

Design and Access Statements

In August 2006 changes to the Development Control System came into force that require many types of planning application to include a **design and access statement**.

Please note that these changes prohibit the planning authority from registering an application that is not accompanied by a design and access statement where one is required.

The following types of application **do not** require design and access statements:

- A material change in the use of land or buildings, unless it also involves operational development.
- Engineering or mining operations.
- 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, where no part of that dwelling house or curtilage is within a designated area. "Designated area" means a National Park, site of special scientific interest, conservation area, area of outstanding natural beauty, World Heritage Site and the Broads.

A design and access statement is a short report accompanying and supporting a planning 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 should set out how the applicant has considered the following elements:

- **The design process** – how the scheme has been informed by a rigorous process of assessment, involvement, evaluation and design
- **Amount**- how much will be built on the site
- **Use** – what the building and spaces will be used for
- **Layout** – how the buildings and public and private 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 will be
- **Appearance** – what the buildings and spaces will look like, for example, building materials and architectural details
- **Landscaping** – how open spaces will be treated to enhance and protect the character of a place
- **Access** – how everyone will get to and move through the place, and why the access points and routes have been chosen

The level of detail required in a design and access statement will depend on the scale and the complexity of the application, and the length of the statement will vary accordingly. Statements must be proportionate to the complexity of the application, but need not be long.

Further guidance on how to write a design and access statement is contained in the CABE guidance document "**Design and access statements: how to write, read and use them**".

This document is available from the CABE website: www.cabe.org.uk.