



## CLEARING PERMIT

Granted under section 51E of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*

<b>Purpose Permit number:</b>	CPS 7508/1
<b>Permit Holder:</b>	Telstra Corporation Limited
<b>Duration of Permit:</b>	From 28 June 2017 to 28 June 2022

The Permit Holder is authorised to clear native vegetation subject to the following conditions of this Permit.

### PART I – CLEARING AUTHORISED

**1. Purpose for which clearing may be done**

Clearing for the purpose of installing underground optical fibre cables.

**2. Land on which clearing is to be done**

Lot 9 on Deposited Plan 91722, Ngaanyatjarra-Giles.

**3. Area of clearing**

The Permit Holder shall not clear more than 76 hectares of native vegetation within the combined areas cross-hatched yellow on attached Plan 7508/1a, Plan 7508/1b, Plan 7508/1c, Plan 7508/1d, Plan 7508/1e, Plan 7508/1f, Plan 7508/1g, Plan 7508/1h, Plan 7508/1i and Plan 7508/1j.

**4. Application**

This Permit allows the Permit Holder to authorise persons, including employees, contractors and agents of the Permit Holder, to clear native vegetation authorised under this Permit subject to compliance with the conditions of this Permit and approval from the Permit Holder.

**5. Type of clearing authorised**

This Permit authorises the Permit Holder to clear native vegetation for activities to the extent that the Permit Holder has the right to access land under the *Land Administration Act 1997* or any other written law.

### PART II – MANAGEMENT CONDITIONS

**6. Avoid, minimise etc clearing**

In determining the amount of native vegetation to be cleared authorised under this Permit, the Permit Holder must have regard to the following principles, set out in order of preference:

- avoid the clearing of native vegetation;
- minimise the amount of native vegetation to be cleared; and
- reduce the impact of clearing on any environmental value.

**7. Revegetation and rehabilitation**

The Permit Holder shall retain the vegetative material and topsoil removed by clearing authorised under this Permit and respread that vegetative material and topsoil over the cleared area upon completion of installation of the underground optical fibre cables.

  
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James Widenbar  
MANAGER CLEARING REGULATION  
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT REGULATION

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

6 June 2017

# Plan 7508/1a



## Legend

- Imagery
- Clearing Instruments Activities
- Local Government Authority



1:50,000  
(Approximate when reproduced at A4)

