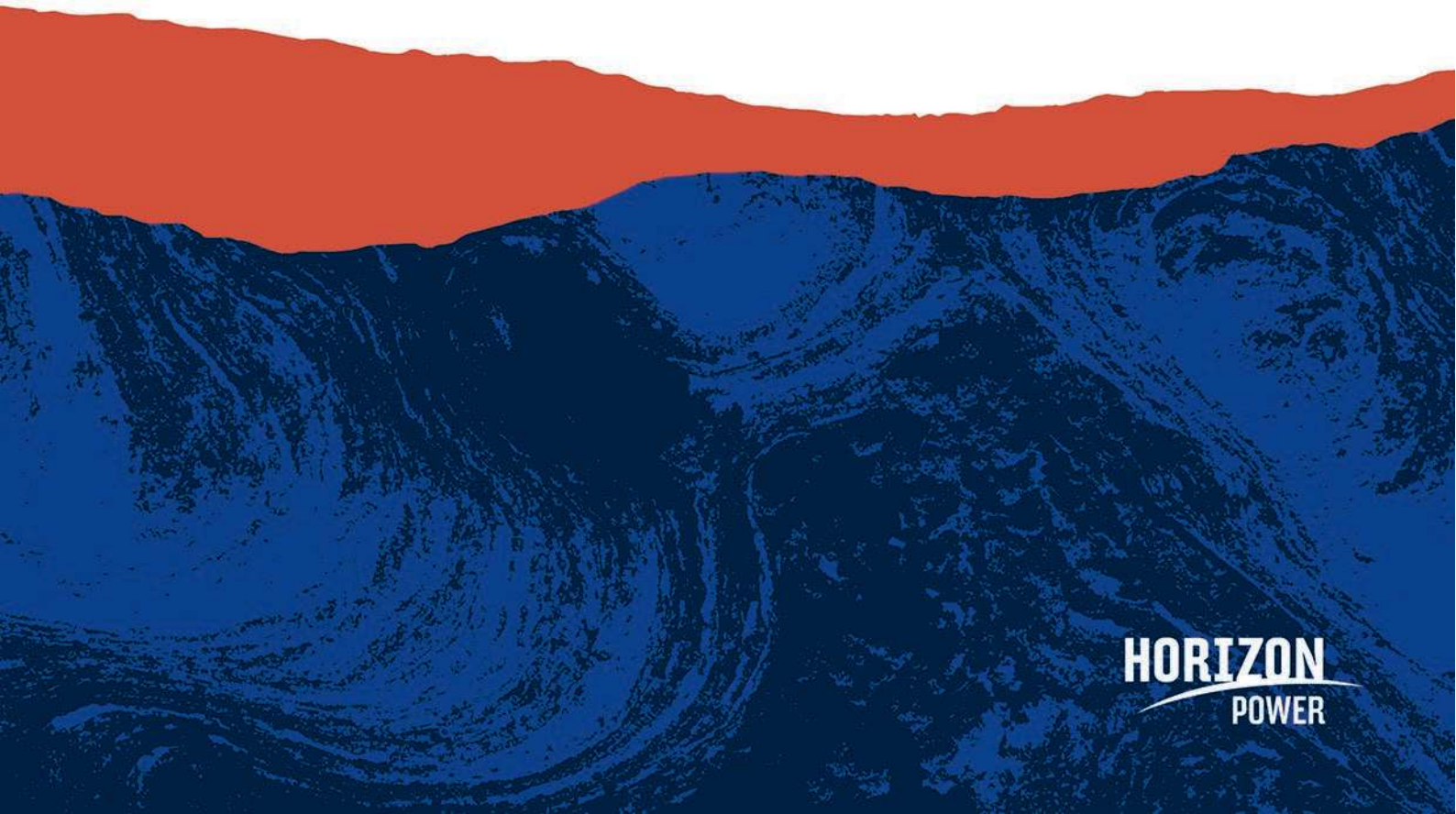
Red Hill Iron Ore Joint Venture Connection - Native Vegetation Clearing Referral

Supporting Document

August 2024



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1 Introduction

1.1 Project Context

Regional Power Corporation, trading as (T/A) Horizon Power, is a Western Australian (WA) Government Trading Enterprise (GTE) and the state's regional and remote energy provider. Horizon Power operates under the *Electricity Corporations Act 2005* and is governed by a Board of Directors accountable to the Minister for Energy.

