

Clearing Desktop Report – Short Form



1. PROJECT DETAILS

Project Name:	Emu Rocks – Kingswood St North		
Region/Directorate:	OMTID		
Expected Project Start Date:	05/01/2022		
Road/Bridge Name and No:	Coolgardie Esperance Highway, SLK 74.35		
Project Location (SLK):	SLK 74.35		
TRIM Document No:	D21#1271250		
TRIM Link to Spatial Data:	D21#1269891		
EOS No:	2189		
Project No:	21111760	Task Code:	13.01

2. PURPOSE OF CLEARING

The aim of this proposal is to upgrade the intersection between Kingswood Street North and Coolgardie Esperance Highway. As part of the works, extra clearing is required to accommodate the wider lanes, and turning radii of the new design. The proposed footprint (hereafter referred to as project area) extends over an area of 0.07 ha.

3. ALTERNATIVES TO CLEARING

There are no alternatives to the clearing proposed as the footprint has been reduced as far as practicable and only a minimal amount of native vegetation in a Degraded condition will be removed for the works.

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

The project area will be marked prior to clearing and the movement of machinery will be restricted to the approved limits of vegetation clearing. This approach will prevent accidental over-clearing.

5. APPROVED POLICES AND PLANNING INSTRUMENTS

The clearing of native vegetation in Western Australia is regulated under the *Environmental Protection Act* (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 (DEC, December 2014)
- Procedure: Native vegetation clearing permits (DWER, October 2019)
- 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):	0.07 ha of native vegetation	No. Trees Cleared:	No trees with a DBH of ≥ 50 cm were recorded.
Species Name:	<i>Atriplex nummularia</i> , <i>Atriplex vesicaria</i> , <i>Tecticornia</i> sp., <i>Frankenia</i> sp.		
Easting and Northing:	51J; Easting: 364741, Northing: 6515441		

7. EXISTING ENVIRONMENT AND SITE INFORMATION

Site Vegetation Description/Association:	<i>Atriplex nummularia</i> and <i>Atriplex vesicaria</i> sparse shrubland over isolated shrubs of <i>Tecticornia</i> sp. and <i>Frankenia</i> sp. over a sparse tussock grassland of exotic grasses.
Site Vegetation Condition:	Degraded

Pre-European Extent Remaining (%)	Vegetation Association 9:	
	Levels	% Remaining
	Statewide	97.78
	IBRA Bioregion Coolgardie	97.78
	IBRA Subregion Eastern Goldfields	97.75
	Local Government Authority Shire of Coolgardie	98.29
	Vegetation Association 9 is not classified as a significant remnant vegetation as more than 30% of its pre-European extent remains at the State, IBRA Bioregion, IBRA Subregion and Local Government Authority level.	

8. ASSESSMENT OF PROJECT AGAINST CLEARING PRINCIPLES

Is Vegetation to be cleared at variance with:	Justification or Evidence:
<p>Principle (a) – Native vegetation should not be cleared if it comprises a high level of biological diversity.</p>	<p>Biological surveys conducted by GHD in 2014 and 2015 did not identify any significant flora and fauna species in the project area and its vicinity (GHD 2015; GHD 2016). The vegetation which extends over 0.07 ha is in a Degraded condition. Given the disturbed nature of the habitat, it is highly unlikely that any significant fauna or flora species would be reliant on habitat present in the project area.</p> <p>In addition, no Threatened Ecological Communities were recorded in the project area and its vicinity (GHD 2015; GHD 2016).</p> <p>The size of the clearing footprint coupled with the fact that no significant species or ecological communities will be impacted make it unlikely that clearing will significantly reduce the biodiversity of the locality. This vegetation assemblage is also not exclusive to the project area and occurs in the locality to the north and south of the proposed clearing.</p> <p>Based on the above, the proposed clearing is not likely to be at variance to this Principle.</p>
<p>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 indigenous to Western Australia.</p>	<p>No significant fauna species were recorded in the project area during the 2015 biological survey (GHD 2016). The likelihood of these species being present is considered to be very low due to a lack of suitable habitats. Given that the vegetation of the project area consists only of a sparse cover of low shrubs over exotic grasses, significant fauna species are not expected to be reliant on the vegetation to be cleared. Also, since the project area covers only a small area that adjoins the junction of two roads, it is not likely that the removal of this vegetation will reduce ecosystem functioning or will be a barrier to ecological linkages.</p> <p>Based on the above, the proposed clearing is not at variance to this Principle.</p>
<p>Principle (c) – Native vegetation should not be cleared if it includes, or is necessary for the continued existence of, rare flora.</p>	<p>No Threatened flora species were recorded during the 2015 biological survey (GHD 2016). Given the small size of the clearing footprint that consists of a Degraded vegetation that does not support habitats suitable for the occurrence of Threatened flora species, this project is not likely to directly or indirectly impact any rare flora.</p> <p>Based on the above, the proposed clearing is not at variance to this Principle.</p>
<p>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.</p>	<p>The 2015 biological survey did not identify any state listed Threatened Ecological communities (TECs) within the project area (GHD 2016). The nearest known TEC is the Parker Range complexes, located approximately 170 km to the west of the project area.</p> <p>Based on the above, the proposed clearing is not at variance to this Principle.</p>

