

Draft Basement Controls for Low-Rise Housing

Canterbury-Bankstown
Development Control Plan 2023

November 2025

CANTERBURY  BANKSTOWN



Acknowledgment of Country

The City of Canterbury Bankstown acknowledges the traditional country of the Darug (Darag, Dharug, Daruk and Dharuk) and the Eora peoples.

We recognise and respect their cultural heritage, beliefs and relationship with the land. We acknowledge that they are of continuing importance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples living today.

Council also acknowledges other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language groups in the City and works closely with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to advance reconciliation in the City.

We're committed to creating a liveable and loveable City for all our residents



Great Cities

We believe in creating vibrant, dynamic, and diverse communities that offer opportunities for people to connect, pursue their passions, and contribute to the world around them.



Naturally Green

We protect and prioritise nature in and around our city to enhance environmental sustainability and improve the quality of life for our residents.



Design Excellence

We encourage buildings, spaces, and objects that are both beautiful and practical, enhancing the beauty, accessibility, and safety of our built environment.



People First

We prioritise the needs, preferences, and aspirations of our community in all aspects of urban planning and design, creating supportive and enriching places people love.



Community

We engage with our community to ensure their needs and aspirations are reflected in the outcome, creating sustainable, resilient, vibrant, diverse, and inclusive places.



Sustainability

We seek designs that reduce negative impacts on the environment while also promoting social and economic well-being.



Net-Zero

We encourage our community to design buildings and places that produce as much renewable energy as they consume, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, lowering energy bills, and increasing resilience to environmental shocks and stresses.

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INTRODUCTION



Council is preparing new draft basement controls to address inconsistencies across the City.

Currently, planning provisions vary significantly: in some parts of the City, basements in low-rise housing are encouraged, while in others they are discouraged. This lack of consistency creates uncertainty for applicants, designers, planners and the broader community.

We also recognise that many residents value the flexibility to include basements in their homes. Basements can provide practical benefits such as parking and storage, as well as opportunities for additional living spaces including gyms, home offices or theatre rooms.

The intent of the proposed draft controls is to strike a balanced approach—managing the potential impacts of basement development while permitting their inclusion on appropriate sites. The draft controls aim to provide greater clarity and consistency in basement design and use, supporting both community aspirations and sound planning and design outcomes.



Basement parking in low-rise housing (Sydney, NSW).



AMENDMENT 1: DWELLING HOUSES IN THE FORMER CANTERBURY LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA



Canterbury-Bankstown Development Control Plan 2023 (Chapter 5.2, Section 2)

Add new basement controls to replace existing basement controls [2.5 (C5), 2.6 (C12d), 2.6 (C14)] as follows:

Basements

2.16 Basement Size

Objectives

- O1. To ensure the basement is well-designed and integrates into the overall design of the development.
- O2. To ensure the basement is subservient in size and scale to the dwelling house on the site.
- O3. To ensure the basement and earthworks do not have a detrimental impact on the environment, neighbouring properties and natural features on the site.

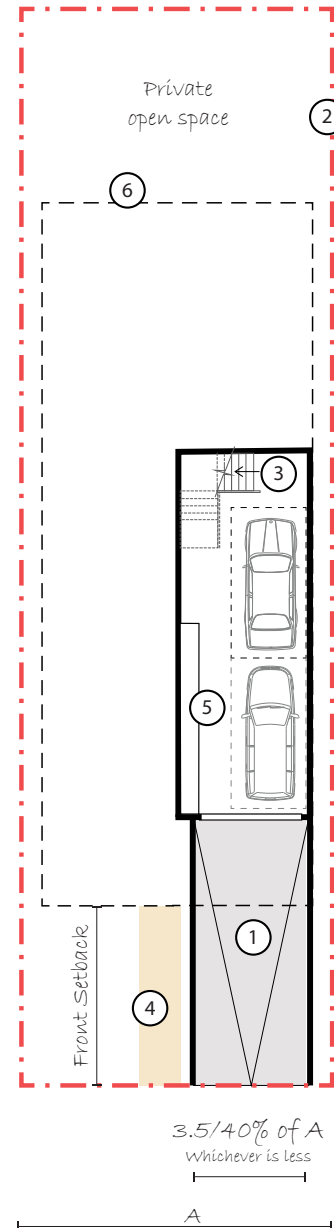
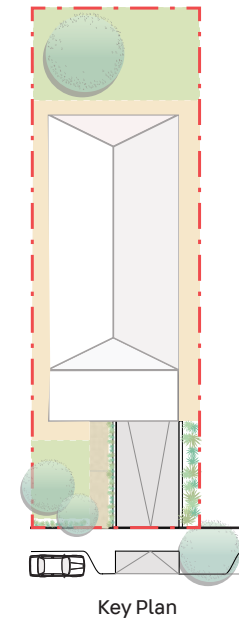


Figure 1.

