 July 2010. The approval had effect until 31 July 2020.

Other relevant authorisations required for the proposed land use include:

- A Mining Development and Closure Proposal approved under the *Mining Act 1978*

It is the proponent's responsibility to liaise with the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation and the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, to determine whether a Works Approval, Water Licence, Bed and Banks Permit, or any other licences or approvals are required for the proposed works.

End

Appendix A. Additional information provided by applicant (PMI, 2026)

Date	Summary of comments	Consideration of comment
6 January 2026	The applicant amended the purpose of the application to more accurately reflect the activities.	This information was incorporated as part of the amendment and detailed in Section 1.2 Description of clearing activities.
14 January 2026	The applicant proposed a 44 hectare reduction in amount of authorised clearing as a minimisation measure from 139 hectares to 95 hectares.	This information was incorporated into the amendment, detailed in Section 1.2 Description of clearing activities and considered an avoidance and mitigation measure in Section 3.1.

Appendix B. Site characteristics

B.1. Site characteristics

Characteristic	Details
Local context	The area proposed to be cleared is part of an expansive tract of native vegetation in the extensive land use zone of Western Australia, north of Yandicoogina Iron Ore Mine and east of Marillana Creek Mine (Yandi) (GIS Database). The predominant land use in the region is grazing of native pastures, conservation, mining activities, and urban development (CALM, 2002).
Ecological linkage	According to available databases, the application area does not contain any known or mapped ecological linkages (GIS Database).
Conservation areas	The nearest conservation area is Fortescue Marsh Nature Reserve that is located approximately 30 kilometres northeast of the application area (GIS Database).
Vegetation description	The application area occurs within the Hamersley subregion of the Pilbara (PIL03). The vegetation of the application area is broadly mapped as the Beard vegetation association **82** (GIS Database). Ten vegetation associations have been recorded within the application area (detailed in CPS 5855/1; Mattiske Consulting Pty Ltd, 2008).
Vegetation condition	The aerial imagery (GIS Database) indicates the vegetation within the proposed clearing area is in **Very Good** to **Completely Degraded** (Trudgen, 1991) condition. The full Trudgen (1991) condition rating scale is provided in Appendix D. Approximately 84.7 hectares has been cleared under this permit for establishment of mine and associated infrastructure (PMI, 2025b) and these areas are completely degraded, while other areas within the application area remain in very good condition with limited disturbances (GIS Database).
Climate and landform	The application area is mapped within elevations 530 to 590 metres Australian Height Datum (AHD) (GIS Database). The climate of the region is semi-arid to tropical with an annual rainfall average of approximately 324.1 millimetres recorded at Marillana (BoM, 2026; CALM, 2002).
Soil description and land degradation risk	The soil is mapped as part of the following landform systems (DPIRD, 2026a; Van Vreeswyk, 2004): • **Boolgeeda system** (285Bg): stony lower slopes and plains below hill systems supporting hard and soft spinifex grasslands or mulga shrublands. Stony lower plains consist of soil characterised as red loamy earths and stoney slopes and upper plains consist of red shallow loams or red loamy earths. This system covers roughly 30.54 hectares (12.2%) of the application area and is not susceptible to erosion. • **McKay system** (285Mk): hills, ridges, plateaux remnants and breakaways of meta sedimentary and sedimentary rocks supporting hard spinifex grasslands. Soils are mostly characterised as stony soils and red loamy soils. This system covers roughly 81.53 hectares (32.57%) of the application area and is not prone to degradation or soil erosion. • **Newman system** (285Ne): rugged jaspilite plateaux, ridges and mountains supporting hard spinifex grasslands. Most of this system consists of stony soils, red shallow loams, red loamy earths and some red shallow sands. This system covers roughly 76.17 hectares (30.43%) of the application area and is not generally susceptible to erosion. • **Robe land system** (285Ro): low limonite mesas and buttes supporting soft spinifex (and occasionally hard spinifex) grasslands. Most of this system consists of stony soils, red shallow loams and red loamy earths. This system covers roughly 62.05 hectares (24.79%) of the application area and is not generally susceptible to degradation or erosion.
Waterbodies	The desktop assessment and aerial imagery indicated that several ephemeral watercourses transect the area proposed to be cleared (GIS Database). No permanent watercourses or waterbodies have been recorded within the application area (GIS Database). Phil's Creek is a small ephemeral tributary of Marillana Creek that intersects the application area.
Hydrogeography	The application area is located within the Pilbara Groundwater Area and Pilbara Surface Water Area proclaimed under the *Rights in Water and Irrigation Act 1914* (GIS Database). The nearest Public Drinking Water Source Area is Newman Water Reserve, which is located approximately 62 kilometres southeast of the application area (GIS Database). The mapped groundwater salinity is 500-1,000 milligrams per litre total dissolved solids which is described as marginal (GIS Database). The

