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Christmas Creek Network Extension

Native Vegetation Clearing Referral

Supporting Document

December 2025

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1. Introduction

1.1 Project Context

Horizon Power is a Western Australian (WA) Government Trading Enterprise (GTE) and the state's regional and remote energy utility. Horizon Power operates under the *Electricity Corporations Act 2005* and is governed by a Board of Directors accountable to the Minister for Energy. Horizon Power is an experienced asset manager undertaking active management of vast electricity networks across WA, utilising mature and robust operational, health and safety, and environmental systems.

Horizon Power has been engaged for the provision of supporting infrastructure for the high voltage customer connection located at Christmas Creek Road within the Wangka Jungkan remote community in WA. Horizon Power is proposing to install a new 83A/415V connection, including 5 new poles as well as a ground mounted transformer.

The proposed work will involve clearing of vegetation, civil works, installation of poles and associated infrastructure. Clearing required will be up to two native trees.

1.2 Scope and Purpose

The purpose of this document is to demonstrate that the proposed clearing of native vegetation for the customer connection satisfies the four Criterion outlined in 'Guideline: Native Vegetation Clearing Referrals' (DWER, 2021) and, as such, should be considered a 'very low environmental impact activity' that does not require a clearing permit.

To demonstrate this, Horizon Power has provided:

- An overview of the activity and a description of the proposed clearing.
- Avoidance, mitigation and management measures applied to minimise the clearing of native vegetation and reduce the likelihood of environmental impacts associated with the activity.
- An assessment of the clearing against the four Criterion specified in DWER (2021).

A Standard Construction Environmental Management Plan is also provided (Appendix A). This is a standard requirement of the Horizon Power Environmental Management System for projects clearing native vegetation where specific project approvals do not apply.

2. Description of the Activity

As discussed in Section 1, the work will involve the clearing of vegetation, civil works, installation of underground cables and associated infrastructure. Clearing will be limited to two trees.

Horizon Power intends to undertake these works through the exercise of powers conferred by sections 46 and 49 of the *Energy Operators (Powers) Act 1979* (the Act) and as such do not require landowner permission. As required under the Act, Horizon Power will notify all landowners of the proposed work through a formal Notice of Entry.

3. Description of Proposed Clearing

3.1 Extent of Proposed Clearing

The impact area is detailed on Figure 1 and Table 1.

3.2 Proposed Clearing Locations

Table 1 Land parcels within DE

Lot on Plan	Volume	Folio
Lot 1560 on DP 74360 (Lease Christmas Creek Holding Co Pty Ltd)	3162	939
Lot 44 on DP 189358	3144	741



Figure 1. Impact Area; up to two trees to be cleared

3.3 Proposed Clearing Method

Clearing will be undertaken by mechanical and non-mechanical means.

3.4 Avoidance, Mitigation and Management Measures

The site is situated within an area that has previously been cleared. Clearing of up to two native trees will be required for pole installation. Utilising the existing access track and previously cleared areas will reduce the disturbance to native vegetation.

Horizon Power is a mature and competent asset manager with an established Environmental Management System and extensive assets across Western Australia under active management. Clearing activities are undertaken following standardised processes and will be implemented in accordance with our Standard Construction Environmental Management Plan (Appendix A), which includes the following measures to minimise potential impacts.

- Clearing will be minimised where possible through placement of assets in existing cleared or areas of minimal vegetation where possible, along with utilising the existing access track.
- Clearing locations will be demarcated prior to clearing activities.
- Standard weed and hygiene management practices which will be applied to these works.
- Clearing will be undertaken slowly and in a one-way direction to allow fauna to move offsite if present.

4. Suitability for the Clearing Referral Process

The 'Guideline: Native Vegetation Clearing Referrals' (DWER, 2021) Section 5.3 outlines those clearing activities not considered to be suitable for the Clearing Referral process. Table 2 demonstrates that the proposed clearing activity is suitable for assessment under the Clearing Referral process.

