

OBJECTION TO SSD-9679

Previous land clearing in the project area?

Unauthorised and authorised native vegetation has taken place within the proposed project development area. The Applicant and Department whilst acknowledging the land clearing, have not provided the public information quantifying the extent or detail regarding offsets / remediation or enforcement action.

Over the entire assessment process this issue was highlighted to the Department as being of considerable public interest. Acknowledgment by the Applicant and Department with a brief statement is far from an adequate response to this issue.

In an effort to enlighten the public, the community had to submit a GIPA request to the relevant NSW Government Agencies. The information provided raised yet more questions. To aid the Commissioners in determining if previous native vegetation removal is consequential in assessing the merit of the HOGWF, I have attached notated images from the NSW Government Spatial Services (SIXMaps).

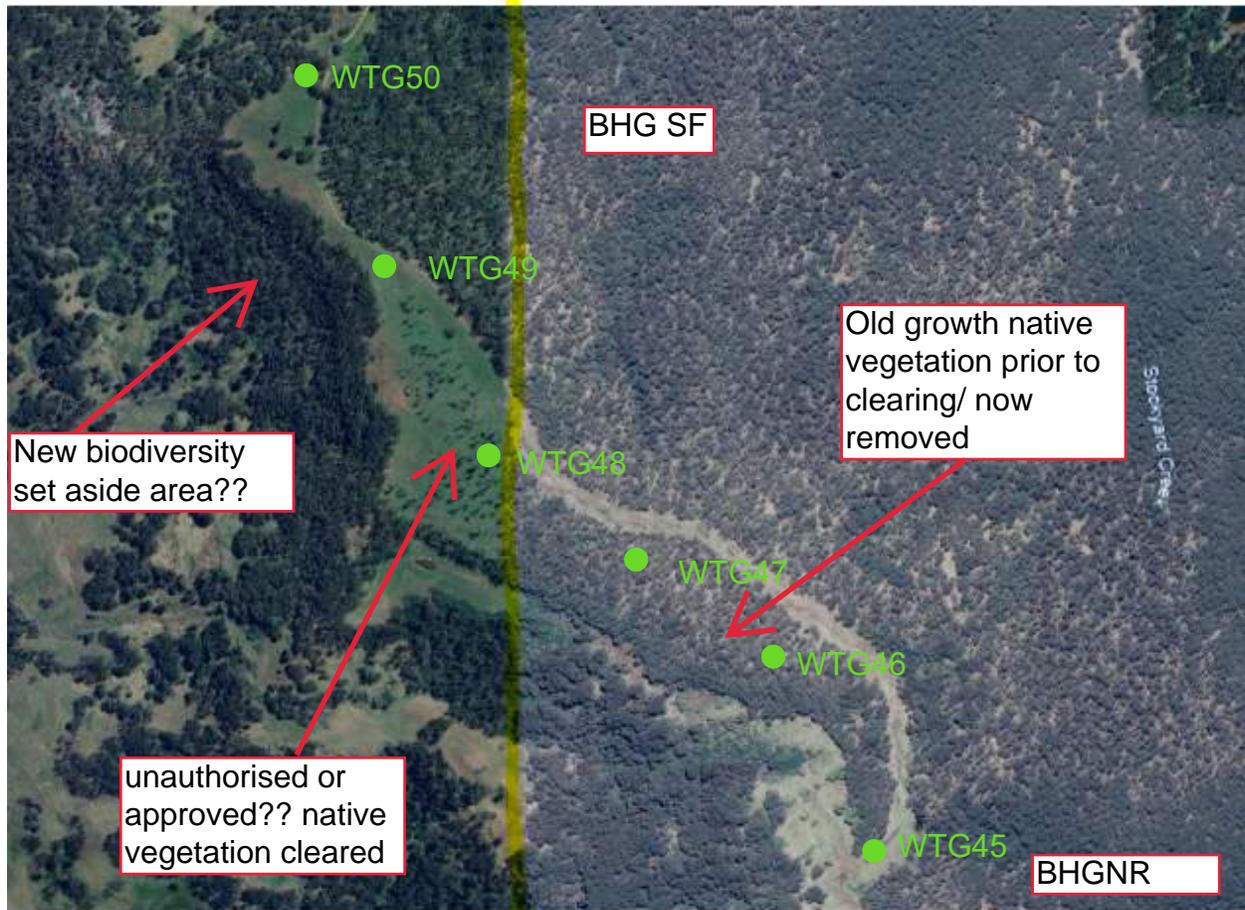
The “agricultural” ridgeline the Commissioners witnessed during the site visit is vastly different to the forested and relatively untouched ridgeline of several years ago. Below in image 1, is a split image showing extensive native vegetation removal at the proposed locations of WTG45,46,47,48,49,50 (Google Earth).