UTM Zone 52S  
World Geodetic System 1984

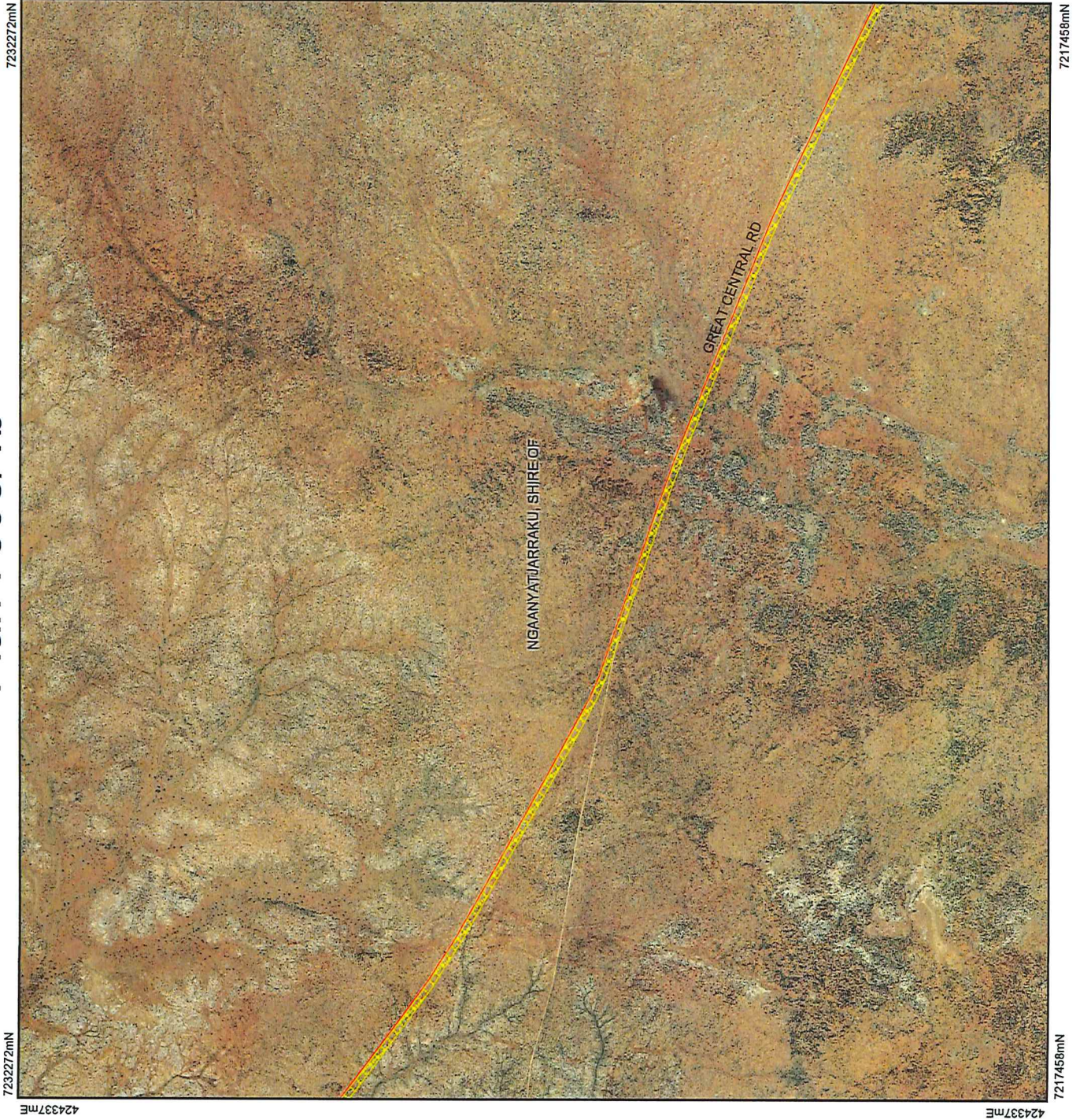
*Swan* Date *6/6/17*

Officer with delegated authority under Section 20 of the  
Environmental Protection Act 1986



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WESTERN AUSTRALIA  
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# Plan 7508/1b



## Legend

- Imagery
- Clearing Instruments Activities
- Local Government Authority



1:50,000

(Approximate when reproduced at A4)

UTM Zone 52S

World Geodetic System 1984

Signature Date 6/6/17

Officer with delegated authority under Section 20 of the Environmental Protection Act 1986



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# Plan 7508/1c



