
From 10 August 2006, applicants will need to submit a **Design and Access Statement** with their applications for planning and listed building consent.

A Design and Access Statement must accompany applications for both outline and full applications, and generally will be required for all planning and listed building consent applications, **except for:**

A material change of use of land and buildings, (unless it also involves operational development);

- Engineering or mining operations;
- Householder developments: **but statements are required if the property is located within a Conservation Area**
- Advertisements
- Tree Preservation Orders
- Storage of Hazardous Waste

What Should a Design and Access Statement Cover?

Statements are documents that explain the design thinking behind an application, to show that the applicant has thought carefully about how everyone, including disabled people, older people and young children will be able to use the places they want to build. They provide an opportunity for the applicant to demonstrate his/her commitment to achieving good design and ensure accessible design. Statements should include a written description of the proposal and a justification for the application. Photographs, maps and drawings would be helpful to further illustrate the points made.

The statement needs to make reference to the relevant planning policies in the Borough Local Plan, Draft LDF, Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG's) and Conservation Area Design Guidelines. Statements should provide a clear reason for any departures from policy. For most straightforward applications, the statement will be short, whereas for more complicated applications will require a detailed report.

Each statement should be individual to the application and should not be templated. The statements do not form part of the documents to be approved and therefore compliance to all or part will have to be secured by condition.

The statement should address the following:

DESIGN

- **The design process** - explain the design principles and concepts. Amount of development - how much will be built on site, number of units/floor space, how the development complies with the principles of sustainability and energy conservation.
- **Use** - what buildings and spaces will be used for
- **Layout** - how the buildings, private/public spaces are to be arranged on site and their relationship.
- **Scale** - how big the buildings and spaces will be in terms of their height/width /length.
- **Appearance** - details of materials/architectural details.
- **Landscaping** - treatment of private and public spaces hard and soft landscaping.

ACCESS

- **Access** - The statement needs to include three potential aspects of access. That is not to say they are separate, but the statement should show that all access issues have been considered together.
- **Vehicular and transport links** - Why the access points and routes have been chosen.
- **Road Layout** - how the site responds to road layout and public transport provision and access for emergency services, where relevant.
- **Inclusive access** - How everyone can get to and move through the place on equal terms regardless of age, disability, ethnicity or social grouping.

Listed Building Consent Applications

Statements should also include a brief explanation of how the design has taken into account the historic and special architectural importance of the building, the particular physical features that justify its designation as a listed building and the building's setting. The statement should detail any specific issues that arise because the building is listed. If it is not possible to provide inclusive design, this needs to be expanded upon in the statement.

The Council are now unable to accept certain applications without a suitable Design and Access Statement. This has occurred due to a change in national legislation.

Further Information

The above details are a summary of the information that is required. The full requirements are set out in Circular 01/2006, which can be downloaded, from the Department for Communities and Local Government website: www.communities.gov.uk

Advice on how to compile a Design and Access Statement has been produced by CABI and can be downloaded from their website: www.cabi.org.uk