Australian Bushfire ASSESSMENT CONSULTANTS

- Design & Assessment of Development in Bushfire Prone Areas
- Bushfire Risk Assessment & Management Plans
- Bushfire Evacuation Plans
- Building Solutions Advice for Bushfire Prone Areas

Bushfire Assessment

Proposed dwelling additions and deck

Lot 1 DP 883594
314 Saltwater Road, Wallabi Point

June 2025
Final

Prepared for
J Bouchet

Project No: 25157

ABAC Group Pty Ltd t/a
ABAC Australian Bushfire Assessment Consultants
ABN: 75 630 374 060
Email: office@accuplan.com.au
Telephone: 02 6555 5522
PO Box 34 Forster NSW 2428

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Prepared by:

Matt Clancy

Registered Planner (RPIA)
Bachelor of Environmental Science (Honours)
Graduate Certificate in Environmental Management
Graduate Diploma in Bushfire Protection
Bushfire Planning and Design Accredited Practitioner: Level 2 – NSW (Accreditation Number BPAD63149)

Report History

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1. INTRODUCTION

This Bushfire Assessment has been prepared in relation to proposed dwelling additions and deck on land at Lot 1 DP 883594, 314 Saltwater Road, Wallabi Point.

The land within the site and surrounds is mapped as bushfire prone land for the purposes of Section 10.3 of the *Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act).

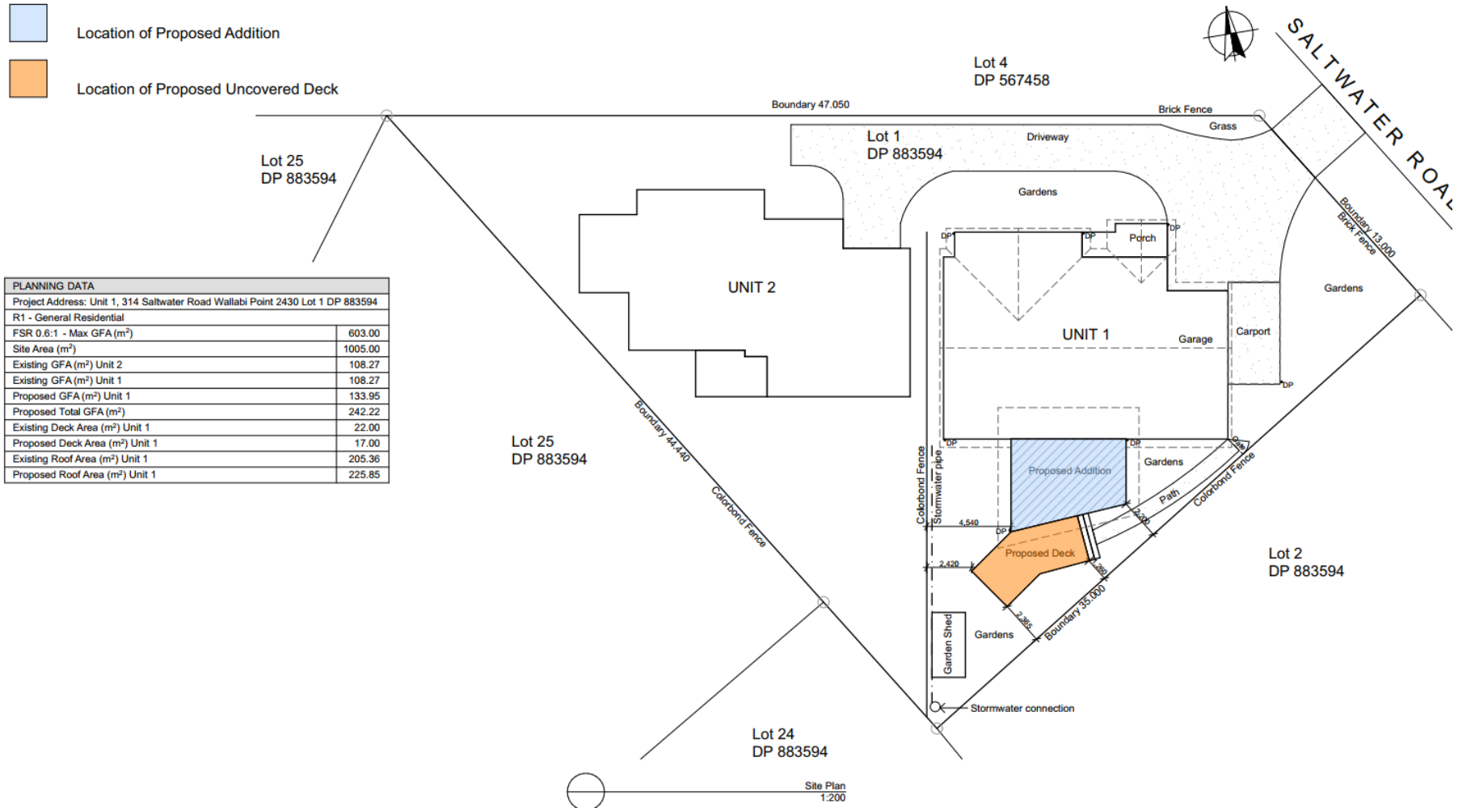
As the land within the site is mapped as bushfire prone land, the purpose of this Bushfire Assessment is to assist in the planning process, to identify the proximity of the proposed new dwelling to any potential bushfire threat and to determine what, if any, level of construction is required in accordance with the New South Wales Rural Fire Service guideline, *Planning for Bush Fire Protection 2019* (PBP).

2. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The proposed development involves the construction of a new family room addition to the southern (rear) elevation of the existing dwelling (Unit 1). The proposal also involves construction of a new deck extending from the southern elevation of the family room additions.

The proposed development is shown on plans by Josh Hayes Building Design and Drafting, *Proposed Addition* (Project no. J0166, dated 23.06.2025).

An extract of the site plan is at Figure 2.1.



PLANNING DATA	
Project Address: Unit 1, 314 Saltwater Road Wallabi Point 2430 Lot 1 DP 883594	
R1 - General Residential	
FSR 0.6:1 - Max GFA (m^2)	603.00
Site Area (m^2)	1005.00
Existing GFA (m^2) Unit 2	108.27
Existing GFA (m^2) Unit 1	108.27
Proposed GFA (m^2) Unit 1	133.95
Proposed Total GFA (m^2)	242.22
Existing Deck Area (m^2) Unit 1	22.00
Proposed Deck Area (m^2) Unit 1	17.00
Existing Roof Area (m^2) Unit 1	205.36
Proposed Roof Area (m^2) Unit 1	225.85

Figure 2.1: Site plan extract
Source: Josh Hayes Building Design and Drafting. Not to scale.

3. SITE DESCRIPTION

Address	314 Saltwater Road, Wallabi Point
Lot / DP	Lot 1 DP 883594
Zoning	R1 General Residential
Local EPI	Greater Taree Local Environmental Plan 2010
FDI	North Coast Fire Weather District (FDI 80)

The site is on the western side of Saltwater Road, opposite the intersection with Walter Fay Street.

The site contains two detached dwellings (dual occupancy) which were built in around 2001. Unit 1 (the subject dwelling) is located in the front/eastern part of the site; while Unit 2 is located in the rear/western part of the site.

The site is surrounded to the south and west by established residential development. Land to the north of the site (Lot 4 DP567458) is a large parcel of freehold land that contains a dwelling and extensive areas of native vegetation that are contiguous with vegetated landscapes to the west. Vegetation within Lot 4, adjacent to the northern boundary of the subject site, is presently managed as mown lawn and gardens with minimal bushfire hazard potential.

Vegetated land is also located north-east of the site, on the eastern side of Walter Fay Street.

Land within the site is mapped as buffer to Category 1 bushfire prone land (see Figure 3.1).

Figure 3.1: Site Locality and Bushfire Prone Land Map

The following photos show the condition of the site and surrounding lands.

