Clearing Desktop Report – Short Form

This Clearing Desktop Report – Short Form is required for proposals with low clearing impacts that do not require a full assessment through a Clearing Desktop Report (CDR). Clearing that may be or is at variance should not be assessed using this form. This form must be reviewed and endorsed by the Central Review and Submissions Process (CRSP) Team, who will determine whether the clearing impacts have been assessed properly. Send the form via clearingpermit@mainroads.wa.gov.au. The Environment Officer will be advised within **2 business days** if the assessment of the proposal clearing is endorsed. Refer to the Factsheet on the Assessment of Low Impact Clearing under Main Roads Statewide Clearing Permit CPS 818 (D17#452322) for further information. Text in *red italics* are guidance notes and should be deleted once the HRA is complete. Blue non-italicised text is where relevant information is to be added and changed to black once complete.

1. PROPOSAL DETAILS

Proposal Name:	*M041 Corner Wells Road, Sightline Clearing 3 trees.*		
Region/Directorate:	Wheatbelt		
Local Government:	York		
Road/Bridge Name & Number:	*M041 York Merredin Road*		
Proposal Location (SLK):	*26.04 SLK – 26.03 SLK*		
CDR Short Form TRIM Number:	*D25#82637*		
Spatial Data TRIM Number:	*D25#58297*		
EOS Number:	3589		
Expected Proposal Start Date:	After Approval		
Oracle Project No:	30000921	**Task Code:**	741.16
LISC TRIM Number:	D25#60209	**HRA TRIM Number:**	D25#60184

2. PURPOSE OF CLEARING

Three trees require removal to allow safe access onto York Merredin Road from Corner Wells Road for all road users, including persons travelling on the local school bus. The three trees are obstructing the sightlines of traffic turning onto York Merredin Rd from Corner Wells Rd.

3. ALTERNATIVES TO CLEARING

The works are to increase safety of an existing intersection. No modifications to the road network are proposed given only minor clearing is required to achieve desired safety improvement. There are no other feasible alternatives to improve sightlines for road users at this location.

4. MEASURES TO AVOID, MINIMISE, MITIGATE AND MANAGE PROPOSAL CLEARING IMPACTS

Vegetation to be cleared will be marked prior to clearing and the movement of machinery will be restricted to identified locations. This approach will prevent accidental over-clearing. No native understorey or ground cover is present in the area and consequently, only 0.0078 ha of vegetation will be impacted during clearing.

5. APPROVED POLICES AND PLANNING INSTRUMENTS

The clearing of native vegetation in Western Australia is regulated under the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* (EP Act) and the Environmental Protection (Clearing of Native Vegetation) Regulations 2004 (Clearing Regulations).

In addition to the matters considered in accordance with section 51O of the EP Act (see Section 1.3), Main Roads has also had regard to the following documents.

Environmental Protection Policies:

- Environmental Protection (Peel Inlet - Harvey Estuary) Policy 1992
- Environmental Protection (Western Swamp Tortoise Habitat) Policy 2011

Other legislation of relevance for assessment of clearing and planning/other matters:

- *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* (WA) (BC Act)

- *Conservation and Land Management Act 1984* (WA) (CALM Act)
- *Country Areas Water Supply Act 1947* (WA) (CAWS Act)
- *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth) (EPBC Act)
- *Planning and Development Act 2005* (WA) (P&D Act)
- *Soil and Land Conservation Act 1945* (WA)
- *Rights in Water and Irrigation Act 1914* (WA) (RIWI Act)
- *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972* (WA) (AHA)
- *Town Planning and Development Act* (WA)*1928*

Relevant other policies and guidance documents:

- Environmental Offsets Policy (Government of Western Australia, 2011)
- A guide to the assessment of applications to clear native vegetation (DER, 2014)
- Procedure: Native vegetation clearing permits (DWER, October 2021)
- Environmental Offsets Guidelines (Government of Western Australia, August 2014)
- Technical guidance – Flora and Vegetation Surveys for Environmental Impact Assessment (EPA, 2016)
- Technical guidance – Terrestrial Vertebrate Fauna Surveys for Environmental Impact Assessment (EPA, 2020)
- Approved conservation advice under section 266B of the EPBC Act for threatened flora/fauna/vegetation communities
- Approved Recovery Plans for threatened species
- EPBC Act Referral guidelines for the three threatened black cockatoo species
- Strategic advice - EPA

