

Targeted Assessment for Mygalomorph spiders for the Katanning Gold Project – Wheatbelt, Western Australia.



Report by *Invertebrate Solutions Pty Ltd* for
Ausgold Ltd

May 2026

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Prepared for: Ausgold Exploration Pty Ltd

Frontispiece: Invertebrate Solutions staff using a digital endoscope to investigate a potential mygalomorph burrow.

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Executive Summary

AusGold Ltd is developing the Katanning Gold Project (KGP), approximately 35 km north east of the Katanning townsite. As part of the ongoing environmental approvals for KGP being facilitated by Talis Environmental (Talis), the Environmental Protection Authority has requested further information regarding potential mygalomorph spider presence within native vegetation areas inside the Project boundary.

Talis Environmental on behalf of AusGold Exploration Pty Ltd requested Invertebrate Solutions Pty Ltd (Invertebrate Solutions) undertake a targeted field survey for mygalomorph spiders (trapdoor spiders) within the accessible vegetated areas of the KGP together with a desktop review of mygalomorph spiders within the central Wheatbelt region.

Invertebrate Solutions completed the targeted search of vegetated areas within the Project Area on 16th – 17th April, and 4th May 2026.

The Project Area was searched by Invertebrate Solutions staff however, no burrows, either active, or inactive were observed within the survey area. No suitable habitat of undisturbed remnant vegetation with intact understorey was found within or adjacent to the Project. The majority of the Project area is cleared and / or highly modified agricultural land, with no remnant vegetation to provide habitat for mygalomorph spiders.

The remnant woodland areas that occur as isolated patches throughout the cleared agricultural land are highly disturbed from livestock grazing, agricultural rubbish dumping and other historical disturbances. Little to no understorey is present throughout these woodland areas and they are not considered currently suitable to support mygalomorph spider populations.

Following the targeted field assessment, it is unlikely that any mygalomorph spiders are present within the rural land and associated degraded woodland areas.

Whilst it is conceivable that some mygalomorph burrows may be present within the Woorgabup Nature Reserve, but not observed, they are unlikely to be present in high abundance.

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1. Introduction

The Katanning Gold Project (KGP) is being developed by AusGold Exploration Pty Ltd, approximately 35 km north east of the Katanning townsite. As part of the ongoing environmental approvals for KGP being facilitated by Talis Environmental (Talis), the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) under S38(F) has requested further information regarding potential mygalomorph spider presence within native vegetation areas inside the Project boundary.

Talis Environmental on behalf of AusGold Ltd requested Invertebrate Solutions Pty Ltd (Invertebrate Solutions) undertake a targeted field survey for mygalomorph spiders (trapdoor spiders) within the accessible vegetated areas of the KGP, together with a desktop review of mygalomorph spiders within the central Wheatbelt region.

