



Clearing Permit Decision Report

1. Application details

1.1. Permit application details

Permit application No.: 7348/2
Permit type: Purpose Permit

1.2. Proponent details

Proponent's name: Aurumin Mt Dimer Pty Ltd

1.3. Property details

Property: Mining Lease 77/427
Local Government Area: Shire of Yilgarn
Colloquial name: Mt Dimer Project

1.4. Application

| Clearing Area (ha) | No. Trees | Method of Clearing | For the purpose of: |
|--------------------|-----------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| 21.35 | | Mechanical Removal | Tailings Storage Facility |

1.5. Decision on application

Decision on Permit Application: Grant
Decision Date: 6 May 2021

2. Site Information

2.1. Existing environment and information

2.1.1. Description of the native vegetation under application

Vegetation Description The vegetation of the application area is broadly mapped as the following Beard vegetation associations: 141: Medium woodland; York gum, salmon gum & gimlet; and 538: Shrublands; *Acacia brachystachya* scrub (GIS Database).

A flora and vegetation survey was conducted over the application area by Western Botanical during 30 May to 10 June 2016. The following vegetation associations were recorded within the application area (Western Botanical, 2016):

Tall *Eucalyptus* Woodlands

E1

Eucalyptus salmonophloia, *Eucalyptus salubris* over *Acacia acuminata* over Sclerophyll Understorey on non-saline clay soils.

E11

Eucalyptus ravidia over Chenopod understorey on saline soils.

Mallee *Eucalyptus* Woodlands

E2

Eucalyptus ebbanoensis over *Acacia acuminata* over *Olearia muelleri*, *Scaevola spinescens* (broad leaf) and *Amphipogon caricinus* on red silty sand with gravel.

E3

Eucalyptus formanii over *Beyeria brevifolia* var. *robustior* over *Triodia scariosa* on orange to red sandplains.

E7

Eucalyptus loxophleba subsp. *lissophloia* over *Acacia acuminata* over *Prostanthera grylloana*, *Phebalium* spp. on non-saline soils, low-lying areas.

Acacia dominated Thicket with emergent Mallee

S1

Emergent *Eucalyptus ebbanoensis*, *Eucalyptus formanii* over *Acacia sibina*, *Acacia resinimarginea*, *Acacia acuminata*, *Allocasuarina acutivalvis* subsp. *acutivalvis*, *Allocasuarina corniculata* over *Phebalium* spp. dominated OR Myrtaceae spp. dominated understorey on gravelly sandplains.

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| Clearing Description | Mt Dimer Project. Aurumin Mt Dimer Pty Ltd proposes to clear up to 21.35 hectares of native vegetation within a boundary of approximately 29.505 hectares, for the purpose of a tailings storage facility. The project is located approximately 120 kilometres north east of Southern Cross, within the Shire of Yilgarn. |
| Vegetation Condition | Pristine: No obvious signs of disturbance (Keighery, 1994). to Completely Degraded: No longer intact; completely/almost completely without native species (Keighery, 1994). |
| Comment | The vegetation condition was derived from a vegetation survey conducted by Western Botanical (2016) The proposed clearing is for the development of a tailings storage facility. Clearing permit CPS 7348/1 was granted by the Department of Mines and Petroleum (now the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety) on 5 January 2017 and was valid from 28 January 2017 to 31 January 2022. The permit authorised the clearing of up to 21.35 hectares of native vegetation within a boundary of approximately 29.308 hectares, for the purpose of a tailings storage facility. On 17 February 2021, the Permit Holder applied to amend CPS 7348/1 to increase the permit boundary, extend the permit duration and update the Permit Holder name. |

3. Assessment of application against Clearing Principles

Comments

The permit holder has applied to increase the permit boundary by 0.197 hectares, and extend the permit duration by four years, to 31 January 2026. The permit holder has also requested to update the company name on the permit from Golden Iron Resources Ltd to Aurumin Mt Dimer Pty Ltd. The amount of clearing authorised remains the same. The permit extension will allow for the development of a tailings storage facility and the increase to the permit boundary will allow for better access.

