

# Carports and garages

## Rules for exempt and complying development

This fact sheet explains when you can build carports without the need for development approval from council and when you can build carports and garages as complying development. It summarises the size and location requirements with which carports and garages must comply.

### Check planning controls first

This fact sheet is for guidance only and may not contain all the information relevant to every property in NSW. You should refer to the [relevant planning controls](#) before beginning work, or seek professional advice on how the planning controls apply to your property.

The majority of the development that can be done as exempt or complying development in NSW is identified in the State Environmental Planning Policy (Exempt and Complying Development Codes) 2008 (the policy). View the policy at the [Exempt and complying development policy web page](#).

**Exempt development** is minor building work that does not need planning or building approval. Fact sheet *Understanding exempt development* provides more information about exempt development.

**Complying development** is a joint planning and construction approval that can be granted by council or a private certifier. Fact sheet *Exempt and Complying Development* gives more information about complying development.

Exempt and complying development cannot be carried out on certain land.



**Photo credit:** NSW Department of Planning and Environment / Salty Dingo

## Carports as exempt development

You can build a carport without planning or building approval, as long as it complies with specific development standards in the policy.

Carports cannot be built as exempt development when on a lot that contains a heritage item (or draft item), or in a foreshore area.

### The maximum size allowed

- The floor area of a carport must not exceed:
  - 20 m<sup>2</sup> on lots with an area of 300 m<sup>2</sup> or less
  - 50 m<sup>2</sup> for lots larger than 300 m<sup>2</sup> in rural zones and residential Zone R5
  - 25 m<sup>2</sup> for lots larger than 300 m<sup>2</sup> in other zones.
- The carport must not be higher than 3 m above ground level (existing), and if it is attached to a single storey dwelling, not higher than the roof gutter line of that dwelling.
- At least 2 sides and one-third of the carport's total perimeter must be open.

## Where you can build them on your lot

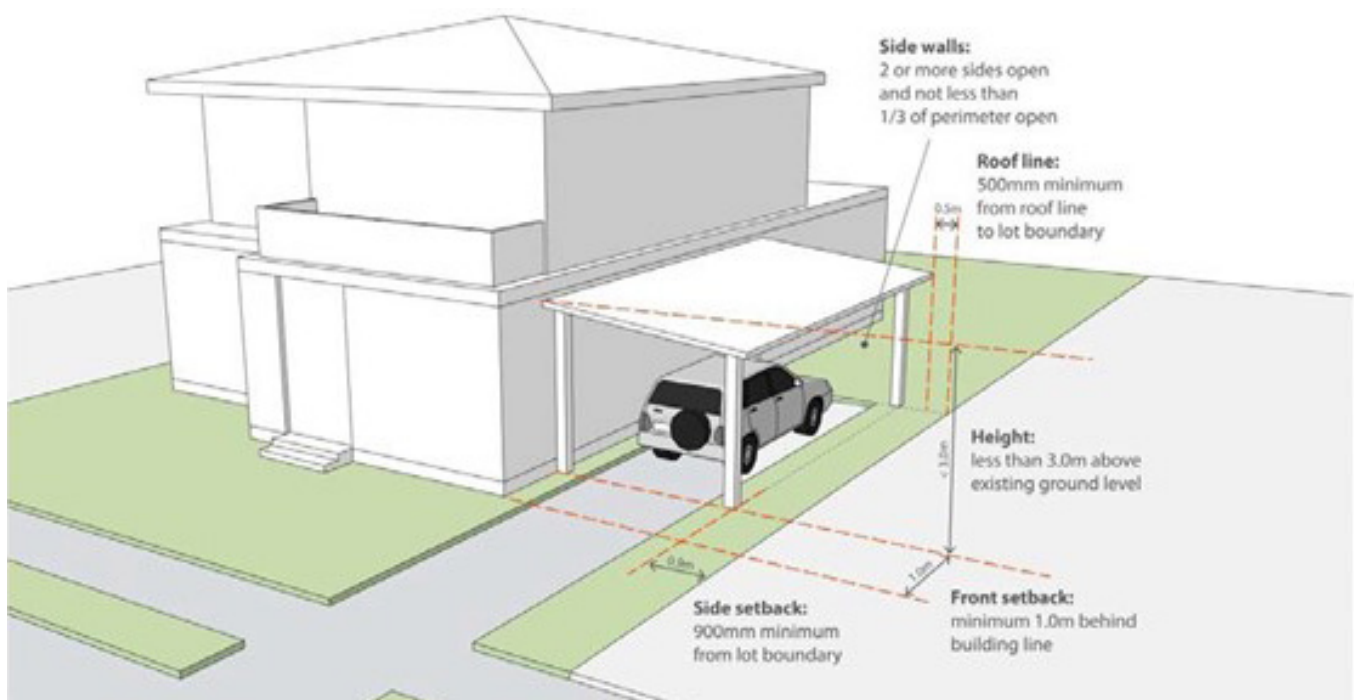
Carports must be at least 1 m behind the building line facing any road (the building line is the face of the wall and does not include any porch or portico type structure).

