

WCC Accessibility Audits Tawa Community Centre

703771/01

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0	EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
1.1	Tawa Community Centre	1
1.2	Effects of Recommendations	1
1.3	International Symbol Of Access (ISA)	1
2.0	INTRODUCTION	2
3.0	REPORT PURPOSE	3
4.0	AUDIT METHODOLOGY	4
5.0	LEGISLATION AND THE ACCESSIBLE ROUTE	5
5.1	Legislative Documents Overview	5
6.0	TAWA COMMUNITY CENTRE HISTORY AND PURPOSE GROUPS	6
7.0	AUDIT FINDINGS	8
7.1	Projections into the Accessible Route	8
7.2	Carparks	10
7.3	Kerb Ramps	13
7.4	Footpaths	14
7.5	External Ramps	15
7.6	Internal Ramps	17
7.7	Front Entrance	18
7.8	Chambers Entrance	20
7.9	Community Hall Entrance	21
7.10	Public Counters	23
7.11	Stairs	24
7.12	Doorways, Doors, Corridors	25
7.13	Controls	26
7.14	Places of Assembly - Community Centre Foyer	27
7.15	Places of Assembly - Community Centre Hall	28
7.16	Places of Assembly - Council Chamber	29
7.17	Listening Systems	30
7.18	Warning Systems	31
7.19	Visibility Factors	32
7.20	Surface Finishes - Flooring/Paving	33
7.21	Toilet Facilities	35
7.22	Signs	38
7.23	Placement of the International Symbol of Access (ISA)	40
7.24	Summary of Suggested Actions	41
7.25	NZBA S112 - Before Undertaking Alterations and Upgrades Work	42

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Accessibility Audit Report for the Tawa Community Centre sets out to:

- Establish items of Non-Compliance and Compliance along the accessible journey. The accessible journey is a theoretical path of travel that links the three primary components for designing and constructing the built environment. These components are Buildings, Public Spaces and Transport Systems.
- Recommend options to achieve a compliant or improved level of accessibility where possible.
- Comment on applicability of International Symbol of Access (ISA) for the building.

1.1 Tawa Community Centre

The overall quality of access provisions at the Community Centre do not meet the requirements of today's legislation. With some remedial and upgrade works however, the centre could provide improved access and facilities for persons with impairments.

Significant non-compliances were found regarding:

- Signage.
- Access to, from and around the building.
- Entrances to the building.
- Parking.
- Kerb ramps.
- Toilet facilities.

1.2 Effects of Recommendations

Ultimately undertaking any of the actions recommended in this audit report would give an improved experience to persons with impairments who use the Community Centre. All the recommendations in this audit would require different levels of work to be undertaken. We have made comment on the works which may involve downtime of the facilities or would be unfeasible due to costs involved, or where items could be undertaken without much interruption to the activities conducted on a daily basis within and around the buildings.

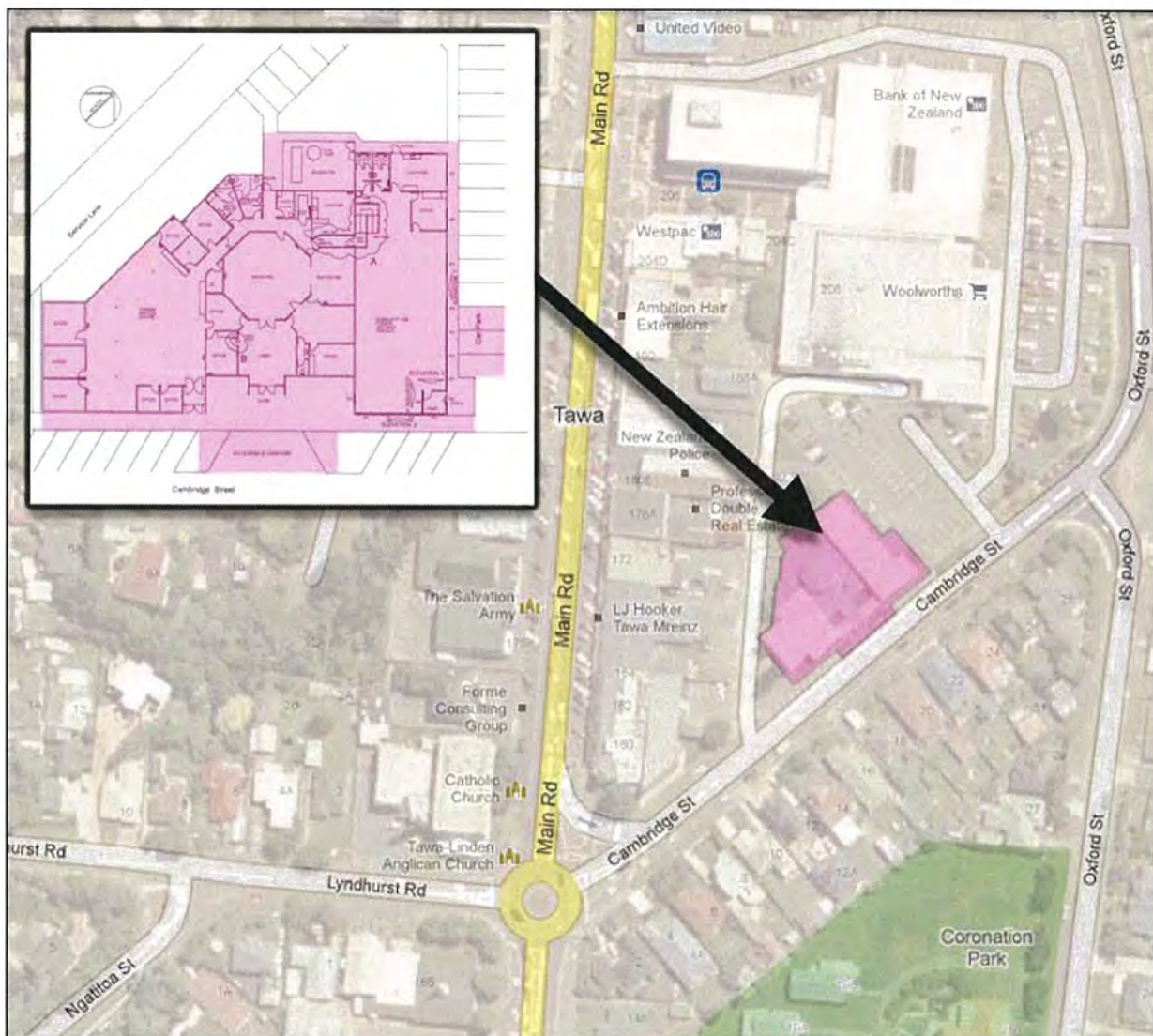
1.3 International Symbol Of Access (ISA)

Whilst the Community Centre contains compliant features and could display the ISA in accordance with NZS:4121, it should be considered that doing so would be misleading unless the facilities which are actually on the "Accessible Route" are clearly defined on signage beside the ISA at the building entry.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

Wellington City Council (WCC) engaged CPG NZ Ltd (CPG) to undertake an accessibility audit on the Tawa Community Centre. The centre is a hub for the many community activities and services available to the population of Tawa.

