



# Clearing Permit Decision Report

## 1. Application details

### 1.1. Permit application details

Permit application No.: 8514/2  
Permit type: Purpose Permit

### 1.2. Proponent details

Proponent's name: Aurene Parker Range Pty Ltd

### 1.3. Property details

Property: Mining Lease 77/657  
Mining Lease 77/762  
Miscellaneous Licence 77/264  
Local Government Area: Shire of Yilgarn  
Colloquial name: Centenary Gold Project

### 1.4. Application

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

### 1.5. Decision on application

Decision on Permit Application: Grant  
Decision Date: 29 October 2020

## 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:  
8: Medium woodland; salmon gum and gimlet;  
125: Bare areas; salt lakes;  
128: Bare areas; rock outcrops; and  
1068: Medium woodland; salmon gum, morrel, gimlet and *Eucalyptus sheathiana* (GIS Database).

A vegetation survey was conducted over the application area and surrounding areas by Botanica Consulting during November 2012. The survey locations were revisited in April 2019 (Botanica, 2019). The following five vegetation associations, from two major vegetation groups, were recorded within the application area (Botanica, 2019):

#### Eucalypt Woodland

- CLP-EW1:** Low woodland of *Eucalyptus salubris* over tall shrubland of *Melaleuca pauperiflora* subsp. *fastigiata* and open low shrubland of *Microcybe multiflora* on clay-loam plain;
- CLP-EW2:** Low woodland of *Eucalyptus longicornis* / *Eucalyptus salubris* over tall open scrubland of *Melaleuca pauperiflora* subsp. *fastigiata* and open chenopod shrubland and of *Atriplex vesicaria* / *Tectornina disarticulata* on clay-loam plain;
- HS-EW1:** Low woodland of *Eucalyptus longicornis* / *Eucalyptus salubris* over tall open shrubland of *Melaleuca pauperiflora* subsp. *fastigiata* and low open shrubland of *Phebalium tuberosum* on Banded Ironstone Formation (BIF) ridge;
- B-EW1:** Open low woodland of *Eucalyptus capillosa* over very open shrub mallee of *E. loxophleba* subsp. *lissophloia* and low open shrubland of *Astroloma serratifolium* / *Calytrix tetragona* on breakaway; and

#### Mallee Woodland and Shrubland

- SLP-MWS1:** Very open tree mallee of *Eucalyptus horistes* over mid shrubland of *Acacia acuminata* / *Allocasuarina corniculata* and open low open sedgeland of *Lepidosperma sanguinolentum* on sand-loam plain.

#### Clearing Description

Centenary Gold Project.  
Aurene Parker Range Pty Ltd proposes to clear up to 108.3 hectares of native vegetation within a boundary of approximately 108.3 hectares, for the purpose of mineral production and associated activities. The project is located approximately 19 kilometres south east of Marvel Loch, within the Shire of Yilgarn.

<b>Vegetation Condition</b>	Good: Structure significantly altered by multiple disturbance; retains basic structure/ability to regenerate (Keighery, 1994).
<b>Comment</b>	<p>The vegetation condition was derived from a vegetation survey conducted by Botanica (2019).</p> <p>Clearing permit CPS 8514/1 was granted by the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety (DMIRS) on 1 August 2019 and is valid from 24 August 2019 to 23 August 2024. The permit authorised the clearing of 96.9 hectares of native vegetation within a boundary of approximately 96.9 hectares, for the purpose of mineral production and associated infrastructure.</p> <p>On 20 August 2020, Aurene Parker Range Pty Ltd applied to amend CPS 8514/1 for the purpose of increasing the permit boundary and amount of approved clearing by 11.4 hectares.</p>

### 3. Assessment of application against Clearing Principles

#### Comments

The permit holder has applied to amend CPS 8514/1 for the purpose of increasing the amount of clearing authorised and the permit boundary by approximately 11.4 hectares, to allow for borrow pit expansion and road maintenance (Aurene, 2020).

The clearing permit amendment area is located within the Southern Cross subregion of the Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation for Australia (IBRA) Coolgardie Bioregion (GIS Database). The Southern Cross subregion is characterised by gently undulating uplands dissected by broad valleys with bands of low greenstone hills, supporting diverse Eucalyptus woodlands rich in endemic eucalypts (CALM, 2002).

