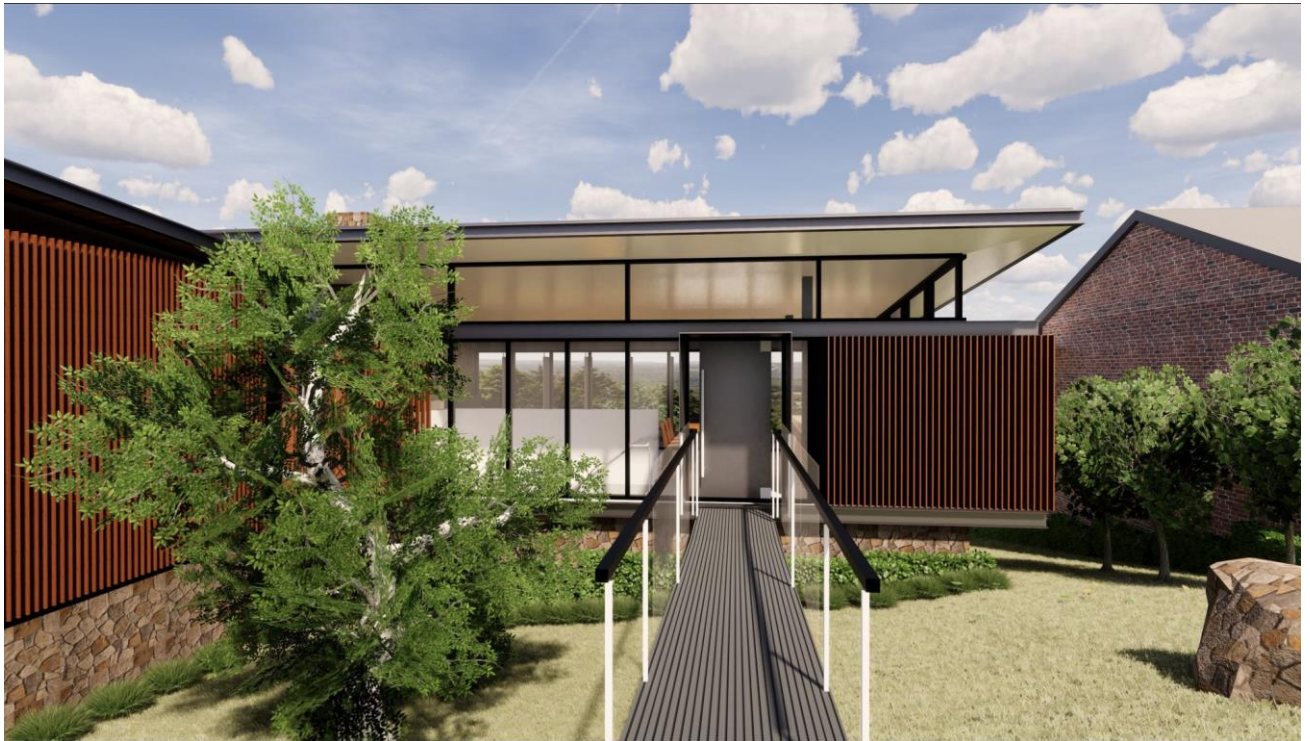


Ten Steps to Building in a Bushfire area



“The design phase is crucial to control your budget and ensure bushfire legislation compliance.”



BUSHFIRE APPROPRIATE DESIGN STEPS

STEP 1 - Engage a certified Bushfire Planning & Design Practitioner.

Did you know that a level 3 practitioner is the best qualified person to assess your property and provide design guidance if you live in a BAL-40 and BAL-Flame zone area?

- o Find a certified Bushfire consultant here:

Fire Protection Association Australia <http://www.fpa.com.au/bpad.aspx>

STEP 2 – Research your Building Designer or Architect for experience in designing in bush fire zones.

Ask “How many houses have you designed and were built in bushfire prone areas?”

- o Find a local building designer here:

Building Designers Association of Australia

<https://findadesigner.com.au/>

STEP 3 – Building Sustainably means Building to Passive House standards.

Often people are scared to design and build a passive house as they think it will be more expensive. It depends on what you are comparing to. If you compared prices to a mass builder it is more expensive but if you want a house that is thermally comfortable and healthy to live in then a Passive house is no more expensive. You will be surprised that it is often more economical to build sustainably as the initial construction cost soon pales into insignificance to the decades of maintenance, cost of running and disposal costs afterwards.

If you engage an architect or building designer experienced in passive house design you will be able to control your initial construction costs, reduce your house’s ongoing maintenance and running costs and contribute towards a better future.

Ask your designer “How can I economically design a passive house ?”

- o Learn more about reducing your ongoing costs <https://www.yourhome.gov.au/housing/affordability>
- o Learn more about the additional construction costs for each BAL rating here: <https://www.aami.com.au/home-insurance/bushfire-prevention.html>

STEP 4 – Request a section 10.7 certificate from your local council.

This document can often be found with your title deed documents.

It will give you detailed requirements including if your property is zoned bushfire and to see if you can apply for a Complying Development (CDC) or a Development Application (DA).

STEP 5- Design according to the codes.

An experienced building designer or architect will know the codes.

They should know the difference between AS 3959, the local DCP controls and LEP planning law.

Ask them to explain these rules to you. Then work with them and your certified bushfire consultant to design your house according to the relevant planning rules.

Learn more by calling your local council and asking them what rules apply to your property.



STEP 6 – Interview builders with bushfire appropriate experience.

Engage the builder that has a reputation among previous clients and suppliers as someone who values a good relationship. They will provide you with accurate estimates before submitting the drawings for DA or CDC approval. Beware of builders who are known for dodgy pricing tactics, swapping out for inferior products or that don't provide an itemised estimate.

Ask them:

- Should I consider a blower door test to confirm the quality of my build?
- What measures do your insulation installers take to ensure full coverage and inspection for me before it is covered up?
- Do you buy locally to reduce carbon footprint of my build?

STEP 7 – Submit your plans to your local council or PCA.

Your building designer or architect will be able to advise you whether you need to go through council or a PCA.

During the DA assessment Council and possibly the RFS will assess the design and give feedback as required.

STEP 8 – Prepare construction drawings.

If you had to go through the Council for planning approval you now need to work with your building designer or architect to complete your house plans to get legal permission to build. This is called a construction certificate. Otherwise, if you have applied for a CDC once it is approved your builder can start construction.

STEP 9 – Construction implementation phase.

Time to bring to life the bushfire appropriate design with your trusted builder and designer.

STEP 10 – Occupation Certificate.

Once your certifier is satisfied that your house is complete in accordance with the approved plans, the building code (NCC) and bushfire legislation they will issue you with an Occupation certificate. This is a very important document that ensures that you can legally inhabit the building and can sell it in the future if required.



OUR STORY

Cory Webb Design Studio specialises in crafting bespoke sustainable and bushfire compliant houses. Cory has 20 years' experience working in architectural studios for high end clients on the North Shore of Sydney, the Victorian High Country and Internationally.

Cory Webb Design Studio was founded in February 2020 to fill the demand of discerning and educated clients who want to invest in the earth's future through thoughtful and considered architecture in the Blue Mountains and Greater Western Sydney Region.

NEXT STEPS

Reach out to us to discuss your next project and ask any questions in any of the following ways:

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