Department of Energy, Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety

GOVERNMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Clearing Permit Decision Report

1. Application details and outcomes

1.1. Permit application details

Permit number:	6457/4
Permit type:	Purpose Permit
Applicant name:	Silver Lake (Integra) Pty Limited
Application received:	12 November 2024
Application area:	230 hectares
Purpose of clearing:	Mineral Production and Associated Activities
Method of clearing:	Mechanical Removal
Tenure:	Mining Lease 25/71
	Mining Lease 25/236
	Mining Lease 25/371
Location (LGA area/s):	City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder
Colloquial name:	Santa Deposit Project

1.2. Description of clearing activities

Silver Lake (Integra) Pty Limited proposes to clear up to 230 hectares of native vegetation within a boundary of approximately 892.9 hectares, for the purpose of mineral production and associated activities. The project is located approximately 70 kilometres southeast of Kalgoorlie-Boulder, within the City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder.

Clearing permit CPS 6457/1 was granted by the Department of Mines and Petroleum (now the Department of Energy, Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety) on 26 March 2015 and was valid from 18 April 2015 to 18 April 2020. The permit authorised the clearing of up to 84 hectares of native vegetation within a boundary of approximately 101 hectares, for the purpose of mineral production.

CPS 6457/2 was granted on 14 November 2019, amending the permit to extend the permit duration to 30 April 2025. The amount authorised to clear, and the permit boundary remained unchanged.

CPS 6457/3 was granted on 7 April 2022, amending the permit to increase the amount authorised to clear to 220 hectares, increase the permit boundary to approximately 892.9 hectares, and add Mining Leases M 25/236 and M 25/371 to the permit.

On 12 November 2024, the permit holder applied to amend CPS 6457/3 to extend the permit duration by five years, to 30 April 2030, and increase the amount authorised to clear to 230 hectares.

The application is to allow for the expansion of the existing mine site and for ongoing operations (Silver Lake (Integra) Pty Ltd, 2024a). The most recent annual clearing report stated approximately 187.92 hectares has been cleared under CPS 6457/3 as of the 30 June 2024 (Silver Lake (Integra) Pty Ltd, 2024b).

1.3. Decision on application and key considerations

Decision:	Grant
Decision date:	3 April 2025
Decision area:	230 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 Energy, Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety (DEMIRS) advertised the application for a public comment for a period of 21 days, and one submission was received.

In making this decision, the Delegated Officer had regard for the site characteristics (Appendix B), relevant datasets (Appendix E), supporting information provided by the applicant including the results of biological surveys, 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;
- impacts to a priority ecological community;
- impacts to a timber reserve;
- the loss of riparian vegetation; and
- potential land degradation in the form of water erosion.

After consideration of the available information, as well as the applicant's minimisation and mitigation measures (see 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 conditions that were imposed on clearing permit CPS 8329/1 are considered adequate to manage the impacts of clearing:

- take hygiene steps to minimise the risk of the introduction and spread of weeds;
- staged clearing to minimise erosion; and
- vegetation management condition to minimise the clearing to riparian vegetation where practicable and to maintain surface water flows and/or reinstate water flow downstream into existing natural drainage lines.

The assessment has not changed since the assessment for CPS 6457/3, expect in the case of principles (a) and (h). The Delegated Officer determined that the proposed amendment to increase the amount authorised to clear from 220 hectares to 230 hectares, and extend the permit duration by five years, to 30 April 2030 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)
- *Mining Act 1978* (WA)
- *Rights in Water and Irrigation Act 1914* (RIWI Act)

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)
- Guidance for the Assessment of Environmental Factors – *Terrestrial Fauna Surveys for Environmental Impact Assessment in Western Australia* (EPA, 2004a)
- Guidance for the Assessment of Environmental Factors – *Terrestrial Flora and Vegetation Surveys for Environmental Impact Assessment in Western Australia* (EPA, 2004b)
- Technical guidance – *Flora and Vegetation Surveys for Environmental Impact Assessment* (EPA, 2016b)
- Technical guidance – *Terrestrial Fauna Surveys for Environmental Impact Assessment* (EPA, 2016a)
- Technical guidance – *Terrestrial Fauna Surveys for Environmental Impact Assessment* (EPA, 2020)

