

Clearing Desktop Report – Short Form



This Clearing Desktop Report – Short Form is required for projects with low clearing impacts that do not require a full assessment through a Clearing Desktop Report (CDR). Clearing that may be or is at variance should not be assessed using this form. This form must be reviewed and endorsed by the Central Review and Submissions Process (CRSP) role or delegate, who will determine whether the clearing impacts have been assessed properly. Send the form via clearingpermit@mainroads.wa.gov.au. The Environment Officer will be advised within **2 business days** if the assessment of the project clearing is endorsed. Refer to the [Factsheet on the Assessment of Low Impact Clearing under Main Roads Statewide Clearing Permit CPS 818](#) (D17#452322) for further information.

1. PROJECT DETAILS

Project Name:	Low Cost Shoulder Sealing Northam Cranbrook (M031) SLK 250.8-315.81 Tree Removal		
Region/Directorate:	Great Southern		
Expected Project Start Date:	1 June 2021		
Road/Bridge Name and No:	Northam Cranbrook Road M031		
Project Location (SLK):	SLK 250.8-315.81		
TRIM Document No:	D21#650652		
TRIM Link to Spatial Data:	D21#477370 – Location of 16 trees D21#434706 (100m buffer around each tree)		
EOS No:	2388		
Project No:	21116701	Task Code:	19301

2. PURPOSE OF CLEARING

This project forms part of the Great Southern Region's low-cost shoulder sealing (LCSS) program to improve safety of regional roads.

As part of the LCSS construction works, 16 trees need to be removed from Northam Cranbrook Road M031 between SLK 250.8-315.81.

The trees and stumps identified need to be removed to provide access for construction of the road shoulders and to maintain the existing infrastructure.

All trees are over 10 years of age and are located within the Maintenance Zone.

The process of removing these individual trees will start with removal of the overhead branches, working their way from the top of the tree to ground level. The tree will be mulched, and mulched material will be dispersed in the road reserve or approved spoil location. The trunk will then be felled and utilised within road reserve or disposed of at an approved spoil location. Then the grinding of the stump and roots (if applicable) will take place. The stump ground material and area surrounding will be cleaned up and left levelled for future maintenance activities.

3. ALTERNATIVES TO CLEARING

There are no reasonable alternatives to clearing of the trees apart from not being able to deliver the LCSS program in the areas where trees are retained.

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

The impact of the LCSS Project has been reduced to as low as reasonably practicable through the identification of the minimum number of trees required to achieve the safety features of the LCSS program.

Additional measures and actions to reduce the project clearing impact e.g. steepen batter slopes, installation of safety barriers, changing alignment to one side of existing road are not practical nor feasible in the context of the LCSS program.

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):	0.16 ha (16 x 0.01ha for each tree)	No. Trees Cleared:	16
Species Name:	Refer Table 1.		
Easting and Northing:	Refer Table 1.		

Table 1: Location of 16 trees proposed for removal and tree species information.

Northam Cranbrook Road (M031) SLK	Tree ID	GPS (Easting)	GPS (Northing)	Tree Species (Assessment by visual inspection of photography undertaken by SEO 03/05/2021 or 12/04/2021)	Pre-European Vegetation Association
250.80	3	117.42382	-33.60035	<i>Eucalyptus wandoo</i>	Wagin – Woodland Other - (1023)
291.24	4	117.64886	-33.8549	<i>Eucalyptus wandoo</i>	Broomhill – Woodland Other - 1085
291.62	5	117.64947	-33.85827	<i>Eucalyptus wandoo</i>	Broomhill – Woodland Other - 1085
296.35	6	117.66242	-33.896	<i>Eucalyptus sp.</i> (native); (potentially <i>E. wandoo</i>)	Broomhill – Woodland Other - 1085
298.53	7	117.65317	-33.91394	<i>Eucalyptus wandoo</i>	Broomhill – Woodland Other - 1085
298.65	8	117.65253	-33.91489	<i>Eucalyptus rudis</i>	Broomhill – Woodland Other - 1085
299.12	9	117.65141	-33.9188	<i>Allocasuarina</i>	Broomhill – Woodland Other - 1085
299.34	10	117.65157	-33.92084	<i>Eucalyptus wandoo</i>	Broomhill – Woodland Other - 1085
300.87	11	117.64534	-33.93302	<i>Eucalyptus wandoo</i>	Broomhill – Woodland Other - 1085
304.61	12	117.63602	-33.96481	<i>Eucalyptus wandoo</i>	Tambellup – Woodland Other - 967
304.09	13	117.63638	-33.96018	Dead stag	Tambellup – Woodland Other - 967
306.26	14	117.63165	-33.97922	Dead stag	Tambellup – Woodland Other - 967
306.61	15	117.63056	-33.98207	<i>Eucalyptus wandoo</i>	Tambellup – Woodland Other - 967
306.83	16	117.62981	-33.98399	<i>Eucalyptus wandoo</i>	Tambellup – Woodland Other - 967
315.80	17	117.65092	-34.05919	<i>Eucalyptus sp</i> /possibly <i>Eucalyptus loxophleba</i>	Tambellup – Heath - 1004
315.81	18	117.65077	-34.05902	<i>Eucalyptus sp</i> /possibly <i>Eucalyptus loxophleba</i>	Tambellup – Heath - 1004

