



CLEARING PERMIT

Granted under section 51E of the Environmental Protection Act 1986

Purpose Permit number:	CPS 6863/1
Permit Holders:	Shire of Coorow
Duration of Permit:	19 March 2016 – 19 March 2021

The Permit Holder is authorised to clear native vegetation subject to the following conditions of this Permit.

PART I – CLEARING AUTHORISED

1. Purpose for which clearing may be done

Clearing for the purpose of constructing camp sites, access roads, and walk trails.

2. Land on which clearing is to be done

Lot 350 on Deposited Plan 64841 (Reserve 22521), Green Head.

3. Area of Clearing

The Permit Holder must not clear more than 1.336 hectares of native vegetation within the area cross-hatched yellow on attached Plan 6863/1.

4. Application

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

5. Type of clearing authorised

This Permit authorises the Permit Holder to clear native vegetation for the activities described in condition 1 of this Permit to the extent that the Permit Holder has the power to carry out works involving clearing for those activities under the *Local Government Act 1995* or any other written law.

PART II – MANAGEMENT CONDITIONS

6. Avoid, minimise etc clearing

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:

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

7. Weed 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*:

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

DEFINITIONS

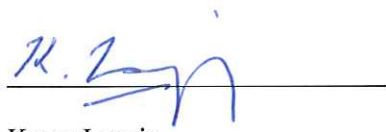
The following meanings are given to terms used in this Permit:

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.



Kerry Laszig
DIRECTOR
LICENSING AND APPROVALS

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

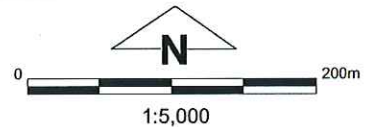
18 February 2016

Plan 6863/1



Legend


-  Imagery
-  Clearing Instruments Activities
-  Roads
-  Local Government Authority



(Approximate when reproduced at A4)

GDA 94 (Lat/Long)

Geocentric Datum of Australia 1994

 Date 18/02/2016
Kerry Laszig

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



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1. Application details

1.1. Permit application details

Permit application No.: 6863/1
Permit type: Purpose Permit

1.2. Applicant details

Applicant's name: Shire of Coorow

1.3. Property details

Property: LOT 350 ON DEPOSITED PLAN 64841, GREEN HEAD
Local Government Authority: COOROW, SHIRE OF
DER Region: MIDWEST
DPaW District: MOORA
Localities: GREEN HEAD

1.4. Application

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

1.5. Decision on application

Decision on Permit Application: Granted
Decision Date: 18 February 2016
Reasons for Decision: The clearing application has been assessed against the clearing principles, planning instruments and other matters in accordance with s51O of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*, and it has been concluded that the proposed clearing is not likely to be at variance to any of the clearing principles.

Clearing of the vegetation under application may impact the environmental values of adjacent native vegetation through the introduction or spread of weeds and dieback. Weed and dieback management measures will minimise impacts to adjacent native vegetation.

This application was advertised in The West Australian on 28 December 2015. A total of 342 public submissions were received. The submissions identify a number of potential environmental and social impacts of the proposed camping development, with the majority relating to the end land use, rather than the impacts of the clearing of native vegetation. The applicant provided responses to the most commonly raised issues.

Through assessment it has been determined that the clearing itself is unlikely to have any significant environmental impacts. Planning instruments and other relevant matters have been taken into consideration in the decision to grant a clearing permit.

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
Mapped Beard vegetation association 1026 is described as a mosaic: shrublands; <i>Acacia rostellifera</i> , <i>A. cyclops</i> (in the south) and <i>Melaleuca cardiophylla</i> (in the north) thicket / Shrublands; <i>Acacia lasiocarpa</i> and <i>Melaleuca acerosa</i> heath (Shepherd et al. 2001).	The clearing of 1.336 hectares of native vegetation within a 5.8 hectare footprint within Lot 350 on Deposited Plan 64841 (Reserve 22521), Green Head, for the purpose of constructing camp sites, access roads, and walk trails.	Completely degraded: The structure of the vegetation is no longer intact and the area is completely or almost completely without native species (Keighery 1994). To Excellent; Vegetation structure intact; disturbance affecting individual species, weeds non-aggressive (Keighery 1994).	The condition and description of the vegetation was determined by a site inspection undertaken by Department of Environment Regulation in May 2015 (DER 2015) and a Level 1 Flora Assessment (GHD 2015). The majority of the vegetation under application is mapped as <i>Melaleuca lanceolata</i> over Samphire, with a small section mapped as a degraded area with bare dunes or no native species (GHD 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

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

The applicant proposes to clear 1.336 hectares of native vegetation within a 5.8 hectare footprint for the purpose of constructing camp sites, access roads, and walk trails.

