



VEHICLE CROSSOVER

INFORMATION PACK

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MAY 2024

Introduction

What is a vehicle crossover?

A Vehicle crossover also known as a Dropped or Lowered Kerb provides the legal means for motor vehicles to access a property. Lowering the kerb and strengthening the footway to allow vehicles to pass over reducing the likelihood of causing damage to either the footway or the numerous services usually located under the surface.

Does the application require planning permission?

The Council's crossover officer will determine whether an application needs planning permission.

Planning permission is generally needed if your property is located where:

- The access is to be on a classified / tiered or trunk road;
- The access is to a commercial property;
- The access is to a property that is a maisonette or divided into flats;
- The access is to a listed building;
- The access is in a conservation area, which is covered by Article 4 Direction of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995, requiring planning permission for hard surfacing; and
- The access is likely to affect a tree, within the property, which is protected by a Tree Preservation Order.

If your property requires planning permission the appropriate forms will be sent to you. The application will also be subject to planning fees.

N.B. Properties subject to planning permission must also meet the vehicle crossover criteria.

Procedure for applications that do not require planning permission

The Council has designed its assessment criteria based on national safety guidelines with measurements so that no maneuvering on the highway is necessary to obtain access to and from the property.

If after reading the criteria (Section A) and the terms and conditions (Section D) you have decided you would like to proceed, please fill in the application form on line at <https://www.merton.gov.uk/streets-parking-transport/streets-and-pavements/dropped-kerbs>

On receipt of your payment an officer will assess your application, undertake a site visit and if suitable, prepare an estimate for the construction of a crossover. The Council will then send you a letter with the estimate and the terms and conditions for the vehicle crossover. On receipt of your signed confirmation and payment, construction of your crossover will be programmed with the Council's contractor. If you are a leaseholder or do not own the property, you will be required to provide written permission from the freeholder or owner of the property prior to a crossover being constructed. This also applies to Council or Housing owned properties

A. Criteria for approving a vehicle crossover (effective since 04th June 2018)

- A1 The depth of the area you intend to park your vehicle, (forecourt) within the property (measured at right angles (90 degrees) from the highway boundary (Where your garden wall, fence or hedge touches the pavement) to the nearest section of the property façade, (house brickwork or bay window) must be at least 4.8 metres to reduce the risk of vehicles overhanging the highway.
- A2 The width of the area you intend to park your vehicle (forecourt) must be at least 2.3 metres wide. This is required to enable passengers to safely enter and exit their vehicle and must not encroach over the property's front door or porch where built. The width of 2.3 metres must be maintained across the full 4.8 metre depth. Any application where part of the 2.3 metres width falls across any part of the front door or porch must have an increased depth of no less than 5.5 metres. Any application that cannot meet this requirement will be rejected. Unless Criteria A3 is met.
- A3 Where there is a depth of forecourt between 4.3 metres and 4.79 metres (and the other criteria are satisfied) a vehicle crossover may be granted, if the applicant is willing to enter into an agreement between the property owner and the Council, (Short Frontage Agreement) stating that their vehicle will be wholly parked in the forecourt without overhanging the public highway (footpath, footway or carriageway). The Agreement will be in the form of a local land charge to the property to be transferred if the property is ever sold. Short Frontage Agreements cannot be considered in front of the front door.
- A4 On the public highway the minimum width of an approved crossover is 2.5 metres at the back of the footway, (the footway where it meets your property boundary) and 3.7 metres on the kerb line (this includes the ramped edges). The width may be increased to a maximum of 4.80 metres at the property boundary (6 metres along the kerb including ramped edges) for a single crossover. Crossovers must be sited on the area of footway marked by the property boundary to which it serves and should not overhang the frontage of neighbour's property without their written consent. The linking of more than two separate crossovers together will be discouraged to avoid excessive lengths of footway becoming crossovers, which is considered prejudicial to the public safety. The Crossover Officer has the authority to extend the crossover over a neighboring property if the need arises.
- A5 A vehicle must be able to enter and exit the property at right angles (90 degrees) to the highway in one movement. There must be no adjusting movements of a vehicle made on the highway when entering or exiting the property.

- A6 The distance from any junction, (side road or commercial property accesses) from the nearest edge of the proposed crossover must be at least 10m (8m Min on safety grounds). (Refer to Diagram 3).
(A6.1) *If the side road is a permanent No-Through-Road or Cul-De-Sac with 30 properties or less, consideration may be given on safety grounds via Risk assessment to a minimum of 2.0m from the kerb line.*
- A7 The minimum clear sight line, when leaving the property, will be measured from a point 1.5 metres inside the property forecourt from the centre point of the proposed vehicle crossover. This must have a clear view for 2.4m each side minimum, (the optimum is 5m)
- A8 The width of a grass verge, or amenity area (including shrubberies, hedges or other planted areas) in front of your property must be less than 2 metres in depth (Refer to Diagram 5). Where two grass verges exist the combined depth of grass must not exceed 3 metres.
- A8.1 Where an application to extend an existing vehicle crossover, within a grass verge with depth greater than 2.0m, a maximum loss of extra grass amenity will be considered to a maximum of 4.50 Sq Mtrs. (5.0m depth of grass by 0.90m extension = 4.50 sq mtrs of lost amenity) This will be permitted once and recorded in the councils' records. Repeat or subsequent requests will be refused.
- A9 All Street furniture, (post, bollard, sign post, lamp columns and utility plant, telegraph poles or sewer vent pipes) must be situated at least 1.0 metre from the top of the ramped kerb of the proposed crossover. (Any street furniture within 1.0 metre may be relocated but only at the full expense of the applicant.) (Refer to Diagram 6).
- A10 Applications requiring the removal of a street tree will be refused. There must be a minimum of 1.0 metre from the base of the tree to the top of the ramped kerb of the proposed crossover (Refer to Diagram 7). If the tree is still staked relocation may be approved but at full cost to the applicant.
- A11 If gates are to be fitted across the vehicle entrance to your property they must not open outwards across the footpath or carriageway. (Highways Act 1980 - Section 153.) (Refer to Diagram 8).
- A12 In cases where use of neighboring land may be required, for example, due to insufficient footway adjacent to the applicant's property, a legal agreement between all parties will be required. All costs to be covered by the applicant.
- A13 Applications for crossovers to be sited within controlled parking zones will be required to meet the criteria outlined in this document. However, if it is necessary to remove an existing on street parking space an amendment to the Traffic Order will be required. All fees must be paid by the applicant to cover the council's costs in advertising and consulting on the proposal and will also significantly

