



CLEARING PERMIT

Granted under section 51E of the Environmental Protection Act 1986

| | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Purpose Permit number: | CPS 8393/1 |
| Permit Holder: | Shire of Quairading |
| Duration of Permit: | 18 October 2019 to 18 October 2024 |

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 road construction or upgrades.

2. Land on which clearing is to be done

Goldfields Road Reserve (PIN 1353878), Doodenanning

3. Area of clearing

The Permit Holder must not clear more than 0.105 hectares of native vegetation within the area cross-hatched yellow on attached Plan 8393/1.

4. Application

This Permit allows the Permit Holder to authorise persons, including employees, contractors and agents of the Permit Holder, to clear native vegetation for the purposes of 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 the activities described in condition 1 of this Permit to the extent that the Permit Holder has the power to carry out works involving clearing for those activities under the *Local Government Act 1995* or any other written law.

PART II – MANAGEMENT CONDITIONS

6. Avoid, minimise and reduce the impacts and extent of 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. Dieback and weed management

When undertaking any clearing or other activity authorised under this Permit, the Permit Holder must take the following steps to minimise the risk of the introduction and spread of *weeds* and *dieback*:

- clean earth-moving machinery of soil and vegetation prior to entering and leaving the area to be cleared;

- (b) ensure that no *dieback* or *weed*-affected soil, *mulch*, *fill* or other material is brought into the area to be cleared; and
- (c) restrict the movement of machines and other vehicles to the limits of the areas to be cleared.

PART III - RECORD KEEPING AND REPORTING

8. Records must be kept

The Permit Holder must maintain the following records for activities done in pursuant to this Permit:

- (a) In relation to the clearing of native vegetation authorised under this Permit:
 - (i) the location where the clearing occurred, recorded using a Global Positioning System (GPS) unit set to Geocentric Datum Australia 1994 (GDA94), expressing the geographical coordinates in Eastings and Northings;
 - (ii) the date that the area was cleared; and
 - (iii) the size of the area cleared (in hectares).
- (b) Actions taken to avoid, minimise and reduce the impacts and extent of clearing in accordance with condition 6 of the Permit.
- (c) Actions taken to minimise the risk of the introduction and spread of *weeds* and *dieback* in accordance with condition 7 of the Permit.

9. Reporting

The Permit Holder must provide to the *CEO* the records required under condition 8 of this Permit, when requested by the *CEO*.

DEFINITIONS

The following meanings are given to terms used in this Permit:

CEO: means the Chief Executive Officer of the Department responsible for the administration of the clearing provisions under the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*;

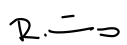
dieback means the effect of *Phytophthora* species on native vegetation;

fill means material used to increase the ground level, or fill a hollow;

mulch means the use of organic matter, wood chips or rocks to slow the movement of water across the soil surface and to reduce evaporation; and

weed/s means any plant -

- (a) that is a declared pest under section 22 of the *Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act 2007*;
or
- (b) published in a Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions species-led ecological impact and invasiveness ranking summary, regardless of ranking; or
- (c) not indigenous to the area concerned.

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Ryan Mincham
MANAGER
NATIVE VEGETATION REGULATION

