

**FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT**  
**31-33 BRINKBURN STREET,**  
**BYKER,**  
**NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE NE6 2JU**

JANUARY 2021



**STORM TEMPEST**  
**PROPERTY CONSULTANCY**

**Reference:** PA-3888-01-21

**Prepared by:**

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**Version:** 1

**Prepared for:**

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Client	Byker Community Trust (BCT)
Instruction	This Fire Risk Assessment was undertaken in accordance with an instruction received from George Surrey, Head of Karbon Solutions, Karbon Solutions Ltd (KSL).
Responsible Person	Jill Haley, Chief Executive, BCT.
The Property	31-33 Brinkburn Street, Byker, Newcastle Upon Tyne. NE6 2JU
The Surveyor	The Fire Risk Assessment was carried out by: Paul Anderson BEng (Hons), MIFireE.
Survey Date	27 <sup>th</sup> January 2021
Scope and Purpose of the Fire Risk Assessment	The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 [RR(FS)O] applies to all non-domestic premises, including any voluntary sector and self-employed people with premises separate from their homes.

A fire risk assessment is an organised and methodical look at your premises. The fire risk assessment procedure identifies the activities carried out at the premises and assesses the likelihood of a fire starting. The aim of a fire risk assessment is to:

- Identify the hazards.
- Reduce the risk of those hazards causing harm to as low as reasonably practicable.
- Decide what physical fire precautions and management policies are necessary to ensure the safety of people in your premises if a fire does start.

The fire risk assessment was carried out in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) 'sleeping accommodation' guidance document.

This building has been audited to highlight to the Client, any non-compliant issues with regard to relevant aspects of UK fire safety



legislation and best practice. The principal documents relevant to buildings being:

- The Building Regulations 2010 Approved Document B – Fire Safety
- BS9991 2015 Fire safety in the design, management and use of residential buildings – Code of practice
- Local Government Association - Fire safety in purpose-built blocks of flats (hereafter referred to as the LGA Guide)
- LACORS – Housing – Fire Safety – Guidance on fire safety provisions for certain types of existing housing

The RR(FS)O does not stipulate the required review period for a particular building, we recommend to review this type of building **every three years**.

#### Limitations of the Fire Risk Assessment

The RR(FS)O places a burden of responsibility firmly on the head of a 'responsible person' with regard to the fire safety of the occupants of the premises to which they have been assigned. The responsible person is required to co-ordinate all fire safety related issues including the carrying out of a fire risk assessment and production of associated documentation. The responsible person may nominate a 'competent person' to assist in the implementation of any measures deemed necessary to ensure the fire safety of the occupants of the premises.

There are many factors that impact upon what may constitute adequate measures to assess the fire safety of the occupants. Storm Tempest Ltd are not the responsible person and are unable to determine, on behalf of the organisation, the steps it should or must take to comply with its duties under the RR(FS)O. The fire risk assessment will cover all of the areas within the property. We will also comment upon the areas surrounding the building.

This report is for the use of the party to whom it is addressed and should be used within the context of instruction under which it has been prepared.



A Type 3 Common Parts and Flats (non-destructive) Fire Risk Assessment was undertaken (as detailed in LGA Guidance Document Fire Safety in Purpose Built Blocks of Flats). No opening up of any part of the structure was carried out nor were any operational electrical or mechanical systems tested. All comments and recommendations are based on visual inspection only.

Efforts were made to enter a number of dwellings to confirm the suitability of the fire safety arrangement that are the responsibility of the client. We were able to gain access to number 31.

We were unable to access the electric cupboards under the block.

Prioritisation of Recommendations To assist in the development of a strategy and action plan for addressing recommendations in the fire risk assessment report, a priority rating is attached to each recommendation. The following is an explanation of each rating:

High Priority: Immediate action required to prevent risk to the health and safety of relevant persons

Medium Priority: Planned action to improve fire safety within the premises

Low Priority: Features that comply with current regulations but which the responsible person may consider upgrading.

Identified costs of Recommendations The report will give a budget costing for recommendations covered in the fire risk assessment for alterations or improvements to physical features to assist the client in developing an Action Plan and improvement programme.



