



Your food and beverage business relies on efficiently delivering high-quality products to your customers. Maintaining operations is paramount.

So the idea of building on your existing facility can be both exciting and stressful. You're enabling business growth, but to make that happen you risk disrupting the business itself. That's why it's important to bring experts on board.

There are a host of considerations when working on an existing site — here are some common ones.

BUSINESS CONTINUITY

We understand FMCG retailers expect rapid product innovation from suppliers, which means big changes on the production side within short timeframes. A good planning approach avoids delays and cuts commissioning time so your new products can hit the shelves faster.

On the flip side, getting it wrong and losing an essential service can bring process lines to a halt. The cost quickly compounds with profit losses and rescheduled production to cover shortfalls.

As an experienced contractor, BADGE manages and mitigates these risks. We also add value with technical knowledge from other industries — such as aviation, where critical functions cannot be compromised for a moment.



EXAMPLE - IMMERSION CHILLER REPLACEMENT

BADGE worked with Ingham's to replace aging immersion chiller units — 20-metre vessels that rapidly reduce the temperature of chickens prior to boning, located inside a tight facility.

We jointly developed a plan based on a shutdown window over Easter. Seven hours of disconnection and removal works were required simply to access the area, with a cascade of different trades working sequentially. Services and access walkways were removed, and space was made to manoeuvre the bus-sized chillers into place.

With thorough preparation and execution, the job was finished in time for production to resume just as Ingham's staff returned from the Easter break.

MAINTAINING HYGIENE & STAGING

There can be no compromise on food safety. So when it comes to construction activity around process lines, the right measures need to be in place.

As well as the construction personnel themselves, major works require vehicles and large quantities of materials to enter your site, and their involvement needs to be located and timed accurately to keep your products secure. Dust, fumes, noise and vibration are also common side effects of construction works — and since every site is unique, we'd be surprised if yours didn't throw up any special challenges of its own which require attentive management. This means that close collaboration and coordination are important.

We develop staging plans tailored to your site and schedule, isolating active works from production areas to keep things running. We also conduct regular reviews and ensure you're involved every step of the way.



EXAMPLE - REARING FARM EXPANSION

To achieve efficiency in flock sizes for downstream breeding farms, Ingham's engaged us to expand the capacity of their Rearing Farm facility — without shutting it down in the process.

Keeping the farm running meant maintaining biosecurity standards throughout. To avoid risks, we timed the extensions to be built during flock clean-outs, and coordinated active works with small gaps in the farm production schedule.

During our preliminary inspection of the sheds, we uncovered dilapidation issues, and moved quickly to develop a solution with all stakeholders that fit the programme. This happened at a critical time with a new flock placement approaching. Strict biosecurity protocols were maintained and the works ran successfully to schedule.

BUILDING COMPLIANCE

Adding rooms or moving walls is fairly simple from a construction perspective, but it might mean your site no longer ticks the compliance boxes it did when it was first built. For example, will the emergency egress path change as a result of your upgrades? Failing to achieve Building Code compliance can put occupants at risk and nullify your insurance cover.

If you're increasing your floor area or joining separate structures, the Code might require you to implement extra safety provisions — but that depends on how your project is designed. With our knowledge of the Code and expertise in planning, we can develop a strategy that meets your expansion brief and keeps your occupants and assets safe, while avoiding the need for costly extras like fire sprinklers.

Building and process services also come under the microscope. A common case is older electrical boards and wiring — those components may be fine to operate as they are, but adding or changing the circuitry could require upgrades to achieve the electrical compliance necessary for new works.

By involving experts early in your project planning, the Code requirements can be quantified and the scope tailored to avoid unnecessary obligations. This way, there will be no surprises, and your Capital Expenditure budget will reflect everything necessary to get your project operational.

LEGACY ISSUES

Ageing facilities can conceal many surprises, and if nobody takes a good look before your project kicks off, a nasty one could derail everything. Asbestos, contamination or overloaded structures will bring works (and your planned launch date) to an immediate halt. Our experts are prepared to undertake a thorough site investigation at the earliest opportunity, so that we can advise you on potential remediation works before the project programme is finalised.

We know that a project needs to be economically viable from start to finish, which is why we encourage clients to have a handle on all costs before it proceeds. Applying for more funding during a project can be frustrating and time consuming — and in the worst cases, unknown costs can tip a project into the unviable category.

We can help shift unforeseen costs to different cost centres like an R&M budget. However, the best practice is to get a handle on legacy issues in the earliest stages of a project so they can be managed proactively, not reactively. We have the knowledge to properly investigate and identify legacy issues, and then develop quality solutions.

EXAMPLE - OVERLOADED ROOF STRUCTURE

One of our clients approached us about expanding a processing facility we had previously built for them. Like many in the industry, the client had responded to technological advances by changing their process equipment several times. We started by getting out to the site for investigations when we had a moment of near panic.

During a structural inspection, we saw that the client had loaded up the roof structure with hanging equipment to the point where major roof deflection was visible. They undertook this without any engineering advice and nearly resulted in an evacuation. Luckily, temporary measures enabled ongoing operation — and even luckier still, the additional bracing was not expensive in this case.

However, most fortunate of all was that everyone stayed safe. Sometimes people think older structures have a greater capacity through overdesign, and skimp on the inspection — but if these works had gone ahead without the roof problem being discovered and actioned, the result could have been catastrophic.

