



CARPORTS AND GARAGES

What are carports and garages?

Carports and garages are defined in the [Residential Design Codes Volume 1](#) as the following:

Carport: “An unenclosed structure designed to accommodate one or more motor vehicles and being without a door.”

Garage: “Any roofed structure, other than a carport, designed to accommodate one or more motor vehicles.”

In April 2024 the definition of carport was changed to no-longer allow for garage doors. This means you may see some existing carports with garage doors, but these would now be assessed as garages.

Will I need development approval?

Garages and Carports that satisfy all of the Deemed-to-Comply standards of the City's [Policy 7.1.1 - Built Form](#) and the Residential Design Codes Volume 1 do not require development (planning) approval.

As most carports are located within the street setback area of a house, generally planning approval is required.

Development approval is always required for carports and garages on properties which are heritage protected places.

A building permit is also always for carports and garages.

The following information sheet provides **general advice** on the standards and objectives in the City's Built Form Policy and Residential Design Codes Volume 1 which apply to common carport and garage proposals within the Residential Built Form Area.

Please note this advice may not be applicable to your property, for example:

- You are within a Character Retention Area
- You are within a Heritage Area or are a Heritage Protected Place
- You are within a Town Centre, Mixed Use, Transit Corridor or Activity Corridor Built Form area

Where can I locate a carport or garage on my property?

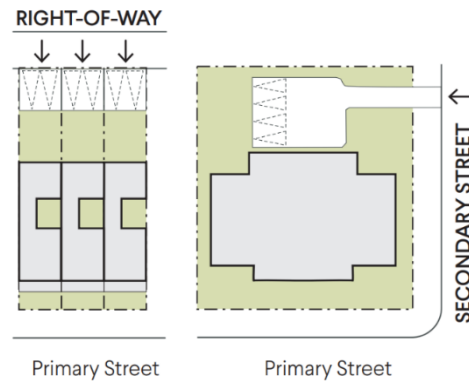
Where possible, carports and garages should be located at the rear or side of your property. Access should be taken from a right of way (laneway) or secondary street where this is available.

The reasons for this standard are so that:

- The street will be less dominated by carports, garages and parked vehicles, improving streetscape character and visual amenity.
- There will be fewer crossovers and driveways and so more useable space for street trees and kerbside parking for visitors; and
- There will be fewer conflicting movements of vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists, improving safety.

Carports or garages are generally only supported to the primary street (the main street which the front door of your house generally faces) where your property does not have a right-of-way or secondary street available. Other considerations include whether your house has existing vehicle access to the primary street and whether there is a significant precedent along the primary street of other houses with the same situation.

The diagram below shows where a primary street, secondary street and right of way are typically located in relation to your house.



What do I need to consider when designing my carport or garage?

When designing your carport there are a range of factors you need to consider, this includes location (as detailed above), setbacks, width, design, parking space dimensions and sight lines.

Further information is provided on each of these considerations below.

Setbacks:

This includes the setbacks to the street or right of way as well as to the side (lot) boundaries. This is measured between the street, right of way or side boundary to the carport posts or garage walls.

The reasons for these standards are so that the visual impact of carports and garages on the street and neighbouring properties are reduced, space and surveillance is maintained between the house and the street to enhance a sense of community and safety, and so that a more attractive setting is provided for the existing house.

Rights of Way:

For rights of way, the minimum setback standard is generally 1 metre.

Carports or garages may also need to setback further to allow for 6 metres of vehicle manoeuvring space in behind them. For example, if the right of way is only 4 metres wide then the carport or garage should be setback 2 metres from the right of way boundary. This is because the Australian Standards (AS2890.1) need 6.0m of reversing space to allow sufficient room for turning in-and-out of the carport.

Please note that some rights of way are subject to future widening. New development isn't permitted within these future widening areas and the setback standard of 1 metre will be taken from the future lot boundary after the widening area is considered. To find out whether this impacts your property, chat to one of the City's Urban Planners on the contact details below.

Secondary Street:

For secondary streets, the minimum setback standard is generally 1.5 metres where your property is zoned R35 or less or 1.0 metre where your property is zoned R40 or higher. You can find out our zoning on the City's [Intramaps](#) system.

An additional setback standard applies for a garages, being that they should be setback a minimum of 0.5 metres behind the dwelling alignment. The dwelling alignment is generally the front wall of your house and excludes any porch, portico, verandah, balcony or similar open structure.



Primary Street:

For primary streets, the minimum setback standard is generally based on the average setback (measured to the nearest wall) of the five adjoining properties on both sides of your property.

This means that generally any carport located forward of the front wall of your house will not satisfy the applicable setback standard to the primary street.