Example of dwelling house where the basement (50m²) is providing parking.



LEGEND

- ① Ramp to Basement
- ② Lot Boundary
- ③ Internal Access
- ④ Pedestrian access
- ⑤ Storage area
- ⑥ Building Footprint



Controls

- C1. Development may propose a basement only where:
 - (a) the site has a minimum width of 7.5m at the front building line; and
 - (b) compliance with the Canterbury-Bankstown Local Environmental Plan 2023 (clause 6.2) can be demonstrated.
- C2. Where a basement is proposed, only one set of controls (C3 or C4) may apply, depending on whether the basement provides parking or not. These controls cannot be combined.
- C3. Where the basement is providing parking:
 - (a) the combined area of parking, storage, plant rooms and any areas used for mechanical services or ducting must not be more than 50m²; and
 - (b) any area in the basement beyond the limit specified in subclause (a) must be included in the calculation of gross floor area; and
 - (c) the parking must be tandem parking.

- C4. Where the basement is not providing parking:
 - (a) the combined area of storage, plant rooms and any areas used for mechanical services or ducting must not be more than 20m²; and
 - (b) any area in the basement beyond the limit specified in subclause (a) must be included in the calculation of gross floor area; and
 - (c) pedestrian access must only be provided internally or from the side or rear of the dwelling house. Pedestrian access from the side or rear of the dwelling house must not result in stairs or access encroaching into the minimum setback areas.

2.17 Setbacks

Objectives

- O1. To ensure the basement does not adversely impact the streetscape, public domain, landscaped areas and amenity.

Controls

- C1. The basement must not extend beyond the perimeter of the floor level immediately above. For the purpose of this clause, the perimeter includes the front porch.

2.18 Landscaped areas and driveways

Objectives

- O1. To ensure the site has landscaped areas of sufficient size to enhance the streetscape and provide a high level of amenity.
- O2. To provide deep soil zones to allow for and support healthy plant and tree growth.
- O3. To protect existing street trees and on-street parking.

Controls

- C1. The width of the driveway must not be more than 3.5m or 40% of the site width at the front building line, whichever is the lesser.
- C2. The driveway and adjoining retaining walls must integrate into the overall design of the dwelling house and landscaped areas. Large areas of blank, minimally or poorly articulated retaining walls are not acceptable.



AMENDMENT 2: DUAL OCCUPANCIES AND SEMI-DETACHED DWELLINGS IN THE FORMER CANTERBURY LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA



Canterbury-Bankstown Development Control Plan 2023 (Chapter 5.2, Section 3)

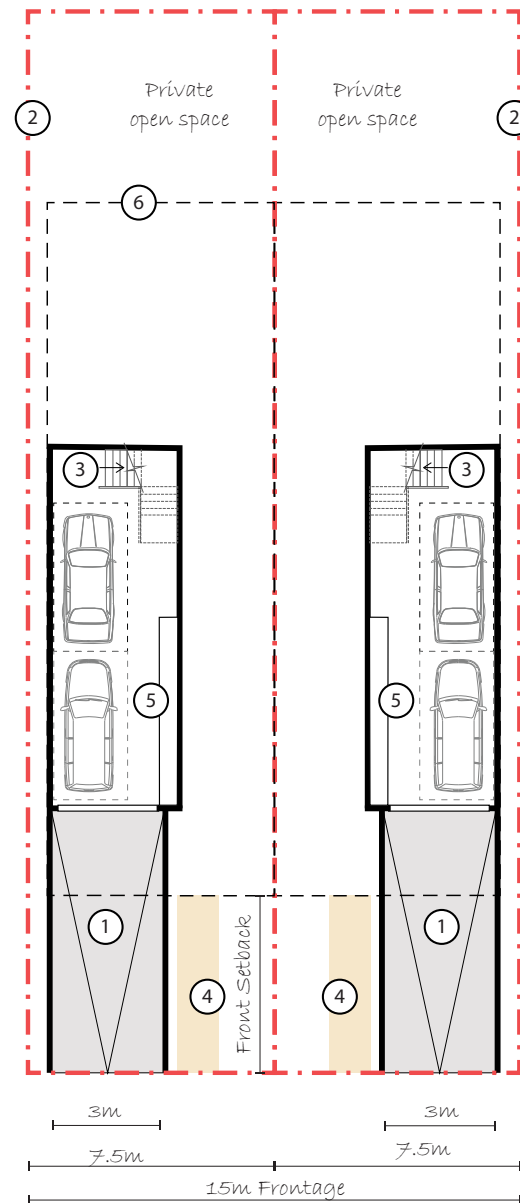
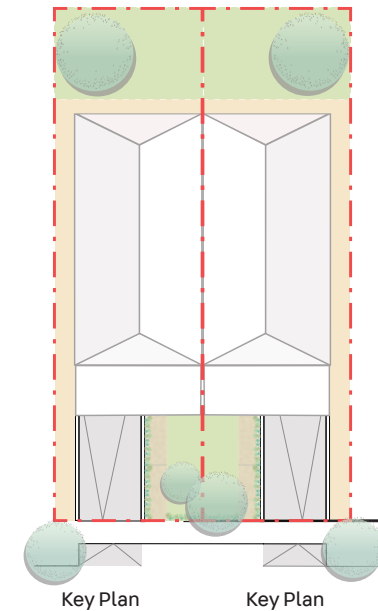
Add new basement controls as follows:

