London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham

Fire Risk Assessment of:	Elgar Court, Hammersmith, W14 0PL
Author of Assessment:	Jakub Owczarek, MIFSM, ACABE, LBHF Fire Risk Assessor
Quality Assured by:	Claire Norman, Senior Fire Surveyor, LBH&F
Responsible Person:	Richard Shwe
Risk Assessment Valid From:	15/08/2024
Risk Assessment Valid To:	15/08/2026

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Building Features

Approximate Square Area of the Building:	560
Number of Dwellings:	24
Number of Internal Communal Stairs:	1
Number of External Escape Stairs:	0
Number of Final Exits:	3
Number of Stair Lifts:	
Number of Storeys	6
Uninhabited Roof Void?	
Basement Present?	
Gas Installed to Building?	yes
Solar Panels Installed on Building?	no
Number of Occupants:	48 (based on 2 occupants per flat)
Current Evacuation Policy:	Stay Put Procedure
Recommended Evacuation Policy:	Stay Put Procedure
Last LFB Inspection:	

Survey Findings:

Building Construction & Layout:	General Needs, detached, purpose built Communal Block of Flats with one, centrally located, staircase core. Balcony deck approach style for the dwellings at each end of the building and direct access from the internal MoE corridors/lift landings to the flats in the centre of the block. Built as part of the Springvale Estate circa 1953/54, which placed it under the London County Council (LCC) guidance of 1936-1946 (w. 1946-62 amendments) – a single, non-combustible stairway was acceptable in residential blocks not exceeding four storeys above ground, with each flat accessed directly from the stairway. For blocks with balcony deck approach – accommodation for not more than 150 persons. All dwellings had to have an entrance hall. In 1946, the maximum distance of travel between any flat and the stairway (single) was set at 30m. For blocks with only one additional storey (meaning 5 above ground blocks), access could be provided from each top floor flat to the balcony of the flat below. Elgar Court is over four storeys above ground level (6 storey altogether). This meant a secondary MoE from the top floor was necessary – there are additional staircases at the end of the access decks, linking the 4th and the 5th floor. The surveyed premise meets the standards of the era. Six Storey reinforced concrete sub structure with brick/masonry cavity wall infill. Flat, felt covered roof – accessed via a hatch from within the communal MoE stairway, with a plant room enclosure on top.

Direct approach access to the building – communal staircase accessed via Intercom, 'key coded/ FOB' Security Door (780mm wide) leading into GF hallway, incorporating Notional FD30s enclosed Electrical Intake Cupboard. A few steps up is a lift landing with a FED on each side and two communal exits to the rear side, 600mm each.
Each of the three communal exit doors is supported with a FRS override switch.

'Stay Put' fire evacuation strategy in place.

All Accommodation Units are served by a single, concrete core stairway, partly open to the outer air, 960mm wide (wall to handrail).
MoE staircase incorporating an electrical mains riser – enclosed in thick panels.

Lift – The building has one passenger lift which is supported by an override switch that allows the FRS to take control in an emergency. The lift serves all floors. The staircase is ventilated by openable uPVC windows and by non-restricted airflow from the two open-deck balconies 4m away.
The lift is marked with the firefighter's pictogram which must only be used to identify firefighters' lifts.
It indicates that it has protection, controls and signals which enable it to be used under the exclusive control of the FRS. The Assessor did not note an escape hatch in the lift.
These were first described in BS EN 81-72:2003 and BS 5588-5:2004.

The building contains 24 flats with 4 flats on each floor level.
Each of the floors has a similar layout. Two FEDs open directly onto a lift landing, on either side of the stairs and the lift, and two flats are accessed from an open-deck balcony with the balconies also accessed on either side of the staircase and lift – one FED per deck, no passing risk.
Each flat has a private storage cupboard, fitted with notional FD30s, opening onto the MoE.

Both GF flats accessed from the deck are approached directly from the outside, without the use of communal MoE, street level, without the use of the communal MoE.

FED – FD60s SC – same type of door installed throughout the block.

Private balconies to the rear.

Emergency Escape directional signage Installed.

UPVC casement, windows installed to all Accommodation Units.

Lift motor room and a water tank room – located on the roof, in a brick-and-mortar enclosure, accessed directly from the lift landing below, via a ladder and a hatch. roof.

Fire rated, refuse chute hoppers off each balcony deck, not separated from the MoE.

Bin room at the base of the refuse chute, accessed externally, housed in a brick-and-mortar enclosure with a metal security door.
FR, fusible link damper installed at the base of the refuse chute.

