

7 December 2023

Native Vegetation Clearing Branch
Department of Water and Environmental Regulation
Locked Bag 10
JOONDALUP DC WA 6919

Dear Sir / Madam,

METRONET STAGE 1: YANCHEP RAIL EXTENSION PIPIDINNY ROAD WIDENING NATIVE VEGETATION CLEARING PERMIT AMENDMENT (CPS 9092/1)

1. Background

The Yanchep Rail Extension (YRE) project forms part of METRONET, a State government program of projects to increase the size of Perth's railway network. The project aims to support the planning of integrated station precincts and the growth of the Perth metropolitan region. The YRE project is an extension to the Northern Suburbs Railway (also known as the Joondalup line) to support existing communities with improved transport connections and create new communities through integrated station precincts. The YRE project includes 14.5 km of railway beyond the existing Butler Station, new stations at Alkimos, Eglinton and Yanchep, and associated infrastructure. NEWest Alliance (NEWest) has been appointed by the Public Transport Authority (PTA) as the head contractor for the YRE project.

The scope of this Native Vegetation Clearing Permit (NVCP) amendment involves the clearing of vegetation at Pipidinny Road to facilitate:

- Road widening to facilitate traffic turning into Eglinton station; and
- the construction of batters to ensure road safety requirements are met.

The additional area required for this amendment is due to design changes to accommodate the steeper than anticipated terrain in this section of the road immediately north of the existing road reserve.

This amendment will also be used to update the body corporate details for NEWest, following a change in ownership of one the joint venture partners (refer to Part 3 of **Attachment 3**).

This amendment application will support the operation of the YRE project, however it is separate to the proposal (i.e. YRE Part 1 – Butler to Eglinton section) assessed by the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) and approved under Ministerial Statement 1100.

The PTA commissioned GHD to undertake additional biological surveys in July 2020 for YRE Part 1 (provided as part of the original CPS application), which included a survey of the Pipidinny Road widening and service relocation footprint. NEWest commissioned Natural Area Consulting Management Services (NACMS) to undertake a vegetation survey in October 2020 to close a gap in the original survey data along the Pipidinny Road reserve (provided as part of the original CPS application). Approximately 0.03231 ha is expected to be disturbed and has been surveyed by

appropriately qualified personnel. Although vegetation clearing as part of this scope of works has been minimised where possible, native vegetation, generally in a degraded condition, is required to be cleared.

This letter provides a summary of the relevant background information associated with the attached application (**Attachment 1** – C4 application form) for an NVCP amendment.

2. Native Vegetation

The proposed road widening and batter construction at Pipidinny Road will require clearing of native vegetation. The area of native vegetation identified to be cleared under this scope of works totals 0.03231 ha. This is also the total disturbance footprint (**Figure 1**).

A description of the native vegetation at the proposed clearing area at Pipidinny Road is provided below based on the biological surveys conducted for the disturbance area (GHD, 2020; NACMS, 2020). The digital survey information has previously been provided in accordance with the EPA's *Instructions for the preparation of data packages for the Index of Biodiversity Surveys for Assessments (IBSA)*.

The survey recorded the following three vegetation types (as well as previously cleared areas) within the proposed disturbance area at Pipidinny Road (**Figure 2**):

- *Acacia saligna* and *Xanthorrhoea preissii* tall shrubland (0.02006 ha);
- *Banksia attenuata* and *B. menziesii* low woodland (0.01083 ha); and
- *Banksia sessilis* and *Spyridium globulosum* tall shrubland (0.00142 ha).

The vegetation condition within the proposed clearing area ranges from Degraded to Good (**Figure 3**). No Declared Plants listed under the *Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act 2007* (BAM Act), or Weeds of National Significance (WoNS) were identified in the proposed clearing area. The purpose of clearing, and the proposed impacts to vegetation type and condition, and Priority Ecological Communities (PEC) are summarised in **Table 1**.

