

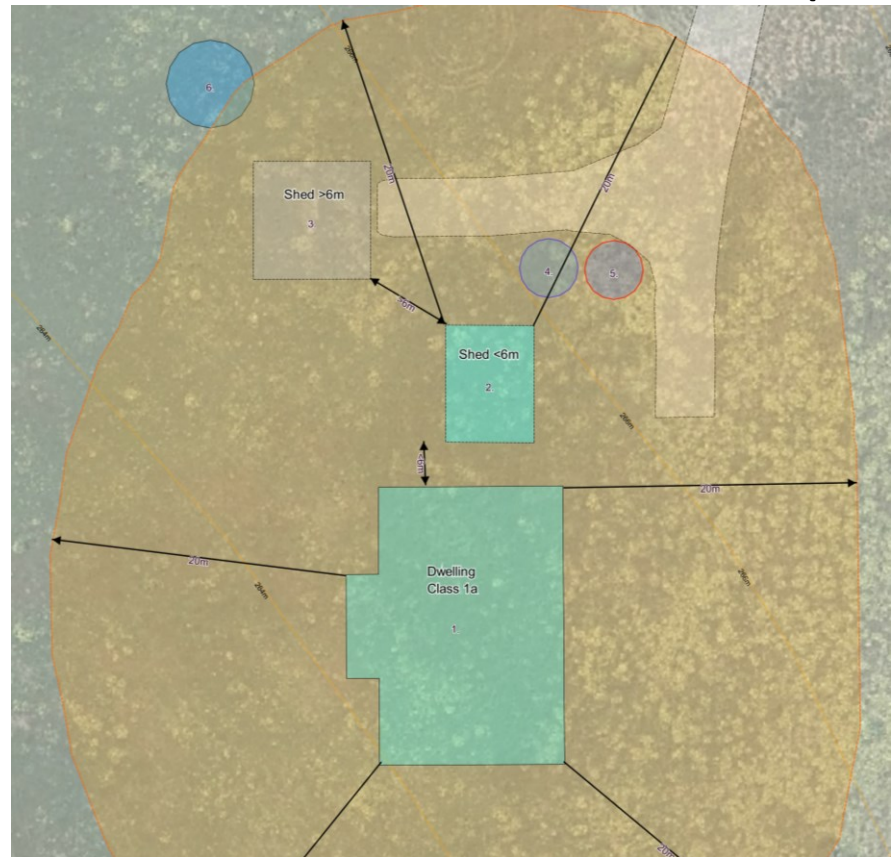
Customer APZ Information READ ME !!!

Information on Asset Protection Zones (APZ)

An APZ is an area that is a set distance from a dwelling or any structure that is less than 6m from that dwelling, the APZ is managed to reduce the bushfire hazard to an acceptable level.

The width of the required APZ varies with slope and vegetation. The APZ should at a minimum be of sufficient size to ensure the potential BAL rating does not exceed BAL-29.

The APZ will be lot specific and shown in orange for my BAL documents, Like Right:



Trees inside the APZ should be not clumped together and have an overall canopy cover percentage of 10-15%, so for example, at midday the shadow cast from the trees inside the APZ shall only be 10-15% on the ground and all canopies shall be separated by 5m minimum.

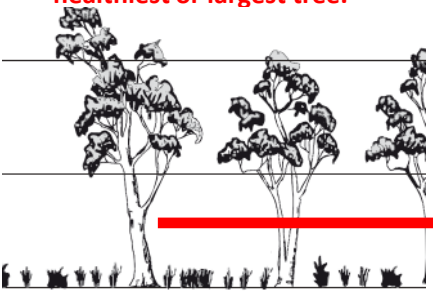
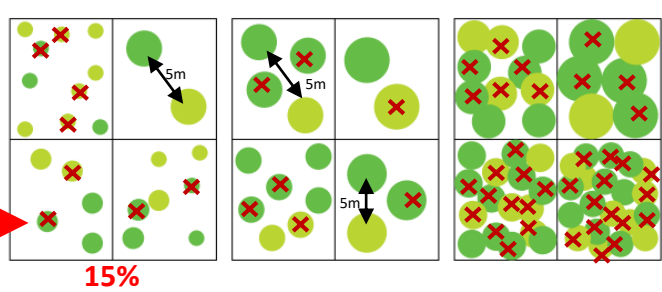
Hazard separation in the form of using design elements including driveways, water tanks or excluded and low threat vegetation adjacent to the structure may be sited inside the APZ.

