



CLEARING PERMIT

Granted under section 51E of the Environmental Protection Act 1986

PERMIT DETAILS

Area Permit Number: 6489/1
File Number: DER2015/000349-1
Duration of Permit: From 15 August 2015 to 15 August 2017

PERMIT HOLDER

Rhonda Lynette Morcombe

LAND ON WHICH CLEARING IS TO BE DONE

Lot 794 on Deposited Plan 201777, Scaddan
Lot 956 on Deposited Plan 202839, Scaddan
Lot 957 on Deposited Plan 202839, Scaddan

AUTHORISED ACTIVITY

The Permit Holder shall not clear more than seven hectares of native vegetation within the areas shaded yellow on attached Plan 6489/1.

CONDITIONS

Nil.

A handwritten signature in black ink, 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*

16 July 2015

Plan 6489/1

6290000



Legend

 Areas approved to clear

 LGA

 Roads

 Virtual Mosaic

 Goldfields Cadastre (Land Parcels)



1:21,967

MGA 84

Geocentric Datum of Australia 1994

M Warnock Date: 16/7/15

M Warnock

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



GOVERNMENT OF
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

6290000

6290000

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1. Application details

1.1. Permit application details

Permit application No.: 6489/1
Permit type: Area Permit

1.2. Proponent details

Proponent's name: Mrs Rhonda Morcombe

1.3. Property details

Property: LOT 957 ON DEPOSITED PLAN 202839, SCADDAN
LOT 956 ON DEPOSITED PLAN 202839, SCADDAN
LOT 794 ON DEPOSITED PLAN 201777, SCADDAN

Colloquial name:
Local Government Authority: ESPERANCE, SHIRE OF
DER Region: Goldfields
DPaW District: ESPERANCE
LCDC: ESPERANCE
Localities: SCADDAN

1.4. Application

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

1.5. Decision on application

Decision on Permit Application: Granted
Decision Date: 16 July 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 1516 is described as Shrublands; mallee scrub, black marlock & Forrest's marlock (Shepherd et al. 2001).	The clearing of seven hectares of native vegetation within Lot 794 on Deposited Plan 201777 and Lots 956 and 957 on Deposited Plan 202839, Scaddan, for the purpose of cropping.	Completely Degraded: No longer intact; completely/almost completely without native species (Keighery 1994) To Good: Structure significantly altered by multiple disturbance; retains basic structure/ability to regenerate (Keighery 1994).	The description and condition of the vegetation under application was determined by a site inspection undertaken by the Department of Environment Regulation (DER 2015).

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 application is to clear seven hectares of native vegetation within Lot 794 on Deposited Plan 201777 and Lots 956 and 957 on Deposited Plan 202839, Scaddan, for the purpose of cropping. The clearing will enable more efficient passes of wide farm machinery. The application area consists of numerous, individual trees or small parcels of vegetation, scattered over approximately 1600 hectares. The vegetation is in a completely degraded to good (Keighery 1994) condition (DER 2015) having been subjected to past grazing by sheep.

Numerous priority flora species have been recorded within the local area (10 kilometre radius), all of which are located within the same vegetation association and soil type as the application area. The closest is a Priority 1 species, approximately one kilometre from the application area. The Department of Parks and Wildlife (Parks

and Wildlife) (2015) has advised that these species are not likely to occur within the application area, given the sparse understorey.

One rare flora species has been recorded within the local area. This tree species has been recorded in habitat consistent with that of the application area. A targeted survey for this particular species did not locate any individuals of this species within the application area (Esperance Wildflower Society Inc. 2015).

Numerous Priority 3 ecological communities are located within the local area. One is located approximately 360 metres east, another approximately 540 metres south, of the application area. Both are described as 'Proteaceae Dominated Kwongan Shrubland'. This community is dominated by flowering shrub species from the Proteaceae family (e.g. Banksias, Grevilleas, Hakeas) (DotE 2014). The area under application does not contain vegetation representative of this community.

The proposed clearing is not likely to impact on significant habitat for indigenous fauna given that it is in excess of 45 kilometres from the coast, no closer than 200 metres to saline lakes and consists of numerous, scattered, small land parcels, virtually devoid of understorey (DER 2015).

Given the above, the application area is not likely to comprise a high level of biological diversity.