The scope of this report is limited to the Tawa Community Centres surrounding Accessible Routes and includes the areas that would be accessed by both the staff and general public. These areas are shown in pink on the plan below.



Should any item of non-compliance within this report be disputed by the Council it is recommended that a determination on the matter be sought from the Department of Building and Housing (DBH) which would override any conclusions reached in this report.

3.0 REPORT PURPOSE

This report for the Tawa Community Centre seeks to identify items of non-compliance and recommend to the WCC the best means of achieving improved accessibility. Its purpose is to report on the building for compliance with the legislative requirements for the provision of access for people with impairments.

The report also recommends solutions that would improve the accessibility in areas of non-compliance. Comment is also provided regarding the appropriateness of displaying the International Symbol of Access (ISA) on the building.

4.0 AUDIT METHODOLOGY

The methodology used for this accessibility audit report has been developed over the past three years by CPG NZ Ltd. It has been developed using the general principles of the Barrier Free Trusts Methodology.

The methodology involves establishing the building's history, an in-depth audit consisting of physical "as is", "where is" factors, followed by a detailed assessment of the findings.

Approachability, Accessibility and Usability are considered as part of the identification process throughout the accessible journey. Items identified in this report that do not meet the required standards of current legislation will be reported as "non-compliant", regardless of them being functional/acceptable in the opinion of others.

- **Approachability** ensures that people with impairments can get to a building and is concerned with the exterior environment of a building, including environmental factors and car parking.
- **Accessibility** ensures that people with impairments can enter and move about freely within a building, without having to call for assistance.
- **Usability** means that the building and facilities are, in fact, usable by persons with impairments

These practical design principles relate to the concept of the "Accessible Journey" to an individual building. In doing so, they connect the legislative requirements for access to the specific compliance detail of the "Accessible Route".

Our recommendations are presented to improve the accessible compliance of the building with consideration to practicality. Some recommendations are supported by a digitised artist's impressions of the proposed improvements.

5.0 LEGISLATION AND THE ACCESSIBLE ROUTE

5.1 Legislative Documents Overview

For this accessibility report the Tawa Community Centre has been audited against current versions of the legislative documents set out below.

Extracts from each of the relevant legislative documents are given below. Each document varies in its definition of an accessible route.

5.1.1 New Zealand Building Act 2004 (NZBA)

The NZBA Section 118 states that;

“reasonable and adequate provision by way of access, parking provisions, and sanitary facilities must be made for persons with disabilities who may be expected to visit or work in that building and carry out normal activities and processes in that building” (NZBA section 118).

5.1.2 New Zealand Building Code (NZBC)

The NZBC states that;

“Accessible Routes shall be a continuous route that can be negotiated unaided by a wheelchair user. The route shall extend from street boundary or car parking area to those spaces within the building required to be accessible to enable people with disabilities to carry out normal activities and processes within the building” (NZBC section D1/VM1 & AS1 Definitions).

5.1.3 New Zealand Standard 4121 (NZS 4121)

NZS4121 states that;

“Accessible Routes shall be a continuous route that can be negotiated unaided by a wheelchair user, walking device or person with a guide dog. The route shall extend from street boundary or car parking area to those spaces within the building required to be accessible to enable people with disabilities to carry out normal activities and processes within the building” (NZS4121 section 1.5.1 Definitions).

5.1.4 Human Rights Act 1993 (HRA)

The HRA Section 21 states that;

“A disability is prohibited grounds for discrimination. The term disability is defined in the HRA as a: physical disability or impairment, physical illness, psychiatric illness, intellectual or psychological disability or impairment, Any other loss or abnormality of psychological/physiological/anatomical structure or function, reliance on a guide dog/wheelchair/other remedial means, the presence in the body of organisms capable of causing illness” (HRA section 21).

5.1.5 Barrier Free Resource Handbook (BFRH)

The BFRH is not a compliance document, but has been included in the list as a reference. Some items within this handbook are based on the Barrier Free Trusts expert opinion rather than legislative requirements. The BFRH will be referenced where there is no legislation available to assess an item as compliant or non-compliant. It has no legal standing and is the Trust's opinion, therefore it is completely optional to follow any BFRH recommendations.

5.2 Summary of legislative requirements

Buildings and environments are required to be accessible; compliant accessibility enables people with disabilities to carry out normal activities and processes within the building or environment.

6.0 TAWA COMMUNITY CENTRE HISTORY AND PURPOSE GROUPS



Tawa Community Centre - March 2011

6.1 History

The renovated Tawa Community Centre was opened by the Mayor, Kerry Prendergast on 5 May, 2007. This renovation expanded the Community Centre to provide a new hall and five offices available for community use.

6.2 New Zealand Building Code (NZBC) Purpose Groups

The NZBC provides a means of calculating occupancy figures based on the intended use of space and the floor area provided to that space. These occupancy figures are used for calculations involving toilet facilities, fire system features, escape routes etc.

The Tawa Community Centre as a whole contains all the following purpose groups under the NZBC "C" Documents, Table 2.1:

Crowd Activities:

- CS** - Crowd Activities with an occupant load up to 100 people.
- CL** - Crowd Activities with an occupant load in excess of 100 people.

Working Business or Storage Activities:

- WL** - Spaces used for working, business or storage.

Intermittent Activities:

- IE** – Exit ways on escape routes.
- IA** - Spaces used for intermittent occupation or providing intermittently used support functions.

6.3 Occupancy Levels

Approximate maximum occupancy levels for the Community Centre have been calculated from the NZBC “C” Documents, Table 2.2.

- Offices: 30 people
- Hall/community areas: 378 people
- Lobbies: 33 people
- Lunch rooms/kitchenettes: 5 people

This gives an approximate total maximum occupancy of 446 people.

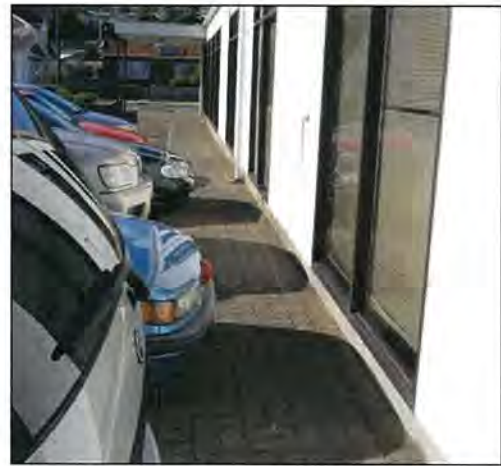
7.0 AUDIT FINDINGS

The following is an evaluation of the accessibility features found within the Tawa Community Centre. Where items of non-compliance were discovered, recommendations on the means of achieving compliance for that particular aspect are provided.

