

Attachment 1.2
Bushfire Management Statement

December 2014

Bushfire Management Statement, Lincoln Heath South PSP, Victoria



Final Report

Prepared for:

**Australand Property
Group**

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A photograph of the study area taken during the current assessment.

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1 Introduction

This Bushfire Management Statement (BMS) relates to a proposed subdivision and development within the Lincoln Heath South Precinct Structure Plan (PSP) area in Point Cook, Victoria (the study area). The study area is located approximately 22 kms south-west of Melbourne. The study area is not subject to Clause 44.06 because a Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO) does not apply to that land. The study area is, however, within a 'Designated Bushfire Prone Area' (Department of Transport Planning and Local Infrastructure 2014). Furthermore, the Lincoln Heath South PSP, in section 3.3.2 requires "a Site Management Plan that addresses bushfire risk during, and where necessary, after construction must be submitted to and approved by the Country Fire Authority (CFA)" (Metropolitan Planning Authority 2014, p. 12). The PSP further states that the plan must include, amongst other things:

- *The staging of development and the likely bushfire risks at each stage;*
- *An area of land between the development edge and non-urban areas consistent with the separation distances specified in AS3959-2009, where bushfire risk is managed;*
- *The measures to be undertaken by the developer to reduce the risk from fire within any surrounding rural or undeveloped landscape and protect residents and property from the threat of fire;*
- *How adequate opportunities for access and egress will be provided for early residents, construction workers and emergency vehicles* (Metropolitan Planning Authority 2014, p. 12).

It was considered that the best way to address these considerations was through a BMS for the proposed subdivision, following Clause 52.47-2 (Planning for Bushfire) of the Wyndham City Council Planning Scheme, which is the standard document used by the CFA to assess the bushfire risk to subdivisions in more highly fire prone areas (those areas subject to a BMO) across Victoria.

This current BMS has taken into consideration changes made to the planning scheme in August 2014 through Amendment VC109. The BMS contains two components:

- A locality and site description that is used to identify the existing conditions of the site and surrounds, in accordance with the application requirements of Clause 44.06-2.
- A Bushfire Management Statement, that is used to calculate the defendable space and construction requirements and show how the application meets the relevant objectives, standards, mandatory standards and decision guidelines of Clause 44.06 - Bushfire Management Overlay and Clause 52.47-2 (Subdivisions). This includes a 'bushfire hazard site assessment' and 'bushfire hazard landscape assessment'.

2 Locality and site description

2.1 The site

2.2.1	Site shape, dimensions, size and planning controls
The shape of the site is:	Approximately square
The site has a total area of:	43.32 hectares
The zoning of the site is:	Urban Growth Zone (UGZ)
The overlays that apply to the site are:	DPO2: Development Plan Overlay
2.2.2	Existing use and development on the site
The current use of the site is:	The study area is vacant land that is cropped and dominated by exotic pasture.
The buildings or works located on the site are:	None
2.2.3	Existing access arrangements
The main vehicle access to the site is provided from:	Point Cook Road runs along the eastern boundary of the study area. Access can also be gained through existing residential developments at Fongeo Drive and Festival Drive on the study area's western boundary and Parkwood Terrace from the north.
Roads and access within the site are currently constructed from the following materials:	Point Cook Road is a major sealed through road (Route 11). The other roads are minor, sealed roads providing access to residents in nearby subdivisions. There are currently no internal roads in the study area.
2.2.4	Existing vegetation
Describe the vegetation on the site, including the type, location, extent and any other relevant information:	<p>The vegetation on the site is largely modified and is dominated by exotic pasture species such as Perennial Rye-grass <i>Lolium perenne</i> and Barley Grass <i>Hordeum</i> spp.. It has previously supported a crop of Wheat <i>Triticum aestivum</i>.</p> <p>In the south-west of the property, two patches, approximating 3.16 hectares, of the nationally significant Seasonal Herbaceous Wetland (Freshwater) of the Temperate Lowland Plains have previously been identified (see attachment 1). This vegetation community contains low biomass/fuel and can be inundated at any time of the year, primarily in Winter and Spring (Threatened Species Scientific Community 2012)</p>
2.2.5	Other

