

# WAGGA WAGGA THEATRE SCHOOL OF ARTS

## Report on NCC Vol 1 BCA Compliance



Prepared by

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For

**City of Wagga Wagga**

*EMA*

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

The City of Wagga Wagga Commissioned Eric Martin & Associates (EMA) to undertake an inspection of and prepare a report on the Wagga Wagga School of Arts which included:

- A detailed access audit of the whole lower area and access to it.
- Review compliance with other BCA issues including access/egress, toilets and any other obvious issues excluding mechanical, electrical, structural, fire integrity etc.
- Provide some initial concept/suggestions on how the non-conformances may be overcome.

The inspection was undertaken by Eric Martin and Paul Martin on 16 October 2015 using base plans provided by Council.

## **2.0 ACCESS AUDIT**

The access audit is illustrated in Figure 1 and is summarized below:

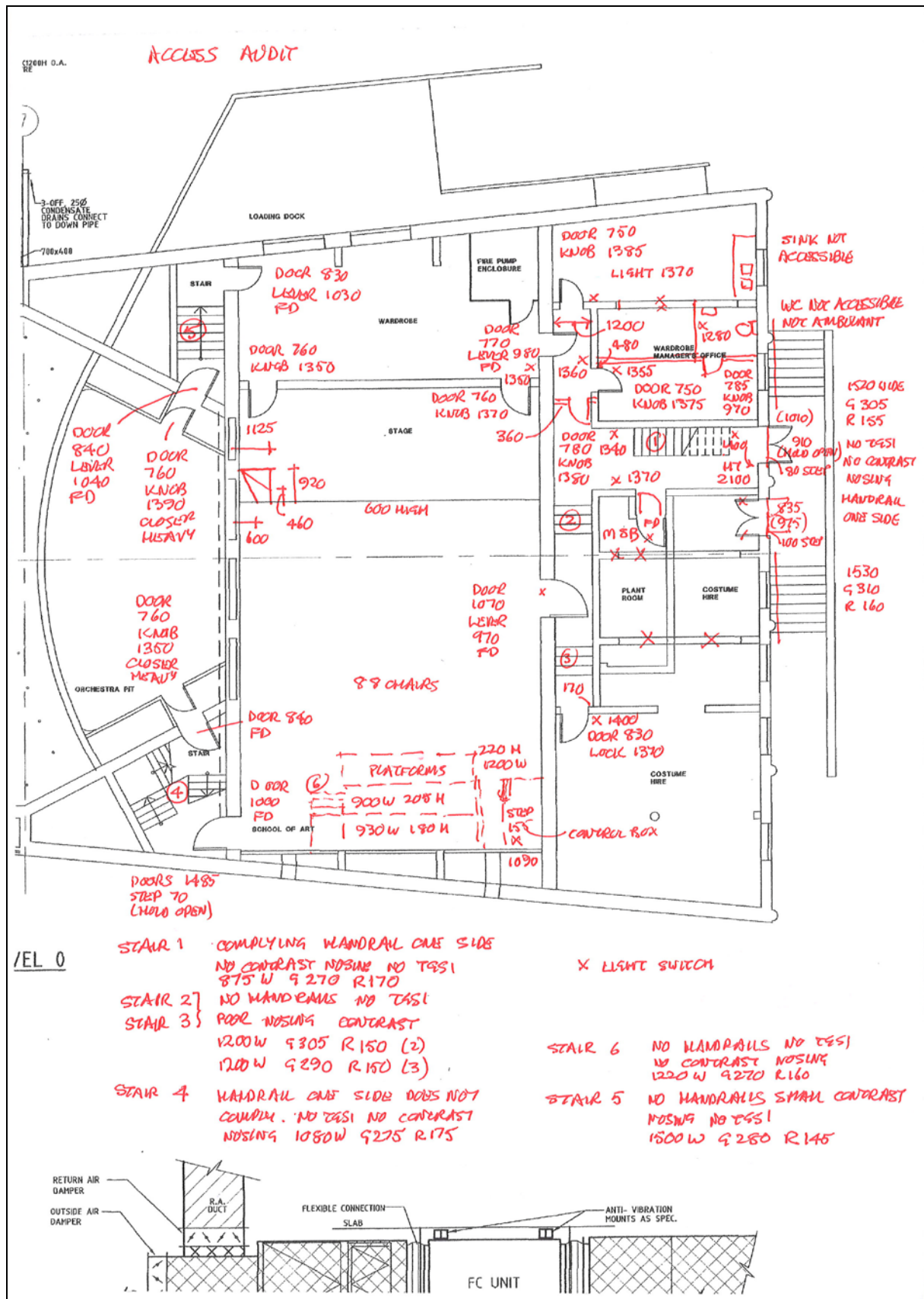


Figure 1: Marked up plan showing access issues

## **2.1 ACCESS INTO BUILDING**

The main public access is from the side where the double doors are held open providing a clear opening of 1485mm but including a step of 70mm.

