



# **WEST WIMMERA SHIRE COUNCIL NEIGHBOURHOOD SAFER PLACES PLAN**

*PLACES OF LAST RESORT DURING A BUSHFIRE*

[Adopted by Council at its Ordinary meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> June 2010]

## 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 bushfire.<sup>1</sup>

In response to this recommendation, the Victorian Government has introduced the *Emergency Services Legislation Amendment Act 2009 (Vic)* ('**ESLA Act**') which amends the *Country Fire Authority Act 1958 (Vic)* ('**CFA Act**') and the *Emergency Management Act 1986 (Vic)* ('**EM Act**'). The effect of these amendments will be to require the Country Fire Authority ('**CFA**') to certify NSPs against the CFA's Fire Rating Criteria, and Victoria's Councils to identify, designate, establish and maintain suitable places as 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.

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.

This Plan is a neighbourhood safer places plan 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 NSPs 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.

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

## Structure of this Plan

This Plan has been divided up into four distinct sections.

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<sup>1</sup> Recommendation 8.5, 2009 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission Interim Report

**Section 1** contains a flow chart which summarises the process for council to adopt in identifying, designating, establishing and maintaining NSPs within their municipal district.

**Section 2** contains a more detailed summary of the steps summarised in the flow chart found in Section 1.

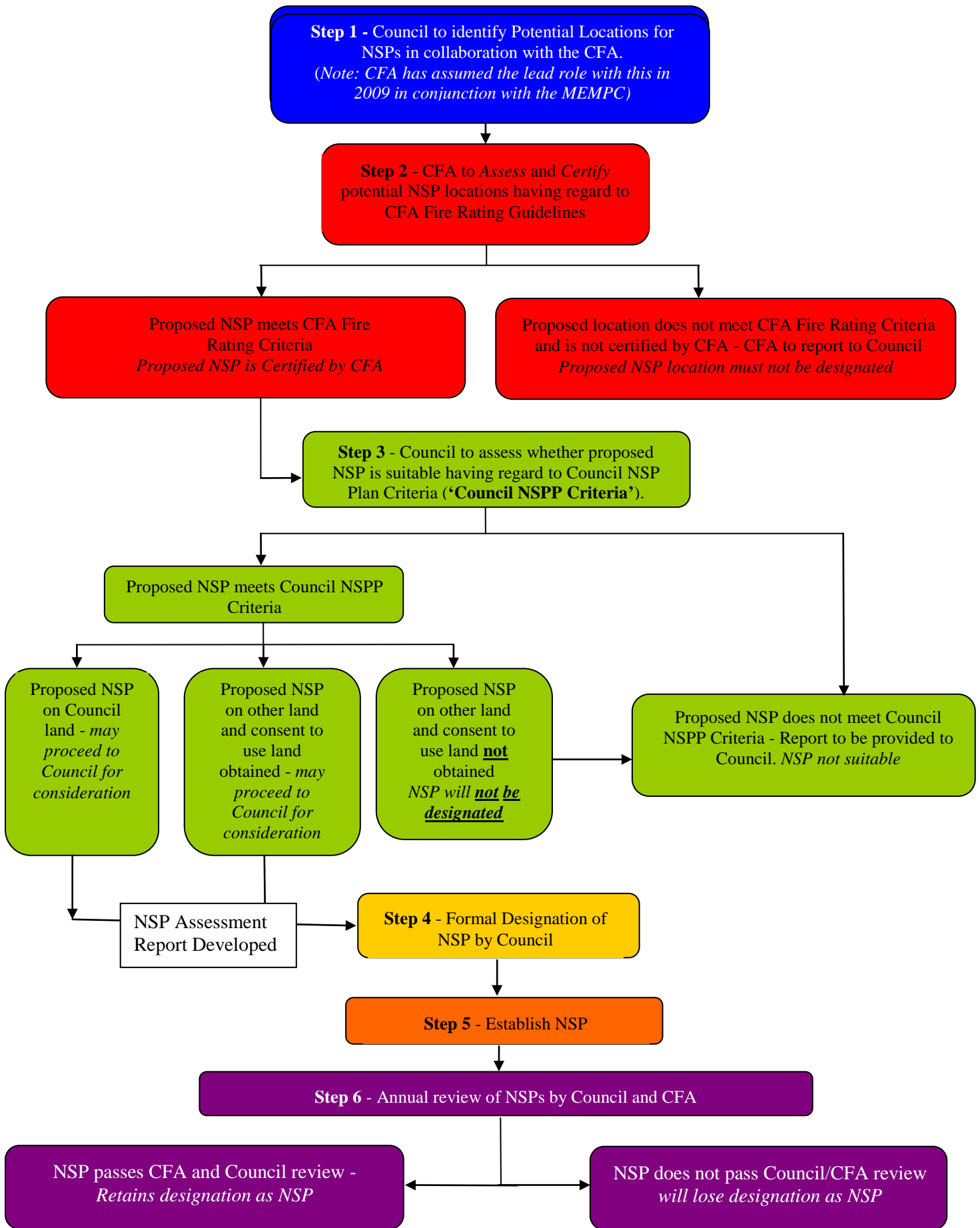
**Section 3** contains an assessment tool Council may consider using in assessing potential NSP locations.

