



WOODS POINT AND SURROUNDING DISTRICT COMMUNITY SAFETY PLAN - UPDATED FEBRUARY 2022



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Note: For privacy reasons the Public Release Version of this Plan does not include full addresses or phone numbers for residents etc

Enquiries relation to the Plan, suggestions for improvements and the like should be directed to Mansfield Shire Council, the Municipal Emergency Management Officer or the Municipal Fire Prevention Officer 5775 8555

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PART 1 – INTRODUCTION TO PLAN

Summary

The need to develop a separate plan for the Woods Point district arose mainly because of the remoteness and the unique geographical features of its location that render it more susceptible to various types of hazards and complicate the ability for the communities up-river of Jamieson to cope with emergencies.

The Plan was developed to support the community of Woods Point and district mitigate, prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies in the area. It is an 'all hazards' plan – it addresses a range of emergency situations including bushfire and storm and extended isolation.

The Woods Point area and communities are almost unique in Victoria such that, in the event of an emergency, the relevant response and recovery agencies may not be able to access or communicate with the impacted area, and limited local resources may have to cope unassisted until access and/or communication is restored.

The experiences of the 2006/07 fires resulted in the loss of many dwellings in the Upper Goulburn River valley, caused major upheaval to the community and significantly impacted on the environment. The fires burnt a very large portion of the State and have been compared with the 1939 fires. Fortunately, the fires which were caused by lightning strikes, were predominantly contained to Crown land. On this occasion, the change in the weather, the significant lead time and the ability to gather resources all contributed to the Woods Point community being prepared for the fires, and ultimately the Woods Point township (and other areas) escaped the potential destructive force of the fire. The Gaffney's Creek area was not as fortunate.

Further experiences and lessons from the Black Saturday Fires of 2009 which threatened the towns around Woods Point, the subsequent Royal Commission and the 2019/20 Inspector General Emergency Management bushfire inquiry have been applied to this document.

In 2012, Emergency Management Victoria (EMV) recognised the importance of community being involved in every stage of emergency management and developed the Community Based Emergency Management approach;

<https://www.emv.vic.gov.au/how-we-help/community/community-based-emergency-management>

This plan has been developed along the same lines as the CBEM model which "assists communities to identify and build upon their own strengths, together with the appropriate support from organisations." It has been a cooperative process between Council, the Community, CFA and all principal response agencies.

The Plan represents a shared view of activities, triggers, response, community capacity, building and location uses. The draft Plan had a working debut during the 2006 fires which threatened the area and ultimately severely impacted the Gaffney's Creek and A1 Mine Settlement and surrounding area.

The process provided support to the development on behalf of the Woods Point community of a relief/recovery centre, establishing the NSP and improved supplementary water resources. Improvements to the community facility and provision of a static water supply at Gaffney's Creek have also been completed.

The Woods Point and Surrounding District Community Safety plan sits with the Mansfield Shire Municipal Emergency Management Plan and is seen as a necessity given the remoteness of the area and the fact that the Woods Point and nearby areas and their local population need to respond to situations as they arise, often without assistance for some time. The original Woods Point and Surrounding District Community Safety Plan was initially presented to the Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee 15 October 2007 and most recently following a time of review and updating on 5 April 2022.

1. Aim:

The aim of this plan is to provide a localised framework for the local communities, agencies, organisations and seeks to record actions to prevent, respond to and recover from emergencies in the Woods Point township and surrounding areas.

2. Objective:

The overall objective is to minimise the threat to life, property, the environment, and the community in general, from any emergency that may occur within Woods Point and environs.

The plan provides a guide for the community members of Woods Point and surrounding district through outlining the process of preventing or minimising the effects of natural or man-made emergencies and provides for a shared understanding of how to respond. The plan also guides response and recovery agencies and aims to assist in the co-ordination and co-operation of the community and participating organisations to ensure the efficient use of all available resources.

3. Plan Development

Following a 'Fire Refuge case study' community involvement project with the Office of the Emergency Services Commissioner and subsequent discussion between the community, Council and CFA District 23, a project was scoped and resulted in a funding submission being developed. The successful funding delivered 4 broad concepts which were highlighted during earlier Woods Point project with OESC (now Emergency Management Victoria) regarding a fire refuge.

1. A community owned 'All Hazard' safety plan.
2. To raise the profile of community safety – with a focus on fire in the environment.
3. A safer community building to act as a relief/recovery centre available to aid residents of the area including young and elderly, regular visitors, including non-resident owners and the significant influx of tourists.
4. Improve the 'mine adit' initially as a recognised Fire Refuge and subsequently as a designated Neighbourhood Safer Place and enable needed improvement and maintenance to occur (stages 1 & 2 undertaken).

A local steering committee from the Woods Point area was established and became the local Community Safety Committee, initially to work with Council and CFA to further develop the 1st Plan.

The Draft Plan had a working debut during the 2006 fires which threatened the area and ultimately severely impacted on the Gaffney's Creek and A1 Mine Settlement and surrounding area. The Plan has since been updated in response to subsequent community feedback and following some of the experiences of the 2006/07 and 2009 fires which resulted in the loss of many dwellings, caused major

upheaval to this and other Victorian communities and significant impacts on the environment and people. These fires have been compared with 1939 fires.

This version of the Plan represents the refinement of the earlier draft and trialled versions of the adopted Plan. It was expanded to cover Woods Point and nearby areas. Further reviewed following the 2009 experiences, refined State and CFA positions, the formation of EMV and following the redevelopment of the Woods Point Adit from a designated Refuge to a Designated Neighbourhood Safer Place – Place of Last Resort (NSP).

This version follows from the review and assurance process associated with the redrafting of the Municipal Emergency Management Plan in 2021 and the acceptance of this document as a Sub-plan by the newly formed MEMPC at its meeting 5th April 2022. It is anticipated that during planned community resilience engagement activities that this plan will be the subject of a further review in the short-term.

The Steering Committee now functions as the Woods Point Community Safety Committee (WPCSC) with oversight of all aspects of emergency management in Woods Point.

As referenced above, the Plan is a sub plan to the Mansfield Shire Municipal Emergency Management Plan and is seen as a necessity given the remoteness of the area and the fact that the Woods Point and nearby areas and their local population will need to respond to situations as they arise and often without external assistance for some time. Whilst fire has been the main focus, the Plan represents an ‘all hazard’ risk management approach.

Agreements have been signed (MOU’s) for works at and the ongoing use of the Community Hall as an Emergency Relief Centre and the Cherry Adit as a Neighbourhood Safer Place (NSP) as Council is not the owner or occupier of these sites. Council has signed the agreements in its capacity as the agency representing the community. The NSP has been formally designated by Council and supported by CFA – with the consent of DELWP as manager of Crown Land.

4. Maintenance of Plans:

The WPCSC is encouraged to convene after each emergency that requires the activation of components of the Woods Point and Surrounding District Community Safety Plan. The committee is tasked to:

- (a) Consider any recommendations that may come from the de-briefings of control and support agencies involved in the emergency.
- (b) Recommend changes to the plan to overcome any shortcomings.
- (c) Create minutes of meetings and arrange for their distribution via Council.

NB: Meetings of the WPCSC may be called at a min 48 hrs notice and shall be conducted in accordance with Council’s Meeting Local Law.

This is in addition to the holding of the recommended 2 planned annual meetings. See Part 4 Sec 2 for further information

PART 2 – WOODS POINT & DISTRICT PROFILE

1. General:

Woods Point is situated in the Upper Goulburn River Valley approximately 290 kms North East of Melbourne via Mansfield – 200 km along the Maroondah Highway and then 90 km along the Mansfield Woods Point Road via Jamieson, or alternatively via Matlock from the Marysville and Warburton Woods Point Road. Other nearby settlements include Gaffney's Creek, the A1 Mine Settlement and Matlock. It is envisaged that this Plan will assist all those communities south of Kevington as generally covered by the Woods Point Police response zone.

Woods Point is 90 kms south of Mansfield and the larger town and focal point in this area. The Woods Point Police response zone is approximately 1000 sq. kms of mostly mountainous terrain surrounded by National Parks and State Forests and is generally the same area as defined as the CFA – Woods Point Brigade Assignment Area. The zone overlaps into the Upper Thompson water supply catchment administered by Melbourne Water.

The response zone encompasses the settlements of Gaffney's Creek, Matlock and A1 Mine Settlement and has a total permanent population of around 37 people, boosted by up to 40 mine workers and contractors when the A1 and Morning Star Mines are operational (operational as at 09/03/2022). The area is also subject to seasonal change and has a transient tourist population of up to 200 people on most weekends including regular weekenders who are non-resident property owners. The area is popular amongst 4WD and motorcycle enthusiasts along with campers along the river frontage areas, bushwalkers, rock climbers, fishermen, horse riders and deer hunters, cyclists. Gold was discovered in the area in the 1800's and three Gold Mines remain with current activity (within the Woods Point township and at A1 Mine Settlement). There are an enormous number of abandoned mines scattered throughout the district with mining relics abundant.

2. Topography:

The topography surrounding Woods Point township and the district is heavily treed mountainous bush land, State Forests and Parks, accessed mainly by steep, rocky 4WD tracks. Northern access is via the Mansfield Woods Point Road. Southern access to the town is via the Walhalla Woods Point Road or the Warburton Woods Point Road, Eastern access via South and Mt. Selma Roads to Walhalla Road.

There are numerous creeks and river systems with the main one being the upper reaches of the Goulburn River that flows generally south east from its source near Frenchman's Gap to Woods Point thence generally northeast and northwest to Lake Eildon near Jamieson. Due in part to the road and river following similar paths, the road is subject to flood waters and flood damage.

3. Climate:

The climate is typified by cold wet/snowy winters and warm to hot summers, with an annual rainfall average of ~1480mm. Temperature ranges at Woods Point vary between -5°C in winter up to a recorded maximum of 41°C in summer, the annual daily mean maximum temperature being 17°C and minimum 3.5°C.

http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/averages/tables/cw_083033.shtml

Storms and blizzards are not uncommon in winter and high winds in the higher regions such as Matlock, can dry out the forests and bush very quickly in summer.

4. Population:

The Australian Bureau of Statistics indicates Woods Point and district has a total permanent population of around 37 people with a transient mining, residential & tourist population. The area encompasses the townships of Gaffney's Creek, Matlock, A1 Mine Settlement and Enoch's Point. The gender breakdown shows 58.8% male and 41.2% female. During the spring/summer and autumn months, long weekends, and School Holidays there can be up to 1000 people distributed around the area. Enoch's Point is also accessible from Jamieson and Eildon via the 'Big River road'.

A community profile can be found on the Australian Bureau of Statistics website:

https://quickstats.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2016/quickstat/SSC22825

There are 3 community groups – the Woods Point Progress Association, RSL and the Buffalo Lodge.

5. Commercial Development:

The main commercial developments in Woods Point are the Morning Star Gold Mine, the A1 Gold Mine, Richmond Retreat Accommodation, Commercial Hotel and the small Woods Point general store/post office – with limited fuel supplies. There are two or three smaller Gold Mines operating in the area. At the time of this review, mining activity within the area has had a comparative upturn in scale of operation. Local ore trucks use the roads from the A1 Mine to Mansfield, daily.

6. Police:

The response zone is patrolled by one Police Officer with 4WD vehicle; policing back up comes from nearby Jamieson (1 hour) and Mansfield (1.5 hrs). There is a low crime rate with the main policing issue being the normal range of law enforcement actions including community and individuals risk prevention, searches for lost persons and attending vehicle collisions. The Officer is a focal point in the community and assists DELWP and Parks personnel and Council staff with their duties.

7. Fire Services:

During the summer period there is always a high risk of bushfires. Woods Point has a small but active Volunteer CFA Brigade operating one 4WD Tanker, one 4WD Ultra-Light tanker. Due to its isolation, it is not affiliated but liaises with Mansfield Fire Brigades Group. It is part of CFA District 23. The Gaffney's Creek community is part of the Brigade and also has a fire pump and trailer. The communities and individuals are very 'fire aware' and have developed a high degree of self-reliance.

