

Section 3 – Special Provisions on Means of Escape for Use Classification 5a

Subsection B19 – Application of this Section

Clause B19.1

In addition to the general requirements in Sections 1 and 2, all places of public entertainment in Use Classification 5a should comply with the requirements in Subsections B19 to B27.

For a temporary building which is intended to be used or which is licensed for a public entertainment, it should comply with the requirements in Subsection B28.

Clause B19.2

A premises of Use Classification 5a including cinema with an occupant capacity not exceeding 50 persons may share the exit routes with other non-domestic accommodations in the same building and the requirements under this Section do not apply to such premises; provided that:-

- (a) the total occupant capacity for all such premises in the same building is not more than 150 persons;
- (b) such premises is not situated in basement;
- (c) any projection room, if provided, should comply with the requirements in Part C; and
- (d) a cinema foyer, where applicable is provided in accordance with Clause B27.8.

Subsection B20 - Site Requirements

Clause B20.1

The site of a Use Classification 5a should abut upon and have frontages to two or more thoroughfares.

Clause B20.2

The frontages of a building having a Use Classification 5a should, subject to Clause B20.7, form at least one half of the total perimeter of the building excluding recesses and projections which do not prejudicially affect exit routes, and should permit the provision of exit routes in accordance with this Section from each tier or floor direct to two or more thoroughfares.

Clause B20.3

The thoroughfares in Clause B20.2 should be of such width as will enable the persons who are to be accommodated in the Use Classification 5a to disperse rapidly in the event of fire.

Clause B20.4

In the case of a Use Classification 5a which has an occupant capacity more than 500 but not more than 2,000 persons, one of the thoroughfares in Clause B20.2 should be at least 12m wide.

Clause B20.5

In the case of a Use Classification 5a which has an occupant capacity more than 2,000 but not more than 3,000 persons, one of the thoroughfares in Clause B20.2 should be at least 12m wide and the other one should be at least 9m wide if it is a carriageway or 6m wide if it is a footway.

Clause B20.6

In the case of a Use Classification 5a which has an occupant capacity more than 3,000 but not more than 5,000 persons, one of the thoroughfares in Clause B20.2 should be at least 15m wide and the other one should be at least 9m wide.

Clause B20.7

In the case of a Use Classification 5a which has an occupant capacity more than 5,000 persons such further frontage to the thoroughfares in Clause B20.2 should be provided as the Building Authority may require.

Clause B20.8

Subject to Clause B20.9, in the case of a Use Classification 5a which has an occupant capacity not more than 500 persons, one of the thoroughfares in Clause B20.2 should be at least 7.3m wide.

Clause B20.9

In the case of a Use Classification 5a (other than cinema or theatre) which has an occupant capacity not more than 500 persons in a non-domestic building not having polluting industrial undertakings of Use Classification 6 or the non-domestic part of a composite building, the site of such premises may be permitted to abut on one thoroughfare if the said thoroughfare is an acceptable EVA and Director of Fire Services does not have any adverse comment on the arrangement.

Commentary

Modification of the requirement of the Building (Planning) Regulation 49A may be considered for a Use Classification 5a described in Clause B20.9 with a total occupant capacity not more than 500 persons.

Subsection B21 - Exit Requirements for Use Classification 5a

Clause B21.1

Buildings of Use Classification 5a should be provided with exits as follows:

- (a) if the Use Classification 5a is located at a storey less than 12m above ground floor level, Table B2 should be complied with;
- (b) if any part of Use Classification 5a is located at a storey 12m or more above ground floor level, Table B5 should be complied with.

Table B5: Exit Width for Use Classification 5a Located at 12m or more above Ground Floor Level

Occupant Capacity	Minimum Number of Exits	Minimum Total Width of Exit Route (mm)
31-200	2	2400
201-300	2	2600
301-500	2	4300
501-750	3	6400
751-1000	4	8500
1001-1250	5	10400
1251-1500	6	12500
1501-1750	7	14600
1751-2000	8	16700
2001-2500	10	20800
2501-3000	12	24900

Notes:

1. Buildings with total occupant capacity of Use Classification 5a over 3000 persons, the minimum number of exits and total width of exit routes required shall be determined by the Building Authority.
2. Minimum door width is 1050mm in accordance with Table B2, subject to compliance with other requirements in this Part, especially Subsections B5, B7 and B8.

Clause B21.2

Adequate exit routes complying with Clause B21.1 should be provided for every tier or floor.

Clause B21.3

Two of the exit routes from each tier or floor should open into different thoroughfares or ways.