In this situation, carports are generally only supported where there is no alternative access option available, where the carport setback and width is consistent with other approved carports in the same street or section of street, and where the design, setback and width of the carport does not detract from the appearance of the existing house and the street.

An additional setback standard applies for garages, being that they should be setback a minimum of 0.5 metres behind the dwelling alignment. The dwelling alignment is generally the front wall of your house and excludes any porch, portico, verandah, balcony or similar open structure.

Garages fronting the primary street generally won't be supported by the City where they are forward of the dwelling alignment.

Side (Lot) Boundaries:

For **carports**, the minimum setback standard to side boundaries is 1 metre where their length is 14 metres or less and their wall height is 3.5 metres or less. Where carports are longer or higher the setback standards increase as per Table 2a of the Residential Design Codes Volume 1.

Carports are permitted to have a nil setback where:

- They are not more than 10m in length; and
- Are behind the primary street setback; and
- The overall height of the structure is not more than 2.7m in height.

The City may support carports with a reduced setback where it can be demonstrated they won't impact the amenity of the adjoining property. Potential impacts on amenity include building bulk, direct sun access, ventilation and loss of privacy.

For **garages**, they can be built up to the side boundary within certain standards. This is a maximum height of 3.5 metres and a maximum length of two-thirds of the side boundary (with this including both the garage wall and any other existing/new walls built up to the boundary).

The minimum setback standard to side boundaries is 1 metre where their length is 14 metres or less and their wall height is 3.5 metres or less. Where garages are longer or higher the setback standards increase as per Table 2a of the Residential Design Codes Volume 1.

Width:

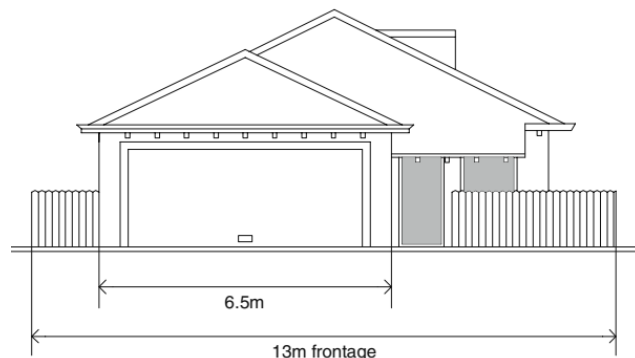
This is the width of the carport or garage facing the street or the right of way.

The reason for these standards are so that carports or garages don't occupy a large portion of a property frontage where they can have a visual impact on the existing house and the character of the street.

For carports, the width standard is that they are not to exceed 50% the width of the lot (the front or rear boundary of your property) or a width of 6 metres, whichever is the lesser.

For garages, the width standard is that they are not to exceed 50% the width of the lot. For lots less than 10 metre wide, the width standard is a maximum of 4 metres for garages.

The garage width includes the garage door and its supporting structures. The diagram below shows how this is measured.



Design:

This includes style, roof design, colours and materials.

For the design of garages and carports, the standard is that they should match the existing house's predominant colour, scale and materials. They should also be complementary and subservient the existing house.

The reason for these standards are so that when there are extensions or additions to an existing house, the materials, colours and the design of the carport or garage is compatible with the house and considerate of the character of the street, reducing the visual impact of the structure.

There isn't a set design that a carport or garage should follow, and the following should be considered to decide what design is most appropriate for your property and house:

- Whether the roof is pitched or a concealed (flat) roof, and whether this complements the existing house.

For example, a pitched roof might match the existing house's roof and the street, but it also may block views to character or design features on the existing house.

- Whether the colours and materials tie into or complement the existing house.

For example, the colours and materials of the existing house could be used in the carport or garage, or these could be different to the existing house with a high-quality finish that complements the existing house.

- Whether the carport or garage respects the design features of the existing house.

For example, this could mean replicating the detailing and styling of the existing house in the garage or carport design, or it could mean locating and designing the carport or garage so it doesn't block or remove any key details or architectural features of the existing house, for example the traditional verandah or gable roof feature.

- Whether the location and size is subservient to the existing house.

For example, it may only be appropriate to have a single width carport or garage, or for the carport and garage to be located to the side of the property rather than the centre so that it doesn't dominate or block the appearance of the existing house.

For carports, the following additional design standards apply:

- The carports must not obstruct views between the street and the windows of house

This can be achieved by only providing slim posts or piers to the carport and not having any solid walls to the front, side or rear. Under the 2024 changes to the R Codes Volume 1, a carport may not have a garage door, even if visually permeable. If a garage door is proposed, the application would be assessed as a garage.

- The carports shall allow light and ventilation to the windows of the house.

This can be achieved by providing separation between the carport and the house to allow light and ventilation to the windows of the house.

