

Native Vegetation Clearing Permit Application – Supporting Document

Port Bouvard Pistol and Small Bore Rifle Club Inc.



Introduction

Background

The Port Bouvard Pistol and Small Bore Rifle Club Inc. (the Club) formed in 1986 and consist of five 25m pistol ranges, one 50m Pistol range and two 50m rifle ranges, one indoor Air pistol range, a club house, club facilities and a canteen.

Native vegetation clearing is proposed in areas at the rear of the five 25m pistol ranges and the three 50m ranges. These ranges end at a backstop where spent bullets collect in the sandy embankment. The backstop was previously cleared in approximately 2005. Regrowth vegetation and three established *Eucalyptus gomphocephala* (Tuart) trees are currently present in the backstop. Two of the Tuart trees are showing exposed roots due to the incline of the sandy embankment of the backstop and pose a possible safety risk. The three Tuart trees in the backstop area are a ricochet hazard.

A total disturbance area of 2,040m² or 0.204ha is proposed (Figure 1). Clearing of regrowth low shrub vegetation and the three Tuart trees is proposed for the following purposes:

- to undertake earthworks to re-stabilise the embankment of the backstop utilising an excavator
- to create an access track for the excavator, which will also allow for easier access for future work at the site when required
- to remove the risk of ricochet hazard.

The Club is located in the 'Tuart (*Eucalyptus gomphocephala*) woodlands and forests of the Swan Coastal Plain' Threatened Ecological Community (TEC) and is therefore applying for a clearing permit (area permit) under the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*, section 51E.

An existing access track for the earth moving vehicles will be used to access the backstop.

Location

The Club is located 10 minutes south of Mandurah, Western Australia on Lot 1644 and Lot 2215, Country Club Drive, Dawesville.

Site Tenure and Other Arrangements

The Club leases 4.860 hectares (ha) of land from the City of Mandurah (Table 1).

Vegetation disturbance is proposed in Portion Lot 1644 only.

Table 1: Summary of Lease areas

| Lot | Area (ha) |
|---------------------------|--------------|
| Portion Lot 1644 (R32477) | 2.481 |
| Portion Lot 2215 (R2851) | 2.019 |
| Total | 4.860 |



Figure 1: Location of the Port Bouvard Pistol and Small Bore Rifle Club, and proposed vegetation disturbance area

*not drawn to scale, indicated disturbance area only.

Environmental Values

Vegetation

A search of FloraBase database was undertaken in April 2021, with a 5 km buffer from the Club site and identified three conservation species may occur in the area (Table 2) (DBCA 2021a). No declared rare flora occur in the area.

The Tuart tree (*Eucalyptus gomphocephala*) is not listed as a threatened species.

Table 2: Conservation significant flora species that may occur in the area

| Species Name | Conservation Status |
|---|---------------------|
| <i>Conostylis pauciflora</i> subsp. <i>pauciflora</i> | Priority 4 |
| <i>Hakea oligoneura</i> | Priority 2 |
| <i>Lasiopetalum membranaceum</i> | Priority 3 |

Source: DBCA 2021a

Vegetation Condition




The undergrowth area is highly disturbed due to the nature of the land use (capturing spent bullets), existing access track and previous clearing undertaken to create the backstop. The regrowth vegetation is sparse and patchy. The location of the three Tuart trees, existing access track and rifle ranges are depicted in Figure 2.



Figure 2: Location of rifle range, access track and Tuart trees to be cleared.

Table 3 summarises the condition of the Tuart trees that are proposed to be cleared. Two of the Tuart trees are showing exposed roots due to the incline of the sandy embankment of the backstop and pose a possible safety risk.

