



Department of
Planning



Western
Australian
Planning
Commission

PLANNING IN BUSHFIRE PRONE AREAS

BUSHFIRE POLICY FRAMEWORK



SPP 3.7
Planning in
Bushfire
Prone Areas

Guidelines for
Planning in
Bushfire
Prone Areas

FACTSHEET

Version 1, December 2015

SUBDIVIDING A PROPERTY

Bushfire planning requirements for subdividing a lot in a designated bushfire prone area

PLANNING IN BUSHFIRE PRONE AREAS

If you are proposing to subdivide a property that is in a designated bushfire prone area on the *Map of Bush Fire Prone Areas* you will be required to obtain a BAL Contour Map before you can apply for subdivision approval. You may also be required to produce a Bushfire Management Plan.

If people, property or infrastructure cannot be protected due to high or extreme bushfire threat affecting a property, that property may not be suitable for subdivision.

WHAT IS A BAL CONTOUR MAP

A Bushfire Attack Level (BAL) Contour Map is a scale map of a development site including the proposed lot layout, which identifies indicative BAL ratings across the lot and within the immediate surrounding area.

A BAL Contour Map is used to identify land suitable for development and areas of unavoidable risk, and ensures that appropriate risk management is incorporated into subdivision design and lot layout.

WHEN IS A BAL CONTOUR MAP REQUIRED

If you are proposing to subdivide a property in a designated bushfire prone area you will be required to submit a BAL Contour Map with your subdivision application to the Western Australian Planning Commission. A BAL Contour Map should be prepared by an accredited Level 2 or Level 3 Bushfire Planning Practitioner.

If you are proposing a staged subdivision, a BAL Contour Map should be prepared for each stage of the subdivision proposal.

If you are proposing a small scale subdivision (i.e. 1 into 2 lot subdivision) a BAL assessment for each new lot being created may be used in place of BAL Contour Map. This is because obtaining a small number of BAL assessments may be more cost effective than producing a BAL Contour Map. BAL assessments prepared for subdivision purposes should be prepared by an accredited Level 2 or Level 3 Bushfire Planning Practitioner.

WHAT IS A BUSHFIRE MANAGEMENT PLAN

A Bushfire Management Plan (BMP) is a plan which identifies the extent of the bushfire hazard to the development. A BMP sets out short, medium and long term bushfire risk management strategies for a particular area.

A BMP is used to support planning proposals and development applications in bushfire prone areas. It includes consideration of such things as fire breaks, firefighting water supply, firefighting access, easements and ongoing risk management responsibilities.

WHEN IS A BUSHFIRE MANAGEMENT PLAN REQUIRED

A BAL Contour Map will identify bushfire hazard issues in relation to the proposed subdivision. If the BAL Contour Map indicates any lots will have a BAL 12.5 or above, a Bushfire Management Plan (BMP) will be required to be submitted with the subdivision application.

If all of the proposed newly created lots have a BAL-LOW indicated, a BMP is not required.

Generally proposed lots where a BAL-40 or BAL-FZ apply, will not be considered appropriate and will not be approved for subdivision.

If a BMP was prepared in a prior planning stage (i.e. structure plan or previous subdivision approval), it may be used if still current (e.g. if prepared within the last five years and with no significant changes in site conditions) and updated with the appropriate level of detail.

PLANNING IN BUSHFIRE PRONE AREAS

SUBDIVISION DESIGN

A well-designed and located subdivision can greatly protect people, property and infrastructure from bushfire threat and assist in fire management during a bushfire event.

If you are proposing to subdivide a property in a designated bushfire prone area you should try to achieve the following in the design of your subdivision:

- lots are located close to existing settlements;
- lots are located in areas clear of vegetation (to avoid further clearing)
- lots have a minimum interface with areas of bushfire hazard (i.e. large areas of vegetation);
- more than one safe access route;
- residential development is not located on steep slopes;
- carefully consider the creation of vegetation corridors where they may enable fire to enter the subdivision area)
- recreational areas can be used as separation areas to large areas of vegetation and /or refuge areas;
- access to adequate water and access to infrastructure; and
- landscaping that does not create areas of bushfire hazard.

FURTHER INFORMATION

You can find further information about subdividing in designated bushfire prone areas by visiting the Department of Planning's website www.planning.wa.gov.au/bushfire.

You can find further information about Level 2 and Level 3 accredited Bushfire Planning Practitioners at the Fire Protection Authority (FPA) Australia's website www.fpa.com.au.

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