



GOVERNMENT OF  
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

## CLEARING PERMIT

*Granted under section 51E of the Environmental Protection Act 1986*

<b>Purpose Permit number:</b>	CPS 6003/1
<b>Permit Holder:</b>	Gunbower (WA) Pty Ltd
<b>Duration of Permit:</b>	31 May 2014 to 31 May 2019

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 improving agricultural efficiency.

**2. Land on which clearing is to be done**

Lot 3993 on Plan 112413 (Minding 6315)

**3. Area of Clearing**

The Permit Holder shall not clear more 200 native trees within the area hatched yellow on attached Plan 6003/1.

**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*

1 May 2014



## 1. Application details

### 1.1. Permit application details

Permit application No.: 6003/1  
Permit type: Purpose Permit

### 1.2. Proponent details

Proponent's name: Gunbower (WA) Pty Ltd

### 1.3. Property details

Property: LOT 3993 ON PLAN 112413 (House No. 1167 ARTHUR MINDING 6315)  
Local Government Area: Shire of Wagin  
Colloquial name:

### 1.4. Application

Clearing Area (ha)	No. Trees	Method of Clearing	For the purpose of:
	200	Mechanical Removal	Cropping

### 1.5. Decision on application

Decision on Permit Application: Grant  
Decision Date: 1 May 2014

## 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
Mapped Beard vegetation association 1023 is described as medium woodland; York gum, wandoo and salmon gum (Eucalyptus salmonophloia) (Shepherd et al 2001).	The clearing of 200 trees within Lot 3993 on Plan 112413, Minding is for the purpose of improving agricultural cropping efficiency.	Completely Degraded: No longer intact; completely/almost completely without native species (Keighery 1994)	The area under application consists of scattered paddocks trees including Eucalyptus sp., York Gum and Wandoo. No understorey or midstorey species were present (DER 2014).

## 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 clearing of 200 trees within Lot 3993 on Plan 112413, Minding is for the purpose of improving agricultural efficiency.

The application area consists of scattered paddock trees, with no understorey or mid storey present.

A number of priority flora species have been recorded within the local area (10 kilometre radius), the closest records being located approximately six kilometres from the application area. The closest records are mid or understorey species. Given the lack of understorey and mid storey within the application area it is unlikely the proposed clearing will impact upon priority flora species.

A number of fauna species listed as rare or likely to become extinct under the Wildlife Conservation Act 1950 have been recorded within a 20 kilometre radius including: Forest Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo (*Calyptorhynchus banksii* subsp. *naso*), Carnaby's Cockatoo (*Calyptorhynchus latirostris*), Chuditch (*Dasyurus geoffroii*) and Red-tailed Phascogale (*Phascogale calura*) (DEC 2007-). The application area consists of scattered paddock trees which may provide habitat for avian and arboreal fauna including the Forest Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo and Carnaby's Cockatoo. However, a site inspection undertaken by the Department of Environment Regulation (DER 2014) did not identify any trees suitable for breeding by the black cockatoo species. The trees under application did not contain hollows or contained hollows that were too small for breeding.

The local area (10 kilometre radius) has been extensively cleared for agricultural purposes with approximately 10 per cent of vegetation remaining.

Although the local area has been extensively cleared the majority of the vegetation under application consists of scattered paddock trees, therefore the vegetation proposed to be cleared is not likely to comprise a high level of biological diversity.

Given the above the clearing as proposed is not likely to be at variance to this principle.

**Methodology** References:  
- DEC (2007-)  
- DER (2014)

GIS Databases:  
- SAC Biodata sets - accessed March 2014  
- Wagin 50cm Orthomosaic - Landgate 2006

**(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 number of fauna species listed as rare or likely to become extinct under the Wildlife Conservation Act 1950 have been recorded within a 20 kilometre radius including: Forest Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo (*Calyptorhynchus banksii* subsp. *naso*), Carnaby's Cockatoo (*Calyptorhynchus latirostris*), Chuditch (*Dasyurus geoffroii*) and Red-tailed Phascogale (*Phascogale calura*) (DEC 2007-). The application area consists of scattered paddock trees which may provide habitat for avian and arboreal fauna including the Forest Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo, Carnaby's Cockatoo and Red-tailed Phascogale.

Carnaby's Cockatoo and Forest Red-tailed Black-Cockatoos are listed as endangered under the Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act). Carnaby's Cockatoo nest in large hollows of eucalyptus trees predominately salmon gum or wandoo (Department of Environment 2014).

