



Colac Otway Shire

Neighbourhood Safer Places Plan

Bushfire Places of Last Resort

September 2023



MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA

Document Format

This document has been created by using the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) draft Municipal Neighbourhood Safer Places – Interim Assessment Guidelines 2009 as the base document.

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Introduction and Background

In its Interim Report, the 2009 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission recommended that Neighbourhood Safer Places, or '**NSPs**', be identified and established to provide persons in bushfire affected areas with a place of last resort during a bushfire¹.

In response to this recommendation, the Victorian Government introduced the *Emergency Services Legislation Amendment Act 2009* (**ESLA Act**) which amends the *Country Fire Authority Act 1958* (**CFA Act**) and the *Emergency Management Act 1986* (**EM Act**). The effect of these amendments requires the Country Fire Authority (**CFA**) to certify NSPs against the Country Fire Authority's Fire Rating Guidelines², and Councils within Victoria to identify, designate, establish, maintain and decommission NSPs in their municipal districts.

NSPs are not community fire refuges or emergency relief centres.

NSPs are **Places of Last Resort** during the passage of a bushfire, and are intended to be used by persons whose primary bushfire plans have failed.

NSPs are places of relative safety only. They do not guarantee the survival of those who assemble there.

Furthermore, there may be serious risks to safety encountered in travelling and seeking access to NSPs during bushfire events. Depending on the direction of a particular fire, it may not be 'a safer place' to assemble than other places within the municipal district. At that point in time it almost certainly will be a matter for individual judgement and decision, as to which if any NSP a person or persons should travel in the presence of fire.

NSPs will be assessed by the CFA as providing some protection from immediate risk of direct fire attack, but not necessarily from other risks, such as flying embers. Where a potential NSP is used for an operational purpose at many times and meets the CFA's criteria, then the CFA considers that those operational activities will be able to continue (to the extent practicable in the circumstances) while the place is being used as an NSP.

This Plan is a Neighbourhood Safer Places Plan (**NSPP**) for the purposes of the legislation, and contains guidelines, which have been developed by the Municipal Association of Victoria (**MAV**) to assist the Council in:

- identifying;
- designating;
- establishing;
- maintaining; and
- decommissioning

Places as Neighbourhood Safer Places within its municipal district.

This Plan also identifies other matters that should be taken into account in identifying, designating, establishing and maintaining NSPs within the municipality.

Once this Plan has been adopted, Council must make it, and any documents incorporated into it, available at the Council's municipal offices for public inspection during normal office hours free of charge in accordance with section 50F(4)(b) of the CFA Act. It must also be published on Council's website in accordance with section 50F(4)(a) of the CFA Act.

¹Recommendation 8.5, 2009 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission Interim Report

²The CFA Act refers to "Country Fire Authority Assessment Guidelines". For ease of reference in the context of this MNSP Plan, these guidelines are referred to as the CFA Fire Rating Guidelines.

Structure of this Plan

This Plan contains a step-by-step methodology for the Council to follow in relation to identifying, designating, establishing, maintaining and decommissioning NSPs. Council must consider each of the factors set out in this Plan and consider other factors, which are specific to Council's circumstances, including the resources available to Council.

This Plan has been divided up into three distinct sections:

Section 1

Contains flow charts, which summarise:

- The process for Council to adopt when identifying, designating, establishing and maintaining NSPs within the municipal district from January 2010 onwards.

Section 2

Contains a more detailed summary of the steps for identifying, assessing, establishing, maintaining and decommissioning NSPs as summarised in the flow chart found in section 1.2.

Section 3

Contains details of the content of signage that Council is required to erect at designated NSP locations.

Appendix 1 – Council Neighbourhood Safer Place Plan Criteria Assessment Tool

Appendix 2 – Annual Neighbourhood Safer Place Assessment Checklist

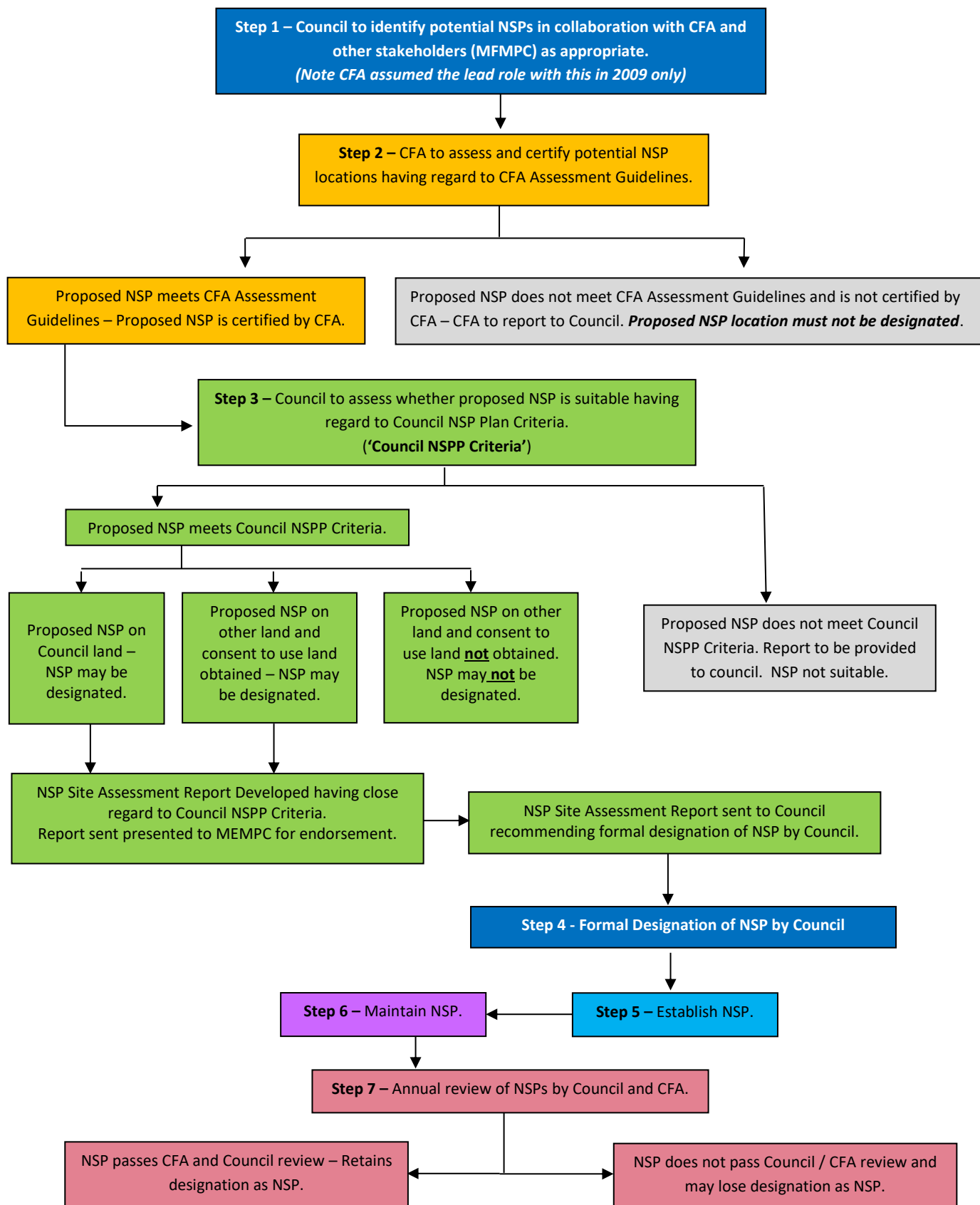
Appendix 3 – List of Council designated Neighbourhood Safer Places

Appendix 4 – Table recording details of Neighbourhood Safer Places annual audit

Appendix 5 – Maps of Council designated Neighbourhood Safer Places

Section 1- Flowcharts

1.1 Overview of the process for identifying, assessing, establishing, maintaining and decommissioning NSPs from January 2010



Section 2 - Summary of steps for identifying, assessing, establishing, maintaining and decommissioning NSPs

2.1 Identification of Potential NSP Locations

2.1.1 Responsibility for identifying potential NSP locations

For the 2009-2010 fire season, CFA assumed the lead responsibility for identifying potential NSPs. In Colac Otway Shire, CFA did this in consultation with representatives from Council, Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (**DELWP**), Parks Victoria, Victoria Police, Barwon Water and Powercor.

The initial focus was to identify potential NSPs in each town within the municipality that had been assessed using the Victorian Fire Risk Register – Bushfire (**VFRR**) tool, as having a risk rating of Extreme and a priority ranking of 1A, 1B or 1C, and for which CFA were developing a Township Protection Plan (now known as Community Information Guides). These towns included; Barongarook, Barwon Downs, Forrest, Carlisle River, Kawarren, Lavers Hill, Marengo, Kennett River, Beech Forest and Wye River/Separation Creek.

From 2010 onwards, Council has been responsible for identifying potential NSPs within its municipal district. Section 50G of the CFA Act requires Council to identify potential NSP locations.

2.1.2 Identification process

Colac Otway Shire will undertake the identification of potential NSP locations in collaboration with the Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (**MEMPC**).

Colac Otway Shire will employ a staged risk based approach in the identification of potential NSPs and will utilise the expertise of the MEMPC in this process.

The process of NSP identification is ongoing. Future identification of potential NSPs will follow the same approach as previously mentioned with the focus moving to townships assessed as having a lower risk rating and priority ranking.

Townships identified and assessed using the VFRR as Extreme and Very High risk rating will continue to have assessments undertaken with the intention of finding a suitable site for an NSP or other shelter option.

2.1.3 When do potential NSPs need to be identified?

The Colac Otway Shire will undertake to identify potential NSPs by 31 May each year. This should allow sufficient time for:

- firstly (CFA Certification) - assessment and certification of the potential NSP by the CFA;
- secondly (Council Designation) - designation of the potential NSP location by Council; and
- thirdly (Establishment) - subject to the outcome of the assessment and designation process, establishing the NSP, including the erection of signage and other steps by Council.

The process of NSP identification is ongoing. Following each fire season, Council should assess whether any additional potentially suitable NSP locations can be identified within the municipal district.

2.1.4 Factors to be considered when initially identifying potential NSP locations

When identifying potential NSP locations, Council should consider matters such as:

- the environment surrounding the potential NSP;
- what other uses are made of the potential NSP, and whether or not those uses could be inconsistent with its designation as an NSP;
- whether the land on which the potential NSP is located is Council-owned or non-Council owned land;
- whether there are clear means of access and egress to and from the potential NSP; and
- whether the potential NSP is in close proximity to population centres.

Council's identification of potential NSP locations should be undertaken by the Municipal Emergency Management Officer (**MEMO**) and the Municipal Fire Prevention Officer (**MFPO**), with input from other Council personnel such as Emergency Management Officer – Fire Awareness, Infrastructure Services Manager, or equivalent) as appropriate.

2.1.5 Who should undertake the identification of potential NSPs?

Under the CFA Act, all Councils whose municipal district is located wholly or partly in the 'country area' of Victoria are required to identify and designate NSPs.

Council should ensure that the following actions are completed prior to making any determinations regarding the assessment, designation and certification of NSPs:

- A risk assessment considering the matters outlined in section 2.1.4 (above) must be undertaken by Council's Municipal Emergency Management Officer (**MEMO**) and Municipal Fire Prevention Officer (**MFPO**) which may be initiated through the Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee, using appropriate available information such as Integrated Fire Management Planning data and/or VFRR data and any applicable Township Protection Plans.
- The MEMPC must review the results of the risk assessment, as summarised in the MEMO's and MFPO's report prepared under section 2.1.4 (above), and submit a written report to Council with a recommendation as to whether CFA assessment and Council designation of the potential NSP is warranted in the area under consideration.
- Council should formally review the MEMPC report. Council should only decide that NSP assessment and designation is not warranted in the area under consideration where Council is satisfied that:
 - The risk assessment undertaken by the MEMO and MFPO has addressed the matters raised in section 2.1.4 of this NSPP; and
 - The MEMPC has recommended that assessment and designation of the NSP is not warranted.

2.2 CFA Assessment and Certification of potential NSP locations

2.2.1 Who is responsible for assessing potential NSPs against guidelines issued by the CFA?

Under section 50G(5) of the *Country Fire Authority Act 1958* (6228), the Country Fire Authority (CFA) is responsible for assessing potential NSP locations against the CFA Fire Rating Guidelines. This will be done by appropriately and experienced CFA personnel.

Council is not responsible for the assessment and certification of potential NSPs by the CFA.

2.2.2 What criteria must CFA take into account in assessing potential NSP locations?

In assessing potential NSP locations which have been identified by the CFA (for the 2009-2010 fire season), or by Councils (from 2010–onwards), the CFA must consider the criteria and other considerations as set out in the CFA's Fire Rating Guidelines as issued from time to time by the CFA.

The key matters to be considered by the CFA under current Fire Rating Guidelines criteria are:

a) For Open Spaces

- the appropriate separation distance between the outer edge of the of the potential NSP and the nearest fire hazard (**Buffer Zone**)³ should be at least 310 metres; or
- an alternative Buffer Zone distance may be prescribed by the CFA, which will ensure that the maximum potential radiant heat impacting on the site is no more than 2 kw/m².

b) For Buildings

- the Buffer Zone between the outer edge of the building and the nearest fire hazard should be at least 140 metres; or
- an alternative Buffer Zone distance may be prescribed by the CFA, which will ensure that the maximum potential radiant heat impacting on the building is no more than 10 kw/m².

2.2.3 When does the CFA assess potential NSPs?

Following identification of a place which may be suitable as an NSP, the potential NSP is assessed by the CFA as soon as practicable. This is likely to occur shortly after identification.

2.3.4 When does the CFA certify potential NSP locations?

Once the assessment of a potential NSP is completed by the CFA, the CFA will certify the potential NSP if the place meets the CFA Fire Rating Guidelines criteria. The CFA will provide a copy of the CFA certification in relation to a potential NSP to Council upon completion of certification, and a summary of the criteria and assumptions upon which the assessment is based.

Council should ensure that the boundaries of both the potential NSP as certified by the CFA, and any Buffer Zone surrounding it, are clearly defined in the CFA assessment.

³The CFA Guidelines refer to "separation distances". However, for ease of understanding, the term "Buffer Zone" is used throughout this MNSP Plan

For reasons of community safety, it is a requirement of s. 50G(6) of the CFA Act, and it is also Council policy (s.50G(7) CFA Act), that only those places assessed and certified by the CFA may be considered for designation as NSPs by the Council. The Council must not designate a place as an NSP unless it has CFA certification.

2.3 Council Assessment of NSPs

Factors applied by Council in assessing the suitability of a place as a potential NSP

Council must assess each potential NSP in accordance with the factors outlined in the following points to determine whether it is suitable to be designated as a NSP. Unless a potential NSP satisfies each of the following criteria outlined below, it should not be designated by Council as a NSP. [Appendix 1 - Council Neighbourhood Safer Place Plan Criteria Assessment Tool](#) contains an audit tool that Council will use to assist in undertaking a preliminary assessment of potential NSP locations against the criteria in the NSP Plan.

The Municipal Fire Prevention Officer in consultation with the MEMO will be responsible for coordinating the Council preliminary assessment of all potential NSPs utilising the expertise of the MFMP.

The factors to determine the suitability of the place as a NSP are as follows (**Council NSP Plan Criteria**):

2.3.1 Consent and rights of access

There must be appropriate land access and tenure arrangements so that Council has the right to:

- use the place as a NSP;
- access the site and surrounding areas for maintenance; and
- erect appropriate signage at the NSP, and any additional NSP information signage that may be required.

