

1. Introduction

Bushfire is a hazard that is a relevant consideration for the City of Rockingham (City) in the preparation or amendment of town planning schemes, strategies and policies, and in the consideration of applications for development or subdivision. Specifically, *State Planning Policy 3.7 - Planning in Bushfire Prone Areas* (SPP3.7) directs how land use should address bushfire risk management in Western Australia. SPP3.7 applies to all higher order strategic planning documents, strategic planning proposals, subdivision and development applications located on land which has been designated as bushfire prone by the Fire and Emergency Services (FES) Commissioner, as highlighted on the Map of Bushfire Prone Areas (MBPA).

1.1 Map of Bushfire Prone Areas (MBPA)

In December 2015 the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) released the MBPA, a state wide map designating land that is bushfire prone. The mapping is based on the DFES/Office of Bushfire Risk Management's (OBRM) Mapping Standard for Bushfire Prone Areas. The map essentially includes any bushfire prone vegetation and a 100m buffer around the vegetation. It is a binary system, i.e. land is either bushfire prone or not. The mapping does not indicate any level of hazard; it is simply a tool to trigger further assessment i.e. if land is designated as bushfire prone, there may be additional bushfire planning and building requirements. The MBPA is available on DFES' website and has been included on the City's external mapping website (Intramaps). The MBPA is reviewed annually.

1.2 Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015

The *Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015* (Regs) require that development approval be obtained, for certain types of development, in areas subject to extreme bushfire risk (i.e. Bushfire Attack Level (BAL)-40 or BAL-FZ areas) or in areas where a bushfire attack level cannot be determined because of the terrain. For example, if a proposal that would normally be exempt from development approval was found to be subject to an extreme bushfire risk, an application for development approval must be lodged with the City. The proposal would then be assessed for compliance with SPP3.7 and the *Guidelines for Planning in Bushfire Prone Areas*.

The provisions of the Regs do not take effect unless a site has been located within a bushfire prone area (on the MBPA) for a period of at least four months.

1.3 State Planning Policy 3.7 - Planning in Bushfire Prone Areas

SPP3.7 applies to all higher order strategic planning documents, strategic planning proposals, subdivision and development applications located on land which has been designated as bushfire prone. This policy provides the foundation for land use planning to address bushfire risk management in Western Australia. It is used to inform and guide decision-makers, referral agencies and landowners/ proponents to help achieve acceptable bushfire protection outcomes.

SPP3.7 references the Bushfire Protection Criteria in the *Guidelines for Planning in Bushfire Prone Areas*. To comply with SPP3.7, a proposal or application must demonstrate compliance with the Bushfire Protection Criteria, or that the criteria can be achieved at a subsequent stage of the planning process. Unlike the provisions of the Regs, there is no transition period for the application of SPP3.7.

1.3.1 Guidelines for Planning in Bushfire Prone Areas

In late 2015 the Western Australian Planning Commission (WAPC) and the DFES released the *Guidelines for Planning in Bushfire Prone Areas* (Guidelines). These guidelines provide further detail on the requirements of SPP3.7 and outline the matters that need to be addressed at the various stages of the planning process. It is essential to read the Guidelines in conjunction with this Planning Procedure.

2. Statement of Intent

The purpose of this Planning Procedure is to provide guidance on the City's requirements for the preparation of bushfire reports that need to be addressed at all stages of the planning process.

The objectives of the Planning Procedure are:

- to avoid inappropriately located or designed land use, subdivision and development on land that is identified as being bushfire prone; and
- to ensure an appropriate level of protection to life and property is provided from bushfires.

3. Application

This Planning Procedure applies to planning proposals that will result in habitable buildings on all land that is designated as 'bushfire prone' under the MBPA. For new areas designated bushfire (i.e. within four months of the release of a new version of the MBPA), no transition period applies to the application of this Planning Procedure. Development applications, Local Structure Plans and other planning proposals which are in a designated bushfire prone area are to address the requirements of this Planning Procedure.

3.1 Exemptions

If a proposal does not:

- result in the intensification of development (or land use);
- result in an increase of residents or employees; or
- involve the occupation of employees on site for any considerable amount of time,

then there may not be any practicable reason to require a BAL Assessment and an assessment against the Bushfire Protection Criteria.

Exemptions apply to infrastructure including roads, telecommunications and dams; and to rural activities, including piggeries and chicken farms which do not involve employees on site for a considerable amount of time.

The deemed provisions of the Regs exempt renovations, alterations, extensions, improvements or repair of a building, and incidental uses (including outbuildings, verandas, unenclosed swimming pools, carports, patios and storage sheds). Although SPP3.7 does not specify these exemptions, WAPC *Planning Bulletin 111/2016 Planning in Bushfire Prone Areas* states that, where the proposal is exempt under the deemed provisions or local planning scheme, and does not:

- result in the intensification of development (or land use);
- result in an increase of residents or employees;
- involve the occupation of employees on site for any considerable amount of time; or

- result in an increase to the bushfire threat;

the proposal is considered to be exempt from the provisions of SPP3.7.

Exemptions also apply to single houses and ancillary dwellings on lots less than 1,100m². This exemption does not include grouped or multiple dwellings. Bushfire construction requirements under the Building Code of Australia (BCA) or AS3959 may still apply to proposals that are exempt from the requirements of SPP3.7 and this Planning Procedure.

3.2 Advice of Department of Fire and Emergency Services to be sought

The advice of DFES is to be sought and considered in the preparation and determination of all strategic planning proposals, Subdivision and Development Applications where:

- compliance with SPP3.7 measures is unlikely to be achieved; and/or
- additional/alternative measures are proposed; and/or
- the application contains unavoidable development, or vulnerable or high-risk land uses.

4. Assessment Documents

4.1 General

The Guidelines detail the process for preparation and assessment of Bushfire Hazard Level Assessments (BHLA), BAL Contour Plans, BAL Assessments and Bushfire Management Plans (BMP). This Planning Procedure refers to the Guidelines for specific detail, which are available at:

<http://www.planning.wa.gov.au/dop/pub/pdf/BushfireGuidelinesText.pdf> (Guidelines) and

<http://www.planning.wa.gov.au/dop/pub/pdf/BushfireGuidelinesAppendix.pdf> (Appendices).

