



## CLEARING PERMIT

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

### PERMIT DETAILS

Area Permit Number: CPS 6669/1

File Number: DER2015/001660-1

Duration of Permit: 14 November 2015 to 14 November 2020

### PERMIT HOLDER

Pilbara Ports Authority

### LAND ON WHICH CLEARING IS TO BE DONE

Lot 569 on Deposited Plan 71345, Talandji

### AUTHORISED ACTIVITY

The Permit Holder shall not clear more than 13.954 hectares of native vegetation within the area cross-hatched yellow on attached Plan 6669/1.

#### 1. Type of Clearing Authorised/Method

This Permit allows the Permit Holder to authorise persons, including employees, contractors and agents of the Permit Holder, to clear native vegetation authorised under this Permit subject to compliance with the conditions of this Permit and approval from the Permit Holder.

#### 2. Mitigation

In determining the amount of native vegetation to be cleared authorised under this Permit, the Permit Holder must have regard to the following principles, set out in order of preference:

- (a) avoid the clearing of native vegetation;
- (b) minimise the amount of native vegetation to be cleared; and
- (c) reduce the impact of clearing on any environmental value.

#### 3. Weed & Soil Control

When undertaking any clearing or other activity authorised under this Permit, the Permit Holder must take the following steps to minimise the risk of the introduction and spread of *weeds*:

- (a) clean earth-moving machinery of soil and vegetation prior to entering and leaving the area to be cleared;
- (b) ensure that no *weed*-affected soil, *mulch*, *fill* or other material is brought into the area to be cleared; and
- (c) restrict the movement of machines and other vehicles to the limits of the areas to be cleared.

### DEFINITIONS

The following meanings are given to terms used in this Permit:

*fill* means material used to increase the ground level, or fill a hollow;

*mulch* means the use of organic matter, wood chips or rocks to slow the movement of water across the soil surface and to reduce evaporation;

*weed/s* means any plant -

- (a) that is a declared pest under section 22 of the *Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act 2007*;  
or
- (b) published in a Department of Parks and Wildlife Regional Weed Rankings Summary, regardless of ranking; or
- (c) not indigenous to the area concerned.



M Warnock  
SENIOR MANAGER  
CLEARING REGULATION





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

15 October 2015

# Plan 6669/1



## Legend

-  Areas approved to clear
  -  Roads
  -  LGA
  -  Cadastre
- Virtual Mosaic (LGATE-V001)



1:7,000

MGA 94  
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



GOVERNMENT OF  
WESTERN AUSTRALIA



## 1. Application details

### 1.1. Permit application details

Permit application No.: 6669/1  
Permit type: Area Permit

### 1.2. Applicant details

Applicant's name: Pilbara Ports Authority

### 1.3. Property details

Property: Lot 569 on Deposited Plan 71345, Talandji  
Colloquial name:  
Local Government Authority: Shire of Ashburton  
DER Region: North West  
DPaW District: N/A  
LCDC: Ashburton  
Localities: Talandji

### 1.4. Application

Clearing Area (ha)	No. Trees	Method of Clearing	For the purpose of:
13.954		Mechanical Removal	Laydown and storage area

### 1.5. Decision on application

Decision on Permit Application: Grant  
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 117 is described as hummock grasslands, grass steppe; soft spinifex (Shepherd et al., 2001).	Pilbara Ports Authority proposes to clear up to 13.954 hectares of native vegetation within Lot 569 on Deposited Plan 71345, Talandji, for the purpose of a laydown and storage area.	Very Good; Vegetation structure altered; obvious signs of disturbance (Keighery, 1994).	Vegetation condition was determined via aerial imagery and photographs provided by the applicant (Pilbara Ports Authority, 2015).
Beard Vegetation Association 127 is described as bare areas; mud flats (Shepherd et al., 2001).			
Biota (2010) recorded three vegetation associations within the application area, including:  <i>Acacia tetragonophylla</i> scattered shrubs over <i>Triodia epactia</i> (spinifex) hummock grasslands;  <i>Tecticornia</i> sp. low shrubland; and  <i>Sporobolus mitchellii</i> , <i>Eriachne</i> aff. <i>benthamii</i> , <i>E. benthamii</i> , <i>Eulalia aurea</i> tussock grassland.			



### 3. Assessment of application against clearing principles

#### Comments

The current application is for the clearing of up to 13.954 hectares of native vegetation for the purpose of a laydown and storage area. The application area is located approximately 70 metres from the Onslow coastline within the footprint of the Wheatstone LNG project, and is adjacent to infrastructure associated with the project. Vegetation within the application area appears to be in very good (Keighery, 1994) condition (Pilbara Ports Authority, 2015).

A total of four priority flora species have been recorded within 20 kilometres of the application area, including one priority 2 (*Vigna sp. central* [M.E. Trudgen 1626]) and three priority 3 (*Eleocharis papillosa*, *Eremophila forrestii* subsp. *viridis* and *Triumfetta echinata*) flora species. No conservation significant flora were recorded within the application area during a flora survey conducted by Biota Environmental Services (Biota, 2010). All three priority 3 flora species have moderate to large distributions across multiple Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation of Australia (IBRA) bioregions (Western Australian Herbarium, 1998-), and are not likely to be significantly impacted by the proposed clearing. *Vigna sp. central* (M.E. Trudgen 1626) also has a broad distribution that extends 610 kilometres east-west and 170 kilometres north-south (Parks and Wildlife, 2015a). While this species has been recorded within the Wheatstone project, it was not recorded within the application area by Biota (2010), and Parks and Wildlife (2015a) advise that the proposed clearing is unlikely to have a significant impact on this species on either a local or regional scale.