2.2.5	Other
Describe other features and constraints on the site that may be relevant to bushfire hazard, which may influence future use and development of the site:	<p>The study area is flat, falling only five metres from its high point in the north, to the south over a distance of approximately 660 metres (0.76% gradient).</p> <p>In the south-west corner of the property, there are two patches, approximating 3.16 hectares in area, of the nationally significant Seasonal Herbaceous Wetland (Freshwater) of the Temperate Lowland Plains (see attachment 1). These areas are to be protected by incorporating them into open space reserve within the development.</p> <p>See also Attachment 2 for a detailed assessment of the vegetation.</p>

2.2 The locality and surrounding land

2.3.1	Existing use and development on adjacent sites
Describe the land and existing land uses in all directions around the subject land:	<p>The site is dominated by exotic pasture and native grasses with no trees recorded within the study area.</p> <p>North: An existing residential development is located immediately north of the site (See Plate 1).</p> <p>East: Point Cook Road flanks the eastern boundary of the study area. Beyond it, are the Saltwater Fields Playing Grounds on the north-eastern corner of the study area and south of this is private property that is used as a truck depot.</p> <p>West: An existing residential development is located immediately west of the property (See Plate 3).</p> <p>South: The southern boundary is the future site of the Point Cook South PSP (#1207). This development has not yet begun, and the land is currently an open paddock dominated by exotic pasture and native grasses. There is a house on this property which is surrounded by planted trees and shrubs. These features are approximately 150 metres from the study area.</p> <p>See also Attachment 1.</p>

2.3.2	Access to infrastructure and existing road networks
Describe the infrastructure and constraints on the site and in the surrounding area (where relevant) including the roads, town water and power supply to the site:	<p>The proposed subdivision and development will be accessed from Point Cook Road, Fongeo Drive and Festival Drive, with access and egress points into the proposed development to the south of the study area to allow for access to the Point Cook South PSP. The main entrance to the subdivision will be from Point Cook Road, near the northern boundary of the study area. Internal roads will be between 13 and 20 metres in width, however the main through roads will be 25.5 metres in width, while the entrance off Point Cook Road will be 28.5 metres in width.</p> <p>The site has full access to town infrastructure including reticulated water supply, mains power and an established sealed road</p>

network.

2.3.3

Landscape

Describe the surrounding landscape:

The study area is located on the urban fringe. To the north and west of the study area, developments connect the site to the surrounding suburbs. This development has yet occur to the south of the study area, however this area has been set aside for the Point Cook South PSP (#1207) and the study area will then be completely surrounded by developed residential land.

The terrain is largely flat both within the study area and its surrounds and supports only grassland vegetation, which is mostly managed for agricultural uses (i.e. cultivation or grazing). Most trees in the area are planted as garden specimens. All the vegetation to the north and west of the study area is limited in extent, managed and located in the gardens of residents in the nearby suburbs.

2.3.4

Other characteristics

Are there other features or characteristics in the area relevant to bushfire hazard?

None



Plate 1. Looking north from central part of property. Property is dominated by exotic pasture species.



Plate 2. Looking south-west towards the toward to Seasonal Herbaceous Wetland (Freshwater) of the Temperate Lowland Plains



Plate 3. Looking west towards existing development

3 Bushfire Management Statement

3.1 Landscape, siting and design objectives

52.47-1 Landscape, siting and design objectives

These objectives:

- Consider how the location affects the bushfire risk to new development
- Select a site for the proposed development on the land
- Consider whether simple design improvements can enhance a building's resilience to embers.

