

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENTS – GUIDANCE NOTE 1

STATEMENTS REQUIRED TO ACCOMPANY APPLICATIONS FOR PLANNING PERMISSION

In June 2013 the statutory requirements for Design and Access Statement to accompany certain types of planning applications were amended¹. The following Guidance Notes explain the current requirements with the Council's expectations in respect of the requirements and the content of such documents.

What are Design and Access Statements?

Design & Access Statements must set out:

- the design principles and concepts have been applied to the development, and
- how issues relating to access to the development have been dealt with.

Statements will provide local authorities with a greater understanding of what is being proposed, why certain design decisions have been taken, and what the final development might look like in its context.

For what types of Planning Applications are Design and Access Statements needed?

Within Rother District, statements are now required for:

- **development which is major development** (UNLESS the development is restricted to only a material change of use of land or buildings, engineering or mining operations, or waste development)
- **the provision of one or more dwelling houses where any part of the development is in a Conservation Area**
- **the provision of a building or buildings* where any part of the development is in a Conservation Area and where the floor space created by the development is 100 sqm or more**

(*“building” includes any structure or erection, and any part of a building, including extensions.)

What must be included in a Design & Access Statement?

In summary, the statutory requirements for a Design and Access Statement to accompany an application for Planning Permission are that it shall:

- a) explain the design principles and concepts that have been applied to the development:**
this might be best achieved not just with written text, but also sketches, drawings, models, photographs and precedent examples where appropriate, sufficient to explain the particular proposals. Though specific sub-headings have now been removed from the statutory requirement, it might reasonably be anticipated that the explanation should cover the architectural and urban design approach to layout and disposition of development on the site, the character intended to be created by the development, and the rationale behind design decisions taken on matters such as scale, mass and building appearance, and the public realm.
- b) demonstrate the steps taken to appraise the context of the development and how the design of the development takes that account into context:**
a thorough appraisal of the site and context is usually a key early stage in the design process and is included as part of Policy EN3 ‘Design Quality’ in the Rother Core Strategy (submission version). Good advice on preparing site and context appraisals is produced by the English Historic Towns Forum via the following weblink: [EHTF Making Better Planning Applications.pdf](#). The appraisal must be evidenced in the statement, and again might be best achieved with a variety of material, including site photographs, annotated sketch plans and street-scene sections and elevations, drawings and models,

¹ The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) (Amendment) Order 2013

sufficient to explain the particular proposals in response to the context, with particular regard to existing on-site and neighbouring features such as buildings, topography, trees, hedgerows and other landscape features, and views. The statement should explain the design decisions taken accordingly with regard to siting, layout, and heights of proposed development, and treatment of landscape and public realm. Where proposals are in a Conservation Area, reference might usefully be made to the relevant parts of the Conservation Area Appraisal, where these exist. [Conservation Areas - Rother District Council](#)

c) explain the policy adopted as to access, and how policies relating to access in local development documents have been taken into account:

as appropriate to the scale of development, this should make reference to all users and modes of access to and around the development e.g. vehicular, cyclists, pedestrians, and with reference to provision for inclusion of disabled people. The statement should also explain how the proposal relates to and links existing and neighbouring movement networks; roads (including public transport), footpaths and the public realm and open spaces. It should also describe how the design, access points, layout and materials of roads and footpaths has been planned to achieve broader objectives including reducing vehicle speed, and creating places with a particular character. Useful reference can be made to the DfT's [Manual for Streets.pdf](#).

d) state what, if any, consultation has been undertaken on issues relating to access to the development, and what account has been taken of the outcome of any such consultation:

depending on the scale of the proposal, this may include consultation with local communities and disabled access groups, and technical advice from the local highway authority, transport consultants and engineers and urban designers.

e) explain how any specific issues which might affect access to the development have been addressed.

How to submit a Design & Access Statement.

For convenience, we have produced a *pro forma* to help structure a Design and Access Statement with reference to the above five points. This is available on our website via the following link [Design Access Statement Proforma 1 Planning Applications.pdf](#)

The additional information, e.g. sketches, photographs etc should be appended to this *pro forma* and the complete Statement submitted with your application.

Should you choose to prepare a separate stand-alone document for your Design and Access Statement, you should indicate on the *pro forma* the relevant pages of your document on which each of the five points are addressed, so that we may be sure the statutory requirements are fulfilled. However, additional information will always be welcomed.

We will be unable to register applications with inadequate Design and Access Statements.