AUSTRALIAN BUSHFIRE CONSULTING SERVICES



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Bush Fire Assessment Report



Residential alterations and additions:

15 May Gibbs Way Frenchs Forest, NSW 2086.

30th June 2021 Reference 21-301

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Abbreviations:

ABCS	Australian Bushfire Consulting Services Pty Ltd
APZ	Asset Protection Zone
AS2419.1 2017	Fire hydrant installations System design, installation and commissioning
AS3959 - 2018	Australian Standard 3959 – 2018 Construction of buildings in bushfire prone areas
BAL	Bushfire Attack Level
BCA	Building Code of Australia
BPMs	Bushfire Protection Measures
BPLM	Bushfire Prone Land Map
Council	Northern Beaches Council
DA	Development Application
EP&A Act	Environmental Planning and Assessment Act - 1979
ESD	Ecologically Sustainable Development
FR NSW	Fire & Rescue NSW
IPA	Inner Protection Area
LGA	Local Government Area
NCC	National Construction Codes
NP	National Park
NSP	Neighbourhood Safer Place
OPA	Outer Protection Area
PBP 2019	Planning for Bush Fire Protection – 2019
ROW	Right of Way
RF Act	Rural Fires Act - 1997
RFS	NSW Rural Fire Service
SEARs	Planning Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements
SEPP	State Environmental Planning Policy
SFPP	Special Fire Protection Purpose
SWS	Static Water Supply
URA	Urban Release Area

1.0 Introduction.

The development seeks approval for the alterations and additions to an existing sole occupancy dwelling within an existing residential allotment at 15 May Gibbs Way, Frenchs Forest, NSW. The subject site is mapped as bushfire prone land and therefore the application of *Planning for Bush Fire Protection 2019* (PBP 2019) is relevant to the development proposal.

The aims of PBP 2019 is to provide for the protection of human life and minimise impacts on property from the threat of bush fire, while having due regard to development potential, site characteristics and protection of the environment. This is achieved by determining and where applicable applying the required asset protection zones, applying the relevant construction requirements, ensuring satisfactory access and egress has been incorporated into the design and providing safe service supply and adequate water provisions for occupants and attending emergency services.

2.0 Property details.

Address:15 May Gibbs Way, Frenchs Forest NSW, 2086.Lot/DP:Lot 3 DP 1048135Zoned:R2 Low Density ResidentialLGA:Northern Beaches Council

The site has street frontage to May Gibbs Way to the east, Peppercorn Park to the north and is surrounded by private R2 residential allotments to the remaining aspects. The vegetation posing a potential bushfire threat was found to be located to the north of the subject site within Peppercorn Park and to the east within a RE1 zoned reserve.

3.0 Legislative context.

The development is classified as infill development and assessed under section 4.14 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act). Under Section 4.14 of the EP&A Act, Council can determine a development application on bushfire prone land providing;

Council is satisfied that the development conforms to the specifications and requirements of Planning for Bush Fire Protection that are relevant to the development or

Council has been provided with a certificate by a person who is recognised by the NSW Rural Fire Service as a qualified consultant in bush fire risk assessment stating that the development conforms to the relevant specifications and requirements Planning for Bush Fire Protection. Maintained curtilages

If the Council is satisfied that the development does not conform to the relevant specifications and requirements of Planning for Bush Fire Protection Council may grant consent but only if it has consulted with the Commissioner of the NSW Rural Fire Service concerning measures to be taken with respect to the development to protect persons, property and the environment from danger that may arise from a bush fire.

The highest bushfire attack level (BAL) to the proposed development has been determined to be BAL 12.5. Suitable recommendations have been made herein to enable Council to issue development consent inclusive of conditions required to ensure compliance with both AS3959 – 2018 and PBP 2019.

The proposal meets the aims and objectives of PBP 2019 by means of compliance with the deemed to satisfy provisions of that document. I am a person who is recognised by the NSW Rural Fire Service as a qualified consultant in bush fire risk assessment and I have attached a certificate to this report satisfying the requirements of s4.14 of the EP & A Act. As such Council can approve the application without referral to the NSW Rural Fire Service.