Table 2 Assessment of Suitability for the Clearing Referral Process

Aspect	Assessment	Suitable? (Yes/No)
The referral process cannot be used for proposed clearing on land subject to an agreement to reserve or a conservation covenant under the Soil and Land Conservation Act 1945 (SLC Act)	Land is not subject to a conservation covenant.	Yes
The referral process cannot be used for proposed clearing on land subject to an environmental protection covenant under Part VB of the EP Act	Land is not subject to an environmental protection covenant.	Yes
The referral process is not suitable for proposed clearing that is not likely to be completed within two years.	The works are proposed to commence in 2026.	Yes
The referral process is not suitable for proposed clearing that will contravene the requirements of a soil conservation notice issued under Part V of the SLC Act	The proposed clearing activity will not contravene the requirements of a soil conservation notice issued under Part V of the SLC Act.	Yes
The referral process is not suitable for proposed clearing that will or is likely to have a significant impact on matters of national environmental significance (MNES)	The proposed clearing is not likely to have a significant impact on MNES. No EPBC Act listed flora, fauna or ecological communities are likely to be impacted.	Yes
The referral process is not suitable for proposed clearing that includes marine native vegetation clearing activities	No clearing of marine native vegetation is proposed.	Yes
The referral process is not suitable for proposed clearing that may impact on protected or otherwise significant flora or fauna	The proposed clearing is not likely to have a significant impact on protected or otherwise conservation significant flora or fauna (as detailed in Section 5).	Yes
The referral process is not suitable for proposed clearing that will be within a highly cleared landscape or an area containing limited or restricted native vegetation types.	The proposed clearing is not within an extensively cleared landscape or an area containing limited or restricted native vegetation types, as detailed in Section 5. More than 99% of the Pre-European Vegetation Association's extent remains.	Yes
The referral process is not suitable for proposed clearing that is on land previously reserved as an environmental offset under the conditions of another approval under the EP Act.	A review of the DWER Offsets Register (via spatial dataset DWER-078; GoWA, 2022) indicates that the land is not reserved as an environmental offset under the conditions of an approval under the EP Act.	Yes

5. Assessment Against DWER Criterion

5.1 Criterion 1: The area proposed to be cleared is small relative to the total remaining vegetation

The proposed clearing activity satisfies Criterion 1, as detailed in the following tables.

Table 3 Assessment of the Proposed Clearing Activity Against Criterion 1

Aspect	Assessment
Extent of proposed clearing	The total proposed clearing is limited to two trees. This is less than the 10 ha threshold for clearing activities located north of the 26° latitude line.
Threshold for remaining extent of native vegetation association or complex in the relevant IBRA bioregion	More than 30% of the relevant vegetation associations remain within the relevant IBRA bioregion, therefore; a permit is not required on this basis.
Threshold for remaining native vegetation surrounding the boundary of the proposed clearing	Within a 10 km buffer of the proposed clearing more than 30% native vegetation is remaining (GoWA 2022; DPIRD-055). Therefore, a permit is not required on this basis.

Table 4 Pre-European Vegetation Association Extents

Vegetation association	Scale	Pre-European extent (ha)	Current extent (ha)	% Remaining	% of current extent in all Department of Biodiversity Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) managed land (proportion of current extent)
565 South Fitzroy Plain	State: WA	143,438.92	143,427.36	99.99	-
	IBRA Bioregion: Ord Victoria Plain	34,443.49	34,443.49	100.00	-
	IBRA Subregion: South Kimberley Interzone	34,443.49	34,443.49	100.00	-
	LGA: Shire of Derby-West Kimberly	34,482.20	34,482.20	100.00	-

5.2 Criterion 2: There are no known or likely significant environmental values within the area

The proposed clearing activity satisfies Criterion 2, as detailed in the following tables.

