

Clearing Desktop Report – Short Form



1. PROPOSAL DETAILS

Proposal Name:	H005 Quellington Rd Sightline Clearing – remove 6 small trees		
Region/Directorate:	Wheatbelt		
Local Government Authority:	Cunderdin		
Road/Bridge Name and No:	H005 Great Eastern Highway		
Proposal Location (SLK):	127.44 – 128.05		
TRIM Link to Spatial Data:	Sightline Tree Removal: D23#41222		
EOS No:	2932		
Expected Proposal Start Date:	January 2023		
Project No:	30000922	Task Code:	741.16
LISC TRIM No:	D23#41469	HRA TRIM No:	D23#42474

2. PURPOSE OF CLEARING

The Heavy Vehicle Services have contacted Main Roads Environment requesting the removal of six small trees (with no understory) to reinstate the sightline on H005 Great Eastern Highway (GEH) to upgrade the Restricted Access Vehicle classification in the region.

The sightline in the Left-Hand Lane of GEH and the corner of Quellington Road is visually impaired by six small trees (Figure 1 and 2; Appendix A: Photo 1 and 2) between 127.44 and 128.05 SLK, thus reducing drivers' vision to turn safely onto and when travelling west on GEH.

3. ALTERNATIVES TO CLEARING

As this Proposal is the removal of six small trees in the maintenance zone for safety reasons, then there is limited scope to alter the clearing. Six small trees are proposed to be cleared with no understory vegetation and with a condition mapped as Degraded to Completely Degraded.

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

There are limited measures to avoid or mitigate clearing impacts, as the six small trees are required to be removed to re-establish sightlines for the purposes of road safety.

The removal of six small trees will be undertaken progressively using an Elevated Work Platform, minimising the impact on surrounding vegetation which may occur using other clearing techniques. The six small trees will be mulched with the resultant chip being used as mulch within the road reserve if possible. If not possible, the mulch will be removed from site and taken to an authorised area.

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):	0.011 ha	No. Trees Cleared:	Six												
Species Name:	5x <i>Acacia acuminata</i> and 1x <i>Eucalyptus sp.</i>														
Easting and Northing:	<table border="1"> <tbody> <tr> <td><i>Acacia acuminata</i></td> <td>Longitude: 117.0002785 Latitude: -31.6468853</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Acacia acuminata</i></td> <td>Longitude: 117.0003994 Latitude: -31.6468124</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Eucalyptus sp.</i></td> <td>Longitude: 117.0009263 Latitude: -31.6464856</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Acacia acuminata</i></td> <td>Longitude: 117.0033870 Latitude: -31.6439597</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Acacia acuminata</i></td> <td>Longitude: 117.0033540 Latitude: -31.6437148</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Acacia acuminata</i></td> <td>Longitude: 117.0038085 Latitude: -31.6432590</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			<i>Acacia acuminata</i>	Longitude: 117.0002785 Latitude: -31.6468853	<i>Acacia acuminata</i>	Longitude: 117.0003994 Latitude: -31.6468124	<i>Eucalyptus sp.</i>	Longitude: 117.0009263 Latitude: -31.6464856	<i>Acacia acuminata</i>	Longitude: 117.0033870 Latitude: -31.6439597	<i>Acacia acuminata</i>	Longitude: 117.0033540 Latitude: -31.6437148	<i>Acacia acuminata</i>	Longitude: 117.0038085 Latitude: -31.6432590
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7. EXISTING ENVIRONMENT AND SITE INFORMATION															
Site Vegetation Description/Association:	VA: 1049 Medium woodland; wandoo, York gum, salmon gum, morrel & gimlet														
Site Vegetation Condition:	Degraded to Completely Degraded														
Pre-European Extent Remaining (%):	56,618 ha (6.79%) remains at a Statewide level with 6,260 (5.17%) remaining at a LGA level (Shire of Cunderdin)														
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 Proposal requires the removal of six small sized trees (5x <i>Acacia acuminata</i> and 1x <i>Eucalyptus sp.</i>). The understorey in the tree locations is dominated by introduced weed species to exclusion of native vegetation. Site inspection and photographic evidence taken by the vegetation manager for the Wheatbelt Region noted: • There was no presence of Black Cockatoo hollows or any other hollows suitable for fauna habitat. • The selected trees were not of suitable DBH size to provide future habitat for Black Cockatoo • There is no native understorey vegetation • The surrounding area comprises cleared farmland A desktop investigation of the six small trees revealed: • The Trees do not lie within any TECs/PECs														

