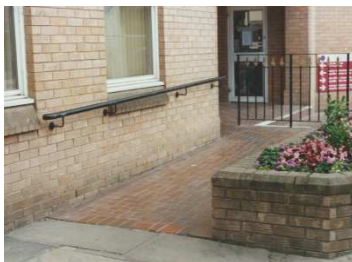


Design and Access Statements



This information note has been prepared by the Wrexham County Borough Council Planning Department to provide guidance to applicants/agents on the requirements for, and suggested content of, Design and Access Statements (DAS). This guidance should not be treated as definitive, but is intended to assist applicants, agents and developers to consider the design and access issues relevant to their development proposals. However there may be further issues that should be considered when a scheme is designed and subsequently discussed in the DAS that have not been covered by this information note.

Available in accessible formats on request



Requirement

DAS are required by law for most planning applications, whether outline or full. Applications submitted without them are invalid and cannot be registered until one is submitted. However there are a very limited number of exceptions:

- applications for engineering or mineral operations, such as quarrying;
- extensions to existing dwellings or erection of buildings within the curtilage (garden) of a dwelling for private domestic use, such as garages, shed, greenhouses etc;
- changes of use of land or buildings. But where it will be necessary to provide access for employees, or where the use involves the provision of services to members of the public a statement dealing with access issues only is required.

DAS are required for all applications for listed building consent. However the statement will not need to consider access issues if internal works only are proposed.

DAS is not required for applications that are not for planning permission or listed building consent (e.g. applications relating to

advertisement control, works to trees affected by tree preservation orders or storage of hazardous substances).

Because applications for approval of reserved matters are not applications for planning permission, there is no mandatory requirement for DAS to be submitted with them. However, a DAS is supposed to provide information about how a scheme has developed through different design stages and applications for reserved matters approval should therefore include an updated version of any DAS submitted with the outline application to reflect any changes since that one was written.

Purpose

A DAS is a report submitted with applications for planning permission and listed building consent to show how the five objectives of good design have been applied to a particular proposal, or where they haven't to explain why. The five objectives are;

- 1. Accessibility;**
- 2. Environmental sustainability;**
- 3. Character;**
- 4. Community safety;**
- 5. Movement to, from and within the development.**



Planning for Sustainable Buildings' guidance can be downloaded from: wales.gov.uk

The need for a DAS should make developers more aware of issues that they need to consider when designing their schemes, assist the Council and external consultees to consider applications as well as helping the local community to understand proposals for development. The DAS should not be a document simply written to accompany a planning application. It should provide an account of the whole design process from when a site was purchased/leased, to initial ideas right through to the final design stage.

Length and Content

The length of a DAS will vary depending on the type and size of development and how complex the associated design and access requirements are. However, as a minimum DAS for planning applications should explain how design objectives have been applied to the development in relation to the following aspects; accessibility, environmental sustainability, character, community safety and movement to, from and within the development.

For applications for listed building consent, the DAS should, as a minimum, explain how the design objectives have been applied in relation to the following aspects; appearance, environmental sustainability, layout, scale and accessibility.



In addition to a written report, it is strongly recommended that plans, photographs or other illustrations are included in a DAS. However care should be taken to avoid duplicating other information submitted with an application. Instead, the DAS should cross-refer to other documents, which could include site and elevations plans, Transport Assessments, ecological assessments or energy performance assessments.

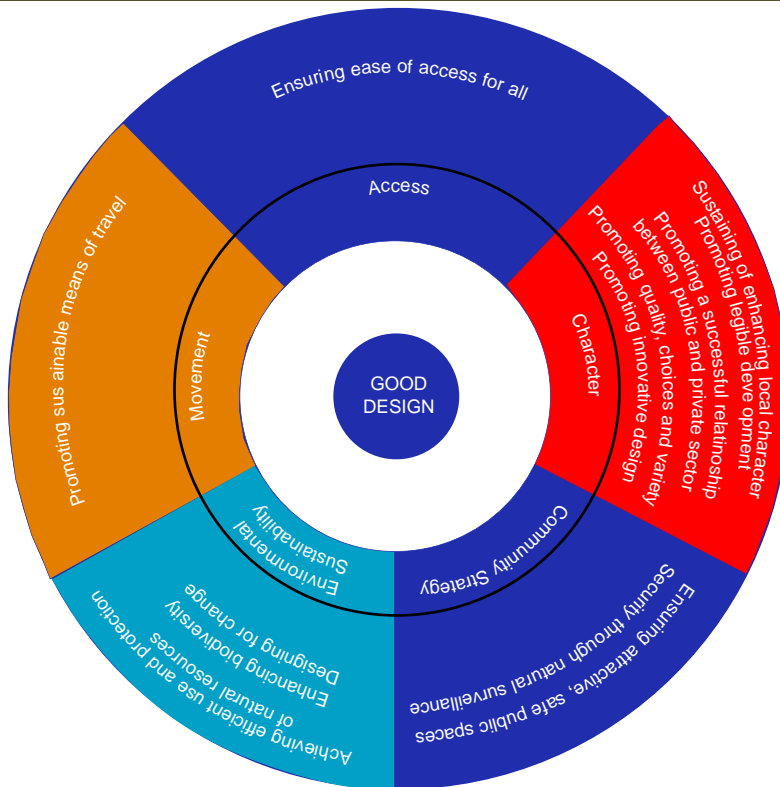
The points below provide some guidance on the layout and content of a DAS, however they are not intended to provide a comprehensive list and there are likely to be other issues unique to each development that will need to be considered and discussed.



