



Clearing Permit Decision Report

1. Application details

1.1. Permit application details

Permit application No.: 7836/2
Permit type: Purpose Permit

1.2. Proponent details

Proponent's name: Greenmount Resources Pty Ltd

1.3. Property details

Property: Mining Lease 52/1070
Miscellaneous Licence 52/177
Miscellaneous Licence 52/178
Miscellaneous Licence 52/179
Miscellaneous Licence 52/183

Local Government Area: Shire of Meekatharra

Colloquial name: Karlawinda Gold Project

1.4. Application

Clearing Area (ha)	No. Trees	Method of Clearing	For the purpose of:
525		Mechanical Removal	Mineral Production and Associated Activities

1.5. Decision on application

Decision on Permit Application: Grant
Decision Date: 11 October 2018

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:

29: Sparse low woodland; mulga, discontinuous in scattered groups;

96: Hummock grasslands, shrub steppe; acacia species (+Grevillea) over *Triodia basedowii* often between sandridges;

111: Hummock grasslands, shrub steppe; *Eucalyptus gamophylla* over hard spinifex; and

216: Low woodland; mulga (with spinifex) on rises (GIS Database).

A flora and vegetation survey was conducted over the broader area by 360 Environmental Pty Ltd during March 2016 which was inclusive of the majority of the current application area. The following vegetation associations were recorded within the surveyed area (360 Environmental, 2017):

1. *Acacia aneura*, *Corymbia candida* subsp. *dipsodes* (+ *C. hamersleyana*) low woodland over *Hakea lorea* subsp. *lorea* tall open shrubland over *Eriachne flaccida*, *Aristida inaequiglumis* and *Digitaria ammophila* open tussock grassland;

2. *Acacia aneura* tall sparse shrubland (to open shrubland) over *Eremophila forrestii* subsp. *forrestii* isolated shrubs over *Triodia schinzii* hummock grassland;

3. *Acacia aneura* low woodland over *Eremophila forrestii* subsp. *forrestii* sparse shrubland over *Aristida inaequiglumis*, *Digitaria ammophila* sparse tussock grassland over *Fimbristylis dichotoma* sparse herbland;

4. *Acacia aptaneura*, *Corymbia candida* subsp. *dipsodes*, *Acacia catenulata* subsp. *occidentalis* open forest over *Psyrax latifolia* tall sparse shrubland *Eremophila* sparse shrubland;

5a. *Acacia aptaneura* (and/or *A. paraneura*) tall isolated shrubs over *Eremophila fraseri* subsp. *fraseri* sparse shrubland over *Eremophila youngii* subsp. *youngii* low isolated shrubs over *Aristida contorta* sparse grassland and *Fimbristylis dichotoma* sparse herbs;

5b. *Acacia aptaneura* tall isolated shrubs over *Eremophila fraseri* subsp. *fraseri* isolated shrubs over *Eremophila rigida* low sparse shrubs over *Aristida contorta* sparse grassland;

6. *Acacia aptaneura* or *Acacia subcontorta* sparse shrubland over *Fimbristylis dichotoma* isolated herbs;

7a. *Acacia pruinoarpa* isolated shrubs over *Triodia schinzii* hummock grassland (+ *Triodia epactia*);

7b. *Acacia aptaneura* and *Hakea lorea* subsp. *lorea* tall open shrubland over *Eremophila forrestii* subsp. *forrestii* sparse shrubland over *Triodia pungens* hummock grassland;

8. *A. synchronicia* (+*Acacia aptaneura*/*A. aneura*) tall scattered shrubs over *Maireana triptera* and *Eremophila cuneifolia* low open shrubland over *Aristida contorta* sparse grassland;

9. *Acacia aptaneura* tall sparse shrubland over *Eremophila flaccida* subsp. *flaccida* low open shrubland over *Fimbristylis dichotoma* and *Aristida contorta* isolated herbs and grasses;

10. *Acacia pruinocarpa* (+*Acacia incurvaneura*) sparse shrubland over *Triodia* sp. Shovelanna Hill (S. van Leeuwen 3835) hummock grassland; and

11. *Acacia incurvaneura* and *Acacia ayersiana* low woodland over *Eremophila forrestii* subsp. *forrestii* sparse shrubland over *Thyridolepis xerophila* sparse tussock grassland (+ *Triodia pungens*).

