

RETAINING WALLS

When is a retaining wall required?

The *Building Act 1975 (s75)* requires that if soil conditions, ground levels, excavation or filling make it necessary to protect land, buildings or structures in the neighbourhood then:

- retaining walls, or other suitable methods must be used, to prevent soil movement; and
- drainage of the land, buildings or structure must be provided.

Is drainage required?

Yes - drainage is an integral part of retaining walls. The *Building Act 1975 (s76)* requires that where drainage is part of the approval of the work, it must be carried out in a way that protects land, buildings and structures in the neighbourhood. If the work is accepted development (ie. permit is not required), the work must comply with manufacturer specifications or refer to NMP1.7 of the Queensland Development Code (QDC) for recommended acceptable solutions/ performance criteria.

When is a permit NOT required?

Schedule 1 of the *Building Regulation 2006* confirms retaining walls as accepted development if:

- there is no surcharge loading (eg driveway) over the zone of influence* for the wall; and
- the total height of the wall and of the fill or cut retained by the wall is no more than 1 metre above the wall's natural ground surface; and
- the wall is no closer than 1.5m to a building or another retaining wall.

If the proposed structure cannot comply with any of the above, then a permit is required.

Is planning approval required?

The Rockhampton Region Planning Scheme may require further permits for building work, particularly if your property is located within the Flood Hazard Overlay. If required, this approval must be obtained before a building permit can be issued. The Duty Planner can assist to determine your planning scheme requirements.

Excavation / filling on site

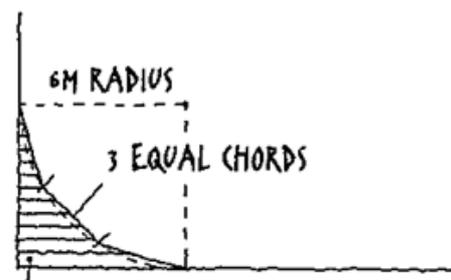
Generally cut and fill related to building work less than 1m in depth remains accepted development however the soil type and fill gradient are factors that may trigger assessable building work. Schedule 1 of the *Building Regulation 2006* outlines these requirements further.

Siting requirements

The whole of the structure, including sub-drainage, spoon drainage on the top/at the base of the wall, footings etc, must be wholly within the boundary of a property. The owner of the property on which the wall is located is responsible for the maintenance of the structure.

If the retaining wall is situated on a corner allotment, the wall and other structures must not exceed 1m in height within the 6m x 6m truncation.

Extract from QDC MP1.1 and MP1.2



NO STRUCTURE MORE THAN 1M HIGH

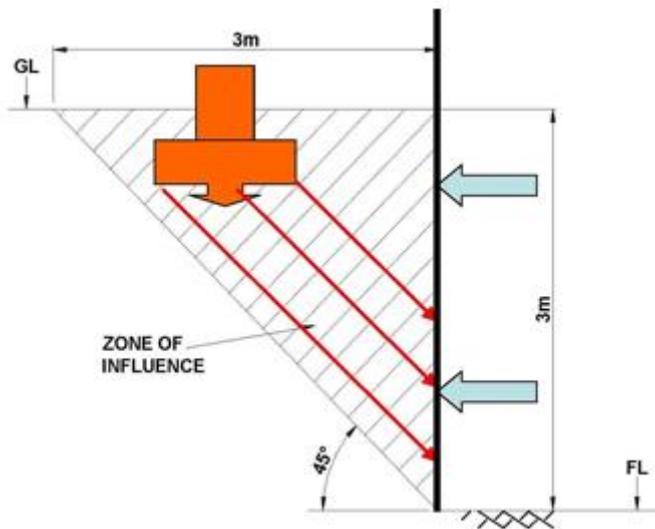


Do I require a Permit?

Below is a general guide to some of the scenarios that may require a referral agency application, building or planning permit:

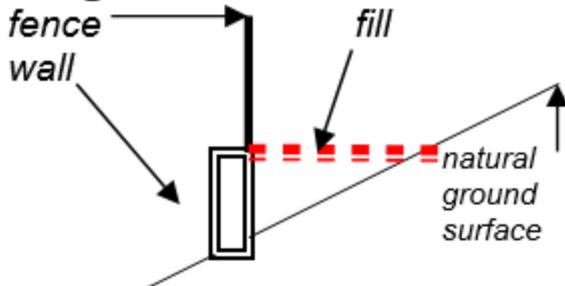
	Building Permit Required	Planning Permit Required (See the Duty Planner)
Retaining wall less than 1 metre high	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If within 1.5m of a building or another retaining wall - If there is surcharge loading (driveway, footings, structures, etc) over the zone of influence* 	If located within the Flood Hazard Overlay
Retaining wall over 1 metre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yes – always, and - If located within the 6m x 6m truncation of a corner, a <i>Referral Agency Application (QDC)</i> is also required 	
Retaining wall or fence on top of a retaining wall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If the total height exceeds 2 metres above the natural ground surface** then a <i>Referral Agency Application (QDC)</i> is also required 	

*The zone of influence is determined by the height of the wall and is measured from the base of the retaining wall outwards at a 45° angle.



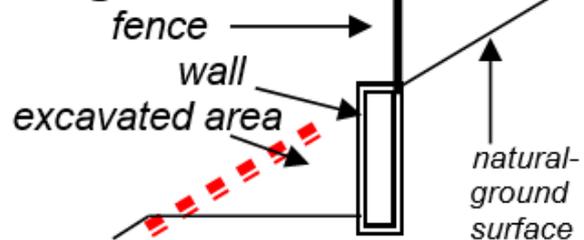
**Includes the total height of the wall and fence where constructed on top of the natural ground level only – see Diagram A and B

Diagram A:



the wall is constructed ON the natural ground surface
the wall is to retain fill placed behind the wall
the fence is to be constructed on top of the wall

Diagram B:



the natural ground surface is excavated
the wall is restraining the excavated area
the fence is to be built on top of the wall
the fence is constructed on the natural ground surface level

