

4 September 2020

Alesco Senior College  
c/- AVID Project Management  
PO Box 206  
CARRINGTON NSW 2294  
**Attention: David Read**

Dear David,

**Alesco Senior College**  
**27 Chapman Street, Charlestown**  
**Access for Persons with a Disability**

The following accessibility statement has been prepared to accompany the the Environmental Impact Statement (State Significant Design DA process).

## **1. Background**

The project is alterations to an existing building (the former St Albans Church and Hall) to accommodate the Alesco Senior College. The building will remain largely unchanged as a part of the development – partition walls will be erected within the existing hall to accommodate learning spaces and new sanitary facilities will also be provided. Due to the existing conditions on the site, a performance-based approach to accessibility has been adopted that includes an accessible drop-off area within the existing driveway area and maintaining the existing accessible sanitary facility.

Alesco Senior College is a secondary school, set within an adult learning environment that encourages young people to participate in education and training that leads to a sustainable future. It offers students the opportunity to complete their Higher School Certificate in a supportive environment which focuses on programs to meet individual students learning needs, offering education to young people whose circumstances have previously prohibited them from succeeding in mainstream education.

The school provides opportunities for these young people to reach their potential in an environment that is designed specifically to support inclusion and individual needs, providing vulnerable young people the opportunity to achieve success in a smaller and more supportive environment.

We have been advised that the school offers a secure, controlled environment where ALL occupants – staff, students and visitors – are known to management prior to arrival at the site. All students attending the college will have an Individual Learning Support Plan. While many students are likely to suffer from anxiety and/or depression due to trauma related issues, the school does not generally cater to students with high physical support needs.

## 2. Reviewed Documentation

Documentation prepared by CKDS Architecture has been reviewed as follows:

- DA-0001 Cover Sheet
- DA-0101 B Existing Plan
- DA-1001 B Site Plan / Analysis
- DA-1101 B Ground Floor Plan
- DA-2001 B Elevations
- DA-3001 B Section
- DA-7001 B Signage

## 3. Legislation

Access assessment has been made against Access Legislation including:

- The Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA)
- Disability (Access to Premises (Buildings)) Standards 2010
- Access Code for Buildings 2010
- The Building Code of Australia 2019 (BCA) Section D3 – Access for People with Disabilities
- Australian Standards AS1428.1(2009) Amendment 1, AS1428.2(1992), AS1428.4(2009) – Design for Access and Mobility

## 4. Access and Approach

The approach to the building needs to be considered when considering access for persons with a disability. The BCA has three requirements for the approach to the building for persons with a disability. An accessible path of travel is required to the building entrance from the allotment boundary at the main points of pedestrian entry, from accessible carparking areas and from any adjacent and associated accessible building.

In this instance, the approach to the building has been considered from the allotment boundary at the pedestrian entrance along Chapman Street; and from the proposed accessible carparking area to the building entrance (located along St Albans Close. A performance-based approach has been adopted.

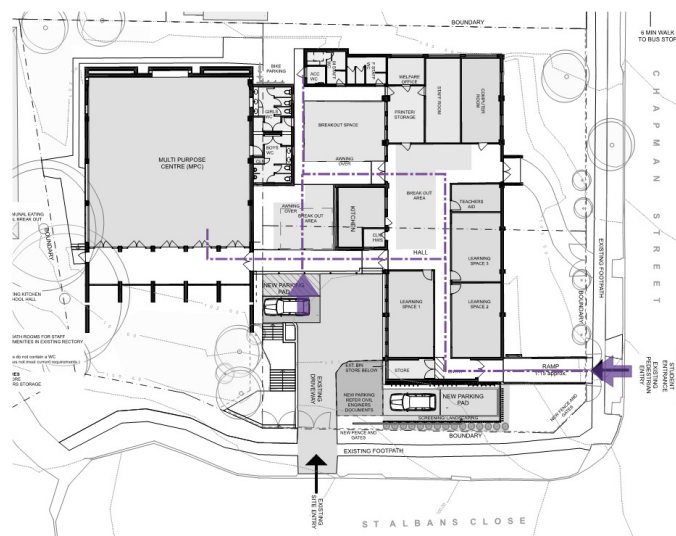


Figure 1 | Overall Site Plan

#### 4.1 Pedestrian Entrance from Chapman Street:

The existing pedestrian entrance to the Hall will be retained as the main student entrance. An existing ramp with gradient of 1:15 facilitates an accessible path of travel to the building from the allotment boundary along Chapman Street, satisfying BCA requirements.

We note the provision of existing footpath infrastructure – with signalised pedestrian crossings – along Chapman Street. This will enable safe pedestrian access to the site from surrounding areas.



