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My Tien (Angela) Ray

Tel: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

14 July 2024

RE: Clearing referral related to electricity connection for Lot 16 Bell Rd, Coonabidgee WA 6503

To Whom It May Concern:

By way of explanation, we are applying for a referral in the hope of connecting mains electricity to our property at Lot 16 Bell Rd, Coonabidgee. We are undertaking a development on that site in order to move our small family-run business there. Western Power have come back to us with a quote advising that clearing will be required in order to make the electricity connection.

We applied for the connection/quote with Western Power in March/April 2023 and finally received the quote and design around 13 months later in May 2024. We had initially requested a higher power supply but had to reduce it due to insufficient power being available in the area. After cutting our requested supply in half, we had hoped that we could just connect straight onto the lines on the overhead pole that is right outside the SW corner of our lot. However, apparently, there would still be insufficient power if we connect there so Western Power have said that the only option is to connect to the overhead lines two poles, and 80m, away to the East and run underground cables to the SW corner of our lot. We are unsure why some kind of upgrade of the overhead lines is not an option; perhaps it is very difficult or maybe Western Power have a policy to be moving power distribution underground?

Western Power also advised that we would need to pursue authorisation for the clearing required to install these underground cables. We contacted DWER, initiating enquiry ENQ-0000966 on Fri 31 May at 14:27. We then liaised with [REDACTED] from DWER on several occasions, as listed below, and the advice was basically to make a referral application. I have not included these emails with the application but feel free to request that we send them if they are needed.

| Email Sent Date | Reply Date |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|
| Initial enquiry Fri 31 May 14:27 | Wed, 5 Jun, 14:51 |
| Mon, 10 Jun, 17:26 | Tue, 11 Jun, 07:32 |
| Tue, 11 Jun, 14:18 | 11 Jun 2024 at 14:53 |
| Wed, 12 Jun, 12:10 | |

We did try to ask Western Power if there were any alternative options that did not involve, or involve as much, clearing, even at additional cost to us, but the advice that came back from Western Power that the "Senior Distribution Design Engineer ... states ... that [u]nfortunately, there are no design alternatives that avoid clearing for this project, as there is vegetation on both sides of the road and at the pillar location." I have attached a copy of this correspondence to the referral application.

We believe that the amount of clearing is a reasonably small area. Whilst it would be preferable to not have to do any clearing, and we did try to see if there was another option, at least it seems like this is not a very significantly sized area. We would suggest that almost all the vegetation in the clearing area are small diameter paperbark (*Melaleuca raphiophylla*) trees that have regrown in the area, with just a few other trees/shrubs (see photos at the end of this document). Subdivision was done in the second half of the 1980's and many trees in the vicinity had been cleared at that time. Aerial imagery from 1981 (Landgate, 2022) shows very few trees in that area; the next useful image from Landgate is from 2000 and there may be the very start of some regrowth occurring in that image, although it seems like a fire (or something) may have effectively cleared most of the immediate area again sometime between 2000 and 2003. By 2010 it seems like a row of small paperbark trees were established within the roadside drain in the proposed clearing area. Presumably these trees have been pruned down periodically to keep them below the overhead 3-phase power lines, which perhaps partly explains their comparatively small size in contrast, for example, to those along the creek on our property, which seem to have regrown into a decent sized stand of paperbark trees between 1981 (when they appear to have been thinned out along the creek quite a lot) and 2000 by which time there were many more trees along the creek. Their canopies have grown significantly between 2000 and the present day, despite maybe also having had some kind of setback between 2000 and 2003. In contrast, the trees in the proposed clearing area have had limited opportunity to grow given their restraints vertically and horizontally due to the adjacent road and overhead power lines.

We believe that if Western Power or the Shire of Gingin were clearing the trees in the proposed clearing area, they would have an exemption under the 'Environmental Protection Act 1986', 'Schedule 6 — Clearing for which a clearing permit is not required', clause 10B, which states that a permit is not required for: "10B. Clearing that is done by the occupier of land, or an energy operator, under the Energy Operators (Powers) Act 1979 section 54." The 'Energy Operators (Powers) Act 1979', section 54, clause 1, states that "(1) It shall be the duty of the occupier of any land on or over which vegetation is growing to fell or lop, or to remove or otherwise deal with, in such manner as is reasonable in the circumstances, so much of any vegetation as is necessary to prevent it interfering with or obstructing, or becoming likely to interfere with or obstruct, the **construction**, maintenance or safe use of any supply system." (emphasis added)

However, given Western Power have asked us to gain approval for, and undertake, the clearing we have been advised, via the emails in the table above, that this exemption does not apply in this instance as we are not the owners of the land on which the clearing is to take place. Nonetheless, we hope that the necessity for us to connect power to our lot is evident and that, given the proposed area is reasonably small and not within a designated environmentally sensitive area, it may be acceptable for the clearing to take place. If possible to expedite the process in any way then that would be greatly appreciated given how long we have already had to wait for the Western Power design/quote.