3. Detailed assessment of application

3.1. Avoidance and mitigation measures

Silver Lake's Environmental Management Plan was last reviewed in 2021, which outlined the following measures to manage impacts (Silver Lake Resources Limited, 2021):

- clearing the minimum necessary native vegetation for safe construction and operation of the Project
- managing all new ground disturbance through the internal Surface Disturbance Permit (SDP) process

- clearing of the P3 PEC vegetation will be avoided where possible and kept to the minimum approved area if unavoidable
- conducting operations in accordance with the Conservation Management Plan
- minimising disturbed areas and progressively rehabilitating to avoid colonisation by weed species and dust generation
- controlling off-road vehicle use with no driving permitted off designated routes
- all earthmoving vehicles are inspected to be clear of weeds, soil and vegetative matter before mobilisation, including submission of signed Weed Hygiene checklist
- using provenance seed in the rehabilitation programme
- using dribble bars on all water trucks to limit spray drift impact on surrounding vegetation
- adhering to procedures to prevent and control the spread of weeds
- educating personnel about dust management and clearing within the Randell Timber Reserve will be included in the induction and training programs
- providing inductions and ongoing education about minimising impacts to fauna
- implementing sound hygiene practices including appropriate disposal of wastes to avoid attracting feral species
- using trained reptile removers to remove trapped reptiles away from the impact area
- installing fauna egress matting in each corner of turkey nests/dams and also fencing if required
- SLR will consult with the pastoralist regarding feral animal management including appropriate goat management in consultation with DBCA if required
- minimising impact on natural surface water flows where possible by designing the Project to avoid existing drainage lines
- where impacts to drainage lines are unavoidable:
    - constructing diversion drains and bunding to divert natural surface water flow around landforms
    - reinforcing landform toes with competent waste rock at this location to reduce erosion impacts
    - lining drains with competent NAF waste rock in erosion prone locations
    - installing designed floodways and/or culverts at drainage line road crossings
    - modify drainage management if ponding occurs
- installing dewatering pipelines next to infrastructure ensuring potential adverse impacts on the surrounding environment is minimised
- inspecting mine site infrastructure and surrounding areas after significant rainfall to identify any pooling or damage done as a result of surface flows
- leaving vegetation corridors between mining infrastructure areas, where possible, to provide soil stability and maintain existing surface water flows.

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.

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 clearing permit decision report CPS 6457/3.

The additional proposed clearing area (220 hectares to 230 hectares) will further impact the 'Mount Belches *Acacia quadrimarginea* / *Ptilotus obovatus* banded ironstone community' priority ecological community. Given the extent of the additional clearing and the avoid and mitigation measures proposed and conditioned on the permit, the clearing is not considered to have result in significant impacts to this community. The additional proposed clearing area is not likely to contain locally / regionally significant flora or fauna species.

3.2.1. Biological values and conservation areas (priority ecological community and timber reserve) - Clearing Principles (a) and (h)

Assessment

The application area is mapped within the 'Mount Belches *Acacia quadrimarginea* / *Ptilotus obovatus* banded ironstone community' priority ecological community (PEC) (P3) (GIS Database). This PEC is only known from this one location, and is primarily restricted to the Randall Timber Reserve, making it a unique area (DBCA, 2023; 2024b; GIS Database).

Flora and vegetation surveys conducted by Outback Ecology (Outback Ecology, 2009a; 2013) assessed an approximately 3,215 hectare area, of which 848.5 hectares coincides with the application area. These surveys determined approximately 256.2 hectares represent the PEC, 45.4 hectares of which is located within the application area.