4.0 Referenced documents and people.

The following documents have been referenced in the preparation of this report;

- AS3959 2018 Construction of buildings in bushfire prone areas,
- Planning for Bush Fire Protection 2019,
- Northern Beaches Council's Bushfire Prone Land Map,
- Rural Fires Act 1997,
- Rural Fires Regulation 2013,
- 10/50 Vegetation Clearing Code of Practice,
- NSW RFS Guide for bush fire prone land mapping V5b Nov 2015,
- Ocean Shores to Desert Dunes David Andrew Keith 2004.

The site plans, roof plan and elevations by Hi-Craft for Mr & Mrs Pratley drawing no. 21196-03 pages 1 - 3 inclusive have been reviewed and relied upon in the preparation of this report. An inspection of the property and the surrounding area was undertaken on 16/6/2021. At that time free access was available within the subject site, Peppercorn Park and the RE1 zoned reserve. Clear views were also available into the surrounding properties.

5.0 Copyright, scope and disclaimer.

This assessment of possible bushfire impact (including smoke, ember, radiant heat and flame contact) and compliance with other matters such as access and service supply is pertinent to the subject site only. Where reference has been made to the surrounding lands, this report does not assess impact to those lands rather it is an assessment of possible bushfire progression and impact on or from those lands towards the subject site.

Apart from any use permitted under the Copyright Act 1968 no part of this document, including any wording, images, or graphics, can be modified, changed or altered in any way without written permission from Australian Bushfire Consulting Services Pty Ltd. This report may only be referenced, distributed or forwarded to other parties in its original format.

This report has been prepared as a submission document in support of a development application to Council and cannot be relied upon for commencement of works or construction until it has been included within the consent conditions issued by Council as part of the DA determination. The onus is on the applicant to cross reference this document with any conditions of consent issued by Council or any requirements supplied by the NSW Rural Fire Service following development approval. I can review and cross reference these documents however the onus is on the applicant / client to provide them to me and request this review.

Where any difference between this document and the development consent (or the NSW Rural Fire Service requirements) is found, the conditions of consent always take precedence until an application to review, amend or vary those conditions is approved.

The statements and opinions contained in this report are given in good faith and in the belief that such statements and opinions are correct and not misleading. AS3959 – 2018 states that "...there can be no guarantee that a building will survive a bushfire event of every occasion. This is substantially due to the degree of vegetation management, the unpredictable nature and behaviour of fire, and extreme weather conditions". The NSW RFS state "Homes are not designed to withstand fires in catastrophic conditions". Correspondingly any representation, statement of opinion, or advice expressed or implied in this document is made on the basis that Australian Bushfire Consulting Services Pty Ltd is not liable to any person for any damage or loss whatsoever which has occurred or may occur in relation to that person taking or not taking (as the case may be) action in respect of any representation, statement or advice made by Australian Bushfire Consulting Services Pty Ltd.

6.0 Assessment summary table.

Aspect	North	East	West	South
Vegetation Structure	Forest	Forest	n/a	n/a
Hazard slope	0° & upslope	0-5° downslope	n/a	n/a
Proposed asset protection zone	>45 metres	>80 metres	n/a	n/a
Features that may mitigate the impact of bush fire on the proposed development.	The separation from the hazard interface includes maintained land wholly within the subject site and land considered to be equivalent to an asset protection zone being existing managed land within neighbouring private allotments, May Gibbs Way road reserve and managed recreation spaces within Peppercorn Park. The asset protection zones are existing, and no tree removal or vegetation modification is required to establish it. As such there is no impact on the environment of the proposed bushfire protection measures.			
Noteworthy landform & environmental features.	Peppercorn Park	May Gibbs Way / Maintained curtilages	Maintained curtilages	Maintained curtilages
Bushfire Attack Level Table A1.12.5 PBP 2019	BAL 12.5	BAL 12.5	n/a	n/a
Required Construction Level	The highest Bushfire Attack Level to the proposed new works was determined from Table A1.12.5 PBP 2019 to be 'BAL 12.5'. The proposed new works are required to comply with section 3 and 5 BAL 12.5 of <i>AS</i> 3959 – 2018 Construction of buildings in bushfire prone areas or NASH Standard (1.7.14 updated) National Standard Steel Framed Construction in Bushfire Areas 2014 as appropriate for BAL 12.5 construction. The additional construction requirements detailed within section 7.5.2 of PBP 2019 are also applicable.			

