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BY EMAIL ONLY
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Project: Michael House School
Client: Red Eagle One (Shipley) Ltd
Prepared by: ARC Design Studio Ltd

PLAN COMPLIANCE REPORT

1.0 Part B – Building A (Michael House School)

1.1 Residential Units

The proposed residential layouts have been reviewed against the requirements of **Approved Document B (Fire Safety)**, considering the applicable purpose group classification, means of escape strategy, internal planning arrangements, the relationship between cooking facilities and escape routes, and the provision of escape windows where applicable.

The review confirmed that the majority of the proposed dwellings were capable of achieving compliance with only limited amendments. Where alterations were required, these comprised relatively minor internal layout revisions to strengthen the means of escape strategy and ensure compliance with the guidance contained within Approved Document B.

Whilst the review demonstrated that compliance could generally be achieved through the provision of escape windows where permitted, the client sought to adopt a more robust fire safety strategy within the higher-density *Old School Building*. Consequently, a number of apartments were reconfigured to incorporate protected entrance hallways serving the habitable rooms. This approach reduces reliance on escape windows as a compensatory means of escape by providing a protected internal circulation route to the final exit.

In addition to enhancing the overall resilience of the fire strategy, this approach removes the need to influence the external architectural design to satisfy escape window requirements, allowing greater flexibility in the design and placement of glazing whilst maintaining compliance with Approved Document B.

Overall, the revised layouts now provide an appropriate means of escape for their respective dwelling types and purpose groups, with the adopted design following the principles of Approved Document B through a combination of protected internal circulation, compliant escape arrangements and improved internal space planning.

Summary of Principal Amendments

- Protected entrance hallways introduced within selected apartments to provide a protected internal escape route.
- Apartment layouts reconfigured to remove reliance on escape windows where practicable.
- Kitchen layouts amended to provide remote cooking positions, improving separation between the cooking appliance and the principal escape route.
- Bedroom and internal door arrangements revised where necessary to ensure habitable rooms discharge onto protected circulation spaces.
- Internal planning refined to provide a clearer and more direct means of escape to the final exit.
- Layouts rationalised to achieve compliance whilst maintaining the intended architectural design, avoiding unnecessary constraints on external glazing arrangements.

1.2 Communal Means of Escape

Stair 1 – Serving Units 7 & 19

Stair 1 serves one flat at ground floor level (Unit 7) and one flat at first floor level (Unit 19) and is therefore considered a small single-stair building serving no more than two flats per storey in accordance with Diagram 3.9(b) of Approved Document B, Volume 1.
The common stair should be enclosed as a protected stairway within 30min fire resisting construction and provided with smoke ventilation by means of an AOV with a minimum free area of 1.0m² located at the head of the stair, or an equivalent smoke control system.

As no protected lobby is provided between the common stairs and the flat entrance doors, each flat incorporates a protected entrance hall in accordance with the guidance in Approved Document B. Therefore, with the inclusion of an AOV, this configuration is compliant.

Summary of Principal Amendments

- Installation of one AOV roof line.
- Apartment layouts adjusted as per Section 1.1

Stair 2 – Serving Units 8, 9, 20 & 21

Stair 2 serves two flats at ground floor level (Units 8 and 9) and two flats at first floor level (Units 20 and 21). As the stair serves no more than two flats per storey, the arrangement is considered in accordance with the provisions for a small single-stair building shown in Diagram 3.9(b) of Approved Document B, Volume 1.

The common stair should be enclosed as a protected stairway constructed to provide a minimum of 30 minutes' fire resistance. In accordance with Approved Document B, smoke ventilation should be provided to the stair by means of an AOV with a minimum free area of 1.0 m² located at the head of the stair, or by an equivalent smoke control system.

No protected lobby is provided between the common stair and the flat entrance doors.

Consequently, each flat should incorporate a protected entrance hall separating the accommodation from the flat entrance door. The layouts of Units 9, 20 and 21 achieve this arrangement. Units 8 should be reviewed alongside the recommendations contained within Section 1.1 to ensure the protected entrance halls remain uncompromised following the proposed layout amendments (hob location).

Summary of Principal Amendments

- Installation of one AOV roof line.
- Apartment layouts adjusted as per Section 1.1

Stair 3 – Serving Units 22, 23 & 24

Stair 3 provides the principal means of escape for the three first-floor flats (Units 22–24). Whilst Units 10 and 11 are accessed at ground floor level from an external open passageway, these dwellings do not utilise the enclosed stair for means of escape and have therefore not been considered as being served by this stair.

The first-floor flats are accessed from a communal lobby off the protected stair. Due to the extended travel distances within the common access arrangement, the escape strategy has been assessed in accordance with the provisions for a small single-stair building with extended travel distances, as illustrated in Diagrams 3.7(b) and 3.9(a) of Approved Document B, Volume 1.

The protected stair and communal lobby should be enclosed in fire-resisting construction and provided with smoke ventilation. To achieve the required smoke control, a minimum free area of 1.5 m^2 should be provided to the communal lobby. Owing to the constraints of the existing window openings, it is proposed that this is achieved by the installation of two AOVs, providing the required combined free area.

