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GEOTECHNICAL INVESTIGATIONS

NATIVE VEGETATION CLEARING PERMIT APPLICATION

9 July 2026

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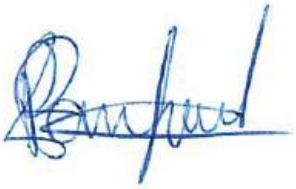
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Preston Consulting acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands on which it works and, in particular the Whadjuk People of the Noongar Nation and, the Yued People, the Traditional Owners of the land on which the activity is proposed. Preston Consulting pays its respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Past and Present, and recognise their continuing connection to land, waters, sky, culture, and community.

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DOCUMENT CONTROL

Document Title	Geotechnical Investigations – Native Vegetation Clearing Permit		
Document Number	TRA-BER-NVC-1		
Revision Number	0		9/07/2026
Status	Final		9/07/2026
Author	Phoebe Ranford Senior Environmental Consultant Preston Consulting Pty Ltd		9/07/2026
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1 INTRODUCTION

TEC Pipe Pty Ltd is a subsidiary of TransAlta Corporation (TransAlta). TransAlta is seeking to develop the Beros Plains Power Station (Project). The Project comprises of a gas-fired medium-speed firming power plant as part of the South West Interconnected System.

The Project will be located approximately 9 km north of Warradarge, in the Midwest region of Western Australia (WA). The Project will be located entirely within Lot 502 of Deposited Plan 400357. Lot 502 is 52 ha however only up to 5 ha of disturbance is required should the largest facility (i.e., 400 MW) be built. The Project is located next to Western Power's existing Eneabba Substation.

Feasibility investigations are required to provide information about the design and construction requirements of foundations, potential earthworks and construction material evaluation for the Project, which is critical for the overall feasibility of the Project. The investigations do not represent implementation of the Project.

1.1 PURPOSE

The purpose of this Native Vegetation Clearing Permit (NVCP) application is to seek permission to clear up to 5 ha of native vegetation within a 35.3 ha Permit Area (Figure 1) to facilitate feasibility investigations. Clearing is required for existing access track maintenance, new access track construction, temporary laydown areas, fencing and gate modifications, geophysical surveys and geotechnical investigations which include drill boreholes and associated drill pads, and test pits.

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Legend

Permit Area

ESRI World Imagery

N

0 100 200 m

GDA2020 / MGA zone 50

1:15,000

Project: 674_TRA_001
Date: 26/06/2026
Size: A4
Author: swilliams (Preston Consulting Pty Ltd)

Figure 1: Permit Area

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2 PERMIT AREA

A Purpose Permit is being sought to allow a total clearing of up to 5 ha of native vegetation within the Permit Area (Figure 1).

2.1 BOUNDARY

Clearing is to be conducted entirely within the boundaries of the Permit Area shown in Figure 1. Key environmental values were identified in the baseline studies as outlined in Section 4.

2.2 TENURE AND LAND ACCESS

The Permit Area will be located entirely within Lot 502 of Deposited Plan 400357 which is owned by Genthrust Trust Pty Ltd. An Option to Lease Agreement has been provided as Attachment 1. Condition 6 of this Agreement allows TransAlta to complete geotechnical investigations on the Property to confirm suitability of the property for the Project.

2.3 NATIVE TITLE

The Permit Area lies within the South West Settlement where Native title has been extinguished. The Permit Area lies within the Yued Native Title Land Use Agreement Area with the State of WA.

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3 PROPOSED ACTIVITIES

Clearing is required to commence ground disturbing feasibility investigations to support the Project. This will involve vegetation clearing for:

- Existing access track widening and maintenance;
- New access track construction;
- Temporary laydown areas;
- Fencing and gate modifications;
- Geophysical surveys; and
- Geotechnical investigations, including drill boreholes and associated drill pads and test pits.

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4 ENVIRONMENTAL CHARACTERISTICS

The environmental characteristics of the Permit Area relevant to this NVCP application are detailed in the following sections.