- The carport must be setback:
  - at least 5 m from any lot boundary in zones RU1, RU2, RU3, RU4, RU6, R5
  - at least 900 mm in any other zone.
- In heritage conservation areas (or draft conservation areas), carports must be located in the rear yard.
- The roof of the carport may project into the required setback area, but it must be setback at least 500 mm from any lot boundary.

**Figure 1** below illustrates the requirements.

If you need to construct a new driveway or gutter crossing, you must get approval from the relevant road authority first (under the *Roads Act 1993*).

The road authority is generally your local council, but in the case of classified roads, you should contact Roads and Maritime Services.



**Figure 1**  
Standards for carports built as exempt development.



**Photo credit:** NSW Department of Planning and Environment / Adam Hollingworth

## Other standards that apply

- On bushfire-prone land, carports must be constructed of non-combustible materials if it is within 5 m of a dwelling.
- Roof water from the carport must be disposed of into an existing stormwater drainage system.
- Any connection to a building fascia must be done in accordance with a professional engineer's specifications.
- Works must not reduce vehicular access to or from the site or reduce existing car parking, or loading/unloading facilities.
- Any metal materials must be low reflective, factory pre-coloured materials

## One carport per dwelling

For residential exempt development, you can only have one carport for every dwelling house on the lot.

For instance, if the lot has one dwelling house, there can only be one carport on that lot. If there is a primary and secondary dwelling on the lot, you can have 2 carports.

## Residential carports and garages as complying development

Carports and garages can be built as complying development as attached and detached development.

To be complying development, the new carport or garage must not result in all of the development on the lot exceeding the gross floor area.

## In residential zones

Carports and garages can only be built as complying development on lots zoned residential R1, R2, R3, R4 and rural zone RU5, that:

- have an area of at least 200 m<sup>2</sup>
- a width of at least 6 m.

The carport or garage must comply with the following development standards (cl 3.16 of the policy):

- Garages can only be built on lots that are less than 8 m wide when the vehicle access is from a secondary road, parallel road or lane (not the primary road).

The maximum permitted height for detached garages or carports is 4.5 m above ground level (existing).

- If vehicle access is on a primary road frontage, the carport or garage must be set back at least 5.5 m or 1 m behind the building line, dependent on front setback from the boundary with the primary road.
- The total width of all garage door openings that face a road must not exceed:
  - 3.2 m on lots that are between 8 m and 12 m wide, or
  - 6 m on lots that are more than 12 m wide.
- The location of carports and garages on battle-axe lots must allow vehicles to exit the site in a forward direction



**Photo credit:** NSW Department of Planning and Environment / Adam Hollingworth

## Other items to consider

- If a new driveway or gutter crossing is required, you must get separate approval from council or the Roads and Maritime Services under the *Roads Act 1993*.
  - New driveways must be constructed in accordance with Australian Standard 2890.1 – 2004 Parking Facilities – off-street car parking.
  - If you propose to do any cut or fill, the works must comply with the requirements for cut and fill for exempt development or complying development. Fact sheet *Earth works and retaining walls* provides more information about cut and fill.
  - If you propose to remove or prune any existing trees or vegetation, you should contact your council first. You may need approval.
  - If any structures will be located on public land, or on or over a public road (including temporary structures), you will need to get separate approval from the relevant council or Roads and Maritime Services under the *Roads Act 1993* and the *Local Government Act 1993*.
- If your proposal does not meet the required standards for exempt or complying development, you may still be able to do the work, but you must get development approval first. In this case, you should contact your local council to discuss your options.

## More information

To find out more, visit the [Exempt and complying development web page](#) or call the department's Codes Team on 02 8289 6600 or email [codes@planning.nsw.gov.au](mailto:codes@planning.nsw.gov.au).

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