

Design and Access Statements

Following advice from government in Circular 1/2006, the District Council will be unable to register certain planning applications unless they are accompanied by a Design and Access Statement, commencing **10th August 2006**.

A Design and Access Statement combines a range of information into one document and is used in support of an application. The aim of the statement is to explain how an application has evolved, to justify the detail of the proposal and, ultimately, to improve the overall quality of development. It will also help planning officers, statutory consultees, councillors and any other interested party to better understand the impacts and implications of a proposal.

General guidance on producing a Design and Access Statement is provided overleaf.

Design and Access Statements will be required for most applications, including applications for Outline and Full permission, although the content and length will vary depending on the complexity, sensitivity and detail of the application. They will usually include graphic material in explanation, in addition to text.

The following applications will not require a Design and Access Statement:

- ✎ A material change of use of land or buildings, unless it also involves operational development
- ✎ Engineering or mining operations
- ✎ Householder applications (unless in a designated area such as a Conservation Area)
- ✎ Advertisement consent
- ✎ Tree preservation orders
- ✎ Storage of hazardous waste



Further description on the content of Design Statements is available in the Huntingdonshire Design Guide, Part 1. Also, a guidance note entitled '*Design Statements - a guide for designers*' is available from the District Council.

Further information is also provided at www.huntsdc.gov.uk and www.cabe.org.uk.

Huntingdonshire

For further information contact: **Planning Services on 01480 388424**



Design and Access Statements will normally include an assessment of:

Design

The Statement should demonstrate how the physical characteristics of the scheme have been informed by a rigorous process which should include the following steps: **Assessment > Involvement > Evaluation > Design**. The statement should therefore *explain* the design outcome, not simply present it.

In detail, the following issues will normally require description and explanation - often by way of graphic material:

Use

What buildings and spaces will be used for.

Amount

How much would be built on the site

Layout

How the buildings and public spaces will be arranged on the site, and the relationship between them and the buildings and spaces around the site.

Scale

How big the buildings and spaces would be (their height, width and length).

Landscaping

How open spaces will be treated to enhance and protect the character of a place.

Appearance

What the building and spaces will look like, for example, buildings materials and architectural details.

The Council, acting as Local Planning Authority, will also be expecting to see how proposals have addressed issues of sustainable design and construction as part of the overall approach to design considerations.

Access

The Statement needs to include two potential aspects of access. That is not to say they are separate, and the statement should show that all access issues have been considered together:

Vehicular and Transport Links

Why access points and routes have been chosen, and how the site responds to road layout and public transport provision.

Inclusive Access

How everyone can get to and move through the place on equal terms regardless of age, disability, ethnicity or social grouping.

Design and Access Statements relating to **listed buildings** should be extended to include an assessment of and response to: the historic importance of building, particular physical features that justify designation and the building's setting. A guidance note entitled '*Access for All*' is available from the District Council, providing specific advice about provisions for access in an historic context.