The extent of the PEC should encompass all vegetation units associated with the banded ironstone formation and outwash geology (DBCA, 2024b). The areas mapped by Outback Ecology (Outback Ecology, 2009a; 2013) were restricted to the banded ironstone hills and ridges and did not consider the outwash geology potentially supporting associated PEC vegetation units.

Botanica (Botanica, 2023) undertook a targeted survey to define the boundary of the PEC in August 2023. The assessment determined approximately 167.7 hectares of the application area represents the PEC, making the extent of the PEC considerably larger when compared to what was mapped by Outback Ecology (Outback Ecology, 2009a; 2013). Given Botanica

(Botanica, 2023) considered the outwash geology as potentially supporting the PEC, it is reasonable to include the extended areas as the PEC.

Silver Lake (Silver Lake (Integra) Pty Ltd, 2024a) have stated that a total of 14 hectares (inclusive of previous impacts) of the PEC will be impacted to expand their existing operations, some of which will be impacted from clearing under this permit and other clearing permits associated with broader project. An impact of 14 hectares represents approximately 0.5% of the full extent of the PEC (3,221.5 hectares) mapped by Botanica (Botanica, 2023).

Approximately 99% of the application area is located within the Randell Timber Reserve (GIS Database). The condition of the vegetation in the Randell Timber Reserve has been previously degraded by stock and feral animals (Botanica, 2023; Outback Ecology, 2009a; 2013) and historical mineral production has occurred within the application area (GIS Database).

Advice from DBCA (DBCA, 2024a) indicates that the additional proposed clearing is not expected to negate the conservation value of Randell Timber Reserve, given there are already mine voids and disturbance present and the expansion relates to historically disturbed areas.

Ten introduced flora species were identified within and surrounding the application area (Botanica, 2017; Outback Ecology, 2009a; 2013). Weeds have the potential to significantly change the dynamics of a natural ecosystem and lower the biodiversity of an area.

Conclusion

The proposed impact to 'Mount Belches *Acacia quadrimarginea* / *Ptilotus obovatus* banded ironstone community' priority ecological community is unlikely to be significant given the total direct impact across multiple clearing permits will be 14 hectares and represents a small portion of the extent of the PEC.

The increase of 10 hectares of clearing is not likely to have a significant additional impact on the environmental values of Randell Timber Reserve, given the reserve has been previously degraded by mining and grazing, and the proposed clearing is to occur predominantly adjacent to existing roads and infrastructure.

Secondary impacts to both the PEC and Randell Timber Reserve have the potential to result in further modification and should be mitigated (DBCA, 2024b). Cumulative impacts should also be taken into account should Silver Lake wish to expand their existing operations in the future. Continued expansion of mining operations within the reserve will result in decreasing conservation value, as much of the value of the reserve is linked to the representation of the PEC. Continued clearing and degradation of the PEC should be avoided and minimised where possible.

Conditions

To address the above impacts, the following management measures will be required as conditions on the clearing permit:

- avoid, minimise to reduce the impacts and extent of clearing; and
- take hygiene steps to minimise the risk of the introduction and spread of weeds.

3.3. Relevant planning instruments and other matters

The clearing permit amendment application was advertised on 14 January 2025 by the Department of Energy, Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety inviting submissions from the public. One submission received in relation to this application.

There is one native title claim (WC2020/005 - Kakarra Part A) over the area under application (DPLH, 2025). This claim has been registered with the National Native Title Tribunal on behalf of the claimant group. 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 no registered Aboriginal Sites of Significance within the application area (DPLH, 2025). 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.

Other relevant authorisations required for the proposed land use include:

- A Mining Proposal / Mine Closure Plan 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. Details of public submissions

Summary of comments	Consideration of comments
One public submission was received with comments regarding native title rights, regarding the right to use and access the land, and potential impacts to flora and fauna reliant on the native vegetation may impede on the rights, interests, cultural responsibilities and practices asserted by the native title claimants (Submission, 2025).	Comments will be considered during the assessment of the proposed clearing.