Table 3: Description of condition of Tuart trees and site photo

| Description | Site Photo |
|--|---|
| <p>Tuart Tree 1</p> <p>The Tuart tree is established and in good condition. It is located at the end of C Range of the 25m Pistol Range and poses a ricochet hazard.</p> <p>GPS Coordinates: 32.61509° S 115.63546° E</p> |  |
| <p>Tuart Tree 2</p> <p>The Tuart tree is established and in good condition, however showing signs of exposed roots. It is located at the end of the E Range of the 50m Rifle Range and poses a ricochet hazard.</p> <p>GPS Coordinates: 32.61502° S 115.63492° E</p> |  |
| <p>Tuart Tree 3</p> <p>The tree is established and in good condition, however showing signs of exposed roots. It is located at the end of the E Range of the 50m Rifle Range and poses a ricochet hazard.</p> <p>GPS Coordinates: 32.61500° S 115.63473° E</p> |  |

Fauna

The Club site does not coincide with any fauna habitat zones in the Swan Region (DBCA 2019).

A search of NatureMap database identified protected vertebrate fauna that may occur within 5km of the Club including 22 birds, four mammals and three reptiles (DBCA 2021b) (Table 4).

Table 4. Protected terrestrial vertebrate fauna that may occur within 5km of the Club

| Species Name | Common Name | Conservation Status |
|--|--|---------------------|
| Birds | | |
| <i>Actitis hypoleucos</i> | Common Sandpiper | IA |
| <i>Ardenna pacifica</i> | Wedge-tailed Shearwater | IA |
| <i>Calidris acuminata</i> | Sharp-tailed Sandpiper | IA |
| <i>Calidris alba</i> | Sanderling | IA |
| <i>Calidris ferruginea</i> | Curlew Sandpiper | T |
| <i>Calidris ruficollis</i> | Red-necked Stint | IA |
| <i>Calyptorhynchus banksii subsp. naso</i> | Forest Red-tailed Black Cockatoo | T |
| <i>Calyptorhynchus baudinii</i> | Baudin's Cockatoo, White-tailed Long-billed Black Cockatoo | T |
| <i>Calyptorhynchus latirostris</i> | Carnaby's Cockatoo, White-tailed Short-billed Black Cockatoo | T |
| <i>Charadrius mongolus</i> | Lesser Sand Plover | T |
| <i>Falco peregrinus</i> | Peregrine Falcon | S |
| <i>Hydroprogne caspia</i> | Caspian Tern | IA |
| <i>Macronectes giganteus</i> | Southern Giant Petrel | IA |
| <i>Numenius phaeopus</i> | Whimbrel | IA |
| <i>Pandion cristatus</i> | Osprey, Eastern Osprey | IA |
| <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i> | Grey Plover | IA |
| <i>Stercorarius antarcticus</i> | Brown Skua | P4 |
| <i>Sterna hirundo</i> | Common Tern | IA |
| <i>Thalassarche chlororhynchos</i> | Atlantic Yellow-nosed Albatross | T |
| <i>Thalassarche melanophris</i> | Black-browed Albatross | T |
| <i>Thalasseus bergii</i> | Crested Tern | IA |
| <i>Tringa nebularia</i> | Common Greenshank, greenshank | IA |
| Mammals | | |
| <i>Isodon fusciventer</i> | Quenda, southwestern brown bandicoot | P4 |
| <i>Phascogale tapoatafa subsp. wambenger</i> | South-western Brush-tailed Phascogale, Wambenger | S |
| <i>Pseudocheirus occidentalis</i> | Western Ringtail Possum, ngwayir | T |

| Species Name | Common Name | Conservation Status |
|--------------------------|--|---------------------|
| Reptiles | | |
| <i>Lerista lineata</i> | Perth Slider, Lined Skink | P3 |
| <i>Neelaps calonotos</i> | Black-striped Snake, black-striped burrowing snake | P3 |

Source: DBCA 2021b

Conservation Codes

T - Rare or likely to become extinct

IA - Protected under international agreement

S - Other specially protected fauna

P3 - Priority 3

P4 - Priority 4

Reserves and conservation areas

Advice was received from the City of Mandurah that the Club is located in the Tuart (*Eucalyptus gomphocephala*) woodlands and forests of the Swan Coastal Plain' Threatened Ecological Community (TEC). The Department of Environment and Energy released the approved Conservation Advice for this newly listed TEC in July 2019 (Figure 3) (DAWE 2017).