The following are examples of carports showing how all the above design considerations have been applied:



Parking Space Dimensions

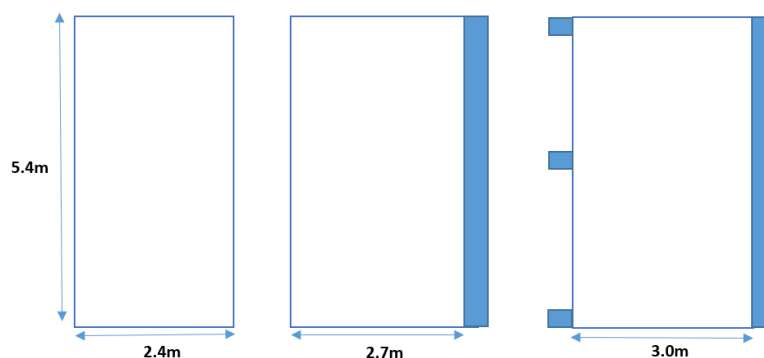
This the minimum dimensions/requirements to accommodate vehicles and to allow enough space for their movement. These are from the Australian Standards (AS2890.1).

The reason for these standards are so that there is enough space for a vehicle of any size, belonging to any current or future occupants, to easily park within a carport or garage and to have space for the doors to open.

It is also so that there is enough space for a vehicle to easily and safely move between the street or right of way and the carport or garage. This is to ensure that a vehicle can enter and exit in one movement without requiring the vehicle to make multiple turns or for the vehicle to move on an angle around structures or verge infrastructure. These situations can create a safety risk for pedestrians, cyclists and other vehicles, and can mean that parking areas aren't easily and safely accessible for a vehicle of any size and for any current or future occupants.

Single Vehicle Minimum Dimensions

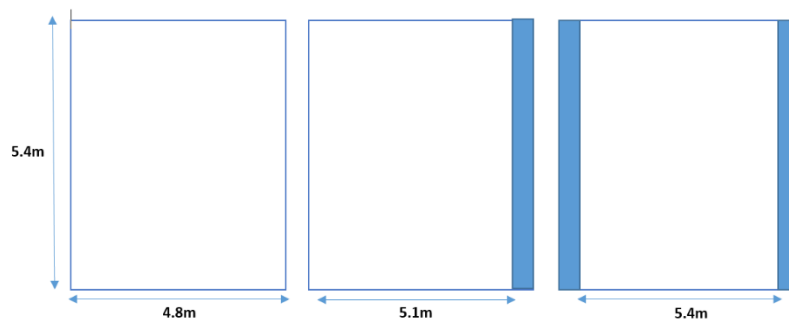
- Minimum Length: 5.4 metres
- Minimum Width: 2.4 metres
- As shown in the diagram below, 0.3 metres needs to be added to the width of the parking area if there are any structures (posts / walls / fences) adjacent to that side of the parking bay. This is to allow space for the vehicle doors to open.



Vehicle parking bays that don't satisfy the minimum dimensions won't be supported. Providing a carport or garage that is significantly larger than these dimensions may also mean that it wouldn't satisfy the design considerations above.

Two Vehicles Minimum Dimensions

- Minimum Length: 5.4 metres (side by side) or 10.8 metres (tandem arrangement)
- Minimum Width: 5.4 metres (side by side) or 2.4 metres (tandem arrangement)
- As shown in the diagram below, 0.3 metres needs to be added to the width of the parking area if there are any structures (posts / walls / fences) adjacent to that side of the parking bay. This is to allow space for the vehicle doors to open.



Vehicle parking bays that don't satisfy the minimum dimensions won't be supported. Providing a carport or garage that is significantly larger than these dimensions may also mean that it wouldn't satisfy the design considerations above.

Manoeuvring Space Requirements – Streets

Vehicle parking bays need to be designed and located so that enough space is provided for a vehicle to safely move between the street and the carport or garage.

To do this, carport or garages and their associated driveways and crossovers need to have minimum setbacks from the following:

- Side Boundary: 0.3 metres (R Codes Volume 1 Part C) 0.5 metres (R Codes Volume 1 Part B) – measured from the edge of the driveway or crossover to your property's side boundary.
- Street Tree: 1.0 metre – measured from the outside/trunk of the tree.
- Power Pole: 0.5 metres – measured from the outside of the pole.
- Street Corner: 6.0 metres – measured from the tangent point of the street/kerb as shown in Figure 3.7b of the R Codes – Volume 1:

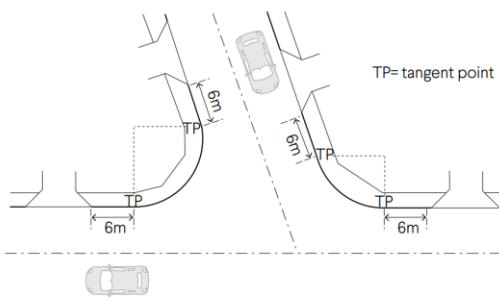


Figure 3.7b Driveways set back from street corner

A driveway is the portion of the vehicle access way located between the carport or garage and the front boundary of your property. A crossover is the portion of the vehicle access way located between the front boundary of your property and the street that crosses over the footpath and verge. Crossovers require a separate approval from the City.