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

18 September 2019

Plan 8393/1

117°12.360'E

117°12.420'E

117°12.480'E

117°12.540'E

31°50.040'S

31°50.100'S

31°50.160'S

31°50.220'S

31°50.040'S

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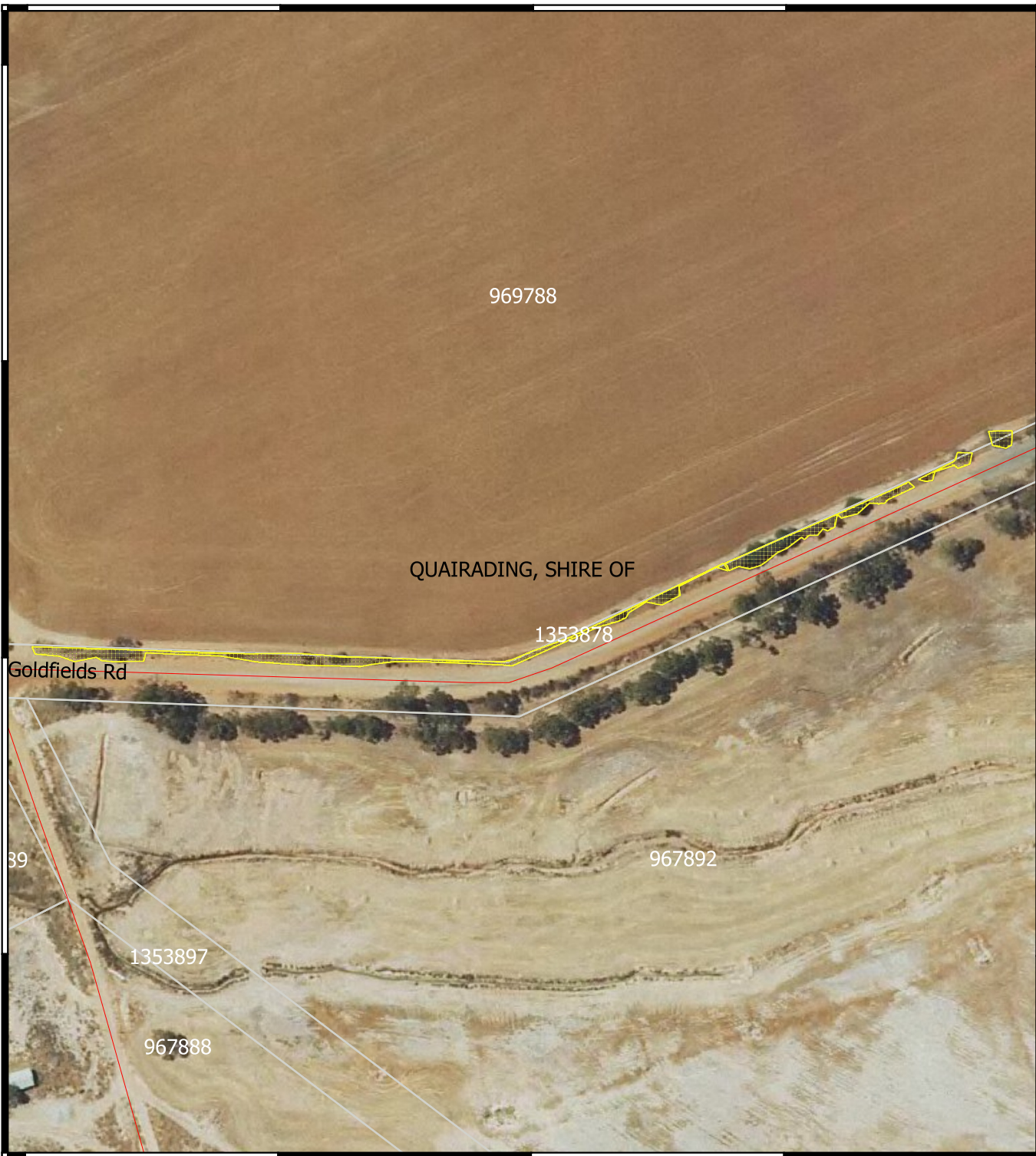
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Legend

CPS layers

 CPS areas approved to clear

base layers

 Road Centrelines

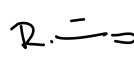
 Land Tenure
LGATE - 226
Local Government Authorities

Image



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Officer delegated under section 20 of the
Environmental Protection Act 1986



GOVERNMENT OF
WESTERN AUSTRALIA



1. Application details

1.1. Permit application details

Permit application No.: 8393/1
Permit type: Purpose Permit

1.2. Applicant details

Applicant's name: Shire of Quairading
Application received date: 28 February 2019

1.3. Property details

Property: Goldfields Road Reserve (PIN 1353878)
Local Government Authority: Shire Of Quairading
Localities: Doodenanning

1.4. Application

| Clearing Area (ha) | No. Trees | Method of Clearing | Purpose category: |
|--------------------|-----------|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| 0.105 | | Mechanical Removal | Road construction or upgrades |

1.5. Decision on application

Decision on Permit Application: Grant
Decision Date: 18 September 2019

Reasons for Decision: The clearing permit application has been assessed against the clearing principles, planning instruments and other matters in accordance with section 51O of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* (EP Act). It has been concluded that the proposed clearing is at variance to principle (e) and is not likely to be at variance to the remaining principles.