The following table outlines the level of information required to be submitted for each application type.

	REQUIREMENTS FOR BUSHFIRE CONSIDERATION			
	Application of SPP3.7	Bushfire Hazard Level Assessment	Bushfire Attack Level Contour Map / Assessment	Address the Bushfire Protection Criteria
Scheme Amendments	✓	✓	✓ *	✓
Structure Plans	✓	✓	✓ *	✓
Subdivision	✓	N/A	✓	✓
Development Application	✓	N/A	✓	✓
Building Permit	N/A	N/A	✓	N/A

* A Bushfire Attack Level Contour Map / Assessment is required for Scheme Amendment and Structure plans where the lot layout is known.

It is strongly recommended that a Bushfire Planning Practitioner is engaged to prepare assessment documentation.

4.2 Bushfire Hazard Level Assessment (BHLA)

A BHLA provides a 'broadbrush' means of determining the potential intensity of a bushfire for a particular area. The BHLA assists in informing the suitability of land contained within strategic planning proposals for future subdivision and development. The BHLA categorises land within a designated bushfire prone area as having a low, moderate or extreme bushfire hazard level. Different hazard levels may be assigned to different parts of individual lots.

BHLAs allow for early strategic consideration of bushfire risk which can then be used to inform the more detailed stages that follow, ensuring all issues are considered, identified and properly addressed at the earliest possible time. When the design of the strategic planning proposal contains sufficient detail to determine the future lot layout, a BAL Contour Map will be more appropriate, as this is more useful in demonstrating the potential site risks.

A BHLA will indicate that the site currently contains a low, moderate or extreme hazard level. In instances where the hazard is identified as moderate or extreme, the proposal should contain information in the form of a Bushfire Management Plan as to how the hazard level will be initially reduced and maintained for the life of the development. This will ensure that appropriate bushfire risk management measures are in place to achieve and maintain a low or moderate hazard level.

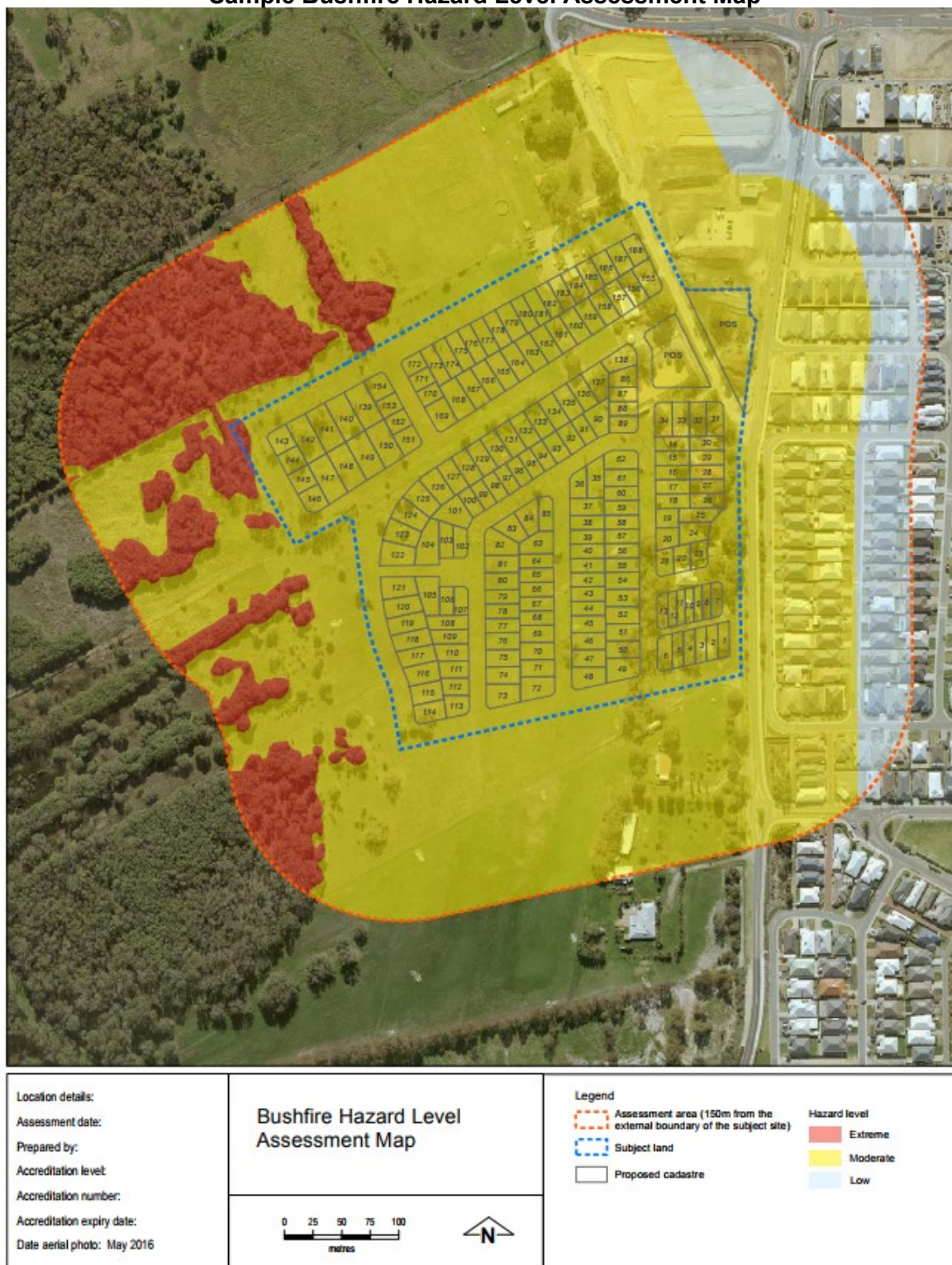
Strategic planning proposals that are to be developed in a staged approach are to be considered using the current bushfire risk for each individual stage. This ensures that the bushfire risk is taken into account throughout the planning process, should subsequent stages not be completed or be affected by an amended plan. The following table lists Hazard Levels and their characteristics.

