Department of Environment
Government of Western Australia

Clearing Permit Decision Report

1. Application details

1.1. Permit application details

Permit application No.: 764/1
Permit type: Area Permit

1.2. Proponent details

Proponent's name: Geoffrey John and Jeanette Margaret James

1.3. Property details

Property: LOT 1331 ON PLAN 109025 (Lot No. 1331 PRESTON BEACH PRESTON BEACH 6215)
Local Government Area: Shire Of Waroona
Colloquial name:

1.4. Application

Clearing Area (ha)	No. Trees	Method of Clearing	For the purpose of:
	150	Mechanical Removal	Hazard reduction or fire control

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
Beard vegetation associations - 998: Medium to open woodland of *Eucalyptus gomphocephala, E.calophylla, E.wandoo*, and *E.camaldulensis*. - 125: tidal mud flats - bare areas (Shepherd et al. 2001). Heddle Vegetation Complexes - Cottesloe Complex central and south: Mosaic of woodland of *E.gomphocephala* and open forest of *E.gomphocelphala - E.marginata - E.calophylla*; closed heath on the Limestone outcrops. - Yoongarillup Complex: Woodland to tall woodland of *E.gomphocephala* with *Agonis flexuosa* in the second storey. (Heddle et al. 1980).	The proposal includes clearing of up to 150 *Eucalyptus gomphocephala* that are scattered across the property (approximately 82ha), by mechanical removal. The purpose of clearing the majority of the trees is to reduce potential hazard to infrastructure and human safety. The area under application consists primarily of cleared paddock, and contains two vegetation associations. Vegetation is predominantly medium to open woodland, but also consists of tidal mudflats that are adjacent to a wetland. The vegetation on site was observed to be dominated by dead and live E.gomphocephala, and *Agonis flexuosa*. The understorey is significantly modified, and in some areas totally removed, and consists mostly of grasses and weed species.	Completely Degraded: No longer intact; completely/almost completely without native species (Keighery 1994)	The description of the vegetation under application was obtained after a site visit to the property on Friday 25th November 2005 and on Wednesday 22nd February 2006.

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 not likely to be at variance to this Principle

The property has been previously cleared and is used for the grazing of stock. Vegetation on site is primarily comprised of *E. gomphocephala* in various conditions, and *Agonis flexuosa*. The vegetation under application is located within a completely degraded lot, and consists of approximately 150 dead *E.gomphocephala* within an 82-hectare area. Furthermore, the area under application is located in close proximity to vegetated properties,

(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 not likely to be at variance to this Principle

The State Government is committed to the National Objective Targets for Biodiversity Conservation, which includes targets that prevent clearance of ecological communities with an extent below 30% of that present pre-European settlement (Department of Natural Resources and Environment 2002; EPA 2000).

The vegetation at the site is a component of Beard vegetation associations 125 and 998, of which there is 89.8% and 35.9% remaining respectively (Shepherd et al. 2001). The vegetation is also a component of Heddle vegetation complexes 'Cottesloe Complex central and south' and 'Yoongarillup Complex', of which there is 41.1% and 45% remaining respectively (Heddle et al. 1980). Excepting Beard association 125, these vegetation complexes are defined as 'depleted', however they are still above the minimum recommended 30% pre-European representation (Department of Natural Resources and Environment 2002).

CALM (2006) has advised that as the proponent has undertaking to remove only dead *E.gomphocephala* the identified local vegetation associations are not likely to be affected. Furthermore, the vegetation in the area under application is in a completely degraded condition, and is not considered likely to be representative of these vegetation associations.

Methodology

Site visit 22/2/06
CALM (2006)
Department of Natural Resources and Environment 2002
EPA 2000
Heddle et al. 1980
Shepherd et al. 2001

(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

Approximately 30ha of the area under application are located within a Conservation Category Wetland (CCW) associated with the adjacent Lake Yalgorup. Lake Preston is also located within close proximity to the area under application. The nearest watercourse is located approximately 7km from the area under application.