Guideline Ref.	Proposed Development Determinations				
Property Access	The most disadvantaged point of the existing dwelling and proposed new works are within 70 metres of a road that supports the operational use of fire appliances (hydrants) and the access requirements of Table 7.4a within PBP 2019 are not applicable. Free pedestrian access is available around the building footprint. Access to the hazard interface for fire suppression or hazard reduction activities is available without the need to enter the subject site.				
Water	The subject site is connected to reticulated water mains for domestic needs. Hydrants are located along May Gibbs Way and other surrounding streets and are available for the replenishment of firefighting appliances. The nearest hydrant is located within the roadside verge immediately east of the subject site on May Gibbs Way.				
Supply	The most disadvantaged point of the existing dwelling and proposed new works will be less than 70 metres from a public road that supports the operational use of fire appliances (hydrants) and a static water supply is not required.				
Electrical & Existing below ground electrical supply is available to the subject site and retion mains is available in this area. There are no new electrical service connection installations proposed as part of this development.					
Evacuation	Occupants are encouraged to complete a Bush Fire Safety Plan addressing "Prepare, Act, Survive" as advocated by the NSW RFS http://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/ under publications / bushfire safety.				

7.0 Images and maps.



Image 01: Aerial image from NSW Government Planning Portal Property Information



Image 02: 10 m contour topographic image from NSW Government Planning Portal Property Information



Image 03: Bushfire Prone Land Map from NSW Government Planning Portal Property Information



Image 04: Extract from streetdirectory.com.au



Image 05: Council LEP Zones from NSW Government Planning Portal Property Information

8.0 Bushfire hazard assessment

Properties considered to be bushfire prone land are identified on Councils Bushfire Prone Land Map as being:

- within or within 100 m of Category 1 (high) hazards or,
- within or within 30 m of Category 2 (low) hazards or,
- within or within 30 m of Category 3 (medium) hazards.

The NSW RFS document PBP – 2019 is applicable to all development on bushfire prone land, this includes an assessment of the proposals adequacy in providing an appropriate combination of bushfire protection measures in terms of asset protections zones, landscaping, access and service supply. This document also provides a means of determining the necessary level of building construction under AS3959 - 2018. Infill development proposals on BFPL must be accompanied by bush fire assessments and reports demonstrating compliance with PBP 2019.

In particular, the following must be addressed:

- a statement that the site is BFPL;
- the location, extent and vegetation formation of any bushland on or within 140 metres of the site;
- the slope and aspect of the site and of any BFPL within 100 metres of the site;
- any features on or adjoining the site that may mitigate the impact of a bush fire on the proposed development;
- a statement assessing the likely environmental impact of any proposed BPMs;
- a site plan showing access, water supplies, APZs, BAL requirements and building footprint in relation to the bush fire hazards; and
- calculated BAL construction levels.

By incorporating bush fire protection measures into a development, the six objectives of PBP 2019 are addressed:

- 1. afford buildings and their occupants protection from exposure to a bush fire;
- 2. provide for a defendable space to be located around buildings;
- 3. provide appropriate separation between a hazard and buildings which, in combination with other measures,
- 4. prevent the likely fire spread to buildings;
- 5. ensure that appropriate operational access and egress for emergency service personnel and occupants is available;
- 6. provide for ongoing management and maintenance of BPMs; and ensure that utility services are adequate to meet the needs of firefighters.



8.1 Site

The site has street frontage to May Gibbs Way to the east, Peppercorn Park to the north and is surrounded by private R2 residential allotments to the remaining aspects. Councils Bushfire Prone Land Map identifies this property as being within the 100 metre buffer zone from a Category 1 Vegetation. Therefore, it is appropriate to apply PBP 2019 to the development proposal.



Photograph 01: View southwest from May Gibbs Way towards the subject site.

8.2 Vegetation

PBP 2019 requires a classification of the vegetation on and surrounding the property out to a distance of 140 metres from property boundary (or building footprint). The surrounding neighbouring private allotments are managed as an asset protection zone within the immediate curtilages around the built assets.

The vegetation posing a potential bushfire threat was found to be located to the north of the subject site within Peppercorn Park and to the east within a RE1 zoned reserve.