## Legend

- Imagery
- Clearing Instruments Activities
- Local Government Authority



1:50,000

(Approximate when reproduced at A4)

UTM Zone 52S

World Geodetic System 1984

*S.M. Mac* ..... Date *6/6/17* .....

Officer with delegated authority under Section 20 of the  
Environmental Protection Act 1986






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# Plan 7508/1d



## Legend

-  Imagery
-  Clearing Instruments Activities
-  Local Government Authority



1:50,000

(Approximate when reproduced at A4)

UTM Zone 52S

World Geodetic System 1984

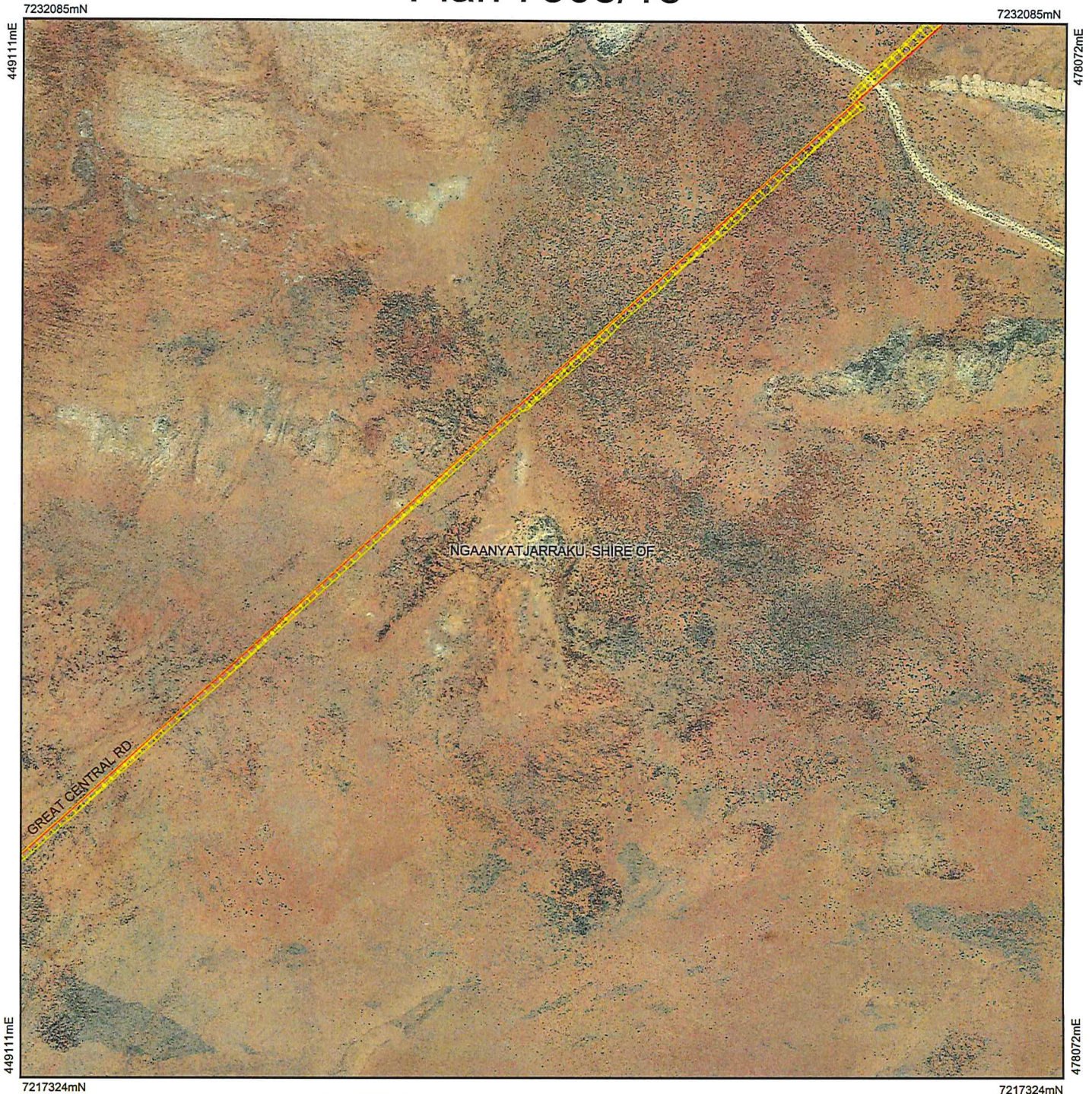
*Andrew* ..... Date *6/6/17* .....

