



CLEARING PERMIT

Granted under section 51E of the Environmental Protection Act 1986

PERMIT DETAILS

Area Permit Number: 6440/1

File Number: 2015/000127-1

Duration of Permit: From 14 November 2015 to 14 November 2017

PERMIT HOLDER

Staughton Farm Pty Ltd

LAND ON WHICH CLEARING IS TO BE DONE

Lot 23 on Deposited Plan 73306, EGANU

AUTHORISED ACTIVITY

The Permit Holder shall not clear more than 3.89 hectares of native vegetation within the area hatched yellow on attached Plan 6440/1.

CONDITIONS

Nil.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "M Warnock", written over a horizontal line.

M Warnock
SENIOR MANAGER
CLEARING REGULATION

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

15 October 2015

Plan 6440/1



Legend

-  Localities
-  Cadastre Flattened - 50K
-  Imagery
-  Clearing Instruments Activities
-  Local Government Authority



1:12,037

(Approximate when reproduced at A4)

GDA 94 (Lat/Long)

Geocentric Datum of Australia 1994

M Warnock Date *15/10/15*

M Warnock

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



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WESTERN AUSTRALIA
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1. Application details

1.1. Permit application details

Permit application No.: 6440/1
Permit type: Area Permit

1.2. Applicant details

Applicant's name: Staughton Farm Pty Ltd

1.3. Property details

Property: LOT 23 ON PLAN 73306, EGANU
Colloquial name:
Local Government Authority: COOROW, SHIRE OF
DER Region: Midwest
DPaW District: MOORA
LCDC:
Localities: EGANU

1.4. Application

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

1.5. Decision on application

Decision on Permit Application: Granted
Decision Date: 15 October 2015

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 697 is described as Shrublands; scrub-heath on lateritic sandplain in the southern Geraldton Sandplain Region (Shepherd et al, 2001).	The proposed clearing consists of three areas totalling 3.89 hectares within Lot 23 on Deposited Plan 73306, Eganu and is for the purpose of cropping.	Very Good; Vegetation structure altered; obvious signs of disturbance (Keighery 1994). To Good: Structure significantly altered by multiple disturbance; retains basic structure/ability to regenerate (Keighery 1994)	The vegetation condition was established from a flora survey conducted in September 2015 (Bellamy 2015). The proposed clearing consists of two separate areas. Area A is 1.59 hectares and consists of remnant Banksia scrub that has been grazed by stock (Bellamy 2015). It is considered that Area A is in a good to very good (Keighery 1994) condition. Area B is 2.3 hectares in size and consists of remnant Banksia scrub that is accessible by stock (Bellamy 2015). It is considered that this area is in a good to very good (Keighery 1994) condition.

3. Assessment of application against clearing principles

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

Comments **Proposed clearing is not likely to be at variance to this Principle**
The proposed clearing consists of two separate areas. Area A is 1.59 hectares and consists of remnant vegetation that has been grazed by stock (Bellamy 2015). It is considered that Area A is in a good to very good (Keighery 1994) condition. Area B is 2.3 hectares in size and consists of remnant vegetation that is accessible by stock (Bellamy 2015). It is considered that this area is in a good to very good (Keighery 1994) condition.

The application areas are surrounded by conservation areas including Pinjarrega Nature Reserve, Watheroo National Park, Capamauro Nature Reserve and Alexander Morrison National Park and both of the application areas are directly adjacent to Land for Wildlife sites.

The application areas occur in a good to very good (Keighery 1994) condition and are both connected through

contiguous vegetation to large native vegetation remnants, associated with the Capamauro Nature Reserve. It is considered that this conservation area contains a higher level of biodiversity than the application areas given that the application areas have been exposed to grazing and occur adjacent to agricultural land. The application area does not provide significant fauna habitat.

No Priority Ecological Communities (PEC) are recorded within the local area (10 kilometre radius) of the proposed clearing. It is unlikely that the application areas contain PECs.

The application area is within the Geraldton Sandplains bioregion, which is recognised as containing very high biological diversity. This bioregion is known for proteaceous shrub heaths, rich in endemic species on sandy undulating earths (Desmond and Chant, 2001). Numerous priority flora species occur within the local area (10 kilometre radius). Potential habitat for two priority two flora species, *Loxocarya gigas* (P2) and *Calytrix platycheiridia* (P2) may occur within the application areas (Parks and Wildlife 2015a). In addition, the proposed clearing may also impact on habitat for one rare orchid species (Parks and Wildlife 2015a). A targeted flora survey undertaken in September 2015 of the application areas did not identify rare or priority flora species within the application areas (Bellamy 2015).

