

Lateral restraint provided by gable ladders

(March 2017) (Second issue - supersedes December 2008)



Question

- 1) Where gable ladders provide lateral restraint to a gable wall, is it acceptable to use the longitudinal bracing in place of blocking between the end trussed rafter and the wall?
- 2) How should the soffit board be installed to provide an effective lateral restraint?

Considerations

- NHBC Standards clause 7.2.8 states 'Gable ladders can be used to provide restraint to the external wall where:
 - there is blocking between the last trussed rafter and the inner leaf (maximum 2m centres),
 - the soffit board is cut carefully and then fixed securely to restrain the outer leaf'.

Answer

It is acceptable to use the longitudinal bracing to provide lateral restraint, with no blocking between the end trussed rafter and the wall, when the ends of each brace is finished tight against the wall. Additional intermediate boards will need to be provided if the longitudinal bracing is more than 2m apart up the slope of the roof. These boards should be installed tight against the wall and fixed over at least three trussed rafters.

Thin sot boards fixed direct to the gable ladder do not provide a good overlap for restraint to the top of the external leaf of the gable wall. A good overlap between the sot board and the top of the wall should be provided by fixing battens to the underside of the gable ladder (see diagram over). The first batten should be positioned tight against the face of the outer leaf to act in combination with the soffit board in providing the lateral restraint.

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