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<sup>6.</sup> The Service accepts no responsibility for any injury loss or damage arising from the use of this map or any errors or

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### Appendix C ELA Bushfire Intensity Modelling Report



### **Bushfire Intensity Modelling**

Ingleside Precinct

Prepared for NSW Department of Planning & Environment

May 2018



### **DOCUMENT TRACKING**

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Project Number	17SYD-9493			
Project Manager	Nathan Kearnes 02 8536 8614 / 0423 191 725 L1, 101 Sussex Street Sydney NSW 2000			
Prepared by	Peter Hawke			
Reviewed by	Nathan Kearnes, Bruce Horkings			
Approved by	Nathan Kearnes			
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### 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Background

The Department of Planning & Environment (DPE) is in the process of reviewing its draft structure plan for the Ingleside Precinct (**Figure 1**). The aim of this study was to prepare bushfire intensity models for a number of bushfire scenarios to provide context to the potential bushfire risk that the precinct is exposed to.

To meet this aim, the agreed project approach was to:

- 1. Assess the bushfire hazard relevant to the Ingleside Precinct (specified for this study as being the precinct and the surrounding landscape out to a distance of 5km); and
- 2. Prepare models within a GIS of the potential bush fire intensity across the study area for an agreed set of bushfire scenarios.

### 1.2 Study Area

The Ingleside Precinct is the focus of this study (**Figure 1**), however the area surrounding the Precinct (to a distance of 5 km) is also included in the study area, in order for the landscape bushfire risk to be assessed.

The Ingleside Precinct is located along Mona Vale Road on Sydney's Northern Beaches and within the Local Government Area of the newly amalgamated Northern Beaches Council. The Precinct is located between Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park to the northwest, Katandra Bushland Sanctuary and Ingleside Chase Reserve to the east, and Garigal National Park to the southwest. Existing urban and rural/urban development and other landuses are located within the Precinct as well as surrounding the Precinct to the north, east, southeast and in part to the west in the Terrey Hills area.



Figure 1: Ingleside Precinct Location & Study Area

### 2 Bushfire Intensity Modelling

The bushfire intensity modelling undertaken for this project is outlined in Section 2.2 and relied on a series of inputs representing various elements of the bushfire hazard setting for the landscape across the study area, outlined in Section 2.1 below.

### 2.1 Bushfire Hazard

The assessment of bushfire hazard for this study leverages on a classification of topography (slope and aspect) and vegetation formations / fuel across the study area. The assessment leveraged off the draft guidelines *Planning for Bushfire Protection* (PBP) (RFS 2017).

### 2.1.1 Slope

Slope (in degrees) has been derived across the study area from a 10 m grid cell Digital Elevation Model (DEM) and provides an overview of the terrain within the study area. It shown in **Figure 2** in the following slope classes (as per PBP):

- Upslope and flat;
- >0° 5° downslope;
- >5° 10° downslope;
- >10° 15° downslope;
- >15° 20° downslope;
- >20° downslope.

### 2.1.1 Aspect

Aspect (in degrees) has been derived across the study area from a 10 m grid cell Digital Elevation Model (DEM). It is shown in **Figure 3** and is a relevant input into the intensity models in combination with wind direction and slope given the influence on intensity of fire burning uphill (faster and hotter) downhill (cooler and slower) or on flat ground.

### 2.1.2 Vegetation / Fuel

Vegetation types present across the study area have been compiled from best available vegetation mapping, then classified into Keith Formations and Keith Class (Keith 2004) and then assigned a potential total fuel load (tonnes / hectare) using Table A1.11.21 from PBP (RFS 2017).

Two different vegetation/fuel layers where developed as follows:

- Existing vegetation, based on extant vegetation mapping;
- Potential future vegetation, based on the above for areas outside the precinct and the potential future vegetation inside the precinct given the proposed land uses presented in the draft structure plan. That is, extant vegetation in areas identified in the Ingleside Precinct Draft Structure Plan for development were removed and conversely, areas marked as environmental conservation or high constraint were retained / added.