DELWP personnel implement three broad fire related prevention strategies in addition to their community engagement:

- Fuel reduction burns to reduce the severity of bushfire impact, particularly on the townships. These fuel reductions are strategic in nature, pre-planned operations and very dependent on suitable weather conditions.
- Track maintenance to provide access into the areas
- Operation of fire towers at:
 1. Mt. Matlock – Noojee DELWP (MGA94 Zone 55, Ref. 284E/410N at ~1372m elevation – VICMAP BOOK CENTRAL, MAP 6457),
 2. Mt. Terrible – Alexandra DELWP (AMG Zone 55, Ref. 238E/608N at ~1316m elevation - CFA Regions 23 & 24 Directory , Map 407)
 3. Mt. Useful – Erica & Heyfield DELWP (AMG Zone 55, Ref. 561E/278N at ~1420m elevation - CFA Regions 23 & 24 Directory 1998, Map 452) and
 4. Mt Buller – Mansfield DELWP (AMG Zone 55, Ref. 489E/888N at ~1800m elevation - CFA Regions 23 & 24 Directory 1998, Map 368)

DELWP also provide an operational response to and recovery activities following fires. The fire lookout towers provide excellent visual coverage of the 'Woods Point District'. These towers are all 'manned' on high fire danger days during daylight hours, throughout the declared fire danger period providing the community with warning of any bushfire or smoke sighting. Communications from the towers are transmitted to DELWP office and ground personnel, CFA District offices and local CFA Brigades, and other fire towers via radio and telephone.

8. Ambulance:

The Woods Point area has a fully operational Ambulance Community Officer ambulance service operated by Ambulance Victoria. Local members have multi-functional roles specific to their small isolated community and may be requested to assist in other roles during an emergency as indicated in this document.

9. Victoria State Emergency Service:

Within Mansfield Shire Vic SES has a volunteer unit based in Mansfield township. The Mansfield Unit has members who are trained and equipped for a variety of emergency events. A Unit member currently resides at Woods Point. Any

significant event within the Shire would possibly see neighbouring Vic SES units assisting Mansfield Unit.

Vic SES is the control agency for flood, storm and earthquake within Victoria. They also provide a Road Crash Rescue (RCR) capability throughout the State and are a support agency to other emergency services.

Due to the isolation and travelling time to respond to Woods Point and its environs Vic SES would seek accurate information and intelligence pertaining to the extent of damage to ensure its response was appropriate. The local Emergency Coordinator (OIC Woods Point Police Station – if manned) would perform the task of sourcing this information.

10. Landing Strips:

The closest fixed wing airstrip is the Jessop Phoschek Airstrip, located at the intersection of Thompson Jordan Divide Road and Warburton Road, Saint Clair (MGA94 Zone 55 Ref. 267E/360N at ~1200 m elevation – VICMAP BOOK CENTRAL, MAP 6457). Google coordinates -37.623841968923514, 146.1777515187345. This airstrip is operated by DELWP during fire danger periods and is maintained by them. Keys available from Woods Point Police.

There are numerous helicopter landing points in the area, and these are shown on most maps of the area. The main helicopter landing point in use for the town is the Woods Point Gun Club Reserve on the Mansfield Woods Point Road (MGA94 Zone 55 Ref. 335E/427N at ~720 m elevation – VICMAP BOOK CENTRAL, MAP 6458) Google coordinates -37.56004953183235, 146.24311535006294. This reserve is about 1 km north of town and is a suitable all-weather landing place. There are two other reserves in town that may be suitable for helicopters i.e. the old tennis court near the Fire Station, which is now in use and may open to smaller craft and the river flats near Richmond Retreat. The A1 Mine site also has an open area at the main office car park which is a suitable all-weather helicopter landing site - Google coordinates 37.49960868273446, 146.20104439630148.

11. Assembly Areas:

NOTE: these locations are NOT fire refuges or Neighbourhood Safer Places.

For Woods Point township, the community assembly area is defined as the Emergency Relief Centre (see below). The Hotel, the redeveloped Gaffney's Creek 'shed' and other venues are suitable locations for community meetings and gatherings.

For outlying communities such as Gaffney's Creek, A1 Mine Settlement and Matlock the Woods Point Emergency Relief Centre is also the primary assembly area, however it is acknowledged there will be instances where those communities cannot travel to Woods Point, therefore secondary assembly areas may be necessary.

The WPCSP and local Woods Point Safety Committee supports the adopted State and CFA view that persons should seek shelter and protection from

radiant heat in any substantial structure rather than risk being caught on the heavily vegetated road. Each individual, household, tourist and the community are encouraged to plan for their welfare in the event of a bushfire – and any other emergency.

The philosophy of pre-planning and '*Stay to defend or leave early*' is promoted.

<https://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/plan-prepare/before-and-during-a-fire/your-guide-to-survival>

12. Emergency Relief/Recovery Centres:

This plan recognises the need for a township Emergency Relief Centre at Woods Point due to its location, the lack of other significant sized 'fire resistant' buildings, the older style building standards in the area, the significant number of visitors to the area including non-resident dwelling and other landowners, campers, fishermen, hunters, 4 wheel drivers, etc. and the needs of the resident community.

The plan recognises that the area is subject to a number of hazards and potential emergencies and that flood, structural fires and bushfire are a possibility each year.

The plan addresses the need for potential self-relocation or evacuation to a safe and supported location, and the possibility of the public, including visitors not being able to leave the area due to road closure or other circumstance where it may not be safe to attempt departure. The Plan recognises that due to location, the Woods Point community and visitors need to be self-reliant and prepared for emergencies.

The principal public relief centre for the township of Woods Point is nominated as the Community Hall (RSL Hall) and a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been created between Council and the owner for this use. This location provides an initial point for the public to assemble, receive direction and receive or assist in the provision of emergency relief. The building is not equipped to cater for a large number of persons for a lengthy period and is limited by toilet capacity, no bedding etc. Alternate relief centre locations in Woods Point are nominated in Part 4 – Table 8 of this document however they have similar if not greater limitations. Commercial accommodation is limited in the area. Longer-term relief accommodation (successive nights, etc.) may need to rely on camping, either nearby or at a reserve. Local arrangements may enable use of unoccupied dwellings or relocation from the area. Most residents and visitors have camping equipment.

After an emergency, recovery activities may be warranted, and the Community Hall will likely be the focal point for these purposes.

The Community Hall site and building exterior was altered extensively in 2005 with funding provided to Council from the Federal Attorney General's Office so as to be generally compliant with the Australian Standard AS3959 'Buildings in bushfire prone areas'. This will help ensure the building is a safe destination to provide

relief from most emergencies. It should withstand a fire with appropriate human intervention, and thus be usable after a fire. This building is near the designated 'NSP'.

13. Fire Refuge/ Neighbourhood Safer Place – Place of Last Resort:

The previously designated Fire Refuge is now a formally designated **Neighbourhood Safer Place – Place of Last Resort** – is located directly south (up-hill) of the Police Station in a disused mine adit (see Part 4 – Section 9). The mine adit was identified by the community and other organisations after use during the 1939 bushfires. Other than providing a place of last resort from an approaching fire, the mine adit is not equipped to provide any other form of emergency function. See also section 9 in Part 4 below

14. Emergency History:

- a) The main historical threats are bushfire and storm including minor flooding. The town of Woods Point and surrounding communities have now been severely affected by fire on 2 occasions 1939 and 2006/07. The Black Friday bushfires in the summer of 1939 had been acknowledged as a 1 in 200-year event. Towns were destroyed and rebuilt after the 1939 fires. In 2006/07 there were no lives lost and due to the advance warning, all tourists and many residents took the opportunity to leave the area in advance of the fire. A small number of non-resident owners also arrived to protect their property. Because of the generally slow-moving nature of the Alpine fire on this occasion, time allowed for CFA and DELWP to assess their capability and deem the Woods Point township as 'defendable'.

Resources were transported into the communities and additional preparation works were undertaken. Power supplies were lost; however, the township was provided with auxiliary power by generators for some weeks.

The 2006 fires which destroyed many houses in the Gaffney's Creek and A1 Mine areas and caused widespread environmental damage will be recorded as having had a significant impact on the communities. The similarly named Black Saturday Bushfires of 2009 possibly the worst fire disaster to hit Victoria came within 11 klm west of Woods Point and 8 klm of Gaffney's Creek. The area of Enoch's Point near Big River came under direct threat of this fire, but no property damage occurred.

- b) Windstorms are frequent in the area and along with rain, short duration (flash) flooding and snow can cause a lot of damage to the environment, infrastructure and buildings. It is common during winter for roads to be blocked by debris and snow, with an occasional road collapse or partial wash-away.
- c) Motor vehicle crashes and frequent collisions involving motor bikes occur, but these are less frequent during the winter. The increased heavy vehicle traffic due to a resurgence in mining works is acknowledged.
- d) Another demand on emergency services involves searches for lost or stranded tourists/ motorists in the bush.

- e) On 21/09/2021 the highest magnitude earthquake ever recorded in Australia occurred at around 09:15 am, 5.9 (Mw) at 10 km depth. (Event ID ga2021sqogij), this was 5 to 10 km northeast of Woods Point township. Although the towns in close proximity to the epicentre were shaken quite severely, only damage to old brick and rock chimneys, some ground movement and cracks in buildings and the road with some rock falls in cuttings occurred. There were nil injuries. This quake was felt all over Victoria and Tasmania, causing building damage in Melbourne. There have daily aftershocks in the Woods Point area since that day and they continue months later.
- e) The occasional light aircraft has crashed in the response zone.
- f) Industrial/mine accidents have been rare but are more likely with greater activity.

15. Woods Point township / locality plan:

See maps in Annexure F

PART 3 – HAZARD IDENTIFICATION AND TREATMENT

1. Hazard Identification:

Hazard identification and the extent of risk particular to the Woods Point and district community was revisited and communicated to the local community by the Office of the Emergency Services Commissioner during a community consultation workshop held in May 2005. Subsequent reviews of Municipal wide plans have not changed the risks relating to fire.

The workshop meetings confirmed public opinion that bushfire was the most significant hazard that would probably threaten the Woods Point area communities. Factors substantiating this were as follows:

- History – 1939 fires, the 2006 /07 'Great Divide' fires (and subsequently – the very recent 2009 Black Saturday State-wide fires
- The Mansfield Emergency Management Plan risk assessment identifies bushfire as the highest risk to the Shire
- Geography – isolation and steep terrain
- Difficult fighting fires – lack of water pressure/volume in the townships
- Lightning strikes – sudden onset and mountainous surround
- Fire starting elsewhere and threatening Woods Point and surrounding areas
- Poor communications and lack of back-up
- Weather changes
- Distance between Woods Point, Jamieson and Mansfield

Risk exposure identified - that remain current are as follows:

- Permanent population approximately 37 in Woods Point, Gaffney's Creek, A1 Mine Settlement, Knockwood and Matlock –. Boosted by up to 50 transient mine workers and contractors during working weeks.
- A small number of elderly people and others who may be at risk and known within the community and also a relatively small number of infants and children
- Visiting population – campers, families, 4-wheel drive clubs
- Population increases to ~500+ during peak holidays (summer)
- Not all visiting population fully appreciative of fire risk or where to access bushfire safety and preparedness information
- Some people camping in bush not aware of declared Total Fire Ban days. Total Fire Ban signs to continue to be displayed at main camping grounds.

The above risks are people and locality related.

Other obvious risks include

- isolation and loss of services
- property damage and/or loss
- infrastructure and environmental damage and/or
- loss and disruption to economic livelihood, i.e. business, employment, tourism.

The risks/hazards affecting the area also generally affect the whole of the Municipality, however due to factors of isolation, distance, terrain, road access and the limited availability of outside support, the impact of those risks/ hazards may be more severe. ‘Normal’ service restoration may take longer.

In particular, loss of vehicular access (road closure due to snow, flood, tree falls, etc.) or loss of power supply and / or communication is acknowledged by this Plan and importantly by the community.

The Municipal Emergency Management Plan has identified the following as the key risks to the Municipality. The 5 highest risks in the municipality area were identified as being:

- Bushfire
- Flood
- Extreme temperature - Heatwave
- Human epidemic/pandemic
- Major events – public safety

Some, but not all of these risks apply to the Woods Point area.

