



City of Melton
Keeping Dry
Stone Walls in
Good Repair

**A Vibrant, safe and liveable
City accessible to all**



Melton City Council recognises the cultural and heritage significance of the many dry stone walls located throughout the municipality. This brochure provides guidance on what you can do to keep your dry stone walls in good repair.

Do I need a Planning Permit?

The Heritage Overlay applies to the land 5 metres on with side of a dry stone wall.

Some works may need a planning permit (if you are in doubt about whether you will need a planning permit, please contact our Statutory Planning Department on 9747 7200). Please refer to the table below to see if your works are considered 'general maintenance' or will require a planning permit.

Table of Permit Requirements	
Type of activity and works	Permit Requirements
Reconstruction of wall	Permit Required
Constructing new wall ends	Permit Required
Replacement of stone courses with new stone	Permit Required
Changing alignment	Permit Required
Changing arrangement of openings & gateways	Permit Required
Demolition of sections	Permit Required
Inserting new posts or wires	Permit Required
Straining existing wires	No permit required
Repairing or replacing existing posts	No permit required
Replacing original fill or hearting stone	No permit required
Replacing original coping stones	No permit required
Plugging gaps & holes with original stone	No permit required
Manual weed removal and herbicide use	No permit required

Dry Stone Walls can be damaged through vibration if the use of heavy machinery is not carefully managed during construction.

If you are conducting construction within five metres of a listed Dry Stone Wall you are required to contact Council to arrange for a management plan to protect the wall.

It is recommended that if you are planning to conduct construction within 10 metres of a listed Dry Stone Wall you should contact Council to discuss whether you need a management plan to protect the wall.



Dry Stone Wall Management Plans

A management plan will be likely to include:

- The installation of barriers near the wall.
- The services of a dry stone waller retained on-site during high risk activities to monitor the integrity of the wall.
- Requiring all noticeable rock falls from walls to be brought to the attention of Council.
- Restricting the type of machinery near the wall (jack hammers, percussion rock hammers, blasting, and vibrating compacters should not be used within five metres of a wall).
- Requiring all machinery used within five metres of the wall to be operated in a careful and controlled manner.

Farming Activity

Many Dry Stone Walls were built to function as farm fences. A properly constructed and maintained dry stone wall can last for hundreds of years.

Dry Stone Walls can provide shelter for stock and wildlife, can improve growing conditions adjacent them, can restrict the spread of windborne weeds, and can serve as a fire break.

Council is keen to work with rural landowners to maintain and improve dry stone walls to ensure they continue to operate as effective farm fences.

If additional height is required to act as a barrier, Council will generally support:

- Additional wire may be located above the wall, provided the new posts do not disturb the structure of the wall.
- The use of temporary, lightweight electric fencing or hot wires, provided the supporting posts do not disturb the structure of the wall.

Heavy machinery may be used for ploughing, sowing, or harvesting near walls. However, if heavy machinery dislodges stones or loosens foundations you must contact Council and create a plan for the repair of the wall.

Weed Management

Many Dry Stone Walls across the municipality have native grasses located next to them which are of national significance, and can contain nationally endangered animals such as the Striped Legless Lizard. Council therefore recommends that weed management around walls should be well managed to prevent loss of important native grasses or nationally endangered animal species.

Possible ways to control the use of herbicide around dry stone walls include:

- The targeted use of herbicides at ground level; or
- Using a cut and paint method when applying herbicides to woody weeds.



Heritage Assistance Fund

The repair of Dry Stone Walls may be eligible for funding through Council's Heritage Assistance Fund.

The Heritage Assistance Fund has been established by Council to assist landowners to repair and rebuild heritage places across the municipality (this includes Dry Stone Walls).

You can apply for help through the fund to pay for professional walling services for repair and rebuilding works.

Applications for the fund can be made to Council and the fund is organised on a \$ for \$ basis.

Information about the fund, the fund guidelines, and application forms, can be found on Council's website melton.vic.gov.au/heritageassistancefund

How Do I Repair My Wall?

Historically the construction of dry stone walls in Melton has been undertaken by a mix of professional and non-professional wallers.

The conservation of dry stone walls in the municipality has in general been carried out by farmers and has consisted of basic plugging or the stacking of fallen rocks on top of walls.

Council encourages the use of professional dry stone wallers in the repair of dry stone walls, and will require the use of a professional dry stone waller if a planning permit is granted for partial demolition of a wall, or the reconstruction of part of a wall (including the creation of new wall ends).

A list of professional dry stone wallers can be found on the Dry Stone Wall Association website - www.dswaa.org.au

The Melton City Council has previously organised workshops to teach landowners how to repair walls, and the Dry Stone Wall Association occasionally run training workshops. Please contact Council's heritage advisor if you may be interested in learning how to repair your dry stone walls.

Council recommends you regularly inspect your walls to assist you in preparing maintenance programmes, and allow for the timely correction of damage done by rock theft, vehicles, animals, or storm / flood events. Correcting damage as quickly as possible will prevent further collapse.

Further Information

For further information about dry stone walls, please contact Council's Strategy Department on 9747 7200 or visit our website at www.melton.vic.gov.au

Melton Civic Centre
232 High Street, Melton
T 9747 7200

Caroline Springs Library and Learning Hub
193 Caroline Springs Boulevard, Caroline
Springs

Melton Library and Learning Hub
31 McKenzie Street, Melton
T 9747 7200



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