Hazard Level	Characteristics
Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low threat vegetation may include areas of maintained lawns, golf courses, public recreation reserves and parklands, vineyards, orchards, cultivated gardens, commercial nurseries, nature strips and windbreaks. Managed grassland in a minimal fuel condition (insufficient fuel is available to significantly increase the severity of the bushfire attack). For example, short-cropped grass to a nominal height of 100 millimetres. Non-vegetated areas including waterways, roads, footpaths, buildings and rock outcrops.
Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Class B: Open woodland (06), Low woodland (07), Low open woodland (08), Open shrubland(09)* Class C: Shrubland Class E: Mallee/Mulga Class G: Grassland, including sown pasture and crops Vegetation that has a low hazard level but is within 100 metres of vegetation classified as a moderate or extreme hazard, is to adopt a moderate hazard level.
Extreme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Class A: Forest Class B: Woodland (05) Class D: Scrub Any classified vegetation with a greater than 10 degree slope
Notes: *As per AS-3959 Table 2.3, Note 2 – Overstoreys of open woodland, low open woodland, tall open shrubland and low open shrubland should be classified to the vegetation type on the basis of their understoreys; others to be classified on the basis of their overstoreys.	

Appendix 2 of the Guidelines contains the methodology for BHLA. A BHLA should be prepared in accordance Appendix 2 and the principles of AS3959.

It is recommended landowners/proponents seek the assistance of an accredited Level 2 or Level 3 Bushfire Planning Practitioner to conduct a BHL assessment.

Sample Bushfire Hazard Level Assessment Map



Source: WAPC (2015) Guidelines for Planning in Bushfire Prone Areas

4.3 BAL Contour Map

A BAL Contour Map is a scale map of the subject lot(s) illustrating the potential radiant heat impacts and associated indicative BAL ratings in reference to any vegetation remaining within 150 metres of the assessment area after subdivision works are complete. It is typically used for bushfire risk assessment at the subdivision stage of the planning process, but is also appropriate for strategic planning proposals where the lot layout of a proposal is already determined.

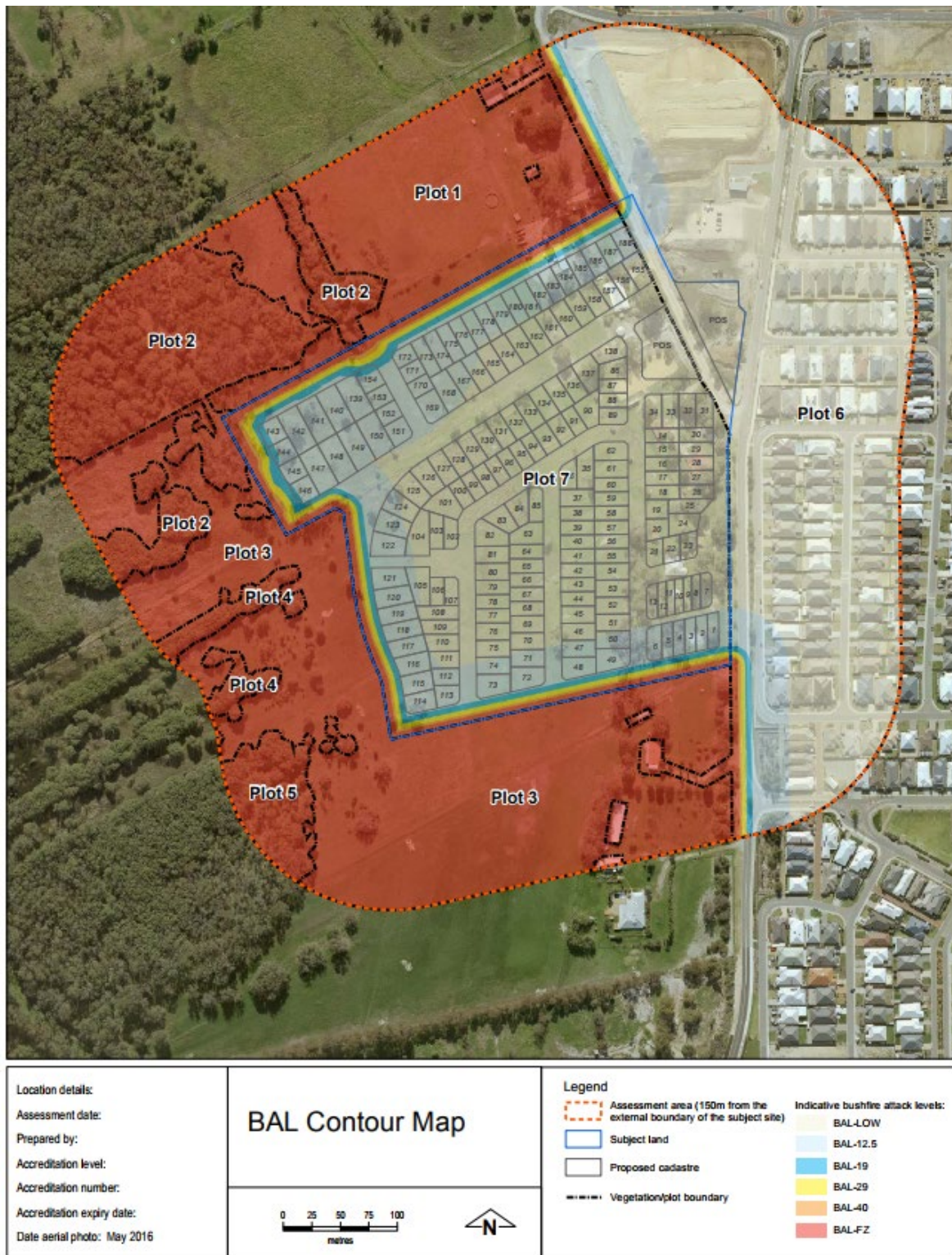
As with all assessments, where a strategic planning proposal or subdivision is proposed to be developed with a staged approach, a new BAL Contour Map must be prepared for each stage and the hazard addressed appropriately for each stage.

In accordance with SPP3.7 and the Regs 2015, where a BAL Contour Map exists for a previous subdivision approval, the BAL Contour Map may be used in place of a site-specific BAL assessment at the development application and/or building permit stage. Notwithstanding this, the City has the discretion to request a new BAL Contour Map or a site-specific BAL assessment if it is of the opinion the existing BAL Contour Map is out-dated.