The APZ includes a defensible space which is an area adjoining the asset within which firefighting operations can be undertaken to defend the structure. Vegetation within the defensible space should be kept at an absolute minimum and the area should be free from combustible items, ground fuels and obstructions. The width of the defensible space is dependent on the space which is available on the property, but as a minimum should be 3 metres.

The APZ should be contained **solely within the boundaries of the lot** on which the building is situated, except in instances where the neighbouring lot or lots will be managed in a low-fuel state on an ongoing basis, in perpetuity and the BAL rating can be maintained at BAL-29 or below.

The APZ may include public roads, waterways, footpaths, buildings, rocky outcrops, golf courses, maintained parkland as well as cultivated gardens in an urban context, but does not include grassland or vegetation on a neighbouring rural lot, farmland, wetland reserves and unmanaged public reserves. APZs can adversely affect the retention of native vegetation.

SCHEDULE 1: STANDARDS FOR ASSET PROTECTION ZONES

OBJECT	REQUIREMENT
Fences within the APZ	Should be constructed from non-combustible materials (for example, iron, brick, limestone, metal post and wire, or bushfire-resisting timber referenced in Appendix F of AS 3959).
Fine fuel load (Combustible, dead vegetation matter <6 millimetres in thickness)	Should be managed and removed on a regular basis to maintain a low threat state. Should be maintained at <2 tonnes per hectare (on average). Mulches should be non-combustible such as stone, gravel or crushed mineral earth or wood mulch >6 millimetres in thickness.
<p>Trees* (>6 metres in height)</p> <p>Upper canopy cover inside your specific APZ area to be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <15% canopy cover - 5m Spacing between canopies <p>Trees are assessed as if they are FULLY mature!</p> <p>Groups of trees need to be reduced to leave the healthiest or largest tree.</p> 	<p>Trunks at maturity should be a minimum distance of six metres from all elevations of the building.</p> <p>Branches at maturity should not touch or overhang a building or powerline.</p> <p>Lower branches and loose bark should be removed to a height of two metres above the ground and/or surface vegetation.</p> <p>Canopy cover within the APZ should be <15 per cent of the total APZ area.</p> <p>Tree canopies at maturity should be at least five metres apart to avoid forming a continuous canopy. Stands of existing mature trees with interlocking canopies may be treated as an individual canopy provided that the total canopy cover within the APZ will not exceed 15 per cent and are not connected to the tree canopy outside the APZ.</p> <p>Figure 19: Tree canopy cover – ranging from 15 to 70 per cent at maturity</p> 
Shrub* and scrub* (0.5 metres to six metres in height). Shrub and scrub >6 metres in height are to be treated as trees.	Should not be located under trees or within three metres of buildings. Should not be planted in clumps >5 square metres in area. Clumps should be separated from each other and any exposed window or door by at least 10 metres.
Ground covers* (<0.5 metres in height. Ground covers >0.5 metres in height are to be treated as shrubs)	Can be planted under trees but must be maintained to remove dead plant material, as prescribed in 'Fine fuel load' above. Can be located within two metres of a structure, but three metres from windows or doors if >100 millimetres in height.
Grass	Grass should be maintained at a height of 100 millimetres or less, at all times. Wherever possible, perennial grasses should be used and well-hydrated with regular application of wetting agents and efficient irrigation.
Defendable space	Within three metres of each wall or supporting post of a habitable building, the area is kept free from vegetation, but can include ground covers, grass and non-combustible mulches as prescribed above.
LP Gas Cylinders	Should be located on the side of a building furthest from the likely direction of a bushfire or on the side of a building where surrounding classified vegetation is upslope, at least one metre from vulnerable parts of a building. The pressure relief valve should point away from the house. No flammable material within six metres from the front of the valve. Must sit on a firm, level and non-combustible base and be secured to a solid structure.