Table 6 Assessment of the Proposed Clearing Activity Against Criterion 2

Environmental value	Assessment
Vegetation type and condition	<p>The proposed clearing sites are comprised of scattered and loosely-spaced hummock grassland with minimal trees, consisting mainly of spinifex (<i>Triodia spp.</i>) and associated vegetation which is commensurate with the mapped vegetation known to occur in Vegetation Association 565. Vegetation is sparse and scattered, showing evidence of degradation including possible weeds and edge effects from the previously cleared areas.</p> <p>The proposed clearing of two trees required for this scope of works is not considered likely to impact significant environmental values.</p>
Significant fauna and habitat	<p>Twenty two conservation significant fauna species were considered likely or possibly occurring within the vicinity of the proposed clearing with a 10 km buffer applied (Appendix B).</p> <p>Significant impacts are not expected given the widespread availability of habitat in the region and removal of only two trees.</p>
Significant ecological linkage	The proposed clearing is not part of a significant ecological linkage.
Mapped ecological community	No Threatened Ecological Communities listed under the EPBC Act or EP Act were identified within the proposed clearing area. No Priority Ecological Communities listed by DBCA were identified from desktop searches to be within the proposed clearing area.
Significant flora	<p>No Threatened or Priority species were identified as likely to occur within the proposed clearing area. Desktop searches identified one Priority flora species within 10 km of the proposed clearing area. Aerial imagery shows that the area has already been cleared. Therefore, it is not anticipated that any significant flora would be impacted by this activity.</p>
Water resources	<p>The proposed clearing area is located approximately 100 km inland of the coast, installation of the proposed new underground cables and infrastructure require trenching of approximately 1.00 m below ground level, no groundwater impacts are expected from the proposed activities.</p> <p>No Internationally (Ramsar) or nationally important wetlands are located within 10 km of the proposed clearing area.</p>
Conservation Reserve	No conservation areas are present within 10 km of the proposed clearing. No impacts to conservation areas are anticipated in association with this scope of works.
Environmentally Sensitive Areas	The proposed works are not in an Environmentally Sensitive area.
Land and soil quality	A review of the Atlas of Australian Acid Sulfate Soils (CSIRO, 2025) indicates a low probability of occurrence of Acid Sulphate Soils (ASS) occurring. The sites do not intersect any known contamination. No off-site impacts are anticipated in association with the activity. Land and soil quality is not likely to be impacted by the activity.
Heritage-related values and native title matters	<p>One registered Aboriginal heritage site intersects the proposed clearing area, the Christmas Creek Store (12235). Horizon Power is seeking clarification from DPLH to determine if any further approvals (under the <i>Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972</i> and the <i>Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 1974</i>) are required. Horizon Power has an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Management Policy and have, established internal processes to protect and mitigate the risk of impacting Aboriginal cultural heritage.</p> <p>There are no native title implications of the proposed works.</p> <p>None of the proposed clearing areas are within a World Heritage Area, a National Heritage Area the West Kimberly (a listed place) occurs within the proposed clearing area, however no impacts are anticipated.</p>

5.3 Criterion 3: The state of scientific knowledge of native vegetation within the region is adequate

The Project area is located within the Old Victorian Plain bioregion and South Kimberley Interzone subregion; both have over 99% of Pre-European vegetation remaining for the Vegetation Association 565.

Vegetation Association 565 is described as Hummock grasslands, low tree steppe; bloodwood over soft spinifex. This is an extensive vegetation type, covering a total area of over 140,000 ha in Western Australia. In addition, 159 surveys of the Old Victorian Plain Bioregion are detailed on the Index of Biodiversity Surveys for Assessments (IBSA) database (DWER 2022). It is, therefore, considered that the state of scientific knowledge of native vegetation within the region is adequate.

5.4 Criterion 4: Conditions will not be required to manage environmental impacts

Due to the small scale of clearing and low environmental impact of the clearing activity, non-standard controls are not considered to be required to manage environmental impacts for this work. Avoidance, mitigation and management measures have been applied to the scope of works, as detailed in Section 3.4. A standard CEMP will be applied during construction (Appendix A). Given the application of these measures, as well as the abundance of native vegetation within and surrounding the impact area and the limited clearing proposed, it is considered that clearing can be undertaken without conditions being applied to further manage environmental impacts.

6. References

Beard, J.S, Beeston, G.R, Judith, H., Hopkins, A. J. M 2013, The Vegetation of Western Australia at the 1:3,000,000 Scale. Explanatory Memoir. Second Edition. Conservation Science Western Australia. 9. 1-152.

Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) 2021, Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 Protected Matters Search Tool Results, retrieved December 2025.

Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER), 2021. *Guideline: Native Vegetation Clearing Referrals*, Available at: <https://www.wa.gov.au/service/environment/environment-information-services/guideline-native-vegetation-clearing-referrals>, Accessed December 2025.

DWER, 2022. Index of Biodiversity Surveys for Assessments (IBSA), https://biocollect.ala.org.au/ibsa#q%3D*pilbara*%26queryText%3D*pilbara*%26max%3D30%26sort%3DdateCreatedSort , accessed December 2025.

GoWA (2022). *Data WA*. Available at: <https://data.wa.gov.au/>, accessed December 2025.

