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Patron: Her Excellency Professor the Honourable Margaret Gardner AC, Governor of Victoria

CFA Fire Risk, Research and Community Preparedness
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CFA Ref:
RA Ref:



5 December 2024

Erin Skurrie
Department of Transport & Planning
8 Nicholson Street
EAST MELBOURNE VIC 3002

Dear Erin,

LETTER OF ADVICE

Proposal: Planning Scheme Amendment to Schedule 3 of the Special Use Zone (SUZ3) and incorporated document Plenty Valley Christian College Master Plan, March 2008

Location: 840 Yan Yean Road, Doreen

Thank you for providing CFA with an opportunity to comment on the proposed planning scheme amendment for Plenty Valley Christian College. It's understood that a request has been made for the proposal to be considered via the Development Facilitation Program (DFP) and that at this stage you are seeking our views regarding the proposal's suitability for this program from a bushfire perspective.

CFA has considered the proposal including whether:

- The subject land is located within a lower risk bushfire landscape environment and should be able to accommodate an increase in population provided appropriate bushfire protection measures are identified and implemented as part of the proposal.
- There is strategic justification to encourage growth in this location from a bushfire perspective.
- There is access to safer areas, with connections to an existing or proposed road network that can provide appropriate access and egress.
- There is high likelihood that the proposal will be capable of meeting bushfire policy objectives and implementing common bushfire protection measures to reduce risk to an acceptable level.

Based on the information provided, CFA is of the view the proposal can achieve the bushfire objectives of the scheme and supports the proposal being accepted into the DFP. However, to facilitate implementation of the project post amendment we offer the following advice:

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- While building system requirements do not normally require significant consideration at planning scheme amendment or planning permit stage, in Victoria Part G5 of the National Construction Code 2022 (Part G5) now includes detailed requirements for schools in designate Bushfire Prone Areas and provides Specification 43 as the 'deemed to satisfy' (DTS) measures for achieving these requirements.
- The Bushfire Risk Assessment prepared by BAL Assessments discusses the need for school buildings to be set back from unmanaged vegetation to the extent that they are exposed to less than 10 kW/m² from a bushfire front. It's noted that along with this requirement, there are a number of additional measures within Part G5 that will likely have an impact on the location (or occupancy) of buildings and the general layout of the school that may have implications for the proposed Master Plan.
- To avoid the need for future amendments to achieve compliance with Part G5, CFA strongly suggest further consideration is given to these requirements, including the implications of any proposed change to the occupancy of existing buildings. It would be advisable to seek the advice of an experienced registered building surveyor before finalising the Master Plan.

CFA also suggests consideration be given to the School's emergency management arrangements, particularly in response to bushfire and strategies for 'sheltering in place' should a fire occur while the school in occupied. The master planning process provides an opportunity for an appropriate 'shelter in place' building to identified, located and designed in a manner that is suitably resilient to bushfire future emergency arrangements.

Please do not hesitate to contact me on 9262 8373 if you wish to discuss this matter in more detail.

Yours faithfully



Mark Holland
Manager Bushfire Safety & Natural Environment
FIRE RISK RESEARCH & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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