
By: Nick Chard, Cabinet Member, Environment, Highways & Waste
To: Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 4 November 2010
Subject: Inclusive Design & Placemaking Guidance
Classification: Unrestricted

Summary:

It has been recognised that there is a need for clearer guidance and policy about inclusive design. Inclusive design ensures that the pedestrian environment is accessible for all members of society regardless of ability. In order to address this, a technical appendix to the Kent Design Guide has been drafted. The draft document was presented to Environment Highways and Waste, Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee in September 2010. In addition, the document has been through a process of expert stakeholder consultation and has been amended accordingly. The amended guidance is presented to the committee who are asked to agree to the document going forward for a) public consultation and b) to be submitted for a Cabinet decision to adopt the guidance as formal policy.

Introduction

A draft Inclusive Design & Place-making Technical Appendix for the Kent Design Guide (December 2005) was submitted to the Environment Highways and Waste Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee in September 2010. The committee gave valuable feedback on the guidance which has been fed into the stakeholder consultation process.

The rationale for the document stems from the recognition that there is a need for clearer guidance and policy about inclusive design. This has been requested from a number of District Planning Officers. As a result a working group consisting of Officers from KCC, Maidstone District Council and Tunbridge Wells District Council have worked in partnership to produce the draft Inclusive Design technical appendix.

Inclusive design ensures that the pedestrian environment is accessible for all members of society regardless of ability. The guidance aims to provide specific detail and guidance on how to address “*accessibility for all*” in Kent’s future built environment. In addition, the document includes an audit tool which can be used to help guide professionals when assessing the accessibility of a public space. The guidance in this document applies to the design of the public realm, including arrival at a building or public space, for new and re-development schemes. It does not intend to deal with matters inside buildings that are covered under Building Regulations, nor restate existing highway and streetscape guidance.

Progress to date:

Following comprehensive expert stakeholder consultation, the original draft document has been amended and is attached for comment. If the Cabinet agree, the intention is to now undertake a public consultation on the guidance. Following final amendments, the document will then be submitted for Cabinet approval and adoption as formal policy.

Conclusions and Recommendations:

Following expert stakeholder consultation the draft Inclusive Design & Place-making Technical Appendix for the Kent Design Guide (December 2005) has been amended. The draft is now ready to go out for public consultation.

Members of the committee are asked to:

- Continue to support the need to produce a cross-county policy on Inclusive Design & Placemaking;
- To endorse the next step to carry out a public consultation
- To endorse submitting the final document for Cabinet approval and adoption as formal policy.

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Background Documents:

Equalities Act 2010
Inclusive Design & Place-making Technical Appendix