

Listed Building Consent Design & Access Statements

Preparing Design and Access Statements for listed building consent applications: guidance for applicants and agents

Harrow Council is committed to raising the standards of design in the Borough. Good design adds value by increasing the economic viability of development and contributes to social and environmental regeneration and a sustainable future. All new development in Harrow should be of the highest quality design.

Good design should be inclusive and meet everyone's needs; therefore developers must consider an access strategy at the earliest stages of the design process.

Listed Building Consent Statements are documents that explain and justify the design and access of a proposed listed building development in relation to the architectural and historical qualities of the building and its wider context. The purpose of these statements is to ensure that all developments to listed buildings are as sympathetic and inclusive as possible.



Requirement

Harrow Council now requires that owners of listed buildings and/or their appointed agents provide statements with any application for Listed Building Consents (although reference to access is only required for external works). Where there is a planning application submitted in parallel with an application for listed building consent, a single statement may be used but should address all the requirements of both this guidance note and the separate guidance note.

"Preparing design and access statements for planning permission: guidance for applicants and agents" should be consulted.

Applications will not be accepted without a statement and it will be a material consideration when Harrow Council assesses listed building consent applications. The production of a statement will help officers to assess your proposals in a clearer more structured way and will speed the application process up.

Where developers enter into pre-application discussions, a draft statement should be included. Where a design is altered it is advisable to revise the statement to reflect the changes.

Appearance.

The statement should communicate the way the proposal was developed out of the initial site and contextual assessments by following the three-step process below. The size of the statement should be proportional to the complexity and impact of the application. It will be vary from a short report of one or two pages for a small development (such as replacement windows or a small extension) to a major report for a large-scale or sensitive development. Where illustrative material is used it should be accurate and appropriate.

The statement should clearly show how the proposals fit in to the surrounding area and how they preserve or enhance the quality of Harrow's listed buildings.

Process

You are advised to follow a three-stage process when producing your statement.

STAGE 1: ASSESSMENT

Assess the historical and architectural qualities of the building and its wider setting, and consider any social, economic, environmental and policy issues, through a desktop study and site visits

STAGE 2: EVALUATION

Evaluate and identify the constraints & opportunities thrown up in Step 1. Then develop design and access principles that will define the character of the proposals

STAGE 3: PROPOSAL

Show how the worked up proposals reflect the site assessment and evaluation process.

Stage 1: Assessment

An assessment of the building's immediate and wider context in terms of historical and architectural qualities of the building and its wider setting, and should consider any relevant social, economic, environmental and policy issues. It will probably include a desk survey as well as an on-site analysis of the building's fabric, history and surroundings

The extent of the research will depend on the nature, scale and sensitivity of the development. If you are in any doubt as to the topics that should be covered at

this stage, then please consider the sort of development you wish to undertake and the extent of the impact that it may have on the character and appearance of the listed building.

This information should be collated and presented at the beginning of the statement.

If areas of assessment relevant to the building and the proposal are omitted from this stage then the listed building application may be treated as invalid or refused.

Stage 2: Evaluation

An examination of the information collected during assessment, this stage will include the identification of opportunities and constraints and formulating the design and access principles of the development.

The evaluation will show how the aims of the development relate to the context. A successful evaluation will identify potential conflicts and show how they have

been resolved. If the design does not follow best practice the developer needs to explain why.

The statement will identify the principles behind the access proposals and explain how these will be integrated into the design of the development.

Professional advice that has informed the design process should also be included at this stage.

Stage 3: Proposal

The statement must show how the design relates to the principles set out in the evaluation stage as a result of the assessment. Thus proposals should be individual to the site and the statement will need to reflect this. A statement should not justify a pre-determined design through subsequent site assessment and evaluation.

The statement must show how the proposals have complied with the London Plan, Harrow's policy and supplementary planning guidance, with BS 8300, 2001,

Part M of the Building Regulations 2004 and a commitment to the Disability Discrimination Act 2005. This must be balanced with the duty to preserve or enhance the particular historic and architectural significance of the building.

Any conditions or principles that will be used in developing the proposal in the future should be included. To safeguard design quality, Harrow Council may wish to control listed building consent on the basis of these conditions or principles.

Design Considerations - Explain:

- 1) The design principles that have been applied to the scale, layout and appearance aspects of a proposal.
- 2) Justify how the design approach preserves or enhances: the historic and special architectural importance of the building, its setting and the physical features that justify its listing. Where there is an aspect of design that will potentially harm these, the statement should explain why this is necessary, and what design measures have been taken to minimise this impact.
- 3) How the design approach considers any relevant social, economic, environmental and policy issues.

Access Considerations - Explain:

- 1) Access solutions, including accessible step-free design, internal design features that allow for ease of use by disabled people and communication devices. Where this has an impact on the historic fabric the developer needs to show the alternative means of access considered in relation to the policies in relevant local development documents.
- 2) How access considerations take account of: the architectural or historic importance of the building, its setting and the physical features that justify its listing.
- 3) How the access approach considers any relevant social, economic, environmental, policy and any other issues.
- 4) Any consultation and how this has been addressed.
- 5) Future maintenance of access features.
- 6) Where inclusive design has not been provided, explain why. In alterations to existing buildings where the fabric of the structure restricts the ability to meet minimum levels of accessibility, solutions should be provided which minimise the impact on disabled people and ensure that any services provided within the building are made available in other ways.

Importantly the requirement for access considerations refers only to 'access to the development' and so does not extend to internal aspects of the individual building. Listed building consent applications for only internal works do not require a consideration within a design and access statement of access matters.

Assistance - where do I get help

Harrow Council's conservation officers may be able to help you but it is not the Council's role to provide a statement for you. If you would like to have an informal discussion on development proposals it is necessary to have an assessment of the building and information on its architecture and history, setting and any relevant social, eco-

nomic, environmental or policy issues ready beforehand so that the design principles can be discussed before detailed design work is undertaken. It must be understood that the Council's Development Control Committee may not support an officer's view on your scheme.

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