6. CLEARING AREA

Clearing Area (ha):	0.0078 ha	**No. Trees Cleared:**	One *Eucalyptus wandoo* and two *Allocasuarina huegeliana*
Species Name(s):	*Eucalyptus wandoo and Allocasuarina huegeliana*		
Easting and Northing:	50J 500345 6465668		

7. EXISTING ENVIRONMENT AND SITE INFORMATION

Site Vegetation Description/Association:	Vegetation to be cleared consists of one *Eucalyptus wandoo* (Wandoo) tree and two *Allocasuarina huegeliana* (Sheoak) trees that are located within the Medium woodland; York gum vegetation association (Beard Vegetation Association 352) at a regional scale.
Site Vegetation Condition:	Degraded to Completely Degraded (Keighery, 1994)
Pre-European Extent Remaining (%):	19.61% (Statewide)

8. ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSAL AGAINST CLEARING PRINCIPLES

Is vegetation to be cleared at variance with:	Justification or Evidence:
Principle (a) – Native vegetation should not be cleared if it comprises a high level of biological diversity.	The vegetation proposed to be cleared consists of three roadside trees (one Wandoo and two Sheaok) on the south eastern corner of a patch (approximately 5 ha in size) of Degraded-Completely Degraded remnant native vegetation. Analysis of aerial imagery indicates the patch is bound by cleared agricultural land to the north, a railway line and cleared agricultural land to the west, York-Merredin Road to the south and Corner Wells Road and cleared agricultural land to the east. The patch has some potential connectivity with remnant vegetation to the south-east, although ground-dwelling fauna would need to cross York-

	Merredin Road in order to access this vegetation. Google Maps (2023) street view imagery indicates the patch is dominated by Sheaok, with few Eucalyptus trees present in the overstorey. The ground layer is dominated by agricultural weeds and the area has been impacted by fenceline clearing, access tracks and other disturbances. The north-western and central sections of the patch are particularly sparse and appear to have been parkland-cleared or grazed historically, contributing to the Degraded – Completely Degraded condition of the vegetation. The lack of Eucalypt species and the dominance of Sheoak indicates the vegetation is not representative of the Eucalypt woodlands of the Western Australian Wheatbelt Threatened Ecological Community (TEC). The only other TEC or Priority Ecological Community (PEC) within a 20 km radius of the proposal area is the Priority 1 'Pools of the Avon and Dale Rivers' PEC. The proposal area is not associated with either River system and does not contain deep pools. This PEC is not present. A desktop assessment did not any identify any Threatened or Priority flora species in the proposal area or the immediate surrounds. Whilst there are a number of Threatened and Priority flora records within a **REDACTED** km radius of the proposal area, the proposed clearing is limited to one *Eucalyptus wandoo* and two *Allocasuarina huegeliana* trees. Neither species is of conservation significance and there is no native understorey to be cleared, therefore Threatened and Priority flora will not be impacted by the proposal. The three roadside trees proposed for clearing are unlikely to support a high level of fauna diversity in comparison to other larger areas of remnant vegetation in the local area. Further assessment of the fauna habitat values of the proposed clearing area is provided against Clearing Principle (b). Based on the above, the proposed clearing is not at variance to this Principle.
Principle (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.	The proposed clearing area is within the known distribution of Carnaby's Cockatoo (*Zanda latirostris*), listed as Endangered under the EPBC Act (Commonwealth) and BC Act (Western Australia). According to available databases, the nearest Carnaby's Cockatoo record to the proposed clearing area is approximately **REDACTED** south in 1980, whilst there is a 1999 record approximately **REDACTED** north-west. The nearest known Black Cockatoo roost site is approximately **REDACTED** north-west, and the nearest known Black Cockatoo breeding site is over **REDACTED** north-west. The one *Eucalyptus wandoo* tree proposed for clearing is greater than 300 mm Diameter at Breast Height (DBH) and is defined as a 'potential nesting tree', based on DAWE (2022). However, the tree contains no nesting hollows and has been regularly pruned for the safety of motorists, given it is close to the edge of the York-Merredin Road. The remaining tree limbs are considered too small to contain or form hollows suitable for Black Cockatoo nesting (refer to Plates 1 to 4 in Appendix 1). *E. wandoo* provides some foraging value for Carnaby's Cockatoo, however given the

