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First name	Owen
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I am making this submission as	Resident
Submission type	Personal
Organisation making the submission (if applicable)	
Your position in the organisation (if applicable)	
Consent to make submission public	Public
Your story	<p>Protection of human life is the number one priority in all decision making.</p> <p>The Australian Governments federal, state and local are charged by the citizens of Australia to preserve human life as the number one priority above all other considerations.</p> <p>The focus of this report is into the New South Wales State Planning Department and its directives towards local government with regard to protection of persons and property adjacent to land owned or controlled by Local Government.</p>
1.1 Causes and contributing factors	<p>Local government may own land by zoning and historical means or by Development Contributions. Local governments should have the same responsibility to manage their land as any other stakeholder owning land in New South Wales. This means the land they hold cannot impact on their neighbours or the general</p>

population in particular regarding their personal safety from bush fire.

I have lived in my premises for 25 years. Every year before the fire session, a slasher would come through the asset protection area and reduce the combustibles. Lake Macquarie City Council(LMCC) arranged a public information meeting at Redhead park, which I attended. The essence of the meeting was that it was too costly to maintain the LMCC Reserves like the one I live alongside, so the solution was for me to establish a Bush fire survival plan. In other words, council was not reducing the fire risk, I was required to flee my home.

Several years ago, a fire deliberately lit by teenagers raged toward us from the south. I loaded the car with essentials and was ready to leave, luckily with one road out, the fire did not cut me off.

If land owned by local government is impacting on the surrounding land creating a high fire risk, citizens surrounding that land should have the right to have the situation made safe. This will entail the New South Wales planning Department directing local government to make safe its reserves. Left to themselves local council will delay the work, due to budget constraints and nothing will change.

1.2 Preparation and planning

Those parcels of land adjoining council own land and reserves should give the surrounding landowner the option to have the boundary assessed and if the local government area land is posing a fire hazard to the property, the local government should be directed to clear the land and make it fire safe.

Some options for Council.

1. Follow the directive from State planning and continue to keep the reserve safe from fire.
2. Give permission to the landowner to clear the land and maintain an asset protection zone and future landowners be obliged to continue to do so.
3. Purchase the adjacent property and make it part of the reserve.
4. Area is declared safe and no further action is taken.

It is important that the local council is not the decision maker in this process as the decisions may be influenced by the cost rather than the personal safety of those residing at the premises.

1.3 Response to bushfires

Local Councils have an obligation to keep land under their control safe for the citizens.
The citizens should be able to apply to the NSW state planning body to have an independent assessment of the fire risk.
The council must be obliged to follow the NSW state planning recommendation.

1.4 Any other matters

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