

Guidelines for installation of hardwood floor or hard floor in flats

These guidelines have been prepared to assist in applying for Licence for Alterations for the installation of hard floors where a lease requires fully fitted carpets over underlay.

You will need to satisfy the following minimum requirements to control impact and airborne sound to prevent a nuisance or annoyance.

Any licence granted will include a nuisance clause that in the event that the hardwood floor or hard floors causes a nuisance or annoyance the floor will be covered to comply with the lease terms.

Sound Testing

- 1) To establish a bench mark for the existing situation, sound tests to BS EN ISO 140 -4 : 1998 airborne sounds and BS EN ISO 140 – 7 : 1998 impact sound must be carried out before any refurbishment works are undertaken. The measurements are to be corrected to a reverberation time in the receiving room of 0.5s to produce a single figure, for comparison to a further test being carried out on completion of the hardwood/hard floor. A test is required in each area to receive hardwood/hard floors. A tolerance of field measurements of plus or minus 2dB between the test figures is permitted.
- 2) The Building Regulations 2010 and Approved Document E 2015 requirements for sound insulation are 43db for airborne sound and 64dB for impact sound. To assist in understanding these set points for airborne sound insulation a value higher than 43dB is better and for impact sound insulation a value lower than 64dB is better. The Building Regulations is only to be used as the minimum requirement and cannot be used where greater sound insulation qualities have been proven by the initial sound tests. An existing situation takes precedence over Building Regulation requirements, where sound insulation performances are greater.
- 3) The acoustic test is to be undertaken by a member of a recognised professional body, either The Institute of Acoustics or The Association of Noise Consultants.

Design

- 4) When granting a Licence for Alterations for the installation of hardwood floors we do not accept any responsibility in the design performance of insulation products or that the design chosen will satisfy the sound requirements to be achieved.

Designers of wooden/hard floors will be required to design a floor that does not rely on any insulation treatment requiring access to the ceiling of the floor below where the hardwood floor is to be installed. Designers should also be aware that flanking transmission can be as important in determining the sound insulation of the floor and is often not quoted or shown by manufacturers' sales literature. The designed floor details are to be provided to us as part of the licence requirements.

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Building Surveying Department
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