

## What is a 'Bushfire Prone Area'?

A 'Bushfire Prone Area' is an area of land that has been designated by the Fire and Emergency Services Commissioner as land that is subject, or likely to be subject, to bushfires.

## How do I know if my property is within a Bushfire Prone Area?



To find out whether or not your property falls within, or partially within, a designated Bushfire Prone Area the *Map of Bush Fire Prone Areas 2016* is available on the Department of Fire and Emergency Services website (click link below). If the *Map of Bush Fire Prone Areas* covers only a small portion of your property, the entire property is still considered to be a Bushfire Prone Area.



<https://maps.slip.wa.gov.au/landgate/bushfireprone2016/>

## Is Development Approval Required?

A Bushfire Attack Level (BAL) Assessment is required if you are proposing the construction or use of the following on a lot/s over 1,100m<sup>2</sup>:

- A single house or ancillary dwelling ('granny flat'); and/or
- A habitable building other than a single house or ancillary dwelling (e.g. a permanent or temporary structure that involves the use of the structure by people for living, working, studying or being entertained).

If the BAL Assessment produces a BAL rating of 'BAL-40' or 'BAL-Flame Zone' you are required to obtain Development Approval. If the BAL Assessment produces a BAL rating of 'BAL-29' or below you are not required to obtain Development Approval, subject to compliance with other planning requirements.



A BAL assessment is used for planning and building purposes to determine whether a building or development requires additional bushfire risk management measures to address the threat of bushfire to the development.

## Am I exempt from bushfire planning requirements if I have a building envelope?

No, you are still required to obtain a BAL Assessment if your property has a building envelope and is completely or partially within a bushfire prone area. If you propose to build within 6 metres of another structure within the building envelope you will be required to obtain a BAL Assessment. For example, if you have an existing house on your property and you wish to build a shed within 6 metres of the house you will be required to obtain a BAL Assessment.



## Who can prepare a BAL Assessment?

A BAL Assessment can be carried out by an accredited Level 1 BAL Assessor or Bushfire Planning Practitioner. You can find a list of accredited Level 1 BAL Assessors on the Fire Protection Association ([FPA](http://www.fpa.org.au)) [Australia's website](http://www.fpa.org.au). We strongly suggest that you cut any long grass or weeds prior to the BAL Assessor inspecting your property.

## Do I need a Building Permit as well as Development Approval?



Yes, you will also need to obtain a Building Permit from the Shire of Northam prior to commencing any development. A building/structure located within a bushfire prone area must comply with the current BAL Assessment, the Building Code of Australia and AS3959 Construction of Buildings in Bushfire Prone Areas.

Please note that if you propose to construct a single house, granny flat or any other habitable building on a lot smaller than 1,100m<sup>2</sup>, you will still be required to submit a BAL Assessment as part of your Building Permit Application.

## Where do I find more information?

Further information can be obtained from the Shire of Northam's Planning Services Department on 9622 6133 or 9622 6143 or via email at [records@northam.wa.gov.au](mailto:records@northam.wa.gov.au)

The information contained in this brochure is intended as a guide only. It is recommended that the advice and assistance of the Shire's Planning Services Department be sought prior to lodgement of a Development Application. The Shire of Northam disclaims any liability for any damages sustained by a person acting on the basis of this information.