



Department of **Planning,
Lands and Heritage**



PLANNING IN BUSHFIRE PRONE AREAS

BUSHFIRE POLICY FRAMEWORK



SPP 3.7
Planning in
**Bushfire
Prone Areas**

Guidelines for
Planning in
**Bushfire
Prone Areas**

FACTSHEET

September 2018

LOCAL PLANNING STRATEGY:
FACTSHEET

This fact sheet has been prepared to assist in the preparation of local planning strategies in accordance with *State Planning Policy 3.7 Planning in Bushfire Prone Areas* and the *Guidelines for Planning in Bushfire Prone Areas*.

SPP 3.7 ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS

A **local planning strategy** (LPS) sets out a local government's long-term planning direction for an area. It must incorporate any relevant State planning policies and provide the rationale for any zoning or classification of land under the local planning scheme.

Policy measures 6.2 and 6.3 of *State Planning Policy 3.7 Planning in Bushfire Prone Areas* (SPP3.7) apply to strategic planning proposals – including an LPS. However, where an LPS does not propose land use intensification in a bushfire prone area or result in an increase in bushfire threat, it is not required to address SPP3.7.

Where a bushfire assessment is required, the purpose of the assessment is to assist the local government identify suitable new areas for land use intensification; and/or to rationalise legacy areas previously identified for land use intensification, but that are yet to be developed. The bushfire assessment should be undertaken as early as possible in the process to inform the preparation of the LPS.

APPLYING POLICY MEASURE 6.3

In accordance with policy measure 6.3 of SPP3.7, any strategic planning proposal that requires a bushfire assessment should be accompanied by:

- a Bushfire Hazard Level (BHL) assessment, which should be prepared by an accredited Bushfire Planning Practitioner;
- identification of any bushfire hazard issues arising from the relevant assessment; and
- demonstration that compliance with the bushfire protection criteria can be achieved in subsequent planning stages.

This information should be prepared in accordance with the *Guidelines for Planning in Bushfire Prone Areas* (the Guidelines).

Bushfire Hazard Level assessment

A BHL assessment should be prepared for a:

- proposed development investigation area (DIA) – an area identified, or being considered for land use intensification including new land release areas or areas proposing a change of zoning that would result in an increase in residents or employees; and
- legacy DIA – an area identified in a local planning strategy or zoned in a local planning scheme prior to December 2015, but that is not yet developed.

Bushfire protection criteria

Demonstration that compliance with the bushfire protection criteria (**Appendix 4** of the **Guidelines**) can be achieved in subsequent planning stages; along with identification of areas of non-compliance, is required. The assessment for each DIA should address the following elements.

Element 1: Location

- Consider the landscape context, including the type and extent of vegetation, topography (particularly land with slopes of >10 degrees), areas of possible fire-runs and evacuation options.
- Identify areas that represent an extreme bushfire risk that cannot be managed and should not be supported for development.
- Identify areas most suitable for land use intensification where the bushfire hazard is low or moderate upon completion.

PLANNING IN BUSHFIRE PRONE AREAS

BUSHFIRE POLICY FRAMEWORK

- Identify conservation areas including threatened ecological communities (TECs), Bush Forever, nature reserves, wetlands and ground water protection areas that may constrain the clearing of vegetation to manage or reduce the BAL rating.
- Identify areas that would require significant clearing to achieve an appropriate BAL rating.

Element 2: Siting and design

- Identify appropriate range of density codes (or lot sizes) and the need for asset protection zones (APZs).
- Identify interfaces between proposed development and bushfire prone vegetation (hazard separation) to achieve an appropriate BAL rating (in accordance with AS3959).

Element 3: Vehicular access

- Identify existing vehicular access routes that provide safe access and egress to two different destinations at a local and a broader district level.
- Identify requirements for additional vehicular access.
- Identify opportunities to improve access and egress for existing development.

Element 4: Water

- In non-reticulated areas, demonstrate the availability of alternative water supplies for firefighting purposes.

Spatial representation of bushfire protection criteria

At this stage of the planning process it is important that the work undertaken to determine the bushfire hazard and the measures required to comply with the bushfire protection criteria, are connected spatially. A spatial representation (map) should provide a snapshot of the bushfire risk management measures for each of the DIAs (as identified in the assessment against the bushfire protection criteria).

This spatial representation will enable a comparison of each DIA to assist decision-makers evaluate the range of issues and the appropriateness of each area for inclusion in the LPS.

Inclusion of the BHL assessment in the local planning strategy

Where an LPS identifies one or more of these DIAs for land use intensification, the strategy should clearly articulate the bushfire issues and the bushfire risk management measures, as identified in the BHL assessment.

SYNERGIES WITH EXISTING LOCAL GOVERNMENT BUSHFIRE DOCUMENTATION

There may be opportunities to align information with existing local government bushfire preparation/policy documentation (e.g. local government's Bushfire Risk Management Plan [BRMP]).

BRMPs provide local governments with an integrated bushfire risk management framework for their local area and contain: a written plan, a communications strategy, an asset risk register, and a treatment schedule.

Any strategic risk assessments undertaken to inform the BRMP may be particularly useful in understanding the bushfire hazard issues affecting the local government.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Please email specific queries to:

Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage –
Bushfire Policy team bushfire@dplh.wa.gov.au

Further information on the bushfire policy framework can
be found at: dplh.wa.gov.au

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