2. Types of hazards that may be expected in the Woods Point area:

IDENTIFIED HAZARD	EFFECT	RISK LEVEL	TREATMENT OPTIONS
Vehicle accident/ crash	Isolation (loss of vehicular access) Death/injury Infrastructure damage	High	WPCS Plan and WPCSPC actions Warnings Police protocols, Ambulance Vic protocols, Warnings (signage)
Bushfire & fire	Death/Injury Smoke Isolation (Loss of vehicular access) Environmental damage Infrastructure damage private and public Loss of power Loss of communications	High	Warnings, education, WPCS Plan and WPCSPC actions CFA/DELWP operations Fuel reduction burns Community education WMO introduction & promotion Warnings NSP Establish relief centre Police protocols Ambulance Vic protocols
Storm & adverse weather	Isolation (loss of vehicular access) Tree damage Infrastructure damage Loss of power Loss of communications Death/injury	High	WPCS Plan and WPCSPC actions Warnings Establish relief centre Police protocols, AV protocols
Lost persons	Death/injury Resource demand	Moderate	Police protocols, SES Vic response, Ambulance Vic protocols,
Snow	Isolation (loss of vehicular access) Tree damage	Moderate	Warnings WPCS Plan and WPCSPC actions
Landslide	Isolation (loss of vehicular access) Environmental damage	Moderate	WPCS Plan and WPCSPC actions Warnings
Flood	Death/injury Isolation (loss of vehicular access) Infrastructure damage Environmental damage	Moderate	WPCS Plan and WPCSPC actions VicSES protocols, Police protocols, Ambulance Vic protocols, Establish relief centre
Earthquake	Environmental damage Infrastructure damage Isolation (loss of vehicular access) Loss of power/communications Mine incident	Low	Establish relief centre SES protocols Police protocols, Ambulance Vic protocols Municipal building surveyors assess

			building damage
Pandemic	Death/injury	Low	DHS protocols, Police protocols, Ambulance Vic protocols,
Mine Accident	Death/injury Loss of income Whole town affected	Low	Mine EM Plans and OH&S protocols, Police protocols, Ambulance Vic protocols, establish relief centre Municipal & other government protocols
Loss of power	No water (pumps) Loss of income	Low	Redundancies
Loss of communications	Inconvenience Loss of income	Low	Redundancies
Drought	Environmental damage Loss of income	Low	Municipal & other government protocols Community support initiatives

3. Hazard Review:

Due to community and seasonal changes the degree of possible risks related to identified hazards may vary. An ongoing role of the WPCSC will be to review the risk rating for identified hazards and consider any circumstances that may effect changes to the ratings specified in the WPCSP and the MEMP.

4. Specific Fire Related Treatments:

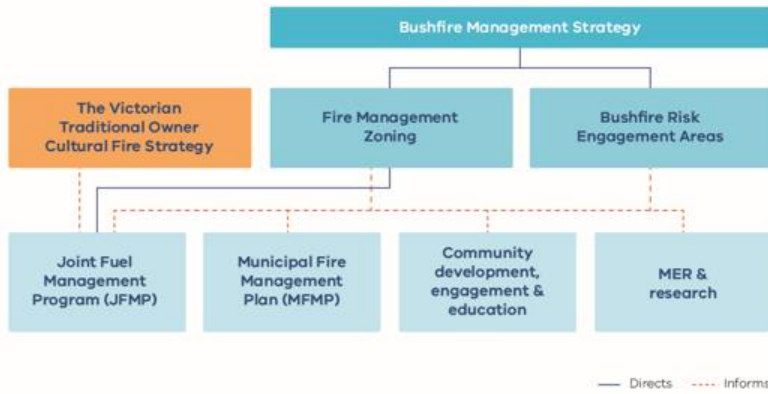
DELWP has developed and oversees the Joint Fuel Management Program which is a state-wide program that manages fuel on public and private land. The program integrates a risk-focused bushfire management approach. Forest Fire Management Victoria (FFMVic) and Country Fire Authority (CFA) commits to work as one sector by sharing resources, vehicles, and other equipment. The JFMP includes areas proposed for fuel reduction burning, ecological burning and road and track maintenance (updated annually).

<https://www.ffm.vic.gov.au/bushfire-fuel-and-risk-management/joint-fuel-management-program>

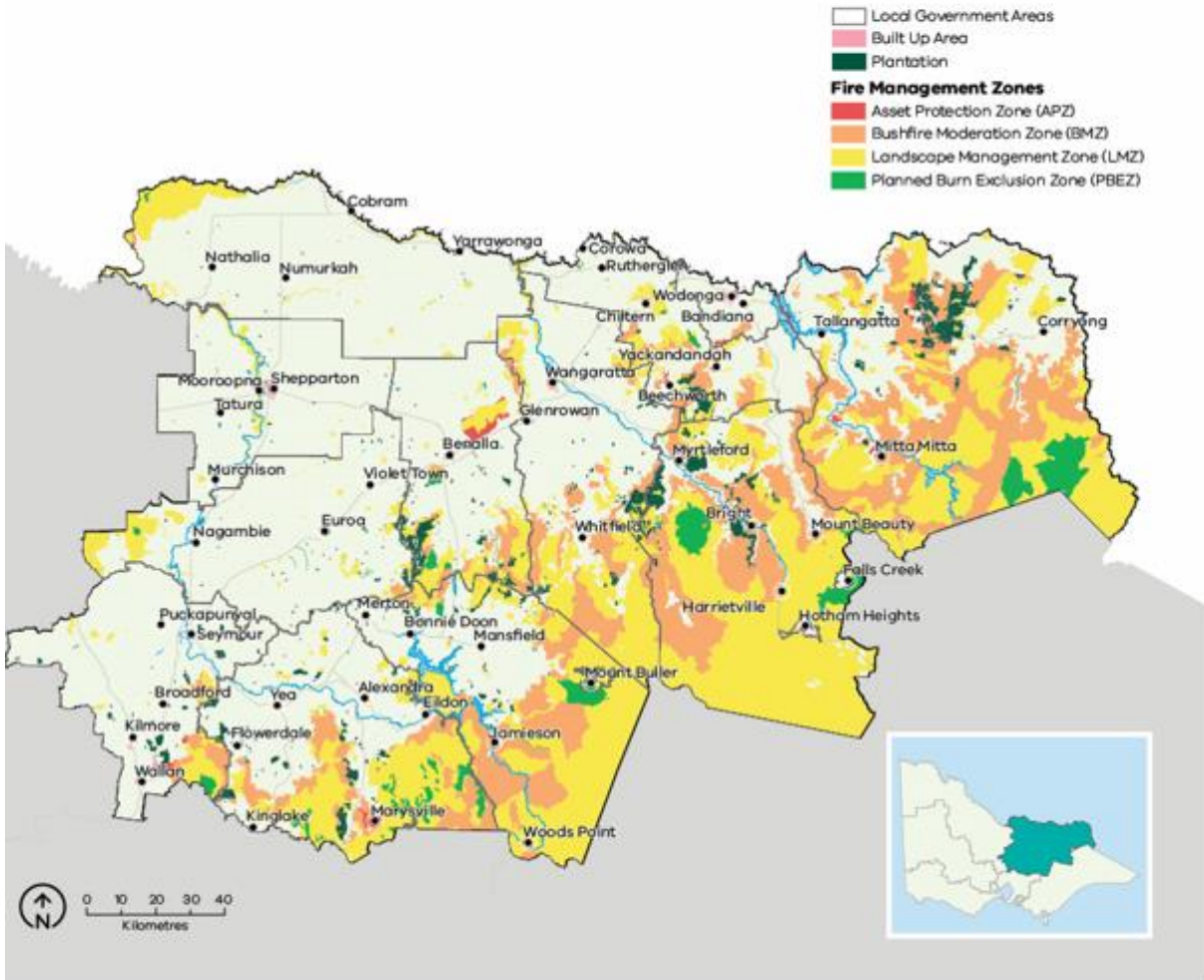
DELWP also undertakes strategic bushfire management planning with the result for this area being the Hume Bushfire Management Strategy 2020 which can be viewed on this link <https://www.safertogether.vic.gov.au/strategic-bushfire-management-planning>

The fuel management strategies directly inform the JFMP and other planning and is detailed in the diagram following:

Figure 13: Schematic representation of the strategy's influence on implementation programs and plans



Hume - Fire Management Zones



Woods Point and other townships at A1 Mine Settlement, Gaffney's Creek and Matlock and isolated areas of freehold property comprise a very small proportion of land within the area compared with public land being administered by DELWP.

DELWP also delivers a community engagement program as well as fire preparedness, fire prevention and education programs for public land. DELWP

maps are available specific to the general Woods Point location and show planned fuel reduction burning, however these objectives change on a yearly basis relevant to prevailing conditions (contact Mansfield DELWP on 5733 1200).

The area around Woods Point is designated in the Hume Bushfire Management Strategy as being Bushfire Moderation Zone, Landscape Management Zone and the area closest to the Woods Point township as being Asset Protection Zone.

Fuel management zoning allows determination of priorities for fuel reduction based on all values at risk, risk potential and the range of bushfire suppression options desired under most weather conditions. DELWP has a positive relationship with the Woods Point and related communities, particularly engaging the community in the planning of future works and providing advice and support when requested.

The township of Woods Point and the general district is declared a 'Bushfire Prone Area' to reflect the hazard and the zoning of the adjoining public land which means building construction and planning controls apply.

5. Woods Point Water Supply

Goulburn Valley Water (GVW) administers a reticulated water supply to the Woods Point township, but this is not inclusive of all properties and the water is not potable. Some areas around 'White City' are connected through a private arrangement.



The Woods Point reticulated water supply is sourced from a permanent flow in Brewery Creek several hundred metres upstream of its junction with the Goulburn River and piped via a 90mm diameter PVC underground main to the pumping station adjacent to the Fire Station in Scott Street (see photo above). The water is then pumped to a 50 kilolitre holding tank elevated at the top of Hurley Street. A new 80,000 litre tank was installed in 2021 to ensure the town has a minimum of 8 hours water supply. The reticulation is gravity fed and generally comprises 100mm (4") diameter UPVC mains constructed in 2001, however there are some older sections of 64mm (2.5") diameter galvanised steel main in the Richmond Retreat

area. Other types and smaller sizes of pipe are utilised on some of the branch mains and north of the Goulburn River Bridge in Scott Street.

The supply is chlorinated but not a potable source without further treatment.

There are several hydrants located throughout the town, but the system has limited pressure and capacity to be used as a brigade firefighting supply direct from the mains. During the hotter months increased demand causes some of the houses at higher elevations to lose supply.

The reticulated supply system is an invaluable fire aid as an off-peak source to maintain individual house-hold firefighting tank storages that are recommended within this plan as part of the mitigation initiatives.

The Community Hall building has been equipped with a 22,000-litre storage tank for firefighting purposes with Hall protection via the pump to the sprinkler system and a hose reel as its prime purpose. The supply is also available to CFA.

There is a considerable untapped water resource retained within the mine adit (NSP). This supply is reputedly very clean and is considered by many in the community as the emergency back-up source for the town reticulation in the event of the Brewery Creek supply becoming contaminated. Its capacity for use as drinking water is not known (ground water and past n= mining activities)

5.1. Brigade Strategic Water Supplies

The Woods Point CFA Brigade has several sources of firefighting water supply. Two 22,000 litre storage tank supplies have been installed at Gaffney's Creek.

There is a deep hole on the Goulburn River behind the Woods Point fire station (see photo below) from where water is diverted (via pump) to an overhead standpipe at the entrance to the fire station.

A turn around area to refill water tanks on fire trucks also exists at a) the Gun Club/Cricket Ground, b) at Jack Scott Reserve behind the BBQ shelter and c) Matlock at Grant reserve) at White City opposite Richmond Retreat.

Outside Woods Point the district has access to the Goulburn River and creeks where subject to flow, water can be sourced.