	tree is on the edge of a busy road it is a sub-optimal foraging location as there is an increased risk of foraging birds being injured or killed by interaction with vehicles. *Allocasuarina* is also known to provide some foraging value for Carnaby's Cockatoo, however as per the Wandoo tree, the roadside location of the two Allocasuarinas proposed for clearing makes them sub-optimal for foraging. None of the three trees proposed for clearing are considered of sufficient size to be utilised for roosting. Given the lack of Black Cockatoo records nearby, including no known roosting or nesting sites within 20 km, the proposed clearing of three roadside trees is unlikely to result in a loss of significant foraging, roosting or breeding habitat for Carnaby's Cockatoo. To provide some local context, there is approximately 12,686 ha of native vegetation within a 20 km of the proposal area (according to the DPIRD-005 native vegetation extent dataset). The proposed clearing of 0.0078 ha accounts for less than 0.001% of the native vegetation within 20 km. The proposed clearing will have no noticeable impact on the availability of foraging, roosting or breeding habitat for Carnaby's Cockatoo. The Red-tailed Phascogale (*Phascogale calura*) has previously been recorded approximately **REDACTED** south-east of the proposed clearing area (recorded in 2010, based on GIS datasets). This species is listed as Conservation Dependent under the BC Act and Vulnerable under the EPBC Act. According to the Threatened Species Scientific Committee (2016), the species is largely confined to woodlands with old-growth hollow-producing eucalypts, particularly Wandoo (*Eucalyptus wandoo*) and York gum (*E. loxophleba*), often with associated rock sheoak (*Allocasuarina huegeliana*), but has also been recorded in shrublands and various mosaics of woodland, shrubland and scrub-heath. The species prefers long unburnt (more than 50 years) patches. The best habitat for this species has numerous tree hollows for shelter and a semi-continuous canopy. The species mates in winter and recorded nesting sites include hollow logs, tree hollows and the skirts and stumps of grass trees (*Xanthorrhoea* spp.). As seen in Appendix 1 (Plates 6, 7 and 8), the proposed clearing area is not reflective of a Wandoo or York Gum Woodland, and could best be described as marginal habitat for the Red-tailed Phascogale given the presence of *Allocasuarina huegeliana*. However, the proposed clearing consists of three roadside trees on the periphery of a small and degraded patch of remnant vegetation with limited connectivity to other remnants, unless fauna cross York-Merredin Road. Furthermore, the proposed clearing does not involve the removal of hollow-bearing trees, logs or grass trees which provide potential nesting habitat. Clearing is also proposed for February 2025, outside of the species breeding period, further reducing the likelihood of any impacts to the species. The Southwestern Brush-tailed Phascogale (*Phascogale tapoatafa wambenger*) has previously been recorded approximately **REDACTED** km north-west of the proposed clearing area (recorded in 2007, based on GIS datasets). This species is listed as Conservation Dependent under the BC Act. According to DEC

	(2012), this species occurs at low densities in the northern Jarrah forest with highest densities known from the Perup/Kingston area (east of Manjimup), Collie River valley and near Margaret River and Busselton. In southwest Western Australia, habitat is described as dry sclerophyll forests and open woodlands that contain hollow-bearing trees. The proposed clearing area is not likely to provide habitat for this species, based on the lack of Jarrah and hollow-bearing Eucalypts. The three roadside trees proposed for clearing are not likely to comprise the whole or a part of, or be necessary for the maintenance of, a significant habitat for any fauna species. The trees are on the south-eastern edge of the degraded patch of remnant vegetation within which they occur, and their removal is unlikely to adversely impact any habitat values that the broader remnant patch may provide. Based on the above, the proposed clearing is not likely to be at variance to this Principle.
Principle (c) – Native vegetation should not be cleared if it includes, or is necessary for the continued existence of, threatened flora.	The proposal consists of clearing one *Eucalyptus wandoo* and two *Allocasuarina huegeliana* trees. Neither species is listed as threatened flora. According to Western Australian Herbarium and DBCA datasets, the nearest threatened flora record is *Thomasia glabripetala*, located approximately **REDACTED** south-east. Given that the proposed clearing is limited to three overstorey trees and does not contain any native understory or groundcover, threatened flora species won't be impacted by the proposed clearing. Based on the above, the proposed clearing is not at variance to this Principle.
Principle (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.	A desktop assessment of mapped Threatened Ecological Communities (TECs) within the Study Area (20 km radius of the proposed clearing area) identified the presence of one TEC - Eucalypt woodlands of the Western Australian Wheatbelt (Wheatbelt Woodlands), listed as 'Critically Endangered' under the EPBC Act. According to TEC GIS databases, the proposed clearing area is within the buffered extent (200 m) of this TEC. However, analysis of the vegetation proposed to be cleared, including the surrounding vegetation of the remnant patch within which it occurs, indicates the vegetation is not representative of the TEC. According to the Approved Conservation Advice (including listing advice) for the Eucalypt Woodlands of the Western Australian Wheatbelt TEC (Department of the Environment, 2015), the key species of the tree canopy of this TEC are species of Eucalypts and the structure of the community is a woodland in which the minimum crown cover of the tree canopy is 10%. Contra-indicators (characteristics which indicate the TEC is not likely to be present) include a dominant presence of non-eucalypt species in the tree canopy, for instance *Acacia acuminata* (jam) or *Allocasuarina huegeliana* (rock sheoak). As per the photographs in Appendix 1, the vegetation proposed to be cleared and the surrounding remnant patch within which it is

