

# Modular Construction on Educational Sites

The use of temporary modular buildings at educational sites to provide long term accommodation is not ideal from an insurance perspective.

Where permanent style modular buildings are being utilised it is very difficult to give a one size fits all brief on what is or is not acceptable from an insurance perspective. The specific risk factors at a site will contribute to the position. The basic risk factors that are considered are:

## Existing buildings

- Proximity to – a minimum separation distance of 10 metres from existing buildings is preferred. Where this has been achieved and other minimums referred to below have been met there is no need to refer to AIG unless the project is over £1m in value.
- Construction of – Particular care should be taken where the existing school buildings are of a consortia (CLASP, SCOLA, Vic Hallam etc) or non-standard or brick and timber construction.
- Rebuild value of – where the adjacent buildings are of a high value the risk is increased. Any modular being proposed on a secondary school site should be referred to AIG for consultation.
- Any higher risk areas close-by (i.e. boiler room etc.) – a minimum 10 meters clear free space **MUST** be maintained between the modular construction and any high risk areas.
- Linking to existing buildings is not preferred – if this is the case then a fire roller shutter linked to the fire alarm **MUST** be provided to give at least 2 hours fire protection. In some cases two one hour fire shutters will be the preferred option.

## The construction of the modular

- As far as practically possible the structure should contain non-combustible materials. These **MUST** be LPCB approved and fire rated.
- Combustible timber materials **MUST** be avoided. This is to include materials used in framing and the envelope, including ETPs (engineered timber products).
- Sedum or natural roofs which increase the fire load **MUST NOT** be used.
- Expanded foam insulation materials, such as expanded polystyrene and polyurethane insulation materials **MUST NOT** be used (even if “approved”).



## Modular Size

Modular buildings are not expected to exceed 2 classrooms (or equivalent) in size unless there is a specific temporary need (i.e. following a fire on site or whilst a more permanent structure is being erected). If the size of the project trigger is over 3 classrooms the need for sprinklers may be required by AIG and hence the modular construction method would unlikely be considered appropriate.

### Occupation of the proposed structure

The intended use of the structure should not increase the fire risk, for example – provision of kitchens, canteens, laboratories, and workshops etc. – **MUST NOT** be provided in these areas.

### Connection with the existing buildings

A direct connection should be avoided or referral made to AIG risk engineer for consultation (see comments above).

### Fire Detection

All modular projects **MUST** be fitted with fire detection (smoke or heat) which is linked to the main school's fire detection system which **MUST** be linked to a system which signals off site using BT RedCare signalling equipment or similar. The system **MUST** be installed by an NSI approved installer.

### Intruder Alarm Protection

All modular projects **MUST** be intruder alarm protected, also linked to the existing school system using BT RedCare signalling equipment or similar. The system **MUST** be installed by an NSI approved installer.

### Underfloor voids created by pier foundations

**MUST** be avoided. Where the modular is an acceptable distance from the school buildings and a void cannot be avoided it **MUST** be secured against unauthorised access and windblown debris. A lattice type structure will **NOT** be acceptable. The material used to secure the void must be robust, non-combustible and installed in a manner which will make removal difficult.

### Sprinkler Policy

There is a sprinkler policy for new buildings. If the size of the project trigger is over 3 classrooms the need for sprinklers maybe required by AIG and hence the modular construction method would unlikely be considered appropriate.

### Electrical materials

The electrical material, including lighting, **MUST** be connected up, tested and maintain in accordance with the regulation. This will include an infrared thermography scanning on a regular basis to be defined in accordance with the AIG risk engineer

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