The vegetation to the north is identified as PCT Name: *Red Bloodwood – Scribbly Gum/Old-man Banksia* open forest on sandstone ridges of Northern Sydney and the Central Coast PCT Id: 1783 vegetation Formation: *Dry Sclerophyll Forests* vegetation Class: *Sydney Coastal Dry Sclerophyll Forests*. For the purpose of assessment under Table A1.12.5 of PBP 2019 a forest classification has been applied to the vegetation to the north.

The vegetation to the east is a mix of Tall Heath and Forest identified as PCT Name: *Red Bloodwood* – *Scribbly Gum/Old-man Banksia open forest on sandstone ridges of Northern Sydney and the Central Coast & Mallee* – *Banksia* – *Tea-tree* – *Hakea heath-woodland of the coastal sandstone plateaus of the Sydney Basin* PCT Id: 1783 & 1824 vegetation Formation: *Dry Sclerophyll Forests & Heathlands* vegetation Class: *Sydney Coastal Dry Sclerophyll Forests & Sydney Coastal Heaths*. For the purpose of assessment under Table A1.12.5 of PBP 2019 the highest hazard, being a forest classification, has been applied to the vegetation to the east.

8.3 Topography

The slope must be assessed over a distance of 100m from the existing property boundary (or building footprint) towards the various vegetation communities constituting the hazard. In assessing the slope, it may be found that there are a variety of slopes covering different distances. The gradient within the hazard (vegetation) which will most significantly influence the fire behaviour must be determined.

The most influential slope was assessed onsite with an inclinometer and verified by using 1 metre contour mapping to be:

- 0° degrees & upslope within the hazard to the north.
- 0-5° degrees downslope within the hazard to the east.



Photograph 02: View north from within Peppercorn Park.



Photograph 03: View east showing the RE1 zoned reserve to the east of subject site.

8.4 Asset Protection Zones

An Asset Protection Zone (APZ) is a buffer zone between a bush fire hazard and buildings, which is managed progressively to minimise fuel loads and reduce potential radiant heat levels, flame, ember and smoke attack. A fuel-reduced, physical separation between buildings and bush fire hazards is the key element in the suite of bushfire protection measures.

The existing available asset protection zones were measured onsite and verified from plans and aerial imagery to be;

- >45 metres to the north
- >80 metres to the east

The separation from the hazard interface includes maintained land wholly within the subject site and land considered to be equivalent to an asset protection zone being existing managed land within neighbouring private allotments, May Gibbs Way road reserve and maintained recreation spaces within Peppercorn Park. The asset protection zones are existing, and no tree removal or vegetation modification is required to establish it. As such there is no impact on the environment of the proposed bushfire protection measures.

Recommendations will be included within this report to ensure that at the commencement of construction and in perpetuity all land not built upon within the subject site is continued to be maintained as an Asset Protection Zone / Inner Protection Area in accordance with the requirements detailed within Appendix 4 of *Planning for Bush Fire Protection 2019* and the NSW RFS document Standards for an Asset Protection Zone.

8.5 Access & egress

The subject property has street frontage to May Gibbs Way to the east. Persons seeking to egress the subject site will be able to do so via the existing access drive and the existing road infrastructure. It is encouraged that the occupants complete a Bush Fire Safety Plan addressing "Prepare, Act, Survive" as advocated by the NSW RFS http://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/ under publications / bushfire safety.

The most disadvantaged point of the existing dwelling and proposed new works are within 70 metres of a road that supports the operational use of fire appliances (hydrants) and the access requirements of Table 7.4a within PBP 2019 are not applicable. Free pedestrian access is available around the building footprint. Access to the hazard interface for fire suppression or hazard reduction activities is available without the need to enter the subject site.





8.6 Services

The subject site is connected to reticulated water mains for domestic needs. Hydrants are located along May Gibbs Way and other surrounding streets and are available for the replenishment of firefighting appliances. The nearest hydrant is located within the roadside verge immediately east of the subject site on May Gibbs Way.

The most disadvantaged point of the existing dwelling and proposed new works will be less than 70 metres from a public road that supports the operational use of fire appliances (hydrants) and a static water supply is not required.

Existing below ground electrical supply is available to the subject site and reticulated gas mains is available in this area. There are no new electrical service connections or gas installations proposed as part of this development.