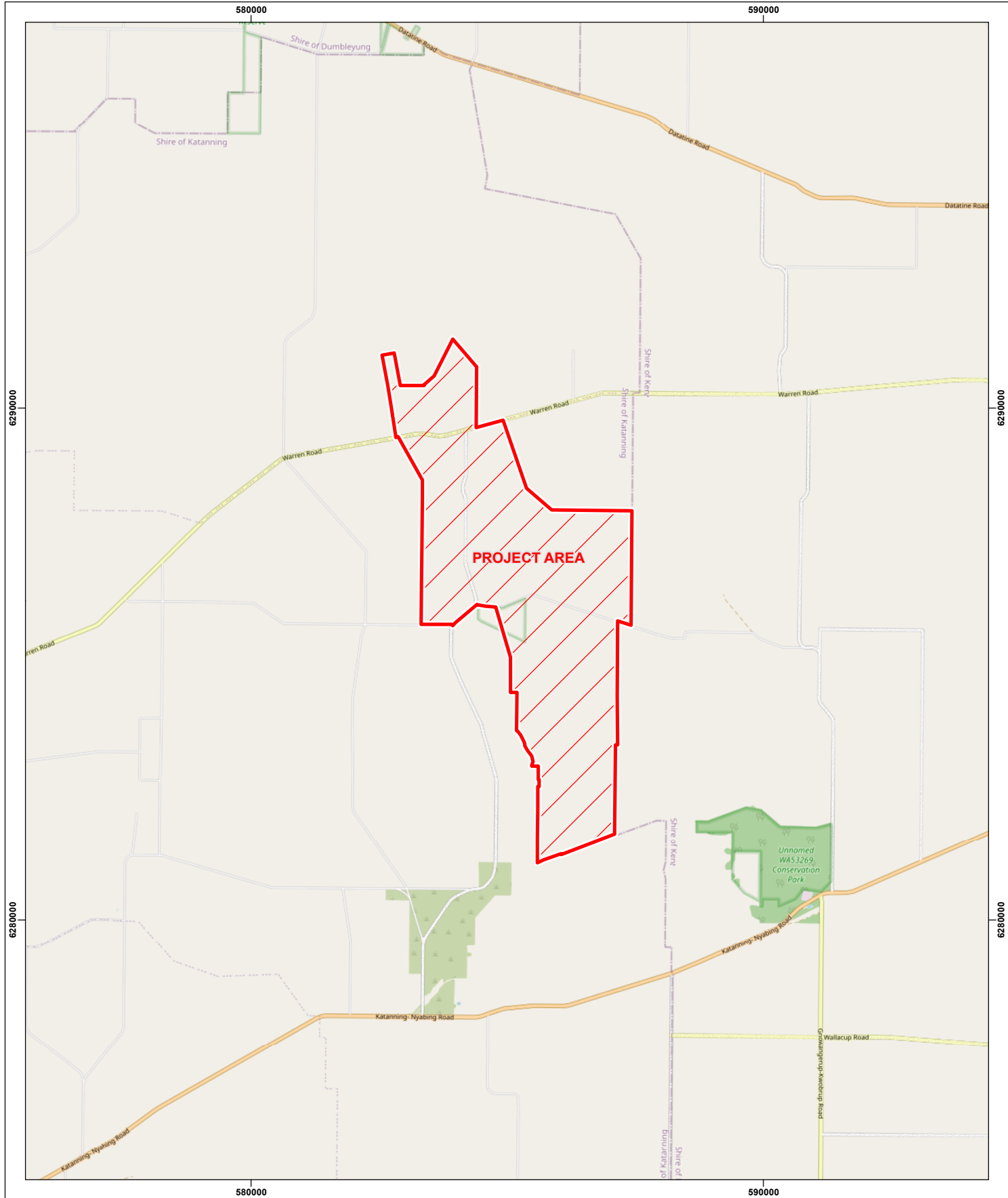
1.1 Scope of Works

Invertebrate Solutions was requested by Talis to undertake the following scope of works within the project area, Western Australia:

- Undertake a desktop review of mygalomorph spiders within the Wheatbelt region in the vicinity of the KGP, noting any conservation significant or potential short range endemic taxa.
- Undertake a targeted grid search of the accessible representative native vegetation to provide an indication of the presence of mygalomorph spiders within the KGP.
- All burrows of mygalomorph spiders that are located in the field are to be recorded with GPS and any matriarchal clusters noted.
- If burrows of mygalomorph spiders are recorded then collect up to 10 different burrow morphology specimens from the project area for identification.
- Provide a technical memorandum containing the location of all mygalomorph spiders, the date they were recorded and the methods used for detection, including figures and plates as appropriate.
- Provide an IBSA data package for all survey information.

1.2 Project area

The Katanning Gold Project is located approximately 35 km north-east of Katanning townsite in the central Wheatbelt of Western Australia. The project area contains several patches of remnant native vegetation (primarily within the proposed development footprint) that have been highlighted as potential habitat for mygalomorph spiders. The project area extent is shown in Figure 1.



