

Clearing Desktop Report – Short Form



1. PROPOSAL DETAILS

Proposal Name:	Tanami Road SLK 73-114 Water Bore Drilling		
Region/Directorate:	Kimberley Region		
Local Government:	Shire of Halls Creek		
Road/Bridge Name & Number:	Tanami Road (0020025)		
Proposal Location (SLK):	SLK 73-114		
CDR Short Form TRIM Number:	D26#795904		
Spatial Data TRIM Number:	D26#776252 - Proposal Area shapefile D26#781750 – Approved Clearing Area shapefile		
EOS Number:	3888		
Expected Proposal Start Date:	July 2026		
Oracle Project No:	30001299	Task Code:	19301.06
LISC TRIM Number:	D26#750700	HRA TRIM Number:	D26#750693

2. PURPOSE OF CLEARING

This clearing proposal is required to investigate the potential of additional construction water sources on the Tanami Road Project. The water bore drilling campaign carried out in 2024 in this section resulted in several unproductive bores. This campaign seeks to find productive water sources for road construction and proposes seven separate drill sites between SLK 73.85 and 113.91, as outlined in section 6 of this report.

Clearing of vegetation is required to create tracks to be used to access the proposed drill sites and drill pads for the drilling machinery to test for water. Drill pads will be approximately 20 m x 20 m to allow sufficient space for drilling equipment, and to enable operations to be conducted in a safe manner. Drilling will be undertaken to an estimated depth of 150 m below ground level. If water investigations are successful, test bores will become long term, strategic water sources.

3. ALTERNATIVES TO CLEARING

- **Using existing Bores further north on the Tanami Road;** however, the cost of transportation of the water is more costly than to establish new bores closer to the construction works for the Tanami Project from SLK 72-114. The established bores will also become available for the continuous maintenance of the road in future years.
- **Use of existing cleared areas, such as material pits, laydown areas and turnaround areas;** however, this approach is not practicable for locating quality water sources.
- **Obtaining a Surface Water licence to extract water from Sturt Creek;** however, this would still require > 40 km of transportation on un-sealed road which is costly for resources and time (this option may be practicable in 2-3 years when Tanami Road is in "Stage 4").

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

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

- Establishing water bore drilling locations close to the existing road so that less access tracks are required to be cleared.
- Clearing is to be limited to the required area for works to construct the water bores). A total of 0.5 ha may not be required to be cleared, because much of the area within the Development Envelope contains existing, disturbed or naturally barren areas devoid of vegetation where the water bores may go.
- 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 water bore locations, 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, 2014)
- Procedure: Native vegetation clearing permits (DWER, 2019)
- 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
- Strategic advice - EPA

6. CLEARING AREA

Clearing Area (ha):	0.5 ha in a Development Envelope (DE) of approximately 21.8 ha.	No. Trees Cleared:	N/A
Species Name(s):	N/A – See Site Vegetation Description/Association.		
Easting and Northing:	SLK	Side of Road	Location
			Easting Northing
	73.85	LHS	-18.856392 127.757892
	81.45	LHS	-18.921317 127.763886
	83.69	LHS	-18.937598 127.752682
	93.59	RHS	-18.999967 127.691384
	96.86	LHS	-19.025916 127.682673
	100.20	LHS	-19.053928 127.675094
	113.91	LHS	-19.172978 127.649543

