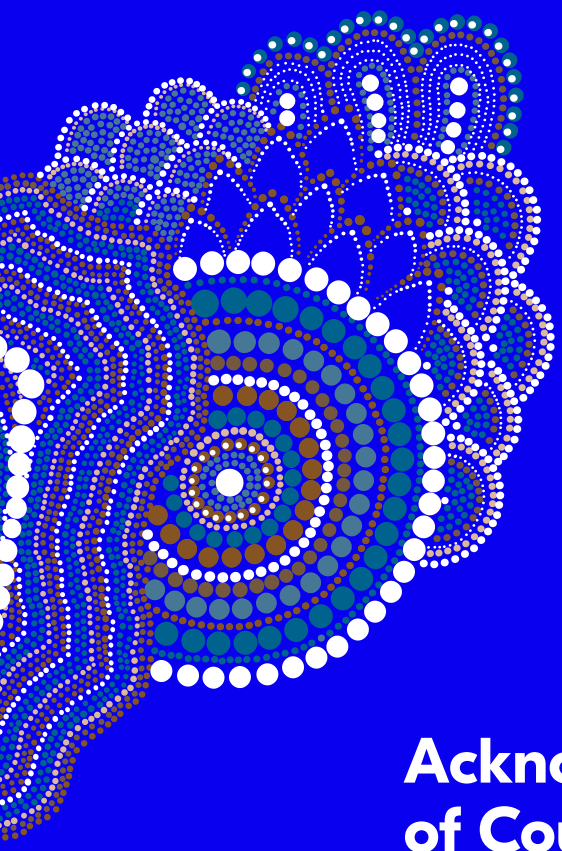
NRMA ROAD TRAVEL REWARDS

GSA Get Skilled Access

Accessible EV charging infrastructure

NRMA proposed policy for equitable accessibility

2025



Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the land on which we gather, from places as widespread and diverse as the NRMA. In the presence of Elders past, present and future, we recognise all journeys and our mutual role in creating new paths together.

About the NRMA

The NRMA is one of Australia's largest member-owned organisations with a 105-year history, representing 3.4 million members. We offer a range of products and services, from motoring and transport to travel services that help members go further.

Independent advocacy is the foundation activity of our organisation and remains critical to who we are today. As a modern mutual we work with all levels of government to help improve transport safety, road safety, mobility issues and enhance community connections.

About GSA

Get Skilled Access (GSA) specialises in delivering customised consulting services. The organisation partners with a diverse range of clients across both the private and public sectors.

GSA is dedicated to fostering meaningful and sustainable change in the areas of disability inclusion and accessibility. Their mission involves developing strategies and solutions that empower organisations to create environments where people with disability can thrive, promote equitable access to resources, and implement best practices for inclusivity and accessibility within their workplaces and communities.

By leveraging extensive expertise and experience, GSA aims to drive impactful outcomes for people with disability.

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NRMA policy position on accessible EV charging infrastructure

Overview and rationale

Why accessibility matters

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, 21.4% of the population live with a disability, with around 80% of these being non-visible. This means that a significant portion of the population faces access barriers that may not be immediately apparent, highlighting the need for proactive and thoughtful transport infrastructure design.

The NRMA sees the transition to electric vehicles (EVs) as a once-in-a-generation opportunity to redefine sustainable transportation technologies, and how we design and deliver the supporting infrastructure. By embedding inclusive design principles from the outset, we can ensure that no one is left behind in the move towards cleaner, smarter mobility. Accessibility should not be treated as an afterthought or compliance check-box, it should be a core requirement that enhances independence whilst championing dignity and participation for all Australians, now and into the future.

Current scenario

At this stage in the development of the EV charging industry, there is no specific standard that directly addresses accessibility requirements. For example, the NSW Government's programs supporting public charging infrastructure reference a range of existing guidelines deemed most relevant to the current context. These include the Royal Automobile Association of South Australia (RAA). Existing guidelines fail to meet the needs of today's users and fall short of ensuring accessibility and inclusion for all. While these documents provide useful direction, the NRMA believes this fragmented and ad hoc approach is not ideal and fails to support the accessibility requirements of users.

