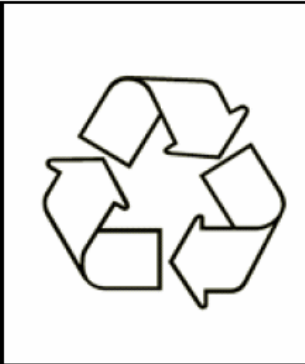


# Design, Sustainability and Access Statements



June 2006

**Advice**

**Planning**

**Supplementary**

## June 2006

*This guidance was adopted by the Executive on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2006 and forms part of the Urban Design Action Plan for the Borough.*

The Royal Borough of Kingston is committed to achieving the highest quality design in all new development. We therefore need your help in achieving this by the submission of the following written Statements in support of your planning application.

Your planning application may be invalid if it is not accompanied by the relevant statements.

### Householder applications

All applications relating to domestic extensions, alterations or single dwelling houses will require a Design Statement (Please refer to grey boxes)
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### All other applications

**A. Design Statements** should be submitted with all planning applications with the exception of:

- Applications for a change of use.
- Minor elevational alterations.
- Minor engineering operations.
- Tree preservation orders

**B. Sustainability Statements** should be submitted for all commercial development and new build residential development.

**C. Access Statements should be submitted with the following types of planning application:**

- Residential applications involving the construction of one or more newly built dwellings.
- Applications for change of use.
- Non domestic applications involving new buildings or alterations to existing buildings.

## A. DESIGN STATEMENTS

### What is a Design Statement?

A design Statement should demonstrate how good design has been taken into account in drawing up the development proposals. Its purpose is to improve the design of all new development. It should include a site analysis, set out the design principles and produce design solutions. You will therefore need to show the following:

- The principles/ factors that have influenced your design.
- How your design respects its surroundings and will help to improve the local environment.
- How your design relates to Development Plan policies and any relevant Supplementary Planning Guidance.
- How your design relates to Government planning advice.

A design statement helps to explain the rationale behind the design. It minimises the potential for costly and time-consuming re-design and any potential delays once the application is submitted.

Design Statements are being requested in accordance with Planning Policy Guidance Note 1: General Policy and Principles (PPG1), issued by the government in 1997 and The London Plan: Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London, Policy 4B.1 issued by the Greater London Authority in February 2004.

### What should be included in a Design Statement?

The design statement should include a written statement setting out the design principles adopted as well as illustrative material.

#### **Householder Applications**

- You must submit a short written Design Statement taking account of the relevant issues in Steps 1 and 2 below.
- You must include plans, elevations and photographs, which should show the relationship of the proposal to its surroundings.

#### **All Other Applications**

- You must submit a comprehensive written Design Statement, which addresses the issues in Steps 1 and 2 below.
- You must include perspective drawings, annotated sketches/photographs and street scene drawings, identifying the key features of the site appraisal and the design principles.
- If the site is particularly complex then it may be helpful to produce three-dimensional drawings or an architectural model.

# How do I produce a Design Statement?

## Step 1

### Constraints and Opportunities

This should include an assessment of the character of the site itself and the surrounding area identifying key features. The following may be appropriate for the proposed development:

#### Householder Applications

Building form and massing; The height and shape of adjoining buildings on and adjacent to the site; building styles; architectural details and materials; means of access; spaces between buildings; effect on any historic buildings or structures and conservation areas; changes of levels; trees, hedges, and boundary treatments; orientation.

#### All Other Applications

In addition to the above, more complex proposals need to address: Topography; contaminated soils and filled areas; local or strategic views; wider access issues (including connection points and pedestrian routes); public transport nodes; microclimate and noise sources; infrastructure constraints such as underground services and drainage systems; ecological features such as watercourses, ponds, or habitats for protected species.

## Step 2

### Identify the Design Principles

These principles should be the main criteria, which the design needs to achieve and may include the following:

#### Householder Applications

- The key constraints and opportunities of the site, which will have been identified in the site analysis in Step 1 above.
- Other planning requirements and policies such as those set out in the Unitary Development Plan or Supplementary Planning Guidance.
- Impact on neighbours e.g. loss of light, overlooking, noise etc.

#### All Other Applications

In addition to the above the following will need to be considered: -

- Development objectives.
- The creation of public and private space.
- Access for vehicular, cyclists, pedestrians and for the less mobile.
- Impact on travel patterns.
- Potential for any other sustainable development components.

An effective assessment explains how any apparent conflict between development objectives and site characteristics may be resolved and high quality design achieved.

## **Step 3**

### **Create Design Solutions**

This section should explain how your proposed design responds to the site analysis and the design principles you have identified and benefits the local environment. It may help you to discuss your preferred design solution with the Council's planning officers before you submit your formal application.

