

Blue Hills Quarry (BLUQ) Bushfire Management Plan



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1 Introduction and Site Location

The property is located in central Victoria over two land parcels totalling approximately 115 hectares in area. The two allotments are located at 910 and 912 Lakeys Road Bradford, 3463, within the Mount Alexander Shire council as show in Figure 1 Bushfire Management Plan Area. The area is subject to a bushfire management overlay.

Land parcels and titles are as follows with associated planning reports and, register title statements and plans attached to the proposal.

Parcel	Parent Titles
Crown Allotment 9, Section 11	08644 / 410
Crown Allotment 10, Section 11	07391/034 08788/242

2 Site Details

Address	Bells Lane, Eastville Vic 3463
Telephone	(03) 5766 2251
Central Regional Manager	Damian Eastman
Mobile	0476 932 749
Email	deastman@mawsons.com.au
Resource Development and Environment Manager	Cheryl Ward
Mobile	0437335747
Email	cward@mawsons.com.au

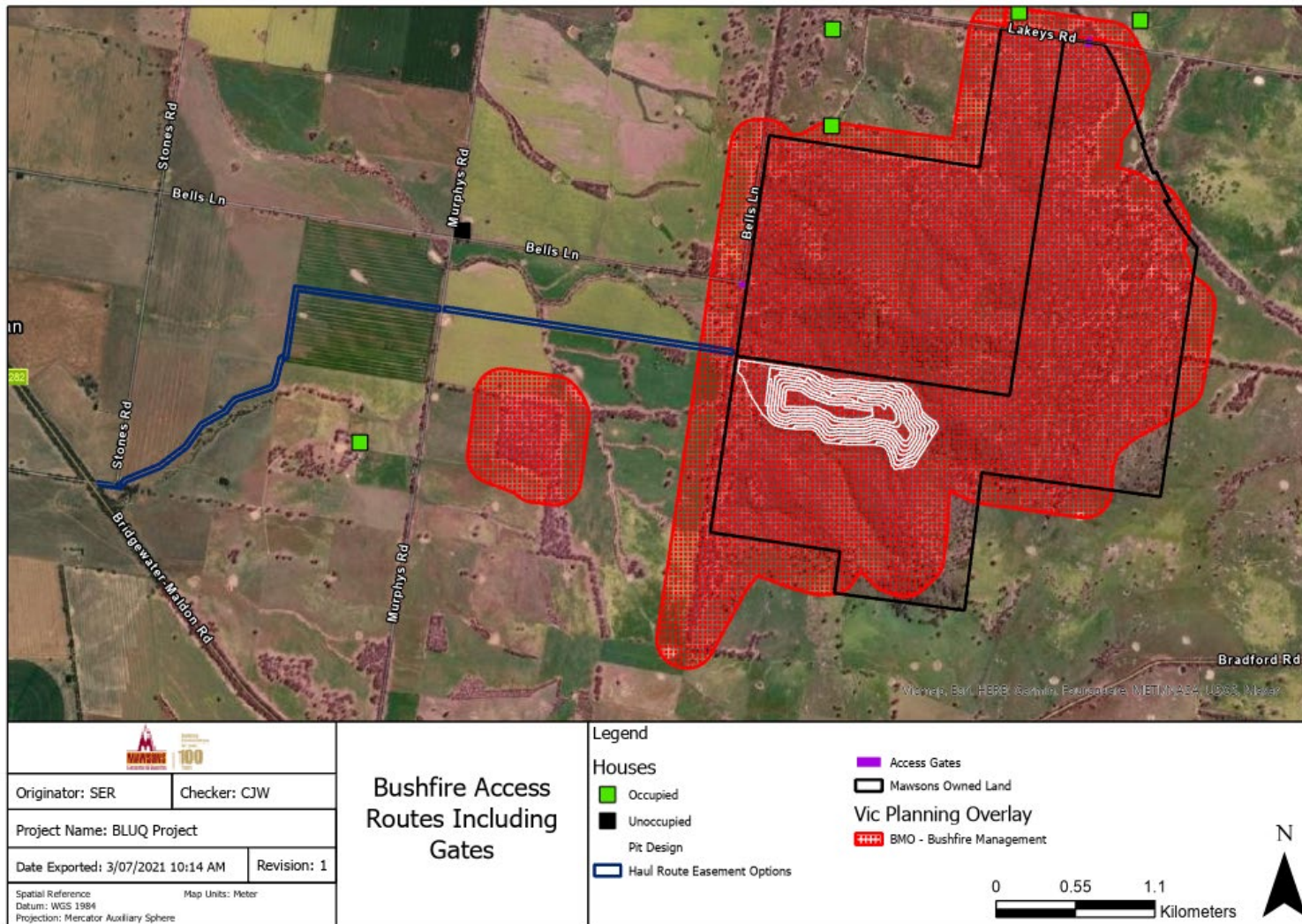


Figure 1 Bushfire Management Plan Area

3 Fire Risk

3.1 Fire History

The most recent major fire to impact Mount Alexander Shire occurred on 7 February 2009 in the Redesdale / Barfold area. Starting in Redesdale, the fire burnt 7,086 ha mainly in the Mount Alexander Shire, but also impacting small areas on City of Greater Bendigo, Mitchell and Macedon Ranges municipalities.

The fire resulted in the loss of 14 houses, over 50 sheds, a church, bridge, two olive plantations, one vineyard and 300km of fencing. There were no lives lost in this fire.

Other fires to impact the municipality include:

- 2003 – Barkers Creek
- 1986 – South east of Metcalfe
- 1981 and 1996 – Castlemaine Woollen Mill
- 1980 – North West of Maldon, Muckleford Forest
- 1979-80 – Golden Point (east of Maldon, Muckleford / Walmer area)
- 1975 – South west of Redesdale
- 1969 – North and North West of Maldon, and south of Strathlea
- 1965 – South Ravenswood
- Circa 1963 – Walmer
- 1958 and 2001 – Harcourt Cool Store
- 1957 – Harcourt Sawmill.

The most recent large fire event experienced in the Loddon Shire was the Morse's Road fire (26 January 2006). The Morse's road fire burnt 34 square kilometres of open plains crop and grassland at an average speed of 6 kph under an extreme FDR. The fire crossed several major roads including the Wimmera Highway. The fire was contained within 12 hrs, using direct attack with CFA tankers, Council Graders and DSE Bulldozers and crews.