Given the above, the proposed clearing is not likely to be at variance to this Principle.

Methodology

References

- Bellamy (2015)
- Desmond and Chant (2001)
- Keighery (1994)
- Parks and Wildlife (2015a)
- GIS Databases
- SAC Bio datasets (18 February 2015)

(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

Proposed clearing is not likely to be at variance to this Principle

Nine conservation significant fauna species have been recorded within the local area (10 kilometre radius) being; Eastern Great Egret (*Ardea modesta*), Woma (*Aspidites ramsayi*), Carnaby's Cockatoo (*Calyptorhynchus latirostris*), Western Spiny-tailed Skink (*Egernia stokesii* subsp. *Badia*), Malleefowl (*Leipoa ocellata*), Ghost Bat (*Macroderma gigas*), Tammar Wallaby (*Macropus eugenii* subsp. *derbianus*), Rainbow Bee eater (*Merops ornatus*) and the Blue-billed Duck (*Oxyura australis*) (Parks and Wildlife 2007-).

There is approximately 40 percent of Pre-European vegetation remaining within the local area (10 kilometre radius of the application). The application areas are connected through contiguous native vegetation to numerous conservation areas including Capamauro Nature Reserve, Pinjarrega Nature Reserve, Watheroo National Park and Alexander Morrison National Park and both of the application areas are directly adjacent to Land for Wildlife Sites.

Given the relatively small size of the application areas, exposed to grazing and that these areas occur on the edge of large native vegetation remnants, it is not considered that the proposed clearing will impact on significant fauna habitat.

The proposed clearing is not likely to be at variance to this Principle.

Methodology

References

- Keighery (1994)
- Parks and Wildlife (2007-)
- GIS Database
- Sac Bio datasets (18 February 2015)

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

Comments

Proposed clearing is not likely to be at variance to this Principle

There are four rare flora species recorded within the local area (20 kilometre radius). The first rare flora species occurs on gravelly brown sand or loam supporting health. All known populations occur within road reserves or firebreaks (Brown et al. 1998).

The second rare flora species occurs around saline lakes under melaleuca scrub (Brown et al. 1998).

The third rare flora species occurs in grey clayey sand or red sandy loam in damp situations and along margins of salt lakes (Western Australian Herbarium 1998-).

A flora survey undertaken in September 2015 indicated that the areas under application consist of Banksia scrub in a good to very good (Keighery 1994) condition, occurring on pale yellow sands (Bellamy 2015). The application area is unlikely to provide habitat for the three species discussed above (Parks and Wildlife 2015a).

The fourth rare flora species grows in yellow sandy soil, in clearings among thick scrub or low, dense heath (Hopper and Brown 2008). Habitat for this species may occur within the application areas as this species can produce thousands of fine, wind dispersed seed that is capable of re-establishing plants within old disturbed areas (Parks and Wildlife 2015a and 2015b). This species is endemic to Western Australia and is known from 16 populations. The total population of mature, flowering plants is estimated to be 120 and the extent of occurrence is approximately 6300 kilometres squared (Hopper and Brown 2008).

A target flora survey undertaken in September 2015 of the application areas did not identify rare or priority flora species (Bellamy 2015). Previous Land for Wildlife flora surveys of the application area undertaken in 2012 also did not identify rare flora within the property (Bellamy 2015).

Given the above, the proposed clearing is not likely to be at variance to this Principle.

- Methodology** **References**
 -Bellamy (2015)
 -Brown et al. (1998)
 -Hopper and Brown (2008)-Keighery (1994)
 -Parks and Wildlife (2015a)
 -Parks and Wildlife (2015b)
 -Staughton Farm Pty Ltd (2015)
 -Western Australia Herbarium (1998-)
GIS Databases
 -SAC Bio datasets (18 February 2015)
 -Soils, statewide

(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** **Proposed clearing is not likely to be at variance to this Principle**
 The closest recorded Threatened Ecological Community (TEC) to the application area is the 'Herbaceous plant assemblages on bentonite lakes' which occurs 15 kilometres south east of the application area.
- Given the distance to the nearest recorded TEC and that the application area is not associated with bentonite lakes, the proposed clearing is not likely to impact on or include this TEC. The proposed clearing is not likely to be at variance to this Principle.

- Methodology** **GIS Databases**
 -Sac Biodatasets (18 February 2015)

(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** **Proposed clearing is not likely to be at variance to this Principle**
 The local area (10 kilometre radius) is approximately 40 per cent vegetated and the Shire of Coorow in which the application occurs has approximately 47 per cent of pre-European vegetation extent remaining.

