



CLEARING PERMIT

Granted under section 51E of the Environmental Protection Act 1986

Purpose Permit number:	CPS 9194/1
Permit Holder:	Opticomm Pty Ltd
Duration of Permit:	From 7 June 2021 to 7 June 2027

The permit holder is authorised to clear native vegetation subject to the following conditions of this permit.

PART I – CLEARING AUTHORISED

1. Clearing authorised (purpose)

The permit holder is authorised to clear native vegetation for the purpose of the purpose of installing new cables for a telecommunications cabinet.

2. Land on which clearing is to be done

Cheriton Road Reserve (PIN 11726125), Gingin

3. Clearing authorised

The permit holder must not clear more than 0.034 hectares of native vegetation within the area cross-hatched yellow in Figure 1 of Schedule 1.

4. Period during which clearing is authorised

The permit holder must not clear any native vegetation after 7 June 2026.

PART II – MANAGEMENT CONDITIONS

5. Avoid, minimise, and reduce impacts and extent of clearing

In determining the native vegetation authorised to be cleared under this permit, the permit holder must apply the following principles, set out in descending 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.

6. Weed and dieback management

When undertaking any clearing authorised under this permit, the permit holder must take the following measures to minimise the risk of 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.

7. Clearing not authorised

- (a) Prior to undertaking any clearing authorised within the areas cross-hatched yellow on Figure 1 of Schedule 1, the permit holder must provide the Chief Executive Officer (*CEO*) with the coordinates of all standing native trees 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 permit holder shall ensure that no clearing of any standing native trees identified under condition 7(a) occurs.

8. Revegetation (temporary works)

The permit holder must *revegetate* areas cleared for *temporary works* within six months of the area no longer being required for the purpose for which it was cleared, unless the *CEO*, in writing, advises the permit holder to the contrary.

PART III - RECORD KEEPING AND REPORTING

9. Records that must be kept

The permit holder must maintain records relating to the listed relevant matters in accordance with the specifications detailed in Table 1.

Table 1: Records that must be kept

No.	Relevant matter	Specifications
1.	In relation to the authorised clearing activities generally	<ol style="list-style-type: none">(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;(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 5;(e) actions taken to minimise the risk of the introduction and spread of weeds and dieback in accordance with condition 6;(f) Photographs of the application area immediately

No.	Relevant matter	Specifications
		<p>prior to and after the clearing occurred, to demonstrate that all standing native trees were retained in accordance with condition 7; and</p> <p>(g) actions taken to <i>revegetate</i> areas cleared for temporary works in accordance with condition 8.</p>

10. Reporting

The permit holder must provide to the *CEO* the records required under condition 9 of this permit when requested by the *CEO*.

DEFINITIONS

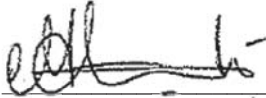
In this permit, the terms in Table 2 have the meanings defined.

Table 2: Definitions

Term	Definition
CEO	Chief Executive Officer of the department responsible for the administration of the clearing provisions under the <i>Environmental Protection Act 1986</i> .
Clearing	has the meaning given under section 3(1) of the EP Act.
Condition	a condition to which this clearing permit is subject under section 51H of the EP Act.
Fill	means material used to increase the ground level, or to fill a depression.
Dieback	means the effect of <i>Phytophthora</i> species on native vegetation.
Department	means the department established under section 35 of the <i>Public Sector Management Act 1994</i> (WA) and designated as responsible for the administration of the EP Act, which includes Part V Division 3.
EP Act	<i>Environmental Protection Act 1986</i> (WA)
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.
Native vegetation	has the meaning given under section 3(1) and section 51A of the EP Act.
Revegetate	means the re-establishment of a cover of local provenance native vegetation in an area using methods such as natural regeneration, direct seeding and/or planting, so that the species composition, structure and density is similar to pre-clearing vegetation types in that area.
Temporary works	means access tracks, spoil areas, side tracks, site offices, storage areas, laydown areas, extraction sites, camps, project surveys, pre-construction activities, and similar works associated with a project activity that are temporary in nature.
Weeds	means any plant – <p>(a) that is a declared pest under section 22 of the <i>Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act 2007</i>; or</p>

Term	Definition
	(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.

END OF CONDITIONS



Meenu Vitarana

A/Manager

NATIVE VEGETATION REGULATION

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

14 May 2021

Schedule 1

The boundary of the area authorised to be cleared is shown in the map below (Figure 1).



Figure 1: Map of the boundary of the area within which clearing may occur



Clearing Permit Decision Report

1 Application details and outcome

1.1. Permit application details

Permit number:	CPS 9194/1
Permit type:	Purpose permit
Applicant name:	Opticomm Pty Ltd
Application received:	22 January 2021
Application area:	0.034 hectares
Purpose of clearing:	Installation of cables for a telecommunications cabinet.
Method of clearing:	Mechanical
Property:	Cheriton Road Reserve (PIN 11726125)
Location (LGA area/s):	Shire of Gingin
Localities (suburb/s):	Gingin

1.2. Description of clearing activities

The vegetation proposed to be cleared comprises two discrete parcels of vegetation within the western extent of Cheriton Road Reserve, on either side of the junction with McHavloe Drive (see Figure 1, Section 1.5). The proposed clearing is for the purpose of installing new cables for an existing telecommunications cabinet. Installation of cables will be completed through sub-surface directional drilling. The application area extends approximately 25 metres by 9 metres north of McHavloe Drive and approximately 14 metres by 9 metres to the south of McHavloe Drive. The vegetation to the north of McHavloe Drive is a part of an approximately 260 strip of native vegetation within the Cheriton Road reserve.

