

THOMAS DIXON CENTRE

Thomas Dixon Centre WELL Feature Guide

1. Impact of Built Environment on Health and Wellbeing

Overview

The built environment refers to the human-made surroundings where people live, work and recreate. It includes buildings and parks as well as supporting infrastructure such as transport, water and energy networks (Coleman 2017).

Under the rapid urbanization and economic development of the last 70 years, the built environments and their daily use have been significantly changing. It is said that we now spend over 90% of our time indoors. The awareness of the connection between human health and both, natural and built environments, is increasing. There is also strong evidence demonstrating that the built environment notably affects individuals' physical and mental health wellbeing.

The concept of health itself has gradually evolved from the absence of disease into comprehensive good physical, social and psychological conditions. Since the built environment has a key role to play in supporting human health as part of everyday living, its thoughtful planning and optimization will provide a healthy work environment and influence the resident's healthy lifestyle choices.

2. International WELL Building Standard

Overview

International WELL Building Standard (WELL) is a world-renowned, standard-setting, innovative building, and operational model developed over 10 years and backed by the latest scientific research. WELL is leading a global movement to elevate human health and comfort to the forefront of building practices and reinvent buildings that are not only better for the planet, but for the people.

WELL is based on a thorough review, of the existing research on the effects of spaces on individuals and has been advanced through scientific and technical reviews. It identifies over 100 rigorous, performance-based metrics for design strategies, operational protocols, and company-wide policies, implemented from the early stages of the built and verified by a third party.

To summarize, The International WELL Building Standard is founded on the understanding that facets of our environment interact with personal, genetic, and behavioural factors to shape overall health and wellbeing. WELL is designed to comprehensively cover the various needs of the occupants, ensuring a wholesome environment to thrive.

WELL Concepts Overview

The WELL Building Standard is based on ten key concepts, covering different areas, which affect people's overall wellness. They are Air, Water, Nourishment, Light, Movement, Thermal Comfort, Sound, Materials, Mind and Community.

Each of them lists multiple features, which intend to address specific aspects of the occupant's health, comfort, and knowledge. Over 100, features provide specific guidelines and thresholds for following and upkeeping the WELL requirements.

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3. International WELL Building Standard at Thomas Dixon Centre

WELL Platinum Rating

Health and wellbeing are key elements at the heart of Queensland Ballet's culture. As part of the redevelopment of our home at the Thomas Dixon Centre, we have become the first arts organisation in the world to achieve the International WELL Building Platinum Certification, reflecting the highest standard in building design and operations, aimed at optimising human health and performance.

Why WELL?

- Queensland Ballet believes that people are the company's greatest asset, and as result, human health and wellness are the top priority. Choosing to aim for the highest, Platinum rating of the International WELL Building Standard is a practical way of implementing the people-first value into the daily lives of all Thomas Dixon Centre occupants and visitors.
- WELL provides practical solutions to fostering sustainability and cultivating a conscious approach to long-term health and wellbeing.
- Building and operating according to WELL regulations is an investment, which in return attracts top talent, supports staff retention, and raises productivity and engagement among its occupants.
- WELL helps improve ESG performance.

4. Promotion of the Health-Oriented Mission at the Thomas Dixon Centre

The Thomas Dixon Centre building improves comfort, drives better choices and generally enhances, not compromises, the health and wellness of its residents and visitors. The operations within Thomas Dixon Centre comprise overarching benefits for all who work and visit the building. This is achieved through both the level and quality of maintenance, as well as the providing specific health and wellness initiatives and programs for the specialised occupants of the building. We believe that promoting health and wellness enhances the happiness, productivity, general health, creativity, engagement and collaboration between all occupants and stakeholders involved in the Thomas Dixon Centre, leading to enriched lives of all those who visit or work here.

A. Our specific Objectives for health promotion are:

- Providing evidence-based health information relevant to the occupants of the Thomas Dixon Centre, to improve the overall health of the workforce, productivity, employee retention and wellness, and reduce disease burden, illness and absenteeism.
- Promoting healthy behaviours which enhance health and wellness.
- Encouraging safe practices at work, to protect occupants and prevent accidents, injuries and health issues where possible.
- Providing opportunities for occupants to engage in regular movement and exercise to support their health and wellbeing.
- Providing an environment conducive to healthy engagement at work and between people.
- Supporting the specific health needs of different occupant groups working within the Thomas Dixon Centre.
- Promoting a culture within the Thomas Dixon Centre of consideration of health and wellbeing factors, in the design and implementation of maintenance, programs, events and use of the building.