Clearing Description	Karlawinda Gold Project. Greenmount Resources Pty Ltd proposes to clear up to 525 hectares of native vegetation within a boundary of approximately 3,053 hectares, for the purpose of mineral production and associated activities. The project is located approximately 60 kilometres south-east of Newman, within the Shire of Meekatharra.
Vegetation Condition	Very Good: Vegetation structure altered; obvious signs of disturbance (Keighery, 1994); To: Good: Structure significantly altered by multiple disturbance; retains basic structure/ability to regenerate (Keighery, 1994).
Comment	Clearing permit CPS 7836/1 was granted by the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety on 4 January 2018 and was valid from 27 January 2018 to 31 January 2023. The permit authorised the clearing of up to 500 hectares of native vegetation within a boundary of approximately 2,975 hectares, for the purpose of mineral production. On 30 August 2018, the Permit Holder applied to amend CPS 7836/1 to increase the amount of clearing authorised to 525 hectares, increase the permit boundary to 3,053 hectares and add additional tenure to the permit.

3. Assessment of application against Clearing Principles

Comments

Greenmount Resources Pty Ltd has applied to increase the area permitted to clear from 500 hectares to 525 hectares, and to increase the permit boundary from 2,975 hectares to 3,053 hectares. This is to allow the development of a water supply borefield, a diversion drain and an access road.

The flora and vegetation survey, and aerial imagery identified no new vegetation associations within the amendment area (360 Environmental, 2018; GIS Database). The vegetation within the amended boundary is similar to the vegetation within the previous permit area. None of the vegetation associations were listed as a Threatened or Priority Ecological Community, and although the flora survey only covered a small area of the amended boundary, no Threatened or Priority flora species were identified within the amendment area (360 Environmental, 2018; GIS Database).

There are minor ephemeral drainage lines that intersect the amended boundary (GIS Database). Riparian vegetation within the minor drainage lines may provide important habitat for fauna (GIS Database). Provided disturbance to riparian habitats is avoided or minimised where possible, and strict weed hygiene procedures are followed, the proposed works are not expected to substantially impact these vegetation associations. Potential impacts to riparian vegetation may be minimised through the existing watercourse management condition.

The vegetation associations, landforms and fauna habitat types occurring within the amended application area remain consistent with those identified within the assessment for CPS 7836/1 and are well represented within the local area (360 Environmental, 2018; GIS Database). A targeted Bilby survey conducted by 360 Environmental (2017) included the amended boundary and there was no evidence of Bilbies or Mulgara during the survey (360 Environmental, 2017; 2018). The proposed clearing of an additional 25 hectares of native vegetation for a borefield, diversion drain and access road is unlikely to have a significant impact on the availability of fauna habitat at a local or regional scale.

The proposed increase in clearing is unlikely to significantly impact surface water or groundwater. The application area is not located within a Public Drinking Water Source Area (GIS Database).

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 7836/1.

Methodology 360 Environmental (2017)

360 Environmental (2018)

GIS Database:

- Hydrography, Lakes
- Hydrography, Linear
- Imagery
- Landsystem Rangelands
- Pre-European Vegetation
- Public Drinking Water Source Area
- 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 over the area under application (DPLH, 2018). This 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, 2018). 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 10 September 2018 by the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety inviting submissions from the public. No submissions were received in relation to this application.

