



## 1. Application details

### 1.1. Permit application details

Permit application No.: 990/1  
Permit type: Purpose Permit

### 1.2. Proponent details

Proponent's name: Shire of Ngaanyatjarraku

### 1.3. Property details

Property: Reserve 17614  
Local Government Area: Shire Of Ngaanyatjarraku  
Colloquial name:

### 1.4. Application

Clearing Area (ha)	No. Trees	Method of Clearing	For the purpose of:
9.5		Mechanical Removal	Road construction or maintenance

## 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 19 - low woodland; mulga between sand ridges. Beard vegetation association 230 - mosaic; medium sparse woodland; desert oak between sand dunes/Hummock grasslands; grass steppe; hard spinifex Triodia basedowii. (Shepherd et al 2001, Hopkins et al 2001)	The area under application consists of three separate areas for the purposes of road maintenance. There are two 200m x 200m gravel pits, one adjacent to the Jameson to Blackstone Road and the other adjacent to Mulga Park Road. The third area consists of a 30m x 500m section of road to realign the Jameson to Blackstone Road to make it safer for travellers.	Excellent: Vegetation structure intact; disturbance affecting individual species, weeds non-aggressive (Keighery 1994)	A condition of 'excellent' is used in this application as the vegetation under application is likely to have been disturbed from previous works associated with the existing road. However, due to this limited disturbance, it is likely that the vegetation under application is still in excellent condition.

## 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 may be at variance to this Principle**

The area under application is located within the Ranges of the Western Desert which is listed on the Register of the National Estate for Indigenous and Natural Heritage values. However the total area listed on the Register encompasses over 8,000,000ha. While the area under application may be of high biodiversity value, it is unlikely that the clearance of 9ha over three sites would greatly impact on the biodiversity of the region. In addition, the three areas proposed to be cleared are located adjacent or within close proximity to existing roads and may have been subjected to some forms of degradation such as weed invasion or trampling.

Therefore, it is considered that the clearing as proposed may be at variance to this Principle. In addition, the proponent has indicated in the application that the proposed clearing is to realign a dangerous stretch of road in order to make it safer for travellers.

**Methodology** Register of the National Estate webpage - [www.deh.gov.au](http://www.deh.gov.au)  
Information provided by the proponent (DoE Trim Ref IN24959)

### (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**

The areas under application are surrounded by an extensive, well represented habitat that will offset habitat loss arising from the proposed clearing. The proposed clearing itself consists of relatively small, isolated segments along or near to the edges of the Jameson to Blackstone Road and Mulga Park Road, which would normally be a disturbed area. The clearing as proposed is therefore not likely to be at variance to this Principle.

**Methodology** Information provided by the proponent (DoE Trim Ref IN24959-01)  
GIS Databases:  
- Pre-European Vegetation - DA 01/01

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

**Comments** **Proposal is not likely to be at variance to this Principle**  
There are no known occurrences of Declared Rare or Priority Flora within the area under application or within the local area (50km radius). It is therefore unlikely that the clearing as proposed would be at variance to this Principle.

**Methodology** GIS Databases:  
- Declared Rare and Priority Flora List - 01/07/05

**(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 likely to be at variance to this Principle**  
There are no known occurrences of Threatened Ecological Communities within the area under application or within the local area (50km radius). It is therefore unlikely that the clearing as proposed would be at variance to 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 State Government is committed to the National Objectives and Targets for Biodiversity Conservation which includes a target that prevents clearance of ecological communities with an extent below 30% of that present pre European settlement (Department of Natural Resources and Environment 2001, EPA 2000).

In relation to this application, the Beard vegetation association 19 consists of over 4,000,000ha (99% remaining) and the Beard vegetation association 230 has over 1,000,000ha remaining (approximately 100%). Both are well above the 30% threshold value (Shepherd et al 2001, Hopkins et al 2001).

Therefore, the clearing as proposed is not at variance to this Principle.

**Methodology** Department of Natural Resources and Environment (2001)  
EPA (2000)  
Shepherd et al (2001)  
Hopkins et al (2001)

**(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 surface water features within the area under application or within the immediate surrounds. Therefore the vegetation under application is not considered to be associated with a wetland or watercourse and the proposed clearing is not likely to be at variance to this Principle.