The vegetation under application has been mapped as Beard vegetation association 697, of which there is approximately 39 per cent pre-European extent remaining within the Geraldton Sandplains 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). The mapped vegetation association within the application areas retains more than the national recommended level.

The application areas are not considered to be significant remnants of native vegetation as they do not contain significant fauna habitat or high biodiversity. In addition, the local area (10 kilometre radius) is 40 per cent vegetated and therefore, the proposed clearing does not occur within an extensively cleared area.

The proposed clearing is not likely to be at variance to this Principle.

	Pre-European (ha)	Current Extent (ha)	Remaining (%)	Extent in Parks and Wildlife Managed Lands (%)
IBRA Bioregion*				
Geraldton Sandplains	1,501,209	587,889	39.1	33.3
Shire*				

Shire of Coorow	67,698	32,088	47.4	50.7
Beard Vegetation Association in Bioregion*				
697	50,867	19,595	38.5	40.6

Methodology **References**
 -Commonwealth of Australia (2001)
 -Parks and Wildlife (2015a)
 -*Government of Western Australia (2014)
 -Keighery (1994)
GIS Databases:
 -Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation of Australia
 -Pre-European Vegetation
 -SAC Bio datasets (18 February 2015)
 -NWLRA, Extent of Native Vegetation

(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 **Proposed clearing is not likely to be at variance to this Principle**
 The closest watercourse to the application area is the Coonderoo River occurring 1.6 kilometres to the east. The closest wetlands to the application area occur one kilometre to the south east and two kilometres north of the application area.

 Given the distance to the nearest wetlands and watercourse, the proposed clearing is not likely to impact vegetation growing in association with a wetland or watercourse.

 The proposed clearing is not likely to be at variance to this Principle.

Methodology **GIS Databases**
 -Hydrography, linear

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

Comments **Proposed clearing is not likely to be at variance to this Principle**
 The application area occurs on the Launer 1 landform subsystem which consists of plains with occasional low dunes and depressions. Yellow and pale deep sands, gravelly deep sands, some sandy earths and sandy gravels (Commissioner of Soil and Land Conservation 2015).

 The soils and slope of land within the application areas are not considered to have a high risk of wind or water erosion. In addition, the proposed clearing is not likely to cause an increase in salinity or eutrophication (Commissioner of Soil and Land Conservation 2015).

 The proposed clearing is not likely to cause appreciable land degradation and is not likely to be at variance to this Principle.

Methodology
References
 - Commissioner of Soil and Land Conservation (2015)
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 **Proposed clearing is not likely to be at variance to this Principle**
 There are numerous conservation areas within the local area (10 kilometre radius) of the proposed clearing. These include Capamauro Nature Reserve located 180 metres south and 200 metres north of the application areas, respectively. Pinjarrega Nature Reserve occurs 4.4 kilometres south and Watheroo National Park occurs 10 kilometres south of the application areas.

 The application areas are adjacent to two Land for Wildlife sites however are separated by a firebreak from these conservation areas. The proposed clearing is not likely to impact the environmental values of these conservation areas.

The proposed clearing is not likely to increase fragmentation of the Land for Wildlife sites given the location of the clearing on the edge of these conservation areas.

The proposed clearing is not likely to be at variance to this Principle.

Methodology GIS Databases
-Parks and Wildlife Managed Land
-Parks and Wildlife Regional Parks
-Land For Wildlife
-SAC Bio datasets (18 February 2015)

(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 Proposed clearing is not likely to be at variance to this Principle

The closest watercourse to the application area is the Coonderoo River occurring 1.6 kilometres to the east. The closest wetlands to the application area occur one kilometre to the south east and two kilometres north of the application area.

Given the distance to the nearest wetland and watercourse, the proposed clearing is not likely to cause a measurable deterioration in surface water. The groundwater salinity levels mapped within the application areas are classed a medium with 14000-35000 milligrams of salt per litre.

The Commissioner of Soil and Land Conservation (2015) has advised that the proposed clearing is unlikely to cause eutrophication or increase salinity of surface water or groundwater.

The proposed clearing is not likely to be at variance to this Principle.

Methodology References
-Commissioner of Soil and Land Conservation (2015)
GIS Databases
-Hydrography, linear

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

Comments Proposed clearing is not likely to be at variance to this Principle

The closest watercourse to the application area is the Coonderoo River occurring 1.6 kilometres to the east. The closest wetlands to the application area occur one kilometre to the south east and two kilometres north of the application area.

Given the distance to the nearest wetlands and watercourse, and the large native vegetation remnants occurring in close proximity to the application areas, it is not likely that the proposed clearing will cause or exacerbate the incidence or intensity of flooding.

