



NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE

Northern Beaches Council
PO Box 882
MONA VALE NSW 1660

Your reference: DA2021/0027 (CNR-17958)
Our reference: DA20210208000477-Original-1

ATTENTION: Northern Beaches Council

Date: Friday 26 February 2021

Dear Sir/Madam,

Development Application

s4.14 - Infill - Commercial Premises

20 Grattan Crescent Frenchs Forest NSW 2155, 101//DP844534, 101//DP844534

I refer to your correspondence dated 08/02/2021 seeking advice regarding bush fire protection for the above Development Application in accordance with section 4.14 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.

The New South Wales Rural Fire Service (NSW RFS) has considered the information submitted and provides the following recommended conditions:

Asset Protection Zones

The intent of measures is to minimise the risk of bush fire attack and provide protection for emergency services personnel, residents and others assisting fire fighting activities. To achieve this, the following conditions shall apply:

1. From the start of building works, and in perpetuity to ensure ongoing protection from the impact of bush fires, the entire property must be managed as an inner protection area (IPA) in accordance with the requirements of Appendix 4 of *Planning for Bush Fire Protection 2019*. When establishing and maintaining an IPA the following requirements apply:

- tree canopy cover should be less than 15% at maturity;
- trees at maturity should not touch or overhang the building;
- lower limbs should be removed up to a height of 2 metres above the ground;
- tree canopies should be separated by 2 to 5 metres;
- preference should be given to smooth barked and evergreen trees;
- large discontinuities or gaps in vegetation should be provided to slow down or break the progress of fire towards buildings;
- shrubs should not be located under trees;
- shrubs should not form more than 10% ground cover;
- clumps of shrubs should be separated from exposed windows and doors by a distance of at least twice the height of the vegetation.

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- grass should be kept mown (as a guide grass should be kept to no more than 100 mm in height); and
- leaves and vegetation debris should be removed.

Construction Standards

The intent of measures is that buildings are designed and constructed to withstand the potential impacts of bush fire attack. To achieve this, the following conditions shall apply:

2. New construction must comply with Section 3 (excluding section 3.5) and Section 9 (BAL FZ) of Australian Standard AS3959-2018 *Construction of buildings in bushfire-prone areas* or the relevant BAL-FZ requirements of the NASH Standard - *Steel Framed Construction in Bushfire Areas (incorporating amendment A - 2015)*. New construction must also comply with the construction requirements in Section 7.5 of *Planning for Bush Fire Protection 2019*.
3. The existing building must be upgraded to improve ember protection by enclosing all openings (excluding roof tile spaces) or covering openings with a non-corrosive metal screen mesh with a maximum aperture of 2mm. Where applicable, this includes any sub floor areas, openable windows, vents, weepholes and eaves. External doors are to be fitted with draft excluders.

Water and Utility Services

The intent of measures is to minimise the risk of bush fire attack and provide protection for emergency services personnel, residents and others assisting fire fighting activities. To achieve this, the following conditions shall apply:

4. Any new provision of water, electricity and gas must comply with the following in accordance with Table 7.4a of *Planning for Bush Fire Protection 2019*:
 - reticulated water is to be provided to the development where available;
 - all above-ground water service pipes external to the building are metal, including and up to any taps;
 - where practicable, electrical transmission lines are underground;
 - reticulated or bottled gas is installed and maintained in accordance with AS/NZS 1596:2014 and the requirements of relevant authorities, and metal piping is used;
 - all fixed gas cylinders are kept clear of all flammable materials to a distance of 10 metres and shielded on the hazard side;
 - connections to and from gas cylinders are metal; polymer-sheathed flexible gas supply lines are not used; and
 - above-ground gas service pipes are metal, including and up to any outlets.

Landscaping Assessment

The intent of measures is for landscaping. To achieve this, the following conditions shall apply:

5. Landscaping within the required asset protection zone must comply with Appendix 4 of *Planning for Bush Fire Protection 2019*. In this regard, the following principles are to be incorporated:
 - A minimum 1 metre wide area, suitable for pedestrian traffic, must be provided around the immediate curtilage of the building;
 - Planting is limited in the immediate vicinity of the building;
 - Planting does not provide a continuous canopy to the building (i.e. trees or shrubs are isolated or located in small clusters);
 - Landscape species are chosen to ensure tree canopy cover is less than 15% (IPA), and less than 30% (OPA) at maturity and trees do not touch or overhang buildings;
 - Avoid species with rough fibrous bark, or which retain/shed bark in long strips or retain dead material in their canopies;
 - Use smooth bark species of trees species which generally do not carry a fire up the bark into the crown;
 - Avoid planting of deciduous species that may increase fuel at surface/ ground level (i.e. leaf litter);
 - Avoid climbing species to walls and pergolas;
 - Locate combustible materials such as woodchips/mulch, flammable fuel stores away from the building;

- Locate combustible structures such as garden sheds, pergolas and materials such as timber garden furniture away from the building; and
- Low flammability vegetation species are used.

General Advice – Consent Authority to Note

- The NSW RFS recognises that the site is constrained and that the proposed development falls within the Flame Zone. Flame Zone development is high risk development; consequently, in situations such as this, the NSW RFS seeks to improve the overall fire safety of the existing development. This requires greater emphasis on construction standards, landscaping, siting, and vegetation management practices to ensure improved levels of protection are afforded to the development, its occupants and fire fighters. The NSW RFS has undertaken a merit based assessment of the proposal and provides the above advice in accordance with *Planning for Bush Fire Protection 2019*.
- Unobstructed pedestrian access should be provided to the rear of the property to aid in fire fighting activities.

For any queries regarding this correspondence, please contact Rohini Belapurkar on 1300 NSW RFS.

Yours sincerely,

Kalpana Varghese
Manager Planning & Environment Services
Planning and Environment Services