The administration entry is at the rear from stairs that do not comply with only one handrail (although stairs in both directions compensate for this), no contrast nosing and TGSi. The double doors can be held open providing a clear opening of 910mm but with a 80mm step. The low height (below 2000mm) at the admin entry does not include TGSi or a suitable barrier.

## **2.2 ACCESS WITHIN BUILDING**

There is no lift to the theatre level from the public access. The stairs do not comply with a handrail one side, incorrect handrail, no contrast nosing and no TGSi.

There are internal stairs to restrict access from the back of theatre areas to the theatre. These stairs do not comply with no hand rails, no TGSi and poor contrast nosing.

All doors do not comply with most being too narrow, having inadequate circulation and many have knob handles and hardware that is too high.

NOTE: Although outside the School of Arts area, access to the orchestra pit also includes non-complying stairs.

## **2.3 TOILETS**

There is one toilet which is neither accessible nor an ambulant facility and signage is non-compliant.

## **2.4 CONTROLS**

All light switches and security switch are too high.

## **2.5 DDA ISSUES**

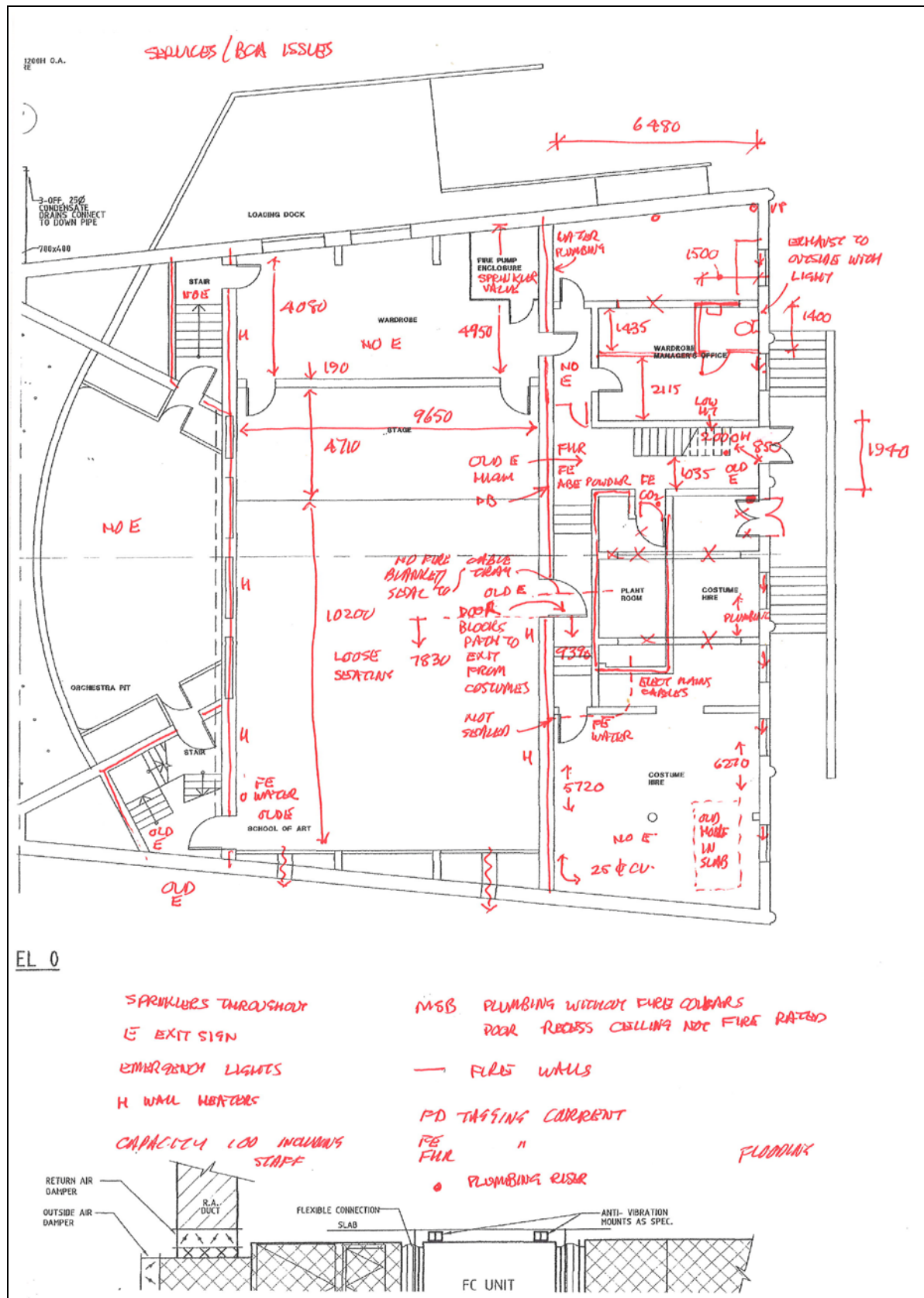
These include access issues not covered by NCC 2015 Vol 1 BCA but are potential discrimination issues:

- There is only stair access to the stage and it has no handrail and no contrast nosing.
- There is no sound augmentation but as there is no inbuilt PA system this may not be a problem. If a PA is used for any production then one would be required.
- Additional signage including raised tactile and braille information is desirable.
- There is space for wheelchair patrons as seating is not fixed, but wheelchair access is not possible.
- The sink unit in the office is not accessible.

## **3.0 NCC 2015 VOL 1 BCA ISSUES**

The following discusses some NCC Vol 1 BCA issues in addition to the disability access items mentioned in 2 above. Refer also Figure 2.

It is noted that the capacity of the area is 100 people.



### Figure 2: Annotated Plan



### 3.1 STAIRS

Risers/goings of all stairs comply but the balustrade at the main entry has openings in excess of 125mm diameter.

### 3.2 EXIT SIGNS

These exist but are the old type (not the running man) and do not provide coverage to office corridor and back stage.

(NOTE there are no exit signs from the orchestra pit).

### 3.3 EXIT PATHS

The exit path to the main public entry complies but the exit to the admin entry is not wide enough as it crosses under the stairs (850mm wide).

### 3.4 FIRE RATING

There are fire rated sections and the facility is fire separated from the main theatre. The other area that is fire separated is the MSB. Fire doors are provided and tagged but there are penetrations through walls by electrical cables and a pumping pipe. The ceiling of the entry door recess to the MSB is not fire rated.

The extent of fire rating would appear adequate.

### 3.5 FIRE SERVICES

The whole area is sprinklered and includes a FHR (although more than 4m from an exit door) and fire extinguishers are strategically placed. All services are tagged and current and would appear to be sufficient. The fire sprinkler valve enclosure is within the back stage area which is unusual.

### 3.6 VENTILATION

The toilet has an exhaust operated with the light switch. There is an openable window into the office, adjacent room and costume area.

There are two vents in the rear wall of the theatre and four wall-mounted electrical heaters. NCC 2015 Vol 1 BCA requires ventilation or air conditioning to AS1668.2 and AS3666.1.

The ventilation would appear inadequate.

### 3.7 LIGHTING

There are emergency lighting and general lighting throughout.

This appears adequate except no aisle lights are provided.

### 3.8 FOYER

There is effectively no foyer. NCC 2015 Vol 1 BCA clause NSW H101.3 requires a foyer space of 0.25m<sup>2</sup> per person or 25m<sup>2</sup>.

### 3.9 OTHER COMMENTS

3.9.1 The theatre seats are not linked together and pose a risk in an emergency.

3.9.2 The stair to the upper level (back stage of main theatre) does not meet requirements for a general access stair but serves no purpose for the School of Arts function and little purpose for the main theatre

3.9.3 There is a unused floor hatch in the costume room.

### **3.10 SECTION J ENERGY**

No assessment or comment made.

### **3.11 TOILETS**

For 100 patrons equally split into 50 male and 50 female. There is no requirement for toilets (the cut-off point and maximum number per sex is 50).

For employees, which will include staff and performers and assuming less than 10, then one unisex accessible facility will comply.

## **4.0 COMMENT / RECOMMENDATION**

### **4.1 GENERAL**

While the existing facility exists there is no need to upgrade or change anything but there is work that should be done and work that could be done for life safety and operational needs.

