

Environment, Planning and Countryside Committee

EPC(2) 14-06(p4) Annex A

Access Statements

Analysis Of Consultation Responses - Summary

1. Total Number of Responses on Issue of Access Statements (ASs): 37

specifically support / favour statutory ASs - 51% (19)

specifically do not want statutory ASs - 06% (02)

comments only - 43% (16).

2. Responses by Sector:

Responses related broadly to four key issues: the drafting of the two statutory instruments (SIs), to guidance, to training requirements, and to the draft Regulatory Appraisal.

i) LA - 35% (13) (Local Authorities (including National Park Authorities))

Issues relating to the SIs

One LA specifically did not want statutory ASs; five said the proposed requirements were right (one of which said that there were no special circumstances in Wales to require anything different to that in force in England); one wanted requirements to extend to all changes of use; two favoured reduced requirements to only apply to new buildings that could be accessed by disabled people.

Issues relating to Guidance

Six LAs wanted guidance (clarifying definition of AS, especially in relation to non planning legislation matters i.e related Building Regulation access matters, one specifying that guidance should be available before commencement)

Issues relating to training

One LA mentioned related resource / training issues

Issues relating to the draft Regulatory Appraisal

One LA considered serious costs of regulatory burden on developers, amenity groups and LPAs be added.

ii) BUS - 11% (04) (Business)

Issues relating to the Sis

No Business response specifically opposed statutory ASs; two specifically supported them; two considered the requirements acceptable, with one saying that whilst it favoured the exemptions listed, there should also be an exemption where development relates to private working areas where there is no public access (citing farms and factories) - here needs of disabled staff would be addressed individually.

Issues relating to Guidance

One Business responses wanted guidance; specified matters were clear requirements standardised at national level, linking them with other access issues under Building Regulations, ensuring access matters don't dominate other design considerations.

Issues relating to training

None raised.

Issues relating to the draft Regulatory Appraisal

One Business pointed to additional benefits of commercial advantage to developer & user, and means to ensure public monies are directed into projects that fulfil legislation, policy & guidance.

iii) GOV – 13.5% (05) (Government Agencies / other public sector)

Issues relating to the Sis

One respondent specifically opposed ASs, whilst three respondents specifically supported them. Two queried the need to fail to exclude householder development in designated areas; one favoured the requirement to extend to all changes of use and to all new build including householder development; another suggested that it was possible that some changes of use could have access implications. One specified that the requirement should be brought in advance of any further consideration of design statements.

Issues relating to Guidance

One respondent specified the need for clear guidance and favoured referencing DRC guidance

together with the endorsement of ODPM good practice guidance ('Planning and Access for Disabled People', 2003). This respondent also wanted ASs linked with other access issues under Building Regulations.

Issues relating to training

One respondent pointed to the need for training for relevant LPA staff

Issues relating to the draft Regulatory Appraisal

One respondent said that social costs of continued exclusion of the built environment were understated, and that training costs would be incurred anyway as LPAs need to meet the requirements of the DED.

iv) PROF - 13.5% (05) (Professional Bodies / Interest Groups)

Issues relating to the Sis

Three respondents supported the statutory ASs; one wanted all changes of use included as they represented 'fresh starts'; two wanted internal access addressed.

Issues relating to Guidance

Two respondents specified the need for guidance.

Issues relating to training

One respondent pointed to the need for training for planners and developers in the public and private sectors (and the financial implications of this).

Issues relating to the draft Regulatory Appraisal

No issues.

v) VOL - 27% (10) (Voluntary Organisations)

Issues relating to the Sis

All 10 voluntary organisations supported statutory ASs. In relation to change of use, three favoured inclusion of all change of use, two specified inclusion where there would be access by members of the public and/or employees. Four wanted all householder applications included, whilst one wanted all planning applications included. One did not want housing development included where there was less than 3 houses proposed. One specified that the requirement should be brought in advance of any further consideration of design statements.

Issues relating to Guidance

Five voluntary organisations wanted guidance; specified matters were best practice pointers, clarity, linking ASs with internal access issues under Building Regulations, favoured adapting, adopting or referencing DRC guidance together with the endorsement of ODPM good practice guidance ('Planning and Access for Disabled People', 2003). Matters of LPA accountability and auditing were also raised.

Issues relating to training

Five respondents specified the need for training; mentioned were planning and building control officers, and members of planning committees.

Issues relating to the draft Regulatory Appraisal

One respondent commented that costs for training would arise under DDA for developers and LPAs anyway.

vi) 0 - 00% (00) (Other)

None