Vegetation within the lease area of the Club contains Tuart trees in patches, however the area has not been biologically surveyed. Based on the TEC map (Figure 3), it is likely that the TEC occurs and assessment against the ten clearing principles (Table 5) has been undertaken based on this likely occurrence.

Environmentally Sensitive Areas

A search of the Department of Water and Environment Regulation (DWER) clearing permit system was undertaken to determine whether the area is an environmentally sensitive area (ESA). The Club is not located in an ESA and the closest ESA is more than 500m to the East (Figure 3).

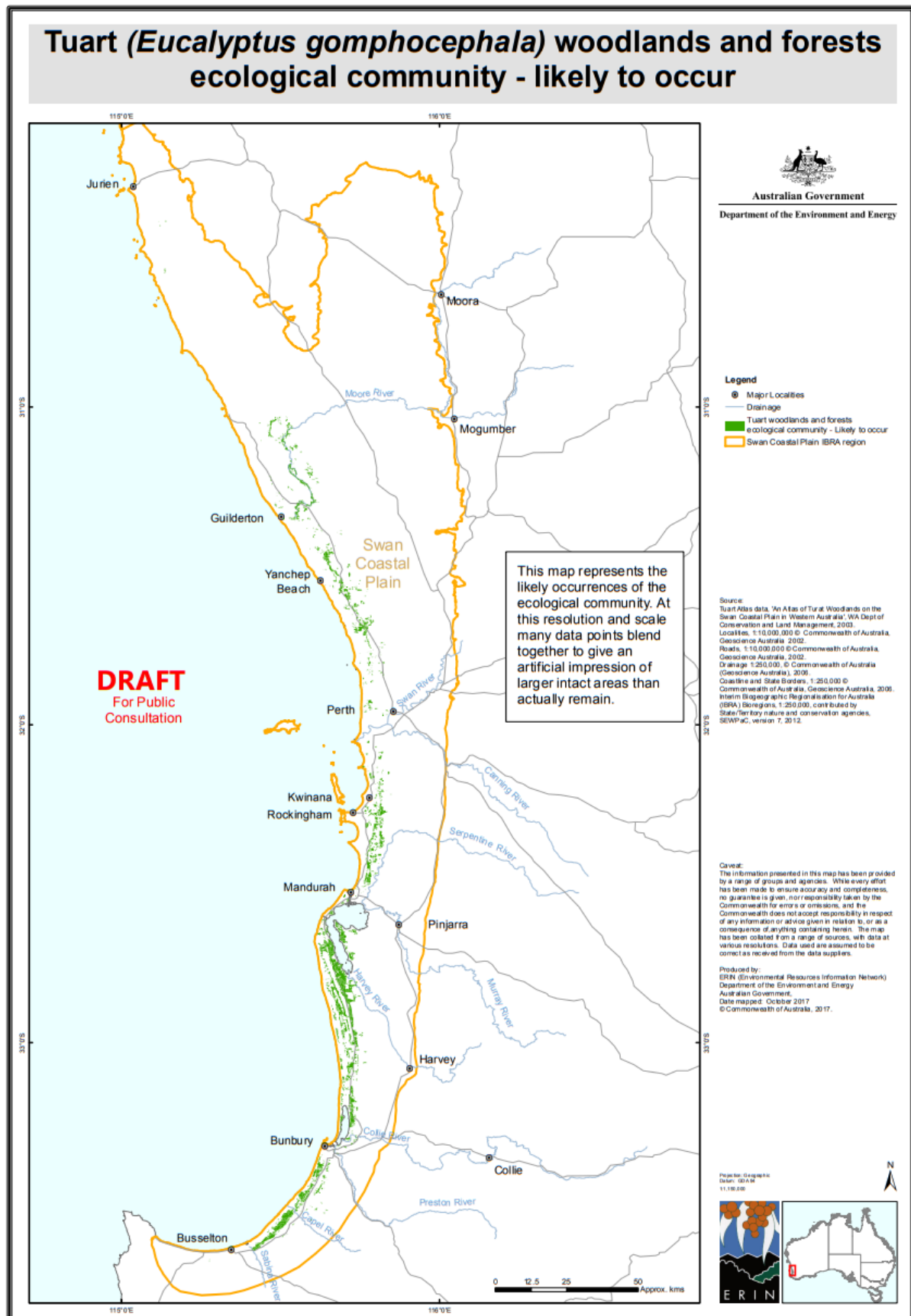


Figure 2 Tuart (*Eucalyptus gomphocephala*) woodlands and forests of the Swan Coastal Plain Threatened Ecological Community