Given that no wetland vegetation was observed during the site visit, and that the *E.gomphocephala* under application are dead, the proposed clearing is not likely to have impacts on vegetation associated with a watercourse or wetland.

Methodology

GIS Databases:
EPP, Lakes - DEP 1/12/92
Geomorphic Wetlands (Mgt Categories), Swan Coastal Plain - DOE 15/9/04
Hydrography, linear (hierarchy) - DOE 13/4/05

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

Comments

Proposal is not likely to be at variance to this Principle

The area under application consists of a soil landscape classified as siliceous sands with leached sands in wetter areas. There is no known risk of acid sulphate soils or salinity within the area under application.

Given the selective nature of the proposed clearing for a limited number of dead *E. gomphocephala* over 85 hectares, it is not considered likely to cause an increase in water or wind erosion. The proposal is therefore not likely to cause appreciable land degradation.

Methodology

Site visit 22/2/06
GIS Databases:
Acid Sulfate Soil Risk Map, SCP - DOE 04/11/04
Salinity Risk LM 25m - DOLA 00
Soils, Statewide - DA 11/99

(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 is not likely to be at variance to this Principle

Yalgorup National Park is adjacent to the northern, eastern and southern perimeters of the area under application. This conservation area contains a Conservation Category Wetland, which is also listed as a RAMSAR Wetland. Siltation may occur where vegetation is removed from within the wetland and associated buffer, although the majority of the vegetation under application is located away from the wetland (toward the

Recommendations:

The Department reminds you that the authorised activity is the removal of dead *Eucalyptus gomphocephala* (Tuarts), and Tuarts that show obvious signs of regrowth or epicormic growth should not be removed.

The Department advises that the dead Tuarts within Lot 1331 Preston Beach Road may contain hollows and/or habitat that could potentially be utilised by native fauna. It is therefore recommended that all vegetation considered for removal be assessed for signs of habitat, with the preferential clearing of vegetation that does not contain these attributes, unless the vegetation represents a potential hazard to infrastructure or personal safety. It is also recommended that where practical the fallen vegetation is heaped and burned, and Tuart seedlings planted into the ash bed.

5. References

CALM Land clearing proposal advice (2005) Advice to A/Director General, Department of Environment (DoE). Department of Conservation and Land Management, Western Australia. DoE TRIM ref IN24700

CALM Land clearing proposal advice (2006) Advice to A/Director General, Department of Environment (DoE). Department of Conservation and Land Management, Western Australia. DoE TRIM ref 2006I/492

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.

Heddle, E. M., Loneragan, O. W., and Havel, J. J. (1980) Vegetation Complexes of the Darling System, Western Australia. In Department of Conservation and Environment, Atlas of Natural Resources, Darling System, Western Australia.

JANIS Forests Criteria (1997) Nationally agreed criteria for the establishment of a comprehensive, Adequate and Representative reserve System for Forests in Australia. A report by the Joint ANZECC/MCFFA National Forest Policy Statement Implementation Sub-committee. Regional Forests Agreement process. Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra.

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.

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)

CPS 764/1

SUMMARY

- To clear 150 dead *Eucalyptus gomphocephala* (Tuart) trees within an 82ha property in the Shire of Waroona to reduce the potential hazard to infrastructure and human safety.
- The vegetation under application has limited potential for faunal habitat due to the lack, or complete absence, of understorey. Any habitat present in the form of nesting hollows is not likely to be significant when compared to that present in the adjacent Yalgorup National Park.
- No known DRF, priority flora or TECs are found within the area under application, however some do occur within the local region. Given the selective nature of the proposed clearing, and the degraded condition of vegetation within the lot, these populations are not considered likely to be affected.
- The lot is adjacent to Yalgorup National Park and two wetlands, however as only dead Tuarts are to be removed the conservation values are not likely to be affected.
- No land degradation issues.
- No submissions received.
- The proponent has agreed to only remove dead Tuart trees that represent a potential hazard to infrastructure or human safety – this has been specified in the authorised activity and in advice in the covering letter. The proponent also agreed to the attached condition to replant 300 Tuart seedlings.