



Guidance on Removal of Chimney Breasts

The removal of a chimney breast and the installation of supports is building work that requires Building Regulation approval. A full Plans application can be made with detailed drawings and a specification, or a Building Notice can be used.

The details on this sheet are for chimney supports within buildings that are constructed of traditional brick and blockwork. The details are for guidance only as gallows brackets are not always suitable and another method of supporting the chimney may have to be used eg the installation of a steel beam spanning between load-bearing walls. Also check with your neighbour whether their chimney breasts have already been removed. If they have then you should not install gallows to the roof. Ensure that the party wall is built up to the underside of the roof and fill any gaps above the wall, under the roof covering, with a flexible fire-stop material eg rockwool insulation quilt. In addition gallows brackets should not be used where the chimney exceeds 2.0m above the roof level and chimney walls are greater than 225mm thick.

If the brackets are to be used, take all measurements from your chimney before having anything made up. They should be installed as low as possible in the roof void to counteract the height of the chimney above the roof.

The concrete fireplace hearth at first floor level should be removed. Additional timber joists must be installed and adequately supported by the existing trimming joists or the party wall.

Make good to all parts of the party wall where brickwork has been removed. Ensure that the wall thickness is a minimum 225mm (9 inches) to maintain a reasonable level of sound insulation after the chimney has been removed.

It is advisable to cap-off the chimney pots, to prevent birds (and heavy rain!) getting into the flue.

Removing a chimney breasts can be a noisy and dirty business so let your neighbours know about the proposed work. The Party Wall Act 1996 will almost certainly apply to the removal of a notification to the adjoining property owner before work commences.

If you have any queries contact a Building Control Surveyor.

IMPORTANT: Gallows brackets can only be used in the roof space of two storey houses.

Wycombe Building Control
Queen Victoria Road
High Wycombe
Bucks
HP11 1BB

Email: Building_Control@wycombe.gov.uk
Telephone: 01494 421 403