A BAL Contour Map prepared for planning purposes should be detailed enough to be considered suitable for use at the development approval and/or building permit stage to avoid duplication of assessment. At a minimum, the scale should be such that the lot number, proposed building envelope and indicative BAL rating/s are clearly depicted on the map, to the satisfaction of the assessing officer. Where multiple BAL ratings apply to a single building envelope, the higher BAL rating applies. The assessment area of the BAL Contour Map is to extend 100 metres from the site boundary.

Appendix 3 of the Guidelines contains the methodology for BAL Contour Map. A BAL Contour Map should be prepared in accordance Appendix 3 and the principles of AS3959.

Sample BAL Contour Map



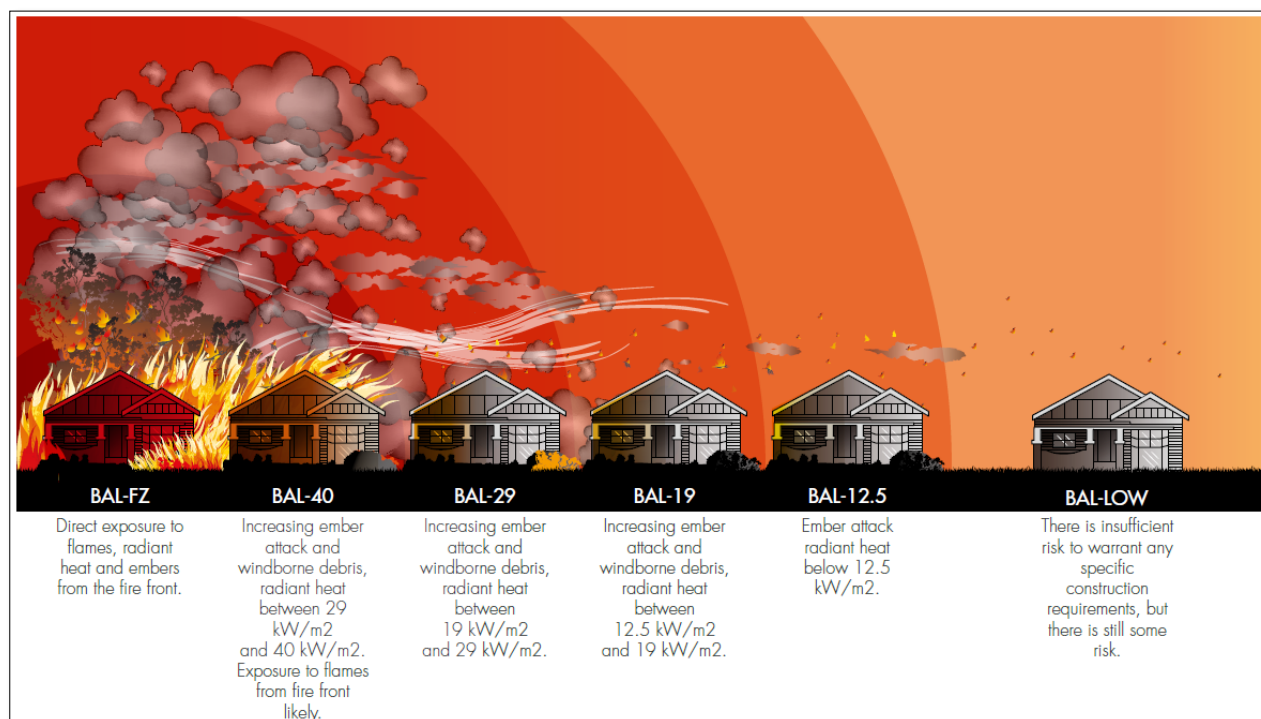
Source: WAPC (2015) Guidelines for Planning in Bushfire Prone Areas

4.4 BAL Assessment

A BAL assessment is a more detailed assessment of the potential exposure of a site to bushfire attack. In the planning process, BAL assessments are used to determine whether a site or allotment will require additional management measures in order to respond to the potential bushfire hazard. It is important to note that these measures are not just the construction standards outlined in *Australian Standard 3959-2009: Construction of buildings in bushfire-prone areas (AS3959)*.

AS3959 provides for six categories of Bushfire Attack Levels based on radiant heat levels, this is demonstrated in the figure below. They relate to how the forms of bushfire attack will affect a site or building, with ember attack being applicable to all BALs above BAL-LOW and as proximity to the hazard increases, so does the exposure to radiant heat and direct flame contact.

BAL Construction Levels in Context



Source: WAPC (2015) *Guidelines for Planning in Bushfire Prone Areas*

A BAL assessment is required to accompany Subdivision Applications, Development Applications and applications to modify Building Envelopes. A BAL assessment may be prepared as either Method 1 (Simple) or Method 2 (Complex) assessment. The methodologies for conducting a BAL assessment are outlined in AS3959.

4.5 Bushfire Protection Criteria

The bushfire protection criteria (Appendix Four of the Guidelines) are a performance-based system of assessing bushfire risk management measures. An assessment against the criteria is to be undertaken for any strategic planning proposal, Subdivision and Development Application for a site that has or will, on completion, have a bushfire hazard level above 'Low' or a BAL rating above BAL-LOW.

The bushfire protection criteria consist of four elements:

- **Element 1:** Location
- **Element 2:** Siting and design of development
- **Element 3:** Vehicular access
- **Element 4:** Water

Element 1 - Location

The intent of this Element is to ensure developments are located in an area not subject to extreme bushfire hazards or in areas of BAL-40 or BAL-FZ. These areas are essentially unsafe both for occupants of developments and the emergency service personnel who need to respond to bushfires. Development is to be avoided in these areas.

Element 2 - Siting and Design of Development

The intent of this element is to ensure developments are appropriately sited in relation to bushfire risk. It requires developments to be separated from the hazard. This separation can be achieved either through physical distance (i.e. >100m) or if a separation distance of less than 100m is provided, construction standards are incorporated into the building design to improve its protection.