The applicant has avoided and minimised impacts by reducing the application area from 0.4 hectares to 0.105 hectares.

The Delegated Officer also determined that the proposed clearing may increase the spread of weeds and dieback into nearby vegetation. To minimise the impact associated with weeds and dieback, a condition has been placed on the permit requiring the implementation of weed and dieback management measures.

After consideration of the above, the Delegated Officer decided to grant a clearing permit subject to dieback and weed management conditions.

2. Site Information

Clearing Description The application is to clear 0.105 hectares of native vegetation within Goldfields Road Reserve (PIN 1353878), Doodenanning, for the purpose of upgrading Goldfields Road (Figure 1).

Vegetation Description The application area is mapped as Avon Wheatbelt (1049) Beard vegetation association, described as, 'Medium woodland; wandoo, York gum, salmon gum, morrel & gimlet' (Government of Western Australia, 2019).

Upon review of photographs provided by the applicant (Shire of Quairading, 2019b), the application area was identified as comprising of *Acacia* sp., *Eucalyptus* sp., and *Allocasuarina* sp., over predominately weed infested understorey (Figures 2-7).

Vegetation Condition Completely degraded: The structure of the vegetation is no longer intact and the area is completely or almost completely without native species (Keighery, 1994).

To

Degraded: Basic vegetation structure severely impacted by disturbance, scope for regeneration but not to a state approaching good condition without intensive management (Keighery, 1994).

Soil Type The application area is mapped as the Morbinning 4 Subsystem described as, 'Narrow tributary valleys of the Goomalling system with duplex soils under Wandoo vegetation' (Schoknecht et al., 2004).

Comments

The local area referred to in the assessment of this application is defined as a 10 kilometre radius measured from the perimeter of the application area.

The vegetation condition was confirmed through photographs supplied by the applicant (Shire of Quairading, 2019b).



Figure 1. Revised application area (hatched blue)





Figures 2-7. Photographs of the application area provided by the applicant (Shire of Quairading, 2019b).

3. Minimisation and mitigation measures

The clearing permit application was received by the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER) on 28 February 2019, for the clearing of 0.4 hectares of native vegetation within the Goldfields Road Reserve (PIN 1353878) (Figure 8; Shire of Quairading, 2019a). In a letter of 8 April 2019, DWER requested further information on how the applicant intends to avoid, minimise and/or offset impacts to native vegetation within an extensively cleared landscape.

The applicant provided a response on 29 May 2019 with a revised clearing permit application (Shire of Quairading, 2019c). The applicant advised that the initial clearing permit application included the southern side of Goldfields Road, to include the clearing that may be required for the realignment of associated underground water pipes (Figure 8). However, the applicant advised that the underground water pipe realignment was able to be completed without clearing native vegetation. Given this, the applicant has limited the proposed clearing to the northern side of Goldfields Road, and reduced the clearing from 0.4 hectares of native vegetation to 0.105 hectares, for the purpose of road upgrades (Figure 1).



Figure 8. Original application area (prior to minimisation measures).

