



1. Application details

1.1. Permit application details

Permit application No.: 7001/1
Permit type: Area Permit

1.2. Applicant details

Applicant's name: Mrs Tracy Michelle Ravenhill
Mr Rhys Graham Ravenhill

1.3. Property details

Property: LOT 108 ON PLAN 3951, SEPPINGS
Local Government Authority: ALBANY, CITY OF
DER Region: SOUTH COAST
DPaW District: ALBANY
Localities: SEPPINGS

1.4. Application

Clearing Area (ha)	No. Trees	Method of Clearing	For the purpose of:
1.896		Mechanical Removal	Building or structure, horticulture & agriculture

1.5. Decision on application

Decision on Permit Application: Refused
Decision Date: 30 June 2016
Reasons for Decision: The clearing permit application to clear 1.896 hectares of native vegetation for the purpose of constructing a house, and horticultural and agricultural purposes was received on 17 March 2016. The applicants provided evidence of the intention to purchase the property by supplying a conditional contract, being an offer and acceptance to purchase.

The application was assessed against the clearing principles, planning instruments and other matters in accordance with s51O of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*. It was concluded that the proposed clearing is at variance to Principle (f) and is not likely to be at variance to any of the remaining clearing principles.

The assessment found that the proposed clearing includes vegetation growing in association with a watercourse. However given the size and condition of the application area, impacts to riparian vegetation are not considered to be significant.

On 7 June 2016, the Delegated Officer provided the applicants with the preliminary assessment and invited the applicants to provide evidence that the contract to purchase the land remained current and that planning approval had been obtained from the City of Albany. The applicants were provided with 21 days to provide information. No response was received.

The Delegated Officer therefore determined the application on the information available at the date of the decision.

In making the decision to refuse the application, in accordance with s51O of the EP Act, the Delegated Officer had regard to the advice of the City of Albany that planning approval was required for the proposed activities and that the applicants did not provide evidence that they had a valid contract to purchase the property .

2. Site Information

2.1. Existing environment and information

Vegetation Description	Clearing Description	Vegetation Condition	Comment
Mapped Beard vegetation association 3 is described as medium forest; jarrah-marri (Shepherd et al. 2001).	Clearing of 1.896 hectares of native vegetation within Lot 108 on Plan 3951, Seppings, for the purpose of constructing a house, keeping a small amount of livestock and planting a small orchard of fruit trees.	Completely Degraded; No longer intact, completely/almost completely without native species (Keighery 1994).	The condition of the vegetation within the application area was determined via a Department of Environment Regulation site inspection undertaken on 27 April 2016 (DER 2016).
Mapped Albany Regional Vegetation Survey unit 59 is described as <i>Taxandria juniperina</i> closed forest (Sandiford and Barrett 2010).			

3. Assessment of application against clearing principles

Comments The application to clear up to 1.896 hectares of native vegetation for the purpose of constructing a house, keeping a small amount of livestock and planting a small orchard of fruit trees is unlikely to have significant environmental impacts. The vegetation within the application area consists of very dense, weed dominated vegetation with a *Taxandria juniperina* overstorey. The main introduced species observed on site were *Quercus* sp. (Oak trees), *Betula* sp. (Birch trees), *Zantedeschia aethiopica* (Arum lily), *Lantana camara* (Lantana), *Rubus* sp. (Blackberry), *Pteridium esculentum* (Bracken), and *Acacia longifolia*. The vegetation is considered to be in completely degraded (Keighery 1994) condition given the weed infestation levels.

Given the completely degraded condition of the vegetation and minimal presence of native species (DER 2016), the proposed clearing is not likely to impact on rare or priority flora, a priority or threatened ecological community or conservation reserves within the local area. The application area is also unlikely to contain a high level of biological diversity or significant remnant vegetation within a highly cleared landscape.

The application area adjoins an approximately 90 hectare remnant of native vegetation to the east. The application area may be used by indigenous fauna, however given the minimal presence of native species and completely degraded condition, it is not likely to be significant compared to the other higher quality vegetation nearby. The proposed clearing is not likely to impact any linkages or the functionality of the larger remnant.

A small section of the application area is mapped as an area subject to inundation. A drainage line was observed within the application area (DER 2016). *Taxandria juniperina* grows in the margins of winter-wet or permanent watercourses (Western Australian Herbarium 1998-) and was observed in the application area.

Given the size and condition of the application area, the proposed clearing is not likely to contribute to or cause land degradation, deteriorate the quality of ground water or surface water, or cause or exacerbate flooding.

Clearing the vegetation within the application area has the potential to increase the spread of weeds and dieback into the adjacent vegetation. Weed and dieback management practices are likely to limit this risk.

Given the above, the proposed clearing is at variance to Principle (f) and is not likely to be at variance to the remaining clearing principles.

Methodology References:
DER (2016)
Keighery (1994)
Western Australian Herbarium (1998-)

GIS Databases:
- Hydrography, lakes (medium scale, 250k GA)
- Hydrography, linear
- Hydrography, hierarchy
- Parks and Wildlife tenure
- SAC bio datasets accessed May 2016
- Virtual mosaic

Planning instruments and other relevant matters.

Comments The application is to clear up to 1.896 hectares of native vegetation within Lot 108 on Plan 3951, Seppings. The applicants advised that the clearing is for the purpose of constructing a house, keeping a small amount of livestock and planting a small orchard of fruit trees.

The applicants do not currently own Lot 108 on Plan 3951, Seppings. The application was for an undertaking to grant a permit, until such time as the property transferred to the applicants.

The application area is zoned Future Urban under the City of Albany's Local Planning Scheme No. 1. The City of Albany (2016) has advised that the proposed land uses require planning approval.

The Delegated Officer advised the applicants on 7 June 2016 that the preliminary assessment had not identified any significant environmental impacts associated with the proposed clearing. The applicants were advised that the proposed land uses require planning approval and that it was noted that the purchase of Lot 108 had not been finalised. The applicants were invited to provide further information in respect to these matters within 21 days from the date of the letter. No response was received at the date of the decision.

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

No public submissions have been received in relation to this application.

Methodology References:
City of Albany (2016)

GIS Databases:
- Aboriginal Sites Register System
- Town Planning Scheme Zones

4. References

- City of Albany (2016) Advice provided in relation to Clearing Permit Application CPS 7001/1. Advice received 17 May 2016. DER REF: A1100528.
- Department of Environment Regulation (2016) Site inspection report for Clearing Permit Application CPS 7001/1. Site inspection conducted 27 April 2016. DER REF: A1091937.
- Keighery, B.J. (1994) Bushland Plant Survey: A Guide to Plant Community Survey for the Community. Wildflower Society of WA (Inc). Nedlands, Western Australia.
- Sandiford, E.M. and Barrett, S. (2010) Albany Regional Vegetation Survey, Extent Type and Status, A project funded by the Western Australian Planning Commission (EnviroPlanning "Integrating NRM into Land Use Planning" and State NRM Program), South Coast Natural Resource Management Inc. and City of Albany for the Department of Environment and Conservation. Unpublished report. Department of Environment and Conservation, Western Australia.
- 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/>.