This element also requires reductions in fuel loads the closer you get to the building. These lower fuel areas are currently referred to as the Asset Protection Zone (APZ) (previously Building Protection Zone (BPZ)). The purpose of these zones is to reduce the intensity of the bushfire and consequently reduce radiant heat levels and avoid flame contact on buildings.

Element 3 - Vehicular Access

There are a number of sub criteria relating to access, however, the aim is to make sure:

- Occupants can get out, and so there needs to be options in terms of directions that they can go to avoid the bushfire; and
- The road network can cater for emergency services vehicles. It needs to be remembered that during a bushfire smoke can impair visibility, so there needs to be plenty of room for these vehicles to manoeuvre.

Element 4 - Water

This element aims to ensure that there is sufficient water supply for firefighting provided at all times.

4.5.1 Compliance with the Bushfire Protection Criteria

Each criterion has the following components:

- **Intent:** which outlines the desired outcome for the element, and reflects identified planning and policy requirements in respect of each issue;
- **Acceptable solutions:** which provide one way of meeting the element's intent; and
- **Performance principles:** which is a general statement of how best to achieve the intent of the relevant bushfire element.

For a proposal to be considered compliant with SPP3.7, each element must be satisfied. Demonstration of how a proposal meets the bushfire protection criteria can be in the form of a Bushfire Management Plan and must be provided upfront with any planning proposal that has, or will, on approval, have a bushfire hazard level above Low or a BAL rating above BAL-LOW. A proposal may utilise a combination of the acceptable solutions and the performance principles in order to address the criteria.

It is important to remember that the bushfire report will be used by land owners, so it needs to be made clear what is required to be done (detailed in the report) and the extent of any works required (shown on a scaled plan).

It is strongly recommended that the assessment against the Bushfire Protection Criteria be carried out by a Bushfire Planning Practitioner.

4.6 Bushfire Management Plan (BMP)

A BMP is a generic term used to describe documentation submitted in support of a planning proposal located within bushfire prone areas. A BMP generally sets out short, medium and long term management strategies for bushfire hazards and generally accompanies strategic planning proposals, Subdivision or Development Applications in bushfire prone areas. It represents an ongoing commitment by the landowner/proponent or responsible authority to undertake bushfire risk management measures for the life of the development. Typically, a BMP will include the results of a BHLA, BAL Contour Map and/or BAL assessment to identify the extent of the bushfire risk for a particular area. It should also set out bushfire risk management measures that address each of the four elements of the bushfire protection criteria. The BMP may also include references to fire breaks, firefighting water supply, firefighting access, easements and ongoing management responsibilities.

A BMP shall:

1. Be based on the BHLA, either carried out as part of a previous application, or where it hasn't previously been undertaken, conducted in accordance with Appendix 2 of the Guidelines;

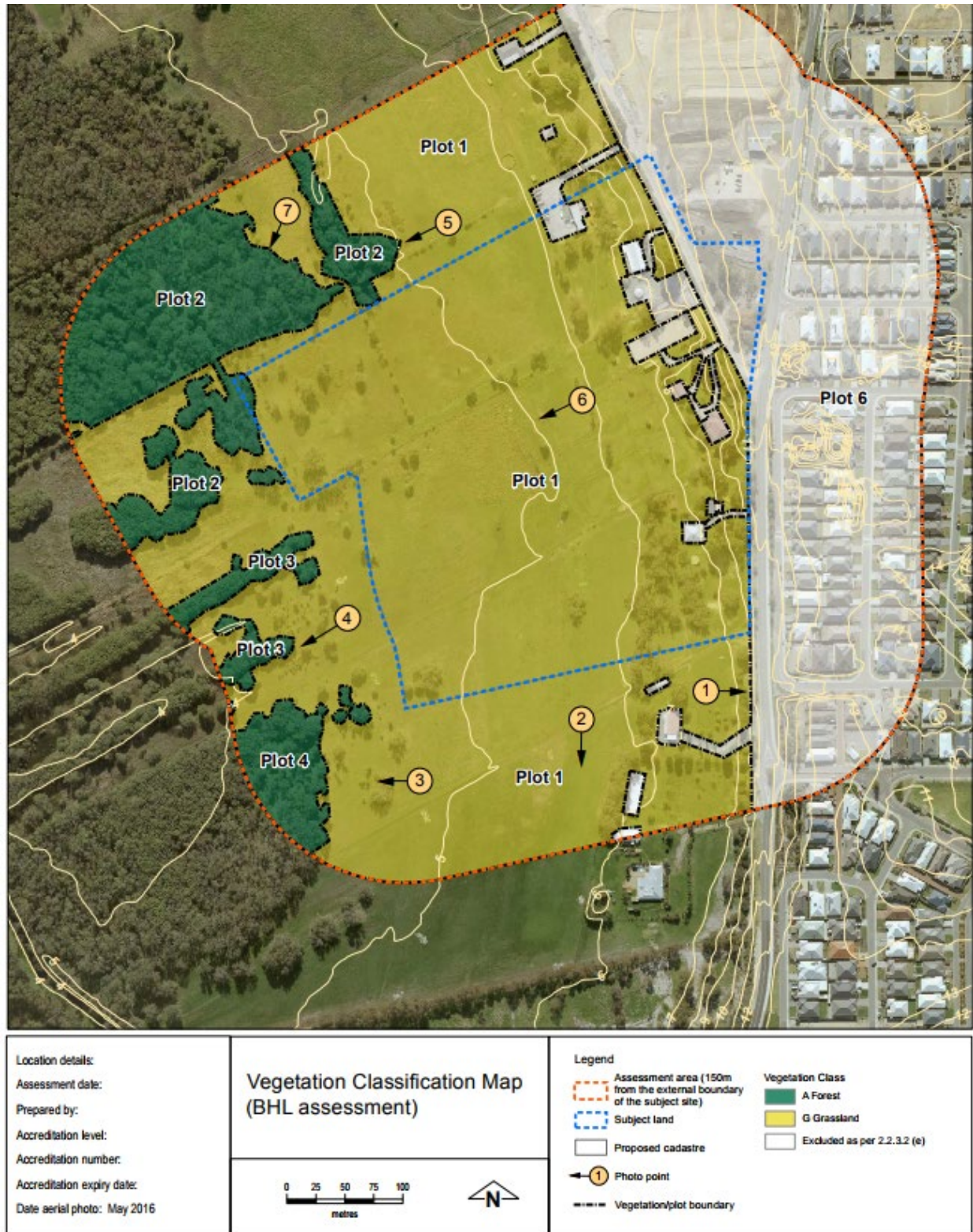
and/or

Include a BAL Contour Map or BAL Assessment specifically including:

- (a) A Bushfire Hazard Assessment Area Plan. This is a plan comprising an aerial photograph that is to scale. It shows the boundary of the development site, plus a line offset 150m from the site boundary;
- (b) A Vegetation Classification Map. This is to illustrate the areas of vegetation classified in accordance with AS3959 Guidelines. It is to cover the Assessment Area;
- (c) A table outlining the distance between the site and each of the vegetation types classified in (b) above;
- (d) Average Slope Map. This is a map of the slope under the classified vegetation (step (b)) which is to be categorised as per Table 2.4.3 of AS3959;

- (e) BAL Contour Plan. This is a plan illustrating the BALs applying to the site as determined by Table 2.4.3 of the AS3959; and
 - (f) BAL Table. This is a table that summarises the BALs applying to site. For subdivisions, this should nominate the worst case BAL for the lot or building envelope.
2. Set out bushfire risk management measures that address each of the four Bushfire Protection Criteria:
- Location;
 - Siting and Design of Development
 - Vehicular Access; and
 - Water;
- outlined in the Appendix 4 of the Guidelines.

Sample Vegetation Classification Map



Source: WAPC (2015) *Guidelines for Planning in Bushfire Prone Areas*

4.7 Bushfire Management Plan addressing the Bushfire Protection Criteria Coversheet

The aim of this coversheet is to identify (for administrative purposes) what sections of a Bushfire Management Plan trigger referral to DFES.

All strategic planning proposals, subdivision applications or development applications that are submitted to the City should be accompanied with this coversheet.

If any (one or more) of the answers to the questions outlined in the table in the coversheet is 'yes' then the City will refer the Bushfire Management Plan to DFES for comment.

The coversheet can be downloaded from the Department of Planning's website via the Bushfire planning publications page at the following link:

https://www.planning.wa.gov.au/dop_pub_pdf/Bushfire_management_plan_coversheet_july2017.pdf

5. Planning Procedure

5.1 Scheme Amendments

5.1.1 Requirements

All Scheme Amendments that propose to rezone land designated as bushfire prone must be supported by a BMP including the following detail:

- A BHLA and/or a BAL Contour Map (if the lot layout is already know) prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Guidelines and this Planning Procedure;
- Management measures that address each of the four elements Bushfire Protection Criteria; and
- The Bushfire Management Plan addressing the Bushfire Protection Criteria Coversheet.

5.1.2 Referrals

The City will refer all Scheme Amendments concerning land designated as bushfire prone to the DFES for advice on fire impacts as part of the advertising requirements for Scheme Amendments.

A BMP will be referred, where relevant, to the following City departments for assessment:

- Fire Prevention Officer;
- Environment and Sustainability; and
- Land Development and Infrastructure.

5.1.3 Land Use Considerations

The location of land use in areas of high risk fire hazard, where significant changes to the environment need to occur to reduce the risk of bushfire hazard to people and property, is to be avoided.

5.2 Structure Plans

5.2.1 Requirements

Structure Plans that cover land designated as bushfire prone must be supported by a BMP including the following detail:

- A BHLA and/or a BAL Contour Map (if the lot layout is already known) prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Guidelines and this Planning Procedure;
- Management measures that address each of the four elements Bushfire Protection Criteria; and
- The Bushfire Management Plan addressing the Bushfire Protection Criteria Coversheet.

5.2.2 Referrals

The City will refer all Structure Plans to DFES for advice on fire impacts as part of the advertising requirements for Structure Plans.

A BMP will be referred, where relevant, to the following City departments for assessment:

- Fire Prevention Officer;
- Planning and Development Directorate (Senior Projects Officer);
- Environment and Sustainability; and
- Land Development and Infrastructure.

5.2.3 Land Use Considerations

Perimeter roads are to be provided where the Structure Plan site abuts areas of bushfire hazard to provide for adequate Hazard Separation.

Consideration needs to be given to the retention of areas of remnant vegetation in Public Open Space (POS) and the interface with residential development.

5.3 Subdivision

5.3.1 Requirements

Applications for Subdivision are referred to the City by the WAPC for the City to provide its recommendations where the application may affect the functions of the local government. The City has a period of 42 days in which to provide a response back to the WAPC.

All subdivision applications for land designated as bushfire prone must be supported by a BMP including the following detail:

- A BAL Contour Map prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Guidelines and this Planning Procedure;
- Management measures that address each of the four elements Bushfire Protection Criteria; and
- The Bushfire Management Plan addressing the Bushfire Protection Criteria Coversheet.

5.3.2 Referrals

A BMP will be referred, where relevant, to the following City departments for assessment:

- Fire Prevention Officer;
- Environment and Sustainability; and
- Land Development and Infrastructure.

Where a BMP does not fully comply with the acceptable solutions set out in Appendix 4 of the Guidelines (i.e. involving a performance criteria assessment) it will be referred to DFES for advice prior to a decision being made.

A BMP that purports to use a Method 2 (Complex) BAL Assessment from AS3959 will be referred to DFES for comment prior to determination.

5.3.3 Land Use Considerations

The location of allotments for the purpose of residential development (including any provision for a residential dwelling) in areas of high risk fire hazard, where significant changes to the environment need to occur to reduce the risk of bushfire hazard to people and property, are to be avoided.

Subdivision in an area with an extreme bushfire hazard classification or construction standard of BAL-40 or BAL-FZ would not normally be supported.

Where subdivision is in an area that has an extreme bushfire hazard land classification and requires construction standards between BAL-40 or BAL-FZ is considered minor development, the application will only be approved where it can be demonstrated that acceptable, permanent hazard reduction measures can be implemented to reduce the hazard level to an acceptable level, and that the development can be undertaken in accordance with the general principles and building construction standards that underpin these guidelines.

