

Application for a clearing referral – Falls Road Shared Path Serpentine

Background

The proposed project is a State election commitment to extend the shared use path from the Serpentine Town Centre along Karnup Road to the Serpentine Falls entrance along Falls Road in Serpentine. The Shire is submitting this referral to the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation to determine whether a clearing permit under the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* is required to clear up to 0.042 ha of vegetation along a 150 m section of road verge as per the following information.

i) Avoidance

The Shire has assessed the vegetation on the north and south of Falls Road to determine the path alignment that will require the least amount of vegetation clearing from within the Guildford Vegetation Complex. The majority of the path alignment along the road verge has been previously cleared and is void of any native vegetation.

One section of the proposed shared path contains vegetation on the north and south side of Falls Road. The northern section, subject to this clearing referral, contains vegetation in a degraded condition, comprising the species *Acacia saligna*, *Labichea lanceolata*, *Eucalyptus rudis* and the weed Blackberry (**Rubus* sp.) (Photos 1-5).

Florabase lists *Labichea lanceolata* as a shrub with a mixed naturalised status. The presence of the species in a previously dredged drainage channel (Multiple Use Wetland) and powerline corridor indicates that the vegetation may be naturalised rather than indicative of remnant native vegetation. Additionally, *Acacia saligna* is known to grow in disturbed environments, such as drainage channels and road verges.

An Atlas of Living Australia Report in a 3km radius of the project area found records of two species of *Labichea* including *Labichea lanceolata* and *Labichea punctata* (Attachment 2). These species are not listed as Threatened or Priority species under the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*.

Small trees sprouting epicormically, thought to be *Eucalyptus rudis*, were growing more than 3 m from the sealed road on the north side (Photo 5) and will be retained during the clearing process, as will the shrubs of *Labichea lanceolata* growing greater than 3 m from the road seal. There is evidence that the *Eucalyptus* trees have been recently pruned, possibly by Western Power, to provide a safe clearance beneath the overhead powerlines.

The southern section of the road contained large mature *Eucalyptus rudis* trees (Photo 6). By constructing the road on the north side of Falls Road, the clearing of several large *Eucalyptus* trees will be avoided in lieu of degraded vegetation on the north side. These *Eucalyptus* trees would likely be classified as potential habitat trees for Black Cockatoos based on DBH over 500 mm.

ii) Mitigation

The Shire will employ the following mitigation measures:

1. **Pruning:** The shrubs were observed growing along the drain from 2.5 m to 3 m from the sealed road. Therefore, it may be possible to prune, rather than remove large shrubs in some locations.
2. **Dieback management:** The Shire will implement dieback management during earth works. This will involve working in drier weather where possible, cleaning mud and plant material from machinery and vehicles prior to accessing and leaving the project area.
3. **Weed management:** The Shire will ensure all green waste generated through the proposed clearing is disposed of in an authorised waste facility.



Photo 1. *Labichea lanceolata* growing along the road verge.



Photo 2. *Labiichea lanceolata* growing along the road verge.



Photo 3. *Labichea lanceolata* intermixed with *Rubus* sp.

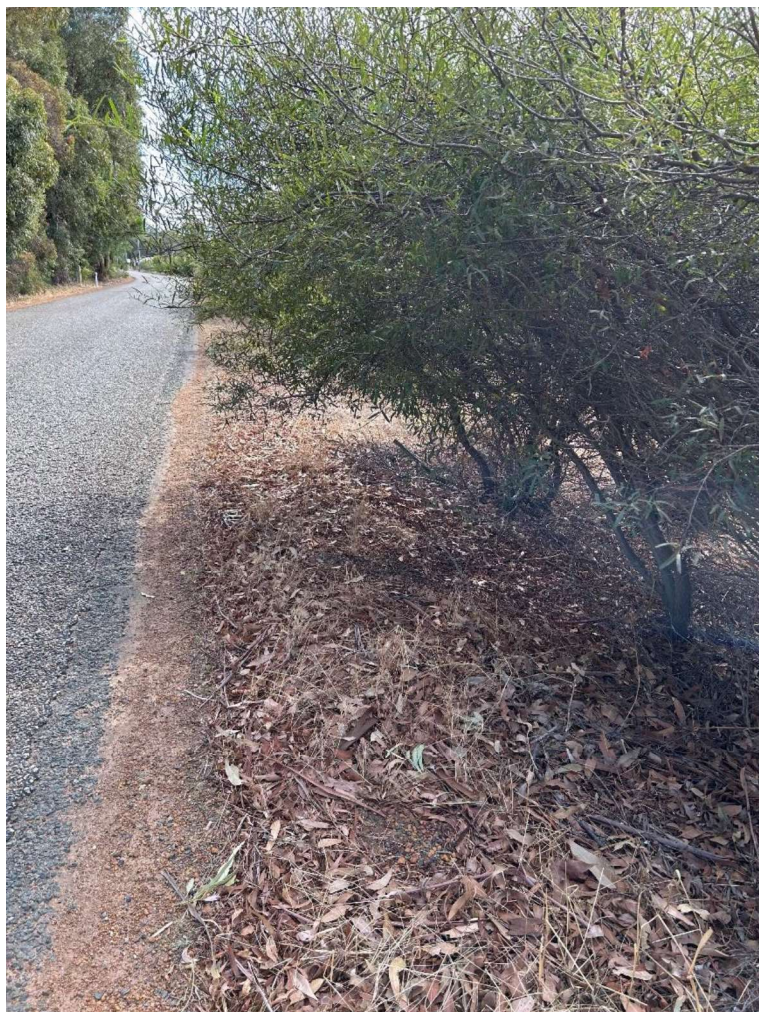


Photo 4. *Labichea lanceolata* growing along the road verge.



Photo 5. Tree, *thought to be Eucalyptus rudis*, growing along road verge that would be retained.



Photo 6. Large *E. rudis* growing on south side of Falls Road which will be avoided during the clearing process.