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 (GIS Database). It is surrounded by large areas of uncleared land, mining operations, and salt lake systems, which are common throughout the Eastern Goldfields subregion of the Coolgardie bioregion (GIS Database). It forms a small part of the Great Western Woodlands and is partially located within Mt Monger pastoral station (GIS Database). Approximately 99% of the local area (50 kilometre radius from the area proposed to be cleared) remains uncleared (GIS Database). It is located adjacent to CPS 6329/2, 7244/5, 8051/2, 8329/2, and 10286/1, which are also held by Silver Lake (GIS Database).
Ecological linkage	The application area is not considered a significant ecological linkage. The vegetation immediately surrounding the application area and the majority of the region remains uncleared (GIS Database).
Conservation areas	The application area is partially located within the Randell Timber Reserve (approximately 886.6 hectares) (GIS Database). The Randell Timber Reserve spans approximately 16,310 hectares (GIS Database). The nearest legislated nature reserve is the Cardunia Rocks Nature Reserve located approximately 33.7 kilometres northeast of the application area (GIS Database).
Vegetation description	The vegetation of the application area is broadly mapped as the following Beard vegetation associations: 501: Medium woodland; goldfields blackbutt; and 506: Succulent steppe with woodland; salmon gum & bluebush (GIS Database). Numerous flora and vegetation surveys have been conducted over various parts of the application area by Botanica Consulting (Botanica) and Outback Ecology during March and October 2012, January 2021, and August 2023. The following vegetation types were recorded within the application area (Botanica, 2021; 2023; Outback Ecology, 2013): **CLP-EW/MWS1**: Low woodland of *Eucalyptus salmonophloia* / open tree mallee of *Eucalyptus moderata* over open low scrub of *Maireana sedifolia* / *Atriplex nummularia* and dwarf scrub of *Sclerolaena parviflora* / *Sida spodochroma* / open low grass of *Austrostipa nitida* on clay-loam plain. **HS-EW1**: Low woodland of *Eucalyptus lesouefii* over scrub of *Eremophila interstans* subsp. *virgata* and dwarf scrub of *Atriplex nummularia* on hillslope. **CLP-COW1**: Open low woodland of *Casuarina pauper* over low scrub and dwarf scrub on clay-loam plain. **DD-EW1**: Low woodland of *Eucalyptus salmonophloia* over open low scrub and dwarf scrub on drainage depression. **HS-AOW1**: Low open woodland of *Acacia collegialis* over low scrub of *Acacia tetragonophylla / Dodonaea lobulata* and dwarf scrub of *Maireana sedifolia* and *Ptilotus obovatus* on hillslope. **CoOW**: *Casuarina obesa* (low) open woodland over *Eremophila alternifolia* (tall) scattered shrubs over *Maireana sedifolia* ± *Atriplex nummularia* low open shrubland. **EIW**: *Eucalyptus lesouefii* (± *Eucalyptus salmonophloia*) woodland over *Eremophila alternifolia* scattered low trees over *Maireana sedifolia* scattered low open shrubland. **AbEaTSL**: *Acacia burkittii* ± *Eremophila alternifolia* low woodland to tall shrubland over *Maireana triptera*, *Maireana sedifolia* low open shrubland.

<table>
<tr><th>Characteristic</th><th>Details</th></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>
Eg(Ec)TM: Eucalyptus griffithsii (± Eucalyptus celastroides) tree mallee or woodland over Maireana sedifolia low open shrubland over Austrostipa spp. and Sida spodochroma scattered grasses/herbs.

EsEmW: Eucalyptus salmonophloia ± Eucalyptus moderata woodland over Maireana sedifolia, Maireana triptera, Atriplex nummularia low (open) shrubland over Sclerolaena spp., Austrostipa spp. and Sida spodochroma scattered grasses/herbs.

