



1. Application details

1.1. Permit application details

Permit application No.: 953/1

Permit type: Area Permit

1.2. Proponent details

Proponent's name: City of Geraldton

1.3. Property details

Property:

Local Government Area: City Of Geraldton

Colloquial name:

1.4. Application

Clearing Area (ha)	No. Trees	Method of Clearing	For the purpose of:
0.15		Mechanical Removal	Miscellaneous

2. Site Information

2.1. Existing environment and information

2.1.1. Description of the native vegetation under application

Vegetation Description	Clearing Description	Vegetation Condition	Comment
Beard vegetation association 371: Low forest; <i>Acacia rostellifera</i> (Hopkins et al. 2001, Shepherd et al. 2001)	The area under application consists of approximately 0.15ha of native vegetation and is located on the back of a dune system. The Beard vegetation association expected to occur was not found to be the vegetation cover under application (Site visit 23 November 2005). The vegetation under application is dominated by <i>Atriplex isatidea</i> or coastal saltbush and the groundcover consists mainly of the non-native <i>Tetragonia decumbens</i> or sea spinach. Numerous weed species are also scattered throughout the area under application. (Site visit 23 November 2005)	Good: Structure significantly altered by multiple disturbance; retains basic structure/ability to regenerate (Keighery 1994)	The description of the vegetation under application was obtained after a site visit to the property on Wednesday 23rd November 2005.

3. Assessment of application against clearing principles

(a) Native vegetation should not be cleared if it comprises a high level of biological diversity.

Comments **Proposal is not likely to be at variance to this Principle**
The vegetation under application is in good condition with some weed invasion. There are two main dominant species over the small area (0.15ha) to be cleared. Due to the small area to be cleared it is unlikely that the vegetation is of higher biodiversity significance than the vegetation in the local area. Therefore, the proposal is not likely to be at variance with this Principle.

Methodology Site visit, 2005.
GIS Databases:
- Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation of Australia - EA 18/10/00.

(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.

Comments **Proposal is not likely to be at variance to this Principle**
 Medium sized shrubs within the area under application may provide some habitat for fauna, however the level of disturbance and the small area of vegetation is likely to limit the habitat value of the site. In addition, no evidence of fauna species was noted during the site visit. Therefore, this proposal is not likely to be at variance with this principle.

Methodology Site visit, 2005.
 CALM's Threatened and Priority Fauna Database [The comprehensiveness of the database is dependent on the amount of survey carried out in the area and does not necessarily represent a comprehensive listing (CALM, 2005)].

(c) Native vegetation should not be cleared if it includes, or is necessary for the continued existence of, rare flora.

Comments **Proposal is not at variance to this Principle**
 The dominant species within the area under application is Atriplex isatidea or coastal saltbush. The non native species Tetragonia decumbens also features throughout the area. No Declared Rare or Priority Flora species were identified within the project area or within 5km. Therefore, this proposal is not at variance with this Principle.

Methodology Site visit, 2005
 GIS Databases:
 - Declared Rare and Priority Flora list - CALM 01/07/05
 - Clearing Regulations - Environmentally Sensitive Areas - DoE 30/05/05

(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.

Comments **Proposal is not at variance to this Principle**
 There are no records of Threatened Ecological Communities (TEC's) within or near the area under application. Therefore, this proposal is not at variance with this Principle.

Methodology GIS Databases:
 - Threatened Ecological Communities - CALM 12/04/05

(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.

Comments **Proposal is not at variance to this Principle**
 The Geraldton Sandplains Bioregion has 26.8% of native vegetation remaining within the intensive landuse zone making it vulnerable. Beard vegetation association 371 has only 9.8% of native vegetation remaining making it endangered by conservation status standards, however it was noted during the site visit that this was not consistent with the vegetation within and surrounding the area under application. The vegetation found under application, Atriplex isatidea, is shown to have a wide distribution along the coastal strip throughout the region (FloraBase, 2005). Due to the vegetation and the small size under application the proposed clearing is therefore not at variance to this Principle.

	Pre-European Reserves/CALM-area (ha)	Current extent (ha)	Remaining %*	Conservation status**	managed land,
%					
IBRA Bioregion - Geraldton Sandplains	2,474,401***	663,290***	26.8	Vulnerable	Not available
Shire - Geraldton	Not available	Not available	Not available	Not available	Not available
Beard veg type - 371	37,651	3,703	9.8	Endangered	3.7

* Shepherd et al. (2001)

** Department of Natural Resources and Environment (2002)

*** Area within the Intensive Landuse Zone

Methodology GIS Databases:
 - Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation of Australia - EA 18/10/00
 - Pre-European Vegetation - DA 01/01
 - Local Government Authorities - DLI 08/07/04
 - EPA Position Paper No 2 Agriculture Region - DEP 12/00
 Shepherd et al, 2001.
 Department of Natural Resources and Environment, 2002
 FloraBase, 2005

(f) Native vegetation should not be cleared if it is growing in, or in association with, an environment associated with a watercourse or wetland.

Comments Proposal is not likely to be at variance to this Principle

There are no watercourses or wetlands within the area under application. The closest watercourse is the coastal waterline, which is located 60m from the area under application. Due to the small scale (0.15ha) of the vegetation to be cleared and the distance from the coast this proposal is not likely to be at variance with this Principle.

Methodology GIS Databases:

- Hydrography, linear - DoE 01/02/04
- Hydrographic Catchments - Catchments - DoE 23/03/05

(g) Native vegetation should not be cleared if the clearing of the vegetation is likely to cause appreciable land degradation.

