



Clearing Permit Decision Report

1. Application details

1.1. Permit application details

Permit application No.: 6866/1
Permit type: Area Permit

1.2. Proponent details

Proponent's name: Newmont Boddington Gold Pty Ltd

1.3. Property details

Property: Mining Lease 70/22
Local Government Area: Shire of Boddington
Colloquial name:

1.4. Application

Clearing Area (ha)	No. Trees	Method of Clearing	For the purpose of:
0.18		Mechanical Removal	Fire hazard reduction

1.5. Decision on application

Decision on Permit Application: Grant
Decision Date: 4 February 2016

2. Site Information

2.1. Existing environment and information

2.1.1. Description of the native vegetation under application

Vegetation Description	Beard vegetation associations have been mapped for the whole of Western Australia. One Beard vegetation association is located within the application area (GIS Database): Beard vegetation association 3: Medium forest; Jarrah-Marri (GIS Database).
Clearing Description	Newmont Boddington Gold Pty Ltd proposes to clear up to 0.18 hectares of native vegetation for the purpose of fire hazard reduction. The project is located approximately 12 kilometres northwest of Boddington, in the Shire of Boddington.
Vegetation Condition	Good: Structure significantly altered by multiple disturbance; retains basic structure/ability to regenerate (Keighery, 1994); To: Excellent: Vegetation structure intact; disturbance affecting individual species; weeds are non-aggressive species (Keighery, 1994).
Comment	There have been no flora or fauna surveys undertaken over the application area. The vegetation condition was inferred from aerial photography (GIS Database). The proposed clearing is to reduce the fire hazard risk associated with maintaining minimum stance between flammable material and emergency water storage facilities (to ensure compliance with proponents insurance policy requirements, and interagency agreement between the proponent and the Department of Parks and Wildlife). The proposed clearing of 0.18 hectares involves 10 native trees, and several small shrubs.

3. Assessment of application against clearing principles

Comments

The application area occurs within the Northern Jarrah Forest subregion of the Jarrah Forest Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation of Australia bioregion (GIS Database). Based on aerial imagery, the vegetation within the application area is in a 'good' to 'excellent' condition (Keighery, 1994; Newmont Boddington Gold, 2015; GIS Database), with the vegetation condition affected by the adjacent construction of an emergency water storage facility (GIS Database). The native vegetation within the application area is broadly mapped as Beard vegetation association 3 of which greater than 67% remain at a state and bioregional level (Government of Western Australia, 2014).

A search of the Department of Parks and Wildlife's Threatened and Priority Flora databases within a 5 kilometre radius of the application area revealed no records of Threatened Flora species and seven Priority Flora species (DPaW, 2015). Given that the application area largely consists of an upperstorey of 10 native trees (mainly *Eucalyptus marginata* and *Corymbia calophylla* trees) and a sparse coverage small shrubs, the low impact nature and the small scale of the proposed clearing (0.18 hectares) is not likely to significantly

impact the conservation of any flora species.

No Threatened or Priority Ecological Communities have been recorded within the application area or the local area (GIS Database).

There have been no fauna surveys conducted over the application area. Based on aerial imagery, the application area does not appear to contain significant fauna habitat for any conservation significant fauna species (GIS Database). Hollows within *Eucalyptus marginata* and *Corymbia calophylla* are known to provide habitat for conservation significant fauna. None of the trees within the application area are habitat trees (Newmont Boddington Gold, 2015). The clearing of these trees is not likely to significantly impact future habitat for conservation significant fauna like the Carnaby's Cockatoo (*Calyptorhynchus latirostris*) (Schedule 1).

There are no permanent watercourses or water bodies mapped within the area under application (GIS Database).

The application area is located within the Murray River Catchment Public Drinking Water Source Area. Given the small scale clearing (0.18 hectares), the application area is not susceptible to erosion and the proposed clearing is not likely to cause deterioration in the quality of surface or underground water or increase the incidence or intensity of flooding (GIS Database).