4. Assessment of application against clearing principles

According to available databases, there are four threatened flora species and seven priority flora species that have been recorded within the local area. Of these species, *Stylidium coroniform* subsp. *amblyphyllum* (Threatened), *Hakea aculeata* (Threatened), *Guichenotia seorsiflora* (Threatened), *Acacia ataxiphylla* subsp. *magna* (Threatened), *Eucalyptus sargentii* subsp. *onesis* (Priority 3), *Verticordia huegelii* var. *tridens* (Priority 3), *Thysanotus tenuis* (Priority 3), *Acacia lirellata* subsp. *lirellata* (Priority 3), *Eucalyptus erythronema* subsp. *inornata* (Priority 3), and *Acacia phaeocalyx* (Priority 3), may possibly occur within the application area, as these species have previously been recorded within the same land system as mapped within the application area.

Despite there being a number of threatened and priority flora occurring within the local area on similar soil types, the vegetation remaining within the application area occurs in a linear nature, and is in a completely degraded to degraded condition (Keighery, 1994). The high weed load within the application area is likely to reduce the potential for any threatened flora species to establish themselves within the application area (DBCA, 2019). Given this, the application area is not likely to provide significant habitat for the flora species listed above.

According to available databases, no conservation significant fauna species were recorded within the local area. When the buffer radius was extended to 20 kilometres from the application area, one threatened fauna, two Priority 4 fauna and one species listed under international agreement, have been recorded. These species are the Shield-backed trapdoor spider (*Idiosoma nigrum*), Tree-stem trapdoor spider (*Aganippe castellum*), Water-rat (*Hydromys chrysogaster*) and the Common Greenshank (*Tringa nebularia*) (Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, 2007-). The Common Greenshank is listed as Marine and Migratory under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity and Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act). It is a wader, and found in inland mudflats, swamps, billabongs and flooded crops. The application area does not provide suitable habitat for the Common Greenshank.

The Shield-backed trapdoor spider is listed as Vulnerable under the EPBC Act. This species burrow in heavy clay soils in areas of open *Eucalyptus loxophleba*, *Eucalyptus salmonophloia* and *Eucalyptus capillosa* woodland, where *Acacia acuminata* forms a sparse understorey (Avon Catchment Council, 2007). This species relies heavily on leaf-litter and twigs to build its burrow (Avon Catchment Council, 2007). According to the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions' (DBCA) database (2007-), there are two records of this species within a 20 kilometre buffer of the application area, one record in 1955 and the second record in 2010. Given the completely degraded to degraded (Keighery, 1994) condition, the lack of leaf litter and twigs, and the understorey being predominately containing weeds, the application area is not considered significant habitat for this fauna species.

The Tree-stem trapdoor spider is listed as Priority 4 under the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* (BC Act) within the Wildlife Conservation (Specially Protected Fauna) Notice 2018. This species builds nest against the stems of trees such as *Melaleuca uncinata*, *Allocasuarina acutivalvis* in sandy loam soils (Department of Environment and Conservation, 2008). According to DBCA (2007-), only one occurrence was recorded within a 20 kilometre buffer of the application area in 2003, while the majority of populations were recorded further inland. Given the lack of *Melaleuca sp.* and *Allocasuarina sp.* being dominant species within the application area, and the completely degraded to degraded (Keighery, 1994) condition, the application area is not likely to comprise significant habitat for this fauna species.

Water-rat (*Hydromys chrysogaster*) is listed as Priority 4 under the BC Act within the Wildlife Conservation (Specially Protected Fauna) Notice 2018. This species tends to occur near permanent fresh or brackish water, including freshwater lakes, streams, swamps, dams and urban rivers. According to DBCA (2007-), this species predominately occurs closer to the coast and further north of the application area. Given that the application does not contain a watercourse or waterbody, the application area is not considered significant habitat for this fauna species.

The Carnaby's Cockatoo (*Calyptorhynchus latirostris*) is listed as Endangered under the EPBC Act and BC Act. While the Carnaby's Cockatoos have not been recorded within the local area or within the 20 kilometre buffer of the application area, the application area still falls within their known breeding range (Commonwealth of Australia, 2012). Carnaby's Cockatoo breed in large hollow-bearing trees, generally within woodlands or forests or in isolated trees (Commonwealth of Australia, 2012). These species nest in hollows in live or dead trees of karri, marri, wandoo, tuart, salmon gum, jarrah, flooded gum, York gum, powder bark, bullich and blackbutt (Commonwealth of Australia, 2012). Photographs provided by the applicant demonstrate that there are no potential breeding trees (diameter at breast height of 50 centimetres or greater) within the application area. Therefore, the application area is not likely to contain significant breeding habitat for Carnaby's Cockatoos.

