



CLEARING PERMIT

Granted under section 51E of the Environmental Protection Act 1986

PERMIT DETAILS

Area Permit Number: CPS 7253/1

File Number: DER2016/001752-1

Duration of Permit: From 3 December 2016 to 3 December 2018

PERMIT HOLDER

Regional Power Corporation TA Horizon Power

LAND ON WHICH CLEARING IS TO BE DONE

Lot 555 on Deposited Plan 74894, Talandji

AUTHORISED ACTIVITY

The Permit Holder must not clear more than 14.6 hectares of native vegetation within the area cross hatched yellow on attached Plan 7253/1.

CONDITIONS

1. Weed control

When undertaking any clearing or other activity pursuant to 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.

2. Flora management

- (a) Prior to undertaking any clearing within the inland sand dune vegetation units ID1, as identified within the 'Wheatstone Project, Desktop Review of the Proposed Onslow Micro-Siting Survey Area' the Permit Holder shall engage a *botanist* to undertake a Level 1 survey of the ID1 area to be cleared in accordance with *Guidance Statement No. 51* to identify possible occurrences of, and habitat suitable for *priority flora*.
- (b) Prior to undertaking any clearing, where an area has been identified in accordance with condition 2(a) as containing possible occurrences of, and habitat suitable for *priority flora*, the Permit Holder shall engage a *botanist* to inspect that area for the presence of *priority flora*.
- (c) Where *priority flora* are identified in relation to condition 2(b) of this Permit, the Permit Holder shall ensure that:
 - (i) no clearing occurs within 50 metres of identified priority 1 flora, unless approved by the CEO in writing;
 - (ii) no clearing occurs within 20 metres of identified priority 2, 3 and 4 flora, unless approved by the CEO in writing; and
 - (iii) no clearing of identified *priority flora* occurs unless approved by the CEO in writing.

3. Fauna management

- (a) In relation to the area cross hatched yellow on attached Plan 7253/1, the Permit Holder must engage a *fauna specialist* to inspect that area immediately prior to, and for the duration of clearing, for the presence of terrestrial fauna listed in the *Wildlife Conservation (Specially Protected Fauna) Notice* and *priority fauna*.

- (b) Clearing must cease in any area where any terrestrial fauna listed in the *Wildlife Conservation (Specially Protected Fauna) Notice* and *priority fauna* are identified until either:
 - (i) the individual(s) has been removed by a *fauna specialist*; or
 - (ii) the individual(s) has moved on from that area to adjoining suitable habitat.
- (c) Any terrestrial fauna listed in the *Wildlife Conservation (Specially Protected Fauna) Notice* and *priority fauna* removed in accordance with condition 3(b)(i) of this Permit must be relocated by a *fauna specialist* to an area of suitable habitat.

4. Records to be kept

The Permit Holder must maintain the following records in relation to flora management pursuant to condition 2 of this Permit:

- (a) the location of each *priority flora* species recorded using a Global Positioning System (GPS) unit set to Geocentric Datum Australia 1994 (GDA94), expressing the geographical coordinates in Eastings and Northings or decimal degrees;
- (b) the species name of each *priority flora* species identified; and
- (c) a copy of the *botanist's* flora survey report.

5. Reporting

- (a) The Permit Holder must provide to the CEO on or before 30 June of each year, a written report:
 - (i) of records required under condition 4 of this Permit; and
 - (ii) concerning activities done by the Permit Holder under this Permit between 1 January to 31 December of the preceding calendar year.
- (b) If no clearing authorised under this Permit was undertaken between 1 January to 31 December of the preceding calendar year, a written report confirming that no clearing under this permit has been carried out, must be provided to the CEO on or before 30 June of each year.
- (c) Prior to 3 September 2018, the Permit Holder must provide to the CEO a written report of records required under condition 4 of this Permit where these records have not already been provided under condition 5(a) of this Permit.