A detailed flora and vegetation survey of the broader application area and surrounds was undertaken by Botanica Consulting in November 2012 (Botanica, 2019). The quadrats were revisited and survey data reviewed and updated in April 2019 (Botanica, 2019). The survey recorded 71 flora taxa, from 47 genera and 23 families (Botanica, 2019). No Threatened or Priority flora or Threatened Ecological Communities (TECs) were recorded in the amendment area.

There are records of the Priority Ecological Community (PEC), Parker Range vegetation complexes (Priority 3) within the amendment area (Botanica, 2019; GIS Database). Existing mapping of the Parker Range PEC is indicative only, and definitions of the Parker Range vegetation complexes are broad (DBCA, 2019). Analysis to determine the similarities between species composition and vegetation communities from the broader Parker Range area and the amendment area found that species composition of the Parker Range vegetation complexes appear to differ from those represented in the amendment area (Botanica, 2019). However, previous advice received from DBCA is that the Parker Range PEC is comprised of all the vegetation units that occur on the Parker Range (DBCA, 2019).

The vegetation associations within the amendment area are not restricted and their distribution extends outside of the proposed permit boundary (Botanica, 2019). The proposed clearing of 108.3 hectares represents less than 0.003 % of the Parker Range PEC. Given the relatively small area of clearing, and that the vegetation was previously disturbed by historic mining activities; the proposed clearing is unlikely to significantly impact the PEC.

There are no permanent watercourses or wetlands within the area proposed to clear (GIS Database). Several seasonal creek lines pass through the original application area (GIS Database). None of the vegetation associations recorded during the vegetation survey are described as growing in association with watercourses or wetlands (Botanica, 2019). Given that creeklines are present within the greater permit boundary footprint, it is recommended to maintain the existing vegetation management condition.

Soil mapping of the area defines the amendment area as undulating plains with some low dunes, and with soils of brown and grey brown calcareous earth (Northcote, K. H. et al., 1960-68). The soil mapping indicates a minor potential for wind erosion to occur.

There are no conservation areas in the vicinity of the broader application area. The nearest DBCA (formerly DPaW) managed land is the Jibadji Nature Reserve which is located approximately 13.5 kilometres east of the application 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 8514/1.

<b>Methodology</b>	<p>Aurene (2020)</p> <p>Botanica (2019)</p> <p>CALM (2002)</p> <p>DBCA (2019)</p> <p>Northcote, K. H. et al. (1960-68)</p>
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GIS Database:

- DPaW Tenure
- Hydrography, Lakes
- Hydrography, Linear
- IBRA Australia
- Imagery
- Landsystem Rangelands
- Pre-European Vegetation
- Public Drinking Water Source Areas
- Soils, Statewide
- 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, 2020). This claim 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, 2020). 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 31 August 2020 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 (2020)

## 4. References

- Aurenne (2020) Application for an Amendment to a Clearing Permit – Amendment Application for CPS 8514/1 - Aurenne Parker Range Pty Ltd - Centenary Gold Project. Supporting document prepared by Aurenne Parker Range Pty Ltd, August 2020.
- Botanica (2019) Flora, Vegetation and Fauna Survey of the Centenary Gold Project. Report prepared for Goldfields Technical Services Pty Ltd by Botanica Consulting, May 2019.
- CALM (2002) A Biodiversity Audit of Western Australia's 53 Biogeographic Subregions in 2002. Department of Conservation and Land Management, Western Australia.
- DBCA (2019) Advice received in relation to Clearing Permit Application CPS 8514/1. Species and Communities Branch. Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, Western Australia, June 2019.
- DPLH (2020) Aboriginal Heritage Inquiry System. Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage.  
<http://maps.daa.wa.gov.au/AHIS/> (Accessed 12 October 2020).
- Keighery, B.J. (1994) Bushland Plant Survey: A Guide to Plant Community Survey for the Community. Wildflower Society of WA (Inc). Nedlands, Western Australia.
- Northcote, K. H. with Beckmann, G. G., Bettenay, E., Churchward, H. M., Van Dijk, D. C., Dimmock, G. M., Hubble, G. D., Isbell, R. F., McArthur, W. M., Murtha, G. G., Nicolls, K. D., Paton, T. R., Thompson, C. H., Webb, A. A. and Wright, M. J. (1960-1968). Atlas of Australian Soils, Sheets 1 to 10. With explanatory data (CSIRO Aust. and Melbourne University Press: Melbourne).