The removal of this vegetation has provided a convenient development corridor for wind farm assets. The clearing has resulted in isolation and fragmentation of the western native vegetation which GIPA information suggests may be a biodiversity set aside area.

How can the public be assured the biodiversity set aside area values have not been compromised by this clearing? Without detailed analysis and information, the integrity of the Applicants biodiversity commitments is questionable.

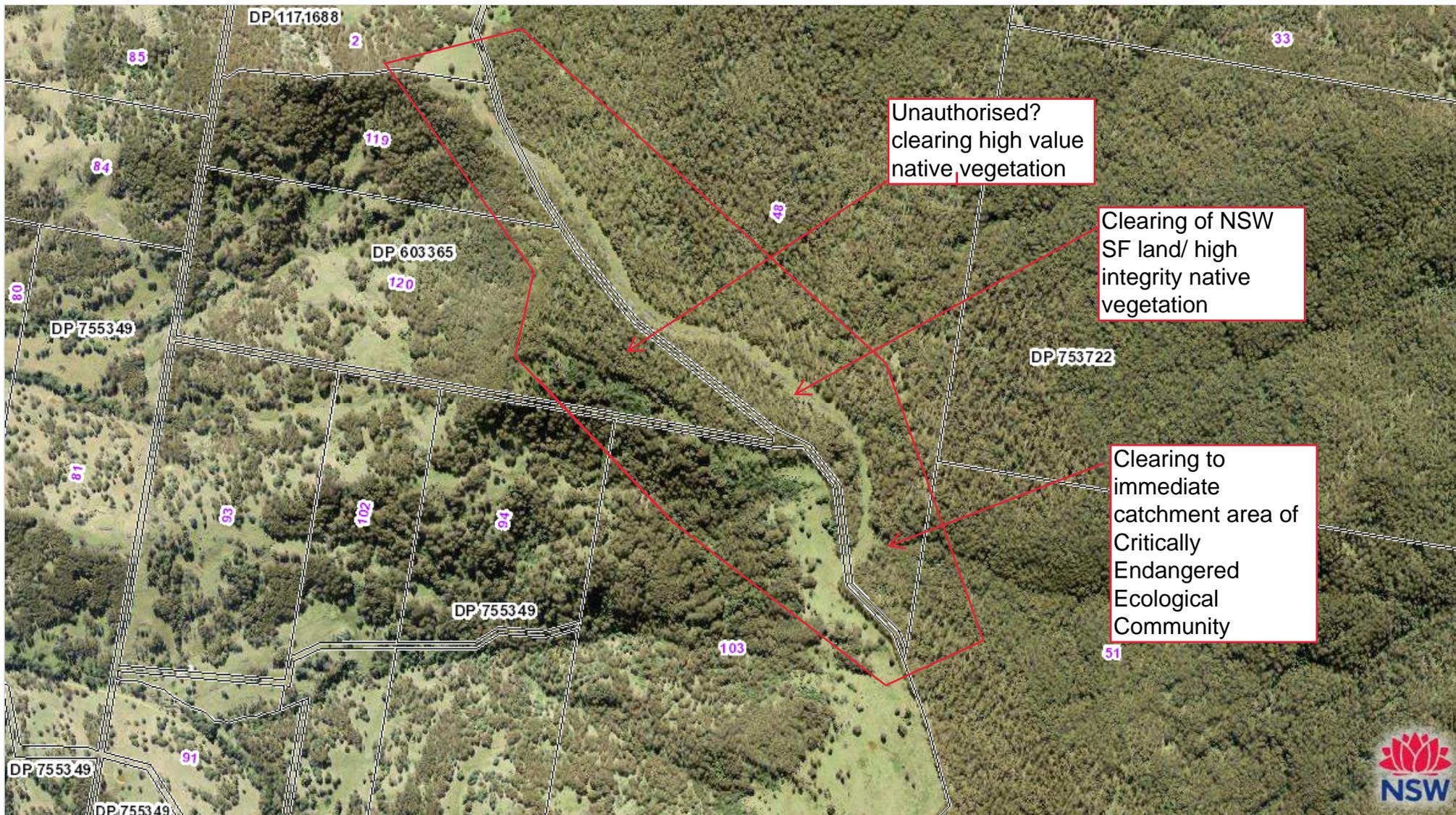
The IPC should refuse consent due to a questionable biodiversity assessment process that lacks integrity and unlawful native vegetation removal within the project development area.