	• The Trees do not lie within or part of a Black Cockatoo Roosting or Breeding habitat. • The Trees do not lie within any DBCA managed Lands or Waters • The Trees do not lie within any wetlands of significance or importance (Ramsar, Geomorphic etc.). Based on the above, the removal of six small trees in an area that is in a Degraded to Completely Degraded condition, containing no native vegetation understory and adjacent to road and farmland is not considered to provide a high level of biodiversity. Removing the six small trees will not significantly impact the area's biodiversity value; therefore, the proposed clearing is not at variance with 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 indigenous to Western Australia.	Analysis of DBCA GIS Fauna databases revealed that no Threatened or Priority fauna species are located within 2 km of the proposed clearing area. Therefore, the removal of these six small trees is not at variance of this Principle.
Principle (c) – Native vegetation should not be cleared if it includes, or is necessary for the continued existence of, rare flora.	Analysis of DBCA GIS Flora databases revealed that no Threatened or Priority fauna species are located within 1.5 km of the proposed clearing area. Therefore, the removal of these six small trees is not at variance of 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.	Analysis of the TEC/PEC databases revealed that the six small trees are not part of or within a TEC/PEC. Analysis by the Main Roads Environment Officer confirmed that the vegetation proposed to be cleared does not comprise a TEC/ PEC. Therefore, the removal of these six small trees is not at variance of 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.	One vegetation association of Beard (1976) has been mapped over the Survey area: Vegetation Association 1049 described as a medium woodland; wandoo, York gum, salmon gum, morrel and gimlet. 56,618 ha (6.79%) remains at a Statewide level with 6,260 ha (5.17%) remaining at a LGA level (Shire of Cunderdin). The removal of these six, spatially separated trees comprising 5 x <i>Acacia acuminata</i> and 1 x <i>Eucalyptus</i> sp. (total clearing area 0.011 ha) in a Degraded to Completely Degraded vegetative habitat does not comprise a significant remnant of native vegetation. The removal of these six small trees will unlikely impact the remnant vegetation and is not significant representation of the wider native remnant vegetation community. Therefore, given the above the removal of these six small trees is not at variance of 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 GIS database layers revealed these six small trees are not part of or close to any watercourses or wetlands (including any wetlands of national significance or importance). Additionally, these six small trees are not species found in or associated with riparian vegetation. Therefore, the removal of these six small trees 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.	DPIRD mapping indicates that the area displays: • 3% very high to extreme hazard water erosion hazard • 12% high to extreme wind erosion hazard • 2% very poor to poor site drainage potential • 1% moderate salinity hazard The Australian Soil Resource Information System (ASRIS) has been used to determine the likelihood of Acid Sulphate Soils (ASS) occurring within the clearing area. The ASRIS database (accessed 13-Jan-2023) indicates there is a low probability of occurrence surrounding these six small trees. No excavations are proposed; therefore, ASS is not considered to be an issue. The removal of these six small trees in a Degraded to Completely Degraded condition is unlikely to cause appreciable land degradation in an area adjacent to road infrastructure and surrounded by cleared agricultural land. The removal of these six small trees is unlikely to result in a change in groundwater level, or an increase in soil salinity. Therefore, the removal of these six small trees is not at variance of 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.	A search of Main Roads GIS shapefiles layers indicates that these six small trees do not lie within any DBCA managed lands or waters, nature reserves, conservation areas or Bush Forever sites. Therefore, the removal of these six small trees is not at variance of 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.	Analysis of the GIS database shows that the clearing area is not located within a: • Public Drinking Water Source Area (PDWSA), • CAWS Act Clearing Control Catchment, • RIWI Act Ground Water or Irrigation district. Although the clearing area is mapped to be within a surface water area proclaimed under the RIWI Act, the location of the proposed clearing does not intersect a mapped watercourse. No change to groundwater level or quality is anticipated from the removal of these six small trees. No deterioration of surface or underground water levels or quality is expected to result from this minor clearing. Therefore, the removal of these six small trees is not at variance of 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 removal of six small trees in an area which is Degraded to Completely Degraded Condition is unlikely to cause, or exacerbate, the incidence of flooding or intensity of flooding. DPIRD mapping indicates that the area has: • 2% moderate to high flood hazard • 2% waterlogging and inundation risk Therefore, given the above, the removal of these six small trees is not at variance of this Principle.