BAD



BAD

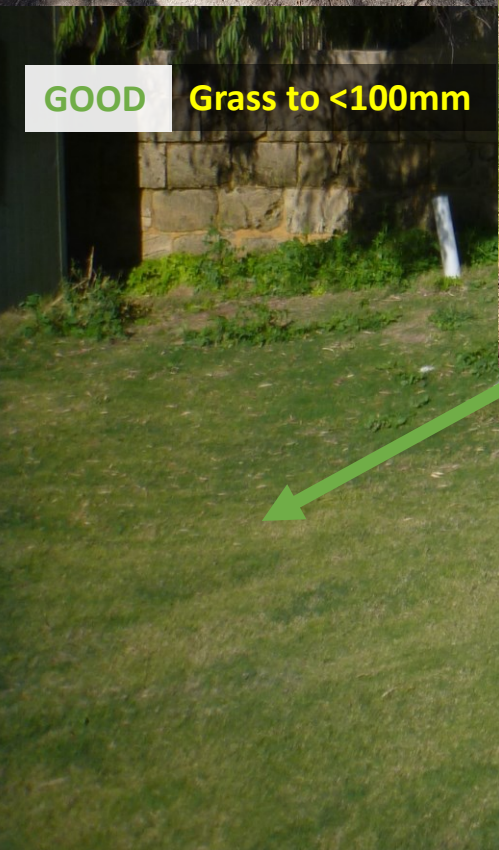


GOOD



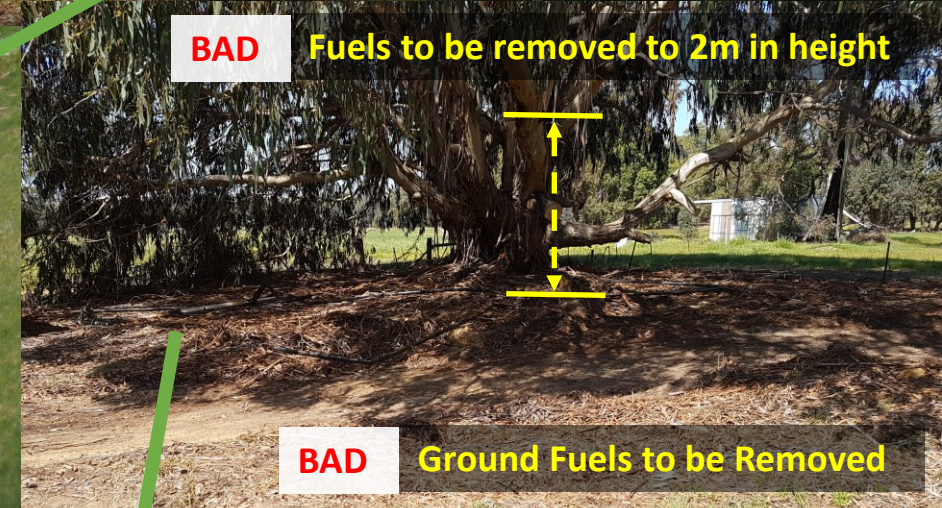
Fuels Removed to be removed 2m in height