3.2 Climate

Mount Alexander has cool damp winters and hot dry summers. The month with the highest average temperatures is February with a mean maximum of 28.4°C and a mean minimum of 13.5°C. The other summer months also have average maximum temperatures over 25°C and mean minimums of over 10°C – indicating that these months are periods in which heatwaves are likely. The decile 9 maximum temperature for January is 35.5 degrees Celsius and the highest ever recorded temperature was 43.9 degrees Celsius on February 7th 2009 (Black Saturday).

The mean average annual rainfall for Castlemaine is 591 mm. February is the driest month. South West is the dominant wind direction through Spring, Summer and Autumn. February has a noticeably Northerly trend. Average wind speed is the highest in late Spring and early Summer. Weather patterns involving the passage of fronts (South-West wind change) in Summer usually generate high-speed North-Westerly winds with an abrupt South-Westerly change.

3.3 Sources

Arson, lighting strike, grassfires from adjacent property, farming activities, mobile plant fire and electrical failure could all be potential ignition sources as the quarry.

3.4 Risk

With current trends in weather patterns being attributed to climate change, research modelling suggests the future climate will be warmer and drier with more extreme weather events. It can therefore be expected that an increase in the number of extreme fire danger days as well as longer fire seasons will become the norm.

Bushfire threat is not confined to forested environments and the threat of grass fires is a significant one throughout the area. While grassfires may have lower intensities and flame heights than forest fires, the combination of open ground and fine fuels can produce very fast moving, destructive fires.

The Blue Hills Quarry (BLUQ) area has a large area of remnant vegetation and fuel loads. Farming practises in the vicinity also effect levels of fuel. The adjacent farmland presents as a risk when significant grassland dries out. The undulating topography increases the risk at this particular location.