7.1 Projections into the Accessible Route



Ramp handrail projects into accessible route



Cars causing obstructions

7.1.1 Compliant Items

- The Community Centre is free of projections into the accessible route for the most part.

7.1.2 Non-Compliant Items

- The ramp connecting the Community Centre with the Community Hall area has handrails which project 90mm into the accessible route and is classed as a minor projection. A minor projection is only permitted within the required clear width of an access route if it is designed to minimise the risk of injury or impact. When within the height of 800-1600mm above floor level, it must project less than 60mm into the access route to be deemed as compliant. This handrail is non-compliant with these requirements.
- The footpath running between the eastern building face and carpark has cars causing a major projection (obstruction) for people with impairments walking in from the main street that would use this path as their accessible route to the Community Centre entrance. In some areas the route width has been reduced below 800mm by parked vehicles. An accessible route is required to maintain a minimum width of 1,200mm at all times.

7.1.3 Recommendations

- Install wheel stops along the eastern carparks to prevent vehicles from parking too close to the kerb and causing a projection onto the accessible route. Example of wheel stops in effect is pictured below.
- Widen ramp so that handrails do not project into the accessible route



Example Wheel Stop

The wheel stops should be placed to ensure adequate width is still available at the back of the car park to prevent cars projecting out into the flow of traffic, or reducing manoeuvring space. We recommend that this be looked into prior to implementing this solution.

7.2 Carparks



Existing accessible carparks (east)



**Non-compliant Southern Accessible Carpark
(in front of council chambers)**

7.2.1 Compliant Items

- The asphalt surface provides adequate slip resistance.
- The width dimensions of the two eastern carparks meet the minimum requirements of NZS 4121:2001.
- Sufficient numbers of accessible parking areas have been provided.

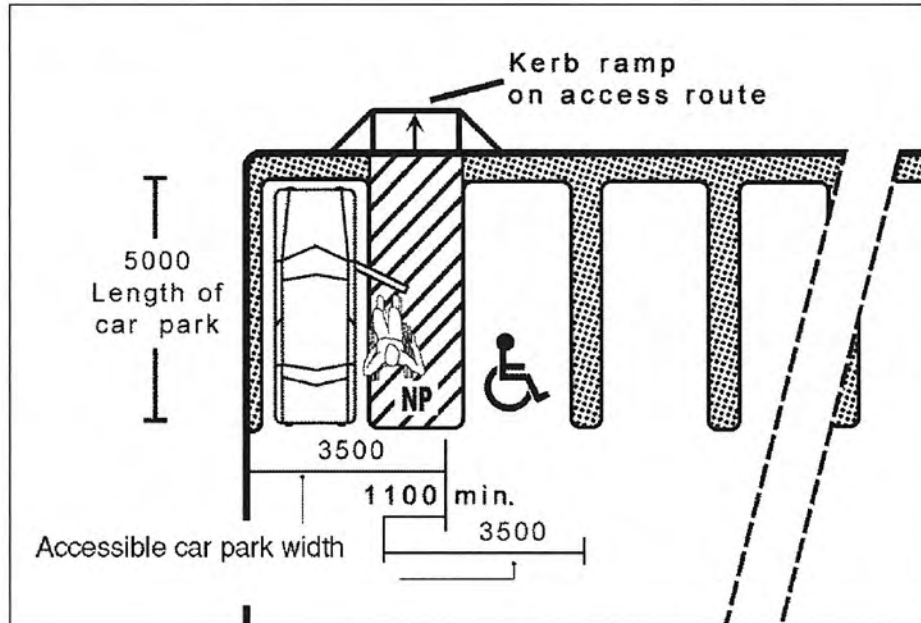
7.2.2 Non-Compliant Items

- The accessible park located on the south side of the centre in front of the council chambers is fully non-compliant and non-functional. A car parked in this space will block the access ramp, requiring the user to walk along the road to access the community centre.
- The southern “accessible” carpark has signage located at a height well above the recommended positioning of 750 - 1200mm from ground level.
- The painted markings on all accessible carparks are very worn and faded, which makes them difficult to see at a distance.
- The eastern accessible carparks have no signage.
- The eastern accessible carparks have no direct accessible route to the front of the building therefore forcing users to travel out onto the road to get front access from these parks.
- No kerb ramp has been provided onto the footpath from the eastern parks. This forces users to travel out onto the road to get access to the community centre from these parks.
- The length dimension of the eastern accessible carparks is 4450mm. This is 550mm less than the min 5000mm.

7.2.3 Recommendations

- That the southern accessible carpark space be abandoned and that the 2 carparks on the eastern side be upgraded to replace this park.
- Upgrade existing eastern accessible carpark spaces to have compliant dimensions, repaint markings, install kerb ramps and signage.

- An accessible ramp connecting this corner to the main front accessible route is detailed under the ramps section of this report.



Compliant Accessible Carpark Diagram
 (Sourced from NZS4121)



Existing Eastern accessible parking



Artist's impression - Upgraded eastern accessible parking

7.3 Kerb Ramps



No kerb ramps present, East Side



No kerb ramps present, Southern Side

7.3.1 Compliant Features

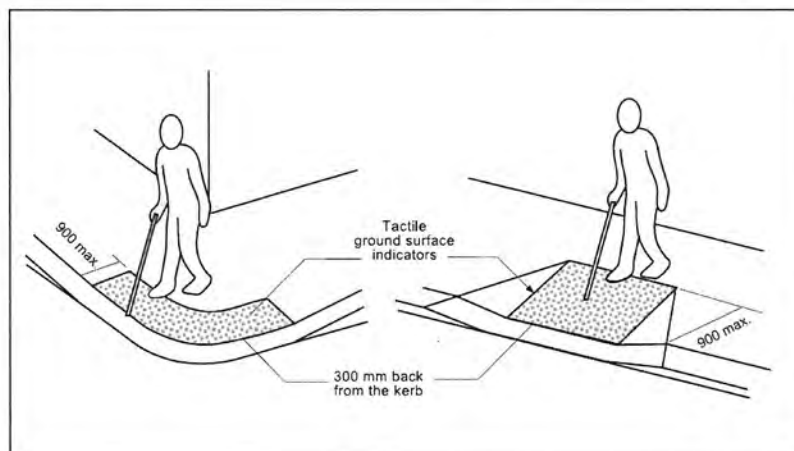
- None.