Council Land

If the potential NSP is on land owned, managed or controlled by Council, appropriate rights of land access and tenure are unlikely to be an issue. However, Council will need to ensure that where Council land is leased or licensed to a third party; it must be possible to put in place appropriate arrangements on reasonably satisfactory and acceptable terms with the tenant or licensee permitting Council to use the land as a potential NSP. In taking these matters into account, Council should consider what alternative uses or arrangements may be made, whether temporarily or semi-permanently, of land under Council control or management.

Crown Land

If the potential NSP is on Crown land not owned or controlled by Council, then the consent of the Crown land manager is required. If the land has been leased or licensed to a third party, such as a caravan park operator, then the consent of the tenant or licensee to use the place as a potential NSP will also be required. In obtaining the consent of the relevant Crown land manager, it may be necessary to consider whether the Crown Grant authorises the place to be used as a potential NSP.

Private Land

Where it is proposed that a place on privately owned land is to be used as a NSP, then the consent of the relevant landowner (and, where applicable, occupier) is required for the place to be designated and used as an NSP. If the landowner (or occupier) does not consent to the place being designated and used as a NSP, on terms that are reasonably satisfactory and acceptable to the Council, it must not be so designated and used. If consent is provided the

proposed activities need to adhere to relevant legislation that may require permits to be obtained prior to works being undertaken (e.g. planning permit).

Deed of Consent

Where a potential NSP is located on non-Council land, with the result that consent and rights of access need to be negotiated with the owner and (where necessary) occupier, Council officers responsible for negotiating such consent and rights of access, may provide a draft form of consent to the owner/occupier for their consideration. This Deed of Consent may be a document which has been previously approved either by Council (through a formal resolution), or by the CEO acting under delegation.

Any amendments to the form of consent that may be requested by the landowner or occupier would need to be thoroughly considered before Council agrees to them. If it is not possible or appropriate for Council to agree on amendments that may be requested to the consent document, then Council should not designate the proposed NSP.

The form of consent may require a contractual licence. This licence may need to address issues such as responsibility for damage, and maintenance of the NSP.

2.3.2 Access and Egress

Council must assess whether there is sufficient access to the potential NSP, which will allow for:

- anticipated potential numbers of people to move to and from the place; and
- the CFA and other emergency services to attend the place for asset and personal protection activities and operations.

Council must assess potential access and egress routes, bearing in mind the fact that NSPs are Places of Last Resort.

As people may be seeking access to a NSP in a rushed or panicked state, a number of people could be seeking access in a relatively short time and visibility could be affected by smoke, therefore easily navigable routes to and from a NSP are crucial.

In considering whether access and egress routes are adequate, consideration should be given to issues such as:

- the condition of the road surface;
- the proximity of the NSP to major roadways and population centres;
- the type and amount of vegetation along any access routes, and whether that vegetation could be affected by fire and pose a risk of harm to those seeking access to the potential NSP, or otherwise block access to the NSP;
- whether appropriate vegetation management activities can be undertaken and maintained through minor works that are both possible and practical having regard for the resources available to the road owner;
- the capacity of access routes to accommodate potentially large numbers of vehicles, and to accommodate potential vehicle breakdowns;
- parking at the place, taking into account that a separate area or adequate space may need to be available to ensure pedestrians can move away from areas where vehicles may enter or park;

- any hazards that may exist for persons accessing the place by foot, including in the buffer zone; and
- any relevant matter contained in Council's Road Management Plan prepared pursuant to the *Road Management Act 2004* (Vic).

If appropriate and satisfactory access and egress routes are not available, then Council should not designate the proposed NSP.

2.3.3 Maintenance of potential NSP in accordance with CFA assessment criteria

Council must ensure that the potential NSP can be maintained in accordance with the criteria taken into account by the CFA in arriving at its fire rating assessment.

If additional information is required from the CFA to understand the criteria they have considered in arriving at their fire rating assessment, Council should seek this information from the CFA. If necessary, Council may request the CFA to undertake further assessment to provide Council with additional information.

2.3.4 Opening of the NSP

Council must consider:

- whether it will be possible or practicable to open the potential NSP or otherwise make it available for use on a 24-hour basis during the declared fire danger period;
- the potential for damage to the place during times that it is open and available for use, but is not being used as a NSP;
- the potential costs to Council associated with the above mentioned points;
- the possibility that a potential NSP could be used for unintended purposes, such as a fire refuge.

2.3.5 Defendable space

CFA have advised that there is no guarantee that fire units will attend a NSP, and that individuals who use NSPs are doing so at their own risk.

There should be **no expectation** that fire units or other emergency services personnel will attend an NSP during a bushfire.

Despite this, the potential NSP should be surrounded by sufficient open space to enable the CFA and other fire services to conduct asset protection and fire suppression operations around the place.

Any open space **should be reasonably** free of obstacles, which could hinder fire suppression activities. Obstacles may include:

- fences;
- buildings and sheds;
- steep inclines in close proximity to the potential NSP;
- vegetation, particularly large trees; and
- other land formations, including rocks, boulders or knolls which could substantially hinder fire suppression operations.

If necessary, advice should be sought from the CFA about their defensible space and fire vehicle access requirements.

When assessing the defensible space factor, Council must consider whether approval to clear or disturb flora and/or fauna is required, whether under legislation such as the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Commonwealth), *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988* (Vic) or the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (Vic). If such approval is required, then it must be obtained before the potential NSP location is designated.

If the proposed NSP does not have adequate defensible space around it, or if approval to clear or disturb flora and/or fauna is required but cannot be obtained before the NSP is required to be established, or cannot be obtained on reasonably satisfactory conditions, it should not be designated as a NSP by Council.

2.3.6 Dependability of buildings

If the potential NSP is a building, Council must consider whether or not it is likely to be subject to ember attack.

As the CFA is not required to assess the risk of ember attack to a building in undertaking the CFA fire rating assessment when certifying NSPs, the Council should consider this issue. In considering this issue, Council may need to seek expert advice from appropriately-qualified CFA personnel.

If there is an considerable risk of the proposed NSP being compromised by ember attack which cannot be satisfactorily defended, then the building is unlikely to be suitable as an NSP and should not be designated by Council.

2.3.7 Signage

Council must assess whether it will be possible to have signage at the entry to, and in the vicinity of, the potential NSP. Consideration should also be given to additional directional signage that may be needed to assist in directing public to the site. Such signage must generally be in accordance with the Signage Guidelines for Neighbourhood Safer Places (as published by Emergency Management Victoria EMV), which is discussed in more detail in [Section 3](#) of this Plan.

Council must refer to the Signage Template when considering whether or not appropriate signage can be erected. If signage must be placed on private land, then the consent of the landowner will be required.

2.3.8 Maintenance and maintainability

Council must assess whether ongoing maintenance of the proposed NSP, and the surrounding area, is both possible and practical having regard to the resources reasonably available to Council. Council should consider this factor not only in relation to the suitability of a proposed NSP, but also as to the total number of proposed NSPs that can be reasonably maintained within the municipal district. This is needed to ensure that the place remains suitable for use as an NSP during each fire season.

Specifically, the place must be capable of being maintained to ensure continuing compliance with the CFA Fire Rating Guidelines Criteria and the Council NSPP Criteria. It is Council policy that if it is not possible to maintain a potential NSP, then it must not be designated as such.

When assessing the maintainability of the potential NSP, both the NSP, and surrounding areas may require various maintenance activities to be undertaken on a periodic basis. The potential introduction of hazards into the Buffer Zone, such as structures, animals and vehicles, should be taken into account.

There may be cases where maintenance activities can only be undertaken by, or with the consent of an adjoining landowner. This may, in turn, require assurances from such landowners that the place, and areas surrounding it, will be maintained to a satisfactory level.

When assessing the maintainability of a potential NSP, Council must consider whether or not approval to clear or disturb flora and /or fauna could be required, whether under legislation such as the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Commonwealth), *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988* (Vic) or the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (Vic). If such approval is required, then it must be obtained before the potential NSP location is designated.

If the proposed NSP is not capable of being satisfactorily maintained, then Council should not designate it.

2.3.9 Disabled access

Council must consider whether or not there are clear means of access for disabled and mobility impaired persons to the potential NSP.

In considering this issue, regard should be had to such matters as whether or not it would be necessary for cars or other vehicles to enter the NSP area to allow persons with disabilities to be dropped off within the place.

2.3.10 Separation and demarcation of area

If the NSP is to be located in an open area, it must be possible to identify the area that is the NSP. This may be best achieved by signage and or some sort of boundary or perimeter marking. As an example, the NSP boundary for an oval may simply be an oval boundary fence.

Although not always possible, areas that enable separation or enable enough room to move away from other forms of potential hazards such as vehicles, buildings and animals are preferred.

2.3.11 Alternative uses of potential NSP

Council must consider what other uses may be made of the potential NSP which could impact on its ability to properly function as a NSP.

Where a potential NSP which is used for an operational purpose at many times and has been assessed by the CFA as meeting the criteria in the CFA Fire Rating Guidelines, and has been certified by the CFA, then the CFA has advised that those operational activities will be able to continue (to the extent practicable in the circumstances) while the place is being used as an NSP.

Should the site be leased or used by other organisations it should be communicated that the site is an NSP and in the event of a threatening fire, activities would need to cease and the use of the area as a NSP would need to take precedence. In most cases large open sites could accommodate a combination of uses. An example of where dual or multiple uses may not be possible is where large events at high risk times occur and where capacity of the site may already be reached.

If the place is used for other uses which could not be effectively managed and which would ultimately compromise its ability to be used as an NSP, then Council should not designate it.

2.3.12 Communication with the community

Council must be able to communicate the location of the NSP to the community. There should be good community awareness of the location of the place, together with the risks that relate to the use of the NSP, and the risks associated with travelling to the NSP in the event of a bushfire.

Note: The communication should also spell out the intended use of the location and what people can expect once at the location.

2.3.13 Public liability insurance

As a matter of prudent risk management, Council should have regard to:

- any additional factors which are relevant to Council's maintenance of insurance coverage for legal claims relating to the identification, designation, establishment, maintenance and decommissioning of a place as a NSP, as well as travel to a NSP; and
- any statutory defences to claims.

2.3.14 Who is responsible for undertaking the Council assessment of potential NSPs?

A report prepared by the MEMO and MFPO detailing whether or not the potential NSP meets the above criteria should be prepared and provided to:

- a) The MEMPC, where it is practicable for the MEMPC to be involved in the Council assessment process; and
- b) The Council.

The MEMPC must assess the potential NSP, taking into account the MEMO's report, and make recommendation to Council as to whether or not to designate the potential NSP.

2.3.15 When are potential NSP locations required to be assessed by Council?

Any potential NSPs certified by the CFA should be assessed by Council no later than 30 June each year, so as to allow time for the places to be designated and established as NSPs by Council, and for any appropriate amendments to be made to the MEMP prior to the commencement of the bushfire season.

This timing is obviously subject to the CFA assessing and certifying the potential NSP location in a timely manner.

2.4 Council Designation of Neighbourhood Safer Places

2.4.1 Who is responsible for Council designation of NSPs?

Council must formally determine whether or not to designate a place as an NSP. Council should not designate a place as an NSP unless it is satisfied that the place is suitable, having regard to the Council NSP Plan criteria.

An NSP may only be designated by a resolution of the Council.

2.4.2 When should Council consider the designation of a potential NSP?

For sites that are certified by the CFA a NSP site assessment report will be prepared by Council's Municipal Emergency Management Officer or a suitably qualified delegate detailing whether or not the potential NSP meets Councils NSPP criteria.

A template for the site assessment report is attached in [Appendix 2 – Neighbourhood Safer Place Site Assessment Report Template](#). In order to be completed the report will need to document detailed findings in relation to the NSPP Criteria and make a recommendation on whether Council should designate the site or not.

The report should be provided to the MEMPC for endorsement prior to being sent to Council. Once such endorsement has been received, Council must formally determine whether or not to designate a place as a NSP. Council should not designate a place as a NSP unless it is satisfied that the place is suitable, having regard to the Council NSPP Criteria and the CFA assessment guidelines.

A NSP may only be designated by a resolution of Council.

If prior endorsement by the MEMPC is not possible Council should inform the committees of the designation of the NSP for noting and inclusion within their respective committees' plans. In such cases Council will only designate a NSP on the stipulation of obtaining appropriate endorsement from the relevant committee. It is important to note that this is not the preferred approach and should only be undertaken in exceptional circumstances.

Council may designate a site as a NSP on the finalisation of any other provision it sees fit. In such cases Council will empower the CEO of the Shire or their delegate to ensure the provisions are satisfactorily met and then confirm by writing the designation of the NSP site on Council behalf.

2.4.3 What must the MFPO do once a potential NSP is designated by Council?

The MFPO must provide an updated list of all designated NSPs within the municipality to the CFA under section 50K of the *Country Fire Authority Act 1958*. This updated list must be provided by no later than 30 September in each year.

2.5 Establishment of Neighbourhood Safer Places

2.5.1 Who is responsible for establishing NSPs?

Following designation, Council will establish NSPs within the municipal district.

2.5.2 What must be done when establishing NSPs?

To establish a NSP after its designation, Council must:

- erect appropriate signage at and near the NSP. Consideration should also be given to additional directional signage that may be needed to assist in directing public to the site;
- undertake any necessary preparatory works, including the construction or establishment of any required infrastructure and the clearance of vegetation, so as to enable the area to be used as a NSP;
- publish the location of the NSP on the Council website; and
- update Council's Municipal Emergency Management Plan and Municipal Fire Management Plan to include the location of the NSP.

The Municipal Fire Prevention Officer must provide an up-to-date list of NSPs to the CFA no later than 30 September in each year.

2.6 Maintaining Neighbourhood Safer Places

2.6.1 Who is responsible for maintaining NSPs?

NSPs within the municipality need to be maintained by Council. Maintenance activities must include vegetation management, hazardous tree removal and the maintenance of infrastructure required to the satisfactory functioning of the place as an NSP. If additional works have been required to establish the NSP, then those works should be subject to periodic review.

The fuel load in the vicinity of the NSP must not increase so as to affect the fire rating of the NSP. Council must ensure that defensible spaces, the Buffer Zone and access and egress routes are appropriately maintained.

Council must inspect the NSP, Buffer Zone and access and egress routes on a periodic basis, and in any event not less than once per month during the declared fire danger period, to ensure that the NSP continues to be capable of functioning as an NSP.

If Council identifies issues that may impact upon the functioning of the place as an NSP, then Council must:

- address the issue;
- take reasonable steps to have the issue addressed, such as requesting the owner of the land on which the NSP or Buffer Zone is located to address the issue; or
- consider decommissioning the NSP and revoking the designation of the place as an NSP.

2.7 Annual Inspections of Neighbourhood Safer Places

2.7.1 Who is responsible for the annual review of NSPs?

Council must undertake an annual review of all designated NSPs within the municipality.

Council must also request the CFA to undertake an assessment against the CFA Fire Rating Guidelines of each NSP within the municipality on an annual basis.

These reviews are intended to ensure that each NSP remains suitable for use as a NSP during the up-coming fire season.

2.7.2 What must be considered when undertaking inspections?

NSPs should be assessed annually against the Council Neighbourhood Safer Places Plan (NSPP) Criteria. The CFA will assess NSPs against the CFA Fire Rating Guidelines.

If an NSP no longer meets:

- the CFA Fire Rating Guidelines Criteria, then it must be decommissioned; and
- the Council NSPP Criteria; then Council must determine whether or not it wishes to address any of the identified non-compliances against the NSPP criteria. If it does not, then the NSP must be decommissioned.

An Annual NSP Assessment checklist is provided at [Appendix 3 - Annual Neighbourhood Safer Place Assessment Checklist](#)

These assessment reports are to be stored on the council file management system, under Emergency Management - Programs – Bushfire Places of Last Resort (BPLR).

