

## Design and Access Statement

### Guidance Note and Template



**April 2007**

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#### General Notes

Since 10<sup>th</sup> August 2006, developers have been required to submit Design & Access Statements as part of applications for development. The statement is a short report accompanying and supporting a planning application to illustrate the process that has led to the development proposal, and to explain and justify the proposal in a structured way.

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#### **Is a Design and Access Statement Required?**

**It should be noted that the County Planning Authority is only responsible for applications for minerals and waste planning together with its own proposals that relate to the functions of the County Council (for example applications for schools and social services facilities)**

##### **YES -**

(a) **Full planning permission** and

(b) **Outline planning permission** applications (in the case of outline planning permission the statement should layout the basis for future detailed planning application)

(c) **Waste applications**

##### **NO -**

(a) **engineering or mining operations;**

(b) **development of an existing dwelling-house, or development within the curtilage of such a dwelling-house** for any purpose incidental to the enjoyment of the dwelling-house, as such, where no part of that dwelling-house or its curtilage is within a designated area; or

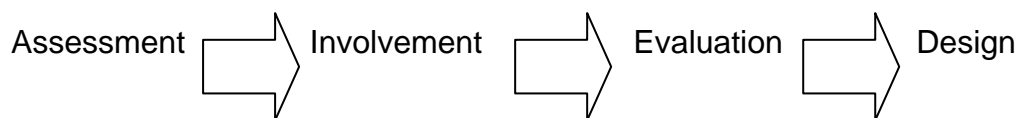
(c) **a material change in the use of land or buildings.**

(d) advertisement control, tree preservation orders or storage of hazardous substances

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## Writing Statements

- ✓ statement will vary in length and detail according to complexity of the application but will generally be concise
- ✓ may include appropriate plans and photographs
- ✓ design and access to be considered together to ensure integration
- ✓ specific statement for specific development/application
- ✓ start statement at the earliest opportunity and continually refer to it during development
- ✓ explain design and aims
- ✓ consult relevant parties as early as possible
- ✓ check local authority requirements and guidelines when writing the statement
- ✓ explain the design process that has been followed E.g:



**Design and Access Statements** will broadly discuss;

- (a) the design principles and concepts applied to the development
- (b) how issues relating to access to the development have been dealt with

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**Design and Access Statements** for **full** planning applications should include information regarding design principles and details, access and an analysis of the context of the development as detailed below. However, it is particularly pertinent to note that design and access should be considered concurrently to produce an inclusive design scheme. The structure of the D&A statement should reflect this.

### A) Design principles based on the following

- (1) **use**; (what spaces and buildings will be used for and how this fits into the surrounding land uses. Emphasis on mixed use and the access/design needs of a particular use)

(2) **amount;** (the amount of floor space for each proposed use in the development or, if residential development, the number proposed residential units)

Statement to justify the amount of development in relation to the site size, the distribution of development on the site, the relationship of the development to its surroundings and the access to/within the development

(3) **layout;** (relationship of buildings, routes and open space. Context of the development)

Statement to explain the layout of the development, the aspect of structures and how development integrates with topography. How is access throughout the site catered for? Which different layout options have been considered? Drawings/plans are particularly helpful in this section.

(4) **scale;**

Statement to justify the scale of the development in terms of surroundings and size of the site but also in terms of individual features (E.g. entrances). Emphasis on balance. Drawings are useful in this section.

(5) **landscaping;**

Statement to explain the principles and purpose of any landscaping to allow it to be included in overall design. Is the landscaped site realistically maintainable in the long term? How will the needs of certain minority groups be met by the landscaping? Also if possible, include a schedule for landscaping.

(6) **appearance;** (visual impression of the development-architecture, material, decoration-everything that went into the design.

The statement should include the design rationale of the proposal and how the appearance fits with other aims of the development. What does the developer want the place to look like? The effects of time of day, season and ageing should be acknowledged.

It should be noted that the detail included does not explicitly need to consider each of these design elements separately. The depth of the information should be tailored according to the complexity of the proposal.

## B) Access

This section should explain the movement pattern around and through the site and should show how the site can be used safely and comfortably by *everyone*. The Statement will also show how design has considered access-IE design and access to be considered together

Statement to include details of the applicant's approach to access and how policies relating to access in relevant local development documents have been taken into account. This will set the framework for further decisions in the development process. E.g.-internal design of individual buildings

(I) **Vehicular and transport links**; why access points have been chosen and how the site interacts with road layout and transport provision

(II) **Inclusive access**; how everyone, regardless of difference, can get to and move through the site

- state what, if any, **consultation** has been undertaken on issues relating to access to the development and what account has been taken of the outcome of any such consultation

- how **specific issues** affecting access to the development have been addressed

**Access considerations to be included in the statement:**

(1) How the site will link with surrounding roads and footpaths

(2) Useful to include how internal building access will be provided as this impacts on the overall access to the site – E.g. through the placement of entrances

(3) How level changes influence access – E.g. kerbs.