BAD



GOOD

Grass to <100mm



BAD

Fuels to be removed to 2m in height

BAD

Ground Fuels to be Removed



Final Fuel load of <2t/Ha

GOOD



GOOD Ground Fuels Removed



GOOD Fuels to 2m height removed

GOOD Final Fuel load of <math><2\text{t}/\text{Ha}</math>



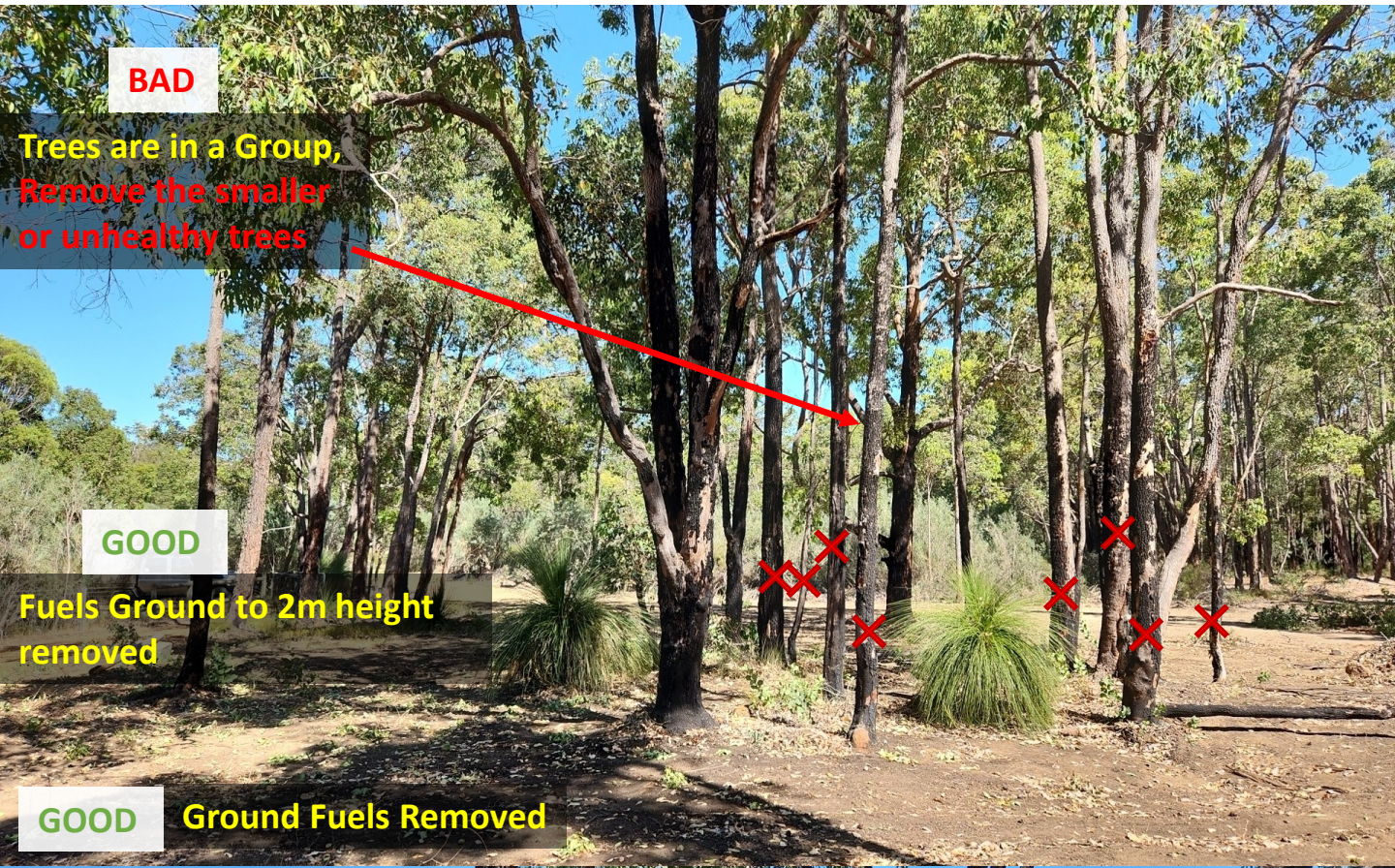
Grass cut to <math><100\text{mm}</math>



Irrigation and Spacing of Shrubs **GOOD**



**Ground covers
0-0.5m Height**



BAD

Trees are in a Group,
Remove the smaller
or unhealthy trees

GOOD

Fuels Ground to 2m height
removed

GOOD Ground Fuels Removed



You can see Some sky

sky

GOOD

Canopy <15% &
Trees are not
grouped

Ground Fuels Removed

GOOD

Final Fuel load of <2t/Ha

Ground covers
0-0.5m Height

Standards for Asset Protection Zones

E2 Landscaping and design of an asset protection zone

Landscaping, design, and maintenance of an APZ in a bushfire prone area can significantly improve the bushfire resilience of a building. An APZ should not be seen as an area entirely cleared of vegetation, but as a strategically designed space that gives holistic consideration to how existing or proposed vegetation or non-combustible features interact with, or affect the building's bushfire resilience.

A well designed APZ provides a greater level of vegetation management within the first few metres of a building with, for example, less vegetation or inclusion of non-combustible materials. The vegetation within the remainder of an APZ can increase further away from the building with carefully considered plant selection and landscaping techniques.

Strategic landscaping measures can be applied, such as replacing weeds with low flammability vegetation (refer to E2 Plant Flammability) to create horizontal and vertical separations between the retained vegetation. The accumulation of fine fuel load from different plants is an important consideration for ongoing maintenance in accordance with Schedule 1. For example, when planting ground covers under deciduous trees within an APZ, the total fine fuel load prescribed in Schedule 1 will include any dead plant material from ground covers and leaf litter from the trees.

Plant density and final structure and form of mature vegetation should be considered in the initial landscaping stages. For example, clumps of sapling shrubs planted at a density without consideration of future growth, may increase the bushfire risk as a clump will quickly grow to exceed 5m². It should be noted that in some cases, a single shrub in a mature state may be so dense as to fill a 5m² clump alone.

