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Signed M Brown					
Sheet No	3	of	8		

# **BUSHFIRE ASSESSMENT REPORT**

# REPAIRS & REPLACEMENT WORKS RIVERSIDE CABINS, 1 DIGGINGS TERRACE THREDBO ALPINE RESORT



## AUGUST 2020 Project: 17-20

# CONTENTS

## Glossary

1	<b>Intr</b> 1.1 1.2 1.3		<b>3</b> 3 6
2	2.1	islation NSW Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 and Rural Fires Act 1997	<b>8</b> 8
3	2.2 <b>Met</b> 3.1 3.2 3.3	Planning for Bushfire Protection 2019 <b>:hodology</b> Site Inspection Vegetation Communities Slope	8 9 9 9
4	<b>Veg</b> 4.1	etation Classification and Slope Assessment Vegetation & Slope Classification	<b>10</b> 10
5	Sigr	nificant Environmental Features	11
6	<b>Bus</b> 6.1 6.2	hfire Assessment Special Fire Protection Purpose Developments 6.1.1 Minor Developments in SFPP Developments 6.1.2 Alpine Resorts Standards for Bush Fire Protection Measures for Special Fire Protection Purpose Developments 6.2.1 Asset Protection Zones (APZs) and building construction	<b>12</b> 12 12 13 13
		<ul> <li>6.2.2 Access</li> <li>6.2.3 Services - Water, gas &amp; electricity</li> <li>6.2.4 Emergency Management Planning</li> </ul>	15 16 18
7	Con	clusion	20

# GLOSSARY

APZ	Asset Protection Zone
AS 3959-2009	Australian Standard 3959-2018: Construction of buildings in bushfire prone areas
BCA	Building Code of Australia
BFSA	Bush Fire Safety Authority
CC	Construction Certificate
DA	Development Application
EP&A Act	Environmental Planning Assessment Act, 1979
IPA	Inner Protection Area
KNP	Kosciuszko National Park
kW/m²	kilowatts per square metre (being a measure of radiant heat)
PBP	Planning for Bushfire Protection 2019
RF Act	Rural Fires Act 1997
RFS	NSW Rural Fire Service
SFPP	Special Fire Protection Purpose

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Purpose

Dabyne Planning Pty Ltd has been engaged to undertake a Bushfire Assessment Report to accompany a Development Application for repairs and replacement works to forty-five (45) of the fifty (50) cabins at the Riverside Cabins complex, located at 1 Diggings Terrace, Thredbo Alpine Resort.

The report has been prepared in accordance with Section 4.47 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1979 (EP&A Act, 1979), and Section 100B of the NSW Rural Fires Act, 1997 (RF Act, 1997) and based on the published Planning for Bushfire Protection 2019 Guidelines (PBP).

## 1.2 Site Description & Proposal

The application relates to Riverside Cabins, located at 1 Diggings Terrace, Thredbo Alpine Resort. The property is legally described as Lot 772 DP 1119757.

The site comprises of fifty (50) cabins used for tourist accommodation.

The proposal seeks consent to undertake repairs and replacement works to the external fabric of forty-five (45) cabins. These maintenance works include replacing the external cedar cladding with either bushfire resistant hardwood cladding or metal cladding, replacing the timber decking boards and decking fascia and repairing the underfloor by fixing metal soffit lining to the underside of the cabins.

These works are scheduled to be undertaken in stages over numerous summers and are required due to ongoing maintenance issues. The works will ensure the longevity of the subject cabins whilst also improving their bushfire risk outcome. This process has been subject to a thorough Architectural design process to ensure that the original design intent and aesthetic associated with the cabins is not compromised whilst achieving an improved maintenance outcome.

All the works are proposed entirely within the existing building footprint with no change to the volume, floor space or overall building envelope with no on ground impacts.