**Section 4** contains details of content of signage that Council is required to erect at designated NSP locations.

# Section 1

*Flow chart Showing Process for Identifying, Designating, Establishing and Maintaining NSPs.*

**Overview of the process for establishing and maintaining NSPs after adoption of this Plan**



# Section 2

*Detailed summary of steps for establishing NSPs.*

# OVERVIEW OF THE STEPS ASSOCIATED WITH NSPs

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## 1 Identification of Potential NSP Locations

### 1.1 Responsibility for identifying places as potential NSPs

For the 2009-2010 fire season, the Country Fire Authority ('CFA') has assumed lead responsibility for identifying potential locations for NSPs. This has been done in consultation with Councils. The initial focus was upon the identification of proposed NSP for those townships in which Township Protection Plans ('TPP') were being considered in the West Wimmera Shire.

From 2010-onwards, Council will be responsible for identifying potential places as NSPs within its municipal district.

### 1.2 NSPs Identification and Timing

The CFA, in conjunction with Council and DSE, is currently in the process of identifying potential NSPs in preparation for the 2010-2011 fire season.

West Wimmera Shire Council will review existing NSP locations including any identification of other potential sites by 31 May in each year. This should allow sufficient time for:

- (a) **(CFA Certification)** assessment and certification of the potential NSP by the CFA;
- (b) **(Council Designation)** designation of the potential NSP location by the Council; and
- (c) **(Establishment)** and subject to the outcome of the assessment and designation process, establishing the NSPs, including the erection of signage and other steps by Council.

The process of NSP identification is ongoing. Following each fire season, Municipal Emergency Planning Committee (MEMPC) must assess whether any additional potentially suitable NSP locations can be identified within the municipal district.

### 1.3 Criteria to be considered when initially identifying potential NSP locations

As part of the initial identification of NSP by the public or internally within Council the following criteria should be used to assist:

- If the potential NSP is an open space, the appropriate separation distance should be greater than 310metres from the fire hazard, particularly vegetation
- If a NSP is a building, the appropriate separation distance should be greater than 140metres from the fire hazard, particularly vegetation
- Locations should have owners consent and available for use at all times
- There are clear means of access and egress to and from the potential NSP;
- The potential NSP is in close proximity to population centres.

- The risks involved in people staying in the area being considered for an NSP, versus leaving the area and travelling to a nearby urban area; and
- The adequacy of egress routes out of the area being considered for an NSP (including number of egress routes, whether major or minor roadway, type and amount of vegetation along key egress routes; capacity of egress routes to accommodate potentially large numbers of vehicles and to accommodate potential vehicle breakdowns).

