



CLEARING PERMIT

Granted under section 51E of the Environmental Protection Act 1986

PERMIT DETAILS

Area Permit Number: 8778/1
File Number: DWERVT4984
Duration of Permit: From 13 April 2020 to 13 April 2022

PERMIT HOLDER

Rottnest Island Authority

LAND ON WHICH CLEARING IS TO BE DONE

Lot 10976 on Deposited Plan 216860, Rottnest Island

AUTHORISED ACTIVITY

The Permit Holder shall not clear more than 0.4019 hectares of native vegetation within the area cross-hatched yellow on attached Plan 8778/1.

CONDITIONS

1. 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:

- (a) avoid the clearing of native vegetation;
- (b) minimise the amount of native vegetation to be cleared; and
- (c) reduce the impact of clearing on any environmental value.

2. Dieback and weed control

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*:

- (a) clean earth-moving machinery of soil and vegetation prior to entering and leaving the area to be cleared;
- (b) ensure that no known *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.

3. Fencing

The Permit Holder must:

- (a) within three months of commencing the authorised clearing activities, construct or install a fence fully enclosing the area cross-hatched yellow on the attached Plan 8778/1; and
- (b) within one month of construction or installation of the fence, notify the *CEO* in writing that this action has been taken.

4. Directional Clearing

The Permit Holder shall conduct clearing in a slow, progressive manner from East to West to allow fauna to move into adjacent native vegetation ahead of the clearing activity.

5. Records must be kept

The Permit Holder must maintain the following records for activities done pursuant to this Permit, in relation to the clearing of native vegetation authorised under this Permit:

- (a) 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 or decimal degrees;
- (b) the date that the area was cleared;
- (c) the size of the area cleared (in hectares);
- (d) actions taken to avoid, minimise and reduce the impacts and extent of clearing in accordance with condition 1 of this Permit;
- (e) actions taken to minimise the risk of the introduction and spread of *dieback* and *weeds* in accordance with condition 2 of this Permit; and
- (f) actions in accordance with condition 4.

6. Reporting

The Permit Holder must provide to the *CEO* the records required under condition 5 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;

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 Regional Weed Rankings Summary, regardless of ranking; or
- (c) not indigenous to the area concerned.