DEFINITIONS

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

botanist: means a person who holds a tertiary qualification in environmental science or equivalent, and has a minimum of 2 years work experience in identification and surveys of flora native to the bioregion being inspected or surveyed, or who is approved by the CEO as a suitable botanist for the bioregion;

fauna specialist: means a person who holds a tertiary qualification specializing in environmental science or equivalent, and has a minimum of 2 years work experience in fauna identification and surveys of fauna native to the region being inspected or surveyed, or who is approved by the CEO as a suitable fauna specialist for the bioregion, and who holds a valid fauna licence issued under the *Wildlife Conservation Act 1950*;

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

Guidance Statement No. 51 means the Environmental Protection Authority Guidance Statement No 51, Guidance for the Assessment of Environmental Factors - Terrestrial Flora and Vegetation Surveys for Environmental Impact Assessment in Western Australia (2004);

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;

priority fauna: means those fauna taxa describes as priority fauna, classes 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5 in the *Department of Parks and Wildlife's Threatened and Priority Fauna Rankings List for Western Australia* (as amended);

priority flora means those plant taxa described as priority flora classes 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5 in the *Department of Parks and Wildlife's Threatened and Priority Flora List for Western Australia* (as amended);

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; and

Wildlife Conservation (Specially Protected Fauna) Notice means those fauna taxa gazetted as rare fauna pursuant to section 14(4)(a) of the *Wildlife Conservation Act 1950* (as amended).

