

Retaining wall

Definition

A retaining wall is a structure designed and constructed to support soil at a slope steeper than can naturally be supported; ie. exceeds natural angle of repose.

Whilst retaining walls are primarily designed to support soil, they may also be placed under stress from other factors such as buildings, swimming pools, landscape structures, footings, vehicle loads and/or wind loads on dividing fences. Some pre-manufactured retaining walls are designed to support soil only and not other contributing stress factors.

Retaining walls may be required during the construction of dwellings, swimming pools, subdivision of land, the erection of dividing fences or landscaping purposes. Whilst the City may require that retaining walls be constructed as part of building works, other retaining walls may be necessary, depending on contributing factors as mentioned above.

Is a Building Permit required for a retaining wall?

A Building Permit is required where a proposed retaining wall exceeds 500mm in height, is an addition to an existing retaining wall and/or in the case of tiered walls, the walls exceed 500mm in total height.

The following retaining walls generally do not require a Building Permit:

- Planter boxes
- Retaining walls used to create public open space areas
- Retaining walls used to create drainage sumps

Is Planning Approval required for a retaining wall (Development Approval)?

Retaining walls greater than 500mm require Development Approvals. Please contact the Town's Planning Services on 9339 9339 and ask to speak with the Planning Officer for further information.

Can I build a retaining wall as Owner-Builder?

Yes, owner builders are allowed to construct a retaining wall. If the construction value is over \$20,000 you will need to apply to the Building Services Board at the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety (DMIRS) for an [Owner-Builder application](#). Once approved, you will receive an Owner-Builder Certificate. A Building Permit cannot be issued for building works that are over \$20,000 unless an Owner Builder Certificate has been received or a registered Builder has been contracted to do the building work.

Do I need a Structural Engineer's Certification for the proposed retaining wall?

Yes, Structural Engineers Details is always required for a retaining wall.

Who can lodge the Building Permit application?

The property owner or the Builder / Agent can lodge the Building Permit application.

How long will my Building Permit application take to process?

Certified Applications must be processed within 10 working days of it being lodged with the Town. If additional information is required, the applicant will be given 21 calendar days to provide the information. The Town then has the balance of the remaining 10 working days in which to provide a determination.

Uncertified Applications must be processed within 25 working days of it being lodged with the Town. If additional information is required, the applicant will be given 21 calendar days to provide the information. The Town then has the balance of the remaining 25 working days in which to provide a determination.

What is the difference between certified and uncertified applications?

A Certified Application has had its assessment completed by a private Building Surveyor and has been issued with a Certificate of Design Compliance. Certified Applications must be submitted, complete with all prior approvals (including Development Approvals). The Town will issue a Building Permit for the proposed structure.

An Uncertified Application is submitted to the Town for a full assessment. The Town will issue a Certificate of Design Compliance and a Building Permit for the proposed structure.

What do I need to submit if I need a building permit?

Certified Applications:

- Completed [BA1 application form](#).
- Completed Certificate of Design Compliance that has been signed by the registered Building Surveyor.
- One copy of all referenced documents as stated in the Certificate of Design Compliance.
- Building and Construction Industry Training Fund and Levy (BCITF) form or copy of BCITF receipt (required where estimated costs of building or construction exceeds \$20,000 incl. GST)

Uncertified Applications:

- Completed [BA2 application form](#).
- 1x copy of a site plan. The site plan must be drawn at a minimum scale of 1:200 indicating site boundaries, existing and proposed levels and proposed wall location (relative to a nominated datum point or Australian Height Datum).
- 1x Structural Engineers details.
- Building and Construction Industry Training Fund and Levy (BCITF) form or copy of BCITF receipt (required where estimated costs of building or construction exceeds \$20,000 incl. GST)

What are the fees for the Building Permit application?

The fee is based on the estimated value of construction, minimum \$171.65. If the value is more than \$20,000, please refer to the [Fee Calculator – Planning & Building](#).

Payment of an Infrastructure Bond is required for all Building and Demolition Permits issued.

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