Approved measure AM 2.1 Broader landscape

- The bushfire risk to the development from the landscape beyond the site can be mitigated to an acceptable level

Justification:

The surrounding landscape is defined as a Broader Landscape Type 1 scenario for the following reasons:

- The property is located on the urban fringe of the suburb of Point Cook which is largely cleared of vegetation, particularly in the north and west, from which most fire danger is likely to occur;
- Bushfire can only approach from the south at the moment, although this will change as the Point Cook South PSP is developed;
- Older residential developments surrounding the site would halt the approach of a fire approaching from the north or west;
- The type and extent of vegetation in the local area is unlikely to result in neighbourhood scale destruction of property;
- The study area and surrounding landscape is flat to gently upslope (less than 1° Gradient);
- Emergency access to the property and surrounds is good, provided by a number of roads. These roads also act as potential fire breaks;
- The main access to the east is provided by Point Cook Road which fronts the proposed subdivision and development, while other access points are to the north and west.

All other Approved Measures can be achieved as detailed below

Approved measure AM 2.2 Siting

A building is sited to ensure the site best achieves the following:

- The maximum separation distance between the building and the bushfire hazard.
- The building is in close proximity to a public road.

- Access can be provided to the building for emergency service vehicles.

Justification:

The location of the proposed subdivision and development is best located within the local area to mitigate risks of extreme fire behavior (Attachments 1 & 2):

- It is located in an increasingly urbanised area of Point Cook, with direct access to Point Cook Road;
- Large amounts of classifiable vegetation is limited to the south at present, although this will be removed at a later date when the Point Cook South PSP is developed. This vegetation is separated from all but three lots by reserves and wetlands. The three lots in the south-east of the study area will be adjacent to this grassland until the development of the Point Cook South PSP is undertaken;
- Two patches of seasonal wetland will be set aside to protect a nationally significant vegetation community. These patches of vegetation will be separated from the lots by a 25.5 metre sealed road, providing a buffer against any localised grass fires that may start in this area, greater than the BAL 12.5 standard of 19 metres; and
- Access for emergency vehicles will be provided at a number of points, including a wide entrance and main roads to facilitate access by emergency vehicles, should they be required. These will be constructed early in the development of the study area to provide access and egress to early residents, building contractors and emergency vehicles.

Approved measure AM 2.3 Building Design

- A building is designed to reduce the accumulation of debris and entry of embers.

Justification:

The proposed subdivision will require each lot to be built to a BAL 12.5 standard as stipulated within the residential building standard Australian Standard AS 3959-2009 (Standards Australia 2009) and 'Planning for Bushfire' Clause 52.47 of the Victorian Planning Scheme (Department of Planning and Community Development 2014).

The Bushfire Landscape Concept Plan is shown as Attachment 4.

3.2 Subdivision Objectives

52.47-2.4 Subdivision objectives

These objectives;

- To provide lots that are capable of being developed in accordance with the objectives of Clause 52.47
- Specify bushfire protection measures for all lots at the subdivision stage

Approved measure AM 5.1

An application to subdivide land, other than where **AM 5.2** applies, demonstrates that each proposed lot is capable of meeting:

- The defendable space in accordance with Column A, B or C of Table 2 to Clause 52.47-3
- The approved measures in Clause 52.47-2.1 and Clause 52.47-2.3

Justification:

All except three of the proposed lots within the site has a defendable space in accordance with Column A (BAL 12.5) of Table 2 to Clause 52.47-3. This requires a total defendable space area of 19 metres in which vegetation will need to be managed (i.e. slashing). The three remaining lots, in the south-eastern corner of the subdivision will require a slashed fire-break on the adjacent land, until such time as it is developed for the Point Cook South PSP. These lots are part of later stages of the development increasing the likelihood that the Point Cook South PSP will have started development, eliminating the necessity to oblige the landowner to the south to maintain a firebreak.

There is no classifiable vegetation to the north and west of the property, although classifiable vegetation will be retained within the study area in the seasonal wetland reserves. This vegetation is classified as Grassland, although for much of the year it is likely to be wet and pose a lower fire risk than surrounding grassland that does have the characteristics of this vegetation community. This vegetation is ringed by a sealed, 25.5 metre road, separating it from the houses within the development and exceeding the BAL 12.5 standard of 19 metres. The treatment proposed here is similar to approved treatment of a similar patch of vegetation located on Featherbrook Drive approximately 400 metres west of the study area.