7.3.2 Non-Compliant Features

- The Tawa Community Centre does not provide compliant kerb ramps for pedestrians. In particular kerb ramps should be installed for the eastern accessible car parks to provide access into the Community Hall entrance. This is achievable currently by using the ramped seal at the southern end of the carpark, as pictured above. However, usage of this requires the user to navigate into traffic and have prior knowledge that this ramped area of seal is present.

7.3.3 Recommendations

- Install kerb ramps with tactile indicators between the two accessible carparks in the eastern carpark which meet the requirements of either NZBC section D1/AS1 3.4 fig.10, or NZS4121 section 13.4.3 fig.46. Tactile indicators help maintain independence, wayfinding and the safety of visually impaired and blind people.



Tactile Ground Surface Indicators At Kerb Ramps Diagram
(Sourced from NZS4121)

7.4 Footpaths



South footpath



East footpath



Zigzag brick pavers

7.4.1 Compliant Items

- Footpath areas around the Community Centre which form the accessible route, comply with the maximum slopes and crossfalls allowed in the relevant standards (variation in level along the footpath is no more than 1:60).
- The rough finish paving provides adequate slip resistance based on a visual comparison to the NZBC tables.

7.4.2 Non-Compliant Items

- A clear width of 1200mm is not available along the accessible route footpath due to cars overhanging into the footpath, pictured above.
- The footpaths around the Community Centre have been created with zigzag brick pavers. The chamfer on these pavers creates a large space of almost twice the maximum allowed in NZS 3116:2002 - Concrete segmental and flagstone paving.
 - NZS 3116 Maximum Width: 7mm
 - NZS 3116 Maximum Depth: 4mm
 - Actual Width: 13-15mm
 - Actual Depth: 6-8mm
- We have obtained opinions from both power chair users and manual chair users on the pavers.

Manual Chair user;

"These are not easy or comfortable pavers to traverse in a wheelchair"

Power Chair User;

"Whilst they mightn't tip my chair over, it would certainly make for an uncomfortable and unpleasant ride"

7.4.3 Recommendations

- Replace all the chamfered zigzag brick pavers with asphalt, concrete or compliant style paving. This will make the Community Centre more attractive to users sensitive to uneven surfaces.

7.5 External Ramps



Council Chambers ramp



Community Centre ramp



Community Hall - no ramp

7.5.1 Compliant Items

Where external ramps are present they have compliant gradients as follows:

- Council Chambers ramp: 1:20
- Community Centre ramp: 1:19

7.5.2 Non-Compliant Items

- No accessible ramp is provided from the eastern accessible parking spaces to the front entry of the community centre, forcing users to travel out onto the road to get front access from these parks.

7.5.3 Recommendations

- Install an accessible ramp beside stairs in front of the Community Hall. It is recommended that this ramp is designed by a person who is experienced in accessible design and that it is done in accordance with NZS4121.



Existing steps in front of community hall entrance



Artist's impression - Possible ramp beside steps in front of community hall entrance

7.6 Internal Ramps



Community Hall and Community Centre connection ramp

7.6.1 Compliant Items

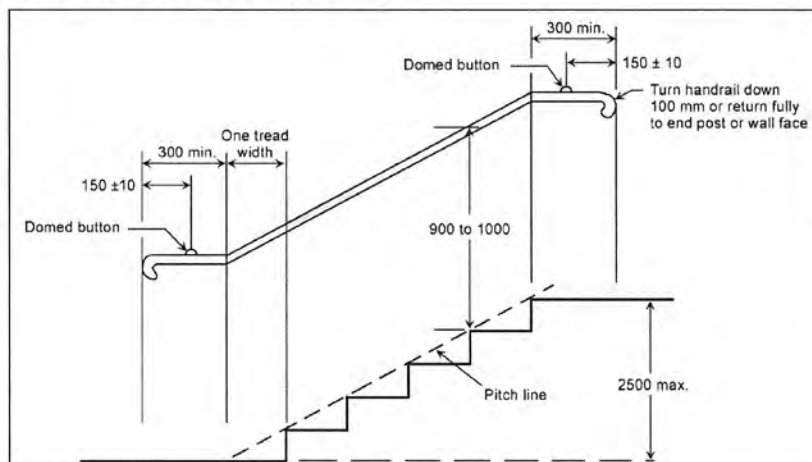
- Access to the ramp is level and has an area exceeding 1200x1200 for a wheelchair to turn.
- The ramp is at a slope of 1:18, which is gentler than the minimum 1:12.

7.6.2 Non-Compliant Items

- Handrail projects into the width of the ramp giving a clear width of 1010mm, which is less than the minimum clear width of 1200mm.
- The handrail has no downturn where it terminates. The downturn indicates its imminent termination and is critical to a person with vision impairments.
- The handrail is not continuous at the top landing.

7.6.3 Recommendations

- Install returns onto end of handrails or have them returning into the wall. Installing a domed button 150mm from the end of the handrail indicating its imminent termination while not fully compliant may be an easier way to lessen non-compliance.
- Widen ramp so that clear width is 1200mm



Handrail Downturns & Dome Diagram
(Sourced from NZS4121)

7.7 Front Entrance



Poorly signed front entrance

7.7.1 Compliant Items

- The approach space to the entrance is clear and free of obstructions.
- A change of material on the surfaces of the foyer areas clearly defines the entry.

7.7.2 Non-Compliant Items

- The front entrance is not located on an accessible route from the eastern carpark area. Currently users from the eastern accessible car parking must travel out onto the road to access the front of the Centre.
- No signage is present to indicate that this is an entry point to the Community Centre (a sandwich board sign was placed in the lobby but this is of little use to people outside the building).
- No signage is present at the entrance to clearly indicate where any of the facilities are.
- The dimensions of the landing in front of the entrance doors are inadequate and would require a chair user to back off the level to open the door fully.

7.7.3 Recommendations

- Signage should be installed on the entry doors between 700 - 1000mm from the floor level. These signs would ideally be in a contrasting colour such as yellow, and be 50mm deep with black lettering to read "ENTRY" placed on each manifestation strip, giving good clear contrast and making the door easy to distinguish from its surroundings.
- Informative and directional signage should also be installed as close to the entrance as possible. The signage should indicate: accessible carparks, accessible routes through the building, accessible entrances, services available in the building, accessible ramp locations and the location of accessible toilet facilities.
- Widening of the landing area to ensure 1,200mm of clear space in front of the opened door. This makes opening the door much easier for a chair user.
- Installing hooks for the doors to remove the need to hold doors open with objects that cause obstructions.