NRMA takes the lead

The lack of a dedicated, nationally consistent accessibility code creates confusion, limits implementation, and risks excluding people with disability from equitable participation in the EV transition. The solution is a clear, scalable, and universally applicable framework that supports principles to ensure inclusive infrastructure delivery at every EV charging location from the beginning.

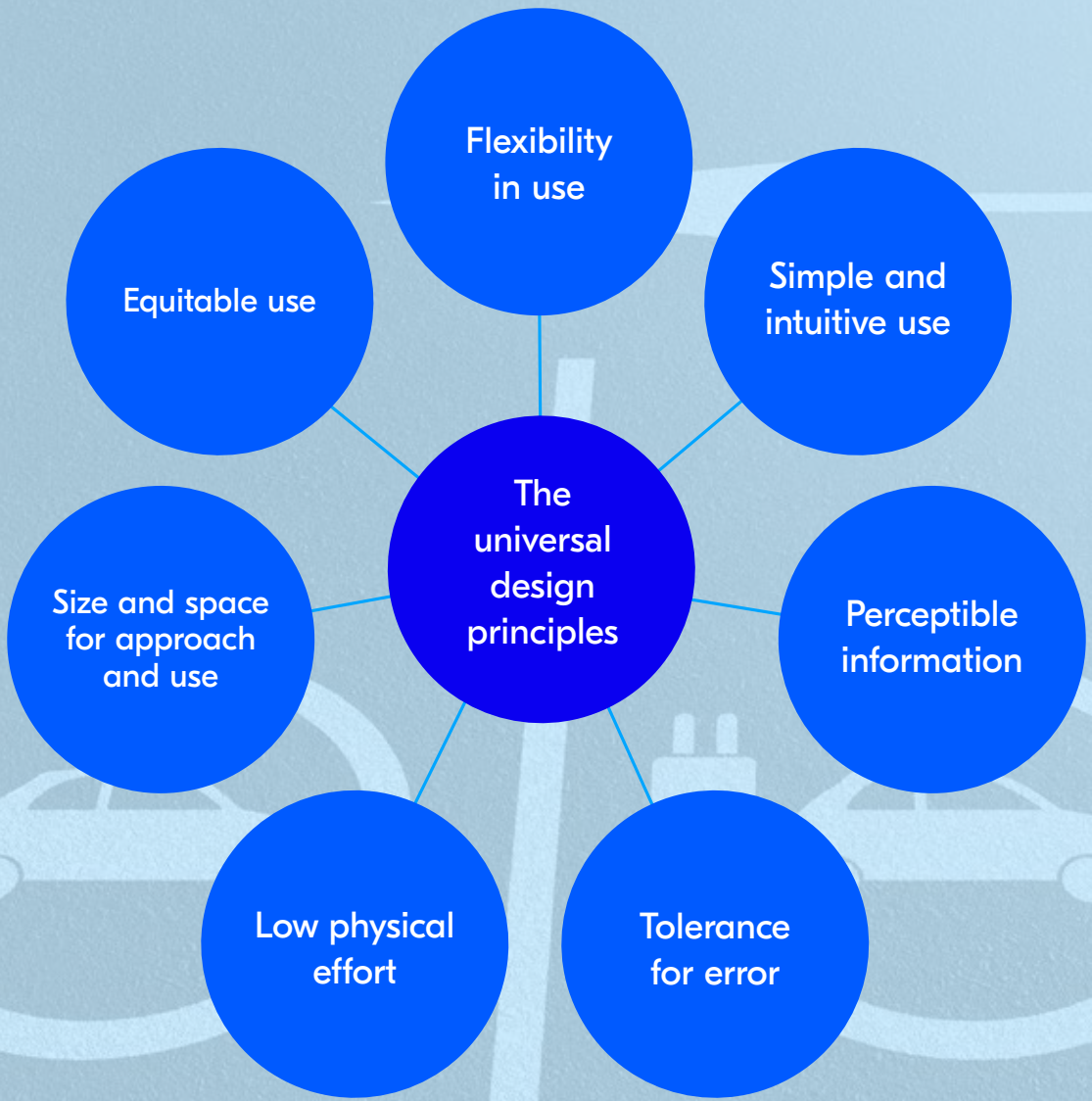
To address these concerns, the NRMA commissioned the development of accessible EV bay design guidelines and engaged independent experts to review and validate the proposed approach . Based on this work, we have also developed a set of policy positions to guide future investment, regulation, and delivery of accessible EV infrastructure across Australia.