However once work is done then the Premises Standards will require access to and through the main entry to be also provided.

### **4.2 PRIORITY WORKS**

These should be implemented:

- Rectify breaches of fire rating walls.
- Add handrails each side to AS1428.1 and contrast nosing to all stairs but maintain 1000mm clear width in main entry stair.
- Widen or relocate the admin entry to provide a minimum 1000m clear passage past the stair.
- Seating to be linked.

### **4.3 OTHER WORKS TO MEET CURRENT NCC VOL 1 BCA**

This should include:

- Remove steps at entrances.
- A lift to the theatre level.
- A lift or ramp to the rest of floor level.
- An accessible toilet and signage.
- New doors and layout to meet circulation requirements.
- Replace exit signs including tactile/braille signs.
- Add TGSi to the general use stairs.
- Provide foyer.

### **4.4 POSSIBLE WORKS**

This could include:

- Remove the stair to upper level.
- Hearing augmentation.
- Accessible tea facilities.



- Additional toilets.
- Lower light switches/control.
- Add handrail to the stage stair and contrast nosing.
- Air conditioning.

#### 4.5 POSSIBLE LAYOUT

A possible layout that would satisfy the above requirements is indicated in Figure 3 and Figure 4.

These should be considered as an indication of what may be required and what is possible.

