

## Community Inclusion & Wellbeing Reference Group

Date	6 November 2023	Time	11am
Venue	Manning Entertainment Centre	Note-taker	Lyndie Hepple
Present	Margaret Guider, Felicity Carter, Mydie Keegan, Gemma Green, Cr Dheera Smith, Alex Mills, Chris Tippett, Tim Larritt, Craig Partridge, Anna Burley, Chris Rowsell, Lyndie Hepple		
Apologies	Cr K Stinson		

### Meeting Items

Item	Key points/actions
1	Welcome Acknowledgement of Country
	Apologies have been received from Cr Kathryn Stinson.
2	Previous notes and action list. There were no outstanding items on the action list.
3	<p><u>Access at the MEC</u></p> <p>The building was constructed in a different era when access was not considered, however the new Beryl Flett Studio is accessible. The two foyers have been opened into one to enable patrons to access the new accessible toilets. Staff are committed to access and try to assist patrons wherever possible.</p> <p>Access to the stage has long been an issue.</p> <p>Recent external grant funding has allowed for the installation of automatic doors, handrails and the purchase of a wheelchair lift to provide access to the stage.</p> <p>Access Australia was engaged to do an audit of the facility. Copies of the audit report/s were distributed to the group and are attached to these meeting notes. Report 1 – Access to the Main auditorium, Report 2 – Access to the Flett Studio. Report 3 – Recommendations.</p> <p>When people book tickets for shows, there is a question about access/need for assistance to assist with booking appropriate seats.</p>

Report 3, Page 3 summarises the main issues – path of travel.

The following challenges identified in the report have already been completed:

- Upgrade night lighting
- Upgrade streetlights along Centenarians Way
- Path of travel between fire door of Flett Studio and main space

Significant funding will be required to complete:

- Improved paths of travel between Manning River Drive, parking, entries, etc.
- Former Visitor's Information Centre lighting.

The Group undertook a tour of the MEC to understand the challenges with access. While a temporary solution for access to the stage has been actioned, the lift weighs 250 Kg so it's not a simple fix. It can only be used for access to the stage at the steps from the auditorium. There are still no accessible access solutions to the backstage area or the green room which is located underneath the stage.

There are no options for people with mobility challenges to access seats in the auditorium – they need to sit in the front row.

Chris Tippett discussed the need for a lift to access the back row of the auditorium and a quiet room for patrons. There are very few options in the current layout of the building. One option is to move the ticket office to the new entry near the Flett Studio and use the old entry space as a lift well.

The outside ramp leading to the Auditorium does not comply with current standards, and neither does the slope leading to the original entrance at the ticket office.

Apart from the access issues pointed out to the Group, the Auditorium hasn't been upgraded for about 25 years, and the stage needs replacing/upgrading.

Significant funding will be required to improve the access to the Auditorium, possibly requiring an extension to the facility to accommodate lift wells and ramps.

**Action:** Investigate grant through Perpetual IMPACT Philanthropy program which closes 8 December.

The Community Inclusion & Wellbeing Reference Group acknowledged the challenges involved in bringing the Auditorium up to standard, and the need to improve access to the backstage and front of house, particularly given the ageing demographic of the MidCoast, and the higher than the average

	<p>proportion of the population with a disability (8.2% of MidCoast, 6.3% for Regional New South Wales and 5.1% for Australia), and encourages and supports the allocation of funding, or the search for external funding to upgrade the facility.</p>
4	<p><u>Aboriginal Action Plan</u></p> <p>The Aboriginal Action Plan has now been adopted.</p> <p>One of the key actions in the plan, to establish an Aboriginal Reference Group to increase the Aboriginal voice to Council, has already been resolved by Council and the nomination period for membership has recently closed. That group will be convened early in 2024.</p> <p>Within the Community Development Team, the Aboriginal Community Development officer is funded by DCJ under the Targeted Early Intervention Framework. One of the outcomes for that funding is the development of the plan, and approximately a quarter of the actions align with the DCJ funding for action. Other actions align with the role of the team's Aboriginal Liaison Officer – this role is the bridge between the community and Council. And others, particularly in the areas of education and provision of health services, are outside the scope of Council's work, but it was important to record what the community told us.</p> <p>The actions include a column to indicate what Council can fund and how the actions are resourced. Other actions are not resourced by Council but are included to inform other agencies. The actions include possible pathways to implement the actions. These are the ideas that the community put forward but are not the only way the commitments can be met.</p> <p>Key focus area 5 – Inclusion and Participation will be of most interest to this Group.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> Consider a separate page to include reference to Close the Gap.</p> <p>A Cultural Development Officer has been appointed in Libraries, to work on storytelling and other cultural activities.</p> <p>In the recently advertised Aboriginal Outreach role reference to working in Gloucester was not made, as this role is required to do customer service (front desk) duties in Taree and Forster.</p>

	<p>The Community Inclusion &amp; Wellbeing Reference Group passed on thanks and congratulations to the Aboriginal Community Development Officer and the Aboriginal Liaison Officer for the outstanding consultation with the community that contributed the development of the Aboriginal Action Plan.</p>
5	<p><u>Mapping Accessible Fish Cleaning Tables</u></p> <p>This project was identified by the Group at the August meeting. Clarification was sought regarding the Group's expectations.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> Investigate feasibility of accessible fish cleaning tables being included in online and printed maps of Barrington Coast.</p>
	<p><u>Other business</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cr Stinson queried Council's Have your Say process as online submissions are not accessible for many residents. It was confirmed that Customer Service can help people with submissions if they can't access the online system, but this is not publicised.</li> </ul> <p><b>Action:</b> Council to promote this service and the fact that there are computers in Libraries for public access.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anna Burley advised that when calling Council, the voicing of the menu options is too fast for comprehension, and there were a couple of hang-ups as she was trying to access assistance.</li> <li>• Disability Inclusion Action Plan – Progress Report</li> </ul> <p><b>Action:</b> Lyndie to forward the Progress Report to the Group for information.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Bins for blokes</u></li> </ul> <p>An initiative for sanitary disposal bins to be placed in men's toilets for disposal of incontinence material. The CWA and Prostate Cancer Support Group in Gloucester are lobbying for a trial in Gloucester, but it hasn't occurred yet. The Group agreed this was an important initiative and agreed</p>

to approach CWA and support groups across the LGA to advocate for this service.

- Dementia Friendly Alliances

Following four recent workshops across the LGA to raise awareness of Dementia, Dementia Friendly Alliances have been established in Tea Gardens, Forster and Taree. A local Gloucester resident is assisting with the establishment of a group in Gloucester which should kick off in February. The groups comprise passionate residents and service providers who are identifying and implementing ways to raise awareness of the needs of people with Dementia.

Members of the Group were made aware of the Yellow Door Program where toilet doors are painted yellow as people with dementia lose the ability to distinguish different colours, but the ability to identify yellow lasts the longest. Painting toilet doors yellow assists people with dementia to identify the location of facilities.

- Cr Smith enquired how the Group felt about its progress after a year and the Group believed it was starting to get some traction and expressed the desire to continue meeting in the current format, with no change to membership.

- Homelessness/Housing

There was a brief discussion about the worsening homelessness situation. People are finding it hard to make ends meet. Service providers are reporting increases in the need for counselling services and food support with whole families attending soup kitchens and other food assistance programs.

There is an increase in people moving from private rentals into homelessness or seeking social housing. Client circumstances are more complex than a few years ago. Domestic Violence is also on the rise.

Tim Larritt reported that at a recent conference in Sydney, levels of Government spoke about the issue and advised that some funding has been allocated to Regional NSW, but it is unclear how it will be used.

5	<p>Dates for 2024:</p> <p>Monday 12 February</p> <p>Monday 6 May</p> <p>Monday 5 August</p> <p>Monday 4 November</p>
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**Next meeting**

Date	5 February 2023	Time	11 am
Venue	Forster Civic Precinct Lake Street, Forster	Note-taker	Lyndie Hepple

16 August 2023

## **Manning Entertainment Centre Access Report 1**

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### **Methodology**

This Access Australia (AA) report relates to instructions and documents received to date from MidCoast Council (MCC) in relation to an access assessment of Manning Entertainment Centre (MEC) – Report 1 – and the Beryl Jane Flett Studio Theatre – Report 2 – at 3 Manning River Drive, Taree NSW.

AA initial scope was discussed on 6 June and AA site inspections were carried out on 3 and 7 July with Council personnel.

AA reports and recommendations relate to the ABCB (Australian Building Codes Board) 2010 DDA Access to Premises Standard (APS) as amended, current NCC / BCA access requirements and local authority requirements.

The intent of the APS is to harmonise BCA access provisions with the complaints based DDA.

Access provisions are to comply with relevant Australian Standards, including current AS1428.1 - 2009, AS1428.2 - 1992, AS1428.4 - 2009, AS1735.12 - 1999, AS2890.6 - 2007 and local authority access requirements as applicable.

DDA complaints can be lodged in relation to existing and or proposed buildings and services. Accordingly, AA provides a risk management approach, and recommends access modifications / retrofit to existing premises in conjunction with accessible new works and services.

AA directors are members of the ACAA (Association of Consultants in Access Australia).

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## Scope

AA initial scope is to carry out an access audit of the existing MEC including site measurements, photos, access issues and recommendations for resolution.

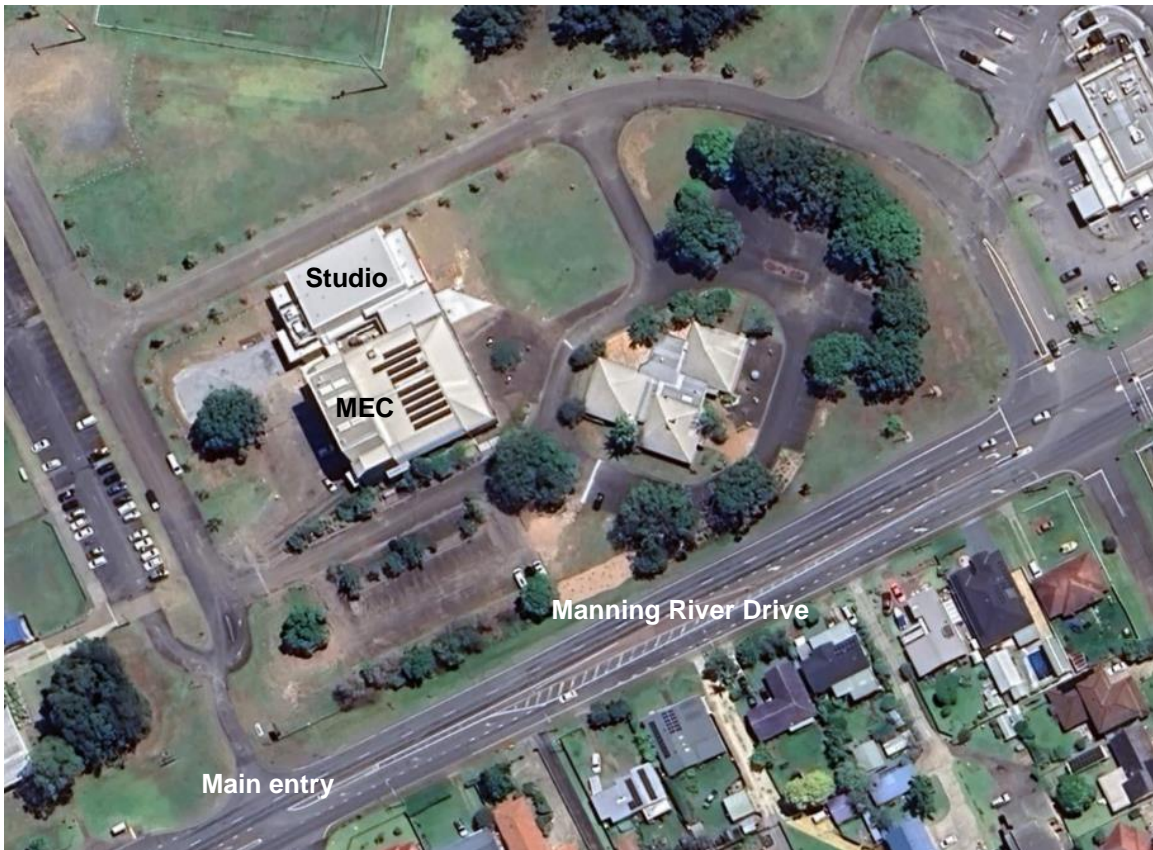
Following completion of the Access Audit – AA recommends preparation of an AA access strategy to provide equitable access to and within all areas, including performance solutions, diagrams etc as required.

AA can also provide access services during detailed design and construction, to site inspections and access certification on satisfactory completion.

