

15 August 2024

File Ref: IRC-6793

Wellington Ratepayer
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Tēnā koe

Thank you for your email dated 21 July 2024, to Kaunihera o Pōneke / Wellington City Council (the Council) requesting the following information about accessway rules:

- *What is the national and local regulation on both recommended and max slope permitted for an access way?*
- *What are defining factors behind the max permitted (runoff, health & safety)*
- *Where are the rules defined in local and national regulations?*
- *Does it change depending on material used (formed dirt, gravel, chip seal, asphalt, cement, other)?*
- *Does it change depending on zone (Urban, Industrial, Mixed, Rural, Other)?*
- *Does it change depending on the primary possible vehicle (pedestrian, car, tiny home, bus, tractor, other)?*
- *Does it change depending on whether it is a pedestrian or vehicular way?*
- *For clarities sake, please provide a table sortable by zone, material, purpose, recommended percentage, maximum percentage, relevant notes.*
- *Note: to minimise possible later misunderstandings, please specify whether the gradients provided are specified as % or angle, etc.*
- *If undefined at both a national and local level, does this mean that any angle is permitted for a driveway or other access way?*

Your request has been considered under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (LGOIMA). Please find my response below.

What is the national and local regulation on both recommended and max slope permitted for an access way?

The national standard defining the maximum slopes of vehicle accessways is AS/NZS2890.1:2004, see [AS/NZS 2890.1:2004 :: Standards New Zealand](#). In this standard, various maximum gradients are provided depending on the situation that applies.

For a domestic driveway, clause 2.6.2 advises that the maximum slope is 1 in 4 (25%). There is a note that advises that “limiting driveway gradients to 25% maximum may not be practicable in some particularly hilly residential locations. The services of a professionally qualified person with appropriate experience may be required to make a judgement as to whether a particular grade line design is safe and environmentally sustainable”.

For commercial driveways and residential driveways serving multiple properties, and greater than 20 metres in length, the maximum gradient is 1 in 6 (16.7%). For commercial driveways up to 20 meters long, the maximum gradient is 1 in 5 (20%).

For ramps in public carparks longer than 20 metres, the maximum gradient is 1 in 6 (16.7%). For ramps in public carparks up to 20 metres long, the maximum gradient is 1 in 5 (20%).

For all these driveways, transition gradients will be required at each end of the steep section of driveway.

The Council's 2000 District Plan sets our current requirements for driveway slopes. In this, they are required to meet the standards of AS/NZS2890.1:2004, detailed above. This District Plan is available on the Council's website, see: [2000 District Plan - Plans, policies and bylaws - Wellington City Council](#)

Various maximum gradients are proposed in the Council's 2024 District Plan but these are not yet finalised. While they vary depending on the type of driveway, the 2024 District Plan currently proposes a 1 in 4 (25%) maximum gradient for a driveway with up to 30 light vehicle movements per day and no more than 2 heavy vehicle movements per week. Flatter slopes are recommended on busier driveways.

What are defining factors behind the max permitted gradient (runoff, health & safety)

The feasibility of creating and then using the driveway is the main consideration for having a maximum permitted gradient. The safety of other driveway users is also relevant.

We note too, that maintenance of a steep driveway can be difficult.

Where are the rules defined in local and national regulations?

As advised above.

Does it change depending on material used (formed dirt, gravel, chip seal, asphalt, cement, other)?

In some situations, lower gradients are recommended in the Council's Code of Practice for Land Development 2012. For chipseal paving, a maximum gradient of 1 in 8 (12.5%) is advised. For unsealed roads, a gradient steeper than 1 in 8 (12.5%) must be sealed.

Does it change depending on zone (Urban, Industrial, Mixed, Rural, Other)?

As advised above, maximum gradients vary depending on the type of road or accessway and the type of vehicles using it, as well as expected vehicle volumes. This will particularly apply when the 2024 District Plan is finalised. At present, under the proposed 2024 District Plan, a busy driveway (meaning up to 200 light vehicle movements per day and 5 to 8 heavy vehicle movements per week) will be required to have a maximum gradient of 1 in 6.25% (16%).

Does it change depending on the primary possible vehicle (pedestrian, car, tiny home, bus, tractor, other)?

As explained above, the maximum permitted gradient currently varies in the 2000 District Plan depending on whether it is a residential or a commercial driveway.

Does it change depending on whether it is a pedestrian or vehicular way?

The gradient of accessways that are intended for pedestrian use only are defined by the NZ Building Code rather than AS/NZS2890.1:2004. I refer you to: [Building Code and handbooks | Building Performance](#)

For clarity, please provide a table sortable by zone, material, purpose, recommended percentage, maximum percentage, relevant notes.

The Council does not have a diagrammatic representation of the scenarios described above. We therefore have to refuse this part of your request under section 17(g)(i) of the Act, on the grounds that we do not hold this information and we have no grounds to believe it is held by another local authority, department, Minister of the Crown or organisation.

Note: to minimise possible later misunderstandings, please specify whether the gradients provided are specified as % or angle, etc.

In the information we have provided above, gradients have been expressed as both a ratio (eg 1 in 5) and a percentage (eg 20%).

If undefined at both a national and local level, does this mean that any angle is permitted for a driveway or other access way?

This has been addressed above.

You have the right, by way of complaint under section 28(1) of the LGOIMA, to request an investigation and review of the Council's response to your request by the Ombudsman. Information about making a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Nāku noa, nā

Susan Sales
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Wellington City Council