

POLICY NAME: FIRE ASSET PROTECTION ZONES
- PRIVATE USE OF PUBLIC LAND

POLICY REF: F03

MEETING ADOPTED: 22 February 2024
Resolution No. 220224/9

POLICY HISTORY: 270220/35; 240316/17; 220911/28;
260407/32



OBJECTIVE

This policy aims to regulate use of public land in Council's care and control for private use as a fire asset protection zone (APZ).

POLICY

Asset Protection Zones required for private developments are to be located entirely within the boundary of the development.

Where new subdivisions are required to provide APZs these must be located within the subdivision and may include the use of roads, private property or in some cases public reserves that are part of the subdivision.

BACKGROUND

The NSW Rural Fire Service has identified land that is classified as bushfire prone land. This land requires a bushfire safety authority approval for development purposes. An APZ is usually specified for these developments and in such cases a cleared area of a specified size is required to be maintained around the development.

Council owned and controlled public land may adjoin private land which is bushfire prone land. Therefore Council may receive requests to include Council land in the APZ.

There are risks associated with allowing adjacent Council public land to be incorporated into private-use APZs. For example, Council may become liable if the developer or future owners do not adequately maintain the APZ. Alternatively the community carries the financial burden of maintaining an APZ for an individual property.

DEFINITIONS

Asset Protection Zone Development on bush fire prone land will normally require the implementation of a set back distance which is referred to as an asset protection zone. An asset protection zone (APZ) is also known as a fire protection zone and aims to protect human life, property and highly valued assets. It is a buffer zone between a bush fire hazard and buildings, which is managed progressively to minimise fuel loads and reduce the potential radiant heat levels, flame contact, ember and smoke attack on life and property.

The width of the APZ will vary with slope, vegetation, Fire Danger Index (FDI) and construction level. Planning for Bush Fire Protection

2019 sets out the site assessment methodology that should be used to determine the applicable width of the APZ.

An APZ can consist of an area maintained to minimal fuel loads and can comprise of a combination of perimeter roads (subdivision), fire trails and managed lands so that a fire path is not created between the hazard and the building.

Bushfire Prone Land

A bush fire prone land is an area of land that can support a bush fire or is likely to be subject to bush fire attack. Bush fire prone areas are identified on a bush fire prone lands map which have been prepared for most councils across NSW. The map identifies bush fire hazards and associated buffer zones within a local government area.

Bush fire prone land maps are prepared by local councils across the State of NSW and are certified by the Commissioner of the NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS). New development on areas identified as bush fire prone are subject to the development and planning controls of 'Planning for Bush Fire Protection 2019' and must be designed to improve the survivability of the development and the occupants that are exposed to a bush fire hazard.

SCOPE OF POLICY

This policy applies to community members

RELATED DOCUMENTATION

- Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979
- Rural Fires Act 1997
- SEPP Transport and Infrastructure 2021
- Planning for Bush Fire Protection 2019

REVIEW

This Policy is to be reviewed every four years.