



DEVELOPMENT ON BUSH FIRE PRONE LAND

On behalf of the Baulkham Hills Rural Fire District, we would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to our Shire.

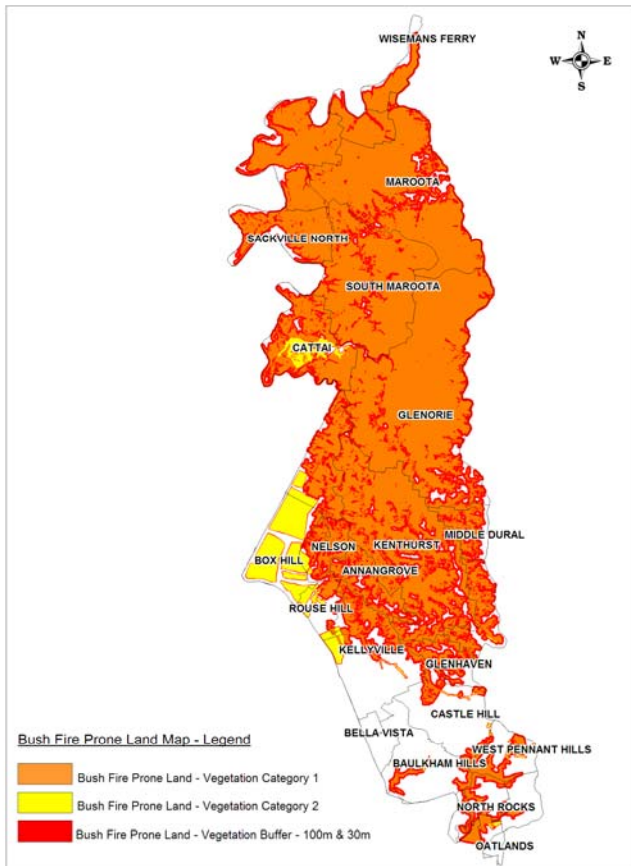
The Baulkham Hills Shire consists of urban and rural landscapes that comprise both small and large areas of remnant bushland. Because of the vast extent of bushland approximately 80 percent of the Shire has been mapped as Bush Fire Prone Land.

What is Bush Fire Prone Land?

Bush Fire Prone Land is land that can support a bush fire or is likely to be subject to bush fire/ember attack. In general, bush fire prone land identifies vegetation types and associated buffer zones. Bush fire prone land maps are prepared by local councils and certified by the Commissioner of the Rural Fire Service (RFS).

Bush Fire Prone Land is described as Category 1 or Category 2 vegetation.

Baulkham Hills LGA - Bush Fire Prone Land Map



Category 1 vegetation appears as orange on the map and represents forests, woodlands, heathlands, pine plantations and wetlands. Land within 100 metres of this category (indicated by the red buffer on the map)

is also captured by the Bushfire Prone Land Map due to the likelihood of bushfire attack.

Category 2 vegetation appears as yellow on the map and represents grasslands, scrublands, rainforests, open woodlands and mallee. Land within 30 metres of this category (indicated by the red buffer on the map) is also captured by the Bushfire Prone Land Map due to the likelihood of bushfire attack.

To find out whether your property is bush fire prone contact Baulkham Hills Shire Council.

If the property on which I want to build is mapped as bushfire prone land, will I be able to develop the land as I had proposed?

Bush fire prone land mapping is designed to flag that a property has a potential to be threatened by bush fire and to initiate an assessment under *Planning for Bush Fire Protection* to determine whether land management and construction measures need to be adopted to help safeguard a development from bush fire.

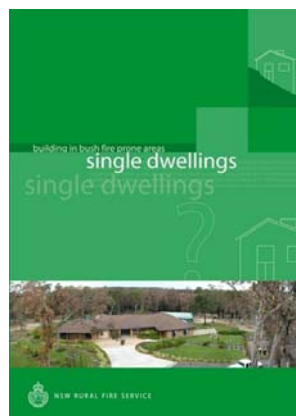
If it is determined that there is a level of bush fire risk to the development then the development will need to meet the planning requirements of the NSW Rural Fire Service publication *Planning for Bushfire Protection 2006*. This may mean implementing certain construction standards, asset protection zones, access arrangements, dedicated water supply, electrical or gas service requirements and evacuation procedures to reduce the impact of bush fire.