Subject to the provision of the protected stair enclosure, compliant flat entrance doors, and the proposed smoke ventilation strategy, the communal means of escape is considered capable of satisfying the guidance of Approved Document B.

Summary of Principal Amendments

- Installation of two AOV windows to elevation facing car park.
- Apartment layouts adjusted as per Section 1.1

Stair 4 – Serving Units 15, 25, 26 & 27

Stair 4 serves Unit 15 at ground floor level and Units 25–27 at first floor level. The adopted design originally proposed the first-floor flats opening directly onto the protected stair enclosure, treating the arrangement as a small single-stair building in accordance with Diagram 3.9(b) of Approved Document B, Volume 1. It should also be noted the stair was originally planned to be retained but it has been assessed and this would be non-compliant as a general access stair and could not be retained as part of the fire strategy.

In order to maintain compliance, the stair must be replaced with new construction designed to achieve general access requirements. The new stair should be protected and enclosed in fire-resisting construction accompanied with an AOV with a minimum free area of 1.0 m² located at the head of the stair to provide smoke ventilation.

As three flats are served from the first-floor landing, the adopted arrangement exceeds the maximum of two flats per storey illustrated in Diagram 3.9(b).

To provide a solution that aligns more closely with the guidance contained within Approved Document B, the layout has been reconfigured to incorporate a new general access stair and the introduction of two communal lobbies between the protected stair and the flat entrance doors.

This revised arrangement accords with the principles of Diagram 3.9(a), providing additional separation between the flats and the protected stair enclosure and improving the robustness of the communal means of escape strategy.

Summary of Principal Amendments

- Installation of one AOV roof line.
- Apartment layouts adjusted as per Section 1.1
- Existing stair replaced with new general access stair (original orientation and design intent has been maintained)

Further details on stair adjustments can be found below.

2.0 PART K - Building A (Michael House School)

Stairs 1–3 – General Access Stairs

Stairs 1, 2 and 3 have been reviewed against the guidance for general access stairs contained within Approved Document K. The proposed arrangements achieve the recommended dimensional requirements, including stair width, with sufficient tolerance within the current layouts to accommodate minor design development and coordination changes during Stage 4 without compromising compliance.

Subject to detailed design development, Stairs 1–3 are considered capable of achieving compliance with the guidance contained within Approved Document K.

Stair 4 (Serving Units 15, 25, 26 & 27) – General Access Stairs

The adopted design proposed the retention of the existing stair serving Stair 4. As part of the proposed change of use, the stair forms part of the communal circulation route and principal means of escape and should therefore be assessed against the guidance for a general access stair contained within Approved Document K.

A review of the existing stair identified that the retained arrangement provided an overall stair width of approximately 900 mm. Approved Document K recommends a stair width of 1200 mm, with a minimum clear width of 1000 mm between handrails where handrails project into the stair. Accordingly, the existing arrangement did not achieve the recommended dimensional guidance for a general access stair.

As part of the design development, the stair has been widened to demonstrate how compliance can be achieved within the constraints of the existing structure. The revised arrangement is shown on the design mark-ups for reference.

It should be noted that, due to the existing building constraints, the associated landing width cannot achieve the full recommended 1200 mm clear width to match the stair width. The proposed arrangement therefore represents an improvement over the existing condition and maximises the available dimensions within the existing envelope.

The revised stair arrangement should be reviewed and agreed with Building Control as part of the Stage 4 design development, with the remaining landing width constraint recorded as a departure from the recommended guidance of Approved Document K.

Summary of Principal Amendments

- Existing stair replaced with new general access stair (original orientation and design intent has been maintained)

Dwellinghouses – Private Stairs

The private stairs within the dwellinghouses have been reviewed against the guidance contained within Approved Document K. The proposed stair arrangements appear to achieve the recommended dimensional requirements, with stair widths exceeding 900 mm and no significant issues identified at this stage.

Minor adjustments may be required during Stage 4 following receipt of the building scan information and confirmation of the existing floor to floor heights, as these will allow the final riser and going dimensions to be verified against the requirements of Approved Document K.

Subject to confirmation of the existing dimensional information, the private stair arrangements are considered capable of achieving compliance with the guidance contained within Approved Document K.

3.0 PART M - Building A (Michael House School)

The proposed layouts have been reviewed against the guidance contained within Approved Document M. At this stage, the design demonstrates a clear route to compliance, with most dwelling entrance doors achieving the required minimum clear opening widths and the internal layouts, including WC arrangements, capable of being configured to meet the requirements of M4(1) Visitable and Adaptable Dwellings.

Minor amendments and coordination adjustments may be required during Stage 4 design development to fully align the layouts with the detailed requirements of Approved Document M4(1), including final confirmation of approach routes, door clearances, sanitary provision and internal maneuvering spaces.

Subject to these minor refinements, the proposed arrangements are considered capable of achieving compliance with the requirements of Approved Document M4(1).