The NRMA has adopted the 'Use Last' methodology, intended to be used by any EV driver when no accessible parking permit holder is present, but should be prioritised for those who need them.

Technical framework and preferred design

Design philosophy

The NRMA's approach is grounded in the principles of universal design, ensuring that EV charging infrastructure is inherently inclusive, usable, and convenient for all people, regardless of ability. Our design prioritises practical solutions that work across diverse site conditions and environments. Unlike other existing design guidelines, the NRMA's modular layout avoids additional land acquisitions and fits seamlessly within existing parking footprints. This flexible and scalable approach supports both new builds and retrofits, enabling widespread and consistent adoption across metropolitan, regional, and remote locations.



Design options

The NRMA commissioned Get Skilled Access (GSA), an Australian consultancy specialising in disability inclusion and accessibility, to evaluate multiple design configurations. The recommended design includes six bays of which four are for EV charging and two for accessible transfer and equipment use making it the most inclusive and preferred design. It allows easy, step-free access and fits into existing car parks without needing extra space. An additional option, which includes five bays of which four are for EV charging and one for equipment/transfer was also supported as a practical alternative where the recommended design cannot be implemented.

Site considerations and engineering standards

NRMA's standard EV bay designs prioritise ease of access, safety, and compliance with best-practice engineering principles. All designs ensure chargers are installed at ground level, eliminating steps or elevation changes that could create barriers. Surfaces are required to be firm and level, with gentle gradients supporting ease of mobility. Bollards are strategically placed to safeguard equipment while allowing unobstructed movement around the charger. Compatibility with all types of EV chargers, from standard AC units to battery-integrated DC fast chargers were also considered in the design process.

Scalability and real-world feasibility

The NRMA's approach is practical and scalable, designed to work within existing car park layouts without requiring land acquisition or major structural changes. The modular approach easily scales from three bays for a single charger to nine bays for three chargers and beyond based on site capacity and demand. This ensures easy integration into both new and existing sites, including compact urban lots and regional locations. It allows local government areas and site operators to implement accessible EV charging infrastructure quickly and cost-effectively, supporting widespread rollout without compromising usability or compliance.

Evidence and analysis

To date, the NRMA has been proactive in building the National Highway Charging Network for EVs, with many sites developed in line with our accessibility standards and design options, created in collaboration with GSA.

