

Insulated Panels
UK

Changes to the Requirements of Part B – Fire Safety



DLUHC published a substantial update to the building regulations and associated guidance on 01/06/22. This comes after the consultation reviewing the ban on combustibles closed in May 2020.

The new guidance went live on 1/12/2022. Provided the initial notice has been given or plans deposited with a local authority before 01/12/22 you have 6 months to start building work if you want to use the 2019(w/2020) amendments version of ADB.

RELEVANT METAL COMPOSITE MATERIAL

There is now a definition for a “relevant metal composite material”. These relevant metal composite materials are now banned on all buildings of all heights by Regulation 7(1)a.

Relevant metal composite materials are defined (in regulation 2(6)(c)) as any panel or sheet, having a thickness of no more than 10mm which is composed of a number of layers two or more of which are made of metal, alloy or metal compound and one or more of which is a substantial layer made of a material having a gross calorific value of more than 35MJ/kg when tested in accordance with BS EN ISO 1716.

A substantial layer is defined as a layer which is at least 1mm thick or has a mass per unit area of at least 1kg/m².

It is important to note the difference between this type of metal composite material (sometimes referred to as an ACM) and an insulated panel.

FAQ

What is the difference between an ACM panel and an insulated panel? Watch the video here

REGULATION 7 – RELEVANT BUILDING

Regulation 7 (4) which defines the term relevant building was re-written in the amendments of approved document B in 2019, this was to ban the use of combustible cladding and insulation on relevant buildings.

In the latest iteration of ADB, the definition of a relevant building has been further amended to include hotels and hostels which were previously omitted. This has now expanded to cover hotels, hostels and boarding houses with a storey above 18m.

Relevant Buildings can now be summarised as any of the following with a floor level in excess of 18m above finished ground level:-

- Residential building (e.g. flats)
- Hospitals
- Care homes
- Boarding schools
- Student accommodation
- Residential institutions (e.g. prisons)
- Hotels and hostels

BUILDINGS BETWEEN 11-18M

Perhaps one of the most notable changes in terms of the restrictions to the construction of external walls is the inclusion of residential buildings (purpose groups 1 and 2) with a storey of more than 11m in height.

Purpose groups 1 and 2 include all of the types of residential building outlined under Regulation 7. However, these buildings can comply either by following the same guidance on external surfaces, materials and products, and cavities and cavity barriers as for relevant buildings over 18m, or by meeting the performance criteria given in BRE report BR 135 for external walls using full-scale test data from BS 8414-1 or BS 8414-2.




This is significant, because large scale system testing such as BS 8414 is a robust way of identifying the fire safety of a full external wall construction, rather than relying on a simple classification based on small scale laboratory tests of individual products within the system.

Ultimately, it is the interaction of the different elements and the design of the construction, including aspects such as the depth of a ventilation cavity, which determines how well that construction performs in a fire, as much as individual product performance.

For information on Kingspan Insulated Panel products which comply with BR135, please contact the technical department.

CURRENT ENGLAND RULES FOR DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION

EXTERNAL WALLS – FROM 1 DECEMBER 2022

Storey Height	Relevant Buildings and other Residential Buildings (buildings listed in Regulation 7)	Non-Residential
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Euroclass B, C, D and E prohibited – Regulation 7 applies – Only way is Class A2-s1,d0 or A1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – ACM PE banned (Reg 7(1A)) – Functional requirement / ADB apply – Either Class A2-s1,d0 or A1 or BS 8414/BR135 performance route
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – ACM PE banned (Reg 7(1A)) – Functional requirement / ADB apply – Either Class A2-s1,d0 or A1 or BS 8414 / BR135 performance route 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – ACM PE banned (Reg 7(1A)) – Euroclass B, C, D and E are permitted (surface reaction to fire controls may apply)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – ACM PE banned (Reg 7(1A)) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – ACM PE banned (Reg 7(1A))

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Where a building has a height, regardless of storey height of more than 18m restrictions on the use of some external coatings do apply. The external surfaces (i.e. outermost external material) of external walls should comply with the provisions in Table 12.1 in Approved Document B.

For full details of the amendments and to access the statutory guidance in Approved Document B, always check the gov.uk website for the latest versions.

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