Comments Proposal is not likely to be at variance to this Principle

The area proposed to be cleared is a small area (0.15 hectares) that lies on an undulating dune landscape mainly comprised of sands. The area under application experiences good to average rainfall and does not fall within a salinity risk area. The sandy nature of the soil suggests that the area may be subject to wind erosion if not properly managed, however the City of Geraldton has committed to management strategies, which are detailed in the conditions, in order to minimise the impact of the clearing. Therefore, this proposal is not likely to be at variance with this Principle.

Methodology GIS Databases:

- Rainfall, Mean Annual - BOM 30/09/01
- Salinity Risk LM 25m - DOLA 00
- Acid Sulphate Soil risk map, SCP DOE 04/11/04
- Soils, Statewide - DA 11/99

(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.

Comments Proposal is not at variance to this Principle

The area under application does not fall within, provide a buffer for, or contribute an ecological linkage to a conservation area. Therefore, this proposal is not at variance with this Principle.

Methodology GIS Databases:

- CALM Regional Parks - CALM 12/04/02
- WRC Estate - DoE 09/04
- CALM Managed Lands & Waters - CALM 01/07/05
- Proposed National Parks FMP-CALM 19/03/03
- Register of National Estate - EA 28/01/03

(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.

Comments Proposal is not at variance to this Principle

The area under application falls within the Coastal catchment and lies within 65m from the coastal waterline. Due to the small area (0.15ha) under application, the proposal is unlikely to cause deterioration in the quality of surface or underground water (Midwest Gascoyne Hydro Unit, 2005). Therefore, this proposal is not at variance with this Principle.

Methodology Midwest Gascoyne Hydro Unit, 2005.

GIS Databases:

- Current WIN data sets
- PDWSA Protection Zones - DOE 07/01/04
- Public Drinking Water Sources (PDWSAs) - DOE 09/08/05
- Hydrographic Catchments - Catchments - DOE 23/03/05
- Hydrography, linear - DoE 01/02/04
- Rainfall, Mean Annual - BOM 30/09/01

(j) Native vegetation should not be cleared if clearing the vegetation is likely to cause, or exacerbate, the incidence or intensity of flooding.

Comments Proposal is not at variance to this Principle

The area proposed to be cleared is a small area (0.15 hectares) that lies on an undulating dune landscape mainly comprised of sands. Due to the porous nature of the soil and the small area to be cleared, the proposal

is not likely to cause or exacerbate the incidence of flooding. Therefore, this proposal is not at variance with this Principle.

Methodology GIS Databases:
 - Rainfall, Mean Annual - BOM 30/09/01
 - Topographic Contours, Statewide - DOLA 12/09/02

Planning instrument, Native Title, Previous EPA decision or other matter.

Comments

The City of Geraldton has not indicated if there are any planning requirements or approvals that would affect the clearing.

There is no further requirement for a RIWI Act Licence, Works Approval or EP Act Licence for the area under application.

An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) was conducted over the area under application as part of the Geraldton Region Plan which identified proposed areas for infrastructure and areas of conservation within the Midwest region. This EIA does not affect this application as the area under application was not identified as an area of interest (EPA Bulletin Number 891).

There are three Native Title Claims over the area under application. The Reserve is vested with the City of Geraldton for the purpose of recreation, which is consistent with the purpose of the clearing for a public recreation area. Therefore, Native Title is extinguished.

Department of Planning and Infrastructure have raised no objections to this clearing application.

A submission received in relation to this application raised an issue regarding dune stability and erosion. This has been addressed in Principle g, native vegetation should not be cleared if the clearing of the vegetation is likely to cause appreciable land degradation.

Methodology Environmental Protection Authority, 1998

4. Assessor's recommendations

Purpose	Method	Applied area (ha)/ trees	Decision	Comment / recommendation
Miscellaneous	Mechanical Removal	0.15	Grant	The assessable criteria have been addressed and no objections were raised. The assessing officer therefore recommends that the permit should be granted.

5. References

Department of Natural Resources and Environment (2002) Biodiversity Action Planning. Action planning for native biodiversity at multiple scales ; catchment bioregional, landscape, local. Department of Natural Resources and Environment, Victoria.

Environmental Protection Authority (1998) Geraldton Region Plan Bulletin 891, Environmental Protection Authority, Perth, Western Australia.

Hopkins, A.J.M., Beeston, G.R. and Harvey J.M. (2001) A database on the vegetation of Western Australia. Stage 1. CALMScience after J. S. Beard, late 1960's to early 1980's Vegetation Survey of Western Australia, UWA Press.

Keighery, BJ (1994) Bushland Plant Survey: A Guide to Plant Community Survey for the Community. Wildflower Society of WA (Inc). Nedlands, Western Australia.

Shepherd, D.P., Beeston, G.R. and Hopkins, A.J.M. (2001) Native Vegetation in Western Australia, Extent, Type and Status. Resource Management Technical Report 249. Department of Agriculture, Western Australia.

Western Australian Herbarium (1998-). FloraBase — The Western Australian Flora. Department of Conservation and Land Management. <http://florabase.calm.wa.gov.au/>

6. Glossary

Term	Meaning
CALM	Department of Conservation and Land Management
DAWA	Department of Agriculture
DEP	Department of Environmental Protection (now DoE)
DoE	Department of Environment
DoIR	Department of Industry and Resources
DRF	Declared Rare Flora

EPP	Environmental Protection Policy
GIS	Geographical Information System
ha	Hectare (10,000 square metres)
TEC	Threatened Ecological Community
WRC	Water and Rivers Commission (now DoE)