



1. Application details

1.1. Permit application details

Permit application No.: 622/1
Permit type: Area Permit

1.2. Proponent details

Proponent's name: Dampier Salt Limited

1.3. Property details

Property: AML70/253
Local Government Area: Shire Of Roebourne
Colloquial name: Millstream Rd - AML70/253

1.4. Application

Clearing Area (ha)	No. Trees	Method of Clearing	For the purpose of:
33.78		Mechanical Removal	Extractive Industry

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 589: Mosaic Short bunch grassland - savanna / grass plain (Pilbara) / Hummock grasslands, grass steppe; soft spinifex (Hopkins et al., 2001)	The area under application comprises of four smaller areas totalling 33.78 Ha. The vegetation community in the areas under application is a sparse heath consisting predominantly of the spinifex <i>Triodia basedowii</i> and of <i>Acacia bivenosa</i> , with varying levels of Buffel grass (<i>Cenchrus ciliaris</i>) infestation throughout. Much of the area has been degraded by previous activity including the acquisition of materials used in the construction and maintenance of levee banks and roads within the Dampier Salt operation. No declared rare flora has been recorded at the site (Dampier Salt Ltd, Permit application, 2005).	Good: Structure significantly altered by multiple disturbance; retains basic structure/ability to regenerate (Keighery 1994)	The description of the vegetation under application was obtained after a site visit by DoE Officer Kate Barr on Friday 15 July 2005. During clearing in an adjacent area permitted under an NOI, approximately 2Ha of the area under assessment was cleared without authorisation or exemption. Dampier Salt Ltd immediately stopped works and advised Kate Barr from DoE. This clearing was confirmed during a site visit by Kate Barr on 15/07/2005. A letter of warning was issued to Dampier Salt Ltd in response to the incident (Trim KT15358).

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 four small areas of 15.4Ha, 5Ha, 9.4Ha and 3.65Ha of degraded remnant vegetation. The existing vegetation community is a sparse heath consisting predominantly of <i>Triodia basedowii</i> and <i>Acacia bivenosa</i> with varying levels of Buffel grass (<i>Cenchrus ciliaris</i>) infestation throughout. Much of the area has historically been used for the acquisition of materials used in the construction and maintenance of levee banks and roads within the operation and has been previously rehabilitated. Therefore, the area under application is unlikely to be of higher biodiversity significance than the vegetation in the local region.
Methodology	Permit application; Site visit (15/07/2005).

(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

The area under application has been disturbed by previous extractive activity including the acquisition of materials used in the construction and maintenance of levee banks and roads within Dampier Salt operations. Therefore links, such as wildlife corridors, between the proposed area to be cleared and other native vegetation are significantly degraded. Thus, the vegetation is unlikely to support significant habitat for fauna populations.

Methodology Aerial Photograph;
Permit application;
Site visit (15/07/2005).

(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 area under assessment is degraded and has historically been used for the acquisition of materials used in the construction and maintenance of levee banks and roads within the operation. No rare flora has been recorded at this location. Therefore, the site under application is unlikely to be necessary for the continued in situ existence of significant flora.

Methodology Permit Application;
Site visit (15/07/2005).

(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 known Threatened Ecological Communities recorded within a 50km radius of the area under application. Further to this, past and present operations in the areas adjacent to the area under application would have significantly impacted on flora and fauna habitat values. Therefore, the site under application is unlikely to be necessary for the maintenance of a threatened ecological community.

Methodology GIS Database: Threatened Ecological Communities - CALM 15/7/03;
Site visit (15/07/2005).

(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 State Government is committed to the National Objectives and Targets for Biodiversity Conservation which includes a target that prevents clearance of ecological communities with an extent below 30% of that present pre-European settlement (Department of Natural Resources and Environment, 2002).

reserves/CALM-	Pre-European area (ha) *	Current extent (ha) *	Remaining %*	Conservation Status**	% in managed land
IBRA Bioregion - Pilbara	17,944,694	17,944,694	~100%	Least concern	15.17
Shire of Roebourne	No information available				
Beard vegetation associations - 589	848,201	848,201	~100%	Least concern	1.6

* Shepherd et al. (2001)

** Department of Natural Resources and Environment (2002)

Vegetation complexes within this application are above 30% representation. The vegetation of the site is a component of Beard Vegetation Association 589 (Hopkins et al, 2001), of which there is ~100% of the pre-European extent still remaining (Shepherd et al, 2001). The vegetation type is therefore of 'least concern' for biodiversity conservation (Department of Natural Resources and Environment, 2002).