The understorey is dominated by exotic pasture grasses and as such, and no native vegetation will be removed to facilitate the management of the defendable space areas. The existing vegetation within the BAL 12.5 defendable space areas of the study area will be managed to the required standards at all times (i.e. slashing).

Whilst in some instances the defendable space overlaps into adjoining properties, it is considered reasonable that the land will remain or continue to be managed as part of the defendable space requirements. The exception is for the three lots that will require their southern defendable space to be managed by the land-owner to the south of the study area until it is developed. Until such time as the land to the south is developed, the developer should make arrangements with the landowner to the south to have it slashed during summer. Councils will also issue notices to all rural landholders in spring to create firebreaks (i.e. slashing), and these notices would apply to this property. Landholders who ignore these notices can be fined for failing to act on them. As such, the proposed subdivision and development is almost entirely capable of managing the bushfire risk within the boundaries of the property and council regulations ensure the remaining parts of the study area can meet the BAL 21.5 specifications.

The landscape, siting and design objectives of the subdivision and development have been met (refer to AM 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3).

All lots will have access to the public reticulated water supply through the installation of fire hydrants. The maximum distance between a hydrant and the rear of a lot must be 120 metres with hydrants no more than 200 metres apart. Currently the nearest fire hydrant is located on Point Cook Road, on the western boundary of the study area (Attachment 2).

Further information can be found on the Bushfire Hazard Landscape Plan (Attachment 4).

Approved measure AM 5.2

An application to subdivide land zoned for residential or rural residential purposes must be accompanied by a plan that shows:

- A building envelope for a single dwelling on each lot that complies with **AM 2.2** and provides defensible space in accordance with:
 - Columns A or B of Table 2 to Clause 52.47-3 for a subdivision that creates 10 or more lots; or
 - Columns A, B or C of Table 2 to Clause 52.47-3 for a subdivision that creates less than 10 lots.
- Defensible space wholly contained within the boundaries of the proposed subdivision
- Vegetation management requirements, including inner zone standards (as appropriate), to implement and maintain the defensible space required under this approved measure
- Water supply and vehicle access that complies with **AM 4.1**

Justification:

All lots created will be safely developed under the requirements for building in bushfire prone areas.

The proposed subdivision and development ensures that the defensible space can be managed across the subject site, with 'grassland' vegetation identified to the south predominately beyond the defensible space distance from the nearest houses. Where defensible space occurs in adjacent landholdings, it is expected that the land will remain or continue to be managed as part of the defensible space requirements. Council has the power to oblige land-holders to reduce the fire risk adjacent to residential developments on the urban fringe, and it is expected that this can easily be negotiated to achieve the stated BAL rating for the three lots in the south-east of the study area.

During the staging of development of the site, 20 metre, slashed or ploughed fire-breaks will be maintained to separate stages from the grassland within the study area and the remaining vegetation within the study area will also be maintained, by slashing. This will maintain BAL 12.5 standards for early residents and building contractors as the development progresses.

As a result each proposed lot within the site has a defensible space in accordance with Column A (BAL 12.5) of Table 2 to Clause 52.47-3.

Refer to the Bushfire Landscape Concept Plan (Attachment 4).

Approved measure AM 5.3

An application to subdivide land to create 10 or more lots provides a perimeter road adjoining the hazardous vegetation to support firefighting.

Justification:

The site is readily accessed via Point Cook Road.

A perimeter road, comprising Point Cook Road to the east and internal subdivisional roads to the south and west provide at least 25 metres buffers between the housing lots and any classifiable vegetation. The exceptions to this are the three lots in the south-east of the study area, which will back straight on to the development of the Point Cook South PSP. These residences are buffered by a six metre wide pedestrian link, which is short of the 19 metres required to achieve a BAL of 12.5. Therefore, the installation and maintenance of a firebreak on the adjacent property to the south, supported and regulated by council, is required until that land is developed.

