

Perimeter support to plasterboard ceilings clarification

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Background

NHBC Standards Chapter 9.2 Table 5 sets out when and where timber noggings should be included to provide adequate support to the plasterboard during normal use and in the event of a fire. Table 5 was updated in NHBC Standards 2020 to reflect the plasterboard manufacturer's current recommendations particularly in respect of fire resistance of intermediate floors.

A footnote was added to Table 5 which potentially allows the omission of perimeter noggings to 15mm plasterboard with supports at maximum 600mm centres to intermediate floors. This however only applies to two or three storey dwellings and the following justification is required;

Justification from either the floor joist manufacturer or the plasterboard manufacturer that the floor achieves 30 minutes fire resistance without perimeter noggings.

Or, a fire test for a particular floor construction that demonstrates that the floor achieves 30 minutes fire resistance.

Considerations

- Where two layers of plasterboard are required to meet the fire performance, timber noggings, both within the ceiling area and at the perimeter edges, should be provided to support the second layer of plasterboard.
- Perimeter noggings are not required for support of 15mm plasterboard on supports at 600mm centres where the ceiling is part of a non-fire rated structure, e.g. ceiling to trusses under a roof void.
- Noggings should always be provided behind all plasterboard joints where a vapour control plasterboard is used to inhibit the movement of water vapour through the joint.
- Perimeter relates to all ceiling edges both at external walls and internal partitions. If the plasterboard is erected before the internal partition i.e. it continues across the top of the partition, it is not considered a perimeter in this context.