Methodology Used and References:	Australian Soil Resource Information System (ASRIS) Mapping (http://www.asris.csiro.au/mapping/viewer.htm) DPIRD mapping (https://maps.agric.wa.gov.au/nrm-info/) Main Roads GIS Shapefiles Shapefile of clearing of tree D23#41222
Completed By:	
Name	[Redacted]
Signature	[Redacted]
Job Title	Environmental Officer
Date	13/01/2023

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

DECISION ON CLEARING ASSESSMENT		
Clearing Assessment	ENDORSED ☒	REFUSED ☐
Comments	I note the following: • The proposed clearing comprises 0.011 ha. • Six small trees which are spatially separated are required to be cleared to maintain sightlines within the road reserve. • Clearing has been requested by Heavy Vehicle Services for the purposes of road safety	
Name	[Redacted]	
Signature	[Redacted]	
Job Title	Environment Contractor	
Date	17/01/2023	

Site Inspection Photos



Photo 1: Quellington Road and GEH intersection looking West



Photo 2: Quellington Road and GEH intersection looking East

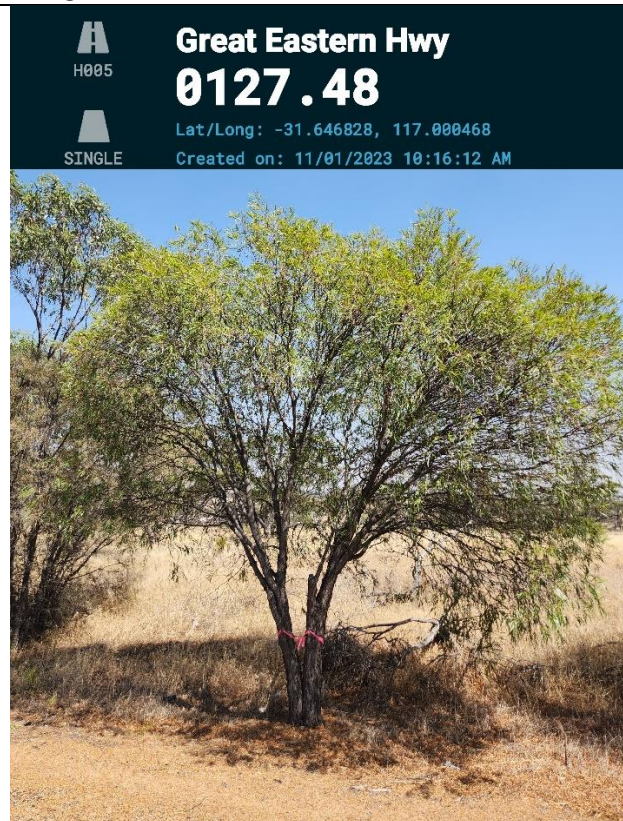


Photo 3: Jam wattle (*Acacia acuminata*) obstructing view

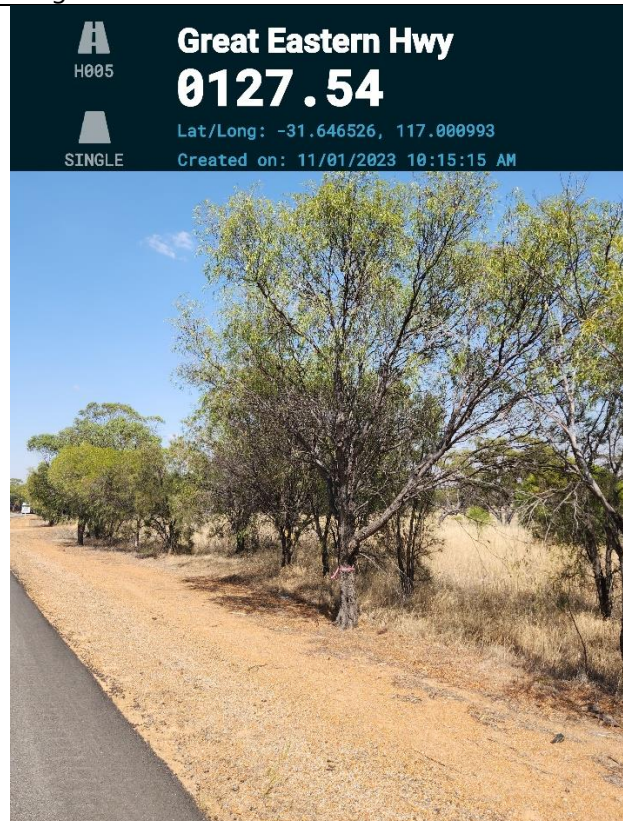


Photo 4: Jam wattle (*Acacia acuminata*) obstructing view



Great Eastern Hwy

0127.56

Lat/Long: -31.646444, 117.001255

Created on: 11/01/2023 10:14:13 AM



Photo 5: *Eucalypt* sp.
obstructing view



Great Eastern Hwy

0127.93

Lat/Long: -31.643817, 117.003602

Created on: 11/01/2023 10:10:14 AM



Photo 6: Jam wattle (*Acacia acuminata*)
obstructing view



Great Eastern Hwy

0127.94

Lat/Long: -31.643724, 117.003729

Created on: 11/01/2023 10:09:53 AM



Photo 7: Jam wattle (*Acacia acuminata*)
obstructing view



Great Eastern Hwy

0128.01

Lat/Long: -31.643166, 117.004057

Created on: 11/01/2023 10:08:08 AM



Photo 8: Jam wattle (*Acacia acuminata*)
obstructing view



Figure 1: GEH and Quellington Rd Intersection Sightline reinstatement (127.44-127.80 SLK)