Environmentally Sensitive Areas (DWER-046)

Pre-European vegetation (DPIRD-006)

Aboriginal heritage sites (DPLH-001)

Heritage Council WA – State Register (DPLH-006)

Legislated Lands and Waters (DBCA-011)

RIWI Act, Rivers (DWER-036)

Public Drinking Water Source Areas (DWER-033)

RIWI Act, Surface Water and Irrigation Districts (DWER-037)

RIWI Act, Groundwater Areas (DWER-034)

Appendix A: Standard Construction Environmental Management Plan

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Christmas Creek Network Expansion Construction Environmental Management Plan

December 2025

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1 Introduction

1.1 Project Context and Scope

Regional Power Corporation, trading as (T/A) Horizon Power, is a Western Australian (WA) Government Trading Enterprise (GTE) and the state's regional and remote energy provider. Horizon Power operates under the Electricity Corporations Act 2005 and is governed by a Board of Directors accountable to the Minister for Energy.

Horizon Power has been engaged for the provision of supporting infrastructure for the high voltage customer connection located at Christmas Creek Road within the Wangka Jungkan remote community in WA. Horizon Power is proposing to install a new 83A/415V connection, including 5 new poles as well as a ground mounted transformer.

Clearing will be limited to two trees for the Project.

1.2 Scope and purpose

This Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) has been developed to outline environmental management measures to be implemented by Horizon Power and its contractors during the construction of the Project. This includes, but is not limited to, measures to manage dust, erosion and spread of weeds during clearing of native vegetation. The CEMP will be provided to personnel and contractors prior to undertaking the scope of works to ensure the environmental advice will be complied with.

2 Description of the Activity

2.1 Activity Overview

As discussed in Section 1, the work will involve the clearing of vegetation, civil works, installation of underground cables and associated infrastructure. Clearing will be limited to two trees.

Clearing will be undertaken via mechanical and non-mechanical removal.

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Figure 1 Impact Area; up to two trees to be cleared

3 Management Measures

The management measures listed in Table 1 will be implemented during construction for this Project.

Table 1 Management Measures to be Implemented During Construction

Aspect	Management Measure
Extent of Clearing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – No more than two trees will be removed. – The clearing locations are to be demarcated prior to clearing activities. – A pre-clearing toolbox will be held so all staff are aware of their responsibilities and the limits of clearing.
Fauna	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Construction personnel will not touch, feed or otherwise directly interact with fauna.
Weeds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The Contractor will ensure that no weed-affected soil, mulch, fill or other material is brought onto the site. – All vehicles and machinery will arrive clean on site. – Movement of vehicles and machinery will be restricted to the area to be cleared and existing cleared areas.
Erosion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Standard construction measures regarding erosion and sediment control will be implemented during construction works.
Dust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Standard construction dust control and mitigation measures will be implemented during clearing. This may include the use of a water truck, or similar. – Ground disturbance and clearing of vegetation will be restricted during high winds if dust cannot be adequately controlled.
Noise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The contractor will comply with the Environmental Protection (Noise) Regulations 1997. – Complaints regarding noise will be recorded and investigated by Horizon Power.
Waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Rubbish will be disposed of in appropriate containers and all waste will be removed from the site.
Hydrocarbons and chemicals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Hydrocarbons and chemicals will be appropriately managed on site to prevent spills, including maintaining equipment in good working order in accordance with manufacturers specifications. – No refuelling will be undertaken within 50 m of a waterway, drain or drainage line. – Hydrocarbons will be appropriately stored at least 50 m away from drainage lines and stored in an appropriately bunded container. – Refuelling will be undertaken on hardstand or using catch trays only. Uncontrolled refuelling is not permitted. – Chemicals will be appropriately stored.
Contamination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Unexpected finds protocols will be applied including immediate stop work if contamination is suspected.

