

Soil & Water Management on Large Building & Construction Sites



What is this?

Sediment and erosion control measures are typically required for subdivisions and larger sites. The construction of subdivisions involves breaking land into smaller lots and installation of related services (roads, water, sewerage, power etc.). Due to the scale of land clearance and excavation, subdivision construction activities can cause excessive erosion and sediment loads in runoff, compared with the disturbance of building single house lots.

Why is it important?

Sediment generated from erosion on building and construction sites can be a major source of pollution to local waterways. Follow the practices discussed in this fact sheet and you will minimise erosion and control sediment run-off from your site, meet your legal requirements and help protect our waterways.

WHAT DO I NEED TO DO?

All works undertaken during subdivision construction are normally 'controlled' through the principle contractor and site manager. This means the risks of erosion can be readily managed through appropriate guidance and supervision. Compared with the allotment building phase where there are different building contractors and subcontractors present on any given allotment it is easier to manage erosion and prevent sediment runoff at the subdivision construction phase.

Submit a Soil and Water Management Plan:

Subdivisions or activities that create greater than 250 m² of ground disturbance may need to submit a drawn Soil and Water Management Plan (SWMP) to council as a requirement of their planning permit (see Fact Sheet 3).

On the SWMP clearly define and document who is responsible for maintaining the sediment and erosion control measures (installed during the subdivision phase) that will be used in the allotment building phase.

When designing subdivision works:

- 1) Ensure that the subdivision conforms to the natural limitations presented by the topography and the soil so as to reduce the potential for soil erosion.
- 2) Make sure that land clearing is only being undertaken in conjunction with the development of each stage.
- 3) Develop the site in increments of workable size such that adequate sediment and erosion control measures can be provided as the subdivision progresses. The smallest practical area of land should be exposed at any one period of time.
- 4) Coordinate the sediment and erosion control measures with the different subdivision construction phases.
- 5) Limit soil exposure to the shortest feasible period of time.
- 6) Keep removed topsoil for respreading over the developed area.
- 7) Retain and protect natural vegetation wherever practical.
- 8) Install larger sediment controls i.e. sediment basins if site conditions are suitable.
- 9) Manage wind-borne erosion.

Fact Sheet 1

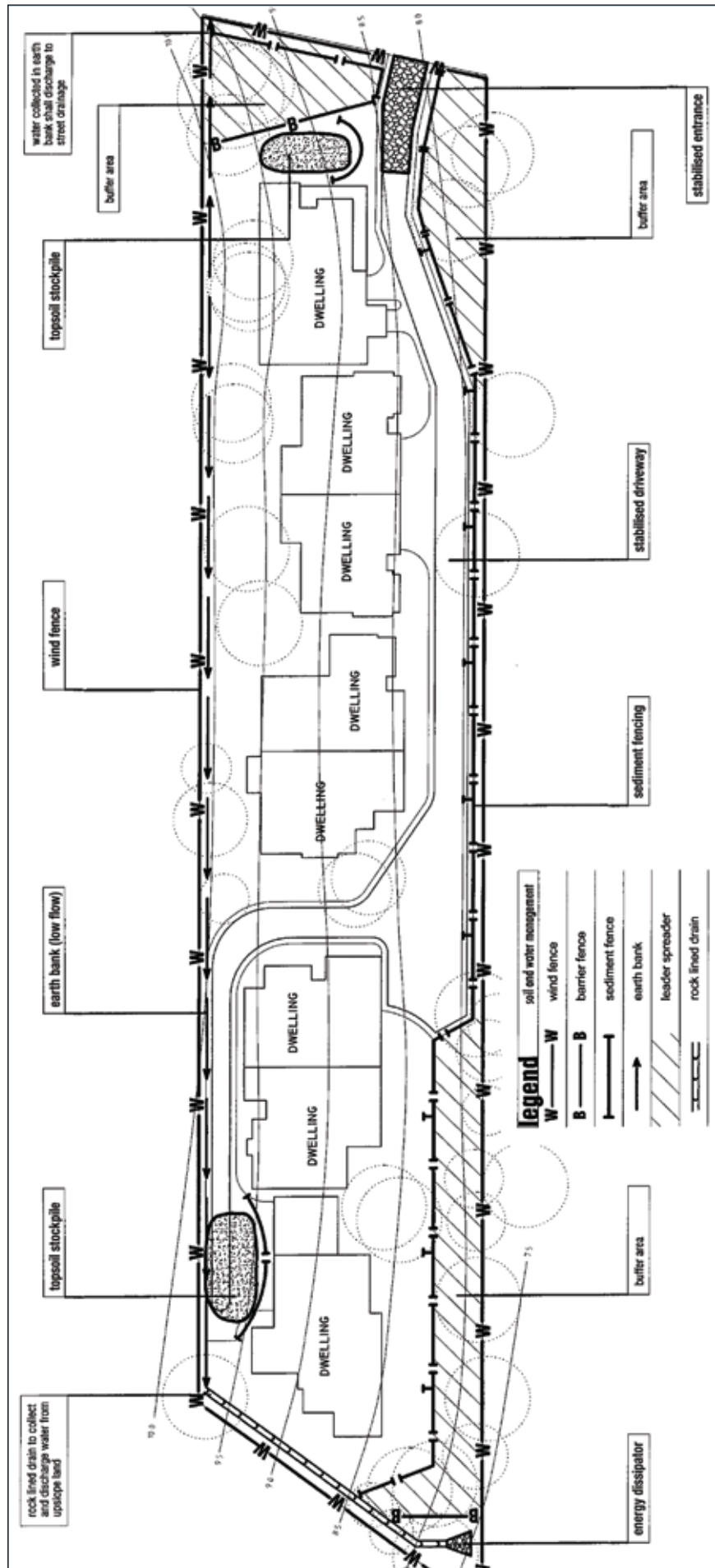


Figure 1A: SWMP for a subdivision.

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15. Protection of Stormwater Pits
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Remember:

Everyone working on building and construction sites has a responsibility to prevent pollution. If you do have an accident and pollution occurs you are required by law to notify the site supervisor. If the site supervisor cannot be contacted, workers should immediately notify the local council so they can work with you to minimise any harm to the environment.

Acknowledgement:

Figure 1A after Landcom 2004 "Soils & Construction Volume 1 Managing Urban Stormwater (4th edition)". Some of the text in this brochure has been obtained and modified from the Brisbane City Council 2008 "Subdivision and Development Guidelines".

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