## 2.0 THE BUILDING

2.1 The Building      The building comprises three, two storey maisonettes built on concrete pillars. The dwellings are of traditional cavity brick-built external walls with a sloping roof. The space under is open to the elements and is used to house cupboards containing the electric meters and tenant's belongings.

Access to the dwellings is by an external communal stair leading to an open balcony that serves each of the dwellings. The travel distance from the furthest front door to the head of the stair is approximately 15 metres.

Heating is supplied from a district heating system.

2.2 Fire Loss Experience      BCT have not made us aware of any fire related incidents at this location.



### 3.0 FIRE HAZARDS

3.1 Sources of Fuel The sources of fuel within the premises were assessed as follows:

- Timber benches lining the communal balcony,
- Typical household items such as household goods, fixed and soft furniture etc. within the dwellings,
- Waste bins positioned on the communal balcony.

3.2 Sources of Ignition The sources of ignition within the property were assessed as follows:

- Landlord's electrical supply – distribution boards
- Electric meters
- Electrical lighting to communal balcony
- Ignition sources associated with private dwellings, these are outside the control of the client
- Landlord's electrical supply – distribution boards.

We noted the electrical supply in number 31 was tested on the 9<sup>th</sup> January 2020. The electrical distribution should be tested every five years by a registered NICEIC contractor to satisfy compliance with the requirements of the Electricity at Work Act 1989.

3.3 Sources of Oxygen Natural airflow through doors and windows.

3.4 People at Risk The people at risk are the occupiers, visitors and occasional contractors.



## 4.0 MEANS OF ESCAPE

4.1 Escape Routes Each dwelling is provided with a single entrance/exit onto the communal balcony. Within the dwellings escape from the first-floor is down a single staircase that leads to an entrance hallway that provides access to the entrance door.

Escape is then down the external stair, via the balcony.

We noted wheely bins and planters on the balcony. We recommend they are removed and the client engages with the residents to remind them of the importance of maintain a clear, unobstructed means of escape.

4.2 Fire Doors We were able to access number 31 to inspect the specification of the flat entrance door. The door is a solid door with glazed panel hung on 3 steel hinges and fitted with mortice lock with no mechanical override, door viewer and letter box aperture.

We are unable to determine the fire rating of the flat entrance doors. Current design guidance, (BS 9991:2015 Fire safety in the design, management and use of residential buildings - Code of Practice) recommends that doors from maisonettes opening onto balconies providing a single direction of escape should be FD 30 self-closing doors. We recommend the client examines their installation records to confirm the entrance doors meet the required standard. Where it cannot be confirmed, where possible, we recommend the doors are upgraded, where this is not possible we recommend the doors are replaced with doors meeting the required standard. We further recommend that the mortice locks on all doors are fitted with a mechanical override that negates the use of a key to operate the lock in an emergency.

4.3 Fire Compartmentation The dwelling entry level is separated from the space below by concrete construction. We were unable to access the cupboards or





the sub-station on the ground floor so we are unable to comment on the integrity of the ceiling above.

We recommend the client access the cupboards and the sub-station to determine the condition of the ceiling and any breaches noted are adequately sealed to maintain the fire resistance of the ceiling. Any works to be carried out by a third party, accredited contractor.

We did note breaches in the walls enclosing the meter cupboards in the space below the dwellings. These breaches may allow the passage of fire and smoke from a fire outside to spread to the inside of the cupboards and possibly beyond.

We recommend the client ensures that all breaches to the external walls are appropriately sealed to maintain the fire resistance of the wall. The works should be carried out by a third party, accredited contractor.

#### 4.4 Fire Alarm and Detection System

We accessed number 31 and noted automatic smoke detection in the entrance hall, living room, at the head of the stairs and automatic heat detection in the kitchen. We did not note any damage or signs of tampering with the devices.

Planned inspection, maintenance and testing procedures should be established to ensure that the automatic fire detection and alarm system can operate effectively when required. The following British Standard should be used for determining the routine maintenance, inspection and testing of the fire detection and alarm system: BS 5839-6 2019.

The occupier of number 31 reported a history of false alarms from the system, whereby the alarm sounds and then appears to reset itself. We recommend the client inspects the fire alarm system to determine the cause of the fault and return the system to a healthy condition.



