

**Diagram 4: Impact of a 50 per cent plot ratio for single dwellings, compared with maximum plot ratio of dual occupancy in Suburban Areas**

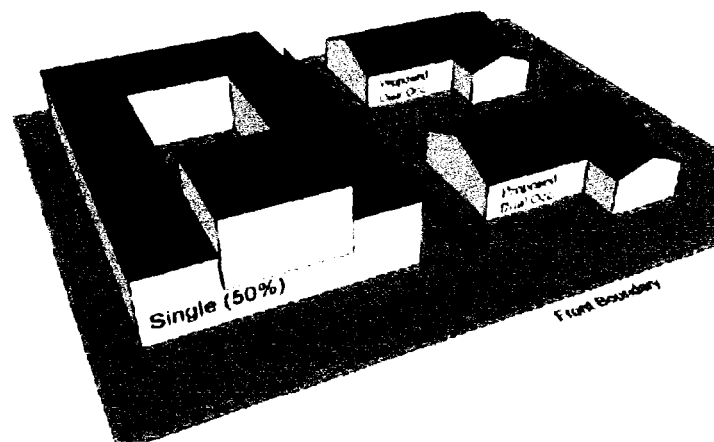


Diagram 4 illustrates a proposal in the Suburban Area for a dual occupancy on a 1000m<sup>2</sup> block that has a plot ratio limit of 29 per cent. A proposal for a new single dwelling on the same site has a plot ratio limit of 50 per cent. This means that redevelopment of blocks for large single dwellings can potentially impact on the character of Suburban Areas.

A snapshot of development activity in the Suburban Area of O'Connor was made to determine whether this is presenting a problem. From December 2003 until April 2006, there were eight approved dual occupancies and one approved multi-unit development. In the same period there were 31 approved proposals for redevelopment for single dwellings. Twenty had a plot ratio of over 35 per cent.

It is too early to determine the effect of increased numbers of large houses in Suburban Areas. There are very few public submissions about single dwelling redevelopments across Canberra. Generally, houses are now being built larger than previously. Larger houses can cater for current lifestyles and enable older relatives to be accommodated, potentially reducing demand for aged housing. Notwithstanding this, options to address the issue should be explored. These could include:

- a sliding plot ratio scale for single dwellings in Suburban Areas, similar to the existing sliding scale for dual occupancies in Suburban Areas to prevent excessively large dwellings being built;
- increased rear setbacks to ensure adequate space for trees;
- a site coverage restriction that requires the building footprint to be limited to 40 per cent of a site (a dwelling can still achieve a 50 per cent plot ratio by having a second floor); and/or
- incentives for dwellings with a smaller plot ratio, such as code assessment track proposed under the new Territory Plan.

A comparison of possible site coverage controls with the existing Garden City provision controls can be found at Appendix C.