MCC documents provided to date include

- ❖ MEC – SB Architects site plan & floor plans – 2003
- ❖ Studio Theatre – Austin McFarland Architects, site and floor plans – 2021

Catwalks, galleries and the like are ancillary spaces and access is not required.



Location plan



# 1 Manning Entertainment Centre

## 1.1 Entries

The Manning River Drive entry is identified by an MEC sign visible when approaching the site from the north or south. Minimal direction signage is provided at the north Centenarians Way entry, shared zones and within the site. The MEC was opened in July 1988.

Entry driveways include irregular surfaces and 3 designated non-complying 5m± x 2.5m± accessible parking spaces with no line marking, ground signage or adjacent shared area, adjacent to the main stepped east entry.

The east entry is not directly accessible from the carpark. Access is via north kerb ramp and walkways.



Manning River Drive entry



MEC east entry steps

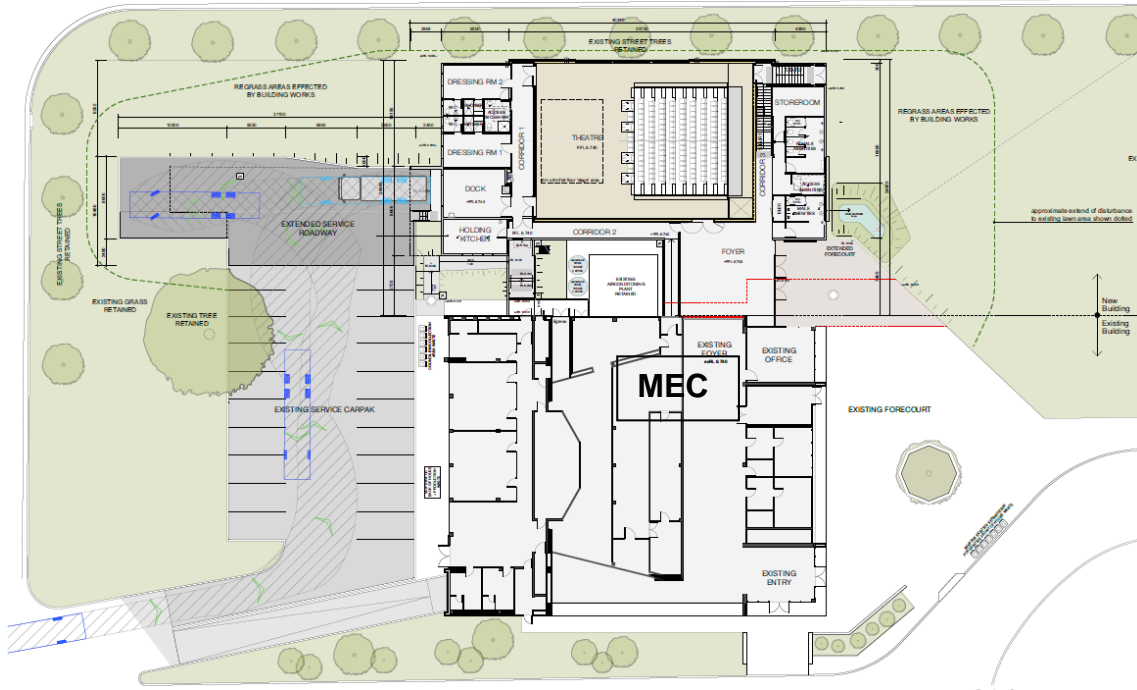


Non-complying accessible parking



Accessible parking signage

The east entry steps are 6m± wide with central and side generally complying handrails and stair nosings. Tactile indicators are not provided. Paving and steps are irregular with movement and fractures in various locations.



Site plan

East entry to the MEC foyer is via a pair of 900± wide hinged doors opening out with 20± stepped threshold and 1m± high pull handles.

*Note* – auto doors are planned for the MEC east and north entries.



East entry steps



East entry

Green Room east entry is via a non-complying 1:10± ramp with 150 kerb, and no handrails, up to a 1200± wide landing with 50± step at the 800± wide entry door opening out with 1100± high pull handle and lock.





Green Room east entry



East external ramp

East external non-complying ramp, irregular paving, 1500± wide, 1:12± gradient with non-complying handrails and no tactile indicators, provides access between MEC entry foyer, MEC auditorium and stage level via steps.



Upper MEC exit



Steps up to stage level

Upper MEC doors to external ramp are a generally complying pair of 900± wide doors opening out with 1m± high push and pull handles to a 2.5m± x 2m± landing.

External steps up to stage level have generally complying nosings, non-complying handrails one side and no tactile indicators. Stage door is 900± wide opening out with 50± step, 1100± high lock and 1250± high pull handles.

North entry access is via a generally complying 2m± wide kerb ramp across 1:20± sloping walkways up to the north MEC entry and Office.

North MEC entry is via a pair of 900± wide sliding doors with 10± step.

MEC office entry door, with signage, is via a pair of generally complying 800± wide doors opening out with 900± high lock, 1m± high pull handles and 10± step.

A 1500± high button 'for assistance' is located adjacent to the Office entry door.



MEC north kerb ramp



MEC north walkway approach



MEC north entry



MEC office entry

<b>MEC 1.1 Entries</b>	<b>Access criteria APS, BCA &amp; Standards</b>
<p>Path of travel (POT) Entries, signage, doors</p>	<p>Provide continuous accessible POTs, doors, ramps, and directional signage, and repair paving between Manning River Drive and to and within the MEC</p> <p>Provide accessible entries to and within MEC east entry, Green Room and auditorium</p> <p>Lower Office assistance button to 900 to 1250 high</p> <p>Upgrade external lighting to provide safe and accessible paths of travel</p>
<p>Accessible parking</p>	<p>Provide complying accessible parking, with adjacent shared spaces and ISA (International Symbol of Access) ground and vertical signage</p> <p>Refer Appendix A</p>



## 1.2 Foyer & amenities

Generally level complying access is provided at north and east Foyer entries.



North entry



East entry

Reception desk and bar are 1150± high. Doors are 800± wide with knob handles.

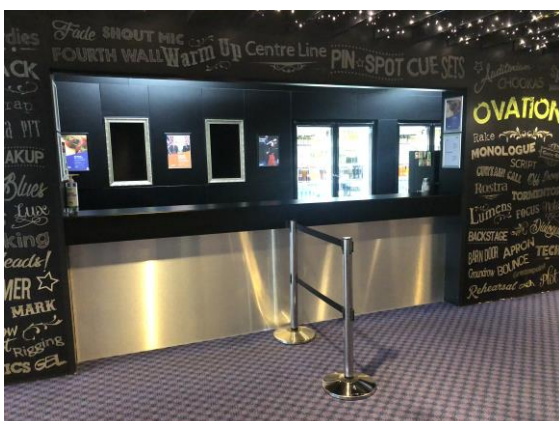


Reception



Foyer

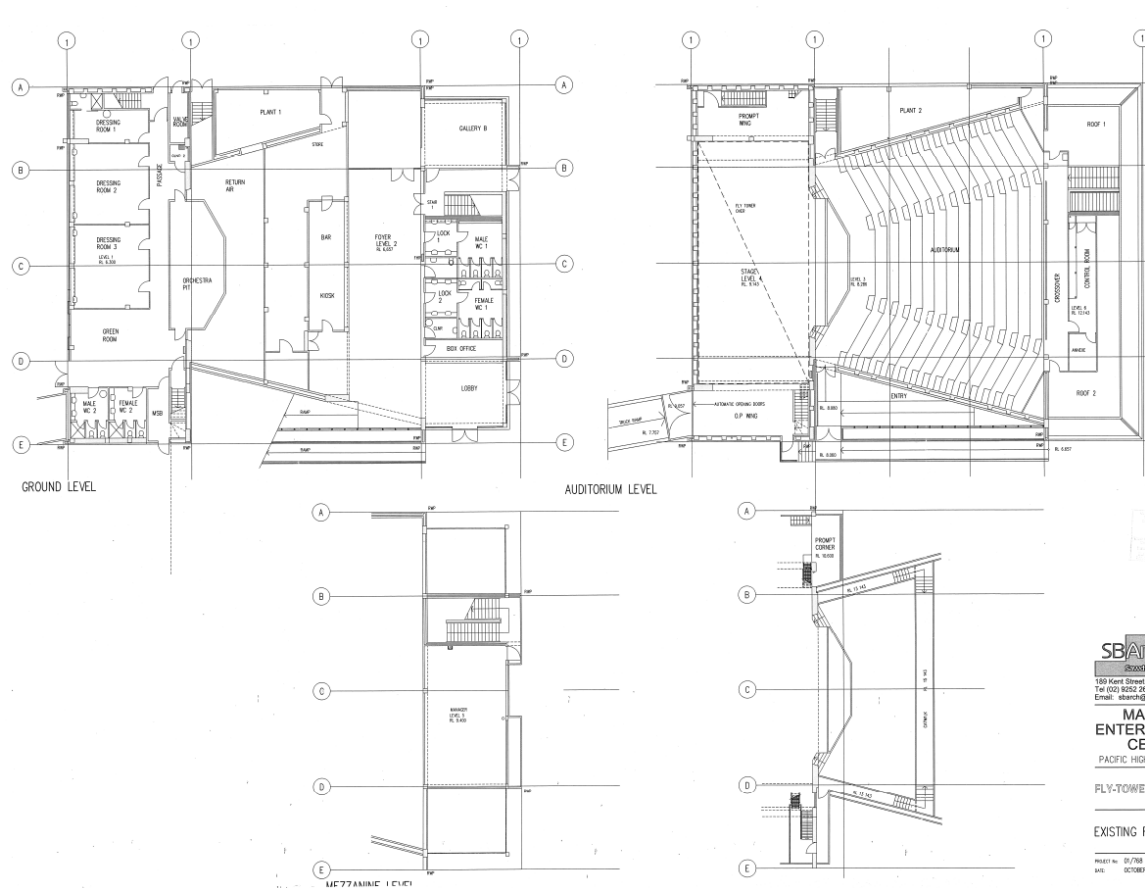
Male and female WCs with no ambulant cubicles, and non-complying accessible WCs are located within the foyer. Office door is 760± wide.



Bar



Office



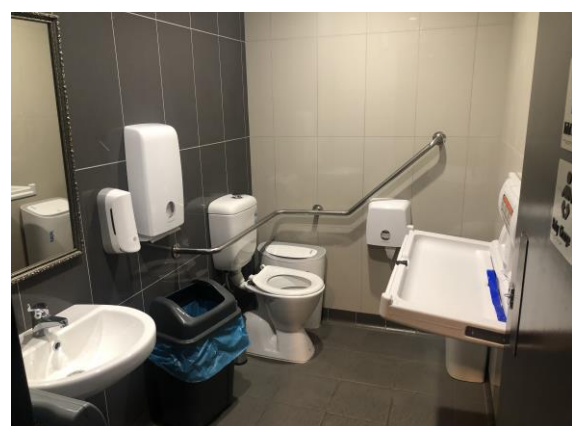
Floor plan

The non-complying accessible WC door is 760± wide with a 10± step, opening into a 1600± x 2400± room.

The WC is non-complying 650± from the back wall, and the basin, mirror and fold down baby change generally comply.



Typical WC cubicle



Non-complying accessible WC

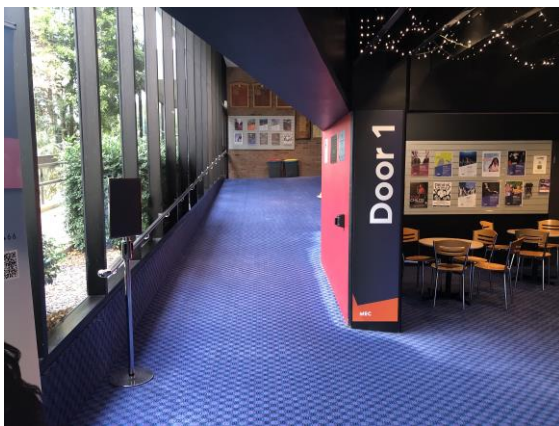


Foyer access to the auditorium is via Door 1 non-complying ramp and Door 2 stairs. Level access to the Studio Theatre Foyer. Refer AA Report 2.