Basements

3.16 Basement Size

Objectives

- O1. To ensure the basement is well-designed and integrates into the overall design of the development.
- O2. To ensure the basement is subservient in size and scale to the dwellings on the site.
- O3. To ensure the basement and earthworks do not have a detrimental impact on the environment, neighbouring properties and natural features on the site.



LEGEND

- ① Ramp to Basement
- ② Lot Boundary
- ③ Internal Access
- ④ Pedestrian access
- ⑤ Storage area
- ⑥ Building Footprint

Figure 1. Example of dual occupancy where the basement (50m²) is providing parking and separate driveways



Controls

- C1. Development may propose a basement only where:
- (a) each dwelling has a minimum lot width of 7.5m at the front building line after any proposed subdivision; and
 - (b) compliance with the Canterbury-Bankstown Local Environmental Plan 2023 (clause 6.2) can be demonstrated.
- C2. Where a basement is proposed, only one set of controls (C3 or C4) may apply, depending on whether the basement provides parking or not. These controls cannot be combined.
- C3. Where the basement is providing parking:
- (a) the combined area of parking, storage, plant rooms and any areas used for mechanical services or ducting must not be more than 25m² where:
 - (i) the lot width is up to 10m at the front building line after any proposed subdivision, and
 - (ii) the dwelling has fewer than three bedrooms; or