2.7.3 When must NSP locations be inspected?

NSPs must be inspected prior to 31 August each year under section 50J(1) of the *Country Fire Authority Act 1958*.

Council must also undertake fire hazard inspections of the site prior to and during the fire danger period to ensure the site is being managed appropriately and continues to comply with the NSPP criteria.

2.8 Decommissioning of Neighbourhood Safer Places

Decommissioning of NSPs must be by Council resolution.

Council must decommission a designated NSP if the CFA assessment of the site determines it is no longer suitable.

The Council may decommission a NSP even though it has CFA certification, if Council is satisfied on reasonable grounds that it is not appropriate for the place to continue to be a designated NSP.

The Council will decommission a NSP that is not on council owned land if the occupier or the person in control of the land has withdrawn consent to the designation of the site as an NSP.

Section 3 – Signage guidelines for Neighbourhood Safer Places

Neighbourhood Safer Places -Bushfire Place of Last Resort Signage Manual (D20/30650)

<https://www.emv.vic.gov.au/publications/neighbourhood-safer-places-bushfire-place-of-last-resort-signage-manual>

Country Fire Authority Act 1958

Section 50H

Signage Guidelines for Neighbourhood Safer Places

1. Under section 50H of the **Country Fire Authority Act 1958**, municipal councils are required to:
 - (1) ensure that appropriate signs are provided at each designated neighbourhood safer place in its municipal district; and in meeting that obligation; and
 - (2) have regard to signage guidelines issued from time to time on the Internet site of the Office of the Emergency Services Commissioner (OESC).
2. The OESC has, in consultation with the Country Fire Authority and the Municipal Association of Victoria, developed a standard sign for designated neighbourhood safer places.
3. The specifications for the standard sign are set out in Schedule 1.
4. Nothing in these guidelines prevents a municipal council from providing additional information on the sign post displaying the standard sign. For example, such information may relate to the capacity or use of the place.
5. If a municipal council determines there is a need for a directional sign in the style of a street sign then the following words are recommended:
BUSHFIRE NEIGHBOURHOOD SAFER PLACE
6. These guidelines come into effect on the date below and continue to apply until otherwise replaced or varied.



Michael Hallows
Emergency Services Commissioner

Dated: 28th September 2011

Bushfire Neighbourhood Safer Place
450mm x 450mm Sign



Notes:

- All Dimensions are in Millimetres
- Border, background and edgestrip - Retroreflective GREEN CL.2 (PMS Colour 342)
- Symbol - Retroreflective WHITE CL.2 (community information billboard sign)

The above has been designed in accordance with Australian Standards 2342 -1992 Guidelines.
Signage contractor responsible for manufacturing in accordance with VICROADS Specifications.

Australian Standards applicable:

AS 2899.1 - 1986	Public Information Symbols Part 1 – General Information Signs
AS 2342 – 1992	Development, Testing & Implementing of Information & Safety Symbols and Symbolic Signs
Colours:	
Background	Dark Green (as specified)
Text	Reflective White (as specified)
Enclosure	Reflective White (as specified)

COMMOTION

WARNING

THIS *DESIGNATED NEIGHBOURHOOD SAFER PLACE (NSP)* IS A PLACE OF LAST RESORT DURING THE PASSAGE OF A BUSHFIRE. WHILST IT MAY OFFER SOME PROTECTION FROM BUSHFIRE, THE SAFETY OR SURVIVAL OF THOSE WHO ASSEMBLE HERE IS NOT GUARANTEED.

BEFORE DECIDING TO HEAD TOWARDS, OR ENTER, THIS NSP IN THE EVENT OF BUSHFIRE, BE AWARE THAT:

- MANY HOUSES MAY OFFER BETTER PROTECTION THAN THIS NSP
- TRAVELLING TO THIS NSP WHEN THERE IS BUSHFIRE CAN BE EXTREMELY DANGEROUS. THERE IS NO GUARANTEE THAT YOU WILL BE SAFE DOING SO.
- THIS NSP MAY NOT PREVENT DEATH OR INJURY FROM FIRE, EMBERS OR RADIANT HEAT WHEN YOU GET HERE
- YOU SHOULD ONLY USE THIS NSP WHEN YOUR PRIMARY BUSHFIRE PLAN HAS FAILED OR CANNOT BE IMPLEMENTED
- THIS NSP ONLY HAS LIMITED CAPACITY
- THERE IS NO GUARANTEE THAT CFA OR OTHER EMERGENCY SERVICES WILL BE PRESENT AT THIS NSP DURING A BUSHFIRE
- NO FACILITIES ARE PROVIDED FOR PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS, INCLUDING THOSE REQUIRING MEDICAL ATTENTION
- THIS NSP MAY BE UNCOMFORTABLE AND NO AMENITIES SUCH AS FOOD AND DRINKS WILL BE PROVIDED
- THERE IS NO PROVISION FOR ANIMALS

VICTORIAN BUSHFIRE INFORMATION LINE - 1800 240 667

Colac Otway Shire Neighbourhood Safer Places Plan

APPENDICIES

Appendix 1 – Council Neighbourhood Safer Place Plan Criteria Assessments

Appendix 2 – Annual Neighbourhood Safer Place Assessment Checklist

Appendix 3 – List of Council designated Neighbourhood Safer Places

Appendix 4 – Records of Council designated Neighbourhood Safer Places

Annual Assessment Audits

Appendix 5 – Maps of Council designated Neighbourhood Safer Places

Appendix 1 - Council Neighbourhood Safer Places Plan Criteria – Assessment - Barwon Downs

NSP Location: Barwon Downs – Structure Date: 4 July 2023

Council NSPP Criteria	Issues to consider	Council comments	Satisfied? Yes/No
Consents and rights of access <i>See section 2.3.1</i>	If the potential NSP is located on Council-owned land, can Council use the land as an NSP if required? Consider whether or not Council allows the land to be used for potentially inconsistent purposes, such as for farmers' markets, fetes, circuses etc.	Colac Otway Shire owned building. Can continue to be used as NSP-BPLR.	Yes
	If the potential NSP is on private land, or public land under the control of a Crown Land Manager (other than Council), can Council enter into arrangements which allow it to use the land as a potential NSP on reasonably satisfactory terms? Also consider whether Council has the right to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> access the site and surrounding areas for maintenance; and erect appropriate signage at the NSP. 	Sign located within building which can be seen from outside.	Yes
Access and egress <i>See section 2.3.2</i>	Do access routes to the potential NSP allow for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the anticipated potential number of people to move to and from the place; and the CFA and other emergency services to attend the place for asset and personnel protection activities? 	Yes No restrictions for CFA appliances or personnel. Building attached to rear of CFA station.	Yes
	Are access routes easily navigable, bearing in mind they could be affected by smoke? Consider the condition of the road surface, proximity to population centres and major roads, capacity of access routes to accommodate large numbers of vehicles, the availability of car parking at the place and any other relevant matters.	Access/egress easily navigable along Birregurra – Forrest Rd to the north and south. Parking readily available at NSP-BPLR and within built township near NSP-BPLR.	Yes
Maintenance of NSP in accordance with CFA assessment <i>See section 2.3.3</i>	Can Council maintain the potential NSP in accordance with the criteria taken into account by the CFA in arriving at its fire rating assessment? <i>If the CFA have not provided sufficient information in relation to the criteria it has taken into account in arriving at its fire rating assessment, it may be necessary for Council to seek further information from the CFA.</i>	Site currently maintained in accordance with CFA criteria by Colac Otway Shire.	Yes
Opening of the NSP See section 2.3.4	Will it be possible and practicable to make the potential NSP available for use on a 24 hour basis during the declared fire danger period? This is a particular issue where the potential NSP is a building.	Building available on 24-hour basis. Access to building by Barwon Downs CFA or Tennis club. Key also available through Colac Otway Shire.	Yes

Council NSPP Criteria	Issues to consider	Council comments	Satisfied? Yes/No
	Consider the potential for damage to the NSP which could result during times that it is open and available for use, but is not being used as an NSP.		
	What costs could be incurred by Council in making the potential NSP available on a 24 hour basis during the declared fire danger period? Are these costs reasonable, and capable of being borne by Council?	Building available on 24-hour basis. No costs involved in making available on 24 hour basis.	Yes
	Could the potential NSP be used for an unintended purpose which could impact upon its use as an NSP (such as an emergency relief centre)?	Building available on 24-hour basis. Not listed as Emergency Relief Centre – an ERC may be opened at Community Hall at 1575 Birregurra-Forrest Rd.	Yes
Defendable space and fire suppression activities See section 2.3.5	Is the potential NSP surrounded by sufficient open space to enable the CFA to conduct asset protection and fire suppression operations? Is that open space reasonably free of obstacles (such as fences, buildings, steep gradients, vegetation and other land formations)? Council should seek CFA advice concerning the defendability of the potential NSP and the Buffer Zone, including in relation to fire vehicle access requirements.	No significant restrictions on access or egress of CFA appliances for the purpose of fire suppression or asset protection. Access to grassed area via chain links in fence – key available via Barwon Downs CFA or MFPO.	Yes
	Will approval be required under legislation such as the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Cwlth), Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988 (Vic) and the Planning and Environment Act 1987 (Vic)? Can such approval be obtained before the NSP is established?	Permits for vegetation works achieved prior to establishment (D20/60970).	Yes
Defendability of buildings See section 2.3.6	If the potential NSP is a building, has Council sought expert advice from the CFA to determine whether the NSP is likely to be subject to risk from ember attack? If it is subject to such a risk, can that risk be safely managed?	No additional requirements from CFA.	Yes
Signage See section 2.3.7	Can appropriate signage be erected at the entry to the potential NSP, and in its vicinity?	Additional sign located inside building.	Yes
	If signage needs to be placed on private land, can Council obtain the consent of the relevant landowner to the erection of the signage?	Not applicable.	Yes

Council NSPP Criteria	Issues to consider	Council comments	Satisfied? Yes/No
Maintenance and maintainability See section 2.3.8	<p>Is the potential NSP capable of being maintained to ensure continuing compliance with the CFA Fire Rating Criteria and the Council NSPP Criteria?</p> <p>Where relevant, consider whether adjoining land owners and occupiers will provide Council with an assurance that both the potential NSP and the Buffer Zone can be maintained to a satisfactory level.</p>	<p>Yes – current maintenance meets CFA requirements.</p> <p>Adjoining landowners maintaining land according to requirements of CFA & MFPO. Land owner agreement (D19/108626).</p>	Yes
Disabled access See section 2.3.9	<p>Are there are means of access for disabled and mobility-impaired persons to the potential NSP, including vehicle access to drop off people with disabilities?</p>	<p>Yes – paved paths and ramps for ease of disabled access. Disabled parking available.</p>	Yes
Alternative uses of potential NSP See section 2.3.11	<p>Can Council manage alternative uses which may be made of the potential NSP so as to ensure that those uses will not compromise the function of the place as a potential NSP?</p> <p>The CFA has advised that where a potential NSP which is used for an operational purpose at many times meets the CFA Fire Rating Criteria, then the CFA considers that those operational activities will be able to continue (to the extent practicable in the circumstances) while the place is being used as an NSP.</p>	<p>No other alternative uses to compromise use as NSP-BPLR.</p> <p>NSP-BPLR not suitable for operational purposes. CFA station on part of site.</p>	Yes
Community Communication See section 2.3.12	<p>Will it be possible to ensure that there will be good community awareness of the location of the potential NSP, and the risks associated with using the potential NSP?</p>	<p>Community aware of NSP-BPLR and associated risks.</p>	Yes

Council Neighbourhood Safer Places Plan Criteria – Assessment – Barwon Downs

NSP Location: Barwon Downs – Open Space Date: 4 July 2023

Council NSPP Criteria	Issues to consider	Council comments	Satisfied? Yes/No
Consents and rights of access See section 2.3.1	If the potential NSP is located on Council-owned land, can Council use the land as an NSP if required? Consider whether or not Council allows the land to be used for potentially inconsistent purposes, such as for farmers' markets, fetes, circuses etc.	Colac Otway Shire owned and managed land. Can continue to be used as NSP-BPLR.	Yes
	If the potential NSP is on private land, or public land under the control of a Crown Land Manager (other than Council), can Council enter into arrangements which allow it to use the land as a potential NSP on reasonably satisfactory terms? Also consider whether Council has the right to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> access the site and surrounding areas for maintenance; and erect appropriate signage at the NSP. 	Colac Otway Shire owned and managed land. Not Applicable.	Yes
Access and egress See section 2.3.2	Do access routes to the potential NSP allow for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the anticipated potential number of people to move to and from the place; and the CFA and other emergency services to attend the place for asset and personnel protection activities? 	Yes No restrictions for CFA appliances or personnel.	Yes
	Are access routes easily navigable, bearing in mind they could be affected by smoke? Consider the condition of the road surface, proximity to population centres and major roads, capacity of access routes to accommodate large numbers of vehicles, the availability of car parking at the place and any other relevant matters.	Access/egress easily navigable along Birregurra – Forrest Rd to the north and south. Parking readily available at NSP-BPLR and within built township near NSP-BPLR.	Yes
Maintenance of NSP in accordance with CFA assessment See section 2.3.3	Can Council maintain the potential NSP in accordance with the criteria taken into account by the CFA in arriving at its fire rating assessment? <i>If the CFA have not provided sufficient information in relation to the criteria it has taken into account in arriving at its fire rating assessment, it may be necessary for Council to seek further information from the CFA.</i>	Site currently maintained in accordance with CFA criteria by Colac Otway Shire.	Yes

Council NSPP Criteria	Issues to consider	Council comments	Satisfied? Yes/No
Opening of the NSP See section 2.3.4	Will it be possible and practicable to make the potential NSP available for use on a 24 hour basis during the declared fire danger period? This is a particular issue where the potential NSP is a building. Consider the potential for damage to the NSP which could result during times that it is open and available for use, but is not being used as an NSP.	Open space NSP-BPLR – not applicable Access to grassed area via chain links in fence – key (003) available via Barwon Downs CFA or MFPO.	Yes
	What costs could be incurred by Council in making the potential NSP available on a 24 hour basis during the declared fire danger period? Are these costs reasonable, and capable of being borne by Council?	Open space NSP-BPLR – not applicable.	Yes
	Could the potential NSP be used for an unintended purpose which could impact upon its use as an NSP (such as an emergency relief centre)?	Open space NSP-BPLR – not applicable.	Yes
Defendable space and fire suppression activities See section 2.3.5	Is the potential NSP surrounded by sufficient open space to enable the CFA to conduct asset protection and fire suppression operations? Is that open space reasonably free of obstacles (such as fences, buildings, steep gradients, vegetation and other land formations)? Council should seek CFA advice concerning the defendability of the potential NSP and the Buffer Zone, including in relation to fire vehicle access requirements.	No significant restrictions on access or egress of CFA appliances for the purpose of fire suppression or asset protection. Access to grassed area via chain links in fence – key (003) available via Barwon Downs CFA or MFPO. Adjoining landowners maintaining land according to requirements of CFA & MFPO. Land owner agreement (D19/108626).	Yes
	Will approval be required under legislation such as the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Cwlth), Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988 (Vic) and the Planning and Environment Act 1987 (Vic)? Can such approval be obtained before the NSP is established?	Permits for vegetation works achieved prior to establishment (D20/60970). No further works required.	Yes
Defendability of buildings See section 2.3.6	If the potential NSP is a building, has Council sought expert advice from the CFA to determine whether the NSP is likely to be subject to risk from ember attack? If it is subject to such a risk, can that risk be safely managed?	Open space NSP – not applicable.	Yes

Council NSPP Criteria	Issues to consider	Council comments	Satisfied? Yes/No
Signage See section 2.3.7	Can appropriate signage be erected at the entry to the potential NSP, and in its vicinity?	Appropriate signage located at two entry points to NSP-BPLR.	Yes
	If signage needs to be placed on private land, can Council obtain the consent of the relevant landowner to the erection of the signage?	Colac Otway Shire owned and managed land. Not applicable.	Yes
Maintenance and maintainability See section 2.3.8	Is the potential NSP capable of being maintained to ensure continuing compliance with the CFA Fire Rating Criteria and the Council NSPP Criteria? Where relevant, consider whether adjoining land owners and occupiers will provide Council with an assurance that both the potential NSP and the Buffer Zone can be maintained to a satisfactory level.	Yes – current maintenance meets CFA requirements. Adjoining landowners maintaining land according to requirements of CFA & MFPO. Land owner agreement (D19/108626).	Yes
Disabled access See section 2.3.9	Are there are means of access for disabled and mobility-impaired persons to the potential NSP, including vehicle access to drop off people with disabilities?	Yes –paved paths and ramps for ease of disabled access.	Yes
Alternative uses of potential NSP See section 2.3.11	Can Council manage alternative uses which may be made of the potential NSP so as to ensure that those uses will not compromise the function of the place as a potential NSP? The CFA has advised that where a potential NSP which is used for an operational purpose at many times meets the CFA Fire Rating Criteria, then the CFA considers that those operational activities will be able to continue (to the extent practicable in the circumstances) while the place is being used as an NSP.	No other alternative uses to compromise use as NSP-BPLR. NSP-BPLR not suitable for operational purposes. CFA station on part of site.	Yes
Community Communication See section 2.3.12	Will it be possible to ensure that there will be good community awareness of the location of the potential NSP, and the risks associated with using the potential NSP?	Community aware of NSP-BPLR and associated risks.	Yes



Barwon Downs Open space NSP-BPLR – orange, grassland management agreement area in yellow.