4.1 SURVEY DETAILS

Trace Enterprises (Trace) were commissioned to complete a reconnaissance flora survey, basic fauna survey and black cockatoo habitat assessment within the Survey Area outlined in Figure 2.

Desktop searches of several biological databases were undertaken to identify and prepare lists of significant flora and fauna that may occur within the Survey Area. Desktop searches were conducted within a 40 km radius of the Survey Area to provide a regional context for flora, vegetation and fauna recorded during the field surveys. To identify communities or species of significance potentially occurring, the results of the database searches were compiled and then assessed in consideration of the known habitat preferences for each community or species. The likelihood that significant species or communities would occur in the Survey Area was assessed using a set of rankings and criteria.

Field methods for the flora and vegetation surveys included:

- Surveying of quadrats and relevés;
- Targeted flora searches;
- Vegetation type and condition mapping; and
- Assessment of presence of Threatened Ecological Communities (TEC) or Priority Ecological Communities (PEC).

Field methods for the fauna survey included:

- Habitat assessment and mapping via foot and vehicles traverses; and
- Motion cameras.

All surveys were completed in accordance with relevant Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) Technical Guidance (EPA, 2016a & 2020).

4.2 BIOGEOGRAPHIC REGIONS

The Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation of Australia (IBRA) classifies Australia's landscapes into large 'bioregions' and 'subregions' based on climate, geology, landform, native vegetation and species information (DCCEEW, 2025). The Permit Area is located in the Leseur subregion (GS3) of the Geraldton Sandplains bioregion which is characterised as 'Shrub-heaths rich in endemics occur on a mosaic of lateritic mesas, sandplains, coastal sands and limestones'.

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Legend

- Permit Area
- Survey Area

ESRI World Imagery

N

0 100 200 m

GDA2020 / MGA zone 50

1:15,000

Project: 670_TRA_002
Date: 26/06/2026
Size: A4
Author: swilliams (Preston Consulting Pty Ltd

Figure 2: Survey Area

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4.3 Land Systems

Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development undertakes land system mapping for WA using a nesting soil-landscape mapping hierarchy (Payne & Schoknecht, 2011). While the primary purpose of the mapping is to inform pastoral and agricultural land capability, it is also useful for informing biological assessments. Land systems are defined as areas with recurring patterns of landforms, soils, vegetation and drainage (Payne & Leighton, 2004). The Permit Area lies entirely within the Yerramullah System which is described as 'Subdued dissected lateritic plateau, undulating low hills and rises on lateritised weathered sandstone. Pale deep sand, sandy gravels and yellow deep sand. Banksia woodlands on lower slopes/depressions, heathlands elsewhere'.

4.4 Pre-European Vegetation

From 2007 to 2018, the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) and Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER) published regular updates regarding the pre-European extent and current year's extent of each of Beard's vegetation units in WA.

The Permit Area is located entirely within vegetation association 379 which is described as scrub-heath with details of its current extent described in Table 1.

Table 1: Vegetation Association 379 Extent

Region	Pre-European Extent	Current Extent	% Remaining
Statewide Extent	547,736.9	129,736.8	23.7
Geraldton Sandplains (IBRA Region)	546,507.3	129,495.8	23.7
Leseur Sandplains (IBRA Subregion)	370,029.8	111,632.5	30.2

4.5 Flora and Vegetation

4.5.1 Listed Flora

Initial desktop studies identified 103 listed flora species recorded within a 10 km radius of the Study Area, comprising 26 species listed under the EPBC Act and/or BC Act and 77 listed as Priority by DBCA. One of these records intersected the Permit Area, *Mesomelaena stygia* subsp. *deflexa* (Priority 3) which was reported in 1981.

Of these 103 species, only two were recorded in the field survey:

- *Haemodorum loratum* (Priority 3) – one individual; and
- *Jacksonia anthoclada* (Priority 3) – one individual.

Mesomelaena stygia subsp. *deflexa* was not detected during the survey.