The subject site is illustrated in context with the locality in figures 1 & 2 below:



Figure 1: Aerial map of the subject site



Figure: 2 Topographic map of the subject site

The following photos identify the cabins exteriors requiring repairs and replacement work:

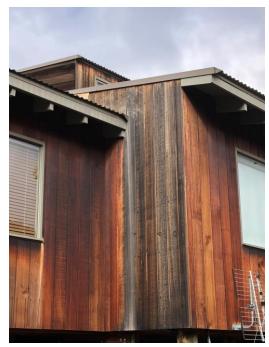


Figure 3: Photo showing the deteriorated cladding requiring replacement



Figure 5: Photo of the lantern façade cladding requiring replacement



Figure 4: Photo showing the deteriorated cladding, decking boards and decking fascia requiring



Figure 6: Photo of a typical cabin with its cedar cladding





Figure 8: Photo of a cabin with the original cladding requiring replacement and further back a cabin recently re-cladded

Figure 7: Photo of the underside of the cabins to be lined with metal soffit lining

## 1.3 Bushfire Prone Land

The subject site is located partly within a buffer area and partly within areas mapped as bushfire prone vegetation as extracted from the NSW Department of Planning, Industry & Environment Planning Portal website as shown in figure 9 below. The development is therefore subject to S.100B of the NSW Rural Fires Act, 1997.



Figure 9: Bushfire Prone Land map for the subject site

# 2. LEGISLATION

## 2.1 NSW Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 and Rural Fires Act 1997

As identified above, the subject site is located within a designated bushfire-prone area and as the development is for the purpose of 'tourist accommodation', the development is classed as being for a 'Special Fire Protection Purpose'.

The development application is therefore categorised as an Integrated Development under S.4.46 of the EP&A Act, 1979 and therefore requires a Bushfire Safety Authority from the NSW Rural Fire Service under S.100B of the RF Act, 1997.

Clause 44 of the Rural Fires Regulation 2013 sets out the matters that must be assessed in an application for a Bush Fire Safety Authority including a description of the property, classification of the vegetation, slope assessment, identification of significant environmental features, and details of threatened species and Aboriginal relic or place.

Clause 44(1)(g) of the Rural Fires Regulation 2013 specifies that a bushfire assessment for a proposed development must address the following matters:

*(i) the extent to which the development is to provide for setbacks, including asset protection zones,* 

(ii) the siting and adequacy of water supplies for fire fighting,

(iii) the capacity of public roads in the vicinity to handle increased volumes of traffic in the event of a bush fire emergency,

(iv) whether or not public roads in the vicinity that link with the fire trail network have two-way access,

(v) the adequacy of arrangements for access to and egress from the development site for the purposes of an emergency response,

(vi) the adequacy of bush fire maintenance plans and fire emergency procedures for the development site,

(vii) the construction standards to be used for building elements in the development, and

(viii) the adequacy of sprinkler systems and other fire protection measures to be incorporated into the development.'

This Bushfire Assessment Report has been undertaken in accordance with the requirements stipulated above, where considered relevant in context of the proposed development.

## 2.2 Planning for Bushfire Protection 2019

The NSW Rural Fire Service 'Planning for Bushfire Protection, 2019: A Guide for Councils, Planners, Fire Authorities and Developers' applies to the proposed development as it was adopted on the 1 March 2020.

The subject site is located within the Thredbo Alpine Resort, which is located within the NSW Alpine Resorts as discussed on page 53 of PBP.

Under PBP, a 1:50 fire weather scenario has been determined for the Alpine Resorts, being FFDI 50.

# 3. METHODOLOGY

## 3.1 Site Inspection

A site inspection was undertaken by Dabyne Planning Pty Ltd in May 2020, to determine the potential bushfire risks associated with the site. The guidelines for bushfire risk assessment as set out in PBP were used to determine these potential bushfire risks.

## 3.2 Vegetation Communities

The vegetation and plant communities within 140m of the site were determined by undertaking a site inspection and consulting PBP and the vegetation types identified in *Ocean Shores to Desert Dunes'*, by Kieth (2004).

The classification under David Keith's *'Ocean Shores to Desert Dunes'* (used in PBP) were then converted to the 'Sprect' classifications using Table A3.5.1 in the Appendix 3 Addendum.

This vegetation classification was also informed by consulting the plant community maps identified in the *Kosciuszko Resorts Vegetation Assessment 2002*, prepared by Ecology Australia, in association with NGH Environmental, for Planning NSW (now Department of Planning, Industry & Environment).

## 3.3 Slope

The slope assessment has been based on the topographical contour lines sourced from the Department of Lands mapping and on-site assessment.

Slope over a distance of at least 100m from the building footprint on the development site towards the vegetation communities that constitute the predominant hazard has been considered.

The gradient that will most significantly influence the fire behaviour will be used for the bush fire attack assessment.

## 4. VEGETATION CLASSIFICATION & SLOPE ASSESSMENT

## 4.1 Vegetation & Slope Classification

The vegetation formation to the west and south-west is considered to have the most influence in the event of a bushfire, as illustrated in figure 10 below. This is categorised as 'Forest' vegetation.