IMAGE 1



Six maps imagery

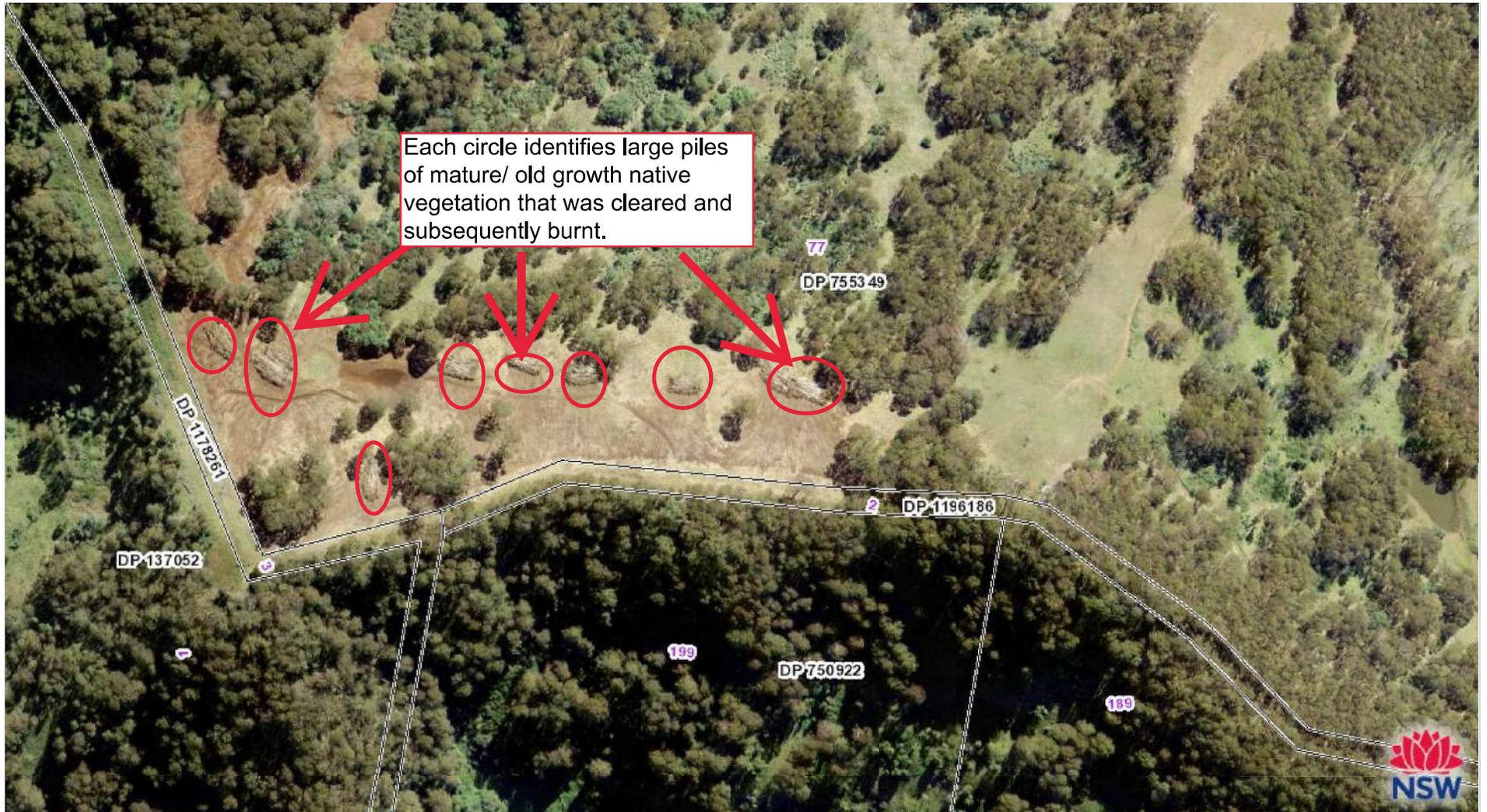
State Forest clearing



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Six Maps Imagery

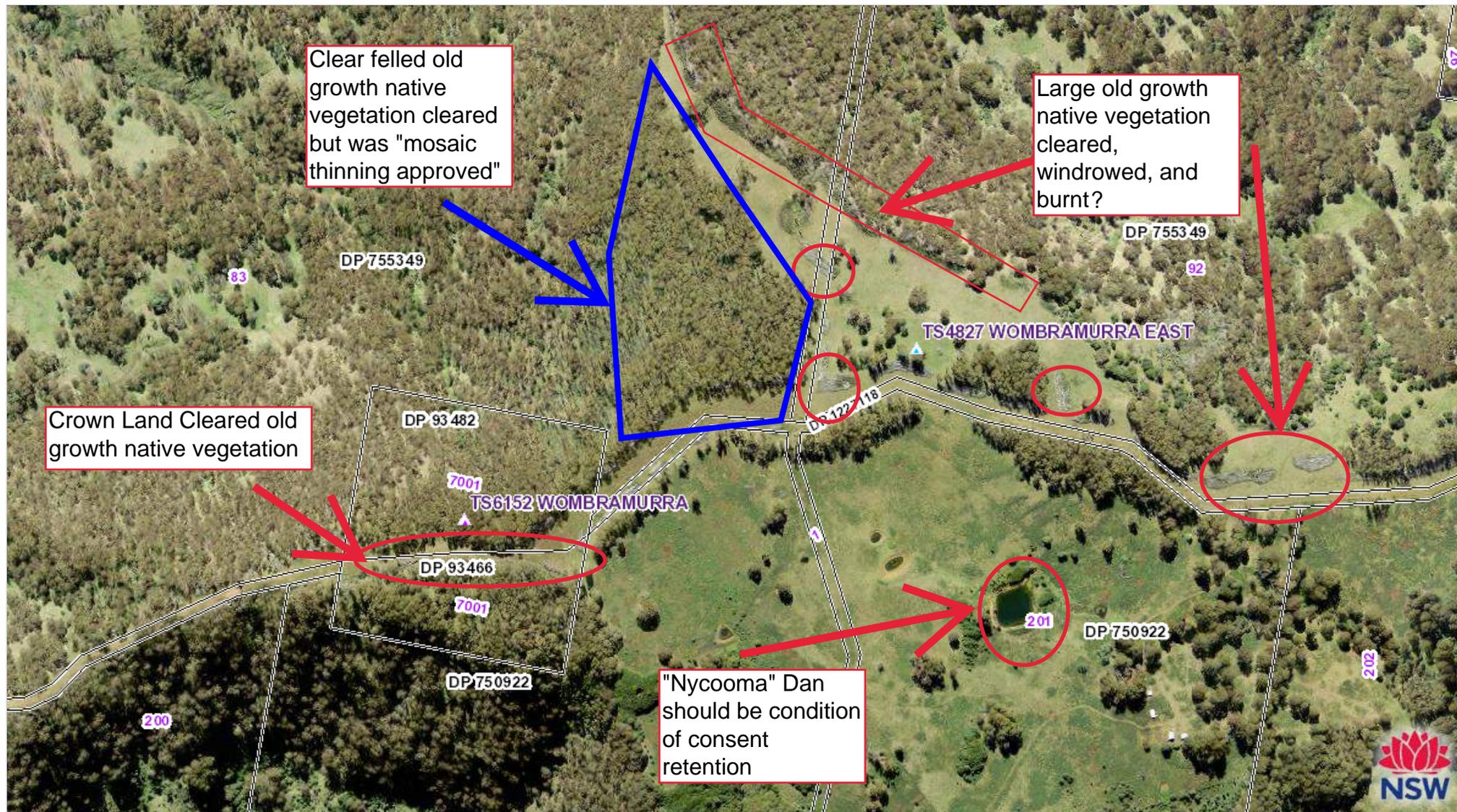