Black cockatoos have a preference for foraging habitat that includes jarrah and marri woodlands and forest heathland and woodland dominated by proteaceous plant species such as *Banksia sp.*, *Hakea sp.*, and *Grevillea sp.*, (Commonwealth of Australia, 2012). Noting the completely degraded to degraded (Keighery, 1994) condition of the vegetation, and that none of the key food species listed above were in the photos of the application area provided by the applicant, the proposed clearing is not likely to contain significant foraging habitat for Carnaby's Cockatoo.

According to available databases, one Commonwealth listed threatened ecological community (TEC), 'Eucalypt woodlands of the Western Australian Wheatbelt', has been mapped within the local area. This ecological community is also listed as Priority 3 under the State's BC Act. This ecological community has been mapped to occur approximately 503 metres south east of the application area. The application area does not meet the key diagnostic characteristics of this ecological community, as it is too narrow and has little or no native understorey cover remaining, owing to the completely degraded to degraded (Keighery, 1994) condition (Commonwealth of Australia, 2016). Given this, the application area does not comprise the whole or a part of, or is necessary for the maintenance of this ecological community.

According to available databases, there are no conservation areas within or adjacent to the application area. The nearest conservation area is the Balkuling Nature Reserve that is located approximately 5,840 metres west of the application area. Given the distance between this nature reserve and the application area, the proposed clearing is not likely to have an impact on the environmental value of any conservation areas.

The National Objectives and Targets for Biodiversity Conservation include a target to prevent the clearance of ecological communities with an extent below 30 per cent of that present pre-European settlement (Commonwealth of Australia, 2001). The application area falls within the Avon Wheatbelt Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation of Australia (IBRA) bioregion which retains approximately 18.51 per cent of its pre-European extent of native vegetation, and is mapped as Beard vegetation association 1049 which retains approximately 6.79 per cent of its pre-European extent of native vegetation within the Avon Wheatbelt IBRA bioregion (Government of Western Australia, 2019). Given that both the bioregion and the mapped vegetation association are less than the 30 per cent threshold, and the local area also only retains approximately 6.5 per cent of remnant vegetation, the application area is a remnant of native vegetation in an area that has been extensively cleared, and the proposed clearing is at variance to Principle (e). However, the proposed clearing is not likely to result in any significant residual impacts. The application area is in a completely degraded to degraded (Keighery, 1994) condition, and is no longer representative of Beard vegetation association 1049, which is described as 'Medium woodland; wandoo, York gum, salmon gum, morrel & gimlet' (Government of Western Australia, 2019). Furthermore, through the avoidance and minimisation measures proposed by the applicant, the southern side of Goldfields Road will not be cleared. The vegetation on the southern side of Goldfields Road to be retained is more densely vegetated than the application area, and can continue to function as an ecological linkage within the local area.

According to available databases, no wetlands or watercourses have been mapped within the application area. The closest watercourse is located approximately 55 metres and 52 metres south of the application area, respectively. Groundwater salinity is mapped between 14,000 to 35,000 milligrams per litre total dissolved solids, which is considered to be highly saline. Due to the relatively small size and linear nature of the application area, the proposed clearing is not likely to increase sedimentation and runoff into the nearby wetland and watercourse. Given this, the application area is not likely to cause deterioration in the quality of surface water or groundwater.

The soils are mapped within the application area as having a high wind erosion risk, flood risk and waterlogging risk (50 to 70 per cent of map unit has a high to extreme wind erosion risk, over 70 per cent of the map unit has a moderate to high flood risk and, over 70 per cent of map unit has a moderate to very high waterlogging risk). However, given the relatively small size, linear nature, and the vegetation condition of the application area, the proposed clearing is not likely to cause appreciable land degradation or likely to cause, or exacerbate, the incidence or intensity of flooding.