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# Plan 7508/1e




## Legend

-  Imagery
-  Clearing Instruments Activities
-  Local Government Authority



1:50,000  
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UTM Zone 52S  
World Geodetic System 1984

 Date 6/6/17

Officer with delegated authority under Section 20 of the Environmental Protection Act 1986

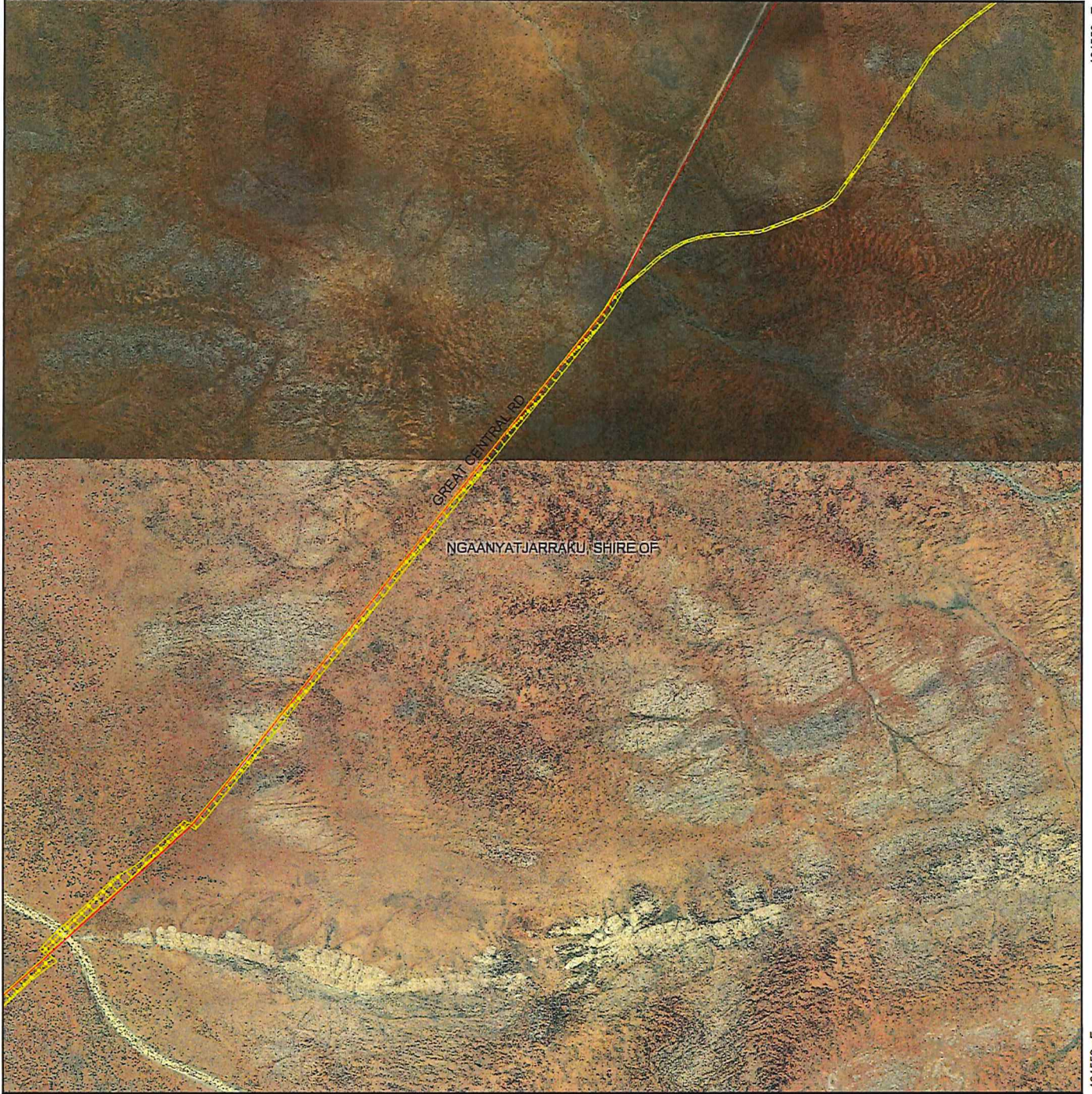
# Plan 7508/1f

7239726mN

7239726mN

455586mE

484556mE



455586mE

484556mE

7224979mN

7224979mN

## Legend

-  Imagery
-  Clearing Instruments Activities
-  Local Government Authority

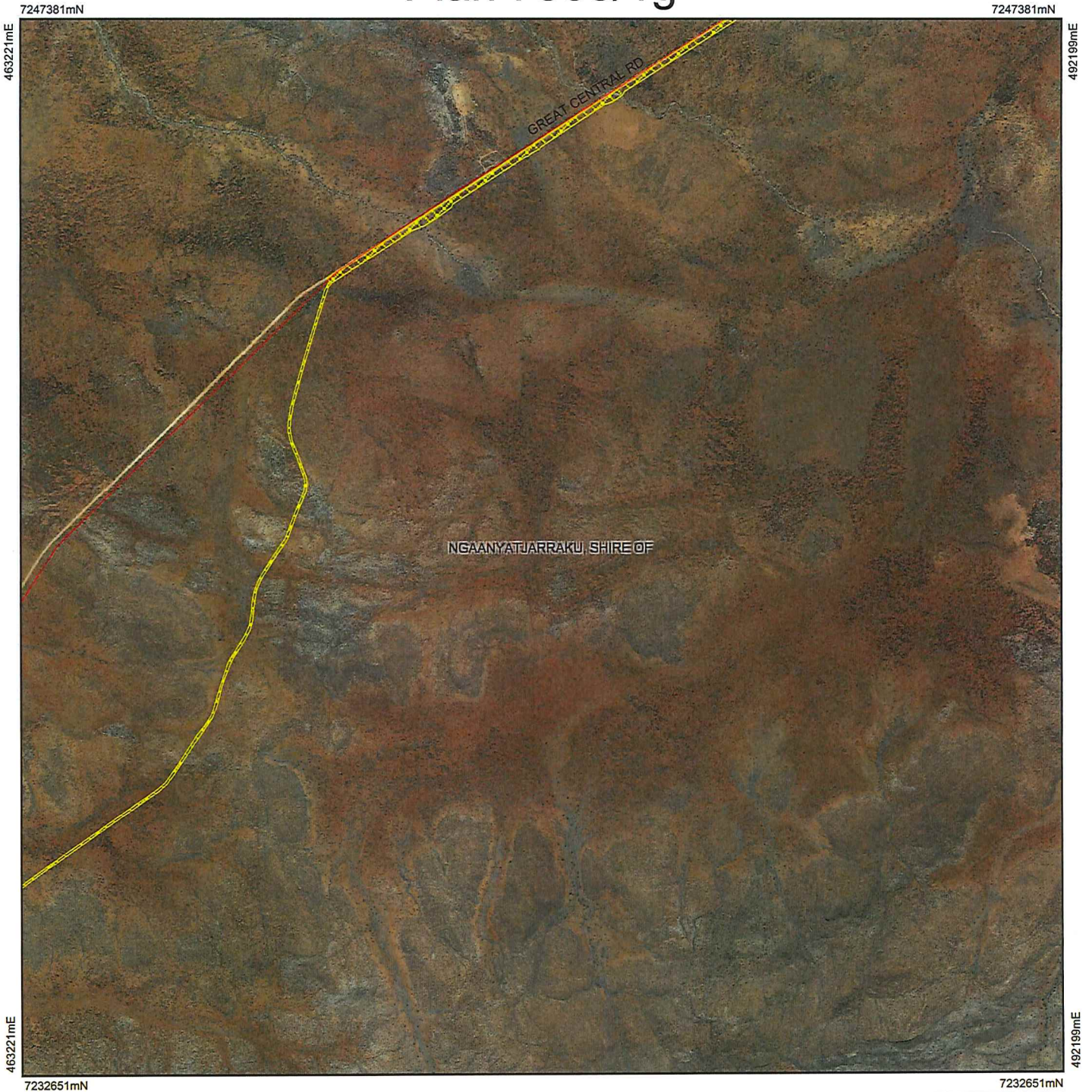


1:50,000  
(Approximate when reproduced at A4)  
UTM Zone 52S  
World Geodetic System 1984


*Simon* Date *6/6/17*

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# Plan 7508/1g



## Legend

-  Imagery
-  Clearing Instruments Activities
-  Local Government Authority



1:50,000  
(Approximate when reproduced at A4)  
UTM Zone 52S  
World Geodetic System 1984

