

SC6.8 Mitigating bushfire hazard planning scheme policy

SC6.8.1 Introduction

Short Title -The planning scheme policy (PSP) may be cited as the Bushfire PSP.

SC6.8.1.1 Purpose

- (1) The purpose of the planning scheme policy is to:
 - (a) support the outcomes presented in the Bushfire hazard overlay code; and
 - (b) provide guidance and information relating to the preparation of a Bushfire hazard assessment, and where necessary a Bushfire management plan.

SC6.8.1.2 Legislative authority

This planning scheme policy is made under Chapter 3, Part 4, Division 2, and Chapter 3, Part 5 of the [Sustainable Planning Act 2009](#).

SC6.8.1.3 Relationship to the Townsville City Plan

This planning scheme policy is to be read in conjunction with the assessment provisions specified in the Townsville City Plan, in particular, the Bushfire hazard overlay code.

SC6.8.1.4 Terminology

Terms used in this planning scheme policy are as defined in [Schedule 1 – Definitions](#). A term used in the planning scheme policy which is not defined in Schedule 1 - Definitions is to be interpreted in accordance with [Part 1.3.1 Definitions](#).

SC6.8.2 Planning scheme policy details

SC6.8.2.1 Bushfire hazard assessment

A Bushfire hazard assessment (and where necessary a Bushfire management plan) may be required as part of an assessable Reconfiguring a Lot or Material Change of Use development application as determined by assessment under the Bushfire hazard overlay code.

Where a Bushfire hazard assessment is required or is submitted, assessments are to be prepared and undertaken by a suitably qualified and experienced professional.

As a guide, the features sought by council to achieve a comprehensive Bushfire hazard assessment are addressed below.

The Bushfire hazard assessment should have regard to the following –

- (1) [Australian Standard AS3959](#) - 2009: Construction of buildings in bushfire prone areas.
- (2) [State Planning Policy](#) and supporting guidelines.

Editor's note—A detailed guide on how to undertake this type of risk assessment is provided in QRA (2012) publication. Although this focusses on flooding the evaluation process can be applied for any natural hazard.

- (1) A bushfire hazard assessment should provide:
 - (a) the name and qualifications or experience of the person(s) preparing the assessment;
 - (b) the use description;
 - (c) location of the extent and level of bushfire hazard in relation to the spatial extent of existing and forecasted land uses;
 - (d) details of the storage of any dangerous or hazardous goods to be kept on the site;
 - (e) details of existing vegetation, including slope and aspect characteristics of the site;
 - (f) details of weather conditions that influence bushfire intensity;
 - (g) details of existing bushfire records and local knowledge.

- (2) Risk appropriate development;
 - (a) mapping details of the proposed development through GIS overlays or comparison of hard copy mapping;
 - (b) a determination of the consequence of a bushfire hazard for each lot within the study area, and a qualitative assessment of
 - (i) vulnerability;
 - (ii) tolerability;
 - (iii) a bushfire risk assessment to identify how development mitigation measures will work in conjunction with other risk management measures including building controls, mitigation infrastructure, early warning systems, community awareness and emergency managements to address the risk of bushfire, should it not be classed as a low hazard on the subject site; and
 - (iv) recommendations.

SC6.8.2.2 Bushfire management plans

Where a bushfire management plan is required to respond to the risk, these are to be prepared and undertaken by a suitably qualified and experienced professional.

Where required, a Bushfire management plan is to include with the following:

- (1) a discussion of proposed mitigation measures, the reduction of the hazard risk and the feasibility and reasonableness of these measures;
- (2) identification of the key factors such as vegetation type, slope and aspect and include matters such as: likely direction of bushfire attack, environmental values that may limit mitigation options, location of evacuation routes and/or safety zones;
- (3) an assessment of the specific risk factors associated with the development proposal, including matters such as the nature of activities and materials to be conducted or stored on the site, numbers and types of persons likely to be present, particular warning and/or evacuation requirements;
- (4) a plan for mitigating the bushfire risk. The plan should address all of the matters raised and recommend specific mitigation actions for the proposed development including:
 - (a) road and lot layout and land use allocations;
 - (b) firebreaks and buffers;
 - (c) building locations or building envelopes;
 - (d) landscaping treatments;
 - (e) warning and evacuation procedures and routes;
 - (f) firefighting requirements including infrastructure;
 - (g) any other specific measures such as external sprinkler systems and alarms;
 - (h) purchaser/resident education and awareness programs;
 - (i) ongoing maintenance and response awareness programs; and
 - (j) a description of the control measures that will be use to ensure compliance.

The level of detail required will vary with the nature of the development proposal and site, and with the type of development application.

The level of detail required to accompany a particular application should be determined in consultation with the assessment manager.