

**Shire of Carnarvon**  
**Retaining Wall**  
**Information & Checklist**



**Retaining Wall**

A retaining wall is a wall or structure designed and constructed to support soil at a slope steeper than can naturally be supported.

While retaining walls are primarily designed to support soil, they may also be placed under a stress from other factors such as buildings, footings, driveways, swimming pools, vehicle loads and/or wind loads on dividing fences. Some retaining walls are designed to support soil only and no other contributing stress factors, these walls are termed “non-surcharged”. It is very important to ensure the wall you intend to construct is designed to support any surcharge that may be placed upon it.

A fence should not be used to retain soil unless it is designed to do so.

A dividing fence can be positioned on the higher side of a retaining wall that abuts a common boundary. Retaining walls abutting a common boundary shall be constructed entirely within one property. **They are not permitted to straddle the boundary.**

**Responsibility for Construction**

The landowner who alters the natural lie of the land is responsible to retain soil where necessary by providing a suitable retaining wall or durable embankment to ensure the natural ground level and any existing surcharge load at the boundary are maintained.

When both adjoining landowners have undertaken earthworks and altered the ground levels, they would be jointly responsible and may need to proportionately share the cost for the construction of a retaining wall.

**Approval:**

A building permit is required where a proposed retaining wall is

- 500mm or greater in height and/ or
- addition to an existing retaining wall and/or
- In the case of tiered walls, the walls exceed 500mm in total height.

Please note:

- Development approval is required for retaining walls over 500mm and should be obtained prior to submitting a building permit application.

**Fees:**

There is a minimum fee of \$171.65 payable upon submission of a building permit application, consisting of a \$110.00 application fee and a \$61.65 Building Services Levy. Additional fees are payable when the estimated value of the proposed building works exceeds \$20,000.

## Checklist:

### 1. Forms, Supporting Documents & Fees Payable

- BA2 form - Application for Building Permit Uncertified or  
BA1 form - Application for Building Permit Certified  
Refer to the Shire of Carnarvon website to find out the difference between certified and uncertified applications.
- Certificate of Design Compliance (for certified application only)
- BA20 or BA20A Form Consent from adjoining owner where proposed works may encroach or adversely affect neighbouring properties and adjoining land
- All fees are payable at the time of lodging the application.
- Water Corporation approval stamp
- Development Approval  
Provide proof of development approval e.g. Planning Approval, Planning Assessment, Planning Clearance

### 2. Plans

A complete set of plans, details and specifications must be submitted with your application. All plans and details must be legible, drawn to scale and include the Lot address and owner details.

- Site Plan (minimum scale 1:200)**
  - Clearly indicate all property boundaries, boundary dimensions and existing buildings
  - Clearly indicate the distance from the existing buildings and property boundaries to the proposed building
  - Existing ground level and proposed finished floor and ground levels relative to nominated datum point or AHD (where applicable)
  - Heights of a wall along the entire length – reference the datum point using Top of Wall (TOW) and Bottom of Wall (BOW)
  - Location of any vehicle driveway, crossover or access way located within 3m of the wall.
  - North Point
- Elevations (minimum scale 1:200)**
  - All sides of the structure with description/heading of each elevation (i.e. north, south, east, west) including all dimensions and natural ground levels.

### 3. Wall Details

- Engineer Certification**
  - The Shire of Carnarvon requires that retaining walls greater than or equal to 500mm in height are designed and certified by a structural engineer. Signed original copy of the documentation to be submitted.
- Construction Details**
  - Footing size/material
  - Construction material size and arrangement
  - Minimum and maximum height requirements
  - Type of structure over (e.g. fence, shed, building) if any.

Notwithstanding the above, it is at the discretion of the Building Surveyor assessing the plans as to whether more details will be required to be submitted to achieve the performance requirements relating to the relevant parts of the National Construction Code and the Western Australia Building Act 2011.

## Disclaimer

This publication has been prepared by the Shire of Carnarvon in good faith as a service to its residents. The material contained in this document is intended to provide general information only to help you to understand the rules and regulations. While we aim to keep the content of this document current and accurate, we accept no responsibility for any ramifications or repercussions for providing this information. Please contact the Shire of Carnarvon if you wish to comment on the sheets provided and information contained within. Any reported errors will be amended.