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Chartered Engineers

BUILDING CONDITION ASSESSMENT REPORT

for

Respond

at

Fairhill Lodge, Dungloe, Co. Donegal

On

7th June 2025

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1 INTRODUCTION

SIMON BEALE + ASSOCIATES have been retained by Respond to prepare an overall Building Condition Report for a property at Fairhill Lodge, Dungloe, Co. Donegal.

Stephen Devaney from the Ballina office of Simon Beale + Associates, carried out an inspection at the Fairhill Lodge, Dungloe on the 7th June 2025. Access was given to inspect the property (Stairwells, Common Areas, Security Office & Games Room) by a representative from Respond.

2 PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

The purpose of this report is to assess and categorise the condition of the property in relation to defective concrete blockwork. Recommendations provided in Irish Standard I.S 465:2018+A1:2020 document *Assessment, testing and categorisation of damaged buildings incorporating concrete blocks containing certain deleterious materials* have been suggested and referenced in this report

A scale from 1 to 10 will be used to categorise the property. The scale system will grade the property from most damaged (10) to least damaged (1).

This report is based on a visual inspection and does not take into consideration works, which have been covered up or are reasonably un-examinable or inaccessible. All attempts have been made to provide the commissioner of this report with reasonable conclusions drawn from the visible evidence available at the time of the inspection. This report is confined to the assessment and categorisation of cracking damage to the blockwork and the assessment of the core samples taken from locations at the property following results from a certified laboratory.

3 DESK STUDY

The property in question is located at Fairhill Lodge, Dungloe, Co. Donegal. The development consists of an apartment block containing 24 units constructed circa 2006-2007. The dwelling in question consists of blockwork construction with some structural steel elements. The intermediate floors consist of hollow core units. The roof consists of sigma purlins with galvanised sheeting fitted to the sigma purlins. The external wall consists of a nap render finish with a paint applied to the render. The foundation type for the apartment unit is unknown. The location of the apartment unit is note below in the OSI map extract with a red arrow.



Fairhill Lodge, Donegal (Extract from OSI maps)

4 DWELLING INSPECTION

A visual inspection was carried out at the suspected property by Stephen Devaney in accordance with the guidelines set out in I.S. 465:2018+A1:2020 “*Assessment, testing and categorisation of damaged buildings incorporating concrete blocks containing certain deleterious materials*”.