Clause B21.4

Each tier or floor in a Use Classification 5a shall be constructed so that it does not have a gradient steeper than 35° to the horizontal and the headroom between any such floor or tier and the underside of the tier or ceiling above it shall in every part be at least 3m.

Clause B21.5

In calculating the number of persons who can be accommodated in any tier or floor or part of a tier or floor, the accommodation of all standing and waiting spaces in such tier or floor or part of a tier or floor should be included. Any cafe, lounge, restaurant or foyer should be regarded as a waiting space.

Clause B21.6

Exit routes should be arranged so as to afford a ready means of escape from all parts of each tier or floor and should lead directly into thoroughfares.

Clause B21.7

The exit routes from each part of each tier or floor should be placed in a position remote from the stage.

Clause B21.8

All entrances and exit doors, other than pass doors in connection with spaces in which persons await admission, should be arranged so as to be available for exit during the whole of the time that the public are within the premises.

Subsection B22 – Exits, Notices, etc.

Clause B22.1

All exit doors or openings from a premises of Use Classification 5a and from the stage and dressing rooms in such place should be clearly indicated by sufficient directional and exit signs. Such signs should comply with the requirements in the Code of Practice for Minimum Fire Service Installations and Equipment.

Clause B22.2

[Clause deleted.]

Clause B22.3

Doors and openings other than exits within sight of the audiences, which lead to portions of Use Classification 5a accessible to the public, should have notices placed over them indicating the use of such portions so that such doors and openings will not be mistaken as exits.

Clause B22.4

Notices, signs and handpointers indicating the exit direction should be provided.

Clause B22.5

Notices bearing the words NO EXIT should not be provided.

Clause B22.6

Each notice indicating an exit should be illuminated by a light on two systems as the lighting referred to in Clause B25.6.

Clause B22.7

The lighting of exit notices should not in any circumstances be extinguished or dimmed while the public are in the places of public entertainment.

Subsection B23 - Required Staircases

Clauses B23.1

All required staircases in this Section should comply with the following requirements:

- (a) The required staircase have no winders;
- (b) Each flight is of not more than 16 or of less than 3 steps;
- (c) The required staircase should not have more than 2 successive flights without a turn;
- (d) There should be a turn between 2 successive flights if any one of them has more than 12 steps in a flight; and
- (e) Treads should be not less than 280mm wide and risers should be not more than 150mm high.

Clauses B23.2

Where a flight of steps in a Use Classification 5a returns, the newel wall should be chased so as to allow the handrail to turn without projecting over the landing.

Clause B23.3

Any recess in the walls of a required staircase should be defended by guardrails.

Subsection B24 – Barriers

Clause B24.1

Any barriers which may be provided for checking or controlling admission should be arranged so that the portions immediately in the line of exit open automatically upon pressure being applied in the direction of exit and so as not to reduce the width of the exit route. All fixed directional barriers to define the exit route should have adequate strength complying with the requirements in the Building (Construction) Regulation 17(3).

Clause B24.2

Rope barriers should be fitted with automatic catches or slip connexions and should be arranged so as not to trail on the floor when parted and the fittings should not project into the gangway or exit route.

Subsection B25 – Exit Route Details

Clause B25.1

Chains or padlocks should not be used to secure exit doors. When any other locking mechanism is used, the doors should be readily opened from inside without using a key.

Clause B25.2

The gangways and seatways layout should comply with the requirements in Clause B27.6.

Clause B25.3

All gangways, exit routes and the treads of steps and required staircases should have slip-resistant surfaces.

Clause B25.4

The edges of the tread of steps and staircases should be conspicuous.

Clause B25.5

Where tiered seating is provided and is located such that persons could fall more than 1000mm, a guard rail should be provided at a height of at least 1100mm to prevent falling.

Clause B25.6

All portions of a premises of Use Classification 5a to which the public have access should be provided with lighting of a horizontal illuminance at floor level of not less than 30 lux. The lighting can be a combination of natural and artificial lighting and should be backed up by an emergency lighting system that complies with the Code of Practice for Minimum Fire Service Installations and Equipment.

Subsection B26 - Exit from Stages

Clause B26.1

Where a permanent stage is provided, an exit should be provided from each side of the stage, and one of such exits should lead directly to a thoroughfare and should comply with Table B2 or Table B5 as appropriate.

Clause B26.2

An exit route leading directly to a thoroughfare should be provided from the stage basement, and should comply with Table B2 or Table B5 as appropriate.

Subsection B27 – Cinemas in Multi-storey Buildings

Clause B27.1

Cinemas accommodating not more than 2,000 people in aggregate in any one building may be situated in any one storey or storeys within a non-domestic building or the non-domestic part of a composite building.