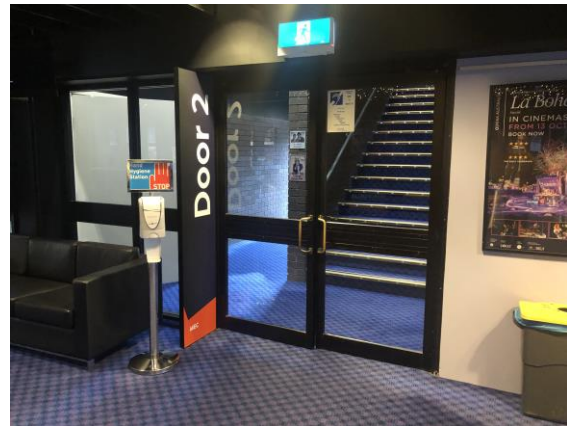
Door 1 ramp is 2m± wide, 12m± long with 1:10± gradient, handrail one side and no tactile indicators. Lower ramp headroom is 2120± under an existing beam.

Door 2 entry is via a pair of 900± doors with 1m± high pull handles. Door 2 stairs are 1500± wide with non-complying nosings, non-complying handrails both sides and no tactile indicators.

Audio induction loop signage is provided. Light switches and controls are 1200± to 1600± high.

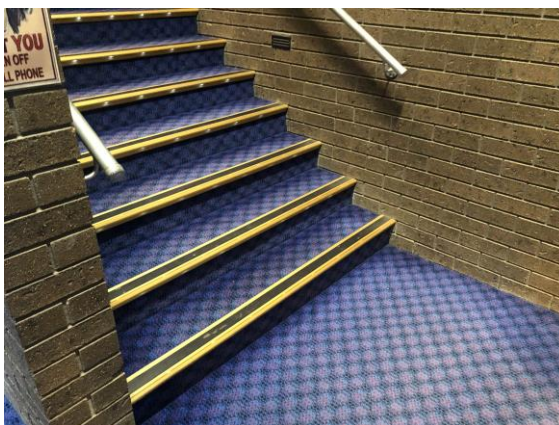


Door 1 non-complying ramp



Door 2 doors to stairs

Door 2 provides stair entry to the mezzanine level non-accessible Collins Room. Entry door is 1m± wide with 1m± high knob handles. Kitchen bench is 900± high.



Non-complying Door 2 stairs



The Collins Room via Door 2 stair

Door 1 auditorium entry is via a non-complying splayed ramp top landing through a pair of generally complying 800± wide doors opening out with 1200± high push pull handles.





Door 1 auditorium entry



Audio induction loop signage

<b>MEC 1.2 Foyer &amp; Amenities</b>	<b>Access criteria APS, BCA &amp; Standards</b>
Path of travel (POT) Entries, signage, doors	Comply with Entries access criteria
Accessible amenities	Provide accessible and equitable access and POT between parking, entries, Foyer, auditorium, stage and back stage areas  Provide NCC / BCA 2019 complying accessible amenities
Gender specific amenities	Accessible toilets to comply with AS1428.1-2009 – including complying WC back rest, FF&E, door and circulation space  Provide complying PAD cubicles to assist persons with ambulant disabilities  Refer Appendix A
Fire stairs	Install complying nosings to fire stairs where applicable

## 1.3 Auditorium

Access to the auditorium is via Door 1 non-complying ramp and Door 2 stairs. Stage access is not provided. Stairs 1m± wide are provided at each side of stage with non-complying nosings, no handrails or tactiles.

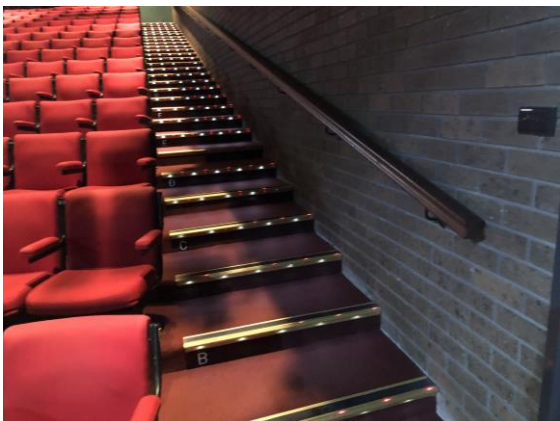
Aisles are 1m± wide. Side and centre aisles include generally complying nosings and side aisle handrails are non-complying. The auditorium seats 500± people.



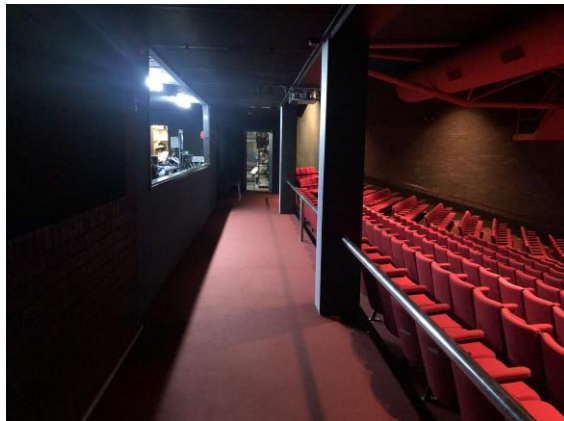
Door 1 lower access aisle



Wheelchair spaces option



Side aisle and non-complying handrail



Door 2 upper aisle

<b>MEC 1.3 Auditorium</b>	<b>Access criteria APS, BCA &amp; Standards</b>
Path of travel (POT) Entries, signage, doors	Comply with Entries access criteria  Provide aisle seat access handrails at each row  Reinstall upper aisle foot lighting
Stage access	Provide equitable access POT between auditorium and stage

## 1.4 Back stage

Back stage dressing rooms, Green Room, and orchestra pit are located below the stage with 1m± wide stair access with generally complying nosings, non-complying handrails and no tactiles.

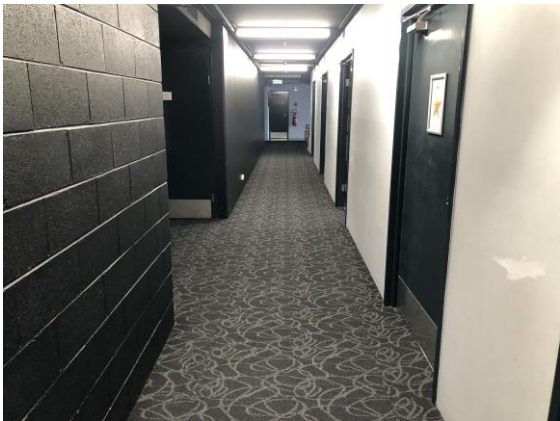


East stairs down from stage

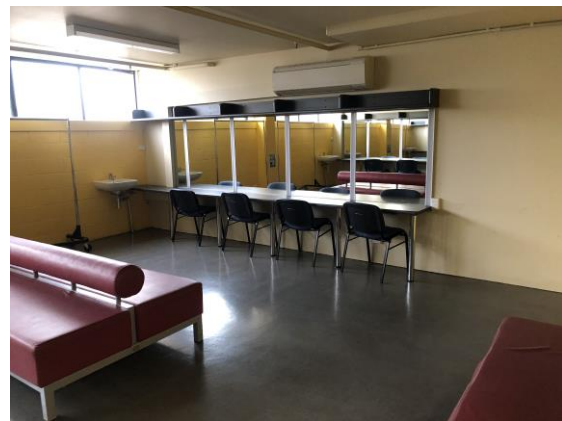


West stairs down from stage

A corridor 1500± wide provides access between dressing rooms, Green Room and amenities. Doors have non-complying 1m± high knob handles.



Corridor to dressing rooms



Typical dressing room

Dressing room doors are 1m± wide with knob handles and WCs and showers are not accessible. Light switches are 1300± high.

Green Room kitchen bench is 900± high with 2 microwaves 1300± to 1450± high. South exit door is a pair of 950± doors opening out with 25± step.

Male and Female toilets (3m x 4m x 2) are not accessible, with 760± doors and 1m± high push plates and pull handles.

Orchestra pit access from the Green Room is via 3 x 1200± wide steps with generally complying nosings, no handrails and no tactiles.

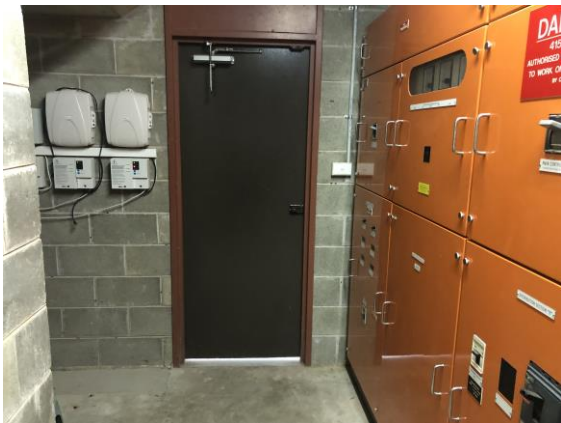




Typical dressing room WC



Green Room and kitchen



Lower level east exit



Non-accessible amenities

<b>MEC 1.4 Back Stage</b>	<b>Access criteria APS, BCA &amp; Standards</b>
Path of travel (POT) Entries, signage, doors	Comply with Entries access criteria  Provide equitable accessible POT between back stage, Green Room and stage areas
Accessible amenities	Provide NCC / BCA 2019 complying accessible amenities  Accessible toilets to comply with AS1428.1-2009 – including complying WC back rest, FF&E, door and circulation space, Braille and tactile signage
Gender specific amenities	Provide complying PAD cubicles to assist persons with ambulant disabilities Refer Appendix A

## 1.5 Night lighting

External lighting is minimal and paths of travel and safety hazards require additional lighting. Photos provided by MEC.



MEC east entry



MEC north entry

<b>MEC 1.5 Night lighting</b>	<b>Access criteria</b> APS, BCA & Standards
Path of travel (POT) Entries, signage, doors	Comply with Entries access criteria
External lighting	Install accessible lighting to MEC approaches and entries

## Access Compliance

Access compliance requires access assessments during detailed documentation, and inspections during construction, to review, assess and report on access compliance or non-compliance.

Access Certification and sign-off can be provided on satisfactory resolution and completion of all access related issues.

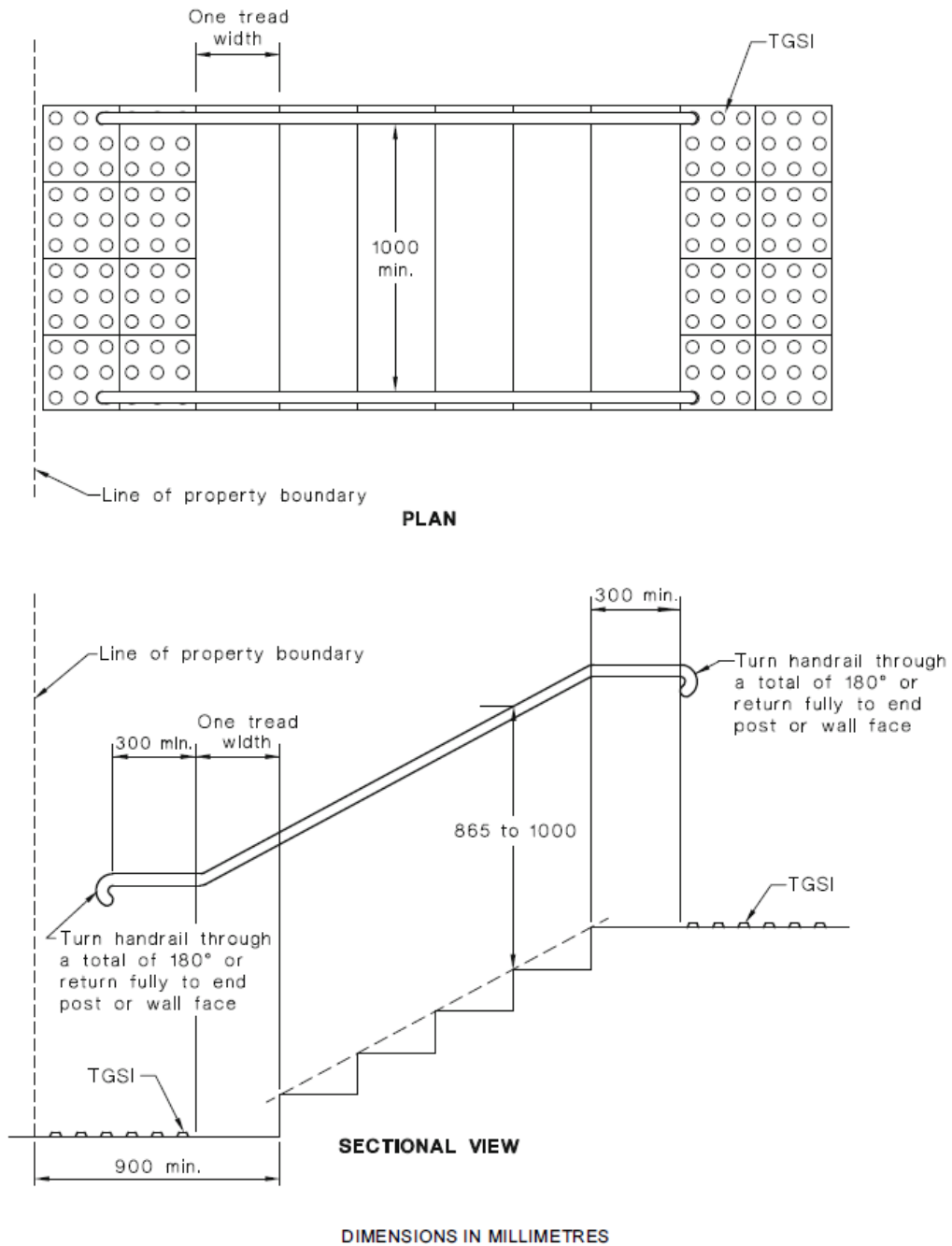
*Access Australia*  
*Michael Fox AM B Arch MTCP ACAA*  
*Director*

