

New Bushfire Maps To Be Released: What Does It Mean For You?

Since the introduction of the Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO), Meinhardt in collaboration with our partners Ecotide have provided advice to State and Local Government, private landholders, and industry in relation to planning and bushfire issues. We have an acute understanding of these issues from a policy, community, and development perspective.

What's Happening?

Following recommendations from the 2009 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission, the Victorian Government made several adjustments to planning laws which changed the way in which bushfire risk needed to be considered. Positive steps were taken to ensure that bushfire risk was addressed at the planning stage.

While the planning rules changed, no changes were made to planning maps to show the areas affected.

There has been significant interest in the release of new bushfire mapping with a general view that additional new areas would be included within the Bushfire Management Overlay. Earlier this month numerous properties in the Ballarat and Mildura region were removed from restrictions under the building system.

Understandably, those with properties in regional, rural, and outer metropolitan areas want a level of certainty as to whether their properties are included, or excluded.

After a period of uncertainty, we understand that new bushfire mapping is about to be released. Landholders affected by changes to the Bushfire Management Overlay will be notified in writing shortly. The opportunity will be made available to view the new mapping and provide a submission to Government.

What's Next?

Submissions will be considered by the Government prior to the mapping changes being formalised through the planning system.

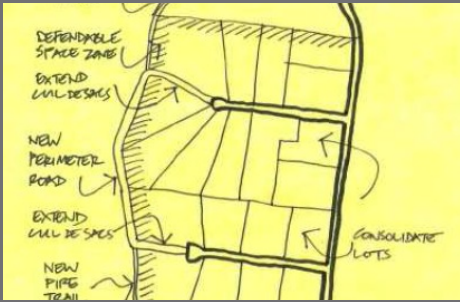
This is a critical opportunity for:

Landholders who may be looking to build or extend.
Developers with projects currently underway or planned for future development.
Investors considering land in regional, rural, and outer metropolitan locations.
Local Government to represent the views of its local community.

What Can We Offer?

- Bushfire Assessment/Mapping
- Submission Preparation
- Advocacy Services
- Community Consultation And Engagement
- Planning & Bushfire Advice

Leaders In Bushfire Planning & Management



Hepburn Shire Bushfire & Restructure Plan Project

Meinhardt undertook an assessment of planning, bushfire, land capability constraints affecting three settlements in **Hepburn Shire**. Located adjacent to State Forest, each settlement was considered of significant bushfire risk, with numerous other environmental issues affecting the safety and liveability of current and future residents.

Through the establishment of good bushfire design and urban design principles, Meinhardt developed a restructure plan for each settlement, including the establishment of improvements to road networks, access, lot orientation, and land management. The report provides strong consideration of the relevant statutory and policy context affecting the subject land and provides a robust foundation for changes to the Hepburn planning scheme to improve community safety.



St Andrews Community Centre

Meinhardt and Ecotide assisted **Nillumbik Shire Council** to manage bushfire risk associated with the construction of the **St Andrews Community Centre**. We provided specialist planning and bushfire advice using an alternative method. Our approach responded to the fire risk, the relevant bushfire provisions and has "unlocked" what would otherwise be considered a "stuck" development. This has involved the preparation of a Bushfire Management Statement, mapping, and Emergency Management Plan in close liaison with Council, senior CFA executive management and community stakeholders.



Walhalla Bushfire and Heritage Study

Meinhardt and Ecotide are currently providing services to **Baw Baw Shire Council** to prepare a Bushfire Strategy for the historic tourist town of **Walhalla**. Visited by over 100,000 people per year, Walhalla is one of Regional Victoria's most significant tourist assets. Located in an isolated landscape of significant bushfire risk and one of the most challenging planning environments with issues relating to heritage, environment and flood, Meinhardt and Ecotide are providing an assessment of bushfire risk and overall planning strategy for the township. The project is due for completion in 2013.

Key Contacts

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- Tom has an acute understanding of the requirements of the Victorian Planning system with respect to bushfire.
- Throughout 2011 and 2012, Tom assisted the Department of Planning and Community Development in the training of planners, surveyors, ecologists in the use of new bushfire planning provisions.
- Tom has extensive planning experience, coupled with the preparation of numerous strategic plans for regional and rural towns. Tom is currently assisting both public and private clients with a number of statutory and strategic bushfire projects across Victoria.

Paul Barnard – Ecotide



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- Paul has completed over 250 bushfire assessments of individual residential and development properties across Victoria.
- Paul has prepared Fire Management Plans for the City of Casey 2009, and Royal Botanic Gardens Cranbourne helping to protect the complex and the Australian Garden- 2009
- More recently, Paul has developed a model for Victorian wide application for local government and the tourism industry to address bushfire risks on the Victorian Surf Coast.