delay the process of approving a crossover application. The council may refuse an application where it is considered that the removal of too many on-street spaces or provision of too many crossovers would lead to insufficient on street space being available. The approval of a crossover would be subject to the outcome of a statutory consultation and therefore cannot be guaranteed. There are no refunds of these costs. You will be advised of the costs and they must be paid in full before the application can be progressed.

- A14 Properties where the hard standing slopes towards the Public Highway must install a drainage channel and appropriate sized soak away within the property freehold to be compliant with rainwater runoff, which may require planning permission. The applicant must check and apply if planning is required.
- A14.1 Applications to extend an existing vehicle crossover may require a drainage channel, with appropriate soak away, to be installed across both the existing and extended hard standing, to be compliant with rainwater runoff. The applicant must check and apply if planning is required.

B. Appeals Procedure

- B1. Applicants will be notified in writing if the property fails to meet the criteria. As of April 2011 appeals will no longer be considered and the decision made is a final decision and is not subject to any form of appeal.

C. Guidance for converting front gardens

- C1 Do not go ahead with converting your front garden until you have received permission from the Council for your vehicle crossover.
- C2 When permission is received you will be expected to complete the conversion of your garden before the vehicle crossover is implemented.
- C3 When converting your front garden it is important to consider the drainage as under Section 163 of the Highways Act 1980 it is the responsibility of the property owner to provide adequate drainage for surface water so that it does not flow or fall onto the public highway.

Specific rules apply for householders wanting to pave over their front gardens: You will not need planning permission if a new or replacement driveway of any size uses permeable (or porous) surfacing which allows water to drain through, such as gravel, permeable concrete block paving or porous asphalt, or if the rainwater is directed to a lawn or border to drain naturally.

If the surface to be covered is more than five square metres planning permission will be needed for laying traditional, impermeable driveways that do not provide for the water to run to a permeable area.

Please visit the [planning portal](#) for more information.

- C4 Some tips on the best way to provide adequate drainage include:
- The use of permeable or semi-permeable material for your conversions. Suitable surfacing materials could include:
1. pervious concrete paving slabs.
 2. paving slabs with sand jointing.
 3. block paving that incorporates voids or larger joints.
 4. gravel with a stone size of at least 20mm. (Where such gravel is used, a suitable hard surfaced strip of at least 110mm deep must be provided at the property threshold (matching the width of the crossover) to prevent stones spilling onto the pavement.)
 5. bonded gravel

Try to limit the area for hard surfacing.

Provide a drainage channel where the paved area meets the back of the footway to collect surface water. The channel should be connected to a “soak away” (i.e. a large, covered hole, measuring approximately 1M² filled with rubble or other granular material) that allows the water to disperse into the ground.

Retain as much planting as possible.

D. Terms and conditions of a vehicle crossover

- D1 Permission for a crossover is granted only when a site assessment has been carried out and the assessing Officer is satisfied that the application has fulfilled the criteria as described in this document.
- D2 It is your responsibility to complete the garden preparation as specified in Section C of this Information Pack. The implementation of an approved crossover will only be carried out when you have completed the confirmed agreement of application conditions online, and full payment of the fees are received. Failure to meet these conditions will be subject to a £50 inspection fee for each additional inspection.
- D3 In order to ensure that vehicle crossovers are properly constructed, all dropped kerbs and vehicle crossovers will be built by the London Borough of Merton as the appropriate Highway Authority. The Council will provide the estimates and must receive payment before any work is carried out.
- D4 The finished crossover remains part of the public highway and only essential maintenance will be carried out if considered unsafe by the Council.
- D5 It is illegal to use the vehicle crossover for parking. A crossover is for access and egress only.
- D6 It is an offence if the vehicle parked on private property obstructs any part of the public highway. Therefore vehicles parked in the proposed parking space must not exceed the length of parking space available or they may be subject to a Penalty Charge Notice (PCN).
- D7 A vehicle crossover is solely for the use of private light vehicles. It cannot be used by heavy goods vehicles or mechanical equipment. The cost of repairing any subsequent damage to the crossing caused by non-permitted vehicles will be charged to the occupier.
- D8 The council retains the right to alter the layout or fully remove a vehicle crossover at any time, due to modifications in the highway layout. *(Every effort will be made to maintain access to the property and the occupier of premises so affected will be given adequate notice of such works.)*
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E. Costs and Charges

- E1 The cost of a crossover is made up of two parts, an application fee plus the actual cost of construction.
- E2 The non refundable application fee required for a standard vehicle crossover is currently £206 and includes Controlled Parking Zones. These charges include two site visits by an engineer for the preparation of a plan and an estimate. Additional site visits, if required, are charged at £50 per visit. Where planning permission is required, a planning application fee is also required. These fees are non- refundable. A further charge of £100 is required for a short frontage agreement between 4.30m to 4.79m depth.