7. EXISTING ENVIRONMENT AND SITE INFORMATION

Site Vegetation Description/Association:	Pre-European Vegetation Associations: The following Pre-European Vegetation Associations have been mapped as occurring within the Development Envelope. All Vegetation Associations have approximately 100 % extent remaining according to the Vegetation Statistics Statewide Report (Government of Western Australia, 2019): 81: Hummock grasslands, low tree steppe; snappy gum over soft spinifex 849: Hummock grasslands, low tree steppe; snappy gum & bloodwood over soft spinifex 899: Mosaic: Grasslands, short bunch grass savanna low tree; snappy gum over <i>enneapogon</i> short grass on plains / Hummock grasslands, grass steppe; hard spinifex, <i>Triodia intermedia</i>. Biota (2024) undertook a biological survey in April 2024 that included the Development Envelope and surrounding areas. The following vegetation types were mapped from the Development Envelope: P12) - <i>Corymbia opaca</i> scattered low trees over <i>Acacia sp. Urandangie</i> (L. Pedley 2025), <i>Grevillea pyramidalis subsp. leucadendron</i>, <i>Grevillea wickhamii</i> tall open shrubland over <i>Triodia epactia</i> hummock grassland. (P13) - <i>Eucalyptus brevifolia</i> low open woodland over <i>Acacia sp. Urandangie</i> (L. Pedley 2025) tall open shrubland over <i>Triodia epactia</i> and/or <i>T. intermedia</i> hummock grassland and <i>Eulalia aurea</i>, <i>Chrysopogon fallax</i>, <i>Aristida inaequiglumis</i> very open tussock grassland. (P14) - <i>Eucalyptus brevifolia</i> and/or <i>Corymbia opaca</i> scattered low trees over <i>Acacia lysiphloia</i> tall open scrub over <i>Triodia intermedia</i>, <i>T. epactia</i> open hummock grassland with mixed open tussock grassland.																																																																																																																					
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8. ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSAL AGAINST CLEARING PRINCIPLES

Is vegetation to be cleared at variance with:

Principle (a) – Native vegetation should not be cleared if it comprises a high level of biological diversity.

Justification or Evidence:

Vegetation

Pre-European Vegetation Associations and vegetation types within the DE as mapped by Biota (2024) are all locally and regionally common and do not constitute Threatened Ecological Communities (TECs) or Priority Ecological Communities (PECs). In addition, the maximum impact of clearing upon native vegetation types mapped by Biota in 2024 (see Table 2 below) is a negligible 0.6 % (excluding cleared & disturbed areas) of the 3,851 ha surveyed area.

These common plains vegetation types to be cleared are unlikely to support a higher level of vegetation or flora diversity than other areas locally or regionally.

Table 2. Maximum Impacts to Vegetation Types (Biota, 2024)

Vegetation Type	DE (ha)	Local Area (ha)	% in DE	Max Impact to Veg (%)
P12	3.0	2188.3	0.1	0.1
P13	16.2	5658.0	0.3	0.3
P14	1.1	652.1	0.2	0.2
cleared	0.7	187.0	0.3	0.3
disturbed	0.8	165.0	0.5	0.5
Total Veg	20.3	8498.5	0.6	0.6

Fauna Habitat

One locally common fauna habitat type occurs in the DE:

OSP: Open woodland/shrubland on spinifex/tussock grass - Described as mixed low open woodlands typically dominated by *Eucalyptus brevifolia*, *Corymbia opaca*, *Lysiphyllum cunninghamii* and/or *Atalaya hemiglauca* over open but occasionally dense shrublands over *Triodia epactia* and/or *T. intermedia* open hummock grasslands with mixed open tussock grasslands.

This single, common habitat type is unlikely to support a higher level of fauna diversity than other areas locally or regionally.

Flora

Based on Threatened flora GIS datasets and Biota (2024), there are no known records of Threatened flora in the DE.

Nine species of Priority flora were recorded across a 3,851 ha Survey Area (Biota, 2024), but only one occurrence of Priority Flora was found within the DE, *Goodenia crenata* (P3). This species has an estimated 339,000 individuals recorded from 1,726 locations (Biota 2024), with previous surveys identifying high abundance across the whole Tanami Project (Biota, 2021a; 2021b; 2023a; 360 Environmental, 2022). Based on the high abundance of this species throughout the Tanami, impacts of clearing for this proposal are unlikely to be significant to *G. crenata* in a local or regional context.

Three Priority species, *Trachymene villosa* (P1), *Eriachne armitii* (P1) and *Ergrostris confertiflora* (P3), were recorded in Biota's 2024 Survey and within approximately 2.5 km of the DE. While these species were not recorded inside the DE, they utilise the same plains vegetation types