	located is not considered to be a Eucalypt woodland, with a distinct lack of Eucalyptus trees in the canopy layer and a dominance of *Allocasuarina huegeliana* in the tree canopy. The vegetation proposed to be cleared does not comprise the whole or a part of, nor is it necessary for the maintenance of, a TEC. Based on the above, the proposed clearing is not at variance to this Principle.
Principle (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.	The proposal area is mapped as occurring within Vegetation Association 352 (Medium woodland; York Gum) (Government of Western Australia, 2019). Vegetation Association 352 has less than 30 % of its pre-European extent remaining at the State, IBRA bioregion, IBRA subregion and Shire of York levels (19.61 %, 17.27 %, 10.74 % and 9.54 % respectively). However, the vegetation proposed for clearing consists of three roadside trees in a Completely Degraded condition and is not representative of a York Gum woodland. The proposed clearing will not sever a significant ecological linkage across the landscape and is therefore not considered to be a significant remnant of Vegetation Association 352. Based on the above, the proposed clearing is not at variance to this Principle.
Principle (f) – Native vegetation should not be cleared if it is growing in, or in association with, an environment associated with a watercourse or wetland.	Analysis of aerial imagery, site photographs and GIS datasets indicates the proposal area does not intersect any watercourses or wetlands. The nearest mapped watercourse is the Boonmull Brook, located over 500 m south-east The three road side trees proposed for clearing are not associated with any watercourse or wetland. Based on the above, the proposed clearing is not at variance to this Principle.
Principle (g) – Native vegetation should not be cleared if the clearing of the vegetation is likely to cause appreciable land degradation.	The removal of three trees from the roadside is unlikely to cause appreciable land degradation, noting the vegetation is already in a Completely Degraded condition. Based on the above, the proposed clearing is not at variance to this Principle.
Principle (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.	The proposal area is not located within, adjacent to a or near any conservation areas. The nearest conservation area is an un-named nature reserve, located approximately 5.3 km south south-east. The proposed clearing does not occur in any ecological linkages or corridors that connect areas of ecological significance locally or regionally. Noting the above, and given the distance to the nearest conservation area, it is unlikely that the proposed clearing will impact the environmental values of any conservation areas.

	Based on the above, the proposed clearing is not at variance to this Principle.
Principle (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.	The removal of three trees from the roadside is not likely to cause deterioration in the quality of surface or underground water given that no watercourses or wetlands are present and the very small extent of the proposed clearing. Based on the above, the proposed clearing is not at variance to this Principle.
Principle (j) – Native vegetation should not be cleared if clearing the vegetation is likely to cause, or exacerbate, the incidence or intensity of flooding.	Based on the presence deep sandy duplex soils and small area of native vegetation clearing, it is unlikely that clearing will cause or exacerbate the incidence or intensity of flooding. The proposal area does not occur within a floodplain area (GIS database). Based on the above, the proposed clearing is not at variance to this Principle.

