



20 May 2019

Simon Burchill
Manager
Physical Disability Australia Ltd
PO Box 345
TOWONG QLD 4066

Dear Mr Burchill –

ACCESSIBLE TOILETS IN THE NEWCASTLE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA

I refer to your letter to Lord Mayor Cr Nuatali Nelmes of 21 March 2019, regarding ensuring that the community has equitable access to accessible and non-accessible public amenities in our local government area. City of Newcastle (CN) shares your views that public amenities should be made available to all members of the community without regard to their physical ability.

We acknowledge that some of our accessible amenities are only available during daylight hours if the user is in possession of an MLAK key. Unfortunately, we regularly experience negative public behaviours in several of our public amenities – particularly accessible amenities (due, we believe, in part to their bigger size) - including people sleeping in them overnight; vandalism, unsavoury social acts, and use of these spaces for drug taking. In the past, this has led CN to take a position of avoidance, resulting in the locking of these amenities during daylight hours.

We are pleased to inform you that we will be implementing a number of changes to the operations of these accessible amenities in the next financial year, including ensuring they are open to all community members during daylight hours for the same duration as the adjacent non-accessible amenities. Whilst we do anticipate that these changed arrangements are likely to expose us to the negative behaviours again, and additional operational costs to mitigate against these outcomes, we remain committed to working through these obstacles in the pursuit of positive community outcomes.

If you have any questions in relation to this matter, please contact me on 4974 2009 or avine@ncc.nsw.gov.au.

Yours faithfully

A Vine
MANAGER PROPERTY AND FACILITIES