The location of plants within an APZ is a key design technique. Separation of garden beds with areas of low fuel or non-combustible material, will break up fuel continuity and reduce the likelihood of a bushfire running through an APZ and subjecting a dwelling to radiant heat or direct flame contact. It is important to note, where mature trees are separated from a building by six metres, but the canopy has grown to extend or overhang a building, maintenance and pruning to remove the overhanging branches should be undertaken without the entirety of the tree being removed.

Mulches used within the APZ should be non-combustible. The use of stone, gravel, rock and crushed mineral earth is encouraged. Wood mulch >6mm in thickness may be used, however it is recommended that it is used in garden beds or areas where the moisture level is higher by regular irrigation. These materials could be sourced from non-toxic construction and demolition waste giving the added benefit of reducing the environmental impact of any 'hard landscaping' actions.

Combustible objects, plants, garden supplies such as mulches, fences made from combustible material, should be avoided within 10 metres of a building. Vines or climbing plants on pergolas, posts or beams, should be located away from vulnerable parts of the building, such as windows and doors. Non-flammable features can be used to provide hazard separation from classified vegetation, such as tennis courts, pools, lawns and driveways or paths that use inorganic mulches (gravel or crushed rock). Consider locating firewood stacks away from trees and habitable buildings.

Incorporation of landscaping features, such as masonry feature walls can provide habitable buildings with barriers to wind, radiant heat and embers. These features can include noise walls or wind breaks. Use of Appendix F of AS 3959 for bushfire resistant timber selection within areas of 29kW/m² (BAL-29) or below, or the use of non-combustible fencing materials such as iron, brick, limestone, metal post and wire is encouraged.

In addition to regular maintenance of an APZ, further bushfire protection can be provided at any time by:

- ensuring gutters are free from vegetation;
- installing gutter guards or plugs;
- regular cleaning of underfloor spaces, or enclosing them to prevent gaps;
- trimming and removing dead plants or leaf litter;
- pruning climbing vegetation (such as vines) on a trellis, to ensure it does not connect to a building, particularly near windows and doors;
- removing vegetation in close proximity to a water tank to ensure it is not touching the sides of a tank; and/or
- following the requirements of the relevant local government section 33 fire break notice, which may include additional provisions such as locating wood piles more than 10 metres from a building.

Standards for Asset Protection Zones

Preparation of a property prior to the bushfire season and/or in anticipation of a bushfire is beneficial even if your plan is to evacuate. As embers can travel up to several kilometres from a bushfire and fall into small spaces and crevices or land against the external walls of a building, best practice recommends that objects within the APZ are moved away from the building prior to any bushfire event. Objects may include, but are not limited to:

- door mats;
- outdoor furniture;
- potted plants;
- shade sails or umbrellas;
- plastic garbage bins;
- firewood stacks;
- flammable sculptures; and/or
- playground equipment and children's toys.

E2 Plant flammability

There are certain plant characteristics that are known to influence flammability, such as moisture or oil content and the presence and type of bark. Plants with lower flammability properties may still burn during a bushfire event, but may be more resistant to burning and some may regenerate faster post-bushfire.

There are many terms for plant flammability that should not be confused, including:

- Fire resistant – plant species that survive being burnt and will regrow after a bushfire and therefore may be highly flammable and inappropriate for a garden in areas of high bushfire risk.
- Fire retardant – plants that may not burn readily or may slow the passage of a bushfire.
- Fire wise – plants that have been identified and selected based on their flammability properties and linked to maintenance advice and planting location within a garden.

Although not a requirement of these Guidelines, local governments may develop their own list of fire wise or fire-retardant plant species that suit the environmental characteristics of an area. When developing a recommended plant species list, local governments should consult with ecologists, land care officers or environmental authorities to ensure the plants do not present a risk to endangered ecological communities, threatened, or endangered species or their habitat.

When selecting plants, private landholders and developers should aim for plants within the APZ that have the following characteristics:

- grow in a predicted structure, shape and height;
- are open and loose branching with leaves that are thinly spread;
- have a coarse texture and low surface-area-to-volume ratio;
- will not drop large amounts of leaves or limbs, that require regular maintenance;
- have wide, flat, and thick or succulent leaves;
- trees that have bark attached tightly to their trunk or have smooth bark;
- have low amounts of oils, waxes, and resins (which will often have a strong scent when crushed);
- do not produce or hold large amounts of fine dead material in their crowns; and/or
- will not become a weed in the area.

Refer to the WAPC Bushfire and Vegetation Fact Sheet for further information on clearing and vegetation management and APZ landscaping, design and plant selection reference material.