Horizon Power is proposing to install a feeder connection (the Project) between the existing Onslow Power Station and the Red Hill Iron Ore Joint Venture truck maintenance facility in the town of Onslow, Western Australia (**Figure 1**).

Main Roads Western Australia (Main Roads WA) has obtained a clearing permit for the Onslow and Warrirda Road Expansion project (CPS 9534/1), with some of the vegetation required for the Project already cleared under this clearing permit (**Figure 1**). Further, Mineral Resources (a partner in the Red Hill Iron Ore Joint Venture) has obtained a clearing permit for the truck maintenance facility (CPS 9495/1) under their subsidiary 'Kumina Iron', which will allow for the installation of the connection infrastructure within this permit area (**Figure 1**).

Up to 0.52 ha of vegetation will be cleared for the Project, that is not already cleared or approved under other clearing permits.

1.2 Scope and Purpose

The scope of this document is limited to the proposed clearing of native vegetation required for the Project that is not already cleared or already approved for clearing as detailed in **Section 1.1**.

The purpose of this document is to demonstrate that the proposed clearing of native vegetation for the Project satisfies the three Criterion outlined in 'Guideline: Native Vegetation Clearing Referrals' (DWER, 2021) and, as such, is considered an activity with a 'very low environmental impact activity' that does not require a Native Vegetation Clearing Permit (NVCP).

To demonstrate the above, this document includes:

- An overview of the activity and a description of the proposed clearing.
- Avoidance, mitigation and management measures that have been or will be applied to minimise the clearing of native vegetation and reduce the likelihood of environmental impacts associated with the activity.
- An assessment of the clearing against the three Criterion specified in DWER (2021).



Figure 1 | Onslow Iron Connection

N

0 75 150 300 Meters

Scale: 1:10,000

HORIZON POWER

2 Description of the Activity

The proposed connection commences at the existing Onslow Power Station located at Lot 555 on Plan 74894, crosses under Onslow Road, and follows the cadastral boundary south until it intersects Lot 149. Clearing associated with Lot 149 is approved under CPS 9495/1. This clearing referral supporting document only details clearing required that is not approved under CPS 9495/1, or already undertaken by Main Roads WA under CPS 9534/1.

3 Description of Proposed Clearing

3.1 Extent of Proposed Clearing

A total cleared area of 0.52 ha is required for the activity. This includes the following:

- Trenching and installation of connection cable from the Onslow Power Station
- Transformer and Ring Main Units
- Directional drilling under Onslow Road
- Low voltage cable installation for street lights and associated pillar for connection of street lights
- Joint pits as required for installation of cable.

3.2 Proposed Clearing Location

Horizon Power intends to undertake these works through the exercise of powers conferred by Sections 46 and 49 of the *Energy Operators (Powers) Act 1979* (the Act) and as such do not require landowner permission.

Table 1 Project land parcels

Lot on Plan	Volume/Folio
Lot 555 on Plan 74894	LR3163-982
Lot 280 on Plan 219235	LR3131-929
Lot 152 on Plan 220265	LR2098-710

3.3 Proposed Clearing Method

Clearing will be undertaken via mechanical removal as part of trenching and directional drilling.

3.4 Avoidance, Mitigation and Management Measures

The project has been located in an area within and adjacent to existing disturbance to reduce the impact on native vegetation.

Horizon Power is a mature and competent asset manager with an established Environmental Management System and extensive assets across Western Australia under active management. Clearing activities are undertaken following standardised processes and will be implemented in accordance with our Standard Construction Environmental Management Plan (Appendix A), which includes the following measures to minimise potential impacts.

- Clearing will be minimised where possible through placement of assets in existing cleared or areas of minimal vegetation where possible.
- The clearing locations will be demarcated prior to clearing activities.
- Standard weed and hygiene management practices which will be applied to these works.
- Clearing will be undertaken slowly and in a one-way direction to allow fauna to move offsite if present.