Neighbourhood Safer Place – Bushfire Place of Last Resort Site Assessment Report



Site Details:

NSP-BPLR ID Number	1000042288		
CFA Region	South West	CFA District	CFA District 06
Municipal Council	Colac-Otway Shire		

Location	Barwon Downs Parkland (Old school site)		
Sub Location			
Address	1595 Birregurra-Forrest Road (near corner Wickhams Lane)		
Township	Barwon Downs	Postcode	3243

Location Type	Open Space
---------------	------------

Best Access to Site	
Brief Description of Use	Public open space

Site Assessment Officer Details:

Name	Jessica Sutherland
Assessment Date	4/7/2023

Result:

Assessment Result	<u>COMPLIANT/PRESCRIPTIONS</u>
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COMPLIANT	Meeting the CFA assessment criteria on the day of assessment
COMPLIANT/PRESCRIPTIONS	Meeting the CFA assessment criteria on the day of assessment, provided that the prescriptions for grassland management* are implemented throughout the fire danger period; and secured by agreed terms entered into by the landholder(s) ¹
NON-COMPLIANT	Not meeting the CFA assessment criteria on the day of assessment

The assessment result is determined in accordance with the CFA NSP-BPLR Assessment Guideline. The Guideline has been prepared and approved by CFA, published in the Government Gazette and on the CFA website, pursuant to s.50E of the *Country Fire Authority Act 1958*.

Certification Details:

	Manager Community Safety	Assistant Chief Fire Officer
Name	James Haley	Daniel Condon
Date	20/7/2023	28/7/2023

¹ The landholder may be the council, a public authority, an agency, or a private person. Evidence of grassland management agreement(s) noting the specific prescriptions within this assessment report must be provided to CFA with notification of council designation or continued designation as part of review.



Neighbourhood Safer Place – Bushfire Place of Last Resort Site Assessment Report



NSP-BPLR ID Number	1000042288		
Location	Barwon Downs Parkland (Old school site)		
Address	1595 Birregurra-Forrest Road (near corner Wickhams Lane)		
Township	Barwon Downs	Postcode	3243
Location Type	Open Space		

Assessment Factors:

		North Aspect	East Aspect	South Aspect	West Aspect
Vegetation Type		AS3959 Grassland / BAA Grassland (pasture)	AS3959 Grassland / BAA Grassland (pasture)	AS3959 Grassland / BAA Grassland (pasture)	AS3959 Grassland / BAA Grassland (pasture)
Separation Distance to Vegetation (m)	Actual	53	16	25	14
	Prescribed (Grassland only)	70	70	70	70
Vegetation Height		0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
Effective Slope (°)		0	0	0	0
Site Slope (°)		0	0	0	0
Deemed to Satisfy Requirements (Actual or Prescribed) for Distance Achieved (Distance ≥ 140m Building; ≥ 310m Open Space)		No	No	No	No
Deemed to Satisfy Requirements for Slope Achieved (Effective Slope < 20°)		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
(If DTS is not achieved) Calculated Heat Flux (kW/m²) (To be ≤ 2kW Open Space; ≤ 10kW Building)	Actual	3.49	15.57	9.48	18.4
	Prescribed (Grassland only)	1.91	1.91	1.91	1.9*1
*Prescriptions for grassland management		Properties to the Nth,Sth, Est, and Wst aspects of the reserve shall be maintained in a minimum fuel condition of <100mm throughout the FDP for a distance of 70m in all directions from the reserve outer boundary.			
Overall Criteria Achieved		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

CFA Assessment Criteria:

An NSP-BPLR should provide protection to people from lethal levels of radiant heat through an appropriate separation distance between the bushfire hazard (vegetation) and the outer edge of the NSP-BPLR.

An NSP-BPLR must meet the following maximum radiant heat criteria.



Neighbourhood Safer Place – Bushfire Place of Last Resort Site Assessment Report



NSP-BPLR type	Maximum radiant heat	Separation distance
Building	10kW/m ²	> 140m
Open space	2kW/m ²	> 310m

The separation distance in metres (m), in the above table, is from the outer edge of a proposed or existing NSP-BPLR to a forest fuel hazard and represents an acceptable evidence-based measure to comply with the maximum allowable radiant heat criteria. Where NSP-BPLRs are abutting less than extreme fuel hazards the separation distance may be reduced so long as the criteria for maximum radiant heat are met.

Compliance with the CFA assessment criteria is the first step in a broader municipal council process for a site to be considered for designation or ongoing designation as part of review.

Council Neighbourhood Safer Places Plan Criteria – Assessment - Beeac

NSP Location: Beeac Date: 04 July 2023

Council NSPP Criteria	Issues to consider	Council comments	Satisfied? Yes/No
Consents and rights of access <i>See section 2.3.1</i>	If the potential NSP is located on Council-owned land, can Council use the land as an NSP if required? Consider whether or not Council allows the land to be used for potentially inconsistent purposes, such as for farmers' markets, fetes, circuses etc.	Colac Otway Shire owned land, is also part playground and BBQ area. Can continue to be used as NSP-BPLR.	Yes
	If the potential NSP is on private land, or public land under the control of a Crown Land Manager (other than Council), can Council enter into arrangements which allow it to use the land as a potential NSP on reasonably satisfactory terms? Also consider whether Council has the right to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> access the site and surrounding areas for maintenance; and erect appropriate signage at the NSP. 	Not Applicable.	N/A
Access and egress <i>See section 2.3.2</i>	Do access routes to the potential NSP allow for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the anticipated potential number of people to move to and from the place; and the CFA and other emergency services to attend the place for asset and personnel protection activities? 	Yes No restrictions for CFA appliances or personnel.	Yes
	Are access routes easily navigable, bearing in mind they could be affected by smoke? Consider the condition of the road surface, proximity to population centres and major roads, capacity of access routes to accommodate large numbers of vehicles, the availability of car parking at the place and any other relevant matters.	Access/egress easily navigable along Main St (Colac-Ballarat Rd) Parking readily available at NSP-BPLR and within built township near NSP-BPLR (incl. heavy vehicles).	Yes
Maintenance of NSP in accordance with CFA assessment <i>See section 2.3.3</i>	Can Council maintain the potential NSP in accordance with the criteria taken into account by the CFA in arriving at its fire rating assessment? <i>If the CFA have not provided sufficient information in relation to the criteria it has taken into account in arriving at its fire rating assessment, it may be necessary for Council to seek further information from the CFA.</i>	Site currently maintained in accordance with CFA criteria by Colac Otway Shire.	Yes

Council NSPP Criteria	Issues to consider	Council comments	Satisfied? Yes/No
Opening of the NSP See section 2.3.4	Will it be possible and practicable to make the potential NSP available for use on a 24 hour basis during the declared fire danger period? This is a particular issue where the potential NSP is a building. Consider the potential for damage to the NSP which could result during times that it is open and available for use, but is not being used as an NSP.	Open space available 24 hrs during fire danger period. Not applicable.	Yes
	What costs could be incurred by Council in making the potential NSP available on a 24 hour basis during the declared fire danger period? Are these costs reasonable, and capable of being borne by Council?	Open space available 24 hrs during fire danger period. Not applicable.	Yes
	Could the potential NSP be used for an unintended purpose which could impact upon its use as an NSP (such as an emergency relief centre)?	Open space available 24 hrs during fire danger period. Not suitable for use as ERC. Nearest potential ERC located at Beeac Hall, 55 Lang St (Mingawalla Rd).	Yes
Defendable space and fire suppression activities See section 2.3.5	Is the potential NSP surrounded by sufficient open space to enable the CFA to conduct asset protection and fire suppression operations? Is that open space reasonably free of obstacles (such as fences, buildings, steep gradients, vegetation and other land formations)? Council should seek CFA advice concerning the defendability of the potential NSP and the Buffer Zone, including in relation to fire vehicle access requirements.	No significant restrictions on access or egress of CFA appliances for the purpose of fire suppression or asset protection.	Yes
	Will approval be required under legislation such as the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Cwlth), Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988 (Vic) and the Planning and Environment Act 1987 (Vic)? Can such approval be obtained before the NSP is established?	No permits required under these Acts for treatments and/or maintenance.	Yes
Defendability of buildings See section 2.3.6	If the potential NSP is a building, has Council sought expert advice from the CFA to determine whether the NSP is likely to be subject to risk from ember attack? If it is subject to such a risk, can that risk be safely managed?	Open space NSP – not applicable Fire hose reel fitted to operate from mains water supply	Yes

Council NSPP Criteria	Issues to consider	Council comments	Satisfied? Yes/No
Signage See section 2.3.7	Can appropriate signage be erected at the entry to the potential NSP, and in its vicinity?	Appropriate signage located at two entry points to NSP-BPLR.	Yes
	If signage needs to be placed on private land, can Council obtained the consent of the relevant landowner to the erection of the signage?	Not applicable	Yes
Maintenance and maintainability See section 2.3.8	Is the potential NSP capable of being maintained to ensure continuing compliance with the CFA Fire Rating Criteria and the Council NSPP Criteria? Where relevant, consider whether adjoining land owners and occupiers will provide Council with an assurance that both the potential NSP and the Buffer Zone can be maintained to a satisfactory level.	Yes – current maintenance meets CFA requirements. Adjoining landowners maintaining land according to requirements of CFA & MFPO. All land within 115m 2.2.3.2 low threat vegetation and non-vegetated areas (e) & (f).	Yes
Disabled access See section 2.3.9	Are there are means of access for disabled and mobility-impaired persons to the potential NSP, including vehicle access to drop off people with disabilities?	Yes – disabled parking on street and paved paths for ease of access.	Yes
Alternative uses of potential NSP See section 2.3.11	Can Council manage alternative uses which may be made of the potential NSP so as to ensure that those uses will not compromise the function of the place as a potential NSP? The CFA has advised that where a potential NSP which is used for an operational purpose at many times meets the CFA Fire Rating Criteria, then the CFA considers that those operational activities will be able to continue (to the extent practicable in the circumstances) while the place is being used as an NSP.	No other alternative uses to compromise use as NSP-BPLR NSP-BPLR not suitable for operational purposes. Rec reserve and brigade in vicinity for operational purposes.	Yes
Community Communication See section 2.3.12	Will it be possible to ensure that there will be good community awareness of the location of the potential NSP, and the risks associated with using the potential NSP?	Community aware of NSP-BPLR and associated risks.	Yes





Neighbourhood Safer Place – Bushfire Place of Last Resort Site Assessment Report



Site Details:

NSP-BPLR ID Number	1000042355		
CFA Region	South West	CFA District	CFA District 06
Municipal Council	Colac-Otway Shire		

Location	Beeac Park		
Sub Location			
Address	Corner of Main Street (Colac-Ballarat Road) and Wallace Street		
Township	Beeac	Postcode	3251

Location Type	Open Space
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Best Access to Site	
Brief Description of Use	Council Park on Main street in town

Site Assessment Officer Details:

Name	Jessica Sutherland
Assessment Date	4/7/2023

Result:

Assessment Result	<u>COMPLIANT</u>
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COMPLIANT	Meeting the CFA assessment criteria on the day of assessment
COMPLIANT/PRESCRIPTIONS	Meeting the CFA assessment criteria on the day of assessment, provided that the prescriptions for grassland management* are implemented throughout the fire danger period; and secured by agreed terms entered into by the landholder(s) ¹
NON-COMPLIANT	Not meeting the CFA assessment criteria on the day of assessment

The assessment result is determined in accordance with the CFA NSP-BPLR Assessment Guideline. The Guideline has been prepared and approved by CFA, published in the Government Gazette and on the CFA website, pursuant to s.50E of the *Country Fire Authority Act 1958*.

Certification Details:

	Manager Community Safety	Assistant Chief Fire Officer
Name	James Haley	Daniel Condon
Date	20/7/2023	28/7/2023

¹ The landholder may be the council, a public authority, an agency, or a private person. Evidence of grassland management agreement(s) noting the specific prescriptions within this assessment report must be provided to CFA with notification of council designation or continued designation as part of review.



Neighbourhood Safer Place – Bushfire Place of Last Resort Site Assessment Report



NSP-BPLR ID Number	1000042355		
Location	Beeac Park		
Address	Corner of Main Street (Colac-Ballarat Road) and Wallace Street		
Township	Beeac	Postcode	3251
Location Type	Open Space		

Assessment Factors:

		North Aspect	East Aspect	South Aspect	West Aspect
Vegetation Type		AS3959 Grassland / BAA Grassland (pasture)	AS3959 Grassland / BAA Grassland (pasture)	AS3959 Grassland / BAA Grassland (pasture)	AS3959 Grassland / BAA Grassland (pasture)
Separation Distance to Vegetation (m)	Actual	283	93	260	139
	Prescribed (Grassland only)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Vegetation Height		0.1	0.1	0.2	0.2
Effective Slope (°)		0	0	0	-1
Site Slope (°)		0	0	0	0
Deemed to Satisfy Requirements (Actual or Prescribed) for Distance Achieved (Distance ≥ 140m Building; ≥ 310m Open Space)		No	No	No	No
Deemed to Satisfy Requirements for Slope Achieved (Effective Slope < 20°)		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
(If DTS is not achieved) Calculated Heat Flux (kW/m ²) (To be ≤ 2kW Open Space; ≤ 10kW Building)	Actual	0.12	1.03	0.12	0.62
	Prescribed (Grassland only)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
*Prescriptions for grassland management					
Overall Criteria Achieved		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

CFA Assessment Criteria:

An NSP-BPLR should provide protection to people from lethal levels of radiant heat through an appropriate separation distance between the bushfire hazard (vegetation) and the outer edge of the NSP-BPLR.

An NSP-BPLR must meet the following maximum radiant heat criteria.

NSP-BPLR type	Maximum radiant heat	Separation distance
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Neighbourhood Safer Place – Bushfire Place of Last Resort Site Assessment Report



Building	10kW/m ²	> 140m
Open space	2kW/m ²	> 310m

The separation distance in metres (m), in the above table, is from the outer edge of a proposed or existing NSP-BPLR to a forest fuel hazard and represents an acceptable evidence-based measure to comply with the maximum allowable radiant heat criteria. Where NSP-BPLRs are abutting less than extreme fuel hazards the separation distance may be reduced so long as the criteria for maximum radiant heat are met.

