

Universal Access Ramps on Footpaths Policy

Corangamite Shire

June 2023



**CORANGAMITE
SHIRE**

Council Policy



Universal Access Ramps on Footpaths Policy

Introduction

For new works on existing buildings, construction of a ramp providing equitable access to the building may be required to make it compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA). In some instances the only alternative for building owners to be compliant is to have the universal access to the existing building encroaching onto the abutting footpath within the road reserve.

Purpose

This policy aims to provide the guidelines to be followed for the application, assessment and installation of universal access ramps that encroach onto footpaths.

Scope

This policy applies to the applications for the establishment of universal access ramps encroaching onto footpaths for existing buildings only. For new buildings the universal access ramps are required to be constructed within the private property.

References

Building Code of Australia
Disability Discrimination Act
Australian Standard AS 1428 Design for Access and Mobility
Austroads Guide to Road Design – Part 6A Pedestrian and Cyclist Paths
Corangamite Shire Social Inclusion Policy
Corangamite Shire Disability Discrimination Policy

Policy Detail

Applications

In line with the Building Code of Australia, alterations internally to an existing building may trigger the requirement for universal access to be provided for the public so that the building is compliant with the DDA. The application for a universal access ramp would generally be submitted in conjunction with submission of a permit application to Council's Planning and Building Services for the overall building alterations. The current requirements for building permit applications would extend to applications for the access ramps.

Council requires the applicant for a universal access ramp to make every effort to design the ramp within the property boundaries, or within the building itself, whenever possible. Designing a ramp which will encroach into a public footpath should be the last alternative considered. Council will refuse construction of an access ramp encroaching onto the footpath when there is considered to be a valid alternative.

The applicable standard for a new access ramp is AS 1428.1 which has the requirements of a new ramp which will guide in determining the most appropriate positioning of the ramp. According to the standard a new ramp is to contain, amongst other requirements, the following features:

- A slope no steeper than 1 in 14.
- A compliant handrail on each side of the ramp
- A minimum ramp width of 1m between the rails.
- Level landings at the top and bottom of each ramp run.

Assessment

Officers from Council's Planning and Building Services and Assets Planning teams will jointly review the application for the universal access ramp.

If it is determined that it is not feasible to construct a universal ramp within the property Council will consider permitting the establishment of a universal access ramp that will encroach onto the footpath provided:

- There will be a 1.8m wide minimum clearance on the footpath from the outer extremity of the proposed ramp taking into account the location of street furniture and other obstructions; and
- Access to service utilities under the footpath will not be blocked by the proposed ramp.

Design of the access ramp will be required to be in accordance with the relevant building codes and Australian Standard AS 1428 Design for Access and Mobility. The design will include the provision of tactile ground surface indicators on the footpath to guide vision impaired people around the ramp.

Approval to the universal access ramp design will be incorporated into the building permit for the building alterations.

Installation

It will be the owner of the property's responsibility to construct and maintain a ramp that encroaches onto a footpath.

Prior to commencement of construction of the ramp within the road reserve, the owner will be required to obtain a Road Opening Permit from Council's Assets Planning team and adhere to the conditions that accompany the permit. The owner will also be required to enter into an agreement with Council via a Memorandum of Understanding prior to construction which will confirm the building owner's maintenance responsibilities and the requirement for public liability insurance cover for the ramp.

Council reserves the right to have the ramp removed, repaired or altered at the owner's expense if it is considered to be a public hazard and/or has fallen into a state of disrepair.

Review Date

June 2026

It is considered that this Policy does not impact negatively on any rights identified in the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*.

The *Gender Equality Act 2020* requires Council to undertake gender impact assessments when developing or reviewing any policy, program or service which has a direct and significant impact on the public. This policy will not have a direct and significant public impact and a Gender Impact Assessment has not been undertaken.