	application area intersects the Yandicoogina palaeovalley, Hamersley - Fractured Rock Aquifer and Fortescue River Upper surface water catchment (GIS Database). The nearest ANCA Wetland listed in the Directory of Important Wetlands in Australia is Fortescue Marshes located approximately 23 kilometres north of the application area (GIS Database). The Fortescue Marshes is a proposed Ramsar site addition, however, no other Ramsar wetlands occur within 50 kilometres of the application area (GIS Database).
Flora	No threatened or priority flora species have been recorded within the application area (Mattiske Consulting Pty Ltd, 2008; GIS Database). There are records of one threatened and 57 priority flora species within the local surrounds (50 kilometres) as detailed in Appendix B.2 (GIS Database).
Ecological communities	There are no records of Threatened or Priority Ecological Communities (TEC/PECs) within the application area (GIS Database). There are nine Priority Ecological Communities that occur within 50 kilometres of the application area listed in Section B.4 (GIS Database).
Fauna	One priority fauna species was recorded within the application area (Western Wildlife, 2008). There are records of 30 conservation significant fauna species within the local surrounds (50 kilometres) as detailed in Section B.3 (GIS Database).
Fauna habitat	Fauna habitats that have been recorded within the application area consist of (Western Wildlife, 2008): • **major and minor creek-lines**: major creek-line (Phil's Creek) characterised by *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* over shrubs and grasses on sandy soils; • **shrubs over grasslands on flats**: flat areas around the creek-lines characterised by shrub of *Acacia* spp. over spinifex and grasses on clay-loam; • **spinifex grassland on hills and slopes**: low undulating hills, characterised by spinifex grasslands with *Acacia* spp. and *Grevillea wickhamii*, and occasional *Eucalyptus* and *Corymbia* trees. Many of the hills had multiple shallow gullies with denser but similar vegetation; and • **rocky breakaway and gorges**: some places along Phil's Creek and minor creek-lines and gullies there are rocky breakaways, rocky walls and gorges. Although these do not support large caves, they do have numerous holes and crevices. Representative habitat photos in Appendix E.

B.2. Flora analysis table

Conservation significant flora recorded within 50 kilometres of the application area (Western Australian Herbarium, 1998-; GIS Database).

Species name	Suitable habitat features? [Y/N]	Suitable vegetation type? [Y/N]	Suitable soil type? [Y/N]	Distance of closest record to application area (km)	Number of known records (total)
Threatened					
Synostemon hamersleyensis	Y	Y	Y	<7	35
Priority 1					
Calotis squamigera	Possible	Possible	N	<14	5
Lindernia sp. Pilbara (M.N. Lyons & L. Lewis FV 1069)	N	N	N	<43	5
Myriocephalus scalpellus	N	N	N	<43	3
Rorippa sp. Fortescue Valley (M.N. Lyons & R.A. Coppen FV 0760)	N	N	N	<43	2
Samolus intricatus	N	N	N	<39	24
Tecticornia globulifera	N	N	N	<37	25
Tecticornia sp. Christmas Creek (K.A. Shepherd & T. Colmer et al. KS 1063)	N	N	N	<34	29
Priority 2					
Cladium procerum	Y	Y	Y	<15	15
Hibiscus sp. Gurinbiddy Range (M.E. Trudgen MET 15708)	Y	Y	Y	<30	38
Kohautia australiensis	N	N	N	<30	9
Triodia karijini	Y	Possible	Y	<41	14