The application area is not located within any conservation area (GIS Database). There are no conservation areas within two kilometres of the application area (GIS Database). The clearing of 0.18 hectares of native vegetation is not likely to provide a significant ecological linkage or fauna movement corridor and is not likely to impact the environmental values of any conservation areas.

Weeds have the potential to significantly change the dynamics of a natural ecosystem and lower the biodiversity of an area. The presence of Dieback (*Phytophthora cinnamomi*) has been confirmed to occur within the application area, although areas are not mapped (GIS Database). Potential impacts to biodiversity as a result of the proposed clearing may be minimised by the implementation of a weed and dieback management condition.

The proposal to clear 0.18 hectares of native vegetation for the purpose of a fire reduction hazard is unlikely to have any significant environmental impacts.

The application has been assessed against the clearing principles, planning instruments and other matters in accordance with s.51O of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*, and the proposed clearing is not likely to be at variance to Principles (a), (b), (c), (d), (e), (f), (g), (h), (i), and (j).

Methodology DPaW (2015)
Government of Western Australia (2014)
Keighery (1994)
Newmont Boddington Gold (2015)
GIS Database

Planning instrument, Native Title, RIWI Act Licence, EP Act Licence, Works Approval, Previous EPA decision or other matter.

Comments

There is one Native Title claim over the area under application (Department of Aboriginal Affairs, 2016). This claim has been registered with the National Native Title Tribunal on behalf of the claimant group. However, 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 is one registered Aboriginal Sites of Significance within the application area (Department of Aboriginal Affairs, 2016). 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.

It is the proponent's responsibility to liaise with the Department of Environment Regulation, Department of Parks and Wildlife and the Department of Water, to determine whether a Works Approval, Water Licence, Bed and Banks Permit, or any other licences or approvals are required for the proposed works.

The clearing permit application was advertised on 12 December 2015 by the Department of Mines and Petroleum inviting submissions from the public. No submissions were received.

Methodology Department of Aboriginal Affairs (2016)

4. References

Department of Aboriginal Affairs (2016) Aboriginal Heritage Enquiry System. Government of Western Australia, <http://maps.dia.wa.gov.au/AHIS2/>. (Accessed 15 January 2016).
DPaW (2015) NatureMap Department of Parks and Wildlife, <http://naturemap.dec.wa.gov.au>. (Accessed 18 December 2015).

Government of Western Australia (2014) 2014 Statewide Vegetation Statistics incorporating the CAR Reserve Analysis (Full Report). Current as of June 2014. WA Department of Environment and Conservation, 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.

Newmont Boddington Gold (2015) Supporting information for CPS 6866/1. Prepared by Newmont Boddington Gold Pty Ltd, December 2015.

5. Glossary

Acronyms:

BoM	Bureau of Meteorology, Australian Government
DAA	Department of Aboriginal Affairs, Western Australia
DAFWA	Department of Agriculture and Food, Western Australia
DEC	Department of Environment and Conservation, Western Australia (now DPaW and DER)
DER	Department of Environment Regulation, Western Australia
DMP	Department of Mines and Petroleum, Western Australia
DRF	Declared Rare Flora
DotE	Department of the Environment, Australian Government
DoW	Department of Water, Western Australia
DPaW	Department of Parks and Wildlife, Western Australia
DSEWPaC	Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities (now DotE)
EPA	Environmental Protection Authority, Western Australia
EP Act	<i>Environmental Protection Act 1986</i> , Western Australia
EPBC Act	<i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i> (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	<i>Rights in Water and Irrigation Act 1914</i> , Western Australia
TEC	Threatened Ecological Community

Definitions:

{DPaW (2015) Conservation Codes for Western Australian Flora and Fauna. Department of Parks and Wildlife, Western Australia}:-