Table 1: Summary of Proposed Disturbance Area, Purpose of Clearing and Vegetation Type and Condition at Pipidinny Road

Purpose of Clearing	Vegetation Type			Vegetation Condition	PEC	
	Type	Code	Area (ha)		Type	Area (ha)
Road widening, batter construction.	<i>Acacia saligna</i> and <i>Xanthorrhoea preissii</i> tall shrubland	VT01	0.02006	Degraded	Northern Spearwood shrublands and woodlands (FCT 24)	0.1918
	<i>Banksia attenuata</i> and <i>B. menziesii</i> low woodland	VT04	0.01003	Degraded		
	<i>Banksia attenuata</i> and <i>B. menziesii</i> low woodland	VT04	0.008	Good		
	<i>Banksia sessilis</i> and <i>Spyridium globulosum</i> tall shrubland	VT03	0.00142	Degraded		
	Total Native Vegetation Clearing Area (ha)		0.03231		Total PEC Clearing Area (ha)	0.00142

The proposed clearing area contains 0.00142 ha of Northern Spearwood shrublands and woodlands (FCT 24) - Priority 3 PEC (mapped as *Banksia sessilis* and *Spyridium globulosum* tall shrubland) (**Figure 4**). There are no vegetation communities that are representative of a Threatened Ecological Community (TEC) within the proposed clearing area.

3. Threatened Fauna and Fauna Habitats

A Black Cockatoo habitat assessment was undertaken concurrently with the vegetation and significant flora survey for the YRE Part 1 Additional Areas 2 (GHD, 2020), including the Pipidinny Road widening footprint.

The mixed *Banksia* woodlands, and *Banksia sessilis* shrublands within the proposed clearing area provide high value foraging habitat in the form of seeds, nectar and invertebrates. These two habitat types support high densities of a variety of proteaceae species that are well known to be primary or important foraging plant species. An area of 0.01225 ha has been mapped as high value habitat for Carnaby's Black Cockatoo (*Calyptorhynchus latirostris*) (currently listed as 'Endangered' under the EPBC Act). The remaining vegetation in the disturbance area (*Acacia saligna* and *Xanthorrhoea preissii* tall shrubland) is mapped as low value habitat (0.02006 ha) (**Table 2** and **Figure 5**). No suitable breeding or roosting habitat has been identified within the proposed clearing area.

Table 2: Black Cockatoo Foraging Habitat Area

Foraging Habitat	Area Impacted (ha)
High value	0.01225
Low value	0.02006
Total	0.03231

No other fauna species of conservation significance was recorded during the survey.

4. Environmental Management

As part of the initial planning for road widening works at Pipidinny Road, a desktop review of potential locations was undertaken, and the location was selected to avoid the clearing of high-quality native vegetation, minimise the amount of vegetation to be cleared and reduce the impact of clearing on environmental values (e.g. high value Black Cockatoo habitat). The primary clearing method undertaken will be mechanical and the extent of clearing will be limited to that required for construction and final operation. The additional area required for this amendment is due to design changes to accommodate the steeper than anticipated terrain in the section in question.

NEWest will also ensure the following management measures are implemented to minimise impacts to environmental values during the ground disturbance and clearing works:

- Survey personnel will flag/demarcate clearing areas prior to clearing works commencing.
- NEWest will issue internal ground disturbance permits prior to any clearing works.
- Pre-start meeting to be held with machinery operators to highlight the requirements to stay within approved clearing areas and minimise impacts to vegetation.
- All clearing and survey works will be supervised by environmental personnel.

1.1 Flora, Vegetation and Ecological Communities

To manage the potential impacts of clearing on flora, vegetation and ecological communities (e.g. PEC identified within the proposed clearing area), the following strategies have been developed:

To avoid native vegetation clearing:

- During the initial planning phase for the road widening, high quality vegetation areas were avoided and alternatives sought.
 - This has meant that through this proposed amendment, 92% of the additional vegetation required to be disturbed is of a degraded nature.

To minimise native vegetation clearing:

- Existing cleared areas will be utilised for construction access; and
- The PTA and NEWest have further reduced the native vegetation clearing footprint during the detailed design phase, where practicable, to minimise the overall clearing impacts associated with the scope of works under this NVCP amendment application.

1.2 Fauna

To minimise the potential impacts to clearing on fauna and fauna habitat, the following management measures will be implemented during native vegetation clearing:

- Existing cleared areas will be used for laydown and construction access to avoid additional clearing;
- The clearing footprint has been minimised to a relatively small amount of native vegetation clearing required to implement the scope;
- NEWest will minimise the clearing of potential Black Cockatoo foraging habitat identified by the survey, where practicable; and
- An appropriately licenced and qualified fauna spotter will be present to relocate fauna.

