



The Coral Homes
cleverliving
team

NEWS FROM THE HOME FRONT

Tips on retaining walls

Presented by Scott Fleet from the Coral Homes *Clever Living team*

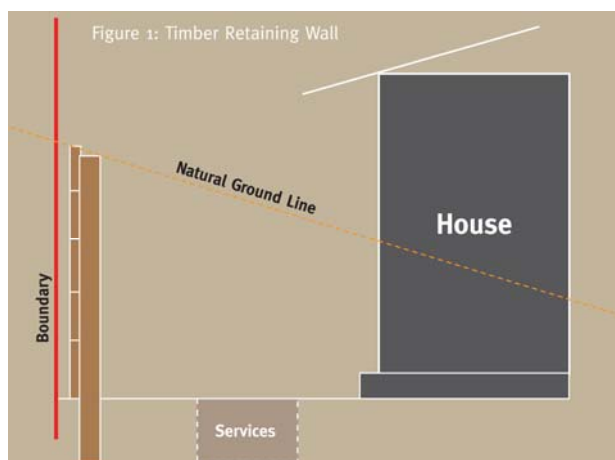
If you have a sloping block, you may be required to organise retaining walls to be installed before your builder starts construction on the house. And you may need to employ the services of both a design engineer and a retaining wall construction expert to ensure you get them right.

Even though you will be employing experts to construct your retaining walls, you still need to consult with your builder to ensure the house is not impacted by the work. The builder will need a minimum area around the entire house to allow for services, drainage and construction workers. There are four main types of retaining walls, and each one will take up a different amount of area between your boundary and your house. As a general rule, you should allow a minimum distance of 1.5m from the brickwork of your home to your retaining wall – any less and the ability of workers to adequately construct your home may be impaired, resulting in delays and undue complications.

Timber Retaining Walls

Timber, or sleeper, retaining walls are a cost effective option and take up very little space (above or below ground) because they are constructed almost vertically (see *Figure 1*). The footings for each vertical post are positioned straight down into the ground under the wall itself. In some cases however, a timber retaining wall may not be

suitable due to ground conditions or not strong enough, and in such cases you may need to consider another type of wall.



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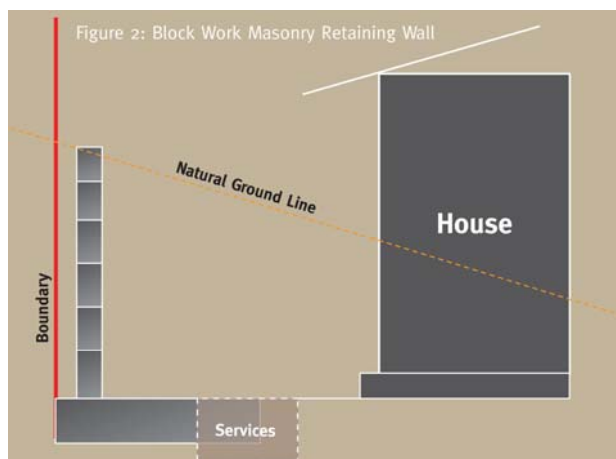
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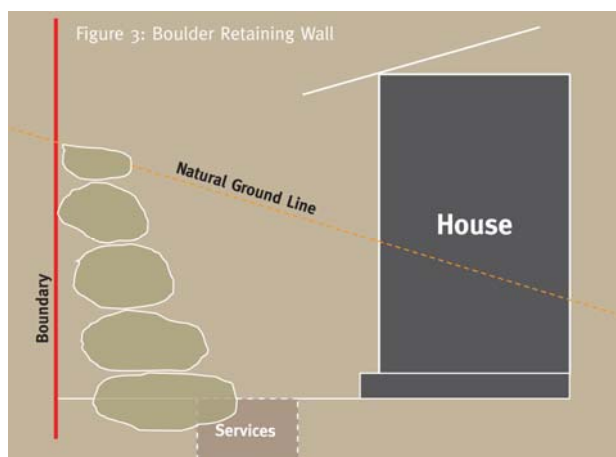
Block Work Masonry Retaining Walls

Reinforced with steel, block work masonry walls are a lot stronger than timber walls (see *Figure 2*). They can be a good option because they are built vertically to allow maximum space above ground. Below ground, however, masonry walls require a concrete footing which extends from the wall towards the house. The size of this footing depends on the height of the wall – the higher the wall, the larger the footing. Be aware that services and drainage need to be installed and the concrete footing may impact on these.



Boulder Retaining Walls

Boulder, or rock, retaining walls are strong however they are not built vertically (see *Figure 3*). With large rocks at the bottom of the wall and small rocks at the top, these walls can considerably impact on the space available around the house, and may also impact on the installation of drainage and services.



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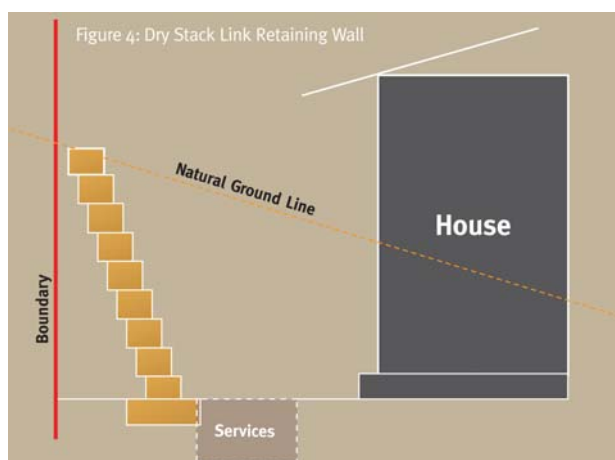


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Dry Stack Link Walls

This type of retaining wall is generally not recommended (see *Figure 4*). Dry stack link walls are very affordable however they can be prone to collapse, as they typically consist of blocks placed on top of each other in a tiered fashion with no footings or reinforcement. They are better suited to smaller landscaping applications.



For more information on finding a home design to suit your block, visit your nearest Coral Homes display or go to www.coralhomes.com.au



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