- E3 The construction estimates are calculated using the competitively tendered Term contract rates and is determined by the size of the crossover required and the width of the footway at the location.
- E4 Parking across a dropped kerb without the owner's permission is illegal. The Council can provide a white bar marking painted across the front of the crossover and although this cannot be enforced it does draw attention to the existence of a crossover. The current charge for this service is £80. If the white bar needs to be repainted in the future the cost is £40.
- E5 Further charges will be incurred by the applicant if there is a requirement to relocate any street furniture such as signage, street lighting and utility plant.
- E6 Applications for vehicle crossovers within CPZs will incur charges for a statutory consultation and the amendment of the existing Traffic Management Order. This charge could be either £3000 for a single applicant or £300 awaiting 9 further applicants. This may be across the whole borough not just within the same zone. It should be noted that construction of the crossover cannot be guaranteed - it would be subject to the outcome of the statutory consultation. This fee is Non-refundable.
- E7 Full settlement of all charges is required before the construction of an approved vehicle crossover.
- E8 Any obstruction such as trees, hedges or walls belonging to the property must be removed prior to the construction of the crossover. Failure to do so will result in abortive costs which must be reimbursed by the applicant at a cost of up to £1000. This must be paid in advance of the contractor returning to undertake the construction of the crossover. Should this not be paid and the applicant withdraws the application, the refunded amount will be minus the abortive cost of up to £1000.
- E9 The estimate is only valid for 3 months. After this period a fee of £50 will be applied to each re-assessment and any estimate changes. Applications are only valid for 12 months from the date the estimate is provided. After this 12 month period a new application will be required.

Please note that upon receiving full payment and confirmation that your property is ready to accommodate off-street parking, the construction of your crossover will be programmed. To minimise cost, it will not be possible to advise you of the exact date of construction.

The location of the crossover will be marked on the footway. You will be sent a plan (along with an estimate of costs) showing size and location of the crossover.

By making payment, it is assumed that you agree with size, location and cost of the crossover. Any change after this is unlikely to be considered. It is therefore, essential that you carefully consider the plan and on-site markings before making payment.

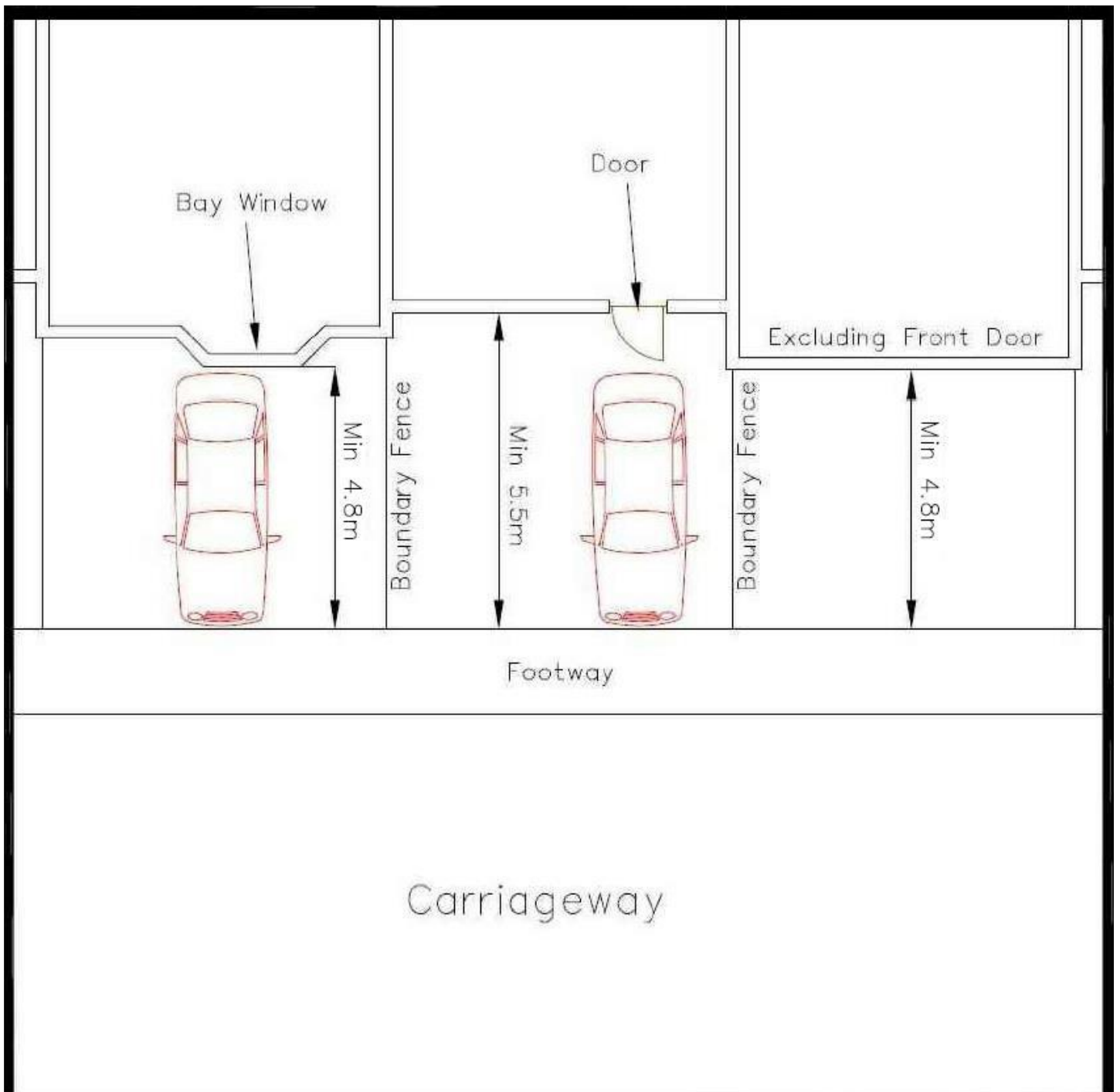


DIAGRAM 1

The depth of the garden measured at right angles from the highway boundary to the nearest section of the property façade must be a minimum of 4.8 meters.