5.4 Development Applications

5.4.1 Requirements

Applications for Development Approval on land that is designated bushfire prone must include a BMP including the following detail:

- A BAL Contour Map or a BAL assessment prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Guidelines and this Planning Procedure;
- Management measures that address each of the four elements Bushfire Protection Criteria; and
- The Bushfire Management Plan addressing the Bushfire Protection Criteria Coversheet.

Appendix Four of the Guidelines lists 'acceptable solutions' and performance criteria for development in bushfire prone areas. The report should include a detailed assessment of how the proposal complies with the requirements of the four Bushfire Protection Criteria. The summary page will include a table that lists the relevant criteria and describes how the development will comply.

This does not necessarily need to be an extensive document (i.e. it can be less than five pages) but it must be accurate.

If the Development Application proposes a vulnerable or high-risk land use in areas between BAL-12.5 to BAL-29, it will not be supported unless it is accompanied by a BMP jointly endorsed by the City and DFES. The BMP must include an emergency evacuation plan for proposed occupants and/or a risk management plan for any flammable on-site hazards.

5.4.2 Referrals

A development application concerning bushfire prone land will be referred, where relevant, to the following City departments for assessment:

- Fire and Emergency Administration;
- Building Services;
- Environment and Sustainability; and
- Land Development and Infrastructure.

Where a proposal does not fully comply with the acceptable solutions set out in Appendix 4 of the Guidelines (i.e. involving a performance criteria assessment) it will be referred to DFES for advice prior to a decision being made.

A BMP that purports to use a Method 2 (Complex) BAL Assessment from AS3959 will be referred to DFES for comment prior to determination.

5.4.3 Land Use Considerations

Development in an area with an extreme bushfire hazard classification or construction standard of BAL-40 or BAL-FZ would not normally be approved.

Where development in an area that has an extreme bushfire hazard land classification and requires construction standards between BAL-40 or BAL-FZ is considered minor, the application will only be approved where it can be demonstrated that acceptable, permanent hazard reduction measures can be implemented to reduce the hazard level to an acceptable level, and that the development can be undertaken in accordance with the general principles and building construction standards that underpin these guidelines.

5.5 Building Permit

An application for a Building Permit in a designated bushfire prone area must include a Bushfire Attack Level (BAL) Assessment carried out in accordance with the methodology contained in *Australian Standard AS3959-2009: Construction of Buildings in Bushfire-Prone Areas* where one has not previously been prepared.

6. Interpretations

Acceptable solution is a set solution that complies with the requirement(s) of a corresponding Performance Criterion.

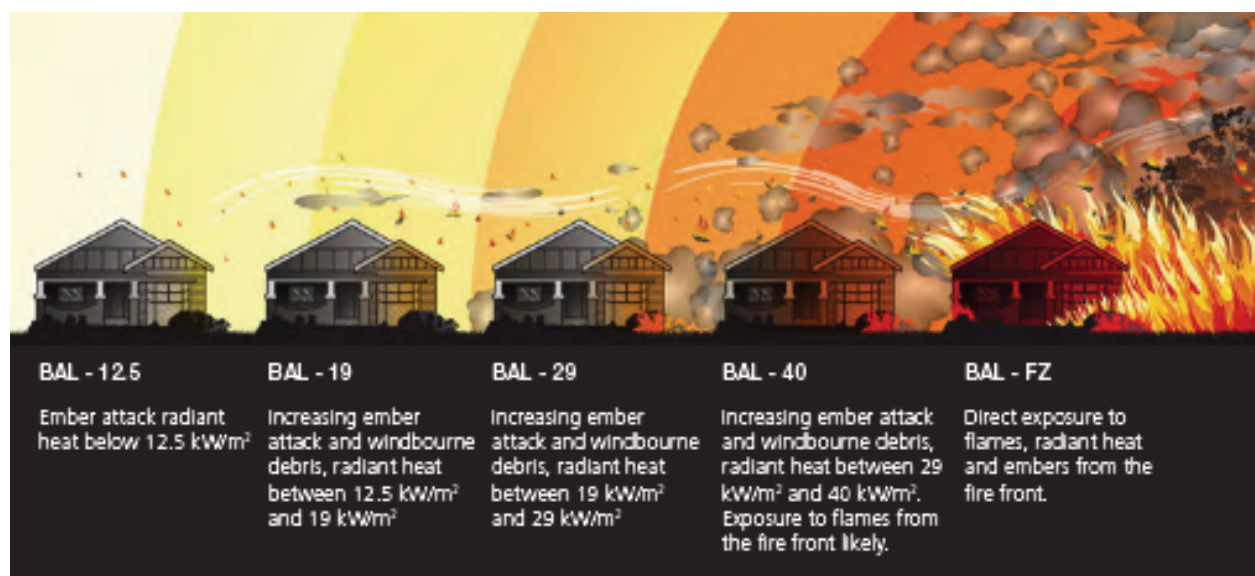
Asset Protection Zone (APZ) means a low fuel area immediately surrounding habitable buildings and is to meet the following requirements:

- **Minimum width:** Measured from any external wall or supporting post or column of the proposed building or the building envelope, and of sufficient size to ensure the potential radiant heat impact of a bushfire does not exceed 29kW/m² (BAL-29)

- **Location:** wholly within the development site
- **Fences:** within the APZ are constructed from non-combustible materials (e.g. iron, brick, limestone, metal post and wire). It is recommended that solid or slatted non-combustible perimeter fences are used.
- **Objects:** within 10 metres of a building, combustible objects must not be located close to the vulnerable parts of the building i.e. windows and doors.
- **Fine Fuel load:** combustible dead vegetation matter less than 6 millimetres in thickness reduced to and maintained at an average of two tonnes per hectare.
- **Trees (> 5 metres in height):** trunks at maturity should be a minimum distance of 6 metres from all elevations of the building, branches at maturity should not touch or overhang the building, lower branches should be removed to a height of 2 metres above the ground and or surface vegetation, canopy cover should be less
- **Shrubs (0.5 metres to 5 metres in height):** should not be located under trees or within 3 metres of buildings, should not be planted in clumps greater than 5m² in area, clumps of shrubs should be separated from each other and any exposed window or door by at least 10 metres. Shrubs greater than 5 metres in height are to be treated as trees.
- **Ground covers (<0.5 metres in height):** can be planted under trees but must be properly maintained to remove dead plant material and any parts within 2 metres of a structure, but 3 metres from windows or doors if greater than 100 millimetres in height. Ground covers greater than 0.5 metres in height are to be treated as shrubs.
- **Grass:** should be managed to maintain a height of 100 millimetres or less.