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Legend

- Permit Area

Significant Flora

- Haemodorum loratum (Priority 3)
- Jacksonia anthoclada (Priority 3)

ESRI World Imagery

N

0 100 200 m

GDA2020 / MGA zone 50

1:10,000

Project: 674_TRA_003
Date: 26/06/2026
Size: A4
Author: swilliams (Preston Consulting Pty Ltd)

Figure 3: Records of significant flora

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4.5.2 Introduced Flora

There were 14 introduced flora species recorded during the field survey, none of which are a Weeds of National Significance/Declared Pest.

4.5.3 Vegetation Types

Two vegetation types were mapped across the Permit Area (Figure 4). Vegetation types and their relative extents across the Permit Area are presented in Table 2. None of the vegetation types were considered to align with any TECs or PECs.

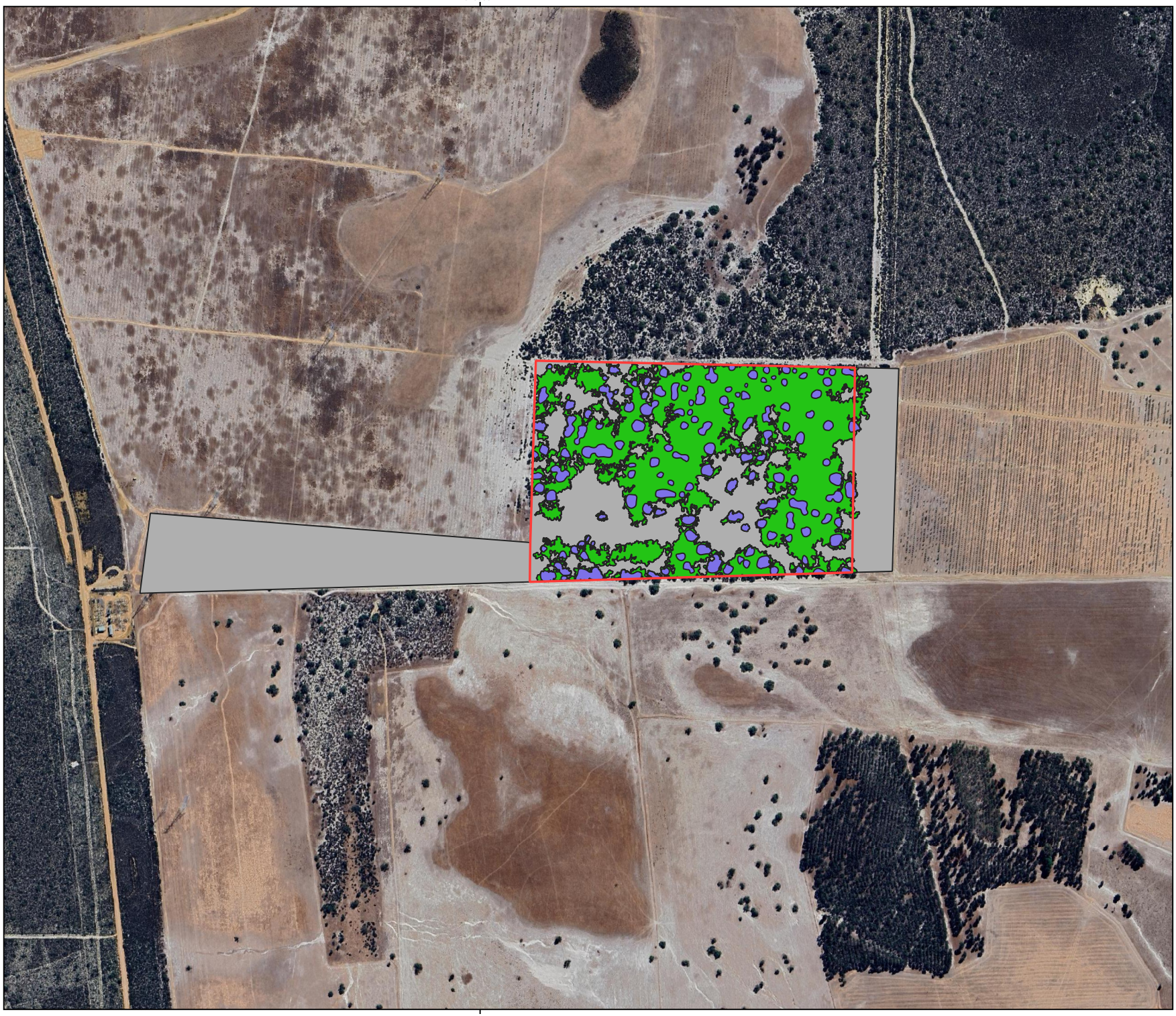
Table 2: Vegetation types

Vegetation Type	Description	Mapped extent (ha)	Extent in Permit Area	
			Area (ha)	Proportion of Permit Area (%)
Hypochaeris glabra, Hordeum leporinum and *Vulpia myuros* (HyHoVu)	Highly disturbed open low grassland/paddock dominated by weeds, *Hypochaeris glabra, Hordeum leporinum* and *Vulpia myuros forma myuros.*	28.5	28.5	80.7
Eucalyptus spp., *Adenanthos cygnorum, Hibbertia* spp. (EuAdHi)	Low scrubland with isolated *Eucalyptus todtiana* and *E. conveniens* over a midstory of *Adenanthos cygnorum* over an understory of *Hibbertia subvaginata* and *H. polystachya*	5.1	5.1	14.4
Grassland/Paddock	N/A	18.0	1.7	4.8

4.5.4 Vegetation Condition

The vegetation condition of the Permit Area was mapped based on the appropriate condition scale for the South-West Botanical Province (EPA, 2016). The vegetation condition of the Permit Area was mapped as Degraded or Good with the majority of the Permit Area (64.6%) mapped as Good (Figure 5).

