Managing Site Compounds & Containers

It should be recognised that this best practice guidance does not replace any existing legal requirement placed upon organisations undertaking street or works for road purposes or an organisations existing internal operating procedures, but is intended to give further guidance on potential risks that need to be considered.
Introduction

This document is aimed at providing guidance on the use of site compounds, which are required to facilitate the delivery of utility and highway works.

Establishing a local compound is an integral part of creating a safe and practical site, and for schemes falling under the Construction, Design and Management Regulations [CDM], it is a legal responsibility.

There are many stakeholders to consider when planning where to site compounds, these could include but not restricted to; highway authority, local residents/businesses, highway users – all of whom may require engagement as early as reasonably practicable.

A site compound may comprise of a site office, welfare facilities, parking and storage for major utility or highway projects. A dedicated compound would enable contractors to keep these out of the highway and avoid additional congestion and inconvenience for local residents and highway users. The contractor should display a sign outside their compound with a mobile number for emergency contact to address any logistical issues.

Reasons a compound is required

A local compound enables signing, lighting & guarding, materials and machinery to be stored safely and securely near the works site, allowing them to be accessed and delivered quickly when they are required.

In addition, CDM regulations require suitable and sufficient sanitary conveniences and washing facilities to be provided or made readily available, as far as reasonably practicable. Recognising the health & safety requirements of employees, individual organisations may also have internal policies which require the provision of such facilities for works that do not fall under CDM regulations.

Dependent on the number of employees visiting and/or working on site, welfare facilities may be provided in the form of portable toilets, welfare vans or steel containers.

A steel container may combine welfare facilitates and secure storage, to reduce the overall number of containers required on site.

Siting of compound

It is essential that compounds are located safely, whether on public or private land; the following is a list of minimum requirements and other safety considerations;

A compound should not be sited within 20 metres of;

- a road junction
- bus stop
- traffic signals (temporary or permanent) (the compound may be sited in an area protected by temporary traffic signals)
- pedestrian crossing
- School, hospital or works entrances/exits
- Railway

A compound should consider:

- visibility of highway users
- maintain a safe width in accordance with Safety at Street Works & Road Works Code of practice if located in the highway
- access for emergency vehicles
- Protect verges or environmentally sensitive sites shall not be used
- Other sensitive sites, e.g. in a flood plain
- Adequate space to allow loading, unloading, turning and parking of vehicles etc.

The above is not an exhaustive list, prior to placing any compound a site specific risk assessment must be completed and submitted to your supervisor/highway authority for approval.

The location of a compound should be chosen to minimise the impact on local residents, businesses, the travelling public and the environment, as far as reasonably practicable; while taking into account the requirements of the project or scheme.

Recognising that each site is unique and will require the completion of an onsite risk assessment, the order of preference should be;

- Private land or non-highway public areas i.e parks/verges or similar areas
- Public highway

Where a compound is placed on private or public land, other than the public highway, prior agreement will be required with the owner and or organisation/person having responsibility for that land, which is the responsibility of the person placing the compound.

Any new (temporary) access from land onto the highway, where a compound is sited, would need to be approved by the highway authority, including location, site access, visibility and temporary construction.

Where a compound is placed on the public highway, the location should be agreed with the local highway authority.

It is also recognised that whilst there could be areas off the public highway where a compound could be placed, in the event the necessary agreement cannot be reached and/or the cost is deemed unreasonable then it may be necessary to place the compound on the public highway.
Other Considerations;

Designated parking areas

Where the compound is to be placed in a resident’s or controlled parking bay, the applicant may require a suspension of on-street parking places. There may be an additional cost associated with the parking suspension/s.

It is an offence to place an obstruction in a parking bay, which has not been suspended by the highway authority, and the highway authority has the power to remove the obstruction and prosecute the person responsible.

Disabled parking bays should be avoided where possible.

Managing the compound

It is the responsibility of the organisation placing the compound to ensure it is maintained in a safe and secure condition.

Additional conditions could also be imposed which set out measures to ensure that the person placing the compound maintains satisfactory levels of environmental protection and minimises disturbance from construction activities, as far as reasonably practicable. These conditions may also provide a framework for community liaison which would be in place for the duration of the scheme, recognising compounds may be required to move as utility and/or highway works progress. Specific conditions could cover such matters as:-

- Lighting and fencing of the compound
- Access routes for equipment and materials
- Control of potential environmental hazards within the site compound
- Protection of trees and wildlife
- Working hours and noise levels
- Portable toilets - where will they be placed, safely, hygienically and accessible for maintenance

Additional information can be obtained on pollution and hazardous material storage from the Environment Agency’s website:

Permitted hours that a compound be used

Any restrictions on working hours should be considered and agreed as part of the site specific risk assessment and in discussion with the owner and or organisation/person having responsibility for that land, and where necessary local environmental officers.

Such restrictions should balance the needs of the local community, businesses, the travelling public and completion of the works in a timely manner.

Any requirement to work outside restricted working hours should be jointly agreed with stakeholders.

Planning & communication

Adequate time should be allowed to plan and prepare for the placing of a compound. There will in some instances be a need for external negotiations, including legal searches for land owners etc.

Discussion with the local community, particularly those who may be directly affected by the compound i.e. placed outside their property, would normally be required to secure a mutual understanding and agreement.

Consideration should be made to the longevity of the compound. Minimising the need to move the compound during the scheme may be more practical than relocating throughout the progression of the works, therefore limiting those potentially impacted. A contractor may need to consult with the local planning authority for longer term compounds greater than six months.

Notification

Compounds will be noticed in accordance with the ‘Code of Practice for the Coordination of Street Works and Works for Road Purposes and Related Matters’, when placed on the public highway. Containers not sited directly within the area where work is taking place i.e. in an adjacent street each authority will have an individual mechanism to accommodate this (appropriate Highways Act licence).

Compound Removal

When a compound is no longer required, the site will be returned to its previous condition or as close as reasonably practicable and as soon as is practicable.

Additional requirements for containers sited on the highway

- A container shall not exceed 5m (16'6") in length by 2m (6'6") in width
- A container shall not be placed within 20m (65'7") of a road junction, bus stop, traffic lights, pedestrian crossing, entrance to, or exit from schools, hospitals or works.
- A container shall be placed on the carriageway with the long side parallel to the kerb at 250mm (10") out in the position agreed by the highway authority. It
shall be sited so as not impede the surface water drainage of the street nor obstruct access to any manhole or apparatus of any Statutory Undertaker or of the Council, nor obstruct access to any other premises unless the consent of the occupier of those premises has been obtained. Door opening widths needs consideration.

- A container shall not be dragged or pushed along the carriageway in any way which causes or may cause damage to the highway. And should be placed on timber spreaders to prevent damage to the carriageway surface.

- A container shall not be deposited on any of the footway or verge at any time nor shall the container be transported over the footway nor shall any part of the transporting vehicle be on the footway when depositing or uplifting the container.

- Single containers shall be lighted by at least four lights one at each corner during the hours of darkness and clearly visible to all traffic. Where appropriate further reflective marking may be required and identified in the dynamic risk assessment.

- A container shall when deposited be clearly and indelibly marked with the owners/contractors name and with his telephone number or address.

- No containers on the highway shall contain any inflammable, explosive, noxious or dangerous material or any material, which is likely to putrefy, or which is likely to become a nuisance to users of the highway

- Shall not restrict visibility from private accesses.

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