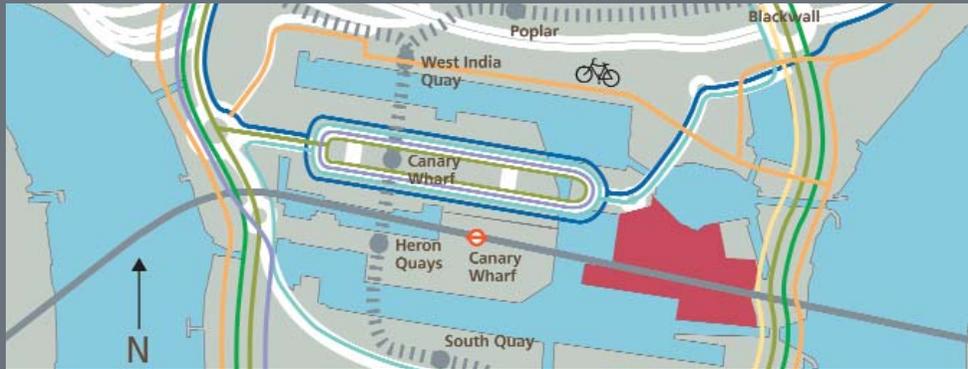


Design and Access Statements





Design and Access Statements

This guide is one of a series of leaflets that will provide information and advice on the services offered by the Directorate of Development and Renewal. In addition the Directorate offers a wide range of other services from Building Control, Access to Employment, Inward Investment and Major Projects including Transport Infrastructure. Housing services are also now part of Development and Renewal. For an introduction to these services please access the Council's website (address on back of leaflet). This guide covers the following:

1. What is a Design and Access Statement?
2. How will a Design and Access Statement help?
3. How to produce a Design and Access Statement.
4. What will a Design and Access Statement look like?
5. Further information.

Both Central Government and Tower Hamlets are committed to raising the standard of design in the Borough. It is generally accepted that good urban design not only adds value by increasing the economic viability of development but also contributes to social and environmental regeneration.

1. What is a Design and Access Statement?

Design and Access Statements are aimed at improving the design and accessibility of all new buildings and public spaces. Not only will the Statement facilitate a clearer, more structured and eventually faster assessment of a planning application by the Council, it will also provide useful visual material to aid public consultation. Crucially, the Statement should illustrate how the design of the proposal has taken into account its surroundings, how it will improve the environment and accessibility.

Access is established as a fundamental planning issue owing to the duties imposed by the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) and the Council's promise to deliver an accessible built environment. Disabled access is often addressed far too late in the development control process, so considering access should be undertaken at all stages.

2. How Will a Design and Access Statement Help?

Design and Access Statements assist the applicant, Development Control Officers, local Councillors, neighbours and the public to:

- Fully understand the principles of the proposed design, which appreciate site opportunities.
- Consider how the proposal relates to the Urban Design policies in the Council's Development Plan.
- Show how the proposal could be accessed by all.
- Understand how the proposals reflect time honoured Urban Design principles and Government guidance.

A Design and Access Statement should be the first task in the approach to developing a site.



3. How to Produce a Design and Access Statement

There are three essential steps to producing a Design and Access Statement, which are:

- Step 1 – site analysis.
- Step 2 – identify design principles.
- Step 3 – evolving the design solution.
- Step 4 – creating accessible design.

Step 1 – Site Analysis

This is a factual account using text, drawings and/or photographs to explain the setting of the site. This account should include:

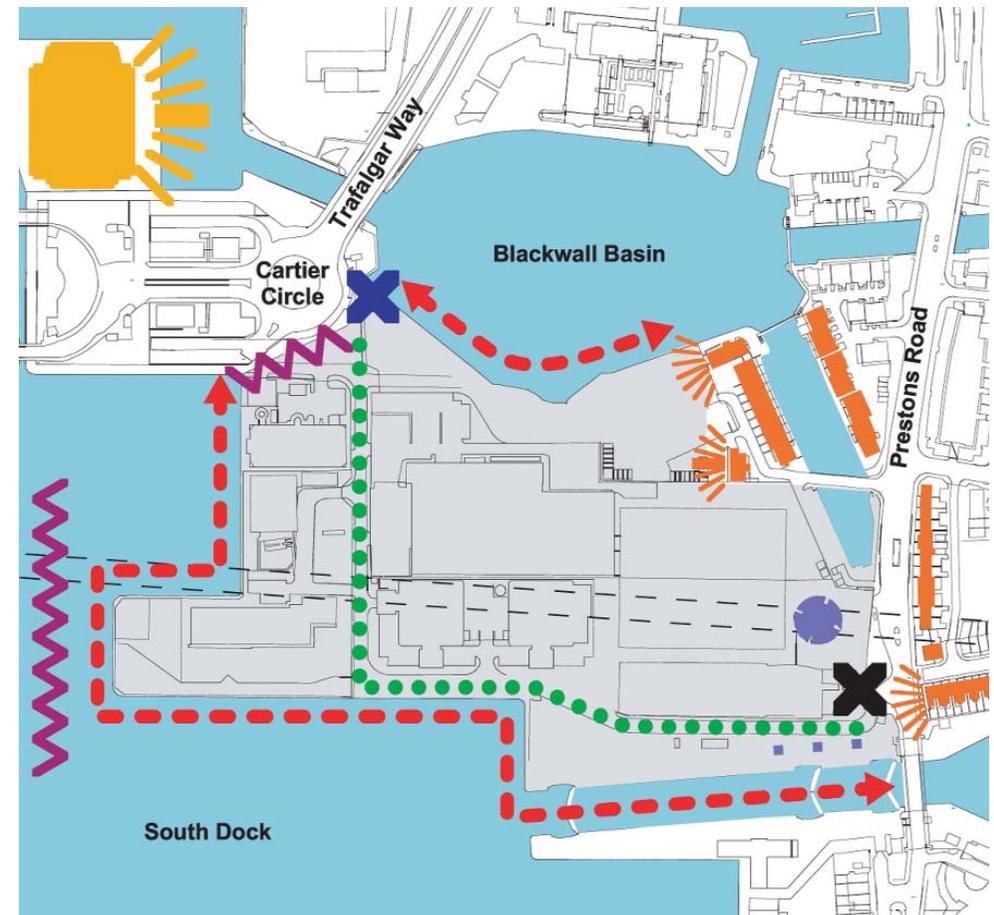
- Establishing site context, which illustrates urban structure, movement networks, density and mix for the site surroundings. It should also take into account character and features surrounding the site such as building styles, accessibility, active frontages, uses, historic buildings, watercourses, trees, etc.
- An explanation of the character and features of the site itself such as main existing uses, built and natural features, changes in levels, watercourses, infrastructure, etc.



Step 2 – Identifying Design Principles

Most applicants have certain development objectives such as achieving a minimum floorspace or unit numbers. The constraints and opportunities identified should be combined with the important features identified in the site analysis and the applicant's development objectives to inform & underpin the design process.

Certain commercial and personal objectives may be at odds with the important features and characters identified in the site analysis. An effective assessment should explain how any conflict can be resolved.



Step 3 – Evolving the Design Solution

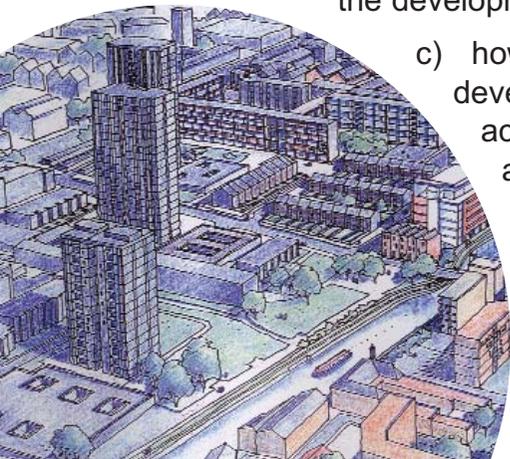
The Design and Access Statement is not simply a justification of a predetermined design solution. It is likely that there will be several design options, which should be evaluated against the same criteria, including response to context, amount of development proposed, mix of uses, scale, layout, appearance and landscaping. The preferred option will reflect the design principles from Step 2, which in turn incorporate the site analysis from Step 1. Use of three dimensional presentation techniques is specially encouraged at this stage.