8.7 Construction

Australian Standard 3959 – 2018 'Construction of buildings in bushfire-prone areas' provides for six (6) levels of building construction these being BAL - Low, BAL - 12.5, BAL - 19, BAL - 29, BAL - 40 and BAL - FZ. The Australian Standard 3959 specifies construction standards for buildings within various Bushfire Attack Levels as determined by the *Planning for Bush Fire Protection – 2019* document.

The highest Bushfire Attack Level to the proposed new works was determined from Table A1.12.5 PBP 2019 to be 'BAL 12.5'. The proposed new works are required to comply with section 3 and 5 BAL 12.5 of AS 3959 – 2018 Construction of buildings in bushfire prone areas or NASH Standard (1.7.14 updated) National Standard Steel Framed Construction in Bushfire Areas 2014 as appropriate for BAL 12.5 construction. The additional construction requirements detailed within section 7.5.2 of PBP 2019 are also applicable.

8.8 Risk

The level of risk is determined using the combination of likelihood and consequences. The purpose of analysing risk is to establish an understanding of the level of bushfire threat and will help to evaluate the appropriateness of bushfire protection measures recommended for a development application.

This section of the report is for risk evaluation only and has been based on an abridged version of the assessment process detailed within the Bush Fire Risk Management Planning Guidelines for Bush Fire Risk Management Committees. This evaluation does not reflect the Bushfire Attack Level determined under PBP 2019 or AS3959 - 2018.

The likelihood of a bush fire occurring can be determined using fire history data or local knowledge. The likelihood must be considered in the context of long term planning and not simply if a bush fire is likely to occur during the next five years. The consequences of a bush fire event can be determined by considering the vulnerability of the asset. Vulnerability is related to the capacity of an asset to cope with or recover from the impacts of a bush fire.

Likelihood Rating	Description and indicative probability			
Almost certain	Expected to occur, many recorded incidents, strong anecdotal evidence, high opportunity, reason or means to occur; may occur or be exceeded once in every 5 years.			
Likely	Will probably occur; consistent record of incidents and good anecdotal evidence; considerable opportunity, reason or means to occur; may occur or be exceeded once in every 10 years.			
Possible	Might occur; a few recorded incidents in each locality and some anecdotal evidence; some opportunity, reason or means to occur; may occur or be exceeded once in every 20 years.			
Unlikely	Is not expected to occur; isolated recorded incidents in this community, anecdotal evidence in other communities; little opportunity, reason or means to occur.			

Consequence Description and indicative result Rating			
Minor	Inconsequential or no damage. Little or no disruption to occupation. Little or no financial loss.		
Moderate	Localised damage that is rectified by routine arrangements. Normal functioning with some inconvenience. Localised displacement of people who return within 24 hours. Personal support satisfied through local arrangements.		
Major	Major Significant damage that requires external resources. Displacement for more that 24 hours duration. Extensive resources required for personal support.		
Catastrophic	Extensive damage. Extensive personal support. General and widespread displacement for extended durations.		

Consequence Likelihood	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic
Almost certain	Medium	High	Extreme	Extreme
Likely	Low	Medium	High	Extreme
Possible	Insignificant	Low	Medium	High
Unlikely	Insignificant	Insignificant	Low	Medium

The bushfire risk to this development is determined to be <u>insignificant</u> and the package of bushfire protection measures recommended in section 9 of this report are considered <u>satisfactory</u>.

9.0 Recommendations

9.1 Asset Protection Zones / landscaping

1. That at the commencement of construction and in perpetuity all land not built upon within the subject site is continued to be maintained as an Asset Protection Zone / Inner Protection Area in accordance with the requirements detailed within Appendix 4 of *Planning for Bush Fire Protection 2019* and the NSW RFS document *Standards for an Asset Protection Zone*.

9.2 Construction

- That the proposed new works are to be constructed in accordance with section 3 and 5 BAL 12.5 of AS 3959 – 2018 Construction of buildings in bushfire prone areas or NASH Standard (1.7.14 updated) National Standard Steel Framed Construction in Bushfire Areas 2014 as appropriate for BAL 12.5 construction.
- 3. That the proposed new works are also constructed to that of the 'Additional Construction Requirements' detailed within section 7.5.2 of *Planning for Bush Fire Protection 2019*.