## **B. SUSTAINABILITY STATEMENTS**

### **What is a Sustainability Statement?**

A Sustainability Statement should demonstrate how sustainability issues have been addressed during the design process. (See UDP Policies and the Council's Sustainable Construction Guide available from Planning & Development).

### **What should be included in a Sustainability Statement?**

The statement should address the following issues:

- Energy conservation including layout, orientation and insulation of buildings.
- The embodied energy and transport costs of materials including proposals for the use of local materials.
- The use of renewable energy.
- The feasibility of using community heating in conjunction with combined heat and power.
- How opportunities for walking, cycling and ease of access to public transport are to be provided and made convenient and attractive.
- An assessment of the quality of life or "health" of the building through utilising natural light and ventilation, sound insulation and non toxic materials.
- Water conservation through rainwater harvesting, grey water recycling, low use fittings and permeable storm water drainage systems.
- How waste is to be minimised through the use of recycled material and the recycling of demolition waste.
- How waste storage facilitates recycling, the handling of biodegradable waste and new waste technologies.
- How biodiversity can be maximised and designed into new developments.

## **C. ACCESS STATEMENTS**

### **What is an Access Statement?**

An Access Statement should give full details of the way in which the principles of inclusive design have been incorporated into the proposed development.

Inclusive design recognises peoples' differing needs and accommodates them in a way that is universal. It provides a single solution for all users of a building, avoiding separate facilities for disabled people. The result is an environment which is not only accessible, but is *fully inclusive*, which is more satisfactory, both aesthetically and practically.

Applicants should therefore adopt the principles of inclusive design, so that the resulting building is usable by everyone. In the case of new build, the provision of ramps should not be necessary as level access can be achieved in all but the most difficult of terrains.

### **What should be included in an Access Statement?**

The access statement should clearly identify:

- The philosophy and approach to inclusive design
- The key access considerations for the particular scheme
- The sources of access advice and guidance used
- How the principles of inclusive design have been implemented in the scheme
- How inclusion will be maintained and managed in the use of the scheme

As with Design Statements, the exact form of the access statement will depend on the size, nature and complexity of the scheme. For example, alterations to a shopfront may include a brief description, indicating how the issue of access has been dealt with given the opportunities and constraints of the site, backed up by a plan showing door dimensions, threshold details etc.

Comprehensive advice on access statements can be found on the Disability Rights Commission's website [www.drc.org.uk](http://www.drc.org.uk).

With respect to a major development, more substantial details will be required demonstrating how the following issues are being addressed; but this is not an exhaustive list.

- Transport links
- Approaches to and around the site
- Car parking, setting down points and garaging
- Entering the development, including the buildings
- Circulation routes and layout
- Use of surfacing materials

- Facilities in the building(s)
- Way finding and signage
- Evacuation

The access statement should explain how the needs of users of the development (including disabled people) are incorporated into the design of the scheme, and should be accompanied by plans showing circulation routes, facilities, dimensions etc. The developer is encouraged to seek the services of an access consultant (reference can be made to the National Register of Access Consultants for qualified consultants).

The applicant should consider the implications of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 when designing the scheme, to ensure that the design and management are in accordance with the Act. Access Statements are also a requirement of:

- The London Plan: Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London, Policy 4B.5 issued by the Greater London Authority in February 2004.
- Part M of the Building Regulations (2004 edition of the Approved Document).
- Planning and Access for Disabled People: Good Practice Guide, ODPM 2003, paragraph 7.5.

## **Access Statements for residential applications**

There are some additional requirements for Access Statements if residential development is involved. These requirements relate to Lifetime Homes and Wheelchair Housing.

### **Lifetime Homes**

All new housing in the borough should be designed to Lifetime Homes standards. This is a requirement of the London Plan (Policy 3A.4 Housing Choice). Kingston's UDP supports the idea that accessible housing benefits everybody, but it refers to Mobility Housing (Policy H11), which is now an outdated concept. The Council will not therefore seek Mobility Housing on new developments, but will ensure that all new dwellings are built to Lifetime Home standards in accordance with London Plan Policy 3A.4.

Current Building Regulations (Part M) do not require Lifetime Home standards and building control surveyors and approved inspectors do not, therefore, have a statutory obligation to assess compliance with these standards. It is therefore necessary to check compliance at the planning application stage. Applicants should ensure that plans (marked up with appropriate dimensions) submitted for planning permission, together with the accompanying Access Statement, explain how each of the 16 design criteria for Lifetime Homes (see Appendix 1) has been satisfied in the proposal.

## **The provision of lifts in blocks of flats**

Lifetime Home criterion 5 sets access standards for communal stairs and lifts. It does not state the circumstances in which either stairs or lifts should be provided.

The Council's view is that a Part M compliant lift is necessary in all new developments where dwellings are accessed above the ground floor. This will enable people to access their homes when they can no longer use stairs easily, or at all, in accordance with the overall purpose of Lifetime Homes Standards.