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Legend

- Permit Area
- Grassland/paddock
- HyHoVu
- EuAdHi

N

0 100 200 m

GDA2020 / MGA zone 50

1:11,500

Project: 674_TRA_BER
Date: 21/06/2026
Size: A4
Author: pranford (Preston Consulting Pty Ltd

Figure 4: Vegetation types

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Legend

- Permit Area

Vegetation Condition

- Completely degraded
- Good

ESRI World Imagery

N

0 100 200 m

GDA2020 / MGA zone 50

1:10,000

Project: 674_TRA_005
Date: 26/06/2026
Size: A4
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Figure 5: Vegetation condition

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4.6 FAUNA

4.6.1 FAUNA HABITAT

Two broad fauna habitats were mapped within the Permit Area consisting of Open Shrubland and Grassland/Paddock (Figure 6). The majority of the Permit Area (64.6%) was mapped as Open Shrubland.

These habitats are unlikely to support any significant fauna given they are highly disturbed and fragmented (Trace, 2026).

Additionally, a black cockatoo habitat assessment was completed within the Permit Area and no suitable breeding habitat or evidence of black cockatoo roosting (e.g., moulted feathers, chewed food items, droppings etc.) was recorded (Trace, 2026). The vegetation was also given a foraging value score of 0 due to the condition of the vegetation, distance to the nearest breeding records and lack of foraging evidence.

4.6.2 LISTED FAUNA

Thirty-seven significant vertebrate fauna species were identified in the desktop review, none of which have previously been recorded in the Permit Area. Two significant species were considered to have a medium likelihood of occurring including:

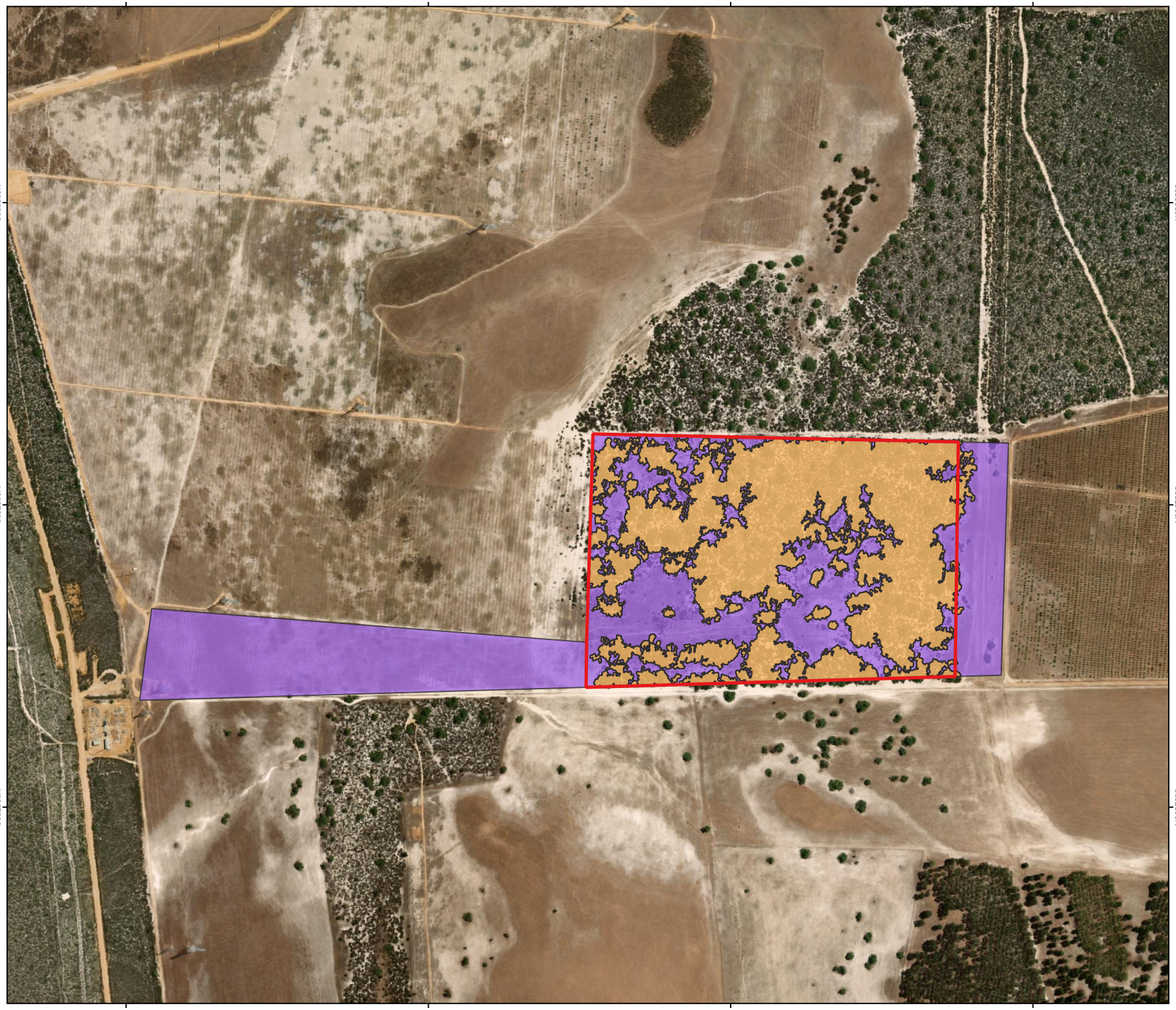
- Carnaby's Cockatoo (*Zanda latirostris*) listed as Endangered under the EPBC and BC Acts; and
- Southern Whiteface (*Aphelocephala leucopsis*) listed as Vulnerable under the EPBC Act.

The remaining 35 species were considered unlikely to occur (Trace, 2026).

4.6.3 RECORDED SIGNIFICANT FAUNA

No Threatened or Priority vertebrate fauna were recorded during the survey (Trace, 2026). The habitats within the Permit Area are highly disturbed and fragmented in addition to multiple introduced species being recorded including the Red Fox (*Vulpes* vulpes) and Feral Cats (*Felis catus*).