Photo 3.1: Looking west across the site from Saltwater Road

Photo 3.2: Looking west across neighbouring land to the north, showing existing areas of maintained land and nearest forest hazards (the site is to the left of the photo)

3.1 Vegetation Classification

The nearest vegetation that could present a bushfire hazard is located to the north of the site, at Lot 4 DP567458 (Photo 3.2). The land adjacent to the northern boundary is maintained in a minimal fuel condition for approximately 30 metres perpendicular to the site; however, there are no formal arrangements ensuring that this management will continue in perpetuity. Therefore, it has been assumed that management may cease and the land, presently maintained as lawn and gardens, could regenerate to present a bushfire hazard.

Bushfire prone vegetation also exists on the opposite side of Saltwater Road, on the eastern side of Walter Fay Street.

Vegetation on land to the north and east of the site has been classified as "Forest" for the purposes of determining BALs.

3.2 Separation

The following separation distances are available between the proposed additions and the nearest classified vegetation to the north and east:

- 17.4 metres to the northern boundary (at the closest point); and
- ~50 metres to vegetation on the north-eastern side of Saltwater Road, east of Walter Fay Street.

3.3 Slope Assessment

The slope has been assessed in accordance with the methodology in Section A1.5 of PBP. The assessment of slope was undertaken via analysis of 1 metre resolution Digital Elevation Model (DEM) and through field analysis using a hand-held inclinometer and range finder.

For the purposes of this assessment, the slope of land most likely to influence bushfire behaviour in relation to the proposed additions is:

- *upslope and/or cross slope* to the north / north-west; and
- *>0-5 degrees downslope* to the north-east.

4. BUSHFIRE ASSESSMENT

4.1 Bushfire Attack Levels

The existing dwelling is a Class 1 building for the purposes of Volume 2 of the National Construction Code: Building Code of Australia (BCA). The site is in the North Coast fire (weather) area and is subject to a Fire Danger Index (FDI) of FDI 80.

Appendix 1 of PBP provides the site assessment methodology for determining the applicable Bushfire Attack Level (BAL). Once the BAL is determined, construction requirements for the corresponding BAL apply subject to AS3959-2018: *Construction of buildings in bushfire-prone areas* subject to Section 7.5 of PBP, or *National Association of Steel Framed Housing (2021) Steel Framed Construction in Bush Fire Areas* (as applicable).

The following table provides a determination of Bushfire Attack Level (BAL) as per Table A1.12.6 of PBP 2019 (Determination of BAL, FFDI 80 – residential development) and subsequent required building standards.

Table 4.1: BAL Assessment (Table A1.12.6 of PBP)

Direction	Vegetation Formation	Effective Slope	Available Separation	Bushfire Attack Level (BAL)
Additions (Class 1)				
North/north-west	*Forest*	upslope	~17m	**BAL-40**
North-east	*Forest*	>0-5 degrees	~50	BAL-12.5
Deck (Class 10)				
North/north-west	*Forest*	upslope	~21m	**BAL-29**
North-east	*Forest*	>0-5 degrees	~52	BAL-12.5

As per Table A1.12.6 of PBP, the highest BAL that the proposed dwelling additions is likely to be exposed to is BAL-40. The construction requirements for BAL-40 therefore apply for the purposes of AS 3959-2018 and the additional construction requirements/variations as outlined in 7.5.2 (page 70) of PBP.

4.1.1 Shielding

According to Section A1.8 (Shielding) of PBP 2019, where an elevation is shielded from direct radiant heat arising from bush fire attack, then the construction requirements for that elevation can be reduced to the next lower BAL. A similar provision is contained in Section 3.5 of AS3959-2018.

The elevations of the dwelling additions are located on the southern side of the existing dwelling and do not have any direct 'line of sight' to the vegetation on land to the north of the site.

Applying Section A1.8 of PBP, consideration may be given to construction of all elements of the walls, but not the roof or sub-floor, being reduced by one level of construction to meet the construction requirements for BAL-29 as per AS3959-2018.

Additional construction requirements detailed in Section 7.5.2 of PBP apply in addition to any construction requirements detailed by AS 3959-2018 for the relevant BAL applying to any shielded elevations of the additions.

4.1.2 Better Bushfire Outcomes

Section 8.2.1 of PBP includes considerations where an alteration and/or addition is proposed to a dwelling built prior to 2002 and the existing building has little or no BPMs incorporated into its design. In this circumstance, PBP requires that:

a. consideration must be given to upgrading the existing structure; and

b. the new works are required to comply with the NCC.