1.3. Decision on application

Decision:	Granted
Decision date:	14 May 2021
Decision area:	0.034 hectares of native vegetation as depicted in Section 1.5, below.

1.4. Reasons for decision

This clearing permit application was submitted, accepted, assessed and determined in accordance with sections 51E and 51O of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* (EP Act). The Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER) advertised the application for 14 days and no submissions were received.

In making this decision, the Delegated Officer had regard for the site characteristics (see Appendix A), relevant datasets (see Appendix E.1), the clearing principles set out in Schedule 5 of the EP Act (see Appendix B), relevant planning instruments and any other matters considered relevant to the assessment (see Section 3).

The assessment identified that the proposed clearing may result in the potential introduction and spread of weeds and dieback into adjacent vegetation, which could impact on the quality of the adjacent vegetation and its habitat values.

After consideration of the available information, as well as the applicant's minimisation and mitigation measures (see Section 3.1), the Delegated Officer determined the proposed clearing is not likely to have long-term adverse impacts on wetlands, or flora, fauna or communities of conservation significance. The proposed clearing can be managed to a degree that is not likely to lead to an unacceptable risk to the environment. The applicant has suitably demonstrated avoidance and minimisation measures.

The Delegated Officer decided to grant a clearing permit subject to conditions to:

- avoid, minimise to reduce the impacts and extent of clearing
- take hygiene steps to minimise the risk of the introduction and spread of weeds and dieback
- retain all standing native trees within the application area
- revegetate areas cleared for temporary works.

1.5. Site map

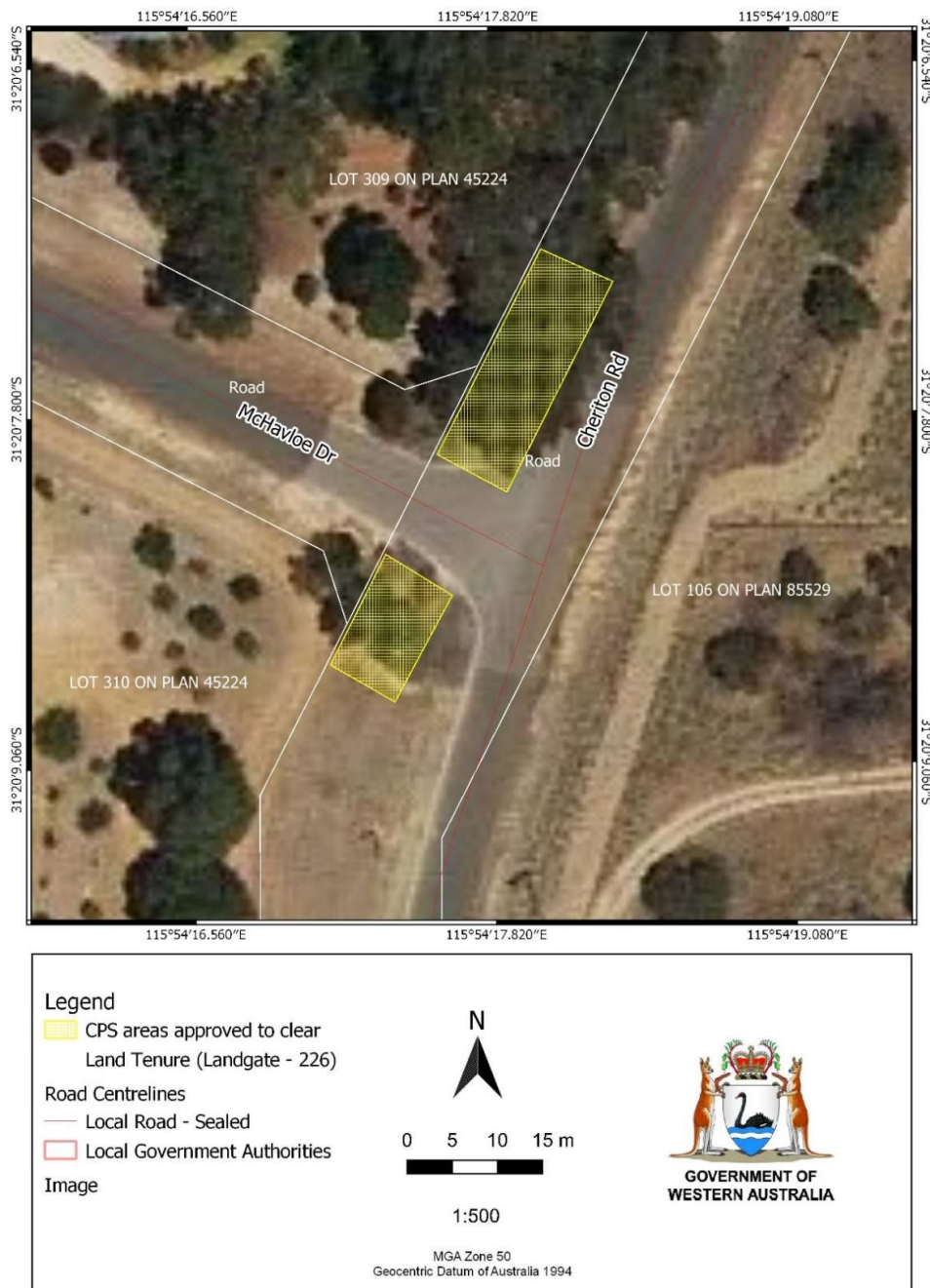


Figure 1 - Map of the application area. The areas crosshatched yellow indicates the areas authorised to be cleared under the granted clearing permit.