Approved measure AM 5.4

A subdivision manages the bushfire risk to future development from existing or proposed landscaping, public open space and communal areas.

Justification:

The proposed subdivision has been designed to ensure defensible space and construction requirements are not compromised over time. This has been achieved by having the vast majority of the defensible space located within the existing residential developments, with only a small percentage located in adjacent properties that will be developed to the same standard in due course as part of the Point Cook South PSP.

The protection of the seasonal wetland vegetation community will result in classifiable vegetation persisting within the development. However this vegetation will pose little bushfire risk because it is enveloped by a 25.5 metre wide road to the north and east, and constructed and maintained wetlands to the south and west. This approach is consistent with a similar reserve 400 metres to the west of the study area.

Alternative measure AltM 5.5

A building envelope for a subdivision that creates 10 or more lots required under AM 5.2 may show defensible space in accordance with Column C of Table 2 to Clause 52.47-3 where it can be demonstrated that:

- All other requirements of **AM 5.2** have been met
- Less defensible space and a higher construction standard is appropriate having regard to the bushfire hazard landscape assessment.

Justification:

N/A

3.3 Other relevant planning provisions

The Lincoln Heath South PSP (Metropolitan Planning Authority 2014) requires the proponent, under section 3.3.2 of that document, to prepare a Site Management Plan that addresses the bushfire risk during and after construction for approval by the CFA. This BMS is intended to provide the framework for that plan. It details above the following:

- *The staging of development and the likely bushfire risks at each stage*
- *An area of land between the development edge and non-urban areas consistent with the separation distances specified in AS3959-2009, where bushfire risk is managed;*
- *The measures to be undertaken by the developer to reduce the risk from fire within any surrounding rural or undeveloped landscape and protect residents and property from the threat of fire;*
- *How adequate opportunities for access and egress will be provided for early residents, construction workers and emergency vehicles* (Metropolitan Planning Authority 2014, p. 12).

The State Planning Policy Framework (SPPF) provides the broad framework for bushfire protection policy and provisions in the planning scheme. This includes policy seeking to 'assist to strengthen community resilience to bushfire' (Department of Transport Planning and Local Infrastructure 2014). This report has been designed having regard to the overarching policy objectives of the SPPF.

The study area is a designated Fire Prone Area, however it is not subject to a Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO). This Bushfire Management Statement has been prepared to respond to the requirements of a BMO as a framework for ensuring a practical and safe approach to bushfire planning.

In late 2009, the Country Fire Authority (CFA) Act was amended to make provision for Neighborhood Safer Places (NSPs), in places designated as CFA areas by that Act. The purpose of a NSP is to provide some protection from the effects of radiant heat during a bushfire. Although the City of Wyndham falls within CFA areas, the risk of bushfire for this municipality is considered to be quite low by council (Wyndham City Council 2014). Therefore it has been determined by the City of Wyndham that such facilities do not need to be designated within the municipality (Wyndham City Council 2014). The principle reasons for this is the low bushfire risk and that those areas of Wyndham City that may be at risk of bushfire are serviced by significant major road networks which have the capacity to enable rapid evacuation of the populations located there (Wyndham City Council 2014). Evacuation to nearby urban areas is therefore seen as the safest and most practical option for residents in these areas (Wyndham City Council 2014).

The decision guidelines require that before deciding on an application or approval of a plan, the responsible authority must consider, among other things, whether the proposal will 'produce acceptable outcomes' in relation to the degree of fire hazard associated with the location of the land and the use, development or management of the land so as to minimise any such hazard. This Bushfire Management Statement has made an assessment of fire hazard, resulting in a design response which is responsive to the opportunities and constraints presented by the site and its surrounds.

4 Overall conclusion

The proposed development meets the standards for a BAL 12.5 rating, consistent with Clause 52.47 – Bushfire Protection: Planning requirements.

The property is located within a Landscape Type 1 scenario where bushfire attack is limited to one aspect; the south. A number of favorable factors suggest that the risk posed can be managed, with the risk to new residents no greater than that of existing residents in adjacent developments. It is also proposed that appropriate defensible space can largely be provided within the property.

