

Design and Access Statements

Information Sheet – Stratford on Avon District Council- July 2006

From 10 August 2006, the majority of new applications must be supported by Design and Access Statements.

All outline and full planning applications will require Design and Access Statements, unless they are for:

- Planning applications for householder developments outside of 'designated areas' (Conservation Areas, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Sites of Special Scientific Interest);
- Planning applications for changes of use which do not involve building works or other operational works; or
- Planning applications for engineering or mining operations, e.g. formation of a new track across a field.

All Listed Building Consent applications will require Design and Access Statements.

Other types of application will not require Design and Access Statements, e.g. Advertisement applications, Hazardous substance applications, Tree applications, Agricultural Notifications and Telecommunication Notifications.

It is important to note that this means that all applications for householder extensions and other minor works to residential properties in Conservation Areas and AONBs will require Design and Access Statements.

The statement should be appropriate to the scale of the proposal, e.g. householder developments will normally require only brief statements, while statements supporting major development proposals will need to be extensive.

Design

Design statements should demonstrate the thought that has gone into the design and the relationship of the proposal to the site, the locality and the policy context. The design aspect of the statement should specifically address the issues of the amount, layout, scale, appearance and landscaping of the proposed development.

Design Statements submitted with planning applications should:

- Explain the design principles and design concept;
- State what pre-application consultations have taken place on the issue of design, and explain how this has informed the design process.
- Outline how these are reflected in the development's layout, density, scale, visual appearance and landscape;
- Explain how the design relates to its site and wider area (through a full site and area appraisal where appropriate), and to the purpose of the proposed development;
- Explain how the development will meet the Stratford-on-Avon District Design Guide objectives and other relevant planning policies relating to design;
- Include a summary where this would be of value in public consultation;

- Include appropriate photographs, plans and drawings to illustrate the points made in the statement; and
- In relation to all applications for listed building consent, the statement should demonstrate a knowledge and understanding of the building's historical development, and outline the design principles that have been applied to the scale, layout and appearance of the works.

Access

The access part of the statement does not extend to details of the internal layout of buildings. However, it will require an assessment of how all users, including disabled people, will have equal and convenient access to the development, including to the building(s) and the spaces around them.

The statement should:

- Explain the overall approach to access in the proposal, explaining how Local Plan policies DEV.4 (Access), DEV.5 (Car parking) and DEV.9 (Access for people with disabilities) have been taken into account; and
- State what pre-application consultations have taken place on the issue of access, and explain how this has informed the design process.

The statement should then proceed to deal with the following points:

- Access to and within the site by pedestrians and cyclists;
- Access to and within the site by public transport;
- Access to and within the site by emergency vehicles and other large vehicles;
- Specific details regarding access to and within the site, and into any buildings, for people with disabilities;
- Provision of car/lorry/coach parking;
- Traffic generation; and
- Highway safety.

In looking at these points, the following issues should be dealt with where appropriate:

- Will all users, regardless of disabilities, be able to enter the site, move around the site, enter buildings and use the facilities?
- Will the place be logical, obvious, simple and convenient to use, with appropriate links to surrounding movement networks?
- Will the place be safe to use?
- Is the road/pathway/cycleway design appropriate?
- Is there an appropriate balance between land used for motor vehicles and that used for buildings and open spaces?
- Will the development be flexible enough to accommodate changing travel demands?
- Will the development provide adequate access for the emergency services?

More detailed advice can be obtained in DCLG Circular 01/2006 – Guidance on Changes to the Development Control System, and forthcoming amendments to the Town and County Planning (General Development Procedural) Order (GDPO), both of which are available through www.opsi.gov.uk and www.dclg.gov.uk. For more detailed advice see CABE's guide: 'Design and Access Statements- How to write, read and use them' (<http://www.cabe.org.uk/AssetLibrary/8073.pdf>).