

**Cinemas in Composite Buildings
Places of Public Entertainment Regulations**

Under the Places of Public Entertainment Regulation 6A, a cinema or cinemas accommodating not more than 2,000 people in aggregate may be situated in any storey or storeys of a non-domestic building or the non-domestic part of a composite building. A pair or group of such cinemas may share exits, foyers, waiting spaces, vestibules and projection rooms subject to the following guidelines :

(a) Widths & Sizes of Shared Facilities

The common facilities shall be designed to have adequate widths and sizes based on the total capacity of the cinemas to be served.

(b) Separation

All parts of the cinema or cinemas must be separated from other occupancies by walls, floors or other elements of construction having adequate "fire resistance period" (FRP) as defined in the current edition of the Code of Practice for Fire Resisting Construction and required by the Building (Construction) Regulations and the Places of Public Entertainment Regulations. (In normal circumstances, a 2-hour FRP separation is acceptable.)

(c) Entrances

The **main** entrance to the cinema or cinemas and to the foyer(s) shall not be through other accommodation in the building since the doors of the required protected lobby can be wedged open permanently. A **secondary** access communicating with other non-domestic parts of the building, such as a shopping arcade, may be permitted when the opening is adequately protected and where movement of persons would not be so regular as to prejudice the effectiveness of the protected lobby.

(d) Exits

Exits from a cinema should be relatively remote from each other and **the majority of exit routes** must discharge onto streets, if necessary through but separated from other occupancies. **Service lanes**, especially private lanes, can become obstructed and clearance may be a lengthy process; this would impede the exit arrangements.

Streets in this context shall be not less than 4.5 m wide and be accessible to fire-fighting vehicles to the satisfaction of the Director of Fire Services.

/(e) Ventilation

(e) **Ventilation to Projection Rooms**

A projection room suite, if not provided with natural ventilation, must be mechanically ventilated to the open air by an independent system.

(f) **Foyers**

Where Regulation 36 is invoked and it is required to provide suitable accommodation for persons awaiting admission, such space shall be based on 0.5 m² per person at a ratio of one in six persons for whom seating accommodation is provided.

Cinemas in Basements

2. Cinemas may be situated at the **first basement only**. Location at lower basements will not be permitted.

3. If a cinema (the cinemas) is (are) situated in a basement, the following additional requirements will apply :

(a) **Foyers**

The foyers shall be located on the ground floor. The minimum size of the foyer shall be based on 0.5 m² per person at a ratio of one in three persons for whom seating accommodation is provided.

(b) **Exit**

All **exit routes** from the auditorium to the staircases and from the staircases to the streets should be short and direct. All **staircases/exits** from the cinema or cinemas shall discharge independently onto a street. All **staircases** serving other basement floors shall be sealed off at the cinema floor.

The widths of the staircases shall be in accordance with the following table.

| No. of persons in each cinema | No. of exit routes required | Widths of exit routes required |
|-------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| Less than 300 | 2 | 1.5 m each |
| 301 - 500 | 2 | 2 m each |
| 501 - 750 | 3 | 2 m each |
| over 750 | To be decided by the Building Authority | |

At least one of the exit routes shall be a fire-fighting and rescue stairway complying with the provisions of the current edition of the Code of Practice for Provision of Means of Access for Fire-fighting and Rescue Purposes.

(c) **Toilets**

All toilets shall be located on the ground floor.

(d) **Lifts**

All lifts serving other floors shall not open into the cinema or cinemas.

The fireman's lift shall open into the ventilated lobby in the fire-fighting and rescue stairway and such lobby shall give access to the auditorium.

(e) **Separation**

All parts of a cinema or cinemas must be separated from other parts of the buildings by walls, floors or other elements of construction having a FRP of not less than 4 hours. Reference should also be made to paragraph 12 of the Code of Practice for Fire Resisting Construction.

Consent, Special Approval and Modification

4. On application for consent, special approval and modification under the Places of Public Entertainment Regulations 9, 18 and 168 for a cinema or cinemas designed in accordance with Regulation 6A, please write to the Building Authority stating the special circumstances of the case.



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