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

Methodology References:
DER (2015)
DotE (2014)
Esperance Wildflower Society Inc. (2015)
Keighery (1994)
Parks and Wildlife (2015)

GIS Database:
- SAC Biodatasets - accessed July 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 **Proposal is not likely to be at variance to this Principle**

No fauna species listed as rare or likely to become extinct under the Wildlife Conservation Act 1950 have been recorded within the local area (10 kilometre radius). One Priority 4 species, the Hooded Plover (*Thinornis rubricollis tregellasi*), has been listed within the local area (Parks and Wildlife 2007-). This species nests on beaches and on the shores of salt lakes (Raines and Blyth 2002).

The application area is at least 45 kilometres from the coast. Although there are several saline lakes scattered amongst the parcels of vegetation under application, none of these lakes is closer than approximately 200 metres to the application area. Given this, and the absence of understorey (DER 2015), the proposed clearing is not likely to be at variance to this principle.

Methodology References:
DER (2015)
Parks and Wildlife (2007-)
Raines and Blyth (2002)

GIS Database:
- SAC Biodatasets - accessed July 2015

(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**

One rare flora species has been recorded within the local area (10 kilometre radius). This tree species has been recorded in habitat consistent with that of the application area.

This species occurs on sandy clay and grey sand near salt lakes and saline flats in open mallee shrub, often with dense scrub beneath (Parks and Wildlife 2015).

A targeted survey for this particular species did not locate any individuals of this species within the application area (Esperance Wildflower Society Inc. 2015).

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

Methodology References:
Esperance Wildflower Society Inc. (2015)
Parks and Wildlife (2015)

GIS Database:
- SAC Biodatasets - accessed July 2015

(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**
No threatened ecological communities are mapped within the local area (10 kilometre radius).
Therefore, the clearing as proposed is not likely to be at variance to this principle.

Methodology GIS Database:
- SAC Biodatasets - accessed July 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 **Proposal is not likely to be at variance to this Principle**
The areas under application are located within the Mallee Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation of Australia (IBRA) bioregion. This IBRA bioregion has approximately 56 per cent of its pre-European vegetation extent remaining (Government of Western Australia 2013).
The vegetation under application is mapped as Beard Vegetation Association 1516 which has approximately 47 per cent of its pre-European extent remaining within the Mallee bioregion (Government of Western Australia 2013).
The National Objectives and Targets for Biodiversity Conservation includes a target that prevents the clearance of ecological communities with an extent below 30 per cent of that present pre-European settlement (Commonwealth of Australia 2001).
Aerial imagery indicates that the local area (10 kilometre radius) surrounding the areas under application retains approximately 10 per cent vegetation cover.
Given the highly scattered distribution of the vegetation proposed to be cleared, the application area is not considered to be a significant remnant in a highly cleared landscape.

	Pre-European (ha)	Current Extent (ha)	Remaining (%)	Extent in DPaW Managed Lands (%)
IBRA Bioregion* Mallee	7,395,894	4,185,989	56	30
Shire* Shire of Esperance	4,459,670	3,211,034	72	30
Beard Vegetation Association in Bioregion* 1516	125,543	59,433	47	40

* Government of Western Australia (2013)

Methodology References:
Commonwealth of Australia (2001)
Government of Western Australia (2013)

GIS Database:
- Wheatbelt Remnant 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 **Proposal is not likely to be at variance to this Principle**
No watercourses are mapped within, or in close proximity to, the application area. Although the northwest of the application area encroaches slightly upon a small basin situated adjacent to a dam, no riparian vegetation was observed during a site inspection undertaken by Department of Environment Regulation officers (DER 2015).

Numerous saline lakes occur within close proximity to the application area. These are internally drained. The eastern part of the property drainage lines are the upper reaches of the Bandy Creek Catchment (Commissioner of Soil and Land Conservation 2015).

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

Methodology References:
Commissioner of Soil and Land Conservation (2015)
DER (2015)

GIS Databases:
- Wheatbelt Minor Hydrography
- Wheatbelt Wetlands

(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**
No watercourses are mapped within, or in close proximity to, the application area. The northwest of the application area (approximately 0.5 hectares) encroaches slightly upon a small basin.

Soils within the application area are described as alkaline grey shallow sandy duplex and minor sandy duplexes, ironstone gravel and non-cracking clays with minor saline wet soils (Commissioner of Soil and Land Conservation 2015).

Groundwater on site is highly saline, mapped at 14000-35000 Total Dissolved Solids (milligrams per litre) and local average annual rainfall is 500 millimetres.

