

# Design and Access Statements



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## What are they?

Statements are documents that explain the design thinking behind a planning application. For example, they should show that the person applying for permission (the applicant) has thought carefully about how everyone, including disabled people, older people and very young children, will be able to use the places they want to build.

## When will they be required?

The statutory requirement for applications to be accompanied by design and access statements comes into force on 10 August 2006. Design and access statements will be required for all applications made under the Town and Country Planning Acts including Listed Building applications except for applications:

1. relating to advertisement control,
2. for works to Trees covered by a Tree Preservation Order,
3. for storage of hazardous substances,
4. for a material change in the use of land or buildings, unless it also involves operational development,
5. for engineering or mining operations,
6. for Certificates of Lawfulness applications,
7. for development of an existing dwelling house or development within the curtilage of a dwelling house for any purpose incidental to the enjoyment of the dwelling house, **but they will be required** where any part of that dwelling house or curtilage is within a designated area. "Designated area" within this Borough means a Site of Special Scientific Interest or a Conservation Area.

You can find out where these designations apply either at the Civic Centre or by undertaking a property search on the Council's web site ([www.dartford.gov.uk](http://www.dartford.gov.uk)). This can be done via the Public Access module on the Planning pages. Alternatively, you can contact the Development Control section on 01322 343203 or at [planning.admin@dartford.gov.uk](mailto:planning.admin@dartford.gov.uk).

## What should statements include?

Statements should include a written description and explanation of the planning application. They should provide the opportunity for developers and designers to demonstrate their commitment to achieving good design and ensuring accessibility in the work they undertake, and allow them to show how they are meeting, or will meet the various obligations placed on them by legislation and policy. Sometimes photos, maps and drawings may be needed to further illustrate the points made. They will be available alongside the application for anyone to see, so should avoid jargon or overly technical language. It is important that they are written specifically for the application they accompany. They need not be very long, but the amount of detail they contain should reflect how

complex the application is. So, a statement for a major development is likely to be much longer than one for a single building.

Typically, they should include:

1. The design principles and concepts that have been applied to the development - i.e. relating to the amount, layout, scale, landscaping and appearance of the development, and how the design of the development takes into account its context.
2. How issues relating to access to the development have been dealt with – i.e. the policy adopted relating to access and how relevant Development Plan policies have been taken into account, whether any consultation has been undertaken, how any issues which might affect access have been addressed, how prospective users will be able to gain access to the development from the existing transport network, reasons for choosing the main points of access to the site and the layout of internal routes, and how features which ensure access will be maintained.
3. In relation to all applications for listed building consent, the design principles and concepts that have been applied to the scale, layout and appearance of the works, and how these and the adopted policy relating to access take account of the special architectural or historic importance of the building, any important physical features of the building, and the building's setting. The statement should include a brief explanation of how the design has taken account of paragraph 3.5 of PPG15 (Planning and the Historic Environment), and in particular:
  - the historic and special architectural importance of the building.
  - the particular physical features of the building that justify its designation as a listed building.
  - the building's setting.

The statement will need to explain and justify the approach to ensuring that the listed building preserves or enhances its special historic and architectural importance. Where there is potentially an aspect of design that will impact on this, the statement should explain why this is necessary, and what measures within the approach to design have been taken to minimise its impact.

Applications which need to be accompanied by a Design and Access Statement but are submitted without one will not be registered until the Statement has been received.

## **Further information**

Further information on design and access statements is available from

- "Design and Access Statements – How to write, read and use them". Published by CABE. This is available free at <http://www.cabe.org.uk/AssetLibrary/8073.pdf> .
- The Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) (Amendment) (England) Order 2006 sets out the legislative requirements. This is available free at [http://www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2006/uksi\\_20061062\\_en.pdf](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2006/uksi_20061062_en.pdf)
- Detailed advice from the Department of Communities and Local Government on Design and Access statements is provided in Circular 1/2006. This is also available free from [http://www.communities.gov.uk/pub/715/Circular0106DCLGGuidanceonChangestotheDevelopmentControlSystem\\_id1500715.pdf](http://www.communities.gov.uk/pub/715/Circular0106DCLGGuidanceonChangestotheDevelopmentControlSystem_id1500715.pdf) ).