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B. Occupant health and organisational objectives.

Queensland Ballet is the primary occupant organisation within the Thomas Dixon Centre. Queensland Ballet's three strategic pillars are:

- 1) Artistic
- 2) Academy
- 3) Health and Community

Queensland Ballet has an unwavering commitment to sustainable careers and livelihoods for artists and arts workers, and our home at the Thomas Dixon Centre is an important part of supporting the work, health and wellness of our employees, occupants, and visitors. The Thomas Dixon Centre assists us to enrich lives through our work in the performing arts, build meaning and cohesion through our community and arts communities we work with and contribute to the healthy daily lives of all who enter the building. Being WELL allows us to work to our best and be at our peak, and therefore achieve our objectives across all the diverse teams within Queensland Ballet.

C & D. Building site selection/conditions and the ten WELL concepts.

The Thomas Dixon Centre opened in 1908, originally commissioned as a shoe factory by Thomas Dixon and designed by architect Richard Gailey. It was redeveloped by subsequent owners, the Queensland Government, in 1991 and became home to Queensland Ballet. The Queensland Ballet has a long artistic history in the Thomas Dixon Centre, which brings meaning and legacy to the building and the site. In 2022, the Thomas Dixon Centre started a new life again as an artistic and community destination, after an ambitious restoration which protects the heritage elements and meaning of the building to the people who work and visit there. The building redevelopment was designed collaboratively as a centre conducive to performing arts and community engagement, whilst retaining the original building at its heart.

The multi-storey building features an interplay of heritage elements and contemporary architecture. The iconic red brick façade has been preserved, with nods to this rare example of Georgian revival-style architecture celebrated throughout. The renovation of the original building and the adjoining new additional building have been designed to improve aspects of occupant's experience, specifically - **natural Light** throughout the building, access to the outdoors environment and nature, **fresh Air** to all spaces (not recycled air), filtered **Water** to all areas, **Thermal regulation** through the seasons, and prioritising the health and wellness of all occupants.

For our Queensland Ballet dancers, we are committed to providing world-leading medical facilities and care for injury prevention, treatment and recovery, and mental wellbeing. Our new Wellness Suite offers outstanding facilities including physiotherapy treatment areas, fully equipped gym, massage zone, medical consultancy rooms, Pilates space and a cold pool for injury management and muscle recovery (**Movement**). Our dancers can also now enjoy using more dance studios, with new sprung floors (to control landing impact on the body from repetitive jumps), expanded dressing rooms, lounge breakout zones, the new in-house Talbot Theatre, and outdoor lunch terrace and garden spaces.

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Other Company staff needs have been considered also, including expanded space for Costume, Production, Artistic and Business teams, storage spaces, meeting areas, staff kitchen and lunch facilities, natural outdoor spaces, car and bike parking on site and end of trip facilities. All staff are offered free access to our Community Dance classes, which are held daily and, in the evenings, covering many dance and exercise genres (encouraging **Movement**).

Healthy eating practices are encouraged through occupant education via newsletters, posters, educational workshops, and the planned café serving nutritious meals and snacks (opening shortly) (**Nourishment**). Dancers have access to individual consultations with our Sports Dietitian, at no cost to them, should they have concerns or wish to improve their nutrition for health and performance. The in-house Performance Health team also facilitates health screening programs for our dancers at the start of each year, for prevention of injury and health problems wherever possible.

The Thomas Dixon Centre WELL digital library and staff newsletter regularly publishes articles on tackling mental health concerns such as stress, anxiety, workplace conflicts and common mental health concerns, with helpful resources. Queensland Ballet provides its employees with counselling via our EAP provider, which staff can access at no cost to them if needed (**Mind**). Dancers are specifically provided with workshops on topics relevant to them (eg. performance anxiety, growth mindset, injury adjustment strategies and career transition planning) from our consultant Sports Psychologist (**Mind**).

The dance community and general public are welcomed into the Thomas Dixon Centre by its very design, with the open, airy spaces of the foyer and reception, the catwalk across the upper-level foyer between dance studios, and the views into the behind-the-scenes work areas of the company (costume workshop, wellness suite and dance studios). The dedicated Community Studio sits at the entrance to the building, allowing easy access for Community group classes, patrons and participants with mobility issues and showcasing the importance of our community classes in the daily life of the building (**Community**).

The Thomas Dixon Centre has been designed with great care to maximize the acoustic comfort of its occupants (**Sound**).