The width of the carport or garage parking bay/s, the driveway and the crossover needs to match. This to make sure that the vehicle/s move across the footpath and between the parking bay and street in a straight direction.

Vehicle parking bays that are located fully or partially behind street trees or power poles, too close to a street corner, or that require a vehicle to move on an angle or around structures, generally won't be supported (regardless of whether there are other examples in the street).

Manoeuvring Space Requirements – Rights of Way

Vehicle parking bays need to be designed and located so that enough space is provided for a vehicle to safely move between the right of way and the carport or garage in a single movement.

To achieve this, a minimum of 6 metres of vehicle movement space needs to be provided directly in front of the carport or garage and publicly available (i.e. within your property or within the public right of way).

For example, if the right of way is only 4 metres wide, the carport or garage needs to be setback 2 metres from the right of way boundary within your property to allow a total vehicle movement space of 6 metres.

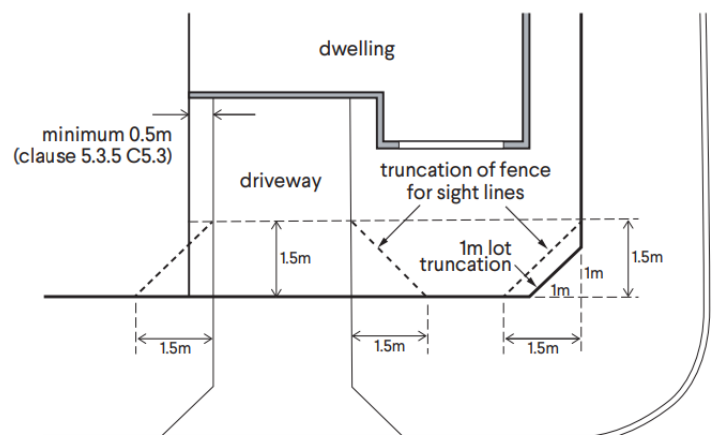
Sight Lines

There are requirements to allow a clear line of sight for vehicles and pedestrians when moving between the street and the carport or garage. The reason for this standard is so that visibility and safety is provided when a vehicle is moving between the street and your property and crossing over the footpath, allowing enough space and time for a vehicle and pedestrian to clearly see each other and to reduce the risk of an accident.

This is achieved in the form of a 1.5 metre x 1.5 metre sight lines truncation area. As shown in the diagram below, this is located within your property and is measured out from the point where the driveway meets the front boundary of your property.

To increase safety for drivers and pedestrians, no solid walls or structures higher than 0.75 metres are permitted within this 1.5m x 1.5m truncation area. A single pier/post may also be permitted within this area with a maximum width and depth of 0.4 metres.

For rights of way, this sight lines truncation area can be reduced to 1.0 metre x 1.0 metre through a development approval.



As shown in the diagram to the left, sightlines apply to adjoining properties as well as the development site.

What information is needed for a Development Application?

Please refer to the relevant Development Application Checklist on our website [here](#).

How long does the Development Application process take?

The City has 60 days to make a decision on the application or 90 days if the application needs community consultation.

The *Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulation 2015* states that applications may take longer than 90 days where it is agreed to in writing between the City and the applicant.

How long do I have to build my carport or garage?

Development approvals are valid for a period of 2 years. The construction of the carport or garage needs to be substantially commenced within this period.



Do I need a building permit?

Applying for development approval and a building permit are two separate processes, both controlled under different legislation. **A building permit is required for all carport and garage developments.**

A building permit ensures that the building is structurally safe and complies with the relevant building legislation.

If you would like further information on the building permit process and requirements, please contact the City on 9273 6000 or visit our website.

What if I have more questions?

The City is unable to confirm if a proposal will be supported in the absence of a development application being submitted

However, you can discuss development proposals and preliminary plans with the City's Urban Planners. Urban Planners can provide general advice on proposals and the information needed to lodge a complete application.

A Duty Planner is available to talk to at the City's Administration Office Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 5.00pm, in person or on the phone.

Phone: 9273 6000

Email: mail@vincent.wa.gov.au

Address: Main Administration Building, 244 Vincent Street, Leederville 6007, WA

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