Department of Environment
Government of Western Australia

Clearing Permit Decision Report

1. Application details

1.1. Permit application details

Permit application No.: 742/1
Permit type: Area Permit

1.2. Proponent details

Proponent's name: **Katanning Machinery Restoration Group Inc.**

1.3. Property details

Property: KATANNING TOWNSITE LOT 994 (Lot No. 994 RAMSDEN KATANNING 6317)
KATANNING TOWNSITE LOT 995 (Lot No. 995 GREAT SOUTHERN KATANNING 6317)
Local Government Area: Shire Of Katanning
Colloquial name: Katanning - Reserves 21820 and 27092

1.4. Application

Clearing Area (ha)	No. Trees	Method of Clearing	For the purpose of:
45		Mechanical Removal	Building or Structure

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
The application is located within the Broomehill Vegetation Beard Association No. 1085 (Hopkins et al., 2001).	A land degradation assessment report prepared by the Department of Agriculture (WA) describes the native vegetation within the notified area to be Eucalyptus wandoo (Wandoo) and Allocasuarina fraseriana (Rock Sheoak) woodland (and associated understorey) on duplex soils (TRIM ref IN24516).	Good: Structure significantly altered by multiple disturbance; retains basic structure/ability to regenerate (Keighery 1994)	The report suggests that the current vegetation composition may not accurately reflect the original vegetation composition due to disturbance in the past, however the condition of the current vegetation is fair to good (TRIM ref SWD46262).

3. Assessment of application against clearing principles

(a) Native vegetation should not be cleared if it comprises a high level of biological diversity.

Comments

Proposal is at variance to this Principle

The clearing of this site is likely to contribute towards reducing the biodiversity values of the local area. The application area has intrinsic value in a local context given the largely cleared landscape that surrounds it.

The area that is proposed to be cleared represents one of the larger blocks of the Broomehill vegetation association No. 1085 within a 10km radius (SAC Bio Datasets 180407). It is likely to have a higher level of biological diversity when compared to the smaller fragments of remnant vegetation that remain in the 10km local area. Clearing this vegetation is likely to impact on local biodiversity values.

Based on the information provided and available, the area that has been applied to be cleared is considered to have high biodiversity value.

Methodology SAC Bio Datasets (180407)

(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.

Comments

Proposal may be at variance to this Principle

A land degradation assessment report prepared by the Department of Agriculture (WA) describes the native vegetation within the notified area to be Eucalyptus wandoo (Wandoo) and Allocasuarina fraseriana (Rock Sheoak) woodland (and associated understorey) on duplex soils. The report suggests that the current

vegetation composition may not accurately reflect the original vegetation composition due to disturbance in the past, however the condition of the current vegetation is fair to good.

'According to the database results, a total of 5 Threatened fauna taxa (including 4 listed under the EPBC Act) and 3 Priority fauna taxa have been recorded within the local area (CALM, 2006)'.

'The nearest record of Threatened or Priority fauna taxa is Phascogale calura (Red-tailed Phascogale, T, listed as Endangered under the EPBC Act), located approximately 200 metres from the notified area in bushland across Great Southern Highway. This arboreal marsupial seems to prefer dense woodland or tall shrubland with a continuous canopy and is most often associated with dense stands of Allocasuarina huegeliana (Rock Sheoak) and Eucalyptus wandoo (Wandoo). CALM's Katanning District indicates that the application area contains suitable habitat for this species, and given the close proximity of this record it is likely that this species occurs within the application.

A fauna survey is recommended to determine whether or not this species is present within the application area (CALM, 2006)'.

'CALM's Katanning District indicates that the application area contains suitable habitat for Morelia spilota imbricata (South West Carpet Python, Schedule 1/Priority 4). This species occurs in a variety of habitats including forest and heathland. It is often arboreal and preys on birds, other reptiles and small to medium size mammals. The nearest record is located approximately 5.8 kilometres from the application area (CALM, 2006)'.

'A fauna survey is recommended to determine whether or not the identified species are present and or utilise the application area (CALM, 2006)'.

Methodology CALM (2006) (TRIM ref SWD46262)

(c) Native vegetation should not be cleared if it includes, or is necessary for the continued existence of, rare flora.