Legend

 Project Area

0 0.5 1 2
km
Scale: 1:100,000 @ A4



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- NOTE THAT POSITION ERRORS CAN BE >5M IN SOME AREAS

LOCALITY MAP



HORIZONTAL DATUM & PROJECTION
GDA2020 MGA Zone 50

DATE
15/04/2026

PROJECT
Katanning Gold Project Mygalomorph Targeted Survey

CREATED	CHECKED	APPROVED	REVISION
ENVIRONMAPS	TM	TM	0

AusGold Ltd

Figure 1
Katanning Gold Project Area

1.3 Mygalomorph Spiders

Mygalomorph spiders (commonly known as trapdoor spiders) are a diverse group of long-lived, ground-dwelling arachnids that are ambush predators. Females of many species can live for more than 20 years and, in some cases, over 40 years. They construct silk-lined burrows in a variety of soil types, often beneath trees and shrubs or in open ground, with the burrow entrance typically camouflaged by a trapdoor or silk flap that makes detection challenging during field surveys. In the central Wheatbelt region of Western Australia, mygalomorph spiders are represented by several families, most notably the Idiopidae (shield-back trapdoor spiders of the genus *Idiosoma*), many of which are known to include short-range endemic (SRE) or conservation-significant taxa (Rix et al. 2018).

1.4 Report Limitations and Exclusions

This survey was limited to the written scope emailed to the client by Invertebrate Solutions (9th April 2026) and in Section 1.1. This survey was limited to the extent of information made available to Invertebrate Solutions at the time of undertaking the work. Information not made available to this survey, or which subsequently becomes available may alter the conclusions made herein. The opinions, conclusions and any recommendations in this report are based on conditions encountered and information reviewed at the date of preparation of the report. Invertebrate Solutions has no responsibility or obligation to update this report to account for events or changes occurring subsequent to the date that the report was prepared.

The opinions, conclusions and any recommendations in this report are based on assumptions made by Invertebrate Solutions described in this report (this section and throughout this report). Invertebrate Solutions disclaims liability arising from any of the assumptions being incorrect.

Invertebrate Solutions has prepared this report on the basis of information provided by AusGold Ltd, Talis Environmental Pty Ltd, and others (including Government authorities), which Invertebrate Solutions has not independently verified or checked beyond the agreed scope of work. Invertebrate Solutions does not accept liability in connection with such unverified information, including errors and omissions in the report which were caused by errors or omissions in that information.

1.5 Field Sampling Limitations

Invertebrate Solutions notes the following field sampling limitations in the writing of this report and its subsequent conclusions:

- Field sampling for any site is never exhaustive and Invertebrate Solutions makes no warrant that burrows of mygalomorph spiders remain to be documented within the defined survey area shown in Figure 1, especially within the Woorgabup Nature Reserve.

2. Methods

The desktop assessment and field survey program were undertaken with regard to Technical Guidance Sampling of short range endemic invertebrate fauna (EPA 2016).

2.1 Desktop Review

A search of records held by the Western Australian Museum (WAM) and by the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) for an area bounded on the northwest corner (33.104162°S, 117.354127°E) and the southeast corner (34.027763°S, 118.370173°E).

2.2 Targeted Survey

Invertebrate Solutions staff undertook a targeted field assessment of the accessible native vegetation within the Katanning Gold Project (KGP), including a grid search of all vegetated areas for burrows of mygalomorph spiders. Each burrow, or burrow cluster, had its position recorded by GPS in GDA2020 datum and the number of burrows recorded. Burrows of mygalomorph spiders are generally located beneath trees and shrubs and these areas were thoroughly searched.

Potential mygalomorph spider burrows were initially investigated using a Kentfaith digital endoscope to non-destructively determine if a mygalomorph spider, or other organism was present (Plate 1).