*Jim [Signature]* Date *8/6/17*

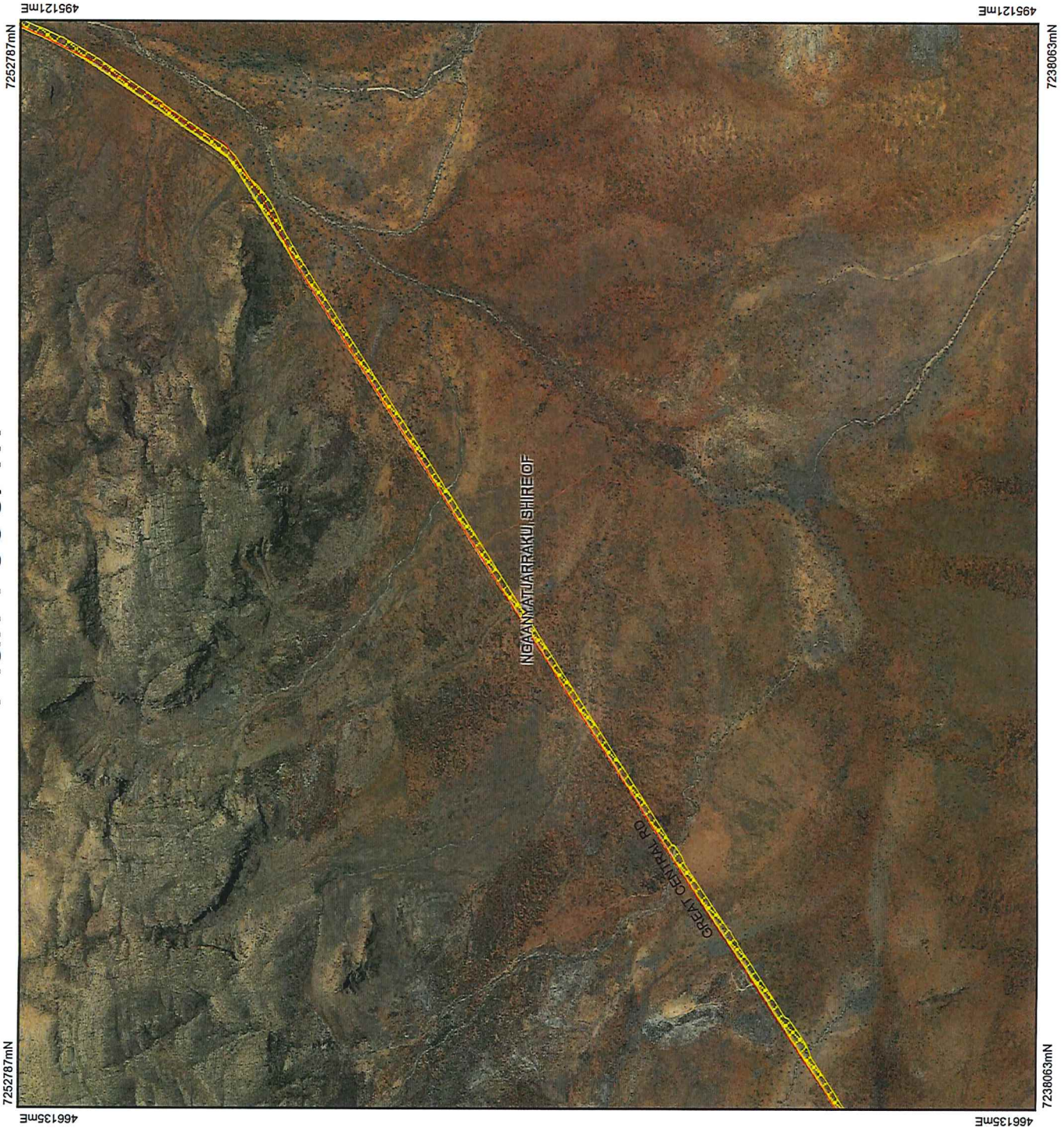
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# Plan 7508/1h



## Legend

-  Imagery
-  Clearing Instruments Activities
-  Local Government Authority



1:50,000

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UTM Zone 52S

World Geodetic System 1984

..... Date *8/6/17*

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# Plan 7508/1i



## Legend

-  Imagery
-  Clearing Instruments Activities
-  Local Government Authority



1:50,000  
(Approximate when reproduced at A4)  
UTM Zone 52S  
World Geodetic System 1984

*J. M. M.* Date *6/6/17*

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# Plan 7508/1j

7260865mN 481358mE



## Legend

- Imagery
- Clearing Instruments Activities
- Local Government Authority



1:50,000

(Approximate when reproduced at A4)

UTM Zone 52S

World Geodetic System 1984

..... Date *6/6/17* .....

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481358mE 7246174mN  
510356mE 7260865mN



## 1. Application details

### 1.1. Permit application details

Permit application No.: 7508/1  
Permit type: Purpose Permit

### 1.2. Applicant details

Applicant's name: Telstra Corporation Limited

### 1.3. Property details

Property: LOT 9 ON DEPOSITED PLAN 91722, NGAANYATJARRA-GILES  
Local Government Authority: NGAANYATJARRAKU, SHIRE OF  
DER Region: Goldfields  
LCDC: Wiluna  
Localities: NGAANYATJARRA-GILES

### 1.4. Application

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

### 1.5. Decision on application

Decision on Permit Application: Granted  
Decision Date: 6 June 2017  
Reasons for Decision: The clearing permit application received on 24 February 2017 has been assessed against the clearing principles, planning instruments and other matters in accordance with s51O of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*. It has been concluded that the proposed clearing is at variance to principle (f), and is not or is not likely to be at variance to the remaining clearing principles.

The Delegated Officer had regard to the narrow and linear nature of the proposed clearing across a distance of approximately 96 kilometres, and to the relocation of part of the application area to an old road alignment to avoid impacts to priority flora, and considered that no significant environmental impacts are likely to occur. Respread of cleared vegetation and topsoil will assist in natural regeneration further mitigating the risk of significant environmental impacts.

