

FRONT FENCES WITHIN RESIDENTIAL AREAS

The City of Albany Local Law Relating to Fencing 2001 states:

“A person shall not, without the written consent of the Building Surveyor, erect a freestanding fence greater than 1200mm in height, within the front setback area of a Residential Lot within the district.”

Height of Front Fences/Walls

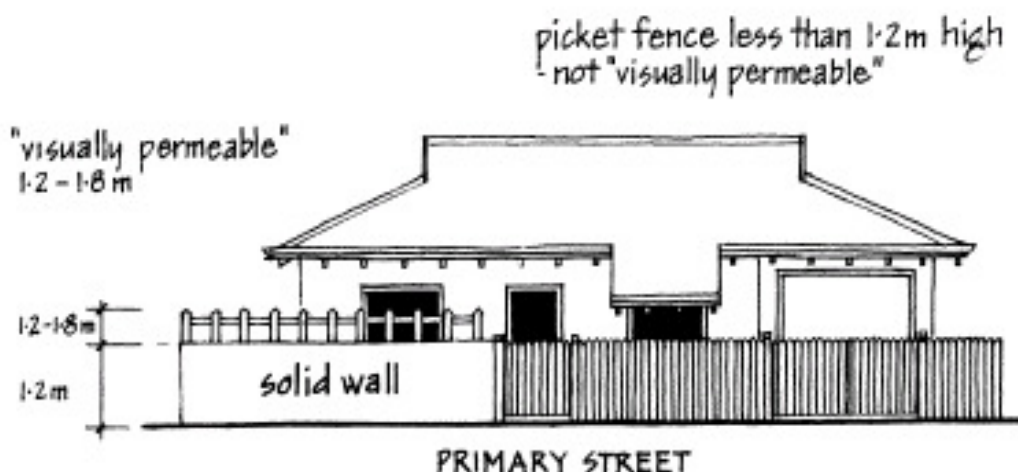
Walls and fences in residential areas in the primary street front setback area are to be visually permeable above 1200mm. A visually permeable surface is one that can be seen through so as not to obstruct the view.

The most common way of achieving visually permeability on a front fence is to use pickets (either steel or timber) at a spacing of not less than 50mm. This allows passive surveillance in and out of the front yard and contributes to the perception of safety within a street.

In What Circumstances can I Apply for a Solid Wall in Excess of 1.2m in Height?

Council will consider proposals for solid walls/fences at a height greater than 1.2m in instances where:

- They adjoin a street or road carrying more than 6000 vehicles per day, provided that the wall does not occupy greater than 75% of the lot frontage and allows for unobstructed views to the dwelling entrance; or
- Protects a bedroom window from traffic headlight glare; or
- Provides privacy to the sole outdoor living area of a dwelling.

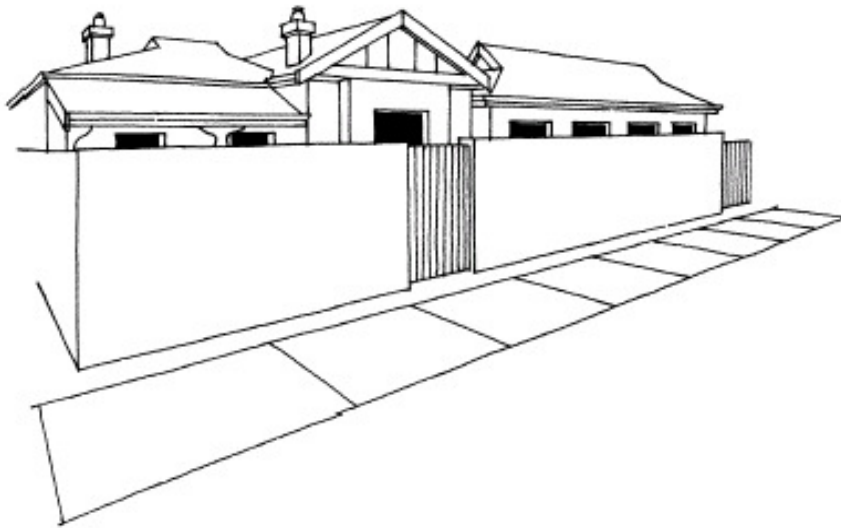


This is an example of an acceptable Front Fence design
Source: Residential Design Codes of Western Australia, Part 3, October 2002

When will a Front Fence Application be Refused?

Applications for a front fence may not be approved where any of the following apply:

- Public safety is comprised.
- Lack of vision for users of a driveway.
- Traffic sight lines are comprised.
- The streetscape is affected by the proposal.
- Heritage values are compromised.
- Inadequate justification is provided.
- Unacceptable earthworks are proposed.
- Council verge requires cut/fill/retention.
- Alternate options are available.
- Pre-used materials are being used.
- The truncation is required where the visibility of turning vehicles is likely to be affected.
- The structure represents a fire hazard.



*This is an example of an generally unacceptable Front Fence
Source: Residential Design Codes of Western Australia, Part 3, October 2002*

What if My Fence is on a Secondary Street?

Walls and fences fronting secondary streets MAY be solid to allow for a back yard to be created. They should conform to the requirements for a front fence, forward of the dwelling as delineated in this information pack.

Do I Need to Get Comment From My Neighbours?

Applications for a front fence over 1200mm in height require neighbour's comments for the portion located along the common boundary, forward of the building setback.

Are There Any Other Special Requirements I Should Know?

Walls or fences of masonry, stone or concrete construction, where they are also retaining soil, and they are over 1000mm high, require a Building Licence and may require structural engineering details at the officer's discretion.

Generally, barbed wire, glass, razor wire, electrified fences or similar are not to be approved in residential areas. These are often proposed because of security fears and the applicant should be directed to alternative methods of protecting their property such as increasing exposure to the street, obtaining security advice (from police or consultants) or the use of house alarms.



This is another Acceptable Design of a Front Fence.

Source: *Residential Design Codes of Western Australia, Part 3, October 2002*

Process to Gain Approval

For a front fence greater than 1.2 metres the following needs to be submitted to Council:

- a Building Licence (available at front counter) showing a site plan, an elevation of the fence in relation to the dwelling and how it is to be structurally affixed to the ground;
- a letter of justification being provided taking into account the above mentioned issues; and
- neighbour's comments.

More Information

Should you have any questions or require any further information, please contact a member of the Development Services Team by either phoning on 9841 9383, by email planning@albany.wa.gov.au or in person at the City Offices.

**** DISCLAIMER ****

This information sheet is a guide only. Verification with original Local Laws, Acts, Planning Schemes, and other relevant documents is recommended for detailed references. The City of Albany accepts no responsibility for errors or omissions.