	Emergency escape lighting provision in the MoE stairway, lift landings, plant room and EIC. Lightning protection system not installed. Access for FRS engines from the rear of the property (balcony decks' side). FH – 12m from the RHS external wall, within the estate grounds.

Executive Summary	At the time of the Inspection the Assessor identified that the premise has adequate standard of Compartmentation within parts of the communal MoE, with the noted deficiencies requiring either further inspection, installations and/or remedial upgrade works. Standard of Compartmentation within the EIC is of concern – missing fire stopping at the bottom of the riser. It is the Assessor's view that the current situation could enable a potential fire within the EIC to travel upwards between the levels and compromise the single MoE. Fire stopping at the base of the riser (EIC ceiling level) and around the panels within the stairway has been recommended. Should ventilation of the EIC be necessary, then the mains void/shaft rising through the MoE stairway (currently covered with timber panels) could be considered as an 'active' vent – under the condition that the riser would be covered with FR30 panels, sealed with proprietary fire seal or intumescent ATG, and venting directly to the outside. Electrical trunking within the EIC is missing a cover. It may seem minor but the trunking penetrates the compartment wall and missing elements cause a breach, allowing a potential fire within the EIC to compromise the communal MoE. A remedial installation of the missing elements is necessary. Breaches in compartmentation noted along all balcony decks, below 1.1m – ventilation grilles and occasional gaps around resident self-installed drainpipes. A job for installation of FR30 intumescent grilles has been considered but the existing situation has been deemed acceptable by the Assessor due to the balconies only accommodating one FED each and the minimal passing risk – only residents of the dwelling potentially affected, so evacuation would have been undertaken prior to a potential compromise of the MoE. FEDs throughout the surveyed premise are of the same type as the two inspected doors – FD60s SC, which is more than the required FD30s SC. The surveyed premise is a 50% balcony deck approach building, which reduces the risk due to open air access, and no risk of passing in these areas. No FD required on the balcony decks in the surveyed block, so the management went beyond the recommended benchmark to ensure extra safety of the residents. EIC door – notional FD30s SC – suitable and sufficient. Resident cupboards opening onto MoE – notional FD30s SC – suitable and sufficient. Dry Riser – inlet at the rear of the block, the internal road side, easily accessible by FRS engines. Outlets installed on two floors only – 3rd and 5th. It is recommended to extend the dry riser to include the 1st, 2nd, 4th floors and

	the roof to ensure a more efficient FRS operations and increase the level of fire safety for the residents. No EEL provision within the MoE balcony decks (internal stairway and lift landings only) as reliance is on 'borrowed light'. It is undetermined whether suitable and sufficient 'borrowed light' in the hours of darkness and or power failure would sufficiently illuminate the MoE decks. Recommend installation of non-maintained EEL along the MoE access decks during the next major refurbishment. Any installation should be in accordance with BS 5266. AFD provision exists within the accommodation units, LD2 D1 - BS5839-6. Lightning Protection not installed – retrofitting of lightning protection has not been deemed immediately necessary due to the presence of higher structures in the area, lowering the risk of a lightning strike, but it should be considered upon the next major refurbishment, to further reduce the risk of ignition. The Accommodation units' Internal Design was not subject to inspection by the Assessor to confirm adequate compartmentation. Persons at Risk - it is not untypical of a social housing block for persons of various ages, physical & cognitive abilities, and behavioural types to be in the premises by way of lawful and unlawful tenancies or visit. It had not been identified to the Assessor of any specific individual person/s especially at risk from fire. It is expected that lone workers (LBHF cleaning operatives) are informed of, 'site specific' risks and have appropriate Fire Safety awareness Training. It is the Assessors opinion that the 'Stay Put' strategy adopted is adequate, subsequent to further surveys/inspections to be undertaken and inclusive of the identified remedial works to be actioned as noted in this FRA.

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Guidance

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Scope of Assessment:

This FRA has been carried out on behalf of the 'Responsible Person' in accordance with Article 9 of the requirements of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (FSO). The purpose of this report is to provide an assessment of the risk to life from fire in this premise and where appropriate, to identify significant findings to ensure compliance with fire safety legislation as obliged observing current best practice, providing a minimum fire safety standard.

This report reflects the fire safety standards identified during inspection and does not address the risk fire may pose to property or business continuity.

