



ACT
Government

Corner blocks

Advisory Note 17

Territory Planning Authority
December 2025

Introduction to advisory notes

Advisory notes provide guidance on how particular processes in the ACT planning system will typically occur, how elements of the system work and how considerations will typically be made. These will typically be technical in nature and may cover anything from steps in an assessment and decision-making process to interpreting elements of the statutory planning documents.

Advisory notes in combination with process maps, guides and factsheets, seek to support all stakeholders to better understand and interact with the planning system.

Advisory notes are for the use of all stakeholders, including the development industry when preparing a development proposal or progressing a proposal through the assessment and approvals process, or the general community when commenting on applications and interacting with the planning system.

Advisory notes are prepared by the Territory Planning Authority to cover elements of the *Planning Act 2023* only. These are not intended to cover other processes, such as Building Approvals under the *Building Act 2004*.

Advisory notes may be updated or added to from time to time.

Version history

Version number	Approved by	Date
1.0	Senior Director, Territory Plan and Coordination, Planning and Urban Policy	19/12/2025

Glossary

front boundary means any boundary of a block adjacent to a public road, public reserve, or public pedestrian way.

building is a structure and includes:

- a) an addition to a building;
- b) a structure attached to a building; and
- c) a part of a building.

but does not include:

- a) a transportable building, mobile home, caravan or similar that is not used for long term habitation; and is readily transportable without being disassembled or removed from associated components;
- b) paving, a driveway or a road that is not inside a building;
- c) a surface level car park that is not inside a building; and
- d) a fence, courtyard wall or retaining wall.

Advisory Note 17: Corner blocks

This advisory note provides information and guidance for single dwelling development on corner blocks.

What is a corner block?

A block can be considered a corner block when it meets any of the following conditions:

- where it fronts two or more gazetted* public roads at their intersection.
- a block fronting a single road on a bend can be considered a corner block where the intersection of the centrelines at the bend in the street has an interior angle of less than 120 degrees.

A chamfer** does not change the consideration of a block being a corner block.

*For the purposes of describing a corner block, all roads are to be gazetted public roads.

**A chamfer is a corner cut-off that is usually found at the corner of a block at the junction of two roads.

How are setbacks measured from corner blocks?

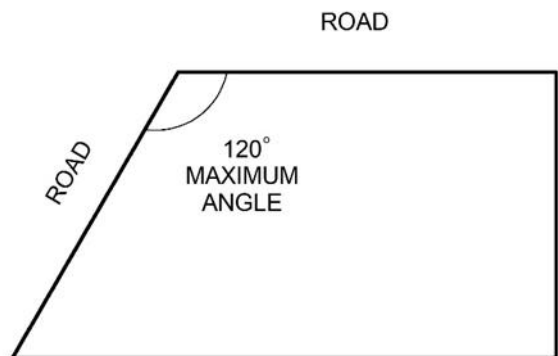
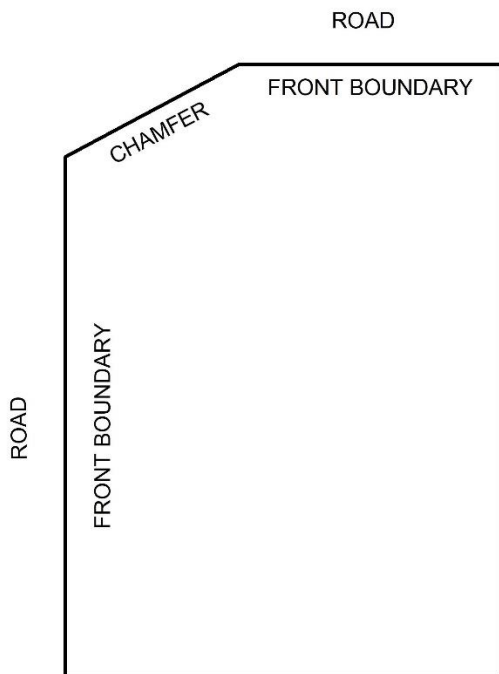
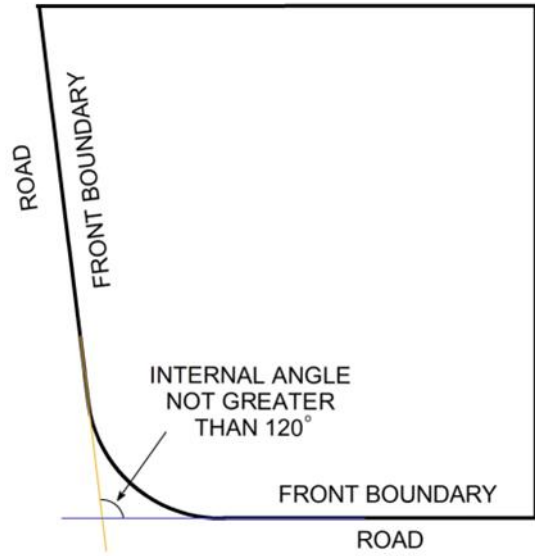
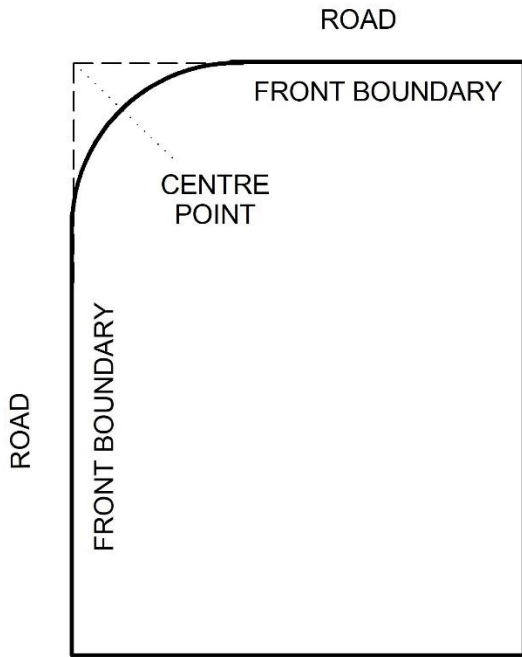
For developed blocks, front setbacks to existing buildings determine the primary and secondary frontages. Where an existing building is located at reduced setback, any future development would still need to comply with the setbacks in the Single Dwelling Housing Development Control to be exempt development.