7. EXISTING ENVIRONMENT AND SITE INFORMATION

Site Vegetation Description/Association:	See Table 1.
Site Vegetation Condition:	Mostly degraded condition (assessed by MRWA SEO on 3/5/2021 using Google Earth imagery).
Pre-European Extent Remaining (%):	<p>Wagin – Woodland Other - (1023) – 10.79%</p> <p>Broomhill – Woodland Other – 1085 – 11.46%</p> <p>Tambellup – Woodland Other – 967 – 16.86%</p> <p>Tambellup – Heath – 1004 – 39.88%</p> <p>*This Data from Vegetation Statistics Statewide 2018 Full Report; Percentage European Extent Remaining is from Sheet 1a Column D.</p>

8. ASSESSMENT OF PROJECT 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:

The proposed removal of 16 isolated trees is **not likely to be at variance** because:

- The clearing for the project amounts to the removal of 16 isolated trees (*Eucalyptus wandoo* (9), *Eucalyptus rudis* (1), *Eucalyptus spp* (1) possibly *Eucalyptus wandoo*; possibly *Eucalyptus loxophleba* (2), *Allocasuarina* (1) and two dead stags;
- The trees are not located in the Threatened Ecological Community (TEC) (Eucalypt Woodlands of The Western Australian Wheatbelt) (TEC minimum condition thresholds not met (too degraded, patch-size too small) with the exception of 3 trees (trees at SLK 291.24, 300.87, 304.61) that may occur in Category D TEC which is described as 'patches likely to correspond to a condition of degraded to good.'
- Although three of the trees proposed to be cleared have the potential to form part of the Eucalypt Woodlands TEC, there is only a small number (only three individual trees) to be removed. These trees are located on the edge of these potential patches of TEC. The condition of the vegetation to be cleared is at best degraded to good with low biodiversity and high weed loads and the patches from which the trees are proposed to be removed are not considered to represent a significant occurrence of this ecological community. The clearing does not occur in an area of high biodiversity:
 - EPBC Protected Matters Searches and DBCA NatureMap Searches identified potential for 13 Threatened plant species to be present (*Verticordia fimbriolepis subsp. fimbriolepis*, *Acacia errabunda*, *Banksia subpinnatifida var. imberbis*, *Acacia grisea*, *Adenanthos pungens subsp. effuses*, *Chordifex ornatus*, *Leucopogon florulentus*, *Regelia cymbifolia*, *Andersonia gracilis*, *Banksia oligantha*, *Adenanthos pungens subsp. pungens*, *Banksia pseudoplumosa*, *Roycea pycnophylloides*). However, the MRWA flora and herbarium layers identified no known Threatened or priority flora species within 100m of each tree and due to the largely degraded condition of the vegetation to be cleared they are considered unlikely to occur; and

