

APPENDIX B: ACCESS STRATEGY STATEMENT PROCESS

ACCESS STRATEGY STATEMENT PROCESS

INTRODUCTION

The Approval process should not be considered as a 'one off' document review even for the simplest of projects. The minimum audit level should comprise a review of documents at initial design and construction drawings stages together with an audit of the completed project when fully operational. Materials and samples should be requested as a matter of course where illustrations and specifications do not provide sufficient clarity. Approved samples should be retained for checking against the completed project.

THE REVIEW AND APPROVAL PROCESS

Although the whole process could be described as an audit the actual Audit does not take place until the project is completed and operational. The precursor to the audit is a checking and review process based on drawings and data submitted to DCCA for approval under the Building Codes. The scope of the Accessibility Code means that there are very few aspects of the public domain and the built environment that it does not impact on. It is also important to recognise the interaction between the various elements and not sign off sections of the code in isolation. The interface of the public realm with building plots and buildings is a good example of this and auditors should ensure that they have adequate information to make an assessment. Likewise the procurement process may result in submissions by more than one party and a potential splitting of responsibility. It is important therefore that the required standards are established by the Project Sponsor from the initial

design stages and form the basis of a set of Project Requirements that all parts of the project team have to comply with.

The Access Strategy Statement is an important document which should be submitted to DCCA by the Project Sponsor at the start of the project design phase. This document will provide the auditor with key information about the project and will assist them in programming the design review process. It will also allow the auditor to establish whether those parties acting for the Project Sponsor understand and are following his requirements. There is little point wasting review time where it is obvious that there is a significant difference between the submitted designs and the Project Sponsors' requirements. Likewise reviews should not be carried out based on incomplete information.

As a minimum the Access Strategy Statement should contain:

- 1) A plan of the plot locating it within the development zone.
- 2) A detailed plot plan
- 3) A building footprint, including basement, ground floor and typical floor plans.
- 4) Sections

The drawings should illustrate the location of transport interchanges; routes to, from and around the building; the location of accessible parking and horizontal and vertical circulation routes. The document will also detail the philosophy and approach to inclusive design and any challenges posed by the site constraints. Due to the variety of programmes and procurement routes that may be encountered it is useful to consider the review process in terms of the level of detail examined at each stage.

USING THE CHECK LISTS

Check lists have been provided for each section of the Code and can be used for both the design review stage and the audit stage. The check lists cover the deemed to satisfy solutions which represent the minimum mandatory requirements and the management requirements that need to be demonstrated at the occupation stage. Where there are multiple elements of a particular feature within the same development a checklist should be completed for each instance where there is a significant difference. When carrying out a design review there will be some questions on the check list that cannot be answered until the development is operational, e.g. Is the required clear headroom provided for the length of the route? Where this related to planting the auditor should look for evidence in the specification and maintenance requirements documents that this provision has been allowed for.

The person carrying out the review or audit should follow the 'user journey' set out in the Code. Although we have referred to various stages in the development process it is useful to think of the review process as a number of levels where the quantity and level of detailed information increases. The final audit being the most complex in that it includes an evaluation of operational issues.