A level 1 flora assessment was conducted over the majority of the proposed clearing area where the vegetation will be cleared for the purpose of constructing camp sites (GHD 2015). A small area of vegetation to be cleared for the purpose of access tracks and walk trails was not included in the survey area.

The majority of the vegetation under application is mapped as *Melaleuca lanceolata* over Samphire with a small section mapped as a degraded area with bare dunes or no native species (GHD 2015). The vegetation to be cleared is in excellent (Keighery 1994) to completely degraded (Keighery 1994) condition (DER 2015; GHD 2015) with the majority in good (Keighery 1994) condition.

Three priority 3 flora species have been recorded in the local area (10 kilometre radius) within the same mapped vegetation association and soil type as the application area. The level 1 flora survey identified two plants of a priority 3 flora species within the survey area, 600 metres and 4.8 kilometres from the application area (GHD 2015). Priority 3 flora species are poorly known, but do not appear to be under imminent threat. The proposed clearing is not likely to impact the conservation of any priority 3 species if they are present within the application area.

There are no threatened ecological communities (TEC) or priority ecological communities (PEC) mapped within the area proposed for clearing or within the local area (10 kilometre radius). The vegetation within the application area is not representative of a TEC or PEC (GHD 2015).

The local area surrounding the application is highly vegetated (retaining approximately 90 per cent native vegetation). The area under application is mapped as Beard vegetation association 1026 which retains approximately 94 per cent of its pre-European extent (Government of Western Australia 2014).

The proposed clearing may impact the adjacent vegetation through the spread of weeds as an indirect consequence of the clearing. Weed management practices will assist in mitigating the risk of introduction or spread of invasive species into adjacent remnant vegetation.

Given the relatively small size of the proposed clearing and highly vegetated local area, the proposed clearing is not likely to be at variance to this clearing principle.

Methodology

References:

- DER (2015)
- GHD (2015)
- Government of Western Australia (2014)
- Keighery (1994)

GIS Databases:

- NLWRA, Current Extent of Native Vegetation
- Pre-European Vegetation
- SAC bio datasets accessed January 2016
- Soils, Statewide
- Virtual Mosaic

(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

There are 23 fauna species of conservation significance mapped within 10 kilometres of the application area (Parks and Wildlife 2007-). A level 1 fauna survey conducted over the majority of the proposed clearing area identified 11 native fauna species and four introduced fauna species, none of which are conservation significant species (GHD 2015). No fauna was observed during a DER site inspection (DER 2015).

Based on their preferred habitat, Fairy tern (*Sterna nereis subsp. nereis*) and bar-tailed godwit (*Limosa lapponica subsp. menzibieri*), both listed as rare or likely to become extinct under the *Wildlife Conservation Act 1950* and hooded plover (*Charadrius rubricollis*; Priority 4) may utilise the coastline west of the application area (DotE 2016a; 2016b; 2016c) but are unlikely to use the coastal vegetation under application.

Twelve of the conservation significant fauna species are migratory birds protected under international agreement (Parks and Wildlife 2007-). Whilst there may be suitable habitat for these species within the application area, impacts to these species are expected to be minimal given the surrounding well vegetated landscape, and the highly mobile nature of migratory species.

Given that the application is for camp site nodes and tracks, the cleared areas will continue to be surrounded by vegetation. Given the relatively small application area and well vegetated landscape (approximately 90 per cent native vegetation remaining within the local area), the proposed clearing is not likely to significantly impact upon the connectivity of the landscape, sever ecological linkages or contain significant fauna habitat.