For undeveloped blocks, primary and secondary frontages are nominated by the applicant in accordance with the front boundary setbacks in the tables in the Single Dwelling Housing Development Control.

For determining setbacks to primary and secondary frontages where the block does not meet at a defined corner:

- where there is a bend at the corner of the block, the primary and secondary frontages are applied from the location of the centre-point of the bend.
- where there is a chamfer, the chamfer can be included in the secondary frontage setback but only if the length of the chamfer is less than the length of the secondary front boundary.

Some examples of corner block configurations



How is a secondary street frontage determined?

The reason to provide clarification on what can be considered a corner block is to establish whether reduced setbacks can apply to the secondary street frontage, thereby enabling a block to be appropriately developed without unnecessarily losing developable space to meet setback provisions.

Control 9 of the [Single Dwelling Housing Development Control](#) provides detail on nominating the secondary street frontage. The minimum (reduced) boundary setbacks for corner blocks apply only to the street frontage nominated as a secondary street frontage. On a vacant block or a block with no *building* on it, the minimum (reduced) boundary setbacks for corner blocks apply only to one street frontage nominated by the applicant or nominated in a district policy as a secondary street frontage.

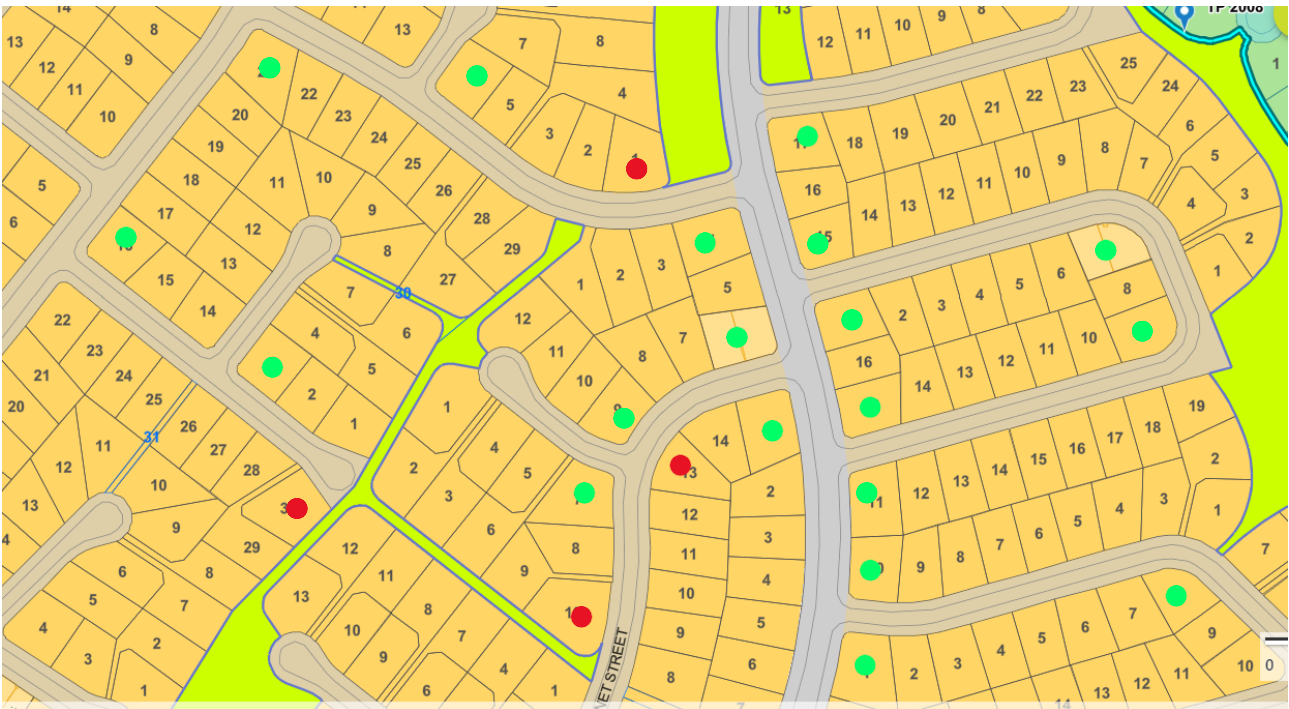
If there are existing *buildings* on the block already at the minimum (reduced) front setback, that would determine which street frontage is the secondary street frontage. For example, if a reduced setback/secondary street frontage was provided for the frontage to Street A, an addition getting closer to Street B would need to comply with the standard front boundary setback, not the reduced.

