

FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT
138-142 RABY STREET, BYKER,
NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE,
NE6 2BY

AUGUST 2022



STORM TEMPEST
PROPERTY CONSULTANCY

Reference: 4180-04-22-IC

Prepared by:

Storm Tempest Ltd
3 Apollo Court
Koppers Way
Monkton Business Park South
Hebburn
Tyne and Wear
NE31 2ES

Version: 1

Prepared for:

Karbon Homes
Unit D2
The Waterfront
Newburn Riverside
Goldcrest Way
Tyne and Wear
NE15 8NZ



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Client	Karbon Homes
Instruction	This Fire Risk Assessment was undertaken in accordance with an instruction received from Tony Ruddick, Data & Compliance Manager, Karbon Homes.
Responsible Person	Paul Fiddaman, Chief Executive, Karbon Homes
The Property	138-142 Raby Street, Byker, Newcastle Upon Tyne. NE6 2BY.
The Surveyor	The Fire Risk Assessment was carried out by: Ian Cuskin GIFireE.
Survey Date	15 th August 2022.
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 in addition to the 'Local Government Group - Fire safety in purpose-built blocks of flats'.

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 residential buildings being:

- The Building Regulations 2019 Approved Document B – Fire Safety
- BS9999 2018 Code of practice for fire safety in the design, management and use of buildings
- BS9991 2015 Fire safety in the design, management and use of residential buildings – Code of practice
- Local Government Group - 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 a review of this type of building **every three years or when a material change is made to the property.**

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 (as detailed in LGG Guidance Document Fire Safety in Purpose Built Blocks of Flats) has been conducted.

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.

Access Limitations We were able to gain access to all necessary compartments as part of the assessment.

Revisit A revisit is not required at this time.



2.0 THE BUILDING

2.1 The Building

The building is a grade II* listed building with Historic England, designed and constructed circa 1969 as part of the iconic Byker development. The building consists of an end of terrace structure constructed from concrete frame and external brickwork. Windows are aluminium framed double glazed and the roof is constructed of aluminium profiled sheeting. Rainwater goods are Upvc. Internally, floors are concrete, and walls are of solid masonry construction.

The block comprises of 3 maisonette style apartments located on the 1st and 2nd floors, one of which is currently being used as a housing hub/office, and there are two flats on the ground floor with their own access.

The building features decorative timber cladding in part, affixed to some external surfaces and there are two timber balconies to the second-floor rear elevation, and one balcony to the front.

As some sections of the building façade are fitted with cladding to approximately 5% of the external walls, Schedule 1 Section B4(1) of the Building Regulations 2010 requires that: "The external walls of the building shall adequately resist the spread of fire over the walls and from one building to another, having regard to the height, use and position of the building". The MHCLG guidance recommends the removal or replacement of cladding with that which is EU class A1 or A2-S1 d0; it should be noted that this is advice rather than regulations and should cladding remain on buildings less than 18m in height, then the risks of fire and fire spread must be reduced by controlling combustible items and storage upon them and the prevention of ignition sources. It should also be noted that this building is 3 storeys and approximately 10m in height and therefore is **not** considered to be a Higher Risk Residential Building (10 or more storeys – as defined by the Hackitt Report). Notwithstanding the client should check their records to assess fire safety and compliance with Building Regulations.

We have been informed by Karbon Homes that external wall surveys and subsequent appropriate treatment of combustible



cladding is ongoing within the estate, however this may take several years to complete fully.

Access to the apartments is via a concrete enclosed stair leading to a first-floor balcony walkway, which is semi-enclosed with a corrugated PVC roof, and connects the entrance doors of all three maisonettes.

The building benefits from a communal district central heating system which is generated remotely from the building.

Internally, the apartments are constructed of solid brick compartment walls with plaster skim and internal timber stud walls also with plaster skim.

The building benefits from emergency lighting throughout and has automatic interlinked mains powered fire detection within the apartments only, which are not remotely monitored.

Fire Loss
Experience

Karbon Homes have not made us aware of any fire related incidents at this housing scheme.