Species name	Suitable habitat features? [Y/N]	Suitable vegetation type? [Y/N]	Suitable soil type? [Y/N]	Distance of closest record to application area (km)	Number of known records (total)
Priority 3					
Acacia effusa	Y	Possible	Y	<37	33
Acacia subtiliformis	N	N	N	<19	26
Amaranthus centralis	N	Unknown	N	<7	8
Aristida jerichoensis var. *subspinulifera*	N	Y	N	<36	49
Aristida lazaridis	Y	Y	Y	<8	29
Atriplex flabelliformis	N	N	N	<29	9
Dicladanthera glabra	Y	Y	Y	<37	23
Dampiera metallorum	N	N	Y	<22	22
Dolichocarpa sp. Hamersley Station (A.A. Mitchell PRP 1479)	N	N	Y	<31	46
Dysphania congestiflora	N	N	N	<34	6
Eleocharis papillosa	N	N	N	<40	15
Eragrostis sp. Erect spikelets (P.K. Latz 2122)	N	N	N	<42	6
Eragrostis sp. Mt Robinson (S. van Leeuwen 4109)	Unlikely	N	Y	<37	8
Eremophila naaykensii	Y	N	Y	<9	22
Eremophila sp. West Angelas (S. van Leeuwen 4068)	N	N	Y	<43	8
Eremophila spongiocarpa	N	N	N	<22	39
Euphorbia australis var. *glabra*	N	N	N	<26	23
Euphorbia inappendiculata var. *inappendiculata*	N	N	N	<24	17
Euphorbia inappendiculata var. *queenslandica*	N	N	N	<42	18
Fimbristylis sieberiana	Y	Y	Y	<9	30
Glycine falcata	N	N	N	<31	14
Goodenia sp. East Pilbara (A.A. Mitchell PRP 727)	N	N	Y	<18	53
Grevillea saxicola	N	N	Y	<28	40
Gymnanthera cunninghamii	Y	Y	Y	<10	45
Indigofera gilesii	Y	Y	Y	<30	40
Iotasperma sessilifolium	N	N	N	<44	18
Ipomoea racemigera	Y	Y	Y	<18	23
Isotropis parviflora	Possible	Some	Y	<8	34
Oxalis sp. Pilbara (M.E. Trudgen 12725)	Y	Y	Y	<40	18
Pilbara trudgenii	Possible	N	Y	<41	12
Rostellularia adscendens var. *latifolia*	Y	Y	Y	<8	53
Solanum kentrocaule	Y	Y	Y	<43	22
Stackhousia clementii	N	N	N	<40	23
Streptoglossa sp. Cracking clays (S. van Leeuwen et al. PBS 7353)	N	N	N	<28	13
Stylidium weeliwolli	Y	Y	Y	<15	30
Tecticornia medusa	N	N	N	<36	21
Themeda sp. Hamersley Station (M.E. Trudgen 11431)	N	N	Y	<5	61
Triodia basitricha	Y	Y	Y	<35	49
Triodia sp. Mt Ella (M.E. Trudgen 12739)	Y	Y	Y	<28	40

Species name	Suitable habitat features? [Y/N]	Suitable vegetation type? [Y/N]	Suitable soil type? [Y/N]	Distance of closest record to application area (km)	Number of known records (total)
Uvedalia clementii	N	N	N	<46	10
Vittadinia sp. Coondewanna Flats (S. van Leeuwen 4684)	Possible	Y	Y	<31	27
Priority 4					
Acacia bromilowiana	Y	Y	Y	<13	30
Eremophila magnifica subsp. *magnifica*	Y	Y	Y	<22	47
Eremophila youngii subsp. *lepidota*	N	N	N	<31	49
Ptilotus mollis	Y	Y	Y	<38	48
Rhynchosia bungarensis	Y	Y	Y	<15	115

T: threatened, CR: critically endangered, EN: endangered, VU: vulnerable, P: priority

B.3. Fauna analysis table

Conservation significant fauna recorded within 50 kilometres of the application area (EPA, 2016a; Car et al, 2019; Menkhorst et al., 2019; Western Wildlife, 2008; Wilson and Swan, 2020; GIS Database).

Species name	Conservation status	Suitable habitat features? [Y/N]	Suitable vegetation type? [Y/N]	Distance of closest record to application area (km)
Mammal				
Bilby (*Macrotis lagotis*)	VU	N	N	<18
Brush-tailed mulgara (*Dasycercus blythi*)	P4	N	N	<8
Ghost bat (*Macroderma gigas*)	VU	Y	Y	<8
Greater stick-nest rat (*Leporillus conditor*)	CD	Unlikely	Possible	<34
Northern quoll (*Dasyurus hallucatus*)	EN	Y	Y	<7
Orange leaf-nosed bat (*Rhinonicteris aurantia*)	P4	Y	Y	<28
Pilbara leaf-nosed bat (*Rhinonicteris aurantia* (Pilbara form))	VU	Y	Y	<20
Western pebble-mound mouse (*Pseudomys chapmani*)	P4	Y	Y	0
Reptile				
Gane's blind snake (Pilbara) (*Anilios ganei*)	P1	Y	Y	<28
Pilbara barking gecko (*Underwoodisaurus seorsus*)	P2	Y	Y	<19
Pilbara olive python (*Liasis olivaceus barroni*)	VU	Y	Y	<6
Unpatterned robust slider (Robertson Range) (*Lerista macropisthopus remota*)	P2	Y	Y	<37
Wetland birds				
Australian painted snipe (*Rostratula australis*) (shorebird)	EN	Y	Y	<43
Caspian tern (*Hydroprogne caspia*) (shorebird)	MI	Y	Y	<36
Common greenshank (*Tringa nebularia*) (shorebird)	MI	N	N	<22
Common sandpiper (*Actitis hypoleucos*)	MI	Y	Y	<20
Glossy ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*)	MI	Y	Y	<40
Gull-billed tern (*Gelochelidon nilotica*)	MI	Y	Y	<30
Oriental plover (*Charadrius veredus*)	MI	N	N	<36
Southern giant petrel (*Macronectes giganteus*)	MI	N	N	<14