The vegetation/fuel classification (existing) is presented in **Figure 4** with the allocation of formations, classes and assignment of fuel load as per **Table 2**. The vegetation/fuel datasets where generated from a compilation of the following:

- Sydney Metro Catchment Management Area Vegetation Mapping (OEH 2016)
- Ingleside Precinct Validated Vegetation Mapping (ELA 2016)

Keith Formation	Keith Class	Overall Fuel (t/ha)*	
Deinforget	Littoral Rainforests	40.0	
Ramorest	Northern Warm Temperate Rainforests	13.2	
Wet Sclerophyll Forests (Grassy)	Northern Hinterland Wet Sclerophyll Forests	33.1	
Wat Salaraphyll Foracta (Shrubby)	North Coast Wet Sclerophyll Forests	35.98	
	Southern Lowland Wet Sclerophyll Forests	32.8	
	Sydney Coastal Dry Sclerophyll Forests	27.3	
Dry Sclerophyll Forests (Shrubby)	Sydney Hinterland Dry Sclerophyll Forests	27.42	
	Coastal Dune Dry Sclerophyll Forests	31.1	
Forested Wetlands	Coastal Swamp Forests	34.1	
	Sydney Coastal Heaths##	15	
Heathlands (Tall Heath)	Coastal Headland Heaths	36.9	
	Low Hazard <sup>#</sup>	13.2	
	Coastal Heath Swamps	15.0	
Freshwater Wetlands	Coastal Floodplain Wetlands	15.1	
	Coastal Freshwater Lagoons	4.4	
Grasslands	Maritime Grasslands	6.0	

### Table 1: Vegetation formation, class and fuel allocation for the study area

\*Overall fuel as per Bark and Canopy field in Table A1.11.21 from PBP (RFS 2017)

<sup>#</sup> 'Low Hazard' vegetation as per PBP, Rainforest Fuel used.

## Short Heath fuel used given abundance of rock outcrops.



Figure 2: Slope across the study area



Figure 3: Aspect across the study area

![](_page_12_Picture_1.jpeg)

Figure 4: Current vegetation formation / fuel classification of the study area

### 2.2 Bushfire Intensity Modelling

A series of bushfire intensity models were prepared based on the approach and scenarios outlined below and the inputs outlined in Section 2.1 above. The models provide an indication of the potential head fire intensity from the direction of attack for the scenario's being modelled, with intensities greater than 4,000 kW/m generally considered uncontrollable in all weather conditions.

The models were generated spatially for the entire study area utilising the bushfire hazard data (as detailed in Section 2.1) and in light of an analysis of bushfire weather (documented in Section 2.2.1 below). These models use the following parameters to identify the potential bushfire intensity:

- Terrain (slope and aspect);
- Fuel (vegetation);
- Likely bushfire weather scenarios including the Forest Fire Danger Index (FFDI) and wind direction.

The modelling approach calculates potential head fire intensity using established fire intensity formulae documented in Cheney et al 2012 (for Forest and Woodland), Anderson et al 2015 (for Heath and Shrubland), and Cheney et al 1998 (for Grassland). Three core models where prepared for the following bushfire attack scenarios:

- Bushfire attack from the north to south-east direction (clockwise) at FFDI 63 (Figure 5 & 12);
- Bushfire attack from the south-east to south-west direction (clockwise) at FFDI 47 (Figure 6 & 13);
- Bushfire attack from the south-west to north direction (clockwise) at FFDI 116 (Figure 7 & 14).

The three core models have been compiled together to provide an overall "average" intensity from all directions (**Figure 8 & 15**).

In addition, models were run to simulate bush fire attack from the south-west to north direction (clockwise) at FFDI 62, representing the likely conditions experienced on 8<sup>th</sup> of January 1994 (**Figure 9 & 16**), and also south-west to north direction (clockwise) at FFDI 134, representing a scenario for potential climate change conditions (**Figure 10 & 17**). Lastly, final models were run at FFDI 100, following stakeholder requests (**Figure 11 & 18**).

