

# Supplementary Guidance: Temporary Buildings

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## 1. Status of Supplementary Guidance

This Supplementary Guidance (SG) forms part of the Development Plan and is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

The SG expands upon the following [Aberdeen Local Development Plan](#) policies:

- Policy D1 – Quality Placemaking and Design

## 2. Introduction to Topic

The Council acknowledge that there will be occasions when temporary buildings will be required to fulfil specific accommodation demands. Without careful consideration the placement and length of time a temporary building is in place could, however, detrimentally impact upon the visual amenity of an area. This Supplementary Guidance provides guidance on how the Council will consider proposals for portable and modular / demountable buildings.

## 3. Requirement for Planning Permission

In some circumstances temporary buildings may be covered by *Permitted Development Rights* and therefore would not require planning permission (see [Part 4 \(Temporary Buildings and Uses\) of The Town and Country Planning \(General Permitted Development\) \(Scotland\) Order 1992](#)).

These circumstances are summarised as follows:

- Planning permission is not required for the erection or placing of moveable structures (including buildings) required as part of a temporary use taking place on land for 28 days or less. This would, for example, allow a portable building to be located within a park, field or public open space during an outdoor event or open-air market.
- Planning permission is not required for temporary buildings required during construction work on land or on adjoining land. This would include, for example, a contractor's site office or storage container located on a construction site or on land adjacent to a construction site.

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Planning permission is required for all other temporary buildings, regardless of how long they would be present on the land.

Applications for planning permission should be accompanied by a statement explaining:

- the reason a temporary building is required;
- the proposed use of the temporary building;
- the period of time the temporary building would be required; and,
- where applicable, what the permanent solution to any on-going accommodation requirement would be.

#### 4. General Principles

In considering applications for planning permission, the Council will expect temporary buildings to be sensitively located so as to minimise any detrimental visual intrusion onto the surrounding area. Temporary buildings should:

- Be located appropriately. Normally this will mean to the rear of existing buildings. Rarely will a temporary building situated at the front of the principal elevation of a building be acceptable, especially where it is visible from a public area, such as a road, path, lane or public open space. A location at the side of a building may be acceptable if it is not visible from a public area and is adequately screened.

- Avoid the loss of existing parking spaces or turning areas. Dependent on the use and agreed duration of the temporary building, additional parking may be required. Particular attention should be paid to the need to encourage sustainable travel. Further information is available in the [Transport and Accessibility Supplementary Guidance](#), and early discussion with the Council's Roads Development Management Team is recommended.
- Avoid landscaped areas, especially those with established tree or shrub planting. In exceptional circumstances this may be unavoidable, and where this is the case, appropriate justification must be provided to demonstrate why development in landscaped areas is necessary. In such circumstances, a Condition will be attached to any planning permission requiring new landscape proposals to be established in an agreed timescale following the removal of the temporary building.

Within conservation areas or the grounds of a listed building it may not be possible for a temporary building to be accommodated without adversely affecting the character of the conservation area or setting of the listed building. In these circumstances applications are likely to be refused.

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In the case of all temporary building proposals, removal of the structures and restoration of the site will be required within an agreed timescale (generally three months) following the completion of the development (or other reason why the temporary building has been permitted).

## **5. Specific Guidance for Portable and Modular / Demountable Buildings**

### **5.1 Specific Guidance for Portable Buildings**

'Portable buildings' are typically stand-alone, self-contained buildings that are manufactured and fitted out in a factory. They are delivered in one piece by road and craned into position, usually supported on jack-up legs. They are typically used for short-term accommodation requirements.

Portable buildings can also include tent-like metal framed structures covered in plastic fabric which utilise simple foundations or are bolted to a concrete slab. These are increasingly used at industrial premises.

The Council consider that in most circumstances three years is a reasonable timescale for any permanent accommodation solution to be achieved, and therefore typically that will be the maximum initial period of time granted for portable buildings.

Should a further period be required, a new planning application would be necessary and the Council would consider that on its merits.

During this assessment the Council will consider whether:

- the buildings have been maintained in a satisfactory condition; and,
- the applicant can present a justifiable case for the continued use of a temporary building rather than the erection of a permanent replacement.

### **5.2 Specific Guidance for Modular / Demountable Buildings**

'Modular' and 'Demountable' buildings can be more permanent in nature than portable buildings. Modular buildings are normally constructed from two or more factory-built steel-framed 'modules' which are connected to each other. The modules are transported to site by road, and then craned into prepared foundations. Temporary buildings resting on bricks or concrete blocks will not be regarded as demountable buildings.

Generally, the Council will treat modular / demountable buildings as permanent buildings for the purposes of assessing planning applications.

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In addition to the General Principles noted above, applicants will need to demonstrate that a modular / demountable building is sited in an appropriate location, is of a suitable design for its context, and would not adversely impact the amenity of neighbouring uses.

In recognition of their more permanent nature and higher quality, modular / demountable buildings, a case may be made for allowing the approval of the building for an initial period longer than three years, however this will not exceed five years except in exceptional circumstances. The Council will consider each case on its individual merits.

## **6. Residential Accommodation**

Temporary buildings for residential use will only be considered appropriate when required to accommodate temporary workers for construction of a major infrastructure project. Such proposals must demonstrate that satisfactory provision of potable water, foul drainage and refuse disposal facilities can be provided.

The temporary siting of a static caravan whilst a replacement dwellinghouse is constructed will be acceptable in principle. Such caravans should be located within the same development site and will be restricted to being present for the duration of the demolition of the old dwellinghouse and construction of the new dwellinghouse.

Guidance on temporary halting sites is outlined within the [Gypsy / Traveller Sites Supplementary Guidance](#)