<p>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.</p>	<p>The project area is mapped as occurring within Vegetation Association 9, defined as 'Medium woodland; coral gum (<i>Eucalyptus torquata</i>) & goldfields blackbutt (<i>E. le soufii</i>)'. Vegetation Association 9 is not classified as a significant remnant vegetation as more than 30% of its pre-European extent remains at the State, IBRA Bioregion, IBRA Subregion and Local Government Authority level. Consequently, the project area does not occur within a significant remnant vegetation.</p> <p>Based on the above, the proposed clearing is not at variance to this Principle.</p>
<p>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.</p>	<p>The vegetation to be cleared under CPS 818/15 is not associated with any watercourse.</p> <p>Based on the above, the proposed clearing is not at variance to this Principle.</p>
<p>Principle (g) – Native vegetation should not be cleared if the clearing of the vegetation is likely to cause appreciable land degradation.</p>	<p>It is unlikely that this project will cause appreciable land degradation due to the minor nature of the works and the fact that only a small linear section of native vegetation will be cleared.</p> <p>Based on the above, the proposed clearing is not at variance to this Principle.</p>
<p>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.</p>	<p>There are no reserves or conservation areas located within and in the vicinity of the project area.</p> <p>The nearest area is the Dordie Rocks Nature Reserve located 11 km south-east of the project area. Given the distance to this site, it is unlikely that this project will significantly impact any nature reserves or conservation areas.</p> <p>Based on the above, the proposed clearing is not at variance to this Principle.</p>
<p>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.</p>	<p>The project area lies within the Proclaimed Goldfields Groundwater Area. However, it does not occur on a Proclaimed Surface Water Area or Public Drinking Water Source Area. As no dewatering or excavation below the water table will be undertaken, no impacts to the groundwater area are expected.</p> <p>Based on the above, the proposed clearing is not at variance to this Principle.</p>
<p>Principle (j) – Native vegetation should not be cleared if clearing the vegetation is likely to cause, or exacerbate, the incidence of flooding.</p>	<p>Based on the presence of loam/clayey loam soils and small area of native vegetation to be removed, it is unlikely that this project will cause or exacerbate the incidence or intensity of flooding.</p> <p>Based on the above, the proposed clearing is not at variance to this Principle.</p>

Methodology Used and References:	<p>GHD (2015) Emu Rocks North Project, Coolgardie Esperance Highway Biological Assessment. Unpublished report prepared for Main Roads WA.</p> <p>GHD (2016) Coolgardie Esperance Highway, Emu Rocks South and Mitel Deviation Biological Survey. Unpublished report prepared for Main Roads WA.</p> <p>Government of Western Australia. (2019). 2018 Statewide Vegetation Statistics incorporating the CAR Reserve Analysis (Full Report). Current as of April 2019. WA Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, Perth. Available online from: https://catalogue.data.wa.gov.au/dataset/dbca-statewide-vegetation-statistics. Accessed 28/10/2020.</p>
Completed By:	
Name	
Signature	
Job Title	Environment Officer
Date	14/12/2021

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

DECISION ON CLEARING ASSESSMENT		
Clearing Assessment	ENDORSED <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	REFUSED <input type="checkbox"/>
Comments	I have reviewed the CDR and agree that the proposed clearing under CPS 818 is not at variance to any of the clearing principles. Therefore we will not be submitting to DWER.	
Name		
Signature		
Job Title	SEO	
Date	20 December 2021	

Appendix 1 – Site Photos



Image 1. Looking east from the western section of the project area and showing flagging tape along the northern boundary of the project area. Photo indicates the dominance of *Atriplex* spp. in the project area.



Image 2. Looking east from the western section of the project area. Photo shows low shrubs of *Atriplex nummularia* and *Atriplex vesicaria* over *Tecticornia* sp. and *Frankenia* sp.



Image 3. Looking east from the eastern section of the project area. Photo shows a sparse cover of *Atriplex nummularia* and *Atriplex vesicaria* over exotic grasses and bare areas. The northern boundary of the project area is indicated by the orange flagging tape.



Image 4. Photo showing the easternmost section of the project area that consists of *Atriplex nummularia* and *Atriplex vesicaria* over exotic grasses and bare areas.