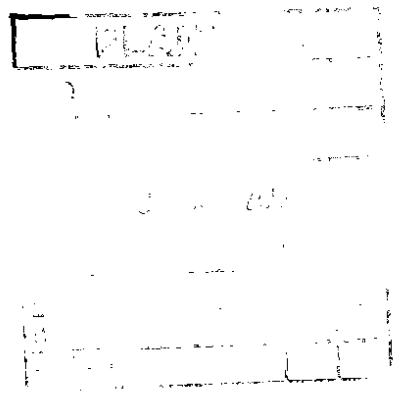


DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

FOR

TESCO STORES LTD

BY

STACE BUILDING SURVEYING

April 2005 No 2005/0906

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TESCO express

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Tesco have a pro active approach to the duties placed on them by Part III of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 as providers of goods, facilities and services to the public. We are conscious that the Act makes it unlawful to discriminate against disabled people in certain circumstances and that Section 21 of the Act imposes a duty to make "reasonable adjustments" for disabled people.

We are committed to ensuring that we, as a company, do not treat any disabled person, whether a visitor to one of our stores or a company employee, any less favourably for reasons relating to their disability and will continue to take positive and pro-active steps to make our services wholly accessible.

The core purpose of this Access Statement is to demonstrate that consideration has been given to the extent to which our stores are and will continue to be accessible to people with disabilities, both staff and visitors. This statement will summarise the facilities provided against the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and will clearly identify:

- The philosophy and approach to inclusive design.
- The key access issues considered.
- The sources of advice and guidance used.
- How the principles of inclusive design are implemented into a store conversion scheme.
- How inclusion will be maintained and managed.

2.0 PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

- **General description.**
- **Style and age of premises.**
- **Existing use.**
- **Size and number of storeys.**
- **Car parking facilities.**
- **Site topography and unique features.**

3.0 APPROACH TO AND ACCESS INTO THE BUILDING

A means of access for people with disabilities will be provided to the point of entry to the building. The design of the approach to the store will recognise both wheelchair users and the ambulant disabled. It will also consider those with visual disabilities to ensure the design does not cause them confusion.

3.1 Car parking

We are aware that some people with physical disabilities, whether visitors to the premises or employees, will rely on the car to get to and from the building. **In many circumstances there are no car parking facilities available and access to the store is via public footpaths, the maintenance of which are to a large extent out of Tesco's control.**

In situations where car parking facilities are available, designated parking spaces will be provided for customer and employee use and the buildings management will prevent the misuse of the designated bays.

Clear signage will indicate and differentiate between the designated disabled car parking spaces which will be located close to the buildings entrance and be level and wide enough to allow a wheelchair user to transfer to and from the car.

3.2 Level and unobstructed approach to entrance

The approach to our stores wherever possible will be level and free from obstructions, with the route itself having a slip-resistant and smooth surface. We are conscious that uneven surfaces, surfaces of loose materials and large gaps between paving slabs cause problems for wheelchair users, people with impaired vision and people who are generally unsteady on their feet.

The buildings management will ensure that the approach remains free from obstructions at all times.

3.3 Ramped approach to entrance

In circumstances where there is a change in level between the approach to and the buildings main entrance, it may be necessary to provide a sloped surface on which a wheelchair user can travel.

It may prove impossible to provide a permanent ramped approach beyond the line of the building, due to the proximity of access roads, car parks, public footpaths or Council restrictions. In these circumstances, we consider a portable ramp which can be brought out of storage as and when required. Alternatively, consideration at design stage may also be given to the provision of a permanent internal ramp dependent upon the restrictions imposed by the buildings structure or our Landlords approval process.

All our ramps will have the lowest practical gradient and be designed to comply with the requirements stipulated in Approved Document M and BS8300. The location of the ramp will always be clearly indicated as a person approaches the building, particularly as any temporary structure will impede traffic flow when in use.