Plate 1 Invertebrate Solutions staff using a digital endoscope to investigate a potential mygalomorph spider burrow.

If burrows of mygalomorph spiders were recorded, up to 10 different burrow-morphology specimens were collected from the project area for identification. The survey program was undertaken with regard to the Technical Guidance – Sampling of short range endemic invertebrate fauna (EPA 2016).

2.3 Survey Effort, Timing and Staff

Invertebrate Solutions completed the survey of the Shield Backed Trapdoor spiders and the targeted search of the Project Area between 16th – 17th April 2026, and 4th May 2026.

Field sampling for invertebrates was undertaken by experienced ecologists and comprised of:

- Dr Timothy Moulds *BSc (Hons) Geol., PhD. Invert. Ecol.* (Invertebrate Solutions).
- James Lai *B.Sc.* (Invertebrate Solutions).

Survey work was undertaken under the collection licences issued by the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions:

- BA27001549; Licensee Dr Tim Moulds; Valid 16/04/2027.

3. Results

3.1 Mygalomorph Spiders in the Katanning Region

A search of DBCA records revealed no conservation significant mygalomorph spider records in the vicinity of Katanning with the closest records being in the Stirling Ranges National Park over 85 km to the south of the Project. These conservation significant mygalomorph spiders are all from the Migid genus *Bertmainus* with individual species restricted to single peaks, or closely groups mountain peaks and do not occur in the surrounding low lying areas as characterised by the landforms at the Project area.

Within the local Katanning region there are isolated records of mygalomorph spiders, all of which are known to be widespread, and not short range endemic (SRE) species (*sensu* Harvey 2002). Most mygalomorph records are from nature reserves in the region including Tarin Rock Nature Reserve (50 km north east), Peringillup Nature Reserve (45 km south east), and Rasmussen Road (37 km north east), that contain relatively undisturbed vegetation with intact understorey. Recorded genera include *Teyl*, *Missulena* and *Kwonkan* and represent widespread species.

3.2 Targeted Search

The Project Area was searched by Dr Timothy Moulds and Mr James Lai (Invertebrate Solutions) during the field survey. No burrows, either active, or inactive were observed within the survey area **Error! Reference source not found..** The tracklog of areas searched is shown in **Error! Reference source not found..**

The majority of the Project area is cleared agricultural land, with small remnant patches of woodland present. Multiple areas of remnant woodland were surveyed, including some adjacent road reserves to the north of the Project area. The remnant woodland areas were found to be impacted by sheep grazing and other historical farming disturbances and contained little to no understorey (Plate 2 and Plate 3).



Plate 2 A and B. Remnant vegetation in the road reserve of West Rd in the north of the Project area