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**Appendix A**

AS 1428.1—2009

48



**FIGURE 26(A) STAIRWAY LOCATION AND HANDRAIL EXTENSIONS AT BOUNDARY**

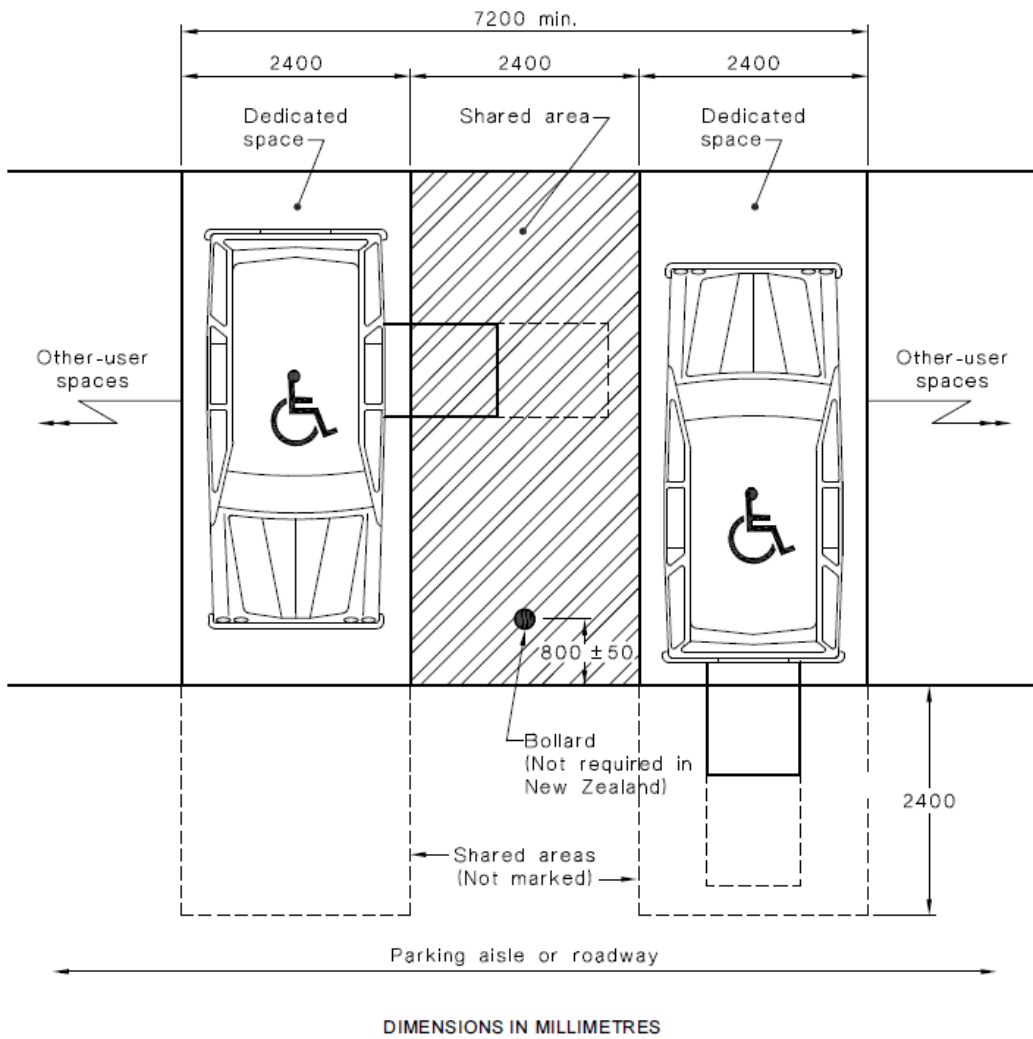
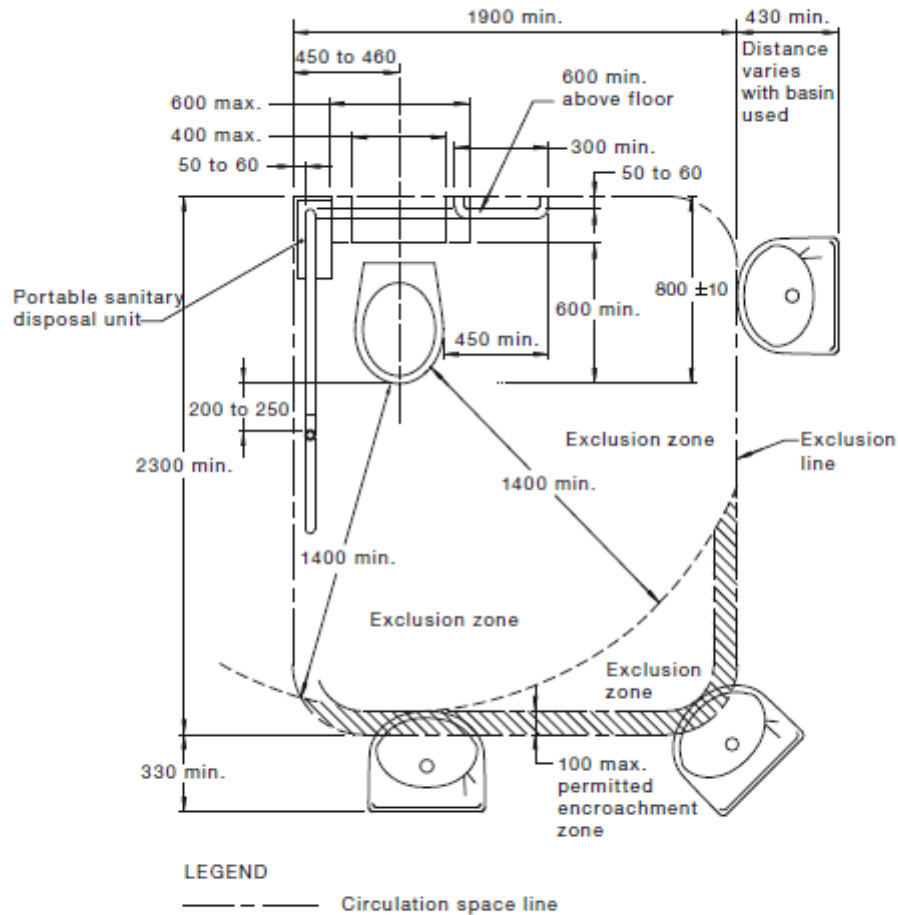


FIGURE 2.3 EXAMPLE OF TWO PARKING SPACES WITH A COMMON SHARED AREA—DIMENSIONS FOR AUSTRALIA ONLY\*





NOTE: This circulation space may overlap any other circulation spaces specified in this Standard.

DIMENSIONS IN MILLIMETRES

FIGURE 43 CIRCULATION SPACE FOR WC PAN—RIGHT-HAND TRANSFER  
(LEFT-HAND TRANSFER IS MIRROR REVERSED)

28 August 2023

## **MEC Studio Theatre Access Report 2**

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### **Methodology**

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## Scope

AA initial scope is to carry out an access audit of the existing MEC including site measurements, photos, access issues and recommendations for resolution.

Following completion of the Access Audit – AA recommends preparation of an AA access strategy to provide equitable access to and within all areas, including performance solutions, diagrams etc as required.

AA can also provide access services during detailed design and construction, to site inspections and access certification on satisfactory completion.

MCC documents provided to date include

- ❖ MEC – SB Architects site plan & floor plans – 2003
- ❖ Studio Theatre – Austin McFarland Architects, site and floor plans – 2021

Catwalks, galleries and the like are ancillary spaces and access is not required.



Location Plan

## 2 MEC Studio Theatre

### 2.1 Entries

The Manning River Drive entry is identified by an MEC sign visible when approaching the site from the north or south. Minimal direction signage is provided within the site. The Studio Theatre was opened in 2022±.

Entry driveways include irregular surfaces and 3 designated non-complying 5m± x 2.5m± accessible parking spaces with no line marking, ground signage or adjacent shared area, adjacent to the MEC stepped east entry. The east entry is not accessible.

North entry access is via a generally complying 2m± wide driveway kerb ramp across 30m± 1:20± sloping walkways up to the Studio main entry.



North frontage



North driveway kerb ramp



Studio ramped entry



Studio entry

Entry paving west edge has an 80± step down to grassed areas and rain garden.

Studio main entry doors are two pairs of 950± wide hinged doors opening out with flush drain and 1m± high push handles.





Entry paving west edge



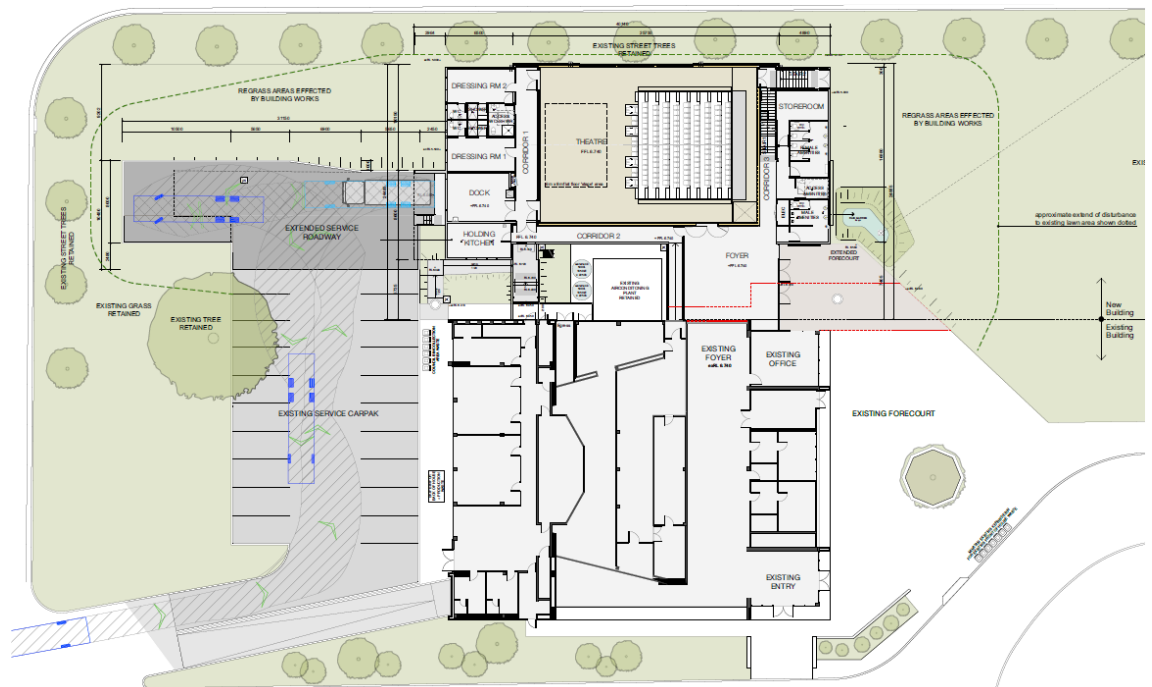
West entry rain garden



Entry flush drain



Entry foyer



Site plan

Studio NW exit stair has a 100± step down to grassed areas. Accessible path of travel to the paved entry or road is required with suitable signage and lighting.



West grassed areas



NW stair exit

<b>Studio 2.1 Entries</b>	<b>Access criteria</b> APS, BCA & Standards
Path of travel (POT) Entries, signage, doors	Provide continuous accessible POTs, doors, ramps and directional signage between Manning River Drive and to and within the MEC and Studio  Provide level or splayed transitions between entry ramp west edge and adjacent grassed areas  Provide accessible POT from NW exit stair  Upgrade external lighting to provide safe and accessible paths of travel
Accessible parking	Provide complying accessible parking, with adjacent shared spaces and ISA (International Symbol of Access) ground and vertical signage  Refer Appendix A

## 2.2 Foyer & amenities

The foyer provides level access between the MEC and Studio. Foyer seating provides a range of seating with backs and armrests.