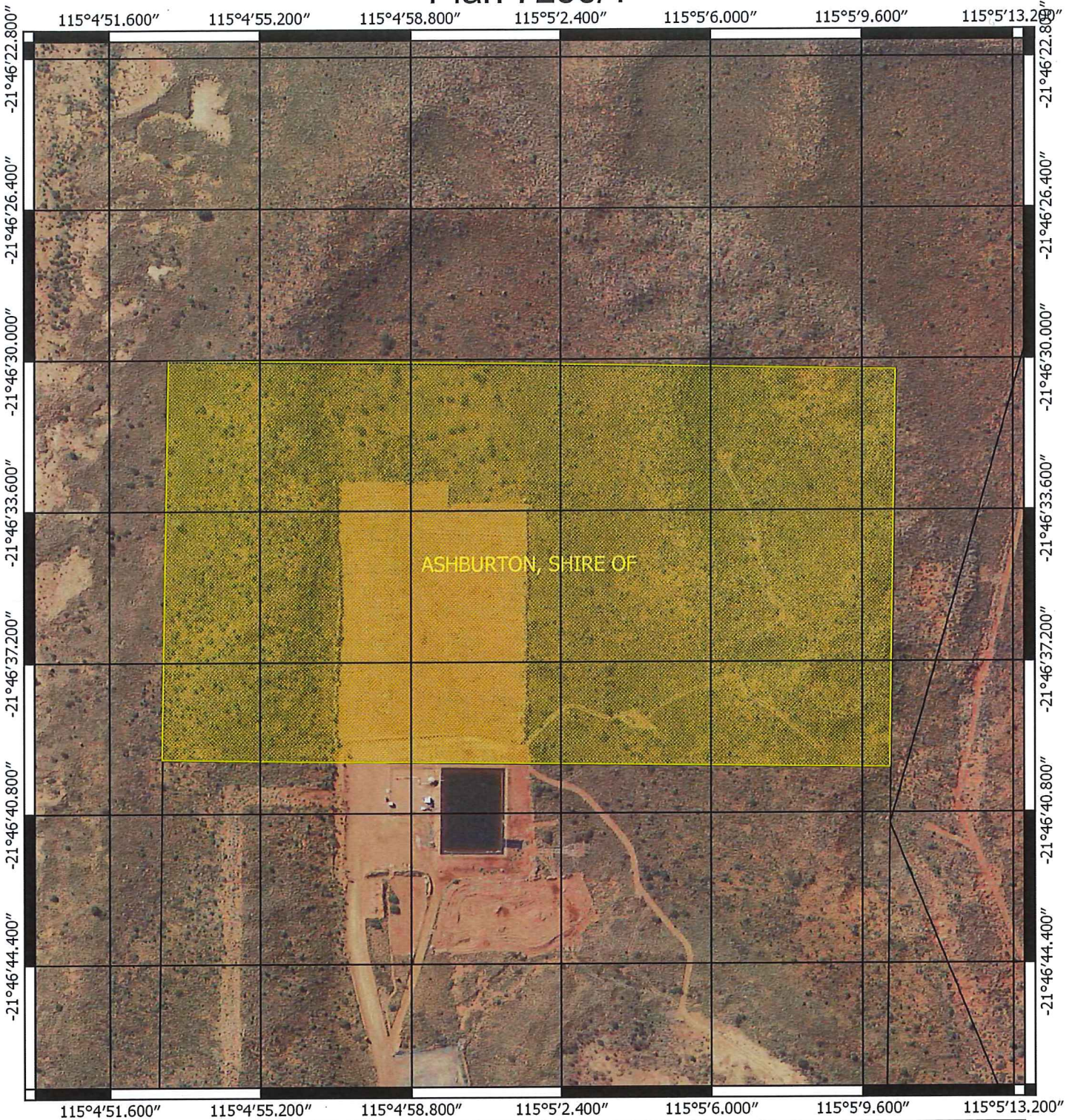


Dr Anne Mathews
SENIOR MANAGER
CLEARING REGULATION

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

3 November 2016

Plan 7253/1



Legend

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



1:3,000

MGA 94

Geocentric Datum of Australia 1994

Anne Mathews Date *3/11/2016*
 Dr Anne Mathews

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.: 7253/1
Permit type: Area Permit

1.2. Applicant details

Applicant's name: Regional Power Corporation TA Horizon Power

1.3. Property details

Property: LOT 555 ON PLAN 74894, TALANDJI
Local Government Authority: ASHBURTON, SHIRE OF
DER Region: North West
LCDC: ASHBURTON
Localities: TALANDJI

1.4. Application

Clearing Area (ha)	No. Trees	Method of Clearing	For the purpose of:
14.6		Mechanical Removal	Water/gas/cable/pipeline/power installation

1.5. Decision on application

Decision on Permit Application: Grant

Decision Date: 3 November 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 has concluded that the proposed clearing may be at variance to principle (a), is not likely to be at variance to the remaining clearing principles and is not at variance to principle (e).

Through assessment the Delegated Officer has determined that the clearing may impact priority flora species and conservation significant terrestrial fauna species. Flora management measures, that restrict any clearing within 50 metres of identified priority 1 flora species and within 20 metres of priority 2, 3 and 4 flora species will minimise impacts on priority flora species. Fauna management measures that involve a pre-clearing inspection of the application area for conservation significant fauna, and subsequent removal and relocation of any conservation significant fauna identified, will help to minimise impacts to fauna species.

The Department of Environment Regulation (DER) has approved a Works Approval to construct a power station within the site as part of Onslow Utilities Infrastructure Upgrade Project (OUIRP).

Relevant State policies and other relevant policies 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
One Beard vegetation association has been mapped within the application area: 670 - Hummock grasslands, shrub steppe; scattered shrubs over <i>Triodia basedowii</i> (Shepherd et al., 2001).	Regional Power Corporation TA Horizon Power (Horizon) has applied to clear 14.6 hectares of native vegetation within Lot 555 on Deposited Plan 74894, for the purpose of undertaking the Onslow Utilities Infrastructure Upgrade Project (OUIRP), namely the construction of a power station.	Good; Structure significantly altered by multiple disturbance; retains basic structure/ability to regenerate (Keighery, 1994).	Several flora and vegetation based studies, covering various portions of the application area have been previously undertaken. These studies together with aerial imagery were incorporated to form a desktop study of the application area by Biota Environmental Services (2013), identifying Lot 555 as:

Inland Sand Dunes Habitat
Vegetation unit ID1 comprises *Grevillea stenobotrya* tall open shrubland over *Crotalaria cunninghamii*, *Trichodesma zeylanicum* var. *grandiflorum* open shrubland over *Triodia epactia* open hummock grassland.

Coastal Sand Plains Habitat
Vegetation unit CS1 comprises *Acacia tetragonophylla* scattered shrubs over *Triodia epactia* hummock grassland in mosaic with *Sporobolus mitchellii*, *E. benthamii* and *Eulalia aurea* tussock grassland.

3. Assessment of application against clearing principles

Comments This application proposes to clear 14.6 hectares of native vegetation within Lot 555 on Deposited Plan 74894, Talandji for the purpose of constructing a power station, associated with the Onslow Utilities Infrastructure Upgrade Project (OUIRP).