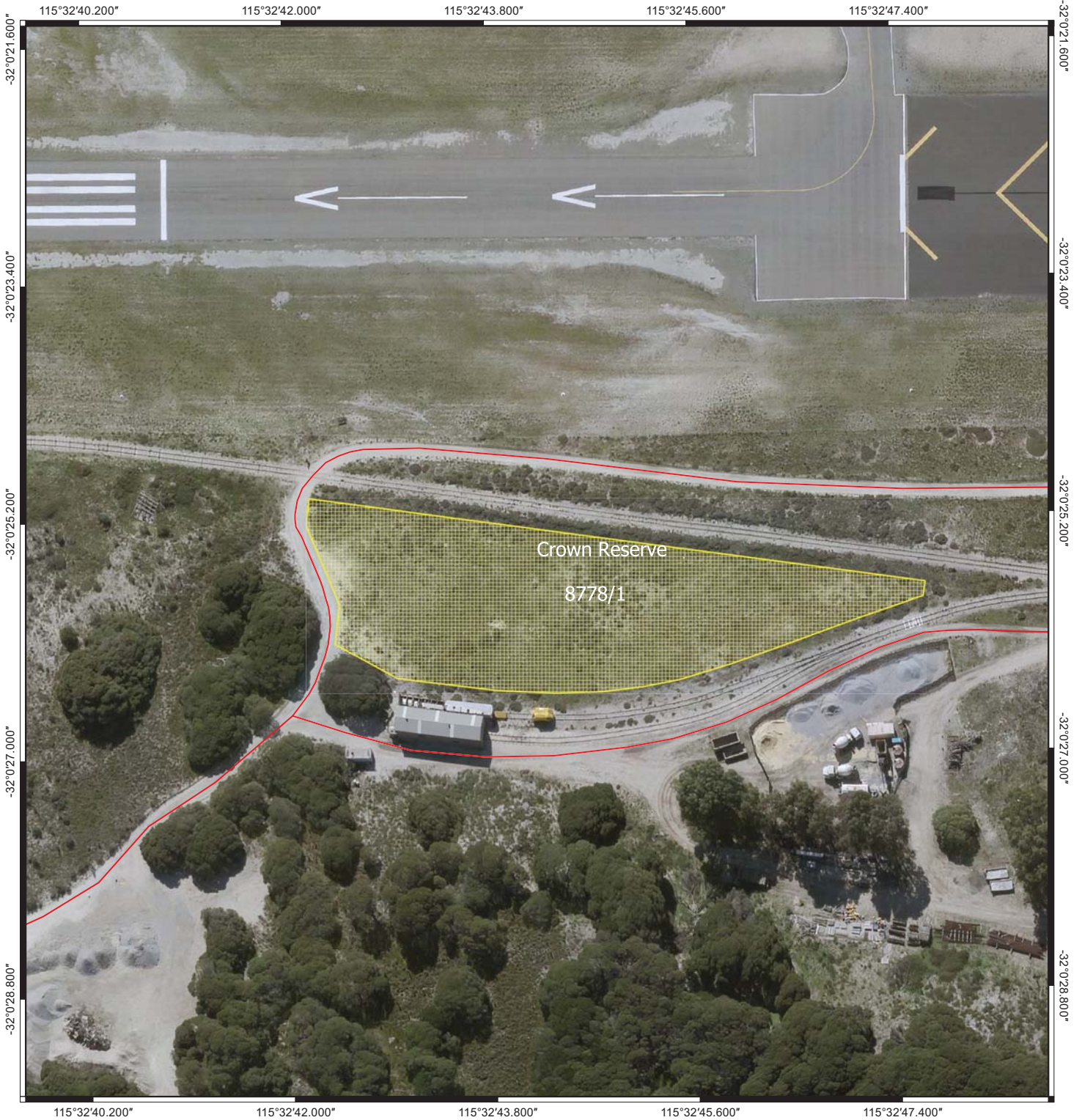


Samara Rogers
MANAGER
NATIVE VEGETATION REGULATION



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

18 March 2020

Plan 8778/1



Legend

-  CPS areas approved to clear
-  Local Government Authorities
-  Roads
- Image



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Geocentric Datum of Australia 1994

Samara Rogers

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Officer with delegated authority under Section 20
of the Environmental Protection Act 1986



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WESTERN AUSTRALIA
WA Crown Copyright 2018



Clearing Permit Decision Report

1. Application details

1.1. Permit application details

Permit application No.: 8778/1
Permit type: Area Permit

1.2. Applicant details

Applicant's name: Rottnest Island Authority
Application received date: 6 January 2020

1.3. Property details

Property: Lot 10976 on Plan 216860, Rottnest Island
Local Government Authority: City of Cockburn
Localities: Rottnest Island

1.4. Application

Clearing Area (ha)	No. Trees	Method of Clearing	Purpose category:
0.4019		Mechanical Removal	Building or structure

1.5. Decision on application

Decision on Permit Application: Granted
Decision Date: 21 February 2020

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 with principle (h), and is not likely to be at variance with the remaining principles.

The proposed clearing may impact surrounding native vegetation through the introduction or spread of weeds and dieback. A weed management condition has been placed on the clearing permit to minimise the risk of weeds spreading into adjacent areas of remnant vegetation.

Throughout assessment it was determined that the proposed clearing may impact on habitat for fauna. A Directional clearing condition, requiring the Permit Holder to clear east to west to allow fauna to move into adjacent vegetation and a fauna management condition requiring the Permit Holder to install a fence enclosing the application area will mitigate any potential impacts of the proposed clearing.

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

2. Site Information

Clearing Description

The application is to clear 0.4019 hectares of native vegetation within Lot 10976 on Plan 216860 (Crown reserve 16713), Rottnest Island, for the purpose of placement and operation of the mobile asphalt plant (6 weeks duration) on the island. (Figure 1 and 2a-b).

Vegetation Description

The application area occurs within the 'Swan Coastal Plain' Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation for Australia (IBRA) bioregion, and is mapped as the following Swan Coastal Plain vegetation complex (Hedde, 1980):

- Quindalup Complex: coastal dune complex consisting mainly of two alliances - the strand and fore-dune alliance and the mobile and stable dune alliance. Local variations include the low closed forest of *Melaleuca lanceolata* (Rottnest Teatree) - *Callitris preissii* (Rottnest Island Pine), the closed scrub of *Acacia rostellifera* (Summer-scented Wattle) and the low closed *Agonis flexuosa* (Peppermint) forest of Geographe Bay.