Each of the above model intensity scenarios were modelled to represent the existing vegetation environment, and in addition; each model scenario was run for the potential future vegetation fuel loads based on the Draft Structure Plan. **Table 3** summarises the scenarios modelled and the resultant figures (presented in Section 3).

	ltem	Bushfire Scenario	Existing vegetation	Proposed vegetation (based on draft Structure Plan)
lels	1	N to SE wind - FFDI 63	Figure 5	Figure 12
e Moc	2	SE to SW wind - FFDI 47	Figure 6	Figure 13
Cor	3	SW to N wind - FFDI 116	Figure 7	Figure 14

Table 2: Bush fire intensity models run in this study

	ltem	Bushfire Scenario	Existing vegetation	Proposed vegetation (based on draft Structure Plan)
	4	Average intensity from all scenario's above	Figure 8	Figure 15
lodels	5	SW to N wind - FFDI 62 (representing the likely conditions experienced on 8th January 1994)	Figure 9	Figure 16
Additional M	6	SW to N wind - FFDI 134 (representing potential climate change conditions)	Figure 10	Figure 17
	7	SW to N wind - FFDI 100	Figure 11	Figure 18

### 2.2.1 Bushfire Weather Analysis

Weather data developed by Lucas (2010) under the National Historical Fire Weather Dataset (1972-2015) incorporates the daily Forest Fire Danger Index (FFDI), where suitable inputs are available, from over 70 weather stations across Australia. Data from the Sydney Airport and Richmond weather stations (station numbers 66037 and 67033/67105 respectively) was analysed to determine the maximum FFDI for a 1 in 50-year event, being the accepted recurrence period for land use planning (RFS 2006).

The dataset for each site was split into subsets based on wind directions including:

- All directions;
- North to south-east (clockwise);
- South-east to South-west (clockwise);
- South-west to North (clockwise).

To determine the 1:50 recurrence value, a Generalised Extreme Value (GEV) analysis method was undertaken to calculate the FFDI value within each data subset (**Table 4**). Although the GEV model has been used in other disciplines for analysing extreme events (i.e. flooding recurrence values), it is only in recent times to have been considered appropriate for bushfire weather analysis (Douglas 2017). The GEV methodology and its use to analyse bushfire weather data is discussed in a number of papers by Douglas et al (2014; 2016).

Weather Station	Max Recorded FFDI	All directions	N to SE	SE to SW	SW to N
Sydney Airport	116	116	63	47	116
Richmond Airport	96	105	52	45	105

### Table 3: FFDI for a 1 in 50-year event

The FFDI values for Sydney Airport are worse (higher) than those for Richmond Airport, so the former was considered more appropriate for consideration as 'worst case'.

### 3 Results

The models show that the greatest intensities are possible on the western facing slopes containing forest and heath vegetation, which are present in the surrounding National Parks areas to the west and south. The areas to the east are modelled as generally having lower potential levels of intensities.

It is noted that each bushfire event is different, responding to changes in fuel, weather conditions and FFDI. Thus, the models are an indication of what could be experienced under the bushfire weather scenario modelled provided the fuel and terrain are similar to the input data used in the model.

It is important to note that the models of potential fire intensity do not provide an indication of ignition risk or the rate of spread of a bushfire. It is specifically noted that, although the grassland areas will not carry a fire of the same intensity as the forested areas, these areas potentially have the highest risk of ignition and rate of spread. Conversely, fires within the grassland areas are potentially more controllable under certain weather conditions given the lower potential fire intensities in these locations.

