

June 2024

**To Wellington City Council**

Please find attached DPA’s submission on the Willowbank Playground Renewal

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/$file/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 this opportunity to give feedback to Wellington City Council (WCC) on the Willowbank Play Area renewal project.

DPA has recommended in past submissions on playgrounds to this and other councils around the country about the need for universal design concepts to be incorporated into all play area and playground designs to enable full inclusion for all playground users, including disabled children and adults.

DPA also recognises the Wellington City Council’s Play Spaces Policy (2017) as informing the design of all the city’s play spaces and playgrounds, including Willowbank.

## Positives of the play area from a disability perspective

DPA notes that this project has already been extensively consulted upon with the Tawa community.

At this point in the process, we are pleased that a draft plan has been developed which incorporates some important accessibility features. These include plans to install an accessible carousel, swing seats and talking boards which are good for disabled children and adults to access.

## Areas for improvement

DPA recommends that Council consults with the local disabled community and with disabled children and adults especially around what other inclusive equipment could be added into the play area including, for example, inclusive see saws.

DPA recommends that the picnic table which is currently placed on a grassy patch be transferred to sit on a smoother, more accessible surface that is easier for wheelchair and mobility device users to manoeuvre in and out of.

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| **Recommendation 1:** that Council consults with the local disabled community and with disabled children and adults especially around what other inclusive equipment could be added into the play area. |

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| **Recommendation 2:** that the picnic table which is currently placed on a grassy patch needs to be transferred to sit on a much smoother, more accessible surface. |