November 2024

**To Wellington City Council**

Please find attached our submission on the Te Ngākau Precinct Development Plan Consultation

For any further inquiries, please contact:

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**Introducing Disabled Persons Assembly NZ**

**We work on systemic change for the equity of disabled people**

Disabled Persons Assembly NZ (DPA) is a not-for-profit pan-impairment Disabled People’s Organisation run by and for disabled people.

**We recognise:**

* Māori as Tangata Whenua and [Te Tiriti o Waitangi](https://www.archives.govt.nz/discover-our-stories/the-treaty-of-waitangi) as the founding document of Aotearoa New Zealand;
* disabled people as experts on their own lives;
* the [Social Model of Disability](https://www.odi.govt.nz/guidance-and-resources/guidance-for-policy-makes/) as the guiding principle for interpreting disability and impairment;
* the [United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities.html) as the basis for disabled people’s relationship with the State;
* the [New Zealand Disability Strategy](https://www.odi.govt.nz/nz-disability-strategy/) as Government agencies’ guide on disability issues; and
* the [Enabling Good Lives Principles](https://www.enablinggoodlives.co.nz/about-egl/egl-approach/principles/), [Whāia Te Ao Mārama: Māori Disability Action Plan](https://www.health.govt.nz/publication/whaia-te-ao-marama-2018-2022-maori-disability-action-plan), and [Faiva Ora: National Pasifika Disability Disability Plan](https://www.moh.govt.nz/notebook/nbbooks.nsf/0/5E544A3A23BEAECDCC2580FE007F7518/%24file/faiva-ora-2016-2021-national-pasifika-disability-plan-feb17.pdf) as avenues to disabled people gaining greater choice and control over their lives and supports.

**We drive systemic change through:**

**Rangatiratanga / Leadership**: reflecting the collective voice of disabled people, locally, nationally and internationally.

**Pārongo me te tohutohu / Information and advice**: informing and advising on policies impacting on the lives of disabled people.

**Kōkiri / Advocacy**: supporting disabled people to have a voice, including a collective voice, in society.

**Aroturuki / Monitoring**: monitoring and giving feedback on existing laws, policies and practices about and relevant to disabled people.

# The Submission

DPA welcomes the opportunity to engage with the Wellington City Council (WCC) on the Te Ngākau Precinct Development Plan consultation.

DPA welcomes the precinct development project and discussions around what should become of the City to Sea Bridge.

**We acknowledge the WCC’s desire to make the Te Ngākau Precinct accessible for everyone, including disabled and non-disabled people. We recommend that the precinct has Universal Design (UD) standards incorporated into its final design and construction.[[1]](#footnote-2)**

**We also recommend that the space is developed according to the principles of being SOS (safe, obvious and step-free) enabling inclusive accessibility for everyone.[[2]](#footnote-3)**

DPA shares the vision of the Central City Residents Association and other stakeholders that the precinct is ideal for the creation of a genuinely accessible green space in the heart of the city

In this submission, we answer the most relevant questions contained in the consultation document around what we would like to see happen.

We would like to point out to the consultation documents for this project were inaccessible to some of our disabled members who wished to comment, including blind and Deafblind people. It’s important to ensure accessibility in your consultations so that everyone can feedback on the issues that are important for them.

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| **Recommendation 1:** that the precinct has Universal Design (UD) standards incorporated into its final design and construction. |

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| **Recommendation 2:** that the precinct is developed according to the principles of being SOS (safe, obvious and step-free) supporting accessibility for everyone. |

## A.) City to Sea Bridge

## Q.1) What is our preferred City to Sea Bridge Scenario?

DPA members who commented on this submission have said that the existing City to Sea Bridge has not fully met accessibility requirements, with overly steep slopes and many steps.

There is a need for the precinct to be connected to the harbour in a way which is accessible for everyone.

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| Recommendation 3: that the precinct is connected to the harbour in an accessible way. |

## Q.2) If people want a new bridge, there are many things to think about when designing it. Whether you support building a bridge or not, we want to know what the most important things to consider are:

## Q.3) Please tell us why you chose those areas?

Any new bridge must be accessible in terms of incorporating universal design principles and be safe and step-free.

Universal design means that a new bridge should be at a minimum step free to enable easy access for all users.

It should incorporate other features such as tactile strips for blind and low vision people to easily navigate and adequate lighting to guide safe crossings at night.

We also agree that viewing areas should be created and places added for people to sit and gather (provided these do not impede access for other pedestrians). This is an important consideration for disabled people who may have energy and/or mobility issues requiring spaces for frequent rest.

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| **Recommendation 4:** thatany new bridge should be step free. |

## B.) Te Ngākau Draft Precinct Development Plan

## Q.1) What potential scenarios do we favour for the precinct?

## Q.2) Please tell us why you chose those areas?

DPA favours the option of both keeping and increasing the number of green spaces, which are available within the precinct.

All green spaces must be accessible for all people, including disabled people and be designed according to UD principles.

This includes, for example, that signage about any plants and other features include a QR code that links to the information in accessible formats such as NZ Sign Language, large print, Braille and audio formats to enable everyone to enjoy and learn more about these spaces.

Any pathways through these spaces must be of sufficient width to enable everyone to safely navigate and use them including people with mobility impairments and blind and low vision people.

Again, we recommend that adequate lighting is very important to ensure safety and accessibility for all users after dark.

Another aspect is the need for sufficient shelter to be available in Civic Square to shelter from the weather if needed.

As outlined above with respect to the bridge, there needs to be sufficient seating available throughout the precinct to enable all users, particularly disabled people, to have space for shelter, rest and socialisation.

Mobility parking is another important consideration for the precinct.

Disabled people need to have easy access to mobility parks in that they should be placed in and around the precinct.

According to our members, when the Wellington Public Library was still open, there were plenty of accessible parking spaces through which to reach the precinct but given that this area remains closed, this has become more difficult.

The updating of the precinct presents the perfect opportunity to create more parking spaces, including mobility parking, for people who need it.

Accessible toilets and well signed ones at that are needed within the precinct. Given that our population is growing and ageing, it would be a good time to invest in accessible lavatories in highly utilised public spaces like Te Ngākau.

Lastly, the Jack Ilott Green needs to be made more fully accessible for everyone, including disabled people.

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| **Recommendation 5:** that green spaces must be accessible for all people, including disabled people and designed according to UD principles. |

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| **Recommendation 6:** that signage about any plants and other features include a QR code that links to the information in accessible formats such as NZ Sign Language, large print, Braille and audio formats. |
| **Recommendation 7:** that allpathways through these spaces must be of sufficient width to enable everyone to safely navigate. |
| **Recommendation 8:** that adequate lighting is provided to ensure both safety and accessibility for all users after dark. |
| **Recommendation 9:** that sufficient shelter is created in Civic Square. |
| **Recommendation 10:** that more mobility parking spaces are created within easy reach of the precinct. |
| **Recommendation 11:** that more accessible toilets are provided throughout the precinct. |

1. <https://www.branz.co.nz/universal-design/> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. <https://www.nzta.govt.nz/walking-cycling-and-public-transport/walking/walking-standards-and-guidelines/pedestrian-network-guidance/planning/pedestrian-planning-principles/principles-of-safe-obvious-and-step-free-sos/> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)