Comments

Proposal may be at variance to this Principle

'No field assessment was undertaken. A land degradation assessment report prepared by the Department of Agriculture (WA) describes the native vegetation within the notified area to be Eucalyptus wandoo (Wandoo) and Allocasuarina fraseriana (Rock Sheoak) woodland (and associated understorey) on duplex soils. The report suggests that the current vegetation composition may not accurately reflect the original vegetation composition due to disturbance in the past, however the condition of the current vegetation is fair to good (CALM, 2006)'.

'According to the database results, a total of 1 Declared Rare flora taxa and 7 Priority flora taxa have been recorded within the local area.
The nearest record of Declared Rare flora taxa is Tribonanthes purpurea (Granite Pink), located approximately 1.1 kilometres from the application area. This species is described on CALM's FloraBase website as a tuberous, perennial herb between 0.03-0.04 metres tall, with pink and purple flowers in August, growing in seasonally wet soils in moss swards and herbfields among granite rocks (CALM, 2006)'.

'The nearest record of Priority flora taxa is Verticordia brevifolia subsp. brevifolia (Priority 3), located approximately 1.1 kilometres from the notified area. This species is described on CALM's FloraBase website as a shrub between 0.2-0.4 metres tall, with yellow, orange and red flowers between October and November, growing in gravelly loam and clay associated with road verges (CALM, 2006)'.

'Given that the quality of the bushland present within the application area ranges from fair to good as a result of past disturbance and current recreational activities, the likelihood of Declared Rare and Priority flora taxa being present is somewhat lower than if the vegetation was in very good condition. However, given that the closest records of Declared Rare and Priority flora taxa are only 1100 metres away, it is possible that these taxa may occur within the notified area. In the absence of an appropriately timed flora survey carried out by a qualified botanist, CALM advises that this proposal may be at variance to this Principle (CALM, 2006)'.

Methodology CALM (2006) (TRIM ref SWD46262)

(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.

Comments

Proposal is not likely to be at variance to this Principle

'There are no known occurrences of Threatened Ecological Communities (TEC) within the local area (CALM, 2006)'.

'There are no known occurrences of TEC's within a 50km radius (CALM, 2005)'.

Methodology CALM (2006) (TRIM ref SWD46262)
CALM (2005)

(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.

Comments

Proposal is at variance to this Principle

According to the J.S.Beard dataset there are 5 vegetation systems and 8 vegetation associations within the local area. Of these, 1 vegetation association occurs within the notified area (CALM, 2006).

The application is located within the Broomehill Vegetation Association No. 1085. 8.9% of this vegetation association remains. 0.0% of this vegetation association is in secure tenure (SAC Bio Datasets 170407).

The 'National Objective and Targets for Biodiversity Conservation 2001-2005' (AGPS, 2001) recognises that the threshold level below which species loss appears to accelerate exponentially at an ecosystem level is regarded as being at a level of 30% of the pre-clearing extent of the vegetation type, with a level of 10% of the original extent regarded as being a level representing 'endangered'.

Therefore, any further clearing of this vegetation association will contribute to the loss of biodiversity which is already poorly represented and minimally reserved according to the state and national targets.

Methodology

AGPS (2001)
CALM (2006) (TRIM ref 46262)
SAC Bio Datasets (170407)

(f) Native vegetation should not be cleared if it is growing in, or in association with, an environment associated with a watercourse or wetland.

Comments

Proposal is not likely to be at variance to this Principle

The closest hydrography (linear) features include the Katanning Creek approximately 0.4km east, the Kojonup Creek approximately 1.4km south and and un-named tributary approximately 2.1km north of the application (SAC Bio Datasets 170407).

'The nearest wetlands of National significance are Coyrecup Lake (20km east) and Lake Dumbleyung (50km north) (CALM, 2005)'.

Given the distance between wetlands and rivers to the area under application the proposed clearing is not likely to be at variance to this principle.

Methodology

AGWA (2005) (TRIM ref IN24516)
CALM (2005)
SAC Bio Datasets (170407)

(g) Native vegetation should not be cleared if the clearing of the vegetation is likely to cause appreciable land degradation.

Comments

Proposal is seriously at variance to this Principle

The AGWA (2005) Report indicates that there is a moderate to high risk of land degradation in the form of salinity and a low to moderate risk of waterlogging if the proposed clearing is carried out.

The AGWA (2005) report states that the proposed clearing of 45 hectares of land within Reserves 21820 and 27092 is likely to be seriously at variance with Principle (g) for salinity and at variance for waterlogging.

Methodology

AGWA (2005) (TRIM ref IN24516)

(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.