3.0 FIRE HAZARDS

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

- Electrical PVC insulation throughout.
- Timber construction materials (in particular, within the roof space, balconies and timber cladding).
- Combustible refuse outside of some flats.
- Potential for a mains gas supply to the building as some apartments retain legacy live gas supply pipe work (but no gas appliances) which Karbon Homes carryout annual inspections of until Northern Gas Network terminate the supply.

It was noted, outside of flat entrance doors to numbers 138, 140 and 142 there are large amounts of combustible refuse. This practice partially obstructs the means of escape for others, increases the risk of an arson attack, and any subsequent fire is likely to spread to other parts of the building and affect the safety of the residents. We recommend this refuse is removed, the means of escape kept clear at all times and residents are reminded to dispose of their refuse responsibly to ensure the means of escape is available for the residents' to use in an emergency.

It is accepted that there will be sources of fuel located within the individual apartments associated with domestic living such as; timber and foam furnishings, linen, bedding, clothing and cooking oils and fats within the kitchens.

Karbon Homes are in the process of removing all historic and redundant gas supplies to properties in the Byker Estate in partnership with Northern Gas Networks, with minimal properties still connected. Any remaining properties receive an annual gas safety check and when they become void, the gas supply is removed.

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

- Electrical supply and distribution system.



- Potential for arson to the refuse on the communal walkway outside of the flat entrance doors.
- Sources of ignition located within individual apartments associated with domestic living such as electrical goods, cooking & heating appliances, and the possibility of smoking materials & candles.

We were unable to confirm when the last time the electrical installation within the communal areas was last subject to inspection and test by a competent person. We recommend the client consults their records to confirm the installation has been subject to inspection and test by a competent person within the previous 5 years.

All electrical installations are required to be tested regularly to the standards defined by the IET Wiring Regulations (BS 7671). The mains electrical supply and distribution installation and wiring (common areas and rented dwellings) should be tested at least every five years by a registered NICEIC contractor to satisfy compliance with the requirements of the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 in addition to the IET Wiring Regulations BS7671:2018 18th edition.

3.3 Sources of Oxygen

Natural airflow through doors and windows.

3.4 People at Risk

The residents within apartments and communal areas of the building in addition to the potential for visitors, housing staff and trades persons.



MEANS OF ESCAPE

4.1 Escape Routes The means of escape routes have an occasional planter and/or fixed bench seating outside individual properties. These are low risk and due to the size, layout, available exit route and number of residents within the building, pose a minimal risk of impeding evacuation in the event of a fire. Karbon Homes are also aware of these and this is part of their "managed use" policy of the building to keep these to an acceptable level and at the same time encourage residents to have a sense of pride and value in their home environment. Notwithstanding this, due cognisance should be taken of the previous recommendation to remove the accumulated refuse from the common means of escape.

All flat entrance doors exit onto the semi-enclosed communal balcony / walkway and onto a short flight of stairs down to a self-closing door with single action opening device. The door opens with the direction of travel in an evacuation and persons exit to an open area.

With the exception of the refuse and planters outside of residents' property (previously mentioned), all access/egress routes were clear at the time of the inspection and are within the recommended travel distances for this type of premises as detailed with the Building Regulations Approved Document B and DCLG Fire Risk Assessment Guidance.

4.2 Fire Doors Flat entrance doors open onto the 1st floor semi enclosed balcony. We were able to gain access to apartment 140 in order to inspect the specification of its entrance door. The entrance doors are good quality timber doors, one with a glazed panel. However, it was noted that the flat entrance doors do not appear to be fire doors. We recommend the flat entrance doors to flats numbered 138 and 140 opening onto the common walkway / balcony should be FD30S doors with a self-closing device fitted. This will ensure residents can evacuate their apartments and be able to pass a fire within an adjoining flat and reach the stairway / final exit. (LGG Fire Safety in Purpose Built Blocks of Flats Sec 59.5).