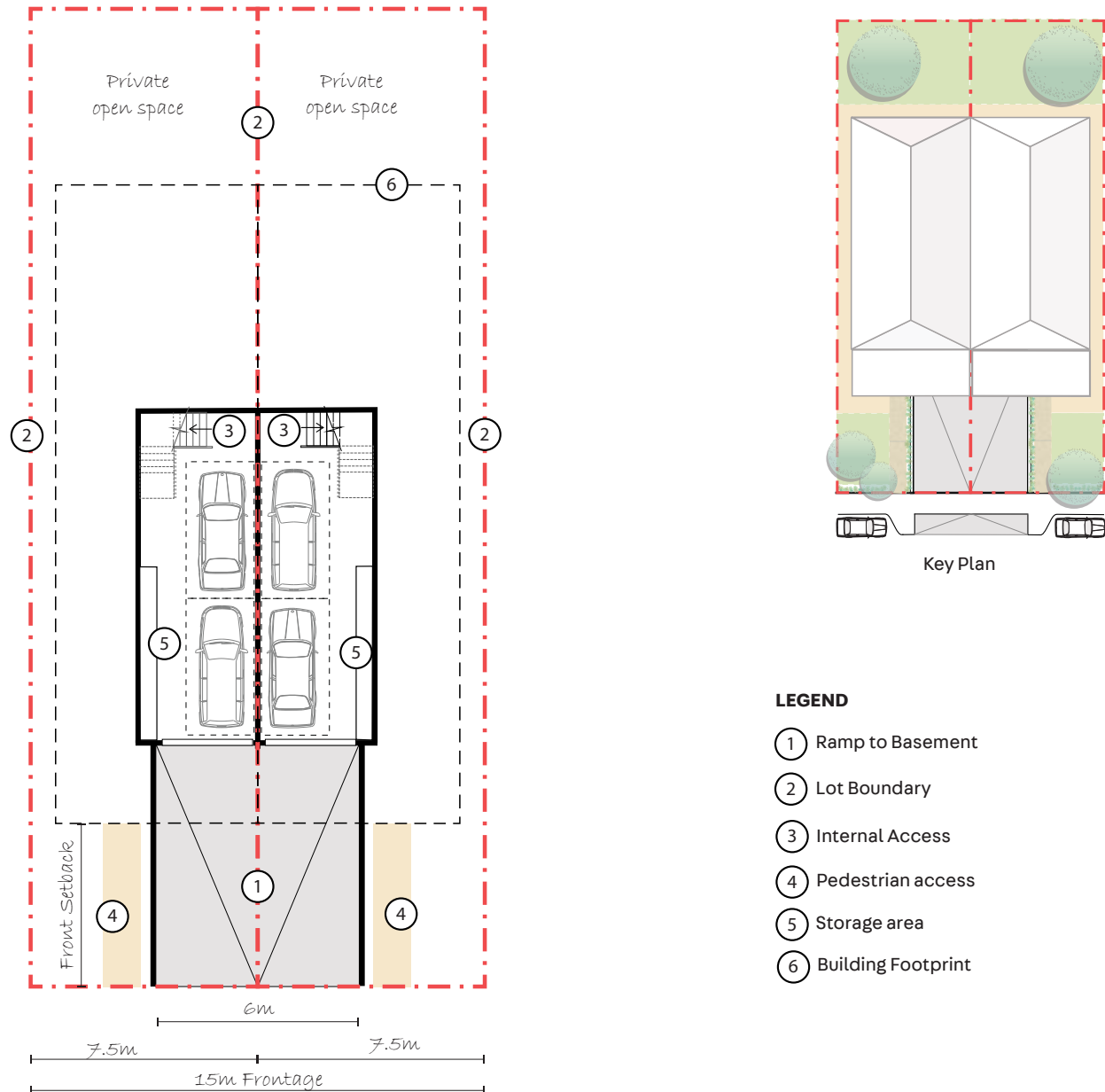


Figure 2. Example of dual occupancy where the basement (50m²) is providing parking and a combined driveway



3.17 Setbacks

- (b) the combined area of parking, storage, plant rooms and any areas used for mechanical services or ducting must not be more than 50m² in all other circumstances; and
 - (c) any area in the basement beyond the limit specified in subclauses (a) and (b) must be included in the calculation of gross floor area; and
 - (d) the parking must be tandem parking.
- C4. Where the basement is not providing parking:
- (a) the combined area of storage, plant rooms and any areas used for mechanical services or ducting must not be more than 20m²; and
 - (b) any area in the basement beyond the limit specified in subclause (a) must be included in the calculation of gross floor area; and
 - (c) pedestrian access must only be provided internally or from the side or rear of the dwellings. Pedestrian access from the side or rear of the dwellings must not result in stairs or access encroaching into the minimum setback areas.

Objectives

- O1. To ensure the basement does not adversely impact the streetscape, public domain, landscaped areas and amenity.

Controls

- C1. The basement must not extend beyond the perimeter of the floor level immediately above. For the purpose of this clause, the perimeter includes the front porch.

3.18 Landscaped areas and driveways

Objectives

- O1. To ensure the site has landscaped areas of sufficient size to enhance the streetscape and provide a high level of amenity.
- O2. To provide deep soil zones to allow for and support healthy plant and tree growth.
- O3. To protect existing street trees and on-street parking.

Controls

- C1. The width of the driveway must not be more than 3.5m or 40% of the lot width at the front building line after any proposed subdivision, whichever is the lesser.
- C2. The driveway and adjoining retaining walls must integrate into the overall design of the dwellings and landscaped areas. Large areas of blank, minimally or poorly articulated retaining walls are not acceptable.



AMENDMENT 3: MULTI DWELLING HOUSING IN THE FORMER CANTERBURY LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA



Canterbury-Bankstown Development Control Plan 2023 (Chapter 5.2, Section 4)

Add new basement control to replace existing basement controls [4.5 (C8), 4.6 (C14d)] as follows:

4.5 Height

Objectives

- O2. To ensure basements are well-designed and integrate into the overall design of the development.

Controls

- C8. The provision of basement parking for multi dwelling housing in the R3 Medium Residential Zone must ensure:
- (a) the basement architecturally integrates with the development; and
 - (b) the basement does not extend beyond the perimeter of the floor level immediately above. For the purpose of this clause, the perimeter includes the front porch; and
 - (c) there will be no adverse impacts on the streetscape, public domain, landscaped areas and amenity; and
 - (d) the driveway and associated retaining walls integrate into the overall design of the dwellings and landscaped areas. Large areas of blank, minimally or poorly articulated retaining walls are not acceptable.



