



## Design & Access Statements

From 10 August 2006, a statement covering the design principles and access considerations of your proposal needs to be submitted with most applications for planning permission and/or listed building consent. The aim is to encourage higher design quality. **If you don't provide this statement along with your application, it will be returned to you without being registered.**

Statements are needed for both outline and full planning permission, although there are some exceptions. The information below tells you more about when you do and don't need to provide a statement, and how to put one together.

### Exceptions: when Design & Access Statements are NOT required

Design & Access statements are required for all applications involving listed buildings - no matter what your proposal - but otherwise you **don't** need to provide a statement if your application is for...

- a material change of use of land, unless it also involves operational development;
- engineering or minor operations;
- extensions, conservatories and other developments to an existing dwelling provided that the property is **not** within a Conservation Area or Site of Special Scientific Interest;
- development within the boundary of a property (garages etc.) provided that the property is **not** within a Conservation Area or Site of Special Scientific Interest.

### How to write your Statement

The aim of your Design and Access Statement is to illustrate the process that has led to the development proposal, and justify your scheme in a structured way. There is no specific format for it (i.e. no special form you need to fill in), and short statements are acceptable for minor proposals as long as they cover all the relevant issues. Sometimes photographs, maps and drawings will be needed to illustrate the points being made.

## **Design and access statements must cover the following matters.**

### **1. Design**

- **The process** – the statement should explain the process by which the development has been designed, and show that account has been taken of the wider context of the site, including local character, relevant planning policies and the views of local people;
- **Use** – what buildings and spaces will be used for, and the relationship to surrounding uses;
- **Amount** – details of how much development is proposed (number of units or floorspace);
- **Scale** – how big the buildings and spaces will be, and how they have been influenced by the existing character of the local area;
- **Layout** – how the buildings and public and private spaces will be arranged on-site, and their relationship with the buildings and spaces adjoining the site;
- **Landscaping** – how spaces will be treated to enhance the character of a place;
- **Appearance** - what the buildings and spaces will look like.

### **2. Access**

- **Vehicle and transport links** – why access points and routes have been chosen, and how the site responds to road layout and public transport provision;
- **Inclusive access** – how everyone can get to the place regardless of age or disability.

### **Statements for Listed Building applications should also explain:**

- the special architectural or historic importance of the building and its setting;
- how the approach ensures that the special architectural or historic importance of the building is preserved or enhanced, and;
- what measures have been taken to minimise the impact of the application.

### **Further help and advice**

Further guidance on design and access statements can be found in “Design and Access Statements” published by CABI ([www.cabi.org.uk](http://www.cabi.org.uk)) and DCLG Circular 01/2006 “Guidance on Changes to the Development Control System” ([www.communities.gov.uk](http://www.communities.gov.uk)).

General advice is available from us but it may be necessary for an architect or planning consultant to prepare an appropriate Design & Access Statement for you, and you may wish to seek qualified help before submitting your application.