Dedicated sound zones have been created to support the need for areas intended for:

- Social interactions and recreation, such as kitchens, dining areas, gardens, gym, and dancer's lounge.
- Focused work, rest and privacy, such as quiet rooms and zen room.
- Collaboration or presentation, such as meeting rooms of various capacities.

To mitigate the background noise in the office spaces, sound barriers, in the form of partition walls have been fitted. Acoustic comfort across the entire building has been addressed with the installation of sound-absorbing finishings and materials, to minimize sound reverberation time.

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All precautions have been taken to ensure the abatement and further restriction of the use of hazardous **Materials** such as asbestos, lead, mercury and PBC during the redevelopment and later operations of the Thomas Dixon Centre. Further to that, additional measures have been undertaken to guarantee a safe environment for all occupants and visitors:

- Limitation of other hazardous materials in building products, furnishings and furniture and electrical components.
- A waste management plan has been created to ensure the safe handling of batteries, pesticides, and equipment that might contain mercury.
- Pesticide use has been significantly reduced to ones ranked as least hazardous.
- Use of safe cleaning products and cleaning practices.

F. Integrating operations and maintenance plans for facilities managers and personnel managing policy requirements related to health and well-being.

Queensland Ballet has appointed a full-time role dedicated to managing the requirements of the WELL standard within the Thomas Dixon Centre. This person holds regular meetings with the Head of Workplace Health and Safety, Director of Health and Community, Head of Human Resources and Head of Facilities to ensure all operations are up to date and run accordingly to the WELL regulations. The WELL regulations have been the base to creating new policies, procedures, and maintenance plans with the Thomas Dixon centre currently operates under.

Daily operations of the facilities management team are designed to maintain the high standards of the Thomas Dixon Centre wellness goals, ensure a safe and healthy environment, and set new industry standards for building upkeep. Maintenance is done in a scheduled and timely manner and in accordance with the guidelines of manufacturers of all appliances on-site. These practices are supported by policies and regulations for consistency in care for the Thomas Dixon Centre and its occupants.

With wellness at its core, the new Thomas Dixon Centre will continue to inspire with creativity, innovation and sustainability.

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5. Implementation of WELL at Thomas Dixon Centre

WELL Implementation Overview

International WELL Building Standard provides a holistic approach and specific guidelines to ensuring the wellbeing of people on site from the very beginning of the build stage, through to the daily operations of Thomas Dixon Centre. The Standard encompasses strict rules of architectural design, conditions of the worksite during build, regular quality checks, operational standards, and company-wide HR policies.

The Thomas Dixon Centre has been designed to improve comfort, drive better choices and generally enhance, not compromise, the health and wellness of our residents and visitors. This vision comprises overarching benefits for all who work and visit the building, as well as specific health and wellness initiatives and programs for the specialised occupants of the building. We believe that promoting health and wellness enhances the happiness, productivity, general health, creativity, engagement and collaboration between all occupants and stakeholders involved in the Thomas Dixon Centre, leading to enriched lives of all those who visit or work here.

Features pursued at Thomas Dixon Centre

AIR

Through the Air concept, we aim to ensure high levels of indoor air quality and minimise human exposure to harmful contaminants, in order to maximize benefits to productivity, wellbeing and general health.

Certification elements:

- Enhanced Air Quality
- Smoke-free Environment
- Enhanced Ventilation Effectiveness
- Construction Pollution Management
- Air Quality Monitoring and Awareness
- Combustion Minimization
- Fine Air Filtration
- Microbe and Mould Control

Benefits to the occupants:

- Reduction of symptoms caused by exposure to air pollutants, such as headaches, dry throat, eye irritation, runny nose and asthma attacks.
- Lowered risk of respiratory and cardiovascular diseases.
- Lack of sick building syndrome.
- Limitation of smoke pollution.

WATER

Through the Water concept, we aim to increase the rate of adequate hydration in building users and reduce health risks due to contaminated water and excessive moisture within buildings through better awareness and maintenance of water quality and management.

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Certification elements:

- Enhanced Water Quality
- Water Contaminants Control
- Legionella Control
- Water Quality Consistency
- Drinking Water Promotion
- Moisture Management
- Handwashing Support

Benefits to the occupants:

- High water quality.
- No threats to the digestion and immune systems.
- Easy access to high-quality drinking water.
- Limitation of places that harbour germs and reduction of infectious disease transmission.