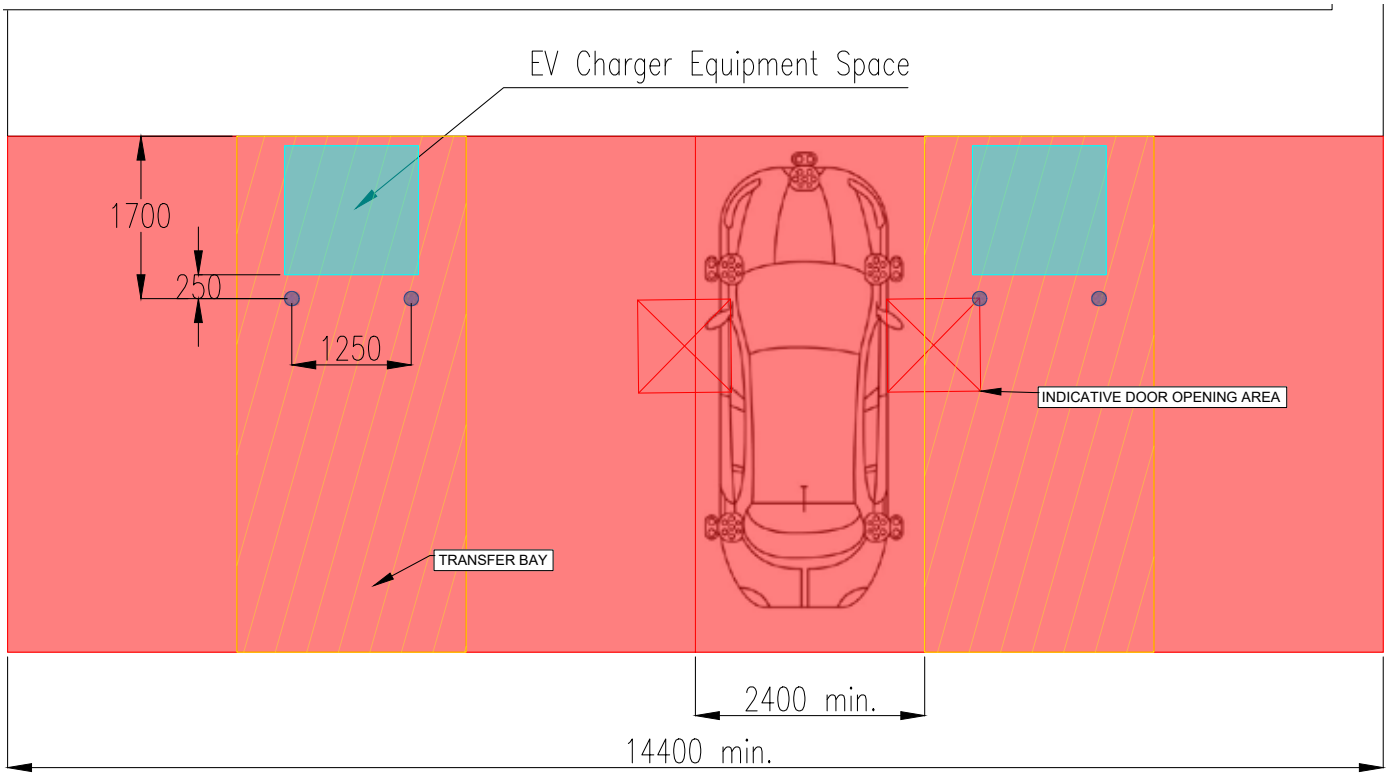
Where practical we implemented 'Design A' (see below and in annexures), the recommended configuration for maximizing accessibility for individuals with disabilities or access requirements.

This approach offers the highest level of compliance with AS 2890.6 - 2:2022, which sets out the minimum requirements for off-street parking facilities for people with disability or accessibility needs. The standard specifically mandates the inclusion of a dedicated transfer bay, an indicative door opening area to support side access for mobility devices, and consideration for extended charging cable lengths to ensure reachability to both sides of a vehicle.

In line with our commitment to inclusive infrastructure and equitable transport access, we are aiming to make all of our sites accessible for everyone based on these guidelines and design templates.

By incorporating these design features from the outset, other charging infrastructure providers can avoid costly retrofits, support independent access, and contribute to a consistent national standard. The alignment with universal design principles also strengthens community confidence in the accessibility of emerging transport technologies.

Additionally, our experience reinforces the need for federal and state governments to adopt a nationally consistent, scalable EV accessibility standard based on NRMA and Get Skilled Access's recommendations for inclusive, practical infrastructure delivery. Ultimately, prioritising inclusive design promotes longterm resilience, usability, and policy coherence across the EV charging network.



Policy recommendations

1. Establish a national standard for accessible EV charging bays

Federal and state governments must adopt a nationally consistent, scalable EV accessibility standard to ensure inclusive and practical infrastructure delivery across all environments.