T	<p>Threatened species: Published as Specially Protected under the <i>Wildlife Conservation Act 1950</i>, listed under Schedules 1 to 4 of the Wildlife Conservation (Specially Protected Fauna) Notice for Threatened Fauna and Wildlife Conservation (Rare Flora) Notice for Threatened Flora (which may also be referred to as Declared Rare Flora).</p> <p>Threatened fauna is that subset of ‘Specially Protected Fauna’ declared to be ‘likely to become extinct’ pursuant to section 14(4) of the Wildlife Conservation Act.</p> <p>Threatened flora is flora that has been declared to be ‘likely to become extinct or is rare, or otherwise in need of special protection’, pursuant to section 23F(2) of the Wildlife Conservation Act.</p> <p>The assessment of the conservation status of these species is based on their national extent and ranked according to their level of threat using IUCN Red List categories and criteria as detailed below.</p>
CR	<p>Critically endangered species Threatened species considered to be facing an extremely high risk of extinction in the wild. Published as Specially Protected under the <i>Wildlife Conservation Act 1950</i>, in Schedule 1 of the Wildlife Conservation (Specially Protected Fauna) Notice for Threatened Fauna and Wildlife Conservation (Rare Flora) Notice for Threatened Flora.</p>
EN	<p>Endangered species Threatened species considered to be facing a very high risk of extinction in the wild. Published as Specially Protected under the <i>Wildlife Conservation Act 1950</i>, in Schedule 2 of the Wildlife Conservation (Specially Protected Fauna) Notice for Threatened Fauna and Wildlife Conservation (Rare Flora) Notice for Threatened Flora.</p>
VU	<p>Vulnerable species Threatened species considered to be facing a high risk of extinction in the wild. Published as Specially Protected under the <i>Wildlife Conservation Act 1950</i>, in Schedule 3 of the Wildlife Conservation (Specially Protected Fauna) Notice for Threatened Fauna and Wildlife Conservation (Rare Flora) Notice for Threatened Flora.</p>

- EX Presumed extinct species**
Species which have been adequately searched for and there is no reasonable doubt that the last individual has died. Published as Specially Protected under the *Wildlife Conservation Act 1950*, in Schedule 4 of the Wildlife Conservation (Specially Protected Fauna) Notice for Presumed Extinct Fauna and Wildlife Conservation (Rare Flora) Notice for Presumed Extinct Flora.
- IA Migratory birds protected under an international agreement**
Birds that are subject to an agreement between the government of Australia and the governments of Japan (JAMBA), China (CAMBA) and The Republic of Korea (ROKAMBA), and the Bonn Convention, relating to the protection of migratory birds. Published as Specially Protected under the *Wildlife Conservation Act 1950*, in Schedule 5 of the Wildlife Conservation (Specially Protected Fauna) Notice.
- CD Conservation dependent fauna**
Fauna of special conservation need being species dependent on ongoing conservation intervention to prevent it becoming eligible for listing as threatened. Published as Specially Protected under the *Wildlife Conservation Act 1950*, in Schedule 6 of the Wildlife Conservation (Specially Protected Fauna) Notice.
- OS Other specially protected fauna**
Fauna otherwise in need of special protection to ensure their conservation. Published as Specially Protected under the *Wildlife Conservation Act 1950*, in Schedule 7 of the Wildlife Conservation (Specially Protected Fauna) Notice.
- P Priority species**
Species which are poorly known; or
Species that are adequately known, are rare but not threatened, and require regular monitoring. Assessment of Priority codes 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:**
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, e.g. 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 and appear to be under immediate threat from known threatening processes. Such species are in urgent need of further survey.
- P2 Priority Two - Poorly-known species:**
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, e.g. 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 and appear to be under threat from known threatening processes. Such species are in urgent need of further survey.
- P3 Priority Three - Poorly-known species:**
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. Such species are in need of 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 Conservation Dependent.
(c) Species that have been removed from the list of threatened species during the past five years for reasons other than taxonomy.