



# Clearing Permit Decision Report

## 1. Application details

### 1.1. Permit application details

Permit application No.: 7365/1  
Permit type: Area Permit

### 1.2. Proponent details

Proponent's name: Newmont Boddington Gold Pty Ltd

### 1.3. Property details

Property: Mining Lease 70/21  
Mining Lease 70/22  
Mining Lease 70/588  
Mining Lease 70/1236

Local Government Area: Shire of Boddington

Colloquial name: NBG Hedges Hall Road Project

### 1.4. Application

Clearing Area (ha)	No. Trees	Method of Clearing	For the purpose of:
4.372		Mechanical Removal	Haul Road and survey markers

### 1.5. Decision on application

Decision on Permit Application: Grant  
Decision Date: 5 January 2017

## 2. Site Information

### 2.1. Existing environment and information

#### 2.1.1. Description of the native vegetation under application

**Vegetation Description** The application area has been mapped as the following Beard vegetation association (GIS Database):

3: Medium forest; jarrah-marri.

**Clearing Description** NBG Hedges Haul Road Project  
Newmont Boddington Gold Pty Ltd (NBG Pty Ltd) proposes to clear up to 4.372 hectares of native vegetation within an application area of 4.372 hectares for the purposes of constructing a haul road and survey markers. The project is located approximately 12 kilometres east of Boddington within the Shire of Boddington.

**Vegetation Condition** Degraded: Structure severely disturbed; regeneration to good condition requires intensive management (Keighery, 1994).

**Comment** The proposed clearing is required for the purpose of constructing a haul road to enable heavy vehicle access from the Boddington Gold Mine to the Hedges River Water Dam. Part of the proposal area requires the clearing of a rehabilitated haul road. The haul road is needed to undertake repairs at the Hedges River Water Dam which is located south of the project area. Four smaller clearing areas are required to construct survey markers (control points) for monitoring of tailings dam and water dam embankment walls using Global Positioning Systems. The majority of the proposed clearing will be undertaken in the previously disturbed haul road area. The survey marker areas contain little to no vegetation (NBG Pty Ltd, 2016a).

No flora or fauna surveys were undertaken over the application area. The condition of the vegetation under application was determined via interpretation of aerial imagery and information provided in the Native Vegetation Clearing Permit application documentation (NBG Pty Ltd, 2016b; GIS Database).

### 3. Assessment of application against clearing principles

**Comments** The application area occurs within the Jarrah Forest Interim Biogeographical Regionalisation for Australia (IBRA) bioregion (CALM, 2002; GIS Database). The Jarrah Forest IBRA region comprises a diverse range of landform features and has not been extensively cleared as approximately 68% of the pre-European vegetation remains in the State (Government of Western Australia, 2015; GIS Database). The vegetation of the application area has been mapped as Beard vegetation association 3; Medium forest; jarrah-marri (GIS Database). However, the majority of the application area has been previously cleared and is not representative of this vegetation association (GIS Database). The application area is neither a remnant of native vegetation nor does it form part of any remnants within the local area (GIS Database).

No on-ground flora or vegetation surveys have been undertaken over the application area. According to available databases, there are no Threatened Ecological Communities (TEC's) or Priority Ecological Communities (PEC's) occurring within or near the application area (GIS Database). There are also no records of Threatened or Priority flora recorded within the application area (GIS Database).

A search of DPaW's NatureMap database revealed records of 30 Priority flora species within a 20 kilometre radius of the application area (DPaW, 2016). The majority of the application area contains vegetation that was rehabilitated approximately ten years ago (NBG Pty Ltd, 2016b). Given the application area is small and has been previously cleared, the proposed clearing is unlikely to impact the conservation status of any Priority flora.

Thirty-six weed species have been recorded in the vicinity of the application area or are known from the local area (DPaW, 2016). Weed invasion has the potential to alter the biodiversity of an area. There is the potential for the presence of Dieback (*Phytophthora cinnamomi*) to occur in the application area, although areas have not been 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.

No fauna surveys have been undertaken over the application area. A search of DPaW's NatureMap database revealed records of 14 conservation significant fauna and three migratory bird species within a 20 kilometre radius of the application area (DPaW, 2016). Given the application area is small (4.372 hectares) and contains areas of previously cleared vegetation, the area is not expected to contain a high level of faunal diversity or support significant habitat for native fauna. It is unlikely the proposed clearing would have a significant impact on conservation significant fauna species as large amounts of similar habitat are located nearby and the clearing area is small and temporary in nature.

There are no permanent watercourses or wetlands mapped within the application area (GIS Database). One minor, non-perennial watercourse is located in the north-eastern part of the clearing area associated with the haul road (GIS Database). Any impacts to riparian vegetation are likely to be minimal.

The application area occurs within the Murray River Catchment Public Drinking Water Source Area (PDWSA) (GIS Database). However, the small area of the proposed clearing is unlikely to have any significant impact on the PDWSA or on surface or groundwater quality.

Given the clearing proposed of 4.372 hectares is an area which remains largely uncleared, it is unlikely that land degradation, erosion or flooding impacts should occur.