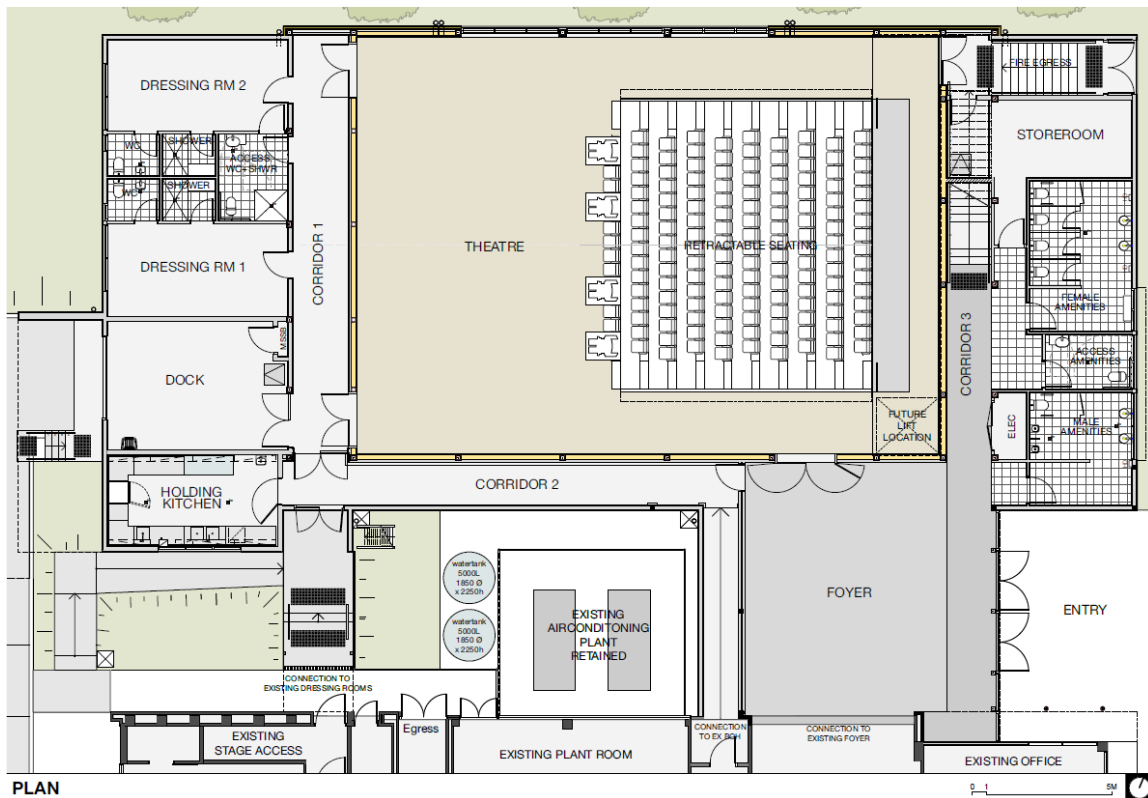
MEC entry is via doors 1 and 2 and Studio access is via doors 3 and 4.



Entry Foyer & link to MEC



Foyer doors 3 and 4 to Studio



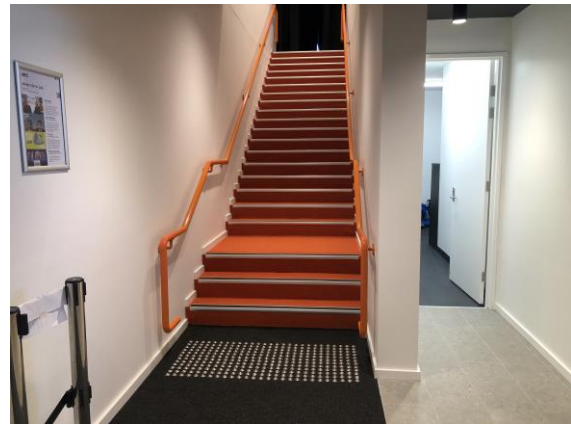
Ground floor plan



Door 3 provides level access to Studio floor and stage level via a pair of 900± doors opening out with pull handles and 950± high locks.



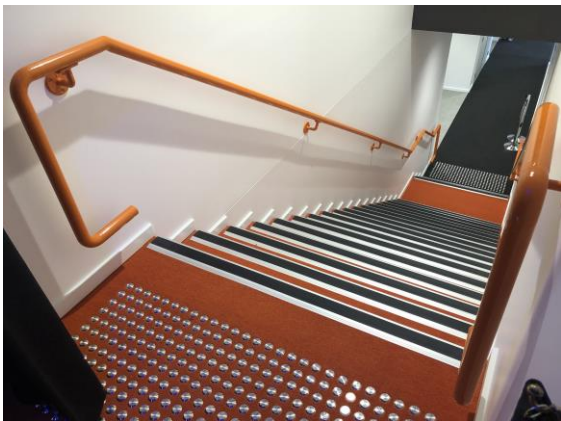
Door 3 & back of house door



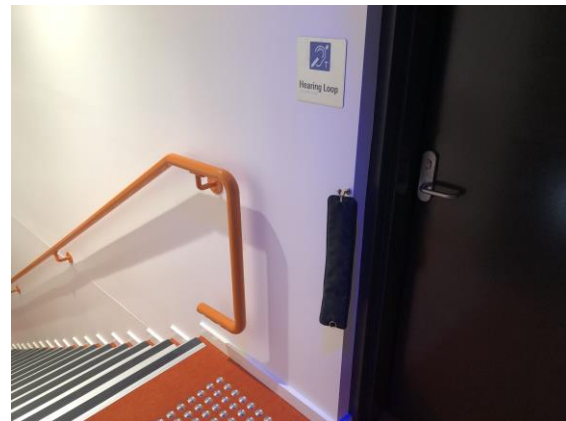
Door 4 access

Door 4 access is via 1400± wide stairs from the foyer to upper Studio 2m± wide gallery and control rooms, with generally complying nosings, handrails and tactile indicators.

Door 4 at gallery entry is 820± wide with 1m± high lever handles. Light switches are 1m± high.



Stairs up to door 4



Door 4 gallery level

Male, female and accessible amenities are provided adjacent to the foyer and door 4 stairs.

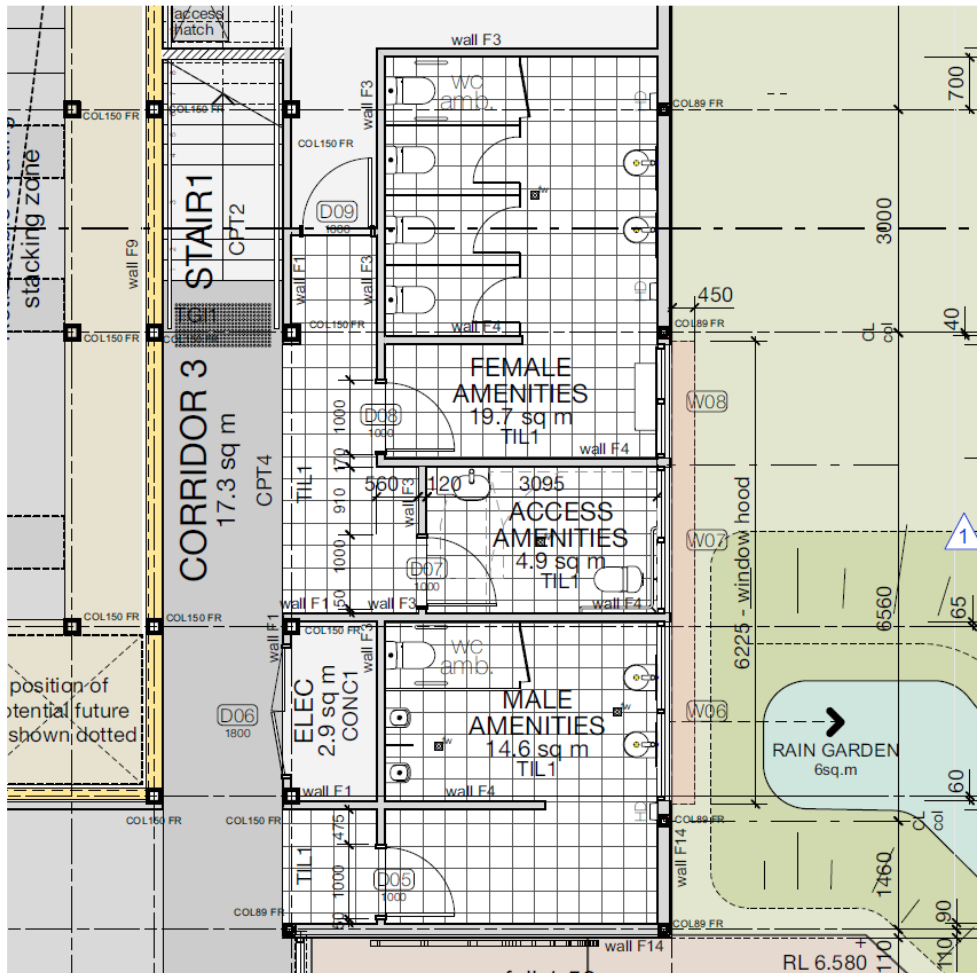
Male and female amenities each include a generally complying PAD cubicle (to assist persons with ambulant disabilities).

PAD cubicle coat hooks are not provided.



Male & female ambulant cubicles

The unisex accessible amenities comply with 850± wide door opening in with 1m high lever handles and 1100 high privacy lock. The room size is 1900± x 3m± with 1800± clear between complying 800± offset WC with backrest and grabrails, 850± high basin and 900± to ceiling vertical mirror.



Foyer amenities plan

Coat hooks (1250± high), paper towel and soap dispenser (1050± high) and toilet paper holder (600± high) comply.



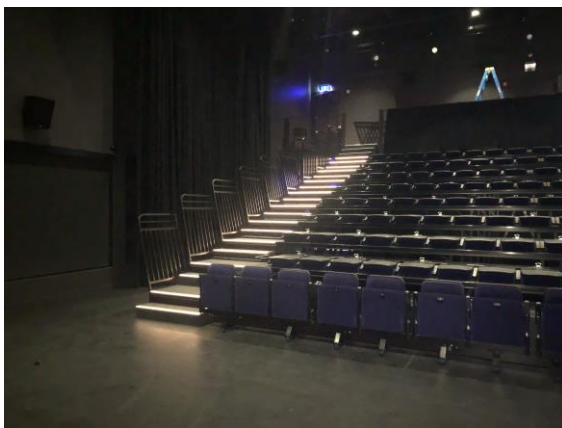
Unisex accessible amenities

<b>Studio 2.2 Foyer &amp; Amenities</b>	<b>Access criteria APS, BCA &amp; Standards</b>
Path of travel (POT) Entries, signage, doors	Comply with Entries access criteria
Gender specific amenities	Install complying coat hooks in PAD cubicles  Refer Appendix A
Fire stairs	Install complying nosings to fire stairs as applicable

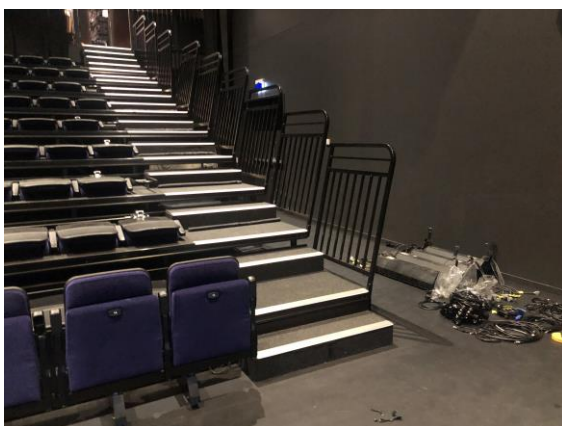
## 2.3 Studio space

The Beryl Jane Flett Studio is a flat floor multi-purpose performance space with raked retractable seating for up to 160 people. Side aisles are 1500± wide and NW exit stair is 1700 wide with complying nosings, handrails and tactiles.

