

DELBURN WIND FARM

SEC

FIRE RISK Consultants

Offsite Landscaping Program

Landscaping Guidance for Bushfire-Prone Areas

The aim of this document is to provide guidance for dwelling owners undertaking their own landscaping on **how to screen or filter views of turbines at the SEC Delburn Wind Farm without increasing bushfire risk**.

This guidance has been prepared by **Fire Risk Consultants on behalf of SEC for the SEC Delburn Windfarm Offsite Landscaping Program**.

Planting design principles

When planning **visual screening vegetation**, consider the following bushfire risk reduction principles:

- The planting should not increase the bushfire threat (Bushfire Attack Level rating) of any dwelling, building or critical infrastructure.
- The planting should not reduce the current or future level of defendable space around a dwelling or building.
- The planting should not impede emergency vehicle access during bushfire suppression operations.
- The plantings should not impede access to firefighting water supplies (e.g. tanks or dams) during bushfire suppression operations.

Maintaining defendable space and access

When considering planting in bushfire-prone areas you should consider the following questions:

Maintaining a Minimal Fuel Zone immediately adjacent to buildings

To help reduce bushfire risk, visual screening plants should not be located directly next to buildings. **The area within 10 metres should ideally have minimal vegetation, such as keeping grass shorter than 100 mm, to reduce the potential impact of flames and radiant heat.**

Question: Will the planting maintain a Minimal Fuel Zone within 10m of any buildings and critical infrastructure?	**Yes**	**No**

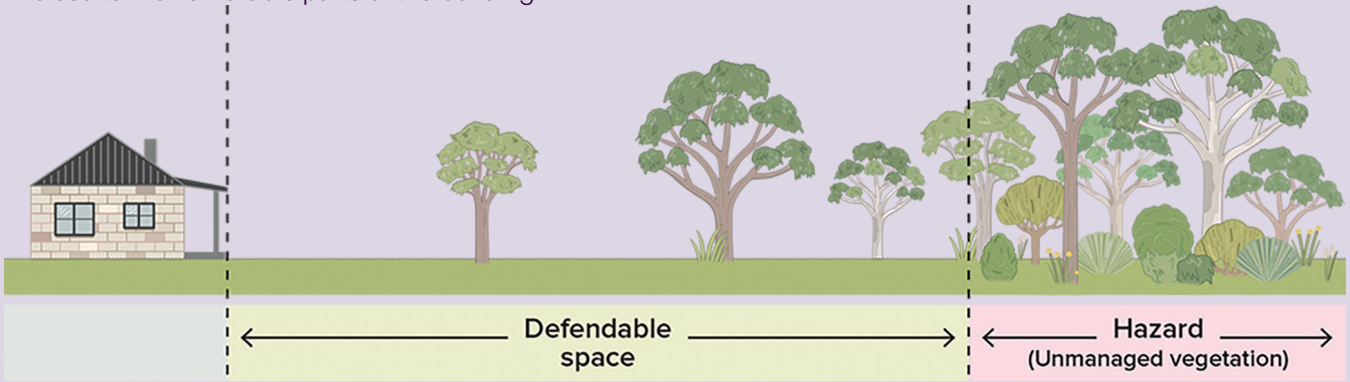
Maintaining defendable space

Defendable Space is an area around a building where vegetation and other potential fuel is managed to reduce bushfire risk. It helps **reduce the risk of direct flame contact, radiant heat and ember attack on the building**. The Victorian Planning Provisions set out the following requirements for **Defendable Space**:

- Grass must be short cropped and maintained during the declared fire danger period.
- All leaves and vegetation debris must be removed at regular intervals during the declared fire danger period.
- Within 10 metres of a building, flammable objects (e.g. wood heaps, boats, sheds) must not be located close to the vulnerable parts of the building.

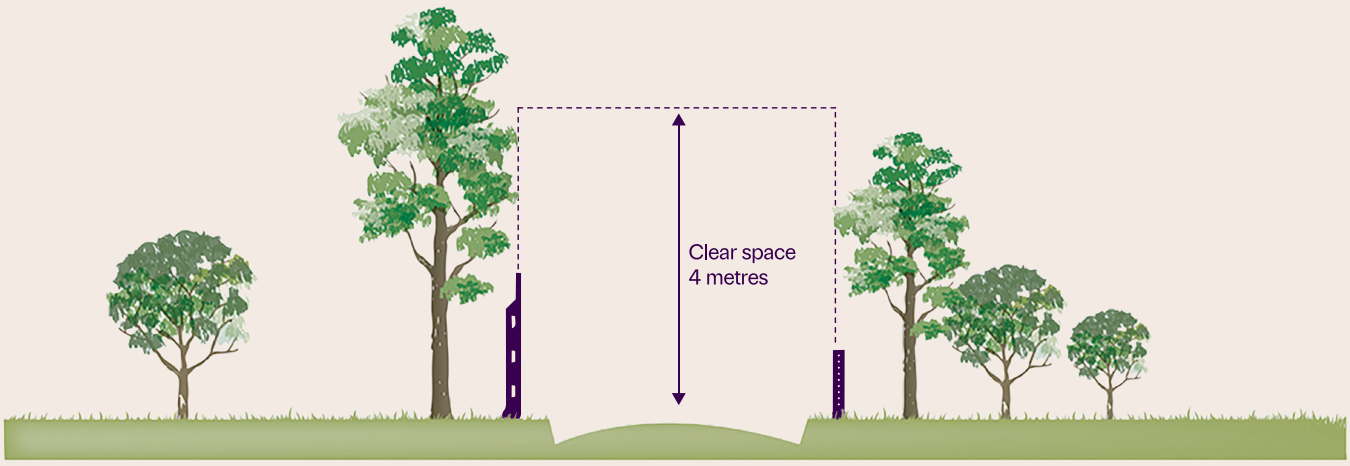
Question: Will the planting maintain effective defendable space immediately adjacent to buildings and critical infrastructure?	**Yes**	**No**