4 Ecological Survey

Main Roads has obtained an NVCP (CPS 9534/1) for the Onslow and Warrirda Road Expansion project. A detailed and targeted flora and basic fauna assessment was conducted by Spectrum Ecology & Spatial (Spectrum) from 4th May to 7th May 2021 (Spectrum, 2022). The survey area for this project overlaps the majority of the Project. The ecological survey is summarised in Table 2.

Due to the small size of the Project and the existence of previous survey by Main Roads, an ecological survey specific to the Project has not been completed.

Table 2 Summary of ecological surveys relevant to the project

Survey	Vegetation type
Warrirda Road Detailed & Targeted Flora & Basic Fauna Assessment. Prepared for Main Roads Western Australia (Spectrum, 2022) **IBSA-2021-0460**	**Survey date:** 4 May to 7 May 2021 **Survey area:** Approximately 372.2 ha. The survey area covers a larger area than the required project, therefore only survey findings relevant to the project have been summarised below. **Flora / Vegetation findings relevant to the Project:** Two Priority 3 flora species that were recorded in the survey area were within approximately 100 m of the project: – *Eremophila forrestii* subsp. *Viridis* – *Triumfetta echinata.* Four introduced flora species that were recorded in the survey area were within approximately 200 m of the project: – **Cenchrus ciliaris* – **Aerva javanica* – **Vachellia farnesiana* – **Prosopis pallida* Two vegetation types were recorded that overlap the project: – Dunes (D1): +/- *Grevillea stenobotrya* tall sparse shrubland over *Scaevola sericophylla*, +/- *Acacia stellaticeps* mid sparse shrubland over *Triodia epactia* open hummock grassland. – Plains (P1a): +/- *Acacia tetragonophylla* tall isolated shrubs over *Triodia epactia* open hummock grassland. – Cleared Vegetation Type D1 provides habitat for the two Priority 3 flora species, *Eremophila forrestii* subsp. *viridis* and *Triumfetta echinata*, found exclusively on the dunes and this vegetation type (Spectrum, 2022). The vegetation condition recorded in the project varied from Very Good to Completely Degraded. No Threatened Ecological Communities (TEC) or listed under the *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation 1999* (EPBC Act) or *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* (BC Act) or Priority Ecological Community (PEC) listed by DBCA were identified within the survey area during the Spectrum (2022) field survey. **Fauna / Fauna habitat findings:** Two fauna habitat types that were recorded overlapping the project: – Sand dunes – Sand plains No Threatened fauna listed under the EPBC Act or BC Act or Priority fauna listed by DBCA were recorded during the survey.

5 Suitability for the Clearing Referral Process

The 'Guideline: Native Vegetation Clearing Referrals' (DWER, 2021) Section 5.3 outlines those clearing activities not considered to be suitable for the Clearing Referral process. Table 3 demonstrates that the proposed clearing activity is suitable for assessment under the Clearing Referral process.