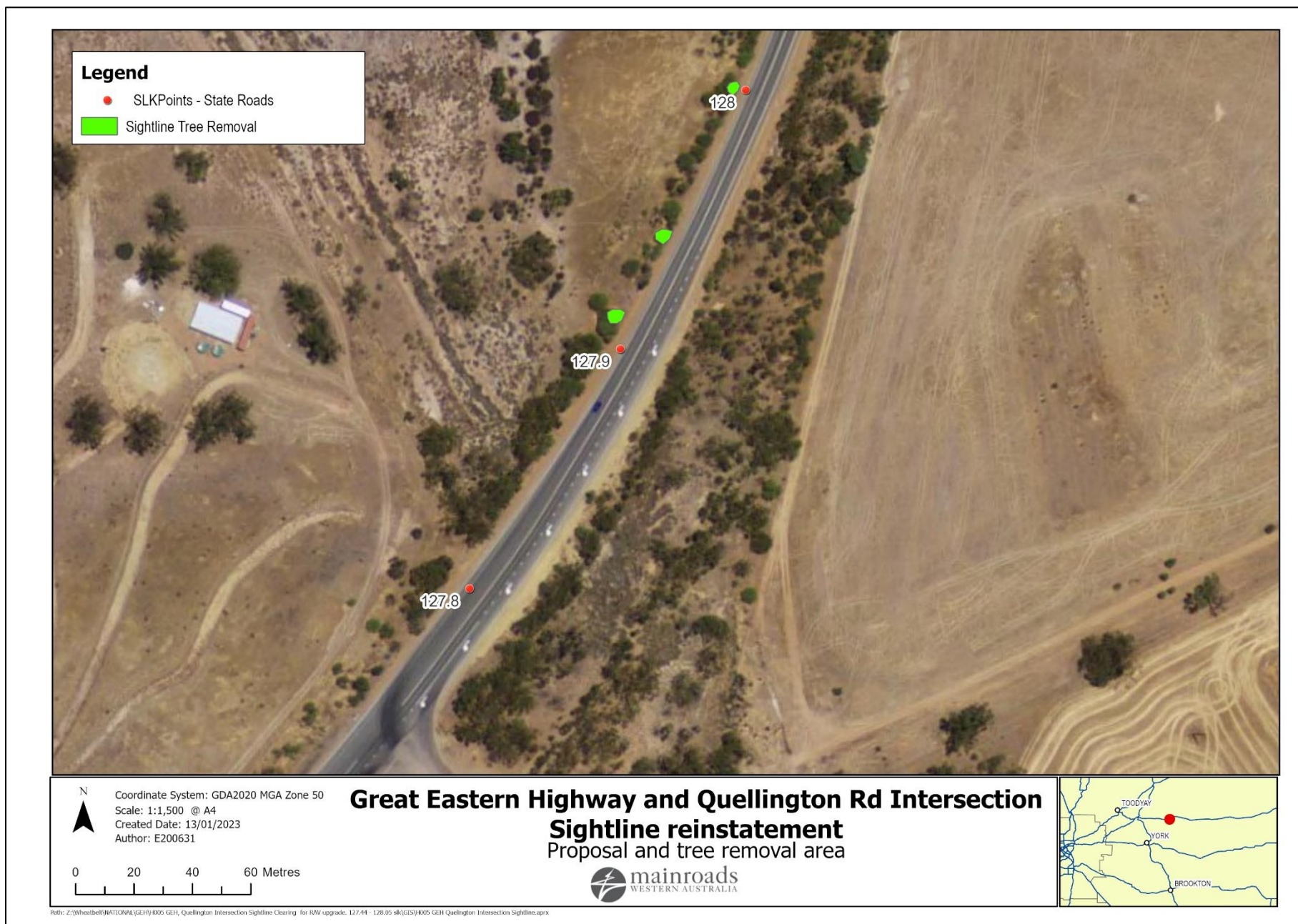


Figure 2: GEH and Quellington Rd Intersection Sightline reinstatement (127.75-128.05 SLK)