## 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 area intersects three mapped Beard vegetation associations:	The application is to clear up to 76 hectares of native vegetation within Lot 9 on Deposited Plan 91722, Ngaanyatjarra-Giles for the purpose of installing underground optical fibre cables.	Excellent; Vegetation structure intact; disturbance affecting individual species, weeds non-aggressive (Keighery 1994).  AND  Very Good; Vegetation structure altered; obvious signs of disturbance (Keighery 1994).  AND  Degraded; Structure severely disturbed; regeneration to good condition requires intensive management (Keighery, 1994).  TO	A flora and fauna assessment commissioned by the applicant identified that 33.4 per cent of the study area was in excellent condition, 58.5 per cent was in very good condition, and 8.1 per cent was in degraded to completely degraded condition (Low Ecological Services Pty Ltd 2017). Vegetation condition was determined using the Keighery scale (Keighery 1994).  The flora and fauna assessment described 11 vegetation associations within the study area that were broken up into 5 groups based on geomorphology (Low Ecological Services Pty Ltd 2017).  The five groups are:  A. Outwash plains B. Mid-slopes and small hills C. Rocky hills D. Dune crests E. Drainage lines
- Beard Vegetation Association 18 which is described as "Low woodland; mulga ( <i>Acacia aneura</i> )" (Shepherd et al. 2001);			
- Beard Vegetation Association 230 which is described as "Mosaic: Medium sparse woodland; desert oak between sand dunes / Hummock grasslands, grass steppe; hard spinifex, <i>Triodia basedowii</i> " (Shepherd et al. 2001); and			

- Beard Vegetation Association 233 which is described as "Shrublands; *Acacia bivenosa*" (Shepherd et al. 2001).

Completely Degraded; No longer intact, completely/almost completely without native species (Keighery 1994)

The 11 vegetation associations are:

A1 - Low open mulga (*Acacia aneura*) woodlands with scattered *Acacia/Corymbia sp.* overstorey with shrubland of *Acacia* and *Senna sp.* over tussock grassland

A2 - Tall open shrubland with scattered *Acacia sp.* trees over hummock grassland on sand plain

A3 - Open shrub mallee with mixed *Acacia* shrubs over hummock grassland and mixed hermland

A4 - *Triodia basedowii* hummock grassland with scattered low shrubland of *Eremophila* and *Acacia sp.* over scattered herbs and tussock grass

B1 - Low open woodland/shrubland of mixed *Acacia sp.* over hummock grasslands

B2 - Tall open mulga shrubland with mixed shrubs of *Acacia* and *Senna sp.* over mixed tussock grassland and hermland

B3 - Desert oak (*Allocasuarina decaisneana*) open forest

B4 - Low open woodland of *Acacia sp.* over mixed low shrubland over mixed tussock and hummock grasses

C1 - Open shrubland dominated by *Acacia* and *Senna sp.* with scattered mulga trees

D1 - Tall open shrubland dominated by *Acacia* and *Grevillea sp.* over scattered *Triodia sp.* and mixed hermland

E1 - Open *Eucalyptus* and *Corymbia* woodland in major drainage lines

Note: The study area is defined as the area adjacent to and within 50 metres of the Great Central Road (Low Ecological Services Pty Ltd 2017). The study area is consistent with the application area except for an approximately nine kilometre long section which was relocated to follow an old alignment of the Great Central Road to avoid priority flora identified during the flora and fauna assessment.

### 3. Assessment of application against clearing principles

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

Comments

#### **Proposed clearing is not likely to be at variance to this Principle**

The application is to clear up to 76 hectares of native vegetation for the purpose of installing underground optical fibre cables. The applicant proposes to extend its cable network from Warakurna in Western Australia to Kaltukatjara (Docker River) in the Northern Territory to support the upgrading of broadband services and to provide mobile telephone services at Kaltukatjara (Telstra Corporation Limited 2017). The application area is approximately 50 metres wide and extends for a distance of approximately 96 kilometres from Warakurna to the Western Australia/Northern Territory border. The application area, for the most part, runs parallel to and immediately adjacent to the Great Central Road.

The applicant has advised that a cable approximately 15 millimetres in diameter will be buried to a depth of 0.9 metres using bulldozers within a cleared corridor likely to be between 5 metres and 10 metres wide depending

upon terrain. Clearing of a wider area may be required in areas where rock is required to be removed. Clearing will also be required at intervals for accessing the alignment from the Great Central Road (Telstra Corporation Limited 2017).

The local area (50 kilometre radius) retains approximately 100 per cent native vegetation cover.

According to available datasets, a total of 15 priority flora species (four Priority 1, one Priority 2, nine Priority 3 and one Priority 4 species) have been recorded in the local area.

A flora and fauna assessment commissioned by the applicant recorded 113 flora taxa of which 110 were native. Two priority flora species were identified; *Indigofera gilesii* (Priority 3) and *Goodenia gibbosa* (Priority 3) (Low Ecological Services Pty Ltd 2017).