Table 3 Assessment of Suitability for the Clearing Referral Process

Aspect	Assessment	Suitable? (Yes/No)
The referral process cannot be used for proposed clearing on land subject to an agreement to reserve or a conservation covenant under the Soil and Land Conservation Act 1945 (SLC Act)	Land is not subject to a conservation covenant.	Yes
The referral process cannot be used for proposed clearing on land subject to an environmental protection covenant under Part VB of the environmental Protection Act 1986 (EP Act)	Land is not subject to an environmental protection covenant.	Yes
The referral process is not suitable for proposed clearing that is not likely to be completed within two years.	The works are proposed to commence in October-November 2024.	Yes
The referral process is not suitable for proposed clearing that will contravene the requirements of a soil conservation notice issued under Part V of the SLC Act	The proposed clearing activity will not contravene the requirements of a soil conservation notice issued under Part V of the SLC Act.	Yes
The referral process is not suitable for proposed clearing that will or is likely to have a significant impact on matters of national environmental significance (MNES)	The proposed clearing is not likely to have a significant impact on MNES. No EPBC Act listed flora, fauna or ecological communities are likely to be impacted.	Yes
The referral process is not suitable for proposed clearing that includes marine native vegetation clearing activities	No clearing of marine native vegetation is proposed.	Yes
The referral process is not suitable for proposed clearing that may impact on protected or otherwise significant flora or fauna	The proposed clearing is not likely to have a significant impact on protected or otherwise conservation significant flora or fauna (as detailed in Section 5).	Yes
The referral process is not suitable for proposed clearing that will be within a highly cleared landscape or an area containing limited or restricted native vegetation types.	The proposed clearing is not within an extensively cleared landscape or an area containing limited or restricted native vegetation types, as detailed in Section 5. More than 99% of Pre-European Vegetation Association extents remain.	Yes
The referral process is not suitable for proposed clearing that is on land previously reserved as an environmental offset under the conditions of another approval under the EP Act.	A review of the DWER Offsets Register (via spatial dataset DWER-078; GoWA, 2022) indicates that the land is not reserved as an environmental offset under the conditions of an approval under the EP Act.	Yes

4 Assessment Against DWER Criterion

4.1 Criterion 1: The area proposed to be cleared is small relative to the total remaining vegetation

The proposed clearing activity satisfies Criterion 1, as detailed in the following tables.

Table 4 Assessment of the Proposed Clearing Activity Against Criterion 1

Aspect	Assessment
Extent of proposed clearing	The total proposed clearing is 0.52 ha This is less than the 10 ha threshold for clearing activities located north of the 26° latitude line.
Threshold for remaining extent of native vegetation association or complex in the relevant IBRA bioregion	More than 30% of the relevant vegetation associations remain within the relevant IBRA bioregion, therefore; a permit is not required on this basis.
Threshold for remaining native vegetation surrounding the boundary of the proposed clearing	Within a 10 km buffer of the proposed clearing more than 30% native vegetation is remaining. Therefore, a permit is not required on this basis.

Table 5 Pre-European Vegetation Association Extents within the Development Envelope

Vegetation association	Scale	Pre-European extent (ha)	Current extent (ha)	% Remaining	% of current extent in all DBCA managed land (proportion of current extent)
670	State: Western Australia	147,897.10	147,794.60	99.93	11.67
	IBRA bioregion: Carnarvon	147,808.61	147,792.06	99.99	11.67
	IBRA Subregion: Cape Range	147,808.61	147,792.06	99.99	11.67
	LGA: Shire of Ashburton	130,267.09	130,164.59	99.92	1.99

4.2 Criterion 2: There are no known or likely significant environmental values within the area

The proposed clearing activity satisfies Criterion 2, as detailed in the following tables.

