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To Christchurch City Council

Please find attached DPA’s submission on Avon Park Redevelopment

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:**

* **Leadership:** reflecting the collective voice of disabled people, locally, nationally and internationally.
* **Information and advice:** informing and advising on policies impacting on the lives of disabled people.
* **Advocacy:** supporting disabled people to have a voice, including a collective voice, in society.
* **Monitoring:** monitoring and giving feedback on existing laws, policies and practices about and relevant to disabled people.

# The Submission

DPA welcomes the proposal to re-develop Avon Park. We see much opportunity in this re-development, particularly in relation to improving accessibility for disabled people to this natural area.

We welcome the statement contained within the spatial principles that the plans are designed to ‘*give space to the river, for the benefit of all*.’

We have recommendations on how to make the re-development fully accessible and inclusive of everyone.

DPA also recommends that further engagement is undertaken with disabled people and our Disabled People’s Organisations [DPOs] around this re-development.

## General arrangement plan and Character zones

DPA supports the general principles behind the re-development plan layout in that it creates separate dedicated activity areas.

DPA supports the division of the park into different character zones as a means of ensuring that the dedicated activity areas can be suitably placed. We feel that this will alleviate the potential for conflict between different park users.

DPA welcomes the creation of the quiet reflective space as this would benefit neurodiverse people (including autistic people), people with psychosocial disability and anyone who wants to sit and quietly contemplate this beautiful area.

DPA recommends that the steppingstone element to access the reflective space be re-evaluated so that it incorporates accessibility features, particularly for people with physical impairments and older people who find it difficult to navigate steps.

DPA supports the creation of a rest and BBQ area under the oak trees. We recommend that all BBQ equipment (including the barbeques themselves) be accessible to disabled people and that any picnic tables have open spaces so that both wheelchair and mobility aid users can access them.

DPA also supports the creation of a viewing tower looking out to Kerr’s Reach Cut. Again, DPA recommends that any viewing tower have accessibility features incorporated into it either via a ramp or lift system to enable disabled and older people to access it.

DPA recommends that walking tracks and trails (including the City to Sea Pathway) be accessible to everyone, be of sufficient width to enable safe ease of navigation (especially on busier days) for people using wheelchairs and mobility aids and for people pushing children’s strollers.

DPA also recommends that there be tactile strips placed along any walkways and trails within the park to enable safe, accessible navigation by blind and low vision people.

DPA recommends that all car parks (including the proposed temporary parks) have sufficient mobility parking spaces available for disabled drivers and passengers to access the park from.

DPA also recommends that there be sufficient pick up and drop off points for people, including those who are coming to and from the park in mobility taxis/passenger vehicles which are commonly used by disabled people for transport.

DPA recommends that there be sufficient, accessible bus stops to enable people to access the park via public transport.

## Avon Park Play Elements

DPA would like to see all Christchurch playgrounds transition towards being built on universal design principles and with all equipment being fully accessible and inclusive to everyone, including disabled children and young people.

DPA recommends that inclusive play equipment be installed in the new Avon Park play areas, to give every child the opportunity to participate in play.

This should be achieved through installing equipment, which is universally designed, inclusive and usable with features including sufficient width, space and elevation, enabling the parents/caregivers/support people of disabled children the ability to navigate and play with equipment easily.

The accessible playground built by the CCC in Halswell Domain as a great example of what could be done in the new Avon Park.

## Community and River Zones

DPA welcomes the proposal to create natural community and river zones throughout the re-development. These will add to the natural beauty and ecological character of the site.

All tracks and walkways, including the City to Sea Pathway, need to be fully accessible, well-signed and regularly monitored for safety reasons.

We are not clear as to whether there will be any cycle ways created or any provision for cyclists to use the park. DPA recommends that if there are any cycle ways or shared spaces created as part of the re-development that these be safely separated through the erection of safety barriers, clear signage and parallel pathways/cycleways to ensure the safety of both pedestrians and cyclists.

Other natural hazards will also need to be managed on the re-developed park. This includes the risk of tree roots damaging walking tracks/paths which would impede access for everyone, including disabled people.

To mitigate this, DPA recommends that the CCC regularly monitor for the emergence of any safety and accessibility hazards in the Avon Park re-development over time, including the emergence of tree roots.

## Recommendations

**Recommendation 1:** that the steppingstone element to access the reflective space be re-evaluated so that it incorporates accessibility features, particularly for people with physical impairments and older people who find it difficult to navigate steps.

**Recommendation 2:** that all BBQ equipment (including the barbeques themselves) be accessible to disabled people and that any picnic tables have open spaces so that both wheelchair and mobility aid users can access them.

**Recommendation 3:** that any viewing tower have accessibility features incorporated into it either via a ramp or lift system to enable disabled and older people to access it.

**Recommendation 4:** that walking tracks and trails (including the City to Sea Pathway) be accessible to everyone, be of sufficient width to enable safe ease of navigation (especially on busier days) for people using wheelchairs and mobility aids and for people pushing children’s strollers.

**Recommendation 5:** that there be tactile strips placed along any walkways and trails within the park to enable safe, accessible navigation by blind and low vision people.

**Recommendation 6:** that all car parks (including the proposed temporary parks) have sufficient mobility parking spaces available for disabled drivers and passengers to access the park from.

**Recommendation 7:** that there be sufficient pick up and drop off points for people, including those who are coming to and from the park in mobility taxis/passenger vehicles which are commonly used by disabled people for transport.

**Recommendation 8:** that there be sufficient, accessible bus stops to enable people to access the park via public transport.

**Recommendation 9:** that inclusive play equipment be installed in the new Avon Park play areas, to give every child the opportunity to participate in play.

**Recommendation 10:** that if there are any cycle ways or shared spaces created as part of the re-development that these be safely separated through the erection of safety barriers, clear signage and parallel pathways/cycleways to ensure the safety of both pedestrians and cyclists.

**Recommendation 11:** that Council monitor for the emergence of any safety and accessibility hazards in the Avon Park re-development over time, including the emergence of tree roots.

**Recommendation:** for longer submissions you may choose to include recommendations along the way, indented like this, which are then in a numbered list at the end.

**Recommendation:** for shorter submissions, just list the recommendations in a numbered list at the end.

To check which headings are being used, click on ‘View’ in the toolbar, then tick the box ‘Navigation Bar’. This will make a Navigation column appear, in which you can see the nested headings in a list. Make sure all your headings are there as this is what screen reader users use to navigate between sections.

# DPA’s Recommendations

DPA strongly recommends that you:

1. Ensure
2. Enable
3. Develop