Development Applications on bush fire prone land must address the potential bush fire risk.

- For smaller applications detached from the main dwelling (eg. pergola, cabana, garage, shed, spa/swimming pool) this can be done relatively simply by attaching a plan/diagram indicating the type and location of the development with approximate distances from property boundary lines, existing dwellings and vegetation.
- For simple single dwelling development applications (including new dwellings and alterations/additions to existing dwellings) this can be done by completing the *Building in Bush Fire Prone Areas Single Dwelling Applicants Kit* OR by addressing the submission requirements listed in Appendix 4 of *Planning for Bush Fire Protection 2006*. For more complex development applications (eg. flame zone developments or alternate solutions) advice should be sought from an appropriately qualified Bushfire Planning and Design Consultant.



- For shops, warehouses, factories, offices, carparks and the like this can be done by an assessment addressing how the development meets the aims and objectives of *Planning for Bushfire Protection 2006*, in relation to access, water, services, emergency planning and landscaping/vegetation management.
- For Subdivisions and Special Fire Protection Purpose developments, where a Bush Fire Safety Authority is required from the Rural Fire Service, a more detailed assessment, including information listed in Appendix 4 of *Planning for Bushfire Protection 2006* is required.



afterwards. 80-90 percent of structural damage in bush fires is caused by ember attack.

Ember attack can best be described as the small burning twigs and leaves that are carried ahead of the main fire, that land on and around houses before the main fire front arrives. These small burning twigs and leaves can enter a house directly through opened windows and doors and roof cavities or can land in gutters, underfloor spaces, on timber decking, window and door frames, door mats, dried out lawns, vegetation and mulch and may smoulder for many hours.

Without anyone present to extinguish these small fires, they may gradually get larger and involve other parts of a building until the whole building becomes involved in fire.

Radiant heat causes objects on and around a property to rapidly reach the point at which they will ignite. Radiant heat can ignite combustible materials in and around your home when a lot of fuel such as forest-like vegetation, overgrown gardens, and other buildings burn quite close to your home. Radiant heat can also crack or break windows, allowing embers to enter, and some wall cladding can be distorted badly or melted to expose timber framing. Most serious is the exposure of people to radiant heat.

Direct flame contact can break windows or set alight external surfaces of a house.

The amount of direct flame contact and/or radiant heat a house may be subjected to will depend on how much fuel (eg. vegetation and other combustible materials) there is to burn and how far the house is from the source of the heat. If the distance from the fire is doubled, the radiant heat load on the building can be reduced by up to four times.

Where can I get more information?

- For more information on preparing you and your home for a bushfire or to arrange a free-of-charge property inspection contact the RFS - Baulkham Hills District.
- *Planning for Bush Fire Protection 2006* can be downloaded off the RFS web site.
- *Building in Bush Fire Prone Areas Single Dwelling Applicants Kit* can be downloaded off the RFS web site or obtain a copy at Baulkham Hills Shire Council or the RFS - Baulkham Hills District.
- A list of certified Bushfire Planning and Design Consultants can be downloaded off the Fire Protection Association of Australia web site at <http://www.fpaa.com.au/certification/index.php?certification=bpad>

Why all these bush fire requirements?

Planning law in NSW requires new development on bush fire prone land to comply with the provisions of *Planning for Bush Fire Protection 2006*. Incorporating bush fire protection measures into the development process will allow for improved protection for life, property and fire fighters against bush fires.

Bush fire requirements are designed to afford as much protection to you and your property as can be achieved. That is why there will often be more than one requirement on development consent conditions. No one strategy alone will ensure bush fire protection, however by combining a number of strategies including fuel reduced buffers (ie Asset Protection Zones), levels of building construction and design, safe property access, additional stored water for extinguishing fire and emergency management arrangements, the level of safety to the resident and the fire fighter and chances of home survivability increase substantially.

What are we guarding against?

Bush fire requirements assist to guard against ember attack, radiant heat and flame contact.

Ember attack usually occurs up to 30 minutes prior to the arrival of a fire front and for several hours