Table 6 Assessment of the Proposed Clearing Activity Against Criterion 2

Environmental value	Assessment
Vegetation type and condition	The project is located within Pre-European Vegetation Association 670. More than 99% of this vegetation association remains. Two vegetation types recorded in the Spectrum (2022) survey overlapped the project: – Dunes (D1): +/- *Grevillea stenobotrya* tall sparse shrubland over *Scaevola sericophylla*, +/- *Acacia stellaticeps* mid sparse shrubland over *Triodia epactia* open hummock grassland. – Plains (P1a): +/- *Acacia tetragonophylla* tall isolated shrubs over *Triodia epactia* open hummock grassland. Vegetation condition within the project (Spectrum 2022) varied from Very Good to Completely Degraded.
Significant fauna	No Threatened fauna listed under the EPBC Act or BC Act, or Priority fauna listed by DBCA, were recorded during the survey. The small scale of proposed clearing is unlikely to impact significant fauna or fauna habitats.
Fauna habitat	Two fauna habitat types that were recorded in the survey area overlapping the project: – Sand dunes: Sparse to moderate shrubs including *Acacia stellaticeps*, *Scaevola sericophylla* and Grevillea stenobotrya with a ground layer of *Triodia epactia.* – Sand plains: scattered shrubs comprising *Acacia tetragonophylla*., *A synchronicia*, and **Vachellia farnesiana*.
Significant ecological linkage	No significant ecological linkages were identified.
Mapped ecological community	No Threatened Ecological Communities (TEC) or Priority Ecological Communities (PEC) listed under the EPBC Act or BC Act were identified
Significant flora	Two Priority 3 flora species were recorded in the survey area within approximately 100 m of the project: – *Eremophila forrestii* subsp. *Viridis* – *Triumfetta echinata.* Vegetation Type D1 provides habitat for the two Priority 3 flora species, found exclusively on the dunes (Spectrum, 2022). Given the small scale of clearing required for the project, significant impacts to these species are considered unlikely.
Mapped wetlands and/or watercourses	No impacts to waterways and no water extraction from a waterway is proposed for the project. No significant wetlands or rivers intersect the project area. A mapped salt lake system and non-perennial lakes are within 5 km of the project but are unlikely to be impacted.
Water resources	The project overlaps the Pilbara Groundwater Area and the Ashburton River Surface Water Area (spatial dataset DWER-085 & DWER-082; GoWA, 2022), both of which are Proclaimed under the RIWI Act. No Public Drinking Water Source Areas (PDSWAs) are present within the project area, the closest PDSWA, the Cane River Water Reserve, is located approximately 27 km east of the project (spatial dataset DWER-033). The Perth Groundwater Map identified the groundwater level as 17 – 28 m below ground level (Gov WA, 2017). No impacts are expected with digging being to 4 m depth or less.
Conservation reserve	No DBCA managed conservation areas occur within 20 km of the Project. The closest DBCA managed area is Thevenard Island Nature Reserve, located approximately 35 km north-west of the Project (spatial dataset DWER-046; GoWA, 2024).

Environmental value	Assessment
Land and soil quality	A review of Acid Sulphate Soil (ASS) risk mapping (spatial dataset DWER-048; GoWA, 2024) indicates the Project is in close proximity (within 700 m) to areas of moderate to low risk of ASS, however, this area does not overlap the project. Trenching will be undertaken to a depth of 3 m or less for cable installation. No contaminated sites occur within 20 km of the Project (spatial dataset DWER-059; GoWA, 2024). The closest contaminated site (Object ID 658, Contaminated – remediation required) is located on Thevenard Island Nature Reserve.
Environmental heritage	There are no National or World Heritage Areas mapped as overlapping the project.

4.3 Criterion 3: The state of scientific knowledge of native vegetation within the region is adequate

The project lies within the Carnarvon IBRA region, specifically the Cape Range subregion, described by Kendrick & Mau (2002). It forms part of the northern area of the Carnarvon bioregion, and is characterised by:

"Rugged tertiary limestone ranges and extensive areas of red aeolian dunefield, Quaternary coastal beach dunes and mud flats. Acacia shrublands over Triodia on limestone (*Acacia stuartii* or *A. bivenosa*) and red dunefields, Triodia hummock grasslands with sparse Eucalyptus trees and shrubs on the Cape Range. Extensive hummock grasslands (Triodia) on the Cape Range and eastern dune-fields. Tidal mudflats of sheltered embayments of Exmouth Gulf support extensive mangroves. Beach dunes with Spinifex communities. An extensive mosaic of saline alluvial plains with samphire and saltbush low shrublands along the eastern hinterland of Exmouth Gulf. Islands of the Muiron, Barrow, Lowendal and Montebello groups are limestone-based. Climate is arid, semi-desert to subtropical climate, with variable summer and winter rainfall. Cyclonic activity can be significant, and cyclonic systems may affect the coast and hinterland annually."

The survey undertaken by Spectrum (2022), which has been summarised in Section 4, demonstrates that the native vegetation present within the project area is representative of the wider region and that there are no EPBC Act or BC Act listed flora or vegetation within the project area. Other surveys have been undertaken within 10km for Horizon Power projects, specifically in 2017, 2023 and 2024, including the nearby Onslow solar farm. This indicates that the state of scientific knowledge of native vegetation within the region is adequate and Criterion 3 is satisfied.