Existing Entrance



Artist's impression - Showing possible signage and landing extension

7.8 Chambers Entrance



Poorly signed front entrance



Front entrance doors

7.8.1 Compliant Items

- There is a clear level approach space in front of the entry doors with a level surface on the transition from outside to inside.
- A change of material on the surfaces of the foyer areas clearly defines the entry.

7.8.2 Non-Compliant Items

- The entrance to the chambers appears as if it should be the front entrance to the Community Centre as it is central with the most prominent signage and entry features.
- This entrance is not located on an accessible route from the eastern carpark area.
- No signage is present to indicate that this is an entry point to the Chambers.
- No signage is present at the entrance to clearly indicate where the accessible carparks, accessible routes through the building, accessible entrances, services available in the building, accessible ramp locations and the location of accessible toilet facilities.
- The entrance door side panels have no manifestations and could be mistaken as a path of travel.

7.8.3 Recommendations

- Signage should be installed on the entry doors between 700 - 1000mm from the floor level. These signs would ideally be in a contrasting colour such as yellow and be 50mm deep with black lettering to read "ENTRY" placed on each manifestation strip, giving good clear contrast and making the door easy to distinguish from its surroundings.
- Informative and directional signage should be installed as close to the entrance as possible. The signage should indicate: accessible carparks, accessible routes through the building, accessible entrances, services available in the building, accessible ramp locations and the location of accessible toilet facilities.

7.9 Community Hall Entrance



Overview from carpark



Landing in front of entrance



Entrance lobby

7.9.1 Compliant Items

- The Community Hall has an entrance located on the accessible route.
- There is a clear level approach space in front of the entry doors, with a level surface between the transition from inside to outside.

7.9.2 Non-Compliant Items

- No signage is present to indicate that this is an entry point to the Community Hall.
- No signage is present at the entrance to clearly indicate where the accessible carparks, accessible routes through the building, accessible entrances, services available in the building, accessible ramp locations and the location of accessible toilet facilities.
- The entrance door side panels and glass panels along the hall have no manifestations, and could be mistaken as a path of travel.

7.9.3 Recommendations



Informative and directional signage should be installed as close to the entrance as possible. The signage should indicate: accessible carparks, accessible routes through the building, accessible entrances, services available in the building, accessible ramp locations and the location of accessible toilet facilities.

Signage should be installed on the entry door between 700 - 1000mm from the floor level. This sign would ideally be in a contrasting colour such as yellow and be 50mm deep with black lettering

to read “ENTRY” giving good clear contrast and making the door easy to distinguish from its surroundings.

Installation of an accessible ramp with compliant handrails on the northern end of the landing which leads on from the accessible parking.

7.10 Public Counters

As the Community Centre is a public facility with many different amenities and functions, it is rare for no public counter or directional and informative signage to be present at the front entrance. We would suggest that at least informative and directional signage be installed.



Example of a compliant accessible counter

(Sourced from Barrier Free NZ Trust - Guidance on Counters Publication)

7.11 Stairs



Stairs in front of Community Hall entrance

7.11.1 Compliant Items

- Neither the top or bottom stairs encroach into the accessible route.
- There is a full width of 400mm between the Community Hall door and the top of the stairs.
- Riser height does not exceed 180mm.
- Tread width exceeds the minimum 310mm required.
- The bottom riser is more than 300mm back from any return walls.
- The concrete finish provides a slip-resistant surface.

7.11.2 Non-Compliant Items

- The stair riser heights are not uniform which may lead to misjudgement of stepping, and consequently falls.
- No contrasting nosings are present which is a trip hazard to the vision impaired.
- No handrails were present on stairs. Handrails assist with navigation of the stairs and also offer support.

7.11.3 Recommendations

- Accept the stairs as non-accessible stairs, install an accessible ramp opposite as pictured below.



Artist's Impression of ramp installation beside stairs

7.12 Doorways, Doors, Corridors



Corridor



Fire exit step



Fire exit hall



Police office

7.12.1 Compliant Items

- The Community Centre has a wide range of door widths, which generally comply with the requirements set out below for the clear opening widths of doorways.
 - 760mm clear opening widths (1200mm minimum clear approach space).
 - 1,000mm clear opening widths (1000mm clear approach space).
 - 1,200mm clear opening widths (900mm clear approach space).
- The corridors and lobbies on the accessible route through the Community Centre met or exceeded the minimum width requirement of 1200mm.
- In areas where a door opens inwards to the lobby, the length or width of the lobby has been extended by the length of the door.
- The internal doors are a natural brown timber colour with bronzed or silver steel hardware. The door frames have a dark brown colour and combined with the white walls this gives the doors good contrast.

7.12.2 Non-Compliant Features

- The dual swing doors in the Council Chambers do not have the required visibility panels installed. While this was probably done for the purposes of privacy within the Chamber, the Code still requires that the panels have the required glazing panels for user visibility.
- Front entry door to Police office is not wheelchair accessible; however alternative access is readily available via the front entrance to the Community Centre.
- The northern fire escape's final exit door has a large 140mm step down to the escape route path outside. This may result in trips or falls for people with impairments navigating the exit.

7.12.3 Recommendations

- Install a landing and ramp outside the northern exit fire door so that manoeuvring the escape route could be done safely while unattended.
- Provide directional and informative signage indicating access to the police office is via the community centre main entrance or provide a compliant ramp to the door complete with handrails.

7.13 Controls



Example controls



Example controls

7.13.1 Compliant Features

- Lights and windows are manually operated.
- Door control buttons are generally positioned at a height within the recommended 1310mm above the floor.

7.13.2 Non-Compliant Features

- None.

7.13.3 Recommendations

- None.

7.14 Places of Assembly - Community Centre Foyer



7.14.1 Compliant Features

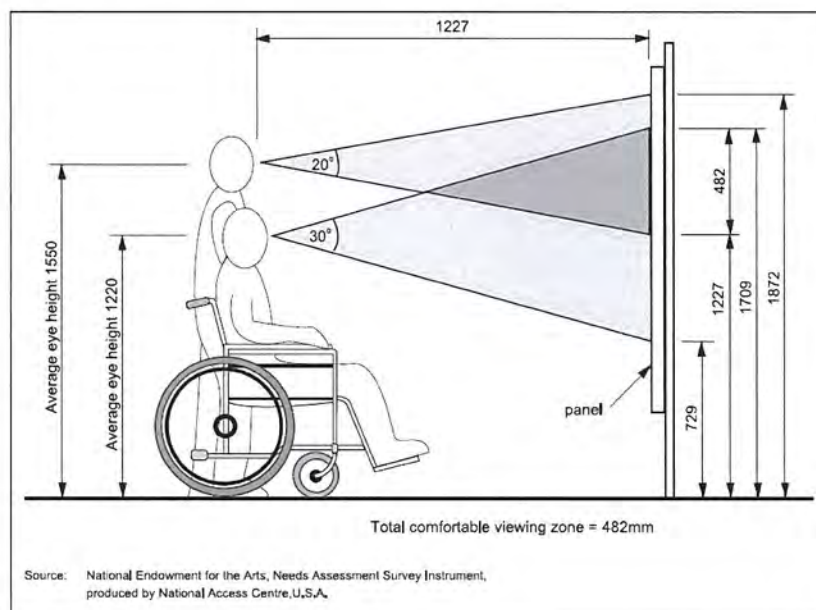
- The Community Centre foyer consists of unfixed seating with a potential maximum occupancy of 180 people.
- The requirement for accessible seating is two spaces for up to 250 seats, plus an additional space for each additional 250 seats. As the seating is unfixed it is considered the foyer is compliant.