2. Prioritise accessible, practical and scalable designs in funding programs

Governments should approve accessible, scalable EV designs that fit existing car parks to provide as many accessible bays across Australia, thereby speeding up the rollout, reducing outset costs, and improving access for people with disability.

3. Integrate accessibility requirements into national EV Strategies and urban planning frameworks

Ensure accessibility provisions are embedded into all EV rollout strategies, regional transport plans, zoning regulations, and infrastructure planning schemes. This should apply to site selection, permit approvals, and network expansion modelling, to promote consistency across public and private installations.

4. Adopting practical EV bay standards for accessibility

Support NRMA's proposed national EV charging standard, which balances accessibility with practicality. These size bays will offer ideal usability for all users with mobility needs, while remaining feasible to implement across a wide range of existing and future sites. This approach avoids delays caused by over-engineering and ensures timely, inclusive access to charging infrastructure.

5. Auditing existing bays for accessibility-compliant upgrades

To support users and long-term inclusion goals, conduct an audit of existing EV charging bays to identify feasible sites for government-funded upgrades to align with the recommended accessibility standard proposed by the NRMA and GSA.

Case study: Accessible EV charging at Liverpool Catholic Club

The electric vehicle (EV) charging industry currently lacks formal standards for accessibility. At the NRMA, we are committed to addressing this gap by developing inclusive infrastructure that ensures people with disabilities are not left behind in the transition to electric mobility. A key part of this commitment is the rollout of accessible EV charging bays designed to remove barriers and provide a dignified, user-friendly experience for all.

As part of our efforts, we met with Bianca from Get Skilled Access (GSA), an organisation that champions accessibility and inclusion. Bianca's lived experience and professional insights helped us better understand the real-world challenges faced by people with disabilities when accessing EV infrastructure. This case study captures her experience at the Liverpool Catholic Club, one of NRMA's All Accessible EV charging sites, and highlights the broader impact of inclusive design.

Bianca had been considering purchasing an EV, drawn by its environmental and economic benefits. However, her local area lacked EV charging stations with sufficient space and accessibility features. As someone who requires additional room for mobility, she found existing infrastructure inadequate and ultimately decided against purchasing an EV.

"I wasn't able to purchase an EV because our environments just didn't support that for someone who required a little bit of extra space for accessibility."

Bianca later participated in a trial at the Liverpool Catholic Club charging site. She found the experience surprisingly seamless, noting the generous space and ease of movement around the vehicle.

"Not only was the space great for me, but there was heaps of space for me to get out of my car and go around to the other side to plug the charger in."

While initially concerned about the weight of the charging cable, Bianca was reassured to find it comparable to a standard petrol bowser. The experience gave her newfound confidence in EV ownership and highlighted the broader benefits of universal design.

"You're setting a new standard, which is really exciting because at the moment EV charging stations just kind of get put anywhere there's an extra car park space."