Clause B27.2

A cinema or cinemas with an occupant capacity not more than 2,000 people in aggregate situated in a non-domestic building or the non-domestic part of a composite building may share the protected exits with other non-domestic use of the same building, subject to compliance with the following requirements:

- (a) All cinema auditoria should be provided with a dedicated smoke extraction system and other fire service installations to the satisfaction of Director of Fire Services;
- (b) All cinema auditoria should be separated from other accommodations with walls and floors having adequate FRR as required in Part C.
- (c) Every door to a cinema auditorium should have an FRR of not less than that required for the walls of the cinema auditorium. Door openings at the cinema auditoria giving access to the cinema foyer or the adjoining non-domestic accommodations are not required to be provided with a protected lobby;
- (d) Separation should be provided between the cinema auditoria and the cinema foyers in accordance with the requirements in (b) and (c) above. Such separation is not required if the smoke extraction system is also provided to the cinemas foyer to the satisfaction of the Director of Fire Services and, in such case, adequate fire separation should be provided between the foyer and other accommodations of the building. Any openings made in the separating walls between the foyer and adjoining accommodations for communication should be protected by a fire rated door or a fire shutter having an FRR not less than that of the wall;

- (e) The protected exits which serve both the cinema and the adjoining accommodations should be accessible from the common circulation area of the building without having to pass through other private premises;
- (f) If a required staircase is directly connected to a cinema at any one storey and the occupants of the cinema do not need to pass through the adjoining non-domestic accommodation to reach the staircase, the part of staircase from that storey to the final point of discharge should comply with Subsection B23. At the transition point where there is a change in the dimension of treads and risers, a flat landing of length not less than twice the width of the required staircase should be provided. A notice in English and Chinese with words and characters “Beware of steps change” and “小心梯級高度改變” of not less than 50mm high should be provided to alert occupants of the change in the step configuration;
- (g) The shared protected exits should be designed to have adequate widths and sizes based on the total occupant capacity of the cinema and the adjoining non-domestic accommodation complying with the requirements in Subsection B21;
- (h) In a composite building, the exit routes of the cinema should be separated from the exit routes of the domestic parts of the building;
- (i) The exit routes of the cinemas including those shared exits should discharge to streets of not less than 4.5m wide. Two of the exit routes from each floor should discharge into different streets; and
- (j) The cinema is not situated at basement.

The entrance to the cinemas or to the cinema foyer may be provided through the circulation area of the adjoining non-domestic accommodations, such as a shopping arcade, subject to compliance with the above requirements.

Clause B27.3

A cinema should not be situated at basement except for the first basement floor. A cinema at the first basement floor should comply with the following requirements:

- (a) All exit routes from the cinema auditorium to the required staircases and from the required staircases to the street should be short and direct ;
- (b) All required staircases/exits from the cinema should discharge independently onto a street;
- (c) All required staircases serving other basement floors should be sealed off at the floor where the cinema is situated;
- (d) At least one of the protected exits should be a firefighting and rescue stairway designed and constructed in accordance with Part D;
- (e) The widths of the required staircases should comply with Table B5;
- (f) The foyer should be located on the ground floor. The minimum size of the foyer should be based on 0.5m² per person at a ratio of one in three persons for whom seating accommodation is provided; and
- (g) Access from the cinema to a lift serving other accommodation should be through a protected lobby. The fireman’s lift should open into the ventilated lobby in the firefighting and rescue stairway and such lobby should give access to the cinema auditoria.

Clause B27.4

Where a cinema or a group of cinemas share the protected exits with any part of the adjoining non-domestic accommodation at the same storey, the total numbers and minimum width of the protected exits required for the cinemas and that part of the adjoining non-domestic accommodation designated to share the protected exits with the cinemas should be determined in accordance with Subsection B21, based on the total occupant capacity of both the cinemas and the relevant part of the adjoining non-domestic accommodation.

Commentary

If the required width of a shared protected exit on a particular floor is greater than that required for the floors below, the required staircase from that particular floor downward to the ground level should be of the width not less than that required for that particular floor.

Clause B27.5

Subject to the following requirements, some of the exits from the cinemas may discharge through the adjoining non-domestic accommodations (e.g. shopping arcade) to the protected exits on the same floor provided that:

- (a) the width of such exits from the cinema should be not more than half of the required total width of exits for that cinema; and
- (b) the common circulation areas (e.g. arcade) of the adjoining non-domestic accommodation and the foyer through which exits from the cinemas will discharge, should have a floor area of not less than 0.5m^2 per person based on the sum of:
 - (i) the total number of persons from the cinemas which is allowed in the design for evacuation through such exits to the adjacent accommodations, calculated on a pro-rata basis by reference to the width of such exits and the total width of the exits required for the cinemas;
 - (ii) the number of persons in the cinema foyer calculated at a ratio of one person per 0.5m^2 of the floor area of the foyer; and
 - (iii) the number of persons in the circulation areas of the adjacent non-domestic accommodation calculated in accordance with Table B1.