Comments

Proposal may be at variance to this Principle

Information provided by CALM (2006) states that 'If this clearing is approved it is likely to result in deleterious impacts to local hydrology, which by association may affect native vegetation found within the Un-named Timber (Mallet) Reserve, and proposed Kojonup-Beaufort-Carrolup River Flats Recovery Catchment'.

Methodology

CALM (2006) (TRIM ref SWD46262)

(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.

Comments

Proposal is not likely to be at variance to this Principle

The AGWA (2005) Report states that it is unlikely that eutrophication would occur due to soil types present however the reduction in the native vegetation will increase stormwater recharge to the groundwater table in areas which have groundwater tables that are within 1.5m of the surface.

If an increase in recharge was to occur it is unlikely that it would cause deterioration in the quality of surface or underground water.

Methodology AGWA (2005) (TRIM ref IN24516)

(j) Native vegetation should not be cleared if clearing the vegetation is likely to cause, or exacerbate, the incidence or intensity of flooding.

Comments **Proposal is not likely to be at variance to this Principle**

'The clearing of further vegetation could increase surface run-off during high rainfall events which would contribute to increased stream flows but is unlikely to cause extensive flooding (AGWA, 2005)'.

Methodology AGWA (2005) (TRIM ref IN24516)

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

Comments

The application is within the Town Planning Scheme Zone: Z (Recreation and open space) (SAC Bio Datasets 170407).

The Katanning townsite participates in the Rural Towns Program to address the rising water tables and associated salinity issues. 'This program includes retaining and re-establishing native vegetation within the townsite (CALM, 2005)'.

'The Katanning LCDC does not support the above application in it's current form (LCDC, 2005)'.

'The Katanning Shire is awaiting a concept plan from the Katanning Machinery Restoration Group before making comments on the clearing application (Shire of Katanning, 2005)'.

Methodology CALM (2005)
LCDC (2005) (TRIM ref SWD44596)
Shire of Katanning (2005) (TRIM ref SWO27023)
SAC Bio Datasets (170407)

4. Assessor's recommendations

Purpose	Method	Applied area (ha)/ trees	Decision	Comment / recommendation
Building or Structure	Mechanical Removal	45		**The principles have been assessed and the clearing as proposed is seriously at variance to (g), at variance to (a) and (e), may be at variance to (b), (c) and (h) and not likely to be at variance to (d) and (i).**

5. References

AGPS (2001) The national objective and targets for biodiversity conservation 2001-2005. Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra.

Clearing Assessment Unit's biodiverstiy advice for land clearing application. Advice to Director General, Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC), Western Australia. TRIM ref xxxxx

DAFWA Land degradation assessment report. Office of the Commissioner of Soil and Land Conservation, Department of Agriculture and Food Western Australia. DoE TRIM ref XXXXX.

Department of Conservation and Land Management (2005) Clearing Notification: 2005F002731V01_742 Katanning Machinery Restoration Group - Reserves 21820 & 27092, Shire Katanning, 45ha. Department of Conservation and Land Management. Katanning, Western Australia.

Department of Environment and Conservation (2007) SAC Bio Datasets 170407. Department of Environment and Conservation, Western Australia.

Department of Natural Resources and Environment (2002) Biodiversity Action Planning. Action planning for native biodiversity at multiple scales; catchment bioregional, landscape, local. Department of Natural Resources and Environment, Victoria.

Hopkins, A.J.M., Beeston, G.R. and Harvey J.M. (2001) A database on the vegetation of Western Australia. Stage 1. CALMScience after J. S. Beard, late 1960's to early 1980's Vegetation Survey of Western Australia, UWA Press.

Katanning LCDC (2005) Application To Clear Native Vegetation. Katanning LCDC. Katanning, Western Australia.

Keighery, B.J. (1994) Bushland Plant Survey: A Guide to Plant Community Survey for the Community. Wildflower Society of WA (Inc). Nedlands, 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.

Shire of Katanning (2005) Application To Clear Native Vegetation. Shire of Katanning. Katanning, Western Australia.

6. Glossary

Term	Meaning
CALM	Department of Conservation and Land Management
DAWA	Department of Agriculture
DEP	Department of Environmental Protection (now DoE)
DoE	Department of Environment
DoIR	Department of Industry and Resources
DRF	Declared Rare Flora
EPP	Environmental Protection Policy
GIS	Geographical Information System
ha	Hectare (10,000 square metres)
TEC	Threatened Ecological Community
WRC	Water and Rivers Commission (now DoE)