Photos of the clearing area are included in the remainder of this document.

Thank you for your consideration,

Shane David Ray

My Tien (Angela) Ray

Geolocated Photographs of Whole Area

The following section contains photographs of the whole area to be cleared, with the following notes:

1. No. 1 starts on Eastern end
2. No. 10 is at Western end
3. The numbers are spaced 10m apart
4. The photos are geo-located and show the approximate heading the camera is pointing towards when taken
5. There are trees in the background that are not to be cleared. The clearing will not go beyond the fence line that can be seen in the background, behind which there are more trees.



☀ 354°N (T) ● -31.336727, 115.864681 ±4m ▲ 40m



14 July 2024, 7:49:08 am



☀ 349°N (T) ● -31.336728, 115.86458 ±4m ▲ 40m



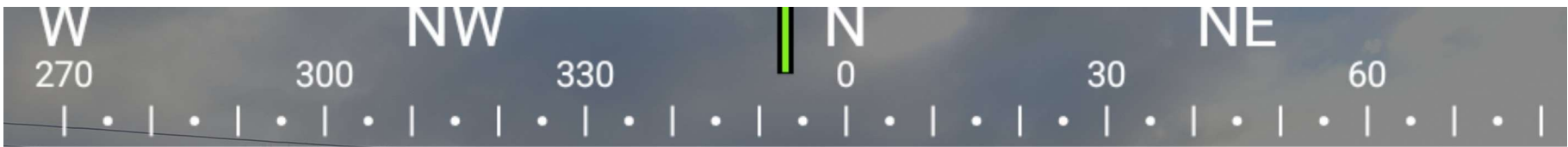
14 July 2024, 7:49:25 am



☀ 345°NW (T) ● -31.336728, 115.864493 ±4m ▲ 40m



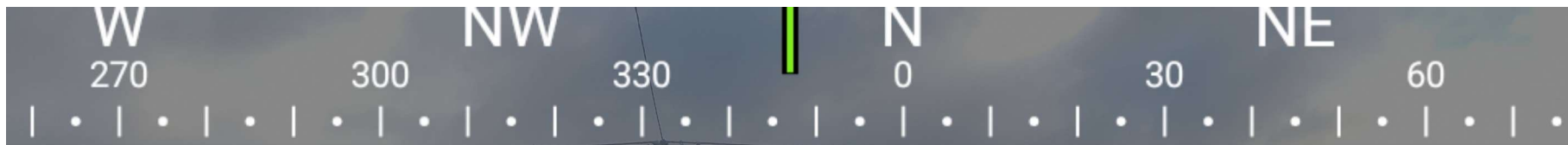
14 July 2024, 7:49:41 am



☀ 353°N (T) ● -31.336716, 115.864381 ±4m ▲ 41m



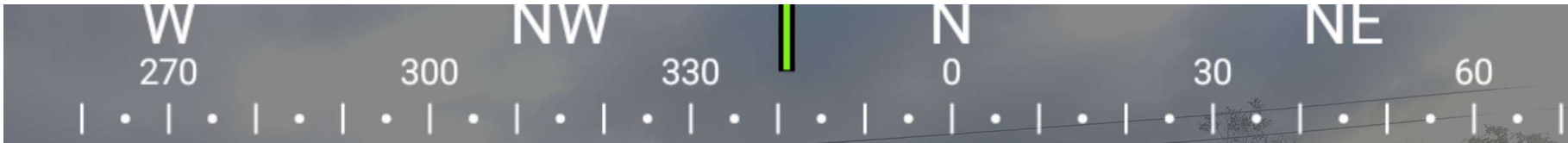
14 July 2024, 7:56:54 am



☀ 347°NW (T) ● -31.336715, 115.864289 ±3m ▲ 42m



14 July 2024, 7:57:10 am



☀ 341°NW (T) ● -31.336724, 115.864195 ±3m ▲ 41m



14 July 2024, 7:57:26 am



☉ 351°N (T) ● -31.33673, 115.864077 ±3m ▲ 41m



14 July 2024, 8:02:45 am



☉ 348°N (T) ● -31.336709, 115.863986 ±3m ▲ 40m



14 July 2024, 8:03:01 am



☉ 343°NW (T) ● -31.336737, 115.863872 ±3m ▲ 39m



14 July 2024, 8:03:16 am

Panorama (Closer Up) Photographs of Each Image Shown Above

The following section contains photographs of each area taken using a 'panorama' photography feature. This allows a closer view of the area to be cleared, with the following notes:

1. The number markers are in the same positions as in the photos in the section above
2. The 'panorama' feature distorts the view, making the trees in the centre appear closer and the trees at the sides further away; similarly the edge of Bell Rd appears to make a V-shape instead of being a straight line
3. The 'panorama' feature may not perfectly joint the vegetation together and so these images are representative without necessarily being completely correct
4. The note in the prior section about some background trees being visible, which are not to be cleared still applies. No trees behind the fence line are to be cleared.

