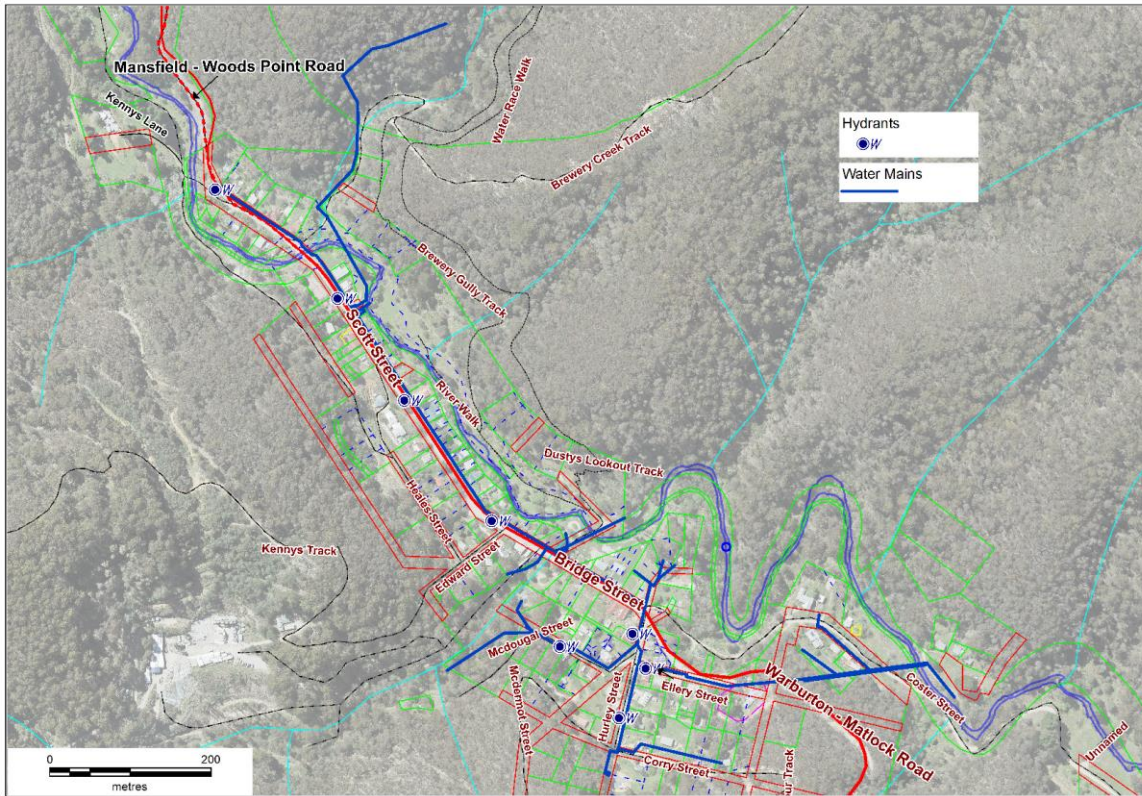


Water hole at the rear of the Woods Point Fire Station



Works undertaken at Gaffney's Creek – 2 x 22,000 litre water tanks adjacent to the Community Hall.

Map of hydrants in Woods Point



6. Individual house protection

a) Construction of buildings in bushfire prone areas.

As mentioned earlier most of the houses and commercial structures in the Woods Point area are older timber structures, most been built soon after the 1939 fires that devastated the area. Most buildings in the town (except the new Police Station and Community Hall) would be unlikely to comply with AS3959-2018 “Construction of buildings in bushfire prone areas” without major renovation. Therefore, the primary objective of individual house and/or building protection in the area may well be finding the most cost effective and practical means of protecting these structures from ember attack.

There is no compulsion for property owners to undertake works to bring their existing buildings into compliance, but the risk is a considerable incentive and with support of the WPCSC it is envisaged people will become more interested in protecting their asset.

AS3959 provisions entail covering, enhancing or adding to existing structures with materials aimed to protect the building from ember attack. Landowners should be encouraged to prioritise improvements by a simple cost/benefit analysis. Any new buildings or renovations should comply with AS3959 as the area is a *Bushfire Prone Area*. Building Surveyors and CFA Community Safety can advise property owners on these issues.

b) Property preparation

These principals relate to the preventative works that can be incorporated around an asset.

One initiative that needs little in the way of structural alteration and should be considered for all dwellings is the PRIVATE provision of a dedicated firefighting water supply tank (steel or concrete) with a minimum 10000 litre capacity combined with a portable pump independent of mains power supply. A sprinkler arrangement located on the roof of the building will add an extra element of protection. Leaf guard protection in storm water gutters around the roof provides a passive means of reducing inflammable debris build up. The outlet point of the tank should also be provided with a second coupling point to suit CFA appliances.

See CFA publication “Your Guide to Preparing Your Property”
<https://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/plan-prepare/how-to-prepare-your-property>

To reduce radiant heat, it is also necessary to separate dwellings and other assets from fuels by creating appropriate buffer zones and ensuring those buffers are maintained prior to the fire season. The Municipal Fire Prevention Officer annually (usually the first week of November) inspects houses and businesses in the townships to ascertain compliance with the Municipal Fire Prevention plan standards. A report of those buildings with firefighting water supplies should be developed as an Annexure to this plan and updated as situations change.

Explanatory brochures promoting the above initiatives and awareness of simple fire prevention measures such as storing firewood away from main buildings, cleaning gutters and reducing combustible vegetation adjoining structures, can be provided by Council and CFA.

7. Application of MPRR to the Woods Point and district fire risk

The phases of emergency management have been defined in the State Emergency Management Plan as mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery.

BEFORE	BEFORE	DURING	AFTER
MITIGATION	PREPAREDNESS	RESPONSE	RECOVERY
Provisions of Municipal Emergency Management Plan sit across all stages of emergency management			
Community participation and individual asset protection. DELWP Strategic Bushfire Plan and JFMP	Community participation and individual asset protection. Public education & awareness – signage Getting Fire Ready flyer CFA publications and website Camper registration during FDP	Community participation and individual asset protection. Incident Action Plan – CFA & DELWP ICC activation WPCSP functional roles	Community participation. Health & wellbeing – Relief Centre, Recovery Centre WPCSP functional roles.
MFPO inspections and directions. Community Education.	Brigade training & readiness Other agencies preparedness,	Communications Plan – CFA & DELWP with support from Council and WPCSP	Temporary accommodation. Welfare provision.
Property protection (apply principles)	Community Safety Committee meets and reviews WPCSP	Alternative supplies – fuel, power, and water.	Reinstatement of services.

Building modifications	Relief Centre and isolation preparations. NSP readiness.	Community Safety Committee activation. Warning system activation.	Business continuity and recovery planning
Identify risk hierarchy – Community and Stakeholder	Backup provision – power, fuel supplies Communications, Water supply, (Brigade and individual buildings) etc. Sufficient individual food and water supplies	ICC activation. Evacuation if required Relief Centre/ NSP use	Emergency relief and recovery funding sourced – liaise with Council
Community Safety Plan development and ongoing maintenance.	Triggers FDI 21-35 FDI >35 –40 Designate and liaise with Community Fire Warden Fire lookout towers manned		Support and advocacy for private and public asset replacement or improvement works.

PART 4 – PLANNING, MANAGEMENT and RESPONSE

1. Planning:

With others, Mansfield Shire Council has a key role in emergency planning and response management throughout the municipality as defined in the Emergency Management Act and the Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP). Council works in co-operation with communities and all relevant authorities to assist in the implementation of relevant planning, mitigation and response and recovery activities to prevent or reduce the impact of an emergency.

The Woods Point and District Community Safety Plan (WPCSP) is a sub plan of the Mansfield Shire Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP).

At the regional level, refer to the

<https://www.emv.vic.gov.au/responsibilities/emergency-management-planning/remps/hume-remp>

At the State level, refer to the State Emergency Management Plan

<https://www.emv.vic.gov.au/responsibilities/sempp>

To provide for local input, ownership and to create a framework for ongoing emergency management, a local committee known as the Woods Point & District Community Safety Committee (WPCSC) has been established. This Committee will provide input and have a representation in conjunction with the Municipal Emergency Response Co-ordinator (MERC), the Municipal Emergency Management Officer (MEMO), and Municipal Recovery Manager (MRM) at the Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC). The committee members 'powers' will be limited to advisory in nature unless otherwise stated.

2. Woods Point & District Community Safety Committee:

This committee as at February 2022 is:

Chairperson (preferably not an agency representative)	Jan Van der Schaft
Community Representative (Business)	Sandra Bevington
Secretary / Minute Taker	Emily Scott
Victoria Police (local officer)	Ken Dwight
Ambulance Victoria (local team Leader)	Fran Scott
CFA (local brigade representative)	Captain or Delegate
Community Representatives	
Woods Point	Kirrily Pay
Gaffney's Creek	Peter Luke

The Chairperson is appointed as a member of the Mansfield Shire – MEMPC to represent the Woods Point and District at the meetings of that committee.

The WPCSC should meet a minimum of twice yearly and should aim to hold meetings at least four weeks prior to the MEMPC meetings to allow any specific issues arising to be included in the MEMPC agenda. The Mansfield Shire Council will provide support to the WPCSC to allow it to become functional as part of the overall MEMPC.

Copies of the local committee meetings should be sent to:

- Mansfield Police - MERC / Officer in Charge
- Mansfield Shire Council - MERO/MRM
- DELWP - Mansfield Officer in Charge
- CFA – Regional Officer
- VICSES – Regional Officer & Mansfield Unit
- Council can assist with the distribution of the Minutes

3. Roles of Control Agencies and Emergency Response Coordinator:

These roles are as detailed in State Plans

<https://www.emv.vic.gov.au/responsibilities/sempr>

and the MEMP Response section

https://www.mansfield.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/largefiles/Mansfield%20MEMP%202021-2024%20Final_2.pdf

but for the purposes of the WPCSP the following brief explanation should clarify the situation. The task of directly controlling an emergency rests with the statutory authority whose function it is to handle such matter:

EMERGENCY	CONTROL AGENCY
Bushfire	CFA or DELWP
Storm and flood	VicSES
Earthquake	VicSES
Mine incident	Victoria Police

Victoria Police are the co-ordinators of all emergency events within Victoria.

4. Specific Emergency Roles for WPCSC Members:

It is expected the committee will allocate specific roles to individual members or others in the community, being mindful of other commitments they may have in the ‘multi-functional atmosphere’ imposed within the small communities. As an example, Woods Point Fire Brigade operational members would have considerable commitment in any fire event and therefore unable to undertake specific ‘relief centre’ roles. Important identified roles that need to be covered by WPCSC members are:

- **Community Communications / Fire Warden** - responsible to monitor local conditions (i.e. during the Fire Danger Period) and relay information to the appropriate agency such as CFA /DELWP Regional Duty Officer or Incident

Controller relative to the level of alert at the time (see Part 5 – Section 1). The role probably sits comfortably with a brigade officer and is currently undertaken by the Brigade 3rd Lieutenant.

- **Relief Centre Warden** – For all incidents, the Local CFA Brigade Captain or his delegate will appoint a warden to open and activate the Community Relief Centre and establish contact with relevant agencies including the MERO and/or MRM. This person may seek additional help or delegate duties depending on the event.
- **NSP Warden** – monitor the NSP and co-ordinate orderly accommodation of people seeking refuge during a fire event. Whilst this role is expected to be utilised very infrequently, once it is functioning it could be demanding. The role may also cover responsibility (at the direction of the Police) for orderly control of traffic movement to and from the refuge and registration of refugees.
- **Phone Tree Warden** – responsible for development, testing and updating of one or more community phone trees and for enabling them to be activated. Copies of the phone tree should be provided to Council and principal response agencies.

Other roles such as **representing communities** and being a **designated driver to transport elderly citizens** to the relief centre or the NSP may be deemed appropriate by the WPCSC and persons delegated. When any roles have been allocated, a list of names and roles should be submitted to the Mansfield Shire MERO so that they can be recorded and included in Councils register of accredited volunteers.

5. Emergency Operation Centres (EOC's):

These are centres normally established by an agency for command/control functions of their own agency. They can be divided into two types:

- **Incident Control Centre (ICC):**
For operations in Woods Point and environs, in most cases an ICC will be located at the Woods Point or Jamieson Police Station. In bigger events they may become an operations or sector command point with the ICC located at Mansfield, Benalla or Wangaratta.
- **Operations Point:**
These *forward control* points are normally located by the control agency to be geographically as near as practicable to the emergency and may be in remote locations and/or used for limited time.

Section 4 Table 8 details a list of identified locations that may be utilised.

6. Staging Areas:

Staging areas are pre-planned locations used in emergency situations for the assembly of personnel and equipment of the Control Agency and support organisations working in the emergency area. Refer to Table 8 following for a summary of pre-planned staging areas with comments.

7. Emergency Relief and Recovery Centres (ERC):

With funding prior to the 2006 fires and later fires of 2009, work has occurred to upgrade the Woods Community Hall:

- Upgrades to the Hall in 2006 as the potential relief/recovery centre for the nearby areas - to the standard for buildings in bush-fire prone areas.
- Install an independent water supply for a rooftop sprinkler system (completed 2006)
- Further renovations in 2010 to upgrade the kitchen, toilets, electrical works etc

Since then, a backup NBN satellite dish was added in 2022 to ensure continued communications during power outages.