4.4 Criterion 4: Conditions will not be required to manage environmental impacts

Avoidance, mitigation and management measures have and/or will been applied to the scope of works, as detailed in Sections 3.4. Given the application of these measures, as well as the abundance of native vegetation within and surrounding the project and the limited clearing proposed, it is considered that clearing can be undertaken without conditions being applied to further manage environmental impacts.

It is considered, therefore, that Criterion 4 is satisfied and conditions under a NVCP are not required.

5 References

Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER), 2021. *Guideline: Native Vegetation Clearing Referrals*. Available at: <https://www.wa.gov.au/service/environment/environment-information-services/guideline-native-vegetation-clearing-referrals> Accessed October 2022

Spectrum, 2022. Warrirda Road Detailed & Targeted Flora & Basic Fauna Assessment. Prepared for Main Roads Western Australia

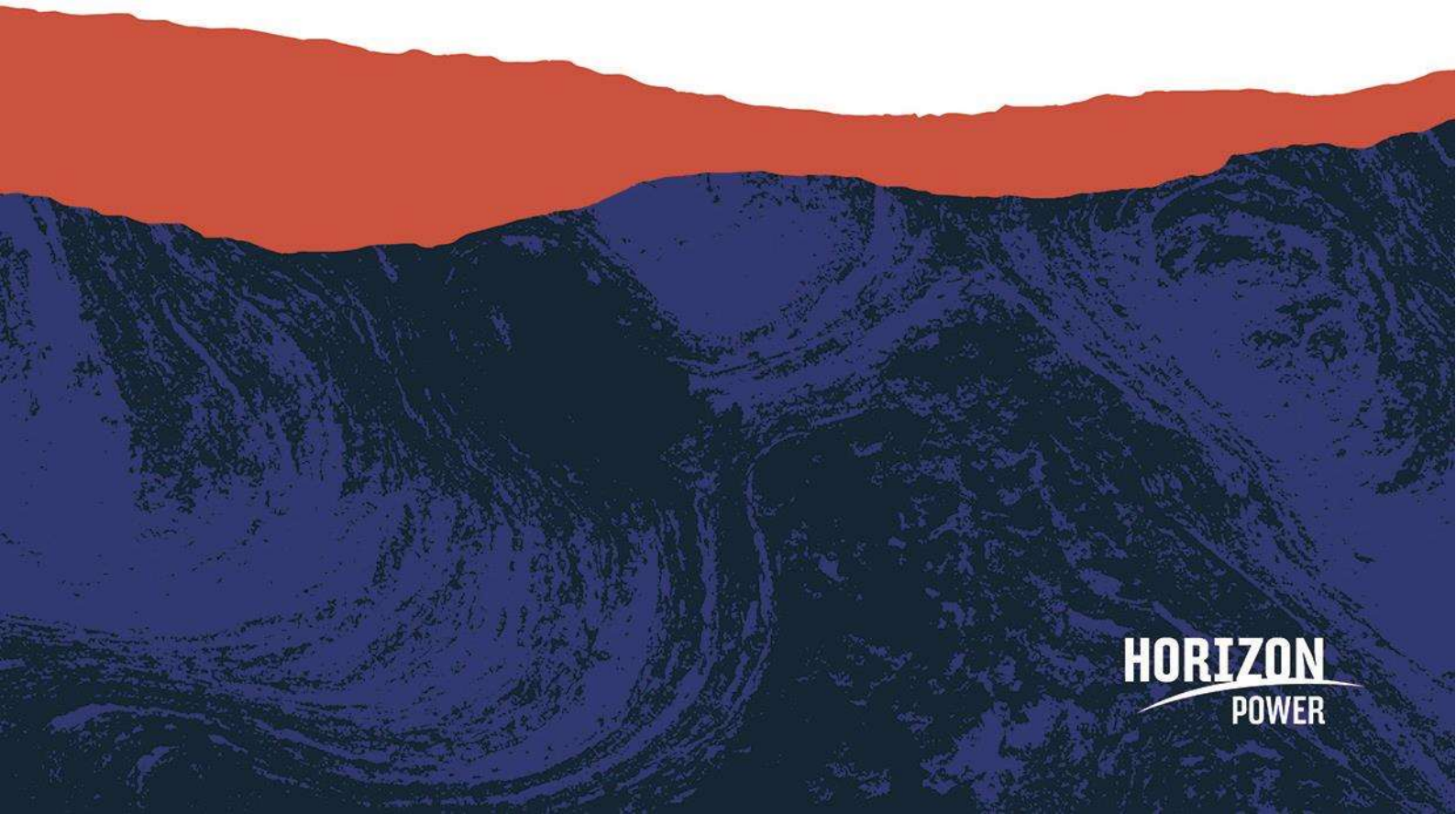
Attachment A: Standard Construction Environmental Management Plan