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Legend

- Permit Area

Fauna Habitats

- Grassland/paddock
- Open scrubland

ESRI World Imagery

N

0 100 200 m

GDA2020 / MGA zone 50

1:10,000

Project: 674_TRA_006
Date: 26/06/2026
Size: A4
Author: swilliams (Preston Consulting Pty Ltd)

Figure 6: Fauna Habitats

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4.7 Water and Drainage

The Permit Area is within the Upper Indoon Logue catchment of the South-West. This catchment is approximately 137,400 ha.

No drainage lines intersect the Permit Area, the nearest drainage line is Warradage Creek located 3 km east.

The Permit Area is located within the Arrowsmith Groundwater Allocation Plan and is not located within a Public Drinking Water Sources Area.

4.8 Land Use

Land use in the region is dominated by agricultural activities. There are also a number of isolated nature reserves in the vicinity of the Permit Area.

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5 STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

TransAlta has consulted with the landowner for the freehold lot underlying the Permit Area. No other stakeholders have been consulted regarding this application.

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6 ASSESSMENT OF CLEARING

The proposed vegetation disturbance has been assessed against the ten clearing principles described within *A Guide to the Assessment of Applications to Clear Native Vegetation* (Department of Environmental Regulation (DER), 2014; Table 3).

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Table 3: Assessment of proposed vegetation disturbance against the ten clearing principles

Relevant Information	Assessment of potential impacts	Proposed control measures	Outcome – Assessment of variance with clearing principle
1. Native Vegetation should not be cleared if it comprises a high level of biological diversity			
Surveys of the Permit Area were undertaken by Trace (2026). Records of two Priority flora were identified within the Permit Area including: • *Haemodorum loratum* (P3) (one individual); and • *Jacksonia anthoclada* (P3) (one individual). No Threatened or Priority Ecological Communities were recorded. No significant fauna were recorded however two were considered to have a medium likelihood of occurring including: • Carnaby's Cockatoo (*Zanda latirostris*) listed as Endangered under the EPBC and BC Acts; and • Southern Whiteface (*Aphelocephala leucopsis*) listed as Vulnerable under the EPBC Act. The Permit Area is highly disturbed and supports only very limited low-quality foraging habitat for Carnaby's Cockatoo. The vegetation only provides transient habitat for the Southern Whiteface.	The proposed clearing will result in the removal of up to 5 ha of native vegetation. Clearing of 5 ha within the Permit Area represents 0.004% of the remaining extent of Vegetation Association 379 within the IBRA subregion. The location of the clearing activities is flexible which allows TransAlta to adjust the layout to minimise impacts on environmental values. TransAlta is committed to avoiding all significant flora identified by Trace (2026). The proposed clearing is low impact and therefore clearing would be limited to narrow access tracks and small investigation areas. This clearing is unlikely to significantly impact the level of biological diversity within these areas.	To minimise the impact of clearing on the environment, TransAlta proposes the following control measures: • All clearing will be managed under a Ground Disturbance Permit process (or similar); • The total extent of vegetation clearing is limited to 5 ha; • Clearing areas will be identified prior using GPS coordinates and boundaries visually identified with pegs; • All clearing restricted to only what is required for each activity within the proposed Permit Area and undertaken only when required; • Where possible, mechanical clearing will be avoided where vehicles can drive over vegetation to access areas that are not connected by existing tracks; and • All vegetation clearing and earthmoving equipment will be inspected and cleaned prior to conducting clearing activities, vehicles will be inspected and cleaned as required to prevent the incidental spread of weeds .	The proposed clearing is unlikely to be at variance with this principle.
2. Native vegetation should not be cleared if it comprises the whole, or part of, or is necessary for the maintenance of a significant habitat for fauna indigenous to WA			
No significant fauna were recorded in the Permit Area. Only two species were considered to have a medium likelihood of occurrence. Only two habitats were mapped within the Permit Area and both were considered highly disturbed and fragmented.	The proposed clearing will result in the removal of up to 5 ha of native fauna habitat. The proposed investigations activities are of low impact. Clearing would be limited to narrow access tracks and small investigation areas. The disturbance will therefore not result in the loss of the whole, or a significant part of a significant fauna habitat.	Implement control measures described above and: • Any fauna interactions will be reported to the TransAlta environment team; and • Implement speed limits within the Permit Area.	The proposed clearing is unlikely to be at variance with this principle.