Compliance with the CFA assessment criteria is the first step in a broader municipal council process for a site to be considered for designation or ongoing designation as part of review.

Council Neighbourhood Safer Places Plan Criteria – Assessment – Beech Forest

NSP Location: Beech Forest Date: 3 July 2023

Council NSPP Criteria	Issues to consider	Council comments	Satisfied? Yes/No
Consents and rights of access <i>See section 2.3.1</i>	If the potential NSP is located on Council-owned land, can Council use the land as an NSP if required? Consider whether or not Council allows the land to be used for potentially inconsistent purposes, such as for farmers' markets, fetes, circuses etc.	Colac Otway Shire managed (CoM) Crown land. Can continue to be used as NSP-BPLR.	Yes
	If the potential NSP is on private land, or public land under the control of a Crown Land Manager (other than Council), can Council enter into arrangements which allow it to use the land as a potential NSP on reasonably satisfactory terms? Also consider whether Council has the right to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> access the site and surrounding areas for maintenance; and erect appropriate signage at the NSP. 	Colac Otway Shire Council is Committee of Management for land and therefore responsible for management. Consent for developing BPLR (D18/115492).	Yes/Yes
Access and egress <i>See section 2.3.2</i>	Do access routes to the potential NSP allow for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the anticipated potential number of people to move to and from the place; and the CFA and other emergency services to attend the place for asset and personnel protection activities? 	Yes No restrictions for CFA appliances or personnel.	Yes
	Are access routes easily navigable, bearing in mind they could be affected by smoke? Consider the condition of the road surface, proximity to population centres and major roads, capacity of access routes to accommodate large numbers of vehicles, the availability of car parking at the place and any other relevant matters.	Access/egress easily navigable along Main Rd (Beech Forest – Lavers Hill Rd and Beech Forest - Mt Sabine Rd) Roadside parking available at NSP-BPLR and within built township near NSP-BPLR (incl. heavy vehicles).	Yes
Maintenance of NSP in accordance with CFA assessment <i>See section 2.3.3</i>	Can Council maintain the potential NSP in accordance with the criteria taken into account by the CFA in arriving at its fire rating assessment? <i>If the CFA have not provided sufficient information in relation to the criteria it has taken into account in arriving at its fire rating assessment, it may be necessary for Council to seek further information from the CFA.</i>	Site and surrounding grasslands currently maintained in accordance with CFA criteria by Colac Otway Shire. Surrounding grasslands managed in required condition by private landholders.	Yes

Council NSPP Criteria	Issues to consider	Council comments	Satisfied? Yes/No
Opening of the NSP See section 2.3.4	Will it be possible and practicable to make the potential NSP available for use on a 24 hour basis during the declared fire danger period? This is a particular issue where the potential NSP is a building. Consider the potential for damage to the NSP which could result during times that it is open and available for use, but is not being used as an NSP.	Open space available 24 hrs during fire danger period. Not applicable.	Yes
	What costs could be incurred by Council in making the potential NSP available on a 24 hour basis during the declared fire danger period? Are these costs reasonable, and capable of being borne by Council?	Open space available 24 hrs during fire danger period. Not applicable.	Yes
	Could the potential NSP be used for an unintended purpose which could impact upon its use as an NSP (such as an emergency relief centre)?	Open space available 24 hrs during fire danger period. Not applicable.	Yes
Defendable space and fire suppression activities See section 2.3.5	Is the potential NSP surrounded by sufficient open space to enable the CFA to conduct asset protection and fire suppression operations? Is that open space reasonably free of obstacles (such as fences, buildings, steep gradients, vegetation and other land formations)? Council should seek CFA advice concerning the defendability of the potential NSP and the Buffer Zone, including in relation to fire vehicle access requirements.	No significant restrictions on access or egress of CFA appliances for the purpose of fire suppression or asset protection. Access/egress to north and south by existing road network	Yes
	Will approval be required under legislation such as the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Cwlth), Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988 (Vic) and the Planning and Environment Act 1987 (Vic)? Can such approval be obtained before the NSP is established?	No permits required under these Acts for treatments and/or maintenance.	Yes
Defendability of buildings See section 2.3.6	If the potential NSP is a building, has Council sought expert advice from the CFA to determine whether the NSP is likely to be subject to risk from ember attack? If it is subject to such a risk, can that risk be safely managed?	Open space NSP – not applicable Building immediately adjacent separated/shielded from BPLR by steel fence.	Yes

Council NSPP Criteria	Issues to consider	Council comments	Satisfied? Yes/No
Signage See section 2.3.7	Can appropriate signage be erected at the entry to the potential NSP, and in its vicinity?	Appropriate signage located at two points for NSP-BPLR.	Yes
	If signage needs to be placed on private land, can Council obtain the consent of the relevant landowner to the erection of the signage?	Not applicable	Yes
Maintenance and maintainability See section 2.3.8	Is the potential NSP capable of being maintained to ensure continuing compliance with the CFA Fire Rating Criteria and the Council NSPP Criteria? Where relevant, consider whether adjoining land owners and occupiers will provide Council with an assurance that both the potential NSP and the Buffer Zone can be maintained to a satisfactory level.	Yes – current maintenance meets CFA requirements. Adjoining grassland area to north and east of site managed by Council as per Committee of Management & adjoining residential landowners maintaining land according to requirements of CFA & MFPO.	Yes Yes
Disabled access See section 2.3.9	Are there any means of access for disabled and mobility-impaired persons to the potential NSP, including vehicle access to drop off people with disabilities?	Disabled access can be made by parking within site.	Yes
Alternative uses of potential NSP See section 2.3.11	Can Council manage alternative uses which may be made of the potential NSP so as to ensure that those uses will not compromise the function of the place as a potential NSP? The CFA has advised that where a potential NSP which is used for an operational purpose at many times meets the CFA Fire Rating Criteria, then the CFA considers that those operational activities will be able to continue (to the extent practicable in the circumstances) while the place is being used as an NSP.	No other alternative uses to compromise use as NSP-BPLR NSP-BPLR not suitable for operational purposes, adjoining Council managed land accessible for operations.	Yes
Community Communication See section 2.3.12	Will it be possible to ensure that there will be good community awareness of the location of the potential NSP, and the risks associated with using the potential NSP?	Community aware of NSP-BPLR and associated risks.	Yes



Beech Forest map showing proposed potential NSP-BPLR and the prescribed areas for grassland management during the declared Fire Danger Period.
The pink circle has a radius of 81m from the northern NSP-BPLR boundary, while the blue is also 81m from the southern boundary.



Neighbourhood Safer Place – Bushfire Place of Last Resort Site Assessment Report



Site Details:

NSP-BPLR ID Number	1000042287		
CFA Region	South West	CFA District	CFA District 06
Municipal Council	Colac-Otway Shire		

Location	Gravel area next to The Beechy Hotel		
Sub Location			
Address	35 Main Road (Beech Forest-Mount Sabine Road)		
Township	Beech Forest	Postcode	3237

Location Type	Open Space
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Best Access to Site	
Brief Description of Use	Currently land is not being used, was previously a playground

Site Assessment Officer Details:

Name	Jessica Sutherland
Assessment Date	4/7/2023

Result:

Assessment Result	COMPLIANT/PRESCRIPTIONS
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COMPLIANT	Meeting the CFA assessment criteria on the day of assessment
COMPLIANT/PRESCRIPTIONS	Meeting the CFA assessment criteria on the day of assessment, provided that the prescriptions for grassland management* are implemented throughout the fire danger period; and secured by agreed terms entered into by the landholder(s) ¹
NON-COMPLIANT	Not meeting the CFA assessment criteria on the day of assessment

The assessment result is determined in accordance with the CFA NSP-BPLR Assessment Guideline. The Guideline has been prepared and approved by CFA, published in the Government Gazette and on the CFA website, pursuant to s.50E of the *Country Fire Authority Act 1958*.

Certification Details:

	Manager Community Safety	Assistant Chief Fire Officer
Name	James Haley	Daniel Condon
Date	21/7/2023	28/7/2023

¹ The landholder may be the council, a public authority, an agency, or a private person. Evidence of grassland management agreement(s) noting the specific prescriptions within this assessment report must be provided to CFA with notification of council designation or continued designation as part of review.



Neighbourhood Safer Place – Bushfire Place of Last Resort Site Assessment Report



Site Assessment Report

NSP-BPLR ID Number	1000042287		
Location	Gravel area next to The Beechy Hotel		
Address	35 Main Road (Beech Forest-Mount Sabine Road)		
Township	Beech Forest	Postcode	3237
Location Type	Open Space		

Assessment Factors:

		North Aspect	East Aspect	South Aspect	West Aspect
Vegetation Type		AS3959 Grassland / BAA Grassland (pasture)	AS3959 Forest / BAA Wet Sclerophyll Forest	AS3959 Grassland / BAA Grassland (pasture)	AS3959 Forest / BAA Wet Sclerophyll Forest
Separation Distance to Vegetation (m)	Actual	70	196	75	208
	Prescribed (Grassland only)	81	N/A	81	N/A
Vegetation Height		0.3	20	0.2	15
Effective Slope (°)		8	8	8	6
Site Slope (°)		0	0	0	0
Deemed to Satisfy Requirements (Actual or Prescribed) for Distance Achieved (Distance ≥ 140m Building; ≥ 310m Open Space)		No	No	No	No
Deemed to Satisfy Requirements for Slope Achieved (Effective Slope < 20°)		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
(If DTS is not achieved) Calculated Heat Flux (kW/m ²) (To be ≤ 2kW Open Space; ≤ 10kW Building)	Actual	3.35	2.7	2.99	2.12
	Prescribed (Grassland only)	1.95	N/A	1.96	N/A
*Prescriptions for grassland management		Any grassland to the north and south of the nsp boundary shall be maintained in a minimum fuel load of < 100mm during the FDP for a distance of 81m from the outer edge of the nsp boundary. This site is compliant subject to the Council Alternative Assessment supplied.			
Overall Criteria Achieved		Yes	No	Yes	No

CFA Assessment Criteria:

An NSP-BPLR should provide protection to people from lethal levels of radiant heat through an appropriate separation distance between the bushfire hazard (vegetation) and the outer edge of the NSP-BPLR.



Neighbourhood Safer Place – Bushfire Place of Last Resort
Site Assessment Report



An NSP-BPLR must meet the following maximum radiant heat criteria.

NSP-BPLR type	Maximum radiant heat	Separation distance
Building	10kW/m ²	> 140m
Open space	2kW/m ²	> 310m

The separation distance in metres (m), in the above table, is from the outer edge of a proposed or existing NSP-BPLR to a forest fuel hazard and represents an acceptable evidence-based measure to comply with the maximum allowable radiant heat criteria. Where NSP-BPLRs are abutting less than extreme fuel hazards the separation distance may be reduced so long as the criteria for maximum radiant heat are met.

Compliance with the CFA assessment criteria is the first step in a broader municipal council process for a site to be considered for designation or ongoing designation as part of review.

Council Neighbourhood Safer Places Plan Criteria – Assessment - Birregurra

NSP Location: Birregurra Date: 4 July 2023

Council NSPP Criteria	Issues to consider	Council comments	Satisfied? Yes/No
Consents and rights of access <i>See section 2.3.1</i>	If the potential NSP is located on Council-owned land, can Council use the land as an NSP if required? Consider whether or not Council allows the land to be used for potentially inconsistent purposes, such as for farmers' markets, fetes, circuses etc.	Colac Otway Shire owned land, is also part playground and BBQ area. Can continue to be used as NSP-BPLR.	Yes
	If the potential NSP is on private land, or public land under the control of a Crown Land Manager (other than Council), can Council enter into arrangements which allow it to use the land as a potential NSP on reasonably satisfactory terms? Also consider whether Council has the right to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> access the site and surrounding areas for maintenance; and erect appropriate signage at the NSP. 	Not applicable, Colac Otway Shire owned land.	Yes
Access and egress <i>See section 2.3.2</i>	Do access routes to the potential NSP allow for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the anticipated potential number of people to move to and from the place; and the CFA and other emergency services to attend the place for asset and personnel protection activities? 	Yes No restrictions for CFA appliances or personnel.	Yes
	Are access routes easily navigable, bearing in mind they could be affected by smoke? Consider the condition of the road surface, proximity to population centres and major roads, capacity of access routes to accommodate large numbers of vehicles, the availability of car parking at the place and any other relevant matters.	Access/egress easily navigable along Main St (Warncoort-Birregurra Rd or Birregurra-Deans Marsh Rd) Parking readily available at NSP-BPLR and within built township near NSP-BPLR.	Yes
Maintenance of NSP in accordance with CFA assessment <i>See section 2.3.3</i>	Can Council maintain the potential NSP in accordance with the criteria taken into account by the CFA in arriving at its fire rating assessment? <i>If the CFA have not provided sufficient information in relation to the criteria it has taken into account in arriving at its fire rating assessment, it may be necessary for Council to seek further information from the CFA.</i>	Site currently maintained in accordance with CFA criteria by Colac Otway Shire.	Yes

Council NSPP Criteria	Issues to consider	Council comments	Satisfied? Yes/No
Opening of the NSP See section 2.3.4	<p>Will it be possible and practicable to make the potential NSP available for use on a 24 hour basis during the declared fire danger period? This is a particular issue where the potential NSP is a building.</p> <p>Consider the potential for damage to the NSP which could result during times that it is open and available for use, but is not being used as an NSP.</p>	<p>Open space available 24 hrs during fire danger period.</p> <p>Not applicable.</p>	Yes
	<p>What costs could be incurred by Council in making the potential NSP available on a 24 hour basis during the declared fire danger period? Are these costs reasonable, and capable of being borne by Council?</p>	<p>Open space available 24 hrs during fire danger period.</p> <p>Not applicable.</p>	Yes
	<p>Could the potential NSP be used for an unintended purpose which could impact upon its use as an NSP (such as an emergency relief centre)?</p>	<p>Open space available 24 hrs during fire danger period.</p> <p>Not applicable.</p>	Yes
Defendable space and fire suppression activities See section 2.3.5	<p>Is the potential NSP surrounded by sufficient open space to enable the CFA to conduct asset protection and fire suppression operations? Is that open space reasonably free of obstacles (such as fences, buildings, steep gradients, vegetation and other land formations)?</p> <p>Council should seek CFA advice concerning the defendability of the potential NSP and the Buffer Zone, including in relation to fire vehicle access requirements.</p>	<p>No significant restrictions on access or egress of CFA appliances for the purpose of fire suppression or asset protection.</p>	Yes
	<p>Will approval be required under legislation such as the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Cwlth), Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988 (Vic) and the Planning and Environment Act 1987 (Vic)? Can such approval be obtained before the NSP is established?</p>	<p>No permits required under these Acts for treatments and/or maintenance.</p>	Yes
Defendability of buildings See section 2.3.6	<p>If the potential NSP is a building, has Council sought expert advice from the CFA to determine whether the NSP is likely to be subject to risk from ember attack? If it is subject to such a risk, can that risk be safely managed?</p>	<p>Open space available 24 hrs during fire danger period.</p> <p>Not applicable.</p>	Yes

