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## **ENVIRONMENTAL AND LANDSCAPE SIGNIFICANCE PROTECTION IN IDENTIFIED WILDFIRE AREAS POLICY**

This policy applies to all land affected by the provisions of the Wildfire Management Overlay.

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### **Policy Basis**

Manningham is committed to protecting and enhancing the environmental and landscape values in areas of high fire intensity.

Wildfire is a natural and common component of the Australian landscape and the retention of vegetation does increase the likelihood of a wildfire event. The Wildfire Management Overlay affects a significant portion of the municipality east of the Mullum Mullum Creek and attempts to protect life and property from the threat of wildfire.

The MSS recognises that the non-urban areas to the east of the Mullum Mullum Creek remain heavily vegetated which contributes to the high incidence of sites of botanical and zoological significance, while also making a substantial contribution to the landscape amenity of the municipality and the greater regional area.

This policy aims to guide decision making for applications for subdivision, buildings and/or works, with regard to the strategic goals of vegetation retention, protection of environmental and landscape significance and the safety for people and property by management of the wildfire risk.

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### **Objectives**

- To retain vegetation and to preserve the recognised environmental and landscape significance of the municipality while also promoting development that is safe from the risk of wildfire.
- To encourage higher construction standards and/or alternative treatments in preference to vegetation removal or development that would impact on recognised environmental and/or landscape values.

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### **Policy**

#### *Subdivision*

Where a permit is required for subdivision, it is policy to:

- Encourage subdivision (which could result in the construction of new dwellings) in wildfire areas only where there will not be a detrimental impact on vegetation and the recognised environmental and/or landscape significance of the land and surrounds, due to the required wildfire risk management works.

#### *Buildings and works*

Where a permit is required for buildings and/or works, it is policy to:

- Encourage dwellings, buildings and/or works to be designed to achieve a higher level of construction and/or utilise alternative treatments to address wildfire risk, in preference to requiring vegetation removal, which would have a detrimental impact on the recognised environmental and/or landscape significance of the land and surrounding area.

- Encourage dwellings, buildings and/or works to be appropriately located to avoid the removal of vegetation, or which will detrimentally affect the recognised environmental and/or landscape significance of the subject land and surrounds, due to the required wildfire risk management works.

#### *Performance measures*

It is policy that proposals for buildings and/or works be assessed against AS 3959 to determine the appropriate level of construction given the category of bushfire attack determined for the site.

#### *Decision guidelines*

Before deciding an application for a planning permit for subdivision and/or development, the responsible authority will consider, as appropriate:

- The extent of vegetation to be removed;
- The impact on the recognised environmental and/or landscape significance of the land and surrounding area;
- The degree to which alternative treatments and/or higher levels of construction have been applied to limit the removal of vegetation and to reduce the impact on the recognised environmental and/or landscape significance of the land and surrounding area;
- The views of the Department of Sustainability and Environment;
- Any statements or policies pertinent to the land and surrounding area relating to the protection of vegetation or the recognised environmental and/or landscape significance;
- The degree to which the application satisfies the performance criteria contained within the documents ‘*Planning Conditions and Guidelines for Subdivisions*’ and ‘*Design and Siting Guidelines, Bushfire Protection for Rural Houses*’.

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#### **Policy References**

*Design and Siting Guidelines, Bushfire Protection for Rural Houses, Country Fire Authority and Ministry for Planning and Environment, 1990.*

*Planning Conditions and Guidelines for Subdivisions, Country Fire Authority, 1991.*

*Building in Bushfire-Prone Areas, CSIRO & Standards Australia (SAA HB36-1993), May 1993.*

*Australian Standard AS 3959-1999, Building Code of Australia, December 1999.*

*Building in a Wildfire Management Overlay – Applicant’s Kit, Country Fire Authority, February 2002.*