



WILDFLOWER SOCIETY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA (Inc)

30 April 2021

Appeals Convenor
Office of the Appeals Convenor
Level 22 Forrest Centre
221 St Georges Terrace
PERTH WA 6000

Attn: Emma Gaunt

Re: CPS 9124/1 Shire of Esperance

Introduction

The Wildflower Society of WA (WSWA) hereby appeals the conditions of the Clearing Permit (CPS 9124/1) granted by the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER) to the Shire of Esperance for the construction of a dual shared-use path at Bandy Creek. Our concern is that the conditions should have specified that revegetation be done on all areas not used for the final path.

The permit allows for clearing of up to 1.79 ha within a 1.92 ha envelope. It is stated that two linear strips will be cleared although no details are provided on the width and location of these strips. The length of the application area/path is approximately 740 m, which means that the average clearing width would be about 24 m. Whilst we appreciate that the clearing envelope may be sufficiently large to allow for flexibility in the routing of the path, the path is to be constructed through a dune system and a wide area may actually need to be cleared to reduce undulations. Comparable coastal dual shared-use paths in many localities, including within the Shire of Esperance, have a sealed surface of 3-3.5 m, with a total clearing of no more than 5 m.

Given that a substantial amount of clearing beyond what is strictly necessary for the path may occur, in our opinion DWER should have imposed a revegetation condition for all areas that were cleared and that do not comprise the path. Such conditions should be standard practice for permits involving clearing well in excess of the minimum required for the stated purpose. The vegetation condition should require a requirement to stabilise the soil in the area disturbed, control movement of vehicles and people outside the width of the formed path (both of which will assist with wind erosion in an exposed shoreline), control and removal of weed species within the revegetation for a period of 10 years and provision of a report of monitoring results to demonstrate achievement of the revegetation objectives over the 10 year period.



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Conclusion

The WSWA recommends that a revegetation condition be specified such that areas cleared beyond the final path be returned to the same composition and structure as the surrounding dune vegetation. Furthermore, such a condition should be required for all similar clearing proposals.



<http://www.wildflowersocietywa.org.au/>