Methodology Used and References:	DAWE (2022) - Referral guideline for 3 WA threatened black cockatoo species - Referral guideline for 3 WA threatened black cockatoo species - DCCEEW DEC (2012) - Brush-tailed Phascogale Factsheet. Department of the Environment (2015) *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) Approved Conservation Advice (including listing advice) fir the Eucalypt Woodlands of the Western Australian Wheatbelt - https://www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/threatened/communities/pubs/128-conservation-advice.pdf Government of Western Australia (2019) – Statewide Vegetation Statistics - https://catalogue.data.wa.gov.au/dataset/dbca-statewide-vegetation-statistics Main Roads Site map: Appendix 1 Photographs: Appendix 1. Shapefile of clearing area/trees: D25#58297 Threatened Species Scientific Committee (2016) - Conservation Advice Phascogale calura red-tailed phascogale Western Australia Change in average annual rainfall 2000 – 2019 GIS Datasets: - Black Cockatoo Breeding Sites - Buffered (DBCA-063) - Black Cockatoo Roosting Sites - Buffered (DBCA-064) - Carnabys Cockatoo Confirmed Roost Sites (DBCA-050) - Clearing Regulations – Environmentally Sensitive Areas (DWER-046) - DBCA – Legislated Lands and Waters (DBCA-011) - DBCA – Lands of Interest (DBCA-012) - DBCA Restricted WA Herbarium Flora - DBCA Restricted Threatened and Priority Fauna - DBCA Restricted Threatened and Priority Flora - DBCA Restricted Black Cockatoo Roosting Sites - DBCA Restricted White Tailed Black Cockatoo Breeding Site Locations - DBCA Restricted Forest Red-tailed Black Cockatoo Breeding Site Locations - Directory of Important Wetlands in Australia – Western Australia (DBCA-045) - EPA Redbook Recommended Conservation Reserves 1976 – 1991 (DBCA-029) - FPM Floodplain Area (DWER-020) - Hydrography Linear (DWER-031) - Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation for Australia (IBRA), Version 7 (Regions and Subregions)

	- Local Government Authority (LGA) Boundaries (LGATE-233) - Medium Scale Topo Water (Line) (LGATE-018) - Native Vegetation Extent (DPIRD-005) - Pre-European Vegetation (DPIRD-006) - Ramsar Sites (DBCA-010) - Threatened Ecological Communities (DBCA-038)

9. REHABILITATION, REVEGETATION AND OFFSETS

Offset Proposal:	No offset proposal is required as the proposed clearing will not result in significant residual impacts to native vegetation within the region.
Revegetation and Rehabilitation:	No temporary clearing will be undertaken as part of the Proposal activities.

10. COMPLIANCE WITH CPS818

The clearing associated with the proposal is not at variance with the Clearing Principles. Additional management actions under CPS 818 are detailed below.

Impact of Clearing	Yes/No or NA	Further Action Required
1. Proposal is within a Region that: • has rainfall greater than 400mm; and, • is South of the 26th parallel.	No	Standard Vehicle and Plant Management Actions Hygiene Checklists (D17#859669) and Vehicle, Plant and Machinery Hygiene Vehicle Register Template (D23#179551) will be applied
2. Do the proposed works require clearing within or adjacent to DBCA managed lands in non-dry conditions?	**No**	No further action required.
3. Main Roads has been notified by DWER or an environmental specialist that the area to be cleared is susceptible to a pathogen other than dieback.	**No**	No further action required.
4. Weeds are likely to spread to and result in environmental harm to adjacent areas of native vegetation that are in good or better condition.	**No**	No further action required.

Completed By:	
Name	**REDACTED**
Signature	**REDACTED**
Job Title	Graduate Environment Officer
Date	5/02/2025

Once all sections are completed, send the form to CRSP for review and endorsement.

DECISION ON CLEARING ASSESSMENT

Name	**REDACTED**
Signature	**REDACTED**
Job Title	Senior Environmental Contractor
Date	6 February 2025

APPENDIX 1 – Proposal Area Clearing

Plate 1. Photographs of trees to be cleared

Plate 2: Google Maps (2023) Streetview imagery of *Eucalyptus wandoo* proposed for clearing at the junction of Corner Wells Rd and York-Merredin Rd.

Plate 3: Google Maps (2023) Streetview imagery *Eucalyptus wandoo* proposed for removal at the junction of Corner Well Rd and York-Merredin Rd. Note evidence of previous pruning.

Plate 4: Google Maps (2022) Streetview Imagery *Eucalyptus wandoo* proposed for removal, viewed from rest area on the opposite side of York-Merredin Road