10.0 Conclusion

The National Construction Code 2019 (NCC) Volume 2 requires that a Class 1 building or a Class 10a building or deck associated with a Class 1 building that is constructed in a designated bushfire prone area must, to the degree necessary, be designed and constructed to reduce the risk of ignition from a bushfire, appropriate to the potential for ignition caused by burning embers, radiant heat or flame generated by a bushfire; and intensity of the bushfire attack on the building.

The subject property is determined to be bushfire prone land and the proposal must achieve compliance with the NCC by meeting the aims and objectives of PBP 2019. This is achieved by providing construction measures to mitigate against the impacts from bush fire including smoke, embers, radiant heat and flame contact and including suitable access, services supply and means of maintaining the bushfire protection measures for the life of the development.

This bushfire hazard and determination has been made on a site-specific basis which includes an assessment of the local bushland area and its possible impact to the subject property. The highest Bushfire Attack Level to the proposed new works was determined to be 'BAL 12.5'. Suitable recommendations have been made herein to enable Council to issue development consent inclusive of conditions required to ensure compliance with all requirements of PBP 2019.

The proposal meets the aims and objectives of PBP 2019 by means of compliance with the deemed to satisfy provisions of that document. I am a person who is recognised by the NSW Rural Fire Service as a qualified consultant in bush fire risk assessment and I have attached a certificate to this report satisfying the requirements of s4.14. As such Council can approve the application without referral to the NSW Rural Fire Service.

In consideration of the bushfire risk posed to the proposed development in combination with the recommended bushfire protection measures contained within this report I am satisfied they will provide a reasonable and satisfactory level of bushfire protection to the proposed development.

I am therefore in support of the development application.

Australian Bushfire Consulting Services Pty Ltd

Wayne Tucker Managing Director G. D. Design in Bushfire Prone Areas. Certificate IV Fire Technology Ass Dip Applied Science FPA Australia BPAD Level 3 Accredited Practitioner BPAD Accreditation No. BPAD9399 Graduate Member Institute of Fire Engineers



11.0 List of attachments

Attachment 01: s4.14 Certificate

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BUSH FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT CERTIFICATE

Issued in accordance with Section 4.14 of the Environmental Planning Act 1979 No.203

PROPERTY DETAILS	15 May Gibbs Way, Frenchs Forest NSW, 2086. Lot 3 DP 1048135				
DEVELOPMENT TYPE	Infill – Residential alterations and additions				
PLAN REFERENCE	Site plans, roof plan and elevations by Hi-Craft for Mr & Mrs Pratley drawing no. 21196-03 pages 1 - 3 inclusive.				
BAL RATING	BAL 12.5	<u>NOTE</u> - If BAL FZ the application is to be referred to the NSW RFS.			
ARE ALTERNATE SOLUTIONS REQUIRED	No	NOTE - If YES the application is to be referred to the NSW RFS.			
IS REFERRAL TO NSW RFS REQUIRED	No	ABCS REF.	21-301	Issue date:	30 th June 2021

I *Wayne Tucker,* of Australian Bushfire Consulting Services Pty. Ltd., hereby certify in accordance with Section 4.14 of the Environmental Planning Act 1979 No.203 that –

- 1. I am a person recognized by the NSW Rural Fire Service as a qualified consultant in bushfire risk assessment and
- 2. Subject to the recommendations contained in the Bush Fire Assessment Report, the proposed development conforms to specifications and requirements of the document entitled *Planning for Bush Fire Protection* (prepared by the NSW Rural Fire Service in co-operation with the Department of Planning) and any other documents as prescribed by Section 4.14 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 No.203.

Further, I am aware that the Bush Fire Assessment Report prepared for the abovementioned site is to be submitted in support of a Development Application for this site. This report will be relied upon by Council as the basis for ensuring that the bushfire risk management aspects of the proposed development have been addressed in accordance with the document entitled Planning for Bush Fire Protection 2019.

Australian Bushfire Consulting Services:

RPAN

Wayne Tucker Managing Director. G. D. Design in Bushfire Prone Areas. Certificate IV Fire Technology Ass Dip Applied Science FPA Australia BPAD Level 3 Accredited Practitioner BPAD Accreditation No. BPAD9399