



# Residential aged care services built environment audit tool

Online version 1.2: Part 1. Audit tool table




## A. External areas

Residential aged care services built environment audit tool: Part 1. Audit tool table: A. External areas		
Environmental recommendation	Achieved?	Useful tools/tips
<p>1. There are signs available to direct visitors on arrival.</p> <p>Comments:</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Action required <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable	<p><b>Resources:</b> [1, 5, 6, 29]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resource [5]: Refer Part C, section 430.</li> </ul>
<p>2. Signs are easy to see and text is easy to read.</p> <p>Comments:</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Action required <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable	<p><b>Tips:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Signs use primary colours (contrasting with the walls) and are available on all key areas that residents need to go [1].</li> <li>Use prompts such as pictures, photographs and simple signs [2].</li> <li>Signs using icons or symbols are familiar to older people including people from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds and clearly represent their meaning [3-6].</li> <li>Make signs large and have the text on a contrasting background (for example, black on white).</li> <li>Style of writing should be simple</li> <li>Signs in dark areas are well lit and do not scroll or flash [4].</li> <li>Text should be provided in common community languages.</li> </ul> <p><b>Resources:</b> [1, 2, 4-10]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resource [5]: Refer Part C, section 750.</li> </ul> <p><a href="http://www.aiga.org/content.cfm/typography-and-the-aging-eye">www.aiga.org/content.cfm/typography-and-the-aging-eye</a></p>


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Environmental recommendation	Achieved?	Useful tools/tips
<p>3. Parking is available and easily accessed by staff, visitors and emergency vehicles.</p> <p>Comments:</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Action required <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable	<p><b>Tips:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If possible, provide dedicated parking lots for disabled persons.</li> <li>• Be aware that car parks and concrete located close to buildings can create excessive heat and glare.</li> <li>• Be aware that most visitors are older and may have some form of infirmity. Make sure there is sufficient turning space and plenty of room between vehicles to park.</li> <li>• Consider the travel distance for an older person when walking from the car park to the front entrance.</li> </ul> <p></p> <p><b>Resources:</b> [1, 5, 6, 11-14]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resource [1]: Refer Section 3.3.4 Vehicles, Car Parking and Garage.</li> <li>• Resource [5]: Refer Part B, section 690.</li> <li>• Resource [12]: Refer Section 3.2 Vehicular access and parking.</li> <li>• Resource [14]: Refer Page 45 heatwave checklist for residential aged care.</li> </ul>
<p>4. Parking areas are well lit at night.</p> <p>Comments:</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Action required <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable	<p><b>Tips</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check that street lighting, bollards and car lights do not shine directly into resident rooms.</li> </ul> <p></p> <p><b>Resources:</b> [1, 12, 13]</p>
<p>5. External paths, steps and ramps used at night are well lit.</p> <p>Comments:</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Action required <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable	<p><b>Tips:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make sure that areas used at night are not left in darkness.</li> <li>• Ensure that bright spotlights do not shine into residents' rooms.</li> </ul> <p><b>Resource:</b> [15]</p>
<p>6. There are external paths within the grounds of the facility that lead the user from their starting point back into the building.</p> <p>Comments:</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Action required <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable	<p><b>Tips:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A figure 8 may be appropriate with no dead ends.</li> <li>• Wheel equipment around all paths in the first instance to ensure paths are not separated by lawn or garden.</li> </ul> <p><b>Resources:</b> [1, 8, 13, 16-18]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resource[8]: Refer Tools Supplement Section 3 environmental audits.</li> </ul>