4.5 Emergency Lighting	Emergency lighting is not provided within the dwellings, the balcony is provided with security lighting that is on a timer.
4.6 Fire Fighting Equipment	Fire fighting equipment is not provided.
4.7 Signage	There is no signage provided. Taking regard to the occupancy and size of the building this considered acceptable.
4.8 Disabled Persons Egress	<p>As the only access to the dwellings is from the external staircase, it is expected that all residents and visitors will be able to negotiate the stairs.</p> <p>In 'general needs' blocks of flats, it can be expected that a residents physical and mental ability will vary. It is usually unrealistic to expect landlords and other responsible persons to plan for this or to have in place special arrangements, such as 'personal emergency evacuation plans'.</p>
4.9 Arson	We are not aware of any anti-social behaviour in the area. The risk of an arson attack is considered medium.



## **5.0 MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES**

- 5.1 Fire Evacuation Procedures      The fire and evacuation procedure is for residents to remain in their property unless the fire is within their dwelling in which case residents are advised to leave immediately.
- 5.2 Fire Log Book                      There are no communal fire protection measures so there is no need for a log book to be kept on-site, however, the client should maintain records of all servicing and maintenance carried out to the fire protection systems such as the fire alarm system.
- 5.3 4.10 Access and Facilities for the Fire Service      The access arrangements to this building have been considered and the arrangements appear to conform to Part B5 of Approved Document B of the Building Regulations. Any changes to road layout etc. are outside the control of the responsible person.



**Surveyor** Paul Anderson BEng (Hons), MIFireE

**Signed** 

.....  
On Behalf of Storm Tempest Ltd

**Checked** Dave Stilling BSc (Hons) MCIOB

**Signed** 

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On Behalf of Storm Tempest Ltd

**APPENDIX 1  
FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT**

## FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT

		<i>Potential consequences of fire</i>		
		<i>Slight Harm (1)</i>	<i>Moderate harm (2)</i>	<i>Extreme harm (3)</i>
<i>Likelihood of fire occurring</i>	<b>Low (1)</b>	<b>Trivial Risk</b>	<b>Tolerable Risk</b>	<b>Moderate Risk</b>
	<b>Medium (2)</b>	<b>Tolerable Risk</b>	<b>Moderate Risk</b>	<b>Substantial Risk</b>
	<b>High (3)</b>	<b>Moderate Risk</b>	<b>Substantial Risk</b>	<b>Intolerable Risk</b>

Taking into account the fire prevention measures observed at the time of this risk assessment, it is considered that the hazard from fire (likelihood of fire) at these premises is:

**Low** 
                         
 **Medium** 
                         
 **High**

- Low:** Unusually low likelihood of fire as a result of negligible potential sources of ignition.
- Medium:** Normal fire hazards (e.g. potential ignition sources) for this type of occupancy, with fire hazards generally subject to appropriate controls (other than minor shortcomings).
- High:** Lack of adequate controls applied to one or more significant fire hazards, such as to result in significant increase in likelihood of fire.

Taking into account the nature of the premises and the occupants, as well as the fire protection and procedural arrangements observed at the time of this fire risk assessment, it is considered that the consequences for life safety in the event of fire would be:

**Slight harm** 
                         
 **Moderate harm** 
                         
 **Extreme harm**

In this context, a definition of the above terms is as follows:

- Slight harm:** Outbreak of fire unlikely to result in serious injury or death of any occupant (other than an occupant sleeping in a room in which a fire occurs).
- Moderate harm:** Outbreak of fire could foreseeably result in injury (including serious injury) of one or more occupants, but it is unlikely to involve multiple fatalities.
- Extreme harm:** Significant potential for serious injury or death of one or more occupants.

Accordingly, it is considered that the risk to life from fire at these premises is:

**Moderate Risk**


(Note that, although the purpose of this section is to place the fire risk in context, the above approach to fire risk assessment is subjective and for guidance only. All hazards and deficiencies identified in this report should be addressed by implementing all recommendations contained in the following action plan. The fire risk assessment should be reviewed regularly.)