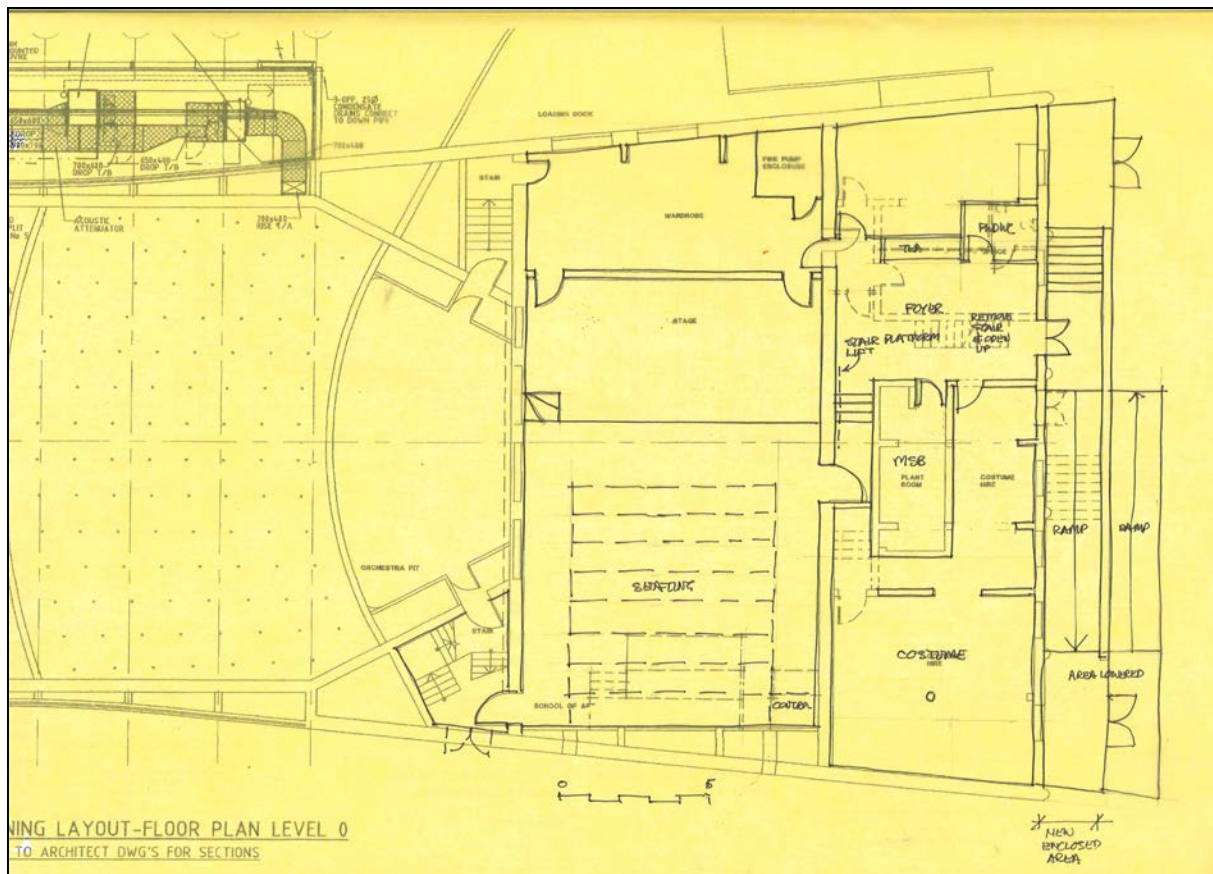


Figure 3: Possible Layout A

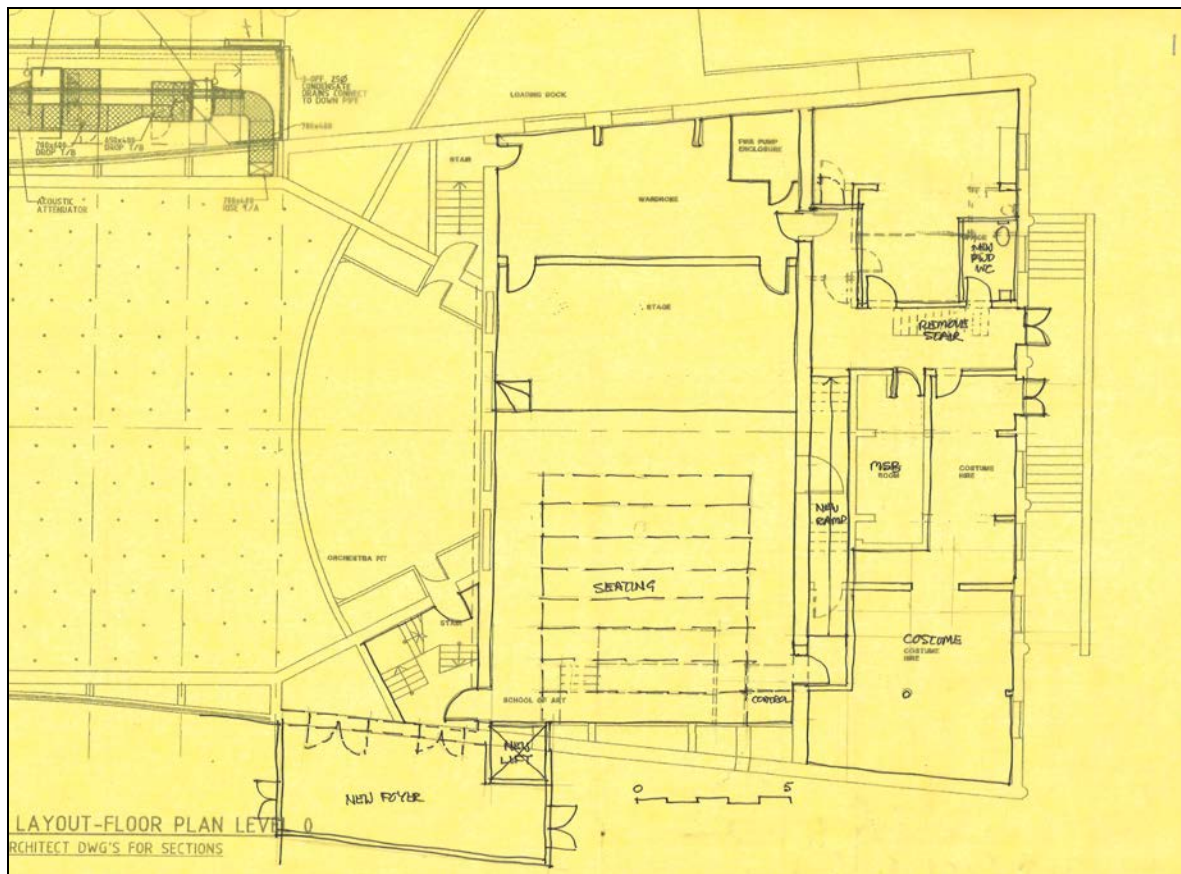


Figure 4: Possible Layout B

## 5.0 CONCLUSION

There are a number of disability access and NCC 2015 Vol 1 BCA non-compliances with this facility.

For the School of Arts to continue to use the facility there needs to be some maintenance type work done as a priority (refer Section 4.2) and it is recommended that to continue a theatre operation then other works should also be done (refer Section 4.3). If this is to occur then consideration should be given to the possible works (refer Section 4.4 being included in the scope.