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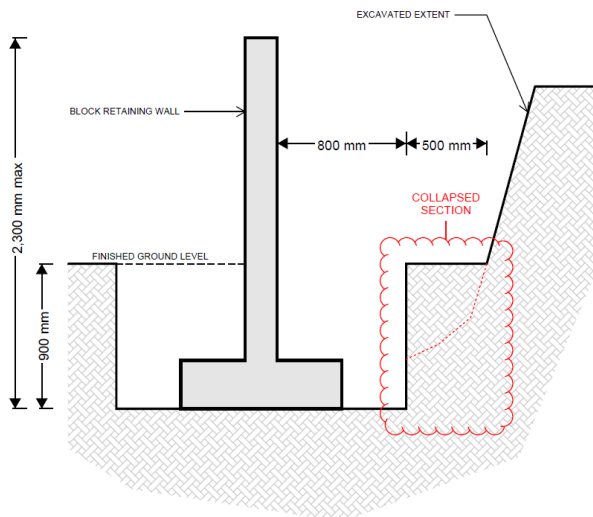


Outline the Scene	Incident	Partial trench collapse
	Subject	Section of clay dislodged
	Incident Date	07/04/2025
	Business Unit	Fletcher Living - Central Branch

What happened



On site we have a ground level difference of 1.7m at the highest point stepping down at each lot. The retaining design is a poured block wall and concrete foundation that is 900mm below ground level. The agreed methodology was to excavate a 1m bench then battered to an angle of approx. 45° and cover with PVC to protect from weather that may contribute to collapse of the soils. Due to space constraints, a section was only benched for 0.5m and not battered to the same extent. During construction there was a heavy downpour of rain on Friday and workers were informed not to access the trench area. Upon returning to site on Monday, we observed that a section of the benching had detached and slipped into the trench.



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We believe all injuries are preventable, here are some questions to help us learn:



- Due to delays, we did not have access to the top section of the site, which required us to alter our original benching and battering methodology. Should we have considered an alternative shoring method to accommodate the reduced benching and battering?
- Did we adequately account for the surcharge imposed by activities or equipment on the upper section of the site?
- Could extending the polythene sheeting have helped reduce water ingress beneath the cover?
- As this type of work falls outside our usual operations, do we possess the necessary expertise and experience to effectively identify and manage the associated risks?
- When team members are on leave, is there a clear process in place to ensure others know how to respond in the event of an incident?
- Workers were verbally instructed to avoid the area prior to the heavy rainfall. How can we ensure that all personnel entering the site are made aware of such restrictions in a consistent and documented manner?

For more information, please contact;

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