



# Etheridge Shire Council

FACT SHEET

## Natural Hazards - Bushfire

### Bushfires

A natural hazard is a naturally occurring event that may endanger the community, cause damage to property and/or infrastructure, and impact our economy and the environment. Bushfires are an example of a natural hazard. The negative impacts of bushfire can be reduced through land use planning and development decisions.

All levels of the planning system seek to ensure that community resilience to natural hazards is increased. The purpose of this fact sheet is to explain some of the strategies used by the proposed planning scheme to help mitigate bushfires.

### Why do we have designated bushfire risk areas?

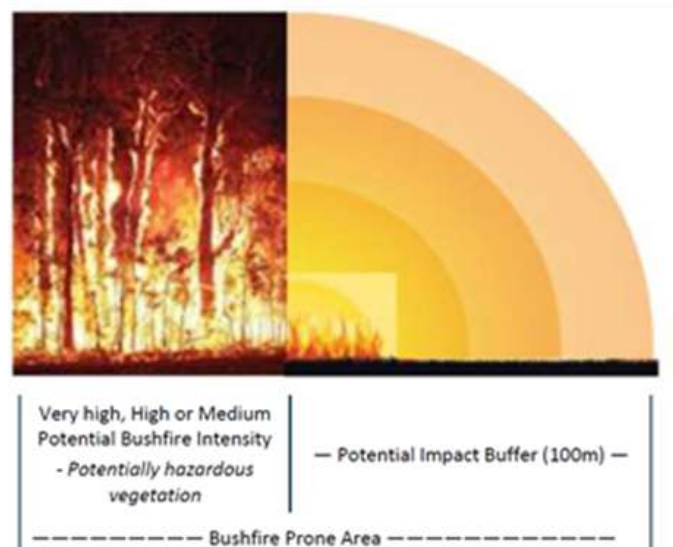
Bushfire hazard areas, also called bushfire prone areas, are land that could support a significant bushfire or be subject to significant bushfire attack. By identifying these areas, land use planning and controls on certain developments can help reduce their negative impacts.

### Hazard areas

Areas prone to bushfire in Etheridge Shire are identified in the Queensland Government's bushfire mapping. The proposed Etheridge Shire Planning Scheme refers to this mapping. The mapping identifies Very High, High and Medium Potential Bushfire Intensity areas as well as Potential Impact Buffer areas.

### Potential Impact Buffer

Even though the fire itself may be burning in a specific area (flame attack), radiant heat exposure may affect properties and people nearby. Land that could be susceptible to such an attack is included in a potential impact buffer. The default width for impact buffers is 100m from all areas of medium, high or very high potential bushfire intensity. The default width of 100m for the potential impact buffer has been determined from analysis of heat radiation decay curves and national research indicating that in most bushfire events, over 80% of housing loss and 80% of human life loss has occurred within 100m of bushland. The width of 100m also coincides with the approximate distance



(Above) – Potential impact bushfire buffer

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needed to avoid injury to people without specialised protective clothing due to radiant heat exposure from a bushfire with a very high intensity.

## **Etheridge Shire's Proposed Planning Scheme**

The planning scheme requires that new development must take bushfire risks into account and avoid areas known to be bushfire-prone. Where development in a bushfire-prone area is unavoidable, it must be built, designed and located to be resilient to bushfires.

### **How do I know if my property is in a bushfire hazard area?**

In this planning scheme, the bushfire hazard areas are the same as those identified by the Queensland Government. To see whether your property is in a bushfire hazard area:

1. Go to Queensland's Government State Planning Policy interactive mapping system located at <https://spp.dsdip.esriaustraliaonline.com.au/geoviewer/map/planmaking>
2. Click Start
3. In the top ribbon you can choose the option to do a Locality Search (click on Council not Suburb once you are in the locality search) and look at the mapping for the whole Shire, or a property search (under the Search for Land Parcels heading).
4. In the left hand side, click Safety and Resilience to Hazards, then click Natural Hazards Risk and Resilience and next click the box beside Bushfire prone area.
5. The map will now show you the extent of the bushfire hazard area. You may need to zoom in or out to see the bushfire layer on the map. Your property is still considered to be in the bushfire hazard area if it covers only part of your property.

### **What does it mean if my property is in a bushfire hazard area?**

If you are building a dwelling house in a bushfire prone area you don't need planning approval from Council. You do need building approval, and bushfire considerations and conditions will be applied during his process.

Uses in the rural zone (that do not directly increase the number of people residing in bushfire areas) such as parks, roadside stalls, cropping and animal husbandry are accepted development and not subject to a planning approval or bushfire assessment. The same approach is used in the township zone for uses such as cemeteries and parks.

Development proposed in bushfire prone areas involving sensitive or accommodation type uses (e.g. dual occupancy, short-term accommodation, rural workers accommodation, tourist park, home-based childcare, residential care or retirement facility) is elevated to code assessment. The development must adhere to the bushfire provisions in the General Development Code.

All emergency services and essential community infrastructure are required to be located outside of the bushfire prone area.

If you are undertaking a residential or urban subdivision in a bushfire prone area you must comply with the bushfire provisions in the proposed scheme.

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Bushfire provisions are in the General Development and Reconfiguring a Lot Codes. Provisions may require you to demonstrate to Council that your intended development:

- **does not** block direct access to evacuation routes
- **provides** a defensible buffer space and separation from hazardous vegetation
- **does not** propose landscaping that has the ability to increase the bushfire risk
- **is not** located on slopes that expose people or property to intolerable risks
- **has access** to a suitable water supply for fire-fighting purposes.

**Disclaimer**

The contents of this information sheet deals with technical matters in a summary way only and has been prepared to assist the community to understand the proposed Etheridge Shire Council Planning Scheme 2019. Please refer to the proposed scheme for further detail.