Other changes to formalise and improve the fire refuge near the Woods Point Police Station took place in 2006. It is now a designated Neighbourhood Safer Place - Place of Last Resort with additional work completed 2015. A new fire door was added to the front of the Adit in 2015. Refer section xxx on management details for the NSP

Note: Agreements exist for the use of the Community Hall at Woods Point. Agreement also exists for the NSP site use and for vegetation management as Council is not the owner of these sites.

Gaffney's Creek has a new Community Hall built in 2011 with two 22,000 litre water tanks to support firefighting purposes.

During an event where there will be considerable impact on the community and possibly requiring evacuations, the ERC at the Community Hall may be activated. The Community Hall has been renovated to comply with AS3959-1999 "Construction of Buildings in bushfire prone areas" such that it will offer a secure environment for displaced persons during an emergency and in the recovery phase after an emergency.

This will depend on whether the facility is affected by the emergency. The WPCSC will be responsible for the operation of this facility until ERC staff arrive.

The hall will have capacity to offer basic facilities for up to ~ 100 persons Council will coordinate any relief activity with the support of the Department of Health and Human Services or, if the area is isolated, by remote instruction to relevant members of the WPCSC.

Ambulance Victoria volunteers may be requested to assist with the Police role of registration of evacuees and may also provide limited medical support in the absence of full-scale emergency support.

In light of this the Police or Red Cross may be able to arrange additional training in ERAS. A registration kit is available at the Woods Point Police Station.

Refer to Table below for summary of pre-planned Relief and Recovery centres. This is supplementary to the list contained in Appendix D of the MEMP.

8. Emergency Use and Facility Table:

LOCATION	ERC / RECOVERY CENTRE	INCIDENT CONTROL CENTRE	OPERATIONS POINT	ASSEMBLY AREA	STAGING AREA	PHONE	RADIO	FUEL	F/F WATER	REMARKS
Gaffney's Creek (Fire) Shed	Local	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Limited space as Staging Area, water supply, comms, F/F Trailer. Capacity for relief / recovery operations.
Gaffney's Creek 'Cricket pitch'	N	N	Y	N	Y	?	?	N	Y	Staging area for operations close to both ends of town. Public toilet facility and creek access. Phone lines could be established as required.
Woods Point Community RSL Hall	Y Primary	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	Y	Community relief / assembly area. Accommodation and cooking facilities, town water supply. Limited parking.
Woods Point NSP - Mine Adit	N	N	N	N	N			N	Y	For use in extreme event, has emergency water supply, (fire pump & First Aid). Fire rated external / entry door installed 2015
Woods Point Police Station	N	Y Primary	Y	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Has full command post facilities, cooking, shower and water supply, comms, power supply, F/F pump
Woods Point Police residence (ex-school)	N	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Private residence limited accom as required, has cooking facilities, shower, sleeping, comms, water supply, v limited parking
Woods Point Fire Station	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	For responders only, has water supply, small kitchen, phone and radio comms, toilet, parking for appliances only
Woods Point Ambulance Station	Y Limited	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Old Hospital building. Limited accommodation and cooking facilities, water supply, comms, and medical use.
Woods Point Pictorial Museum	Limited	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	Limited accommodation, toilet and cooking facilities
Woods Point Gun Club Reserve	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	Y	Principal helicopter landing area for Woods Point. Largest flat area in or near town suitable for marshalling of emergency service vehicle. water point. Minor cooking, toilet, shwr, accom
Woods Point General Store	N	Y	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Limited food, drinks, microwave cooking, fuels, etc.
Woods Point Hotel	Y	N	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Main accommodation & meals for Strike Teams, fire or other agency crews
Woods Point Morning Star Mine site	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Not 1st choice - access road from township is narrow and tree covered. Site itself is reasonably large and open, not suitable for helicopter.
Woods Point River flats Richmond Retreat	N	N	Y	N	Y	N	N	N	Y	Staging area for operations close to White City. NB Could become isolated from rest of town. Accom/meals/shwr
Matlock Helipad Matlock Hill	N	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	N	Limited use, comms by permission of private operators, private F/F trailer

9. Fire Refuge / Neighbourhood Safer Place:

Council resolved 21 January 2014 to formally un-designate the refuge due to conflict with State Policy. Council has also terminated the earlier MOU with Vic Police once the site was recognised as Crown Land and the use as a NSP has now been gazetted by DELWP for this purpose - see site photos below. The site is designated as a Neighbourhood Safer Place – Place of Last Resort, is subject to annual review by Council and CFA; vegetation management by DELWP within the 50m surround and by Council/the local community along the approach from the Police Station direction.

The Ambulance Victoria volunteers have undertaken to man the NSP on high risk fire days and to set up their medical triage area.

General comment:

- **The individual's decision to go to the (NSP) must be made VERY early,**
- Where a risk exists that the bushfire will arrive before time permits for persons to arrive safely at the NSP, other structures such as the home or Community Hall/Relief Centre building are to be considered – any structure offers some protection,
- First preference should be to leave the area on any elevated high fire risk days.
- Consider making the family home or other similar structure compliant with the Australian Standard AS3959 'Buildings in Bushfire Prone areas', and defendable with ongoing fire safety planning, maintenance and with static water supplies.
- Install a fire bunker (subject to Building Permit requirements).

Operational Issues (Section 5) details the circumstances and recognises that people may need to go to the relief centre or the NSP. These recommendations are based on local knowledge, Forest Fire Danger Index (FFDI), rate of spread, spotting distance, etc. and have been developed after extensive investigation into how these factors impact the unique Woods Point environment.

10. Communications channels:

Mobile phone

A Telstra tower was constructed in 2019 which provides mobile phone service in and around Woods Point. The tower allows for NBN and other services to co-locate.

NBN

Available only by satellite.

UHF radio

Local UHF CB Channel 7 - 8 (Repeater at Matlock Hill for Channel 7)

Note: As a result of the communication issues experienced during the 2006/07 fires, improvement to repeater tower signal servicing the area of Gaffney's Creek and surrounding areas is being investigated, **Repeater has been installed Ch 14.**

Police Woods Point:

- UHF CB channel 7 – 8- 40,
 - Police RMR Channel 24-02 Woods Point 200
 - Police MMR Channel 04-02 (Metro)
- Satellite/Mobile 0417161182
Police Mobile Phone 0437499305

CFA Woods Point:

- Firecomm 523, & UHF CB channel 7 – 8- 40
- Gaffney’s Creek UHF 14

Ambulance Victoria Woods Point:

- To be advised
- To be advised
- UHF CB portable Channel 7-8- 40

Community radio

Radio Mansfield has a repeater at Frenchman’s Gap to service Woods Point and district on the frequency 90.1FM. Radio Mansfield is an accredited emergency broadcaster. ABC radio is also an accredited emergency broadcaster.

Social media and website

There is no Woods Point community website.

Woods Point and Matlock Page on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/91047329279>

Commercial Hotel

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Woods-Point-Commercial-Hotel/1588846288096835>

14. Community Warnings:

The usual way to disseminate community warnings and information is through the Vic Emergency mobile phone app and website.

<https://www.emergency.vic.gov.au/respond/>

However, back-up systems are essential to ensure that some form of warning is available to the Woods Point and district communities during an emergency, even in the situation where electricity and phone services have been disrupted.

The CFA Fire Station Siren will be a planned use for this purpose - see below.

- Radio – Broadcast and UHF

Generally, ABC provides broadcast radio coverage in Woods Point and surrounding district along with Radio Mansfield on 90.1 FM and they can be a valuable resource for dissemination of community broadcasts, warnings and updates that is not necessarily dependent on local power or telephone supplies.

Similarly, most businesses and many vehicles and dwellings have a UHF CB Radio that can monitor a pre-determined channel during an event.

CFA promote that any UHF radios included in their Communications Plan be tested at least once a month.

Advisory brochures, or signs are promoted on approach roads to emphasise the need to monitor the ABC or a particular UHF CB channel in case any warnings are issued.

Most people should be aware of impending weather if they venture into the area and should be monitoring any available media, particularly if there is an indication of a worsening situation.

- Warning Sirens

There are currently two functional CFA alert sirens located in Woods Point township.

- a) at the CFA fire shed and
- b) at the Commercial Hotel.

The sirens are a good first alert to the community and they can also be used for events other than fire. **However, they may fail.**

Sirens alert but do not inform

For other areas in Woods Point township, remote dwellings, the Gaffney's Creek and A1 Mine Settlement and Matlock, reliance needs to be placed on self awareness and an individual's responsibility to stay in contact with peak community representatives and agencies as they will not receive the benefit of the CFA Siren.

A protocol for the use of the sirens has been developed by EMV.
<https://www.emv.vic.gov.au/responsibilities/victorias-warning-system/community-alert-sirens>

The sirens should continue to be tested at a set time. For an actual event requiring community involvement the sirens will be activated by the responding CFA Woods Point brigade member or Police if capacity exists.

- Community Phone Tree

Although the CFA siren may be used as an initial alert within the Woods Point township, the best warning system, indicating need to act, be alert, evacuate or take other specific action, shall be via the Community Phone Tree(s) developed by the WPCSC (see below). Any member of the community can activate the phone tree and should follow the agreed process

The WPCSC develop and maintain one or more contact phone trees with inbuilt redundancy for the use of the communities and emergency service personnel and volunteers in an emergency situation.

Principal and alternate community members should be identified in each area to act as the initial point of contact for the disseminating of any warnings and to also act as the point to feed updates back into the development of the Community Phone Tree.

There is a high degree of absentee ownership of property within the Woods Point area and a high percentage of these properties with buildings probably do not have phones connected. It is desirable to include the mobile phone number of absentee owners into the phone tree to be reasonably sure they have been accounted for/can be contacted.

CFA has its own comms systems as do DELWP. For the Woods Point area the list of phone numbers on this system accounts for nearly half of the permanent inhabitants and may very well be the basis for the next step to disseminate a specific message to the rest of the phone connections in the area.

12. Media Liaison:

The media always play a role in an emergency situation. For this reason, it is essential that the media be kept reliably informed of events in order to ensure accurate reporting. It is the responsibility of the Control Agency in conjunction with Victoria Police to disseminate official emergency warnings and updates. Spokespersons must be appointed by Agencies for this purpose.

13. Evacuation / Warning procedures:

The necessity to warn or evacuate all or part of a community threatened by an emergency can arise from a variety of circumstances, eg: fires, windstorms, floods, and health hazard etc.

Responsibilities:

A recommendation to evacuate will usually be made by the Control Agency in conjunction with the Police. The decision must incorporate the area that is to be evacuated, the route to be followed, the means of transport and the nominated assembly area. NB. Those with a pecuniary interest cannot be required to evacuate but may be denied access to re-enter an area if not deemed to be safe.

Where time permits, the following procedures shall apply to provide adequate, factual information in regard to evacuation requirements/recommendations:

- (a) Provide graduated warnings - where time permits - if the emergency situation is not likely to be contained. The warnings should advise the public to tune into Radio Mansfield 90.1FM or local ABC Radio for regular 'on air' situation updates initiated by the Incident Controller or Police. Where time permits,

these broadcasts will give clear advice to people in the threatened areas and should include requests to check with neighbours to ensure they are also aware of the danger.

- (b) In a situation requiring immediate evacuation the **Phone Tree** (see Part 13 below and Annexure A) should be activated (by the community) along with a door knock of the area (if safe to do so) by available personnel - to locate and transport any old or infirm community members. Whether to go to the Emergency Relief Centre or direct to the NSP or other site identified in an individual's EM Plans will depend on a 'dynamic' assessment of the situation. CFA as an organisation do not activate Phone Trees.
- (c) The Police (including non-local) shall be kept informed of emergency situations affecting the community and is anticipated to inform the appointed member/s of the WPCSC to ensure that the Emergency Relief Centre and/or NSP are available and readied when needed.

Evacuation Assembly Areas:

The only assembly area for the Woods Point region is the Emergency Relief Centre at the Community Hall in Scott Street, Woods Point. Any co-ordinated evacuation shall be to this location unless the Control Agency and Police co-ordinator consider it necessary to organise an early evacuation away from the area via the main Mansfield-Woods Point, Warburton-Woods Point or Walhalla Roads. Pre-plans for evacuation have been developed Mansfield Police.