Figure 10: Aerial view showing the surrounding vegetation

The distance of the closest unmanaged vegetation to the closest group of cabins is approximately 7-10m from the proposed external alterations, with this vegetation located within the river corridor, downslope at 5-10 degrees and the predominant vegetation located up the valley, being upslope.

## 5. SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES

The proposed repairs and replacement works are located within the existing building footprint with no impact on native vegetation and therefore an assessment in respect to threatened species, populations, endangered ecological communities or critical habitat is not required to be undertaken. Furthermore, an assessment of Aboriginal heritage is also not warranted.

## 6. BUSHFIRE ASSESSMENT

#### 6.1 Special Fire Protection Purpose Developments

#### 6.1.1 Minor Development in SFPP Facilities

In accordance with Section 6.5 of PBP, minor non-structural works such as the replacement of cladding, balustrades and structural foundations '<u>do not have any influence on potential bush</u> <u>fire impacts and the bush fire protection of the building</u>. For this reason, the NSW RFS does not consider that a BFSA is necessary for the development types listed above. Wherever applicable, the building elements concerned will need to comply with the requirements of AS 3959 or NASH Standard under the NCC'.

Given that these types of works do not have any influence on potential bush fire impacts and do not require a BFSA, then they should not be subject to the Integrated Development provisions of the EP&A Act, 1979 and therefore not require a BFSA under S.100B of the Rural Fires Act, 1997.

#### 6.1.2 Alpine Resorts

The specific objectives that apply to SFPP infill development in the alpine resort areas are as follows:

- provide an appropriate defendable space;
- provide a better bush fire protection outcome for existing structures (e.g. via ember protection measures);
- ensure new building work complies with the construction standards set out in AS 3959;
- to ensure ongoing management and maintenance responsibilities are in place where APZs are proposed outside of the sub lease or leasehold area;
- written consent from the land managers is provided for all proposed works outside of the sub lease or leasehold area;
- proposed APZs outside of the sub lease or leasehold area are supported by a suitable legal mechanism to ensure APZs are managed under a binding legal agreement in perpetuity;
- ensure building design and construction standards enhance the chances of occupant and building survival; and
- provide safe emergency evacuation procedures.

Any additional construction requirements should be commensurate with the following:

- the scope of the proposed works, including any increase in size and footprint of the building;
- any additional capacity for the accommodation of guests and/or staff on site; and
- the cost associated with the proposed upgrade of any building.

The NSW RFS has an expectation that a better bush fire outcome is achieved where new development is proposed in association with existing facilities.

The proposed repairs and replacement works with bushfire resistant hardwood timber & metal cladding and lining will result in a better bush fire outcome.

# 6.2 Standards for Bush Fire Protection Measures for Special Fire Protection Purpose Developments

#### 6.2.1 Asset Protection Zones (APZs) and building construction

Intent of measures: to provide sufficient space for fire fighters and other emergency services personnel, ensuring radiant heat levels permit operations under critical conditions of radiant heat, smoke and embers, while supporting or evacuating occupants.

An assessment of the proposal in accordance with the performance criteria and acceptable solutions for APZs and construction for SFPP development in accordance with Table 6.8a has been provided below.

APZs:			
<b>Performance Criteria</b> The intent may be achieved where:	Acceptable Solutions	Can Comply?	Comments
radiant heat levels of greater than 10kW/ m <sup>2</sup> (calculated at 1200K) will not be experienced on any part of the building.	➤ the building is provided with an APZ in accordance with Table A1.12.1 in Appendix 1.	Х	See discussion below.
APZ maintenance is practical, soil stability is not compromised and the potential for crown fires is minimised.	APZs are located on lands with a slope less than 18 degrees.	~	Complies.
<ul> <li>APZs are managed and maintained to prevent the spread of fire to the building.</li> <li>the APZ is provided in</li> </ul>	The APZ is managed in accordance with the requirements of Appendix 4 of this document, and is wholly within the boundaries of the development site;	Х	See discussion below.
perpetuity.	<ul> <li>APZ are wholly within the boundaries of the development site; and</li> </ul>	Х	See discussion below.
	<ul> <li>other structures located within the APZ need to be located further than 6m from the refuge building.</li> </ul>	N/A	No other structure proposed.
VARIATIONS:			No variations have been afforded to the Alpine Resorts.
Landscaping:			
Iandscaping is designed and managed to minimise flame	<ul> <li>landscaping is in accordance with Appendix 4; and</li> </ul>	N/A	Not applicable.
contact and radiant heat to buildings, and the potential for wind-driven embers to cause ignitions.	Fencing is constructed in accordance with section 7.6.	N/A	No fencing is proposed.
<b>Construction Standards</b>	:		