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Relevant Information	Assessment of potential impacts	Proposed control measures	Outcome – Assessment of variance with clearing principle
	Vegetation will be rehabilitated in areas not required for the Project. The required native vegetation disturbance is unlikely to prevent access to an area necessary for maintaining a significant fauna habitat. No barriers to fauna movement, surface water or other natural processes will be installed.		
3. Native vegetation should not be cleared if it includes, or is necessary for the continued existence of, rare flora			
No Threatened flora were recorded within the Permit Area. Two Priority flora were identified within the Permit Area including: • *Haemodorum loratum* (P3); and • *Jacksonia anthoclada* (P3).	The flexible footprint allows TransAlta to adjust the layout to avoid environmental values. TransAlta is committed to avoiding all significant flora identified by Trace (2026). The proposed clearing will result in the removal of up to 5 ha of native vegetation. Clearing of 5 ha within the Permit Area represents 0.004% of the remaining extent of Vegetation Association 379 within the IBRA subregion. Any disturbance of native vegetation will occur over a narrow area or in defined spaced-out locations.	Implement control measures described above.	The proposed clearing is unlikely to be at variance with this principle.
4. Native vegetation should not be cleared if it comprises the whole or part of, or is necessary for the maintenance of, a Threatened Ecological Community			
Surveys of the Permit Area were undertaken by Trace (2026). None of the vegetation recorded within the Permit Area was considered to represent a TEC.	Not applicable	Not applicable	The proposed clearing is not at variance with this principle.
5. 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 Permit Area lies entirely within the Geraldton Sandplains Bioregion, specifically located on the Leseur IBRA Subregion. The vegetation in the Permit Area is identified as Vegetation Association 379. Vegetation Association 379 only has 23.7% of statewide and Geraldton Sandplains pre-European extent remaining.	Only 5 ha of clearing is proposed as part of this application. This represents 0.004% of the remaining extent of Vegetation Association 379 within the IBRA subregion. The total clearing represents 14% of the vegetation within the Permit Area. 76% of the remnant vegetation within this patch will remain.	Implement control measures described above.	The proposed clearing may be at variance with this principle.
6. Native vegetation should not be cleared if it is growing in, or in association with, an environment associated with a watercourse or wetland			

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Relevant Information	Assessment of potential impacts	Proposed control measures	Outcome – Assessment of variance with clearing principle
The Permit Area does not intersect any watercourses or significant wetlands.	Not applicable	Not applicable	The proposed clearing is not at variance with this principle.
7. Native vegetation should not be cleared if the clearing of the vegetation is likely to cause appreciable land degradation			
No Weeds of National Significance were recorded within the Permit Area (Trace, 2026).	Land degradation will be limited to the 5 ha of proposed land clearing. The proposed investigations activities are of low impact. Clearing would be limited to narrow access tracks and small investigation areas.	Implement control measures described above	The proposed clearing is unlikely to be at variance with this principle.
8. 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 Permit Area does not intersect any conservation reserves. South Eneabba Nature Reserve is located west of the Permit Area.	Clearing of up to 5 ha for geotechnical investigations will not impact the environmental values within South Eneabba Nature Reserve.	Implement control measures described above	The proposed clearing is unlikely to be at variance with this principle.
9. Native vegetation should not be cleared if the clearing is likely to cause deterioration in the quality of surface or underground water			
The Permit Area does not any intersect any drainage lines.	The proposed clearing is not expected to cause deterioration in the quality of surface or underground water. Potential impacts to surface or groundwater quality as a result of the clearing include sediment loss from disturbed areas and minor hydrocarbon spills.	Implement control measures described above	The proposed clearing is unlikely to be at variance with this principle.
10. Native vegetation should not be cleared if the clearing is likely to cause, or exacerbate, the incidence or intensity of flooding			
The region experiences a Mediterranean climate characterised by hot, dry summers and mild, wet winters. No significant drainage lines are present.	Clearing of 5 ha of native vegetation for geotechnical investigations is unlikely to cause, or exacerbate, the incidence or intensity of flooding. Surface water flow during flood conditions would be able to easily maintain its existing regimes. Clearing for access and drill pads are unlikely to have a substantial effect on the hydrologic and hydraulic results due to the narrow and linear nature of the clearing and relatively low impact i.e., vegetation will be rolled over where possible instead of blade clearing to install a graded track. Surface water flow during flood conditions will have negligible	Implement the control measures described above.	The proposed clearing is unlikely to be at variance with this principle.