Council NSPP Criteria	Issues to consider	Council comments	Satisfied? Yes/No
Signage See section 2.3.7	Can appropriate signage be erected at the entry to the potential NSP, and in its vicinity?	Appropriate signage located at various points around NSP-BPLR.	Yes
	If signage needs to be placed on private land, can Council obtain the consent of the relevant landowner to the erection of the signage?	Not applicable	Yes
Maintenance and maintainability See section 2.3.8	Is the potential NSP capable of being maintained to ensure continuing compliance with the CFA Fire Rating Criteria and the Council NSPP Criteria? Where relevant, consider whether adjoining land owners and occupiers will provide Council with an assurance that both the potential NSP and the Buffer Zone can be maintained to a satisfactory level.	Yes – current maintenance meets CFA requirements. Adjoining landowners maintaining land according to requirements of CFA & MFPO. Land being subdivided and new dwellings built & proposed.	Yes
Disabled access See section 2.3.9	Are there any means of access for disabled and mobility-impaired persons to the potential NSP, including vehicle access to drop off people with disabilities?	Yes – disabled parking on street and paved paths for ease of access. Ambulant toilets available.	Yes
Alternative uses of potential NSP See section 2.3.11	Can Council manage alternative uses which may be made of the potential NSP so as to ensure that those uses will not compromise the function of the place as a potential NSP? The CFA has advised that where a potential NSP which is used for an operational purpose at many times meets the CFA Fire Rating Criteria, then the CFA considers that those operational activities will be able to continue (to the extent practicable in the circumstances) while the place is being used as an NSP.	No other alternative uses to compromise use as NSP-BPLR NSP-BPLR not suitable for operational purposes.	Yes Yes
Community Communication See section 2.3.12	Will it be possible to ensure that there will be good community awareness of the location of the potential NSP, and the risks associated with using the potential NSP?	Community aware of NSP-BPLR and associated risks.	Yes





Neighbourhood Safer Place – Bushfire Place of Last Resort Site Assessment Report



Site Details:

NSP-BPLR ID Number	1000023062		
CFA Region	South West	CFA District	CFA District 06
Municipal Council	Colac-Otway Shire		

Location	Birregurra Park		
Sub Location	Grassed area at Northern corner		
Address	35-39 Main Street (Corner of Strachan Street)		
Township	Birregurra	Postcode	3242

Location Type	Open Space
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Best Access to Site	
Brief Description of Use	Currently used as an open space park

Site Assessment Officer Details:

Name	Jessica Sutherland
Assessment Date	4/7/2023

Result:

Assessment Result	<u>COMPLIANT/PRESCRIPTIONS</u>
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COMPLIANT	Meeting the CFA assessment criteria on the day of assessment
COMPLIANT/PRESCRIPTIONS	Meeting the CFA assessment criteria on the day of assessment, provided that the prescriptions for grassland management* are implemented throughout the fire danger period; and secured by agreed terms entered into by the landholder(s) ¹
NON-COMPLIANT	Not meeting the CFA assessment criteria on the day of assessment

The assessment result is determined in accordance with the CFA NSP-BPLR Assessment Guideline. The Guideline has been prepared and approved by CFA, published in the Government Gazette and on the CFA website, pursuant to s.50E of the *Country Fire Authority Act 1958*.

Certification Details:

	Manager Community Safety	Assistant Chief Fire Officer
Name	James Haley	Daniel Condon
Date	21/7/2023	28/7/2023

¹ The landholder may be the council, a public authority, an agency, or a private person. Evidence of grassland management agreement(s) noting the specific prescriptions within this assessment report must be provided to CFA with notification of council designation or continued designation as part of review.



Neighbourhood Safer Place – Bushfire Place of Last Resort Site Assessment Report



NSP-BPLR ID Number	1000023062		
Location	Birregurra Park		
Address	35-39 Main Street (Corner of Strachan Street)		
Township	Birregurra	Postcode	3242
Location Type	Open Space		

Assessment Factors:

		North Aspect	East Aspect	South Aspect	West Aspect
Vegetation Type		AS3959 Grassland / BAA Grassland (pasture)	No Classified Vegetation Type / BAA N/A	AS3959 Grassland / BAA Grassland (pasture)	No Classified Vegetation Type / BAA N/A
Separation Distance to Vegetation (m)	Actual	152	N/A	80	N/A
	Prescribed (Grassland only)	152	N/A	80	N/A
Vegetation Height		0.3	N/A	0.3	N/A
Effective Slope (°)		0	0	0	0
Site Slope (°)		0	0	0	0
Deemed to Satisfy Requirements (Actual or Prescribed) for Distance Achieved (Distance ≥ 140m Building; ≥ 310m Open Space)		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Deemed to Satisfy Requirements for Slope Achieved (Effective Slope < 20°)		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
(If DtS is not achieved) Calculated Heat Flux (kW/m ²) (To be ≤ 2kW Open Space; ≤ 10kW Building)	Actual	0.9	N/A	1.79	N/A
	Prescribed (Grassland only)	N/A	N/A	1.79	N/A
*Prescriptions for grassland management		All areas of unmanaged grassland within approx. 80 mtrs of the NSP shall be maintained in a minimal fuel conditionie. < 100mm for the duration of the Fire Danger Period. A private block located within 70mtrs to the SWest of the NSP has what is considered to be unmanaged Grassland.			
Overall Criteria Achieved		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

CFA Assessment Criteria:

An NSP-BPLR should provide protection to people from lethal levels of radiant heat through an appropriate separation distance between the bushfire hazard (vegetation) and the outer edge of the NSP-BPLR.



Neighbourhood Safer Place – Bushfire Place of Last Resort Site Assessment Report



An NSP-BPLR must meet the following maximum radiant heat criteria.

NSP-BPLR type	Maximum radiant heat	Separation distance
Building	10kW/m ²	> 140m
Open space	2kW/m ²	> 310m

The separation distance in metres (m), in the above table, is from the outer edge of a proposed or existing NSP-BPLR to a forest fuel hazard and represents an acceptable evidence-based measure to comply with the maximum allowable radiant heat criteria. Where NSP-BPLRs are abutting less than extreme fuel hazards the separation distance may be reduced so long as the criteria for maximum radiant heat are met.

Compliance with the CFA assessment criteria is the first step in a broader municipal council process for a site to be considered for designation or ongoing designation as part of review.

Council Neighbourhood Safer Places Plan Criteria – Assessment - Cressy

NSP Location: _____ Cressy – Structure _____ Date: 4 July 2023

Council NSPP Criteria	Issues to consider	Council comments	Satisfied? Yes/No
Consents and rights of access <i>See section 2.3.1</i>	If the potential NSP is located on Council-owned land, can Council use the land as an NSP if required? Consider whether or not Council allows the land to be used for potentially inconsistent purposes, such as for farmers' markets, fetes, circuses etc.	Colac Otway Shire owned, with Community Asset Committee managing building. Can continue to be used as NSP-BPLR.	Yes
	If the potential NSP is on private land, or public land under the control of a Crown Land Manager (other than Council), can Council enter into arrangements which allow it to use the land as a potential NSP on reasonably satisfactory terms? Also consider whether Council has the right to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> access the site and surrounding areas for maintenance; and erect appropriate signage at the NSP. 	Not applicable.	Yes
Access and egress <i>See section 2.3.2</i>	Do access routes to the potential NSP allow for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the anticipated potential number of people to move to and from the place; and the CFA and other emergency services to attend the place for asset and personnel protection activities? 	Yes No restrictions for CFA appliances or personnel.	Yes
	Are access routes easily navigable, bearing in mind they could be affected by smoke? Consider the condition of the road surface, proximity to population centres and major roads, capacity of access routes to accommodate large numbers of vehicles, the availability of car parking at the place and any other relevant matters.	Access/egress easily navigable along Yarima Rd, Lyons & New Station St (Colac-Ballarat Rd). Parking readily available at NSP-BPLR and within built township near NSP-BPLR.	Yes
Maintenance of NSP in accordance with CFA assessment <i>See section 2.3.3</i>	Can Council maintain the potential NSP in accordance with the criteria taken into account by the CFA in arriving at its fire rating assessment? <i>If the CFA have not provided sufficient information in relation to the criteria it has taken into account in arriving at its fire rating assessment, it may be necessary for Council to seek further information from the CFA.</i>	Site currently maintained in accordance with CFA criteria by Colac Otway Shire.	Yes

Council NSPP Criteria	Issues to consider	Council comments	Satisfied? Yes/No
Opening of the NSP See section 2.3.4	<p>Will it be possible and practicable to make the potential NSP available for use on a 24 hour basis during the declared fire danger period? This is a particular issue where the potential NSP is a building.</p> <p>Consider the potential for damage to the NSP which could result during times that it is open and available for use, but is not being used as an NSP.</p>	<p>Building available on 24-hour basis. Key issued to Cressy CFA brigade and Community Asset Committee.</p> <p>Key also available through Colac Otway Shire.</p>	Yes
	<p>What costs could be incurred by Council in making the potential NSP available on a 24 hour basis during the declared fire danger period? Are these costs reasonable, and capable of being borne by Council?</p>	<p>Building available on 24-hour basis. Key issued to Cressy CFA brigade and Community Asset Committee. No costs involved in making available on 24 hour basis.</p>	Yes
	<p>Could the potential NSP be used for an unintended purpose which could impact upon its use as an NSP (such as an emergency relief centre)?</p>	<p>Building available on 24-hour basis. Currently listed as potential Emergency Relief Centre for Colac Otway Shire.</p>	Yes
Defendable space and fire suppression activities See section 2.3.5	<p>Is the potential NSP surrounded by sufficient open space to enable the CFA to conduct asset protection and fire suppression operations? Is that open space reasonably free of obstacles (such as fences, buildings, steep gradients, vegetation and other land formations)?</p> <p>Council should seek CFA advice concerning the defendability of the potential NSP and the Buffer Zone, including in relation to fire vehicle access requirements.</p>	<p>No significant restrictions on access or egress of CFA appliances for the purpose of fire suppression or asset protection.</p>	Yes
	<p>Will approval be required under legislation such as the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Cwlth), Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988 (Vic) and the Planning and Environment Act 1987 (Vic)? Can such approval be obtained before the NSP is established?</p>	<p>No permits required under these Acts for treatments and/or maintenance.</p>	Yes
Defendability of buildings See section 2.3.6	<p>If the potential NSP is a building, has Council sought expert advice from the CFA to determine whether the NSP is likely to be subject to risk from ember attack? If it is subject to such a risk, can that risk be safely managed?</p>	<p>Yes, additional works completed in previous years.</p>	Yes

Council NSPP Criteria	Issues to consider	Council comments	Satisfied? Yes/No
Signage See section 2.3.7	Can appropriate signage be erected at the entry to the potential NSP, and in its vicinity?	Appropriate signage located at two entry points to NSP-BPLR. Additional sign inside building entrance hall.	Yes
	If signage needs to be placed on private land, can Council obtain the consent of the relevant landowner to the erection of the signage?	Not applicable.	Yes
Maintenance and maintainability See section 2.3.8	Is the potential NSP capable of being maintained to ensure continuing compliance with the CFA Fire Rating Criteria and the Council NSPP Criteria? Where relevant, consider whether adjoining land owners and occupiers will provide Council with an assurance that both the potential NSP and the Buffer Zone can be maintained to a satisfactory level.	Yes – current maintenance meets CFA requirements. Adjoining landowners maintaining land according to requirements of CFA & MFPO. Additional works completed to extend and improve buffer zone.	Yes
Disabled access See section 2.3.9	Are there any means of access for disabled and mobility-impaired persons to the potential NSP, including vehicle access to drop off people with disabilities?	Yes – paved paths and ramps for ease of disabled access.	Yes
Alternative uses of potential NSP See section 2.3.11	Can Council manage alternative uses which may be made of the potential NSP so as to ensure that those uses will not compromise the function of the place as a potential NSP? The CFA has advised that where a potential NSP which is used for an operational purpose at many times meets the CFA Fire Rating Criteria, then the CFA considers that those operational activities will be able to continue (to the extent practicable in the circumstances) while the place is being used as an NSP.	No other alternative uses to compromise use as NSP-BPLR. NSP-BPLR not suitable for operational purposes. CFA station within 150m.	Yes
Community Communication See section 2.3.12	Will it be possible to ensure that there will be good community awareness of the location of the potential NSP, and the risks associated with using the potential NSP?	Community aware of NSP-BPLR and associated risks.	Yes

Council Neighbourhood Safer Places Plan Criteria – Assessment - Cressy

NSP Location: Cressy – Open Space Date: 4 July 2023

Council NSPP Criteria	Issues to consider	Council comments	Satisfied? Yes/No
Consents and rights of access <i>See section 2.3.1</i>	If the potential NSP is located on Council-owned land, can Council use the land as an NSP if required? Consider whether or not Council allows the land to be used for potentially inconsistent purposes, such as for farmers' markets, fetes, circuses etc.	Colac Otway Shire owned and managed land. Can continue to be used as NSP-BPLR.	Yes
	If the potential NSP is on private land, or public land under the control of a Crown Land Manager (other than Council), can Council enter into arrangements which allow it to use the land as a potential NSP on reasonably satisfactory terms? Also consider whether Council has the right to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> access the site and surrounding areas for maintenance; and erect appropriate signage at the NSP. 	Not Applicable.	Yes
Access and egress <i>See section 2.3.2</i>	Do access routes to the potential NSP allow for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the anticipated potential number of people to move to and from the place; and the CFA and other emergency services to attend the place for asset and personnel protection activities? 	Yes No restrictions for CFA appliances or personnel.	Yes
	Are access routes easily navigable, bearing in mind they could be affected by smoke? Consider the condition of the road surface, proximity to population centres and major roads, capacity of access routes to accommodate large numbers of vehicles, the availability of car parking at the place and any other relevant matters.	Access/egress easily navigable along Yarima Rd, Lyons & New Station St (Colac-Ballarat Rd). Parking readily available at NSP-BPLR and within built township near NSP-BPLR.	Yes
Maintenance of NSP in accordance with CFA assessment <i>See section 2.3.3</i>	Can Council maintain the potential NSP in accordance with the criteria taken into account by the CFA in arriving at its fire rating assessment? <i>If the CFA have not provided sufficient information in relation to the criteria it has taken into account in arriving at its fire rating assessment, it may be necessary for Council to seek further information from the CFA.</i>	Site currently maintained in accordance with CFA criteria by Colac Otway Shire. Works completed to remove shrubs from front yard.	Yes

Council NSPP Criteria	Issues to consider	Council comments	Satisfied? Yes/No
Opening of the NSP See section 2.3.4	Will it be possible and practicable to make the potential NSP available for use on a 24 hour basis during the declared fire danger period? This is a particular issue where the potential NSP is a building. Consider the potential for damage to the NSP which could result during times that it is open and available for use, but is not being used as an NSP.	Open space NSP-BPLR – not applicable	Yes
	What costs could be incurred by Council in making the potential NSP available on a 24 hour basis during the declared fire danger period? Are these costs reasonable, and capable of being borne by Council?	Open space NSP-BPLR – not applicable	Yes
	Could the potential NSP be used for an unintended purpose which could impact upon its use as an NSP (such as an emergency relief centre)?	Open space NSP-BPLR – not applicable	Yes
Defendable space and fire suppression activities See section 2.3.5	Is the potential NSP surrounded by sufficient open space to enable the CFA to conduct asset protection and fire suppression operations? Is that open space reasonably free of obstacles (such as fences, buildings, steep gradients, vegetation and other land formations)? Council should seek CFA advice concerning the defendability of the potential NSP and the Buffer Zone, including in relation to fire vehicle access requirements.	No significant restrictions on access or egress of CFA appliances for the purpose of fire suppression or asset protection.	Yes
	Will approval be required under legislation such as the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Cwlth), Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988 (Vic) and the Planning and Environment Act 1987 (Vic)? Can such approval be obtained before the NSP is established?	No permits required under these Acts for treatments and/or maintenance.	Yes
Defendability of buildings See section 2.3.6	If the potential NSP is a building, has Council sought expert advice from the CFA to determine whether the NSP is likely to be subject to risk from ember attack? If it is subject to such a risk, can that risk be safely managed?	Open space NSP – not applicable.	Yes