7.14.2 Non-Compliant Features

- Information displays were inaccessible due to the height of brochures and cabinets/loose goods located in front.

7.14.3 Recommendations

- Reassess the location of information displays and brochures.
- Brochures should ideally be at a height of 750 - 1200mm from the floor level.
- Static information/signage and notice boards should be located within 1227 - 1790mm from the floor level.



7.15 Places of Assembly - Community Centre Hall



7.15.1 Compliant Features

- The Community Centre Hall consists of unfixed seating with a maximum permitted occupancy of approximately 198 people.
- The requirement for accessible seating is two spaces for up to 250 seats, plus an additional space for each additional 250 seats. As the seating is unfixed it is considered the Hall is compliant.

7.15.2 Non-Compliant Features

- None.

7.15.3 Recommendations

- None.

7.16 Places of Assembly - Council Chamber



7.16.1 Compliant Features

- The Community Centre Council Chamber consists of unfixed seating with a maximum permitted occupancy of approximately 60 people.
- The requirement for accessible seating is two spaces for up to 250 seats, plus an additional space for each additional 250 seats . As the seating is unfixed it is considered the Council Chambers is compliant.

7.16.2 Non-Compliant Features

- The dual swing doors in the Council Chambers do not have the required visibility panels installed. While this was probably done for the purposes of privacy within the Chamber, the Code still requires that the panels have the required glazing panels for user visibility.

7.16.3 Recommendations

- Consider making the dual swing doors single swing to remove the requirement for visibility panels, or install compliant glazing panels.

7.17 Listening Systems



International symbol of access for hearing loss

No evidence of listening systems within the Community Centre were found.

7.17.1 Recommendations

- If listening systems are present within the Community Centre, signage should be installed that clearly identifies that they are available and where they are located.
- Provision for listening systems should be considered as part of any upgrade works to the community centre, particularly in the areas of public assembly.

7.18 Warning Systems



Callpoint



Callpoint

7.18.1 Compliant Features

- Alerting devices have been installed on the accessible route in the form of manual callpoints and sirens.
- The fire callpoints are correctly signed, although the signage is at the upper limits of the preferred visual zone.
- Callpoints are positioned at a height typically within the recommended 1,310mm above the floor.

7.18.2 Non-Compliant Features

- Alerting devices in the Community Centre are limited to audible sirens only. This means that a person with hearing impairments may not be aware of the fire siren going off, particularly if they are unattended, eg using toilet facilities.

7.18.3 Recommendations

- Install visual alerting devices along the accessible route of the Community Centre and in the toilets. Should an opportunity arise to lower or relocate the callpoint signage to below or beside the callpoint it should be done.

7.19 Visibility Factors



Chambers entry



Hall entry

7.19.1 Compliant Features

- During the audit of the Community Centre no sudden or abrupt change in intensity of natural light or illumination was observed.
- From our visual inspection the lighting levels during the day appeared to be in accordance with the minimum requirements in NZBC section G7, G8 & NZS 6703 Appendix B.

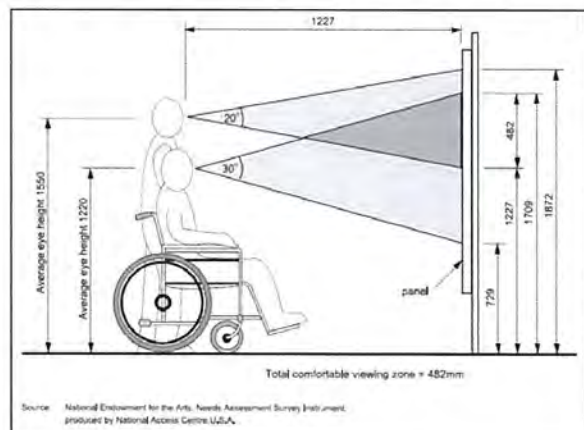
7.19.2 Non-Compliant Features

- Glazing where it could be mistaken for an unimpeded path of travel, such as the glass panels surrounding the hall area or the side panels of the chambers entry lack manifestations. Manifestations help persons with visual impairments by providing additional contrast on transparent surfaces.
- Signage throughout the Community Centre is sparse and is generally located outside of the complying height zones on the accessible route where it is present.

7.19.3 Recommendations

- Install manifestations on all full height glass panels located by entry doors, all the southern and eastern perimeter glass panels in the town hall/community centre areas areas.
- Install more directional and informative signage or relocate existing signage to a height within the recommended range below.

Note: Night time Illumination levels within the Community Centre were unable to be assessed at the time of the audit.



7.20 Surface Finishes - Flooring/Paving



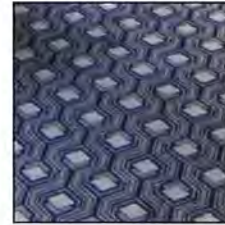
Concrete



Lino



Carpet



Carpet



Slate tiles



Polished timber



Brick pavers

Above: Examples of surfaces and finishes located inside and outside the Community Centre

7.20.1 Compliant Features

- The surfaces within the Community Centre appear to be generally well maintained, stable and firm under normal usage conditions.
- The carpet is short cut pile and is direct stick to the concrete floor.
- Materials chosen for floor coverings and the surrounding outside area have adequate slip resistance values.

7.20.2 Non-Compliant Features

- No tactile indicators have been installed on the accessible route inside or outside of the Community Centre. Tactile pavers help maintain independence, wellbeing and safety of visually impaired people by alerting them to imminent changes in the surrounding environment.
- Pavers outside the Community Centre do not have level surfaces as the gap between pavers caused by the bevel is quite significant.

7.20.3 Recommendations



Example A



Example B



Example C

- Tactile indicators such as tiles, ground surfaces or changes of material should be installed on the accessible route inside or outside of the Community Centre.
- Tactile indicators help maintain independence, wellbeing and safety of visually impaired people.
- Replace all areas paved in zigzag brick pavers with asphalt, concrete or compliant style paving. This will make the Community Centre more attractive to users sensitive to uneven surfaces.