In order to carry out this fire risk assessment the assessor has used their professional expertise, judgement and guidance contained in the British Standards Institute's publicly available specification (PAS 79: 2012), the Department for Communities & Local Government guidance, 'Fire Safety Risk Assessment - Sleeping Accommodation', Local Authorities Coordinators of Regulatory Services (LACORS) 'Housing Fire Safety' guidance and NFCC guidance 'Fire Safety in Specialised Housing'.
Which provides best practice guidance on fire safety provisions in England for certain types of existing housing; as well as the Local Government Association (LGA) Guidance 'Fire safety in purpose-built blocks of flats'.

The aim of the fire risk assessment process is not necessarily to bring an existing building up to the standard expected for a new building, constructed under current legislation. Rather, the intention is to identify measures which are practicable to implement in order to provide a reasonable level of safety for people in and around the premises. Information for the completion of this assessment was obtained by a physical type 1 survey, in compliance with LBHF policy and for the purpose of satisfying the FSO. The inspection of the building is non-destructive. The fire risk assessment will consider the arrangements for means of escape and so forth that will include examination of at least a sample of flat entrance doors. It also considers, so far as reasonably practicable, the separating construction between the flats and the common parts without any opening up of construction; however, in this type of survey, entry to flats beyond the area of the flat entrance door, is not involved as there is normally no automatic right of access for freeholders.

If your premises have been designed and built in line with modern building regulations (and are being used in line with those regulations), your structural fire precautions should be acceptable. While every effort is made to inspect fire compartmentation & fire separating elements of buildings, dependant on accessibility, including roof spaces, voids and service risers, to assess the integrity, comments reflect reasonable assumption. Unless there is reason to expect serious deficiencies in structural fire protection – such as inadequate compartmentation, or poor fire stopping – a type 1 inspection will normally be sufficient. Where doubt exists in relation to these matters, the action plan may recommend that one of the other types of fire risk assessment be carried out or that further investigation be carried out by specialists. (Any such recommendation would be based on identification of issues that justify reason for doubt.)

The FRA includes an Action Plan that sets out measures to enable the Responsible Person to achieve this benchmark risk mitigation level, satisfy the requirements of the FSO and to protect Relevant Persons (as defined in Article 2 of the FSO), from the risks of fire.

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Compartmentation and Building Features	
From a Type 1 inspection perspective, are there breaches identified effecting compartmentation along the escape route?	No
From a Type 1 inspection perspective, are there ineffective or inappropriate materials used to create compartmentation?	No
Does the building have a roof void?	No
Was a survey of the roof void carried out as part of this inspection?	N/A
Are there other concerns identified with the roof void?	N/A
Are lifts installed?	Yes
Does each lift have a fire service over-ride switch?	Yes
Are there any fire-fighting lifts?	No
Is there a lift motor room?	Yes
Is the compartmentation acceptable?	Yes
Did you get access to survey the lift motor room?	Yes
Are there any other concerns with Lifts or the Lift Motor Room?	No
Are there utility cupboards within the communal area?	Yes
Are there any breaches in compartmentation?	Yes
Do utility cupboard doors appear to be FD30s standard?	Yes
Is there evidence to confirm FD30s doors are certified?	No
Is there damage to any part of the door or frame affecting its performance as a 30 minute fire and smoke resistant door?	No
Is there personal items or rubbish in any inspected utility or riser cupboard?	No
Is there a CO2 extinguisher installed inside any large electrical riser cupboard?	Yes
Are CO2 extinguishers compliant?	No
Are there other concerns identified with the utility cupboards and vertical risers?	No

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Is external cladding fitted to the building?	No
Are the internal escape route walls and ceilings to Class 0 standard?	Yes
Are there other concerns identified with flammable materials?	No

Means of Escape

Is the stated emergency evacuation strategy suitable?	Yes
Are fire action notices displayed at the entrances, fire exits and each level as required?	Yes
Are travel distances appropriate for the building design?	Yes
Are the internal escape route corridors free of trip hazards?	Yes
Are stairs free of all trip hazards?	Yes
Are there personal items exceeding the managed policy for communal areas, adversly affecting the escape routes?	No
Do final exits open in the direction of flow where required?	No
Are cable and wire fixings to external walls/ceilings to current standards to limit the likelihood of wire entanglement?	No
Are there suitable door opening devices such as thumb turns, push pad/bar?	Yes
Is directional and exit signage necessary in this building?	Yes
Are directional and exit signs displayed appropriately?	Yes
Does the building have an external escape route?	No
Are there other concerns identified with the evacuation of the building?	No
Is emergency lighting installed?	Yes
Does the installed emergency lighting provide suitable coverage?	Yes
Are there recorded or observable defects with the emergency lighting system?	No
Is there evidence of a current and up-to-date emergency lighting service contract and maintenance programme?	Yes
If no emergency lighting is installed, does the building require the installation of an emergency lighting system?	N/A
Is there a need to increase the emergency lighting provision?	Yes