Chevron Australia Pty Ltd (Chevron) is obliged to provide an upgraded power supply to the town of Onslow as part of the Ashburton North State Development Agreement for the Wheatstone Project. To progress this work, Chevron was issued a clearing permit by the Department of Environment Regulation (DER) in April 2016 (CPS 6541/1), which covered numerous lots, including Lot 555 on Deposited Plan 74894. Since granting the permit, Chevron has transferred the responsibility to complete a portion of the works to Horizon Power. As such, Chevron has submitted an application to excise Lot 555 from CPS 6541/1, which will allow Horizon Power to apply for a clearing permit that will cover this Lot.

Several flora and vegetation studies have been completed within the application area and wider area as part of the OUIRP. Two vegetation communities have been identified within the application area (Biota Environmental Services, 2013):

- The Inland Sand Dunes (ID1) are distinguished broadly by the dominance of *Triodia epactia* versus *Triodia schinzii* in the hummock grassland understorey. Narrow swales between these dunes typically feature scattered tall shrubs of the dominant dune species, with a higher density of *Acacia stellaticeps* low shrubs.

A number of the plant species recorded from the Inland Sand Dunes are restricted to sandy substrates. These species include the priority 3 shrubs *Eremophila forrestii* subsp. *viridis* and *Triumfetta echinata*, and the undescribed taxon *Aenictophyton* aff. *reconditum*. All of these species were recorded from a small number of inland sand dunes within a broader study area, including both of the inland dune vegetation units.

- The Coastal Sand Plains (CS1) comprise of flat to gently undulating sandy inland plains broadly dominated by soft spinifex (*Triodia epactia*) hummock grasslands with a varying degree of invasion by introduced perennial grasses.

The two inland sand dune vegetation units ID1 and ID2, are considered to have high local conservation significance (Horizon Power, 2016 and Biota Environmental Services, 2013). ID1 covers approximately 7.72 hectares of the application area and has the potential to support priority flora species or other species of potential conservation significance (Horizon Power, 2016).

Several fauna species of conservation significance have been recorded within the local area (20 kilometre radius) (Department of Parks and Wildlife (Parks and Wildlife, 2007-). These species have wide distributions and are generally found within a variety of habitats, therefore the relatively small area under application is not likely to represent significant habitat (Parks and Wildlife, 2015), particularly given the extensively vegetated surrounding area (95 per cent vegetative cover in the local area). However, the proposed clearing may result in fauna injuries or deaths during works. The applicant is therefore, required to identify and relocate any terrestrial fauna species of conservation significance immediately prior to, and for the duration of the clearing.

Priority flora species *Triumfetta echinata* (priority 3) has been recorded within the application area. This species is a prostrate shrub that grows to 0.3 metres high (Western Australian Herbarium, 1998-). The limited information available on this species suggests that it is not locally common and restricted to red dunes (Parks and Wildlife, 2016). The Department of Parks and Wildlife advise that the habitat of this taxon should be avoided where practicable (Parks and Wildlife, 2016).

The Department of Parks and Wildlife has highlighted the potential for suitable habitat for *Eleocharis papillosa* (Vulnerable under the *Environmental Protection Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* and priority 3 under the Western Australian Priority Flora List) and *Eremophila forrestii* subsp. *Viridis* (priority 3) to be found within the application area due to similar recorded habitat (Parks and Wildlife, 2016). Given the close proximity of known

populations, the species may be found within the western portion of the Lot.

The requirement to survey and avoid priority flora will mitigate potential impacts to priority flora. The survey should be appropriately timed to detect the presence of targeted conservation significant flora taxa and be conducted by a suitably qualified botanist. If priority taxa are recorded, the extent of the local population should be recorded to enable an assessment of the proportional impact of the proposal to the local population (Parks and Wildlife, 2016).

No rare flora have been identified within the application area (Biota Environmental Services, 2013), and there are no records of rare flora within the local area. Similarly, there are no threatened or priority ecological communities mapped within the local area and none identified within the various flora studies undertaken on the wider study area.