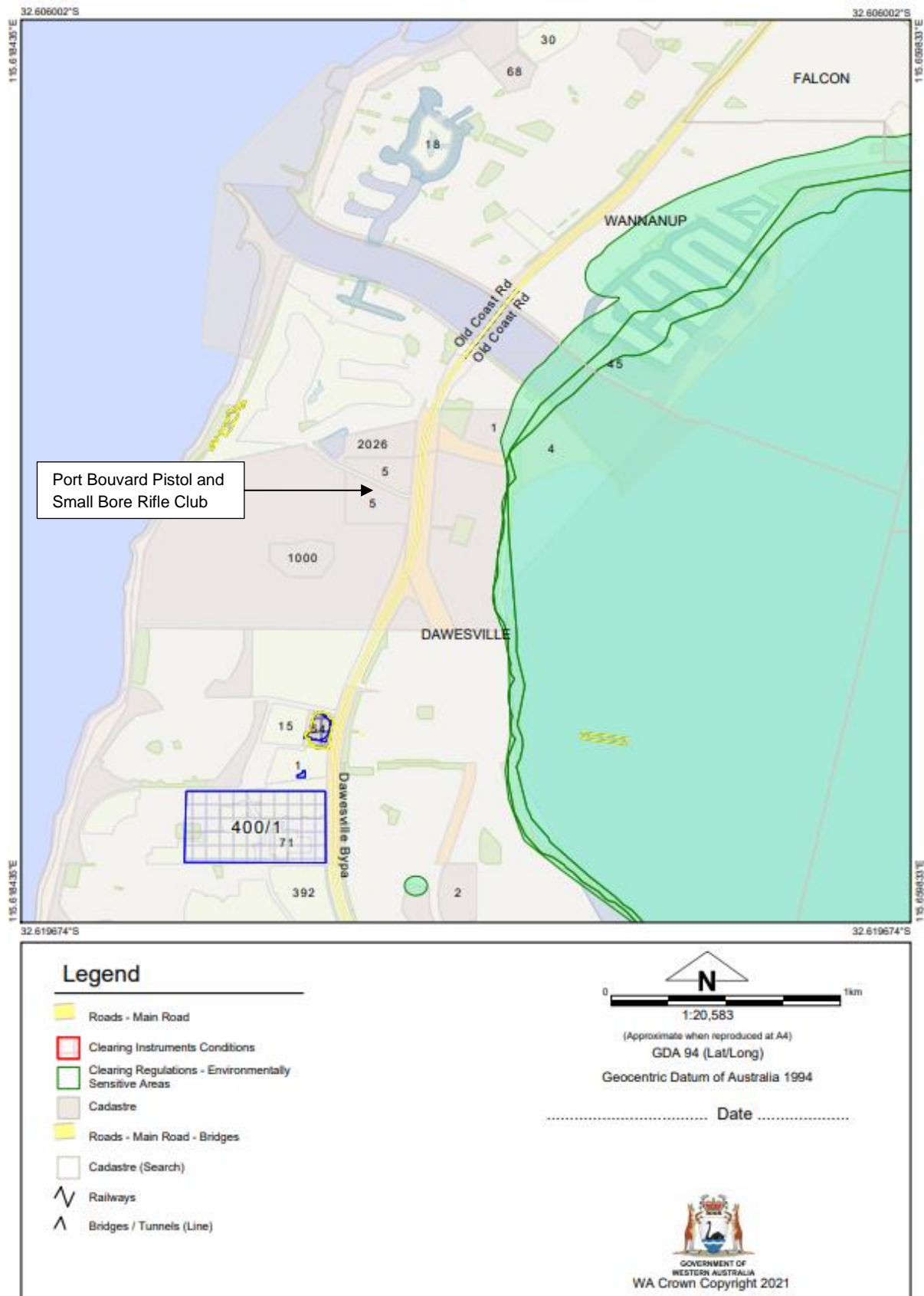


Figure 3: Environmentally Sensitive Areas in the vicinity of the Club

Potential Impact of Clearing

Scale of proposed clearing

The Club proposes to clear some regrowth vegetation in the backstop area and three Tuart trees in a total disturbance area of 0.204ha (Figure 4). Not all vegetation in the disturbance area is expected to be cleared and clearing will be kept to a minimum where possible.

Figure 4 indicates the disturbance area showing the bottom retaining wall and 15m width envelope. It also indicates the location of the three Tuart trees.



Figure 4: Indicative disturbance area, 15m width from the existing retaining wall

Clearing Principles

The proposed vegetation clearing was assessed against the 10 Clearing Principles for native vegetation listed in Schedule 5 of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*.

Table 5: Clearing Principles

| Assessment | Outcome |
|---|--|
| Principle (a) – Native vegetation should not be cleared if it comprises a high level of biological diversity | |
| It is not expected that the removal of three Tuart trees and regrowth vegetation will result in a decrease of biological diversity. Three conservation significant flora species may occur within a 5km buffer of the Club (Table 2) and no declared rare flora occur in the area. The area that requires clearing is already highly disturbed with sparse regrowth and does not contain a high level of biological diversity. | The proposal is not likely to be at variance with this clearing principle. |
| Principle (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. | |
| Conservation significant fauna may occur in the area including 22 bird species, three mammal species and two reptiles. These species are highly mobile and may traverse the area. However due to the land use being zoned for recreational shooting, fauna tends to avoid the area due to noise from the range. Therefore, it is not expected that the removal of three trees and the sparse regrowth vegetation will result in impacting fauna habitats as fauna tend to avoid the area. | The proposal is not likely to be at variance with this clearing principle |
| Principle (c) – Native vegetation should not be cleared if it includes, or is necessary for the continued existence of, threatened flora. | |