#### **1.4 Who should undertake the identification of potential NSP's?**

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)** A risk assessment considering the matters outlined in section 1.3 (above) must be undertaken by Council's Municipal Emergency Resource Officer ("MERO) and Municipal Fire Prevention Officer ("MFPO") (which may be initiated through the Municipal Fire Prevention Committee or the Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee as a sub-committee of the Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee ("MEMPC")), using appropriate available information such as Integrated Fire Management Planning data and /or Victorian Fire Risk Register data and any applicable Township Protection Plans;
  - b)** The MEMPC must review the results of the risk assessment, as summarised in the MERO's and MFPO's report prepared under section 1.4(a) (above), and submit a written to Council with a recommendation as to whether CFA assessment and Council designation of the potential NSP is warranted in the area under consideration.
  - c)** 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 MERO and the MFPO has addressed the matters raised in sections 1.3 of this MNSPP; and
- The MEMPC has recommended that assessment and designation of the NSP is not warranted.



## **CFA Assessment and Certification of Potential NSP Locations**

### **1.5 Responsibility for assessing potential NSPs against guidelines issued by the CFA ('CFA Fire Rating Guidelines')**

Under the Emergency Services Legislation Amendment (Bushfire response & Other Matters) Bill 2009, the CFA is responsible for assessing potential NSP locations against the CFA Fire Rating Guidelines.<sup>2</sup> This will be done by appropriately qualified and experienced CFA personnel.

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

### **1.6 CFA Assessment Criteria**

In assessing potential NSP locations 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 the current CFA Fire Rating Criteria are:

- (a) For Open Spaces
  - (i) the appropriate separation distance between the outer edge of the potential NSP and the nearest fire hazard ('**Buffer Zone**')<sup>3</sup> should be at least 310 metres; or
  - (ii) 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/m<sup>2</sup>.
- (b) For Buildings
  - (i) The Buffer Zone between the outer edge of the building and the nearest fire hazard should be at least 140 metres; or
  - (ii) 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/m<sup>2</sup>.

### **1.7 Notification of CFA of potential NSP's**

From 2010 the nominated site/s will be sent to the General Manager of the CFA Region 17. This will only occur following identification and a successful assessment of the potential NSP by the Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee. Ideally this will occur before the 31 May in any given year.

### **1.8 Informing Council of CFA Assessment**

Once the assessment of a potential NSP has been completed by the CFA, the CFA will inform Council in writing if the potential NSP location successfully passed the CFA Fire Rating Criteria or did not. The CFA will provide a copy of the CFA certification in relation to a potential NSP to Council upon completion of

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<sup>2</sup> The 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.

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

certification, and a summary of the criteria and assumptions upon which the assessment is based.

The boundaries of both the potential NSP as certified by the CFA, and any Buffer Zone surrounding it, must be clearly defined within the CFA documentation.

For reasons of public liability and community safety, it is a requirement of the CFA Act, and Council policy, 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.

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## 2 Council Assessment of NSPs (Following CFA Certification)

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

Council must assess the place in accordance with the factors outlined below to determine whether it is suitable to be designated as an NSP. Unless a potential NSP satisfies each of the criteria outlined below, it should not be designated by Council as an NSP.

The Municipal Fire Prevention Officer will be responsible for co-ordinating the inspection process utilising the expertise within the Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee ('MEMPC'), to assist with the audit and assessment of potential NSP's.

The factors to determine the suitability of the place as an NSP are as follows: ('Council NSPP Criteria'):

#### (a) *Consents and rights of access*

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

- use the place as an NSP;
- access the site and surrounding areas for maintenance; and
- erect appropriate signage at the NSP, including the OESC signage and additional NSP information signage.

#### Council Land

If the potential NSP is on land owned 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 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 will be necessary to consider whether or not 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 an NSP, then the consent of the relevant landowner (and, where applicable occupier) for the place to be designated and used as a NSP is required. If

the landowner (or occupier) does not consent to the place being designated and used as a NSP on terms which are reasonably satisfactory and acceptable to the Council, it must not be so designated and used.

### 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 should provide a draft form of consent to the owner/occupier for their consideration. The 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 which may be requested by the landowner or occupier would need to be thoroughly considered before they are agreed to by Council. If it is not possible or appropriate for Council to agree on amendments that may be requested to the consent document, then the proposed NSP should not be designated by Council.