## **Wheelchair housing**

Policy H12 of the Royal Borough of Kingston Unitary Development Plan: First Alteration (adopted August 2005) states "In developments of 20 or more dwelling units on suitable sites, the Council will seek to negotiate with the developer for an appropriate proportion of the units, consistent with the established need in the borough, to be constructed to wheelchair housing specifications."

London Plan Policy 3A.4 seeks to ensure that 10% of (all) new housing is designed to be wheelchair accessible.

Taking these policies together, the Council will seek more than 10% of dwellings to be constructed to wheelchair standards on developments of 20 or more dwellings, with the aim of ensuring that 10% of all new dwellings are wheelchair accessible.

Full guidance on wheelchair housing standards is given in Appendix 2.

## **Marketing accessible housing**

It is self-evident that accessible housing gives no benefit unless potential purchasers are aware of the accessibility features. When marketing homes built to Lifetime Homes standards, the developer should draw potential purchasers'/occupiers' attention to the features that lend adaptability, particularly those features, such as trimmed joists to facilitate the installation of a future through-floor lift and reinforced walls to take future grab rails in bathrooms, that are not evident from a casual inspection of the dwelling.

With regard to wheelchair accessible dwellings, developers should market exclusively to wheelchair users for the first six months, including advertising in specialist publications as may be recommended by the Council's Access Officer, to ensure that wheelchair users have an opportunity to acquire the few specifically designed dwellings available.

## **Further Help**

The Council encourages pre submission advice. Further help can be obtained from the following contacts:

Planning & Development Department  
020 8547 5330

Jane Young (RBK Access Officer)  
020 8547 5314

# Appendix I

## Lifetime Homes standards

The main criteria of the Lifetime Homes standards are listed below, but full design guidance is contained in 'Meeting Part M and Designing Lifetime Homes' published in 1999 by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, ISBN 1 85935 051 8. This is downloadable from [www.jrf.org.uk](http://www.jrf.org.uk) or hard copy can be purchased for £19.95. Both the Joseph Rowntree publication and this document will be used to determine compliance with Lifetime Home standards for planning purposes.

The 16 Lifetime Homes criteria are as follows:

- 1) The width of the approach, excluding space for a parked car, should take account of the needs of a wheelchair, stick or crutch user. Excluding the car parking space, the path should not be less than 900mm wide. In-curtilage car parking spaces must be capable of enlargement to 3300mm width (generally by having a 900mm path or garden strip adjacent to the 2400mm space for a car).
- 2) Parking should be adjacent or kept to a minimum distance from the dwelling and convenient for disabled people.
- 3) The approach to all entrances should be level or gently sloping.
- 4) All entrances should be illuminated and have accessible level access over the threshold level and the main entrance should be covered. Where the approach to an entrance is ramped, there should be a level landing minimum 1200x1200mm in front of the entrance door.
- 5) Communal stairs should provide easy access and where homes are reached by a lift, it should be fully wheelchair accessible (including minimum internal dimensions of 1100x1400mm and fittings to Part M standard).<sup>1</sup>
- 6) Internal doorways and hallways should be wide enough to allow wheelchair users to manoeuvre into and out of rooms (including one that contains a toilet). Front doors should have a clear opening width of 800mm and internal doors a clear opening width of 750mm. When the approach is not head-on and the corridor width is only 900mm, the doorway clear opening width should be 900mm. There should be 300mm space allowance between any corner and the opening edge of any doors at entrance level. Door and corridor widths should conform to the following:

Doorway clear opening width (mm)	Corridor/passageway width (mm)
750	900 (when approach is head on)

<sup>1</sup> The Council's view is that a Part M compliant lift is necessary in all new developments where dwellings are accessed above the ground floor. This will enable people to access their homes when they can no longer use stairs easily, or at all, in accordance with the overall purpose of Lifetime Homes Standards.

750	1200 (when approach is not head on)
775	1050 (when approach is not head on)
900	900 (when approach is not head on)