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ EPBC Protected Matters Searches and DBCA NatureMap Searches identified potential presence of 12 Threatened and 1 priority fauna species (<i>Calyptorhynchus banksii naso</i> (Forest Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo); <i>Calyptorhynchus latirostris</i> (Carnaby's Cockatoo); <i>Falco hypoleuco</i> (Grey Falcon); <i>Calidris ferruginea</i> (Curlew Sandpiper); <i>Numenius madagascariensis</i> (Eastern Curlew); and <i>Leipoa ocellata</i> (Malleefowl), <i>Dasyurus geoffroii</i> (Chuditch); <i>Phascogale calura</i> (Red-tailed Phascogale); and <i>Parantechinus apicalis</i> (Dibbler); <i>Calidris canutus</i> subsp. <i>rogersi</i> (Red Knot (north-eastern Siberia); <i>Macrotis lagotis</i> (Bilby); <i>Cacatua pastinator</i> subsp. <i>pastinator</i> (Muir's Corella); <i>Platycercus icterotis</i> subsp. <i>xanthogenys</i> (Western Rosella (inland))(P4). These species are highly unlikely to rely on the individual trees proposed for removal. In addition, the trees are typically located in sparsely vegetated areas which are unlikely to provide the necessary habitat for many of these species which prefer habitats with significant vegetative cover/understorey. If these species were present the area, their presence is likely to be transitory. ● A number of trees (Tree from SLK 304.09 to SLK315.81) are located within a confirmed Carnaby's Cockatoo Breeding Zone. With the exception of the one <i>Allocasuarina</i> tree, all trees (<i>Eucalyptus</i> spp and <i>Eucalyptus wandoo</i>) are of suitable diameter at breast height (DBH) to develop a nest hollow, however none have suitable hollows (D21#693772).
<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>The proposed removal of 16 isolated trees is not likely to be at variance because the trees proposed for removal do not contain any hollows suitable for Black Cockatoos and occur in highly disturbed areas. As such, the trees proposed to be cleared are considered to represent limited fauna habitat value.</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>The proposed clearing will result in the selective removal of isolated trees. Based on the highly modified nature of the vegetation proposed to be cleared and the absence of nearby DBCA records, it is unlikely that any Threatened flora will occur in proximity to the trees to be cleared. The proposed removal of 16 isolated trees is not at variance because no rare flora will be impacted by the removal of the isolated 16 trees.</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>Review of DBCA data did not identify the presence of any State-listed TECs in the vicinity of the proposed clearing. No TECs were observed during review of photographs of the vegetation to be cleared, and none are considered likely to occur based on the disturbed condition of the roadside vegetation proposed to be cleared. The proposed removal of 16 isolated trees is therefore not likely to be at variance with 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 proposed removal of 16 isolated trees is not likely to be at variance because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are four Pre-European Vegetation Associations (Vegetation Association 967 – Tambellup – Woodland; Vegetation Association 1004 – Tambellup – Heath, Vegetation Association 1023 – Wagin – Woodland, Vegetation Association 1085 – Broomhill – Woodland) • All Vegetation Associations, have less than 30% of their Pre-European extent remaining within the Project area with the exception of Vegetation Association 1004 at the Statewide scale and Vegetation Association 967 at the Shire of Woodanilling scale. • At the national level, “the threshold level” below which species loss appears to accelerate exponentially at an ecosystem level is regarded as being at a level of 30% of the pre-clearing extent of the vegetation type (Environmental Protection Authority, 2000). • Whilst the vegetation associations have less than 30% of their pre-European extents remaining, given all trees proposed for removal are either in areas where vegetation condition is degraded or located where the patch size is not more than 5m wide. The condition of the vegetation to be cleared is at best degraded to good with low biodiversity and high weed loads and the patches from which the trees are proposed to be removed are not considered to represent a significant remnant of native vegetation. Given the small-scale nature of clearing, the proposed clearing of isolated trees is considered negligible at all scales. Therefore, the clearing does not impact vegetation that is significant as a remnant in an area that has been extensively cleared.
<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 proposed removal of 16 isolated trees is not likely to be at variance because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All trees are not growing in or in association with an environment associated with a watercourse or wetland.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no wetlands within the vicinity of the Proposal. • The closest wetland (part of the Peringillup Reserve) is ~600m south of the tree at SLK 300.87 (MRWA GIS watercourses layer). • The felling of isolated trees is unlikely to disturb or interrupt any natural drainage or surface run-off patterns and is unlikely to impact any bed or banks of a watercourse. • Given the clearing is of isolated trees which are not in or near a watercourse, the Project is unlikely to be at variance to this principle.
<p>Principle (g) – Native vegetation should not be cleared if the clearing of the vegetation is likely to cause appreciable land degradation.</p>	<p>The proposed removal of 16 isolated trees is not likely to be at variance because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The removal of 16 isolated trees is unlikely to significantly change flood risk and salinity, waterlogging, water erosion and wind erosion risk. • There is a low to extremely low risk of occurrence of acid sulphate soils in the Proposal area. In addition, the proposed activity (the removal of isolated trees) is unlikely to require significant disturbance of the soil profile.
<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>The proposed removal of 16 isolated trees is not at variance because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no reserves or conservation areas adjacent to the Proposal. • The closest reserve is Peringillup Nature Reserve which is located ~165m to the south east of the tree at SLK 300.87. • The closest ESA (unnamed) is located ~1200m to the south east of the tree at SLK 315.81.
<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 proposed removal of 16 isolated trees is not at variance because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no proclaimed surface water areas within the vicinity of the Proposal. The closest proclaimed surface water area (Warren River and Tributaries) are located 43km to the west of the tree at SLK 306.26. • The felling of isolated trees is unlikely to disturb or interrupt any natural drainage or surface run-off patterns and will not impact any bed or banks of a watercourse. The nearest watercourse is a minor non-perennial watercourse ~600m from the tree at SLK 300.87. • There are no wetlands within the vicinity of the Proposal. The closest wetland (part of the Peringillup Reserve) is 600m south of the tree at SLK 300.87. • There are no proclaimed groundwater areas in the vicinity of the Proposal. The closest proclaimed groundwater area is the Kondinin-Ravensthorpe

