



BUSH FIRE PRONE LAND MAPS

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

This document provides information on draft bush fire prone land maps, which have been developed by Council for public consultation. Council is exploring whether to reclassify land that is considered to be 'high risk,' particularly for grass fires and bush fires.

This process will inform future planning and development activity on identified properties, as well as allow the NSW Rural Fire Service to carry out fire hazard reduction activities in environmental areas.

BUSH FIRE PRONE LAND MAPS

Q What is bush fire prone land?

A Bush fire prone land is land that has been identified by local council, which can support a bush fire or is subject to bush fire attack. Bush fire prone land maps are prepared by local council and certified by the Commissioner of the NSW Rural Fire Service.

Q Why has Council developed bush fire prone land maps?

A Following a large grass fire in Pemulwuy and Greystanes on 31 December 2019 Cumberland City Council is taking steps to develop mitigation strategies, in consultation with the NSW Rural Fire Service.

The preparation of draft bush fire prone land maps would ensure that future planning and development activities on identified properties appropriately consider fire risks.

The maps will also better equip the NSW Rural Fire Service to carry out hazard reduction burns, increase maintenance works, clear fire trails and ultimately reduce risk to property and people.

Q My property was not previously mapped as bush fire prone land, why has this changed?

A Council is required to review the bush fire prone land map every five years to reflect changes in vegetation or legislation. The draft maps are provided following a review undertaken by Council.

Q What is Council seeking from the community?

A Council is encouraging residents, landowners and businesses to have their say on the draft maps for Cumberland City. These include selected areas in Pemulwuy and Greystanes, as well as areas around Everley Park, Auburn Golf Course, Campbell Hill Pioneer Reserve and Prospect Creek Corridor.

Q What areas are impacted by the change?

A Areas identified in the draft bush fire land maps include selected areas in Pemulwuy and Greystanes, as well as areas around Everley Park, Auburn Golf Course, Campbell Hill Pioneer Reserve and Prospect Creek Corridor.

Q Is my property affected?

A To find out if your property is identified in the draft maps, visit: Cumberland Council's [have your say page](#).

Q What do the colours on the map mean?

A There are four colours on the draft maps, with three of the colours showing different vegetation types and one colour showing the buffer from the vegetation.

Most importantly, if either the mapped vegetation or the buffer intersects your property, the property is considered to be bush fire prone land.

The colours and hazard risks include:

- Forests with many Eucalyptus trees are considered a 'high hazard' for bush fires and are coloured red (Category 1).
- Grass covered land is considered a 'medium hazard' and coloured orange (Category 3). Rainforests and smaller areas of vegetation are considered a 'low hazard' as shown by a light orange colour (Category 2).
- The yellow section of the map is a buffer, which can either be 100 metres from the Category 1 vegetation or 30 metres from Category 2 or 3 vegetation.

Q What will happen to my property should my site be mapped as bush fire prone land?

A In the event that your property is mapped as bush fire prone land, any Section 10.7 Planning Certificate issued by Cumberland City Council will identify the affectation. This will inform future planning and development activity on the property.

Separately, hazard reduction may also occur periodically in proximity to your property, to prepare for bush fires, which is undertaken by NSW Fire and Rescue and/or NSW Rural Fire Service. This may include controlled burning, and/or mechanical clearing of undergrowth. For further information on hazard reduction, visit www.rfs.nsw.gov.au.

DEVELOPMENT AND BUILDING

Q What if I want to re-develop my property?

A Should you wish to re-develop your property, you will need to meet the standard requirements for development and any other relevant requirements for building in bush fire prone areas, and obtain development consent.

The requirements are applicable for all properties identified in the bush fire prone land maps, irrespective of whether the property is part mapped, or mapped in its entirety.

The requirements cover new developments, as well as alterations and additions to existing buildings.

The relevant requirements for building in bush fire prone areas are identified within the following key documents:

- NSW Rural Fire Service publication entitled Planning for Bush fire Protection;
- Australian Standard AS 3959 – Construction for Buildings in Bush fire Prone Areas; and
- The Building Code of Australia (BCA) contained within the National Construction Code (NCC).