Methodology Hopkins et al (2001);
Shepherd et al (2001);
Department of Natural Resources and Environment (2002);
GIS Database: Pre-European Vegetation - DA 01/01.

(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

The areas under application is adjacent to a saline coastal flat which is utilised by Dampier Salt for their solar salt ponds under DOE licence number 7182. These saline coastal flats have been highly altered as solar salt ponds with water movement controlled for the Dampier Salt operations by levee banks and pumps. One creek line runs between two of the areas under application however levee banks have been constructed to minimise surface runoff into the solar ponds.

It is therefore unlikely that clearing the area under application will be at variance to this principle.

Methodology GIS Database:
- Hydrology, linear - DOE 1/02/04;
- Lakes 250K - GA;
- Rivers 250K - GA;
Aerial Photograph.

(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 likely land degradation risks posed by the clearing of vegetation are minimal as the areas are already degraded by past acquisition of materials for road and levee bank construction. Erosion will be confined within the area of the borrow pits, and rehabilitated in accordance with Dampier Salt Ltd procedures once operations are completed in this area.

Methodology Permit application;
Site visit (15/07/2005);
Aerial Photograph;
GIS Database:
- Soils, Statewide - DA 11/99;
- Groundwater Salinity, Statewide - 22/02/00.

(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

There are no reserves or conservation areas within a 20km radius of the proposed site.

Methodology GIS Database: CALM Managed Land and Waters - 1/06/04

(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 proposed clearing area is not in a Public Drinking Water Source Area. Runoff from the site is controlled by a network of levee banks to ensure stormwater is directed around the settling and recirculation ponds.

Therefore, the clearing of vegetation adjacent to the Dampier Salt solar salt ponds is unlikely to significantly impact on surface water quality or groundwater resources in the area.

Methodology GIS Database:
- Public Drinking Water source Areas (PDWSA's) -DOE 29/11/04;
- Hydrography, linear (hierachy) - DOE 13/4/05;
Site visit (15/07/2005).

(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 average rainfall of the area is ~400mm. Runoff from the site is controlled by a network of levee banks. It is therefore unlikely that the removal of the vegetation from the four areas under application will have a significant influence on the run-off and flood regimes in the local area.

Methodology GIS Database: Rainfall, Mean Annual - BOM 30/09/01;
Site visit (15/07/2005).

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

Comments

No objections have been received in relation to the clearing of native vegetation in the area under application.

The vegetation to be cleared is within Mineral Lease 253 SA granted in accordance with the Dampier Solar Salt Industry Agreement Act 1967 and the Mining Act 1908.

There are three Native Title Claims over the area under application by the Ngaluma / Injibandi peoples, the Wong-goo-tt-oo peoples and the Yaburara / Mardudhunera peoples. However, the Mineral Lease has been granted so therefore the granting of a clearing permit does not constitute a future act under the Native Title Act 1993.

No sites are listed in the areas under application on the Interim register on the Aboriginal Sites of Significance or the Register of Heritage Places.

This application is not at variance to the EPA advice given under s38 (CRN 33867 and CRN 36089).

There are no other RIWI Act Licences or Works Approvals that will affect the area that has been applied to clear. This application is not at variance to the conditions set by EP licence number 7182.

Methodology Permit application;
GIS Database:
- Aboriginal Sites of Significance - DIA 04/07/02;
- Register of Heritage Places - DPI 14/7/03;
- Native Title Claims - DLI 19/12/04;
Site visit (15/07/2005).

4. Assessor's recommendations

Purpose	Method	Applied area (ha)/ trees	Decision	Comment / recommendation
Extractive Industry	Mechanical Removal	33.78	Grant	Assessable criteria have been addressed and no objections were raised. The Assessing Officer therefore recommends that the permit should 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.
- Fraser S (2002) Dampier Salt Limited: Environmental Management System. Environmental Operational Procedure: Borrow Pit Rehabilitation. Document No. SF/114 Revision No. 1. Unpublished Document. DoE Reference: TRIM KNI956
- 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)