	<p>groundwater area and it is located 134km to the north east of the Proposal.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The closest public drinking water source area (Katanning Water Supply Catchment Area) is located 9.8km from the tree at SLK 250. Given the distance between the 16 trees and surface water and groundwater resources and the nature and scale of the proposal (which is the removal of isolated trees), the risk to surface water and groundwater is considered minimal/negligible.
Principle (j) – Native vegetation should not be cleared if clearing the vegetation is likely to cause, or exacerbate, the incidence of flooding.	The proposed removal of 16 isolated trees is not at variance because the removal of 16 isolated trees is minor in nature and scale and is unlikely to cause or exacerbate the incidence of flooding.
Methodology Used and References:	Map showing location of each tree - LISC D21#473914 Photographs of each tree – see LISC D21#473914 Shapefile - Location of each tree - D21#477370
Completed By:	
Name	Environment Officer
Signature	Environment Officer
Job Title	Environment Officer
Date	13/07/2021

Table 3. Pre-European Vegetation Representation (Beard)

Pre-European Vegetation Association	Scale	Pre-European (ha)	Current Extent (ha)	% Remaining	% Remaining in DBCA reserves
Veg Assoc No. 967	Statewide	216684.92	36536.08	16.86	0.51
	IBRA Bioregion <i>Avon Wheatbelt</i>	174907.84	26,637.79	15.23	0.22
	IBRA Sub-region <i>Katanning</i>	174907.84	26637.79	15.23	0.22
	Local Government Authority <i>Shire of Broomehill-Tambellup</i>	109805.10	13953.68	12.71	0.28
	<i>Shire of Woodanilling</i> (tree at SLK 250.8)	1295.75	589.20	45.47	0.51
Veg Assoc No. 1004	Statewide	9768.20	3895.93	39.88	16.60
	IBRA Bioregion <i>Avon Wheatbelt</i>	8109.76	2272.94	28.03	0.08
	IBRA Sub-region <i>Katanning</i>	8109.76	2272.94	28.03	0.08
	Local Government Authority	8109.76	2272.94	28.03	0.08

Pre-European Vegetation Association	Scale	Pre-European (ha)	Current Extent (ha)	% Remaining	% Remaining in DBCA reserves
	<i>Shire of Broomehill-Tambellup</i>				
	<i>Shire of Woodanilling (tree at SLK 250.8)</i>	No data	No data	No data	No data
Veg Assoc No. 1023	Statewide	1601605.76	172875.16	10.79	1.18
	IBRA Bioregion <i>Avon Wheatbelt</i>	1522680.40	165123.60	10.84	1.13
	IBRA Sub-region <i>Katanning</i>	51786.78	5935.05	11.46	1.27
	Local Government Authority <i>Shire of Broomehill-Tambellup</i>	1123736.23	138408.96	12.31	No data
	<i>Shire of Woodanilling (tree at SLK 250.8)</i>	77871.76	11211.13	14.40	0.39
Veg Assoc No. 1085	Statewide	51786.78	5935.05	11.46	0.03
	IBRA Bioregion <i>Avon Wheatbelt</i>	51786.78	5935.05	11.46	0.03
	IBRA Sub-region <i>Katanning</i>	51786.78	5935.05	11.46	0.03
	Local Government Authority <i>Shire of Broomehill-Tambellup</i>	29276.48	2869.18	9.80	0.06
	Local Government Authority <i>Shire of Woodanilling (tree at SLK 250.8)</i>	No data	No data	No data	No data

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	CDR (Short Form) is approved as it involves clearing of isolated trees in an area of highly disturbed vegetation condition and is unlikely to be at variance with any of the ten clearing principles.
Name	Senior Environment Officer
Signature	Senior Environment Officer
Job Title	Senior Environment Officer
Date	19/07/2021