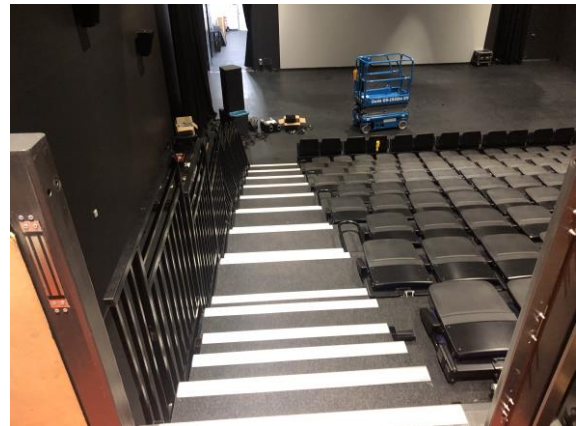
The studio space can be configured to accommodate smaller scale events such as intimate theatrical productions, children’s entertainment, choral performances, classical and contemporary music as well as meetings and conferences.



Studio space



Raked retractable seating



Wheelchair spaces and adjacent companion seats are provided.

<b>Studio 2.3</b> <b>Studio space</b>	<b>Access criteria</b> APS, BCA & Standards
Path of travel (POT) Entries, signage, doors	Comply with Entries access criteria

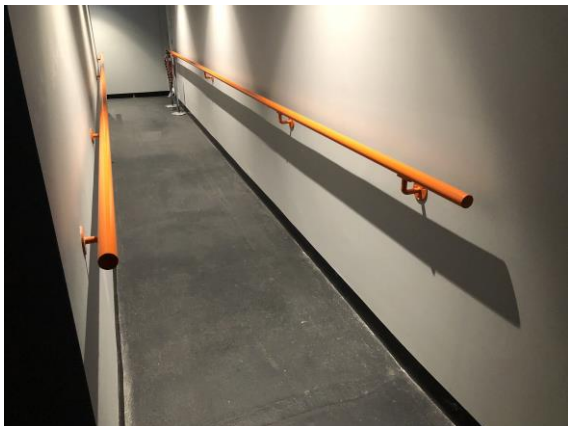


## 2.4 Back stage

Foyer level access to back stage areas is via an 850± wide door with 1m± high lever and 1100± high swipe reader. Corridors are 1500± to 2m± wide.

Back stage areas provide level access between foyer, Studio space, holding kitchen with 850± wide door, 900± high benches and 1800± wide circulation space, and dressing rooms with two pairs of 950± wide doors to the stage area.

Service access is via a 1:20± gradient 1200± wide walkway with non-complying handrails. External complying steps provide access between the Studio and MEC via a pair of 800± wide doors with 1m± high lever handles. The door into the MEC is 1m± wide with 45± step and 1m± high knob handles.



Service corridor



Steps between Studio and MEC

Dressing rooms with 850± doors, 1m± lever handles and 750± high benches, provide access to bathrooms via 700± wide doors with 1m± high lever handles.



Typical dressing room



Typical dressing room bathroom

A unisex accessible bathroom with 850± door, 1m± high levers and privacy lock is provided with generally complying WC, basin, mirror and shower. The bathroom is 2400± x 3m with 1850± clear between WC and basin. Toilet paper holder is non-complying 400± high.



<b>Studio 2.4 Back Stage</b>	<b>Access criteria</b> APS, BCA & Standards
Path of travel (POT) Entries, signage, doors	Comply with Entries access criteria  Service corridor walkway handrails to include end wall returns  Install lever handles to door from Studio to MEC
Accessible amenities	Provide complying toilet paper holder

## 2.5 Night lighting

External lighting is minimal and paths of travel and safety hazards require additional lighting. Photos provided by MEC.



MEC east entry



MEC north entry

<b>Studio 2.5 Night lighting</b>	<b>Access criteria</b> APS, BCA & Standards
Path of travel (POT) Entries, signage, doors	Comply with Entries access criteria
External lighting	Install accessible lighting to MEC approaches and entries

## **Access Compliance**

Access compliance requires access assessments during detailed documentation, and inspections during construction, to review, assess and report on access compliance or non-compliance.

Access Certification and sign-off can be provided on satisfactory resolution and completion of all access related issues.

*Access Australia*  
*Michael Fox AM B Arch MTCP ACAA*  
*Director*

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## Appendix A

### AS1428.1 – 2009 extracts

AS/NZS 2890.6:2009

8

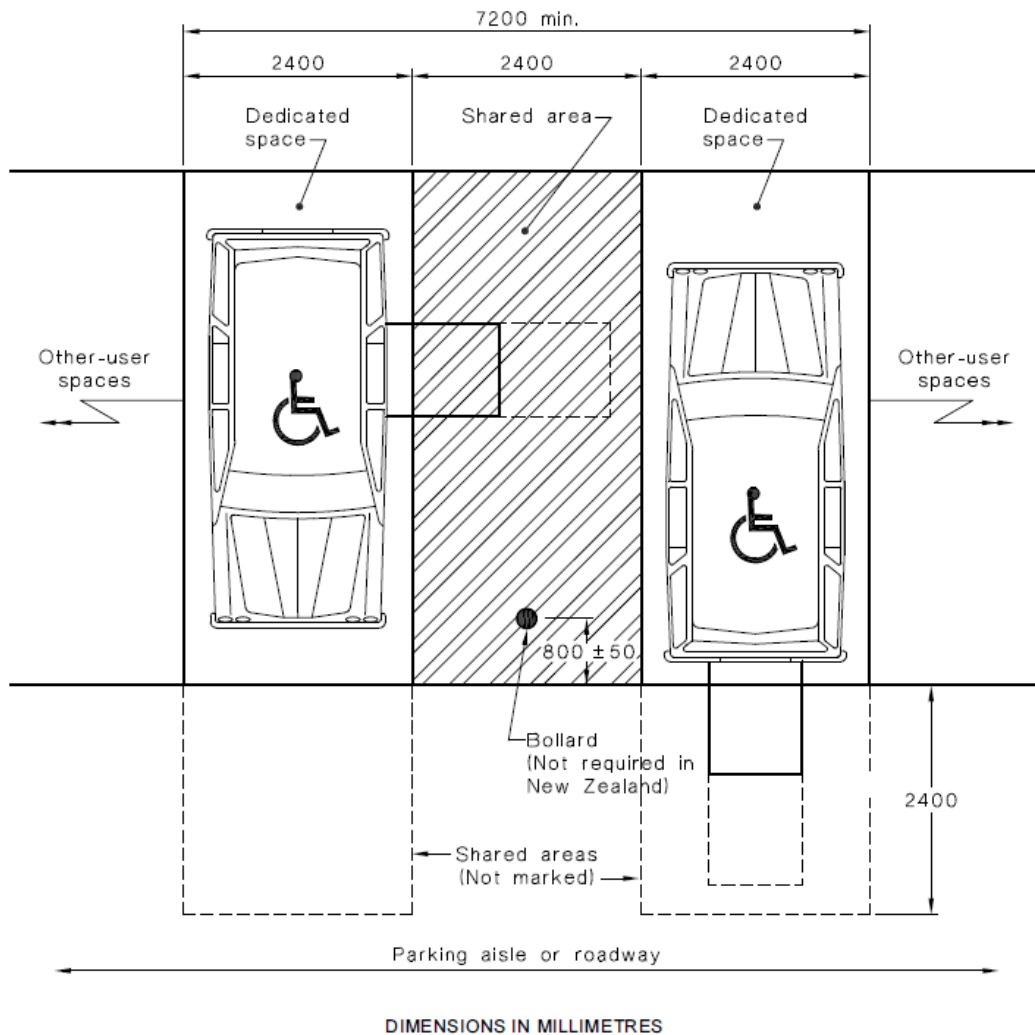


FIGURE 2.3 EXAMPLE OF TWO PARKING SPACES WITH A COMMON SHARED AREA—DIMENSIONS FOR AUSTRALIA ONLY\*

## Coat hooks

16

### SANITARY COMPARTMENT FOR PEOPLE WITH AMBULANT DISABILITIES

AS1428.1-2009 16.5 Coat hook

A coat hook shall be provided within the sanitary compartment and at a height between 1350 mm to 1500 mm from the floor.

## Toilet paper holder

### 15.2.6 Toilet paper dispenser

The outlet for the toilet paper dispenser shall be located within the zone specified in Figure 41.

The toilet paper dispenser shall not encroach upon the clearance space required around the grabrail specified in Clause 15.2.7.

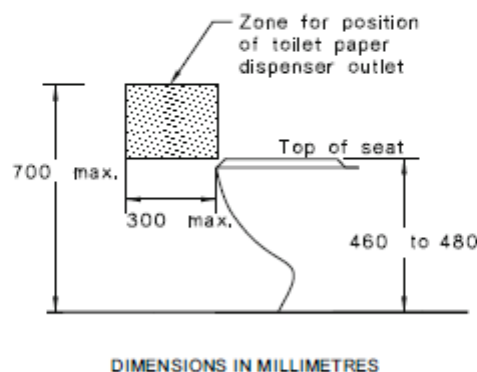


FIGURE 41 ZONE FOR POSITION OF TOILET PAPER DISPENSER

## Handrails

12 HANDRAILS

- (g) Handrails shall be securely fixed and rigid, and their ends shall be turned through a total of 180°, or to the ground, or returned fully to end post or wall face, as shown in Figures 26(C) and 26(D).

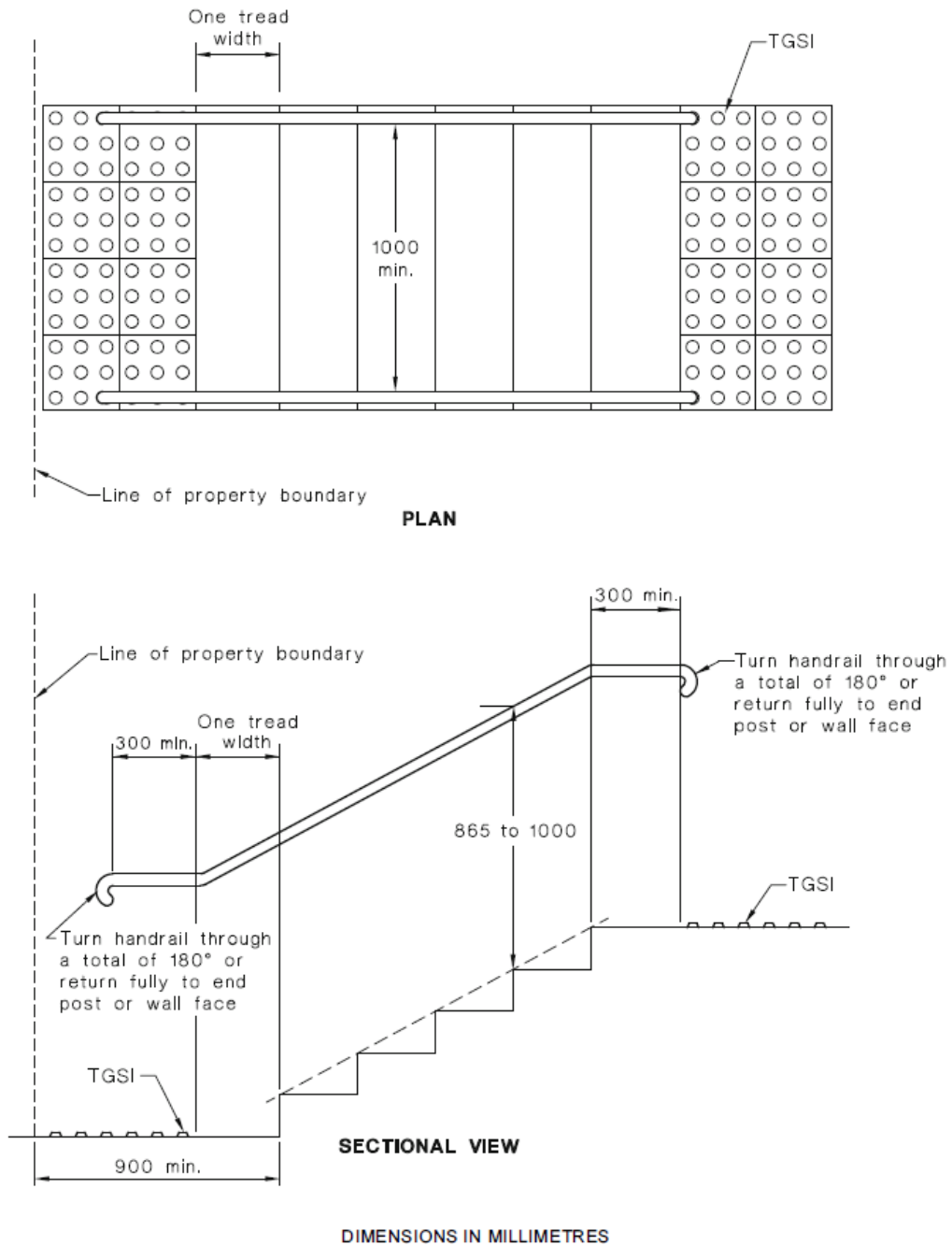
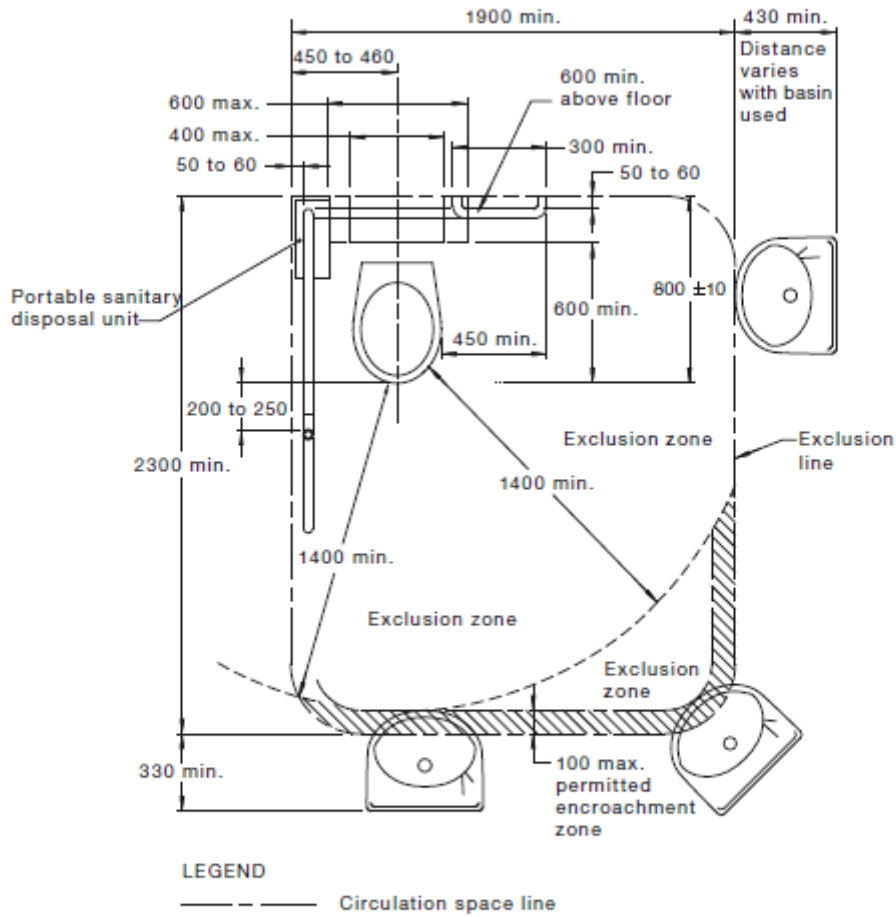