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

Methodology References:
- DER (2015)
- DotE (2016a)
- DotE (2016b)
- DotE (2016c)
- GHD (2015)
- Parks and Wildlife (2007-)
GIS Databases:
- NLWRA, Current Extent of Native Vegetation
- Virtual Mosaic

(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 no rare flora species mapped within 10 kilometres of the application area. The level 1 flora survey conducted over the majority of the proposed clearing area did not identify any rare flora species (GHD 2015).

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

Methodology References:
- GHD (2015)
GIS Databases:
- SAC bio datasets accessed January 2016

(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**
There are no TECs mapped within the local area (10 kilometre radius). A level 1 vegetation and flora survey (GHD 2015) did not identify any vegetation consistent with a TEC within the application area.

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

Methodology References:
- GHD (2015)
GIS Databases:
- SAC bio datasets accessed January 2016

(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 highly vegetated with approximately 90 per cent vegetation remaining.

The area under application is located within the Geraldton Sandplains Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation of Australia (IBRA) bioregion. This IBRA bioregion has approximately 45 per cent of its pre-European vegetation extent remaining (Government of Western Australia 2014).

The vegetation under application is mapped as Beard vegetation association 1026 of which there is approximately 94 per cent of pre-European extent remaining within the Geraldton Sandplains bioregion (Government of Western Australia 2014).

The area under application is located within the Shire of Coorow, which retains approximately 40 per cent pre-European extent (Government of Western Australia 2014).

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).

Given the local area, IBRA bioregion, local government authority and mapped Beard vegetation association all retain over the 30 per cent target, the application area does not occur in an area that has been extensively cleared. 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	3 136 038	1 404 375	45	40
Shire*				
Shire of Coorow	418 943	166 706	40	43
Beard Vegetation Association in Bioregion*				
1026	11 427	10 730	94	52

*Government of Western Australia (2014)

Methodology References:
 - Commonwealth of Australia (2001)
 - Government of Western Australia (2014)
 GIS Databases:
 - IBRA Australia
 - NLWRA, Current Extent of Native Vegetation
 - Pre-European Vegetation
 - Virtual Mosaic

(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**
 There are no watercourses mapped within the application area. The biological survey conducted over the majority of the proposed clearing area concluded that no wetlands or watercourse occur within the survey area (GHD 2015). A DER site inspection did not identify any watercourses or wetlands within the application area (DER 2015).

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

Methodology References:
 - DER (2015)
 - GHD (2015)
 GIS Databases:
 - Hydrography, linear
 - Hydrography, hierarchy

(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 soil within the application area is mapped as A13, which Northcote et al. (1960 - 1968) describes as coastal dune formations backed by the low-lying deposits of inlets and estuaries: chief soils are calcareous sands on the dunes.

The Department of Agriculture and Food Western Australia has mapped the associated land degradation risk for the majority of the application area as:

- 10-30 per cent of the map unit has a high to extreme water erosion risk (third lowest risk rating out of six risk categories); and
- Less than three per cent of the map unit has a moderate to very high waterlogging risk (lowest risk rating out of six risk categories); and
- 10-30 per cent of the map unit has a high to extreme wind erosion risk (third lowest risk rating out of six risk categories).

The groundwater salinity within the application area is 500-1000 milligrams per litre of total dissolved solids. This level of groundwater salinity is considered to be marginal.

Given the presence of sandy soils within the application area, there is the potential for wind erosion to occur post clearing. However, the cleared areas will continue to be surrounded by vegetation and the tracks will be gravel sheeted (Shire of Coorow 2015), therefore wind erosion is unlikely to cause appreciable land degradation.

Therefore the application is not likely to be at variance to this principle.

Methodology References:

- Northcote et al. (1960-68)
- Shire of Coorow (2015)
- GIS Databases:
 - Soils, Statewide
 - Water Erosion
 - Waterlogging
 - Wind Erosion
 - Groundwater Salinity, 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**
 The closest conservation area is Beekeepers Nature Reserve located approximately one kilometre east of the application area. Given the highly vegetated local landscape and the distance between this reserve and the application area, it is not likely that the proposed clearing will impact on the environmental values of this conservation area.

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

Methodology GIS Databases:
 - 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 **Proposed clearing is not likely to be at variance to this Principle**
 There are no watercourses or wetlands within the application area (GHD 2015; DER 2015) and therefore the proposed clearing is unlikely to cause deterioration in the quality of surface water.