If there are existing *buildings* on the block exceeding the minimum front boundary setback requirements, with regards to future development, the secondary street frontage can be nominated by the applicant unless nominated in a district policy as a secondary street frontage.

Chamfers may be included in the secondary street frontage, but only if the length of the chamfer is less than the length of the front boundary.

Where a block has more than two frontages, a single primary frontage and two or more secondary frontages can be applied.

Examples of what is and is not considered a corner block

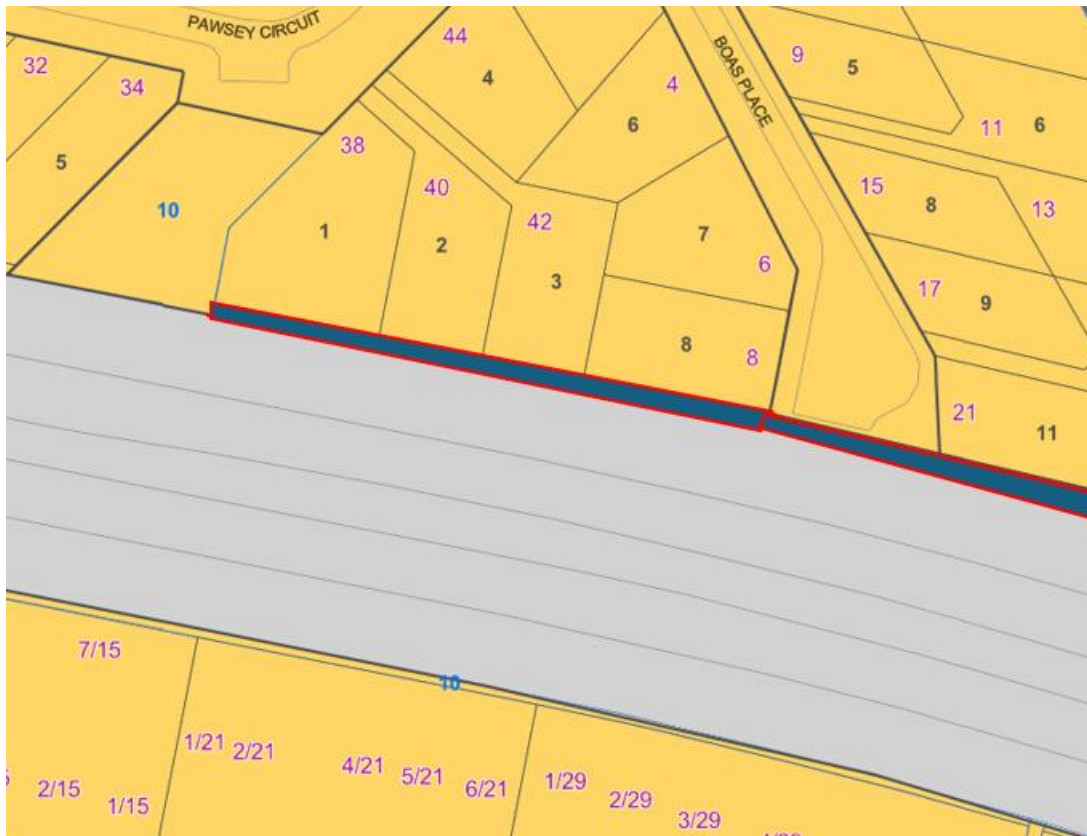


- Corner block
- Not a corner block

Blocks fronting narrow blocks of unleased Territory Land

In some situations, especially in older suburbs, a separate block of unleased Territory Land is located between the road reserve and a block boundary when adjoining a public road (see below). This block prevents driveway access from the public road in these locations.

In these cases, the block boundary of a residential block fronting onto the narrow unleased Territory Land is classified as a front boundary. As a result, the primary or secondary front boundary setbacks in the table in the Single Dwelling Housing Development Control will apply.



 Unleased Territory Land block fronting road

Got questions?

The DA Gateway team can be contacted at:

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Online: <https://services.accesscanberra.act.gov.au/s/forms/land-planning-and-building-enquiry>

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