≻ the proposed building can	≻ a construction level of BAL-12.5	N/A	The proposal does not comprise
withstand bush fire attack in	under AS 3959 or NASH Standard		of a new building or any new
the form of wind, embers,	and section 7.5 of PBP is applied.		additions which would warrant
radiant heat and flame			compliance with a Bushfire Attack
contact.			Level under AS 3959.
			The proposal is for repairs and
			replacement works which will
			result in a better bushfire risk
			outcome.

#### APZ:

The minimum APZ for Forest vegetation with an effective downslope of 5-10 degrees is 93m and with an effective upslope to the predominant vegetation formation to the west and southwest is 67m.

This is in accordance with Table A1.12.1 in PBP, 2019, as provided below:

#### Table A1.12.1

Minimum distances for APZs – SFPP developments ( $\leq$ 10kW/m<sup>2</sup>, 1200K)

	EFFECTIVE SLOPE				
KEITH VEGETATION FORMATION	Up slopes and flat	>0*-5*	>5*-10*	>10*-15*	>15*-20*
	Distance (	(m) from the ass	et to the predomi	nant vegetation f	ormation
Rainforest	38	47	57	69	81
Forest (wet and dry sclerophyll) including Coastal Swamp Forest, Pine Plantations and Sub-Alpine Woodland	67	79	93	100	100
Grassy and Semi-Arid Woodland (including Mallee)	42	50	60	72	85
Forested Wetland (excluding Coastal Swamp Forest)	34	42	51	62	73
Tall Heath	50	56	61	67	72
Short Heath	33	37	41	45	49
Arid-Shrublands (acacia and chenopod)	24	27	30	34	37
Freshwater Wetlands	19	22	25	28	30
Grassland	36	40	45	50	55

Unlike PBP, 2006 where the Alpine Resorts were exempt from providing a minimum distance for APZ's, PBP 2019 includes the above table with no exemption or variation afforded.

The existing cabins are not able to comply with A1.12.1 with the APZ not able to be achieved.

As the proposal is for only repairs and replacement works that are considered to be minor works to an SFPP development, compliance with table A1.12.1 is not considered necessary.

This is because:

- Minor non-structural works such as the replacement of cladding 'do not have any influence on potential bush fire impacts and the bush fire protection of the building' in accordance with Section 6.5 of PBP.
- > The proposed repairs and replacement works will result in a better bushfire risk outcome, achieving the objectives for the Alpine Resorts under Section 6.6 of PBP.

#### 6.2.2 Access

#### Intent of measures: to provide safe operational access for emergency services personnel in suppressing a bush fire, while residents are accessing or egressing an area.

An assessment of the proposal in accordance with the performance criteria and acceptable solutions for APZs and construction for SFPP development in accordance with Table 6.8b has been provided below.

Access:			
<b>Performance Criteria</b> The intent may be achieved where:	Acceptable Solutions	Can Comply?	Comments
➢ firefighting vehicles are provided with safe, all-	<ul> <li>SFPP access roads are two-wheel drive, all-weather roads;</li> </ul>	$\checkmark$	Access road is two-wheel drive and all-weather.
weather access to structures and hazard vegetation.	> access is provided to all structures;	N/A	Not relevant to the proposed works.
	traffic management devices are constructed to not prohibit access by emergency services vehicles;	N/A	Not relevant to the proposed works.
	<ul> <li>access roads must provide suitable turning areas in accordance with Appendix 3; and</li> </ul>	N/A	Not relevant to the proposed works.
	one way only public access roads are no less than 3.5 metres wide and have designated parking bays with hydrants located outside of these areas to ensure accessibility to reticulated water for fire suppression.	N/A	Not relevant to the proposed works.
<ul> <li>the capacity of access roads is adequate for firefighting vehicles.</li> </ul>	the capacity of road surfaces and any bridges/causeways is sufficient to carry fully loaded firefighting vehicles (up to 23 tonnes); bridges and causeways are to clearly indicate load rating.	N/A	Not relevant to the proposed works.
there is appropriate access to water supply.	hydrants are located outside of parking reserves and road carriageways to ensure accessibility to reticulated water for fire suppression;	N/A	Not relevant to the proposed works.
	hydrants are provided in accordance with the relevant clauses of AS 2419.1:2005; and	N/A	Not relevant to the proposed works.
	there is suitable access for a Category 1 fire appliances to within 4m of the static water supply where no reticulated supply is available.	N/A	Not relevant to the proposed works.