Figure 2 | Existing Pedestrian Entrance to Hall from Chapman Street

#### 4.2 Accessible Carparking from St Albans Close:

As a part of the accessibility strategy for the site, an accessible carparking space is proposed within the existing carpark from St Albans Close. As there is only three (3) carparking spaces intended for the site, the accessible carparking need not be identified with signage so as to restrict the use of the space only for people with disabilities.

**As part of the upgrades works, a ramp will need to be provided for access from the accessible carparking and the Break-Out Area.**

We have been advised that carparking on the site will be managed. As a controlled user group will always occupy the site, if a visitor to the college requires the use of the accessible carparking space for access to the building, this can be arranged ahead of their arrival.



Figure 3 | Existing Area for Proposed Accessible Carparking from St Albans Close

## 5. The Affected Part

As the proposed development is the modification of an existing building, only the “new work” and “affected part” is subject to current BCA requirements.

The Disability (Access to Premises – Buildings) Standards apply to ...a new part, and any affected part, of a building, to the extent that the part of the building is...a Class 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 or 10 building (Clause 2.1).

**New work** is defined as follows (Clause 2.1 (4)):

- An extension to the building or a modified part of the building.

An **affected part** is defined as follows (Clause 2.1 (5)):

- The principle pedestrian entrance of an existing building that contains a new part; and
- Any part of an existing building, that contains a new part, that is necessary to provide a continuous accessible path of travel from the entrance to the new part.

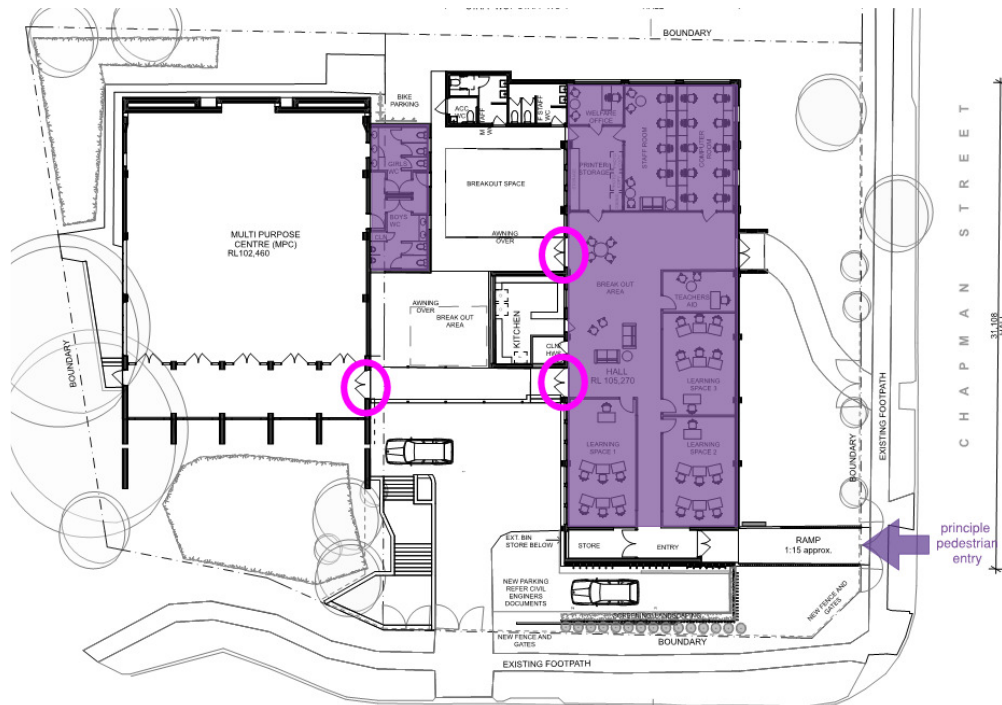


Figure 4 | Identification of “The Affected Part” and “New Work”

The “new work” within the AlSCO Senior College is generally limited to the existing hall where partitions will be erected to create learning spaces and associated facilities. There are also student sanitary facilities proposed adjacent to the multi-purpose centre however, these are not intended to provide a unisex accessible facility.

An accessible path of travel within the meaning of AS1428.1 has been provided to and within the new building works from the main student entrance, fulfilling “affected part” provisions.

We recommend that the doorways highlight in pink (Figure 4) be upgraded to offer a step ramp or similar for access throughout the college. This will maximise accessibility throughout the various break-out and courtyard areas and also offer a link to the accessible car parking area.

## 6. Interior Generally

The interior of the building is over a single level. New work is largely limited to the existing hall where learning spaces and administrative areas will be provided. Additionally, new student sanitary facilities will be provided adjacent to the multipurpose space (former St Albans Anglican Church). The sanitary facilities will include an ambulant accessible cubicle within both the male and female toilet areas.

