

# SUNLEY

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Airspace  
Developments

**July 2020**

# What are 'airspace' developments

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Airspace development is the process of building upwards, on top of existing buildings.

Typically this is in the form of an extension to an existing block of flats with shared access cores, lifts and services.

For some time there have been calls for new homes to be created on top of existing properties in city centres.

Recent changes to permitted development rights, coming into effect on the 1<sup>st</sup> August 2020, will allow for some purpose built blocks of flats, to be extended by up to two storeys.



# Permitted Development & the planning process

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As a result of the recent legislation, planning permission is no longer required – instead, developers looking to create these extensions require prior approval from their local planning authority.

In obtaining this prior approval, there are still a variety of issues to consider from parking, transport, rights of light and all the other typical technical considerations.

Schemes will still need to be high quality, delivering minimum requirements for habitable rooms and providing suitable amenity space.



# Who can do this?

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To qualify, the existing block of flats need to be:

- Detached
- Purpose-built between 1948 and 2018
- Three storeys or more above ground level

Extensions are limited to two additional storeys and buildings must not exceed 30m after the new floors are added.

Just because your property doesn't conform to the above doesn't mean it can't be extended though. The planning process is more involved and can take longer but there may still be options which we can explore with you.

Commercial schemes also have the opportunity for residential extensions, and further updates to legislation are expected later this year.



# Benefits

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Not all buildings are suitable for airspace development, but the Sunley Airspace team can help you make an initial assessment on the suitability of your property.

We would work with existing leaseholders from the outset of any development process to keep them informed, and to minimize disruption.

With the various key stakeholders involved, considerations for whole building improvements can be assessed, including façade upgrades, communal area improvements and generally giving buildings, which may be starting to look ‘tired’ a new lease of life.



# Benefits continued...

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Other benefits can include:

- Reduction in maintenance costs in particular existing roof liability
- Additional ground rent for freeholder or contributions to service charges
- New lift / lift cars if required
- Improvement to existing communal fire detection and means of escape
- Amenity space upgrades



# Frequently Asked Questions

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**Q: We are not sure if our building is suitable for airspace development, how do we find out?**

*A: At Sunley Airspace Developments, we are more than happy to help look at this with you, from a Desktop study through to a site visit we can help work out what options may be available to you.*

**Q: Can my building take the weight of 2 more floors?**

*A: We have a large network of consultants who we work with, from structural engineers to architects and mechanical and electrical engineers, all of whom can assist with the technical requirements of an airspace development.*



# Frequently Asked Questions

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**Q: Will it be noisy and messy for a long time?**

*A: There are multiple options when it comes to airspace development, but typically it's lightweight construction in timber or steel and in some cases 'off-site' / modular construction. This way we can keep noise and mess to a minimum and reduce the time on site dramatically to that of traditional forms of construction.*

**Q: How are the works paid for?**

*A: Sunley Airspace Developments will provide the funding for the development; we will also provide the funding for the wider renovations agreed by all parties so there are often no costs to the leaseholders or freeholders.*



# Frequently Asked Questions

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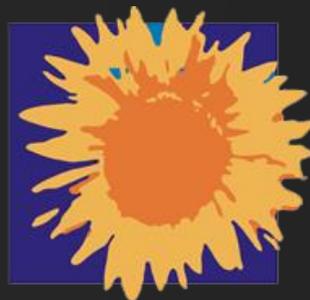
**Q: How long will it take to build?**

*A: With the changes to the planning process, the pre-construction stage will be far quicker but there are still technical considerations to overcome; on site we anticipate between 6 and 9 months depending on the type of construction so overall timescales range between 10 and 18 months?*

**Q: How can we be sure the wider renovations will take place?**

*A: We want to work with the leaseholders and freeholders to agree a scope of works which benefits both parties. In return for airspace rights we can provide the funds for these renovations and ensure they are undertaken in conjunction with any airspace development taking place.*





# SUNLEY

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If you think you might have a suitable property  
get in touch with one of the team:

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