2 Legislative context

The clearing of native vegetation in Western Australia is regulated under the EP Act and the *Environmental Protection (Clearing of Native Vegetation) Regulations 2004* (Clearing Regulations).

In addition to the matters considered in accordance with section 51O of the EP Act (see Section 1.4), the Delegated Officer has also had regard to the objects and principles under section 4A of the EP Act, particularly:

- the precautionary principle
- the principle of intergenerational equity
- the principle of the conservation of biological diversity and ecological integrity.

Other legislation of relevance for this assessment include:

- *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* (WA) (BC Act)
- *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth) (EPBC Act).

The key guidance documents which inform this assessment are:

- *A guide to the assessment of applications to clear native vegetation* (DER, December 2013)
- *Procedure: Native vegetation clearing permits* (DWER, October 2019).

3 Detailed assessment of application

3.1. Avoidance and mitigation measures

The Delegated Officer was satisfied that the applicant has made a reasonable effort to avoid and minimise potential impacts of the proposed clearing on environmental values. The scope of works will use directional drilling for cable installation rather than trenching (Opticomm Pty Ltd, 2021c). This will reduce the clearing requirements and limit root disturbance. The scope of work proposes to remove only understorey vegetation at the directional drill pad site and the existing telecommunications cabinet locations if required (see Figure 2). The directional drill will bore from the drill pad location to the south of McHavloe Drive, under the road, and will terminate near the existing telecommunications cabinet shown in Figure 2 below. Given the use of the directional drill to install the cables, all standing native trees within the application area will be retained (Opticomm Pty Ltd, 2021b).



Figure 2 - The proposed directional drill pad location within the application area, located south of McHavloe Drive (left). The location of where the sub-surface directional drill will terminate at the orange conduit adjacent to the existing telecommunications cabinet (right) (Opticomm Pty Ltd, 2021b)

3.2. Assessment of impacts on environmental values

In assessing the application, the Delegated Officer has had regard for the site characteristics (see Appendix A) and the extent to which the impacts of the proposed clearing present a risk to biological, conservation, or land and water resource values. The assessment identified that the proposed clearing:

- may result in the potential introduction and spread of weeds and dieback into adjacent vegetation, which could impact on the quality of the vegetation and its habitat values

- is not likely to result in loss of habitat significant for fauna species, including threatened *Calyptorhynchus banksii naso* (forest red-tailed black cockatoo; vulnerable) and *Calyptorhynchus latirostris* (Carnaby's cockatoo; endangered). All standing native trees within the application area will be retained and only understorey vegetation is proposed to be cleared if required.

The consideration of these impacts, and the extent to which they can be managed through conditions applied in line with sections 51H and 51I of the EP Act, is set out below.

3.2.1. Biological values (Fauna) - Clearing Principles (b)

Assessment

According to available databases, nine threatened, two Priority 3, four Priority 4, one specially protected species (conservation dependent), one extinct and three specially protected (migratory) fauna have been recorded within the local area. None of these records occur over the application area. Of these species, forest red-tailed black cockatoo and Carnaby's cockatoo, collectively known as black cockatoos, have been identified as having the potential to occur within the application area.

Carnaby's cockatoo and Baudin's cockatoo are listed as endangered and forest red-tailed black cockatoo are listed as vulnerable under the Commonwealth EPBC Act. Carnaby's cockatoo is known from 146 records within the local area, with the nearest recorded approximately 0.8 kilometres from the application area. Forest red-tailed black cockatoo is known from one record within the local area, located approximately 1.4 kilometres from the application area. White-tailed black cockatoos have been recorded 13 times from within the local area. This may indicate the presence of Carnaby's cockatoo or Baudin's cockatoo. The vegetation within the application area is located outside the known distribution range for Baudin's cockatoo (Commonwealth of Australia, 2012).

Black cockatoos 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 indicate that the vegetation within the application area is not likely to comprise hollows or significant breeding habitat for black cockatoos (Appendix D). One confirmed roost site has been recorded within the local area, approximately 1.4 kilometres from the application area. The application area may provide suitable habitat for roosting by black cockatoo. Noting the small extent of the application area, the vegetation within the application area is not likely to comprise significant roost habitat. Given the proposed cable installation primarily comprises directional drilling rather than trenching, all standing native trees within the application area will be retained. The proposed clearing is not likely to significantly impact black cockatoo roosting or breeding habitat.

