

## View Factor

This Fast Fact clarifies the NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS) position on the influence of the view factor on development assessment and in particular its effect on shielding for evacuation and building construction.

The view factor for the purposes of bush fire assessment is the direct line or path of radiant heat that is emitted by a bush fire directly onto another surface. This is important in understanding the way in which a structure is affected by radiant heat from a bush fire.

The general rule for understanding the view factor is that whatever the fire front can 'see' (within the limits of the radiant heat transfer) will be impacted by radiant heat.

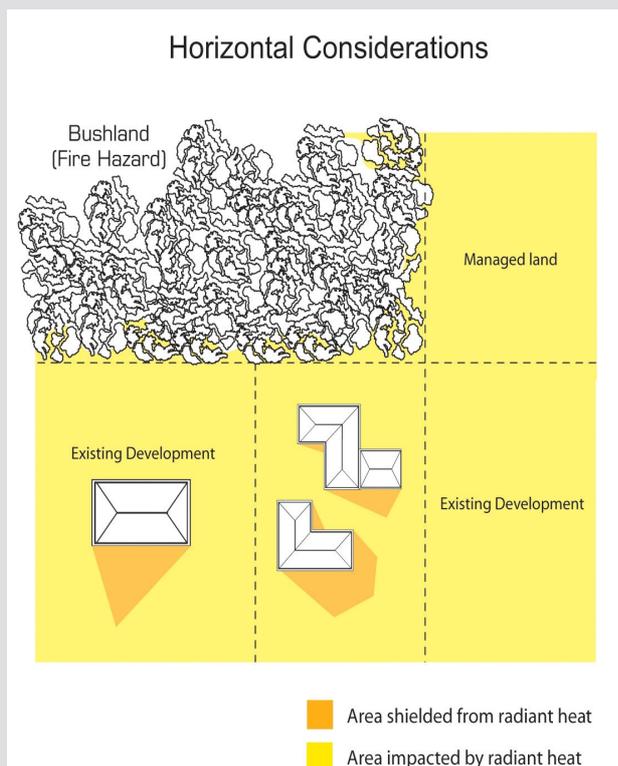
It is also important that the vertical flame height is taken into account when considering the impacts of shielding. In this regard, the flame height must be calculated in order to determine the view factor. Assessment tools that calculate potential flame heights and levels of radiant heat are available on the RFS website at [www.rfs.nsw.gov.au](http://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au).

The view factor is critical when calculating construction standards for 79BA applications. Therefore, understanding the view factor is vital in order to appreciate the level of shielding provided by adjoining structures and its impact on varying construction standards.

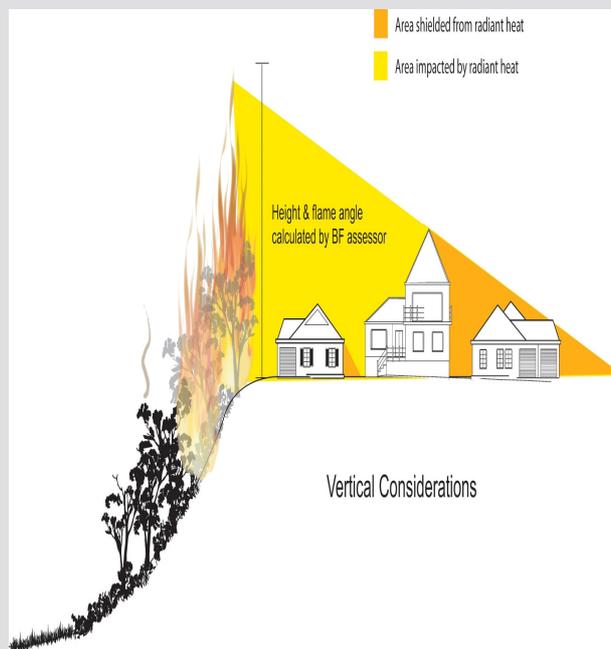
Figures 1 and 2 (on following page) show the vertical and horizontal considerations that need to be accounted for when determining the potential view factor for a building. It should be noted that the effects of shielding do not mitigate the impacts of ember attack.



**Figure 1 – Vertical view of radiant heat impact**



**Figure 2 – Horizontal view of radiant heat impact.**



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