4 Fire Management Plan

4.1 Objective

The aim of the Fire Management Plan is to reduce the threat to adjacent property, vegetation and quarry development.

4.2 Management

As weather conditions cannot be controlled, the following measures will be implemented to reduce the risk of an uncontrolled fire:

Reduce fuel loads by:

- Burning used as an ecologic management tool or to create fire breaks
- Slashing along roadsides and in open areas
- Grazing in neighbouring paddocks
- Spraying where applicable
- Grading fire breaks

Mobile Plant Operations:

- All mobile equipment will be maintained in good working order with appropriate exhaust and fire suppression systems
- No earthmoving equipment will be used to clear vegetation during total fire bans
- Mobile equipment should not be left unattended with the engine running in vegetated areas
- Vehicles will be turned off while refuelling and only refuel in designated areas
- All mobile plant will be supplied with 5 kg dry powder fire extinguishers

Other Quarry Operations:

- Ensure the No Smoking policy is adhered to across Blue Hills Quarry (BLUQ) area
- Ensure all access tracks and fire breaks are regularly maintained
- Welding or cutting should be conducted in accordance with the Mawsons Hot Work Policy
- Ensure good housekeeping is maintained across the quarry
- All work areas should be equipped with appropriate fire extinguishers and their locations indicated by appropriate signage
- All fire equipment shall be regularly maintained

Weather:

If the fire rating for the day is Very High or above, the Quarry Manager will:

- Notify site personnel of the increased risk of fire and stress the need to be vigilant in managing potential ignition sources
- Regularly check the quarry site and horizon for smoke
- Regularly check the media for news of neighbouring fires

5 Estate Layout

The main access to Blue Hills Quarry (BLUQ) area is off Bells Lane as shown in in Figure 1 Bushfire Management Plan Area. A secondary access if required is off Lakey's Road. There is also a small dam which can be accessed for fire water if required.

Details of tracks on site can are shown in Figure 3 and also found in [propeller](#). Recent aerial imagery should be provided to the CFA at a regular frequency as new tracks are developed. .

6 Fire Fighting

- The person discovering the fire should immediately notify the Quarry Manager or whoever is in charge of the quarry at the time
- The 'person in charge' shall immediately investigate the situation, take control of the situation, arrange for electrical supply to be switched off to the area, delegate somebody to telephone 000 and request the Fire Brigade and then decide whether to attack the fire or order an evacuation of the quarry.
- If the decision is to fight the fire, the 'person in charge' shall muster all available resources using fire hoses and extinguishers until the Fire Brigade arrives. The 'person in charge' shall delegate somebody to await the arrival of the Fire Brigade at the quarry entrance, inform them of the situation, and guide them to the fire. If chemicals are involved, a copy of the Material Safety Data Sheet should be provided to the Fire Brigade.
- If the decision is taken to evacuate, the 'person in charge' should ensure that all personnel including visitors and contractors leave the area and muster in the Visitor's Carpark. A roll call should be conducted using the Visitor's book to ensure that everyone onsite has evacuated. The 'person in charge' should also take a first aid kit to the muster area.
- The 'person in charge' must notify the General Manager – Quarries of the situation and await instruction.
- No one should return to the quarry until approved to do so by the Fire Brigade.

Only attempt to extinguish the fire when it is possible to do so, do not place yourself or others at risk of injury.

7 Using A Fire Extinguisher

- Make sure you are using the correct extinguisher for the type of fire
- Keep an emergency exit between you and the fire
- Stay low to avoid heat and smoke

- Direct extinguisher stream at the base of the flame, not at the smoke
- Use a side to side sweeping motion over the burning surface
- Sweep from front edge to the rear, then up a vertical surface
- After the fire is extinguished, pull apart the burnt area to get to hot spots
- If fire gets out of control, retreat. If in a building, close the door to prevent an oxygen supply to the fire