AMENDMENT 4: DWELLING HOUSES, DUAL OCCUPANCIES, SEMI- DETACHED DWELLINGS AND GROUP HOMES IN THE FORMER BANKSTOWN LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA



Canterbury-Bankstown Development Control Plan 2023 (Chapter 5.1, Sections 4 and 5)

Amend clauses 4.29 and 5.28 by adding the words:

Council does not permit internal stacked or tandem garages (not including basements).

Canterbury-Bankstown Development Control Plan 2023 (Chapter 5.1, Section 15)

Add new basement controls to replace existing basement controls [Section 2 (O9, 2.10); Section 4 (O9, 4.11); Section 5 (O9, 5.11); Section 10 (O10, 10.11)] as follows:

Basement Size

Objectives

- O1. To ensure the basement is well-designed and integrates into the overall design of the development.
- O2. To ensure the basement is subservient in size and scale to the dwellings on the site.
- O3. To ensure the basement and earthworks do not have a detrimental impact on the environment, neighbouring properties and natural features on the site.

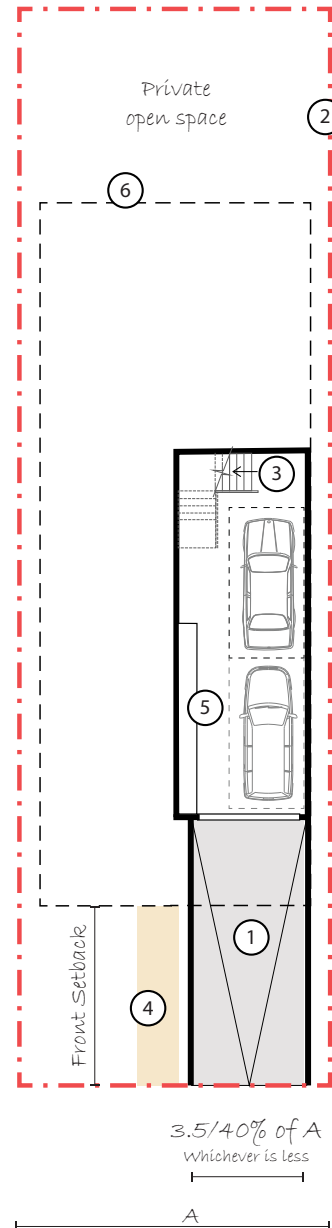
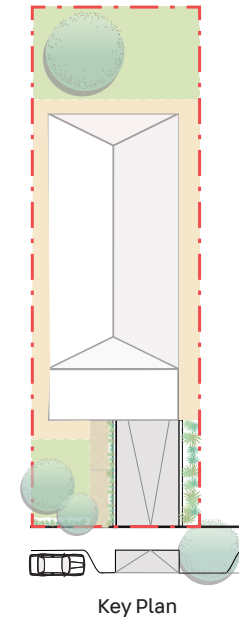
Controls

- 15.1. Development may propose a basement only where:
 - (a) each dwelling has a minimum lot width of 7.5m at the front building line after any proposed subdivision; and
 - (b) compliance with the Canterbury-Bankstown Local Environmental Plan 2023 (clause 6.2) can be demonstrated.
- 15.2. Where a basement is proposed, only one set of controls (15.3, 15.4 or 15.5) may apply, depending on whether the basement provides parking or not. These controls cannot be combined.
- 15.3. This clause applies to dwelling houses. Where the basement is providing parking:
 - (a) the combined area of parking, storage, plant rooms and any areas used for mechanical services or ducting must not be more than 50m²; and
 - (b) any area in the basement beyond the limit specified in subclause (a) must be included in the calculation of gross floor area; and
 - (c) the parking must be tandem parking.
- 15.4. This clause applies to dual occupancies, semi-detached dwellings and group homes. Where the basement is providing parking:
 - (a) the combined area of parking, storage, plant rooms and any areas used for mechanical services or ducting must not be more than 25m² where:
 - (i) the lot width is up to 10m at the front building line after any proposed subdivision, and
 - (ii) the dwelling has fewer than three bedrooms; or
 - (b) the combined area of parking, storage, plant rooms and any areas used for mechanical services or ducting must not be more than 50m² in all other circumstances; and
 - (c) any area in the basement beyond the limit specified in subclauses (a) and (b) must be included in the calculation of gross floor area; and
 - (d) the parking must be tandem parking.