- Plants greater than 10 centimetres in height must not be placed within 3 metres of a window or glass feature of the building.
- Shrubs must not be located under the canopy of trees.
- Individual and clumps of shrubs must not exceed 5 square metres in area and must be separated by at least 5 metres.
- Trees must not overhang or touch any elements of the building.
- The canopy of trees must be separated by at least 5 metres.
- There must be a clearance of at least 2 metres between the lowest tree branches and ground level.



Cross section of defendable space

Source: Country Fire Authority



Source: Country Fire Authority

Not to scale

Maintaining access for firefighting vehicles

To provide safe and effective access for fire fighting vehicles any driveway or access track must:

- provide a minimum trafficable width of 3.5 metres,
- be clear of encroachments for at least 0.5 metres on each side,
- have at least 4 metres vertical clearance (e.g. height above the trafficable surface), and
- have a minimum inner radius of 10 metres on any curves.

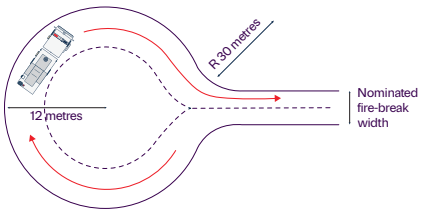
Question: Will the layout of the planting encroach on existing access and working space for large 4WD fire tankers along driveways and access trucks?	**Yes**	**No**

A turning area for fire fighting vehicles should also be provided close to the building by one of the following:

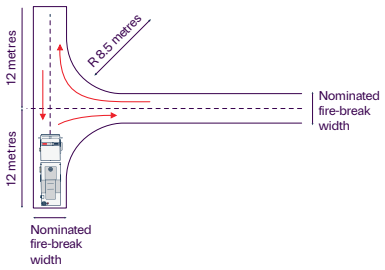
- A turning circle with a minimum radius of 8 metres.
- A driveway encircling the dwelling.
- The provision of other vehicle turning heads – such as a T or Y head.

Turnarounds and passing bays

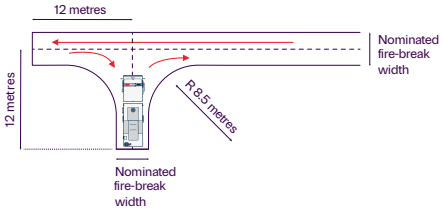
Type A



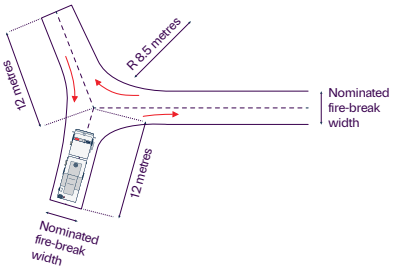
Type B



Type C



Type D



Source: Centre for Bushfire Excellence (2023)

Other important considerations

When considering landscape screening planting generally you must consider the following questions:

Questions	Yes	No
Have I identified trees and shrubs to plant that will be free from loose and flammable bark?		
Have I avoided choosing plants that would make good kindling?		
Have I avoided choosing plants that have continuous fine leaves and twigs from the ground all the way to the canopy?		
Have I avoided choosing plants that retain large amounts of dead leaves and twigs?		
Does the proposed spacing between plants inhibit the ability for the fire to easily spread vertically or horizontally?		
Does the proposed planting location avoid increasing landscape connectivity that would make it easier for fire spread through the landscape under typical fire conditions?		
Will the layout and spacing of the plants enable the management the fuels (grasses and shrubs) within the planting area?		
If grazing will be excluded from the planting area can the fuels (in particular grasses) within the planting area be managed?		
Will the planting process avoid creating debris or obstacles, such as earth mounds or windrows, that may hinder or prevent future fuel management?		
Will the planting avoid areas where slope and terrain will make fuel management problematic either by machine or by hand?		
Will there be enough space between the planting and the fences to maintain access for managing fuels during establishment (and ongoing)?		
Will there be enough space between the plants to maintain access for managing fuels during establishment (and ongoing)?		
Does the proposed planting layout support weed management during establishment (and ongoing)?		
Does the planting layout, design and species selection minimise the need for ongoing fuel management?		

If you have answered **No** to any of the questions above, please seek further information and advice.

SEC DELBURN WIND FARM FIRE RISK Consultants

Where can I seek more information?

For inquiries about the Program please contact the SEC at:

- 1800 936 172
- Info@secvictoria.com.au
- SEC Hub at 248 Commercial Road, Morwell. Monday, Tuesday, Friday from 10am to 3pm.

The Country Fire Authority (CFA) also has a series of informative resources including:

- Fire resistant gardening
- Choosing suitable plants
- Landscaping for Bushfire: Garden Design and Plant Selection

The information provided is general in nature and only to be used as guidance for this program.