

PLANNING APPLICATION DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Guidance for Applicants

Oxfordshire County Council is committed to achieving the highest quality design, adherence to sustainability principles and good inclusive access for all its development. Section 42 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) contains the requirement for Design and Access Statements to be submitted with most planning applications. There is no requirement for a statement with applications for engineering or mining operations, or for changes in the use of land or buildings.

The decisions made at the design stage have a fundamental effect on the way buildings and their surroundings can be used now and in the future. It is therefore important that the scheme is well thought through and the rationale explained. This guidance note sets out what the statement is and what it should include.

What is a Design and Access Statement?

A statement ensures that good design in its broadest sense is achieved in new development. It explains the rationale behind development proposals and justifies the solutions put forward.

The level of detail in a statement should be proportional to the complexity and scale of the development proposed

The DAS should be one statement containing both a design element and an access element

Design Element

- the amount
- the layout
- the scale
- landscaping
- the appearance of the development

Access Element

- the assessment of the site and surrounding development where relevant
- involvement of all consultee's and the local community
- how all users will have equal and convenient access to buildings, spaces and the public transport network
- how the development can adapt to change
- what policy has been adopted
- access for emergency services
- relationship to the Strategic Highway Network
- site parking and manoeuvring

Application template for producing a Design and Access Statement

1. Application details: Location of the proposal
Type of application
Name of agent
Name of applicant
2. Description: Summary of the nature of the development.
3. Date: When the design and access statement was first drafted then dates of any subsequent amendments to the statement.
4. Site Context: This section should include the following stages:
assessment of the physical (natural and built environments), economic and social characteristics of the context, details of any public involvement which has occurred and the subsequent evaluation of the site assessment. Any relevant planning policies and designations (e.g. conservation areas) should also be discussed.
5. Design principles applied to the proposal: This section should include: use; amount; layout; scale; landscaping and appearance of the proposal. However, this section does not necessarily have to explicitly include each of these headings. This section should conclude with the design of the proposal.
6. Access provision philosophy: This section should include the attitude towards pedestrian/ cyclist and vehicular access together with access for mobility impaired groups. How any consultation has influenced the proposal, in terms of access, should be mentioned here.
7. Site access proposals: This section will draw strongly on the assessment of the site context undertaken earlier in the process. To include site position and approach to the site including access routes for motor vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists and public transport. Internal site layout should also be mentioned here along with how a variety of disability groups have been accommodated in the proposal.
8. Maintenance: This section should include maintenance needs and methods.
9. A copy of the statement should be handed to the final occupier so that it can be used in the future to influence any future developments on site to maintain a coherent attitude to design and access. It may also be useful for the management of the development.
10. Inclusion of accurate, informative visual aids such as maps, photos and diagrams will significantly assist in illustrating your statement

Please note if your application requires a Design and Access Statement, it cannot be registered as valid unless it is accompanied by one.