

Outbuildings in the Bushfire Management Overlay

OCTOBER 2017

The Bushfire Management Overlay includes streamlined bushfire protection requirements for outbuildings.

Small outbuildings with a floor area of less than 100 square metres do not require a planning permit.

Outbuildings with a floor area of 100 square metres or more have preset bushfire protection measures to make preparation and assessment of these applications simpler.

Preset bushfire protection measures can be applied to outbuildings that:

- have a floor area of 100 square metres or more
- are not used for accommodation, and
- are associated with and normal to a dwelling. Note large outbuildings may not be considered to meet this test.

Using preset bushfire protection measures means an application will not need an individual Bushfire Attack Level (BAL) assessment, prepare a bushfire management statement or be referred to the CFA.

You do not have to use the preset bushfire protection measures. However an application that does not meet all of the preset bushfire protection measures will be assessed through the standard Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO) process.

There are three steps:

STEP 1	Find out if your land is in the BMO and if you need a planning permit
STEP 2	Prepare a planning permit application that includes a Bushfire Management Plan showing the preset bushfire protection measures. Check if the application meets the criteria for non-referral to the CFA.
STEP 3	Discuss with your council and lodge your application.

STEP 1 Find out if your land is in the BMO and if you need a permit

Use [Planning Maps Online](#) or contact your council to find out if your land is in the BMO.

Permit Exemptions

The BMO includes an exemption from applying for a planning permit for the construction of certain outbuildings not used for accommodation, such as shed or garage, if less than 100 square metres.

Note: An outbuilding may still require a building permit. You should contact your council for advice.

STEP 2 Prepare a planning permit application

Prepare a Bushfire Management Plan

Prepare a plan that details the following:

- Property boundaries
- Orientation
- Location of the proposed outbuilding
- Location and type of buildings on the site
- Separation distance between the proposed outbuilding and dwelling
- Location and type of buildings on adjoining land
- Bushfire mitigation measures including any conditions below.

Examples of plans are shown overleaf. Templates are available at www.planning.vic.gov.au/bmo.

Show the preset bushfire protection measures on the plan

Defendable space condition

Defendable space must be created for a distance of 10 metres around the proposed building or to the property boundary, whichever is the lesser. Defendable space is an area where vegetation (and other flammable materials) must be managed in accordance with the following:

- Grass must be short cropped and maintained during the declared fire danger period.
- All leaves and vegetation debris must be removed at regular intervals during the declared fire danger period.
- Within 10 metres of a building, flammable objects must not be located close to the vulnerable parts of the building
- Plant greater than 10 centimetres in height must not be placed within 3 metres of a window or glass feature of the building
- The canopy of each tree within the defendable space is separated by at least 2 metres.
- Individual and clumps of shrubs must not exceed 5 sq. metres in area and must be separated by at least 5 metres
- Trees must not overhang or touch any elements of the building
- There must be a clearance of at least 2 metres between the lowest tree branches and ground level.

Note: You must include the defendable space condition on your plan (refer to example overleaf).

Fire separation permit conditions for outbuildings less than 10 metres from a dwelling

If the outbuilding is less than 10 metres from any existing dwelling used for accommodation the following additional conditions will be included on the Bushfire Management Plan and on the planning permit by the responsible authority.

Fire separation condition

The proposed outbuilding is separated from the adjacent building by a wall that extends to the underside of a non-combustible roof covering and:

- has a Fire Resistance Level (FRL) of not less than 60/60/60 for loadbearing walls and -/60/60 for non-load bearing walls when tested from the attached structure side, or
- is of masonry, earth wall or masonry-veneer construction with the masonry leaf of not less than 90 millimetres in thickness.

Any openings in the wall shall be protected in accordance with the following:

- i. Doorways – by FRL -/60/30 self-closing fire doors
- ii. Windows – by FRL -/60/- fire windows permanently fixed in the closed position
- iii. Other openings – by construction with an FRL of not less than -/60/-.

Note: Control and construction joints, subfloor vents, weepholes and penetrations for pipes and conduits need not comply with Item iii.

Note: You must include the above condition on the plan.

Fire Resistance Level (FRL)

The FRL is a nominal grading period, in minutes, that is determined by subjecting a building element to a standard time temperature as set out in AS 1530.4-2005 to specify – Structural adequacy/Integrity/Insulation.