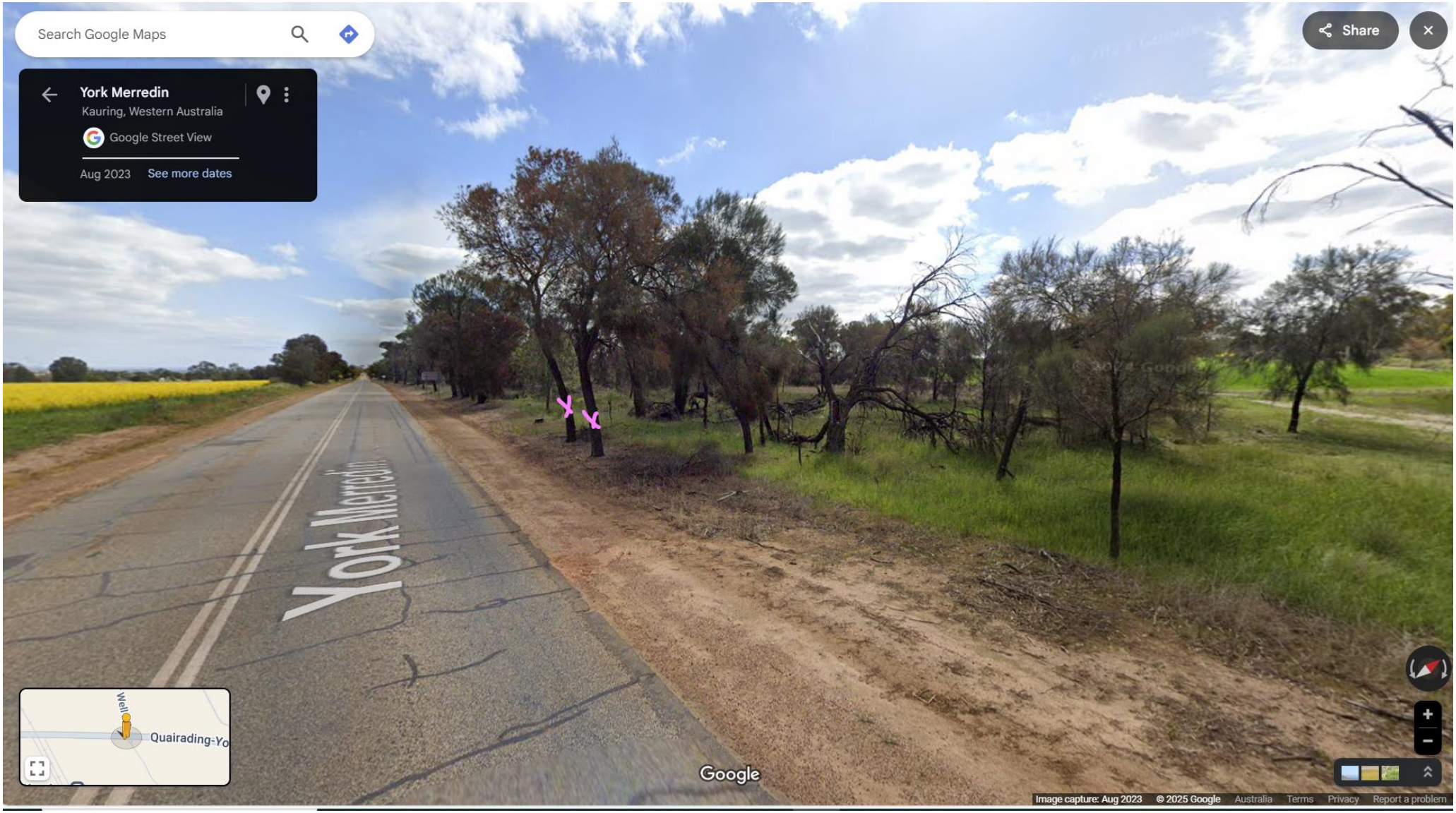

Plate 5: Google Maps (2023) Streetview Imagery (looking west) at two *Allocasuaraina huegeliana* (denoted pink) proposed for clearing. Note the absence of Eucalypt species in the canopy and the Completely Degraded vegetation with weeds dominant in the understorey.

Plate 6: Google Maps (2023) Streetview Imagery (looking east) towards the Wandoo tree proposed for clearing at the intersection of Corner Wells Road. Note the absence of Eucalypt species in the canopy of this remnant vegetation patch, indicating it is not representative of the Eucalypt Woodlands of the Western Australian Wheatbelt TEC.

Plate 7: Google Maps (2023) Streetview Imagery (looking north) at remnant vegetation patch, dominated by Sheoak (*Allocasuarina huegeliana*) and Jam Wattle (*Acacia acuminata*). Vegetation structure is not representative of a Eucalypt woodland.

Plate 8: Google Maps (2023) Streetview Imagery (looking east) at remnant vegetation patch, dominated by Sheoak (*Allocasuarina huegeliana*) with few Eucalypts present. Vegetation structure is not representative of a Eucalypt woodland.

Figure 1. Map of Areas to be cleared