

22.14 DRY STONE WALLS12/05/2016
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This policy applies to all dry stone walls subject to the Heritage Overlay in the municipality including those in dry stone wall precincts and other walls listed in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay.

22.14-1 Policy Basis12/05/2016
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The dry stone wall landscape of the City of Melton is expressive of both the natural history of the volcanic creation of the area and the cultural history of its human modification. The City of Melton's dry stone walls provide information about settlement patterns, farm management and wall construction techniques on Melbourne's western plains. Geologically significant volcanic eruption points such as Mount Cottrell, Mount Kororoit, Mount Atkinson and She Oak Hill are the origins of the fieldstone that was gathered up and shaped into the walls that characterise the landscape of the municipality.

Prior to European settlement, Melton supported a number of biologically diverse ecosystems. Nationally significant volcanic grasslands were the reason early farmers and pastoralists were attracted to the plains beyond Melbourne, and it is on these plains that they established small farms or large pastoral stations, and utilised the plentiful volcanic stone to fence boundaries, stock and homesteads. The dry stone walls are of cultural significance to the municipality. Across the municipality, urban settlement is now encroaching on these dry stone walls.

Each dry stone wall subject to the Heritage Overlay is listed in the incorporated document, *Melton Dry Stone Walls Study, Volume 3 – Statements of Significance* or described as part of a significant place in the incorporated document *Shire of Melton Heritage Study – Volume 6 – Statements of Significance* (March 2009).

22.14-2 Objectives12/05/2016
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- To encourage the conservation and repair of dry stone walls.
- To generally discourage the demolition of dry stone walls in the Heritage Overlay.
- To encourage the retention, reuse and recycling of stone and dry stone walls.
- To ensure new development is sympathetic and seeks to conserve and enhance dry stone walls.

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It is policy to:

- Encourage the retention and conservation of dry stone walls.
- Generally discourage the full demolition or removal of a dry stone wall.
- Encourage the removal of inappropriate alterations that detract from the cultural significance of the dry stone wall.
- Generally discourage the demolition of parts of a dry stone wall unless one of the following matters apply:
 - The section of wall needs to be removed to undertake repairs to damage caused by earth movement.
 - The section of dry stone wall needs to be removed to create a break for new openings (such as farm openings, road widening or road breaks).

- The section of dry stone wall needs to be removed so utility services can be installed (and no viable alternative exists). The dry stone wall must be reconstructed afterwards.
- It can be demonstrated that the removal of the part of the dry stone wall does not negatively affect the significance of the wall.
- Encourage the retention of dry stone walls in favour of contemporary walls or gateway treatments in new development.
- Encourage the conservation and repair of dry stone walls.
- Encourage, where possible, the retention of original openings, posts and wires in any repair or maintenance programs.
- Encourage the reconstruction of features where they have been removed or lost.
- Require the construction of wall ends where new openings have been created in a dry stone wall.
- Require the use of a professional dry stone waller when:
 - reconstructing a section of dry stone wall;
 - creating new openings; and / or
 - constructing new wall ends.
- Discourage the construction of additional stone courses to increase the height of an existing dry stone wall if it is not consistent with the type of the dry stone wall.
- Discourage the use of concrete mortar within a dry stone wall.
- Allow additional wires above a dry stone wall, if required for farming purposes, provided the new posts do not disturb the structure of the dry stone wall.
- Allow subdivision which does not detract from the heritage value of the dry stone wall provided it:
 - Minimises the number of new openings in a dry stone wall; and
 - Applies a five metre wide landscape buffer on either side of a dry stone wall.

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Application Requirements

An application for a permit for any of the following should be supported by relevant documentation as outlined below:

Demolition

- An assessment of the condition of the dry stone wall by a suitably qualified professional.
- A strategic justification as to why demolition is required.
- A plan for the proposed re-use or storage of the removed stone.
- Photographs (or suitable records) of the dry stone wall.

Partial Demolition

- An assessment of the condition of the dry stone wall by a suitably qualified professional.
- The extent of removal required.
- The percentage of the demolished area in relation to the whole structure.
- A strategic justification as to why demolition is required.

- A plan for the proposed re-use or storage of the removed stone.
- Photographs (or suitable records) of the dry stone wall.
- Details of how the section of dry stone wall will be reconstructed (where applicable).
- Any demolition of a dry stone wall section to create an opening must be accompanied with detail on new wall end construction.

Additions, Reconstruction and Conservation

- Drawings of the sections of the dry stone wall that are proposed to be altered (added to, reconstructed or conserved).
- Details of who will be carrying out the proposed works.
- Where conservation or reconstruction is being undertaken, details of how the style of works is in keeping with the structure and form of the original or adjoining lengths of wall.
- Where additions are proposed, a justification of why the additions are required, and detail on the proposed additions, which demonstrate they will not disturb the structure of the dry stone wall.

Subdivision / development

- A feature survey of the dry stone wall(s) within the proposed development.
- A Dry Stone Wall Management Plan which includes the following:
 - Photographs (or suitable records) of the dry stone wall;
 - Recommendations for repair and / or reconstruction; and
 - Conservation works which will retain the cultural significance of the dry stone wall.
- The establishment of a five metre wide landscape buffer either side of a dry stone wall, unless otherwise agreed by the responsible authority.
- A plan showing the proposed location of any landscaping, footpaths, and structures which may impact the dry stone wall.

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Decision Guidelines

Before deciding on an application the responsible authority will consider, as appropriate:

- The views of other landowners of the same dry stone wall, where ownership is shared between multiple property owners. Those views will be sought using Section 52 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (unless exempt under the provisions of Clause 43.01-3).
- The heritage significance of the dry stone wall as cited in the relevant Statement of Significance.
- Any requirements or guidelines relating to the dry stone wall in a Precinct Structure Plan.

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Reference Documents

Melton Heritage Study (2007)

Melton Dry Stone Walls Study (August 2011)