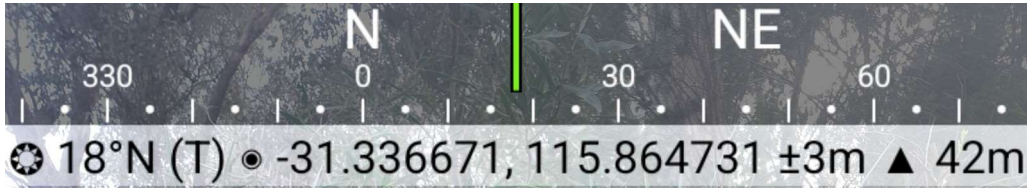


Identification of Flora

The following section contains additional photographs that assist in identifying the flora found within the clearing area. The following species have been identified:

1. The majority of the area is filled with dense, small Swamp Paperbark trees (*Melaleuca raphiophylla*). No additional photos are provided as the majority of the photos in the sections above show these trees.
2. There is one tree that is an acacia tree, believed to be an Orange Wattle (*Acacia saligna*)
3. There is one Grey Stinkwood shrub (*Jacksonia furcellata*)
4. There is one tree that was unable to be identified but which appears to be dead
5. There is one juvenile eucalyptus tree. Not certain of the species but given the ovate leaf shape, despite the juvenile tree being relatively taller than a sapling, perhaps it could be a Red Box (*Eucalyptus polyanthemos* subsp. *polyanthemos*).

The species identified as numbers 1 - 3 above are listed as 'Not threatened' on florabase.dbca.wa.gov.au.

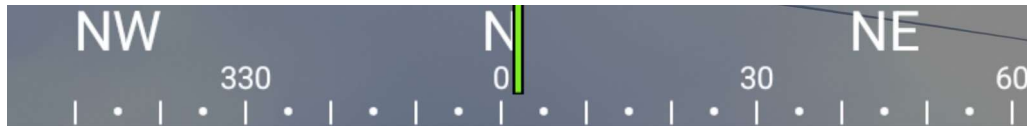


14 July 2024, 8:08:36 am

Orange Wattle (*Acacia saligna*)



14 July 2024, 8:08:43 am



☀ 2°N (T) ● -31.336674, 115.864488 ±3m ▲ 42m



14 July 2024, 8:07:44 am

Grey Stinkwood shrub (*Jacksonia furcellata*)



☀ 1°N (T) ● -31.336665, 115.864491 ±3m ▲ 42m



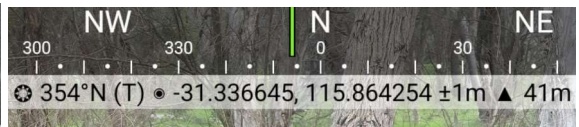
14 July 2024, 8:07:50 am



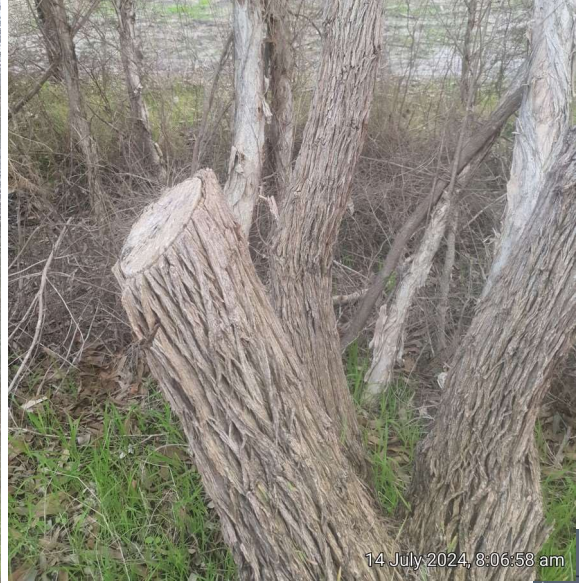
☀ 2°N (T) • -31.336661, 115.86426 ±3m ▲ 41m



14 July 2024, 8:06:44 am



☀ 354°N (T) • -31.336645, 115.864254 ±1m ▲ 41m



14 July 2024, 8:06:58 am

Unknown Tree (dead?)



☀ 358°N (T) • -31.33665, 115.864253 ±3m ▲ 42m



14 July 2024, 8:07:13 am

NW 330 N 0 NE 60
5°N (T) -31.336641, 115.863969 ±4m ▲ 40m



Red Box (*Eucalyptus polyanthemus* subsp. *polyanthemus*)?