



1. Application details

1.1. Permit application details

Permit application No.: 373/1
Permit type: Purpose Permit

1.2. Proponent details

Proponent's name: Paddington Gold Pty Ltd

1.3. Property details

Property:

M16/308
L16/40
P16/1755
P16/1754
P16/1680
L16/50
M16/72
M16/182
M16/87
M16/97
P16/1532
M16/73
L16/38
M16/218
M16/157
M15/993
M16/309
L16/69
L16/39
M15/669
P16/1679

Local Government Area: City Of Kalgoorlie/Boulder & Shire Of Coolgardie
Colloquial name: Kundana Area

1.4. Application

Clearing Area (ha)	No. Trees	Method of Clearing	For the purpose of:
250		Mechanical Removal	Mining

2. Site Information

2.1. Existing environment and information

2.1.1. Description of the native vegetation under application

Vegetation Description	Clearing Description	Vegetation Condition	Comment
Beard vegetation associations 125 - Bare areas; salt lakes, 468 - Medium woodland; salmon gum and Goldfield blackbutt, 480 - Succulent steppe with open low woodland; mulga and sheoak over saltbush (Hopkins et al 2001, Shepherd et al 2001).	Various studies submitted to the Department of Environment summarise the vegetation types and values for this area.	Excellent: Vegetation structure intact; disturbance affecting individual species, weeds non-aggressive (Keighery 1994)	The vegetation proposed to be cleared will be rehabilitated, except for pit areas which constitute a small proportion of the 250ha proposed. Rehabilitation is a condition of the Notice of Intent to Mine approvals process.

3. Assessment of application against clearing principles

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

Comments **Proposal is not likely to be at variance to this Principle**

The plant communities found at the nearby Mt Pleasant operation are widespread and common throughout the region and are not representative of an area of outstanding or distinctive floristic diversity. It is likely that the same plant communities exist at the Kundana Mine site.

A total of 94 flora taxa were collected from the 33 sites at Mt Pleasant (Another nearby mining area proposed for clearing by the same proponent). Of those identified to species level, none was found to be Declared Rare Flora or Priority Flora. The level of richness recorded in the study is generally low to medium compared to other communities/ areas of W.A. Although detailed vegetation studies of the Mt Pleasant area are lacking, regional-scale studies and studies in adjoining districts indicate that the plant communities found at Mt Pleasant are widespread and common throughout the area (van Ettan 2005) .

CALM advises that the floristic variation between the Mt Pleasant area to the Kundana Mine site area is unlikely to be significant. This proposal is not likely to be at variance to this Principle.

Methodology CALM (2005)

(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.

Comments **Proposal is not likely to be at variance to this Principle**

CALM records show that a single Mallee fowl *Leipoa ocellata* (Vulnerable) was sighted on the road to Kundana mining lease on 15 November 2000.

In the introduction of the draft document 'Placer Dome Exploration Drilling: clearing management (sic) plan Kalgoorlie Region', the proponent states: This management plan outlines the procedures in place to ensure that the adverse impacts on the environment, specifically those on native vegetation from exploration drilling are minimised. These procedures ensure that clearing conducted by Placer Dome is not at variance with the following Clearing Principles, which are considered during the assessment of a clearing permit:

-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;

There is no documentary evidence that the proponent has undertaken fauna survey work in the area that is proposed to be cleared, other than the Outback Ecology Services document 'Baseline assessment Kopai and White Flag Lakes' which recorded avian fauna species (only) sighted during a 2 day survey conducted in August 2001. No priority or threatened avian fauna taxa were sighted in that survey. Other than invertebrates no other class of fauna was commented upon in this document.

The Hart, Simpson and Associates Pty Ltd document 'Gilt-edged mining NL. Kundana Project. Ecological Survey' was reviewed for pertinent observations and comment. The report includes an appendix of vertebrate fauna taxa that 'might occur on the site'. The report suggests that the area would support no taxa that are rare or likely to become extinct. The report acknowledges that the area is part of the known range, and may present suitable habitat for the following Schedule 4 (other specially protected fauna) taxa Woma Python *Aspidites ramsayi*, South West Carpet Python *Morelia spilota imbricata*, Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus*. The report cites various reasons why vegetation clearing in the area would not impact on these taxa.

The proposal is not likely to be at variance to this Principle as most of the area will be revegetated in the long term.

Methodology CALM (2005)

(c) Native vegetation should not be cleared if it includes, or is necessary for the continued existence of, significant flora.

Comments **Proposal is not likely to be at variance to this Principle**

According to the available CALM datasets, no Declared Rare or Priority flora taxa are recorded from within the local area of the proposed clearing.

Of the 8 vegetation survey reports cited in the clearing permit application, none reports finding any Declared Rare taxa.

Two separate targeted searches failed to locate priority one species *Gnephosis intonsa* in the vicinity of Lake Kopai. The existing data suggests that the proposal is not likely to be at variance to this Principle.

Methodology CALM (2005)

(d) Native vegetation should not be cleared if it comprises the whole or a part of, or is necessary for the maintenance of a significant ecological community.

Comments **Proposal is not likely to be at variance to this Principle**

No TEC's have been recorded in the area. Therefore this proposal is not likely to be at variance with this Principle.

Methodology CALM (2005) GIS Data base- Threatened Ecological Communities- CALM 15/7/2003

(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.