The amendment application is located within the Southern Cross subregion of the Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation for Australia (IBRA) Coolgardie Bioregion (GIS Database). The Southern Cross subregion is characterised by gently undulating uplands dissected by broad valleys with bands of low greenstone hills (CALM, 2002). Diverse *Eucalyptus* woodlands rich in endemic *Eucalyptus* occur around salt lakes, low greenstone hills, valley alluvials and broad plains of calcareous earths (CALM, 2002). Mallees and scrub-heaths occur on uplands as well as sand lunettes associated with playas along the broad valley floors and sand sheets around the granite outcrops. The scrubs are rich in endemic *Acacia* and *Myrtaceae* (CALM, 2002).

The vegetation within the amendment area is dominated by *Acacia* thickets and *Eucalyptus* woodlands (Western Botanical, 2016). No Threatened or Priority Ecological Communities were identified as potentially occurring within the amendment area and none of the vegetation types mapped and described are listed as Threatened or Priority Ecological Communities (Western Botanical, 2016). No Threatened or Priority flora were identified within the amendment area (Western Botanical, 2016).

There is suitable fauna habitat for malleefowl (*Leipoa ocellata*, VU at both state and federal level) located within the amendment area (Bamford, 2016). The fauna assessment identified inactive mounds and footprints within close proximity to the amendment area, indicative that malleefowl are present within the local area (Bamford, 2016). Potential impacts to malleefowl as a result of the proposed clearing may be minimised by the continued implementation of the fauna management condition. There are no additional conservation significant fauna species that are expected to be reliant upon the amendment area for habitat (Bamford, 2016).

There are no permanent or ephemeral watercourses or wetlands located within the amendment area (GIS Database; Western Botanical, 2016). The proposed amendment is unlikely to cause deterioration in the quality of surface or underground water, or exacerbate the incidence of flooding (Western Botanical, 2016). There are no conservation areas located within the vicinity of the amendment area (GIS Database). The Helena and Aurora Ranges Conservation Park is located approximately 1.5 kilometres west of the amendment area (GIS Database). The clearing within the additional amendment areas is not likely to lead to appreciable land degradation (Western Botanical, 2021).

The amendment application has been assessed against the clearing principles, planning instruments and other matters in accordance with s.51O of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*. Environmental information has been reviewed, and the assessment of the proposed clearing against the clearing principles remains consistent with the assessment contained in decision report CPS 7348/1.

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| Methodology | Bamford (2016) CALM (2002) Western Botanical (2016) GIS Database: - DPaW Tenure - Hydrography, Lakes |
|--------------------|---|

- Hydrography, Linear
- IBRA Australia
- Imagery
- Pre-European Vegetation
- Public Drinking Water Source Areas
- Threatened and Priority Ecological Communities boundaries
- Threatened and Priority Ecological Communities buffers
- Threatened and Priority Flora
- Threatened Fauna

Planning Instrument, Native Title, previous EPA decision or other matter.

Comments

There is one native title claim (WC2017/007) over the area under application (DPLH, 2021). 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 are no registered Aboriginal Sites of Significance within the application area (DPLH, 2021). 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 Water and Environmental Regulation and the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, 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 amendment application was advertised on 8 March 2021 by the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety inviting submissions from the public. The amendment application was readvertised on 19 April 2021 due to an increase to the permit boundary. No submissions were received in relation to this application.

