

New home built alongside existing home

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Question

Where a new home is built onto the side of an existing home, is it necessary to provide a separate wall, along side the existing, on an independent foundation?

Considerations

- The new home should remain as a functioning, waterproof, and separate entity for the duration of its minimum 60-year anticipated design life.
- The existing foundation and wall may not be structurally sound.
- If the two homes are not constructed independently there could be differential movement: this could cause structural damage to one or both homes and/or affect the weatherproofing.
- The existing wall may not resist the passage of sound and fire adequately.
- The existing wall may lack the necessary damp proofing.
- Excluding the existing wall from Buildmark cover by the use of an endorsement is not acceptable.
- If a new leaf is not to be built, it is necessary to demonstrate that the owner of the existing wall recognises that the existing wall is to become a party wall.

Answer

The NHBC would generally seek to treat end of terrace developments as new build. The preferred option for achieving this is to build an independent wall, on an independent foundation, along side the existing wall. The new wall and foundation should be designed by a suitably qualified structural engineer.

Alternatively the existing wall may be used if it meets the following criteria:

- There should be a Party Wall Agreement in accordance with the Party Wall Act and this should be made available to NHBC.
- Confirmation is required that the separating wall meets the relevant requirements of the Building Regulations.
- The existing foundations and wall structure should be exposed to determine whether they are suitable to support any proposed increased loading resulting from the construction of the new home.
- The interface between the new and existing walls and roofs must provide a weatherproof construction.
- An effective dpc should be present in the existing wall, linked to the new dpcs and dpm of the new home.
- At the junction of the existing and new structures, detailing should allow for differential movement without cracking.