# PSP 4
# BUSHFIRE

# Planning Scheme Policy No.4 – Management & Technical Criteria for Development in Potential Bushfire Risk Areas

## 1.0 EXPLANATION

(1) This Policy sets out the following in relation to development for making a material change of use or reconfiguring a lot for a dwelling unit in the SMOA shown on SMOA map 2B:

a. management criteria[1] that should be used in addressing site maintenance for "bushfire protection buffers" referenced in Part 3, Division 3 - Assessment Provisions for SMOAs – Element (2)(b)(ii) of the planning scheme, or

b. technical assessments needed to precisely determine the extent of potential for bushfire risk within areas shown on SMOA map 2B.

(2) This Policy does not relate to construction of buildings in areas mapped in SMOA map 2B as such provisions are outlined in the *Standard Building Regulations 1993*, Section 55 and *Australian Standard AS 3595-1999 – Construction of Buildings in Bushfire Prone Areas*. These provisions would apply to assessable building works.

(3) For the purposes of the *Building Code of Australia*, bushfire areas shown in SMOA map 2B are "designated bushfire prone areas".

## 2.0 MANAGEMENT CRITERIA FOR *BUSHFIRE PROTECTION AREAS*

Bushfire protection areas are established within the boundary of a lot around the complete perimeter of a dwelling unit within which:

(1) thinning of vegetation prone to combustion or fire-spread through interlocked canopy is frequently undertaken.

(2) landscaping[2] is established and maintained which is predominated by lawn-cover and low level landscaping with trees being:

(a) smooth-barked,

(b) located so canopy does not overhang roof and gutter lines, and

(c) regularly pruned.

(3) a 20 metre wide area measured from the horizontal of the building can be maintained to prevent build-up of combustible vegetation and the storage of flammable items, in which area:

(a) at least 10m from the building is a cleared area (fuel free inner zone),

(b) a further area of 10m in width from the fuel free area (fuel reduction outer zone) which may be planted with fire retardant vegetation species or grasses, with trees sparsely distributed so continuous canopy linking to the building is prevented and shrubs are not located beneath trees to create "fuel ladders",

(c) the buffer may include a cleared road verge, perimeter road or fire trail, and

(d) outbuildings (garages/carports and sheds) are built as part of the main building or within 5m of the main building.

(4) buildings and structures:

(a) have roof lines of a nature and pitch which avoid capture of debris, embers and any radiation pick-up,

[1] Source: *Bushfire Prone Areas – Siting and Design of Residential Buildings*, DLGP, 1998. Other relevant sources for householder reference include *Protecting Your Home against Bushfire Attach*, 1998, Queensland Rural Fire Service and *Bushfire Safety in Urban Fringe Areas*, Queensland Rural Fire Services, 1999

[2] Advices on vegetation management and landscaping in bushfire prone areas can be obtained from a DPI Forest Service

(b) involving elevated floors, are treated such that the area between the floor and the ground level prevent entry of burning embers, and

(c) avoid timber fencing.

(5) new dwelling units are serviced by the following:

(a) where requiring connection to a reticulated water service, such has sufficient reserve pressure capacity for fire fighting purposes, or

(b) in areas which are not planned to have reticulated water services or in low pressure service areas, provision is available for fire fighting water supplies (either through a dedicated tank, reserve capacity in domestic water tanks, a swimming pool or a farm dam) providing for:

(i) 4500 litres continuous supply for a dwelling house on a site, or

(ii) 9000 litres continuous supply where involving more than one dwelling unit on a site, and

(iii) tanks are fitted with standard Rural Fire Brigade fittings for emergency fire fighting purposes for fire hose connection (eg 50mm female camlock fitting with a 50mm gate valve with 100mm handling clearance), and

(6) fire fighting water supplies in areas with unreticulated mains water supply or in low pressure service areas:

(a) are located for safe access during fire hazard,

(b) have a gravel constructed, level area available for fire vehicle access, standing and turnaround, and

(c) have stand-by power sources, should electricity be cut off during a bushfire.

## 3.0 TECHNICAL ASSESSMENTS – LEVEL OF RISK

For development applications within the areas shown as having potential for bushfire risk in SMOA map 2B, the extent and nature of risk needs to be determined by way of a Bushfire Risk Assessment involving consideration of:

1. slopes and aspect
2. vegetation type
3. fire history
4. risk from surrounding activities
5. provision for ingress and egress
6. results of discussions with Queensland Rural Fire Services
7. measures to reduce risk and ensure future householders understand the optimal approach to ongoing maintenance to manage bushfire risk