

LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN	WARDS: ALL
COMMERCIAL PROPERTY FIRE COMPARTMENTATION PROGRAMME	
REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT	
FOR SUBMISSION TO: HOUSING FIRE AND BUILDING SAFETY PANEL	DATE: 23 October 2025
SUMMARY OF REPORT The report outlines Camden Council's approach to addressing fire compartmentation risks in its commercial property portfolio, which includes 990 properties, many with residential accommodation above or adjacent under the Building Safety Act. As part of its safety programme, the Council initiated intrusive fire compartmentation surveys in 2023 to assess whether the separation between commercial and residential areas meets required fire resistance standards. Of 504 properties targeted, 440 surveys have been completed, revealing that 137 properties will need works such as upgrading ceilings, walls, fire stopping, and fire door replacements. This report sets out the pilot work being undertaken to two properties and the wider programmed work to reduce the risks across the portfolio. Local Government Act 1972 – Access to Information No documents that require listing were used in the preparation of this report. Contact Officers: Foyes Ahmed, Technical Lead (Commercial Property) Foyes.ahmed@camden.gov.uk, 5 Pancras Square, N1C 4AG Martin Olomofe, Head of Property Martin.olomofe@camden.gov.uk, 5 Pancras Square, N1C 4AG	
RECOMMENDATIONS It is recommended that panel note the content of this report and consider whether a further report would be of interest in the next 3 – 6 months.	

Signed:



Date: 14.10.25

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The commercial property portfolio is made up of a wide-ranging property type and use, i.e. light industrial workshops, office, street-fronted shops, car park, etc. The portfolio has 990 properties, of which 584 are in the housing portfolio.
- 1.2 It is important that the Council takes a pro-active approach in trying to understand the fire risks of its portfolio particularly those properties that have residential accommodation above the commercial demise and take necessary steps to mitigate the fire risks which are proportionate.
- 1.3 The Fire and Building Safety Acts establish the duties of the Landlord/Freeholder (in this case the Council) as the ultimate Responsible Person (RP) for multi-occupant buildings or Principal Accountable Person (PAP/AP) for high-risk buildings (HRB). The PAP/RP is responsible for ensuring that a whole building approach to fire safety is taken to the building envelope, overall structural safety and the risk of fire and smoke spread between demises. The Landlord/Freeholder is also responsible for the co-ordination, sharing and collation of fire safety information of the whole building. The commercial leaseholders are responsible for ensuring that the fire risk assessment, FRA actions and fire safety management is carried out within their demised premises.
- 1.4 In early 2023 it was agreed to carry out intrusive fire compartmentation surveys of the commercial properties which have residential accommodation adjacent and above to it. The surveys have been commissioned through Frankham Consultancy Ltd. and the primary purpose of the survey is to ascertain whether the ceiling and walls which form the compartmentation between the two demises (commercial and residential) have the required fire resistance level.
- 1.5 This report provides an update on the progress with the fire compartmentation surveys programme, outcome of the survey reports to date, pilot sites and vacant properties works, implementation approach and next steps.

2.0 Fire compartmentation surveys progress update

- 2.1 As noted above the purpose of the fire compartmentation surveys are to understand whether compartmentation meets the required fire resistance level. The survey is carried out through a physical inspection on site and where necessary limited destructive method (e.g. small hole) to establish the built-up of the ceiling and walls construction. The survey also includes a dynamic asbestos risk assessment carried out by a qualified asbestos surveyor on site only of the areas affected by the fire compartmentation survey.
- 2.2 The fire compartmentation surveys programme consist of the 504 commercial properties out of 990 in the portfolio. This is because these properties have adjacent residential flats to the unit. The programme had started in June 2023 and to date 440 surveys have been completed with 64 remaining. The Council is working on obtaining access on behalf of Frankham to the remaining 64 properties. It is envisaged that the survey programme will be concluded by end of February 2026.
- 2.3 The below shows the outcome of the 440 surveys that have been carried out.

Description of remedial actions	Number of Property
Fire compartmentation remedial works (i.e. upgrade of ceiling, walls, fire stopping, and fire door replacement)	124

Fire stopping works only	64
Fire door replacement only	6
Review of FRAs (within the commercial premises)	227
Further investigation of the commercial premises	36
Repair required	39
Compartmentation Works Completed and/or In-progress	13

2.4 The above table will be updated once the remaining 64 surveys and compartmentation works underway are completed.

2.5 A programme is being delivered which will consider how best to complete the works to occupied commercial premises and what risks will need to be mitigated prior to work being undertaken.

3.0 Fire compartmentation remedial works to 2 pilot occupied properties and 11 vacant properties

3.1 66 Marchmont Street (book shop) and 38 Great Russell Street (fish and chip restaurant) have been identified as 2 pilot properties for fire compartmentation remedial works. Both properties are tenanted and therefore to carry out the remedial works to those properties, the tenants have to be vacated for the duration of the works and compensated for the loss of business.

3.2 The remedial works for 66 Marchmont St has started on site in early August 2025 and due to complete in end of October 2025.

3.3 The building contractor has been appointed for carry out the remedial works in 38 Great Russell St and access has been granted by tenant to start the works in early November 2025.

3.4 The below list are the vacant properties where fire compartmentation remedial works have been carried out and still on-going. Please note some of the properties have other works included as part of the package of works and ones that have completed, some have now been let.

Completed:

- 1) 219 Belsize Road
- 2) 203a Belsize Road
- 3) 91 Leather Lane
- 4) 72 Marchmont Street
- 5) 30 Camden Road
- 6) 3 Bloomsbury Street

On-going:

- 7) 50 Leverton Road – started on site and anticipated to be completed by mid-December 2025
- 8) 138 Drummond Street – being scoped (includes damp proofing and structural works) and anticipated to be completed by March 2026.
- 9) 51 Hemstal Road – started on site and anticipated to be completed by end of October 2025.
- 10) 85 Kingsgate Road - started on site and anticipated to be completed by end of November 2025.
- 11) 66 Marchmont Street, with 58-60 Marchmont Street to commence upon completion of works at 66 Marchmont Street

4.0 Next steps

4.1 The below are some of the key lists of things that need to be carried out in the coming months:

- 1) Complete the remaining FRAs to the 64 properties
- 2) Complete the work to the occupied pilot properties
- 3) Confirm the programme for the remainder of the work, and secure budget allocations for this, taking into account how best to access occupied commercial premises to complete the work and mitigate risks in the meantime

5.0 Finance Comments of the Executive Directors Corporate Service

5.1 The report updates Camden Council's approach to addressing fire compartmentation risks in its commercial property portfolio, following fire compartmentation surveys undertaken in 2023. These surveys revealed that 137 properties need remedial works such as upgrading ceilings, walls, fire stopping, and fire door replacements.

5.2 The capital works required and revenue compensation payments will affect both the Housing Revenue Account and the General Fund, depending on the timing of work undertaken to the 137 properties in need of remedial works. Until budgets for the work are approved, costs will be met from existing commercial budgets.

5.3 In the absence of external funding for the works, the capital works will be funded through borrowing and will increase the Council's Capital Financing Requirement, the underlying need to borrow to fund capital works. The works will increase the Council's revenue pressures and will be addressed as part of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.

6.0 Legal Comments of the Borough Solicitor

6.1 Legal comments have been incorporated.

7.0 Environmental Implications

7.1 No environmental impacts from implementing this proposal.

REPORT ENDS