The proposed subdivision allows for suitable access for fire fighting vehicles into and out of the development, with the subdivision to have access to the reticulated water system and fire hydrants.

Attachment 1 – Landscape plan

Include a plan or aerial photo of the site that includes:

- *site shape, dimensions, size, orientation and contours*
- *the existing use and siting of buildings or works on the land*
- *existing access arrangements*
- *existing vegetation types, condition and coverage*
- *any other features and constraints of the site relevant to bushfire hazard*
- *north point*
- *legend/key*
- *scale.*

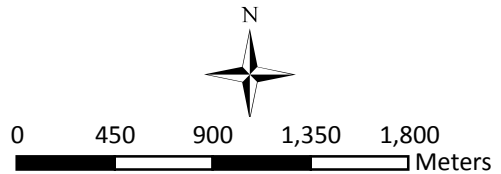
Plan included on next page.

Attachment 1: Landscape Plan

Lincoln Heath South Precinct
Structure Plan Area

Legend

- Study Area
- 150m Area of Interest
- Fire Station
- Fire History (year of most recent fire)



Attachment 2 – Existing site plan

Include a plan or aerial photo of the site and surrounds (at least 150 metres from the site in all directions) that includes:

- *existing land uses*
- *access to infrastructure*
- *existing road networks*
- *the landscape, including any major landscape features, significant vegetation and topography*
- *any other features or characteristics in the area relevant to bushfire hazard*
- *north point*
- *legend/key*
- *scale.*

Any photos of existing site features can also be attached here.

Plan included on next page.

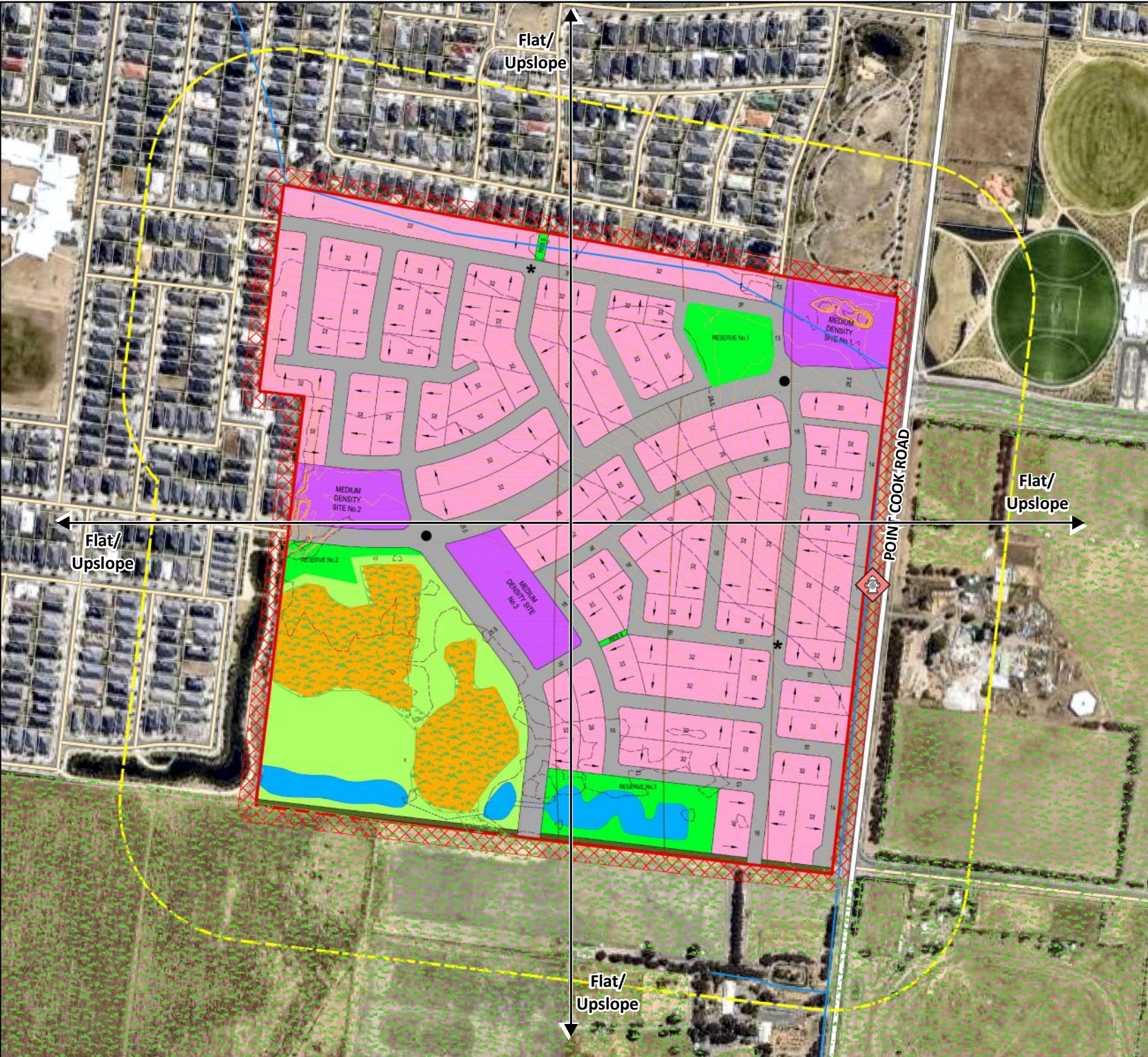
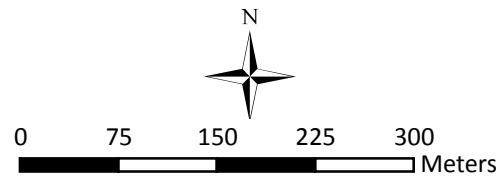
Attachment 2: Detailed Site Plan

