



## RETAINING WALLS & SITE WORKS

What are site works?

Site works are when the natural ground levels of the site are changed by way of filling or excavating existing soil.

What is a Retaining Wall?

A retaining wall is a structure that retains soil when there is a change in ground levels.

Do I need development approval?

Development (planning) approval is not required for site works or retaining walls if they are:

- less than 500mm in height, or in the opinion of the City of Vincent, is over a limited area of the lot and will not constitute a significant alteration of the natural ground level of the land; and
- fully compliant with the deemed-to-comply requirements of the City's Policy No. 7.1.1 – Built Form (Built Form Policy), State Planning Policy 7.3 - Residential Design Codes (R-Codes) and the City's Minor Nature Development Policy.

Development approval is required for:

- any retaining walls or site works located on heritage-protected places;
- For single house and grouped dwellings, any retaining wall or site works that are more than 0.5 metres on a lot boundary OR that are more than 0.5m height above or below the natural ground level between the street boundary and the street setback;
- For commercial properties, any retaining wall or site works more than 0.5 metres above natural ground level anywhere on the site;
- For multiple dwellings (apartments) any retaining wall or site works greater than 0.5 metres in height.

What are the deemed-to-comply requirements?

For single houses and grouped dwellings, the R-Codes – Volume 1 allow a retaining wall that is 0.5 metres or less in height (measured from natural ground level) to be located up to the lot boundary.

Retaining walls and site works more than 0.5 metres in height (measured from natural ground level) are required to be setback in accordance with the Table 4 of the R-Codes – Volume 1:

Height of site works and/or retaining walls	Required minimum setback
0.5m or less	0.5m or less
1m	1m
1.5m	1.5m
2m	2m
2.5m	2.5m
3m	3m

The nearest higher value is used to determine the required setback. For example, a 0.6 metres of site fill or retaining would have a minimum setback requirement of 1 metre.

For multiple dwellings and all other development (including commercial), the City's Minor Nature Development Policy allows retaining walls up to 0.5m in height or less.

If you are replacing an existing retaining wall that is more than 0.5 metres in height, you may still require development approval.



*Note: Where a boundary wall incorporates a retaining wall directly beneath the boundary wall, the retaining wall does not require assessment under Clause 5.3.7 of the R-Codes and is to be included in the wall height calculation.*

[How do you assess a development application for site works and retaining walls?](#)

Where an application does not meet the requirements of the City's Built Form Policy or the R-Codes, written justification detailing how the development satisfies the design principles must be submitted with the application. The design principles for site works and retaining walls require for the proposal to consider the impact to adjoining properties and the streetscape. Consideration will also be given to the response of the proposal to the natural topography of the land.

An Urban Planner will consider this variation and whether the application is considered to meet the relevant design principles or objectives of the City's Built Form Policy and/or R-Codes, to determine whether the variation can be considered.

If the City does not believe the proposal satisfies the design principles or amended plans or reconsideration of the proposal will be required.

[How long does the development application process take?](#)

The City has 60 days in which to determine the application, or 90 days if the application requires community consultation.

Clause 75(c) of the *Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulation 2015* states that applications may take longer than 90 days where it is agreed to in writing between the local government and the applicant.

[How long do I have to build my retaining wall or complete my site works?](#)

Development approvals are valid for 2 years. The construction of the retaining wall has to be substantially commenced within this time period.

[What information is required for a Development Application?](#)

Please refer to the relevant Development Application Checklist available on the City's website [here](#).

[Do I need building approval?](#)

Applying for development approval and a building permit are two separate processes, both controlled under different legislation. A building permit ensures that the retaining wall is appropriately engineered and constructed in accordance with the relevant building legislation.

A retaining wall on the boundary may still require a building permit, even if it is less than 0.5 metres in height.

If you would like further information on the Building Permit process and retaining wall requirements please refer to the City's website and the Building retaining wall information guide available [here](#), or contact the City's Building Services team on 9273 6000.

[Do you have more questions?](#)

The City is unable to confirm if a proposal will be supported in the absence of a formal development application. However, applicants can discuss planning proposals and preliminary plans with the City's Urban Planners. Urban Planners can provide general advice to applicants on a proposed development or land use and the information required to lodge a complete application.

A Duty Planner is available at the City's Administration Office Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 5.00pm, in person or on the phone.

Phone: 9273 6000

Email: [mail@vincent.wa.gov.au](mailto:mail@vincent.wa.gov.au)