4.1 Location of Suspected Property

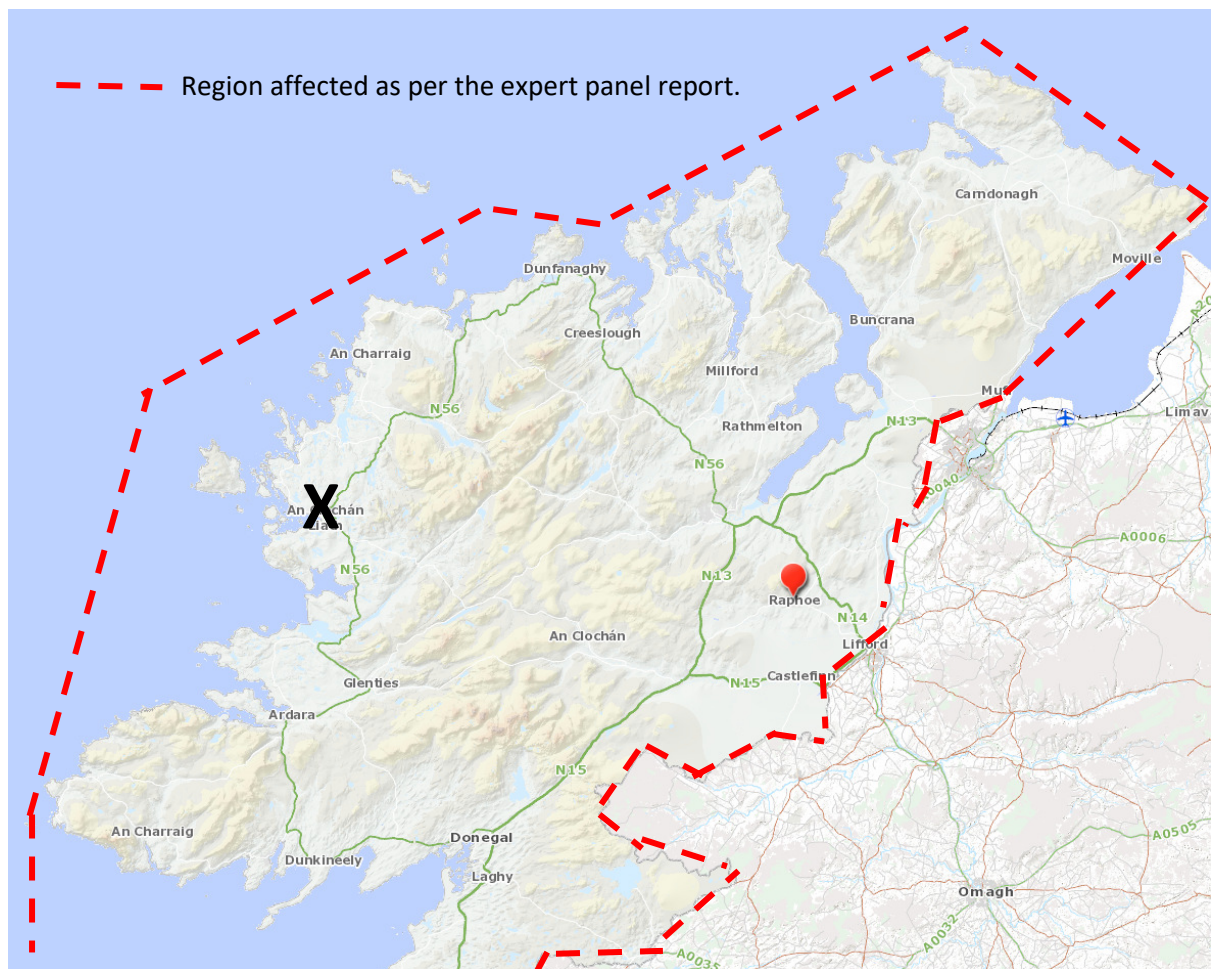


Figure 1 – General Location of Affected Dwellings according to Expert Panel Report. (Map Extract from OSI)

Fairhill Lodge, Dungloe, Co. Donegal was found to be within the geographical location of the affected dwellings as set out in the REPORT OF THE EXPERT PANEL ON CONCRETE BLOCKS June 2017. Construction of the development was also found to be within the time period associated with defective blockwork in the area.

The approximate location of the property is marked with an ‘X’ on Figure 1 above.

4.2 Summary of External Inspection

A visual inspection of the property was carried out. During the visual inspection the following crack patterns were observed.



RHS Elevation – Vertical crack present above the window. (Pictures – Left: 2021, Right: 2025)



RHS Elevation – Vertical crack present behind rainwater down pipe. (Pictures – Left: 2021, Right: 2025)



RHS Elevation – Vertical crack present near the corner of the elevation. (Pictures – Left: 2021, Right: 2025)



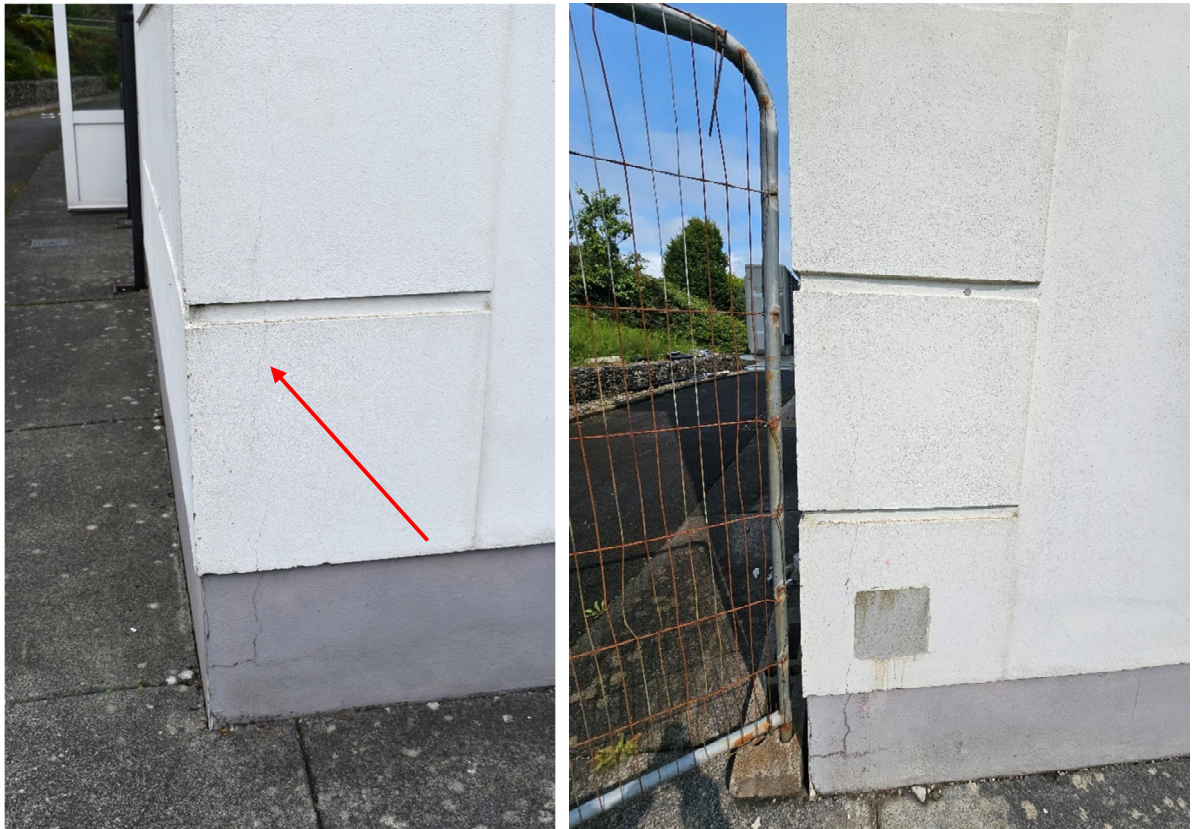
Rear Elevation – Vertical crack present near the corner of the elevation. Horizontal crack near the window sill. (Picture: 2021)