Methodology DPLH (2021)

4. References

- Bamford (2016) Golden Iron Resources Ltd Fauna Assessment, Mount Dimer Project Area. Report prepared for Golden Iron Resources Ltd, by Bamford Consulting Ecologists, September 2016.
- CALM (2002) A Biodiversity Audit of Western Australia's 53 Biogeographic Subregions in 2002. Department of Conservation and Land Management, Western Australia.
- DPLH (2021) Aboriginal Heritage Inquiry System. Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage.
<https://espatial.dplh.wa.gov.au/AHIS/index.html?viewer=AHIS> (Accessed 31 March 2021).
- Keighery, B.J. (1994) Bushland Plant Survey: A Guide to Plant Community Survey for the Community. Wildflower Society of WA (Inc). Nedlands, Western Australia.
- Western Botanical (2016) Interim Report on the Flora and Vegetation of the Mount Dimer Tenements, Level 1 Targeted Priority Flora Assessment. Report prepared for Golden Iron Resources Ltd, by Western Botanical, June 2016.

5. Glossary

Acronyms:

| | |
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| BC Act | <i>Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016</i> , Western Australia |
| BoM | Bureau of Meteorology, Australian Government |
| DAA | Department of Aboriginal Affairs, Western Australia (now DPLH) |
| DAFWA | Department of Agriculture and Food, Western Australia (now DPIRD) |
| DAWE | Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment, Australian Government |
| DBCA | Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, Western Australia |
| DER | Department of Environment Regulation, Western Australia (now DWER) |
| DMIRS | Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety, Western Australia |
| DMP | Department of Mines and Petroleum, Western Australia (now DMIRS) |
| DoEE | Department of the Environment and Energy (now DAWE) |
| DoW | Department of Water, Western Australia (now DWER) |
| DPaW | Department of Parks and Wildlife, Western Australia (now DBCA) |
| DPIRD | Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, Western Australia |
| DPLH | Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage, Western Australia |
| DRF | Declared Rare Flora (now known as Threatened Flora) |
| DWER | Department of Water and Environmental Regulation, Western Australia |
| EP Act | <i>Environmental Protection Act 1986</i> , Western Australia |
| EPA | Environmental Protection Authority, Western Australia |

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|-----------------|---|
| 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:

{DBCAs (2019) Conservation Codes for Western Australian Flora and Fauna. Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, Western Australia):-

T Threatened species:

Listed by order of the Minister as Threatened in the category of critically endangered, endangered or vulnerable under section 19(1), or is a rediscovered species to be regarded as threatened species under section 26(2) of the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* (BC Act).

Threatened fauna is that subset of 'Specially Protected Fauna' listed under schedules 1 to 3 of the *Wildlife Conservation (Specially Protected Fauna) Notice 2018* for Threatened Fauna.

Threatened flora is that subset of 'Rare Flora' listed under schedules 1 to 3 of the *Wildlife Conservation (Rare Flora) Notice 2018* for Threatened Flora.

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.

CR Critically endangered species

Threatened species considered to be "*facing an extremely high risk of extinction in the wild in the immediate future, as determined in accordance with criteria set out in the ministerial guidelines*".

Listed as critically endangered under section 19(1)(a) of the BC Act in accordance with the criteria set out in section 20 and the ministerial guidelines. Published under schedule 1 of the *Wildlife Conservation (Specially Protected Fauna) Notice 2018* for critically endangered fauna or the *Wildlife Conservation (Rare Flora) Notice 2018* for critically endangered flora.

EN Endangered species

Threatened species considered to be "*facing a very high risk of extinction in the wild in the near future, as determined in accordance with criteria set out in the ministerial guidelines*".

Listed as endangered under section 19(1)(b) of the BC Act in accordance with the criteria set out in section 21 and the ministerial guidelines. Published under schedule 2 of the *Wildlife Conservation (Specially Protected Fauna) Notice 2018* for endangered fauna or the *Wildlife Conservation (Rare Flora) Notice 2018* for endangered flora.

VU Vulnerable species

Threatened species considered to be "*facing a high risk of extinction in the wild in the medium-term future, as determined in accordance with criteria set out in the ministerial guidelines*".

Listed as vulnerable under section 19(1)(c) of the BC Act in accordance with the criteria set out in section 22 and the ministerial guidelines. Published under schedule 3 of the *Wildlife Conservation (Specially Protected Fauna) Notice 2018* for vulnerable fauna or the *Wildlife Conservation (Rare Flora) Notice 2018* for vulnerable flora.