If the building's nearest point to the highway is the property's front door, the depth of the garden must be 5.5 meters.

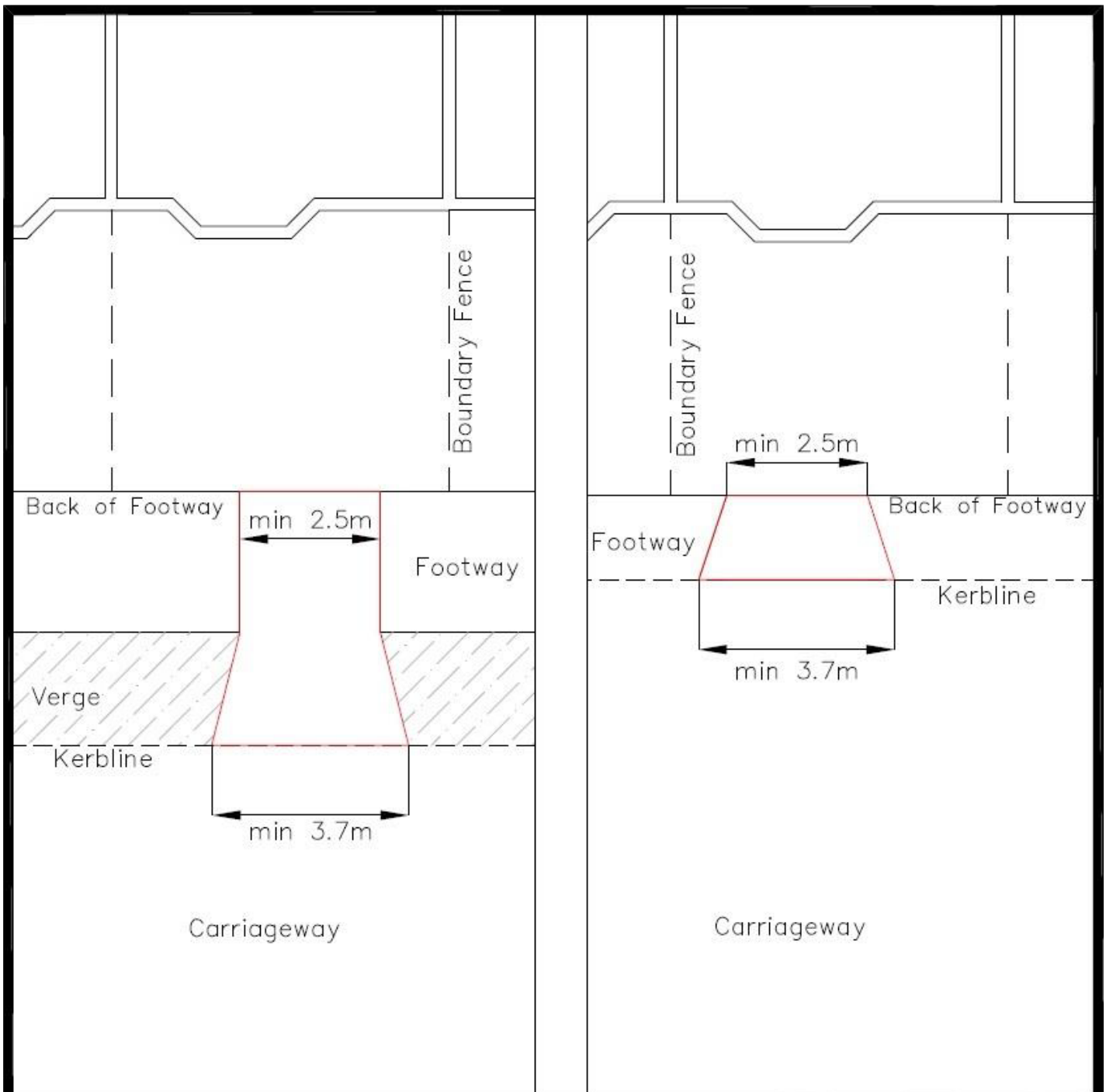


DIAGRAM 2

There must be a minimum of 2.5m clear footway width to the back of the footway adjacent to the location of the crossover