**Residential aged care services built environment audit tool: Part 1. Audit tool table: A. External areas**


Environmental recommendation	Achieved?	Useful tools/tips
<p>7. External paths curve gently and have no sharp corners</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>Tip:</b> Wheels on chairs may be difficult to manoeuvre around sharp corners, and may not turn as easily.</p>  <p><b>Resource:</b> [2, 18]</p>
<p>8. External paths are clearly defined and visible against the garden background.</p> <p>Comments:</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Action required <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable	<p><b>Tips:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check that the edges of pathways are marked and contrast against the garden background.</li> <li>• Be aware of using an appropriate colour to define the pathway.</li> <li>• Check if using garden edging that it does not create a trip hazard for users and equipment.</li> </ul> <p><b>Resource:</b> [2, 18]</p>
<p>9. External paths allow the resident to see into other areas that might invite them to participate.</p> <p>Comments:</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Action required <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable	<p><b>Tips:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outdoor areas should encourage incidental activities, e.g. raised garden beds, bird feeding.</li> <li>• Paths lead to glassed areas/doors that show recreational areas</li> <li>• Be cautious of placing paths alongside bedroom windows for privacy purposes.</li> </ul>  <p><b>Resources:</b> [2, 7, 15, 16, 18, 22, 23]</p>
<p>10. External paths are wide enough to allow two people on motorised scooters to comfortably pass each other.</p> <p>Comments:</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Action required <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable	<p><b>Tips:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mobility equipment is becoming larger and heavier, that is, scooters, tub chairs. If equipment cannot pass on the path then there may be traffic jams, and safety issues if overtaking off the path.</li> <li>• If widening the pathway is not feasible consider the capacity for passing areas, for example, gazebo, seat area.</li> <li>• Be aware of radiant heat from buildings and concrete in enclosed courtyards and gardens – research benefits and drawbacks of ‘soft’ concrete</li> </ul>  <p><b>Standard:</b> Refer AS 1428.1 – 2001 Section 5.1.1 Access ways, walkways, ramps and landings.</p> <p><b>Resources:</b> [1, 5, 8, 12, 18, 19]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resource [1]: Refer 5.5.2. It is recommended that pathways are 1500mm to 1800mm wide.</li> <li>• Resource [8]: Refer Tools Supplement Section 3 environmental audits.</li> </ul>

Residential aged care services built environment audit tool: Part 1. Audit tool table: A. External areas



Environmental recommendation	Achieved?	Useful tools/tips
<p>11. External paths, steps and ramps are slip resistant and free of hazards.</p> <p>Comments:</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Action required <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable	<p><b>Tips:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep grassed areas free of trip hazards.</li> <li>• Keep deciduous plants away from pathways to limit fallen leaves from accumulating on paths that can be a slip hazard.</li> <li>• Paths should be smooth, matte finish and uniform in colour.</li> <li>• Be aware of moss on paths.</li> <li>• Avoid gutters and grates in pathways, else ensure they are safely covered</li> <li>• Check that the edges of pathway are marked and contrast against garden background.</li> <li>• Check concrete lip and path edging do not create trip hazards.</li> <li>• Ensure there are no external window awnings protruding onto pathway.</li> <li>• Ensure garden maintenance on overhanging branches.</li> <li>• Plant resident friendly plants in garden e.g. thornless roses.</li> </ul> <p></p> <p><b>Resources:</b> [1,2, 8, 12, 13, 18-21]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resource[8]: Refer Tools Supplement Section 3 environmental audits.</li> <li>• Resource [20]: Refer Section 2 Hazards.</li> <li>• Resource [21]: Refer Section 10 Physical environment.</li> </ul>
<p>12. There are points of interest (landmarks) along paths to assist residents in finding their way.</p> <p>Comments:</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Action required <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable	<p><b>Tips:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Landmarks can include items of interest, e.g. garden features.</li> <li>• If the design includes a streetscape, then street signs could be included.</li> <li>• Make sure each landmark is unique and not repeated along the path e.g. one birdbath, one clothesline.</li> </ul> <p><b>Resource:</b> [2, 18]</p>