#### (b) ***Access and Egress***

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

- 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 personnel 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 an 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:

- (i) the condition of the road surface;
- (ii) the proximity of the NSP to major roadways and population centres;
- (iii) 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;
- (iv) the capacity of access routes to accommodate potentially large numbers of vehicles, and to accommodate potential vehicle break-downs;

- (v) 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 vehicle may enter or park;
- (vi) any hazards that may exist for persons accessing the place by foot;
- (vii) any relevant matter contained in Council's Road Management Plan prepared pursuant to the *Road Management Act 2004* (Vic); and

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

(c) **Opening of the NSP**

Council must consider

- (i) 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;
- (ii) the potential for damage to the place during times that it is open and available for use, but is not being used as an NSP;
- (iii) the potential costs to Council associated with (i) and (ii) above; and
- (iv) the possibility that a potential NSP could be used for unintended purposes, such as an emergency relief centre.

(d) **Defendable space**

CFA have advised that there is no guarantee that fire units will attend an 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, amongst other things:

- fences;
- buildings and sheds;
- steep inclines in close proximity to the potential NSP;
- vegetation, particularly large trees;
- 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 defendable space and fire vehicle access requirements.

When assessing the defensible space factor, Council must consider whether or not approval to clear or disturb flora and/or fauna is required, whether under legislation such as the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cwlth), *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 an NSP by Council.

(e) ***Defendability of Buildings***

If the potential NSP is a building, Council must consider whether or not it is likely to be subject to risk from ember attack. What its ability may be to withstand such ember attack and what options are available to people should the building catch fire eg. Neighbouring open space where people can evacuate too after the fire front has past. In considering this issue, Council may need to seek expert advice from appropriately-qualified CFA personnel.

If there is an appreciable 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.

(f) ***Signage***

Council must ensure that appropriate signage can be erected at the entry to, and in the vicinity of, the potential NSP which reflects the requirements and specifications set out by the Office of the Emergency Services Commissioner.

Council may also wish to provide further signage and information at the location to inform and support potential users of the NSP's

If signage must be placed on private land, then the consent of the landowner will be required.

(g) ***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 the Council. This factor should be considered by the Council 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 so as to ensure continuing seasonal compliance with the CFA Fire Rating 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.

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.

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

(h) ***Disabled access***

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. In the example of an oval this 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 hazard such as vehicles, buildings and animals are preferred.

(i) ***Alternative uses of potential NSP***

Council must consider what other uses may be made of the potential NSP which could impact upon its ability to properly function. Should the site be leased or used by other organisations it should be communicated that the site is a 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 precedent. 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 effectively managed and which would ultimately adversely compromise its ability to be used as a NSP, then it should not be designated as an NSP by Council.

(j) ***Communication with the community***

Council must be able to communicate the location of the potential 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 potential NSP, and the risks associated with travelling to the potential NSP in the event of a bushfire.

(k) ***Public liability insurance***

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

- (i) 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 an NSP, as well as travel to an NSP; and
- (ii) any indemnity provided by the State of Victoria; and
- (iii) any statutory defences to claims.

## **2.2 Responsible person for undertaking the Council assessment of potential NSPs**

A report prepared by the MERO 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 MERO's report, and make a recommendation to Council as to whether or not to designate the potential NSP.

## **2.3 Timing of Council assessment of NSP's**

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 and MFPP 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.



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### **3 Council Designation of NSPs**

A NSP audit and assessment report prepared by the Municipal Fire Prevention Officer or a suitably qualified delegate detailing whether or not the potential NSP meets NSP criteria should be prepared and provided to Council.

Prior to any finalisation of NSP designation by Council and if practicable to do so, the MEMP Committee (or Municipal Integrated Fire Management Planning Committee) should have endorsed the NSP. If prior endorsement is not possible, Council should still inform the committees of the designation of the NSP for noting and inclusion within their respective committees' plans.