Ridgeline clearing native vegetation



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Six Maps Imagery

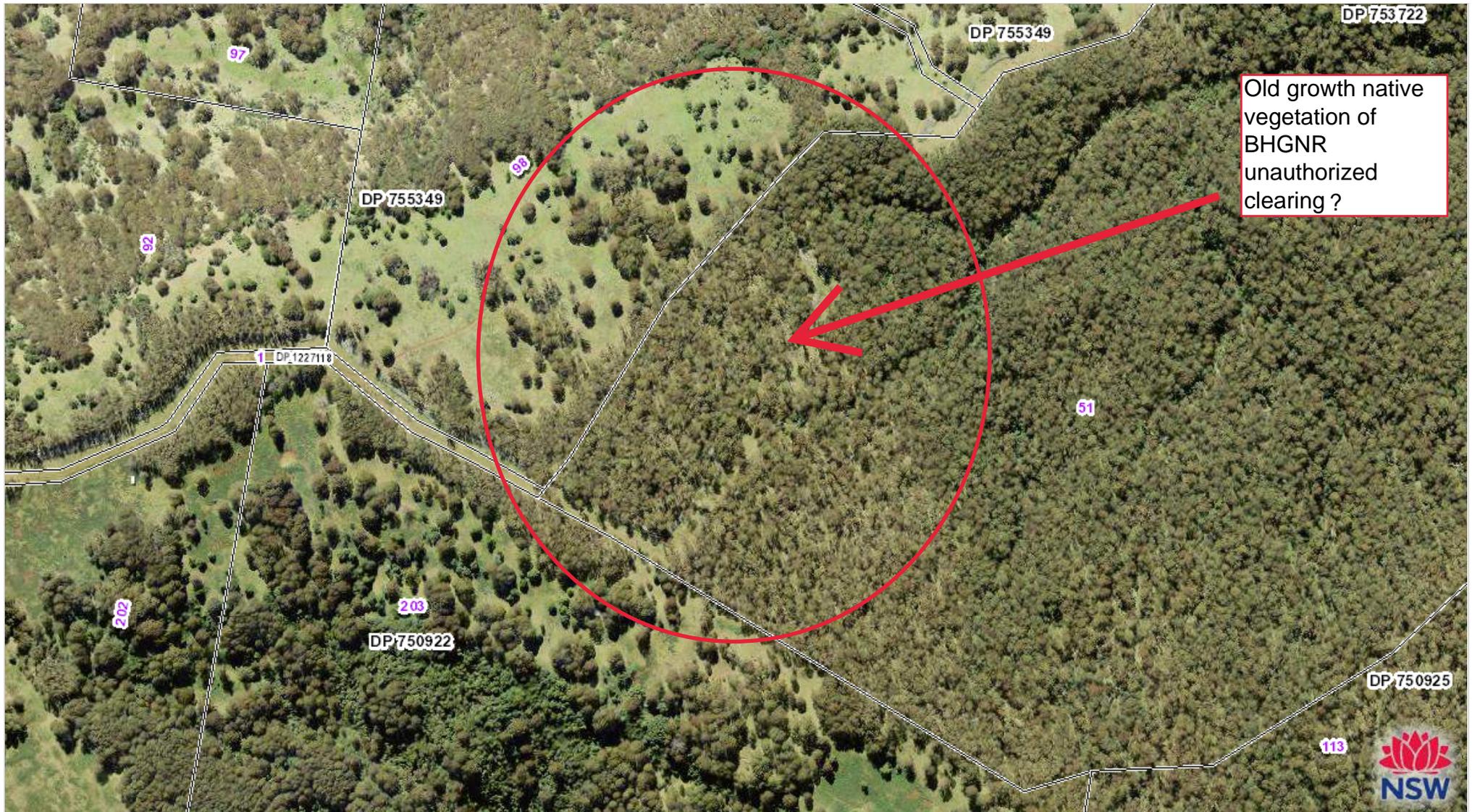
Mt Wombramurra



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Six Maps Imagery

Ben Halls Gap Nature Reserve clearing



Old growth native
vegetation of
BHGMR
unauthorized
clearing ?

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