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Relevant Information	Assessment of potential impacts	Proposed control measures	Outcome – Assessment of variance with clearing principle
	impacts and be able to continue its existing flow regimes. Any sheet flow will be able to flow with negligible disruption. Vegetation will also be rehabilitated in areas not required for the Project, further reducing the impacts on surface water.		

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7 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this NVCP Application is to allow the clearing of up to 5 ha of native vegetation.

The following key points are noted:

- Clearing of 5 ha within the Permit Area represents 0.004% of the remaining extent of Vegetation Association 379;
- The proposed clearing will not impact the following;
  - TECs or PECs;
  - Conservation areas; or
  - Threatened Flora;
  - Threatened and Priority Fauna;
- The proposed clearing will not result in significant indirect impacts to the following:
  - Priority Flora.

TransAlta has also identified a number of control measures to minimise the impacts to native vegetation and other environmental and heritage values. These measures include the following:

- Where target locations cannot be accessed from existing tracks, designate specific access routes across low vegetation for access where possible rather than grade a track ;
- Avoid removing isolated, trees where possible to minimise tree clearing;
- Consider 4WD access first to select driveable route;
- Avoid clearing of known significant flora;
- All clearing will be managed under a Ground Disturbance Permit process;
- The total extent of vegetation clearing is limited to 5 ha;
- Clearing areas will be identified prior using GPS coordinates, and boundaries visually identified with pegs;
- Vegetation will be rehabilitated in areas not required for access or further investigations;
- All clearing restricted to only what is required for each activity within the proposed Permit Area and undertaken only when required; and
- All vegetation clearing and earth moving equipment will be inspected and cleaned prior to conducting clearing activities, vehicles will be inspected as cleaned as required to prevent the incidental spread of weeds and Dieback.

This NVCP application assessed the proposed vegetation clearing against the ten clearing principles described in *A Guide to the Assessment of Applications to Clear Native Vegetation* (DER, 2014). As described in Section 6 and summarised in Table 3, the proposed Investigations Activities may be at variance with one clearing principle:

- 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 region in which the Permit is located has been extensively cleared and therefore it is not possible to avoid being definitively 'at variance' with this principle. The clearing however represents very small area with narrow linear clearing.

Based on the above, the potential variance with the clearing principle is unlikely to result in significant impacts to remnant vegetation.

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GLOSSARY

Term	Definition
DBCA	Department of Biodiversity, Conservation, and Attractions
DCCEEW	Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water
DER	Department of Environmental Regulation
DWER	Department of Water and Environmental Regulation
EPA	Environmental Protection Authority
EPBC	Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation
ha	Hectares
IBRA	Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation of Australia
km	kilometres
NVCP	Native Vegetation Clearing Permit
PEC	Priority Ecological Communities
Project	Beros Plains Power Station
TEC	Threatened Ecological Communities
Trace	Trace Enterprises
TransAlta	TransAlta Corporation
WA	Western Australia

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