Black cockatoos prefer foraging habitat that includes jarrah and marri woodlands and forest heathland and woodland dominated by proteaceous species such as *Banksia* sp., *Hakea* sp. and *Grevillea* sp. (Commonwealth of Australia, 2012). Information provided by the applicant indicates that the vegetation within the application area primarily comprises a stand of *Corymbia calophylla* (marri), a sparse understorey comprising scattered native shrubs, some of which may have been planted, and weed species (Appendix D). Based on photographs provided by the applicant, proteaceous species are absent from the application area. The vegetation within the application area ranges from degraded to very degraded (Keighery, 1994) condition. Given the vegetation within the application area comprises marri, it may provide suitable foraging habitat for black cockatoos. However, noting the absence of proteaceous species and understorey vegetation, and the small extent of clearing proposed, the vegetation within the application area is not likely to comprise significant habitat for black cockatoos. All standing native trees within the application area will be retained and areas cleared for temporary works will be revegetated. The proposed clearing is not likely to significantly impact black cockatoo foraging habitat.

The vegetation within the application area may provide suitable habitat for other conservation significant fauna in the local area (Appendix A). Given the extent of vegetation proposed to be cleared, the degraded vegetation condition and the minimal understorey vegetation, the vegetation within the application area is not likely to comprise significant habitat for conservation significant fauna, and individuals are likely to be transient within the landscape.

Conclusion

For the reasons set out above, it is considered that the impacts of the proposed clearing on fauna habitat within and adjacent to the application area can be managed by taking steps to minimise the risk of the introduction and spread of weeds, and by retaining all standing native trees.

Conditions

To address the above impacts, the following management measures will be required as conditions on the clearing permit:

- management actions to minimise the risk of the introduction or spread of dieback disease and weeds

- retention of all standing native trees to retain potential fauna habitat in the road reserve
- revegetate areas cleared for temporary works

3.3. Relevant planning instruments and other matters

The Shire of Gingin has provided authority to access the land to undertake the proposed clearing under CPS 9194/1 (Opticomm Pty Ltd, 2021d).

No known Aboriginal sites of significance have been mapped within the application area. It is the permit holder's responsibility to comply with the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972 (WA)* and ensure that no Aboriginal Sites of Significance are damaged through the clearing process.

End

Appendix A. Site characteristics

A.1. Site characteristics

Characteristic	Details																								
Local context	The area proposed to be cleared primarily forms part of a 260 metre linear tract of native vegetation in the intensive land use zone of Western Australia. It is located within the Wheatbelt region of Western Australia, surrounded by land that is largely used for agricultural purposes. Spatial data indicate the local area (10-kilometre radius from the centre of the area proposed to be cleared) retains approximately 27.6 per cent of the original native vegetation cover.																								
Ecological linkage	The application area does not intersect any mapped ecological linkages or Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs). The nearest mapped ESA is located approximately 0.6 kilometres east from the application area, associated with a conservation category wetland (palusplain) along the Gingin Brook. The vegetation within the application area contributes to the ecological linkage within the road reserve.																								
Conservation areas	The application area is not located within any mapped conservation areas. The nearest mapped conservation area is an unmanaged reserve (reserve number 26783) associated with a school site, located approximately one kilometre south east from the application area. Boonanarring Nature Reserve and a nature reserve associated with Mooliabeenee Road are situated approximately 8.3 kilometres north and 10 kilometres east from the application area, respectively																								
Vegetation description	Photographs supplied by the applicant indicate the vegetation within the proposed clearing area consists of <i>Corymbia calophylla</i> (marri), with a sparse understorey comprising scattered native shrubs and herbaceous species, some of which appear to be planted vegetation, and weed species. Representative photographs of the application area are available from Appendix D. This is only partially consistent with the mapped Gingin vegetation complex, which is described as open woodland of <i>Corymbia calophylla</i> (marri) with second storey of <i>Banksia grandis</i> (bull banksia) and <i>Nuytsia floribunda</i> . Fringing woodland of <i>Eucalyptus rudis</i> (flooded gum) - <i>Melaleuca raphiophylla</i> (swamp paperbark) along streams (Hedde, 1980). The mapped vegetation type retains approximately 11.6 per cent of the original extent (Government of Western Australia, 2019).																								
Vegetation condition	Photographs supplied by the applicant indicate the vegetation within the proposed clearing area is in Degraded (Keighery, 1994) condition, described as "basic vegetation structure severely impacted by disturbance. Scope for regeneration but not to a state approaching good condition without intensive management. For example, disturbance to vegetation structure caused by very frequent fires, the presence of very aggressive weeds, partial clearing, dieback and/or grazing". The full Keighery (1994) condition rating scale is provided in Appendix C. Representative photographs are available in Appendix D.																								
Soil description	The soil is mapped as Dandaragan Buccleugh Subsystem, gently undulating to undulating rises and hills. Red and brown deep sands (DPIRD, 2019).																								
Land degradation risk	Land degradation risk ratings for the soil type mapped over the application area are provided in the table below. <table border="1" data-bbox="415 1444 1430 1801"> <thead> <tr> <th>Risk categories</th> <th>Risk rating</th> <th>Dandaragan Buccleugh subsystem</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Wind erosion</td> <td>H2</td> <td>>70% of map unit has a high to extreme wind erosion risk</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Water erosion</td> <td>L1</td> <td><3% of map unit has a high to extreme water erosion risk</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Salinity</td> <td>L1</td> <td><3% of map unit has a moderate to high salinity risk or is presently saline</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Subsurface Acidification</td> <td>H2</td> <td>>70% of map unit has a high subsurface acidification risk or is presently acid</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Flood risk</td> <td>L2</td> <td>3-10% of the map unit has a moderate to high flood risk</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Waterlogging</td> <td>L2</td> <td>3-10% of map unit has a moderate to very high waterlogging risk</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Phosphorus export risk</td> <td>M1</td> <td>10-30% of map unit has a high to extreme phosphorus export risk</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Risk categories	Risk rating	Dandaragan Buccleugh subsystem	Wind erosion	H2	>70% of map unit has a high to extreme wind erosion risk	Water erosion	L1	<3% of map unit has a high to extreme water erosion risk	Salinity	L1	<3% of map unit has a moderate to high salinity risk or is presently saline	Subsurface Acidification	H2	>70% of map unit has a high subsurface acidification risk or is presently acid	Flood risk	L2	3-10% of the map unit has a moderate to high flood risk	Waterlogging	L2	3-10% of map unit has a moderate to very high waterlogging risk	Phosphorus export risk	M1	10-30% of map unit has a high to extreme phosphorus export risk
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Phosphorus export risk	M1	10-30% of map unit has a high to extreme phosphorus export risk																							
Waterbodies	The desktop assessment and aerial imagery indicated that no wetlands or watercourses intersect the application area. The nearest mapped wetlands include one conservation category (palusplain) and one multiple use (palusplain) wetland located approximately																								