There must be a minimum of 3.7m along the kerblines

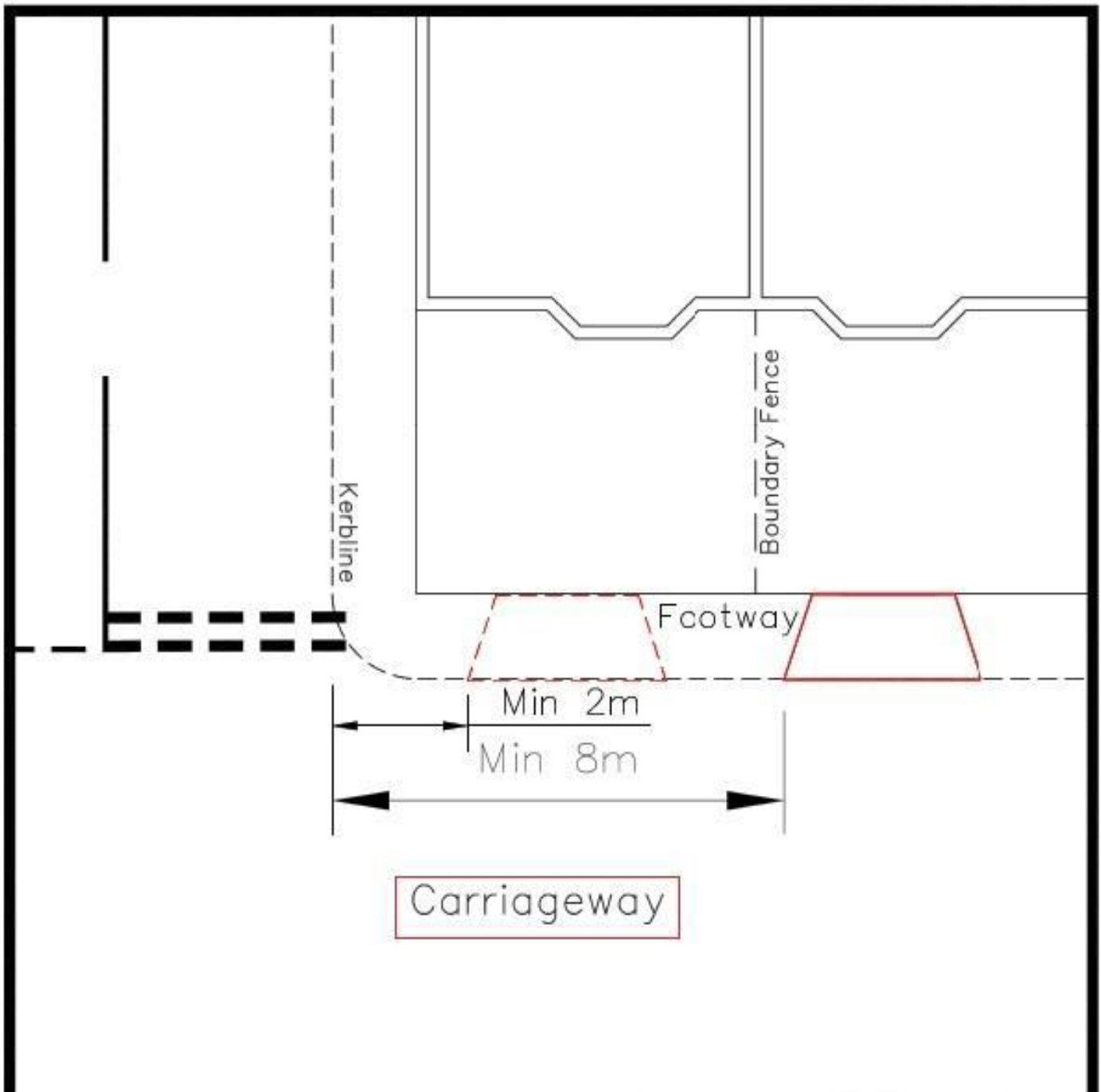


DIAGRAM 3

The distance from any junction from the nearest edge of the proposed crossover must be at least 8m (the optimum is 10m). (Refer to Diagram 3). On Cul-de-sacs or permanent No Through roads with less than 30 properties a minimum of 2.0m from the kerb line may be considered.