The risk of land degradation occurring as a result of the proposed clearing is expected to be low (Commissioner of Soil and Land Conservation 2015). This is attributed to the soil types present, the lack of slope and the scattered distribution of the proposed clearing.

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

Methodology Reference:
Commissioner of Soil and Land Conservation (2015)

GIS Databases:
- Soils of WA
- Wheatbelt Minor Hydrography
- Wheatbelt Wetlands

(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 Truslove Townsite Nature Reserve, located approximately 3.5 kilometres northwest of the application area. Given this distance, the clearing as proposed is not likely to impact upon the environmental values of this conservation area.

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

Methodology GIS Database:
- Parks and Wildlife 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**
No watercourses are mapped within, or in close proximity to, the application area. The northwest of the application area encroaches slightly upon a small basin. Numerous saline lakes occur within close proximity to the application area. These are internally drained. The eastern part of the property drainage lines are the upper reaches of the Bandy Creek Catchment (Commissioner of Soil and Land Conservation 2015).

Groundwater, which is already highly saline, mapped at 14000-35000 Total Dissolved Solids (milligrams per litre), is not likely to be further degraded as a result of the proposed clearing due to the scattered distribution of the vegetation (Commissioner of Soil and Land Conservation 2015)

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

Methodology Reference:
Commissioner of Soil and Land Conservation (2015)

GIS Databases:
- Groundwater salinity
- Wheatbelt Minor Hydrography

(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 general area associated with the proposed clearing is gently undulating. Soils within the application area are described as alkaline grey shallow sandy duplex and minor sandy duplexes, ironstone gravel and non-cracking clays with minor saline wet soils (Commissioner of Soil and Land Conservation 2015). Given this, the application area is expected to be well-drained.

The proposed clearing is not likely to alter the risk of waterlogging on the property, nor increase surface runoff (Commissioner of Soil and Land Conservation 2015). The proposed clearing is therefore not likely to cause or exacerbate the incidence or intensity of flooding.

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

Methodology Reference:
Commissioner of Soil and Land Conservation (2015)

Planning instruments and other relevant matters.

Comments The Shire of Esperance has no objection to the proposed clearing. The Shire has requested that any burning of the cleared vegetation occurs outside of the prohibited burning period and that any fires are actively and appropriately guarded (Shire of Esperance 2015).

The application area is zoned 'Agriculture – General' under the local town planning scheme.

No Aboriginal Sites of Significance have been recorded within the application area.

No public submissions have been received.

Methodology Reference:
Shire of Esperance (2015)

4. References

Commissioner of Soil and Land Conservation (2015) Advice received in relation to clearing permit application CPS 6489/1, received 14 May 2015. Department of Agriculture and Food, Western Australia (DER Ref: A908476).
Commonwealth of Australia (2001) National Objectives and Targets for Biodiversity Conservation 2001-2005, Canberra.
DER (2015) Site visit report for clearing permit application CPS 6489/1, 1 March 2015. Department of Environment Regulation, Western Australia (DER Ref: A901014).
DotE (2014) Proteaceae Dominated Kwongan Shrubland: a nationally-protected ecological community Department of the Environment. <http://www.environment.gov.au/resource/proteaceae-dominated-kwongan-shrubland-nationally-protected-ecological-community-0>. Accessed April 2015.
Esperance Wildflower Society Inc. (2015) Targeted Flora Survey: Scaddan Lots 956 and 957/202839, received 9 July 2015 (DER Ref: A932016).
Government of Western Australia (2013) 2013 Statewide Vegetation Statistics incorporating the CAR Reserve Analysis (Full Report). Current as of June 2013. WA Department of Parks and Wildlife, 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.
Parks and Wildlife (2007-) NatureMap: Mapping Western Australia's Biodiversity. Department of Parks and Wildlife. URL: <http://naturemap.dpaw.wa.gov.au/>. Accessed April 2015.
Parks and Wildlife (2015) Advice for Clearing Permit CPS 6489/1, received 10 April 2015. Department of Parks and Wildlife. Western Australia. (DER Ref: A893234).
Raines, J. and Blyth, J. (2002) Hooded Plover Management Plan (2002-2012) Western Australia. Birds Australia Western Australia Inc.
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.
Shire of Esperance (2015) Advice received in relation to clearing permit application CPS 6489/1, received 7 April 2015. Shire of Esperance (DER Ref: A891177).