Characteristic	Details
	0.8 kilometres and 0.4 kilometres east from the application area, respectively. These wetlands occur along the Gingin Brook, located approximately 0.6 kilometres east from the application area.
Hydrogeography	The application area intersects the Gingin Brook Catchment Area and Gingin Groundwater Area proclaimed under the <i>Rights in Water and Irrigation Act 1914</i> . No public drinking water source areas are located within or adjacent to the application area. Based on topography and land degradation risk mapping, the soils within the application area have a low risk of flooding and salinity.
Flora	<p>Eighteen flora taxa of conservation significance have been recorded within the local area, comprising two Threatened, one Priority 1, four Priority 2, four Priority 3 and seven Priority 4 taxa (Western Australian Herbarium, 1998-). Of these, only one flora taxa, <i>Leucopogon squarrosus subsp. trigynus</i> (Priority 2), occurs within the same soil and vegetation types as those mapped over the application area. Two records of <i>Leucopogon squarrosus subsp. trigynus</i> (Priority 2) occur within one kilometre of the application area. The nearest record is situated approximately 0.5 kilometres from the application area. Three records of this species are known from the local area, recorded between 1932 and 1965 (Western Australian Herbarium, 1998-).</p> <p>Two Threatened flora taxa have been recorded within the local area including <i>Ptychosema pusillum</i> (vulnerable) and <i>Diuris drummondii</i> (vulnerable). <i>Diuris drummondii</i> is known from two records in the local area from 2006, and within different soil and vegetation types to those that occur over the application area. This species typically grows in association with low-lying depressions and swamps (Western Australian Herbarium, 1998-). Based on photographs provided by the applicant and aerial imagery, these habitat types are absent from the application area. <i>Ptychosema pusillum</i> is known from two records in the local area from 1971 from different vegetation types to those in the application area.</p>
Ecological communities	<p>Four conservation significant ecological communities have been recorded within the local area. The nearest is a mapped occurrence of 'Banksia Dominated Woodlands of the Swan Coastal Plain IBRA Region', located approximately 1.6 kilometres from the application area. This is a Priority 3 community, listed as endangered under the EPBC Act. This community is known from 520 records within the local area, covering an area of approximately 7,806 hectares. Other conservation significant ecological communities recorded within the local area include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Forests and woodlands of deep seasonal wetlands of the Swan Coastal Plain (floristic community type 15 as originally described in Gibson et al. (1994)' (Vulnerable) • 'Banksia woodland of the Gingin area restricted to soils dominated by yellow to orange sand' (Priority 2) • 'Herb rich saline shrublands in clay pans (floristic community type 7 as originally described in Gibson et al. (1994) (Vulnerable). <p>Photographs provided by the applicant indicate the vegetation within the application area is not likely to represent these ecological communities.</p>
Fauna	<p>According to available databases, eight birds, eight mammals, one reptile, two invertebrates and one fish of conservation significance have been recorded within ten kilometres of the application area. These comprise two Priority 3, four Priority 4, one specially protected species (conservation dependent), one extinct, nine threatened and three specially protected (migratory) fauna. None of these records intersect the application area. Seven of the conservation significant fauna species recorded within the local area are typically associated with marine and aquatic environments. According to available datasets, aerial imagery and photographs, these habitats are absent from the application area.</p> <p>The application area may provide suitable habitat for <i>Calyptorhynchus banksii naso</i> (forest red-tailed black cockatoo; vulnerable) and <i>Calyptorhynchus latirostris</i> (Carnaby's cockatoo; endangered). One record of forest red-tailed black cockatoo and 146 records of Carnaby's cockatoo are known from within 10 kilometres of the application. White-tailed black cockatoos have been recorded 13 times within the local area. This may indicate the presence of Carnaby's cockatoo or <i>Calyptorhynchus baudinii</i> (Baudin's cockatoo; endangered). However, the vegetation within the application area is located outside the known distribution range for Baudin's cockatoo (Commonwealth of Australia, 2012).</p>

Characteristic	Details
	<i>Neelaps calonotos</i> (black-striped snake; Priority 3), <i>Pseudomys shortridgei</i> (heath mouse; vulnerable), <i>Phascogale tapoatafa wambenger</i> (South-western brush-tailed phascogale; specially protected conservation dependent) and <i>Idiosoma sigillatum</i> (Swan Coastal Plain shield-backed trapdoor spider; Priority 3) have also been recorded within the local area.

