SECTION 6 - DESCRIPTIONS OF OCCUPATION

6.1 Fences - General

With the increasing variety of fences being constructed in recent years, it is evident there is a need to introduce some uniformity in fence descriptions which stand on or adjacent to property boundaries. One of the surveyor’s responsibilities is to clearly and completely describe fences as they exist at the time of survey. In the Surveyors (Cadastral Surveys) Regulations 1985, the certificate to be provided by a Licensed Surveyor for an abstract of field notes requires that adopted boundaries and related features are correctly represented and described.

Whilst maximum uniformity is desirable, factual description remains paramount. For this purpose brand names are not considered factual, and are to be avoided. In the description of fences a certain amount of compromise is necessary, but it is essential that all points measured to are clearly described, so that another surveyor can at some later date positively identify occupation which has remained from the time of the initial survey. It is equally important to avoid such lengthy and complex descriptions that the document becomes too cluttered.

6.1.1 Examples of Fences

A series of photographs illustrating a number of variations in fence construction is included in this Section. This sequence is not intended to be exhaustive, but is included with descriptions and appropriate abbreviations to provide an overall base for uniformity of description in Victoria. Some types of fences used for purposes other than boundary fencing have been intentionally avoided. Each fence is given its generally accepted description along with an appropriate abbreviation.

6.1.2 Abbreviations associated with Fencing

The abbreviations listed here, with two exceptions, have been abstracted from Section 9 of the Survey Practice Handbook - Part 1, and are to be used on survey documents where appropriate:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>asbestos cement</td>
<td>AC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>barb</td>
<td>BB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bluestone</td>
<td>BSTONE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>brick</td>
<td>BK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chain wire mesh</td>
<td>CWM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chemically treated concrete</td>
<td>CT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>concrete block</td>
<td>CONC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>corrugated</td>
<td>CB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>corrugated galvanized iron</td>
<td>CORR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fence</td>
<td>CGI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>galvanized wrought iron</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>height</td>
<td>HT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hinged joint</td>
<td>H JOINT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>horizontal board</td>
<td>HORIZ BD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>masonry</td>
<td>MSRY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>netting</td>
<td>NETT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ornamental</td>
<td>ORN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>paling</td>
<td>PAL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>picket</td>
<td>PIC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plain</td>
<td>PL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plinth</td>
<td>PL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>post</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>post and rail</td>
<td>P &amp; R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>post and wire</td>
<td>P &amp; W</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ringlock</td>
<td>RLOCK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>round</td>
<td>RD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sheet</td>
<td>SH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>split</td>
<td>SP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>square</td>
<td>SQ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>steel</td>
<td>STL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vertical board</td>
<td>VERT BD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>weld mesh</td>
<td>WELD M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wire</td>
<td>W</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wood</td>
<td>WD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wrought iron</td>
<td>WI</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.2 Fence Descriptions

Fence descriptions required on plans of survey and all abstracts of field notes should include reference to the following characteristics, where appropriate:

- Fencing materials including posts
- Age
- Condition
- Height.

6.2.1 Fences and Walls

A fence, by definition, “is an enclosure or barrier, e.g., a hedge, wall, railing etc. along the boundary of any place which it is desired to defend from intruders.”

In cadastral surveying, the term “fence” has many years of acceptance as applied to any freestanding barrier purporting to define a boundary of a parcel of land.

Also by definition, a wall can be freestanding or part of a structure, and as a consequence, when a high masonry fence is constructed along a boundary, it may conceptually be termed a wall.

To avoid confusion in boundary definition, the term “wall” should be reserved for that part of a boundary marked by a wall where that wall is part of a structure built for other purposes in addition to boundary demarcation.

An exception applies to retaining walls which should be fully described.

6.2.2 Fence Posts

As with fences in general, posts and more particularly corner posts, should include reference to the following characteristics:

- Type of Material and Shape (cross-section)
- Age
- Condition.

6.2.2.1 Type of Material and Shape

By tradition, fence post materials are only specified when the material is other than wood. This custom
grew over a long period prior to the introduction of chemically impregnated pine and hardwood posts and the advent of creosote treated posts. With these treatments giving wood much improved durability outdoors, wooden posts and other fencing materials treated in this way should be described as a chemically treated post, (CTP).

By definition, a post is placed in the ground to perform two basic functions:
• To support and space the wire and other components
• To provide resistance to overturning.

The star steel post of Y-section when driven into the ground should be described as a post, and NOT a dropper or picket.

Droppers are not driven into the ground, as their prime purpose is to space the wire component of the fence, transfer the shock loads from one wire to all wires, and act as a visual barrier.

The cross-sectional shape of posts is usually self-evident when portrayed on field notes, viz. Round, square or rectangular. A representative drawing of split and sawn posts can obviate the need for written description of these features. The use of Table 6.1 is recommended.

