

Submission Details

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Submitter

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Note	

In relation to application

Application Number	PT8TT136
Applicant Name	Tipperary County Council
Development Address	Garryvicleheen and Townspark Co. Tipperary

I object to the plans in their current state as there has not been any thought or input for those with a disability. These plans were created without any disabled person being consulted and have gone through this entire process to get to the general consultation phase without a voice for us being represented. If we had been included from the beginning, they never would have reached this stage as they are. The general consultation process is too late to be including us and it needs to be individuals with a disability across Tipperary not an NGO who are paid employees who in many cases do not have a disability.

These plans do not incorporate the UNCRPD and the so called “mobility audit” carried out is laughable and presents as nothing more than a tick box exercise. Firstly, it does not even begin to cover the many points for those with mobility restrictions and secondly, it’s carried out by a group who do not have mobility restrictions and have no idea how to carry out a thorough audit in this area if so they never would have approved the parking spot outside the AIB bank in the plans. The only point they really covered was tactile paving for the visually impaired however even they require more than that. More work on put into the aesthetic audit so it seems that Thurles district council upon approving these plans think it’s more important for the town to look nice than for it to be accessible for all.

One example of how the plans do not cover those with a mobility restriction is the planned blue permit parking spot outside the AIB. It is very dangerous place in its current form. As it is the driver has to get out of their vehicle on the side of the road and for myself as an ambulatory wheelchair user it means whoever is with me will have to stand on the road with the chair for me to get into it as they required zigzagged edge for these spots is not there. I would love to know how this could be approved when its clearly a health and safety issue? But in the plans, you are putting in other things to avoid non mobility restricted individuals being hit by vehicles but you have purposely and knowingly put us in great danger of this happening AND it was approved by the company you hired who did that so called mobility audit. It is vital to remember people with the parking permits do drive.

The spot also has other problems

- it is not long enough to accommodate those who need to exit the vehicle through the back with a liftable ramp.
- There are no zig zags on the inside as there should be to facilitate those getting out of the left side instead there is a pavement and it’s not clear if it will be flat and I mean 100% flat. Any kind of curb immediately makes it impossible to use a wheelchair. Rollator, crutches or frame.
- There are no zig zags on the back instead there is a pavement and it’s not clear if it will be flat and I mean 100% flat.
- The location of the spot hasn’t been thought through. It seems the pattern of TCC of just throwing one anywhere so they can tick box they have one. How do you know this is where we need one?

Other issue with the plans

- A huge amount of parking spots are being removed. People with restricted mobility utilise all parking spots in the town and their restrictions means they need to be as close as possible to the place they need to go so when you are removing multiple spots in the square and on Rossa street you are impacting their ability to work, live and use the town. In some cases, they are being removed for aesthetic measures to be implemented.
- Not enough blue parking spots in the town AND in correct locations. It should be noted you qualify for these parking permits if you can't walk more than 50 meters without stopping or unaided. The spots' location further down the town across from Tesco are as far away as possible from two primes locations the supermarket and the bank. They should have been placed outside Tesco instead people with these permits can't utilise them as its too far from Tesco's front door.
(I have written to the Thurles municipal district office twice about this since Feb and both emails have gone unanswered showing further proof that those with Thurles council do not care about disabled issues as basic manners would have you answer and email but it's becoming a pattern with all areas of TCC to ignore emails about disabled issues as have been relayed to me by fellow patient advocates in the area. I would also challenge you to measure 50 metres to see just how short it is. By not having adequate parking in the correct position/place you are impeding and restricting the ability of those who need (not use but need these spots) ability to remain independent and engage in normal everyday activities.
- There are more points but they would need to be gone through one by one and with different people who have mobility and disabilities who use the town as a person with a physical disability can not talk on behalf of a person with a visual disability and vice versa.

I would ask that these plans are immedicably stalled and a proper consultation process occurs with people with mobility restrictions who use Thurles like myself. This could be done via an online workshop where they share their experiences and the solutions they see and we could truly ensure that these plans are adjusted going forward to ensure the town remains accessible for all.

While I appreciate the town needs to adapt and grow it cannot be done at the expense of one group of people which in its current form it is. People with mobility restrictions still need to be able to continue to access the town for education, employment, to live, shops and services, recreation, entertainment, religious services, medical needs and to visit. It's key to remember people with restricted mobility live full lives and come in all ages.