Registration of Evacuees:

Victoria Police are responsible for the registration of evacuees or displaced people, usually with the assistance of Red Cross and may activate the Register. Find Reunite program <https://www.redcross.org.au/campaigns/about-register-find-reunite>

That assistance will likely be provided for in this area by local Ambulance representatives or volunteers.

15. Community Awareness:

As the attitude of the community to emergencies will have a large effect on its ability to respond to and recover from an event, the WPCSC through its integration with the MEMPC, will have capacity to support and promote prevention, preparedness and promotion of awareness within the community. This support is made more important due to the area's isolation.

Special awareness initiatives such as prominent advisory signs and leaflets shall be aimed at the large transient (tourist/camping) population that is present throughout the area most weekends, but particularly during the summer months when fire risk is greatest. These emphasise a need to maintain some form of communications or monitor radio broadcasts when travelling in isolated areas, and the onus of compliance with fire safety regulations during the Fire Danger Period, especially on Total Fire Ban days. Unattended, inadequately extinguished or illegal campfires are a major concern throughout the Woods Point area.

A system is already in place such that the fire danger period is well advertised throughout the area and Total Fire Ban signs are erected at prominent locations and along the main roads leading into the district. CFA publish the Can I, Can't I leaflet that details what can and can't be done on Total Fire Ban days <https://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/warnings-restrictions/total-fire-bans-and-ratings/can-i-or-cant-i>

DELWP officers will visit campsites during high fire danger periods and Total Fire Ban days to ensure campers are behaving safely.

The WPCSC promote that during the Fire Danger Period a self-registration process similar to that in place for bush walking is utilised at Jamieson, Matlock, Walhalla and Woods Point where remote campers who are staying in the area record their name, vehicle registration, proposed camp location, duration of stay and contact details.

PART 5 – OPERATIONAL ISSUES - FIRE

For a bushfire CFA and DELWP have developed a Cooperative Agreement to maximise the fire suppression effort at fire incidents where resources from both agencies are involved.

In any event where the agencies are involved, and that would likely include any bushfire event in the Woods Point district where private property is threatened by bushfire, a decision will quickly be made as to which agency will be the controlling agency. When the incident response is likely to be protracted, a joint Incident Management Team (IMT) would be established at Mansfield DELWP office.

1. Preparedness

For CFA District 23 in which the Woods Point area is located, CFA and DELWP have agreed on specific levels of Grassland Fire Danger Index (GFDI) and Forest Fire Danger Index (FFDI) to activate their plans. When the FFDI is predicted to be greater than 50 the two fire agencies commence formal coordination of activities.

In determining the triggers to activate various levels of response specific to the Woods Point area, it is obvious that conditions can be substantially different in that area compared to the overall CFA/DELWP region, therefore a more local set of conditions needs to be applied to determine a realistic local trigger for actions.

During the Fire Danger Period and particularly when conditions indicate increased possibility of fire the CFA has daily contact with groups and brigades and builds intelligence based on local observations. Coupled with inter-agency data this allows CFA/DELWP to code each day relative to risk, with a Code Red day being the highest alert. This coding can vary substantially throughout District 23, which extends from flatland cropping country around Yarrawonga to alpine regions on the Great Dividing Range between Woods Point and Matlock.

On a Code Red day, the Rostered Duty Officer may already have assigned and placed crews on a heightened alert level.

The Fire Warden maintains contact with the Matlock Fire Tower, which would probably be the first location to report any fire in the area.

The table below shows an expectation of fire related actions required from WPCSC members.

2. Woods Point Readiness Table:

CODE	FIRE	PERSON	ACTIONS
Code Red, Extreme & Severe	Yes - in area	Community Fire Warden	Ensure Community Relief Centre is open and manned. Activate community warning to ensure everyone has fire plan in place. Prepare for potential or probable influx of campers, visitors into town. Discuss options for immediate evacuation of non-locals with Incident Controller.
		Relief Centre Warden	Establish Community Relief Centre. Ensure communications with Fire Warden, MERC, MEMO & MRM
		NSP Warden	On standby. When advised by OIC Police or Control agency - ensure NSP is accessible. Ensure communications with ICC.
	No	Community Fire Warden	Liaise with CFA/DELWP operations or Incident Controller. Contact Relief Centre Warden and NSP Warden to ensure they are ready to act if needed.
Very High		Community Fire Warden	Undertake immediate check of local indicators and availability of others with nominated roles to perform tasks. Liaise with CFA/DELWP operations to fine tune/upgrade current alert if necessary.
High		Community Fire Warden	On standby.
Low		Community Fire Warden	Routine

3. Triggers

During the Fire Danger Period if conditions are experienced as highlighted and a fire starts or advances within nine (9) kilometres of Woods Point there could be significant ember attack on the township area. Woods Point is located in a basin at the headwaters of the Goulburn River and is surrounded by steep sided valleys and watersheds running in various directions that, in a fire, compound the potential rate of spread and spotting distance.

Any fire occurring on a day when the FFDI is 50 or greater, burning within nine (9) kilometres radius of Woods Point or likely to approach other communities, shall be the trigger for community members to activate their fire plans. At the same time the Woods Point Emergency Relief Centre shall be opened following contact from the Incident Control Agency and be readied to accept evacuees if required. Similar scenarios need to be established for Gaffney’s Creek and the area surrounding Woods Point.

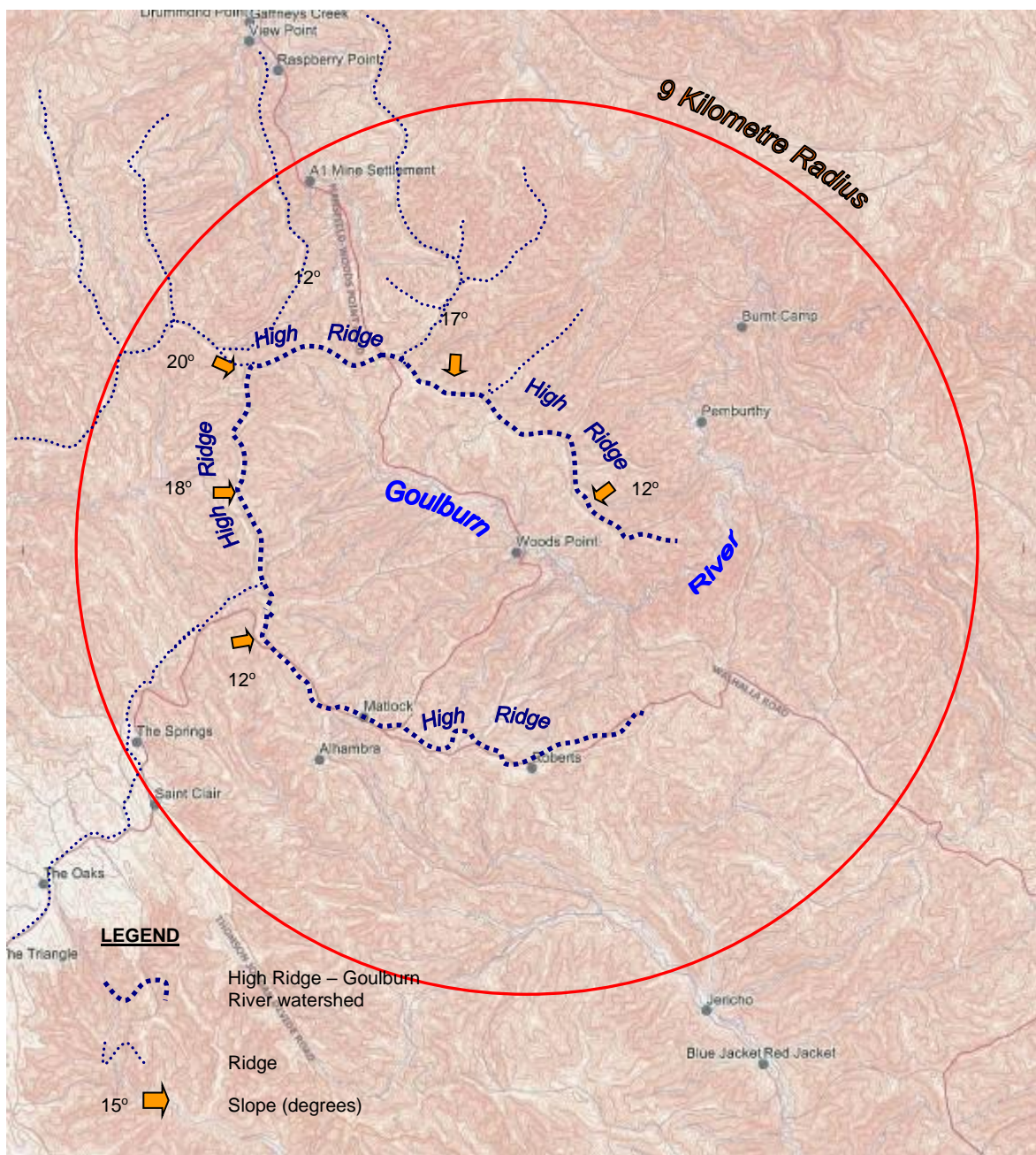
Putting the above in perspective both the A1 Mine Settlement and the DELWP airstrip at St Clair are very close to nine kilometres in a straight line from Woods Point (see Figure 1 below). Whilst the terrain differs, a similar buffer of perhaps nine (9) kilometres should be applied to the outlying communities of Gaffney’s Creek, A1 Mine Settlement and Matlock to prompt a readiness to respond/ defend or a move to the Woods Point Emergency Relief Centre, however **circumstances**

may prevent that option if connecting roads are in doubt or the fire is closer or between Woods Point and those communities.

Individuals' pre-planning is necessary.

The CFA policy and advice in Annexure F provides good information, but the best advice if people have any doubts is to leave early if still safe, and that may mean even before a fire starts if local indicators are consistent with the Code Red and Extreme fire danger ratings – see below and next page.

Figure 1. Topographic map of Woods Point and surrounds



4. Individual action in time of emergency

CFA Advice to the community before and during bushfire is attached as Annexure F and should be read as the main guide for individual action in time of emergency. However, given the unique Woods Point situation and the fact that a lot of the permanent population will have accepted pre- assigned roles during an emergency, the following pointers are included for further guidance:

1. Safety is always the first priority followed by pre-planning.
2. During the Fire Danger Period become pro-active and listen to radio (ABC 774-AM), Radio Mansfield 90.1 FM, UHF Radio or TV broadcasts and become aware of the next day's weather, particularly fire weather warnings and declared total fire ban days. Other incidents can occur at any time of the year so be mindful of gale warnings, low level snow forecasts, etc.
3. Initiate your own fire plan when it becomes obvious that conditions may lead to a fire occurring. Don't wait to be told if the indications are obvious.
4. Make it a priority to know exactly what your role will be during a fire or other emergency in the Woods Point area. Volunteer in advance.
5. Satisfy yourself you know how long it will take to get from your home or workplace to the Woods Point Emergency Relief Centre or the designated Neighbourhood Safer Place - Place of Last Resort (NSP)
6. When prompted by the phone tree ensure you fulfil your role in passing on the message to your nominated group in the tree and if there is no response after multiple attempts advise the Community Fire Warden. Then move to notify the next parties on the Phone tree. If you observe an emergency, activate the phone tree.
7. If in the Woods Point township, know the siren warning protocol:
 - 10:00am on alternate Sundays for test.
 - Continuous blast any time for alert (CFA & RAV personnel will be paged).**Commence monitoring ABC radio or Radio Mansfield at this time.**
8. If you have no particular emergency management role and you decide to stay and protect your residence you must be aware of the consequences of changing your mind in the "heat of the moment". Every known household in the Woods Point area has been issued the CFA brochure '**Your Guide to Property Preparation**'. Only stay if you have a Plan and are entirely satisfied you can handle any situation.
9. Keep in contact with your neighbours in the lead up to an emergency to ensure they are at least as aware as you are.