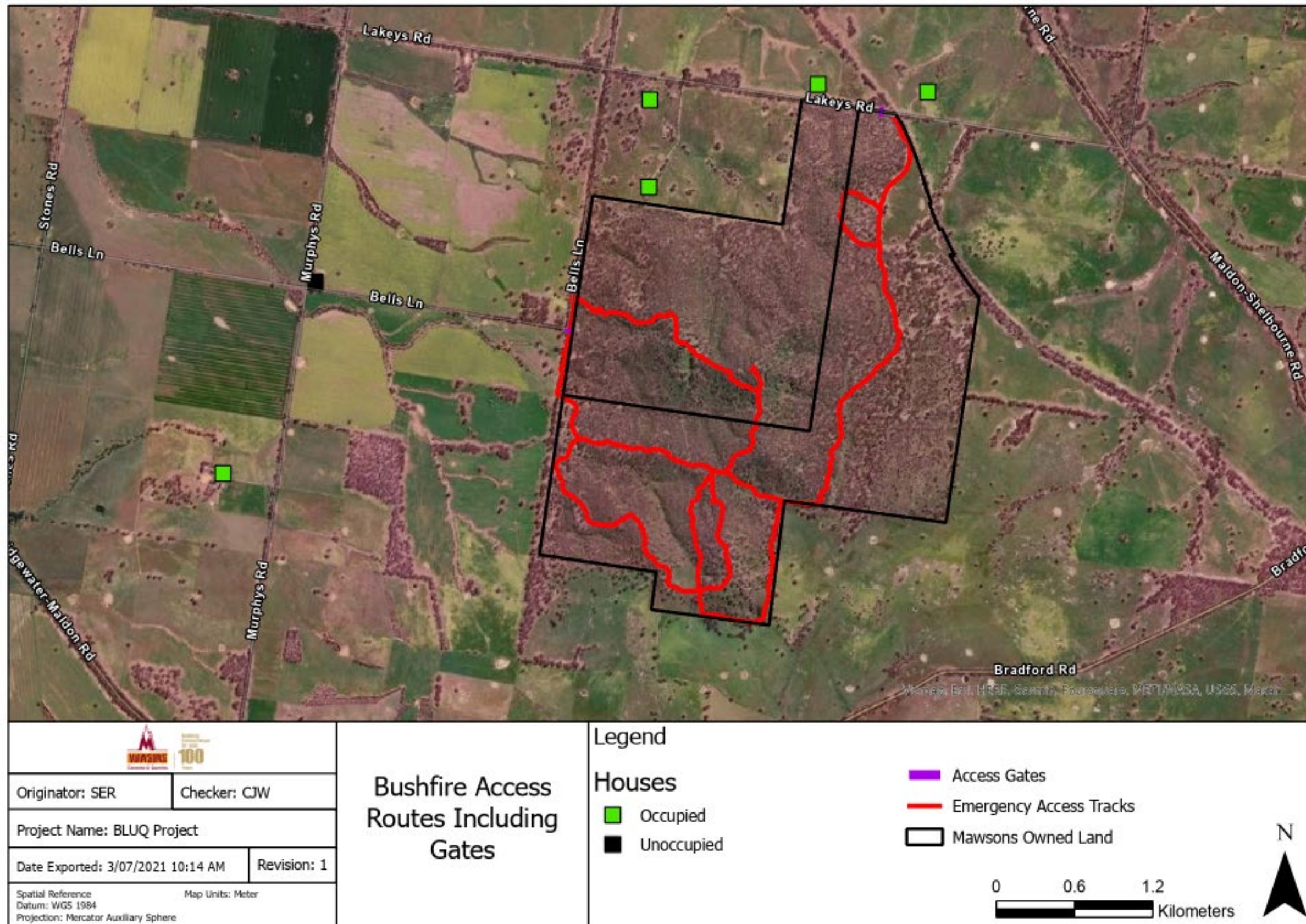


Figure 2 Bushfire Access Routes including Gates



Figure 3- High Resolution Imagery - Access tracks

8 Relevant Documents

- 8.1 Procedure OHS – HS003 Emergency Response
- 8.2 Hot Works Permit SOP – WHS-SOP-009

9 Document History

Revision	Date	Amended By	Reason for Change
0	09/09/21	C Ward	Document Created
1	15/11/2022	C Ward	Updated with reference to detailed tracks in high res imagery. Requirements to give updated map to CFA.
2	28/06/2023	C Ward	Updated to reflect role changes