

Local Authority Consideration

The Design Statement should accompany the planning application and provide part of the background information considered by the Local Authority in determining the application.

The existence of a Design Statement does not guarantee planning permission. Neither does it replace the need for submission of a high standard of plans and elevation drawings.

All applicants should consider design as a key factor in any development. The preparation of the Design Statement, as much as the statement itself, will allow this to be done in a structured and focussed manner.

Whilst it is acknowledged that this will involve additional work in presenting concepts and ideas, it will provide transparency and clarity in this process and should result in quicker decision making and an overall improvement in the built environment.

Background Publications

Designing Places

Scottish Executive Development Department

Planning Advice Note 67 (PAN 67)

Housing Quality

Scottish Executive Development Department

Planning Advice Note 68 (PAN 68)

Design Statements

Scottish Executive Development Department

All the above publications are available from:

Scottish Executive Development Department
2H Victoria Quay
Edinburgh, EH6 6QQ
Tel. 0131 244 7551
www.scotland.gov.uk/planning

Designing for Sustainability in the Highlands – Development Plan Policy Guidance

Available from The Highland Council

If in any doubt, please contact your local Planning and Building Standards Office; details of locations given in Leaflet 1.

To request this information in an alternative format, e.g. large print, Braille, computer disc, audio tape, or suitable language, please contact George Boyd at 01463 702564.

This series of leaflets is intended to give you some general advice and guidance on the planning and building control system; they are not a definitive guide to the law. Please note that this series is being added to on a regular basis.

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The Highland Council
Planning & Development Service



Design Statements

Aithris
Dealbhachaidh

Planning & Building Standards
Help & Advice Leaflets

Introduction

If you are submitting an application for detailed planning permission then you will need to carefully consider the design of your proposals. **Design is a material planning consideration** which the Local Authority must take into account in deciding whether or not to grant permission for a new development.

It is therefore important that before a design solution is chosen, careful analysis of the site and its surroundings is undertaken. One way that this can be done is through the preparation of a Design Statement.

The Scottish Executive produced a Planning Advice Note (PAN 68) on Design Statements, in August 2003, which submits that such statements are good practice in the overall expectation of the planning system to deliver high standards of design.

Although some applicants already submit statements, most do not. Submitted design statements often lack structure and contain irrelevant information. A more consistent approach is needed. This PAN does not introduce a prescriptive approach, but does seek to ensure that applicants are clear about the role of design statements and can become more confident in preparing them. The aim is to see design statements used more effectively in the planning process and to create places of lasting quality.

The Highland Council has produced detailed guidance on Designing for Sustainability in the Highlands. Such guidance is available to support the preparation of Design Statements. The three independent principles of sustainability are expressed in the Highland Structure Plan as:

- supporting the viability of communities
- contributing to a prosperous and vibrant local economy
- safeguarding and enhancing the natural and built environment.

The end result of any development should be to contribute to the quality of our environment and ultimately to improve the quality of life for everyone.

What is a Design Statement?

A Design Statement is a supplementary piece of information which can be submitted as part of an application for Planning Permission.

It allows an applicant to explain the design principles on which the proposed development is based and illustrate the chosen design solution. It is therefore a useful tool in helping everyone understand why a particular approach has been adopted.

When is a Design Statement Required?

While Design Statements are not mandatory, they can usefully support a planning application. There are some circumstances, however, where Design Statements are particularly important, for example for major development proposals or Listed Building applications. They may also be appropriate where unorthodox designs are being proposed, or on prominent or sensitive sites such as within Conservation Areas.

Prior to preparing a Design Statement it is advisable to contact your local Planning Office.

If a Statement is required then it is often useful to arrange a pre-application appointment with a planning officer to discuss your proposal. There may be a need to involve other professionals, such as urban designers, architects, landscape architects and transport engineers. By making such initial contact the project can become more focused, with time and costs being saved.

What format should a Design Statement take?

A Design Statement should be short and succinct and should be supported by clear illustrations or graphics. It can be presented in a number of different ways e.g. as a document, a fold-out sheet, a display board and/or a CD Rom.

Design Statements will normally include

- **Initial appraisal of site and surrounding area**
- **Identification of main design principles**
- **Analysis and cross referencing of above factors**
- **Identification of design concepts**
- **Design solution**

A Design Statement should cover more than purely the aesthetics of the proposed development. It should address issues such as safety, sustainability, adaptability, ambience and ease of use for all groups in society. It needs to consider landscaping, servicing and access issues. For major or sensitive schemes it may also need to incorporate public consultation exercises.