- 7) There should be space for turning a wheelchair in dining areas and sitting rooms and adequate circulation space for wheelchair users elsewhere. Where furniture layout is shown, a 1500mm diameter or 1800x1400mm elliptical turning space should be shown. In kitchens a minimum 1200mm space between units and the opposite wall will suffice.
- 8) The living room should be at entrance/ground level.
- 9) In houses of two or more storeys, there should be space on the entrance level that could be used as a convenient bed space.
- 10) There should be an accessible entrance level toilet incorporating drainage provision for a future shower.
  - a) In smaller units (2 bedrooms or smaller) it is sufficient for this toilet to comply with Approved Document M, i.e.:
    - There should be clear space to enable a wheelchair user to access the WC, unimpeded by the washbasin.
    - The clear useable space between the front of the WC bowl and the opposite door or wall should be at least 750mm, and the distance from the central line of the cistern to the adjacent wall should be at least 450mm.
    - Where oblique access is needed, there should be a minimum of 250mm to the side of the door.
  - b) In larger units (3 bedrooms or more) on more than one floor, the WC should be fully wheelchair accessible, such that:
    - A wheelchair user can close the door when inside the toilet. An outward opening door will normally be required.
    - Drainage and space for a future shower should ideally be incorporated in the WC compartment or, if this is not possible, located nearby.
    - There should be a minimum 1100mm between the WC pan front rim and the opposite wall.
    - There should be at least 700mm clear space beside the WC to enable side-transfer from a wheelchair.
- 11) Walls in bathrooms and toilets should be capable of taking adaptations such as handrails, i.e. should be reinforced between 300 and 1500mm above floor level.
- 12) The design should incorporate:

- a) Provision for a future stair-lift. There should be a minimum of 900mm clear distance between the stair wall and the edge of the opposite stair-rail or balustrade. Unobstructed landing space is needed at the top and bottom of the stairs.
  - b) Suitably identified space for a potential through-floor lift from the ground to the first floor, for example to a bedroom next to a bathroom. This is usually accomplished by trimming the joists.
- 13) The design should provide for a reasonable route for a potential hoist from a main bedroom to the bathroom. This is best provided by incorporating a knock-out panel between the main bedroom and an area of the bathroom unobstructed by fixtures and fittings, although a route via the landing is acceptable.
- 14) The bathroom should be designed to incorporate ease of access to the bath, toilet and wash basin. This will normally require an outward opening door, and 1100mm between the front rim of the WC pan and the opposite wall.
- 15) Living room window glazing should begin at 800mm or lower and windows should be easy to open and operate.
- 16) Switches, sockets, ventilations and service controls should be at a height usable by all - between 450mm and 1200mm from the floor.

## **Further information on Lifetime Homes Standards**

Guidance is also available at [www.lifetimehomes.org.uk](http://www.lifetimehomes.org.uk) (although this site should not be used for detailed design specification), and in Accessible London – SPG to the London Plan 2004, available online at

[http://www.london.gov.uk/mayor/strategies/sds/accessible\\_london.jsp](http://www.london.gov.uk/mayor/strategies/sds/accessible_london.jsp)

## Appendix 2

### Wheelchair housing standards

Wheelchair Housing, i.e. housing specifically designed to meet the needs of wheelchair users, should be built according to the guidance available from 'Wheelchair Housing Design Guide' by Stephen Thorpe, 2006 edition, available from [www.brepres.com](http://www.brepres.com) (ISBN 1860818978, code ep70, £40.00) and should incorporate the following key features:

#### Approach

- Level or gently sloping route to all external entrances, and to external facilities such as storage, parking, bin store, garden and clothes drying area.
- Paths slip resistant and smooth, minimum width 1200mm.
- Ramps to be avoided.
- Path gateways to provide minimum 850mm clear opening width.
- Good cover at point of transfer from vehicle to wheelchair.

#### Parking

- Located adjacent to the front entrance
- Under cover
- 3.6metres wide
- Located beside a 900mm wide path connecting the front door, parking bay and the adjacent road

#### Entrance

- Entrance to be covered and well lit.
- Entrance landing to be level, and min 1500x1500mm
- All external doors to give 800mm clear opening and to have accessible thresholds.

#### Internal circulation

- Corridors minimum 900mm wide, 1200mm wide where 90° turn necessary and 1500mm wide where 180° turn necessary.
- Internal doorways to give minimum 775mm clear opening width and to have level thresholds.
- Provision for storage and recharging of battery-operated wheelchair.
- Minimum turning space inside entrance 1200x1500mm

- Rooms all on one level or accessible by wheelchair accessible lift. Where lift required, to comply with BS5900 (1991).
- Bedrooms, living rooms and dining rooms with adequate space for wheelchair users to turn through 180° with furniture in place i.e. turning circle 1500mm or ellipse 1800x1400mm.
- Main bedroom to bathroom connected by full height knockout panel, or other means.
- Suitable provision for future hoist to run between main bedroom and bathroom.
- Kitchen layout provides effective and appropriate space for use by a wheelchair user. Clear manoeuvring area minimum 1800x1400mm.
- Bathroom layout ensures independent approach/transfer to and use of all fittings, including manoeuvring space clear of fittings.
- Extra space in bathroom for both bath and shower with at least one to be fully installed. Shower area to be wheelchair accessible with floor drain.
- Suitable controls of mains water stopcock, gas and electric main consumer units. Suitable isolating valves to sink, washing machine etc.
- Glazing line in living/dining/bedrooms no higher than 800mm above room floor level.