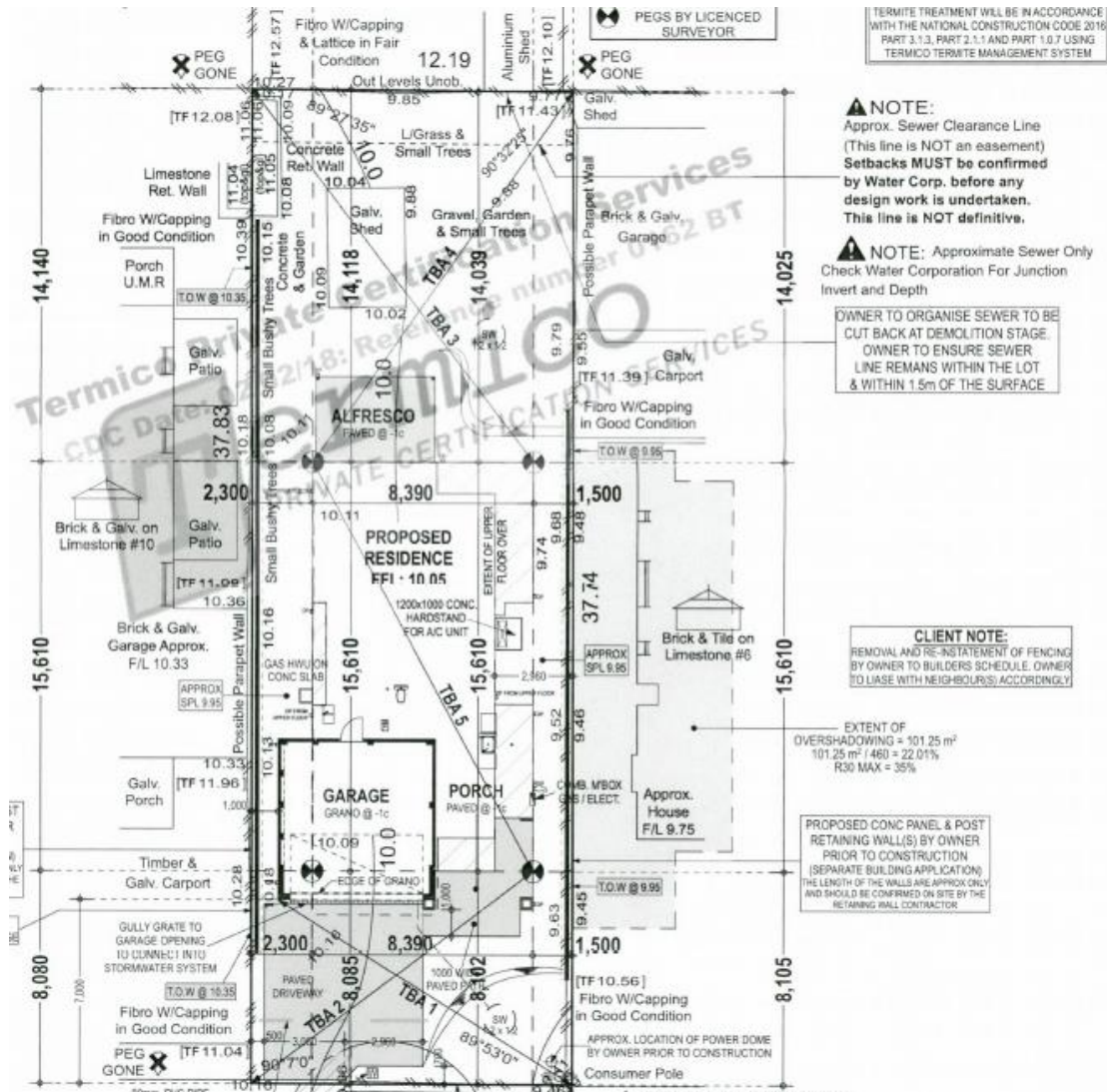
# INFORMATION SHEET



CITY OF VINCENT

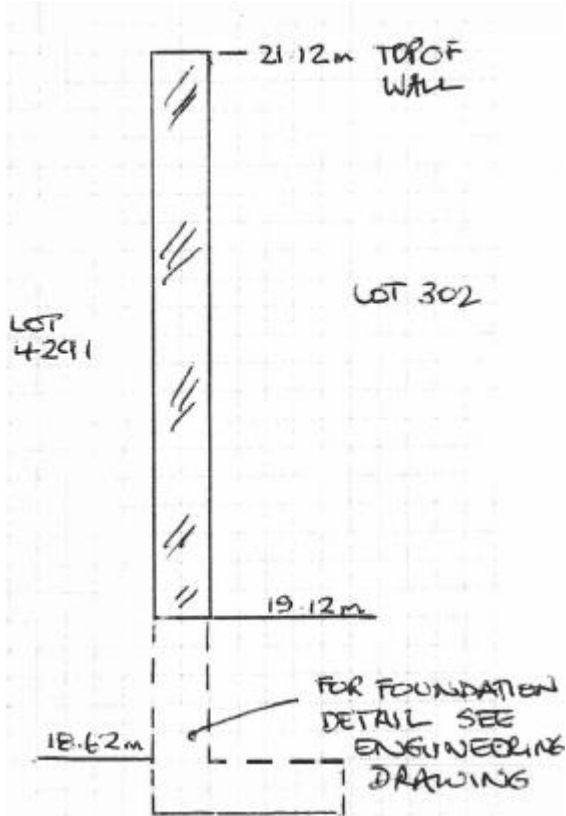
Address: Main Administration Building, 244 Vincent Street, Leederville WA 6007

SITE PLAN EXAMPLE:





ELEVATION PLAN EXAMPLE:



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