Bushfire is a general term used to describe fire in vegetation, and includes wildfire.

Bushfire Attack Level (BAL) is the measurement of the severity of a building's potential exposure to bushfire. In general terms, a BAL is determined based on the type of vegetation, slope of the land and distance to the vegetation. BALs are the basis for determining construction standards for a building to improve its protection against bushfire.



Bushfire hazard is the flammability, arrangement and quantity of vegetation, dead or alive, that can be burnt in a bushfire. Development is to be avoided in extreme bushfire hazard designated areas.

Bushfire Hazard Assessment Level (BHA) is an assessment of bushfire hazard carried out in accordance with Appendix 2 of the Guidelines.

Bushfire Management Plan (BMP) is a document, prepared at a point in time that assesses the bushfire risk to a particular development or subdivision, and that sets out immediate and on-going management and mitigation strategies for fire hazards and risks. Fire management plans are generally prepared by the applicant.

Bushfire Planning Practitioner A person who holds, Level Two or Three accreditation under the Western Australian Bushfire Accreditation Framework.

Bushfire prone area is an area that has been designated by the Fire and Emergency Services Commissioner under s. 18P of the *Fire and Emergency Services Act 1998* as an area that is subject, or likely to be subject, to bushfires. Such areas are identified on the *Map of Bushfire Prone Areas* and can be found on the Department of Fire and Emergency Services website.

Bushfire risk is the chance of a bushfire occurring that will have harmful consequences on life and property. It is measured in terms of consequences and likelihood, and arises from the interaction of hazards, communities and the environment.

DFES is the Department of Fire and Emergency Services.

DPaW is the Department of Parks and Wildlife.

Designated Bushfire Prone Area is an area that has been designated under a power of legislation as being subject, or likely to be subject, to bushfires.

Fire break is any natural or constructed discontinuity in a fuel bed used to segregate, stop and control the spread of a bushfire, or to provide a fire line from which to suppress a fire. This is an area cleared to reduce the risk of bushfire damage.

Fire protection is a generic term used to describe the range of services and systems used to mitigate the impact of fire on the community. It encompasses both fire prevention and emergency response.

Guidelines are the *Guidelines for Planning in Bushfire Prone Areas* prepared by the WAPC and DFES.

Habitable building is any fully or partially enclosed structure, with at least one wall and a roof made of solid material, and used by people to:

- live (house, apartment or hostel);
- work (office, factory or hospital),
- study (school, university or library); or
- socialise or entertain (gym, theatre, restaurant or community facility).

It is possible that some developments will have habitable and non-habitable components which will need to be considered separately for the purpose of meeting this clause.

Hazard reduction is the removal and modification of bushfire fuel, or increase in building construction standards, or a combination of the two.

High risk land use is a land use which may lead to the potential ignition, prolonged duration and/or increased intensity of a bushfire. Such uses may also expose the community, fire fighters and the surrounding environment to dangerous, uncontrolled substances during a bushfire event. Examples of what constitutes a high-risk land use are provided in the Guidelines.

Minor development means applications in residential built-out areas at a scale which may not require full compliance with the relevant policy measures. Classes of development considered under this definition, with the exclusion of applications for unavoidable development, are:

- a single house on an existing lot 1,100m² or greater;
- an ancillary dwelling on a lot of 1,100m² or greater; and
- change to a vulnerable land use in an existing residential development.

Performance solution is a statement which specifies outcomes required for the protection of life and property from bushfires, relating to a specific Element. Performance Criteria are used for the basis of assessing a performance approach assessment under the PfBP Guidelines.

SPP3.7 means the State Planning Policy 3.7 - Planning in Bushfire Prone Areas, prepared by the WAPC, dated December 2015.

Structural fire is a fire in a building.

Unavoidable development means development that, in the opinion of the decision-maker, represents exceptional circumstances where full compliance with this policy would be unreasonable; no alternative location exists; it is not minor development; and it is not contrary to the public interest. Examples of what constitutes unavoidable development are provided in the Guidelines.

Vulnerable use is a land use where persons may be less able to respond in a bushfire emergency. Examples of what constitutes a vulnerable land use are provided in the Guidelines.

7. Endorsement

This revised Planning Procedure was endorsed by the Director, Planning and Development Services on the 15 September 2017.

Links to referenced documents

Current documents

- *Planning and Development (Bushfire Risk Management) Regulations 2014*
[http://www.slp.wa.gov.au/Gazette/gazette.nsf/searchgazette/B8ACC6EABAD425A348257F1100139024/\\$file/Gg183.pdf](http://www.slp.wa.gov.au/Gazette/gazette.nsf/searchgazette/B8ACC6EABAD425A348257F1100139024/$file/Gg183.pdf)
- Department of Planning Bushfire planning publications
<https://www.planning.wa.gov.au/7963.aspx>
- The WAPC's *State Planning Policy 3.7 - Planning in Bushfire Prone Areas* (SPP3.7)
http://www.planning.wa.gov.au/dop_pub_pdf/SPP_3.7_Planning_in_Bushfire_Prone_Areas.pdf
- The WAPC's *Guidelines for Planning in Bushfire Prone Areas* (Guidelines).
https://www.planning.wa.gov.au/dop_pub_pdf/Bushfire_Guidelines_Version_1.2_Aug2017.pdf
https://www.planning.wa.gov.au/dop_pub_pdf/Bushfire_Guidelines_Version_1.2_Aug2017-Appendices.pdf
- The WAPC's "Bushfire management plan/Statement addressing the Bushfire Protection Criteria coversheet"
https://www.planning.wa.gov.au/dop_pub_pdf/Bushfire_management_plan_coversheet_july2017.pdf
- The WAPC's *Planning Bulletin 111/2016 Planning in Bushfire Prone Areas*
https://www.planning.wa.gov.au/dop_pub_pdf/Planning_Bulletin_111_2016.pdf