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To Christchurch City Council

Please find attached DPA’s submission on Te Kaha Stadium Opinion Survey

Disabled Persons Assembly NZ

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Introducing Disabled Persons Assembly NZ

Disabled Persons Assembly NZ (DPA) is a pan-impairment disabled person’s organisation that works to realise an equitable society, where all disabled people of all impairment types and including women, Māori, Pasifika, young people are able to direct their own lives. DPA works to improve social indicators for disabled people and for disabled people be recognised as valued members of society. DPA and its members work with the wider disability community, other DPOs, government agencies, service providers, international disability organisations, and the public by:

* telling our stories and identifying systemic barriers
* developing and advocating for solutions
* innovation and good practice

## United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

DPA was influential in creating the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), a foundational document for disabled people which New Zealand has signed and ratified, confirming that disabled people must have the same human rights as everyone else1. All state bodies in New Zealand, including local and regional government, have a responsibility to uphold the principles and articles of this convention. There are a number of UNCRPD articles pertinent to this submission, including:

### Article 9 – Accessibility

“States Parties shall take appropriate measures to ensure persons with disabilities access, on an equal basis with others, to the physical environment, to transportation, to information and communications.”

New Zealand Disability Strategy 2016-2026

Since ratifying the UNCRPD, the New Zealand Government has established a Disability Strategy to guide the work of government agencies on disability issues. The vision is that New Zealand be a non-disabling society, where disabled people have equal opportunity to achieve their goals and aspirations, and that all of New Zealand works together to make this happen5. It identifies eight outcome areas contributing to achieving this vision, including:

### Outcome 5 – Accessibility

“We access all places, services and information with ease and dignity.”

# The submission

DPA is providing this brief submission for the benefit of Christchurch City Council in its deliberations on the future of the Te Kaha Stadium project.

**DPA takes no position on any of the three options**

We wish to stress that we will not be taking any position on Te Kaha in terms of the options outlined in the consultation survey. This is due to our local membership and disabled people who are also not members having a variety of views on this subject.

**DPA welcomed the opportunity to be involved in early consultations around access**

However, DPA has welcomed the opportunity, through our local Kaituitui, to be involved in early consultations around Te Kaha’s accessibility as part of the initial design process. If Council chooses to continue with the project, it is vital that we continue be involved alongside other disabled people’s organisations in the next phase of planning around this.

**Key factors for CCC to keep in mind around its decision**

We seek to ask that Council, irrespective of whatever decision it makes, considers the following factors:

1. DPA is aware that the Forsyth Barr Stadium, Aotearoa’s first and (so far) only covered stadium in Dunedin, experienced significant cost blow outs during its construction in the order of approximately $200 million. This had an impact on the finances of the Dunedin City Council which saw a significant surge in Council debt levels and, consequently, a period of austerity. This resulted in, amongst other things, deferred maintenance of infrastructure, including to pedestrian infrastructure such as footpaths which are relied on by many disabled people.[[1]](#footnote-2) Furthermore, this austerity resulted in Dunedin Council services facing spending constraints for several years and this stretched to even public library services, another resource that many disabled and other socially marginalised groups rely on for their information, entertainment and socialisation.[[2]](#footnote-3)
2. Should Council seek to green light the stadium project by spending the extra $150 million envisaged, it must ensure that the accessibility of the venue is based on universal design standards and that it is internationally world-class in the provision of accessibility for everyone, including disabled people.
3. Moreover, should the project go ahead, Hopai Card holders and, indeed, all Community Services and Gold Card holders should be afforded high levels of discounts for all ticket entry sporting and concert events held at the venue. This will ensure that disabled people, older people and other disadvantaged members of the community are able to enjoy events at Te Kaha without having to help pay the additional costs of building the facility through paying high ticket prices which has been the case for our Dunedin members and other disabled people who have been fortunate enough to attend events at Forsyth Barr.

The Disabled Person’s Assembly recommends:

* **Recommendation 1:** That should Council proceed with the stadium project by spending the extra $150 million envisaged, it must ensure that the accessibility of the venue is based on universal design standards and that it is internationally world-class in the provision of accessibility for everyone, including disabled people.
* **Recommendation 2:** That if Te Kaha is constructed, in whatever configuration it ends up in, that Hopai Card holders and, all Community Services and Gold Card holders are afforded high levels of discounts for ticket entry to all sporting and concert events held at the venue.

1. Williams, D. (2021, August 13). *The Danger of stadium costs, a Dunedin study.* Retrieved from <https://www.newsroom.co.nz/the-danger-of-stadium-costs-a-dunedin-study> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Elder, V. (2015, May 19). *Proposed library cut backs shelved.* Retrieved from <https://www.odt.co.nz/news/dunedin/proposed-library-cutbacks-shelved> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)