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), (g), (h), (i), and (j), and is not at variance to Principles (d), (e) and (f).

**Methodology** CALM (2002)  
DAA (2016)  
DPaW (2016)  
Government of Western Australia (2015)  
Keighery (1994)  
NBG Pty Ltd (2016)

GIS Database:  
- DPaW Tenure  
- Dieback Occurrence  
- Hydrography, linear  
- IBRA WA (Regions - Sub Regions)  
- Pre-European Vegetation  
- Public Drinking Water Source Areas  
- TEC/PEC – Boundaries  
- TEC/PEC – Buffer  
- Threatened Fauna  
- Threatened and Priority Flora

## Planning instrument, Native Title, Previous EPA decision or other matter.

**Comments** There is one registered native title claim (WC1998/058) over the application area (DAA, 2016). This claim has been registered by the National Native Title Tribunal on behalf of the claimant groups (DAA, 2016). However, the 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 (DAA, 2016). One registered Aboriginal site of significance (Site ID: 27935) is located in close proximity to one of the survey markers (DAA, 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 2016 by the Department of Mines and Petroleum inviting submissions from the public. There were no submissions received.

**Methodology** DAA (2016)

## 4. References

- CALM (2002) A Biodiversity Audit of Western Australia's 53 Biogeographical Subregions. Jarrah Forest 1 (JF1 – Northern Jarrah Forest subregion) Department of Conservation and Land Management, Perth, Western Australia.
- DAA (2016) Aboriginal Heritage Inquiry System. Department of Aboriginal Affairs. <http://maps.dia.wa.gov.au/AHIS2> (Accessed 30 December 2016).
- DPaW (2016) NatureMap - Mapping Western Australia's Biodiversity, Department of Parks and Wildlife. <https://naturemap.dpaw.wa.gov.au/> (Accessed 28 December 2016).
- Government of Western Australia (2015) 2015 Statewide Vegetation Statistics incorporating the CAR Reserve Analysis (Full Report). Western Australian Department of Parks and Wildlife, Perth, Western Australia.
- Keighery B.J. (1994) Bushland Plant Survey: A Guide to Plant Community Survey for the Community. Wildflower Society of Western Australia (Inc.). Nedlands, Western Australia.
- NBG Pty Ltd (2016a) Additional Information received in relation to Clearing Permit Application CPS 7365/1, January 2017. Newmont Boddington Gold Pty Ltd, Perth, Western Australia.
- NBG Pty Ltd (2016b) Application for a Clearing Permit, November 2016. Newmont Boddington Gold Pty Ltd, Perth, Western Australia.

## 5. Glossary

### Acronyms:

<b>BoM</b>	Bureau of Meteorology, Australian Government
<b>DAA</b>	Department of Aboriginal Affairs, Western Australia
<b>DAFWA</b>	Department of Agriculture and Food, Western Australia
<b>DEC</b>	Department of Environment and Conservation, Western Australia (now DPaW and DER)
<b>DER</b>	Department of Environment Regulation, Western Australia
<b>DMP</b>	Department of Mines and Petroleum, Western Australia
<b>DRF</b>	Declared Rare Flora
<b>DotEE</b>	Department of the Environment and Energy, Australian Government
<b>DoW</b>	Department of Water, Western Australia
<b>DPaW</b>	Department of Parks and Wildlife, Western Australia
<b>DSEWPaC</b>	Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities (now DotE)
<b>EPA</b>	Environmental Protection Authority, Western Australia
<b>EP Act</b>	<i>Environmental Protection Act 1986</i> , Western Australia
<b>EPBC Act</b>	<i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i> (Federal Act)
<b>GIS</b>	Geographical Information System
<b>ha</b>	Hectare (10,000 square metres)
<b>IBRA</b>	Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation for Australia
<b>IUCN</b>	International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources – commonly known as the World Conservation Union
<b>PEC</b>	Priority Ecological Community, Western Australia
<b>RIWI Act</b>	<i>Rights in Water and Irrigation Act 1914</i> , Western Australia
<b>TEC</b>	Threatened Ecological Community

### Definitions:

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

**T** Threatened species:

Published as Specially Protected under the *Wildlife Conservation Act 1950*, 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).

**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.

**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.

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. Published as Specially Protected under the *Wildlife Conservation Act 1950*, in Schedule 1 of the Wildlife Conservation (Specially Protected Fauna) Notice for Threatened Fauna and Wildlife Conservation (Rare Flora) Notice for Threatened Flora.
- EN Endangered species**  
Threatened species considered to be facing a very high risk of extinction in the wild. Published as Specially Protected under the *Wildlife Conservation Act 1950*, in Schedule 2 of the Wildlife Conservation (Specially Protected Fauna) Notice for Threatened Fauna and Wildlife Conservation (Rare Flora) Notice for Threatened Flora.
- VU Vulnerable species**  
Threatened species considered to be facing a high risk of extinction in the wild. Published as Specially Protected under the *Wildlife Conservation Act 1950*, in Schedule 3 of the Wildlife Conservation (Specially Protected Fauna) Notice for Threatened Fauna and Wildlife Conservation (Rare Flora) Notice for Threatened Flora.
- 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.