A total of 176 bird, 34 mammal, 90 reptile, seven amphibian and 182 invertebrate species have been recorded within 20 kilometres of the application area, including 11 threatened fauna, seven priority fauna, one other specially protected fauna and 26 bird species protected under international agreement (Parks and Wildlife, 2007-). Habitat value within the application area is decreased by the widespread clearing and development that has occurred to the north, west and south of the application area. While clay pan and hummock grassland vegetation within the application area may provide foraging habitat for threatened or migratory bird species protected under international agreement, available habitat occurs outside the application area and the proposed clearing is not likely to comprise significant habitat for any fauna species.

There are no Threatened or Priority Ecological Communities mapped within 20 kilometres of the application area. The vegetation within the application area is not considered to represent either a TEC or PEC.

Parks and Wildlife (2015b) advise that mesquite (*Prosopis* spp.) may be present within the application area, which is a Weed of National Significance and a declared plant under the *Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act 2007*. Weeds can decrease the biodiversity value of an area, as they out-compete native vegetation for available resources, contribute to land degradation and increase the frequency and intensity of fires (DEC, 2011). The spread of mesquite as a result of the proposed clearing may be minimised by the implementation of weed management practices, including the removal and appropriate disposal of all mesquite plants found within the application area.

Vegetation within the application area is mapped as Beard vegetation associations 117 and 127. Approximately 88 and 97 per cent of these vegetation associations remain at a bioregional level, respectively (Government of Western Australia, 2014), and the proposed clearing is not considered to represent a significant remnant of native vegetation.

The application area contains three landforms, including 'coastal sandy plains', inland sand plains' and 'claypan' (Biota, 2010). Vegetation within the claypan area is considered to have some degree of connectivity with tidal areas, and is representative of an area subject to inundation. However, the proposed clearing is not likely to have a significant impact on the extent of this vegetation type on a local or regional scale.

There are three soil types within the application area, including coastal sand plains, clayey plains, and claypans (Pilbara Ports Authority, 2015). Of these, soils associated with coastal sand plains are most susceptible to wind and water erosion, which is exacerbated if vegetative cover is removed. The clearing of 13.954 hectares of native vegetation partially within a clay pan associated with a tidal flat may also increase sedimentation washed downstream and into the adjacent watercourse located approximately 200 metres east of the application area. However, given the presence of surrounding cleared areas, the natural level of sedimentation likely to occur within this watercourse and that the area will be maintained as a lay down area, the proposed clearing is not likely to significantly impact surface water quality, ground water quality or lead to appreciable land degradation. Potential land degradation as a result of wind and water erosion will also be minimised by the implementation of staged clearing practices as proposed by the applicant.

No conservation areas occur in the vicinity of the application area. Based on the size of the application area and the soil types present, the proposed clearing is not likely to cause deterioration in the quality of groundwater or increase the incidence or intensity of flooding.

Based on the above, the proposed clearing is at variance to Principle (f), is not at variance to Principle (e) and is not likely to be at variance to the remaining Principles.

#### Methodology

References:  
Biota (2010)  
DEC (2011)  
Government of Western Australia (2014)  
Keighery (1994)  
Parks and Wildlife (2007-)

Parks and Wildlife (2015a)  
Parks and Wildlife (2015b)  
Pilbara Ports Authority (2015)  
Western Australian Herbarium (1998-)

GIS Databases:

- Hydrography, linear (hierarchy)
- Imagery
- SAC bio datasets (Accessed August 2015)

## Planning instruments and other relevant matters.

**Comments** The application area is located within the footprint of Ministerial Statement 873, which approves the Wheatstone development including gas processing, export facilities and infrastructure. The proposed clearing does not contravene any conditions of Ministerial Statement 873.

Mesquite (*Prosopis* spp.) is known to occur within the Wheatstone project area. This species is a declared plant under the *Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act 2007*, and the applicant is required to manage mesquite in accordance with this Act. Parks and Wildlife (2015b) advise that any mesquite found within the application area must be removed and disposed of at an appropriate landfill facility, while any further plants found after ground disturbance should be removed or appropriately controlled.

Pilbara Ports Authority (2015) advises that clearing is to occur in a staged approach over five years.

There are no Sites of Aboriginal Significance mapped within the area applied to clear.

The clearing permit application was advertised on 10 August 2015 by the Department of Environment Regulation inviting submissions from the public. No submissions were received.

**Methodology** References:  
Parks and Wildlife (2015b)  
Pilbara Ports Authority (2015)

- GIS Database:
- Aboriginal Sites Register System

## 4. References

- Biota (2010) Vegetation and Flora Survey of the Wheatstone Project Area, near Onslow. Report prepared for Chevron by Biota Environmental Services.
- DEC (2011) Invasive Plant Prioritisation, Department of Environment and Conversation, Perth.
- 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.
- 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 July, 2015.
- Parks and Wildlife (2015a) Flora advice received from the Department of Parks and Wildlife on 28 August 2015. (DER REF: A960462).
- Parks and Wildlife (2015b) Regional advice received from the Department of Parks and Wildlife on 26 August 2015. (DER REF: A983982).
- Pilbara Ports Authority (2015) Clearing permit application supporting information. DER REF: A940527.
- 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.
- Western Australian Herbarium (1998-) FloraBase - The Western Australian Flora. Department of Parks and Wildlife. <http://florabase.dpaw.wa.gov.au/> Accessed September 2015.