As the final stage of the Statement, a detailed presentation of proposed massing, building height, streetscape, key views and its impact on the urban grain should be included. The choice of materials and a landscape plan should be included.

Step 4 – Creating Accessible Design

The access component of a Statement would cover the following points:

- a) the approach adopted to access, and how policies relating to access have been taken into account.
- b) how any specific issues which might affect access to the development have been addressed.
- c) how users will be able to access the development and why the main points of access to the site and the layout of access routes within the site have been chosen.



- d) how features which ensure access to the development will be maintained.

Further guidance is given in “Planning and Access for Disabled People: a good practice guide”, available from www.ODPM.gov.uk.

4. What Will a Design and Access Statement look like?

The scope of the Design and Access Statement will depend on the proposal put forward. However, it should be primarily a graphic document comprising a short written statement outlining the three steps set out above together with plans, diagrams, and sketches to illustrate relevant points. Using photographs can also be very helpful.

It may help to discuss these various stages with Design & Conservation / Development Control Officers from the Council prior to submitting any applications. Informal discussions without a site analysis are futile and will not normally be undertaken. A draft Statement, which includes site analysis, opportunities and constraints, together with the design principles proposed should be submitted prior to any discussions with the Council.

For translation phone:



Albanian	Për përkthim, telefono:	Lithuanian	Vertimui, skambinkite:
Amharic	ለብዙ ለንዲተረጎምልህ ብትሻ ይህን ስልክ ደውል	Malayalam	പരിഭാഷക്കായി വിളിക്കുക
Arabic	: للترجمة ، اتصل	Polish	Po tłumaczenie, zadzwoń pod:
Bengali/Sylheti	অনুবাদের জন্য টেলিফোন করুন :	Portuguese	Para tradução, telefone:
Chinese	如欲索取翻譯，請致電：	Punjabi	ਤਰਜਮੇ ਲਈ ਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ:
Croatian/Serbian	Za prijevod, nazovite:	Russian	Для перевода, позвоните под номер:
Czech	Pro překlad volejte:	Somali	Wixii turjumid ah, wac:
Farsi	: برای ترجمه با تلفن زیر تماس بگیرید:	Spanish	Para traducción, telefonée:
French	Pour obtenir une traduction, veuillez appeler :	Swahili	Piga namba hii ili upate makaratasi yaliyotafsiriwa:
Greek	Για μετάφραση, τηλεφωνήστε	Turkish	Tercüme için, Telefon
Gujarati	તરજૂમા માટે ફોન કરો:	Twi	Se won te brofo na wo pe mboa, fre me
Hindi	अनुवाद के लिए फोन करें:	Urdu	: ترے کیلئے فون کریں:
Japanese	翻訳に関する電話は :	Vietnamese	Muốn bản phiên dịch, gọi số:
Kurdish	: تەلیفون بو تە رجومه	Yoruba	Fun itumo ede, e pewa si eṛo-ibanisọṛo yi:

020 7364 5009

Also for large print, audio or braille

5. Further Information

The Council encourages and welcomes pre-application discussions with the community and businesses and can provide further detailed guidance by contacting 020 7364 5009.

Further guidance published by the council is available at:
www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/data/planning/downloads/pdfs/designstate.pdf

Alternatively, you may wish to visit the Council's website
www.towerhamlets.gov.uk for further general information.



2005-2006
 Promoting Racial Equality
 Getting Closer to Communities
 2004-2005
 Supporting Social Care Workers
 2003-2004
 Community Cohesion



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