A site inspection undertaken by DER (2014) did not identify any trees suitable for breeding by the black cockatoo species. The trees under application did not contain hollows or contained hollows that were too small for breeding.

Red-tailed Phascogale preferred habitats are *Allocasuarina* woodlands with hollow-containing eucalypts (Wandoo) and *Gastrolobium*. This species prefers vegetation that is unburnt for a long time, which provides continuous canopy cover to assist their arboreal habits. Given the lack of understorey and midstorey and that the proposed clearing is for scattered paddock trees the vegetation proposed to be cleared is not likely to provide significant habitat for this species.

Given the lack of understorey within the application area the clearing as proposed is not likely to contain significant habitat for ground dwelling fauna.

Given the above the clearing as proposed is not likely to be at variance to this principle.

**Methodology** References:  
- DEC (2007-)  
- DER (2014)  
- Department of Environment (2014)

GIS Databases:  
- SAC Biodata sets - accessed March 2014  
- Wagin 50cm Orthomosaic - Landgate 2006

**(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**

The closest record of rare flora is located approximately one kilometre south west of the application area.

The species is found to the west of Wagin and Katanning, in deep white to yellow-brown sands near river systems. It generally inhabits areas of tall scrub of candle banksia, acorn banksia and tea-tree.

Given the lack of understorey and midstorey present with the application area, the vegetation proposed to be cleared is not likely to be necessary for the continued existence of rare flora.

Therefore the clearing as proposed is not likely to be at variance to this principle.

**Methodology** References:  
- Brown et al (1998-)

GIS Databases:  
 - SAC Biodata sets - accessed March 2014

**(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 (TEC) located within the local area (10 kilometre radius).

The closest TEC is 'Perched wetlands of the Wheatbelt region with extensive stands of Casuarina obesa and Melaleuca strobophylla' located approximately 58 kilometres north east of the application area.

Given the distance to the closest TEC and the completely degraded (Keighery 1994) condition of the vegetation under application the clearing as proposed is not likely to comprise or be necessary for the maintenance of a TEC.

Therefore the clearing as proposed is not likely to be at variance to this principle.

**Methodology** References:  
 - Keighery (1994)

GIS Databases:  
 - SAC Biodata sets - accessed March 2014

**(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 area under application is located within the Avon Wheatbelt Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation of Australia (IBRA) bioregion. This IBRA bioregion has approximately 19 per cent of its Pre European vegetation extent remaining (Government of Western Australia 2013).

The application area is mapped as Beard Vegetation Associations 1023 which retains approximately 11 per cent of its pre-European extent within the Avon Wheatbelt IBRA bioregion (Government of Western Australia 2013).

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).

Digital imagery (Wagin 50cm Orthomosaic - Landgate 2006) indicates that the local area (10 kilometre radius) surrounding the area under application retains approximately 10 per cent vegetation cover.

The vegetation remaining with the local area, bioregion and vegetation association 1023 retain less than the 30 per cent threshold and therefore the area under application is considered to be located within an extensively cleared landscape.

The area under application consists of scattered paddock trees and does not contain a high level of biodiversity or significant fauna habitat and therefore is not considered to be a significant remnant.

Therefore the proposed clearing is not likely to be at variance to this principle.

	Pre-European (ha)	Current Extent (ha)	Remaining (%)	Extent in DEC Managed Lands (%)
IBRA Bioregion* Avon Wheatbelt	9,517,110	1,778,407	19	10
Shire* Shire of Wagin	194,619	28,927	15	9
Beard Vegetation Association in Bioregion* 1023	1,522,676	166,817	11	10

\* Government of Western Australia (2013)

**Methodology** Reference:  
 - Commonwealth of Australia (2001)  
 - EPA (2000)  
 - Government of Western Australia. (2013)

GIS Database:  
- Wagin 50cm Orthomosaic - Landgate 2006  
- NLWRA, Current Extent of Native  
- Sac bio datasets - accessed March 2014

**(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**

A major non-perennial watercourse is located within close proximity (approximately 20 metres) to the area under application. A number of small minor watercourses intersect the application area.

The application area consists of scattered paddock trees and therefore the clearing of individual large trees is not likely to include any riparian vegetation.

Therefore the clearing proposed is not likely to be at variance to this principle.