FIGURE 26(A) STAIRWAY LOCATION AND HANDRAIL EXTENSIONS AT BOUNDARY



NOTE: This circulation space may overlap any other circulation spaces specified in this Standard.

DIMENSIONS IN MILLIMETRES

FIGURE 43 CIRCULATION SPACE FOR WC PAN—RIGHT-HAND TRANSFER (LEFT-HAND TRANSFER IS MIRROR REVERSED)



28 August 2023

## **MEC & Studio Theatre**

### **Access Strategy Access Report 3**

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#### **Methodology**

This Access Australia (AA) report relates to instructions and documents received to date from MidCoast Council (MCC) in relation to an access assessment of Manning Entertainment Centre (MEC) – Report 1 – and the Beryl Jane Flett Studio Theatre – Report 2 – at 3 Manning River Drive, Taree NSW.

AA initial scope was discussed on 6 June and AA site inspections were carried out on 3 and 7 July with Council personnel.

AA reports and recommendations relate to the ABCB (Australian Building Codes Board) 2010 DDA Access to Premises Standard (APS) as amended, current NCC / BCA access requirements and local authority requirements.

The intent of the APS is to harmonise BCA access provisions with the complaints based DDA.

Access provisions are to comply with relevant Australian Standards, including current AS1428.1 - 2009, AS1428.2 - 1992, AS1428.4 - 2009, AS1735.12 - 1999, AS2890.6 - 2007 and local authority access requirements as applicable.

DDA complaints can be lodged in relation to existing and or proposed buildings and services. Accordingly, AA provides a risk management approach, and recommends access modifications / retrofit to existing premises in conjunction with accessible new works and services.

AA directors are members of the ACAA (Association of Consultants in Access Australia).

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## **Access Report 1 & 2**

AA Access Report 1 provides an assessment and report on the MEC with comments and recommendations including

- ❖ Provide accessible and equitable access and paths of travel (POTs) between Manning River Drive, parking, entries, Foyer, auditorium, stage and back stage areas
- ❖ Provide complying accessible parking, with adjacent shared spaces and ISA (International Symbol of Access) ground and vertical signage
- ❖ Lower Office assistance button to 900 to 1250 high
- ❖ Upgrade external lighting to provide safe and accessible paths of travel
- ❖ Provide complying unisex accessible amenities and gender specific PAD cubicles to assist persons with ambulant disabilities
- ❖ Provide accessible and consistent external night lighting to approaches and entries

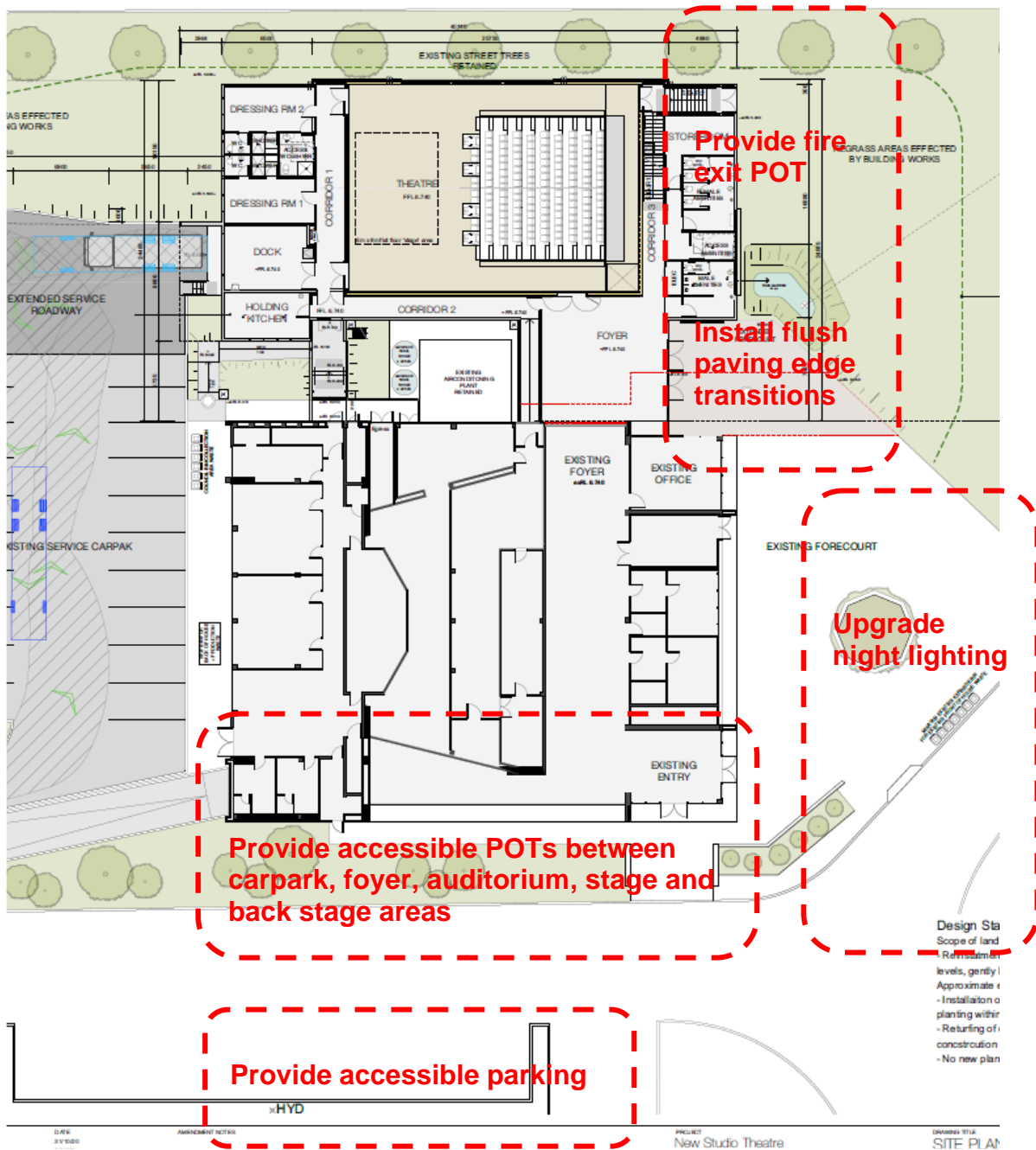
AA Access Report 2 provides an assessment and report on the Studio Theatre with comments and recommendations including

- ❖ Provide continuous accessible POTs, accessible parking, directional signage and upgrade external lighting in conjunction with the MEC
- ❖ Provide level or splayed transitions between entry ramp west edge and adjacent grassed areas
- ❖ Provide accessible POT from NW exit stair
- ❖ Install complying coat hooks in PAD cubicles
- ❖ Wheelchair spaces and adjacent companion seats are provided
- ❖ Service corridor walkway handrails to include end wall returns
- ❖ Install lever handles to door from Studio to MEC
- ❖ Provide complying toilet paper holder

## Access strategy

Following completion of the Access Audits – AA recommends preparation of an AA access strategy to provide equitable access to and within all areas, including performance solutions, diagrams etc as required.

Recommended access program includes the following areas and elements



Recommended access strategy includes

- ❖ Detailed investigation of MEC east entry zone to determine options for providing accessible POTs between carpark, foyer, auditorium, stage and back stage areas
- ❖ Preparation of schematic design options and indicative cost estimates for the proposed MEC accessible east entry zone
- ❖ Prepare design documents and cost estimates for access upgrades including accessible parking, upgraded night lighting, Studio NW fire stair exit POT and flush paving edge transitions
- ❖ Design and document selected options for contract documents, approvals, tenders and construction

AA can provide architectural and access services during detailed design and construction, to site inspections and access certification on satisfactory completion.

## **Access Compliance**

Access compliance requires access assessments during detailed documentation, and inspections during construction, to review, assess and report on access compliance or non-compliance.

Access Certification and sign-off can be provided on satisfactory resolution and completion of all access related issues.

*Access Australia*  
*Michael Fox AM BArch MTCP ACAA*  
*Director*

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# DISABILITY INCLUSION ACTION PLAN


## 2022/23 Progress Report

### Overview

MidCoast Council's second Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) was developed in 2022 after consultation with people with disability and their carers', and disability service providers. The DIAP was adopted by Council on 27 July 2022.


This report outlines progress made against the strategies in the DIAP.