Additional reports and documents may be required by the consent authority, demonstrating compliance with the above documents, as required by the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1979*.

For further information on re-developing your property, you can speak to NSW Rural Fire Service and Council's Duty Officers, or visit www.rfs.nsw.gov.au.

Q Will this change affect my home insurance?

A The maps are currently draft and are provided for public consultation purposes. We advise you to discuss this change with your property insurance provider.

Q What if only part of my property is bush fire prone?

A The above information is applicable for all identified properties mapped as bush fire prone land, irrespective of whether the site is part mapped, or mapped in its entirety, and to both new developments and alterations and additions to existing buildings alike.

Q What is Council's role in preparing the maps?

A As part of Council requirements under the *Environment Planning and Assessment Act 1979*, Councils are required to prepare bush fire prone land maps, which are certified by the Commissioner of the NSW Rural Fire Service. Council has engaged the services of bush fire experts to prepare these maps in line with NSW Rural Fire Service guidelines.

Q What is the role of the Rural Fire Service for these maps?

A Under section 10.3 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*, the Commissioner of the NSW fire service designates bush fire prone land in NSW and how it is to be mapped. This is based on information provided in bush fire prone maps prepared by Council.

BUSH FIRE MANAGEMENT

Q What is a Bush Fire Attack level (BAL)?

A Bush Fire Attack Level is used to “describe the level of potential bush fire attack on a property.”

Fire authorities describe it as involving flame contact, ember attack or radiant heat exposure that can impact or destroy a building. This measure may be assessed by Council or an accredited bush fire consultant from the Fire Protection Association of Australia to guide compliance for property applications.”

For further information, visit www.fpaa.com.au.

Q What maintenance has Council done to minimise bush fire risk to the area?

A A bush fire management plan for the Pemulwuy and Greystanes area has been prepared, and this plan can be viewed at Cumberland Council’s [have your say page](#). A second plan covering the remaining bush fire prone land is currently being finalised.

These plans formulate objectives, strategies and a works program that mitigate risk in identified areas. Council has adopted all recommended actions in this plan and has included all recommended works in our ongoing scheduled works plan.

Following the December 2019 fires, Council has implemented a number of actions including:

- additional regular slashing along bushland boundaries
- tree, branch and debris removal along targeted bushland boundaries where necessary
- clearance of access tracks in bushland areas
- extension of mown areas throughout Lower Prospect Canal corridor
- increase of programmed works in Marong Reserve
- clearance of asset protection zone behind Campbell Hill Reserve
- application to carry out a hazard reduction burn at Grey Box Reserve

Q Will this plan impact the natural environment?

A The bush fire prone maps, together with the bush fire management plan, have been undertaken to provide a holistic, best practice management approach to bush fire mitigation.

Cumberland's natural environment and ecological communities are well represented in the bush fire management plan. Proposed works and mitigation measures have been recommended with the view of providing the best outcomes for both the natural environment and the local community.

NEXT STEPS

Q When will the proposed reclassification changes occur?

A Following a public exhibition period, Council will review submissions and report back on the outcomes of consultation for the draft bush fire prone land maps.

Should Council endorse the bush fire prone land maps for Cumberland City, these maps will then be forwarded to the NSW Rural Fire Service for review and endorsement.

Should the Cumberland bush fire prone land maps be endorsed by the NSW Rural Fire Service, identified properties will be included in Section 10.7 planning certificates issued by Council.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Q How do I find out more?

A For information on the draft Cumberland bush fire prone land maps or bush fire management plan for Pemulwuy and Greystanes area, please visit Cumberland City Council's [have your say page](#).

For information from the NSW Rural Fire Service on planning and building in bush fire prone areas, visit [NSW Rural Fire Service](#) or read NSW Rural Fire Service Guide for Bush Fire Prone Land Mapping.