Species name	Conservation status	Suitable habitat features? [Y/N]	Suitable vegetation type? [Y/N]	Distance of closest record to application area (km)
Wood sandpiper (*Tringa glareola*)	MI	Y	Y	<40
Other birds				
Fork-tailed swift (*Apus pacificus*)	MI	Y	Y	<9
Grey falcon (*Falco hypoleucos*)	VU	Y	Y	<24
Night parrot (*Pezoporus occidentalis*)	CR	N	N	<18
Letter-winged kite (*Elanus scriptus*)	P4	Y	Y	<44
Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*)	MI	Y	Y	<13
Peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*)	OS	Y	Y	<7
Invertebrate (short-range endemics)				
Area C antichiropus millipede (*Antichiropus pendiculus*)	P1	Unlikely	Unknown	<18
Bond's antichiropus millipede (*Antichiropus cirratus*)	P1	Unlikely	Unknown	<23
Cloudbreak antichiropus millipede (*Antichiropus nimbus*)	P1	Unlikely	Unknown	<44
Mt Bruce antichiropus millipede (*Antichiropus lucyae*)	P1	Unlikely	Unknown	<27

T: threatened, CR: critically endangered, EN: endangered, VU: vulnerable, MI: migratory, CD: conservation dependent, OS: other specially protected, P: priority

B.4. Ecological community analysis table

Ecological communities recorded within 50 kilometres of the application area (DBCA, 2023; GIS Database).

Community name	Suitable habitat features? [Y/N]	Suitable vegetation type? [Y/N]	Suitable soil type? [Y/N]	Distance of closest record to application area (km)
Priority 1				
Coolibah - Lignum Flats: sub type 2: Coolibah woodlands over lignum (*Duma florulenta*) over swamp wanderrie (Lake Robinson)	N	N	N	<45
Fortescue Marsh (Marsh Land System)	N	N/A	N	<21
Freshwater claypans downstream of the Fortescue Marsh - Goodiadarrie Hills on Mulga Downs Station.	N	N	N	<41
Weeli Wolli Spring Community	N	N	N	<13
Priority 2				
Riparian flora and plant communities of springs and river pools with high water permanence of the Pilbara Region	N	N	Y	<29
Priority 3				
Coolibah - Lignum Flats: sub type 1: Coolibah and mulga woodland over lignum and tussock grasses on clay plains (Coondewanna and Wanamunna flats and Mt Bruce Flats)	N	N	N	<43
Kumina Land System	N	N/A	N	<31
Narbung Land System	N	N/A	N	<46
Vegetation of sand dunes of the Hamersley Range/Fortescue Valley	Unlikely	Some	N	<9

T: threatened, CR: critically endangered, EN: endangered, VU: vulnerable, P: priority

Appendix C. Assessment against the clearing principles

Assessment against the clearing principles	Variance level	Is further consideration required?
Environmental value: biological values		
Principle (a): *"Native vegetation should not be cleared if it comprises a high level of biodiversity."* Assessment: **Priority flora** There is potentially suitable habitat within the application area for 21 priority flora species that occur within the local surrounds (50 kilometres) (GIS Database). No new flora and vegetation surveys have been submitted as part of this application, and the most recent survey was undertaken in 2008 and is considered outdated. At the time of the survey, no threatened or priority flora were recorded within the application area (Mattiske Consulting Pty Ltd, 2008). If any populations of priority flora were to occur, there may be some local impacts, however, given existing disturbance and limited extent of clearing remaining, it is unlikely that any taxa will be significantly impacted at a regional or species level. **Introduced flora** One weed species, *Cenchrus ciliaris* (buffel grass), was recorded within the application area (Mattiske Consulting Pty Ltd, 2008). The species is not listed as a Weed of National Significance or a Declared Pest in Western Australia under the *Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act 2007* (DPIRD, 2026b). Weeds have the potential to out-compete native flora and reduce biodiversity of an area. Conditions • take hygiene steps to minimise the risk of the introduction and spread of weeds; and • retain cleared vegetation and topsoil and respread this on a cleared area of equivalent size within the permit boundary within 12 months of clearing to ensure vegetation is not permanently lost.	Not likely to be at variance (as per CPS 5855/1)	No
Principle (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."* Assessment: The area proposed to be cleared contains habitat that may be utilised by up to 20 conservation significant fauna species that have been recorded within the local surrounds (50 kilometres) (as detailed in Appendix B.3; GIS Database). A detailed fauna survey was undertaken in 2008, and a targeted northern quoll survey was undertaken in 2013 (Astron, 2013; Western Wildlife, 2008). The Western pebble-mound mouse is the only conservation significant fauna species that was recorded within the application area (PMI, 2013; Western Wildlife, 2008). Any active Western pebble-mound mouse mounds should be avoided, where practicable. Major creek-line habitat associated with Phil's Creek provides significant habitat for several species that potentially occur within the application area. Rocky breakaway and gorges along sections of Phil's Creek also provide rocky habitats, including caves and crevices, however these areas do not support large cave systems (Western Wildlife, 2008). Given existing disturbance, the limited extent of clearing remaining, and the availability of similar habitats nearby, the proposal is unlikely to result in significant impacts to fauna populations or their conservation status. Conditions • undertake slow, progressive one-directional clearing to allow terrestrial fauna to move into adjacent habitat ahead of the clearing activity; • maintain restricted clearing condition within Phil's Creek; and • retain cleared vegetation and topsoil and respread this on a cleared area of equivalent size within the permit boundary within 12 months of clearing to ensure vegetation and fauna habitat is not permanently lost.	May be at variance (as per CPS 5855/1)	No

