



Wigan Access Committee

# LDF

WIGAN LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

## A guidance note on Design and Access for All

**Design and  
Access Statement  
templates are  
included.**

This guidance note explains the importance of creating a well designed and accessible environment that everyone can use. It offers advice on how to create such an environment.

It explains both the requirement to submit a Design and Access Statement and how to prepare one, including advice on where to find further information to help with this.

Updated January 2008



Environmental Services Department

# Will your proposal provide an accessible environment that everyone can use?

## What is an accessible environment?

It is an environment that is easily used, safe, predictable, well designed, used by all regardless of age, gender or disability and recognises the different ways people will use it.

## Why should an accessible environment be provided?

Everyone, but particularly people with disabilities, older people, and families with young children, will benefit from intelligent, logical and accessible design of buildings and the built environment.

## Why think about this now?

It is more cost effective to make the environment accessible to all at the early design stage than to make adjustments later. Making provision for this from the start will result in a more attractive design.

## What requirements are there to do this?

Through the planning application procedure we control development to ensure it is of good quality and complies with the Unitary Development Plan. To comply it must ensure the highest standards of accessibility and inclusion. The Supplementary Planning Document on Access for All shows the main requirements that a development proposal will need to meet to show that the design meets these standards. Guidance on how to achieve this is given in the Supplementary Planning Document. Development proposals that fail to comply may be refused permission.

Building design and construction is governed by the Building Regulations. Part M of the Regulations sets minimum legal standards for access and use of buildings by all building users, including disabled people. Part M covers new buildings, extensions and alterations to existing buildings and certain changes of use. Meeting the requirements of Part M may affect the size and design of your proposal. It is vital this is taken into account at the early design stage before being submitted for planning approval.

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 introduced new measures aimed at ending the discrimination

which many disabled people face. The main driving force of the legislation is to improve disabled peoples' access to employment, education, and services such as shops and restaurants. Service providers must take reasonable steps to overcome any physical barriers which continue to make their services impossible or unreasonably difficult for disabled people to use.

## What creates an accessible, inclusive environment?

The use of the Access Design Chain at the design stage can help to create an accessible, inclusive environment. It is a logical way of thinking of movement from one place to another. The individual links address different issues and if put together successfully should create an accessible environment.

## How can you show your commitment to provide an accessible environment?

A Design and Access Statement provides an opportunity to demonstrate an integrated approach and commitment to creating an accessible environment. It must be specific and relate directly to the individual site and proposal being submitted for planning permission. A Design and Access Statement provided as part of a planning application can be developed further into one suitable for building control purposes.

The level of detail contained will vary according to the size, nature and complexity of the proposal. For example, alterations to a shop front may only need to give a brief description of how an issue such as provision of level or adequately ramped access has been taken into account. However, a larger development proposal may need to demonstrate that the location and orientation of buildings within a site are the most appropriate in terms of gradients and distances. The number of accessible car parking spaces and travel distance from them to the main entrance should be indicated. Details of dropping off points should also be given.

Any information contained in the statement should normally be shown on the plans and elevations submitted as part of the application. Photographs and illustrations can also be included.

# The Access Design Chain

## Approach

- Level or adequately ramped.
- Sufficient width and obstacle free.
- Firm, durable, slip resistant surface.
- Well lit and clearly identified
- Dropped kerbs with tactile surfaces.
- Contrasting colour on bollards and street furniture if provided.

## Entrance

- Clear signing to the accessible entrance.
- Level or adequately ramped and stepped if necessary with appropriately designed handrails.
- Ramp gradients as shallow as possible.
- Level area in front of the door.
- Level threshold.
- Canopy at non-powered doors.
- Easy to open doors.
- Powered entrance doors are of benefit.
- Sufficiently wide door.
- Doors to have contrast.

## Receptions

- Provide hearing enhancement systems and lowered wheelchair accessible counters.
- Should be easily identifiable.

## Circulation

- Adequately wide corridors.
- Sufficiently wide doors.
- Clear, well lit signs.
- Colour contrast within the building.
- Corridors free of obstructions.

## Parking

- Adequate number of spaces for both disabled members of staff and visitors.
- Suitably designed and marked spaces.
- Spaces as close as possible to all accessible entrances.
- Dropped kerbs onto a level obstruction free route to the accessible entrance.
- Appropriately located and signed dropping off point.

## Lobbies

- Need to be of a size and shape to allow a wheelchair user to move clear of one door before opening the second door.
- Floor surface that does not impede movement, avoid matwells.

## Levels

- Provide a lifting device and suitable stairs to all storeys above and below ground.
- Ramps for internal changes within a storey.
- Any raised areas to be accessible to everyone.

## Facilities

- Adequate provision of wheelchair accessible unisex toilets.
- Provision of an enlarged cubicle in separate sex toilets.
- Where shower and changing facilities are included provide wheelchair accessible facilities.
- Provision of wheelchair accessible hotel bedrooms.
- Appropriately designed sockets and switches.