4.3 Fire Compartmentation

Windows opening onto the communal walkway are double glazed aluminium units set into timber frames and do not appear to be fire rated. They also do not extend a minimum of 1100mm above balcony floor level as required by LGG Fire Safety in Purpose Built Blocks of Flats Sec 59.5. These windows are also part of the listed status of the building. We recommend the windows for flats 138 and 140 which do not extend to the required minimum distance of 1100mm above balcony floor level, are upgraded to provide a minimum of 30 minutes fire resistance in order to allow the means of escape to be used by residents safely in a fire situation.

4.4 Fire Alarm and Detection System

The apartments have automatic fire detection that appears to be a Grade D1, LD3 system covering the circulation spaces within the dwelling, in compliance with BS5839-6.

Residents are advised to test their smoke alarms on a monthly basis as per the related guidance.

4.5 Emergency Lighting

The premises have adequate 3-hour non-maintained emergency lighting installed within the means of escape.

There were no records available to confirm the emergency lighting is subject to a monthly functional test or whether the annual discharge of the luminaires has taken place by a competent person. We recommend the client confirms the monthly functional test of the luminaires and the annual discharge test of the luminaire is being carried out, and if not, arrange for this to be undertaken as soon as practicable.

The emergency lighting is required to be tested and maintained in accordance with BS5266 which requires monthly short functional tests and an annual full discharge test which should be detailed in the Fire Logbook.



4.6 Fire Fighting Equipment There is no portable firefighting equipment in the premises and no requirement to do so.

4.7 Signage There is no directional signage fitted within the building and as this is a very simple premises with one direction of travel, this is not required. However, we would advise the installation of a "No Smoking" sign at the head of the stair, in order to discourage residents smoking on the balcony. In addition we would also recommend the installation of a general fire action notice in the same area to advise residents and visitors of the evacuation procedure for the premises.

All signage should satisfy the requirements of BS 5499-5 and be installed in accordance with the recommendations of BS 5499-4.

4.8 Disabled Persons Egress The property is not suitable for persons with limited mobility.



5.0 MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES

- 5.1 Fire Evacuation Procedures We believe there is a full simultaneous evacuation policy in place for the premises. This should be reinforced by the provision of a General Fire Action notice on a prominent position at the head of the stair.
- 5.2 Fire Logbook There is no logbook available for the premises. All records are held centrally by the client.
- 5.3 Training There are no staff in general needs accommodation
- 5.4 Access & Facilities for the Fire Service Access to the buildings for fire appliances is good and is in line with the requirements of Approved Document B.
- 5.5 Arson The risk of an arson attack is considered medium due to the excess refuse outside of apartments on the means of escape (see previous comments).
- 5.6 Previous Recommendations No previous recommendations noted.



Surveyor Ian Cuskin GFireE

Signed 

.....
On Behalf of Storm Tempest Ltd

Checked Dave Stilling BSc (Hons) MCIQB, FSIDip, AFireE, DipFD, CMAPS

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>	Low (1)	Trivial Risk	Tolerable Risk	Moderate Risk
	Medium (2)	Tolerable Risk	Moderate Risk	Substantial Risk
	High (3)	Moderate Risk	Substantial Risk	Intolerable Risk

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:

Tolerable 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.)

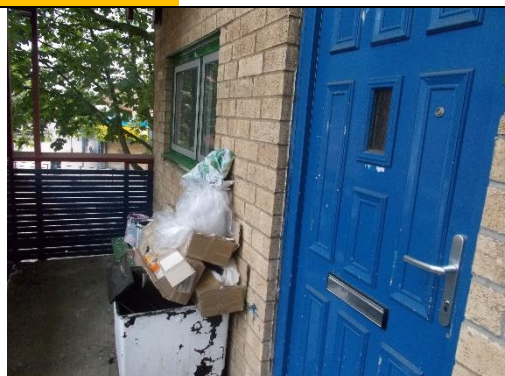
Risk level	Action and timescale
Trivial	No action is required and no detailed records need be kept.
Tolerable	No major additional fire precautions required. However, there might be a need or reasonably practicable improvements that involve minor or limited cost.
Moderate	<p>It is essential that efforts 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