**Methodology** GIS Databases:  
- Hydrology, Linear - DPE 01/02/04  
- Geodata, Lakes - GA 28/06/02

**(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 chief soils within the area under application are red earths and red sands which could potentially be prone to erosion if exposed. Given that the relatively small, isolated areas proposed to be cleared are for the use of gravel pits and road maintenance, it is unlikely that large areas of soil would be bare and possibly subject to erosion. Therefore the clearing as proposed is unlikely to be at variance to this Principle.

**Methodology** GIS Databases:  
- 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 likely to be at variance to this Principle**

The area under application is located within a Ranges of the Western Desert which is listed on the Register of the National Estate for Indigenous and Natural Heritage values. The area listed on the Register encompasses over 8,000,000ha. As such, given the small size of the areas under application relative to the area on the Register, it is unlikely that the clearing as proposed would have a significant impact on the natural values of the wider area.

There are no CALM managed lands within 100km of the proposed clearing.

**Methodology** Register of National Estate webpage - www.deh.gov.au  
GIS Databases:  
- Register of the National Estate - EA 28/01/03  
- CALM Managed Lands and Waters - CALM 01/08/04

**(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 likely to be at variance to this Principle**

The proposed clearing is relatively small and in three scattered areas. This is likely to have little to no impact on the groundwater within the area under application and the surrounding region. There are no permanent surface water bodies within the region due to low annual rainfall (300mm mean per annum) and the high annual evaporation rate (3400mm mean per annum).

Therefore the clearing as proposed is unlikely to have a significant impact on surface or underground water quality.

**Methodology** GIS Databases:  
- Rainfall, Mean Annual - BOM 30/09/01  
- Evaporation Isopleths - BOM 09/98  
- Hydrography, Linear - DOE 01/02/04

**(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 likely to be at variance to this Principle**

Given the low rainfall (300mm mean per annum) and the high evaporation rates (3400mm mean per annum), flooding would be an infrequent event. The removal of small amounts of vegetation for road repair and maintenance is unlikely to exacerbate the incidence or intensity of flooding.

**Methodology** GIS Databases:  
- Rainfall, Mean Annual - BOM 30/09/01  
- Evaporation Isopleths - BOM 09/98

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

**Comments**

The native title over the areas under assessment has been determined to be held by the Ngaanyatjarra Peoples. The Shire of Ngaanyatjarraku is responsible for providing services and facilities under the Local Government Act 1995 in respect of this land, and is exercising its statutory powers in carrying out the clearing activities. The Department considers that the grant of a clearing permit to facilitate this constitutes a secondary approval, and therefore would not be considered a future act under the Native Title Act 1993.

There is no other RIWI Act licence, Works Approval or EP Act licence issues that will affect the area that has been applied to clear.

**Methodology**

**4. Assessor's recommendations**

Purpose	Method	Applied area (ha)/ trees	Decision	Comment / recommendation
Road construction or maintenance	Mechanical Removal	9.5	Grant	The clearing as proposed has been assessed and may be at variance to Principle a.  In regards to Principle a, the proposed clearing occurs within the Ranges of the Western Desert which is on the Register of National Estate. The total area listed on the Register is over 8,000,000ha and it is unlikely that the clearance of three small areas totalling 9.5ha would have a significant impact on the natural heritage values of the Ranges of the Western Desert.

In addition, the proponent has indicated in the application that the proposed clearing is to realign a dangerous stretch of road in order to make it safer for travellers.

Given the above, the assessing officer recommends that this permit be granted for the realignment of Jameson-Blackstone Road (398643, 7128744, Z52 to 398960, 7128274, Z52) and two gravel pits (399302, 7124807, Z52 and 465683, 7139746, Z52).

## 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.
- EPA (2000) Environmental protection of native vegetation in Western Australia. Clearing of native vegetation, with particular reference to the agricultural area. Position Statement No. 2. December 2000. Environmental Protection Authority.
- 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.
- Register of National Estate Database, accessed through the Department of Environment and Heritage Website: [www.deh.gov.au](http://www.deh.gov.au). Accessed 21/02/2006.
- 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.

## 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)