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<p>13. Areas of activity such as garden beds are at a height and located in a position that is easily accessed by residents whether sitting or standing.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Action required <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable	<p><b>Tips:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raised garden beds should be at different heights to suit different users.</li> <li>• Garden beds should be located on a surface that wheeled equipment can reach without any effort.</li> <li>• If garden bed is freestanding (on legs) ensure a wheelchair can fit comfortably underneath the bed.</li> <li>• Consider that corrugated sheeting may reflect heat and may cause glare.</li> <li>• Be aware of sharp edges of the outer shell which may cause harm. E.g. brickwork</li> <li>• Make sure corner edges are rounded.</li> <li>• All fixings (screws, nails, staples) should be recessed and free from jagged or sharp edges.</li> <li>• Timber needs to be planed, sanded smooth and free from knots and splinters on all four sides</li> </ul>  <p><b>Resources:</b>[41]</p>
<p>14. There are sufficient places to rest along external paths.</p> <p>Comments:</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Action required <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable	<p><b>Tips:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seats should be set back from the main path, so they do not obstruct traffic flow, but are easily accessed by wheelchairs. .</li> <li>• Rest points should provide enough room for wheelchairs to turn around, e.g. gazebo with a path passing through the centre.</li> </ul>  <p><b>Resources:</b> [1, 7, 8, 12, 13, 15, 16, 19, 23, 24]  Resource [8]: Refer Tools Supplement Section 3 environmental audits.</p>
<p>15. There are areas available for residents to sit outdoors with the option of sitting in shade or in sunshine.</p> <p>Comments:</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Action required <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable	<p><b>Tips:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shade cloth should be well-attached and maintained.</li> <li>• External shading to include established trees and leafy plants.</li> <li>• Established plants should not block sun in winter.</li> <li>• Water features can create a cooler environment - be aware of safety issues with sharp edges and trip hazards.</li> </ul>  <p><b>Resources:</b> [1, 7, 12, 15, 16, 18, 24, 25]  • Resource [14]: Refer Page 45 heatwave checklist for residential aged care.</p>

**Residential aged care services built environment audit tool: Part 1. Audit tool table: A. External areas**

Environmental recommendation	Achieved?	Useful tools/tips
<p>16. Sturdy outdoor seating is provided in a variety of heights.</p> <p>Comments:</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Action required <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable	<p><b>Tips:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bench seating is available with individual arm rests.</li> <li>• Have access to chairs with armrests.</li> <li>• Wooden seating is preferable to metal or plastic. Metal can be hot to touch and plastic too light.</li> <li>• All fixings (screws, nails, staples) should be recessed and free from jagged or sharp edges.</li> <li>• Timber needs to be planed, sanded smooth and free from knots and splinters on all sides</li> </ul> <p><b>Resource:</b> [13,41]</p>
<p>17. External fencing is sturdy and continuous to the ground.</p> <p>Comments:</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Action required <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable	<p><b>Tips:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recommended fence height 1.8 metres [2]</li> <li>• Ensure there are no footholds on fence, or gaps underneath.</li> <li>• Specifically designed pool fences show views/activities in other areas where the resident may not participate – the bars may resemble prison bars.</li> <li>• Consider different types of fences in different areas.</li> <li>• Awareness of boundaries can be lessened by generous plantings of shrubs.</li> </ul>  <p><b>Resource:</b> [2]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resource [2]: Refer Section 18.</li> </ul>
<p>18. The threshold between internal and external areas is on the same level with no steps between them.</p> <p>Comments:</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Action required <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable	<p><b>Tips:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make sure entrance mats are installed flush with the surrounding floor surface.</li> </ul> <p><b>Resource:</b> [2]</p>