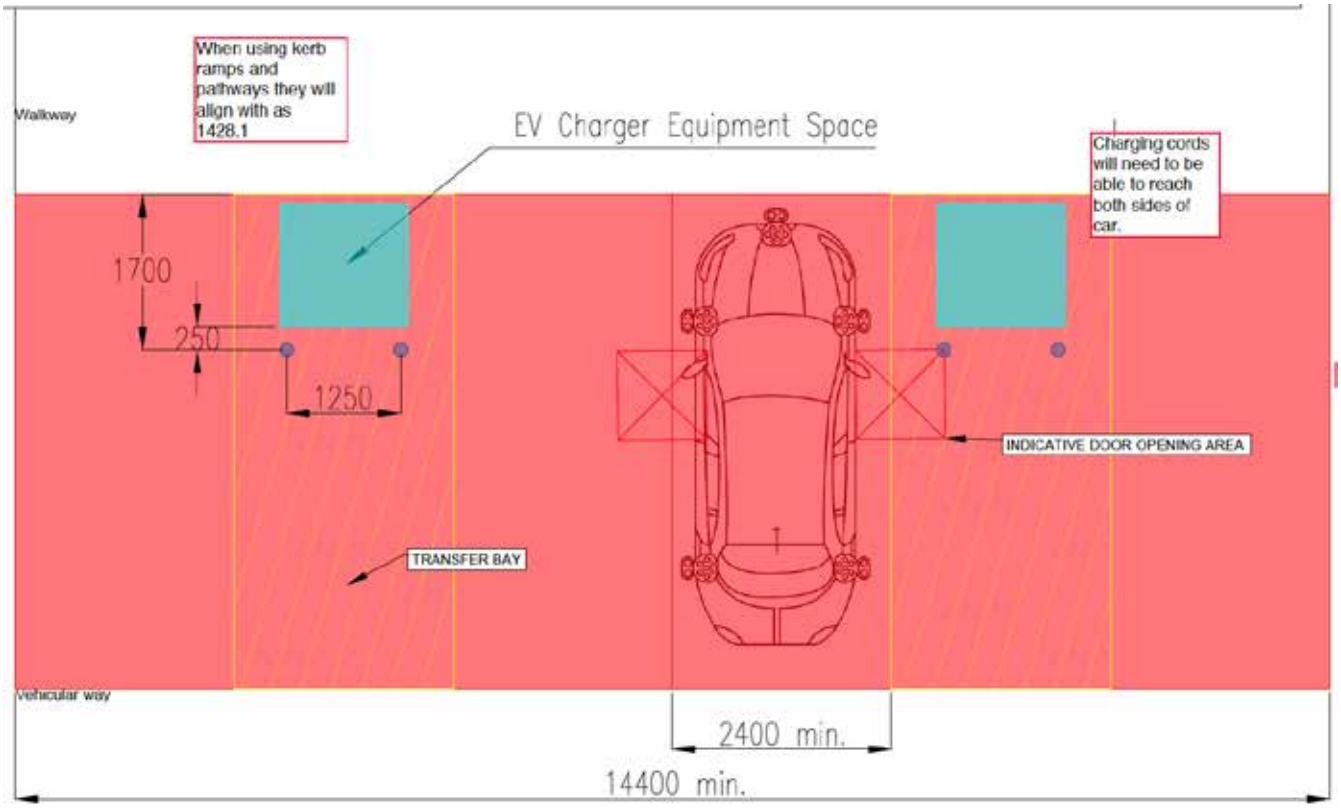
By prioritising accessibility, the NRMA is not only supporting individuals with disabilities but also enhancing usability for the wider community. As EV adoption grows, inclusive infrastructure will be essential to ensuring equitable access for all Australians.

"When I do go to purchase my next vehicle, I'll have that confidence in being able to buy an EV with these new charging stations."