There are seven weed species recorded in the application area and a further three that are considered likely to occur within the application area (Biota Environmental Services, 2013). Of these, two species are classified as Weeds of National Significance under the *Biosecurity and Agricultural Management Act 2007*. These species are *Prosopis glandulosa* and *Prosopis pallida* (Biota Environmental Services, 2013). Chevron (Chevron Australia Pty Ltd, 2015) has advised that measures to mitigate against the spread of these species include:

- Demarcation of *Prosopis glandulosa* and *Prosopis pallida* prior to clearing;
- Any areas containing *Prosopis glandulosa* and *Prosopis pallida* to be removed separately prior to other clearing taking place;
- *Prosopis glandulosa* and *Prosopis pallida* to be disposed of in a manner that will ensure seed is not viable;
- Vehicle weed inspection and wash down points will be installed; and
- Weed free certification requirements for vehicles will be recorded in a Construction Execution Permit system.

The disturbance caused by the proposed clearing has the potential to spread and introduce weeds. Appropriate weed management will assist in mitigating this risk.

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).

The Carnarvon Bioregion and Shire of Ashburton retain approximately 99 per cent of their pre-European vegetation extents (Government of Western Australia 2015). The vegetation under application is mapped as Beard vegetation association 670, which retains approximately 97 per cent of its pre-European vegetation extent within the Carnarvon IBRA Bioregion (Government of Western Australia 2015). These figures are all considerably greater than the abovementioned 30 per cent threshold, therefore the application area is not considered to be within an extensively cleared landscape.

No mapped water courses or conservation areas are located within the application area or surrounds. Based upon soil properties, the proposed clearing is not likely to result in appreciable land degradation, deterioration of surface or underground water quality or exacerbate the incidence of flooding.

Based on the above, the proposed clearing may be at variance to principle (a), is not likely to be at variance to the remaining clearing principles and is not at variance to principle (e).

Methodology

References:

- Biota Environmental Services (2013)
- Commonwealth of Australia (2001)
- Government of Western Australia (2015)
- Chevron Australia Pty Ltd (2015)
- Horizon Power (2016)
- Parks and Wildlife (2007-)
- Parks and Wildlife (2015)
- Parks and Wildlife (2016)
- Keighery (1994)
- Western Australia Herbarium (1998-)

GIS Databases:

- SAC Bio Datasets (Accessed October 2016)

Planning instruments and other relevant matters.

Comments The Department of Environment Regulation (DER) has approved a Works Approval to construct a power station within the site as part of Onslow Utilities Infrastructure Upgrade Project (OUIRP).

The application was advertised in *The West Australian* newspaper on 26 September 2016 by DER inviting submissions from the public within a 21 day period. No submissions were received in relation to this application.

The OUIRP was referred to the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA, 2014). The EPA's decision on 21 July 2014 was 'Not Assessed – Public Advice Given'. Under Part V of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*.

Methodology References:
- EPA (2014)

4. References

- Biota Environmental Services (2013) Desktop Review of the Proposed Onslow Micro-Siting Survey Area. Additional Information for Clearing Permit Application CPS 6541/1. DER Ref A925328.
- Commonwealth of Australia (2001) National Objectives and Targets for Biodiversity Conservation 2001-2005, Canberra, Australia.
- Chevron Australia Pty Ltd (2015) Additional Information for Clearing Permit Application CPS 6541/1. Received 26/06/2015. Chevron Pty Ltd, Australia. DER Ref: A956063.
- EPA (2014) Decision for Project Referral. Additional Information for Clearing Permit Application CPS 6541/1, Public Advice Given. DER Ref A925330.
- Government of Western Australia (2015) 2015 Statewide Vegetation Statistics incorporating the CAR Reserve Analysis (Full Report). Current as of June 2015. WA Department of Parks and Wildlife, Perth.
- Horizon Power (2016) Onslow Distributed Energy Resources Project. Native Vegetation Clearing Permit Application – Lot 555 Onslow. DER Ref A1156207.
- 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.dec.wa.gov.au/>. Accessed March 2016.
- Parks and Wildlife (2015) Species and Communities flora advice. Additional Information for Clearing Permit Application CPS 6541/1. DER Ref A925323.
- Parks and Wildlife (2016) Regional advice. Additional Information for Clearing Permit Application CPS 7253/1. DER Ref A1182639.
- Shepherd, D.P., Beeston, G.R., and Hopkins, A.J.M. (2001), Native Vegetation in Western Australia. Technical Report 249. Department of Agriculture Western Australia, South Perth.
- Western Australian Herbarium (1998-) FloraBase - The Western Australian Flora. Department of Environment and Conservation. <http://florabase.dec.wa.gov.au/>