

Design and Access Statement

Article 9 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 sets out the legal requirement for a Design and Access Statement (DAS).

Applications which must be accompanied by a Design and Access Statement

1. Planning applications for development of 10 or more dwelling houses/flats or 1000sq.m or more of commercial floorspace.
 - a. Planning applications for development in a conservation area consisting of:
 - b. the provision of one or more dwelling houses/flats; or
2. The provision of a building or buildings where the floor space created by the development is 100 square metres or more.
3. Listed Building Consent.

What is a Design and Access Statement?

A DAS is a short report accompanying and supporting a planning application. It explains how a proposed development is a suitable response to the site and its setting and demonstrates that the development can be adequately accessed by prospective users.

The Access element may be prepared separately (usually by an access specialist) but is submitted as part of the DAS.

What must a Design and Access Statement do?

1. Explain the design principles and concepts that have been applied to the development;
2. Demonstrate how the proposed development's context has influenced the design;
3. Explain the applicant's approach to access and how relevant Local Plan policies have been taken into account;
4. 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; and
5. Explain how any specific issues which might affect access to the development have been addressed.

The level of detail in a DAS should be proportionate to the complexity of the application, but should not be long. For most straightforward planning applications, the DAS may only need to be a page long.

Even when a DAS is not needed to make an application valid, applicants are encouraged to provide an access statement, as this speeds the process of reviewing applications. Applications for change of use to residential are strongly recommended to include an access statement as it is often difficult to make an assessment based on drawings alone.

A DAS with a Listed Building Consent application will vary according to the type of work proposed.

Where the work affects the exterior of the building the information in (1) to (6) below is required.

Where the application affects only the interior of a listed building items (1) and (2) are required but we may also ask for items (3) to (6)

1. The design principles and concepts that have been applied to the works; and
2. How the design principles and concepts that have been applied to the works take account of:
 - c. the special architectural or historic importance of the building;
 - d. the particular physical features of the building that justify its designation and a listed building;
 - e. the building's setting;
3. Explain the policy on access, including what alternative means of access have been considered and how policies relating to access in the relevant local development documents have been taken into account;
4. Explain how the policy on access takes account of:
 - a. the special architectural or historic importance of the building;
 - b. the particular physical features of the building that justify its designation and a listed building;
 - c. the building's setting;
5. State what, if any, consultation has been undertaken and what account has been taken of the outcome of any such consultation; and
6. Explain how any specific issues which might affect access to the building have been addressed.

Guidance on an Access Statement

The City of London places great emphasis on the consideration of accessibility in the development of local plans and planning applications and all applications are expected to provide reasonable access. If a suitably detailed access statement is not included, the application is likely to be rejected.

The requirement for an Access Statement is supported in the City of London's Local Plan policy CS 10.4, "Requiring the design and management of buildings, streets and spaces to provide for the access needs of all the City's communities, including the particular needs of disabled people." Local Plan policy DM10.8 gives further support.

An Access Statement provides the opportunity for developers to demonstrate their commitment to ensuring accessibility in the proposed project.

Writing an Access Statement

The form of the access statement will depend upon the size, complexity and nature of the scheme but it must be bespoke for the specific development.

The Access Statement should be considered a live document which 'grows' with the project. At the planning stage the design intentions should be explained although some of the details may not have been developed.

1. Start the statement when the scheme starts. This will ensure access is built into the designs from the concept stage.
2. Explain how the design has come about and what you hope to achieve.
3. Justify any deviation from accepted good practice.
4. Use accurate and informative illustrations.
5. Include details of any consultations and sources of reference.

It is not necessary to recite extracts from good practice guidance. The Statement need only deal with what is proposed and which standards it will meet. Where relevant to the application, details should be provided on:

1. Approaches to and around the site – road and footpath intersections, desire lines, sight lines, lighting, pedestrian, cycle and vehicle routes
2. Car parking, setting down points and garaging
3. Visibility of entrances and access points
4. Entering the building or development

5. Horizontal and vertical circulation and layout arrangements
6. Appropriate use of surfacing materials
7. Facilities including toilet provision within the building
8. Wayfinding and signage
9. Lighting levels and colour/tonal contrast
10. Evacuation arrangements
11. Anything else relating to the safety, comfort and ease of use for all potential users

Developers of residential and hotel schemes must specifically address how the development satisfies relevant development plan policies, eg

- A minimum of 10% of units to meet Wheelchair Housing standards
- An overall commitment to Lifetime Homes standards on all new dwellings
- A minimum of 10% of hotel guest rooms to be accessible

Residential schemes should include indicative furniture layouts so that an assessment of accessible housing standards can be undertaken.

Consultation, Support and Guidance

We recommend that the local communities and disabled access groups are consulted including the City's voluntary Access Group (COLAG) where possible and appropriate. The Case Officer or Access Team welcome consultation at the pre-planning application stage and will provide specific advice.

Appointing an experienced access specialist to the design team from the outset will ensure that an accessible scheme is developed. Find a professional at:

[The National Register of Access Consultants](#)

Guidance Documents

"Designing an Accessible City" The City of London's advice on statutory access requirements, access legislation and technical design standards. (in preparation).

[The London Plan 2015](#) The Design and access policies are in Chapter 7. The key policy is Policy 7.2 'An inclusive environment'.

[Accessible London: achieving an inclusive environment](#) Mayor of London's Supplementary Planning Guidance

[Inclusive Mobility](#) – A Guide to Best Practice on Access to Pedestrian and Transport Infrastructure (Department for Transport)

Building Regulations

[Approved Document to Part K: Protection from falling, collision and impact](#)

[Approved Document to Part M: "Access to and use of Buildings"](#)

BS8300: Code of Practice "Design of Buildings and their approaches to meet the needs of Disabled People" (2010) Available from [the British Standards Institute](#).

Design Council/CABE: Design and Access Statement. This document is held in the [national archive](#).

Housing

[Lifetime Homes](#) DD266: 2007 Design of accessible housing – Lifetime home – Code of Practice Wheelchair Housing Design Guide 2nd Edition 2006 ISBN 1 86081 897 8

Fire safety

[Fire Safety Risk Assessment Means of Escape for Disabled People Supplementary Guide 2007](#) (DCLG) ISBN 13 978 1 85112873 7

Signage and contrast

'Sign Design Guide' Barker, Peter and Fraser, June JMU and Sign Design Society ISBN 185878 412 3

'Building Sight' Barker, Peter and Barrick, Jon and Wilson, Rod (1995) RNIB/HMSO ISBN: 0 11 701993 3

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