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**Your Ref:** D16/4085  
**Our Ref:** MP06\_250 MOD9  
**Date:** 7<sup>th</sup> March 2017

**Attn:** Jason Maslen  
NSW Rural Fire Service  
Planning and Environment Services (East)  
42 Lamb Street  
GLENDENNING NSW 2761

**Via:** email

Dear Jason

**RE: APPLICATION FOR MODIFICATION MP06\_MOD9 – SEASIDE BOULEVARD FERN BAY**

I refer to your letter dated 12<sup>th</sup> December 2016 providing comments in relation to the above application to modify an approval.

It is noted the NSW RFS has reviewed and does not support proposed modification 3, *to change a proposed secondary public road access to an emergency only access road.*

In accordance with Planning for Bushfire Protection 2006 (PBP 2006) the proposed modification satisfies the performance criteria of section 4.1.3 (2) as the secondary access will provide safe operational access during a bushfire for firefighters during a bushfire and for evacuating residents. The Intent of measures for property access does not require a second access to be provided at all times; it is clearly stated that safe access to/from the public road system is to be provided during a bushfire.

The proposed modification involves construction of a two lane emergency access road connecting the northern portion of Seaside Boulevard (Stage 14) to Nelson Bay Road. The road is to be gated and provides two way access allowing the evacuation of residents and safe operational access for emergency services during a bushfire. Similar to all roads within the Seaside Village, the emergency access road will be dedicated to Council.

The proposed road satisfies the performance criteria as listed by PBP 2006 (for Public Roads), achieving the access intent of measures in the following areas:

- The proposed road is to be a two-wheel drive all weather road, providing fire fighters with safe access to structures;
- The proposed road will be 8m wide for the entire length and designed in accordance with the local council (Port Stephens) engineering specifications for local roads;

- The proposed access is less than 200m long (measured from the end of Stage 14 – Seaside Boulevard to the Nelson Bay Road reserve);
- The proposed road is two-way and compliant with the PBP 2006 acceptable solution construction requirements;
- The capacity of the proposed road surface is sufficient to carry fully loaded firefighting vehicles alongside retreating residents;
- The proposed road will be clearly signposted with emergency service personnel (e.g. NSW Rural Fire Service, NSW Fire and Rescue or NSW Police) managing any emergency evacuation traffic control of retreating residents exiting the residential area;
- Access to the reticulated water supply (minimum 2 hydrants along access road) will be clear and unobstructed; and
- The threat of obstruction is minimised as the proposed road is to be gated with no parking permitted at any time.

Furthermore, all vegetation up to 20m on either side of access road within Seaside Village has been cleared and will be maintained in perpetuity as an inner protection area. **Plates 1-4** show the location of the existing formed access road and the extent of vegetation clearing either side. The existing road will be widened to 8m and sealed to ensure continued all-weather access.

The proposed modification seeks to limit the use of the road for emergency situations only, which remains in accordance with the PBP 2006. Accordingly, we support the modification and are of the opinion that during emergency situations, the access road will provide safe operational access for emergency service personnel while residents are evacuating. It is acknowledged that as the gates can only be unlocked by authorised persons; namely emergency service personnel, all vehicles using the access road will do so under the control of emergency services; including when egressing onto Nelson Bay Road. It is likely that all traffic in the local area will be directed away from the bushfire source; and given the approved road was restricted to left in/ left out; it is considered safer for vehicles to enter onto Nelson Bay Road in either direction only under the control of emergency services.

A Bushfire Emergency Management Plan (BEMP) has been prepared outlining the evacuation procedures and route options; including the secondary emergency access. The BEMP details when the secondary access shall be used; being under the direction of emergency services.

Further to demonstrating the proposed modification satisfies the performance criteria of PBP 2006, it is recommended Condition E13 of the Project Approval (MP06\_0250) be

modified to require the inclusion of a BEMP with the Community Management Statement (CMS). Should the BEMP be included in the CMS, it will be implemented by the Community Association and all residents will be made aware and provided with a copy.

We trust this information is sufficient for your purposes, however should you require any further details or clarification, please do not hesitate to contact the writer by telephone.

Yours sincerely

**RPS**



Stuart Greville  
Senior Environmental Planner  
Accredited Bushfire Practitioner (BPAD 26202)



cc: Michael Radovnikovic, Rawson Communities  
Chad Beecham, Monteath and Powys



**Plate 1: Existing formed access road looking east**





**Plate 2: Existing formed access road looking west towards Nelson Bay Road**



**Plate 3: Existing access road looking north west from Stage 14**



**Plate 4: Existing access road looking south east towards Stage 14**