Annexures

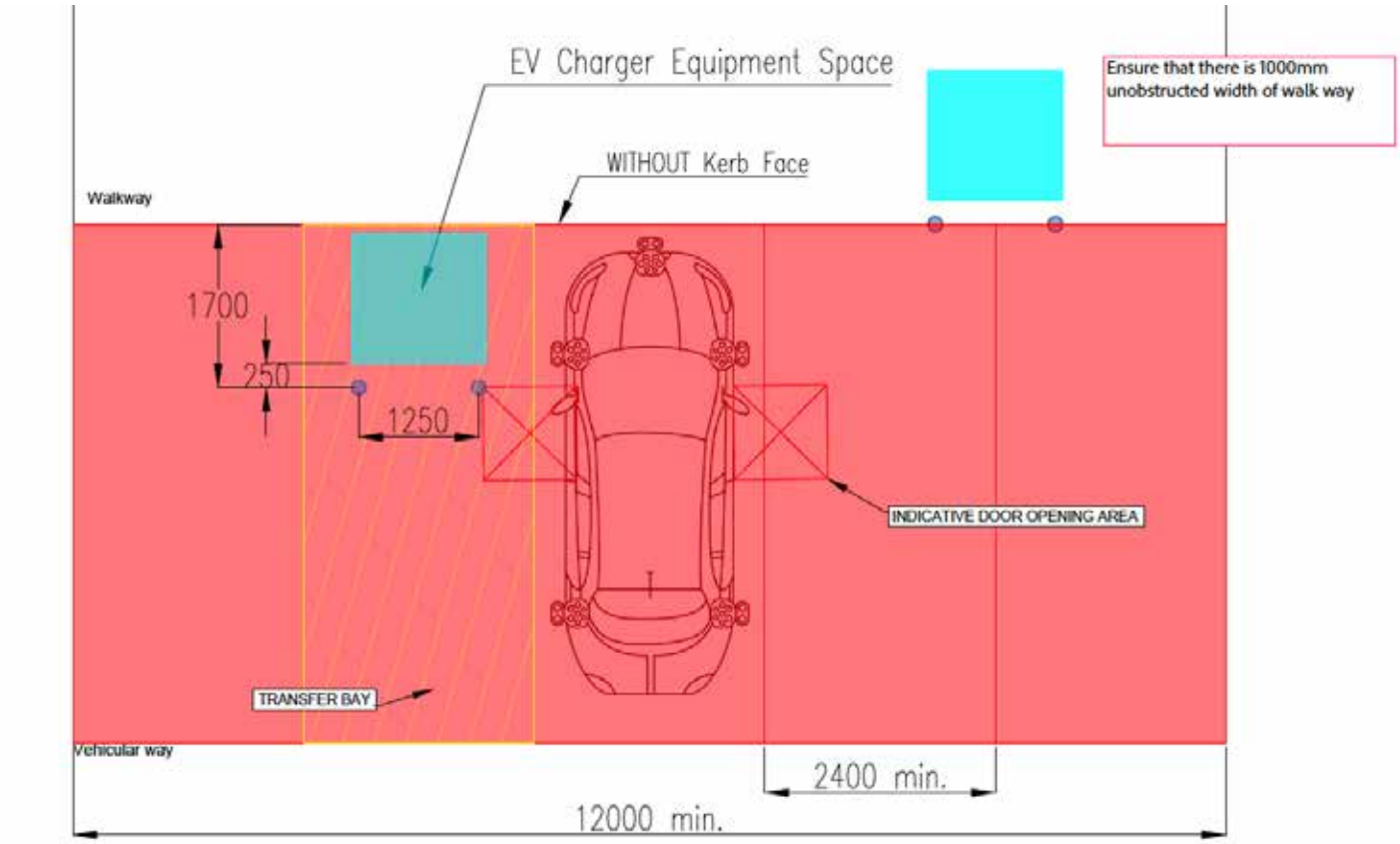
Key considerations for Design Option A

Design Option A is the recommended approach to achieve the greatest access for people with disability or access requirements as it has the greatest alignment with AS 2890.6 - 2:2022 minimum requirements for the provision of off-street parking facilities for people with disability or access requirements.