Given the above, the proposed clearing is at variance to principle (e) and not likely to be at variance to the remaining clearing principles.

Planning instruments and other relevant matters

No Aboriginal sites of significance have been mapped within the application area.

The clearing permit application was advertised on the DWER website on 12 March 2019 with a 21 day submission period. One public submission was received in relation to this application. The submission objects to the proposed clearing for the following reasons (summarised):

- The application should be assessed under EPBC Act Accredited Process;
- The application, as submitted, contains no details to the impact on nationally-listed threatened species;
- Flora and fauna surveys should have been conducted and the results provided with the application, due to the high likelihood of threatened species being impacted;
- Application area is in a heavily cleared part of the Wheatbelt;
- Although not on the list from Nature Map, tree hollows may be used by the threatened bird species, Carnaby's cockatoo;
- Potential impacts to the Eucalypt woodland of the Wheatbelt TEC; and
- Raised concerns that the Shire of Quairading should provide evidence that alternatives to clearing has been thoroughly considered, stating it's not good enough to simply state that they have considered alternatives and that the clearing of native vegetation should be avoided and minimised where technically possible (Submission, 2019).

For a clearing permit application to be assessed under a bilateral agreement, the proposed action has to be determined to be a Controlled Action under the EPBC Act. In the case of this application, the applicant has not referred the application to the Commonwealth Department of the Environment and Energy, therefore this application cannot be assessed under the bilateral agreement. The submitters remaining concerns have been addressed in the assessment against the clearing principles.

The Shire of Quairading previously had a clearing permit granted (CPS 4808/1) over the majority of the area applied for. This previous clearing permit was granted for the purpose of road construction or maintenance, and expired on 26 March 2014.

5. References

- Avon Catchment Council (2007). Shield-backed Trapdoor Spider (*Idiosoma nigrum*) Conservation Plan. Avon Catchment Council, Western Australia.
- Commonwealth of Australia (2001). National Objectives and Targets for Biodiversity Conservation 2001-2005, Canberra.
- Commonwealth of Australia (2012). EPBC Act referral guidelines for three threatened black cockatoo species. Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Populations and Communities, Canberra
- Commonwealth of Australia (2016). Eucalypt Woodlands of the Western Australian Wheatbelt: a nationally protected ecological community. Department of the Environment and Energy, Canberra.
- Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) (2007-). NatureMap: Mapping Western Australia's Biodiversity. Department of Parks and Wildlife. URL: <http://naturemap.dpaw.wa.gov.au/>. Accessed September 2019.
- Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) (2019). Advice received in relation to clearing permit application CPS 8393/1 received 1 May 2019 (DWER Ref: A1785105).
- Department of Environment and Conservation (2008). Tree-stem Trapdoor Spider (*Aganippe castellum*) Conservation Plan, Avon Catchment Council, Western Australia.

Government of Western Australia (2019). 2018 Statewide Vegetation Statistics incorporating the CAR Reserve Analysis (Full Report). Current as of March 2019. WA Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, Perth. <https://catalogue.data.wa.gov.au/dataset/dbca-statewide-vegetation-statistics>.

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

Schoknecht, N., Tille, P. and Purdie, B. (2004). Soil-landscape mapping in South-Western Australia – Overview of Methodology and outputs' Resource Management Technical Report No. 280. Department of Agriculture.

Shire of Quairading (2019a). Clearing permit application form and supporting information for CPS 8393/1 received 28 February 2019 (DWER Ref: A1769139).

Shire of Quairading (2019b). Clearing permit application site photos received 28 March 2019 (DWER Ref: A1778415).

Shire of Quairading (2019c). Additional information provided for clearing permit application CPS 8393/1 received 29 May 2019 (DWER Ref: A1792652).

Submission (2019). Submission received in relation to clearing permit application CPS 8393/1 received 27 March 2019 (DWER Ref: A1775993).