### TABLE 6.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Post</th>
<th>Recommended Description</th>
<th>Symbol</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wooden post normally Associated with paling Fences</td>
<td>Sawn Post</td>
<td>☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wooden post that in cross-section is a Segment of a circle</td>
<td>Split Post</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wooden post of similar nature to wooden railway sleeper</td>
<td>Hewn Post</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steel supporting post Associated with chain Wire mesh fences</td>
<td>Round Steel Post</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Star steel post of Y-shaped cross-section</td>
<td>Star Post</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corner of concrete, brick, stone etc.</td>
<td>Self Explanatory</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Round, square or rectangular posts of any material</td>
<td>Self Explanatory</td>
<td>☐ ☐ ☐ ☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 6.2.2.2 Age

An indication of age in so far as it can be determined, is often useful and equally often, difficult to determine. In general, the posts can be described as:

OLD : 20 years plus
RECENT : 1 - 5 years
NEW : 1 year
(No adjective): of indeterminate age

Where contentious land ownership or boundary location is involved, a deeper investigation of age must be considered in a Licensed Surveyor's Report. See Section 7.10.

#### 6.2.3 Condition

If in sound condition, a corner post should be noted by shape, size, verticality or otherwise, placement of nail or any other marker therein and where, wiring through or round, signs of new wires having been added or tightened, replacement of stays and so on.

If not sound, additional indication of the condition of the post should be given by use of such terms as:

Remains of
Leaning
Burnt

#### 6.2.3 Other Fencing Materials

A wide range of fencing materials is illustrated in this Section.

The terminology of materials used in rural fencing now has a widely accepted coherence in the fencing industry. As a consequence there now appears to be a sound basis for defining some of the more usual types of fencing used in rural areas. In urban areas, terminology of the more frequently used materials has a higher level of common acceptance and will not be enlarged on to any extent.

#### 6.2.3.1 Netting

This term should be reserved for a woven wire hexagonal mesh made from soft wire. It is mainly utilised as a means of excluding vermin e.g. rabbits, dingoes, etc. For many years, it provided the base material for the construction of rabbit or vermin proof fences. Wire netting usually has a mesh size of 25mm or 50mm. Deer netting is now available with a mesh size of 75mm.

#### 6.2.3.2 Ringlock

This material takes its name from the ring joint (ringlock) used for securing rigid vertical wires (pickets) to the horizontal line wires, to form rectangular apertures for stock fencing. Ringlock is not a brand name.

#### 6.2.3.3 Hinged Joint

In this type of prefabricated fencing, the picket wires are permanently but flexibly joined to the horizontal line wires. See Fig. 6.1.
6.2.3.4 Weld Mesh
This derives its name from joint welded squarely intersecting wires. It is made with a variety of gauges of wire with the heavier gauges being used for boundary fencing.

6.2.3.5 Chain Wire Mesh
In the manufacture of this product, wires are regularly kinked and interlocked to give the appearance of a diamond pattern. It has been widely and erroneously known by the brand name “Cyclone”, for many years.

6.2.3.6 Wrought Iron
Much of what is accepted as wrought iron, is in fact welded steel. As this description has such wide usage, it should be retained.

6.2.3.7 Ornamental Metalwork
Some ornamental designs in various types of metal which do not lend themselves to simple description, are used for fencing. For these, “Ornamental steelwork/ cast aluminium work/ etc.” should be used.

6.2.3.8 Composite Fences in Urban Areas
As a convention for descriptive purposes, the base component which is in contact with the ground should always be mentioned first. e.g. Brick base with brush, Bluestone with wrought iron.

6.2.3.9 Age
See Section 6.2.2.2.

6.2.3.10 Condition
If not in sound condition, an indication of the condition of the fence should be given by use of such terms as:

- Irregular
- Incomplete
- Remains of
- Leaning
- Burnt
- Temporary

6.2.3.11 Height
Where applicable, the notation “High” or “Low” should be used. A general rule for this purpose is that “High” is head-height or above, and “Low” is knee-height or below.
1. Split post and rail
2. Split post and rail and ringlock
3. Morticed posts, ringlock and wire
4. Post and 1 rail, ringlock & wire
5. Irregular post and wire and rail
6. Stone rubble, star posts and wire
7. Packed stone, star posts and wire

8. Half-round posts and rails

9. Concrete and star posts and ringlock

10. Post, star post, ringlock and wire

11. Post and wire and wooden droppers

12. Grooved droppers, netting and wire
13. Concrete and star posts and netting

14. Concrete posts, wooden droppers, netting and wire. Note round corner post and split timber stay

15. High chain wire mesh and round posts

16. Weld mesh and steel posts

17. Ornamental wire and sawn posts

18. Ornamental stone
19. Stone veneer

20. Stone base with sawn posts & horizontal boards

21. Bluestone plinth

22. High bluestone

23. High concrete block

24. Rendered brick with concrete balustrade
25. Plain and ornamental concrete brick

26. Brick with wrought iron panels

27. Brick with paling panels

28. Brick base with brush

29. Rock base with ti-tree

30. Basket weave asbestos cement
31. Vertical corrugated asbestos cement

32. Corrugated galvanized iron

33. Corrugated ripple iron

34. Ornamental steel sheet

35. Bluestone pitchers with wrought iron pickets

36. Cast aluminium pickets
37. Sawn posts with tubing panels

38. Steel post and steel guardrail

39. Vertical board

40. Paling and high paling

41. Diagonal open boards (chemically treated)

42. Round posts and high horizontal boards (chemically treated)
43. Railway sleepers on edge

44. Heavy sawn post and rail

45. Ornamental picket

46. Picket

47. Open picket

48. Low open paling