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 regards to the Council NSPP Criteria and the CFA assessment guidelines.

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

The endorsement of the relevant committees will ideally occur before Council designation however in the rare circumstance Council may designate a NSP on the stipulation of appropriate endorsement of a relevant committee.

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.

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## **4 Establishment and Maintenance of NSPs Following Designation**

### **4.1 Establishing NSPs**

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

To establish a NSP after its designation, Council must:

- erect appropriate signage at and near the NSP; Consideration should also be given if additional directional signage may be needed to assist in directing public to the site.
- undertake any necessary fire season preparation 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 an NSP;
- publish the location of the NSP on the Council website; and
- update Council's Municipal Emergency Management Plan and Municipal Fire Prevention Plan to include the location of the NSP.

The MFPO must provide an up-to-date list of NSPs to the CFA no later than 30 September each year.

Following designation, all designated NSPs within the municipality must be identified in:

- the Municipal Fire Prevention Plan; and
- the Municipal Emergency Management Plan.

### **4.2 Maintenance of NSPs**

Council is responsible for maintaining all designated NSP's within its district. Maintenance activities must include appropriate vegetation management and the maintenance of any specified infrastructure (such as signage) required for 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.

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## **5 Annual Inspections of NSPs**

### **5.1 Responsibility 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 Criteria of each NSP within the municipality on an annual basis.

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

### **5.2 Consideration when undertaking inspections**

NSPs should be assessed annually against the Council NSPP Criteria. The CFA will assess NSPs against the CFA Fire Rating Criteria.

If an NSP no longer meets:

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

### **5.3 Inspection timelines**

NSPs must be inspected prior to 31 August each year. Council will also undertake fire hazard inspections of the site prior to and during the fire danger period to ensure fine fuels at the site are being managed appropriately.

### **5.4 Decommissioning of NSPs.**

By resolution of Council:

- 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 the Council is satisfied on reasonable grounds that it is not appropriate for the place to continue to be designated as a NSP.
- The council will decommission a NSP that is not on council owned land if the occupier or person in control of the land has withdrawn consent to the designation of the site as a NSP

# Section 3

Summary of factors for Council to consider in assessing potential NSP locations prior to designation

## Factors to Consider in Assessing Potential NSPs

Council NSPP Criteria	Issues to consider	Council comments	Satisfied? Yes/No
<b>Consents and rights of access</b> <i>See section 3.2(a)</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.		
	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"> <li>• access the site and surrounding areas for maintenance; and</li> <li>• erect appropriate signage at the NSP.</li> </ul>		
<b>Access and egress</b> <i>See section 3.2(b)</i>	Do access routes to the potential NSP allow for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the anticipated potential number of people to move to and from the place; and</li> <li>• the CFA and other emergency services to attend the place for asset and personnel protection activities?</li> </ul>		
	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.		

Council NSPP Criteria	Issues to consider	Council comments	Satisfied? Yes/No
<b>Opening of the NSP</b> <i>See section 3.2(d)</i>	<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>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>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>		
<b>Defendable space and fire suppression activities</b> <i>See section 3.2(e)</i>	<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><i>Council should seek CFA advice concerning the defendability of the potential NSP and the Buffer Zone, including in relation to fire vehicle access requirements.</i></p>		
<b>Defendability of buildings</b> <i>See section 3.2(f)</i>	<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>		
<b>Signage</b> <i>See section 3.2(g)</i>	<p>Can appropriate signage be erected at the entry to the potential NSP, and in its vicinity?</p>		
	<p>If signage needs to be placed on private land, can Council obtain the consent of the relevant</p>		

Council NSPP Criteria	Issues to consider	Council comments	Satisfied? Yes/No
	landowner to the erection of the signage?		
<b>Maintenance and maintainability</b> <i>See section 3.2(h)</i>	<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>		
<b>Alternative uses of potential NSP</b> <i>See section 3.2(j)</i>	<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>		
<b>Community Communication</b> <i>See section 3.2(k)</i>	<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>		

# Section 4

## NSP Signage Template