Risk level	Action and timescale
Trivial	No action is required and no detailed records need be kept.
Tolerable	No major additional fire precautions required. However, there might be a need or reasonably practicable improvements that involve minor or limited cost.
Moderate	<p>It is essential that efforts are made to reduce the risk. Risk reduction measures, which should take cost into account, should be implemented within a defined time period.</p> <p>Where moderate risk is associated with consequences that constitute extreme harm, further assessment might be required to establish more precisely the likelihood of harm as a basis for determining the priority for improved control measures.</p>
Substantial	Considerable resources might have to be allocated to reduce the risk. If the premises are unoccupied, it should not be occupied until the risk has been reduced. If the premises are occupied, urgent action should be taken.
Intolerable	Premises (or relevant area) should not be occupied until the risk is reduced.


**APPENDIX 2**  
**SCHEDULE OF OBSERVATIONS**





## Fire Hazards

<b>MEDIUM</b>		<b>1</b>	
		<b>Assessors Observations:</b> We noted wheely bins and planters located on the balcony.	
<b>Date First Identified:</b>	27/01/2021	<b>Recommended Action:</b> We recommend the they are removed and the client engages with the residents to remind them of the importance of maintain a clear, unobstructed means of escape.	
<b>Date of FRA:</b>	27/01/2021		
<b>Rectify Within: (months)</b>	6		
<b>Budget Cost:</b>	No cost		

## Means of Escape

<b>LOW</b>		<b>2</b>	
		<b>Assessors Observations:</b> We are unable to determine the fire rating of the entrance doors. Current design guidance, (BS 9991:2015 Fire safety in the design, management and use of residential buildings - Code of Practice) recommends that doors from maisonettes opening onto balconies providing a single direction of escape should be FD 30 self-closing doors.	
<b>Date First Identified:</b>	27/01/2021	<b>Recommended Action:</b> We recommend the client examines their installation records to confirm the entrance doors meet the required standard. Where it cannot be confirmed, where possible, we recommend the doors are upgraded, where this is not possible, we recommend the doors are replaced with doors meeting the required standard. We further recommend that the mortice locks on all doors are fitted with a mechanical override that negates the use of a key to operate the lock in an emergency.	
<b>Date of FRA:</b>	27/01/2021		
<b>Rectify Within: (months)</b>	12		
<b>Budget Cost:</b>	£600		

<b>MEDIUM</b>		<b>3</b>	
		<b>Assessors Observations:</b> We were unable to access the cupboards or the sub-station on the ground floor so we are unable to comment on the integrity of the ceiling above.	
<b>Date First Identified:</b>	27/01/2021	<b>Recommended Action:</b> We recommend the client access the cupboards and the sub-station to determine the condition of the ceiling and any breaches noted are adequately sealed to maintain the fire resistance of the ceiling. Any works to be carried out by a third party, accredited contractor.	
<b>Date of FRA:</b>	27/01/2021		
<b>Rectify Within: (months)</b>	6		
<b>Budget Cost:</b>	No cost		

<b>MEDIUM</b>		<b>4</b>	
		<b>Assessors Observations:</b> We did note breaches in the walls enclosing the meter cupboards in the space below the dwellings. These breaches may allow the passage of fire and smoke from a fire outside to spread to the inside of the cupboards and possibly beyond.	
<b>Date First Identified:</b>	27/01/2021	<b>Recommended Action:</b> We recommend the client ensures that all breaches to the external walls are appropriately sealed to maintain the fire resistance of the wall. The works should be carried out by a third party, accredited contractor.	
<b>Date of FRA:</b>	27/01/2021		
<b>Rectify Within: (months)</b>	6		
<b>Budget Cost:</b>	£100		

<b>MEDIUM</b>		<b>5</b>	
<b>No photo</b>		<b>Assessors Observations:</b>	
		The occupier of number 31 reported a history of false alarms from the system, whereby the alarm sounds and then appears to reset itself.	
<b>Date First Identified:</b>	27/01/2021	<b>Recommended Action:</b> . We recommend the client inspects the fire alarm system to determine the cause of the fault and return the system to a healthy condition.	
<b>Date of FRA:</b>	27/01/2021		
<b>Rectify Within: (months)</b>	6		
<b>Budget Cost:</b>	No cost		