The Rottnest Island Authority (RIA) commissioned Focused Vision Consulting Pty Ltd (FVC) to undertake a single phased, detailed flora and vegetation survey (the Flora survey) on 25 October 2018. The Flora survey mapped the application area as comprising of the following vegetation communities (FVC, 2018):

- Approximately 97 per cent of the application area is mapped as *Acanthocarpus preissii*, *Asphodelus fistulosus* and *Trachyandra divaricata* low heath; and

- Approximately one per cent of the application area is mapped as *Melaleuca lanceolata* low woodland to low open forest over *Acacia rostellifera* tall sparse shrubland over *Acanthocarpus preissii* and *Phyllanthus calycinus* shrubland over *Trachyandra divaricata*, *Euphorbia peplus* and *Austrostipa flavescens*
- Approximately two per cents of the application area are completely cleared areas.

Vegetation Condition

The condition of the vegetation within the application area is considered to be in good to completely degraded condition, described as:

- Good; Structure significantly altered by multiple disturbance; retains basic structure/ability to regenerate (Keighery, 1994).
- Completely Degraded; No longer intact, completely/almost completely without native species (Keighery, 1994).

The vegetation condition was determined by the Flora survey (FVC, 2018), which also identified that approximately 97 per cent of the application area is in degraded (Keighery, 1994) to completely degraded (Keighery, 1994) condition (FVC, 2018).

Soil type

The application area is mapped as the following land subsystems (Schoknecht et al., 2004):

- Quindalup South System, which is described as coastal dunes, of the Swan Coastal Plain, with calcareous deep sands and yellow sands. Coastal scrub.

Comments

The local area is considered a 10 kilometre radius of the application area (excluding ocean).



Figure 1: Application area cross-hatched blue



Figure 2a



Figure 2b

Figures 2a-b: Representative photos of the vegetation within the application area (RIA, 2019).

3. Minimisation and mitigation measures

In relation to whether alternatives have been considered that would avoid or minimise the need for clearing, the applicant has advised (RIA, 2019):

"The RIA have reviewed a number of sites within the Settlement Area which have been previously cleared. Areas that have been previously cleared are currently in use for other activities, close in proximity to sensitive receptors or areas requiring excessive excavation to gain level ground. In reviewing areas to be cleared the RIA completed a constraints mapping exercise. The constraints reviewed included: within the zoned settlement area, vegetation condition, location to sensitive receptors, access and proximity to areas of roads to be resurfaced. A total of 6 sites were reviewed in the selection process and the details of each are provided in the supporting documentation (available on <ftp://ftp.dwer.wa.gov.au/permit/> under 8778).

The area will be managed in accordance with the Rotttnest Island Authority Environment Policy and Management Plans. Management during clearing will include:

- Water suppression to reduce dust;
- raised blade clearing;
- the single tree to the south west corner will be retained;
- fencing will be in place to exclude quokkas;
- vegetation cleared will be retained and utilised for mulch."

4. Assessment of application against clearing principles

The environmental impact assessment of the proposed clearing against the clearing principles identified that the proposed clearing may be at variance with principle (h) and is not likely to be at variance with any of the remaining clearing principles.

According to the available biological databases, four priority flora species have been recorded within the local area, and all of them have been mapped within a similar soil and landform type as that mapped within the application area. The Flora survey (FVC, 2018) did not record any flora species listed as threatened or priority under the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* (BC Act) or under the *Environment Protection Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) within the application area. Noting this, the small extent of the proposed clearing and the vegetation predominantly in degraded (Keighery, 1994) to completely degraded (Keighery, 1994) condition (FVC, 2018), the proposed clearing is not likely impact conservation significant flora species.

According to the available biological databases, 43 conservation significant fauna species have been mapped within the local area. From these, Quokka (*Setonix brachyurus*), Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*), Perth slider, lined skink (*Lerista lineata*), Rotttnest Island dugite (*Pseudonaja affinis exilis*) and Rotttnest Island bobtail (*Tiliqua rugosa konowi*) may occur within the application area. However, noting the size of the application area and the extent of the vegetation in the application area and the extent of native vegetation in local area, the application area is not likely to comprise significant habitat for fauna, including species of conservation significance. Noting the potential of the abovementioned species to occur within the application area, a fauna management condition has been placed on the permit requiring directional clearing and installing a fence enclosing the application area to mitigate any potential indirect impacts to fauna.