7.21 Toilet Facilities



Male accessible toilets



Female accessible toilets

In large buildings with a total potential occupancy in excess of 300 people, and where sanitary facilities are provided in groups in two or more locations, accessible facilities shall be included at each location.

It is essential that people with impairments have the same access to facilities as other occupants. These accessible facilities do not need to be in addition to those required for other building occupants.

7.21.1 Compliant Features

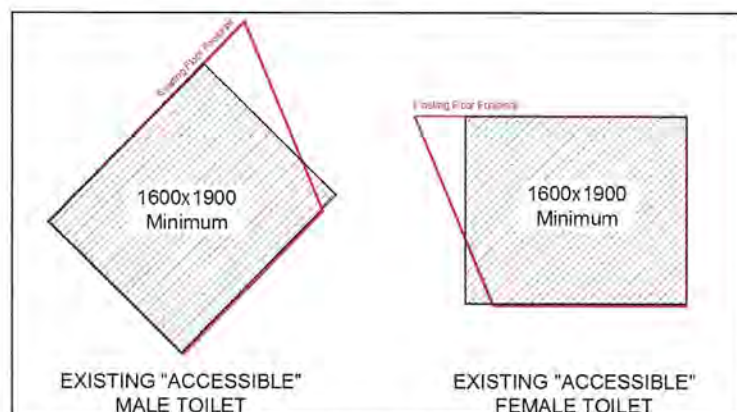
- Both the male and female accessible toilets are located on the accessible route, with one set of facilities being on the same level as the main entry.
- Doors to the accessible toilet swing outwards.
- Grab rails have the correct profile, slip resistance, diameter and finger clearances, and from preliminary testing are capable of fully sustaining the weight of an adult (*complete testing would need to be undertaken to confirm this in accordance with Appendix F7*).
- A basin and tap with mixed flow of water provided through a single outlet mixer tap has been provided at the wash hand basin. The tap has a 60mm clearance to the back wall. (*note this is located outside of the accessible toilet cubical rather than inside it as required by NZS4121 & NZBC G1*)
- Soap, hand dryers and towels are all located as recommended, 900 - 1200mm off the floor, and do not encroach on wheelchair turning space.
- The door latch on the male facility is easy to lock in place, with a usage indicator, and may be unlatched from the outside in an emergency.
- A graspable bar handle is present on the cubicle side of the door in both the male and female facilities.
- The screen walls and doors for the cubicle are acceptable with their upper edge at least 1600mm above the floor, and their lower edge between 150mm and 300mm above the floor.
- Hot water supply pipes are concealed and therefore not exposed under the sink.
- Transfer space to the accessible toilet is in excess of the required 850mm minimum.
- The front of the pan is 700mm from the back wall.

7.21.2 Non-Compliant Features

- No washbasin has been provided within the toilet cubicles.
- The door latch on the female facility was difficult to lock in place with one hand.
- Hooks for hanging items on have been installed well above the recommended accessible height of 1200mm from floor level, and are therefore unusable to persons with mobility impairments.
- The accessible toilet within the cubicle has no signage
- Directional signage to the facility is inadequate.
- Entry doors to the toilets do not have a horizontal grab rail to the back of the door. A grab rail assists users with pulling open the door.
- Due to the angled arrangement of the toilet cubicles, they do not meet the minimum dimensions of 1600 x 1900mm required for an accessible cubicle. See sketch below.



Plan Layout of accessible toilets



Actual dimensions overlaid on required dimensions

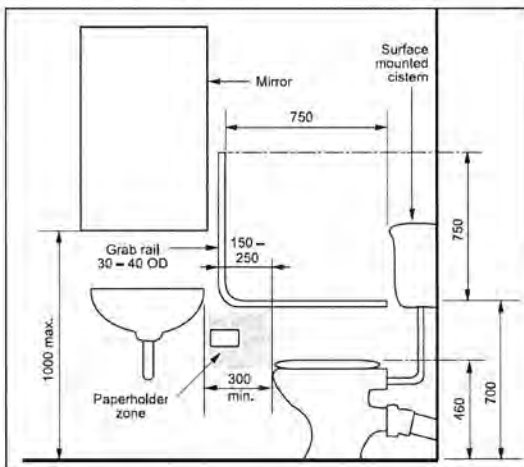
- The toilet flush control is a standard vertical push down setup located on top of the toilet and may not be easily operable by all users due to the required operation of reaching and pushing down.
- No kick plates are present on the accessible toilet doors.
- The front of the ground floor washbasin is 440mm off the rear wall, which is 40mm over the maximum permitted of 400mm. Please note that this is located outside of the accessible toilet cubicle. An accessible toilet is required to have a basin inside it.
- No fixed plug is present for the basins.
- There are no shelf areas for storage of goods within the cubicle. This is not a legislative requirement, but is a greatly appreciated feature by the users of accessible toilets.
- Fixtures do not contrast well with the surrounding environment. This is a flaw with most toilet facilities where all fixtures are white on white coloured walls making the fixtures difficult to identify for a person with visual impairments.
- The tops of the WC seats are 420mm from the floor level. This is 40mm lower than the required height of 460mm and may affect transfer manoeuvres for a chair user.
- The toilet paper dispenser drum is located further forward than the preferred zone in both cubicles.

- Currently the Community Centre has:
 - 2 male pans and 2 female pans located in the Community Hall section.
 - 1 accessible male pan and 1 urinal located opposite the Council Chambers.
 - 1 accessible female pan and 1 female pan located opposite the Council Chambers.

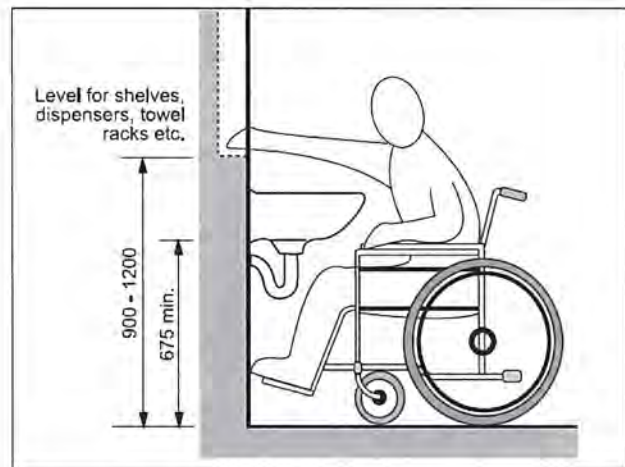
This number of toilets is insufficient for a potential occupancy of 446

