March 2023

To Wellington City Council

Please find attached DPA’s submission on Kilbirnie Connections

For any further inquiries, please contact:

Chris Ford

Regional Policy Advisor (Local Government)

Acting Kaituitui – Wellington Region

policy@dpa.org.nz

**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 this opportunity to comment on the Wellington City Council’s plans for the Kilbirnie Connection.

There is much to commend in this plan given that it focuses on ways to improve accessibility for walkers, cyclists and motorists, including disabled people.

DPA is pleased to see that the following features have been incorporated into the plan:

* New and improved pedestrian crossings
* New separated bike lanes
* New 30km/h safer speed zone and other changes to encourage safer speeds in Tacy Street, Kemp Street and Lyall Parade
* Changes to bus stops on Onepu Road to improve safety and make bus trips quicker
* Turning restrictions for drivers at some side streets and supermarkets
* Possible short-term trials of low traffic neighbourhoods in parts of Ross, Yule or Freyberg streets.

These elements will improve the safety and accessibility of this important suburban transit corridor in Wellington.

However, DPA is concerned about the proposal to remove some car parks in the area. This concern arises as there is no indication as to whether any of these parks are mobility parks. We recommend that if any mobility parks are slated for removal that full consultation is undertaken with disabled people with a view to new parks being created to replace those being lost.

DPA is also concerned about the proposed shared path alongside Ākau Tangi Sports Centre car park. Shared pathways are inherently dangerous for many in the disabled community as they present safety risks for disabled pedestrians. We support separated bike lanes as this is the best solution for everyone. In stating this, we recognise that disabled people are cyclists too. DPA recommends that the Ākau Tangi Sports Centre shared pathway be replaced by a separate but parallel cycle way and pedestrian footpath arrangement.

DPA recommends the need for Tactile Surface Ground Indicators (TGSIs) at all pedestrian crossings (with Blind and Low Vision New Zealand best able to advise on this), and to ensure that the camber of any raised pedestrian crossings and the one raised bus stop being proposed is not too steep for wheelchair users either.

DPA supports the Kilbirnie Connection proceeds as planned on the proviso that the recommendations for change we have made are incorporated into the final plan.

**DPA’s Recommendations**

**Recommendation 1:** that the Kilbirnie Connection proceeds as planned on the proviso that the recommendations for change we have made are incorporated into the final plan.

**Recommendation 2:** that if any mobility parks are slated for removal as part of these changes that full consultation is undertaken with disabled people with a view to new parks being created to replace those being lost.

**Recommendation 3:** that the Ākau Tangi Sports Centre shared pathway be replaced by a separate but parallel cycle way and pedestrian footpath arrangement.

**Recommendation 4:** that TGSIs are placed at all pedestrian crossings after consultation with Blind and Low Vision New Zealand.

**Recommendation 5:** that the camber of any raised pedestrian crossings and the one raised bus stop being proposed is not too steep for wheelchair users.