

NHBC Paper for Members of the HBF Health and Safety Group

Proposed arrangements for NHBC Building Inspectors to inspect work from within roof spaces.

23 September 2013

Purpose of this Paper

This paper refers to the issue of NHBC carrying out final inspections of properties for building control and warranty purposes.

NHBC has for some time instructed its building inspectors not to enter roof spaces when carrying out inspections. Typically, the requirement to inspect a roof space will be when a final inspection is carried out prior to the Council of Mortgage Leaders (CML) certificate being issued. Currently final inspections are achieved by the inspector gaining head and shoulders access only into the loft and if further investigation is required, to satisfy the inspector that all building control / NHBC warranty requirements have been met, this is carried out by the site manager or a tradesperson.

The Issue

Based on NHBC's experience, it is apparent that the current regime of head and shoulders entry only, places limitations on an inspector's ability to comprehensively inspect all of the things that need to be looked at, making it difficult for NHBC to ensure that all building control and warranty inspection obligations have been complied with.

The Proposal

To ensure that NHBC inspectors are able to see for themselves the features that require inspecting, we are proposing that in future Inspectors will carry out final inspections from within the loft. Inevitably this will require the inspector to move around the roof space inspecting such things as; fire stopping at party walls, arrangements for venting soil and vent pipes, integrity of boiler flues, connection of mechanical flue vents and security of fixings such as those used to fix holding down straps.

Given that our inspectors, when carrying out these inspection will be 'at work' and that their place of work will be the roof space of the property being inspected, NHBC will require the builders to provide inspectors with either a temporary or permanent platform and walkway that will provide safe access/egress to and from the areas of the roof that require inspection, i.e. a safe place of work

The proposal for NHBC building inspectors to be provided with a platform/walkway from which to carry out final inspections is put forward in the context of the builder providing a safe place of work to others who carry out work in roofs.

Recommendation

Members are asked to bring this matter to the attention of their respective organisations making them aware of this proposed NHBC inspection requirement.