

CARERS SUPPORT GROUP - NORTH KILDARE

REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 20071998

Re: P82021.06 Kildare Co. Council.

THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF THE HARBOUR FIELD, MAYNOOTH, CO. KILDARE. This submission is being done in conjunction with Maynooth Access Group's own proposal in relation to this matter.

BACKGROUND: We are a support group for parents of children with special needs. We meet monthly at Leixlip Parish Centre. All our parents reside in Kildare, Meath, and West Dublin.

CONTACT: DOLORES O'DONNELL, SECRETARY email; dolmar@eircom.net phone; 087-6604502

PROPOSAL

In consultation with our parents at a recent meeting, we listened to what our parents would like to see at the new harbour field development in Maynooth town. The areas of interest is the new playground to be made inclusive to all is the need for general toilet facilities, a changing places facility along with a café, three disabled parking spaces for cars allowing ample room for a ramp to extend from the back of the car with a wheelchair turning space at the end of the ramp plus one disabled parking space large enough to fit a 16 seater bus with ramp that extends from the back of the vehicle and wheelchair turning space at the end of the ramp.

OBJECTIVES

Maynooth town is rapidly expanding with a wide selection of retail outlets, restaurants, and social outlets. We are asking that persons with disabilities *have the right to access all these facilities without fears or concerns*. Therefore, it is so important to include a "changing place" disabled toilet rather than putting a standard disabled toilet/drop down facility in the harbour field development, preferably near a café. As the harbour field is a central location, we feel this is the perfect place to access this facility.

HEALTH/SAFETY AND MAINTENANCE

We propose that a "Parks Warden" with a Community Employment scheme take the responsibility for the overall upkeep of the playground, toilets, and other facilities along with the supplier of the equipment for the changing places doing regular servicing of the equipment installed in the changing places facility.

RESULTS

Maynooth town would lead the way in becoming one of Irelands towns that is inclusive for persons of all abilities and disabilities .

THE FOLLOWING RECOMMENDATIONS HAVE BEEN COPIED FROM THE CHANGING PLACES IRELAND WEBSITE – IN ORDER TO MEET THE CRITERIA TO BE REGISTERED WITH THEM, THE SPECIFICATIONS LISTED BELOW ARE NECESSARY.

COPY & PASTED from website;

Changing Places facilities are a real improvement on standard accessible toilets as they provide a larger floor area of 12m² and additional equipment such as a height-adjustable adult-sized changing bench, a full room coverage ceiling track hoist system, a centrally located toilet bowl with space either side for transfers/assistants and a safe and clean environment.

Changing Places facilities need to meet a certain standard to be registered on our website. This is to ensure that any facility advertised as a Changing Places toilet meets the needs and expectations of the people who use them.

Changing Places must have a minimum floor area of 12m² (3m x 4m) with a ceiling height of 2.4m to meet the criteria for full registration.

Parents of children with disabilities feedback comments to our group on what they would suggest making the playgrounds inclusive.

Comment 1 – mother of autistic boy

“We love the one in Willsbrook Lucan, there is a wheelchair friendly trampoline, and the Griffen Playground Lucan has a spinning wheel which my boys liked. Sensory Planting and natural materials and textures works best for my children.”

Comment 2

“The new playground in Sallins has a couple pieces of equipment but no toilet facilities and that is a HUGE issue. Parents and kids using the playground are now using the surrounding areas as an open-air loo.”

Comment 3.- mother of child in wheelchair

“The surface must be wheelchair friendly NOT BARK as often depicted in plans for playgrounds.

Wheelchair roundabout. Wheelchair Swing, Large nest Swing. Regular toilets plus a changing place facility absolutely necessary along with a coffee shop.”

Comment 4. – mother of child in wheelchair

“Changing places would be brilliant as long as access to it could be managed and disabled parking essential. Swings that disabled children could access (bucket style) also a wheelchair swing that a child could access without getting out of the wheelchair. The correct ground surface needs to be installed that is wheelchair friendly and make it easier for children with poor mobility to use.”

Comment 5. Parent of autistic child

“Roll-in-ride ramp, rotation spinning board with handles, Squeeze machine (adamandfriends.ie) – not sure if it can be used outdoors”.

Comment 6. Parent of an autistic child

“Net swings always a winner”

Comment 7- mother of child in wheelchair

“Install sensory garden planting near the wheelchair tables”

Comment 8.

Stand up musical chimes, balancing stones, trampoline, Sensory Concave wall mounted mirrors. Wall mounted outdoor activity sensory panels.

Comment 9

No sand/gravel surfaces – an absolute nightmare to get a wheelchair through.