Clause B27.6

The gangways and seatways layout of a cinema auditorium should comply with the following requirements:

- (a) Maximum length of a row of seats in a cinema auditorium should not exceed 12m for a seatway with gangway on one side only, and 24m for a seatway with gangway on two sides;
- (b) The number of seats in a row should not be more than that set out in Table B6. The width of seatway is the minimum clear horizontal distance between the back of one seat unit and the nearest projection of the seat unit in the row behind. Where seats tip up automatically, the width of seatway should be measured between the back of one seat unit and the maximum projection of the seat unit behind when the seat is in the tipped-up position. In all cases there shall be an unobstructed way or space of at least 300mm. The seating should be firmly fixed to the floor;
- (c) Gangways of not less than the width shown in Table B7 should be provided;
- (d) Where steps are provided in intersecting gangways, suitable handgrips should be provided at the ends of the seats; and
- (e) There should be no projection into a gangway that diminishes the clear width of the gangway.

Table B6 – Maximum number of seats in a row

Seatway width (mm)	Maximum number of seats in a row	
	Gangway on one side	Gangway on two sides
300 to 324	7	14
325 to 349	8	15
350 to 374	9	18
375 to 399	10	20
400 to 424	11	22
425 to 449	12	24
450 to 474	12	26
475 to 499	12	28
500 or more	Limited by the maximum length of seatway of 12m	Limited by the maximum length of seatway of 24m

Table B7: Minimum width of Gangways

No. of persons served	Minimum width of gangways
Less than 500	1 100 mm each
501 – 1000	1 200 mm each
1001 – 1500	1 350 mm each
over 1500	1500 mm each

Clause B27.7

Projection rooms should comply with the following requirements:-

- (a) The exit routes from the projection rooms should comply with the requirements in this Section. However, an elevated projection room associated to one cinema auditorium only may be provided with only one exit if the travel distance complies with Subsection B11. The exit or one of the exits from such projection room may discharge through the seating area of the cinema auditorium it serves to the required staircase; and
- (b) A projection room, if not provided with natural ventilation, must be mechanically ventilated to the open air by an independent system.

Clause B27.8

Accommodation for persons awaiting admission in the cinema foyer required under regulation 49E of Building (Planning) Regulation should be provided on the basis of 0.5m² per person at a ratio of one in six persons for whom seating accommodation is provided.

Clause B27.9

The requirements in Subsection B27 may also be applicable to and should be acceptable for other places of public entertainment of Use Classification 5a as if it is a cinema.

Subsection B28 – Temporary Buildings

Clause B28.1

Seating should comply with the following requirements:

- (a) There should be an unobstructed way or space of at least 300mm measured between perpendiculars between the back of one seat and the front of the seat immediately behind; and
- (b) The seating should be fixed firmly to the ground, floor or decking and if separated chairs are used they should be securely battened together in lengths of not less than 4.

Clause B28.2

Gangways not less than 1.2m in width intersecting the rows of seating should be provided in such a manner that no seat should be more than 3m from a gangway measured in the line of seating, and there should be a gangway abutting each side of the building from which the exit routes should open.

Clause B28.3

Gangways not less than 1.2m in width at right angles to the longitudinal gangways required by Clause B28.3 should also be provided in such a manner that the seating is divided into blocks not more than 9m in depth measured between perpendiculars between the front of the seats forming the front row and the back of the seats forming the back row of a block of seating.

Clause B28.4

Exit route not less than 2.4m in width should be provided in each side of the structure in such manner that there is one exit route at each end of a prolongation of the centreline of each of the gangways required by Clause B28.4 and one such exit route is required at each end of a prolongation of a line 1.2m in front of the first or front row of seating.

Clause B28.5

The Building Authority may require further exit from the area of the stage or space provided for the performance in consideration of the hazards associated with the proposed use of the temporary building.

Clause B28.6

Exits, gangways, aisles and seatings should be kept at all times free from any obstruction and during the period the temporary building is occupied.

Clause B28.7

Any door erected at the exits should open in the direction of exit and any fastening used for maintaining the doors closed should readily give way upon light pressure being applied by one person from inside.