The groundwater salinity within the application area is 500-1000 milligrams per litre of total dissolved solids. This level of groundwater salinity is considered to be marginal.

The application area does not occur within a *Country Area Water Supply Act 1914* area or a Public Drinking Water Source Area.

Given the relatively small application area and highly vegetated local landscape, deterioration in groundwater quality is unlikely to occur.

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

Methodology References:
 - DER (2015)
 - GHD (2015)
 GIS Databases:
 - Country Area Water Supply Act (Part IIA) – Clearing Control Catchments
 - Groundwater Salinity, Statewide
 - Hydrography, Linear
 - Hydrography, Hierarchy
 - Public Drinking Water Source Areas

(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 soil within the application area is mapped as A13, which Northcote et al. (1960 - 1968) describes as coastal dune formations backed by the low-lying deposits of inlets and estuaries: chief soils are calcareous sands on the dunes.

The Department of Agriculture and Food Western Australia has mapped the flood risk for the application area as less than three per cent of the map unit with a moderate to high flood risk, the lowest risk category.

Given the porous nature of the sandy soils of the application area, the proposed clearing is unlikely to cause or exacerbate flooding and is therefore not likely to be at variance to this principle.

Methodology References:
 - Northcote et al. (1960-68)
 GIS Databases:
 - Flood Risk
 - Soils, Statewide

Planning instruments and other relevant matters.

Comments

The proposed clearing area is zoned parks and recreation under the Shire of Coorow's Local Planning Scheme No. 3 (DoP 2015a). The Local Planning Strategy (DoP 2015b) advises a strategy to 'Restrict future development in the area between Leeman and Green Head, with a small, low-impact camping or tourism facility possibly being provided at Little Anchorage Bay'.

This application forms part of the Mid West Coastal Nodes Eco-Tourism Project. Similar coastal node development is planned for Sandy Cape (Shire of Dandaragan), Cliff Head (Shire of Irwin) and Lucky Bay (Shire of Northampton). Clearing Permit CPS 6690/1 was granted to the Shire of Northampton on 5 November 2015 to clear 5.16 hectares of native vegetation for the purpose of constructing camping areas.

This application was advertised in The West Australian on 28 December 2015. A total of 342 public submissions were received. The submissions identify a number of potential environmental and social impacts of the proposed camping development. The applicant was provided with an opportunity to comment on the commonly raised issues and their response is detailed below.

Issue raised	Applicant's response (Shire of Coorow 2016)
The presence of campers will lead to an increased risk of fires which, given the presence of strong winds, could threaten the Leeman and Green Head townsites. In addition, the campsites will have no water and in the case of a fire, fleeing campers will have to evacuate through one road which may become impassable.	The Shire have decided not to allow camp fires at the site to reduce the risk of a bush fire and to stop people from cutting down bush etc to burn. We propose to enforce this by having a 'camp host' on site whenever possible, and at least one patrol daily, or at least twice a day when there is no camp host on site.
The presence of campers will lead to increased pollution and rubbish.	Again, the Shire is proposing to have a 'camp host' and increased ranger patrols to enforce the rules of the site. Signage will indicate the availability of rubbish bins at the entry/exit to the area on Indian Ocean Drive.
Campers will not use the designated walking and vehicle tracks and will trample the fragile dune vegetation. The presence of vehicles will increase weeds into the area.	The Shire will be fencing off the camp site with a two rail system which will prevent motor vehicles (including motor bikes) and pedestrians from leaving the designated areas, including the walk trails. This is a great improvement on the current uncontrolled access people are using now.
The cliffs near the proposed camping sites are fragile and an increase in human traffic will decrease the area's stability, increasing erosion, and posing a danger to human life.	The actual campsites and walk trails are away from the cliffs, and will be fenced to prevent people walking over the dune to the cliffs and being unaware of their location, however the cliffs are accessible from the beaches, something that already occurs and will continue to do so regardless of this project.
Campers may bring pets to the site which will kill native fauna and, if abandoned, will become feral.	Camp rules will include that any pets must be on a lead at all times and will be enforced by the camp host and ranger patrols. Anecdotal evidence is that the majority of pets brought to the beach are currently from 'locals', not tourists. The increased ranger patrols that the income from the camp site will allow will reduce the number of pets running free in the area, not make it worse.
The policing and maintaining of the proposed nodes cannot be carried out sufficiently by the Shire of Coorow, given the present allocation of ranger services.	The Shire acknowledges that the current allocation of ranger services is unable to adequately police the area. Council is committed to a review of ranger services and is proposing to hire additional staff and reallocate current staff resources to ensure that the entire reserve is better policed. This can only realistically be achieved by introducing a new income stream to cover the costs of law enforcement, hence the proposed fees for the camp site.
The cost of maintaining and policing the camping area will be paid by the local rate payers.	Council will be charging \$15 per night per site to cover the cost of maintaining and policing the area. It is expected a small surplus will be made each year, which will be transferred to a reserve for the purpose of future capital renewal and upgrades of tourism infrastructure.
The previously standing shacks in the area were mainly built from asbestos and when removed, were buried in the sand.	The main track to be constructed is on the footprint of the old 'shack track', so is not likely to have asbestos buried underneath it. The alignment of the proposed walk trail is