PART 6 – REFERENCES

The following documents, publications and reports have been taken into account during compilation of this plan:

Australian Standard AS3959-2018 “Construction of Buildings in Bushfire Prone Areas”

CFA Act 1958

CFA publication “Can I or Can’t I”

CFA publication Your Guide to Preparing Your Property

<https://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/plan-prepare/how-to-prepare-your-property>

CFA & State Policy – Advice to the community before and during bushfire

DELWP– Hume Strategic Bushfire Management Plan

DELWP – Joint Fire Management Plan

Emergency Management Act 1986 and 2013

Mansfield Shire Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP)

VicPOL – Division 4 (Upper Goulburn) Emergency Response Plan

Victorian Planning Provisions

Wildfire Management Overlay Applicants Kit

PART 7 – ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Council acknowledges the assistance provided in the preparation and ongoing revision of this document and for the works undertaken within the Woods Point township since the process began.

A. Federal Attorney Generals Department & EMA for project funding:

- the Community Safety Plan,
- works at the RSL Hall to create a safe community relief / recovery centre and
- works at the previously designated Fire Refuge now a NSP

B. CFA District 23

for funding and resource allocation especially Neil Ottaway for assistance with creation of this Plan & Mark Williams for advice. Paul Horton for ongoing commitment (review commenced 2013)

C. DELWP Mansfield

Senior Fire Management Officer David Wells, Lucas Russell & crews.

D. Vic Police Ken Dwight Station Commander Woods Point Police Station.

E. OESC Robyn Betts Manager, Research Projects Unit.

F. Woods Point Community members

Initial Steering Committee Margaret Martyn, Bill Smithett & Fran Scott

Woods Point Brigade Members - esp, Max Towe & Tony Rugys

Community Hall Committee Ron Martyn & Max Towe

Morning Star Mine, Ray Wright and team for assistance with former fire refuge improvements

– Ongoing Committee involvement

To all those that have provided comment and discussion with the earlier versions and this later version, Thank you all for your input.

Kevin Murphy

Municipal Emergency Resources Officer & Municipal Fire Prevention Officer

ANNEXURE A Updated March 2021

Woods Point Area - Telephone Directory (and basis for Telephone Tree).

Note Users & participants must be clear that:

- a. development and maintenance of the telephone tree, currency of telephone numbers and covering gaps created by absentee members is the responsibility of members of the tree
- b. Council and the CFA will not control or manage the tree – this must be community driven
- c. Response agencies make no commitment to contact the tree during emergencies;
- d. there are not guarantees that the tree will function in an emergency;
- e. no participant has a personal responsibility for any other person on the list
- f. messages can vary as they get distributed and meaning may change.
- g. **There may be benefit in creating location specific components of the phone tree**

Police/Fire/Ambulance	000	Additional Info.
Police Station Woods Point	57778235	LS/C Ken DWIGHT
Ambulance Woods Point	57778216	Station Officer Gayle TOWE
CFA Fire Station Woods Point	57778236	Volunteer station District 23 Wangaratta RDO 57202300
Police Station Jamieson	57770505	LS/C George CRAWFORD
Police Station Mansfield	57752555	MERC S/Sgt CARDIN
Health Centre Woods Point	57778231	Nurse Jane DWYER (Wed only)

DELWP Tower	Fire Tower Mt. Matlock	57778277	++ Radios	
A1 Mine		57778122		Kirrily Pay
	SPRAGG Nigel, Michelle	57778267		
	LANE Dave Manager	57778126 57778122		C/O A1 MINE

Note: This information is for emergency / preparedness only and shall not be used, distributed or disclosed for any other purpose.

Location Based & A-Z Listing (not as 'up-to-date').

Locations order St Clair
 Woods Point
 Matlock
 Gaffney's Creek

Location Based - see also A-Z Listing (not as 'up-to-date').

Address	Name	1st Phone	Alternate Contact	Additional Info.
	St Clair			
2	BEVINGTON Sandra	57778156	UHF 7	Ambulance

Woods Point				
3	LIDDEL Gail,	0488 222 569		
20	DWIGHT Ken, Sue	57778233/35	0447500411 0407519776	Police, CFA,SES
17	KOZMA Maria	57778204		
28	BEVINGTON, Sandra	57778156		PO/Store
4	MARTYN Margaret	0427778269		
5	McDONALD Don, Lisa	0499892510		CFA
6	WARD, Terry	0427634455		CFA
	MORNING STAR MINE	57778268		
7	Richmond Retreat Gap	57778285		
8	RUGYS Tony,	57778245		CFA/Ambo
9	SCHOENUER Hans, Erica	57778256		
10	SCOTT Fran, Emily	57778224		CFA, Ambo
11	SCOTT Jamie	57778222		CFA
14	STUDD Don	57778272		
12	BUSHARD, Karl	0484089021		CFA
2	TOWE Max, Gayle	0475134049		CFA, Ambo
13	WOODS Cameron, Kiriliy	57778266	0439012090	
P/T Woods Point	WRIGHT Ray	57778238		C/O A1 MINE
P/T Woods Point	BERNS Ros, Harry	57778255		CFA
P/T Woods Point	BEVINGTON, Steve	57778228		
P/T Woods Point	BEVINGTON Alan, Irene	57778208		
P/T Woods Point		57778289		CFA
P/T Woods Point	DILLON Mick, Marie	57778239		
P/T Woods Point	ESLER Murray	57778234		
P/T Woods Point	FAIRWEATHER Mark, Andrea	57778226		
P/T Woods Point		57778263		
P/T Woods Point	METCALF Linton	57778242	0421700313	
P/T Woods Point	NORMAN Pam, CHERRY Greg	0417350978	0408313495	
P/T Woods Point	NORTON Jason	57778298		CFA
	SCRAGG Arthur, Barb	57778213		
P/T Matlock	Matlock			
P/T Matlock	CRIBBES Tim	57778100		Fire Tower
P/T Matlock	McCULLOCH Ian, Marlene	57778214		
P/T Matlock	MIFSUD Fr Michael	0408728506		Church
22	OSTRY Peter	57778260		
				Matlock house

Address	Name	1st Phone	Alternate Contact	Additional Info.
	Gaffney's			
23	CISZEWSKI Peter	57778200		
24	LUKE Peter	57778203		CFA
25				
26		57778240		CFA
		57778249		
	WARD Max	0456 952 870		CFA

A-Z Listing (not as 'up-to-date').

1	<i>Updated list for 2021</i>								
2									
3	(contact)			(contact)			(contact)		
4	MARTYN, Margaret.	427778269	5777 8269	Sandra BEVINGTON.	0488 313 593	57778156	WOODS, Kirrily/Cameron..	0439 012 090	57778266
5	BEVINGTON, Sandra.	0488 313 595	5777 8254	CROMBIE, Shane	0408 320 761		BERNS, Harry/Ros.		5777 8255
6	BOURKE, Des.		5777 8228	COLLIER, Rob	0418 786 567		BEVINGTON, Alan/Irene.		5777 8208
7	CRIBBES, Tim.		5777 8100	DILLON's			CISZEWSKI, Peter.		5777 8200
8	LEAH, Graham		5777 8288	DICK, Jason	0474 351 293		COLIINS, Reece	0407 312 195	5777 0563
9	DWIGHT, Sue/Ken.	0447 500 411	5777 8233	BRODERICK, Jodie, JB	0407 146 799	5777 8188	ESLER, Murray.		
10	A1 MINE		5777 8122	HUGHES,		5777 8242	McDONALD, John	0432 024 889	
11	KOZMA, Maria.		5777 8204	JENKIN, Bronson		5777 8247	OLDROYD, Andrew	0439 884 311	
12	LUKE, Peter.		5777 8203	MCCULLOCH, Ian/Marlene.		5777 8214	GEERLING, Benj	0422 639 026	
13	CHERRY, Greg/Pam	0417 350 978	0408 313 495	MCDONALD, Don/Lisa.	0499 892 510		LANE, David.		5777 8186
14	MIFSUD, FR. Michael.	408728506		METCALF, Linton.	0421 700 313	5777 8242	MERLO, Andrew/Jan.	0418 325 087	5777 8112
15	OSTREY, Peter.		5777 8260	MORNING STAR MINE.		5777 8268	GREEN, Glen	0409 722 665	
16	OWEN, Russell		5275 2055	BURDON, Luke & Carley	408384027	5777 8224	PROTHERO,		5777 8285
17	NARELLE's House		57778253	WARD, Terry and Robyn	0427 634 455		SCOTT, Fran/Emily		5777 8222
18	RUGYS, Tony.			SCHOENAUER, Hans/Erika.		5777 8256	SLIGO HOUSE		5777 8240
19	BERNS, Wayne	0438 025 945	5777 8150	COWAN, Glenn, Anne	0488 558 989		SPRAGG, Nigel/Michelle.		5777 8267
20	KONYN, John/Loki.	0402 495 141		PROTHERO, Craig	0417 587 752		STUDD, Don.		5777 8272
21	BURSHARD, Karl.	0484 089 021		LIDDEL, Gail, Craig	0488 222 569		HASSARD, John	0429 351 149	
22	SIMMONS, Kevin,Helen	0419 858 359	5777 8165	CROUCHER, Darren	0429 980 188		TOIFL, Chris	0438 770 513	
23	WARD, Max.		0456 952 870	WEBB, Brendan	0419 340 351		TOWE, Max/Gayle.	0475 134 049	
25	POLICE, Ken Dwight.		5777 8235						
26	FIRE TOWER.		5777 8277	In an event of no phones working, residents to respond to continuous fire siren.					
27	HEALTH CENTRE		5777 8231	Activate your fire plan or attend the fire Adit Refuge behind the Police Station					
28	AMBULANCE STATION		5777 8217	GENERAL STORE,		5777 8156	SES	132500	
29	CFA SHED	0418 325 087	5777 8236	COMMERCIAL HOTEL		5777 8224	DELWP	5733 1200	
30	POLICE, Jamieson		5777 0505	GAP GETAWAY,		5777 8223	Bush Fire Enquiry Line	1800 240 677	
31	POLICE, Mansfield		5775 2555				Warden of the Adit	0423 754 441	Fran SCOTT
32									

ANNEXURE B

CFA – Advice to the community before and during bushfire**Definitions*****Community development***

In the context of this policy, community development is the process of building self-reliant communities who are able to recognize and understand risk and are prepared to protect themselves and their property from the threat of bushfire across a range of risk environments.

Community warning system

A community warning system is a system for alerting community when there is a bushfire in the area.

Private equipment see cfa.vic.gov.au/plan-prepare/privatefire-fighting-equip

“Private equipment” means equipment or machinery (including tankers) owned or operated by a private individual or body that may be used to help contain, suppress or reduce the effects of a fire. It does not include equipment or machinery used for the private defense of domestic dwellings in a bushfire; or the equipment or machinery contracted by the fire control agency.

Defendable space

Defendable space is an area surrounding a building that is free of (or has significantly reduced) continuous combustible vegetation or other fuels. Having a defendable space limits the ability of a moving fire to spread directly to a building through flame contact or radiant heat.

Defendable space provides a relatively safe area from which residents and fire fighters can control spark and ember attack. A number of factors including design, materials and construction, siting and vegetation type influence the amount of defendable space required for a house.

Objective

The objective of this document is to establish position on CFA community safety messages in order to:

Provide guidance to all CFA personnel who interact with the community through:

- Community development programs
 - Operational response activities
 - Community engagement activities in relation to bushfire risk.
 - Implementation of planning and building regulatory control for bushfire risk mitigation
-

Statement

The following Statement has a foundation based on sound principles of research and evaluation.

Options for community response during bushfire

CFA places a strong emphasis on disseminating key safety messages to the community to ensure that residents are aware of the risks associated with bushfire and have the capacity to make appropriate decisions in regard to personal survival and household protection.

Research demonstrates that the two safest options for residents living in high bushfire risk areas are to:

- Stay and actively defend a well-prepared home, or
- Leave the area before threatened and traveling on the roads becomes hazardous

Research shows that the great majority of houses will survive the passage of a fire front if they are well prepared and actively defended by suitably equipped residents. These houses provide safe refuge for residents during the passage of the fire front.

Residents are advised that it is a safe and worthwhile option to stay and defend their home during a bushfire if:

- They are physically able and mentally prepared to defend their home and
- They have a well-prepared home with adequate defensible space.

Residents are advised to leave the area well before the fire arrives if:

- They do not have the physical capacity and psychological readiness to actively defend their house and will not be supported by others in the household
- The house is likely to be subject to excessive amounts of radiant heat and direct flame contact due to extreme fuel loads touching or very close to the house.