NOURISHMENT

Through the Nourishment concept, we support healthy eating patterns by increasing access to healthier food and beverage choices, limiting access to highly processed foods and ingredients, and designing environments that nudge individuals toward healthier choices.

Certification elements:

- Fruit and Vegetable Availability
- Nutritional Transparency
- Healthy Food Advertising
- Healthy Portion Sizes Promotion
- Nutrition Education
- Mindful Eating
- Special Diets Accommodation
- Local Food Environment

Benefits to the occupants:

- Promotion of healthy eating habits.
- Limitation of highly processed food and beverages.
- Access to healthy food.
- Accommodating a variety of diet requirements.
- Lowered risk of diet-related health problems.

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LIGHT

Through the Light concept, we aim to provide a lighting environment that reduces circadian phase disruption, improves sleep quality and positively impacts mood and productivity.

Certification elements:

- Light Exposure and Education
- Visual Light Design and Balance
- Circadian Lighting Design
- Glare Control
- Enhanced Daylight Access
- Electric Light Quality
- Occupant Control of Lighting Environments

Benefits to the occupants:

- Circadian rhythm support
- Visual comfort
- Enhanced focus
- Improvement of overall health and wellbeing

MOVEMENT

Through the Movement concept, we aim to promote movement, foster physical activity, active living and discourage sedentary behaviour by creating and enhancing physical activity opportunities through Thomas Dixon Centre.

Certification elements:

- Active Building and Communities
- Visual and Physical Ergonomics
- Movement Network and Circulation
- Active Commuter and Occupant Support
- Site Planning and Selection
- Physical Activity Opportunities
- Active Furnishings
- Physical Activity Spaces and Equipment
- Exterior Active Design

Benefits to the occupants:

- Active transport facilities
- Promotion of physical activity within the workplace
- Discouragement of sedentary behaviour
- Access to free fitness programs
- Decreased likelihood of health outcomes including obesity, type 2 diabetes, and cardiovascular risks.

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THERMAL COMFORT

Through the Thermal Comfort concept, we aim to address enhance individual thermal comfort and support human health, well-being and productivity.

Certification elements:

- Thermal Performance
- Individual Thermal Control
- Humidity Control

Benefits to the occupants:

- Adjustable thermal environment
- Increased comfort
- Decreased symptoms associated with sick building syndrome.

SOUND

Through the Sound concept, we aim to provide acoustical comfort for the purpose of improving occupants' general health and well-being.

Certification elements:

- Sound Mapping
- Maximum Noise Levels
- Sound Barriers
- Sound Absorption

Benefits to the occupants:

- Acoustical comfort
- Designated spaces for social interactions, focused work and collaboration.
- Focus support.

MATERIALS

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Through the Materials concept, we aim to reduce the risk of exposure to environmental contamination and promote the choice of safe ingredients.

Certification elements:

- Fundamental Material Precautions
- Hazardous Material Abatement
- Outdoor Structures
- Waste Management
- In-place management
- Site Remediation
- Pesticides Use
- Hazardous Material Reduction
- Cleaning Products and Protocols

Benefits to the occupants:

- Advancing health through the limitation of exposure to harmful chemicals and materials.
- Promotion of safe ingredients.
- Mitigation of environmental contamination.

MIND

Through the Mind concept, we aim to implement design, policy and programmatic strategies that support cognitive and emotional health through a variety of prevention and treatment efforts.

Certification elements:

- Mental health Promotion
- Enhanced Access to Nature
- Mental Health Support
- Mental Health Education
- Stress Support
- Restorative Opportunities
- Restorative Spaces and Programming
- Focus Support

Benefits to the occupants:

- Access to programs supporting mental wellbeing and overall health.
- Increased focus and productivity.
- Promotion of healthy lifestyle choices.
- Lessened irritability and stress.

COMMUNITY

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Through the Community concept, we aim to implement strategies that address public health issues, focusing on the social components. These drive and shape health and form built spaces, that truly create a foundation for equitable, inclusive and healthy environments.

Certification elements:

- Health and Wellness Awareness
- Integrative Design
- Occupant Surveying
- Community Immunity
- New Parent Support
- New Mother Support
- Accessibility and Universal Design
- Bathroom Accommodations
- Emergency Preparedness
- Community Access and Engagement

Benefits to the occupants:

- Inclusive and accessible environment
- Promotion of health and equitable spaces and employment conditions
- Building Health and Wellbeing awareness
- Enhanced wellbeing and health support in a built environment