The proposed clearing is not likely to be at variance to this Principle.

Methodology GIS Databases
-Hydrography, linear

Planning instruments and other relevant matters.

- Comments** A letter was sent to the applicant on 16 April 2015 requesting a flora survey of the application area. A flora survey was received from the applicant on 25 September 2015.
- The applicant has amended the application area from 17.71 hectares to 3.89 hectares as the applicant believes that the majority of the clearing is exempt under Regulation 5, Item 14 of the Environmental Protection (Clearing of Native Vegetation) Regulations 2004.
- The applicant has advised that Area A (1.59 hectares) is a wedge of bush jutting out from remnant bush into cropping land and clearing will allow better agricultural use of the paddock. Area B (2.3 hectares) occurs on good quality agricultural soil adjoining a larger area of remnant bush along the southern property boundary (Staughton Farm Pty Ltd, 2015).
- The applicant has also advised that under Regulation 5, item 10 of the Environmental Protection (Clearing of Native Vegetation) Regulations 2004, clearing for fence lines will also occur on the property to enable new fencing to be installed. These areas are less than five hectares and will be cleared over the next two years (Staughton Farm Pty Ltd, 2015).
- The Commissioner of Soil and Land Conservation (2015) has advised that the land proposed to be cleared is of moderate capability for cropping.
- Department of Water (2015) has advised that no applications to construct a well or abstract groundwater have been received by Department of Water for this property and a water licence has not been issued for this property.
- The application areas are zoned rural under Shire of Coorow Town Planning Scheme.

- Methodology** References
- Staughton Farm Pty Ltd (2015)
 - Commissioner of Soil and Land Conservation (2015)
 - EPA (2000)
 - Department of Water (2015)
- GIS Databases
- Town Planning Scheme Zones
 - Aboriginal sites of significance

4. References

- Bellamy P.J (2015) Flora Survey for Clearing Application CPS 6440/1 – Staughton Farm Pty Ltd. Lot 9923 Launer Road, Coorow. DER ref A981176
- Brown A., Thomson-Dans C. and Marchant N.(1998). Western Australia's Threatened Flora, Department of Conservation and Land Management, Western Australia.
- Commissioner of Soil and Land Conservation (2015) Land Degradation advice for Clearing application CPS 6440/1 – Staughton Farm Pty Ltd – Lot 23 on Plan 73306 Eganu - Commissioner for Soil and Land Conservation. Department of Agriculture and Food. DER ref A885125
- Commonwealth of Australia (2001) National Objectives and Targets for Biodiversity Conservation 2001-2005, Canberra.
- Department of Water (2015) Direct Interest Response received for CPS 6440/1 - Staughton Farm Pty Ltd - Lot 23 on Plan 73306 Eganu. DER ref A884633
- Desmond and Chant (2001). Geraldton Sandplains 2 (GS2 - Geraldton Hills subregion). In May, J.E. and McKenzie, N.L. (eds), *A biodiversity audit of Western Australia's biogeographical subregions in 2002*. Department of Conservation and Land Management.
- 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 (2014) 2014 Statewide Vegetation Statistics incorporating the CAR Reserve Analysis (Full Report). Current as of June 2014. WA Department of Parks and Wildlife, Perth.
- Hopper and Brown (2008) nom. inval. Approved Conservation Advice (s266B of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*) for *Drakaea concolor* (Kneeling Hammer-orchid). Department of Environment. Australian Commonwealth.
- Keighery, B.J. (1994) Bushland Plant Survey: A Guide to Plant Community Survey for the Community. Wildflower Society of WA (Inc). Nedlands, Western Australia.
- Parks and Wildlife (2007 -) NatureMap: Mapping Western Australia's Biodiversity. Department of Environment and Conservation. URL: <http://naturemap.dec.wa.gov.au/>.
- Parks and Wildlife (2015a) Flora advice for CPS 6440/1 – Staughton Farm Pty Ltd – Lot 23 on Plan 73306 Eganu. Department of Parks and Wildlife. DER ref A888460
- Parks and Wildlife (2015b) Further flora advice for CPS 6440/1 – Staughton Farm Pty Ltd – Lot 23 on Plan 73306 Eganu. Department of Parks and Wildlife. DER ref A890074
- 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.
- Staughton Farm Pty Ltd (2015) Clearing Permit Application CPS 6440/1 and supporting documentation – Lot 23 on Deposited Plan 73306 Eganu. DER ref A874726, A874728, A874731 and A859652
- Western Australian Herbarium (1998-) FloraBase - The Western Australian Flora. Department of Parks and Wildlife. <http://florabase.dpaw.wa.gov.au/>