| No declared rare flora species were identified on NatureMap. Three priority flora species (listed as P2, P3 and P4) occur within a 5km buffer of the Club. The area that requires clearing is already highly disturbed and clearing this regrowth area is not expected to impact the existence of threatened flora. The three Tuart trees are not listed as threatened species. | The proposal is not likely to be at variance with this clearing principle. |
| Principle (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 | |
| The vegetation proposed to be cleared is located in the 'Tuart (<i>Eucalyptus gomphocephala</i>) woodlands and forests of the Swan Coastal Plain' TEC. This TEC is a large area in the Swan Coastal Plain that extends from Jurien to south of Busselton (Figure 2). TECs that may be likely to occur within the Swan Coastal Plain consist of remnant areas of Tuart woodlands and forests. The lease area of 4.860ha contains a large area of uncleared remnant vegetation. Clearing of three Tuart trees is not expected to compromise the maintenance of the TEC. | The proposal is not likely to be at variance with this clearing principle. |
| Principle (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. | |
| The disturbance footprint is small (0.204ha) and is located in a highly pre-disturbed area. A small percentage of disturbance is proposed compared to the remaining surrounding vegetation in the lease area (i.e. Portion Lot 2215 consists of 2.019 ha of remnant vegetation which will not be disturbed) and the Club is not extensively clearing remnant vegetation within Portion Lot 1644 (refer to Table 1). | The proposal is not likely to be at variance with this clearing principle. |
| Principle (f) - Native vegetation should not be cleared if it is growing in, or in association with, an environment associated with a watercourse or wetland. | |
| No watercourse or wetlands intersect the proposed disturbance area. A database search of the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment's Protected Matters Search Tool confirms no protected areas, Ramsar Wetlands or Nationally Important Wetlands intersect the area. The | The proposal is not likely to be at variance with this clearing principle. |