It is lastly noted that the above intensity modelling approach does not account for events under extreme fire behaviour / weather including such phenomena as:

- Spotting/Fire storm;
- Fire tornado/whirls;
- Lateral vortices;
- Junction zones (Jump fires);
- Eruptive fires;
- Conflagrations;
- Downbursts;
- Pyro-convective events;

![](_page_17_Figure_1.jpeg)

Figure 5: Potential Fire Intensity (north to south-east wind, FFDI 63, existing vegetation)

![](_page_18_Figure_1.jpeg)

Figure 6: Potential Fire Intensity (south-east to south-west wind, FFDI 47, existing vegetation)

![](_page_19_Figure_1.jpeg)

Figure 7: Potential Fire Intensity (south-west to north wind, FFDI 116, existing vegetation)

![](_page_20_Figure_1.jpeg)

Figure 8: Potential Fire Intensity (average of all directions, existing vegetation)

![](_page_21_Figure_1.jpeg)

Figure 9: Potential Fire Intensity (south-west to north wind, FFDI 62, existing vegetation)

![](_page_22_Figure_1.jpeg)

Figure 10: Potential Fire Intensity (south-west to north, FFDI 134, existing vegetation)

![](_page_23_Figure_1.jpeg)

Figure 11: Potential Fire Intensity (south-west to north, FFDI 100, existing vegetation)

![](_page_24_Figure_1.jpeg)

Figure 12: Potential Fire Intensity (north to south-east wind, FFDI 63, proposed vegetation)

![](_page_25_Figure_1.jpeg)

Figure 13: Potential Fire Intensity (south-east to south-west wind, FFDI 47, proposed vegetation)

![](_page_26_Figure_1.jpeg)

Figure 14: Potential Fire Intensity (south-west to north wind, FFDI 116, proposed vegetation)

![](_page_27_Figure_1.jpeg)

Figure 15: Potential Fire Intensity (average of all directions, proposed vegetation)

![](_page_28_Figure_1.jpeg)

Figure 16: Potential Fire Intensity (south-west to north wind, FFDI 62, proposed vegetation)

![](_page_29_Figure_1.jpeg)

Figure 17: Potential Fire Intensity (south-west to north wind, FFDI 134, proposed vegetation)

![](_page_30_Figure_1.jpeg)

Figure 18: Potential Fire Intensity (south-west to north wind, FFDI 100, proposed vegetation)

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### HEAD OFFICE

Suite 2, Level 3 668-672 Old Princes Highway Sutherland NSW 2232 T 02 8536 8600 F 02 9542 5622

#### **CANBERRA**

Level 2 11 London Circuit Canberra ACT 2601 T 02 6103 0145 F 02 9542 5622

#### **COFFS HARBOUR**

22 Ray McCarthy Drive Coffs Harbour NSW 2450 T 02 6651 5484 F 02 6651 6890

### PERTH

Level 1, Bishop's See 235 St Georges Terrace Perth WA 6000 T 08 9227 1070 F 02 9542 5622

#### **MELBOURNE**

Level 1, 436 Johnston St Abbotsford, VIC 3076 T 1300 646 131

### SYDNEY

Suite 1, Level 1 101 Sussex Street Sydney NSW 2000 T 02 8536 8650 F 02 9542 5622

### NEWCASTLE

Suites 28 & 29, Level 7 19 Bolton Street Newcastle NSW 2300 T 02 4910 0125 F 02 9542 5622

### ARMIDALE

92 Taylor Street Armidale NSW 2350 T 02 8081 2685 F 02 9542 5622

### WOLLONGONG

Suite 204, Level 2 62 Moore Street Austinmer NSW 2515 T 02 4201 2200 F 02 9542 5622

#### BRISBANE

Suite 1, Level 3 471 Adelaide Street Brisbane QLD 4000 T 07 3503 7192

1300 646 131 www.ecoaus.com.au

#### **HUSKISSON**

Unit 1, 51 Owen Street Huskisson NSW 2540 T 02 4201 2264 F 02 9542 5622

### NAROOMA

5/20 Canty Street Narooma NSW 2546 T 02 4302 1266 F 02 9542 5622

#### MUDGEE

Unit 1, Level 1 79 Market Street Mudgee NSW 2850 T 02 4302 1234 F 02 6372 9230

### GOSFORD

Suite 5, Baker One 1-5 Baker Street Gosford NSW 2250 T 02 4302 1221 F 02 9542 5622

### ADELAIDE

2, 70 Pirie Street Adelaide SA 5000 T 08 8470 6650 F 02 9542 5622

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# Appendix D Mapping of Existing and Proposed Risk Exposure