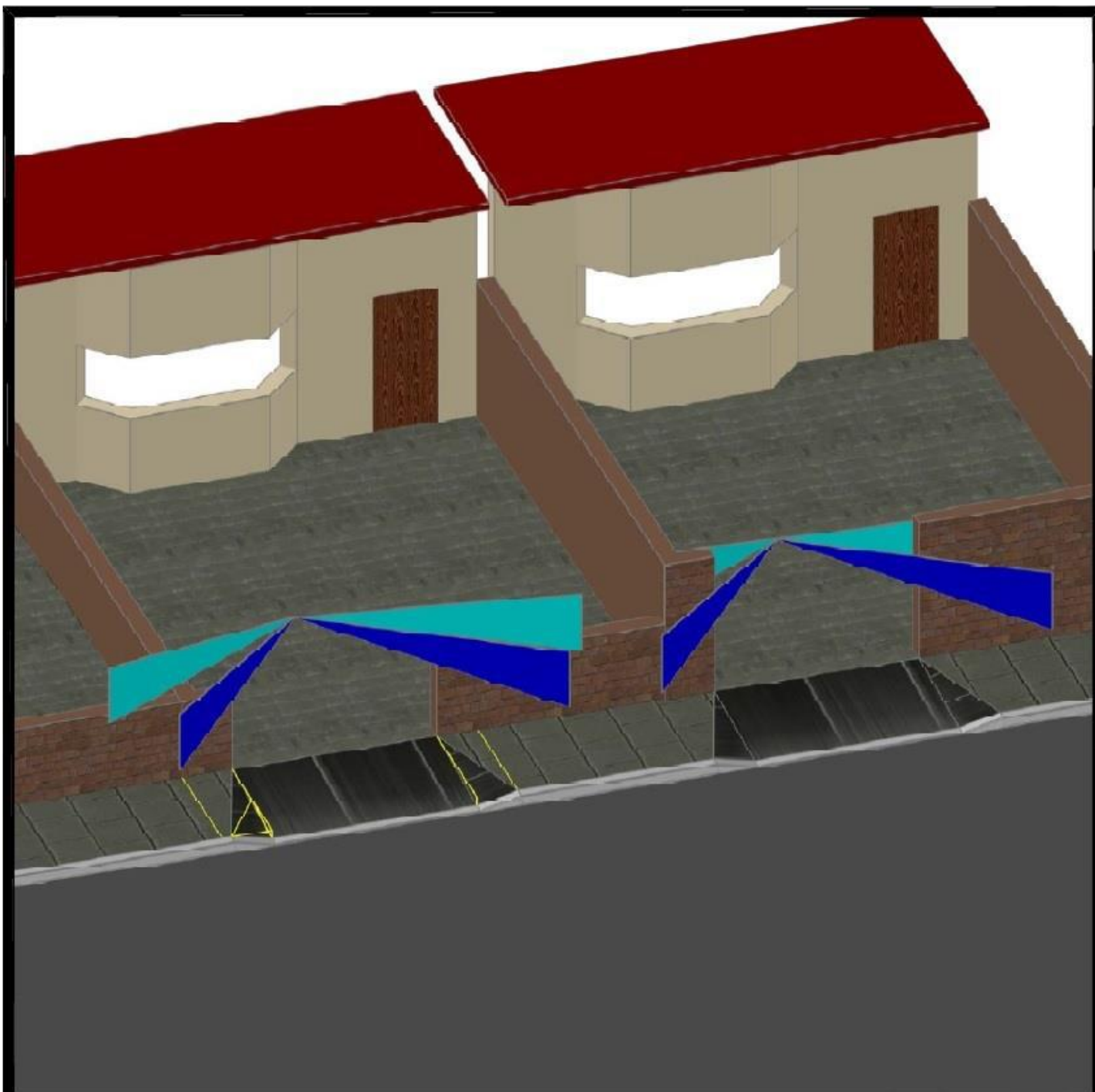


DIAGRAM 4

This measurement is used to ensure any hedges or walls marking the property boundary would not obscure pedestrians using the footway from the vision of the driver of an exiting vehicle. (1.5 metres inside the property line from the centre of the proposed crossover.)

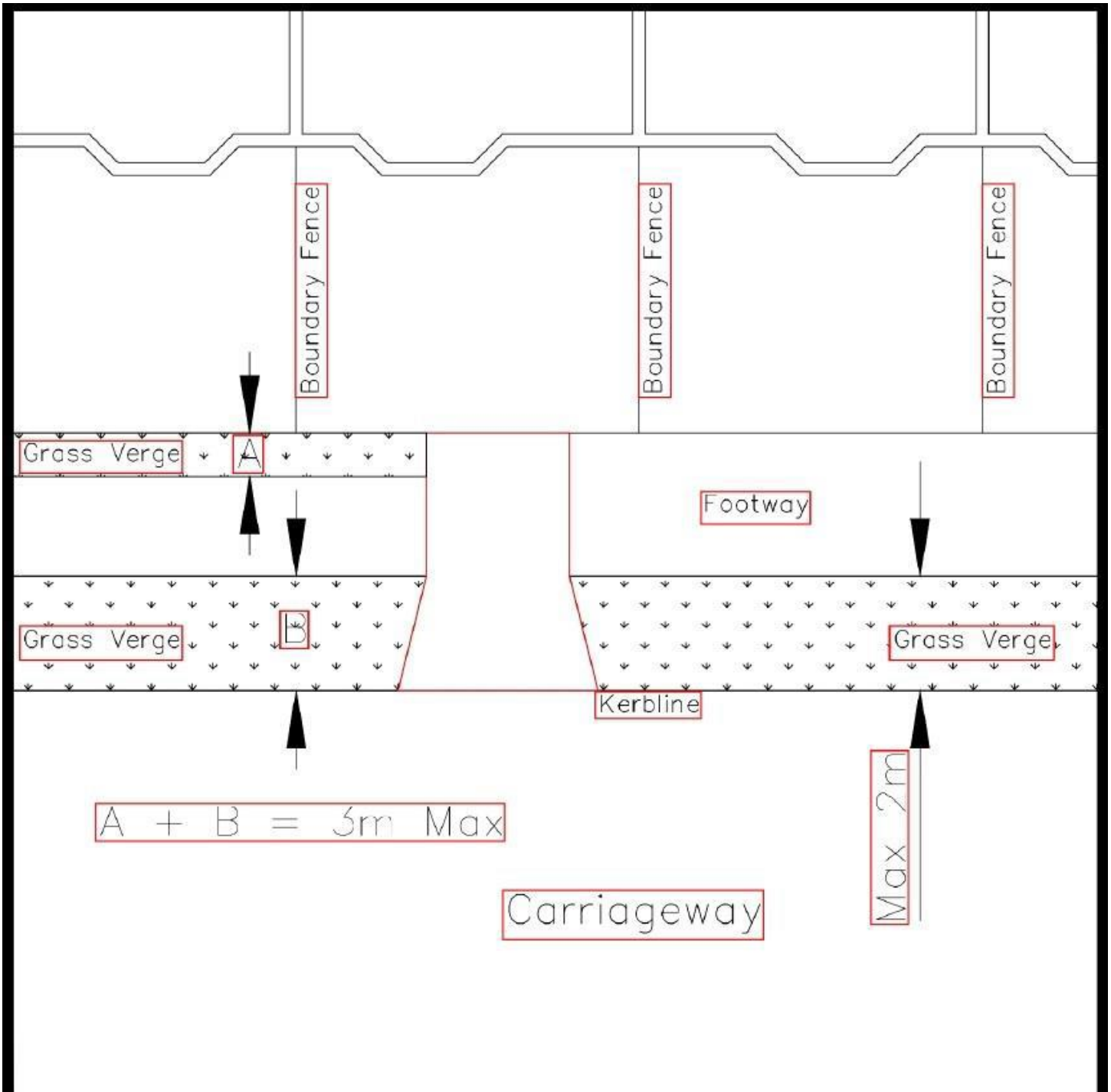


DIAGRAM 5

If the grass verge on your street is over 2metres in depth the application will be refused.

In roads with multiple grass verges, the combined grass verge depth must be 3metres maximum.