General

- Explain the vision for the site (i.e. what the developer is attempting to achieve);
- Provide information about the site, its location, what it is currently used for and existing key features of it (e.g. buildings, access points and boundaries, trees and hedgerows);
- Identify the key character of nearby buildings and the surrounding area;
- Identify any constraints affecting the site (e.g. access problems, ecological considerations, topography);
- Set out relevant planning policies and supplementary planning guidance;
- Include details of any pre-application consultation has been carried out with the owners/occupiers of nearby land or buildings, the local Community Council and any statutory bodies (such as the Local Planning Authority, Environment Agency Wales, the Countryside Council for Wales) and what responses where received;

Explain the processes involved in designing the development to take account of the above.



1. Accessibility

- How does the access to the site take account of adopted planning policies in respect of access?
- How does the development ensure ease of access into site (i.e. from the main site access points) as well as within the site (e.g. from footpaths or car parks) for all potential users? This includes demonstrating what access provision has been made for those with particular requirements, such as individuals with physical disabilities, sensory problems (e.g. poor eyesight), learning difficulties or parents with pushchairs/prams;
- How will the development overcome any problems with the existing access arrangements for the site?
- In the case of listed buildings, explain the full range of options considered for improving access to the building/site and demonstrate why the proposals are considered the most appropriate, both in terms of providing/improving access whilst also preserving or enhancing the historic or architectural importance of the building.

2. Environmental Sustainability

- How has the development been designed to reduce demand for energy and carbon emissions through the implementation of the energy hierarchy?
- For proposals to construct new buildings, see also the attached inserts for further information on the requirement for this section of the DAS
- How has the scheme been designed to reduce demand for water and to limit the impact waste water upon the environment and existing drainage systems?
- Will the development use materials of low environmental impact, such as wood from sustainably managed forests, locally sourced materials (to reduce transport emissions) or reclaimed or recycled materials?
- How will the development maintain or enhance natural habitats?
- Is the development located to promote sustainable transport choices?

- Does the development promote efficient use of land, if so how?
- How will waste be dealt with, before (where existing buildings are to be demolished), during and after development. This should identify how the amount of waste generated will be reduced, reused and recycled?
- Has the development been designed to take account of the impacts of future changes in climate (e.g. changes in temperature or patterns of rainfall)?
- In the case of listed buildings demonstrate the options for ensuring the development is sustainable and that the final design solution is the most appropriate, both in terms of promoting environmental sustainability whilst also preserving or enhancing the historic or architectural importance of the building.

3. Character

- How will the development include hard and soft landscaping to protect and enhance the character of the site and surrounding area?
- How does the scale (including the height, width and length of the proposed buildings) take account of the relationship between the site and adjacent properties/land uses?
- Does the amount of development and the proposed use promote efficient use of land whilst safeguarding the character of the area and amenities of nearby residents?
- How does the layout of the development ensure will be integrate with its surroundings as well as ensuring buildings, open spaces and internal routes (e.g. roads and footpaths) within it development are well related to each other and maximise energy efficiency?
- How does the external design, including the use of materials, boundary treatment and landscaping ensure the appearance of the development reflects, compliment and enhances the character of the area?

○ In the case of listed buildings, explain the range of design solutions considered and demonstrate the proposals are the most appropriate in terms of preserving or enhancing the historic or architectural importance of the building.

4. Community safety

○ How will the layout of the site ensure that there is adequate natural surveillance of public areas, such as open space, car parks or footpaths?

○ Does the development improve community and individual safety by reducing conflicts between different land uses?

5. Movement to, from and within the development

○ How does the development promote sustainable transport choices e.g. is the site close to facilities, such as frequent public

transport, shops, schools, community centres and open space?

○ How has the development taken account of requirements for parking (including how car parks will be managed)?

○ How does the development cater for servicing needs of the site, particularly with regards to freight transport (e.g. parking and turning delivery vehicles)?

○ How does the development provide safe and clear connections to, from and within the development and integrate with existing transport links?



Further advice

The Design Commission for Wales has published the following guidance: Design and Access Statements in Wales: Why, What and How. This can be downloaded from;

dcfw.org/publications/view/design_and_access_statements_in_wales

National policy on sustainable building is set out in Ministerial Interim Planning Policy Statement 01/2009 'Planning for Sustainable Buildings'. This can be downloaded from: wales.gov.uk

National guidance on good design and the content of DAS can be found in Technical Advice Note 12 Design (2009). This can be downloaded from: wales.gov.uk

Cadw, the Welsh Assembly Government's historic environment service has published advise on inclusive access to historic buildings: Overcoming the Barriers, Providing Physical Access to Historic Buildings (2002). This can be downloaded from: www.cadw.wales.gov.uk/upload/resourcepool/Overcoming_e6495.htm

The Council has adopted a number of Local Planning Guidance Notes which provide advice and guidance on appropriate standards for new developments, including design and sustainability. These can be downloaded from www.wrexham.gov.uk/planning



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