Assessment against the clearing principles	Variance level	Is further consideration required?
Principle (c): *"Native vegetation should not be cleared if it includes, or is necessary for the continued existence of, threatened flora."* Assessment: As of 6 October 2023, *Synostemon hamersleyensis* was listed as Endangered (formerly P1) (Gazette No. 135). This species was first described in 2015 (Telford and Naaykens, 2015) and is unlikely to have been considered in prior survey effort. This species is currently under EPBC threatened listing assessment, due 30 April 2026 (Commonwealth of Australia, 2008). The distribution for *Synostemon hamersleyensis* is restricted to the Hamersley subregion from two locations, with an extent of occurrence (EOO) of approximately 184 square kilometres (DBCA, 2025; Telford and Naaykens, 2015; Western Australian Herbarium, 1998-; GIS Database). There are records of numerous subpopulations and frequency information ranging from one individual up to 2,000 individuals (DBCA, 2025). No occurrences have been recorded in Karijini National Park (Telford and Naaykens, 2015; Western Australian Herbarium, 1998-; GIS Database). The area proposed to be cleared is approximately 7 kilometres southeast from the current known EOO (GIS Database). *Synostemon hamersleyensis* inhabits breakaway formations and rock outcrops near incised gully systems and upper slopes (7 to 30 degrees) on wide, undulating ridges adjacent to large, deeply incised gullies, generally at 500 to 700 metres elevation (Telford and Naaykens, 2015). The substrates are typically laterite, ironstone or banded ironstone formation, within vegetation typically dominated by *Eucalyptus leucophloia* and mixed *Acacia* spp. open shrubland, often with minimal *Triodia* cover (DBCA, 2025; Telford and Naaykens, 2015). However, records indicate the species habitat is quite variable (DBCA, 2025). Potentially suitable vegetation occurs within the application area. Aerial imagery and annual clearing reports indicates that the area has been previously cleared around 2014 for mineral production and associated activities (PMI, 2025b; GIS Database). While suitable habitat may potentially occur, this species is not known to be a disturbance specialist, therefore reducing the likelihood of occurrence (DBCA, 2025).	May be at variance (changed from CPS 5855/2)	No
Principle (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."* Assessment: There are no records of Threatened Ecological Communities within the area proposed to be cleared or the local surrounds (50 kilometres) (Mattiske Consulting Pty Ltd, 2008; GIS Database).	Not likely to be at variance (as per CPS 5855/1)	No
Environmental value: significant remnant vegetation and conservation areas		
Principle (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."* Assessment: The extent of the mapped vegetation type in the local area is consistent with the national objectives and targets for biodiversity conservation in Australia (Commonwealth of Australia, 2001). The vegetation proposed to be cleared is not considered to be part of a significant ecological linkage in the local area (GIS Database).	Not at variance (as per CPS 5855/1)	No
Principle (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."* Assessment: Given the distance to the nearest conservation area (GIS Database), the proposed clearing is not likely to have an impact on the environmental values of nearby conservation areas.	Not likely to be at variance (as per CPS 5855/1)	No

Assessment against the clearing principles	Variance level	Is further consideration required?
Environmental value: land and water resources		
Principle (f): *"Native vegetation should not be cleared if it is growing in, or in association with, an environment associated with a watercourse or wetland."* Assessment: The application area intersects Phil's Creek and several ephemeral watercourses (Mattiske Consulting Pty Ltd, 2008). Three of the vegetation communities within the application area are associated with watercourses: C1, C2 and S1 (Mattiske Consulting Pty Ltd, 2008). A restricted clearing condition exists on the current permit within significant riparian vegetation areas limiting clearing for the purpose of haul roads and access tracks. Conditions • avoid riparian vegetation and where a watercourse is to be impacted by clearing, the permit holder shall ensure that the existing surface flow is maintained; and • maintain restricted clearing condition within Phil's Creek riparian vegetation.	At variance (as per CPS 5855/1)	No
Principle (g): *"Native vegetation should not be cleared if the clearing of the vegetation is likely to cause appreciable land degradation."* Assessment: The mapped soils are not generally susceptible to erosion (DPIRD, 2026a; Van Vreeswyk, 2004). Noting the purpose and extent of the proposed clearing, it is unlikely to have an appreciable impact on land degradation.	Not likely to be at variance (as per CPS 5855/1)	No
Principle (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."* Assessment: Given no permanent water courses, wetlands or Public Drinking Water Sources Areas are recorded within the application area (GIS Database), the proposed clearing is unlikely to impact surface or ground water quality.	Not likely to be at variance (as per CPS 5855/1)	No
Principle (j): *"Native vegetation should not be cleared if the clearing of the vegetation is likely to cause, or exacerbate, the incidence or intensity of flooding."* Assessment: Localised flooding occurs seasonally in the region after intense rainfall (CALM, 2002). The mapped soils, topographic contours, and the intersection with Phil's Creek within and around the application area suggest that the proposed clearing could increase the incidence or intensity of localised flooding in low lying areas. However, given the purpose and extent of the clearing, any impact is unlikely to be significant.	Not likely to be at variance (as per CPS 5855/1)	No