## Do I need to submit a Design and Access Statement?

Design and Access Statements are required for both outline and full planning applications except for:

- i** a material change in the use of land or buildings, unless it also involves operational development.
- ii** engineering or mining operations.
- iii** householder developments, unless any part of a dwelling house or its curtilage falls within a Conservation Area or site of special scientific interest.

They are not required for applications to display advertisements.

Most changes of use will also involve some physical alterations and consequently a Design and Access Statement is likely to be required for most change of use applications.

They will be required for all applications for Listed Building Consent and where there is a planning application submitted in parallel a combined statement can be submitted.

Design and Access Statements should meet the national requirements current at the time of submitting the application. The local planning authority can not accept an application unless it is accompanied by a Design and Access Statement when required. It is recommended that the format of any Design and Access Statement submitted should be in accordance with one of the enclosed templates, or be to an equivalent standard.

## How do I prepare a Design and Access Statement?

The Supplementary Planning Document on Access for All contains a section on Design and Access Statements. It describes the process that should be followed in preparing a statement, which starts with making an assessment of the site. Some applications may require further information and so a more detailed template is provided in the Supplementary Planning Document.

The Supplementary Planning Document shows the main requirements that a development will need to meet to show that a design creates an accessible environment and gives detailed design guidance on how to achieve these. It also gives a list of other useful sources of information that might help in the preparation of Design and Access Statements.

The Supplementary Planning Document can be viewed on Wigan Council's website at: <http://www.wigan.gov.uk>.

It would also be of benefit to look at the information contained in The Building Regulations 2000 Approved Document M Access to and use of buildings, which can be viewed at: <http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/england/professionals/en/4000000000988.html>

### Comments and contacts:

If you would like to discuss any aspect of creating an accessible environment, or if you have any comments on the guidance note, please contact Kathryn Barker, the Access Officer on **01942 404247**. Or visit our website at: [www.wigan.gov.uk](http://www.wigan.gov.uk)

For further information on Part M of the Building Regulations please contact John Mann, Principal Building Surveyor, on **01942 404296**.

This guidance note can be made available in other formats on request.

**Wigan Council Environmental Services Department  
Design and Access Statement Template for Planning Applications**

You are advised to read "A guidance note on Design and Access for All" and to refer to "The Supplementary Planning Document on Access for All". These are available from the department or can be viewed on the Council's website at [www.wigan.gov.uk](http://www.wigan.gov.uk)

**1. Type of Application:**

State if the application is for outline, full, reserved matters, or listed building consent.

**2. Location of proposed development:**

Provide the full address.

**3. Description of proposed development:**

Provide an accurate and detailed description.

**4. Date of Preparation:**

This is the date the original statement is prepared.

**5. Date of any amendments:**

This must be kept up to date to show accurately when changes have taken place to the original statement.

**6. Applicant:**

Provide the name only of the applicant.

**7. Agent:**

Provide the name, address (including postcode), telephone and fax number and email address of the agent.

**NB:** This information will be displayed on the Department's Website.

**8. Design principles and concepts applied to the proposal:**

This should include:

**Amount and Use of Development:** Give an explanation of the amount of development proposed (number of residential units and/or floorspace of other uses). State how this will be distributed across the site, how the proposal relates to the site's surroundings, and how all users will be able to gain access to and around the development.

**Layout:** An explanation should be given of why the layout has been chosen, and how it will fit in with its surroundings. Details which are important to creating an accessible environment, such as travel distances and gradients, and the orientation of buildings in relation to any site topography should be provided.

**Scale:** This means the size of buildings, including height, width and length and spaces between buildings. Explain and justify the scale of buildings proposed, including why particular heights have been chosen, and how these relate to the site's surroundings.

**Landscaping:** Explain the proposed landscaping scheme, including any hard landscaping, and demonstrate how it relates to the overall design concept. Where possible, a schedule of planting and proposed hard landscaping materials should be included.

**Appearance:** This is the aspect of the building that determines the visual impression it makes and includes its architecture, materials, decoration, lighting, colour and texture. Explain how these aspects will enhance the design and create an accessible environment. It should be demonstrated that early consideration has been given to the location and levels of lighting.

**8. (cont)**

Sustainability: An explanation should be given of the measures that have been incorporated within the design to ensure it complies with the principles of sustainable development contained in national planning guidance.

**9. Key access issues including the nature and impact of any constraints:**

Details are required of how the development will create an accessible environment. Explain how any specific issues which might affect this have been addressed. For buildings it may be useful to explain how the internal access will be designed, provided and used as this affects the way the building looks and works.

The Supplementary Planning Document on Access for All show the main requirements that a development will need to meet to create an accessible environment and gives detailed design guidance that will help you. Sufficient information must be provided here to show that the relevant requirements can be met.

Where factors, such as existing structures or the site geography, act to constrain the creation of an accessible environment an explanation of the individual constraints should be included. Where a deviation from the relevant design guidance is proposed this should be outlined with an explanation of its effectiveness. If a relevant requirement cannot be met you must give an explanation why, with any proposed alternative.

