

Planning Guidance Note 3: Design and Access Statements

Introduction

As of 10 August 2006 requirements were introduced for the submission of *Design and Access Statements* with certain types of planning applications. On 6 April 2010 the types of planning applications which do not require a design and access statement was expanded, a summary of which is listed below (although applicants are advised to refer to Article 4C of the GDPO as amended by SI 2010/567).

A design and access statement is required for all planning applications (including outline applications), *except* where it relates to:

- (i) engineering and mining operations: - *this includes the construction of accesses and car parks but does not include patios or hardstandings;*
- (ii) development of a dwellinghouse or flat, or development within the curtilage of, an existing dwellinghouse, where no part of the site is within a 'designated' area;
- (iii) change of use (only) to land or buildings: - *i.e. if you are not proposing any building works which require planning permission;*
- (iv) extending the time limit for implementing an existing planning permission;
- (v) extension to an existing building used for non-domestic purposes where the floorspace created does not exceed 100 square metres and where no part is within a 'designated' area;
- (vi) the erection, construction, improvement or alteration of a gate, fence, wall or other means of enclosure, up to 2 metres high or the height of the existing means of enclosure, whichever is the higher, where no part is within a 'designated' area or the curtilage of a listed building;
- (vii) development on operational land consisting of the erection of a building or structure up to 100 cubic metres in volume and 15 metres in height where no part is within a 'designated' area;
- (viii) the alteration of an existing building where the alteration does not increase the size of the building and where no part is within a 'designated' area;

- (ix) the erection, alteration or replacement of plant or machinery where, as a result of the development, the height of the plant or machinery would not exceed the greater of 15 metres above ground level, or the height of the original plant or machinery and where no part is within a 'designated' area;
- (x) development of land pursuant to section 73, i.e. an application to develop land without conditions previously attached.

In Leicestershire a 'designated area' means a conservation area.

Where a statement is required but not submitted, the County Planning Authority is not allowed to deal with it.

Below is a checklist that has been compiled from the published CABE guidance *Design and Access Statements: How to read, write and use them* (<http://www.cabe.org.uk/publications/design-and-access-statements>). Many County Council applications are for relatively small-scale developments (i.e. mobile classroom installation and retention, and small extensions etc) and do not need to address every single issue below. Those issues that need to be addressed for mobile classrooms and ancillary extensions have been marked with an *.

Content

The most important message to convey is that the application is based on a good understanding of the local character and circumstances. The statement should illustrate how the submitted scheme has evolved and explain and justify the chosen solution. It should illustrate how the proposal is based on an understanding of the circumstances that affect the application site and not written as an afterthought.

Checklist of information to be contained in any statement

Use
Justify the development in terms of the land use policies*
Demonstrate acceptability in the context of surrounding uses*
Explain how the uses and development will work together to make the place more useful to the community? *
Demonstrate how design facilitates inclusive access*
Amount
Is the amount and density of development suitable for the site given the context of the site and surrounding area? *
How does the proposed development affect a place in terms of the movement of people? *
Explain how the amount of development would positively/negatively impact upon open space, services and businesses in the locality
Layout
Explain why buildings are orientated in a particular direction and how it would work together with surrounding open spaces*
How does the site layout facilitate inclusive access?
Explain how the development relates to existing buildings in the locality*
Explain why the layout of the development has been chosen*
Scale
Show the scale of the development and explain in the terms of good design how the site accommodates such a scale building*
Where used 3D graphics should show the site from realistic viewing points
Explain how the design considers balance of features such as doors, windows and their height/width*

Landscaping

How does the design of outside places make them attractive and useful? What will be the treatment of outdoor areas and features?

What is the strategy for long-term maintenance and management?

What is the purpose of the landscape design (both public and private areas)?

How will the needs of all mobility's be met? (i.e. level surfaces and non-slip material)*

Appearance

What is the design rationale for the site and how does this relate to the scale and appearance of the development?*

What range of materials is likely to be used?*

What will be the effects of time of day/days/year/years be on the development?

Access

How will surrounding routes be linked? (i.e. lighting, views, and signs)

How will various transport modes move through and around the site? (use diagrams if appropriate)

Explain how the internal and external layouts influence each other?

How would levels and views of the wider area vary as a result of the development?

Demonstrate that disabled people will not be segregated, and can access the site and building with other people*

How will access for the emergency services be provided?*

How will symbols and pictures help people navigate the area?