Council NSPP Criteria	Issues to consider	Council comments	Satisfied? Yes/No
Signage See section 2.3.7	Can appropriate signage be erected at the entry to the potential NSP, and in its vicinity?	Appropriate signage located at two entry points to NSP-BPLR. Additional sign inside building entrance hall.	Yes
	If signage needs to be placed on private land, can Council obtain the consent of the relevant landowner to the erection of the signage?	Not applicable.	Yes
Maintenance and maintainability See section 2.3.8	Is the potential NSP capable of being maintained to ensure continuing compliance with the CFA Fire Rating Criteria and the Council NSPP Criteria? Where relevant, consider whether adjoining land owners and occupiers will provide Council with an assurance that both the potential NSP and the Buffer Zone can be maintained to a satisfactory level.	Yes – current maintenance meets CFA requirements. Adjoining landowners maintaining land according to requirements of CFA & MFPO.	Yes
Disabled access See section 2.3.9	Are there any means of access for disabled and mobility-impaired persons to the potential NSP, including vehicle access to drop off people with disabilities?	Yes – paved paths and ramps for ease of disabled access.	Yes
Alternative uses of potential NSP See section 2.3.11	Can Council manage alternative uses which may be made of the potential NSP so as to ensure that those uses will not compromise the function of the place as a potential NSP? The CFA has advised that where a potential NSP which is used for an operational purpose at many times meets the CFA Fire Rating Criteria, then the CFA considers that those operational activities will be able to continue (to the extent practicable in the circumstances) while the place is being used as an NSP.	No other alternative uses to compromise use as NSP-BPLR. NSP-BPLR not suitable for operational purposes. CFA station within 150m.	Yes
Community Communication See section 2.3.12	Will it be possible to ensure that there will be good community awareness of the location of the potential NSP, and the risks associated with using the potential NSP?	Community aware of NSP-BPLR and associated risks.	Yes



Neighbourhood Safer Place – Bushfire Place of Last Resort Site Assessment Report



Site Details:

NSP-BPLR ID Number	1000066933		
CFA Region	South West	CFA District	CFA District 06
Municipal Council	Colac-Otway Shire		

Location	Cressy Public Hall		
Sub Location	Grassed area at front		
Address	41 Yarima Road		
Township	Cressy	Postcode	3322

Location Type	Open Space
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Best Access to Site	
Brief Description of Use	Grassed garden area associated with the front of the hall

Site Assessment Officer Details:

Name	Jessica Sutherland
Assessment Date	4/7/2023

Result:

Assessment Result	<u>COMPLIANT</u>
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COMPLIANT	Meeting the CFA assessment criteria on the day of assessment
COMPLIANT/PRESCRIPTIONS	Meeting the CFA assessment criteria on the day of assessment, provided that the prescriptions for grassland management* are implemented throughout the fire danger period; and secured by agreed terms entered into by the landholder(s) ¹
NON-COMPLIANT	Not meeting the CFA assessment criteria on the day of assessment

The assessment result is determined in accordance with the CFA NSP-BPLR Assessment Guideline. The Guideline has been prepared and approved by CFA, published in the Government Gazette and on the CFA website, pursuant to s.50E of the *Country Fire Authority Act 1958*.

Certification Details:

	Manager Community Safety	Assistant Chief Fire Officer
Name	James Haley	Daniel Condon
Date	21/7/2023	28/7/2023

¹ The landholder may be the council, a public authority, an agency, or a private person. Evidence of grassland management agreement(s) noting the specific prescriptions within this assessment report must be provided to CFA with notification of council designation or continued designation as part of review.



Neighbourhood Safer Place – Bushfire Place of Last Resort Site Assessment Report



NSP-BPLR ID Number	1000066933			
Location	Cressy Public Hall			
Address	41 Yarima Road			
Township	Cressy	Postcode	3322	
Location Type	Open Space			

Assessment Factors:

		North Aspect	East Aspect	South Aspect	West Aspect
Vegetation Type		AS3959 Grassland / BAA Grassland (pasture)	AS3959 Grassland / BAA Grassland (pasture)	AS3959 Grassland / BAA Grassland (pasture)	AS3959 Grassland / BAA Grassland (pasture)
Separation Distance to Vegetation (m)	Actual	200	130	120	90
	Prescribed (Grassland only)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Vegetation Height		0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4
Effective Slope (°)		0	0	0	0
Site Slope (°)		0	0	0	0
Deemed to Satisfy Requirements (Actual or Prescribed) for Distance Achieved (Distance ≥ 140m Building; ≥ 310m Open Space)		No	No	No	No
Deemed to Satisfy Requirements for Slope Achieved (Effective Slope < 20°)		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
(If DTS is not achieved) Calculated Heat Flux (kW/m ²) (To be ≤ 2kW Open Space; ≤ 10kW Building)	Actual	.37KW/M	.87KW/M	1.02KW/	1.37KW/
	Prescribed (Grassland only)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
*Prescriptions for grassland management					
Overall Criteria Achieved		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

CFA Assessment Criteria:

An NSP-BPLR should provide protection to people from lethal levels of radiant heat through an appropriate separation distance between the bushfire hazard (vegetation) and the outer edge of the NSP-BPLR.

An NSP-BPLR must meet the following maximum radiant heat criteria.

NSP-BPLR type	Maximum radiant heat	Separation distance
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Neighbourhood Safer Place – Bushfire Place of Last Resort Site Assessment Report



Building	10kW/m ²	> 140m
Open space	2kW/m ²	> 310m

The separation distance in metres (m), in the above table, is from the outer edge of a proposed or existing NSP-BPLR to a forest fuel hazard and represents an acceptable evidence-based measure to comply with the maximum allowable radiant heat criteria. Where NSP-BPLRs are abutting less than extreme fuel hazards the separation distance may be reduced so long as the criteria for maximum radiant heat are met.

Compliance with the CFA assessment criteria is the first step in a broader municipal council process for a site to be considered for designation or ongoing designation as part of review.

Council Neighbourhood Safer Places Plan Criteria – Assessment - Gellibrand

NSP Location: Gellibrand Date: 3 July 2023

Council NSPP Criteria	Issues to consider	Council comments	Satisfied? Yes/No
Consents and rights of access <i>See section 2.3.1</i>	If the potential NSP is located on Council-owned land, can Council use the land as an NSP if required? Consider whether or not Council allows the land to be used for potentially inconsistent purposes, such as for farmers' markets, fetes, circuses etc.	Colac Otway Shire partially owned land, is also part playground and BBQ area. Can continue to be used as NSP-BPLR.	Yes
	If the potential NSP is on private land, or public land under the control of a Crown Land Manager (other than Council), can Council enter into arrangements which allow it to use the land as a potential NSP on reasonably satisfactory terms? Also consider whether Council has the right to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> access the site and surrounding areas for maintenance; and erect appropriate signage at the NSP. 	Part of NSP-BPLR under agreement with Regional Roads for use as an NSP-BPLR, including access & the placement of signage on the road reserve (CM D18/82662). No issue with access for maintenance. Colac Otway Shire maintain signage.	Yes
Access and egress <i>See section 2.3.2</i>	Do access routes to the potential NSP allow for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the anticipated potential number of people to move to and from the place; and the CFA and other emergency services to attend the place for asset and personnel protection activities? 	Yes No restrictions for CFA appliances or personnel. Gellibrand CFA station within parkland precinct.	Yes
	Are access routes easily navigable, bearing in mind they could be affected by smoke? Consider the condition of the road surface, proximity to population centres and major roads, capacity of access routes to accommodate large numbers of vehicles, the availability of car parking at the place and any other relevant matters.	The arterial road (Colac-Lavers Hill Rd) is easily navigable and capable of accommodating large volumes of traffic. Secondary roads maintained in good condition. Parking readily available at NSP-BPLR and within built township near NSP-BPLR.	Yes
Maintenance of NSP in accordance with CFA assessment <i>See section 2.3.3</i>	Can Council maintain the potential NSP in accordance with the criteria taken into account by the CFA in arriving at its fire rating assessment? <i>If the CFA have not provided sufficient information in relation to the criteria it has taken into account in arriving at its fire rating assessment, it may be necessary for Council to seek further information from the CFA.</i>	Site currently maintained in accordance with CFA criteria.	Yes

Council NSPP Criteria	Issues to consider	Council comments	Satisfied? Yes/No
Opening of the NSP See section 2.3.4	Will it be possible and practicable to make the potential NSP available for use on a 24 hour basis during the declared fire danger period? This is a particular issue where the potential NSP is a building. Consider the potential for damage to the NSP which could result during times that it is open and available for use, but is not being used as an NSP.	Open space available 24 hrs during fire danger period. Not applicable.	Yes
	What costs could be incurred by Council in making the potential NSP available on a 24 hour basis during the declared fire danger period? Are these costs reasonable, and capable of being borne by Council?	Open space available 24 hrs during fire danger period. Not applicable.	Yes
	Could the potential NSP be used for an unintended purpose which could impact upon its use as an NSP (such as an emergency relief centre)?	Open space available 24 hrs during fire danger period. Not applicable. Nearest potential ERC at Public Hall on separate property.	Yes
Defendable space and fire suppression activities See section 2.3.5	Is the potential NSP surrounded by sufficient open space to enable the CFA to conduct asset protection and fire suppression operations? Is that open space reasonably free of obstacles (such as fences, buildings, steep gradients, vegetation and other land formations)? Council should seek CFA advice concerning the defendability of the potential NSP and the Buffer Zone, including in relation to fire vehicle access requirements.	No significant restrictions on access or egress of CFA appliances for the purpose of fire suppression or asset protection. Old Neighbourhood House structure removed from Rex Norma Reserve (outside of BPLR).	Yes
	Will approval be required under legislation such as the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Cwlth), Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988 (Vic) and the Planning and Environment Act 1987 (Vic)? Can such approval be obtained before the NSP is established?	No permits required under these Acts for treatments and/or maintenance.	Yes
Defendability of buildings See section 2.3.6	If the potential NSP is a building, has Council sought expert advice from the CFA to determine whether the NSP is likely to be subject to risk from ember attack? If it is subject to such a risk, can that risk be safely managed?	Open space available 24 hrs during fire danger period. Not applicable.	Yes
Signage See section 2.3.7	Can appropriate signage be erected at the entry to the potential NSP, and in its vicinity?	Three sets of signage at entry points.	Yes

Council NSPP Criteria	Issues to consider	Council comments	Satisfied? Yes/No
	If signage needs to be placed on private land, can Council obtain the consent of the relevant landowner to the erection of the signage?	Signage on Shire managed land and RRV managed land (D18/82662).	Yes
Maintenance and maintainability See section 2.3.8	Is the potential NSP capable of being maintained to ensure continuing compliance with the CFA Fire Rating Criteria and the Council NSPP Criteria? Where relevant, consider whether adjoining land owners and occupiers will provide Council with an assurance that both the potential NSP and the Buffer Zone can be maintained to a satisfactory level.	Yes Agreement between Colac Otway Shire and adjacent landowner compliant and currently in place. (CM D18/82658). Adjoining landowners maintaining land according to requirements of CFA & MFPO.	Yes
Disabled access See section 2.3.9	Are there any means of access for disabled and mobility-impaired persons to the potential NSP, including vehicle access to drop off people with disabilities?	Yes – disabled parking on street and paved paths for ease of access.	Yes
Alternative uses of potential NSP See section 2.3.11	Can Council manage alternative uses which may be made of the potential NSP so as to ensure that those uses will not compromise the function of the place as a potential NSP? The CFA has advised that where a potential NSP which is used for an operational purpose at many times meets the CFA Fire Rating Criteria, then the CFA considers that those operational activities will be able to continue (to the extent practicable in the circumstances) while the place is being used as an NSP.	Yes – alternative uses would need (Events) permit from Colac Otway Shire. No impact to NSP-BPLR for operational purposes. CFA brigade at southern end of reserve has operational space outside of NSP-BPLR.	Yes
Community Communication See section 2.3.12	Will it be possible to ensure that there will be good community awareness of the location of the potential NSP, and the risks associated with using the potential NSP?	Community aware of NSP-BPLR and associated risks.	Yes



Sign on Main Rd (Colac-Lavers Hill Rd)



Neighbourhood Safer Place – Bushfire Place of Last Resort Site Assessment Report



Site Details:

NSP-BPLR ID Number	1000011790		
CFA Region	South West	CFA District	CFA District 06
Municipal Council	Colac-Otway Shire		

Location	Rex Norman Park		
Sub Location			
Address	Corner of Colac-Lavers Hill Road and Old Beech Forest Road		
Township	Gellibrand	Postcode	3239

Location Type	Open Space
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Best Access to Site	
Brief Description of Use	Reserve

Site Assessment Officer Details:

Name	Jessica Sutherland
Assessment Date	3/7/2023

Result:

Assessment Result	COMPLIANT/PRESCRIPTIONS
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COMPLIANT	Meeting the CFA assessment criteria on the day of assessment
COMPLIANT/PRESCRIPTIONS	Meeting the CFA assessment criteria on the day of assessment, provided that the prescriptions for grassland management* are implemented throughout the fire danger period; and secured by agreed terms entered into by the landholder(s) ¹
NON-COMPLIANT	Not meeting the CFA assessment criteria on the day of assessment

The assessment result is determined in accordance with the CFA NSP-BPLR Assessment Guideline. The Guideline has been prepared and approved by CFA, published in the Government Gazette and on the CFA website, pursuant to s.50E of the *Country Fire Authority Act 1958*.

Certification Details:

	Manager Community Safety	Assistant Chief Fire Officer
Name	James Haley	Daniel Condon
Date	21/7/2023	28/7/2023

¹ The landholder may be the council, a public authority, an agency, or a private person. Evidence of grassland management agreement(s) noting the specific prescriptions within this assessment report must be provided to CFA with notification of council designation or continued designation as part of review.



Neighbourhood Safer Place – Bushfire Place of Last Resort Site Assessment Report



NSP-BPLR ID Number	1000011790		
Location	Rex Norman Park		
Address	Corner of Colac-Lavers Hill Road and Old Beech Forest Road		
Township	Gellibrand	Postcode	3239
Location Type	Open Space		

Assessment Factors:

		North Aspect	East Aspect	South Aspect	West Aspect
Vegetation Type		AS3959 Grassland / BAA Grassland (pasture)	AS3959 Grassland / BAA Grassland (pasture)	No Classified Vegetation Type / BAA N/A	AS3959 Grassland / BAA Grassland (pasture)
Separation Distance to Vegetation (m)	Actual	38	58	N/A	28
	Prescribed (Grassland only)	65	65	N/A	65
Vegetation Height		0.2	0.2	N/A	0.1
Effective Slope (°)		0	0	0	0
Site Slope (°)		0	0	0	0
Deemed to Satisfy Requirements (Actual or Prescribed) for Distance Achieved (Distance ≥ 140m Building; ≥ 310m Open Space)		No	No	Yes	No
Deemed to Satisfy Requirements for Slope Achieved (Effective Slope < 20°)		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
(If DtS is not achieved) Calculated Heat Flux (kW/m²) (To be ≤ 2kW Open Space; ≤ 10kW Building)	Actual	5.14	2.79	N/A	6.41
	Prescribed (Grassland only)	1.96	1.96	N/A	1.96
*Prescriptions for grassland management		All areas of unmanaged grassland (as per attached plan) with approx 65 mts of the outer perimeter of the NSP shall be maintained in a minimal fuel condition ie < 100 mm for the duration of the FDP			
Overall Criteria Achieved		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

CFA Assessment Criteria:

An NSP-BPLR should provide protection to people from lethal levels of radiant heat through an appropriate separation distance between the bushfire hazard (vegetation) and the outer edge of the NSP-BPLR.

An NSP-BPLR must meet the following maximum radiant heat criteria.