Note: Australian Standard - Methods for fire tests on building materials, components and structures

A Bushfire Management Plan must include the above conditions and will form part of the planning permit. Subsequent building approval must be in accordance with the planning permit conditions and Bushfire Management Plan.

Example showing defensible space only

Outbuildings Bushfire Management Plan – 4 Gumtree Road, Gumnut

Legend

- Distance to Dwelling (m)
- Defensible Space
- Dwellings
- Outbuilding
- Property (V/M Property)

Bushfire Protection Measures

a) **Defendable Space**

Defendable space for a distance of 10 metres around the proposed building or to the property boundary, whichever is the lesser is provided and is managed in accordance to the following requirements:

- Grass must be short cropped and maintained during the declared fire danger period.
- All leaves and vegetation debris must be removed at regular intervals during the declared fire danger period.
- Within 10 metres of a building, flammable objects must not be located close to the vulnerable parts of the building.
- Plants greater than 10 centimetres in height must not be placed within 3 metres of a window or glass feature of the building.
- Shrubs must not be located under the canopy of trees.
- Individual and clumps of shrubs must not exceed 5 square metres in area and must be separated by at least 5 metres.
- Trees must not overhang or touch any elements of the building.
- The canopy of trees must be separated by at least 2 metres.
- There must be a clearance of at least 2 metres between the lowest tree branches and ground level.

b) **Construction Requirement**

Non habitable outbuilding ancillary to a dwelling **is more** than 10 metres from a dwelling has **no** construction requirements.

Non habitable outbuilding ancillary to a dwelling **is less** than 10 metres from a dwelling must meet the construction requirements of Table 7 to Clause 52.47

Table 7 Outbuilding construction requirement

Building construction condition
<p>The proposed outbuilding is separated from the adjacent building by a wall that extends to the underside of a non-combustible roof covering and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ has a FRL of not less than 60/60/60 for loadbearing walls and -/60/60 for non-load bearing walls when tested from the attached structure side, or ▪ is of masonry, earth wall or masonry-veneer construction with the masonry leaf of not less than 90 millimetres in thickness. <p>Any openings in the wall shall be protected in accordance with the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Doorways – by FRL -/60/30 self-closing fire doors ii. Windows – by FRL -/60/- fire windows permanently fixed in the closed position iii. Other openings – by construction with a FRL of not less than -/60/- <p>Note: Control and construction joints, subfloor vents, weepholes and penetrations for pipes and conduits need not comply with Item iii.</p>

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Example showing defensible space and fire separation requirements

Outbuildings Bushfire Management Plan – 4 Gumtree Road, Gumnut

Legend

- Distance to Dwellings (m)
- Fire Separation
- Dwellings
- Outbuilding
- Defensible Space
- Property (V/M Property)

Bushfire Protection Measures

a) **Defendable Space**

Defendable space for a distance of 10 metres around the proposed building or to the property boundary, whichever is the lesser is provided and is managed in accordance to the following requirements:

- Grass must be short cropped and maintained during the declared fire danger period.
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Table 7 Outbuilding construction requirement

Building construction condition
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STEP 3 Discuss with your council and lodge the application

Before preparing the final documents and lodging an application, complete the Bushfire Management Plan checklist below and discuss your proposal with a council planning officer.

Bushfire Management Plan Checklist

THE PLAN SHOWS:	CHECKLIST Tick or mark as not applicable
Site details and proposal	
Property boundaries	
Orientation	
Location and type of buildings on the site	
Location of the proposed outbuilding	
Separation distance between the proposed outbuilding and dwelling	
Location and type of buildings on adjoining land	
Preset bushfire protection measures including any conditions	
• 10 metres of defensible space shown on plan	
• Defensible space condition included on plan	
• If outbuilding less than 10 metres from dwelling, fire separation condition included on plan	

The council planning officer will check that the bushfire management plan meets all of the preset bushfire protection measures. **If it does, your application does not need to be referred to the CFA.**

If Council approves a planning permit, the bushfire management plan is approved and becomes part of the planning permit.

If your application does not meet all of the preset bushfire protection measures it will be assessed under the standard BMO process, using the bushfire protection measures in Clause 52.47 of the relevant planning scheme. Referral to the CFA will be required.

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