3.4 Stepped approach to entrance

We are conscious that people with impaired sight are at risk of tripping or losing balance from trying to negotiate several changes in level, particularly when approaching the head of a flight of steps. Therefore, we provide tactile and visual warnings of the change in level and all step nosings are distinguishable through contrasting brightness.

3.5 Principal entrance doors

We will always ensure that convenient access into our buildings is provided for all disabled people whether they are visitors to the building or work within it, with a minimum clear opening width of not less than 800mm.

We are fully aware that people with mobility difficulties cannot generally react quickly to avoid collisions so the entrance doors to our stores will always have a clear unobstructed and well lit approach, contrast with its surroundings, be clearly signed and provide a clear view of the interior of the building. **Manifestation will always be provided to ensure that all glazed doors and screens are clearly defined.**

It is our policy to install automatic doors where possible on all new build schemes such as modular & developer shell sites, although there will be occasions where we are converting or fitting out shop premises when this may not be possible for either LA Planning or conservation restrictions which prevent us from changing the shop front design and fenestration. It may also be structurally impossible to achieve without resorting to major structural works to the building or LA highway.

In certain circumstances, we may be forced to retain the existing manually operated door(s). In these circumstances, alternative arrangements will be made, including the provision of an external door entry system or bell designed to make trained staff members aware that a disabled person wishes to enter the premises. Fully assisted entry to and exit from the building will then be provided.

The opening force at the leading edge of all manually operated doors will be no greater than 20N and an unobstructed space of at least 300mm on the pull side of the door will be provided in accordance with Approved Document M.

4.0 ACCESS WITHIN AND AROUND THE BUILDING

The layout of our stores is designed to provide sufficient space for wheelchair manoeuvre. They also include features to assist disabled people, including those with impaired sight or hearing to find their way around the building with ease and safety.

4.1 Colour contrast

We are aware that an important tool for aiding the safe travel around a building for visually impaired users is careful use of contrasting colours.

We ensure consistently good colour design to maintain the colour contrast throughout the building by careful consideration and planning during cyclical redecoration and refurbishment work.

4.2 Lighting

We aim to retain tight control over internal lighting, whether natural or artificial and to adjust levels to suit the needs of individual users. We position lighting to minimise glare, reflection and confusing pools of light and dark which we are aware can often be misleading, particularly to a person with a visual impairment.

4.3 Way finding

We are conscious that a building may prove challenging to navigate for a disabled person and a person not familiar with the building if it lacks a standardised site wide network of directional and location signs.

All signs throughout our stores form part of an integrated communication scheme to give clear directions for the use of the building. Standard public information symbols will be provided where appropriate.

The signs to identify the goods on sale include simple words, clearly separated and in short sentences. All signs are in lower case letters to make them more easily readable for those with learning difficulties.

4.4 Checkouts and Counters

Tesco's counters and checkouts are set at a height designed to ensure the safety of staff members.

With the above in mind, we operate a policy whereby all disabled shoppers are offered assistance when unloading and/or packing shopping at the checkouts.

4.4 Internal stairs and vertical circulation

Contrasting and non slip nosings will be provided to stair treads throughout our two storey stores for both Health & Safety reasons and for the benefit of visually impaired employees.

A handrail will be provided on both sides of each staircase as recommended by BS8300 to assist ambulant disabled people.

In the event that a wheelchair bound person seeks employment at a two storey store, specific arrangements will be made, including accommodating that person at a local single storey store in order to eliminate the requirement for that person to gain access via a staircase or lift to an upper level. This policy is particular relevant to staff facilities, which are usually located on the upper levels.

Tesco have converted one Express store to allow a wheelchair bound Manager to continue being employed at his store.

4.5 Space for manoeuvre

We are conscious that the ease with which an ambulant disabled person can move around the building will be dictated to a large extent by how efficiently the space is managed. Accordingly, all circulation routes will be kept clear of obstructions at all times and to accomplish this, the stores maintain ample storage space.

4.6 Internal doors and lobbies

Internal door openings will have the minimum unobstructed width of 750mm and be fitted with a delayed action door closer. All double doors will be fitted with a hold open device.