## 5. Glossary

### Acronyms:

<b>BC Act</b>	<i>Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016</i> , Western Australia
<b>BoM</b>	Bureau of Meteorology, Australian Government
<b>DAA</b>	Department of Aboriginal Affairs, Western Australia (now DPLH)

<b>DAFWA</b>	Department of Agriculture and Food, Western Australia (now DPIRD)
<b>DAWE</b>	Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment, Australian Government
<b>DBCA</b>	Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, Western Australia
<b>DEC</b>	Department of Environment and Conservation, Western Australia (now DBCA and DWER)
<b>DER</b>	Department of Environment Regulation, Western Australia (now DWER)
<b>DMIRS</b>	Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety, Western Australia
<b>DMP</b>	Department of Mines and Petroleum, Western Australia (now DMIRS)
<b>DoE</b>	Department of the Environment, Australian Government (now DAWE)
<b>DoEE</b>	Department of the Environment and Energy (now DAWE)
<b>DoW</b>	Department of Water, Western Australia (now DWER)
<b>DPaW</b>	Department of Parks and Wildlife, Western Australia (now DBCA)
<b>DPIRD</b>	Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, Western Australia
<b>DPLH</b>	Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage, Western Australia
<b>DRF</b>	Declared Rare Flora
<b>DSEWPaC</b>	Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities (now DAWE)
<b>DWER</b>	Department of Water and Environmental Regulation, Western Australia
<b>EP Act</b>	<i>Environmental Protection Act 1986</i> , Western Australia
<b>EPA</b>	Environmental Protection Authority, Western Australia
<b>EPBC Act</b>	<i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i> (Federal Act)
<b>GIS</b>	Geographical Information System
<b>ha</b>	Hectare (10,000 square metres)
<b>IBRA</b>	Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation for Australia
<b>IUCN</b>	International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources – commonly known as the World Conservation Union
<b>PEC</b>	Priority Ecological Community, Western Australia
<b>RIWI Act</b>	<i>Rights in Water and Irrigation Act 1914</i> , Western Australia
<b>TEC</b>	Threatened Ecological Community

### Definitions:

{DBCA (2019) Conservation Codes for Western Australian Flora and Fauna. Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, Western Australia):-

#### **T** Threatened species:

Listed by order of the Minister as Threatened in the category of critically endangered, endangered or vulnerable under section 19(1), or is a rediscovered species to be regarded as threatened species under section 26(2) of the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* (BC Act).

**Threatened fauna** is that subset of ‘Specially Protected Fauna’ listed under schedules 1 to 3 of the *Wildlife Conservation (Specially Protected Fauna) Notice 2018* for Threatened Fauna.

**Threatened flora** is that subset of ‘Rare Flora’ listed under schedules 1 to 3 of the *Wildlife Conservation (Rare Flora) Notice 2018* for Threatened Flora.

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.

#### **CR** **Critically endangered species**

Threatened species considered to be “*facing an extremely high risk of extinction in the wild in the immediate future, as determined in accordance with criteria set out in the ministerial guidelines*”.

Listed as critically endangered under section 19(1)(a) of the BC Act in accordance with the criteria set out in section 20 and the ministerial guidelines. Published under schedule 1 of the *Wildlife Conservation (Specially Protected Fauna) Notice 2018* for critically endangered fauna or the *Wildlife Conservation (Rare Flora) Notice 2018* for critically endangered flora.

#### **EN** **Endangered species**

Threatened species considered to be “*facing a very high risk of extinction in the wild in the near future, as determined in accordance with criteria set out in the ministerial guidelines*”.