**Methodology** GID Databases:  
- Hydrology, linear

**(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 area under application has been mapped as soil types Ub90 and Va64. Soil type Ub90 is described as generally rolling to hilly country with tors; lateritic mesas and buttes on some interfluvial areas: chief soils are hard neutral and acidic yellow mottled soils sometimes containing ironstone gravels (Northcote et al 1960 - 1968).

Soil type Va64 is described as plains--shallow flat-bottomed valley plains in which some salinity is usually evident: chief soils are hard alkaline and neutral yellow mottled soils (Northcote et al 1960 - 1968).

Given the vegetation under application is in a completely degraded (Keighery 1994) condition and the proposed clearing is for 200 scattered paddock trees the clearing as proposed is not likely to cause appreciable land degradation.

Therefore the clearing as proposed is not likely to be at variance to this principle.

**Methodology** References:  
- Keighery (1994)  
- Northcote et al (1960 - 1968)

GIS Databases:  
- Soils, statewide

**(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 closest conservation area is an unnamed nature reserve (A Class) located approximately 6.5 kilometres north east of the application area.

Given the distance to the closest conservation area and the completely degraded (Keighery 1994) condition of the vegetation under application it is unlikely the clearing as proposed will have an impact on the environmental values of any conservation area.

Therefore the clearing as proposed is not likely to be at variance to this principle.

**Methodology** References:  
- Keighery (1994)

GIS Database:  
- DEC Tenure

**(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**

A major non-perennial watercourse is located within close proximity (approximately 20 metres) to the area under application. A number of small minor watercourses intersect the application area.

Given the close proximity of the proposed clearing to a major watercourse and that a number of minor watercourses intersect the application area the removal of native vegetation may increase sedimentation into the watercourses. However given the proposed clearing is for scattered paddock trees impacts are likely to be short term and minimal and the clearing as proposed is not likely to cause deterioration in the quality of surface water.

Groundwater salinity ranges from 14000 - 35000 milligrams per litre of Total Dissolved Solids (TDS) which is considered to be 'Highly Saline'. Given the area under application is in a completely degraded (Keighery 1994) condition and consists of scattered paddock trees the clearing as proposed is not likely to cause deterioration in the quality of underground water.

Given the above the clearing as proposed is not likely to be at variance to this principle.

**Methodology** References:  
- Keighery (1994)

GIS Databases:  
- Hydrology, linear  
- Groundwater salinity

**(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 vegetation proposed to be cleared is in completely degraded (Keighery 1994) condition and consists of scattered paddock trees. Therefore the clearing as proposed is not likely to cause or exacerbate the incidence or intensity of flooding.

Therefore the clearing as proposed is not likely to be at variance to this principle.

**Methodology** References:  
- Keighery (1994)

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

**Comments** There are no aboriginal sites of significance located within the application area.

**Methodology** The application is zoned rural under the local town planning scheme.  
References:  
- EPA (2000)

GIS Databases:  
- Aboriginal Sites of Significance

#### 4. References

- Brown A., Thomson-Dans C. and Marchant N. (1998). Western Australia's Threatened Flora, Department of Conservation and Land Management, Western Australia.
- Commonwealth of Australia (2001) National Objectives and Targets for Biodiversity Conservation 2001-2005, Canberra.
- DEC (2007 - ) NatureMap: Mapping Western Australia's Biodiversity. Department of Environment and Conservation. URL: <http://naturemap.dec.wa.gov.au/>. Accessed March 2014
- Department of Environment (2014) Australian Threatened Species - Carnaby's Black-Cockatoo. <http://www.environment.gov.au/system/files/resources/ea3be9ea-3007-48e2-9231-ce73fea6fde8/files/black-cockatoo.pdf>
- DER (2014) Site Inspection Report for Clearing Permit Application CPS 6003/1. Site inspection undertaken 10 April 2014 Department of Environment Regulation, Western Australia (DER Ref: A749926).
- 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, Western Australia.
- 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.
- Northcote, K. H. with Beckmann G G, Bettenay E., Churchward H. M., van Dijk D. C., Dimmock G. M., Hubble G. D., Isbell R. F., McArthur W. M., Murtha G. G., Nicolls K. D., Paton T. R., Thompson C. H., Webb A. A. and Wright M. J. (1960-68): 'Atlas of Australian Soils, Sheets 1 to 10, with explanatory data'. CSIRO and Melbourne University Press: Melbourne.
- 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.