	found across the DE and survey area. The maximum impact of clearing plains vegetation is ~0.6 % (Table 2). The negligible scale of native vegetation to be cleared is unlikely to have a significant impact on <i>T. villosa</i>, <i>E. armitii</i> or <i>E. confertiflora</i>. There was one record of <i>Stylidium anomalum</i> in Biota's 2024 survey, located ~5.6 km north of the DE in vegetation type P13. The nearest drill sites, 5.6 km, 12 km and 14 km, were all surveyed by Biota ecologists, and did not identify <i>S. anomalum</i> in those DE areas. It is unlikely that clearing a maximum 0.3 % of the mapped extent of P13 vegetation will impact <i>S. anomalum</i>. The additional four Priority Flora species recorded in Biota's 2024 survey do not occupy the same habitat types and conditions found within the DE, and are therefore unlikely to be impacted by the proposed clearing. 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.	<u>Fauna Habitats</u> One fauna habitat type, in addition to existing cleared areas, was identified in the Development Envelope: OSP: Open woodland/shrubland on spinifex/tussock grass - Described as mixed low open woodlands typically dominated by <i>Eucalyptus brevifolia</i>, <i>Corymbia opaca</i>, <i>Lysiphyllum cunninghamii</i> and/or <i>Atalaya hemiglauca</i> over open but occasionally dense shrublands over <i>Triodia epactia</i> and/or <i>T. intermedia</i> open hummock grasslands with mixed open tussock grasslands (Biota, 2024). Clearing a maximum of 0.5 ha of this fauna habitat mapped by Biota 2024 (10,199.9 ha) will have a maximum impact of <0.01 % of the mapped extent of this habitat type. In this context, the vegetation proposed for clearing is unlikely to comprise significant habitat for any fauna species. One species of conservation significance was identified as likely to occur in Biota's (2024) post survey Likelihood of Occurrence assessment within the 3,851 ha survey area which is dominated by the OSP habitat, shared with the DE area: The Greater Bilby (<i>Macrotis lagotis</i>, VU). Whilst the Bilby is likely to utilise the OSP habitat, the negligible proportion to be cleared, across seven small drill sites, will not significantly impact habitat availability for this species. As a precautionary measure to reduce the likelihood of bilby mortality and injury, pre-clearance surveys will be undertaken, and no clearing will occur within 30 m of any active burrows identified. The Development Envelope approach taken to this clearing proposal ensures there is flexibility to locate drill sites away from active bilby burrows, should they be encountered. 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.	Based on Threatened flora GIS datasets, no threatened flora species have previously been recorded in the Development Envelope. The nearest Threatened flora record is over 345 km NNW. Biota (2024) did not record any species of Threatened flora during their survey of 3,851 ha, which included 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	Based on Threatened Ecological Community (TEC) GIS datasets, no TEC's are known to occur in the Development Envelope. The nearest TEC is over 299 km north (North Kimberley Mounds).

necessary for the maintenance of, a threatened ecological community.	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 National Objectives and Targets for Biodiversity Conservation recognise that the retention of 30 per cent or more of the pre-clearing extent of each ecological community is necessary if Australia's biological diversity is to be protected (Commonwealth of Australia, 2001). The Development Envelope consists of Vegetation Associations 81, 849 and 899 (Table 1), all of which have approximately 100 per cent of their pre-European extent remaining intact at all levels (Statewide, IBRA Bioregion, IBRA Sub-region and Local Government Authority). The Development Envelope is not located in an area that has been extensively cleared and the vegetation proposed for clearing is not significant as a remnant. 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.	Based on hydrology GIS datasets and analysis of aerial imagery, no watercourses or wetlands are present within the Development Envelope. The nearest watercourse is located approximately 0.45 km away which is Wolf Creek, a minor non-perennial watercourse. The nearest wetland is over 100 km away. Native vegetation proposed to be cleared is not growing in, or in association with, an environment associated 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 cause appreciable land degradation.	The Development Envelope occurs within an area classified as "Extremely Low Probability of Occurrence of acid sulphate soil (ASS)" (Geoscience Australia, 2021) and occurs within a region where pre-European extent of native vegetation remains largely uncleared. The clearing will be completed during dry conditions with no likely interruption of natural surface water flow. The proposed minor clearing in an area that has not been extensively cleared is unlikely to 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.	Based on the DBCA Legislated Lands and Waters GIS dataset, the Development Envelope is not nearby or adjacent to any conservation areas. The nearest conservation area is over 13 km away, which is Wolfe Creek Meteorite Crater National Park. The proposed clearing of up to 0.5 ha, spaced across seven drill locations, is unlikely to 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 Development Envelope is located within the proclaimed Canning-Kimberley Groundwater Area, under the RIWI Act, with the nearest proclaimed surface water being Fitzroy River and Tributaries, approximately 32 km away. According to ArcGIS databases, no Public Drinking Water Source Areas occur in or surrounding the Development Envelope. No mapped watercourses or wetlands occur within the Development Envelope. The nearest watercourse is located approximately 0.45 km away, which is Wolf Creek, a minor non-perennial watercourse. Clearing will take place during dry conditions. Given the absence of watercourses and the minor nature of the clearing, deterioration in the quality of surface or ground water is unlikely. Based on the above, the proposed clearing is not likely to be 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 DE is located within a subregional climate described as dry winter and hot semi-arid summer with a median annual rainfall of 485.6 mm (Halls Creek Station, Site ID - 2079) (BoM, 2026). Extreme weather events are a significant component of the Kimberley climate. Tropical cyclones and tropical storms can bring heavy and sustained rainfall, particularly in the months leading up to and during the wet season. It is common for a large proportion of the region's rainfall to be recorded in one single event, leading to extensive flooding of rivers, creeks and roadways. The proposed clearing is in a region where the remaining native vegetation extent is greater than 99 per cent. No changes to the incidence or intensity of flooding are anticipated given the relatively minor clearing of 0.5 ha. As noted above, climatic conditions are the main factor influencing flooding and relatively minor clearing is unlikely to have a measurable influence on flood regimes in the area. Based on the above, the proposed clearing is not likely to be at variance to this Principle.
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**Methodology Used and
References:**
References:

360 Environmental (2022). Tanami Road Upgrade Targeted Flora Survey. Unpublished report prepared for Main Roads Western Australia, March 2022, 360 Environmental Pty Ltd, Perth Western Australia.

Biota (2021a). Tanami Road Upgrade SLK 0-60 Biological Survey. Unpublished report prepared for Main Roads WA, May 2021, Biota Environmental Sciences, Leederville, Western Australia.

Biota (2021b). Tanami Road Upgrade and Great Northern Highway Material Pit Areas: Flora Surveys. Unpublished report prepared for Main Roads WA, December 2021, Biota Environmental Sciences, Leederville, Western Australia.

Biota (2023a). Tanami Road Upgrades SLK 15-50 Material Pits Biological Survey. Unpublished report prepared for Main Roads WA, November 2023, Biota Environmental Sciences, West Perth, Western Australia.

Biota (2024). Tanami Road Upgrades SLK 60-114 Biological Survey. Prepared for Main Roads Western Australia (2025 Report). Biota Environmental Sciences (Australia) Pty Ltd, Western Australia.

Bureau of Meteorology Australia (BOM), (2026). Climate Averages for Australian Sites – Halls Creek Station, Site ID - 2079. Available online from <http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/data/index.shtml>. Accessed 03/07/2026.

Commonwealth of Australia (Geoscience Australia), (2021). Geoscience Australia Portal. Available online from <https://portal.ga.gov.au/>. Accessed 03/07/2026.

Government of Western Australia, (2019). 2018 Statewide Vegetation Statistics incorporating the CAR Reserve Analysis (Full Report). Current as of March 2019. WA Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, Perth. Available online from: <https://catalogue.data.wa.gov.au/dataset/dbca-statewide-vegetation-statistics>.

Payne, A. and Schoknecht, N., (2011). Land systems of the Kimberley Region, Western Australia. Technical Bulletin No. 98. Department of Agriculture and Food. Western Australian Agriculture Authority.

GIS Datasets:

- Clearing Regulations – Environmentally Sensitive Areas (DWER-046)
- Threatened Ecological Communities (DBCA-038)
- WA Herbarium Flora
- Threatened and Priority Fauna
- Threatened and Priority Flora
- DBCA – Legislated Lands and Waters (DBCA-011)
- Ramsar Sites (DBCA-010)
- Surface Water Proclaimed Areas
- Ground Water Proclaimed Areas
- Public Drinking Water Source Areas
- Directory of Important Wetlands in Australia - Western Australia (DBCA-045)
- Hydrography Linear (DWER-031)
- Soil Landscape Mapping Systems (DPIRD- 064)
- CSIRO Acid Sulphate Soils
- Pre-European Vegetation (DPIRD-006)

	– IBRA7 Regions States – IBRA7 Subregion States	
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, or not likely to be at variance, to any of the ten 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), <u>Hygiene Checklists (D17#859669)</u> and <u>Vehicle, Plant and Machinery Hygiene Vehicle Register Template (D23#179551)</u> 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	03/07/2026	

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	3 July 2026