Appendix B: Species that may or are likely to occur

Scientific Name	Common Name	Presence	Commonwealth Threatened Category	State listing category (Under EP Act or listed by DBCA)	Migratory Status	Preferred habitat
<i>Rostratula australis</i>	Australian Painted Snipe	Species or species habitat may occur within area	Endangered	Endangered		The Australian Painted Snipe generally inhabits shallow terrestrial freshwater (occasionally brackish) wetlands, including temporary and permanent lakes, swamps and claypans.
<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	Barn Swallow	Species or species habitat may occur within area		Migratory	Migratory	In Australia, the Barn Swallow is recorded in open country in coastal lowlands, often near water, towns and cities.
<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	Common Sandpiper	Species or species habitat may occur within area		Migratory	Migratory	The species utilises a wide range of coastal wetlands and some inland wetlands.
<i>Calidris ferruginea</i>	Curlew Sandpiper	Species or species habitat may occur within area	Critically Endangered	Critically Endangered	Migratory	Curlew Sandpipers mainly occur on intertidal mudflats in sheltered coastal areas, such as estuaries, bays, inlets and lagoons, and also around non-tidal swamps, lakes and lagoons near the coast, and ponds in saltworks and sewage farms.
<i>Apus pacificus</i>	Fork-tailed Swift	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area		Migratory	Migratory	In Australia, they mostly occur over inland plains but sometimes above foothills or in coastal areas.
<i>Macroderma gigas</i>	Ghost Bat	Species or species habitat known to occur within area	Vulnerable	Vulnerable		Ghost bats occur in the Pilbara and the Kimberley, with abandoned mine adits.
<i>Chloebia gouldiae</i>	Gouldian Finch	Species or species habitat known to occur within area	Endangered	Priority 4		Gouldian finches feed almost exclusively on grass seed and depend on a relatively small number of grass species which seed at different times throughout the year.
<i>Liopholis kintorei</i>	Great Desert Skink	Species or species habitat may occur within area	Vulnerable	Vulnerable		The Great Desert Skink generally occurs on red sandplains and sand ridges.
<i>Macrotis lagotis</i>	Greater Bilby	Species or species habitat may occur within area	Vulnerable	Vulnerable		Bilbies occupy a range of habitats including: open tussock grassland on uplands and hills; mulga woodland/shrubland growing on ridges and rises; and hummock grassland on plains and in alluvial areas.
<i>Falco hypoleucos</i>	Grey Falcon	Species or species habitat likely to occur within area	Vulnerable	Vulnerable		The species frequents timbered lowland plains, particularly acacia shrublands that are crossed by tree-lined water courses

Scientific Name	Common Name	Presence	Commonwealth Threatened Category	State listing category (Under EP Act or listed by DBCA)	Migratory Status	Preferred habitat
<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	Grey Wagtail	Species or species habitat may occur within area		Migratory	Migratory	Often near flowing water with nearby rocks or surrogate rocky habitat, from mountain streams to weirs in suburban parklands.
<i>Pezoporus occidentalis</i>	Night Parrot	Species or species habitat may occur within area	Critically Endangered	Critically Endangered		Night parrots are highly cryptic in nature, being nocturnal, primarily ground-feeding parrots, that inhabit remote arid and semi-arid areas of Australia
<i>Tiliqua scincoides intermedia</i>	Northern Blue-tongued Skink	Species or species habitat known to occur within area	Critically Endangered			The northern blue-tongue skink has been recorded from dissected sandstone plateaus and gorges, limestone ranges, granite, basalt and dolerite hills, glacial shale undulations, sand plains, sandy waterways, swamps, cracking clay floodplains and coastal flats.
<i>Trichosurus vulpecula arnhemensis</i>	Northern Brushtail Possum	Species or species habitat may occur within area	Vulnerable			The Northern Brush-tail Possum occurs mainly in tall eucalypt open forests with large hollow-bearing trees.
<i>Dasyurus hallucatus</i>	Northern Quoll	Species or species habitat may occur within area	Endangered	Endangered		The Northern Quoll occupies a diversity of habitats across its range which includes rocky areas, eucalypt forest and woodlands, rainforests, sandy lowlands and beaches, shrubland, grasslands and desert.
<i>Charadrius veredus</i>	Oriental Plover	Species or species habitat may occur within area		Migratory	Migratory	After arriving in non-breeding grounds in northern Australia, Oriental Plovers spend a few weeks in coastal habitats.
<i>Calidris melanotos</i>	Pectoral Sandpiper	Species or species habitat may occur within area		Migratory	Migratory	In Australasia, the Pectoral Sandpiper prefers shallow fresh to saline wetlands.
<i>Polytelis alexandrae</i>	Princess Parrot	Species or species habitat may occur within area	Vulnerable	Priority 4		The Princess Parrot inhabits sand dunes and sand flats in the arid zone of western and central Australia.
<i>Erythrorhynchus radiatus</i>	Red Goshawk	Species or species habitat may occur within area	Endangered	Endangered		The Red Goshawk occurs in coastal and sub-coastal areas in wooded and forested lands of tropical and warm-temperate Australia.
<i>Calidris acuminata</i>	Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	Species or species habitat may occur within area	Vulnerable	Migratory		In Australia, the Sharp-tailed Sandpiper prefers muddy edges of shallow fresh or brackish wetlands, with inundated or emergent sedges, grass, saltmarsh or other low vegetation.
<i>Motacilla flava</i>	Yellow Wagtail	Species or species habitat may occur within area		Migratory	Migratory	The yellow wagtail occupies damp marshes, meadows and farmland.