

**22.07 DRY STONE WALLS**

16/02/2017  
C209(Part 1)

This policy applies to all permit applications to demolish, remove or alter a dry stone wall specified in the schedule to the Heritage Overlay.

This policy also applies to all permit applications for the subdivision of land containing a dry stone wall specified in the schedule to the Heritage Overlay.

**22.07-1 Policy Basis**

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Dry stone walls are one of the characteristic features of Melbourne’s western basalt plains. They were constructed as part of the general fencing of private property, and were among the first European constructions on the plains, coming soon after land tenure was established.

Dry stone walls in Wyndham are of historical and aesthetic significance, and in some cases social and archaeological or scientific significance for their association with and physical demonstration of the process of survey, subdivision, alienation and development of land from the period of first land sales, to the late nineteenth century.

The risk of loss of cultural heritage posed by urban development occurring in Wyndham’s growth fronts poses a threat to the conservation of dry stone walls. Good planning and design outcomes should be developed for managing dry stone walls to ensure that this important aspect of Wyndham’s heritage is retained.

**22.07-2 Objectives**

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- To encourage the retention and conservation of dry stone walls.
- To ensure the cultural significance of dry stone walls is not adversely impacted by the construction of nearby buildings and works.
- To ensure that planning applications to demolish, remove or alter a dry stone wall or to subdivide land containing a dry stone wall are assessed against the guidelines set out below.
- To encourage the retention of the cultural significance of a dry stone wall when any demolition, alterations or additions take place.

**22.07-3 Policy**

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The following hierarchy of preference will be adopted when considering a planning application relating to a dry stone wall:

- Retention and conservation in original setting
- Avoid impacts to the dry stone wall in new development.
- Reconstruction on new alignments.
- Demolition and removal.

**22.07-3.1 Demolition and removal**

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It is policy to:

- Discourage the demolition of a dry stone wall unless it can be demonstrated that the demolition is appropriate.

### **Guidelines**

The following guidelines apply in the application of the policy:

- Discourage the demolition and removal of a dry stone wall unless it is demonstrated that:
  - The wall lacks historic value; or
  - The wall is structurally unsound; or
  - The wall's removal is required for the purpose of utility installation and roads; or
  - Demolition of the wall is appropriate on the basis of any other reasonable circumstance.

### **22.07-3.2 Subdivision**

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It is policy to:

- Ensure the cultural significance and landscape values of dry stone walls are retained in new subdivisions.

### **Guidelines**

The following guidelines apply in the application of the policy:

- The design and layout of subdivisions should:
  - Retain dry stone walls in an open area where lots front on to public open space or roads in locations that do not impact on the passive surveillance of the open space.
  - Incorporate a dry stone wall reserve comprising of a 5 metre strip centred in the middle of the wall, wherever possible. Avoid engineering works occurring within the 5 metres strip.
  - Minimise new openings through walls and utilise existing historic openings for entrances into new subdivisions, in a manner that minimises the impact on the wall.
  - Locate new buildings at an appropriate distance from any dry stone walls to be retained, taking account of the depth of proposed foundations, disturbance to bedrock, and mitigation works to protect the walls during construction.

### **22.07-3.3 Additions and alterations**

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It is policy to:

- Ensure the cultural significance and integrity of dry stone walls are not adversely impacted through the construction of additions or alterations.

### **Guidelines**

The following guidelines apply in the application of the policy:

- Maintain the original alignment and construction style of a wall in any addition or alterations to walls.
- Ensure the adaptation of a dry stone wall utilises materials, design and construction techniques that are compatible with the existing wall.
- Ensure the demolition or removal of a section of a dry stone wall does not change its alignment or style.

- Minimise new openings in walls where possible.
- Ensure the construction of new wall ends when any section of a dry stone wall is demolished for a through way.
- Discourage increases in the height of walls through the addition of new stone courses.
- Discourage the use of mortar in the repair of dry stone walls.

#### **22.07-3-4 Reconstruction of dry stone walls**

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It policy to ensure that the reconstruction of dry stone walls is undertaken in accordance with the following guidelines:

- Reconstruction of dry stone walls should be undertaken by a professional dry stone waller utilising stone which matches the original type and design of the wall to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.
- Mortar should not be used in the reconstruction of dry stone walls.
- Stone removed and not reinstated should be used to repair or rebuild walls elsewhere or stockpiled for this purpose in the future
- The original alignment and construction style of a wall should be maintained in the reconstruction of a wall.
- Wall ends at openings should be reconstructed as proper vertical tied end walls.

#### **22.07-4 Application requirements**

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Unless otherwise agreed to by the Responsible Authority, an application to demolish, remove or alter a dry stone wall or to subdivide land containing a dry stone wall, must be accompanied by a dry stone wall management plan, which includes the following (but not limited to):

- A written report that explains how the proposal seeks to manage the conservation of the dry stone wall consistent with the management recommendations set out in the Wyndham Dry Stone Walls Study (2015);
- A justification for the proposed alteration, removal or demolition of the wall;
- Process for repair/reconstruction of wall ends or reinstatement of wall sections, including original fencing materials;
- The method of adaptation and integration of walls into new urban spaces;
- Options for the conservation and management of dry stone walls, and the mitigation of impacts where these cannot be avoided; and,
- Plans and elevations (A3 size) including (but not limited to):
  - Feature survey of all dry stone walls showing the width, length and height of the walls and record of any openings, crossovers, structures, fencing, driveways or distinguishing features of the walls;
  - The extent of alteration, addition or demolition required and the details of the alignment of any additions or alterations;
  - Materials and size of any proposed new fence; and
  - Representative photographs of the section of the wall.

**22.07-5 Decision Guidelines**

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Before deciding on an application the responsible authority will consider:

**General**

- The views of other landowners of the same dry stone wall, where ownership is shared between multiple property owners. Those views may 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.

**Subdivision**

- Whether the subdivision avoids damage to or demolition of dry stone walls.
- Whether existing gaps and openings are utilised as far as possible.
- Whether the design provides for the conservation and maintenance of walls within suitable land and curtilage, for example linear reserves.
- Whether there are opportunities to relocate and reconstruct walls.

**22.07-6 Policy Reference**

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Wyndham Dry Stone Walls Study (2015)