#### 6.2.3 Services - Water, gas & electricity

#### Intent of measures: to provide adequate services of water for the protection of buildings during and after the passage of a bush fire, and to locate gas and electricity so as not to contribute to the risk of fire to a building.

An assessment of the proposal in accordance with the performance criteria and acceptable solutions for APZs and construction for SFPP development in accordance with Table 6.8c has been provided below.

Water Supply:	Accentable Calutions	0	Commente
Performance Criteria The intent may be achieved where:	Acceptable Solutions	Can Comply?	Comments
<ul> <li>an adequate water supply for firefighting purposes is installed and maintained.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>reticulated water is to be provided to the development, where available; or</li> </ul>	~	Reticulated water is available.
	a 10,000 litres minimum static water supply for firefighting purposes is provided for each occupied building where no reticulated water is available.	N/A	Not applicable.
<ul> <li>water supplies are located at regular intervals.</li> <li>the water supply is accessible</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>fire hydrant spacing, design and sizing comply with the relevant clauses of AS 2419.1:2005;</li> </ul>	N/A	Not relevant to the proposed works.
and reliable for firefighting operations.	<ul> <li>hydrants are not located within any road carriageway; and</li> </ul>	N/A	Not relevant to the proposed works
	<ul> <li>reticulated water supply to SFPPs uses a ring main system for areas with perimeter roads.</li> </ul>	N/A	Not relevant to the proposed works
<ul> <li>flows and pressure are appropriate.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>fire hydrant flows and pressures comply with the relevant clauses of AS 2419.1:2005</li> </ul>	N/A	Not relevant to the proposed works
the integrity of the water supply is maintained.	<ul> <li>all above-ground water service pipes external to the building are metal, including and up to any taps.</li> </ul>	N/A	Not relevant to the proposed works
water supplies are adequate in areas where reticulated water is not available.	a connection for firefighting purposes is located within the IPA or non hazard side and away from the structure; a 65mm Storz outlet with a ball valve is fitted to the outlet;	N/A	Not applicable.
	ball valve and pipes are adequate for water flow and are metal;	N/A	Not applicable.
	supply pipes from tank to ball valve have the same bore size to ensure flow volume;	N/A	Not applicable.
	underground tanks have an access hole of 200mm to allow tankers to refill direct from the tank;	N/A	Not applicable.

	a hardened ground surface for truck access is supplied within 4m of the access hole;	N/A	Not applicable.
	<ul> <li>above-ground tanks are manufactured from concrete or metal;</li> </ul>	N/A	Not applicable.
	raised tanks have their stands constructed from non-combustible material or bush fire-resisting timber (see Appendix F AS 3959);	N/A	Not applicable.
	<ul> <li>unobstructed access is provided at all times;</li> </ul>	N/A	Not applicable.
	tanks on the hazard side of a building are provided with adequate shielding for the protection of firefighters; and	N/A	Not applicable.
	<ul> <li>underground tanks are clearly marked,</li> </ul>	N/A	Not applicable.
	<ul> <li>all exposed water pipes external to the building are metal, including any fittings;</li> </ul>	N/A	Not applicable.
	where pumps are provided, they are a minimum 5hp or 3kW petrol or diesel-powered pump, and are shielded against bush fire attack; Any hose and reel for firefighting connected to the pump shall be 19mm internal diameter; and	N/A	Not applicable.
	fire hose reels are constructed in accordance with AS/NZS 1221:1997 Fire hose reels, and installed in accordance with the relevant clauses of AS 2441:2005 Installation of fire hose reels.	N/A	Not applicable.
Electricity Services:			
<ul> <li>location of electricity services</li> <li>limits the possibility of ignition</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>where practicable, electrical transmission lines are underground;</li> </ul>	$\checkmark$	Electricity supply is provided underground.