The flora and fauna assessment report contains a recommendation to realign a portion of the cable route to an old alignment of Great Central Road in order to avoid the identified population of *Indigofera gilesii* (Priority 3) (Low Ecological Services Pty Ltd 2017). This recommendation has been implemented as reflected by the alignment of the application area submitted. No significant impacts to this species are expected.

In relation to *Goodenia gibbosa* (Priority 3), officer level advice was received from the Department of Parks and Wildlife outlining:

- the species is known from four locations in Western Australia but has a much wider distribution across central Australia including in the Northern Territory and South Australia;
- given the species national distribution it has recently been downgraded from a Priority 1 to a Priority 3 species;
- the proposed clearing is unlikely to have a significant impact on the conservation of the species; and
- it is thought that this species would have some soil stored seed and so have a reasonable ability to regenerate post disturbance (Department of Parks and Wildlife 2017).

It is considered that the risk of significant impacts to *Goodenia gibbosa* (Priority 3) is low.

According to available datasets, no records of rare flora occur within the local area. The flora and fauna assessment undertaken did not record any rare flora (Low Ecological Services Pty Ltd 2017).

According to available datasets, no threatened ecological communities are mapped within the local area. The flora and fauna assessment undertaken did not record any threatened ecological communities (Low Ecological Services Pty Ltd 2017).

As outlined in the assessment against clearing principle (b), the risk of impacts to significant fauna habitat is considered low.

Given the above, the vegetation under application is not likely to comprise a high level of biological diversity.

The proposed clearing is not likely to be at variance to this principle.

#### Methodology

##### References:

Department of Parks and Wildlife (2017)  
Low Ecological Services Pty Ltd (2017)  
Telstra Corporation Limited (2017)

##### GIS Datasets:

NLWRA, Current Extent of Native Vegetation  
SAC Bio datasets (accessed 1 June 2017)

#### **(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

##### **Proposed clearing is not likely to be at variance to this Principle**

A flora and fauna assessment commissioned by the applicant identified that the main risk to fauna from the proposed clearing is to sedentary burrowing species (Low Ecological Services Pty Ltd 2017). Three conservation significant burrowing species were identified in desktop assessments as having the potential to occur in the area being:

- greater bilby (*Macrotis lagotis*) (listed as vulnerable under the *Wildlife Conservation Act 1950*);
- great desert skink (*Liopholis kintorei*) (listed as vulnerable under the *Wildlife Conservation Act 1950*); and
- brush-tailed mulgara (*Dasyercus blythi*) (listed as Priority 4 by the Department of Parks and Wildlife) (Low Ecological Services Pty Ltd 2017).

During the field investigations signs of brush-tailed mulgara tracks were observed as well as potential (unconfirmed) signs of great desert skink tracks. No signs of greater bilby were observed. It was considered unlikely that burrows of any of the three species would occur within the proposed cable route (Low Ecological Services Pty Ltd 2017).

The local area retains approximately 100 per cent native vegetation cover. The applicant has advised that the

width of clearing required is likely to be between 5 metres and 10 metres and that there is no requirement to maintain a cleared area for operation of the cable (Telstra Corporation Limited 2017). Upon completion of construction, the cleared area will be allowed to regenerate naturally.

Given the above, the risk of impacts to significant fauna habitat is considered low.

The proposed clearing is not likely to be at variance to this principle.

**Methodology** References:  
Low Ecological Services Pty Ltd (2017)  
Telstra Corporation Limited (2017)

GIS Datasets:  
NLWRA, Current Extent of Native Vegetation

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

**Comments** **Proposed clearing is not likely to be at variance to this Principle**  
According to available datasets, no records of rare flora occur within the local area.

The flora and fauna assessment undertaken did not record any rare flora (Low Ecological Services Pty Ltd 2017).

It is considered that the vegetation under application is unlikely to include, or be necessary for the continued existence of, rare flora.

The proposed clearing is not likely to be at variance to this principle.

**Methodology** References:  
Low Ecological Services Pty Ltd (2017)

GIS Datasets:  
SAC Bio datasets (accessed 1 June 2017)

**(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** **Proposed clearing is not likely to be at variance to this Principle**  
According to available datasets, no threatened ecological communities are mapped within the local area.

The flora and fauna assessment undertaken did not record any threatened ecological communities (Low Ecological Services Pty Ltd 2017).

It is considered that the vegetation under application is unlikely to comprise the whole or a part of, or be necessary for the maintenance of, a threatened ecological community.

The proposed clearing is not likely to be at variance to this principle.

**Methodology** References:  
Low Ecological Services Pty Ltd (2017)

GIS Datasets:  
SAC Bio datasets (accessed 1 June 2017)

**(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** **Proposed clearing is not at variance to this Principle**  
The application area is located within the Central Ranges Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation for Australia (IBRA) bioregion.

The application area intersects three mapped Beard vegetation associations (18, 230 and 233) all of which retain approximately 100 per cent of their pre-European extent within the Central Ranges bioregion in WA (Government of Western Australia 2016). The Central Ranges bioregion in WA and Shire of Ngaanyatjaraku retain approximately 100 per cent of their pre-European extent (Government of Western Australia 2016).

The local area retains approximately 100 per cent native vegetation cover.