Appendix D. Vegetation condition rating scale

Vegetation condition is a rating given to a defined area of vegetation to categorise and rank disturbance related to human activities. The rating refers to the degree of change in the vegetation structure, density and species present in relation to undisturbed vegetation of the same type. The degree of disturbance impacts upon the vegetation's ability to regenerate. Disturbance at a site can be a cumulative effect from a number of interacting disturbance types.

Considering its location, the scale below was used to measure the condition of the vegetation proposed to be cleared. This scale has been extracted from Trudgen, M.E. (1991) *Vegetation condition scale* in National Trust (WA) 1993 Urban Bushland Policy. National Trust of Australia (WA), Wildflower Society of WA (Inc.), and the Tree Society (Inc.), Perth.

Measuring vegetation condition for the Eremaean and Northern Botanical Provinces (Trudgen, 1991)

Condition	Description
Excellent	Pristine or nearly so, no obvious signs of damage caused by human activities since European settlement.
Very good	Some relatively slight signs of damage caused by human activities since European settlement. For example, some signs of damage to tree trunks caused by repeated fire, the presence of some relatively non-aggressive weeds, or occasional vehicle tracks.

Condition	Description
Good	More obvious signs of damage caused by human activity since European settlement, including some obvious impact on the vegetation structure such as that caused by low levels of grazing or slightly aggressive weeds.
Poor	Still retains basic vegetation structure or ability to regenerate it after very obvious impacts of human activities since European settlement, such as grazing, partial clearing, frequent fires or aggressive weeds.
Very poor	Severely impacted by grazing, very frequent fires, clearing or a combination of these activities. Scope for some regeneration but not to a state approaching good condition without intensive management. Usually with a number of weed species present including very aggressive species.
Completely degraded	Areas that are completely or almost completely without native species in the structure of their vegetation; i.e. areas that are cleared or 'parkland cleared' with their flora comprising weed or crop species with isolated native trees or shrubs.

Appendix E. Photographs of habitat features

Photo 1: Rocky crevice habitat within the application area (Astron, 2013).

Photo 2: Small cave adjacent drainage line within the application area (Astron, 2013).

Photo 3: Representative photo of creek line vegetation taken adjacent application area (Astron, 2013).

Photo 4: Representative photo of creek line vegetation taken adjacent the application area (Astron, 2013).

Appendix F. Sources of information

F.1. GIS datasets

Publicly available GIS datasets used (sourced from www.data.wa.gov.au):

- Clearing Instruments Activities (Areas Approved to Clear) (DWER-076)
- Clearing Regulations - Environmentally Sensitive Areas (DWER-046)
- Clearing Regulations - Schedule One Areas (DWER-057)

- DBCA - Lands of Interest (DBCA-012)
- DBCA - Legislated Lands and Waters (DBCA-011)
- DBCA Fire History (DBCA-060)
- Directory of Important Wetlands in Australia - Western Australia (DBCA-045)
- EPA Referred Significant Proposals (DWER-120)
- Groundwater Salinity Statewide (DWER-026)
- Hydrographic Catchments - Catchments (DWER-028)
- IBRA Vegetation Statistics
- Local Government Area (LGA) Boundaries (LGATE-233)
- Localities (LGATE-234)
- Medium Scale Topo Contour (Line) (LGATE-015)
- Medium Scale Topo Elevation (Point) (LGATE-014)
- Medium Scale Topo Inland Flat (Polygon) (LGATE-099)
- Medium Scale Topo Water (Line) (LGATE-018)
- Medium Scale Topo Water (Point) (LGATE-017)
- Medium Scale Topo Water (Polygon) (LGATE-016)
- Mineral Field Boundaries (DMIRS-005)
- Native Title (Determination) (LGATE-066)
- Native Vegetation Extent (DPIRD-005)
- Pre-European Vegetation (DPIRD-006)
- Public Drinking Water Source Areas (DWER-033)
- Ramsar Sites (DBCA-010)
- RIWI Act, Groundwater Areas (DWER-034)
- RIWI Act, Surface Water Areas and Irrigation Districts (DWER-037)
- Soil Landscape Mapping - Best Available (DPIRD-027)
- Surface Water Management Areas (DWER-041)
- Townsites (LGATE-248)
- WA Now Aerial Imagery
- WRIMS - Groundwater Areas (DWER-085)