EgTM: Eucalyptus griffithsii tree mallee over Maireana pyramidata open low heath.

AqEaTSL: Acacia quadrimarginea ± Eremophila alternifolia low open woodland over Maireana trichoptera, ± Maireana sedifolia and Ptilotus obovatus low shrubland over Enneapogon spp. scattered grasses.

AnTSL: Acacia aneura ± Eremophila alternifolia low open woodland over Maireana sedifolia, Maireana triptera and Ptilotus obovatus low open shrubland over Tripogonella loliiformis, Enneapogon spp. and Austrostipa spp. scattered grass.

EaLOW: Eremophila alternifolia low open woodland over Maireana sedifolia low open shrubland over Austrostipa spp. scattered grass.

EsEcOW: Eucalyptus salmonophloia open woodland over Eucalyptus celastroides open tree mallee over Tecticornia disarticulata, Maireana sedifolia, Maireana pyramidata low open shrubland.
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<tr><td>Vegetation condition</td><td>
The application area is considered to be in very good, good, degraded, and completely degraded condition (Botanica, 2021; 2023; Outback Ecology, 2009a; 2013; Trudgen, 1991). The vegetation structure and composition has been altered by livestock and feral animals, and historical mineral production (Botanica, 2019a; 2021; 2023; Outback Ecology, 2009a; 2013; GIS Database).

The full Trudgen (1991) condition rating scale is provided in Appendix D.

A total of 10 weed species have been recorded within the application area and surrounds from a number of surveys (Botanica, 2021; 2023; Outback Ecology, 2009a; 2013):

Centaurea melitensis
Citrullus colocynthis
Dittrichia graveolens
Medicago minima
Oligocarpus calendulaceus
Oncosiphon suffruticosum
Pentameris airoides
Salvia verbenaca
Solanum nigrum
Sonchus oleraceus

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<tr><td>Climate and landform</td><td>
The climate of the Eastern Goldfields subregion is described as arid to semi-arid, with the nearest weather station recording an average rainfall of approximately 265.2 millimetres per year (BoM, 2025; CALM, 2002).

