



Design and Access Statements

Full and Outline Planning Applications

Householder applications in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty or Conservations Areas.

A design and access statement is a short report accompanying and supporting an application to illustrate the process that has led to the development proposal, and to explain and justify the proposal in a structured way. The statement must explain both the design principles and concepts that have been applied to the proposal and how issues relating to access to the development have been dealt with.

In the case of outline applications, design and access statements play a particular role in linking general development principles to final detailed designs. A statement accompanying an outline application must:

- explain how the applicant has considered the proposal and understands what is feasible and appropriate for the site in its context
- clearly explain and justify the design and access principles that will be used to develop future details of the scheme

The design and access statement will form a link between the outline permission and consideration of reserved matters.

The Design Element

The design element of a statement should show the process that has been gone through and explain the scheme in terms of its:

- **Amount** – how much development is proposed
For residential development this will be the number of units proposed, for all other development this will be the proposed floor space for each proposed use.
For both full and outline applications, the statement should explain and justify the amount of development and:
 - how this will be distributed across the site
 - how the proposal relates to its surroundings
 - how accessibility will be maximised to and between parts of the development.
- **Layout** – how the buildings, routes and open spaces (public and private) will be arranged on the site, and in context with the surroundings.
For both full applications and outline applications where layout is included, the statement should:
 - explain and justify the proposed layout in context with the surroundings
 - indicate factors important to accessibility of the site for users
 - demonstrate how crime prevention measures have been considered in the designFor outline applications where layout is reserved, the statement should:

- provide information on the approximate location of proposed buildings, routes and open spaces
 - explain and justify the principles behind the choice of development zones and blocks or building plots proposed
 - explain how these principles, including the need for appropriate access, will inform the detailed layout.
- **Scale** – the height, width and length of building(s) in relation to the surroundings.
For both full applications and outline applications where scale is included, the statement should explain and justify:
 - the scale of proposed buildings, including why particular heights have been chosen
 - how these relate to the site's surroundings and the relevant skyline
 - the size of building parts, particularly entrances and facades, and how they will relate to the human scale.
 For outline applications where scale is reserved, the statement should:
 - indicate parameters for the upper and lower limits of the height, width and length of each proposed building
 - explain and justify the principles behind these parameters and how these will inform the final scale of the buildings.
- **Landscaping** – the treatment of public and private spaces to enhance or protect the amenities of the site and the surrounding area through hard and soft landscaping measures.
For full applications and outline applications where landscaping is included, the statement should:
 - explain and justify the proposed landscaping scheme, explaining the purpose of landscaping spaces and its relationship to the surrounding area.
 - explain how landscaping will be maintained.
 The use of planting and materials schedules is recommended where possible.
For outline applications where landscaping is reserved, specific landscaping information is not required but the statement should explain and justify the principles that will inform any future landscaping scheme for the site.
- **Appearance** – the aspect of a place or building that determines the visual impression it makes, including the external built form of the development, its architecture, materials, decoration, lighting, colour and texture.
For full applications and outline applications where appearance is included, the statement should:
 - explain and justify the appearance of the place or buildings proposed, including how this will relate to the appearance and character of the surroundings
 - explain how the decisions taken about appearance have considered accessibility.
 For outline applications that reserve appearance, specific information is not required but the statement should explain and justify the principles behind the intended appearance and explain how these will inform the final design of the development.

A design and access statement must demonstrate the steps taken to appraise the context of the proposed development. Applicants should follow a design process which includes:

- **Assessment** of the site's immediate and wider context in terms of physical, social and economic characteristics and relevant planning policies.
- **Involvement** of community members and professionals undertaken or planned. The statement should indicate how the findings of any consultation have been taken into account and how this has affected the proposal.

- **Evaluation** of the information collected on the site's immediate and wider context, identifying opportunities and constraints and formulating design and access principles for the development.
- **Design** of the scheme using the assessment, involvement and evaluation of the information collected.

In light of this understanding of the context, a design and access statement should explain how this has been considered in relation to its proposed **use**. For both full and outline applications, the statement should explain the use(s) proposed, their distribution across the site, the appropriateness of the accessibility to and between them, and their inter-relationship to uses surrounding the site. It should also explain how this context has been considered in relation to the physical characteristics of the proposal, i.e. the amount, layout, scale, landscaping and appearance of the development.

The Access Element

N.B. The requirements for the access element of the statement relates only to “access to the development” and does not extend to internal aspects of individual buildings.

For both full applications and outline applications where access is included, statements should:

- explain how access arrangements will ensure that all users will have equal and convenient access to buildings and spaces and the public transport network
- explain the policy adopted in relation to access and how relevant policies in local development documents have been taken into account
- provide information on any consultation undertaken regarding access and how the outcome of this has informed the development proposals
- explain access for emergency services where relevant

For outline applications where access is reserved, the statement should clearly explain the principles which will be used to inform the access arrangements for the final development at all scales from neighbourhood movement patterns where appropriate to the treatment of individual access points to buildings.

Please note that the above information is for guidance only. Applicants and agents are also advised to refer to DCLG Circular 01/2006 and the documents referred to therein, the Amendment of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Regulations 1990 (S.I.2006 No.1063) and ‘Design and access statements: How to write, read and use them’, CABE 2006 (www.cabe.org.uk).