As the existing dwelling was constructed prior to 2002, and incorporates no bushfire resisting construction, recommendations are made for the upgrading of the existing building to improve ember protection.

Recommendations are also made for construction of the new building works in accordance with the relevant provisions of AS3959-2018.

4.2 Performance Criteria & Bushfire Protection Measures

Infill development is assessed in accordance with the acceptable solutions and performance criteria in Chapter 7 (Residential Infill Development) of PBP.

Table 4.2 considers the proposal in relation to the relevant performance criteria contained in Chapter 7 (Residential Infill Development) of PBP.

Table 4.2: Relationship to Acceptable Solutions (Table 7.4a) of PBP

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA	RELATIONSHIP OF PROPOSAL TO ACCEPTABLE SOLUTIONS
ASSET PROTECTION ZONES	
APZs are provided commensurate with the construction of the building; and *A defendable space is provided.*	The siting of the existing building provides approximately 17 metres of separation from the proposed additions to the nearest potential forest vegetation to the north. The assessed separation distance assumes that existing maintained land may regenerate as a hazard. As discussed in Section 4.1 above, the determined level of bushfire attack is BAL-40 (subject to shielding of elevations). While available APZs do not achieve the minimum separation in Table A1.12.3 of PBP (BAL-29), it is not feasible to increase separation due to existing building footprints. Recommendations are made for construction of new building work in accordance with AS3959-2018.
APZs are managed and maintained to prevent the spread of a fire to the building.	Recommendations are made for land within the site to be maintained as per Appendix 4 of PBP.
The APZ is provided in perpetuity. APZ maintenance is practical, soil stability is not compromised and the potential for crown fires is minimised.	While adjacent land is maintained to the standard of an APZ, the determination of BALs has assumed that only land within the site may be maintained to the standard of an APZ in perpetuity. APZs are located on lands with a slope less than 18 degrees.
ACCESS	
Firefighting vehicles are provided with safe, all-weather access to structures.	Access to the site is via Saltwater Road, which is a bitumen-sealed, two-way public through road.
The capacity of access roads is adequate for firefighting vehicles.	Public roads have apparent capacity to carry fully loaded firefighting appliances.
There is appropriate access to water supply.	Reticulated water supply is available to the site and the nearest hydrant is at the site frontage.

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA	RELATIONSHIP OF PROPOSAL TO ACCEPTABLE SOLUTIONS
Firefighting vehicles can access the dwelling and exit the property safely.	The site is in an urban area (<70m from a hydrant) and there are no specific access requirements for fire fighting vehicles.
WATER SUPPLIES	
Adequate water supplies are provided for firefighting purposes.	Reticulated water is available to the site and hydrants are at the site frontage.
Water supplies are located at regular intervals; and he water supply is accessible and reliable for firefighting operations.	As above.
Flows and pressure are appropriate.	No information is available as to flows and pressure.
The integrity of the water supply is maintained.	Recommendations are made for all new above ground water supply pipes to be metal.
A static water supply is provided for firefighting purposes in areas where reticulated water is not available.	N/A
ELECTRICITY SERVICES	
location of electricity services limits the possibility of ignition of surrounding bush land or the fabric of buildings.	Underground electricity supply services the existing dwelling.
GAS SERVICES	
location and design of gas services will not lead to ignition of surrounding bushland or the fabric of buildings.	Any bottled gas installations (if proposed) are to be consistent with the relevant acceptable solutions of PBP.
CONSTRUCTION STANDARDS	
the proposed building can withstand bush fire attack in the form of embers, radiant heat and flame contact.	The highest level of bushfire attack is BAL-40 when determined in accordance with Table A 1.12.6 of PBP. As described in Section 4.1.1, each elevation of the proposed addition is shielded from bushfire attack. Consideration may be given to construction of the wall elements to BAL-29.
proposed fences and gates are designed to minimise the spread of bush fire.	There is no new fencing proposed. Existing boundary fencing is metal.