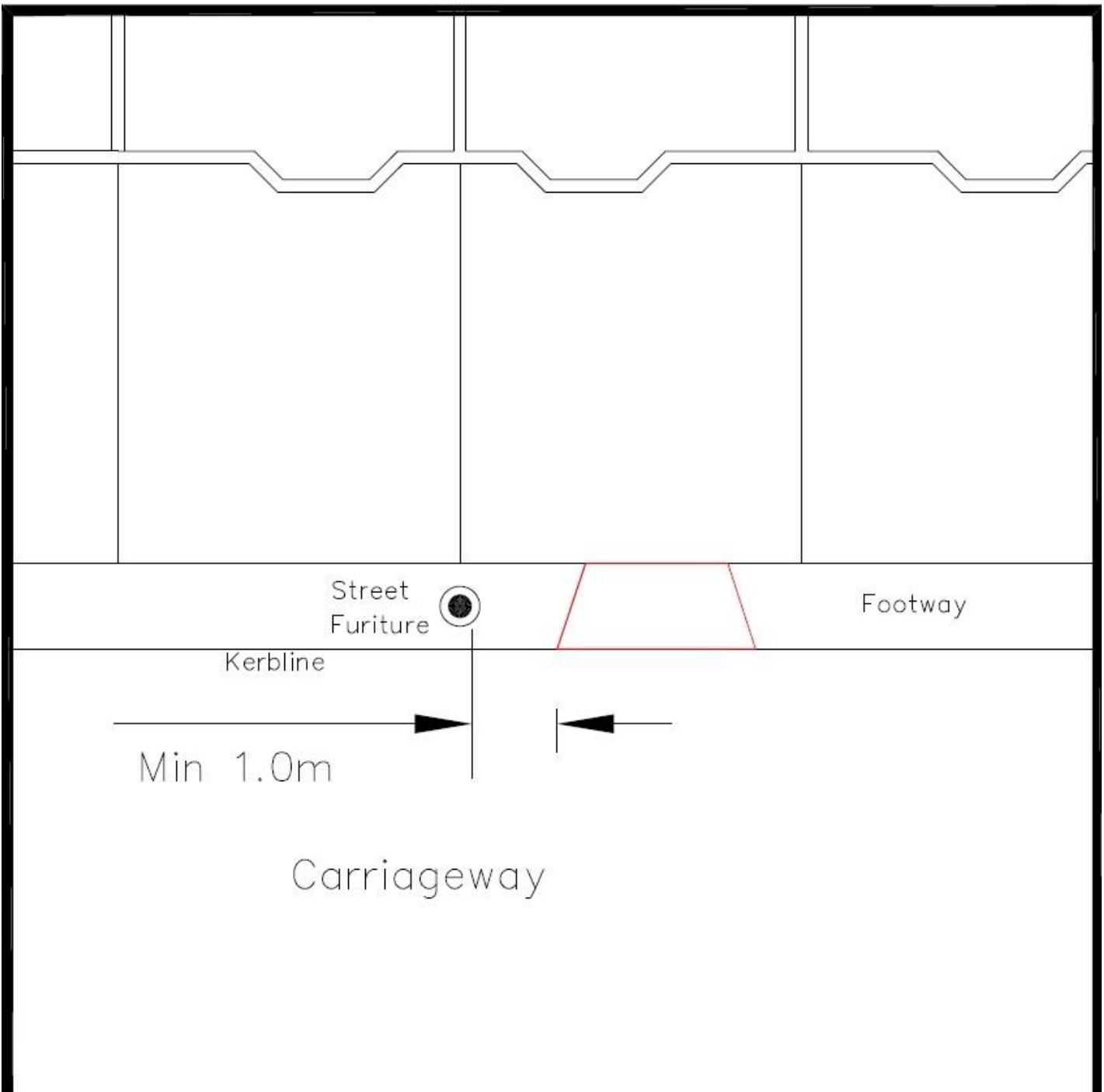


DIAGRAM 6

Street furniture, lamp columns and utility plant must be situated at least 1.0 metre from the location of the proposed crossover. (Any relocation of these facilities will be at the expense of the applicant.)

