Alexandrina Council

Heritage Fencing Guidelines



Fences contribute to the character and appearance of historic areas and local heritage places.

A fence design that is consistent with the style and era of a building will complement the property and enhance the heritage character of an area.

Across the Alexandrina district, development from the 1850s to the mid 1900s has shaped the historic character of our towns. Fencing styles have evolved alongside the architectural periods of these buildings, and new or replacement fences should be designed to respect and complement this heritage context.

> This guideline seeks to provide information on what to consider if you are intending on replacing or repairing a fence associated with a building or place that is of heritage value.

Accompanying these guidelines are technical drawings for four historic fence styles that are considered suitable for buildings constructed during 1850 to mid 1900s.



Timber picket fence, Middleton Methodist Church. State Library of South Australia PRG 733/163.
Photo top: Woven wire fence, Strathalbyn. Rob Fairweather.

Key Principles

When considering a replacement fence or new fence, the following key principles should be considered:

Retain and repair original fences. Where an original fence cannot be repaired and must be replaced, the new fence should reflect the appearance and detailing of the original.

Base new front fencing on evidence. Use historical and photographic evidence of historic fencing styles, and the advice of this guideline.

Front fencing in heritage areas should:

- Be simple, and not highly decorative.
- Enable a view of the house or building and garden from the street.
- Match the era of the house or building.
- Have a maximum height of 1.2m. Where there is a historic precedent, particularly in Goolwa and harsher coastal settings, brush or stone fencing up to 1.5m may be appropriate.
- Avoid preventing views of the house or building and garden due to height or design. For example, solid fences such as metal panels or slats, are not appropriate for a front fence.
- Not be elaborate or ornate. For example, fences of masonry piers and cast-iron were rarely used in the Alexandrina district, even along the front boundary of banks and mansions.

Side and rear fences in heritage areas should:

- Be no taller than 1.8m and simple in style.
- Constructed of stone, timber palings, or corrugated metal sheeting on timber posts.

Heritage Fencing Town by Town

Strathalbyn

In Strathalbyn early front fencing from the 1850s matched the simplicity of the built form and included local stone walls, timber post and rail, or timber post and wire.

> The town is known for a particular version of the post and rail fence where the horizontal beams are turned 45 degrees, presenting an angled face to the street, known as the 'quarter turn' or 'diamond' style.

Hedging was also used to mark property boundaries, often in combination with the more transparent fence types. Where verandahs extended to the street line they were enclosed with a fence of timber pickets.

From the 1870s, as architectural styles became more ornate, timber picket fences were introduced. Then, in the twentieth century, with emergence of the bungalow style of dwelling, came front fences of timber with woven or 'Emu' wire mesh; galvanized tube frames with chain wire mesh, and low masonry fences, with bricks typically selected to match those used on the associated dwelling.



Post and rail fence with hedge, Waveney, Strathalbyn c.1956. Photo: Rob Fairweather.

Milang

Milang evolved from the 1850s into the 1920s and a range of simple architectural styles are present in the town. Many properties had no front fencing and others use landscaping to delineate boundaries. Overall fencing is low and unobtrusive.

Complementary front fencing types in Milang include timber post and wire, timber picket, and hedges.

The shacks along Paddlesteamer Drive adjacent Lake Alexandrina form a distinct precinct where fencing between shacks should be avoided.



Wire fence with timber posts, Milang. State Library of South Australia PRG 1258/2/1067



Timber picket fence, Milang Church of Christ. State Library of South Australia PRG 1258/2/1081.

Goolwa

> As one of Australia's most important river ports from the 1850's to the 1880s, the Goolwa township flourished, and domestic, civic, and commercial structures from this period remain. Fencing was simple in design, and this continues to be the preferred visual outcome.

The Wharf area features former government buildings and structures in an open park-like setting overlooking the wharf and Murray River. Ideal fencing types in this area are timber post and rail, or timber post and wire.

Cadell Street, running through Goolwa's centre towards the river, contains commercial and civic buildings. Little Scotland, located to the south of the town centre, reflects the dense allotment pattern accommodating cottages that housed early Scottish settlers. In both areas low walls of local stone may be used for front fencing, as can simple timber pickets, or timber post and rail.

More generally across Goolwa, front fences are either absent or of a low, open style and in addition to the above can include timber posts and rails with woven wire, and hedges.

Where verandahs extend to the street line they may be enclosed with a fence of timber pickets.



Stone fence, Anglican Church, Goolwa



Timber picket fence, Goolwa. Photo: Alexandrina Library.

Middleton

Middleton was developed from the 1850s and features small cottages, civic, industrial and retail buildings built of local stone. Front fencing of simple timber pickets, or a local stone wall, of 1.2 m height, are appropriate choices for places of heritage value.



Timber picket fence, Middleton Methodist Church. State Library of South Australia B 256.

Port Elliot

Built form in Port Elliot includes styles from the 1850s through to the 1920s. Selection of fence materials and style to match the building style ensures a complementary result.

Simple front fencing types such as timber post and wire, and timber post and rail suit the earliest styles, with timber pickets, woven or 'Emu' wire mesh, and hedges emerging in the later nineteenth century. In the twentieth century, as in other towns, low masonry front fences repeating the building materials and details of the bungalow style dwellings emerged.

Horseshoe Bay is notable as a largely public space where there is little fencing, and where present, it is low and open in nature, enabling views.



Woven Wire 'Emu' Fence, Saint Jude's Church, Port Elliot. State Library of South Australia B 13536.

Frequently Asked Questions

Ask about grants

Your project may be eligible for a Heritage Grant of up to $2,500!

Alexandrina Council Heritage Grants are available annually, and could contribute to the cost of your new fence. For more information, visit **alexandrina.sa.gov.au/local-heritage-grant**

Do I need to lodge a Development Application for a fence?

If your property is subject to a State Heritage Place Overlay, State Heritage Area Overlay, Local Heritage Place Overlay, and/or Historic Area Overlay, you may need to lodge a Development Application for a fence. Before proceeding please contact Council's Development Assessment team to confirm whether your proposed fence will require a Development Application.

How do I lodge a Development Application?

All Development Applications are made online on the PlanSA portal: **plan.sa.gov.au/development_applications**

If your property is affected by a State Heritage Place Overlay or a State Heritage Area Overlay, your Development Application for a fence may require a referral to Heritage SA.

For an outline of Development Application fees, please visit the PlanSA website.

Where can I go for further advice?

Contact **Council's Development Assessment team** on **8555 7000** or visit **alexandrina.sa.gov.au/planning** for:

- advice about the information required for your Development Application.
- to be put in touch with our Heritage Advisor for specific advice about fence styles and materials.

Contact the **Department of Environment and Water (Heritage SA)** on **08 8372 7521** or visit **environment.sa.gov.au/topics/heritage** for:

- advice and information about places listed on the State Heritage Register, and in the Goolwa State Heritage Area.

Did you know?

Your new fence may be eligible for a Heritage Award in the Heritage Gardens and Fencing Category!

For further information and to nominate, please visit **alexandrina.sa.gov.au/heritageawards**



Woven wire fence, Strathalbyn. Photo: Rob Fairweather.

Alexandrina Council
11 Cadell Street, Goolwa
PO Box 21, Goolwa, SA, 5214

alexandrina.sa.gov.au
08 8555 7000
alex@alexandrina.sa.gov.au