The application area is mapped at elevations of 320-360 metres Australian height datum (GIS Database). The landforms present within the application area can be broadly described as gently undulating calcareous stony or gravelly plains, low rises, and low greenstone hills with ironstone ridges (DPIRD, 2025; Waddell and Galloway, 2023a; 2023b; GIS Database).
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<tr><td>Soil description</td><td>
The soils within the application area are broadly mapped as (DPIRD, 2025; Waddell and Galloway, 2023a; 2023b; GIS Database):
<table>
<tr><th>LAND SYSTEM</th><th>DESCRIPTION</th></tr>
<tr><td>Woolibar (571.8 ha)</td><td>calcareous loamy earth, calcareous stony soil, shallow cracking clay, alkaline red deep loamy duplex, calcareous heavy loamy earth</td></tr>
<tr><td>Zed (122 ha)</td><td>red loamy earth, stony soil, friable non-cracking clay</td></tr>
<tr><td>Lawrence (95.8 ha)</td><td>stony soil, red shallow loam, friable non-cracking clay, red deep sandy duplex</td></tr>
<tr><td>Gundockerta (90 ha)</td><td>calcareous loamy earth, red shallow sandy duplex, stony soil, friable non-cracking clay, red-brown hardpan shallow loam</td></tr>
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Characteristic	Details
Land degradation risk	Saline plains and lower alluvial plains of the Woolibar land system are very susceptible to water erosion, particularly where perennial shrub cover is substantially reduced, or the soil surface is disturbed (DPIRD, 2025; Waddell and Galloway, 2023a; 2023b; GIS Database). Narrow drainage tracts of the Lawrence land system are susceptible to water erosion, particularly where perennial shrub cover has been substantially reduced and/or the soil surface is disturbed (DPIRD, 2025; Waddell and Galloway, 2023a; 2023b; GIS Database). The Gundockerta land system is susceptible to water erosion where not protected by a stony mantle, particularly in areas where perennial vegetation is significantly reduced or the soil surface has been disturbed (DPIRD, 2025; Waddell and Galloway, 2023a; 2023b; GIS Database).
Waterbodies	Several minor non-perennial watercourses intersect from north to south of the application area (GIS Database). These tributaries begin to the north and flow south into an unnamed salt lake system to the south of the application area (GIS Database).
Hydrogeography	The application area is not within any legislated surface water area (GIS Database). The nearest Public Drinking Water Source Area is the Menzies Water Reserve, located approximately 179 kilometres northwest of the application area (GIS Database). The application area is located within the Goldfields Groundwater Area proclaimed under the *Rights in Water and Irrigation Act 1914* (GIS Database). The mapped groundwater salinity is 14,000-35,000 total dissolved solids milligrams per litre, which is described saline water quality (GIS Database).
Flora	There are records of 23 priority flora species within a 50 kilometre radius of the application area (GIS Database). Of these species there are eight priority 1, three priority 2, nine priority 3, and three priority 4 species (GIS Database).
Ecological communities	The application area is mapped within the 'Mount Belches *Acacia quadrimarginea* / *Ptilotus obovatus* banded ironstone community' priority ecological community (P3) (GIS Database). This PEC is primarily restricted to the Randall Timber Reserve (GIS Database).
Fauna	There are records of nine conservation significant fauna species within a 50 kilometre radius of the application area (GIS Database). Of these species one is listed as vulnerable, one other specially protected species, three priority 4, and four migratory species (GIS Database).
Fauna habitat	There were three broad fauna habitats recorded within the application area (Botanica, 2021; Terrestrial Ecosystems, 2012): • Open eucalypt woodland with a mixed understory of scattered shrubs and chenopods • Clay-loam plain - Eucalypt woodland • Hillslope - Eucalypt woodland

B.2. Vegetation extent

	Pre-European area (ha)	Current extent (ha)	Extent remaining (%)	Current extent in all DBCA managed land (ha)	Current extent in all DBCA Managed Land (proportion of pre-European extent) (%)
IBRA Bioregion - Coolgardie	12,912,204	12,648,491	~97	2,114,349.37	16.37
Beard vegetation associations - State					
501	48,022	47,889	~99	6,766.43	14.09
506	98,187	98,050	~99	12,572.20	12.80
Beard vegetation associations - Coolgardie bioregion					
501	43,938	43,805	~99	6,766.43	15.40
506	98,187	98,050	~99	12,572.20	12.80

Government of Western Australia (2019)

