

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:	Marble Bar Road – Parking Bay space between Road and Bay at SLK 137.8		
Region/Directorate:	Pilbara		
Local Government:	Shire of East Pilbara		
Road/Bridge Name & Number:	Marble Bar Road (M030)		
Proposal Location (SLK):	SLK 137.8 LHS		
CDR Short Form TRIM Number:	D24#1429178		
Spatial Data TRIM Number:	D24#1389764		
EOS Number:	3541		
Expected Proposal Start Date:	15/11/2024		
Oracle Project No:	30000616	Task Code:	19034
LISC TRIM Number:	D24#1389893	HRA TRIM Number:	D24#1390767

2. PURPOSE OF CLEARING

The proposal is going to deliver safety, efficiency, economic and network connectivity improvements. This site is going to be used to park and turn around equipment and house temporary buildings. Some limited site offices will also be located at the site as no viable alternative for construction offices are available in this remote area.

The area is needed to provide:

- turnaround locations
- limited site office and toilet
- Parking of equipment/ laydown area

The proposal will require the clearing of 0.52 ha within a development envelope of 0.79 ha.

The Development Envelope is located on an existing, partially cleared parking bay.

3. ALTERNATIVES TO CLEARING

The proposal utilises existing cleared areas as far as practicable to avoid or reduce clearing.

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

The following alternatives to clearing were considered during the development of the proposal:

- Main Roads retains frangible vegetation where a clear zone is to be established for road projects. For this project, however, clearing will only be required to accommodate the parking bay/laydown area, with no clear zone being established. Accordingly, the retention of frangible vegetation does not apply to this proposal.
- Reducing the speed limit to minimise clearing requirements, while still balancing safety (driver fatigue) and freight efficiency. Speed Limits are an essential mechanism to ensure the safe and efficient operation of road networks. The application of appropriate speed limits and other traffic management measures is a key mechanism in managing vehicle speeds to achieve desired safety, mobility, traffic management, local amenity, and road user expectations. There are several factors involved in road safety, including road conditions, driver

behaviour and overall road design. Except in special situations, reducing speed limits below national standards on state and national roads is not typically supported as it has the potential to contribute to driver frustration, impatience, tiredness and recklessness. The environmental values protected by reducing the speed limit, do not justify the impacts on freight efficiencies nor road user safety. Accordingly, the reduction of the speed limits to avoid clearing of native vegetation for this proposal is not proposed.

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, December 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):	0.52 ha in a Development Envelope of 0.79 ha.	No. Trees Cleared:	N/A
Species Name(s):	<i>Triodia spp.</i> , <i>Acacia spp.</i> , <i>Hakea spp.</i>		
Easting and Northing:	22°15'32.60"S 119°56'6.90"E		

7. EXISTING ENVIRONMENT AND SITE INFORMATION

Site Vegetation Description/Association:	Vegetation Association No. 173 - Hummock grasslands, shrub steppe; kanji over soft spinifex & <i>Triodia wiseana</i> on basalt.
Site Vegetation Condition:	Poor to Degraded

Pre-European Extent Remaining (%):	Vegetation Association	Remaining Extent %
	173	99.72

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.	A 2024 site inspection conducted by Main Roads Environmental Specialists determined the vegetation condition within the Development Envelope to be Poor to Degraded. Plates 1, 2 and 3 below show sparse vegetation and vehicle track disturbance through the remaining vegetation.
	The vegetation is broadly mapped as Vegetation Association 173. This association is common throughout the region and remains well represented with 99.72% of its pre-European extent remaining.
	A desktop review of ArcGIS databases indicates there are no known Threatened Ecological Communities (TECs) or Priority Ecological Communities (PECs) within, or in close proximity to, the Development Envelope. The nearest mapped ecological community of significance is the Priority 1 PEC; <i>Four plant assemblages of the Wona Land System</i> , located 3.5 km west of the Development Envelope. This PEC is described by the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA 2023) as; <i>Cracking clays of the Chichester and Mungaroona Range - This shrubless plain of stony gibber community occurs on the tablelands with very little vegetative cover during the dry season, however during the wet a suite of ephemerals/annuals and short-lived perennials emerge, many of which are poorly known and range-end taxa.</i> Due to the distance from the Development Envelope, it is unlikely the PEC will be directly or indirectly impacted by the proposed clearing.
	The results of a review of spatial data (DBCA-036) indicates that no threatened or priority flora species have been recorded within or adjacent to the Development Envelope. The small size and Poor to Degraded condition of the vegetation in the Development Envelope is unlikely to support a diverse assemblage of flora.
	The Development Envelope is unlikely to support a diverse assemblage of fauna based on the degraded condition of vegetation, proximity to major transport infrastructure and lack of significant habitat features (such as watercourses, caves, gorges and gullies) that provide shelter and support roosting, denning, breeding and dispersal activities for a range of fauna species.
	Based on the above, the proposed clearing is not likely to be at variance to this Principle.



