

**Projections in relation to site coverage and plot ratio
Building (Planning) Regulations 20 & 21**

In accordance with Building (Planning) Regulation (B(P)R) 2, site coverage means the area of a site that is covered by the building(s) erected thereon. In simple terms, the site coverage is the shadow cast on a site with the sun directly overhead. Hence all components of a building, including all projections, should be accountable for site coverage. However, site coverage is also a measure to control the building bulk.

2. In the case of plot ratio, the definition of gross floor area uses the term 'external wall'. Clearly 'wall' does not just mean concrete or brick material, and windows and parapet railings should obviously also be included. For projections from a building, it is accepted that if the projections are not at a floor level, or potential floor level, and do not dominate the face of a building, measurement as accountable gross floor area is not required.

3. It follows from the above that the following projections from the face of a building, having no significant impact on building bulk, need not be counted for site coverage and plot ratio:

- (a) pitched roof eaves and flat roof overhangs complying with B(P)R 7(1) (provided these are not contained within parapet walls as part of an accessible flat roof);
- (b) individual air-conditioner boxes and platforms of reasonable size which have a built-in system for condensate disposal;
- (c) individual canopies, window hoods complying with B(P)R 7(1) and porches having projection no exceeding 1.5m;
- (d) window cills and window surrounds projecting not more than 100 mm;
- (e) string courses, fins and architectural mouldings complying with B(P)R 7(1) (but not structural beams and columns);
- (f) window flower boxes not exceeding 500mm in width;
- (g) external drainage pipes and gutters complying with B(P)R 7(1); and
- (h) sunshades solely used for the purpose of energy conservation projecting not more than 1.5m from the external wall.

4. It is emphasized that, notwithstanding paragraph 3 above, if any of the listed features is so exaggerated, excessive in scale, or defeats the provisions of the Ordinance (for example, a structural beam doubling as a flower box) or is provided or designed in an unusual way, that feature will be counted for site coverage and, if appropriate, also for plot ratio.

5. It follows from the above that all other projections must be included in site coverage and plot ratio calculations. However projecting windows may be accepted as not counting for plot ratio provided they satisfy all the following criteria within the storey from which they project :

- (a) the projecting window is from domestic accommodation only;
- (b) only one such projecting window is located on one external wall and situated in any one room;
- (c) the total areas of the projecting windows together with the louvres/open grilles, if any, for the purpose of shielding of air-conditioning plants placed underneath or above the projecting windows, do not exceed 50% of the total areas of the façade of the said floor on the same elevation;
- (d) the extent of the projection is not more than 500 mm from the face of the main external wall;
- (e) the base is not less than 500 mm above finished floor level;
- (f) the top is not less than 500 mm from the underside of the finish ceiling; and
- (g) the window complies fully with B(P)R 3A. For the purposes of this requirement, the height of 1100 mm protective barrier will be measured from floor level and any part of the window within this dimension should be fixed or otherwise suitably protected in line with clause (2) of the Regulation.

6. Except those complying with Part II of the B(P)Rs, no projections will normally be allowed over streets unless they can be justified in the public interest. In this context the projection of individual air-conditioning boxes/platforms and window hoods may be allowed, provided they do not project more than 500 mm over a street and are at a height of not less than 2.5 m above ground (please also see PNAP APP-42). For proposals relating to wholesale conversion of industrial buildings and other similar alteration and addition works, application for exemption from section 31(1) of the Buildings Ordinance and/or modification of B(P)Rs 20 and 21 for the erection of individual air-conditioning boxes/platforms with a projection of more than 750mm from the external walls with or without projection over a street will be favourably considered only if there is sufficient justification to demonstrate that there are difficulties in placing the air conditioners inside the premises due to the design and layout constraints in the existing building. As a condition for the granting of the exemption/modification, Grade 1 room air conditioners as specified in the Code of Practice on Energy Labeling of Products issued by the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department should be installed upon completion of the proposed works.



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Ref. : BD GP/BREG/P/2 (III)

This PNAP is previously known as PNAP 68

First issue March 1980

Last revision May 2004

This revision September 2010 (AD/NB1) (Para. 6 amended)