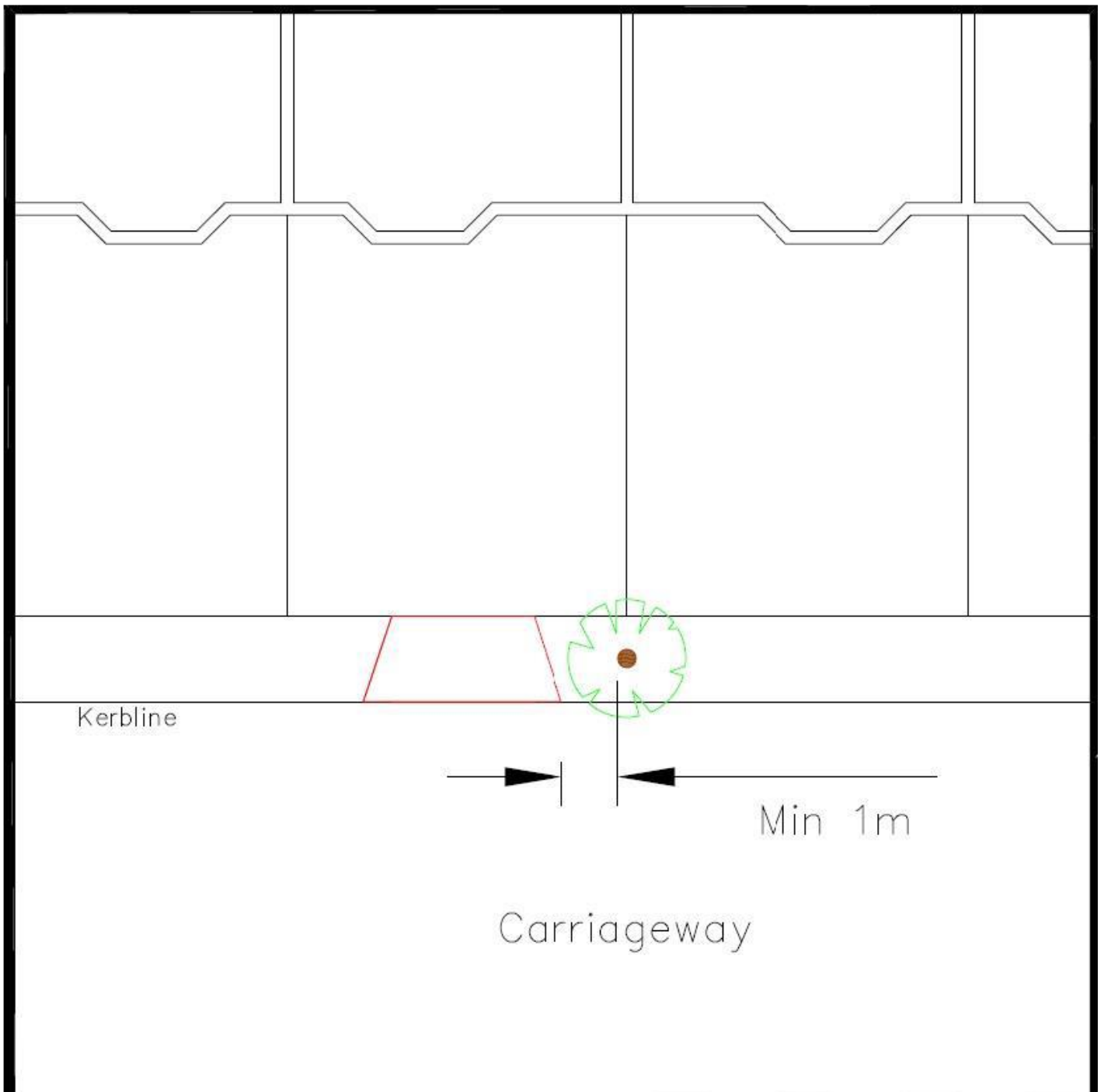


DIAGRAM 7

The policy of the Council is to refuse an application for a vehicle crossing if the application would involve the removal of a Highway tree. There must be a minimum of 1.0 metre from the base of the tree to the top of the ramped kerb of the proposed crossover.

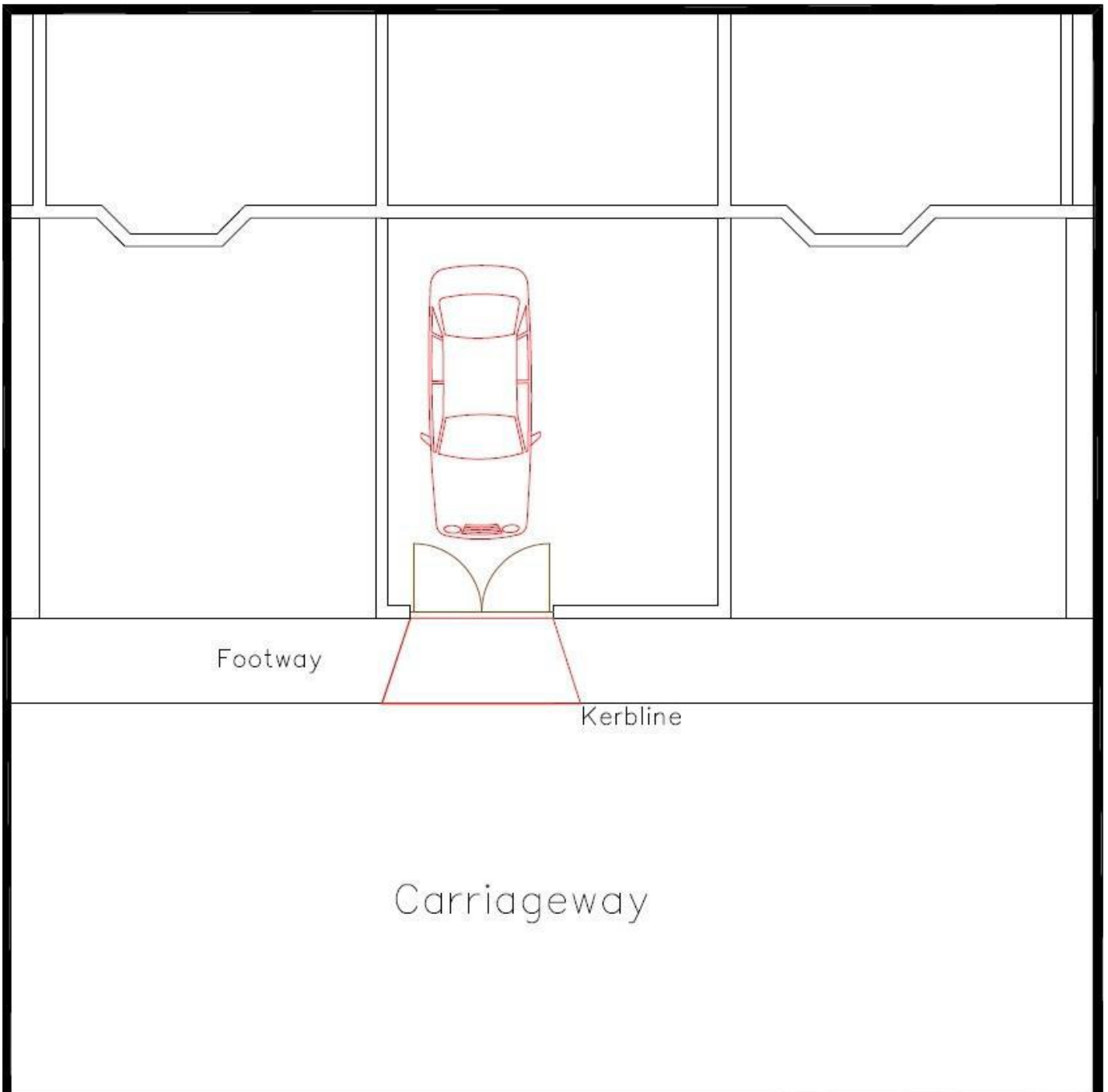


DIAGRAM 8

If you intend gates to be fitted across the vehicle entrance to your property they must not open outwards across the footpath or carriageway. (Highways Act 1980 - Section 153) and must not obscure sightlines.