### Focus Area 1 – Attitudes and Behaviours

Objective	Action	Report
People living with disability on the MidCoast are recognised and valued.	Recognise and celebrate International Day of People with Disability and other significant dates through Council events and social media networks.	<p>In celebration of 2022 International Day of People with Disability, Council and the Manning Regional Art Gallery partnered with Dundaloo Support Services to run a community art project called "Imagine". Art packs were distributed to people with disability via schools and service providers. The resulting art works were converted into giant posters which were pasted onto the external walls of the Manning Regional Art Gallery to form an accessible exhibition.</p> 
MidCoast Council's use of graphics is representative of our community.	Use content that includes people with disabilities when depicting the community.	<p>The MidCoast Assist Disability Awareness Concert was held in December 2023. The event was a fantastic night for the participants to stand up, have a voice and build capacity. It also helped to break stereotypes and showcase the capabilities of people living with a disability.</p> <p>Council uses a diversity of visual media to communicate internally and engage with our community externally including print, digital and social media channels. Council has included a conscious objective to include representation of different communities and</p>

		cultures including people with disabilities and is exploring alternative avenues for the representation of people with nonphysical disabilities.
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## Focus Area 2 – Liveable Communities

Objective	Action	
<p>Footpath safety and connectivity are improved.</p> <p>Opportunities for active transport are improved and promoted.</p>	<p>Seek funding for additional works not identified in the Pedestrian Access &amp; Mobility Plan.</p> <p>Continue to consult with the community to identify improvements.</p>	<p>Community input into the Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan (PAMP) has assisted us in planning and prioritising community needs. Council acknowledges that each project that is delivered is an incremental improvement to removing restrictions and enabling people to use our transport network.</p> <p>The following works were completed during the year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Pelican Boardwalk in Forster received a new decking made from new specially reinforced plastic that provides better grip for those walking, using walking aids or the tyres of mobility aids.</li> <li>• Funding was secured to extend the Pelican Boardwalk further towards the beach to improve beach access.</li> <li>• The Diamond Beach viewing platform has been upgraded with reinforced plastic planks and the paths have been widened and repaved to improve accessibility.</li> <li>• Funding was secured to upgrade the Hawks Nest Fisherman’s Platform delivering a revitalisation project providing a safe and accessible facility for the recreational fishing community.</li> <li>• The Browns Creek walkway has been repaired and is now more accessible and safer for people with disability.</li> <li>• A path extension along Oxley Street in Taree was undertaken to improve pedestrian connectivity with the Chatham Street path and the broader path network.</li> <li>• A path extension along Boomerang Drive resulted in improve pedestrian connectivity with the residential areas and local school.</li> <li>• Pathways on Mirreen Street and Tuloa Street in Hawks Nest now link Peter Sinclair Gardens to the local shopping facilities.</li> </ul> 

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work on the Wingham Streetscape project continues with detailed designs considering disabled parking in compliance with Australian Standards, with quantum of spaces in accordance with the approved strategic plan; and improving footpath levels for property access where possible. Construction will take place over several years as funding becomes available.</li> </ul>
<p>MidCoast Council's community Inclusion &amp; Wellbeing Reference Group advocates for the needs of people with disability.</p>	<p>Council officers advise the Community Inclusion &amp; Wellbeing Reference Group and support identified actions.</p>	<p>The Community Inclusion &amp; Wellbeing Reference Group was established in December 2022 and is meeting quarterly.</p> <p>Meetings have explored strategic priorities across the Disability Inclusion Action Plan, Ageing Strategy, Open Spaces and Recreation Strategy. The Community Inclusion &amp; Wellbeing Reference Group have worked with Council's specialist planners to explore Council's community facilities and recreation work plans for upgrades and advocated for accessibility upgrades to Council facilities.</p>
<p>Council's amenities meet the needs of people with disability.</p> <p>Council's recreational space meets the needs of people with disability.</p>	<p>Seek funding to install lift-and-change facilities where appropriate.</p> <p>Provide compliant accessible toilets.</p>	<p><b>Fazio Park Water Playground</b></p> <p>The new Fazio Park Water Playground in Tuncurry has been opened. Accessible design ensured the playground is accessible with flat access, aligning with principles of Play Space Strategy, Universal Design and intergenerational play. New amenities at the park include ambulant facilities and a fully accessible adult change facility.</p> <p><b>Park Amenities Upgrades</b></p> <p>The following improvements were made to public amenities:</p> <p>John Wright Park Tuncurry: works to rebuild amenities were completed and include ambulant and accessible amenities.</p> <p>Providence Park at Hawk Nest: works to rebuild amenities were completed and include ambulant and accessible amenities.</p> <p>Old Bar Park: works to rebuild amenities were completed and include ambulant and accessible amenities.</p> 

Bulahdelah Lions Park: accessible amenities were constructed where none were previously available.

### **Pool Upgrades**

Tea Gardens Pool: A major upgrade of Tea Gardens Pool was completed in January 2023, including both accessible bathrooms being upgraded with wider doors, improved toilet, sink and shower access and level paths from the pool entrance, improving access from the bathrooms all the way to the carpark. Improved emergency access was also achieved.

A speciality ramp has also been added to the main pool to allow access for people with mobility difficulties, and new storage sheds for some of the pool's user groups to store mobility aids in a safe, dry space have been provided.

Black Head Ocean Pool: this popular ocean pool was upgraded with final sealing work completed to allow a smooth, safe surface for all community members. The works particularly benefit residents who may have lower mobility or use mobility aids.

### **Open Space and Recreation Strategy**

Council's new Open Space and Recreation Strategy was developed and approved, after extensive consultation with the community. The new Strategy recognises that we have a broad demographic in our LGA and includes strategies to improve accessibility and connection across the LGA, including access to the beach.

Area-specific Master Plans will be developed to sit under the Open Space and Recreation Strategy. A Taree Recreational Grounds Master Plan is now being developed to make this open space more accessible. Planning commenced to consult with community for the development of the Old Bar Park Master Plan.



### **Public Spaces and Facilities Improvements**

The following improvements were made to other public spaces and facilities:

**Nabiac & Bulahdelah Showgrounds:** Council received feedback from the community regarding the Draft Nabiac and Bulahdelah Showgrounds Plans and after completing a final submission, the NSW Department of Planning and Environment endorsed the plans in February 2023. Plans have been adopted.

**Gloucester District Park:** Council obtained funding from the NSW Government to repair or replace picnic shelters, park benches and pathways, and undertake minor improvements. Consultation with the Bucketts Way Neighbourhood Centre identified a list of repairs for the Aboriginal cultural area, Minimbah Park. Works included asphalt repairs to improve access for people with disability, parents with prams and people with mobility walkers.



**Gloucester Grandstand:** works to provide seating for 484 people, new steps, handrails, an accessible seating area and more accessible parking were completed. The project was funded by the NSW Government's Stronger Country Communities Program.

**Blackhead Skate Park:** planning for a new Skate Park commenced, to create an open space welcoming to everyone including access ramps, flatter surrounding spots to watch the action and wider skating platforms to suit a range of scooters and skateboards.

**Forster:** several picnic tables have been widened and structurally changed so that a wheelchair can comfortably pull in under the table.



	<p>Include wheelchair beach access in Forster Main Beach Master Plan.</p>	<p>Wheelchair access to beaches is included in the Open Space and Recreation Strategy. Master plans sit under this overarching strategy and funding is currently being sought to implement access to main beaches in the LGA.</p>
	<p>Other building works</p>	<p><b>Wingham Library</b></p> <p>The \$1,000,000 major renovation and expansion of Wingham Library was completed. The project was jointly funded by MidCoast Council and the State Government with \$500,000 coming from the 2019/20 Public Library Infrastructure Grant Program from the NSW Government, as well as a further \$400,000 from the Wingham area developer contributions, and \$100,000 from the library general budget.</p> <p>Key features of the project included a ground-floor extension, and restoration of the library's top-floor. Upstairs was previously unused by the community but now includes additional study areas, relaxation seating and a large meeting room with the capacity to host events. The top floor is now accessible by a new internal lift and the roof of the extension has been replaced. Furniture selection considered library users of all abilities including features such as electronically adjustable tables, accessible public computers and internet kiosks, and accessible public amenities.</p> <p><b>Manning Entertainment Centre:</b></p> <p>Funding was secured with an Accessibility Grant from Create NSW (Creative Capital) money for minor improvements including stair safety in the auditorium, handrails, footpaths and portable chair lift, quiet room and automatic doors for foyer all of which will improve access for patrons.</p> <p>The Flett Studio was completed. The vibrant new theatre space provides an accessible and affordable performance space that will allow for a greater range of performance options for the MidCoast community.</p> <p>A full access audit has been commissioned for the MEC. The report advises on compliance and inform a priority list for seeking future grant funding and accessibility improvement projects.</p> <p>Funding has been secured for purchasing a portable wheelchair lift that can move throughout the space to assist patrons and performers living with disability improving access the main stage.</p>

		<p>The MEC car park and pathways have been resurfaced to allow easier access for lower mobility patrons.</p> <p><b>Community Halls</b></p> <p>The Lower Manning Resilience Group is working with Council to add solar power generators and lights to community halls for disasters making them more visible and accessible, while also having a power source to run various living assistance items that need power to run.</p> <p><b>Forster Community Centre</b></p> <p>The MidCoast Assists disability services have completed plans to improve the facilities to better meet the needs of the community, including upgrades to the breakout areas and kitchen including DDA complaint lower power points, benches suitable for wheelchair access, etc. A hoist for wheelchair access in the MidCoast Assist minibus has been installed.</p>
<p>Ensure adequate accessible parking bay provision.</p>	<p>Conduct parking surveys in high-use areas to ensure adequate accessible parking bays available.</p> <p>Follow standards/guidelines regarding the number of accessible parking bays provided for any new works.</p>	<p>The Transport Assets Team continues to assess need and respond to community demand for accessible parking.</p> <p>The Bulahdelah community provided input to the location of accessible parking in the town centre.</p>

### Focus Area 3 – Employment

Objective	Action	Report
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MidCoast Council is an accessible and inclusive place of work and people with disability feel comfortable and safe working here.	Undertake a Recruitment Review through the Australian Network on Disability.	The Australian Network on Disability completed a Recruitment Review and provided a Report in October 2022. An Action Plan has been developed in accordance with the recommendations provided by the Australian Network on Disability. Many of the recommendations have been actioned. Council will continue to implement the remaining actions through 2023.
	Develop an Action Plan from the Australian Network on Disability Recruitment Review report.	MidCoast Assist participants have been catering for, serving, and meeting Councillors in the specially provided Catering Kitchen at Yalawanyi Ganya during Council Meetings. This fosters capacity building, raises awareness of what people with disability can do, and has allowed connections to develop between the participants and Councillors.
Raise awareness with local businesses of the benefits of employing people with disability	Liaise with Chambers of Commerce to raise awareness of the benefits of employing people with disability	MidCoast Assist has been boosting life skills building with participants through a program where participants interview management level employees within Council and external business. The process – from filming location to selecting the interviewees – is discussed and decided with the help of the participants.
		The Customer Service team has started researching the creation of 'greeting' roles to be filled by local people with disabilities.
People with disability are included on Council interview panels		Council is currently updating its employee database to allow accurate reporting of diversity information. Once complete, Council will be able to efficiently identify employees with disability to potentially include on interview panels.

#### Focus Area 4 – Systems and Processes

Objective	Action	Report
Council Staff are aware of the needs of people with disability.		Our Customer Service team are now offering in-person and over-the-phone assistance navigating our and other related websites like Service NSW to people who struggle with digital literacy.
		Council's Communications team finalised a major overhaul of our website to add more accessibility features and to make it more intuitive.

		<p>Council is now releasing copies of new Strategy Plans to council hubs, depots and Libraries to provide an option for perusal for those with low digital literacy.</p> <p>Libraries continue to invest in and enhance the service offering including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Computers across the MidCoast Libraries branches have been upgraded to speciality touch screen monitors. This means that it is easier for library patrons to access and increase digital literacy. Some of the benefits include the ability to increase magnification on screen with a swipe of two fingers, better speakers to make audio clearer, Bluetooth connectivity to allow connection to hearing devices, etc. Patrons have been blown away with the improvements and there has been a noticeable increase in computer usage.</li> <li>• A significant investment in large-print books, audiobooks, DVD and CD collections which are popular with people with vision impairment and low literacy. Suggestions and requests from disability support groups contribute to the relevancy and currency of the collection.</li> <li>• The online audio and e-book collection through Borrowbox, Libby and Canopy services is growing in popularity and new releases are added regularly. Usage of these platforms has increased by 11%.</li> <li>• Self-service check outs offer independency to users.</li> <li>• Refinements in collection processing have resulted in large print labels being larger and clearer.</li> <li>• The home library lending service, delivering books to people who have difficulty leaving their homes continues to grow, with more than 50 new clients added in the last year. This service suits people with mobility challenges.</li> <li>• Tech Savy classes are offered in the library and in local nursing homes and retirement villages to assist people with the skills required to use the online platforms.</li> <li>• New Wingham and Forster Library pathways have been improved with more space between shelves so that all collections are more accessible and turning is easier with the use of mobility aids.</li> <li>• Substantial dyslexic and literacy collections are updated regularly.</li> <li>• A wide variety of online databases and other resources; availability of 24/7 online services, including access to the catalogue and membership details.</li> </ul>
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<p>People living with disability are included in engagement activities and their ideas are considered in the development of plans for services, facilities and activities.</p>	<p>Community Relations team continues to upskill in engagement practices.</p> <p>Increase opportunity for participation of people with disability in community engagement activities.</p>	<p>Council's Engagement, Community &amp; Education team and Community Development team have progressed to a full IAP2 qualification with some team members achieving full qualifications. IAP2 (International Association for Public Participation) is the peak body for community and stakeholder engagement sector. Its approach to engagement improves environmental, social and governance outcomes and increases trust in the democratic process.</p> <p>A review of the community engagement strategy was conducted which included a randomised but weighted telephone survey, where people with disability were consulted to determine how we can better meet their needs.</p> <p>People with disability are identified as a stakeholder in all engagement activities and the Engagement team tailors activities to encourage participation as necessary, including providing the opportunity for one-on-one interviews, phone interviews etc.</p>
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**Report Author**

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