A.2. Vegetation extent

	Pre-European extent (ha)	Current extent (ha)	Extent remaining (%)	Current extent in all DBCA managed land (ha)	Current proportion (%) of pre-European extent in all DBCA managed land
IBRA bioregion*					
Swan Coastal Plain	1,501,221.93	579,813.47	38.62	222,916.97	14.85
Vegetation complex**					
Gingin Complex (66)	7,113.48	822.79	11.6	268.74	3.74
Local area					
10km radius	31,481.3	8,685.3	27.6	-	-

*Government of Western Australia (2019a)

**Government of Western Australia (2019b)

Appendix B. Assessment against the clearing principles

Assessment against the clearing principles	Variance level	Is further consideration required?
Environmental value: biological values		
<p>Principle (a): "Native vegetation should not be cleared if it comprises a high level of biodiversity."</p> <p>Assessment: The area proposed to be cleared does not contain locally or regionally significant flora, fauna, habitats, assemblages of plants. Given the above, the vegetation within the application area is not likely to comprise a high level of biodiversity.</p> <p>Noting the habitat values including soil and vegetation types, the degraded to completely degraded vegetation condition (Keighery, 1994), and the small extent of clearing proposed, and the distribution of flora records, the vegetation within the application area is not likely to comprise conservation significant flora or their habitats.</p> <p>Given the small patch size and absence of banksia species and native understorey, vegetation within the application area does not meet the key diagnostic characteristics set out in the approved conservation advice '<i>Banksia Dominated Woodlands of the Swan Coastal Plain IBRA Region</i>' ecological community (TSSC, 2016). The proposed clearing is not likely to significantly impact this or other conservation significant ecological communities recorded within the local area.</p> <p>The application area forms part of a linear tract of native vegetation that provides linkage and connectivity within the road reserve. Noting the small extent of clearing proposed, that standing native trees within the application area will be retained and areas cleared for temporary works will be revegetated, the proposed clearing is not likely to sever or significantly impact the linkage within the landscape. The proposed clearing has the potential to introduce weed and dieback into areas of remnant</p>	Not likely to be at variance	No

Assessment against the clearing principles	Variance level	Is further consideration required?
<p>native vegetation. Hygiene management conditions will minimise the risk of the introduction and spread of weeds and dieback.</p> <p>The vegetation within the application area may provide suitable habitat for conservation significant fauna, however noting the small extent of clearing proposed, the sparse native understorey present and the retention of standing native trees proposed, it is not likely to provide significant habitat. The proposed clearing is not likely to significantly impact habitat suitable for conservation significant fauna (see principle (b) and Section 3.2.1).</p>		
<p>Principle (b): <i>“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.”</i></p> <p>Assessment: The application area may provide suitable habitat for <i>Calyptorhynchus banksii naso</i> (forest red-tailed black cockatoo; vulnerable) and <i>Calyptorhynchus latirostris</i> (Carnaby’s cockatoo; endangered), known from one and 146 records within the local area. The proposed clearing is not likely to significantly impact habitat suitable for these species. The vegetation within the application area may provide suitable habitat for other conservation significant fauna recorded within the local area. However, noting the extent of the clearing proposed, the degraded vegetation condition and absence of native understorey, it is not likely to provide significant habitat and fauna are likely to be transient.</p> <p>The retention of all standing native trees within the application area will retain potential fauna habitat in the road reserve. Hygiene management conditions will minimise the risk of the introduction and spread of weeds and dieback to potential habitat values.</p>	Not likely to be at variance	Yes <i>Refer to Section 3.2.1, above.</i>
<p>Principle (c): <i>“Native vegetation should not be cleared if it includes, or is necessary for the continued existence of, threatened flora.”</i></p> <p>Assessment: The area proposed to be cleared is not likely to comprise habitat for flora species listed under the <i>Biodiversity and Conservation Act 2016</i>. Based on preferred habitat types, the degraded vegetation condition and historical nature of records, the vegetation within the application area is not likely to comprise significant habitat for threatened flora. The proposed clearing is not likely to significantly impact threatened flora individuals or populations within the local area. The vegetation within the application area is not likely to include or be necessary for the continued existence of threatened flora.</p>	Not likely to be at variance	No
<p>Principle (d): <i>“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.”</i></p> <p>Assessment: The area proposed to be cleared does not contain species that indicate a threatened ecological community. Noting the vegetation characteristics and the small extent of the application area, the proposed clearing is not likely to significantly impact conservation significant ecological communities within the local area.</p>	Not likely to be at variance	No
Environmental value: significant remnant vegetation and conservation areas		
<p>Principle (e): <i>“Native vegetation should not be cleared if it is significant as a remnant of native vegetation in an area that has been extensively cleared.”</i></p> <p>Assessment: The extent of the mapped vegetation type and native vegetation in the local area is inconsistent with the national objectives and targets for biodiversity conservation in Australia. The application area is mapped within the Gingin vegetation complex, of which approximately 11.6 per cent of the pre-European extent is remaining (Government of Western Australia, 2019). The vegetation within the application area partially resembles the extensively cleared Gingin vegetation complex. The local area retains approximately 27.6 per cent native vegetation cover.</p>	Not likely to be at variance	No