(4) How the disabled will not be segregated in the site and that they will enjoy free mobility

(5) Mention of access to the emergency services

(6) Include diagrams showing the flows of people through the site – include pedestrians, cyclists and cars

C) Context

The DA statement should demonstrate the steps taken to appraise the context of the development. It should also identify how the development design acknowledges the character of the surrounding area (including the social/ economic character and policy context).

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## Outline Planning Applications

The Statement accompanying outline planning permission applications should account for any decisions taken so far but should also explain the principles which will define future details of the development. Many of these will depend on the aims of the development.

Details of what is required for outline permission are set out below.

### **Design Components:**

Amount: as for full planning permission applications

Layout: Reserved- approximate location of buildings, routes and open space together with how this framework should inform detailed layout  
Unreserved- as for full planning permission applications

Scale: Reserved- upper and lower limits of proposed building height and width.  
Unreserved- as for full planning permission applications

Landscaping: Reserved- no need to include specific information but should explain the principles for the development  
Unreserved- as for full planning permission applications

Appearance: Reserved- no need to include specific information but should explain the principles for the development  
Unreserved- as for full planning permission applications

### **Access:**

Reserved –should explain the principles which will be used to inform access arrangements for the development at all scales (E.g. - from neighbourhood movement patterns to access to individual buildings)

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## **Statements Accompanying Applications for Listed Building Consent**

Design and Access Statements also required<sup>1</sup> though are similar to those required for planning permission applications

### **To be included**

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-explanation of design principles applied to scale, layout and appearance characteristics of the proposal

2

-brief explanation of how design has acknowledged paragraph 3.5 of PPG15<sup>2</sup>  
-historic and special architectural importance of the building  
-physical features of the building that justify its listed status  
-the building's setting

3

-explanation of the approach to ensuring the listed building preserves its importance. When there is an aspect of design which will affect this, the statement should explain why this is necessary and what measures have been employed to minimise the impact on the building

4

-how the access approach has balanced the duties imposed by the Disability Discrimination Act and the architectural significance of the building  
-issues that arise from the building being listed  
-where inclusive design has not been provided, for instance because of restraints, the measures taken to minimise the impact should be mentioned

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<sup>1</sup> When there is a planning application submitted in parallel with an application for listed building consent a single combined statement should address the requirements of both  
<sup>2</sup> PPG 15. Planning and the Historic Environment. Paragraph 3.5, i, ii, iii

## TEMPLATE FOR PRODUCING A DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT:

- 1      Application details: Location of the proposal  
Type of application  
Name of agent  
Name of applicant
- 2      Description: Summary of the nature of the development
- 3      Date: When the design & access statement was first drafted then dates of any subsequent amendments to the statement.
- 4      Site context: This section should include the following stages: **assessment** of the physical (natural and built environments), economic and social characteristics of the context, details of any **public involvement** which has occurred and the subsequent **evaluation** of the site assessment. Any relevant **planning policies and designations** (for example, Conservation Areas) should also be discussed.
- 5      Design principles applied to the proposal: This section should include: **use; amount; layout; scale; landscaping** and **appearance** of the proposal. However, this section does not necessarily have to explicitly include each of these headings. This section should conclude with the **design of the proposal**.
- 6      Access provision philosophy: This section should include the attitude towards pedestrian/cyclist and vehicular access together with access for mobility impaired groups. How any consultation has influenced the proposal in terms of access should be mentioned here.
- 7      Site access proposals: This section will draw strongly on the assessment of site context undertaken earlier in the process. Include: site position and approach to the site including access routes for motor vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists and public transport. Internal site layout should also be mentioned here along with how a variety of disability groups has been accommodated in the proposal.
- 8      Maintenance: This section should include maintenance needs and methods.
- 9      A copy of the statement should be handed to the final occupier so that it can be used in the future to influence any future developments on site to maintain a coherent attitude to design and access. It may also be useful for the management of the development.

**Please note the inclusion of accurate, informative visual aids such as maps, photos, and diagrams will significantly assist in illustrating the above elements.**

## **Notes**

### **Legislative Provision**

- PPS1<sup>3</sup> states that good design plays a fundamental role in the development of sustainable developments
- The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 amends the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. These amendments require a statement regarding design and access to be submitted with a planning application whilst also prohibiting a local planning authority from entertaining an application unless accompanied by such a statement
- There is nothing to make the developer build in line with the statement so the LAs need to stipulate in the permission which parts of the statements must be adhered to

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**For further information** please refer to the Department for Communities and Local Government circular, Guidance on Changes to the Development Control System, 12 June 2006. This provides information on the need for, as well as advice on, the writing of Design & Access Statements

If you wish to make any comment, or have any queries, please contact Devon County Council using the details shown below.

Development Control  
Room ABG Lucombe House  
County Hall  
Topsham Road  
Exeter, EX2 4QW

Email: [planning@devon.gov.uk](mailto:planning@devon.gov.uk)  
Telephone: 01392 383195

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<sup>3</sup> Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development. ODPM.2005