

Clearing Desktop Report – Short Form



1. PROPOSAL DETAILS

Proposal Name:	Onslow Road/Peedamulla Road Intersection		
Region/Directorate:	Pilbara		
Local Government:	Shire of Ashburton		
Road/Bridge Name & Number:	Onslow Road – M049		
Proposal Location (SLK):	M049 - SLK 60.25		
CDR Short Form TRIM Number:	D25#499484		
Spatial Data TRIM Number:	D25#462626		
EOS Number:	3661		
Expected Proposal Start Date:	June 2025		
Oracle Project No:	21117138	Task Code:	400.13
LISC TRIM Number:	D25#462639	HRA TRIM Number:	D25#462643

2. PURPOSE OF CLEARING

Upgrades to the existing Onslow Road/Peedamulla Road intersection to facilitate a critical haulage operation.

3. ALTERNATIVES TO CLEARING

No alternatives are proposed given the works will upgrade an existing intersection to improve road user safety while catering for increased road traffic from local mining activities

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. Given this is an upgrade to an existing intersection and no clear zone is to be established, 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. Upgrades to an existing intersection will cater for increased traffic and improve 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 (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):	0.088 ha	No. Trees Cleared:	0
Species Name(s):	<i>Acacia</i> sp. tall isolated shrubs over <i>Triodia basedowii</i> open hummock grassland		
Easting and Northing:	115.1048372E, -21.7994956S		

7. EXISTING ENVIRONMENT AND SITE INFORMATION

Site Vegetation Description/Association:	Vegetation Association 670: Shrub-steppe: <i>Acacia</i> sp. tall isolated shrubs over <i>Triodia basedowii</i> open hummock grassland
Site Vegetation Condition:	Vegetation of the proposed clearing area was mapped by Spectrum Ecology and Spatial (2021) as 'very good'.
Pre-European Extent Remaining (%):	The proposed clearing area lies within a single broad area of one of Beard's vegetation associations, 670 CAPE YANNARE COASTAL PLAIN which is described as Shrub-steppe: <i>Acacia</i> sp. tall isolated shrubs over <i>Triodia basedowii</i> open hummock grassland of which 99.93% is remaining.

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.	Based on the Pre-European vegetation extent levels, vegetation association 670 is common throughout the region and has over 99.93% remaining at all levels. Vegetation present in the proposed clearing area is mapped to be in very good condition and is widely available beyond the proposal area. No Threatened or Priority flora species or communities were recorded within the proposed clearing area or will be impacted by the clearing.

	No conservation significant fauna species were recorded (Spectrum Ecology and Spatial, 2021) and the proposed clearing area is not representative of an area that is significant for fauna. Based on the above, the proposed clearing area is not an area that comprises a high level of biological diversity. 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 located within the Sand Plains fauna habitat which is the most abundant fauna habitat recorded by Spectrum Ecology and Spatial in 2021 (159.4 ha). The proposed clearing area represents less than 1% of this mapped area. No conservation significant fauna species were recorded (Spectrum Ecology and Spatial, 2021) and the proposed clearing area is not representative of an area that is significant for fauna. The proposed clearing area does not contain any significant habitat features which are available beyond the proposed clearing area. Clearing of 0.088 ha of native vegetation clearing that is predominantly adjacent to existing roads will not significantly impact fauna. The proposed clearing is not 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.	No Threatened Flora taxa were recorded during the field survey (Spectrum Ecology and Spatial, 2021) and a desktop likelihood of occurrence assessment deemed no species would likely occur in the proposed clearing area. 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.	No Threatened Ecological Communities (TEC) were recorded within the proposed clearing area (Spectrum Ecology and Spatial, 2021) with vegetation considered not representative of any TEC. A search of Main Roads GIS layers did not identify any TEC occurring within the proposed clearing area or that would be impacted by the clearing. 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.	Vegetation Association 670 is widely available and retains 99.93 % of pre-European vegetation extent Statewide. The small amount of vegetation proposed for clearing (0.088 ha) is predominantly roadside and does not form part of a significant ecological linkage in an area that has been extensively cleared. 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.	No watercourses or wetlands are intersected by the proposed clearing area. Furthermore, no clearing of vegetation growing in, or in association with, a watercourse or wetland is proposed as confirmed by Spectrum Ecology and Spatial (2021). 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 small amount of vegetation proposed for clearing (0.088 ha) predominantly adjacent to existing roads from an area that has not been extensively cleared will not likely cause appreciable land degradation. 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 proposed clearing area is not located within or in proximity of a conservation area. The closest conservation areas are the Cane River (Mount Minnie and Nanutarra) Conservation Park and Unallocated Crown Land (LR3046/473) located approximately 5 km and 5.3 km respectively to the south-east of the proposed clearing area. Additionally, land surrounding the proposed clearing area does not provide a buffer or ecological link to any conservation area. 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.	There are no watercourses or wetlands that are intersected by the proposed clearing area. The minor clearing of 0.088 ha of native vegetation predominantly adjacent to existing roads and in an area that is largely uncleared, will not likely cause deterioration in the quality of surface or groundwater. 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 climate of the region is semi-arid, characterised by hot summers and cool winters. The area has a low average rainfall of approximately 304 millimetres per year (BoM, 2021). No watercourses or wetlands are intersected by the proposed clearing area. The proposed clearing area is located on the Onslow Plain zone which is described as Coastal mudflats (with some sandplains and coastal dunes) on coastal deposits over Cretaceous sedimentary rocks of the Carnarvon Basin. Tidal soils with Calcareous deep sands and some Red deep sands, Red/brown non-cracking clays and Salt lake soils. Bare mudflats with samphire and spinifex/tussock grasslands (and some mangroves) (Tille, 2006). Such soils are anticipated to have a high infiltration rate with infrequent flooding. This is not expected to change as a result of the proposed clearing.

	The small amount of clearing proposed (0.088 ha) from an area that is largely uncleared, will not likely cause or exacerbate the incidence or intensity of flooding. The proposed clearing is not at variance to this Principle.
Methodology Used and References:	DPIRD mapping (https://maps.agric.wa.gov.au/nrm-info/) 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. Main Roads GIS Shapefiles: Main Roads Site Inspection and map: Appendix 1 Photographs: E:\Pilbara Projects\Onslow Road - Peedamulla Rd Intersection\01-Approvals\LISC and HRA\Photos Shapefile of clearing area/trees: D25#462626 Spectrum Ecology and Spatial (2021) – Warrirda Road Detailed & Targeted Flora & Basic Fauna Assessment (D21#751262)

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), Hygiene Checklists (D17#859669) and Vehicle, Plant and Machinery Hygiene Vehicle Register Template (D23#179551) will be applied (<i>which include relevant sections of Condition 10</i>).
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	Senior Environmental Contractor	
Date	20/05/2025	

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 Environment Officer
Date	26/05/2025

