



# NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE



The General Manager  
Bellingen Shire Council  
PO Box 117  
BELLINGEN NSW 2454

Your Ref: Planning Proposal 12  
Our Ref: SP-2018-00006

**ATTENTION:** Daniel Bennett

23 March 2021

Dear Mr Bennett,

**Agency Comment – Planning Proposal 12  
Bellingen LEP 2010, Zone E4 (Environmental Living) Permissible Uses Review**

I refer to your correspondence dated 15 February 2021 seeking comments from the NSW Rural Fire Service (NSW RFS) with respect to the revised Bush Fire Strategic Study prepared by Eco Logical Australia (Ref: 18WOL\_11166, Version 2, dated 9 February 2021) in support of the above Planning Proposal.

The revised Bush Fire Strategic Study continues to highlight the single access road into the respective Thora and Kalang Valleys through a heavily vegetated environment as being the most significant constraint to additional development in the E4 Zone as proposed under the Planning Proposal.

The key recommendation of the revised Bush Fire Strategic Study is that any increase in development resulting from the planning proposal should be limited to the eastern more cleared areas, approximately a maximum 15 -20 minutes travel time from main access roads (Waterfall Way for the Thora Valley and Bowraville Road for the Kalang Valley). While this recommendation does have merit, it does not eliminate the risk associated with access for new development, particularly for visitors who may be unfamiliar with the locality.

It is also noted that a number of the additional recommendations outlined in the revised Bush Fire Strategic Study, such as strategies for management of visitors and activities, property access improvements, maintenance of fire trails and strengthening community resilience (for example, establishing a Neighbourhood Safer Place) have not been discussed in detail. Again, these recommendations may potentially contribute to providing a safer environment, however, in some instances they are beyond the scope of any individual development proposal to address and are not considered sufficient grounds to support the Planning Proposal.

Having regard to the revised Bush Fire Strategic Study, the above comments and the differing risk profile for the proposed land uses and their occupants, the NSW RFS provides the following comments with respect to the Planning Proposal:

**Postal address**

Records  
NSW Rural Fire Service  
Locked Bag 17  
GRANVILLE NSW 2142

**Street address**

NSW Rural Fire Service  
Planning and Environment Services (North)  
Suite 1, 129 West High Street  
COFFS HARBOUR NSW 2450

**T** (02) 6691 0400  
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**Email:** [pes@rfs.nsw.gov.au](mailto:pes@rfs.nsw.gov.au)

- No objection is raised to the proposal to permit (with development consent) dual occupancy (attached) and secondary dwellings in the eastern portion of the Kalang Valley and Thora Valley, as described in the revised Bush Fire Strategic Study.
- The proposal to permit tourist and visitor accommodation, and eco-tourist facility (with development consent) in Zone E4 is not supported.
- The proposal to prohibit backpacker accommodation, hotel or motel accommodation and serviced apartments in Zone E4 is supported.
- No objection is raised to the proposal to permit rural industries with development consent or to include farm buildings as a category of exempt development in Schedule 2 – Exempt Development, of Bellingen Local Environmental Plan 2010, when carried out within Zone E4.

For any queries regarding this correspondence, please contact Paul Creenaune on 6691 0400.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Alan Bawden', with a stylized 'A' and a long horizontal stroke.

Alan Bawden  
**Team Leader – Development Assessment & Planning**  
**Planning and Environment Services (North)**

*The RFS has made getting information easier. For general information on 'Planning for Bush Fire Protection, 2019', visit the RFS web page at [www.rfs.nsw.gov.au](http://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au) and search under 'Planning for Bush Fire Protection, 2019'.*