Extinct Species:

EX Extinct species

Species where "*there is no reasonable doubt that the last member of the species has died*", and listing is otherwise in accordance with the ministerial guidelines (section 24 of the BC Act).

Published as presumed extinct under schedule 4 of the *Wildlife Conservation (Specially Protected Fauna) Notice 2018* for extinct fauna or the *Wildlife Conservation (Rare Flora) Notice 2018* for extinct flora.

EW Extinct in the wild species

Species that "*is known only to survive in cultivation, in captivity or as a naturalised population well outside its past range; and it has not been recorded in its known habitat or expected habitat, at appropriate seasons, anywhere in its past range, despite surveys over a time frame appropriate to its life cycle and form*", and listing is otherwise in accordance with the ministerial guidelines (section 25 of the BC Act).

Currently there are no threatened fauna or threatened flora species listed as extinct in the wild. If

listing of a species as extinct in the wild occurs, then a schedule will be added to the applicable notice.

Specially protected species:

Listed by order of the Minister as specially protected under section 13(1) of the BC Act. Meeting one or more of the following categories: species of special conservation interest; migratory species; cetaceans; species subject to international agreement; or species otherwise in need of special protection.

Species that are listed as threatened species (critically endangered, endangered or vulnerable) or extinct species under the BC Act cannot also be listed as Specially Protected species.

MI

Migratory species

Fauna that periodically or occasionally visit Australia or an external Territory or the exclusive economic zone; or the species is subject of an international agreement that relates to the protection of migratory species and that binds the Commonwealth; and listing is otherwise in accordance with the ministerial guidelines (section 15 of the BC Act).

Includes 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 fauna subject to the *Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals* (Bonn Convention), an environmental treaty under the United Nations Environment Program. Migratory species listed under the BC Act are a subset of the migratory animals, that are known to visit Western Australia, protected under the international agreements or treaties, excluding species that are listed as Threatened species.

Published as migratory birds protected under an international agreement under schedule 5 of the *Wildlife Conservation (Specially Protected Fauna) Notice 2018*.

CD

Species of special conservation interest (conservation dependent fauna)

Fauna of special conservation need being species dependent on ongoing conservation intervention to prevent it becoming eligible for listing as threatened, and listing is otherwise in accordance with the ministerial guidelines (section 14 of the BC Act).

Published as conservation dependent fauna under schedule 6 of the *Wildlife Conservation (Specially Protected Fauna) Notice 2018*.

OS

Other specially protected species

Fauna otherwise in need of special protection to ensure their conservation, and listing is otherwise in accordance with the ministerial guidelines (section 18 of the BC Act).

Published as other specially protected fauna under schedule 7 of the *Wildlife Conservation (Specially Protected Fauna) Notice 2018*.

P

Priority species:

Possibly threatened species that do not meet survey criteria, or are otherwise data deficient, are added to the Priority Fauna or Priority Flora Lists under Priorities 1, 2 or 3. These three categories are ranked in order of priority for survey and evaluation of conservation status so that consideration can be given to their declaration as threatened fauna or flora.

Species that are adequately known, are rare but not threatened, or meet criteria for near threatened, or that have been recently removed from the threatened species or other specially protected fauna lists for other than taxonomic reasons, are placed in Priority 4. These species 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.

Principles for clearing native vegetation:

- (a) Native vegetation should not be cleared if it comprises a high level of biological diversity.
- (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.
- (c) Native vegetation should not be cleared if it includes, or is necessary for the continued existence of, rare flora.
- (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.
- (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.
- (f) Native vegetation should not be cleared if it is growing in, or in association with, an environment associated with a watercourse or wetland.
- (g) Native vegetation should not be cleared if the clearing of the vegetation is likely to cause appreciable land degradation.
- (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.
- (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.
- (j) Native vegetation should not be cleared if clearing the vegetation is likely to cause, or exacerbate, the incidence or intensity of flooding.