

Building Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2000 (as amended)

Appeal against a Rejection of Plans

The following is a summary of the Department's determination of an appeal against a rejection of plans made under Article 17 of the Building Regulations (Northern Ireland) Order 1979 (as amended).

Appeal AP17/11 – Regulation H3 (Stairs, ladders, ramps and landings) as applied by Regulation A7 (Application to alterations and extensions)

The proposed works

The appellant is proposing to fit-out an existing retail unit at a retail park.

The council's decision

In relation to the appeal issue, the District Council's Notice of Rejection dated 27th October 2011 explains that its decision was based on a contravention of Part H of the Building Regulations (NI) 2000 (as amended). The District Council determined that the proposed works would contravene the Building Regulations as follows –

"H3 All ramps/landings should have a surface width not less than 1500 mm – please amend.

H3 The unobstructed length of landing to ramps should be not less than 1200 mm – please amend."

The appellant's grounds for the appeal

The appeal outlined the grounds to support the case that the proposals meet the requirements of Regulation H3. The appeal noted that –

- there are two short sections of ramp
- the higher level platform is to accommodate services
- the ramps are within staff areas
- 4 staff members of staff in total
- staff will be familiar with the ramps
- a 1 m wide ramp with an effective width at handrail height of 820 mm is sufficient as the ramps are only 1200 mm long
- already approved by another district council
- the ramps will allow a disabled official visitor or inspector occasional access

Regulation H3 Stairs, ladders, ramps and landings

Regulation H3, as applied in the circumstances of the work by Regulation A7, states –

A stair, ladder and a ramp and its landings, shall offer reasonable safety to people using them to move between—

(a) levels within the building; and

(b) an entrance or exit of the building and the general ground level immediately outside that entrance or exit.

Department's consideration of the appeal

In coming to a decision on this appeal, the Department considered –

- the application of regulation A7 (Application to alterations and extensions)– therefore the application of Part H to the proposals;
- the case submitted by the appellant;
- the plans indicating the development proposals;

Conclusion

In relation to the width of the ramps, in the circumstances of this building, the plans demonstrate that a ramp with a surface width of 1000 mm meets the provision of reasonable safety as required by regulation H3.

In relation to the length of the landings to the ramps, the size of the landings as shown on the plans permit the ramp to be entered or exited with the expected level of safety by the majority of people therefore meet the provision of reasonable safety as required by regulation H3.

Decision

The detailed examination of the plans and consideration of this case determined that –

- in relation to the width of the ramps, the drawings demonstrated compliance with Regulation H3; and
- in relation to the length of the landings to the ramps, the drawings demonstrated compliance with Regulation H3.