

Design Criteria for New or Altered Catering Premises

This Guidance Note is designed to act as a guide to food business operators, architects and builders, when new premises are to be created or major alterations carried out at existing premises. This note is based on the requirements of the Regulation (EC) No 852/2004.

People intending to carry out such work are strongly advised to contact the Environmental Health Department, as well as the Planning and Building Control Departments of the Council, and the Fire Prevention Officer so that their comments may be sought at an early stage.

Please note that the notes given in bold text are legal standards, whilst recommendations shown in ordinary text reflect good practice or accepted commercial standards. These notes are advisory and alternatives may also comply with the law.

This Guidance Note is not intended to be used as a substitute for the legislation that you are advised to read to ensure that you are complying with your legal obligations.

General

All food premises should be designed to achieve a logical workflow pattern i.e. raw materials in - storage - preparation - cooking - service/despatch. Premises that are designed on this principle allow an efficient, cost effective system of work with a reduced risk of food becoming cross-contaminated. Sufficient space should be allowed for the storage of non- food items such as cleaning materials and equipment, clean and dirty laundry, crockery and cutlery.

Structural Requirements

In general the walls, floors, doors, windows, ceiling, woodwork and all other parts of the structure of food rooms shall be kept in such good order, repair and condition so as to enable them to be effectively cleaned and prevent the entry of pests.

Walls

It is recommended that wall surfaces should be smooth, durable, light in colour and capable of being cleaned without deterioration. The wall surfaces must be capable of being easily cleaned to a height that might become soiled with food debris.

Walls in food preparation areas may be finished in painted plaster, epoxy resin or similar coatings, ceramic tiles, PVC, GRP and other proprietary sheeting.

Consideration should also be given to providing edge strips on exposed edges to protect them against impact damage.

Floors

It is recommended that floor finishes are smooth, impervious, hardwearing and slip resistant. Floors should be laid to a fall when drainage is required.

Ceilings

Ceilings must have a smooth and readily cleansable surface. Rough ceiling surfaces are not recommended. **Voids above suspended ceilings must be accessible to allow maintenance, pest control and cleaning operations to take place.**

Doors and Windows

Doors and windows should be capable of being cleaned easily and external doors should be proofed against the entry of pests. Fly screens of nylon mesh may be fitted if problems with flying insects are

envisaged. In larger premises with loading bays consideration should be given to preventing the entry of pests.

Fittings and Equipment

All fittings and equipment, which come into contact with food, should be constructed of materials, which are readily cleansable and non-absorbent.

Worktops, cupboards and shelves may be constructed of stainless steel or plastic laminate. Ceramic tile finishes are not generally considered suitable for worktops.

Wooden shelving is acceptable in storage areas, provided that the timber has been sealed with polyurethane, gloss paint or varnish.

All major fixtures or equipment e.g. cooking range and chillers should be positioned to allow effective all round cleaning to be carried out. Fixed equipment should have sufficient clearance from the walls and floors to allow cleaning behind and below.

Alternatively they can be fitted with rollers or slides, so that they can be moved or fixed to the floor and walls with no gap. Where possible items of heavy cooking equipment should be centrally sited to allow ease of access.

Sinks

Suitable and sufficient sinks shall be provided for the washing of food and equipment used in the course of the food business.

Separate sinks must be provided for food preparation and equipment washing if the volume in the kitchen demands it. In smaller operations, one sink may be used for both food and equipment washing provided practical arrangements are adopted to prevent cross contamination.

Wash Hand Basins

Suitable and sufficient wash hand basins shall be provided which are conveniently accessible to food handlers. All wash hand basins shall be provided with an adequate supply of hot and cold water and proper hand drying facilities.

In general a wash hand basin should be provided in or near the kitchen where open foods are being handled. The precise siting depends on the type of business and foods being handled.

Pipe work

If the opportunity exists, pipes should be chased into the walls or ceilings or bracketed off the walls to facilitate cleaning behind. Boxed in pipe work should be avoided as it can give harbourage to vermin and pests.

Storage

Correct temperature control is one of the most important factors in preventing food poisoning and maintaining the quality of the food. Sufficient refrigerators and chillers should be provided according to the needs of the food business. It is particularly important to provide enough space so that raw and cooked foods can be stored separately to avoid bacterial cross contamination. A cool, dry, well-ventilated storage area should also be provided for vegetables and dry goods.

Clothing Accommodation

Separate accommodation or an adequate number of lockers or cupboards should be provided for the storage of outdoor clothing.

Refuse Storage

In general, suitable and sufficient arrangements for the storage and disposal of refuse must be made.

It is recommended that bins have tight fitting lids to prevent nuisance from flies and that a concrete standing is provided for bins laid to a fall to allow cleaning and drainage to take place. Adequate storage space should be considered for the larger "wheelie bins" or "paladin" type refuse containers with access for the collector.

The number of collections per week should be arranged so as to prevent nuisance from flies or odour.

Ventilation

Suitable and sufficient ventilation should be provided to all food rooms.

It is recommended that ventilation canopies be fitted over cooking ranges and chip fryers etc. As a guide a minimum rate of 30 air changes per hour to the kitchen is recommended.

A standard of ventilation is also expected in other food areas.

Ducting, incorporating grease filters should be provided to discharge the fumes to a point where nuisance from smell, noise or vibration is minimised. Internal ducting and grease filters must be accessible for maintenance purposes.

Please Note; the provision of high-level external ducting will require planning permission and you are advised to contact the Planning Department.

Lighting

Suitable and sufficient means of lighting shall be provided to all food rooms.

In general, a level of illumination of 540 lux at working height is recommended for all food preparation areas and 300 lux in storage areas.

Sanitary Accommodation

Suitable and sufficient sanitary accommodation must be provided for staff and where applicable customers. Sanitary accommodation must not open directly into rooms in which food is handled.

When considering the sufficiency of provision, regard shall be had to the requirements of the Work Places (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 and to British Standard 6465 relating to that for the public.

It is recommended that sanitary conveniences are ventilated to the rate of 6 to 8 air changes per hour and a lighting level of 300 lux be provided at floor level.

Water

All food premises shall be provided with an adequate supply of wholesome water.

It is recommended that water supplied for food preparation purposes is provided directly from the rising main.

Entertainment Licences

If it is your intention to apply for an entertainment licence for music and dancing at the premises, you are advised to consult at an early stage with the Licensing Team, as there may be additional requirements.

Registration of Food Premises

All food premises within the Borough should be registered with the Council.

Application forms are available through the Food, Health and Safety web pages at www.swindon.gov.uk