Neighbourly Matters Overview

What are Neighbourly Matters?

‘Neighbourly Matters’ is the term applied to a collection of issues that may affect the occupiers or owners of neighbouring land or buildings during the planning and construction of a new scheme. These can include rights to light, party walls, daylight and sunlight and access arrangements. There is a growing awareness of environmental issues and of legal rights. Combined with this increased density of development in towns and cities means that some or all of these issues need to be considered on projects. Taking advice on these issues early in the development process can avoid costly delays and disputes later on.

Important considerations for any development:

- Is the proposed development in a residential area?
- Have the local planning authority asked about light in respect of your proposals?
- Do any parties have a right of way over your property or any other interest in the property?
- Will the works necessitate the use of a crane and is access readily available to the development site?
- Are there any neighbouring buildings sharing support from your property?
- Will the works involve work to a party wall or structure between buildings in separate ownership?
- Will the proposed development require excavation works close to neighbouring buildings?
- Do you intend to construct up to your boundary line?
- And on the other side of the fence... are you a neighbour with a substantial development planned next door?

If the answer to one or more of the above questions is ‘yes’ then Watts’ neighbourly matters teams can help.

Our teams have extensive experience of this subject and work across the whole range of commercial, industrial, retail, residential, public and historic building types.
Rights to light – specialist technical advice from the design stage of a project; liaison with affected parties and their representatives; coordination of an advisory team; production of detailed 3D computer analysis risk management advice and negotiation of settlements where appropriate.

Party walls – all aspects of the service in accordance with the Party Wall Etc Act 1996 including the preparation of notices; undertaking of schedules of condition; agreement of party wall awards and acting in the capacity of building, adjoining, agreed and third surveyor.

Daylight and sunlight – the provision of expert advice on the likely effects of developments or extensions to neighbouring properties. Our service includes undertaking technical analysis in accordance with BRE Report 209; consultation with the design team and local authority; providing detailed reports; confirming findings and recommendations.

Access arrangements – negotiation of access arrangements such as crane over sailing and scaffold licences. Watts has also negotiated access for work near waterways, with local harbour masters and also with the Highways Agency regarding temporary road closures.

Testimonial
"Watts have provided neighbourly matters services on our development comprising 14 residential dwellings within Pangbourne, reading. The site is surrounded by 9 other properties that required party wall notification and consultation regarding boundary matters.

Given the number of objections received during the planning phase I had anticipated this to be a substantial undertaking. I was very pleased with Watts’s pragmatic approach and rapport established with the neighbours, settling disputes early on before anything escalated. From all these neighbours the scheme only resulted in a single party wall award being required. This was a great result which not only represented quite a cost saving but assisted in building relationships with the neighbours and demonstrating that our company employs the right consultants who get the job done."

Michael Gilbert, Director, Daniel & Gilbert

Watts Locations

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