Disturbing the material could be detrimental to human health.	utilising an existing track and minimum clearing will be required so the likelihood of unearthing asbestos is low.
The proposed camping area will not bring business to the townships as campers will bring supplies from Perth or Geraldton.	A study done by the Shire of Irwin of their free camping site has shown that campers are spending approximately \$189 per vehicle in Dongara, despite it being very close to Geraldton and within an easy drive of Perth.
There are already a number of low cost camping sites within close proximity to the proposed area which will suffer a lack of business.	The RV market is a rapidly growing one, with many people seeking an alternative to traditional caravan parks. Many of these people are currently camping in the Billy Goat Bay Car Park (which will be closed when the new site is operational), illegally elsewhere in the vicinity, or bypassing the area altogether. The site will only provide 15 more bays than the current Billy Goat Bay Car Park.

Methodology References:
DoP (2015a)
DoP (2015b)
Shire of Coorow (2016)

4. References

- Commonwealth of Australia (2001) National Objectives and Targets for Biodiversity Conservation 2001-2005, Canberra.
- Department of Environment Regulation (2015) Site inspection report for Clearing Permit application CPS 6863/1. Site inspection conducted on 27 May 2015. DER REF: A1031978.
- Department of Planning (2015a) Shire of Coorow Local Planning Scheme No. 3. Gazetted 27 October 2015.
- Department of Planning (2015b) Shire of Coorow Local Planning Strategy. Endorsed 11 September 2015.
- Department of the Environment (2016a) *Stemula nereis nereis* in Species Profile and Threats Database, Department of the Environment, Canberra. Available from: <http://www.environment.gov.au/sprat>.
- Department of the Environment (2016b) *Thinomis rubricollis rubricollis* in Species Profile and Threats Database, Department of the Environment, Canberra. Available from: <http://www.environment.gov.au/sprat>.
- Department of the Environment (2016c) *Limosa lapponica* in Species Profile and Threats Database, Department of the Environment, Canberra. Available from: <http://www.environment.gov.au/sprat>.
- GHD (2015) Shire of Irwin - Mid West Coastal Nodes Biological Survey Report. DER REF: A1028674.
- 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.
- Northcote, K. H. with Beckmann G G, Bettenay E., Churchward H. M., van Dijk D. C., Dimmock G. M., Hubble G. D., Isbell R. F., McArthur W. M., Murtha G. G., Nicolls K. D., Paton T. R., Thompson C. H., Webb A. A. and Wright M. J. (1960-68): 'Atlas of Australian Soils, Sheets 1 to 10, with explanatory data'. CSIRO and Melbourne University Press: Melbourne.
- Parks and Wildlife (2007-) NatureMap: Mapping Western Australia's Biodiversity. Department of Parks and Wildlife. URL: <http://naturemap.dpaw.wa.gov.au/>. Accessed 30/12/2015.
- 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 Coorow (2015) Clearing permit application form and supporting documentation. DER REF: A1024061.
- Shire of Coorow (2016) Response to public submissions. Advice received 20 January 2016. DER REF: A1038050.