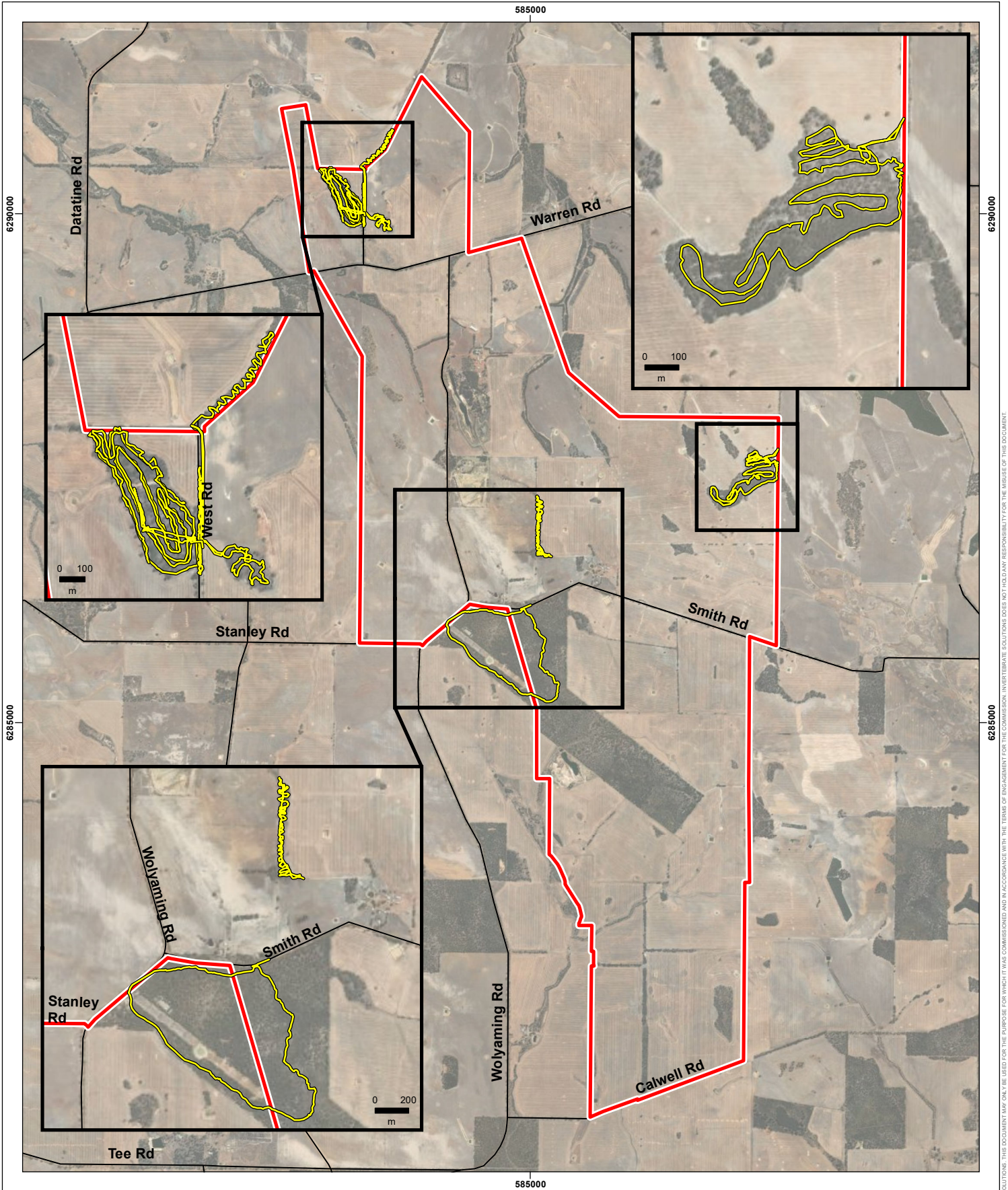
Plate 3 Remnant mixed banksia woodland located to the north of Smith Road



Plate 4 A. Remnant vegetation in the north-east of the Project, north of Smith Rd; B Showing historical land disturbance



Plate 5 A. Lot 400 – Jackson Deposit. Remnant Wandoo woodland west off West Rd



Legend

- Project Area
- Road
- Track Log

0 0.375 0.75 1.5 N
km
Scale: 1:50,000 @ A4
- NOTE THAT POSITION ERRORS CAN BE >5M IN SOME AREAS

LOCALITY MAP



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HORIZONTAL DATUM & PROJECTION
GDA2020 MGA Zone 50
DATE
6/05/2026

PROJECT
Katanning Gold Project Mygalomorph Targeted Survey
CREATED ENVIRONMAPS
CHECKED TM
APPROVED TM
REVISION 0

AusGold Ltd

Figure 2
Katanning Gold Project
Area with Track Log

4. Discussion and Conclusions

The Project Area was searched by Invertebrate Solutions staff however, no burrows, either active, or inactive were observed within the survey area. No suitable habitat of undisturbed remnant vegetation with intact understorey was found within or adjacent to the Project. The majority of the Project area is cleared and / or highly modified agricultural land, with no remnant vegetation to provide habitat for mygalomorph spiders.

