



Clearing Permit Decision Report

1. Application details

1.1. Permit application details

Permit application No.: 8531/1
Permit type: Area Permit

1.2. Applicant details

Applicant's name: Rottnest Island Authority
Application received date: 10 June 2019

1.3. Property details

Property: LOT 10976 ON PLAN 216860, ROTTNEST ISLAND
Local Government Authority: COCKBURN, CITY OF
Localities: ROTTNEST ISLAND

1.4. Application

Clearing Area (ha)	No. Trees	Method of Clearing	Purpose category:
0.77		Mechanical Removal	Building or structure

1.5. Decision on application

Decision on Permit Application: Granted
Decision Date: 2 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 may be at variance to principle (h), and is not likely to be at variance to any of the remaining clearing principles.

Through assessment it was determined that the proposed clearing may impact on habitat for fauna. A fauna management condition requiring the Permit Holder to undertake clearing in a directional manner will mitigate any potential impacts of the proposed clearing.

Through assessment it was determined that the proposed clearing may impact on the environmental values of adjacent remnant vegetation in the Rottnest Island Nature Reserve. A weed management condition will mitigate any potential impacts of the proposed clearing.

In granting a clearing permit subject to conditions, the Delegated Officer determined that the proposed clearing is not likely to have any unacceptable environmental impacts.

2. Site Information

Clearing Description The application is to clear 0.77 hectares of native vegetation within Lot 10976 on Deposited Plan 216860, Rottnest Island, for the purpose of construction of new ablution facilities, recreational amenities with pedestrian access ways and viewing platform.

Vegetation Description The application area is mapped as Beard vegetation association 15, which is described as Acacia, Rottnest pine, coastal moort or mixed tropical forest *Acacia rostellifera*, *Callitris preissii*, *Eucalyptus lehmannii*, *E. cornuta* (Shepherd *et al.* 2001).

Vegetation Condition The vegetation condition of the application area ranges from;
Very good: vegetation structure altered, obvious signs of disturbance;
to
Completely degraded: The structure of the vegetation is no longer intact and the area is completely or almost completely without native species (Keighery, 1994).

The condition of the vegetation was determined through a review of available aerial imagery.

Soil type The soil type within the application area is mapped as Quindalup South System, described as coastal dunes, of the Swan Coastal Plain, with calcareous deep sands and yellow sands; coastal scrub (DPIRD, 2017).

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 local area contains approximately 95 per cent native vegetation cover.

3. Assessment of application against clearing principles

The application is to clear 0.77 hectares of native vegetation within Lot 10976 on Deposited Plan 216860, Rottnest Island, for the purpose of construction of new ablution facilities, recreational amenities with pedestrian access ways and viewing platform.

According to available databases, there are five priority flora species recorded on Rottnest Island. No threatened flora are recorded. All of the priority flora species are located on the eastern side of Rottnest and are associated with Hypersaline Lakes and wetlands. Noting the vegetation type and condition within the application area, the proposed clearing is not likely to impact upon any threatened or priority flora species.

According to available databases, there are seven priority ecological communities (PEC) and one threatened ecological community (TEC), recorded on Rottnest Island. The closest ecological community is located 6500 metres east of the application area. Given the vegetation community mapped within the application area, the vegetation is not likely to comprise the whole or part of, or be necessary for the maintenance of, a TEC or PEC.

The application area may contain suitable habitat for the following conservation significant species (DBCA, 2007-):

- Quokka (*Sentonix brachyurus*) listed as rare or likely to become extinct under the *Wildlife Conservation Act 1950* (WC Act) and Vulnerable under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act);
- Rottnest Island bobtail (*Tiliqua rugosa* subsp. *konowi*) listed as rare or likely to become extinct under the WC Act and as vulnerable under the EPBC Act;
- Rottnest Island dugite (*Pseudonaja affinis* subsp. *exilis*) listed as Priority 4 under the WC Act and as vulnerable under the EPBC Act;
- Bridled tern (*Sterna anaethetus*) listed as migratory birds under international agreement under the WC Act and under the EPBC Act;
- Caspian tern (*Sterna caspia*) listed as migratory birds under international agreement under the WC Act and under the EPBC Act;
- Crested tern (*Sterna bergii*) listed as migratory birds under international agreement under the WC Act and under the EPBC Act;
- Roseate tern (*Sterna dougallii*) listed as migratory birds under international agreement under the WC Act and under the EPBC Act;
- Wedge-tailed shearwater (*Puffinus pacificus*) listed as migratory birds under international agreement under the WC Act and under the EPBC Act.

Noting the size of the application area and the extent of native vegetation in the local area, the application area is not likely to comprise significant habitat for indigenous fauna including species of conservation significance. A fauna management condition has been placed on the permit requiring clearing to occur in a directional manner, to avoid any indirect impacts on fauna.

According to available databases, no wetlands or watercourses have been mapped within the application area. The nearest wetland is located approximately 6530 metres east of the application area. The proposed clearing is not likely to impact on vegetation growing in association with a wetland or watercourse.

Rottnest Island is an A-class Nature Reserve. Noting the size of the application area and noting the extent of native vegetation in the (terrestrial) local area, the proposed clearing may have an impact on the environmental values of this conservation area through the spread of weeds. The implementation of weed management measures will assist in reducing this risk.

As an A-class Nature Reserve, Rottnest Island still retains 95 per cent of native vegetation coverage. As the application area retains more than 30 per cent of its pre-European clearing extent, and the relatively small size of the application area, the application area is not likely to be considered a significant remnant within an extensively cleared area.

Given the largely degraded (Keighery, 1994) condition of the vegetation, and the relatively small size of the application area, the proposed clearing is not likely to contribute to or cause land degradation, deteriorate the quality of ground water, cause or exacerbate flooding.

Given the above, the proposed clearing is may be at variance to principle (h), 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 4 July 2019 with a 14 day submission period. No public submissions have been received in relation to this application.

The City of Cockburn advised that no planning approvals are required from the City of Cockburn for the proposed activity.

4. References

Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) (2007-) Nature Map: Mapping Western Australia's Biodiversity. Department of Parks and Wildlife. URL: <https://naturemap.dpaw.wa.gov.au/> . July 2019.

Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) (2017). NRInfo Digital Mapping. Accessed at <https://maps.agric.wa.gov.au/nrm-info/> Accessed June 2018. Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development. Government of Western Australia.

Government of Western Australia (2019) 2018 Statewide Vegetation Statistics incorporating the CAR Reserve Analysis (Full Report). Current as of February 2018. 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.

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.

GIS Databases:

- Aboriginal Sites of Significance
- Beard vegetation associations
- Clearing Regulations - Environmentally Sensitive Areas
- Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions Estate
- Hydrography, linear
- IBRA Australia
- Remnant vegetation
- SAC bio datasets (accessed July 2019)
- Soils, Statewide
- Wetlands