Residents should be made aware that for a range of reasons CFA is not able to provide assistance to every house during a major bushfire. CFA's first priority is the safety of fire fighters followed by community and asset protection. The Incident Management Team will direct available resources in accordance with CFA priorities, with consideration of fire fighter safety and other factors during the incident.

Firefighting with private equipment

CFA expects that those members of the community who decide to undertake fire-fighting activities using private equipment will comply with the requirements of CFA guidelines.

Successful defense

The likelihood that a house can be successfully defended and provide safe refuge during a bushfire is influenced by the presence of adequate defensible space, which is needed:

- to limit a moving fire from spreading directly to the building through flame contact and radiant heat, and
- to provide a relatively safe area from which residents can control sparks and embers.

A range of factors including house design, construction and maintenance, vegetation management and fire intensity will influence the likelihood a house can be successfully defended. These factors may vary significantly throughout the fire season or on any given day. There is no 'guarantees'.

The likelihood that a house will survive will also depend on the capacity of residents to undertake appropriate response activities during the fire.

Due to the complexity and transient nature of factors influencing house survival, it is difficult for even technical experts to make a categorical assessment of the likelihood of a particular house to survive a range of potential bushfire scenarios. CFA personnel are therefore unable to make definitive statements about whether a house would be defensible or non-defensible during a fire season.

CFA personnel may identify houses that would have a limited chance of surviving a high intensity fire, regardless of potential efforts to actively defend the house. While it is not possible to make a categorical assessment of the viability of these houses, CFA personnel can provide residents with access to advice on how to increase household preparedness in consideration of available tools such as the:

- "Building in Bushfire Management Overlay, Applicants Kit" and
- Australian Standard (AS 3959) "Construction of Buildings in Bushfire Prone Areas".

CFA will play a lead role in developing the capacity of residents to evaluate the bushfire risk to their property and to make appropriate decisions in response to the threat of bushfire.

Seeking temporary shelter during a bushfire

CFA recognizes that not all people caught in a bushfire risk situation will have the opportunity to remain with a well-prepared home. CFA advises these residents to seek temporary shelter in the

nearest building or structure able to provide a shield from radiant heat during the passage of the fire front.

CFA advises residents that temporary shelter may be found inside the home or in alternative structures such as neighboring houses, Formal and informal fire refuges neighborhood safer places or in municipal assembly areas. Even structures that are not well prepared may provide enough shelter to shield people from radiant heat during the actual passage of the fire front.

Where people are caught driving in a bushfire situation and no fixed structures are available, CFA recommends that people shelter inside their car. When selecting a place of refuge, residents are advised to avoid being caught out on the road during a bushfire.

Evacuation

The Emergency Management Act (1986) and the Country Fire Authority Act (1958) gives residents the right to stay with their homes during a bushfire. CFA and other emergency service personnel do not have the authority to order the removal of a person from a property if they have pecuniary interest in the relevant land, building or goods within it.

CFA messages in relation to evacuation during bushfire are:

- The decision to leave the area or stay with their property during a bushfire is the responsibility of the individuals concerned and should be made well before the expected arrival of the fire front. The available research suggests that late evacuation by residents is a dangerous option.
- If a resident is away from home at the time of the fire they can legally be prevented from entering the fire area and can be prevented from returning to their residence.
- Victoria Police manages road access in and out of the fire area. While safety is the overriding concern every effort should be made to allow residents and landholders to reach their properties before the fire impacts and as soon as possible after the fire has passed.
- CFA does not encourage any resident to be traveling on the roads when there is a bushfire in the area.

Dissemination tools

Community Development Bushfire Programs

CFA personnel deliver bushfire community development programs before and during summer to promote key safety messages to residents. The objective of these programs is to increase the capacity of the community so that residents are prepared for bushfire and are able to respond appropriately.

While CFA endeavors to provide all residents of high risk areas with the opportunity to participate in bushfire preparedness programs, CFA recognizes that a proportion of residents living in areas of high bushfire risk will chose not to attend the bushfire preparedness programs offered in their area.

Information Flow

Victoria Police have responsibility to ensure that due consideration has been given to the issuance of community warnings for bushfire and control the Standard Emergency Warning Signal (SEWS) upon advice from the combat agency.

During a significant bushfire incident CFA will activate an Information Unit to deliver accurate and timely threat messages to the communities affected by a bushfire. These messages have been developed to support and encourage appropriate residential response by the communities at risk. The threat messages are significantly more detailed than a simple alerting system as they aim to provide information to enable people to make appropriate decisions and respond to threat more safely.

The Information Unit will utilize a range of pre-planned dissemination tools to support the delivery of information to the community during an incident. These tools include state and local media, call

centers, websites, community displays as well as interactive tools such as door knocks and community meetings.

During an incident the key means of disseminating threat messages to the public include:

- ABC state-wide and regional radio
- Victorian Bushfire Information Line
- The CFA public website (www.cfa.vic.gov.au)

CFA recognizes that rapid onset fires may affect parts of the community before information can be effectively disseminated.

In remote rural areas where radio and Internet access is limited other means of dissemination need to be considered.

Community Warning Systems

While an alerting system may alert people to an incident it does not provide the range of important information required by a community during a bushfire. An alerting system can only communicate a simple warning message that may or may not be interpreted by the community in a way that enhances their safety.

CFA recognizes that some communities will decide to establish a local warning system. For some this will result in an alerting system. CFA does not guarantee to provide, maintain or activate community alerting systems.

CFA will support communities with the provision of technical risk information and access to a range of community development programs, to ensure that any community warning system is used as part of a comprehensive risk reduction strategy. Community warning systems should be used in conjunction with other communication tools such as ABC radio, the Victorian Bushfire Information Line and the CFA public website (www.cfa.vic.gov.au).

ANNEXURE C

Abbreviations within this Document

AV	Ambulance Victoria
BOM	Bureau of Meteorology
CFA	Country Fire Authority
DFFH	Department of Families, Fairness and Housing
DELWP	Department of Environment, Land, Water & Planning
Council	Mansfield Shire Council
EMV	Emergency Management Victoria
EOC	Emergency Operations Centre
ESLO	Emergency Services Liaison Officer
GBCMA	Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority
GVW	Goulburn Valley Water
ICC	Incident Control Centre
IMT	Incident Management Team
MECC	Municipal Emergency Coordination Centre
MEMPC	Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee
MEMP	Municipal Emergency Management Plan
MERC	Municipal Emergency Response Coordinator
MEMO	Municipal Emergency Management Officer
MRM	Municipal Recovery Manager
NSP	Neighbourhood Safer Place - Place of Last Resort (designated)
OIC	Officer in Charge
RAR	Road Accident Rescue
RERC	Regional Emergency Response Coordinator
S&R	Search and Rescue
The Plan	Woods Point and Surrounding District Community Safety Plan
VicPOL	Victoria Police
VicSES	Victorian State Emergency Service
WPCSC	Woods Point (and Surrounding District) Community Safety Committee
WPCSP	Woods Point (and Surrounding District) Community Safety Plan

NSP – Neighbourhood Safer Place

ANNEXURE D

Woods Point and District Community Safety Committee

FIRE EMERGENCY SHEET

1. Once the fire alarm is activated C.F.A. members are required to attend the station to fight a fire.

If the alarm continues, townspeople are advised to activate their fire plan, or make their way to the adit. This is situated behind the police station and is a designated NSP. Access is not available from Kenny's Lane.

Those intending to use the adit are advised to bring a torch.

If the alarm continues to ring delegates will contact all those listed on the updated phone tree.

2. Due to the suddenness and severity of recent fires the Community Hall will no longer be used as a marshalling area. The hall will continue to be used as a Recovery and Relief Centre - as long as it still stands.
3. While fires remain a threat; daily updates of fire activity will be made by U.H.F radio channel 7 at 18.30hrs. Gaffney's Creek residents use channel 14 for their communications. Gaffney's Creek's new assembly area, phone number is 5777 8142.

ANNEXURE E

Action Plan by the Woods Point Community requiring VicSES Response

1. Flood/Storm/Earthquake

Individual households if requiring assistance due to a flood or storm event ring 132 500.

On receiving multiple calls for assistance via 132 500 the Mansfield SES Unit shall notify the NE Regional Duty Officer who shall in turn contact the Woods Point Local Emergency Co-ordinator (nominally the OIC Woods Point Police Station) whose job it is then to seek information regarding the extent of damage and to determine the level of assistance required.

Liaison between the NE Duty Officer and Woods Point Local Emergency Co-ordinator shall then determine the level of response required. It will then be the responsibility of the NE Duty Officer to co-ordinate the response into Woods Point area after consultation with Mansfield SES Unit Controller.

2. Road Accident Rescue (RAR)

Normal State RAR arrangements should be followed. That is notification to 000 detailing the location of the incident and any injuries.

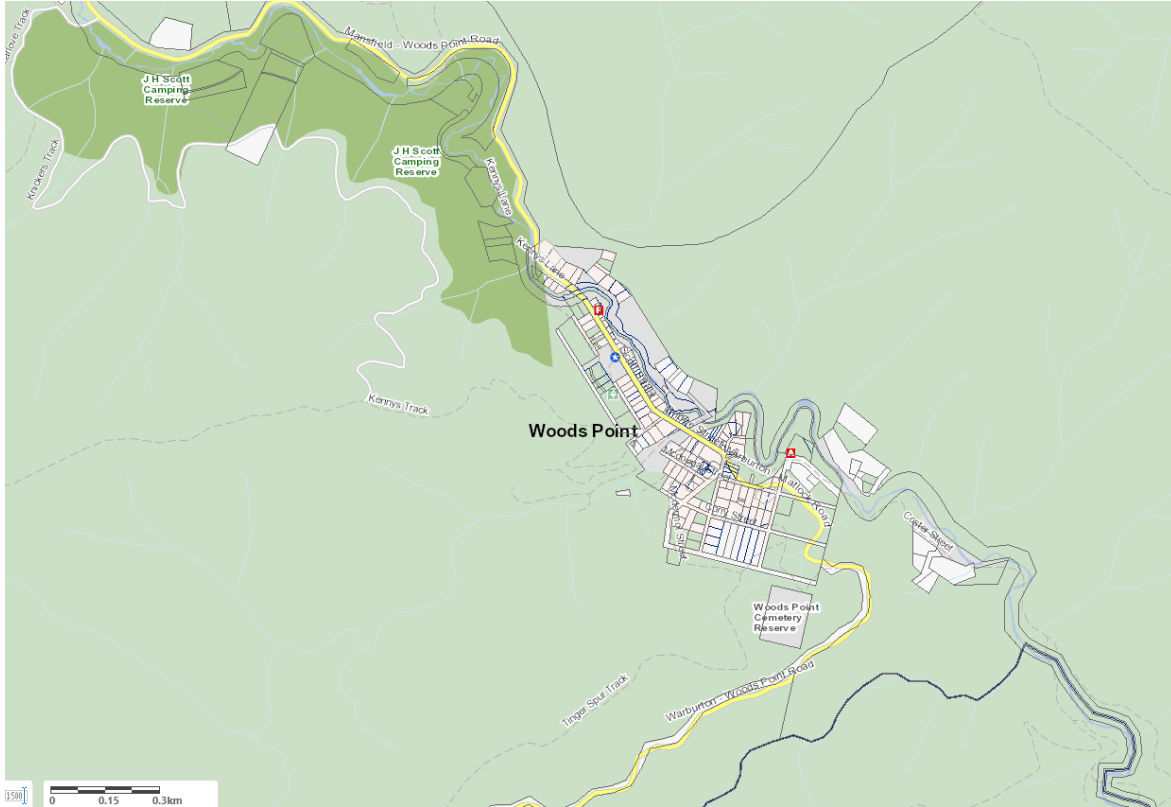
ANNEXURE F

Woods Point Town Plan Attachment

Coordinates from Google maps

-37.5690, 146.2540

<https://www.google.com/maps/@-37.571108,146.2565743,17z>





ANNEXURE G

Map of Woods Point Area – generally reflecting the area within Mansfield Shire covered by this plan. Attachment

(Whilst the area is not formally described and thus able to be plotted accurately on a map, the Assignment Area for the Woods Point Rural Fire Brigade is generally acknowledged as covering the same area and the relevant CFA map is attached herewith. The bulk of the land within the area is controlled by DELWP where they are the principal fire management authority. CFA is responsible for fire management on all areas of freehold/private land. Both authorities work closely together in any event that may impact on the area.)