1.3 Weeds and Diseases

There are no declared weed/WoNS species in the surveyed area, however weed management protocols will be implemented to control any weed species within the proposed clearing areas during construction.

The clearing area is underlain by the Spearwood dunes, and Tamala limestone. The soils are shallow calcareous loams with stony calcrete rises. Such soils have a relatively high pH, which is known to be hostile to *Phytophthora cinnamomi* (DPaW, 2015), and therefore the risk of disease associated with *P. cinnamomi* occurring on these soil types is considered very low. Although a low risk, appropriate hygiene protocols will be implemented to ensure the risk of spreading dieback is carefully managed and minimised.

1.4 Rehabilitation and Offsets

Revegetation opportunities will be investigated for select areas, such as the temporary road/service diversions disturbance areas associated with the scope of works under the existing NVCP application. The revegetation opportunities will be confirmed in discussion with the City of Wanneroo and relevant asset owners and will be in accordance with their specifications. NEWest will implement revegetation/landscaping activities where these opportunities are practical, tie into existing landscaping works and meet operational road safety and maintenance requirements.

As part of this amendment application to CPS 9092/1, NEWest acknowledges a contribution to the Offset Fund managed by DWER prior to clearing is likely required. Documentary evidence will be supplied to DWER as proof of payment.

Given the above proposed mitigation measures are implemented, the proposed clearing (0.03231 ha) is not expected to result in significant impacts to flora, vegetation, ecological communities, fauna and fauna habitats.

5. EPBC Referral

The proposed clearing activities covered in the existing NVCP (CPS 9092/1) were not referred to the Commonwealth Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment (DAWE) as the action was deemed not to have a significant impact on a matter protected under the EPBC Act.

This application will not be requested to be assessed under the bilateral agreement or an accredited assessment.

6. Native Vegetation Clearing Permit

As per the attached *Application to amend a clearing permit Form C4* (**Attachment 1**), NEWest seeks permission to clear up to 0.03231 ha of native vegetation located at Pipidinny Road (**Figure 1**). The assessment of the proposed clearing against the 10 Clearing Principles is provided in **Attachment 2**.

7. Certificates of Title and Landowners Authority

The YRE project proponent, the PTA, does not currently own the parcel of land covered by this NVCP amendment application. All proposed clearing will be within Lot 9017 on Plan 424913, which is currently managed by DevWA as part of the Allara Estate development. DevWA has provided written authorisation (**Attachment 3**) for NEWest to undertake the proposed clearing within the portions of the land mentioned above by this amendment application.

8. Clearing Records to Date

Under CPS 9092/1, NEWest has cleared 0.40037 ha of native vegetation. This was managed via an internal clearing permit. No exceedances of the boundaries of CPS 9092/1 have occurred. Refer to Part 7 within **Attachment 1** for records of the clearing activities, including:

- Clearing data
- Internal clearing permit
- Pre- and post-clearing inspections
- Plant and equipment clean down declaration.

This *Application to amend a clearing permit Form C4* is enclosed (**Attachment 1**) for your consideration. Should you require any further information in regards to the above, please contact [REDACTED], Senior Environmental Advisor, on [REDACTED] in the first instance.

Yours faithfully

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
Environment & Sustainability Manager
NEWest Alliance

Encl:

Figures

Figure 1:	Proposed Disturbance Footprint
Figure 2:	Vegetation Types
Figure 3:	Vegetation Conditions
Figure 4:	Priority Ecological Community
Figure 5:	Black Cockatoo High Value Foraging Habitat

Attachments

Attachment 1:	Clearing Permit Amendment Application (Form C4)
Attachment 2:	10 Clearing Principles Assessment – Pipidinny Road
Attachment 3:	Allara Estate Letter of Consent

References

GHD 2020. Public Transport Authority, Yanchep Rail Extension Part 1 Biological Assessment of Additional Areas 2, GHD, September 2020.

Natural Area Consulting Management Services (NACMS) 2020. Close Gap in Vegetation Survey Mapping Along Northern Pipidinny Road Verge, NACMS, October 2020.