How we helped Mitie provide emergency facilities following the discovery of RAAC

St Andrew's Junior school in Hatfield Peveret, Essex, was one of more than 200 schools across the country found to have Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC), forcing it to close temporarily. Mitie, working for Essex County Council, contracted us to provide a temporary structure, including design and project management, to allow regular school activities to continue whilst major refurbishment work is carried out.

- 2,162L of fuel saved over a fortnight*
- CO2 emissions reduced by 7 tonnes every fortnight*
- NOx reduced by 34kg every fortnight*
- Provided a safe communal & canteen space for 200+ children
- End-to-end design and project management

*When compared to a traditional diesel temporary power set-up.

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In the final week of the summer holidays surveyors from the Department for Education confirmed the roof structure at St Andrew's Junior school contained RAAC. The school was ordered to close two days before the Government escalated its RAAC policy due to the material being prone to collapse.

To allow learning to resume at the school Mitie were engaged by Essex County Council, on behalf of the Department for Education, to provide a temporary accommodation solution, whilst a longer term strategy for the school building is developed.

We have built a strong working relationship with Mitie since collaborating on the construction of COVID testing facilities. Through this partnership, we worked closely with Mitie to define, design, and deliver a bespoke temporary structure and the necessary equipment to meet the school's specific requirements.

Our equipment and services supplied at a glance

- 10m x 20m temporary structure
- Clean energy solution comprising Battery Storage Units and a standby Generator
- Temperature Control comprising a boiler unit and ducting
- Fencing and Barriers
- Trakway around the entire site
- Welfare Accommodation Units for contractors and the Sunbelt Rentals team
- Plant equipment including a Telehandler and Scissor Lift
- Bespoke design service and end-to-end project management

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Challenges

As this is a primary school, it is a sensitive site with limited access and requiring enhanced DBS checks. Speed was of the essence, as it was vital that the structure and equipment were installed within a strict two-week time window.

It was also important that noise and emissions were kept to an absolute minimum, hence the deployment of a clean energy solution. Finally, nothing was more important than the health and safety of children, staff, local residents, and the site team involved.

Solution

The main requirement was the provision of a temporary structure to be used as a canteen area, assembly hall and sports hall. Sunbelt Rentals sourced a 10m x 20m hard-sided marquee structure with storage facilities and a kitchen area which was installed in the school grounds. A temperature control system with a temporary boiler and ducting was also installed to provide heat and hot water into the structure.

A clean energy solution was delivered through the deployment of a Battery Storage Unit (BSU) working alongside a Generator to reduce fuel usage, emissions and noise pollution.

As there was a significant amount of equipment to be installed on the site, we provided Trakway to protect the grass and provide safe access. Fencing and Barriers were also erected around the complete site perimeter during the build phase to keep children away from site operations. Finally, temporary welfare facilities were installed for use by contractors and the site team.

We also worked closely with Mitie and the school to ensure the safety of children at all times, adhering to strict site entrance protocols.

Result

Using experience of dealing with emergency requests, we were able to provide Mitie and the school with a bespoke project management and design solution utilising the extensive range of products and services available in the fleet.

By sourcing all equipment and project management services from one supplier, Mitie were able to benefit from a single point of contact and reduced site deliveries, ensuring the project was delivered on schedule and with minimal disruption to the school and local residents.

The use of the clean energy solution also delivered average savings of 2,162L of fuel, seven tonnes of CO2, and 34kg of Nitrous Oxides every fortnight.

Following the successful delivery of this project, we continued to support Mitie with providing safe, temporary learning environments on similar sites across the UK.