Comments Proposal is not at variance to this Principle

The vegetation proposed to be cleared is well represented and most of the application area will be rehabilitated. Therefore it is considered that the proposal is not at variance with this Clearing Principle.

	Pre-European area (ha)	Current extent (ha)	Remaining %*	Conservation status**	% in reserves/CALM-managed land
IBRA Bioregion-Coolgardie	12,917,718	12,719,084	98.5	Least concern	
City of Kalgoorlie/Boulder				Least concern	
Shire of Coolgardie				Least concern	
Beard veg type- 125	3,940,746	3,536,992	89.8	Least concern	0.4***
Beard veg type- 468	476,124	476,120	100	Least concern	0.0***
Beard veg type-480	135,039	135,039	100	Least concern	0.0***

* Shepherd et al. (2001)

** Department of Natural Resources and Environment (2002)

***The benchmark of 15% representation in conservation reserves (JANIS, 1997) has not been met for vegetation association 125, 468 and 480

Methodology Shepherd et al. (2001) Department of Natural Resources and Environment (2002) JANIS (1997)

(f) Native vegetation should not be cleared if it is growing in, or in association with, an environment associated with a watercourse or wetland.

Comments Proposal is not likely to be at variance to this Principle

The applicant is bound by other approval processes (Notice of Intent to Mine) to manage surface drainage so that wetlands and water courses do not experience negative impacts. Therefore this proposal is not likely to be at variance with this Clearing Principle.

Methodology Correspondence from Placer Dome (AD156).

(g) Native vegetation should not be cleared if the clearing of the vegetation is likely to cause appreciable land degradation.

Comments Proposal is not likely to be at variance to this Principle

DAWA (2005) advise that the proposal is not likely to cause appreciable on site and off site land degradation if surface water on tracks and other cleared areas are managed to avoid soil erosion, provided flow characteristics of natural drainage lines are maintained and disturbed areas are progressively rehabilitated.

Methodology DAWA (2005)

(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.

Comments Proposal is not at variance to this Principle

The clearing associated with this project is unlikely to impact on the environmental and conservation values of the listed CALM managed areas based on the proximity of the proposed clearing to these areas. The proposal is not at variance with this Clearing Principle.

Methodology CALM (2005) GIS database- CALM managed lands and waters 1/6/2004

(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.

Comments Proposal is not likely to be at variance to this Principle

The applicant is bound by other approval processes (Notice of Intent to Mine) to manage activities likely to impact on water quality. Therefore this proposal is not likely to be at variance with this Clearing Principle.

Methodology Correspondence from Placer Dome (AD156)

(j) Native vegetation should not be cleared if clearing the vegetation is likely to cause, or exacerbate, the incidence of flooding.

Comments Proposal is not likely to be at variance to this Principle

The applicant is bound by other approval processes (Notice of Intent to Mine) to manage surface drainage so that flood events are unlikely to be different as a result of vegetation clearing. Therefore this proposal is not likely to be at variance with this Clearing Principle.

Methodology Correspondence from Placer Dome (AD156)

Planning instrument, Native Title, Previous EPA decision or other matter.

Comments

There is a Native Title Claim over the area under application by the Central West Goldfields, Maduwongga and Widji peoples. However, mining tenements for purposes consistent with the clearing have been granted so therefore the granting of a clearing permit is not a future act under the Native Title Act.

Department of Industry and Resources (DoIR) have no objection to the clearing proposal.

Methodology Direct interest letter response - DoIR (ND627)

4. Assessor's recommendations

Purpose	Method	Applied area (ha)/ trees	Decision	Comment / recommendation
Mining	Mechanical Removal	250	Grant	It is recommended that the Purpose Permit for clearing of native vegetation be granted subject to conditions as the proposal is not at variance to the Clearing Principles. Conditions relate to reporting on clearing carried out and will be supplied to the Department of Environment on an annual basis.

5. References

- CALM (2005) Land clearing proposal advice. Advice to A/Director General, Department of Environment (DoE). Department of Conservation and Land Management, Western Australia. DoE TRIM ref IN21716.
- DAWA Land degradation assessment advice. Office of the Commissioner of Soil and Land Conservation, Department of Agriculture Western Australia. DoE TRIM ref NI 1007.
- Department of Natural Resources and Environment (2002) Biodiversity Action Planning. Action planning for native biodiversity at multiple scales ; catchment bioregional, landscape, local. Department of Natural Resources and Environment, Victoria.
- JANIS Forests Criteria (1997) Nationally agreed criteria for the establishment of a comprehensive, Adequate and Representative reserve System for Forests in Australia. A report by the Joint ANZECC/MCFFA National Forest Policy Statement Implementation Sub-committee. Regional Forests Agreement process. Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra.
- Keighery, BJ (1994) Bushland Plant Survey: A Guide to Plant Community Survey for the Community. Wildflower Society of WA (Inc). Nedlands, Western Australia.
- Shepherd, D.P., Beeston, G.R. and Hopkins, A.J.M. (2001) Native Vegetation in Western Australia, Extent, Type and Status. Resource Management Technical Report 249. Department of Agriculture, Western Australia.
- van Ettan (2005) Vegetation and Flora of the Mt Pleasant Mining Area, Kalgoorlie West Operations. Prepared for Placer Dome, April 2005.