7.21.3 Recommendations

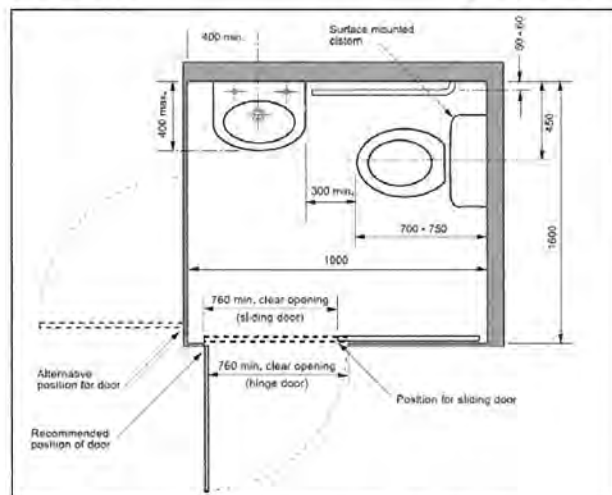
- Lower hooks in main toilet area to be 1200mm from floor level so that they are easily reachable.
- Install hooks within the accessible toilet cubicles at 1200mm from floor level.
- Consider installation of accessible facilities for the community hall area as part of future developments that may be planned.
- Install a compliant basin and mirror within the toilet cubicle as per the below details from NZS4121.



Toilet Cubical Side Elevation
(Sourced from NZS4121)



Basin Placement Side Elevation
(Sourced from NZS4121)



Toilet Cubical Plan Elevation
(Sourced from NZS4121)

7.22 Signs



Front entrance to the Community Centre

7.22.1 Compliant Features

- None.

7.22.2 Non-Compliant Features

Overall the Community Centre has a number of non-compliant signage items.

- The signage is typically in inconsistent locations and positions, making it difficult to navigate the building.
- Signs are generally outside of the recommended height zone of 730mm - 1700mm.
- Accessible facilities such as the ground floor toilets have no compliant informative, directional or locational signage.

7.22.3 Recommendations



Artist's impression of possible signage

- Installation of better directional signage both within and outside the Community Centre would greatly enhance the experience of a visitor with impairments and also non-impaired users.
- New signage should be installed within the recommended height zone of 730mm-1700mm. These signs are to be placed consistently in locations which are easily visible from the accessible route.
- The colour scheme of this signage should be high contrast (*eg: black text on a yellow background as pictured above*). Consideration should also be given to providing low or non-reflective backgrounds to signage.

7.23 Placement of the International Symbol of Access (ISA)

7.23.1 ISA Legislation

NZS4121 Appendix A, section 3,1 states;

“Where any provision required by this section is made at a building in compliance therewith, a notice or sign that indicates in accordance with the international access symbol that provision is made for the needs of persons with disabilities shall be displayed outside the building or so as to be visible from outside it.”

7.23.2 ISA Placement

The Community Centre complies with many sections of NZS 4121 and therefore warrants the display of the ISA in accordance with the above.

However, it should be considered that doing so would be misleading unless the facilities which are actually accessible and located on the “Accessible Route” are defined on signage beside the ISA at the building entry.

7.24 Summary of Suggested Actions

The overall quality of access provisions at the Community Centre do not meet the requirements of today's legislation. With some remedial and upgrade works however, the Community Centre could be upgraded to provide improved access and facilities for persons with disabilities.

Ultimately undertaking any of the actions recommended in this report would provide an improved experience to persons with disabilities who use the Community Centre. All the recommendations in this audit would require different levels of work to be undertaken. Some of the work would involve downtime of the facilities, while others could be undertaken without much interruption to the activities conducted on a daily basis within the Community Centre.

7.24.1 Minor Works

Works which are minor and could be readily carried out with little to no downtime for the building, would be:

- Upgrade and installation of signage.

7.24.2 Medium Works

Works which are more involved and would require some downtime and/or restrictions of access for the public, would be:

- Installation of accessible parking and kerb ramps.
- Upgrade of the warning systems.
- Upgrade of the accessible toilet facilities.
- Extending the landing at the Community Centre's front entrance.

7.24.3 Major Works

Works which would involve large amounts of downtime and require areas of the Community Centre to be unavailable to the public while they are undertaken, would be:

- Installation of accessible ramps and handrails outside the Community Hall.
- Resurfacing the paved areas with asphalt or concrete.
- Installation of additional toilet facilities for the community hall area.

Note: *The complexity of the recommended work should be confirmed by an experienced contractor prior to any remedial works being undertaken.*

7.25 NZBA S112 - Before Undertaking Alterations and Upgrades Work

7.25.1 NZBA S112 General Requirements

For alterations to an existing building involving means of escape from fire and access, and facilities for persons with disabilities, Section 112 (S112) of the New Zealand Building Act 2004 (NZBA) states the requirements to be applied by the Building consent authority.

Effectively S112 states that the building consent authority can allow the alteration of an existing building without the building fully complying with the provisions of the building code, provided that the alteration will result in improvements to the attributes of the building with regard to access and facilities for persons with disabilities.

7.25.2 NZBA S112 and its Effects on Alterations & Upgrades

Due to the diversity in work required to improve the accessibility of the Community Centre it is recommended that a staged upgrade plan be drawn up, and that a meeting be scheduled with the Building consent authority to discuss the upgrades and as to whether or not they are satisfied on reasonable grounds that each stage of the works could be undertaken in accordance with the NZBA section 112 subsection (2).

Section 112 of the NZBA reads as follows:

112 Alterations to existing buildings

- (1) *A building consent authority must not grant a building consent for the alteration of an existing building, or part of an existing building, unless the building consent authority is satisfied that, after the alteration, the building will -*
- (a) *comply, as nearly as is reasonably practicable, with the provisions of the building code that relate to -*
 - (i) *means of escape from fire; and*
 - (ii) *access and facilities for persons with disabilities; (if this is a requirement in terms of section 118);*
 - and*
 - (b) *continue to comply with the other provisions of the building code to at least the same extent as before the alteration.*
- (2) *Despite subsection (1), a territorial authority may, by written notice to the owner of a building, allow the alteration of an existing building, or part of an existing building, without the building complying with provisions of the building code specified by the territorial authority if the territorial authority is satisfied that, -*
- (a) *if the building were required to comply with the relevant provisions of the building code, the alteration would not take place; and*
 - (b) *the alteration will result in improvements to attributes of the building that relate to -*
 - (i) *means of escape from fire; or*
 - (ii) *access and facilities for persons with disabilities;*
 - and*
 - (c) *the improvements referred to in paragraph (b) outweigh any detriment that is likely to arise as a result of the building not complying with the relevant provisions of the building code.*