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Are there other concerns identified with the emergency lighting?	No
Does the building have suitable means to naturally ventilate the escape routes?	Yes
Is there a smoke ventilation system installed?	No
Are there any concerns identified with ventilation of the internal escape route?	No

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Doors	
Is the main entrance door suitable as part of the evacuation strategy for the building?	Yes
Is security to the property suitable to restrict access to uninvited persons during 'out of hour' times?	Yes
Are there a sufficient number of fire exits?	Yes
Are there any defects (glazing, furniture, frames, door) requiring repair or maintenance works?	No
Do any fire exits lead to areas that could put persons at further risk?	No
Do all fire exits have suitable signage?	Yes
Are there other concerns identified with the main entrance and fire exit doors?	No
Are there any compartment fire doors installed in this building?	No
Are there locations where compartment fire doors should be installed?	No
Are there other concerns identified with the compartment fire doors?	N/A
Are there any flat entrance doors not conforming to FD60s standard?	Yes
Do the inspected FD60s doors have certified markings?	Yes
Are positive action self-closers fitted and to the front face of the doors?	Yes
From the sample inspection taken, do the flat entrance doors freely self close into the frame?	Yes
Are there any defective flat entrance doors (glazing, furniture, frames, door) requiring repair or maintenance works?	No
Are there other concerns identified with the flat entrance doors?	No

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Fire Hazards

Are "No Smoking" signs displayed at each entrance?	Yes
Is a no smoking policy being observed in the communal areas?	Yes
Any there other concerns identified with smoking?	No
Are there suitable locations provided for storage of refuse?	Yes
Is the refuse area appropriately clear and well managed?	No
Are vertical refuse chutes fitted to the building?	Yes
Are the hoppers in good condition and fitted with smoke seals?	Yes
Is there a working pull plate at the base of the chute?	Yes
Does the refuse system appear to be free of physical defects?	Yes
Are there other concerns identified with refuse?	No
Has fixed electrical wiring been subject to a safety inspection within the past five years?	Yes
Is there a lightning protection system installed?	No
Is there a wheelchair or stair lift in the communal area?	No
Are there electrical or charged items in the communal area (fridges, tumble dryers, mobility scooters etc)?	No
Any there other concerns identified with ignition sources?	No

Fire Detection

From the sample flats accessed, is early warning fire detection appropriate?	Yes

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Fire Safety Management

Are there hydrants within the grounds of the property estate?	Yes
Are there notable restrictions for the positioning of fire appliances within 20 metres of the building?	No
Is a Premises Information Box installed?	Yes
Are there complexities or unique features to the building to warrant the installation of a Premises Information Box?	No
Is there a working Drop Key mechanism to access the building?	Yes
Is there a Dry Riser installed?	Yes
Are there outlets on each level above the 6th storey?	N/A
Is there evidence to confirm the Dry Riser is serviced?	Yes
Is Dry Riser signage displayed appropriately?	Yes
Are there any observable defects to inlets or outlets and their casings?	No
Are there other concerns identified for fire service operations?	Yes
Did you encounter any potential or actual hoarding risks?	No
LBHF have a medical register of 02 users, did you encounter a resident declaring they were using 02 but not registered?	No
Is there a suppression system installed within any part of the building?	No
Did you encounter any potential hazards due to negligent contractor work at the property and its grounds?	No
Are there other concerns identified to do with fire safety management?	No
Does the building contain both commercial outlets and residential dwellings?	No
Any there other concerns identified with control of shared means of escape?	N/A

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Safety Management	
Are there staff or site managers based at and working in the building?	No
Are staff trained to support an evacuation of the building during a fire emergency?	N/A
Any there other concerns identified with on-site staff and their training?	N/A
Are fire safety records accessible in a suitable physical or digital format for fire inspection audits?	Yes
Is LBHF emergency and general contact details displayed in the communal area?	Yes
Any there other concerns identified with the management of information?	No

Actions Arising from the Survey:

	Slight Harm	**Moderate Harm**	**Extreme Harm**
Low	Trivial Risk	Tolerable Risk	Moderate Risk
Medium	Tolerable Risk	Moderate Risk	Substantial Risk
High	Moderate Risk	Substantial Risk	Intolerable Risk

Risk Scores:	
Risk Score at the time of the Assessment	Moderate Risk
Risk Score if all actions are implemented:	Tolerable Risk