15.5. Where the basement is not providing parking:

- (a) the combined area of storage, plant rooms and any areas used for mechanical services or ducting must not be more than 20m²; and
- (b) any area in the basement beyond the limit specified in subclause (a) must be included in the calculation of gross floor area; and
- (c) pedestrian access must only be provided internally or from the side or rear of the dwellings. Pedestrian access from the side or rear of the dwellings must not result in stairs or access encroaching into the minimum setback areas.



LEGEND

- ① Ramp to Basement
- ② Lot Boundary
- ③ Internal Access
- ④ Pedestrian access
- ⑤ Storage area
- ⑥ Building Footprint

Figure 1. Example of dwelling house where the basement (50m²) is providing parking.



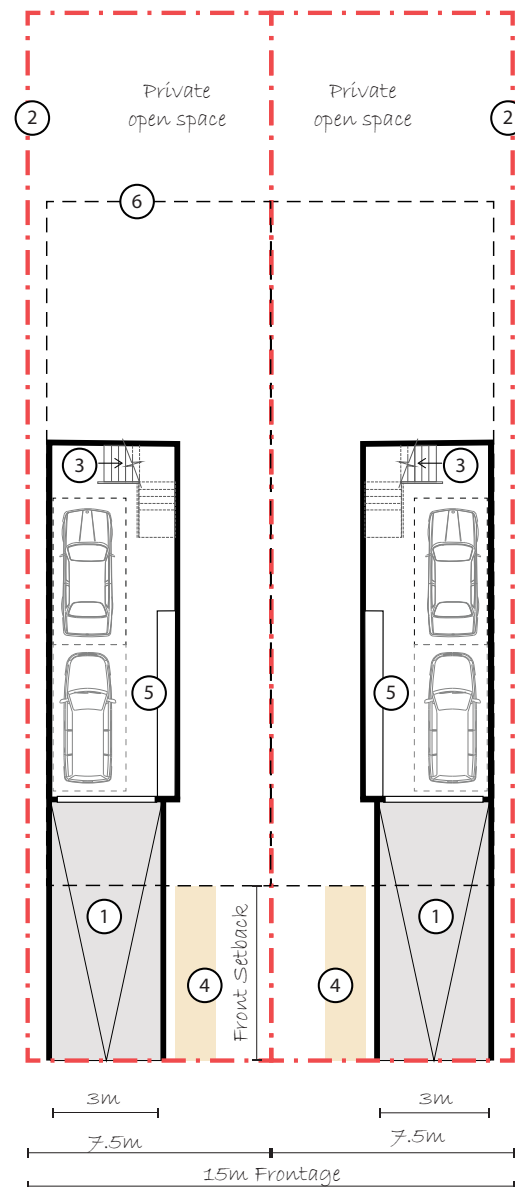
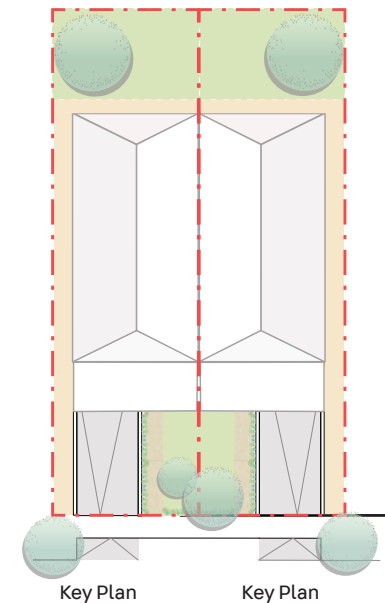
Setbacks

Objectives

- O4. To ensure the basement does not adversely impact the streetscape, public domain, landscaped areas and amenity.

Controls

- 15.6. The basement must not extend beyond the perimeter of the floor level immediately above. For the purpose of this clause, the perimeter includes the front porch.