**Residential aged care services built environment audit tool: Part 1. Audit tool table: A. External areas**

Environmental recommendation	Achieved?	Useful tools/tips
<p>19. Changes in the ground/floor surfaces are clearly defined.</p> <p>Comments:</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Action required <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable	<p><b>Tips:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Although expected at thresholds a change from one floor surface to another, such as vinyl/carpet to concrete, can be a hazard if residents are not aware of it.</li> <li>• Make sure the adjacent surface materials are different colours and/or patterns BUT are tonally similar (check 'tonality' by viewing the surface materials and joining strips in black &amp; white - take a photo)</li> <li>• A joining strip that is not tonally similar can be perceived as a barrier or a step</li> <li>• Make sure that the joining strip is flush with both surface materials so that it is not a trip hazard</li> </ul> <p></p> <p><b>Resources:</b> [2, 7, 19, 30, 42]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resource [30]: Refer Section 4 Floors and floor coverings.</li> </ul>
<p>20. The threshold is clearly identified by using visual cues.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>Tips:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These cues should be visible from both sides of the threshold If not visible from both sides, then the 'visual cues' need to be different on each side so that a person has some indication that they are approaching from a different direction.</li> <li>• Examples include:                         <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Additional light focussing on the threshold</li> <li>– Specific colour contrast or wall texture</li> <li>– Architraves, curtains</li> <li>– Wall-mounted artworks/artefacts</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p></p> <p><b>Resources:</b> [42]</p>
<p>21. If levels are different, ramps are available and provide access to all external areas</p> <p>Comments:</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Action required <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable	<p><b>Tip:</b> The surface of a ramp must also be suitable for the activities undertaken; for example, pushing wheeled equipment up a carpeted ramp may be difficult (depending on the type of surface). Force measurements may need to be taken to ensure they are within acceptable limits.</p> <p><b>Standard:</b> All ramps must conform to AS 1428.1 – 2001.</p> <p><b>Resources:</b> [5, 6, 8, 20, 26]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resource [5]: Refer Part C section 730.7.</li> <li>• Resource [8]: Refer Tools Supplement Section 3 environmental audits.</li> <li>• Resource [20]: Refer Section 4 Access, mobility &amp; OHS.</li> <li>• Resource [26]: Refer Solution Sheet 3, <i>Choosing safe floor coverings</i>.</li> </ul>

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Environmental recommendation	Achieved?	Useful tools/tips
22. Any steps and stairs have contrasting nosings (part of the tread) and/or contrasting risers (vertical faces of the steps), Comments:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Action required <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable	<p><b>Tip:</b> Look for an alternative to steps in external areas.</p> <p><b>Standards:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refer AS 1657 -1992 for stair design and dimension.</li> <li>Refer AS 1428.1 – 2001.</li> </ul> <p><b>Resources:</b> [1, 6, 8, 15, 19, 20]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resource [8]: Refer Tools Supplement Section 3 environmental audits.</li> <li>Resource [20]: Refer Section 4 Access, mobility &amp; OHS.</li> </ul>
23. Handrails for external paths and steps meet standards. Comments:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Action required <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable	<p><b>Tips:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Handrails should extend at least 300mm beyond the end of steps.</li> <li>Handrails should be circular but flattened at the top so residents can rest if necessary.</li> <li>A continuous handrail on one side of external paths can help guide residents.</li> </ul> <p><b>Standard:</b> Refer AS 1428.1 – 2001.</p> <p><b>Resources:</b> [1, 5, 6, 13, 18, 20, 27]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resource[1]: Refer 5.7.2.</li> <li>Resource [5]: Refer Part C, section 765.</li> <li>Resource [20]: Refer Section 4 Access, mobility &amp; OHS.</li> </ul>
24. The colour of handrails stands out against the background (for example, wall, fence, shrubbery). Comments:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Action required <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable	<p><b>Tip:</b> Be aware of heat and glare from stainless steel unpainted handrails.</p>  <p><b>Resources:</b> [1, 5-8, 17, 19, 24, 28]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resource [8]: Refer Tools Supplement Section 3 environmental audits.</li> </ul>
25. Access/call bell facilities are available to residents when outside to return indoors.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Action required <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable	<p><b>Tip:</b> Call bells, security coded pads or push buttons can be placed on walls beside entrance points.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>They need to be clearly labelled</li> <li>Make sure they are within easy reach of residents either sitting or standing.</li> <li>Numbers need to be easy to press and read.</li> </ul>  <p><b>Resources:</b> [2]</p>

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