



Certification Practice Note 5

Guidance on the certification of the structural design of buildings which include supports to buildings services, fixtures and fittings

1.0. Background

- 1.1. The Building (Scotland) Regulations require in Mandatory Standard 1.1 that the building is designed so that the loadings that are liable to act on it will not lead to:
 - a) the collapse of the whole or part of the building
 - b) deformations which would make the building unfit for its intended use, unsafe, or cause damage to other parts of the building or to fittings or to installed equipment, or
 - c) impairment of the stability of any part of another building.
- 1.2. It is also important to note that references to “building” in the legislation include references to part of a building.
- 1.3. Clearly this presents some difficult choices for Certifiers regarding the scope of their certification and the extent of their review of the design in relation to supports to building services, plant, equipment, fixtures and fittings. This document provides some guidance in this respect.

2.0. General Guidance

- 2.1. In preparing this guidance SER have liaised with Scottish Government’s Building Standards Division and LABSS.
- 2.2. It is important that on all projects Certifiers carry out a scoping exercise to determine the elements within the building, the design for which might need to be reviewed as part of the certification process.
- 2.3. This might typically include a review of the loadings applied to the building by any building services, plant, equipment, fixtures and fittings and a review of the design of the supports for such items and of the fixings of the supports to the structure of the building, but need not include consideration of the integrity of those items, e.g. ventilation ducts, cable trays, water tanks or the spacing of any supports, which should be determined by the designers of those items.

2.4. In this respect, Certifiers should take a proportionate approach to the extent of their review, having carried out on a risk assessment which should include consideration of the following:

- a) The scale of the item under consideration and the consequences of any failure of all or part of the element and/or its fixings and supports
- b) Who might be providing advice with respect to the design of the item under consideration, if anyone
- c) Whether or not the item is covered by any recognised test certification, manufacturers literature, BBA certificates, etc
- d) Whether or not the manufacturer or supplier has provided recommendations for the fixings and supports
- e) The integrity of the structural element which will provide support or to which the item will be fixed

2.5. As noted in other guidance, the Certifier is required under the legislation to keep records of how compliance with the building regulations was established. In all cases there must be clear evidence of the scoping exercise and risk assessment within the certification records, together with the reasoning why the design of an element has not been considered as part of the certification process.

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