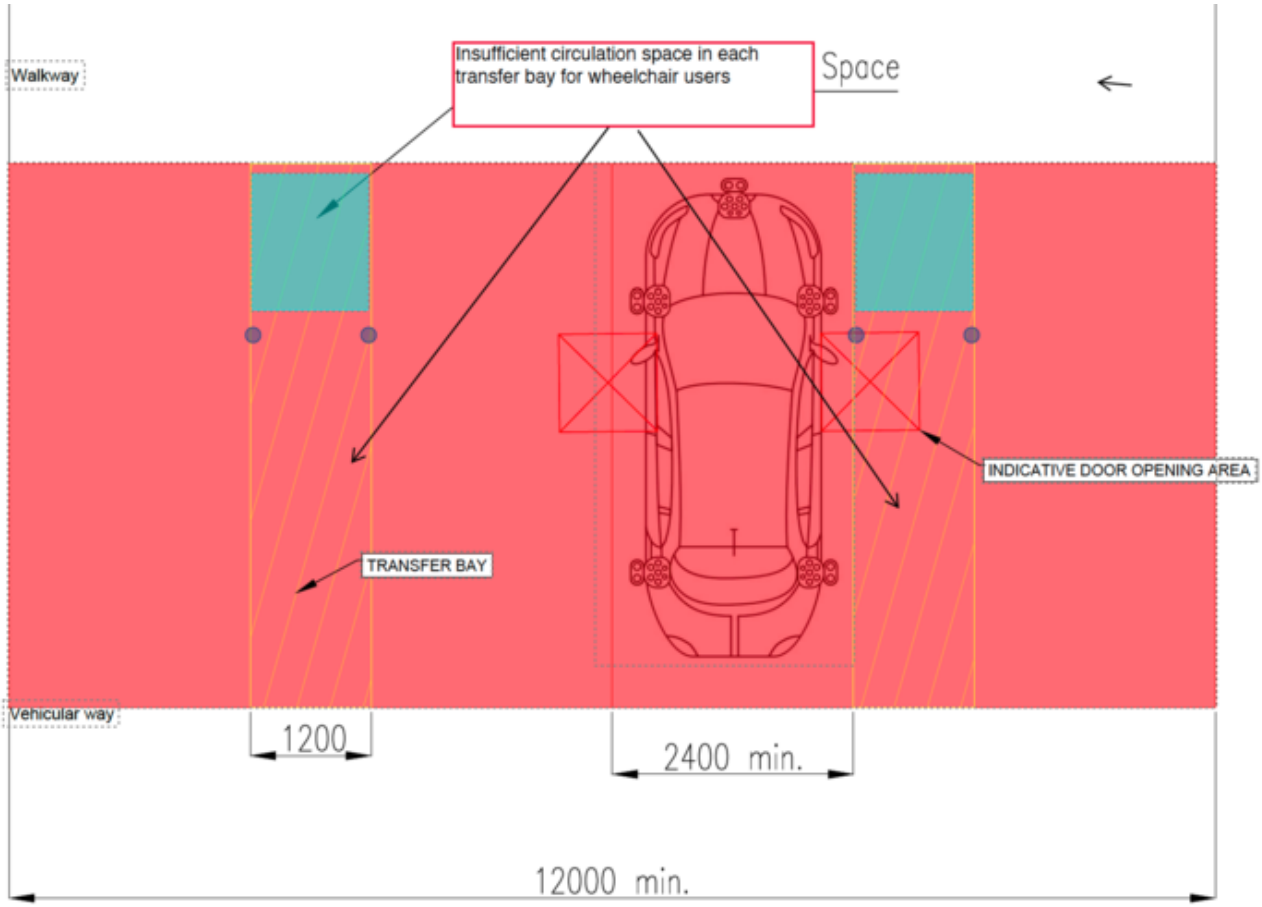
Key Considerations for Design Option B

Where Design Option A cannot be used, GSA recommends that Design Option B is implemented. Option B still allows for a 1500mm x 1500mm wheelchair circulation area at the transfer bay. Option B does present a barrier with the secondary charging station being placed on the walkway. Ensure that there is a 1000mm unobstructed width on the walkway.



Key Considerations for Design Option C

Design Option C provides multiple accessible charging options. However, the transfer bays do not offer sufficient circulation space of 1500mm x 1500mm for wheelchair users to access the charging station, which makes it an impractical choice.



Signage recommendations

GSA recommends an adaptation from the US Access Board: Design Recommendations for Accessible Electric Vehicle Charging Stations, November 2022) "use last" model.

The "use last" model would require more EV charging spaces be designed with accessible mobility features but would not require that the charging spaces be reserved exclusively for people with disability Australian Disability Parking Permit.

Examples of "use last" signage from US Access Board: Design Recommendations for Accessible Electric Vehicle Charging Stations, November 2022.

The last use signage can be extended to not only people with disability but also aging population, pram users. This can be communicated through iconography.