Restricted GIS Databases used:

- Threatened and Priority Flora (TPFL)
- Threatened and Priority Flora (WAHerb)
- Threatened and Priority Fauna
- Threatened and Priority Ecological Communities
- Threatened and Priority Ecological Communities (Buffers)

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Glossary

Acronyms:

BC Act	*Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016,* Western Australia
BoM	Bureau of Meteorology, Australian Government
DAA	Department of Aboriginal Affairs, Western Australia (now DPLH)
DAFWA	Department of Agriculture and Food, Western Australia (now DPIRD)
DCCEEW	Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water, Australian Government
DBCA	Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, Western Australia
DEMIRS	Department of Energy, Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety (now DMPE)

DER	Department of Environment Regulation, Western Australia (now DWER)
DMIRS	Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety, Western Australia (now DMPE)
DMP	Department of Mines and Petroleum, Western Australia (now DMPE)
DMPE	Department of Mines, Petroleum and Exploration
DoEE	Department of the Environment and Energy (now DCCEEW)
DoW	Department of Water, Western Australia (now DWER)
DPaW	Department of Parks and Wildlife, Western Australia (now DBCA)
DPIRD	Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, Western Australia
DPLH	Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage, Western Australia
DRF	Declared Rare Flora (now known as Threatened Flora)
DWER	Department of Water and Environmental Regulation, Western Australia
EP Act	*Environmental Protection Act 1986*, Western Australia
EPA	Environmental Protection Authority, Western Australia
EPBC Act	*Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Commonwealth Act)
GIS	Geographical Information System
ha	Hectare (10,000 square metres)
IBRA	Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation for Australia
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources – commonly known as the World Conservation Union
PEC	Priority Ecological Community, Western Australia
RIWI Act	*Rights in Water and Irrigation Act 1914*, Western Australia
TEC	Threatened Ecological Community

Definitions:

DBCA (2023) Conservation Codes for Western Australian Flora and Fauna. Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, Western Australia:

Threatened species

T Listed by order of the Minister as Threatened in the category of critically endangered, endangered or vulnerable under section 19(1), or is a rediscovered species to be regarded as threatened species under section 26(2) of the Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 (BC Act).

Threatened fauna is the species of fauna that are listed as critically endangered, endangered or vulnerable threatened species.

Threatened flora is the species of flora that are listed as critically endangered, endangered or vulnerable threatened species.

The assessment of the conservation status of threatened species is in accordance with the BC Act listing criteria and the requirements of Ministerial Guideline Number 1 and Ministerial Guideline Number 2 that adopts the use of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List of Threatened Species Categories and Criteria, and is based on the national distribution of the species.

CR **Critically endangered species**

Threatened species considered to be "*facing an extremely high risk of extinction in the wild in the immediate future, as determined in accordance with criteria set out in the ministerial guidelines*".

Listed as critically endangered under section 19(1)(a) of the BC Act in accordance with the criteria set out in section 20 and the ministerial guidelines.

EN **Endangered species**

Threatened species considered to be "*facing a very high risk of extinction in the wild in the near future, as determined in accordance with criteria set out in the ministerial guidelines*".

Listed as endangered under section 19(1)(b) of the BC Act in accordance with the criteria set out in section 21 and the ministerial guidelines.

VU **Vulnerable species**

Threatened species considered to be "*facing a high risk of extinction in the wild in the medium-term future, as determined in accordance with criteria set out in the ministerial guidelines*".

Listed as vulnerable under section 19(1)(c) of the BC Act in accordance with the criteria set out in section 22 and the ministerial guidelines.

Extinct species

Listed by order of the Minister as extinct under section 23(1) of the BC Act as extinct or extinct in the wild.

EX **Extinct species**

Species where "*there is no reasonable doubt that the last member of the species has died*", and listing is otherwise in accordance with the ministerial guidelines (section 24 of the BC Act).

EW **Extinct in the wild species**

Species that *"is known only to survive in cultivation, in captivity or as a naturalised population well outside its past range; and it has not been recorded in its known habitat or expected habitat, at appropriate seasons, anywhere in its past range, despite surveys over a time frame appropriate to its life cycle and form*", and listing is otherwise in accordance with the ministerial guidelines (section 25 of the BC Act).

Currently there are no threatened fauna or threatened flora species listed as extinct in the wild.

Specially protected species

SP **Specially protected species**

Listed by order of the Minister as specially protected under section 13(1) of the BC Act. Meeting one or more of the following categories: species of special conservation interest; migratory species; cetaceans; species subject to international agreement; or species otherwise in need of special protection.

Species that are listed as threatened species (critically endangered, endangered, or vulnerable) or extinct species under the BC Act cannot also be listed as specially protected species.