MEDIUM		1
		<p>Assessors Observations:</p> <p>Outside of flat entrance doors to numbers 138, 140 and 142 there are large amounts of combustible refuse. This practice partially obstructs the means of escape for others, increases the risk of an arson attack, and any subsequent fire is likely to spread to other parts of the building and affect the safety of the residents.</p>
Date First Identified:	15/08/2022	<p>Recommended Action:</p> <p>We recommend this refuse is removed, the means of escape kept clear at all times and residents are reminded to dispose of their refuse responsibly to ensure the means of escape is available for the residents' to use in an emergency.</p>
Date of FRA	15/08/2022	
Rectify Within: (months)	6	
Budget Cost:	No Cost	


LOW		2
No Photo		<p>Assessors Observations:</p> <p>We were unable to confirm when the last time the electrical installation within the communal areas was last subject to inspection and test by a competent person.</p>
Date First Identified:	15/08/2022	<p>Recommended Action:</p> <p>We recommend the client consults their records to confirm the installation has been subject to inspection and test by a competent person within the previous 5 years.</p>
Date of FRA	15/08/2022	
Rectify Within: (months)	12	
Budget Cost:	No Cost	



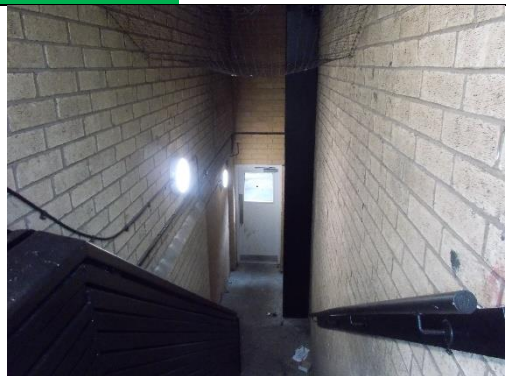
Fire Doors

MEDIUM		3
		Assessors Observations: The flat entrance doors do not appear to be fire doors.
Date First Identified:	15/08/2022	Recommended Action: We recommend the flat entrance doors to flats numbered 138 and 140 opening onto the common walkway / balcony should be FD30S doors with a self-closing device fitted. This will ensure residents can evacuate their apartments and be able to pass a fire within an adjoining flat and reach the stairway / final exit. (LGG Fire Safety in Purpose Built Blocks of Flats Sec 59.5).
Date of FRA	15/08/2022	
Rectify Within: (months)	6	
Budget Cost:	£1200	



LOW		4
		
Assessors Observations:		
<p>Windows opening onto the communal walkway are double glazed aluminium units set into timber frames and do not appear to be fire rated. They also do not extend a minimum of 1100mm above balcony floor level as required by LGG Fire Safety in Purpose Built Blocks of Flats Sec 59.5. These windows are also part of the listed status of the building.</p>		
Date First Identified:	15/08/2022	Recommended Action: We recommend the windows for flats 138 and 140 which do not extend to the required minimum distance of 1100mm above balcony floor level, are upgraded to provide a minimum of 30 minutes fire resistance in order to allow the means of escape to be used by residents safely in a fire situation.
Date of FRA	15/08/2022	
Rectify Within: (months)	12	
Budget Cost:	£2000	

Emergency Lighting

LOW		5
		
Assessors Observations:		
<p>There were no records available to confirm the emergency lighting is subject to a monthly functional test or whether the annual discharge of the luminaires has taken place by a competent person.</p>		
Date First Identified:	15/08/2022	Recommended Action: We recommend the client confirms the monthly functional test of the luminaires and the annual discharge test of the luminaire is being carried out, and if not, arrange for this to be undertaken as soon as practicable.
Date of FRA	15/08/2022	
Rectify Within: (months)	12	
Budget Cost:	No Cost	



Signage

LOW		6
No Photo		Assessors Observations: We would advise the installation of a "No Smoking" sign at the head of the stair, in order to discourage residents smoking on the balcony. In addition we would also recommend the installation of a general fire action notice in the same area to advise residents and visitors of the evacuation procedure for the premises.
		Recommended Action: As above.
Date First Identified:	15/08/2022	
Date of FRA	15/08/2022	
Rectify Within: (months)	12	
Budget Cost:	£20	