- LEGEND**
- ① Ramp to Basement
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 - ④ Pedestrian access
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 - ⑥ Building Footprint

Figure 2. Example of dual occupancy where the basement (50m²) is providing parking and separate driveways



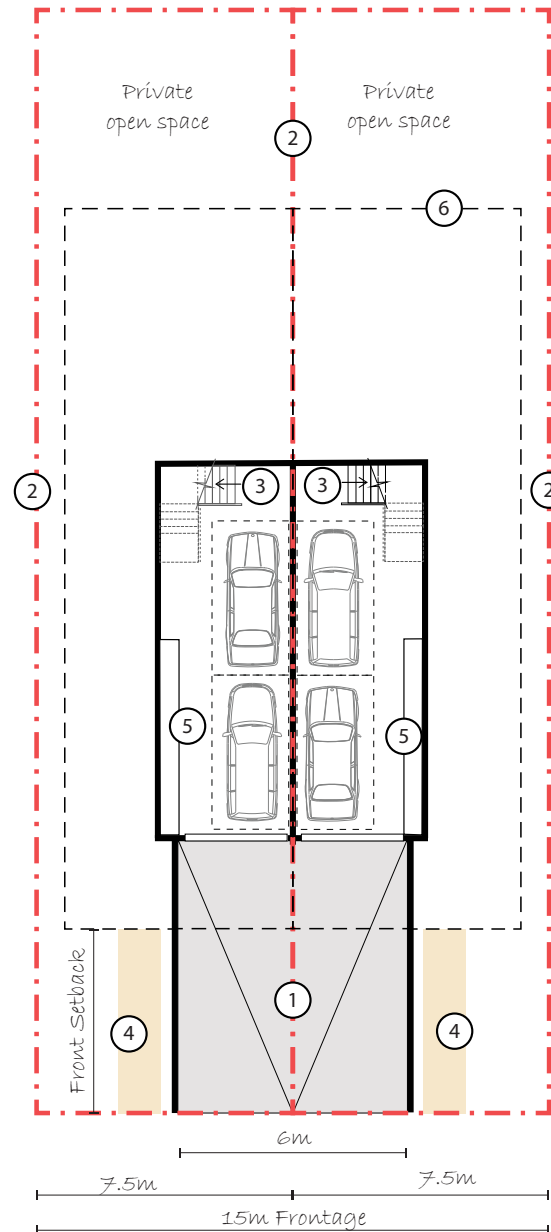
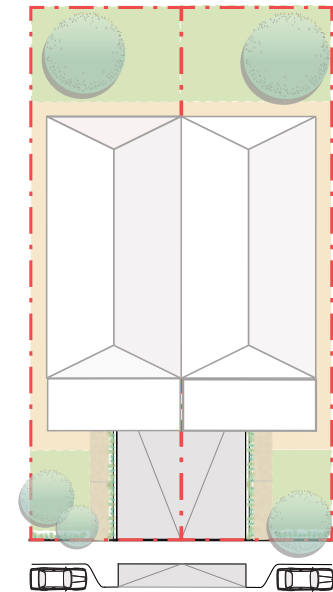
Landscaped areas and driveways

Objectives

- O5. To ensure the site has landscaped areas of sufficient size to enhance the streetscape and provide a high level of amenity.
- O6. To provide deep soil zones to allow for and support healthy plant and tree growth.
- O7. To protect existing street trees and on-street parking.

Controls

- 15.7. The width of the driveway must not be more than 3.5m or 40% of the lot width at the front building line after any proposed subdivision, whichever is the lesser.
- 15.8. The driveway and adjoining retaining walls must integrate into the overall design of the dwellings and landscaped areas. Large areas of blank, minimally or poorly articulated retaining walls are not acceptable.



Key Plan

LEGEND

- ① Ramp to Basement
- ② Lot Boundary
- ③ Internal Access
- ④ Pedestrian access
- ⑤ Storage area
- ⑥ Building Footprint

Figure 3. Example of dual occupancy where the basement (50m²) is providing parking and a combined driveway



AMENDMENT 5: MULTI DWELLING HOUSING AND ATTACHED DWELLINGS IN THE FORMER BANKSTOWN LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA



Canterbury-Bankstown Development Control Plan 2023 (Chapter 5.1)

Add a new basement control to Section 6 to read:

Controls

6.28 Where development proposes a basement, Council must ensure:

- (a) the basement architecturally integrates with the development; and
- (b) the basement does not extend beyond the perimeter of the floor level immediately above. For the purpose of this clause, the perimeter includes the front porch; and
- (c) there will be no adverse impacts on the streetscape, public domain, landscaped areas and amenity; and
- (d) the driveway and associated retaining walls integrate into the overall design of the dwellings and landscaped areas. Large areas of blank, minimally or poorly articulated retaining walls are not acceptable.