Listed as endangered under section 19(1)(b) of the BC Act in accordance with the criteria set out in section 21 and the ministerial guidelines. Published under schedule 2 of the *Wildlife Conservation (Specially Protected Fauna) Notice 2018* for endangered fauna or the *Wildlife Conservation (Rare Flora) Notice 2018* for endangered flora.

#### **VU** **Vulnerable species**

Threatened species considered to be “*facing a high risk of extinction in the wild in the medium-term future, as determined in accordance with criteria set out in the ministerial guidelines*”.

Listed as vulnerable under section 19(1)(c) of the BC Act in accordance with the criteria set out in section 22 and the ministerial guidelines. Published under schedule 3 of the *Wildlife Conservation (Specially Protected Fauna) Notice 2018* for vulnerable fauna or the *Wildlife Conservation (Rare Flora) Notice 2018* for vulnerable flora.

## **Extinct Species:**

### **EX**

#### **Extinct species**

Species where “*there is no reasonable doubt that the last member of the species has died*”, and listing is otherwise in accordance with the ministerial guidelines (section 24 of the BC Act).

Published as presumed extinct under schedule 4 of the *Wildlife Conservation (Specially Protected Fauna) Notice 2018* for extinct fauna or the *Wildlife Conservation (Rare Flora) Notice 2018* for extinct flora.

### **EW**

#### **Extinct in the wild species**

Species that “*is known only to survive in cultivation, in captivity or as a naturalised population well outside its past range; and it has not been recorded in its known habitat or expected habitat, at appropriate seasons, anywhere in its past range, despite surveys over a time frame appropriate to its life cycle and form*”, and listing is otherwise in accordance with the ministerial guidelines (section 25 of the BC Act).

Currently there are no threatened fauna or threatened flora species listed as extinct in the wild. If listing of a species as extinct in the wild occurs, then a schedule will be added to the applicable notice.

## **Specially protected species:**

Listed by order of the Minister as specially protected under section 13(1) of the BC Act. Meeting one or more of the following categories: species of special conservation interest; migratory species; cetaceans; species subject to international agreement; or species otherwise in need of special protection.

Species that are listed as threatened species (critically endangered, endangered or vulnerable) or extinct species under the BC Act cannot also be listed as Specially Protected species.

### **MI**

#### **Migratory species**

Fauna that periodically or occasionally visit Australia or an external Territory or the exclusive economic zone; or the species is subject of an international agreement that relates to the protection of migratory species and that binds the Commonwealth; and listing is otherwise in accordance with the ministerial guidelines (section 15 of the BC Act).

Includes 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 fauna subject to the *Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals* (Bonn Convention), an environmental treaty under the United Nations Environment Program. Migratory species listed under the BC Act are a subset of the migratory animals, that are known to visit Western Australia, protected under the international agreements or treaties, excluding species that are listed as Threatened species.

Published as migratory birds protected under an international agreement under schedule 5 of the *Wildlife Conservation (Specially Protected Fauna) Notice 2018*.

### **CD**

#### **Species of special conservation interest (conservation dependent fauna)**

Fauna of special conservation need being species dependent on ongoing conservation intervention to prevent it becoming eligible for listing as threatened, and listing is otherwise in accordance with the ministerial guidelines (section 14 of the BC Act).

Published as conservation dependent fauna under schedule 6 of the *Wildlife Conservation (Specially Protected Fauna) Notice 2018*.

### **OS**

#### **Other specially protected species**

Fauna otherwise in need of special protection to ensure their conservation, and listing is otherwise in accordance with the ministerial guidelines (section 18 of the BC Act).

Published as other specially protected fauna under schedule 7 of the *Wildlife Conservation (Specially Protected Fauna) Notice 2018*.

### **P**

#### **Priority species:**

Possibly threatened species that do not meet survey criteria, or are otherwise data deficient, are added to the Priority Fauna or Priority Flora Lists under Priorities 1, 2 or 3. These three categories are ranked in order of priority for survey and evaluation of conservation status so that consideration can be given to their declaration as threatened fauna or flora.

Species that are adequately known, are rare but not threatened, or meet criteria for near threatened, or that have been recently removed from the threatened species or other specially protected fauna lists for other than taxonomic reasons, are placed in Priority 4. These species 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.