**10. Vehicular and Transport links**

Where relevant explain how prospective users will be able to access the development from the existing transport network. State why the main points of access to the site and the layout of access routes within the site have been chosen.

**11. Consultation undertaken:**

Details of consultations with planners, conservation officers, access officers, local access groups, police architectural liaison officers, occupiers of surrounding properties and existing /future building users should be given including how the outcome has influenced the proposal.

**12. Commitment to maintaining a relevant Design and Access Statement:**

A commitment should be given that the Access Statement will be maintained and updated as work on the development progresses through the various stages, such as reserved matters or Building Regulations application. It should be given to the end user of the development. It will provide them with a record of decisions that had an impact on access and may need to be taken into account in the management of the scheme.

**13. Design Standards and Guidance followed :**

All design standards followed should be listed. If a standard is only being used for part of a proposal this should be indicated.

The Supplementary Planning Document on Access for All will help identify access standards and guidance relevant to the proposal.

A Design and Access Statement submitted as part of a Building Regulations application will need to be developed further to demonstrate the proposal meets those regulations. The statement should detail any departures from the guidance in Approved Document M with reasons and rationale for the chosen design approach.

**Wigan Council Environmental Services Department  
Design and Access Statement Template for  
Planning Applications relating to existing buildings.**

If your proposal relates to development at an existing building, such as an extension or new shop front you may find this template more appropriate to use. Whilst it will give a guide to the information required it is possible you may be asked to provide some additional information after the application has been registered.

You are advised to read "A guidance note on Design and Access for All" and to refer to "The Supplementary Planning Document on Access for All". These are available from the department or can be viewed on the Council's website at [www.wigan.gov.uk](http://www.wigan.gov.uk)

**1. Location of proposed development:**

Provide the full address.

**2. Description of proposed development:**

Provide an accurate and detailed description.

**3. Date of Preparation:**

This is the date the original statement is prepared.

**4. Date of any amendments:**

This must be kept up to date to show accurately when changes have taken place to the original statement.

**5. Applicant:**

Provide the name only of the applicant.

**6. Agent:**

Provide the name, address (including postcode), telephone and fax number and email address of the agent.

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**7. Design principles and concepts applied to the proposal:**

The level of detail required will depend on the complexity of the proposal but should include some detail on the following:

**Existing Building:** A short description of the location of the building should be provided, for example say if it is in a town centre. It is helpful to know details of any land attached to the building and whether it is bounded by other buildings. Provide details of any existing car parking provision, including the number and lay out of spaces designated for disabled people and state if these are to be affected by the proposal. Explain the route from these to the entrance. Give details of whether the entrance is level or ramped, or has steps, including the number of steps.

**Scale:** This means explaining and justifying the scale of the proposed development in relation to the size of the existing building and how it will relate to the site's surroundings.

**Landscaping:** If any landscaping is proposed, including any hard landscaping, give details of the design. Where possible, a schedule of planting and proposed hard landscaping materials should be included.

**Appearance:** Describe the style and materials of the existing building, especially commenting on any special features. Explain how the design, materials, decoration, lighting, and colour of the proposed extension or alteration to the building will enhance the design and ensure the building is accessible.

**7. (cont)**

**Sustainability:** An explanation should be given of any measures that have been incorporated within the design to ensure it complies with the principles of sustainable development contained in national planning guidance.

**8. Key access issues including the nature and impact of any constraints:**

Detail how the design of the extension or alteration will make the building accessible to all. Explain how any specific issues which might affect this have been addressed. It may be useful to explain how the internal access works. If your proposal has no impact on access into and around the building it is important to explain this.

The Supplementary Planning Document on Access for All show the main requirements that a development, including alterations and extensions to existing buildings, will need to meet to create an accessible environment and gives detailed design guidance that will help you. Sufficient information must be provided here to show that the relevant requirements can be met.

Where factors, such as working within the restrictions of an existing building, act to constrain the creation of an accessible environment an explanation of the individual constraints should be included. Where a deviation from the relevant design guidance is proposed this should be outlined with an explanation of its effectiveness. If a relevant requirement cannot be met you must give an explanation why, with any proposed alternative.

**9. Commitment to maintaining a relevant Design and Access Statement:**

A commitment should be given that the Access Statement will be maintained and updated as work on the development progresses through the various stages, such as reserved matters or Building Regulations application. It should be given to the end user of the development. It will provide them with a record of decisions that had an impact on access and may need to be taken into account in the management of the scheme.

**10. Design Standards and Guidance followed:**

All design standards followed should be listed. If a standard is only being used for part of a proposal this should be indicated.

The Supplementary Planning Document on Access for All will help identify access standards and guidance relevant to the proposal.

A Design and Access Statements submitted as part of a Building Regulations application will need to be developed further to demonstrate the proposal meets the requirements of those regulations. The statement should detail any departures from the guidance in Approved Document M with reasons and the rationale for the chosen design approach.