With the new work, access for people with disabilities is required to and within all areas normally used by the occupants. This has been achieved in the proposed design as follows:

- Adequate circulation areas for wheelchair manoeuvrability have been provided to corridor areas;
- Doorways have been provided with adequate circulation areas for doorways within an accessible path of travel – ensure 850mm clear width is achievable to doorways;
- The hall is over a single floor level.

## 7. Accessible Sanitary Facilities

The existing sanitary facilities within the building include male toilets, female toilets and a unisex accessible sanitary facility. The male and female toilets will be designated as staff facilities and new student facilities will be constructed. These existing male and female toilets do not include ambulant accessible toilet cubicles due to the age of the building.

The new student amenities (male and female) will each include an ambulant accessible toilet. This is encouraged to improve accessibility within the building generally and meet current accessibility requirements of the BCA.

The existing unisex accessible sanitary compartment located off the courtyard area, is to be retained in its current condition. This facility does not meet current accessibility requirements – the dimensions of the existing room are 1750 x 1650mm; the set-out of fixtures does not facilitate adequate circulation spaces; and the path of travel from the courtyard has restricted width.



**Figure 4 | Existing Unisex Accessible Sanitary Compartment**

Regardless, it is intended to retain this facility in its existing condition / configuration due to the perceived needs of the intended users of the building. As stated earlier in this report, all students attending the college will have an Individual Learning Support Plan – this would include any specific physical access requirements. While many students attending the college are likely to suffer from anxiety and/or depression due to trauma related issues, the school does not generally cater to students with high physical support needs.



As such, the use of the unisex accessible sanitary facility is deemed low. If considered against the following statistics, it can be seen that this assumption is valid.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2019, 4430.0 - Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia 2018 identified that of the approximately 18% of people in Australia who have a disability, only 4.4% of this group use a wheelchair.

Further, AS1428.1 – the standard to which accessible sanitary compartments is to comply – caters to people aged between 18-65 years of age. Therefore, it could also be argued that for some students attending the college (Years 9-12), the anthropometric data upon which this standard is based may not be applicable.

Given the likely occupants of the college, we consider that retention of the existing unisex accessible sanitary compartment in its existing condition is reasonable in this instance based on the fact that there are no building works proposed to the existing sanitary facilities. The provision for ambulant accessible toilets within the new male and female student toilets will likely offer suitable facilities for the particular needs of the occupants.

## 8. Conclusion

This report demonstrates that the fundamental aims of accessibility legislation are achievable within the Alseco Senior College proposed at 27 Chapman Street Charlestown through a performance-based approach due to existing conditions. Spatial planning and general arrangements of the proposed building works will offer inclusion for all building users.

Disability is often defined as any limitation, restriction or impairment which restricts everyday activities and has lasted or is likely to last for at least 6 months. Disabilities can be very varied. They can be physical, cognitive, intellectual, mental, sensory, or developmental. They can be present at birth or can occur during a person's lifetime. They can also be permanent or temporary. In Australia, almost one in five people – 4.3 million – have a disability with one in three having severe or profound core activity limitation.

Equity and dignity are important aspects in the provision of access to buildings for all users. With respect to people with a disability, equity and dignity are sometimes overlooked in the construction of new buildings or refurbishment works. The design approach needs to maintain a high level of equity for people with disabilities and meet the performance requirements of the BCA. The performance requirements adopt two main concepts in the provision of access for people with a disability being **to the degree necessary** and **safe movement**. Both of these concepts need to be achieved within the context of equitable and dignified access.

In this respect, a wide range of disabilities needs consideration and a compromise reached between requirements of different disability groups. Measures need to be implemented to ensure inclusion of all users, not a particular disability group in isolation.

This report is limited to items within drawings listed in this report only. Future alterations and additions to the building will render the recommendations in this report null and void as we cannot guarantee continued compliance where changes to the building fabric are made.

Any dimensions quoted throughout this report and within Australian Standards are CLEAR dimensions, not structural. This needs to be considered in the preparation of the construction certificate documentation to account for wall linings and the like.



The recommendations throughout this report reflect the professional opinion and interpretation of Lindsay Perry. This may differ from that of other consultants. We provide practical, performance-based advice based on project specifics that will maximize access for persons with a disability to the built environment.

Lindsay Perry is a qualified Access Advisor, being an accredited within Australia (ACAA No. 136) and at the international level (GAATES No. BE-02-106-18). Lindsay Perry Access Pty Ltd carries public liability insurance, professional indemnity insurance and workers compensation insurance.

Yours Sincerely,

**LINDSAY PERRY**

B.Arch, M.Dis.Stud.

Internationally Certified Access Consultant GAATES ICAC BE-02-106-18

ACAA Accredited Access Consultant No. 136 |

Registered Architect NSW 7021

Livable Housing Assessor 20047 | NDIS SDA Assessor SDA00049 | Changing Places Assessor CP005