Plate 1 - Development Envelope (Main Roads inspection 08/11/2024)



Plate 2 - Tracks through Development Envelope (Main Roads inspection 08/11/2024)

	 <i>Plate 3 - Tracks through Development Envelope and sparse vegetation (Main Roads inspection 08/11/2024)</i>
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.	Site inspection by Main Roads Environmental Specialists confirmed the Development Envelope lacks significant habitat features (such as watercourses, caves, gorges and gullies) that provide shelter and support roosting, denning, breeding and dispersal activities for a range of fauna species. A desktop study of the Development Envelope (Biota, 2021), along with historic ArcGIS datasets shows no conservation significant fauna records within the Development Envelope. One historic occurrence of the Vulnerable <i>Falco hypoleucos</i> (Grey Falcon) was recorded 300 metres from the Development Envelope in 1997. The Development Envelope is mapped as a mix of moderate and low prospective Bilby (<i>Macrotis lagotis</i>) habitat (Biota, 2021). Due to the small-scale nature of clearing required (0.52 ha) and the available, abundant, surrounding native vegetation, it is unlikely that the Development Envelope is significant habitat for Bilby or any other fauna species. If any significant fauna did occur in the area, it is likely that the occurrence would be transient in nature, and that the species would move in search of more suitable habitat. Based on the above, the Development Envelope is not considered to comprise the whole or part of, or be necessary for the maintenance of, a significant habitat for fauna. 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.	A desktop review of ArcGIS databases did not identify any threatened flora species within the Development Envelope. No threatened flora species have been previously recorded within a 40 km radius of the Development Envelope (Biota, 2021). Biota's 2021 Detailed and Targeted Flora and Vegetation Survey did not identify any threatened flora species within the Development Envelope. 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.	The results of a review of spatial data (DBCA-038) showed there are no Threatened Ecological Communities (TECs) within or adjacent to the Development Envelope. Biota (2021) did not map any TECs as occurring within the Development Envelope or surrounds. 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 Development Envelope broadly consists of Vegetation Association 173. This Vegetation Association retains approximately 99.72% of its pre-European extent across the Pilbara bioregion (Table 1). Table 1: Pre-European Vegetation Representation <table><tr><th>Pre-European Vegetation Association</th><th>Scale</th><th>Pre-European (ha)</th><th>Current Extent (ha)</th><th>% Remaining</th><th>% Remaining in DBCA reserves</th></tr><tr><td rowspan="4">Veg Assoc No. 173</td><td>Statewide</td><td>1,753,104</td><td>1,748,260</td><td>99.72</td><td>13.65</td></tr><tr><td>IBRA Bioregion <i>Pilbara</i></td><td>1,752,520</td><td>1,747,677</td><td>99.72</td><td>13.66</td></tr><tr><td>IBRA Sub-region <i>Chichester</i></td><td>1,744,029</td><td>1,739,189</td><td>99.72</td><td>13.73</td></tr><tr><td>Local Government Authority <i>Shire of East Pilbara</i></td><td>1,085,704</td><td>1,081,937</td><td>99.65</td><td>9.93</td></tr></table> Noting the minimal extent of proposed clearing (0.52 ha) of vegetation that is well represented both locally and regionally, the vegetation does not represent a significant remnant of native vegetation in an extensively cleared landscape. Based on the above, the proposed clearing is not at variance to this Principle.	Pre-European Vegetation Association	Scale	Pre-European (ha)	Current Extent (ha)	% Remaining	% Remaining in DBCA reserves	Veg Assoc No. 173	Statewide	1,753,104	1,748,260	99.72	13.65	IBRA Bioregion <i>Pilbara</i>	1,752,520	1,747,677	99.72	13.66	IBRA Sub-region <i>Chichester</i>	1,744,029	1,739,189	99.72	13.73	Local Government Authority <i>Shire of East Pilbara</i>	1,085,704	1,081,937	99.65	9.93
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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.	GIS databases, aerial imagery and site photos confirm there are no watercourses or wetlands within the Development Envelope and no vegetation is growing in association with a 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	The proposed clearing of up to 0.52 ha of Poor to Degraded condition vegetation is unlikely to cause appreciable land degradation, noting clearing will not occur during wet weather and erosion due to surface water flows is considered unlikely in the resilient Pilbara landscape.																											

cause appreciable land degradation.	Based on the above, the proposed clearing is not likely to be 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 results of a review of DBCA spatial data showed there is no conservation areas within or adjacent to the Development Envelope. Fortescue Marsh Nature Reserve is the closest conservation area, located approximately 37 km southwest. The proposed clearing of 0.52 ha will not impact the environmental values of any conservation area. 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.	A review of the Surface Water Area and Groundwater Area databases (DWER-037 and DWER-034) confirms the Development Envelope is located within the Proclaimed Pilbara Surface and Groundwater Areas. However, no watercourses or wetlands are present within the Development Envelope (DWER-031) and the area is not within a Public Drinking Water Source Area (DWER-033). Clearing will be kept to the minimum size necessary and is unlikely to cause deterioration in the quality of surface or underground water given the small clearing area in the context of the largely uncleared surrounding landscape. 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.	The proposed clearing presents low risk of exacerbating the incidence or intensity of flooding, as the Development Envelope is located away from any major watercourse. The proposed clearing will not result in changes to the topography or surface water flows that may be associated with flooding events. Based on the above, the proposed clearing is not at variance to this Principle.	
Methodology Used and References:	2021 Biota Environmental Sciences Biological survey: D21#176745 Shapefile of clearing area: D24#1389764	
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; and, • works are necessary in 'Other than dry conditions'; and, • works have potential for uninfested areas to be impacted.	No	Standard Vehicle and Plant Management Actions from Annexure 204B (TABLE 204B.9.1), 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	
Date	11/11/2024	

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 Officer
Date	14 November 2024