Neighbourhood Safer Place – Bushfire Place of Last Resort Site Assessment Report



NSP-BPLR type	Maximum radiant heat	Separation distance
Building	10kW/m ²	> 140m
Open space	2kW/m ²	> 310m

The separation distance in metres (m), in the above table, is from the outer edge of a proposed or existing NSP-BPLR to a forest fuel hazard and represents an acceptable evidence-based measure to comply with the maximum allowable radiant heat criteria. Where NSP-BPLRs are abutting less than extreme fuel hazards the separation distance may be reduced so long as the criteria for maximum radiant heat are met.



Compliance with the CFA assessment criteria is the first step in a broader municipal council process for a site to be considered for designation or ongoing designation as part of review.

Appendix 3 – Annual Neighbourhood Safer Place Assessment Checklist

The table below contains an action checklist to assist with the management of the Shires NSP's:

STEP #	DETAIL:	TIMELINE:	COMPLETED:
1	Navigate to the CFA NSP website to request a reassessment of the Shires NSP sites. http://www.saferplaces.cfa.vic.gov.au/cfa/authen/default.htm (CFA will undertake assessment using Fire Rating Criteria)	May	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
2	Undertake annual assessments of designated NSP's and complete NSPP Criteria Sheet (Appendix 1). Refer to Section 2.7 of the COS NSP Plan to ensure annual assessment is fully completed.	July-August	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
3	Save completed annual NSPP inspection sheets to Electronic Depository:	July-August	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
4	Login to CFA website (NSP Online Business System) as NSP Coordinator to sign-off on Councils annual assessments. CFA must be notified and the website updated by August 31 st : http://www.saferplaces.cfa.vic.gov.au/cfa/authen/default.htm	August (31 August-legislated deadline)	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
5	-Update COS NSP Plan with any changes i.e. NSPP, list and mapping etc.	August	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
6	Ensure an up-to-date list of all designated NSPs <u>and</u> community fire refuges within the Shire are provided to CFA by 30 th September, as per Section 50K of CFA Act 1958.	September (30 September-legislated deadline)	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
7	Notify NSP land managers (on non-council managed land) that NSPs on their land have been reassessed as compliant as part of an annual review –courtesy letter and reminder.	September	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
8	Systems Review: -Ensure Municipal Emergency Management Plan contains up to date NSP details. -Ensure Municipal Fire Management Plan contains up to date NSP details. -Ensure the COS website contains up to copy of NSP Plan, as per S50F of CFA Act 1958 -Ensure CFA website contains up to date NSP details. Notify CFA if changes required http://www.saferplaces.cfa.vic.gov.au/cfa/search/default.htm -Ensure CFA Community Information Guides (former TPP's) contain up to date NSP details. http://cfaonline.cfa.vic.gov.au/mycfa/Show?pagelId=publicTownshipProtectionPlans	September	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>

9	Hardcopy Check: -Check that an up to date Municipal Neighbourhood Safer Places Plan is available for public inspection at municipal offices, <i>as per S50F of CFA Act 1958</i> . -Check community safety documentation at COS Information Centres. -In accordance with <i>NSPP Community Communication</i> requirements, ensure appropriate information is available at Information Centres, such as Community Information Guides	September-October	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
10	Compliance over Fire Danger Period: MFPO to regularly inspect NSP's and adjoining private/council property to ensure compliance with CFA grassland treatment prescriptions. Communicate with landholders as per original agreements. All NSPs –Colac-Otway Shire responsible officers should undertake an inspection of NSP, buffer zone (if applicable) and access/egress routes (including walkways) at least once during the declared fire danger period.	Declared Fire Danger Period	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
11	Maintain vigilance with NSP's through the year, including potential issues that could affect criteria i.e. access, community/vegetation planting that may influence the CFA assessment, removal of signage etc.	All year round	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

NSP ASSESSMENT GUIDE COMPLETED BY:  _____ DATE: 22/09/2023	MEMO SIGN-OFF:  _____ DATE: 25/09/2023
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Appendix 4 – List of Council designated Neighbourhood Safer Places

Township	Type	Telephone /Toilets	Description & Location
Barwon Downs	Open Space	Public phone (across road from toilets) / Yes	Barwon Downs Parkland (town park - old school site) 1595 Birregurra-Forrest Road, Barwon Downs
Barwon Downs	Structure/indoor	N/A Yes	Barwon Downs Community Hub Room (rear of CFA Fire Station) 1599 Birregurra-Forrest Rd, Barwon Downs
Beeac	Open Space	Public phone (post office) / Yes (across Main St)	Beeac Playground & BBQ area 67 Main Street, Beeac. (corner of Wallace St)
Beech Forest	Open Space	Public Phone (across road) / Information & historical centre (John H Gardner Reserve)	Open Space (gravel area next door to Beech Hotel) 35 Main Rd, Beech Forest.
Birregurra	Open Space	Public phone (Post Office – 65 Main St) / Yes	Birregurra Park 35-39 Main Street, Birregurra (corner of Strachan St)
Cressy	Open Space	Public Phone (New Station Street – across from toilets) / Yes (across road)	Front yard of the Cressy Community Hall 41 Yarima Road, Cressy (corner of Lyons St)
Cressy	Structure/indoor	N/A Yes	Cressy Community Hall 41 Yarima Road, Cressy (corner of Lyons St)
Gellibrand	Open Space	Public phone (opposite general store) / Yes (adjacent park)	Rex Norman Reserve 5 Main Road, Gellibrand (corner of Old Beech Forest Rd)

Appendix 5 – Records of Council designated Neighbourhood Safer Places Annual Assessment Audits

NSP Location	Date of Audit	File Location / Record Number
Barwon Downs - Parkland (Town park - old school site) 1595 Birregurra-Forrest Road, Barwon Downs	4 July 2023	Content Manager – F23/24414 Bushfire Places of Last Resort (BPLR) 2023 - 2024 Record # - D23/1100402
Barwon Downs - Community Hub Room (rear of CFA Fire Station) 1599 Birregurra-Forrest Rd, Barwon Downs	4 July 2023	Content Manager – F23/24414 Bushfire Places of Last Resort (BPLR) 2023 - 2024 Record # - D23/1100403
Beeac - Playground & BBQ area 67 Main Street, Beeac. (corner of Wallace St)	4 July 2023	Content Manager – F23/24414 Bushfire Places of Last Resort (BPLR) 2023 - 2024 Record # - D23/1100404
Beech Forest - Open Space (gravel area next door to Beechy Hotel) 35 Main Rd, Beech Forest.	3 July 2023	Content Manager – F23/24414 Bushfire Places of Last Resort (BPLR) 2023 - 2024 Record # - D23/1100396
Birregurra - Park 35-39 Main Street, Birregurra (corner of Strachan St)	4 July 2023	Content Manager – F23/24414 Bushfire Places of Last Resort (BPLR) 2023 - 2024 Record # - D23/1100398
Cressy - Community Hall 41 Yarima Road, Cressy (corner of Lyons St)	4 July 2023	Content Manager – F23/24414 Bushfire Places of Last Resort (BPLR) 2023 - 2024 Record # - D23/1100399
Cressy – Open space Front of hall 41 Yarima Road, Cressy (corner of Lyons St)	4 July 2023	Content Manager – F23/24414 Bushfire Places of Last Resort (BPLR) 2023 - 2024 Record # - D23/1100400
Gellibrand - Rex Norman Reserve 5 Main Road, Gellibrand (corner of Old Beech Forest Rd)	3 July 2023	Content Manager – F23/24414 Bushfire Places of Last Resort (BPLR) 2023 - 2024 Record # - D23/1100401

Appendix 6 – Maps of Council designated Bushfire Places of Last Resort - Neighbourhood Safer Places

The following map identifies the townships within Colac Otway Shire in which Neighbourhood Safer Places have been designated. These townships are:

- Barwon Downs
- Beeac
- Beech Forest
- Birregurra
- Cressy
- Gellibrand

Figure 1 – Map of townships with a Bushfire Place of Last Resort

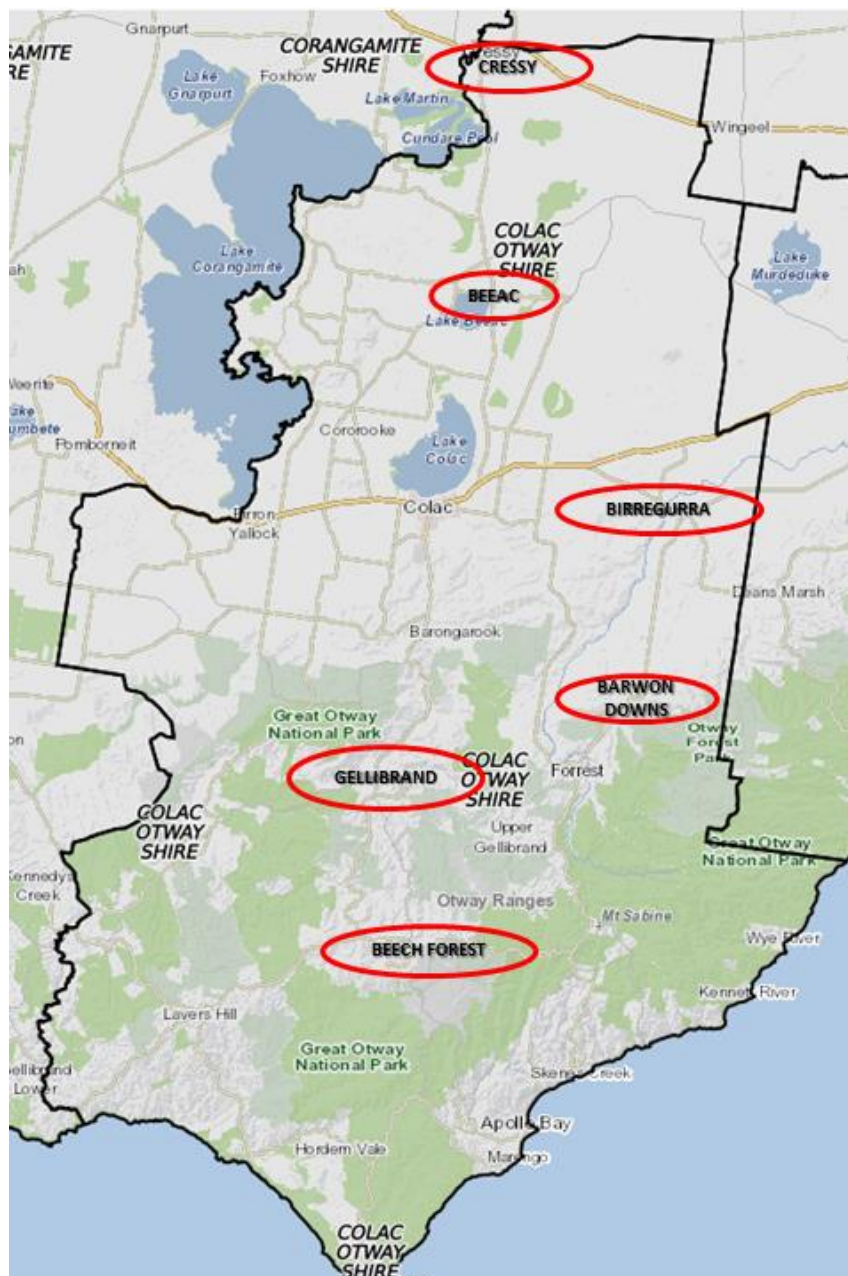


Figure 2 – Map identifying the Barwon Downs Bushfire Place of Last Resort - Barwon Downs Parkland (open space) and Community Hub (structure).



Figure 3 – Map identifying the Beeac Bushfire Place of Last Resort – Beeac Park.



Figure 4 – Map identifying the Beech Forest Bushfire Place of Last Resort – outdoor open space.

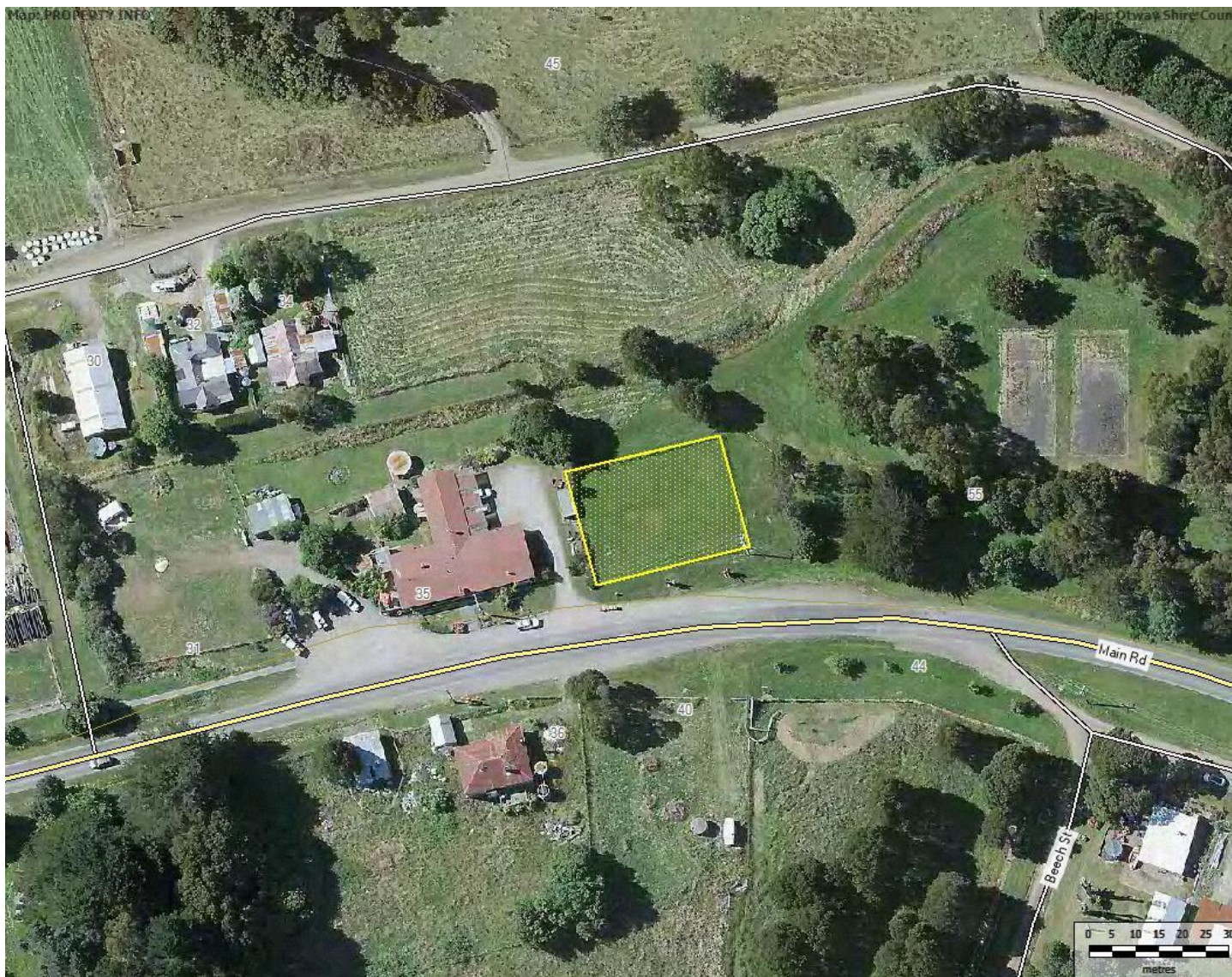


Figure 5 – Map identifying the Birregurra Bushfire Place of Last Resort – Birregurra Park.



Figure 6 – Map identifying the Cressy Bushfire Place of Last Resort - Cressy Community Hall – indoor and outdoor.



Figure 7 – Map identifying the Gellibrand Bushfire Place of Last Resort – Rex Norman Reserve.