According to the available biological databases, seven state listed priority ecological communities (PEC) have been mapped within the local area. All mapped PECs are microbial communities associated with hypersaline lakes. Given this, the vegetation within the application area and the distance to the closest lake, the proposed clearing is not likely to impact any state listed PEC.

According to the available biological databases, state listed *Callitris preissii* (or *Melaleuca lanceolata*) forests and woodlands, Swan Coastal Plain (floristic community type 30a as originally described in Gibson et al. (1994)) threatened ecological community (TEC) has been mapped approximately 700 metres northeast from the application area. The FVC (2018) Flora survey identified that approximately 0.002 hectares, or one tree located in the southwest corner of the application area, is mapped as this TEC. The applicant (Ria, 2019) has advised that this tree will be retained. Given this, the proposed clearing is not likely to impact on vegetation that comprises the whole or a part of, or is necessary for the maintenance of a threatened ecological community.

Noting that the application area is not likely to contain any threatened or priority flora species, is unlikely to comprise the whole or a part of, or be necessary for the maintenance of a state listed PEC or the Commonwealth listed TEC and is not likely to comprise significant habitat for any fauna species. Therefore, the vegetation in the application area is not likely to comprise a high level of biodiversity.

The national objectives and targets for biodiversity conservation in Australia has a target to prevent clearance of ecological communities with an extent below 30 per cent of that present pre-1750, below which species loss appears to accelerate exponentially at an ecosystem level (Commonwealth of Australia, 2001). The Swan Coastal Plain IBRA bioregion retains approximately 32 per cent of the pre-European extent, and the mapped Swan Coastal Plain vegetation Quindalup complex retains approximately 60.5 per cent (approximately 33,012 hectares), of the pre-European extent within the bioregion (Government of Western Australia, 2019). Considering this, the extent of native vegetation in the local area (approximately 87 per cent) and that the application area does not comprise a high level of biodiversity, the vegetation within the application area is not considered significant as a remnant of native vegetation in an area that has been extensively cleared.

According to the available biological databases, no wetlands or watercourses have been mapped within the application area. the nearest wetland (lake) is located approximately 430 metres northwest from the application area. Given the extent of the vegetation proposed to be cleared and the distance to this lake, the proposed clearing is not likely to impact on vegetation growing in association with a wetland or watercourse.

Rotttnest 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, and therefore, may be at variance with clearing principle (h). The implementation of weed management measures will assist in reducing impacts to adjacent vegetation and the Nature Reserve.

Noting the extent of the proposed clearing and the condition of the vegetation within the application area, the proposed clearing is not likely to exacerbate or contribute to further land degradation, deteriorate the quality of ground water, cause or exacerbate flooding than that which is currently present.

Given the above, the proposed clearing may be at variance with principle (h) and is not likely to be at variance with any other 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 23 January 2020 with a 14 day submission period. No public submissions have been received in relation to this application.

5. References

- Commonwealth of Australia (2001) National Objectives and Targets for Biodiversity Conservation 2001-2005, Canberra.
- Focussed Vision Consulting Pty Ltd. (2018). Spring flora and vegetation assessment – Bickley and Garden Lake. Flora survey in relation to clearing permit application CPS 8778/1. DWER Ref: A1869198.
- Government of Western Australia. (2019). 2018 South West Vegetation Complex Statistics. Current as of March 2019. WA Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, Perth, <https://catalogue.data.wa.gov.au/dataset/dbca>.
- Hedde, 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.
- Keighery, B.J. (1994) Bushland Plant Survey: A Guide to Plant Community Survey for the Community. Wildflower Society of WA (Inc). Nedlands, Western Australia.
- Rottneest Island Authority (RIA). (2019). Application form and supporting information in relation to clearing permit application 8778/1. DWER Ref: A1856096.
- 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.

GIS databases:

NatureMap (conservation significant fauna)
Soils of WA
Beard vegetation associations
Managed Tenure
Environmentally Sensitive Areas
TPFL Data January 2020
WAHerb Data January 2020
Aboriginal Sites Register
IBRA Vegetation WA
WA TECPEC