| Assessment | Outcome |
|---|--|
| closest Ramsar Wetland is the Peel-Yalgorup System located more than 500m to the east of the Club (DAWE, 2021). The removal of three trees and regrowth understory will not affect the wetland. | |
| Principle (g) – Native vegetation should not be cleared if the clearing of the vegetation is likely to cause appreciable land degradation. | |
| The area is pre-disturbed and removal of re-growth vegetation and the three Tuart trees in a small area (0.204ha) is not likely to cause appreciable land degradation. Remnant bushland will remain in the lease area (Portion of Lot 1644) and no vegetation is proposed to be disturbed in the adjacent lease (Portion Lot 2215) consisting of 2.019ha of remnant vegetation. | The proposal is not likely to be at variance with this clearing principle. |
| Principle (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. | |
| The Club is not located in an Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA) (Figure 3) and the closest ESA is located more than 500m to the east of the Club. It is not expected the small area of clearing (0.204ha) is likely to have an impact on environmental values of nearby conservation areas. | The proposal is not likely to be at variance with this clearing principle. |
| Principle (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. | |
| <p>The disturbance footprint is small (0.204ha) and the regrowth vegetation is already sparse. During a rainfall event surface water is not expected to significantly pool and should infiltrate the sand.</p> <p>The three Tuart trees and regrowth vegetation area located at the top of an inclined embankment. Two of the trees have exposed roots and therefore reduced capacity to draw on groundwater. It is not anticipated that the removal of three trees or the removal of the sparse regrowth vegetation will affect groundwater.</p> | The proposal is not likely to be at variance with this clearing principle. |
| Principle (j) - Native vegetation should not be cleared if clearing the vegetation is likely to cause, or exacerbate, the incidence or intensity of flooding. | |
| The Western Australian floodplain mapping tool (DWER 2021) was used to confirm that the closest flood plain is more than 500m to the east of the Club. The Club is not located in a floodplain and removal of as small area of vegetation (0.204ha), which is already highly disturbed and sparse, is not likely to cause or exacerbate the incidence or intensity of flooding. | The proposal is not likely to be at variance with this clearing principle. |

Consultation

The Club consulted with the City of Mandurah and a representative from the council conducted a site visit and visually inspected the proposed disturbance area. The representative expressed no concerns with clearing regrowth vegetation and advised the Club to submit an Area clearing permit for the three Tuart trees as it is located in the Tuart (*Eucalyptus gomphocephala*) woodlands and forests of the Swan Coastal Plain TEC.

Various calls and messages were left with the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation, however no consultation was successfully undertaken.

References

Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment (DAWE). 2021. Protected Matters Search Tool. Accessed on line [Protected Matters Search Tool: Interactive Map \(environment.gov.au\)](https://www.environment.gov.au/protected-matters-search-tool) April 2021.

Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA). 2019. Fauna Habitat Zones – Status at 31 December 2019. Map 1: Swan Region. Published by the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, Parks and Wildlife Service.

Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA). 2021a. *FloraBase, the Western Australian Flora. Eucalyptus gomphocephala* DC. Accessed online [Eucalyptus gomphocephala DC.: FloraBase: Flora of Western Australia \(dpaw.wa.gov.au\)](https://florabase.dpaw.wa.gov.au/), April, 2021.

Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA). 2021b. *NatureMap Mapping Western Australia's biodiversity*. NatureMap Species Report. Database search April 2021.

Department of Water and environment Regulation (DWER). 2021a. Clearing Permit System database search. Accessed online <https://www.water.wa.gov.au/maps-and-data/maps/flood-maps>, April, 2021.

Department of Water and environment Regulation (DWER). 2021b. Floodplain Mapping Tool. Accessed online <https://www.water.wa.gov.au/maps-and-data/maps/flood-maps>, April, 2021.