The application area is not located in an area that has been extensively cleared.

The proposed clearing is not at variance to this principle.

**Methodology** References:  
Government of Western Australia (2016)

GIS Datasets:  
IBRA Australia  
Pre-European Vegetation  
NLWRA, Current Extent of Native Vegetation

**(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 Proposed clearing is at variance to this Principle**

According to available datasets, the application area intersects 14 minor non-perennial watercourses. No wetlands are intersected. Some of the watercourses are intersected multiple times.

The larger watercourses include Rebecca Creek, Dare River, Warilpra Creek, Giles Creek and Sladen Water.

The application area includes riparian vegetation growing in association with watercourses. The proposed clearing is at variance to this principle.

The applicant has advised that the width of clearing required is likely to be between 5 metres and 10 metres and that there is no requirement to maintain a cleared area for operation of the cable (Telstra Corporation Limited 2017). Upon completion of construction, the cleared area will be allowed to regenerate naturally.

Given clearing at each watercourse crossing will be minimal and that natural regeneration is expected, no significant impacts to watercourses are considered likely.

**Methodology** References:  
Telstra Corporation Limited (2017)

GIS Datasets:  
Hydrography, linear

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

**Comments Proposed clearing is not likely to be at variance to this Principle**

The application area is narrow and linear with the proposed clearing to be conducted across a distance of approximately 96 kilometres. The applicant has advised that the width of clearing required is likely to be between 5 metres and 10 metres and that there is no requirement to maintain a cleared area for operation of the cable (Telstra Corporation Limited 2017). Upon completion of construction, the cleared area will be allowed to regenerate naturally.

Given the above, the risk of appreciable land degradation as a result of the clearing is considered to be low.

The proposed clearing is not likely to be at variance to this principle.

**Methodology** References:  
Telstra Corporation Limited (2017)

**(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 Proposed clearing is not likely to be at variance to this Principle**

No conservation areas occur within the local area. The closest conservation area is the Gibson Desert Nature Reserve located approximately 200 kilometres west.

The proposed clearing is not likely to be at variance to this principle.

**Methodology** GIS Datasets:  
DPaW Tenure

**(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 Proposed clearing is not likely to be at variance to this Principle**

The application area is narrow and linear with the proposed clearing to be conducted across a distance of approximately 96 kilometres. The local area retains almost 100 per cent native vegetation cover. Given this, impacts to groundwater quality are considered unlikely.

According to available datasets, the application area intersects 14 minor non-perennial watercourses. No wetlands are intersected. Some of the watercourses are intersected multiple times.

The applicant has advised that the width of clearing required is likely to be between 5 metres and 10 metres and that there is no requirement to maintain a cleared area for operation of the cable (Telstra Corporation Limited 2017). Upon completion of construction, the cleared area will be allowed to regenerate naturally.



Given the above, any impacts to surface water quality are likely to be minimal and short term.

The proposed clearing is not likely to be at variance to this principle.

**Methodology** References:  
Telstra Corporation Limited (2017)

GIS Datasets:  
Hydrography, linear  
NLWRA, Current Extent of Native Vegetation

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

**Comments** **Proposed clearing is not likely to be at variance to this Principle**  
The application area is narrow and linear with the proposed clearing to be conducted across a distance of approximately 96 kilometres. Given this, the proposed clearing is considered unlikely to cause, or exacerbate, the incidence or intensity of flooding.

The proposed clearing is not likely to be at variance to this principle.

**Methodology** N/A

**Planning instruments and other relevant matters.**

**Comments** The application was advertised on the Department of Environment Regulation's website and in *The West Australian* newspaper for a 21 day public submission period closing 7 April 2017. No public submissions were received.

The applicant is a party to the 'Telstra - Ngaanyatjarra Lands Fibre Optic Cable Agreement 2016' along with Ngaanyatjarra Land Council (Aboriginal Corporation), Yarnangu Ngaanyatjarraku Parna (Aboriginal Corporation) and Ngaanyatjarra Council (Aboriginal Corporation). This agreement provides the applicant authority to access the land to construct the project subject to a number of conditions.

Notification pursuant to the *Native Title Act 1993* was sent to the three other parties to the agreement inviting comments. No comments were received.

**Methodology** N/A

**4. References**

- Department of Parks and Wildlife (2017) Advice received in relation to clearing permit application CPS 7508/1, received 23 May 2017 (DER Ref: A1438127).
- Government of Western Australia (2016) 2016 Statewide Vegetation Statistics incorporating the CAR Reserve Analysis (Full Report). Current as of October 2016. WA Department of Parks and Wildlife, Perth.
- Keighery, B.J. (1994) Bushland Plant Survey: A Guide to Plant Community Survey for the Community. Wildflower Society of WA (Inc). Nedlands, Western Australia.
- Low Ecological Services Pty Ltd (2017) Flora and Fauna Assessment Optical Fibre Cable Project Warakurna WA - Kaltukatjara NT. Unpublished report prepared for Telstra Corporation Limited, February 2017. Alice Springs, Northern Territory (DER Ref: A1391250).
- 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.
- Telstra Corporation Limited (2017) Clearing Permit Application Additional Information. Submitted 24 February 2017 (DER Ref: A1383087).