Assessment against the clearing principles	Variance level	Is further consideration required?
<p>Noting the local area and mapped vegetation type retains less than 30 per cent pre-European vegetation extent, the application area is considered to occur within an extensively cleared landscape. However, given the size of the proposed clearing of vegetation in degraded condition, that does not contain a high level of biodiversity, has low fauna habitat value and does not comprise conservation significant flora, fauna or ecological communities, the application area is not considered to be significant as a remnant of native vegetation in an extensively cleared landscape.</p>		
<p><u>Principle (h):</u> <i>“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></p> <p><u>Assessment:</u> Given the distance to the nearest conservation area, the proposed clearing is not likely to have an impact on the environmental values of conservation areas within the local area.</p>	Not likely to be at variance	No
Environmental value: land and water resources		
<p><u>Principle (f):</u> <i>“Native vegetation should not be cleared if it is growing in, or in association with, an environment associated with a watercourse or wetland.”</i></p> <p><u>Assessment:</u> No watercourses or wetlands are recorded within 0.4 kilometres from the application area. Photographs and aerial imagery indicate that there are no distinct hydrological features within the application area. The vegetation proposed to be cleared is not likely growing in, or in association with, an environment associated with a watercourse or wetland. The proposed clearing is not likely to impact hydrology or water quality.</p>	Not likely to be at variance	No
<p><u>Principle (g):</u> <i>“Native vegetation should not be cleared if the clearing of the vegetation is likely to cause appreciable land degradation.”</i></p> <p><u>Assessment:</u> The soils mapped over the application area susceptible to wind erosion and subsurface acidification. Noting the small extent and location of the clearing proposed, and the condition of the vegetation, the proposed clearing is not likely to cause appreciable land degradation.</p>	Not likely to be at variance	No
<p><u>Principle (i):</u> <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.”</i></p> <p><u>Assessment:</u> Given no watercourses, wetlands, public drinking water sources areas are recorded within 0.4 kilometres from the application area, the proposed clearing is not likely to impact surface or ground water quality.</p>	Not likely to be at variance	No
<p><u>Principle (j):</u> <i>“Native vegetation should not be cleared if the clearing of the vegetation is likely to cause, or exacerbate, the incidence or intensity of flooding.”</i></p> <p><u>Assessment:</u> The land degradation risks associated with the soils mapped over the application area indicate that the proposed clearing is not likely to contribute to an increased incidence or intensity of flooding. Given no watercourses or wetlands are recorded 0.4 kilometres from the application area, the proposed clearing is not likely to contribute to waterlogging. Therefore, the proposed clearing is not likely to cause, or exacerbate, the incidence or intensity of flooding.</p>	Not likely to be at variance	No

Appendix C. Vegetation condition rating scale

Vegetation condition is a rating given to a defined area of vegetation to categorise and rank disturbance related to human activities. The rating refers to the degree of change in the vegetation structure, density and species present in relation to undisturbed vegetation of the same type. The degree of disturbance impacts upon the vegetation's ability to regenerate. Disturbance at a site can be a cumulative effect from a number of interacting disturbance types.

Considering its location, the scale below was used to measure the condition of the vegetation proposed to be cleared. This scale has been extracted from Keighery (1994).

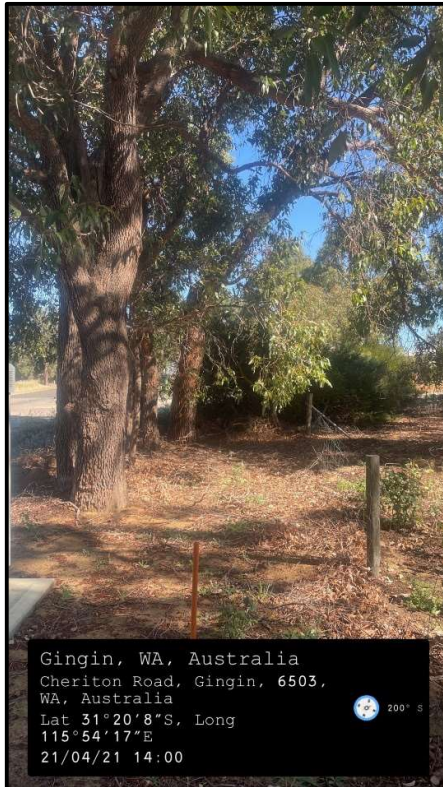
Measuring vegetation condition for the South West and Interzone Botanical Province (Keighery, 1994)

