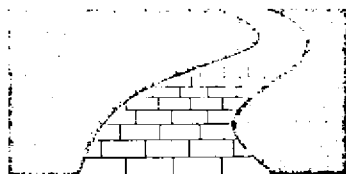


**Paving the way to a
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**for disabled and less
mobile people**

**WELWYN HATFIELD ACCESS GROUP
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25 March 2011

Mrs. S. Morgan
Cracknell
9 Holyrood Street
London SE1 2EL

Dear Mrs Morgan

re: Planning Applications Received by Welwyn Hatfield Council

We note that the Council received the following planning application during week ending 25 February

Appn No.	Description and Location	Applicant
N6/2011/3120/DC3	Redevelopment of site to provide a wet play area, adventure play areas, an educational play area, high ropes attraction, changing huts, education room, café and toilet facilities and car park Splashlands Stanborough Road Welwyn Garden City Hertfordshire AL8 6XA	Mrs. S. Morgan Cracknell 9 Holyrood Street London SE1 2EL

The Welwyn Hatfield Access Group has reviewed all the data submitted with this application via the Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council's website. We would like to tender the following comments.

Planning and Design and Access Statement

Background

We note the master plan development proposals include:

- Wet play area
- Adventure play areas
- An educational play area that accommodates school visits
- A separate high ropes attraction
- Changing huts
- Education room
- Café
- Toilet facilities
- Highways and access improvements
- Wider park integration proposals

We further note the development aims to provide the following:

- Create a design that creates an imaginative /playful/educational landscape
- Work with and enhance the natural topography and views of the site
- Work to integrate the whole site creating a hub of play activity for the whole family and all ages
- Provides 'fun' elements to the concept that will provide a memorable experience for visitors
- Is DDA complete and accessible where appropriate
- Provides a facility that is multifunctional and accessible all year
- Provides Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council with a first class visitor attraction and play offer
- Improved highways and pedestrian access to the site.

Having outlined all the goals, the Welwyn Hatfield Access Group is solely concerned to see that appropriate provisions are included at the site and it's approaches to enable all members of society to benefit from the facilities. As such, we will be reviewing plans to ensure the proposals meet the standards of the Equality Act 2010, which incorporates and supercedes the DDA. In looking at the overall proposal, we believe that all elements of the project as outlined in the Planning and Design and Access Statement are, in some way, directly affected by the Equality Act (2010).

Drawing No. AA – 001 Pavilion Plans

We have attempted to interpret this drawing using the copy presented in the Council's Planning Website. It is not possible to accurately scale from this drawing and we presume measurements will be inline with best practice recommendations. We have the following specific questions:

Toilet Block

This contains a unisex disabled toilet, separate Gent's and Lady's toilet blocks and a wet room incorporating a disabled toilet and a baby changing facility. Can you confirm: -

- i) that the dedicated Gent's and Lady's Toilet Blocks will include facilities for ambulant disabled
- ii) there will be low level urinals in the Gent's toilet for children's use.
- iii) the design of the wet room will allow for either a manual or overhead hoist and a fixed changing table as detailed in 12.7 'Changing Places sanitary accommodation' of BS8300:2009 'The design of buildings and their approaches to meet the needs of disabled people: Code of practice'

Teaching Room

After reviewing the drawings, we are unable to locate any toilets for those using the teaching room. We believe the distance required to travel from this room to the toilet block is too great for those with impairments.

Ticket Office

Would you please confirm if the entry doors to the complex are manual or automatic? From the drawing, we are unable to determine if the ticket office has a section of low counter for the use of height restricted or wheelchair users.

Refreshment Seating

From the drawing it appears these are fixed. As such, these are difficult to use for wheelchair users and those with impaired mobility. Can we suggest a mixture of fixed and movable seating is provided.

High Ropes Unit

Figure 48 provides a detailed section of this facility. As a matter of personal interest, The writer would be pleased to learn if the abseiling tower will be accessible to wheelchair users, having previously undertaken a sponsored wheelchair abseil and interested in undertaking a further sponsored event. As the application makes a statement of compliance to the DDA, we are taking it that this facility will be accessible to all.

Our review has been cursory because we have been unable to accurately determine measurements using the website drawings. Furthermore, we have been unable to identify from our cursory review any references to design and building standards compliance. We believe there are standards for play areas and we would be pleased to learn which are relevant to this application

If we can be of any assistance please feel free to contact us.

Yours sincerely

Brian Wilson
Welwyn Hatfield Access Group

cc Mrs. S.Smith, Planning Officer, Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council