



BUILDING CONTROL INFORMATION SHEET



Access for the Fire Service (Dwellings)

In any proposed development, provision must be made to enable fire appliances to gain access to the building, and facilities must also be provided to assist fire fighters in the protection of life.

The main factor determining the access and facilities requirements to assist fire fighting is the size of the building. Whilst in tall buildings special access facilities equipped with fire mains will be required, for dwellings it is usually only necessary to ensure that the building is sufficiently close to a point accessible to fire brigade vehicles. **It is to these buildings only that this leaflet applies.**

Vehicle access is required to the exterior of dwellings and other small buildings to enable pumping appliances to supply water and equipment for fire-fighting and rescue activities. Any vehicle access routes and hard-standings to be used by fire service vehicles must be designed to meet certain criteria for width, height, carrying capacity and, in addition, turning facilities may be required for safety reasons.

REQUIREMENTS

a) Vehicle access

There should be vehicle access to within 45m of all points within a dwelling.

b) Access route specification

Fire Service Vehicle Access Route Specification for Pump Appliance			
<i>Minimum width of road between kerbs</i>	<i>Minimum width of gateways</i>	<i>Minimum clearance height</i>	<i>Minimum carrying capacity (tonnes)</i>
<i>3.7m</i>	<i>3.1m</i>	<i>3.7m</i>	<i>12.5 tonnes</i>

c) Turning Facilities

Turning facilities should be provided in any dead-end access route that is more than 20m long. This can be by a hammer-head or turning circle. Turning circles must be a minimum of 16.8m if between kerbs, or 19.2m between walls.

If it is not possible to meet these criteria, you should contact the area Building Control Surveyor who may be able to offer advice on alternative methods of meeting the functional requirements. Guidance relating to access and facilities for the fire service to other buildings is contained in Approved Document B to the Building Regulations.

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