



NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE

City of Lithgow Council
PO Box 19
LITHGOW NSW 2790

Your reference: SH: LSPS 2040
Our reference: SPI20200303000032

ATTENTION: Sherilyn Hanrahan

Date: Monday 20 April 2020

Dear Sir/Madam,

Strategic Planning Instrument
Other - Exhibition
Draft Lithgow 2040 Local Strategic Planning Statement

I refer to your correspondence dated 03/03/2020 inviting the NSW Rural Fire Service (NSW RFS) to comment on the above Strategic Planning document.

The NSW RFS has considered the information submitted and provides the following comments.

The Draft Lithgow 2040 Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) outlines the vision for land use planning in Lithgow local government area over the next twenty (20) years to 2040 with a set of key planning priorities, principles and actions to guide future land use decisions.

The strategic planning principles and planning priorities outlined in the LSPS are supported. These are aimed at protection of areas of biodiversity significance, appropriate development of urban interfaces, prevention of urban sprawl to protect rural lands for non residential purposes and to avoid fragmentation, concentration of infill development primarily in the town centres, promotion of higher density residential development in appropriate locations, management of rural residential housing, prevention of land use conflicts and augmentation of land use planning with appropriate infrastructure through systematic and sustainable land use planning decisions supported by further proposed strategic studies.

Bush fire risk is specifically addressed as part of *Planning Priority 12 Adapt to Natural Hazards and Climate Change*. It is recommended to *reduce development footprints in category 1 fire prone areas and to focus new development in established townships to reduce the risk to life and property and maximise functionality of natural hazard infrastructure and services*. Council will *continue to update local bushfire risk mapping as required and increase community awareness of the extent of bush fire prone land and bush fire impacts across the LGA*. These measures are considered to provide better bush fire protection for existing and future development on bush fire prone land (BFPL).

In addition, it is recommended to undertake a strategic bush fire risk study to analyse the risk posed by existing bush fire prone vegetation or future areas demarcated for conservation to support land use decisions in bush fire prone areas.

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In this regard, future studies on bush fire risk to development on BFPL in the Lithgow local government area are recommended to consider the principles in Chapter 4 Strategic Planning of *Planning for Bush Fire Protection (PBP) 2019*:

- To ensure land is suitable for development in the context of bush fire risk;
- To ensure new development on BFPL will comply with *PBP*;
- To minimise reliance on performance-based solutions;
- To provide infrastructure associated with emergency evacuation and firefighting operations; and
- To facilitate appropriate ongoing land management practices.

Inappropriate development must be excluded in BFPL where:

- the bush fire risk makes it inappropriate for new development to occur (in some cases, even despite compliance with *PBP*);
- the development is likely to be difficult to evacuate during a bush fire due to its siting in the landscape, fire history and/or size and scale;
- the development will adversely affect other bush fire protection strategies or place existing development at increased risk;
- the development is within an area of high bush fire risk where density of existing development may cause evacuation issues for both existing and new occupants, and environmental constraints to the site cannot be overcome.

The relevant bush fire protection measures applicable to different types of development need consideration at the strategic planning stage to ensure that future development can comply with *PBP 2019*.

For any queries regarding this correspondence, please contact Kalpana Varghese on 1300 NSW RFS.

Yours sincerely,

Nika Fomin
Manager Planning & Environment Services
Planning and Environment Services