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: The area proposed to be cleared does not contain locally or regionally significant flora, fauna, or habitats based on numerous biological surveys undertaken within the application area (Botanica, 2019a; 2019b; 2020a; 2021; 2023; Outback Ecology, 2013; Terrestrial Ecosystems, 2012). A portion of the application area is mapped as the 'Mount Belches *Acacia quadrimarginea* / *Ptilotus obovatus* banded ironstone community' priority ecological community (P3).	May be at variance *changed from CPS 6457/3*	Yes *Refer to Section 3.2.1, above.*
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 does not contain significant habitat necessary for the maintenance of conservation significant fauna. The habitats found within the application area are common and widespread throughout the Coolgardie bioregion (Botanica, 2020a; 2021; Outback Ecology, 2009b; Terrestrial Ecosystems, 2012). The loss of an additional 10 hectares of fauna habitat is unlikely to significant impact conservation significant fauna species.	Not likely to be at variance *as per CPS 6457/3*	No
Principle (c): *"Native vegetation should not be cleared if it includes, or is necessary for the continued existence of, threatened flora."* Assessment: There are no known records of threatened flora within the application area or within a 50 kilometre radius (GIS Database). None of the flora and vegetation surveys undertaken identified any threatened flora species (Botanica, 2017; 2019b; 2020a; 2020b; 2021; 2023; Outback Ecology, 2009a; 2013). Many of the vegetation types recorded within the application area are common and widespread within the region and is unlikely to provide suitable habitat for threatened flora species (Botanica, 2017; 2019a; 2019b; 2020a; 2020b; 2021; 2023; Outback Ecology, 2009a; 2013).	Not likely to be at variance *as per CPS 6457/3*	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 known state or federally listed threatened ecological communities (TECs) located within or in close proximity to the application area (GIS Database). The nearest known threatened ecological community is the federally listed 'Proteaceae dominated kwongkan shrublands of the southeast coastal floristic province of Western Australia' (EN), located approximately 214 kilometres south of the application area (GIS Database). Flora and vegetation surveys of the application area and surrounds did not record vegetation that could be representative of a TEC (Botanica, 2019b; 2020a; 2021; 2023; Outback Ecology, 2013).	Not likely to be at variance *as per CPS 6457/3*	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 application area falls within the Coolgardie bioregion of the Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation for Australia (IBRA) (GIS Database). Approximately 97% of the pre-European vegetation still exists in the IBRA Coolgardie Bioregion (Government of Western Australia, 2018). The application area is broadly mapped as Beard vegetation associations 501: Medium woodland; goldfields blackbutt; and 506:	Not at variance *as per CPS 6457/3*	No

Assessment against the clearing principles	Variance level	Is further consideration required?
Succulent steppe with woodland; salmon gum & bluebush (GIS Database). Approximately 99% of the pre-European extent of each of these vegetation associations remains uncleared at both the state and bioregional level (Government of Western Australia, 2018). The application area does not represent a significant remnant of native vegetation in an area that has been extensively cleared.		
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: Approximately 99% of the application area is located within Randell Timber Reserve (GIS Database).	May be at variance *changed from CPS 6457/3*	Yes *Refer to Section 3.2.1, above.*
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: Flora and vegetation surveys of the application area recorded a number of vegetation types that grow in association with the non-perennial watercourses that intersect the application area (Botanica, 2019b; 2020a; 2021; 2023; Outback Ecology, 2013). **EgTM** **Description**: *Eucalyptus griffithsii* tree mallee over *Maireana pyramidata* open low heath. **Habitat**: Ephemeral drainage line of orange-brown clay with occasional quartz and calcrete rocks up to five centimetres in size. **AnTSL** **Description**: *Acacia aneura* ± *Eremophila alternifolia* low open woodland over *Maireana sedifolia*, *Maireana triptera* and *Ptilotus obovatus* low open shrubland over *Tripogonella loliiformis*, *Enneapogon* sp. and *Austrostipa* sp. scattered grass. **Habitat**: Broad valley and minor drainage lines between low ridges on light or orange-brown clay with up to five percent cover of ironstone, calcrete and quartz rocks up to eight centimetres in size. **DD-EW1** Low woodland of *Eucalyptus salmonophloia* over open low scrub and dwarf scrub on drainage depression. Potential impacts to vegetation growing in association with these drainage lines may be minimised by the continued implementation of a watercourse management condition.	At variance *as per CPS 6457/3*	No
Principle (g): *"Native vegetation should not be cleared if the clearing of the vegetation is likely to cause appreciable land degradation."* Assessment: The application area lies within the Woolibar, Lawrence, and Gundockerta land systems (DPIRD, 2025; Waddell and Galloway, 2023a; 2023b; GIS Database). These land systems are all prone to water erosion where perennial shrub cover is substantially reduced, or the soil surface is disturbed (DPIRD, 2025; Waddell and Galloway, 2023a; 2023b; GIS Database). Potential land degradation as a result of the proposed clearing may be minimised by the continued implementation of a staged clearing condition and a watercourse management condition.	May be at variance *as per CPS 6457/3*	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:	Not likely to be at variance *as per CPS 6457/3*	No