MI **Migratory species**

Fauna that periodically or occasionally visit Australia or an external Territory or the exclusive economic zone; or the species is subject of an international agreement that relates to the protection of migratory species and that binds the Commonwealth; and listing is otherwise in accordance with the ministerial guidelines (section 15 of the BC Act).

Migratory species include birds that are subject to an agreement between the government of Australia and the governments of Japan (JAMBA), China (CAMBA) or The Republic of Korea (ROKAMBA), and fauna subject to the *Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals* (Bonn Convention), an environmental treaty under the United Nations Environment Program. Migratory species listed under the BC Act are a subset of the migratory animals, that are known to visit Western Australia, protected under the international agreements or treaties, excluding species that are listed as Threatened species.

CD **Species of special conservation interest (conservation dependent fauna)**

Species of special conservation need that are dependent on ongoing conservation intervention to prevent it becoming eligible for listing as threatened, and listing is otherwise in accordance with the ministerial guidelines (section 14 of the BC Act).

Currently only fauna are listed as species of special conservation interest.

OS **Other specially protected species**

Species otherwise in need of special protection to ensure their conservation, and listing is otherwise in accordance with the ministerial guidelines (section 18 of the BC Act).

Currently only fauna are listed as species otherwise in need of special protection.

Priority species

P **Priority species**

Priority is not a listing category under the BC Act. The Priority Flora and Fauna lists are maintained by the department and are published on the department's website.

All fauna and flora are protected in WA following the provisions in Part 10 of the BC Act. The protection applies even when a species is not listed as threatened or specially protected, and regardless of land tenure (State managed land (Crown land), private land, or Commonwealth land).

Species that may possibly be threatened species that do not meet the criteria for listing under the BC Act because of insufficient survey or are otherwise data deficient, are added to the Priority Fauna or Priority Flora Lists under Priorities 1, 2 or 3. These three categories are ranked in order of prioritisation for survey and evaluation of conservation status so that consideration can be given to potential listing as threatened.

Species that are adequately known, meet criteria for near threatened, or are rare but not threatened, or that have been recently removed from the threatened species list or conservation dependent or other specially protected fauna lists for other than taxonomic reasons, are placed in Priority 4. These species require regular monitoring.

Assessment of priority status is based on the Western Australian distribution of the species, unless the distribution in WA is part of a contiguous population extending into adjacent States, as defined by the known spread of locations.

P1 **Priority One - Poorly-known species – known from few locations, none on conservation lands**

Species that are known from one or a few locations (generally five or less) which are potentially at risk. All occurrences are either: very small; or on lands not managed for conservation, for example, agricultural or pastoral lands, urban areas, road and rail reserves, gravel reserves and active mineral leases; or otherwise under threat of habitat destruction or degradation.

Species may be included if they are comparatively well known from one or more locations but do not meet adequacy of survey requirements for threatened listing and appear to be under immediate threat from known threatening processes. These species are in urgent need of further survey.

P2 **Priority Two - Poorly-known species – known from few locations, some on conservation lands**

Species that are known from one or a few locations (generally five or less), some of which are on lands managed primarily for nature conservation, for example, national parks, conservation parks, nature reserves and other lands with secure tenure being managed for conservation.

Species may be included if they are comparatively well known from one or more locations but do not meet adequacy of survey requirements for threatened listing and appear to be under threat from known threatening processes. These species are in urgent need of further survey.

P3 **Priority Three - Poorly-known species – known from several locations**

Species that are known from several locations and the species does not appear to be under imminent threat or from few but widespread locations with either large population size or significant remaining areas of apparently suitable habitat, much of it not under imminent threat.

Species may be included if they are comparatively well known from several locations but do not meet adequacy of survey requirements and known threatening processes exist that could affect them. These species need further survey.

P4 **Priority Four - Rare, Near Threatened and other species in need of monitoring**

(a) Rare. Species that are considered to have been adequately surveyed, or for which sufficient knowledge is available, and that are considered not currently threatened or in need of special protection but could be if present circumstances change. These species are usually represented on conservation lands.

(b) Near Threatened. Species that are considered to have been adequately surveyed and that are close to qualifying for vulnerable but are not listed as a conservation dependent specially protected species.

(c) Species that have been removed from the list of threatened species or lists of conservation dependent or other specially protected species, during the past five years for reasons other than taxonomy.

(d) Other species in need of monitoring.

Principles for clearing native vegetation:

(a) Native vegetation should not be cleared if it comprises a high level of biological diversity.

(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.

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

(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.

(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.

(f) Native vegetation should not be cleared if it is growing in, or in association with, an environment associated with a watercourse or wetland.

(g) Native vegetation should not be cleared if the clearing of the vegetation is likely to cause appreciable land degradation.

(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.

(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.

(j) Native vegetation should not be cleared if the clearing of the vegetation is likely to cause, or exacerbate, the incidence or intensity of flooding.