Canterbury-Bankstown Development Control Plan 2023 (Chapter 5.1)

Add a new basement control to Section 7 to read:

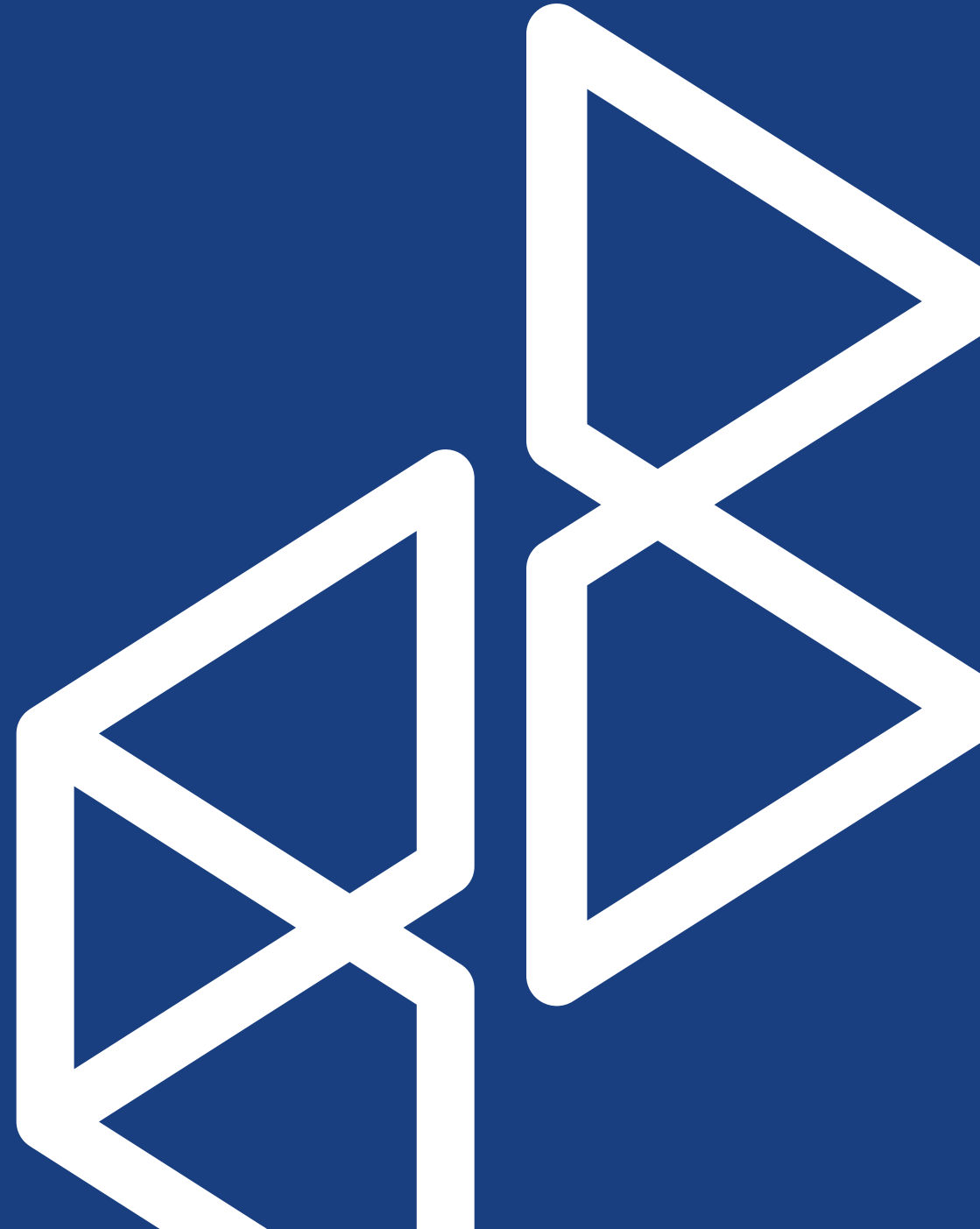
Controls

7.17 Where development proposes a basement, Council must ensure:

- (a) the basement architecturally integrates with the development; and
- (b) the basement does not extend beyond the perimeter of the floor level immediately above. For the purpose of this clause, the perimeter includes the front porch; and
- (c) there will be no adverse impacts on the streetscape, public domain, landscaped areas and amenity; and
- (d) the driveway and associated retaining walls integrate into the overall design of the dwellings and landscaped areas. Large areas of blank, minimally or poorly articulated retaining walls are not acceptable.

Canterbury-Bankstown Development Control Plan 2023 (Chapter 3.1)

Amend clause 2.1 to say that the driveway width controls for dwelling houses, dual occupancies, semi-detached dwellings and group homes with basements under Chapters 5.1 and 5.2 prevail where there is a numerical inconsistency with Chapter 3.1, clause 2.1.



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