PROTECTED

Horizon Power

Standard Construction Environmental Management Plan

March 2024



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1 Introduction

1.1 Context and Scope

Horizon Power is a Western Australian (WA) Government Trading Enterprise (GTE) and the state's regional and remote energy utility. Horizon Power operates under the Electricity Corporations Act 2005 and is governed by a Board of Directors accountable to the Minister for Energy. Horizon Power is an experienced asset manager undertaking active management of vast electricity networks across WA, utilising mature and robust operational, health and safety, and environmental systems.

This Standard Construction Environmental Management Plan (SCEMP) has been developed to outline standard environmental management practice and measures to be implemented by Horizon Power and its contractors during all of Horizon Power construction low-risk projects. This includes, but is not limited to, measures to manage dust, erosion and spread of weeds during clearing of native vegetation.

2 Management Measures

The following are standard management measures listed in Table 1 will be implemented during construction for this Project.

Table 1 Management Measures to be Implemented During Construction

Aspect	Management Measure
Extent of Clearing	– No more than area of clearing as specified in the Sustainability Impact is permitted at the location detailed in the advice. – The clearing locations are to be demarcated prior to clearing activities.
Flora and vegetation	– No more than area of clearing as specified in the Sustainability Impact permitted at the location detailed in the advice.
Fauna	– Clearing of native vegetation will be undertaken in a slow, progressive manner in one direction to allow fauna to move away from the clearing area. – Construction personnel will not touch, feed or otherwise directly interact with fauna. – Clearing will be undertaken during daylight hours only.
Weeds	– The Contractor will ensure that no weed-affected soil, mulch, fill or other material is brought onto the site. – All vehicles and machinery will arrive clean on site. – Movement of vehicles and machinery will be restricted to the area to be cleared and existing cleared areas.
Erosion	– Standard construction measures regarding erosion and sediment control will be implemented during construction works.
Dust	– Standard construction dust control and mitigation measures will be implemented during clearing. This may include the use of a water trucks, or similar. – Ground disturbance and clearing of vegetation will be restricted during high winds if dust cannot be adequately controlled.
Noise	– The contractor will comply with the Environmental Protection (Noise) Regulations 1997. – Complaints regarding noise will be recorded and investigated by Horizon Power.
Waste	– Rubbish will be disposed of in appropriate containers and all waste will be removed from the site.
Hydrocarbons and chemicals	– Hydrocarbons and chemicals will be appropriately managed on site to prevent spills, including maintaining equipment in good working order in accordance with manufacturers specifications. – No refuelling will be undertaken within 50 m of a waterway, drain or drainage line. – Hydrocarbons will be appropriately stored at least 50 m away from drainage lines and stored in an appropriate bunded container. – Refuelling will be undertaken on hardstand or using catch trays only. Uncontrolled refuelling is not permitted. – Chemicals will be appropriately stored.
Contamination	– Unexpected finds protocols will be applied including immediate stop work if contamination is suspected, with escalation to the Project Manager and Sustainability team.
Heritage	– Should previously unknown Aboriginal cultural heritage materials be uncovered during construction works, works are to stop immediately within 20 m of the find. The Contractor is to contact the Horizon Project Manager and an incident will be raised. The area will be cordoned off and no access permitted to the area until the incident is investigated and resolved.

Attachment B: Site Photographs



Plate 1 Intersection of Onslow Road and Ansia Access Road facing east



Plate 2 Onslow Road facing west towards existing Horizon Power facility