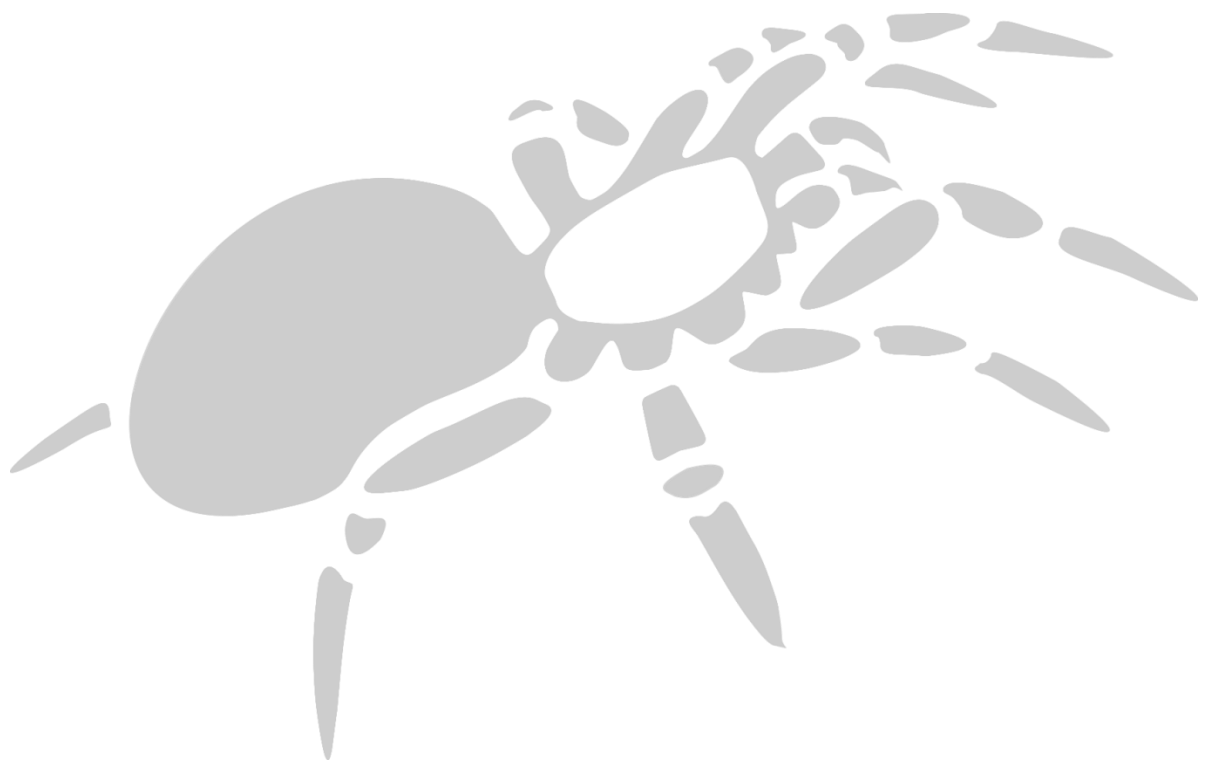
The remnant woodland areas that occur as isolated patches throughout the cleared agricultural land are highly disturbed from livestock grazing, agricultural rubbish dumping and other historical disturbances. Little to no understorey is present throughout these woodland areas and they are not considered currently suitable to support mygalomorph spider populations.

Following the targeted field assessment, it was concluded it is unlikely that any mygalomorph spiders are present within the rural land and associated degraded woodland areas.

Whilst it is conceivable that some mygalomorph burrows may be present within the Woorgabup Nature Reserve, but not observed, they are unlikely to be present in high abundance.

5. References

- Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA). (2025). Threatened and Priority Faun list July 2025. Accessed 12th November 2025 from:
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