Internal doors throughout the building will contrast with their surrounding walls to assist visually impaired building users.

Vision panels will provide the minimum zonal visibility of between 500mm and 1500mm from the floor. Doors which require an intermediate horizontal section for strength or to support door furniture should have two viewing panels, one accommodating a zonal visibility between 500mm and 800mm from the floor and the other accommodating a zonal visibility between 1150mm and 1500mm from the floor. This criteria will enable those with mobility difficulties, to clearly see another person approaching the door from the other direction.

Door opening furniture with a lever action will be fitted to all doors to assist people with arthritis or a weak grip. All door furniture will contrast in colour and be fixed at a maximum height of 1040mm above finished floor level.

4.7 Surface materials

All stores will have a slip resistant vinyl floor covering to give a firm foothold and good wheel grip under all wet and dry weather conditions.

5.0 SANITARY ACCOMMODATION

The number and location of WC's for disabled people will depend on the size of the building and on the ease of access to these facilities.

Our policy for staff members is to provide a compliant sized disabled cubicle which will be fitted out with the required grab rails etc if and when a disabled person is employed at that particular store.

In stores which have public toilet facilities, at least one of the cubicles will be a disabled cubicle designed to meet with the requirements of BS8300 and Part M of the Building Regulations.

6.0 ATMs

Tesco aim to provide ATMs that disabled people can locate and use easily and conveniently and in order to do so we fully comply with the recommendations set out in BS8300.

7.0 EVACUATION PROCEDURES

In our two storey stores, an evacuation chair will be available for use in the event of a fire by staff members that are ambulant disabled. A member of staff will be taught how to assist that person to an appropriate place of safety.

In all our stores, any disabled member of staff or shopper will be helped from the sales area and out of the building to a place of safety by a suitably trained member staff.

Fire alarm systems are fitted with both visual and audible alarm sounders.

8.0 BUILDING MANAGEMENT

Tesco are aware that accessibility cannot be guaranteed by good design alone and that how a building is managed on a day to day basis will have a huge impact on how easy the building is to be used for disabled people.

Our building management will ensure that at minimum the following facilities are not compromised.

1. Routes – ensuring that all external routes and steps etc. are kept clean and unobstructed.

2. Doors – ensuring that door closers are readily maintained and ironmongery is kept clean and free moving.

3. Horizontal circulation – ensuring that space required for manoeuvre is not obstructed by deliveries or storage.

4. Lavatories – ensuring that toilet tissue, paper towels etc. are regularly replenished and that WC's are not used as an unofficial storage area.

5. Signs – ensuring that all new signs integrate with existing signage.

6. Alarms and security – ensuring that alarm systems including those in WC's are regularly checked and that new staff are trained in alarm response procedures.

7. Surfaces – ensuring that cleaning and polishing does not render slip resistant surfaces slippery. Ensuring that junctions between differing floor materials do not lift or become worn, causing a trip hazard.

8. Decorations – ensuring that the future decoration of the internal areas does not compromise the colour scheme designed for ease and to impart information to people with impaired vision.

9. Lighting – ensuring that windows and blinds etc. are kept clean and that lamps are regularly replaced in order to maximise available light.

9.0 SUMMARY

The core purpose of this statement is to demonstrate that consideration has been given to the extent to which our premises are accessible to people with disabilities, both staff and visitors.

The report serves to highlight potential physical barriers to access and how through reasonable adjustments to the way the services are provided or to the physical premises the building can be more readily accessible to a disabled person.

With regard to physical access we appreciate that a disabled person does not necessarily need to be able to access every part of a building on a day to day basis, if activities can be managed to ensure that the person is not at a disadvantage. To open up a building completely to all potential building users is likely to incur considerable and in some circumstances unreasonable expense. Adjusting policy, in many instances, would constitute a reasonable alternative and we try to strike a sensible balance between the two.

We are committed to making ongoing improvements to the accessibility of our stores and are rapidly introducing the required changes arising from Access Audits and general feedback and comments from our customers and staff members.