

My name is Claire Palmer, Stoneville resident and volunteer bush firefighter for 10 years. I put forward a motion that Council recommend the WAPC refuse Structure Plan 34, for the following reasoning:

Massive Under-estimation of risk (bushfire) :

HDH = high density housing

BMP = bush fire management plan

Previous incorrect assumptions/comments:

- Satterley stated in March 2019 they believed the subdivision could become a “safe zone”, and could even be used as a bushfire refuge; as in their opinion their BMP significantly lowers the risk & BAL ratings.
- A belief that high density development reduces bushfire risk
- A belief that Beelu National Park and Leschenaultia, being more than 4km away from site are not a high risk or of concern regarding bushfire, as would be John Forrest National Park.

To address these:

- Threat of ember attack is considerably higher risk than assumed and creates multiple fires quickly.
- The accepted distance by DFES for ember travel is 5km.
- “With the right firebrand and wind conditions, they can travel astonishing distances. Evidence collected from large bushfires have shown they can travel up to 30-40kms” as per CSIRO Leader of Bushfire Behaviour and Risk team Dr Andrew Sullivan.
- CSIRO post-bushfire building survey findings show “surface fuels within the township were readily ignited by embers which rained down on the township, this meant many parts of the township were simultaneously ignited”
- Given the rural nature of the surrounding suburbs, multiple fires **increase threat** to small HDH developments, not diminish it.
- It has been confirmed that the developer has never developed to BAL standards, this is a first attempt. There appears to be a major lack of understanding in what is safely required in this zone.

- With high density, risk is increased due to house proximity – one house igniting can ignite its neighbours through radiant heat – the domino effect.
- Gas bottles and ducted air conditioning in HD magnify the risk of ignition, plus threat of gas venting (creates fireball effect) or explosion can affect multiple houses rapidly
- Occupants will plant gardens, reintroducing vegetation even on smaller blocks, this means vegetation much closer to their house and neighbours’ fences
- We cannot underestimate human impact on fire ignition;
- Accidental ignitions can be as dangerous as arson, aka Kelmscott-Roleystone 2011
- Residents on large lots surrounding HDH will still need to burn off fuel loads
- Escaped burns on existing hills lots regularly threaten neighbours, that risk increases significantly if in close proximity to HDH
- Prof Don Driscoll Deakin University “although weather plays a large part, the key to managing risk is the human factor and prevention”. Also, “Careful Urban Planning is needed to avoid making the bushfire risk worse”.

- Only 3 brigades (including VFRS) in the hills are Urban brigades equipped to combat structural fires
- Roads around the SP34 are not adequate for large evacuation + emergency service access. How efficiently can Emergency services gain access in, to rapidly suppress fire, while managing evacuation of thousands of residents on insufficient routes simultaneously.
- In an emergency, the roads will be overwhelmed, as they were in 2008 and 2014, but with greater numbers.
- Water pressure to hydrants is significantly reduced, as residents use hoses, and multiple emergency appliances access water resources. This impacts FF capabilities within the rapid timing needed to protect lives and defend assets within HDH. There appears to be uncertainty as to how reliable this water resource will be. Note that civilians will not be permitted onto live fire ground to refuel or maintain diesel generators.
- SP34 lacks proper consideration of the risks involved and under-estimates the potential impact of fires surrounding this site. As DFES advised, sections of the consultants' paper lack rigour and do not provide a holistic view of bushfire mitigation within the Shire.

Waroona, Harvey, Margaret River, Denmark, Esperance, Roleystone, Kelmscott – higher density townships on a rural fringe, areas burnt to the ground.

To Conclude : Any BMP with such an inaccurate & inadequate assessment is not satisfactory to warrant approval and support. `Bare Minimum' requirements will not alter the reality, impact and potentially traumatic outcome of HDH in these hills, and the devastating outcomes have been studied & well-documented following Major incidents in Western Australia. That is the truth.