Assessment against the clearing principles	Variance level	Is further consideration required?
Given no permanent watercourses or Public Drinking Water Sources Areas are recorded within the application area or within close proximity, the proposed clearing is unlikely to impact surface or ground water quality (GIS Database).		
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: The mapped topographic contours in the surrounding area do not indicate the proposed clearing is likely to contribute to increased incidence or intensity of flooding (GIS Database). The landform of the local area is gently undulating, and water is likely to follow the natural gradient south of the application area and flow into the unnamed salt lake system (GIS Database). Non-perennial watercourses in the area are dry for most of the year, only flowing briefly immediately following significant rainfall. Temporary localised flooding may occur briefly following these rainfall events; however, the proposed clearing is unlikely to increase the incidence or intensity of natural flooding events.	Not likely to be at variance *as per CPS 6457/3*	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.
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. Sources of information

E.1. GIS databases

Publicly available GIS Databases used (sourced from www.data.wa.gov.au and Geoscience Australia):

- Cadastre (Polygon) (LGATE-217)
- Clearing Instruments Activities (Areas Approved to Clear) (DWER-076)
- Clearing Instruments Conditions (Areas Subject to Conditions) (DWER-077)
- Clearing Instruments Proposals (Areas Applied to Clear) (DWER-075)
- 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)
- Groundwater Salinity Statewide (DWER-026)
- IBRA Vegetation Statistics
- IBSA Survey Details (DWER-118)
- Local Government Area (LGA) Boundaries (LGATE-233)
- Medium Scale Topo Contour (Line) (LGATE-015)
- Medium Scale Topo Water (Line) (LGATE-018)
- Mineral Field Boundaries (DMIRS-005)
- Native Title (Determination) (LGATE-066)
- Native Title (Fed Court) (LGATE-005)
- Native Title (ILUA) (LGATE-067)
- Native Title (NNTT) (LGATE-004)
- Native Vegetation Extent (DPIRD-005)
- Pre-European Vegetation (DPIRD-006)
- Public Drinking Water Source Areas (DWER-033)
- Reserves (LGATE-227)
- RIWI Act, Groundwater Areas (DWER-034)
- RIWI Act, Rivers (DWER-036)
- RIWI Act, Surface Water Areas and Irrigation Districts (DWER-037)
- Soil Landscape Mapping - Best Available (DPIRD-027)
- Soil Landscape Mapping - Project Areas (DPIRD-070)
- Soil Landscape Mapping - Rangelands (DPIRD-063)
- Soil Landscape Mapping - Systems (DPIRD-064)
- Soil Landscape Mapping - Western Australia attributed by WA Soil Group (DPIRD-076)
- Soil Landscape Mapping - Zones (DPIRD-017)
- Townsites (LGATE-248)
- WA Now Aerial Imagery
- Watercourse Lines; GEODATA TOPO 250K Series 3

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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Botanica (2019a) Desktop Flora and Fauna Assessment: Mt Belches Over Head Powerline Route. Prepared by Botanica Consulting Pty Ltd, for Silver Lake Resources Limited, February 2019.

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Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) (2004b) Guidance for the Assessment of Environmental Factors - Terrestrial Flora and Vegetation Surveys for Environmental Impact Assessment in Western Australia, No. 51, June 2004.

Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) (2016a) Technical Guidance - Flora and Vegetation Surveys for Environmental Impact Assessment. http://www.epa.wa.gov.au/sites/default/files/Policies_and_Guidance/EPA%20Technical%20Guidance%20-%20Flora%20and%20Vegetation%20survey_Dec13.pdf

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4. 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
DER	Department of Environment Regulation, Western Australia (now DWER)
DMIRS	Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety, Western Australia (now DEMIRS)
DMP	Department of Mines and Petroleum, Western Australia (now DEMIRS)
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* (Federal 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.