Lincoln Heath South Precinct Structure Plan Area, Victoria

Legend

- Study Area
- 150m Area of Interest
- Classifiable_Vegetation
- BAL 12.5 19m Defendable Space
- Hydrants

Vegetation that is not marked is considered 'Excludable' or 'Low-threat' vegetation



Attachment 3 – Bushfire site assessment

Table 4.1 Classifiable vegetation under the AS 3959 assessment methodology:

Aspect	North	South	East	West
Vegetation Type	Forest	Forest	Forest	Forest
	Woodland	Woodland	Woodland	Woodland
	Shrubland	Shrubland	Shrubland	Shrubland
	Scrub	Scrub	Scrub	Scrub
	Mallee/Mulga	Mallee/Mulga	Mallee/Mulga	Mallee/Mulga
	Rainforest	Rainforest	Rainforest	Rainforest
	Grassland	Grassland	Grassland	Grassland
	Excludable	Excludable	Excludable	Excludable

Table 4.2 The distance of the proposed development from the classifiable vegetation:

	North	South	East	West
Distance from the proposed development to vegetation	>150 metres	<20 metres	>50 metres	>150 metres

Table 4.3 The effective slope under the vegetation:

	North	South	East	West
Flat/Upslope	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Downslope	>0-5°	>0-5°	>0-5°	>0-5°
	>5-10°	>5-10°	>5-10°	>5-10°
	>10-15°	>10-15°	>10-15°	>10-15°
	>15-20°	>15-20°	>15-20°	>15-20°

Table 4.4 BAL determination and defensible space:

BAL Standard	Vegetation Classification	Maximum Slope Class	Defendable Space
12.5	Grassland	Flat/Upslope	19

Attachment 4 – Bushfire Landscape Concept Plan

Attachment 4: Bushfire Landscape Concept Plan

Lincoln Heath South Precinct
Structure Plan Area, Victoria

Legend

- Study Area
- 150m Area of Interest
- BAL 12.5 19m Defendable Space
- Grassland Vegetation
- Hydrants

This plan is based on the Landscaping for Bushfire; garden design and plant selection (CFA 2011).



References

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