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA	RELATIONSHIP OF PROPOSAL TO ACCEPTABLE SOLUTIONS
proposed Class 10a buildings are designed to minimise the spread of bush fire.	The proposed deck is a Class 10 (attached) structure. Recommendations are made for the deck to incorporate construction to BAL-29 in accordance with AS3959-2019.
LANDSCAPING	
landscaping is designed and managed to minimise flame contact and radiant heat to buildings, and the potential for wind-driven embers to cause ignitions.	Recommendations are made for landscaping (if proposed) to be in accordance with Appendix 4 of PBP.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

In relation to the proposed dwelling additions and deck on land at Lot 1 DP 883594, 314 Saltwater Road, Wallabi Point, it is recommended that:

A. Land within the site is to be managed as an APZ for the purposes of *Planning for Bush Fire Protection 2019* (PBP).

B. APZs are to be maintained in accordance with the requirements of an IPA as described in Appendix 4, Section A4.1.1 of *Planning for Bush Fire Protection 2019* (PBP) and any grassy vegetation within the IPA is to be maintained to a height <100mm. A clear area of low-cut lawn or pavement is to be maintained adjacent to the dwelling.

C. Construction of the proposed dwelling additions is to comply with the construction requirements for BAL-40 as per *AS 3959-2018 (Construction of buildings in bushfire-prone areas)* and the additional construction requirements for BAL-40 as per Section 7.5.2 of PBP, or *National Association of Steel Framed Housing (2021) Steel Framed Construction in Bush Fire Areas*.

D. Applying Section A1.8 of PBP, consideration may be given to all elements of the walls of the proposed additions being reduced by one level of construction to meet the requirements for BAL-29 as per AS3959-2018 and the additional construction requirements for BAL-29 as per Section 7.5.2 of PBP.

A. Construction of the proposed deck is to comply with the construction requirements for BAL-29 as per *AS 3959-2018 (Construction of buildings in bushfire-prone areas)* and the additional

construction requirements for BAL-29 as per Section 7.5.2 of PBP, or *National Association of Steel Framed Housing (2021) Steel Framed Construction in Bush Fire Areas*.

B. The existing building should be upgraded to improve ember protection as follows:

i. Enclosing or covering openings with a corrosion-resistant steel, bronze or aluminium mesh with a maximum aperture of 2mm.

ii. Where applicable this includes the openable portion of the windows, vents, weepholes and eaves, but does not include roof tile spaces.

iii. Weather strips, draught excluders or draught seals shall be installed at the base of side hung external doors as per AS 3959.

C. All new above-ground water service pipes external to the proposed building are to be metal, including and up to any taps.

D. Where bottled gas is proposed:

i. It is to be installed and maintained in accordance with *AS 1596* and the requirements of relevant authorities;

ii. All fixed gas cylinders are to be kept clear of all flammable materials to a distance of 10 metres and shielded on the hazard side of the installation;

iii. If gas cylinders need to be kept close to the building, the release valves are to be directed away from the building and at least 2 metres away from any combustible material.

iv. Connections to and from gas cylinders are to be metal.

E. Occupants are advised to prepare a Bush Fire Survival Plan which is revised annually prior to the bush fire season. A *Guide to Making a Bush Fire Survival Plan* has been developed by the NSW RFS to assist residents in the preparation of their plan and can be found at the NSW RFS website - www.rfs.nsw.gov.au. On days of catastrophic fire weather, the NSW RFS recommends leaving early as the only safe option.

NOTES & DISCLAIMER:

(i) This assessment relates only to the development described in Section 2 of this assessment.

(ii) This assessment has been based on bushfire protection guidelines as outlined in the document entitled Planning for Bush Fire Protection 2019 (PBP).

(iii) Notwithstanding the precautions recommended, it should always be remembered that bushfires burn under a range of conditions and an element of risk, no matter how small, always remains.

(iv) This assessment does not imply or infer any approval for the removal and/or thinning of vegetation for Asset Protection or other purposes. It is the responsibility of the client/landowner to obtain all necessary approvals in this regard.

6. REFERENCES

NSW Rural Fire Service (2019)

Planning for Bush Fire Protection 2019

Standards Australia (2018)

AS 3959-2018 Construction of buildings in bushfire-prone areas