Methodology DPLH (2018)

4. References

- 360 Environmental (2017) Karlawinda Gold Project Mining Lease, Application for a Native Vegetation Clearing Permit. Prepared for Capricorn Metals Limited, by 360 Environmental Pty Ltd, 2017.
- 360 Environmental (2018) Desktop Assessment of Additional Tenements – L52/177, L52/178 and L52/183. Prepared for Capricorn Metals Limited, by 360 Environmental Pty Ltd, August 2018.
- DPLH (2018) Aboriginal Heritage Enquiry System. Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage. <http://maps.daa.wa.gov.au/AHIS/> (Accessed 20 September 2018).
- Keighery, B.J. (1994) Bushland Plant Survey: A Guide to Plant Community Survey for the Community. Wildflower Society of WA (Inc). Nedlands, Western Australia.

5. Glossary

Acronyms:

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)
DBCA	Department of Biodiversity Conservation and Attractions, Western Australia
DEC	Department of Environment and Conservation, Western Australia (now DBCA and DWER)
DEE	Department of the Environment and Energy, Australian Government
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)
DPIRD	Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, Western Australia
DPLH	Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage, Western Australia
DRF	Declared Rare Flora
DoE	Department of the Environment, Australian Government (now DEE)
DoW	Department of Water, Western Australia (now DWER)
DPaW	Department of Parks and Wildlife, Western Australia (now DBCA)
DSEWPaC	Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities (now DEE)
DWER	Department of Water and Environmental Regulation, Western Australia
EPA	Environmental Protection Authority, Western Australia

EP Act	<i>Environmental Protection Act 1986</i> , Western Australia
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:

{DPaW (2017) Conservation Codes for Western Australian Flora and Fauna. Department of Parks and Wildlife, Western Australia}:-

T	<p>Threatened species: Published as Specially Protected under the <i>Wildlife Conservation Act 1950</i>, 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).</p> <p>Threatened fauna is that subset of ‘Specially Protected Fauna’ declared to be ‘likely to become extinct’ pursuant to section 14(4) of the <i>Wildlife Conservation Act 1950</i>.</p> <p>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 <i>Wildlife Conservation Act 1950</i>.</p> <p>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.</p>
CR	<p>Critically endangered species Threatened species considered to be facing an extremely high risk of extinction in the wild. Published as Specially Protected under the <i>Wildlife Conservation Act 1950</i>, in Schedule 1 of the Wildlife Conservation (Specially Protected Fauna) Notice for Threatened Fauna and Wildlife Conservation (Rare Flora) Notice for Threatened Flora.</p>
EN	<p>Endangered species Threatened species considered to be facing a very high risk of extinction in the wild. Published as Specially Protected under the <i>Wildlife Conservation Act 1950</i>, in Schedule 2 of the Wildlife Conservation (Specially Protected Fauna) Notice for Threatened Fauna and Wildlife Conservation (Rare Flora) Notice for Threatened Flora.</p>
VU	<p>Vulnerable species Threatened species considered to be facing a high risk of extinction in the wild. Published as Specially Protected under the <i>Wildlife Conservation Act 1950</i>, in Schedule 3 of the Wildlife Conservation (Specially Protected Fauna) Notice for Threatened Fauna and Wildlife Conservation (Rare Flora) Notice for Threatened Flora.</p>
EX	<p>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 <i>Wildlife Conservation Act 1950</i>, 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.</p>
IA	<p>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 <i>Wildlife Conservation Act 1950</i>, in Schedule 5 of the Wildlife Conservation (Specially Protected Fauna) Notice.</p>
CD	<p>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 <i>Wildlife Conservation Act 1950</i>, in Schedule 6 of the Wildlife Conservation (Specially Protected Fauna) Notice.</p>
OS	<p>Other specially protected fauna Fauna otherwise in need of special protection to ensure their conservation. Published as Specially Protected under the <i>Wildlife Conservation Act 1950</i>, in Schedule 7 of the Wildlife Conservation (Specially Protected Fauna) Notice.</p>
P	<p>Priority species Species which are poorly known; or</p>

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.

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.