of surrounding bush land or the fabric of buildings.	<ul> <li>where overhead, electrical transmission lines are proposed as follow:</li> <li>lines are installed with short pole spacing (30m), unless crossing gullies, gorges or riparian areas; and</li> <li>no part of a tree is closer to a power line than the distance set out in accordance with the specifications in ISSC3 Guideline for Managing Vegetation Near Power Lines.</li> </ul>	N/A	Not applicable.
Gas Services:			
Iocation and design of gas services will not lead to ignition of surrounding bushland or the fabric of buildings.	reticulated or bottled gas is installed and maintained in accordance with AS/NZS 1596:2014 and the requirements of relevant authorities, and metal piping is used;	N/A	Not relevant to the proposed works
	all fixed gas cylinders are kept clear of all flammable materials to a distance of 10m and shielded on the hazard side;	N/A	Not relevant to the proposed works
	<ul> <li>connections to and from gas cylinders are metal;</li> </ul>	N/A	Not relevant to the proposed works
	if gas cylinders need to be kept close to the building, safety valves are directed away from the building and at least 2m away from any combustible material, so they do not act as a catalyst to combustion;	N/A	Not relevant to the proposed works
	polymer-sheathed flexible gas supply lines to gas meters adjacent to buildings are not to be used; and	N/A	Not relevant to the proposed works
	above-ground gas service pipes external to the building are metal, including and up to any outlets.	N/A	Not relevant to the proposed works

#### 6.2.4 Emergency Management Planning

Intent of measures: to provide suitable emergency and evacuation arrangements for occupants of SFPP developments.

Emergency Management:					
Performance Criteria	Acceptable Solutions	Can	Comments		
The intent may be achieved where:		Comply?			

a Bush Fire Emergency Management and Evacuation Plan is prepared.	<ul> <li>Bush Fire Emergency Management and Evacuation Plan is prepared consistent with the:         <ul> <li>The NSW RFS document: A Guide to Developing a Bush Fire Emergency Management and Evacuation Plan;</li> <li>NSW RFS Schools Program Guide;</li> <li>Australian Standard AS 3745:2010 Planning for emergencies in facilities; and</li> <li>Australian Standard AS 4083:2010 Planning for emergencies – Health care facilities (where applicable).</li> <li>the Bush Fire Emergency Management and Evacuation Plan should include planning for the early</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		Thredbo Alpine Resort has a village wide Bush Fire Emergency Management and Evacuation Plan
appropriate and adequate management arrangements are established for consultation and implementation of the Bush Fire Emergency Management and Evacuation Plan.	<ul> <li>relocation of occupants.</li> <li>an Emergency Planning Committee is established to consult with residents (and their families in the case of aged care accommodation and schools) and staff in developing and implementing an Emergency Procedures Manual; and</li> <li>detailed plans of all emergency assembly areas including on site and off-site arrangements as stated in AS 3745:2010 are clearly displayed, and an annually emergency evacuation is conducted.</li> </ul>	N/A N/A	Not relevant to the proposed works Not relevant to the proposed works

Riverside Cabins, Thredbo ♦ Bushfire Assessment Report | August 2020

# 7. CONCLUSION

As identified above, the proposed development comprises of repairs and replacement works.

According to PBP, 2019 minor non-structural works such as the replacement of cladding, replacement of decking boards and fascia and repairing the underside of buildings do not have any influence on potential bush fire impacts and the bush fire protection of the building. For this reason, the NSW RFS does not consider that a BFSA is necessary for this type of development.

Contrary to the provisions under PBP, 2019, the exemptions afforded under clause 45 of the Rural Fires Regulations, 2013 were not amended as part of the implementation of the implementation of PBP, 2019 on the 1 March 2020. Therefore, a BFSA may still to be required for minor developments comprising of repairs and replacement works to a SFPP development, contrary to PBP, 2019.

In accordance with the specific provisions for the Alpine Resorts, the NSW RFS has an expectation that a better bush fire outcome is achieved where new development is proposed in association with existing facilities.

The proposed repairs and replacement works allow for deteriorated timber cedar cladding to be replaced with bushfire resistant hardwood cladding for the main building facades and metal cladding for the lantern roof facades. This will result in a far greater bushfire risk outcome.

The proposed repairs and replacement works will also allow for deteriorated timber decking boards and decking fascia to be replaced with bushfire resistant hardwood timber.

The exposed underside of the underfloor of the cabins which have been damaged and comprise of Tyvec paper and chicken wire are proposed to be upgraded with metal soffit lining.

These works will result in a far greater bushfire risk outcome, which therefore achieves the objectives as set out for the Alpine Resorts.

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