Condition	Description
Pristine	Pristine or nearly so, no obvious signs of disturbance.
Excellent	Vegetation structure intact, with disturbance affecting individual species; weeds are non-aggressive species.
Very good	Vegetation structure altered, with obvious signs of disturbance. For example, disturbance to vegetation structure caused by repeated fires, the presence of some more aggressive weeds, dieback, logging and/or grazing.
Good	Vegetation structure significantly altered by very obvious signs of multiple disturbances. Retains basic vegetation structure or ability to regenerate it. For example, disturbance to vegetation structure caused by very frequent fires, the presence of some very aggressive weeds at high density, partial clearing, dieback and/or grazing.
Degraded	Basic vegetation structure severely impacted by disturbance. Scope for regeneration but not to a state approaching good condition without intensive management. For example, disturbance to vegetation structure caused by very frequent fires, the presence of very aggressive weeds, partial clearing, dieback and/or grazing.
Completely degraded	The structure of the vegetation is no longer intact, and the area is completely or almost completely without native species. These areas are often described as 'parkland cleared' with the flora comprising weed or crop species with isolated native trees or shrubs.

Appendix D. Photographs of the vegetation provided by the applicant

Representative photographs of the application area are presented below (Opticomm Pty Ltd, 2021b).





Appendix E. Sources of information

E.1. GIS databases

Publicly available GIS Databases used (sourced from www.data.wa.gov.au):

- 10 Metre Contours (DPIRD-073)
- Aboriginal Heritage Places (DPLH-001)
- Cadastre (LGATE-218)

- Cadastre Address (LGATE-002)
- Contours (DPIRD-073)
- DBCA – Lands of Interest (DBCA-012)
- DBCA Legislated Lands and Waters (DBCA-011)
- Directory of Important Wetlands in Australia – Western Australia (DBCA-045)
- Environmentally Sensitive Areas (DWER-046)
- Flood Risk (DPIRD-007)
- Groundwater Salinity Statewide (DWER-026)
- Hydrography – Inland Waters – Waterlines
- Hydrological Zones of Western Australia (DPIRD-069)
- IBRA Vegetation Statistics
- Imagery
- Local Planning Scheme – Zones and Reserves (DPLH-071)
- Native Title (ILUA) (LGATE-067)
- Offsets Register – Offsets (DWER-078)
- Pre-European Vegetation Statistics
- Public Drinking Water Source Areas (DWER-033)
- Ramsar Sites (DBCA-010)
- Regional Parks (DBCA-026)
- Remnant Vegetation, All Areas
- RIWI Act, Groundwater Areas (DWER-034)
- RIWI Act, Surface Water Areas and Irrigation Districts (DWER-037)
- Soil Landscape Land Quality – Flood Risk (DPIRD-007)
- Soil Landscape Land Quality – Phosphorus Export Risk (DPIRD-010)
- Soil Landscape Land Quality – Subsurface Acidification Risk (DPIRD-011)
- Soil Landscape Land Quality – Water Erosion Risk (DPIRD-013)
- Soil Landscape Land Quality – Waterlogging Risk (DPIRD-015)
- Soil Landscape Land Quality – Wind Erosion Risk (DPIRD-016)
- Soil Landscape Mapping – Best Available
- Soil Landscape Mapping – Systems
- Wheatbelt Wetlands Stage 1 (DBCA-021)

Restricted GIS Databases used:

- ICMS (Incident Complaints Management System) – Points and Polygons
- Threatened Flora (TPFL)
- Threatened Flora (WAHerb)
- Threatened Fauna
- Threatened Ecological Communities and Priority Ecological Communities
- Threatened Ecological Communities and Priority Ecological Communities (Buffers)

E.2. References

Opticomm Pty Ltd (2021a) *Clearing permit application CPS 9194/1*, received 22 January 2021 (DWER Ref DWERDT405300).

Opticomm Pty Ltd (2021b) *Photographs and additional supporting information for clearing permit application CPS 9194/1*, received 22 April 2021 (DWER Ref: A1999224).

Opticomm Pty Ltd (2021c) *Application area and extent of clearing - additional supporting information for clearing permit application CPS 9194/1*, received 23 April 2021 (DWER Ref: A2000135).

Opticomm Pty Ltd (2021d) *Written authority from the Shire of Gingin. Clearing permit application CPS 9194/1*, received 22 March 2021 (DWER Ref A1991253).

Commonwealth of Australia (2001) *National Objectives and Targets for Biodiversity Conservation 2001-2005*, Canberra.

Department of Environment Regulation (DER) (2013). *A guide to the assessment of applications to clear native vegetation*. Perth. Available from: https://www.der.wa.gov.au/images/documents/your-environment/native-vegetation/Guidelines/Guide2_assessment_native_veg.pdf.

- Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) (2019). *NRInfo Digital Mapping. Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development*. Government of Western Australia. URL: <https://maps.agric.wa.gov.au/nrm-info/> (accessed April 2021).
- Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER) (2019). *Procedure: Native vegetation clearing permits*. Joondalup. Available from: https://dwer.wa.gov.au/sites/default/files/Procedure_Native_vegetation_clearing_permits_v1.PDF.
- 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>
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- Threatened Species Scientific Committee (TSSC) (2016). *Approved Conservation Advice (incorporating listing advice) for the Banksia Woodlands of the Swan Coastal Plain ecological community*. Department of the Environment and Energy, Canberra.
- Western Australian Herbarium (1998-). *FloraBase - the Western Australian Flora*. Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, Western Australia. <https://florabase.dpaw.wa.gov.au/> (accessed April 2021).