Rear Elevation – Horizontal crack near the window cill. (Picture: 2025)



Rear Elevation – Horizontal crack near the window cill. (Picture: 2025)



Rear Elevation – Vertical crack present near the corner of the elevation. (Pictures – Left: 2021, Right: 2025)



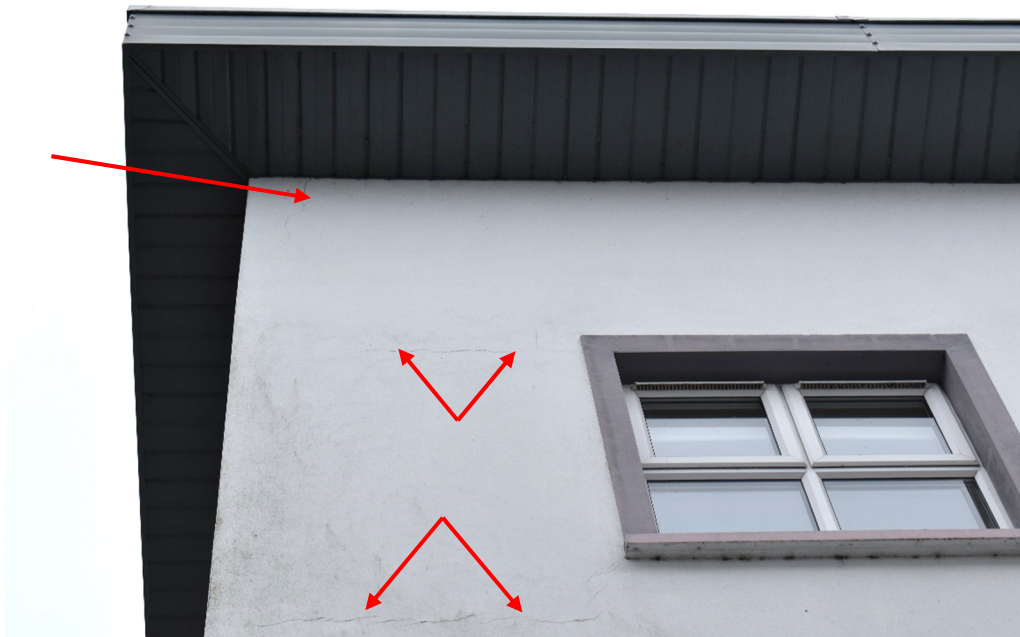
Rear Elevation – Vertical crack present above the door opening and pattern like cracking can be seen in the above photo. (Pictures – Left: 2021, Right: 2025)



Rear Elevation – Pattern like cracks can be seen in the above photo. (Picture – 2021)



Rear Elevation – Pattern like cracks can be seen in the above photo. (Picture – 2025)



Rear Elevation – Horizontal crack from the window head and cill level can be seen in the above photo. A vertical crack near the corner of the elevation can be seen in the above photo also. (Picture – 2021)



Rear Elevation – Horizontal crack from the window head and cill level can be seen in the above photo. (Picture – 2025)



Rear Elevation – A series of horizontal crack from the window head and cill level can be seen in the above photo. A vertical crack near the corner of the elevation can be seen in the above photo also. (Picture – 2021)



Rear Elevation – A series of horizontal crack from the window head and sill level can be seen in the above photos. A vertical crack near the corner of the elevation can be seen in the above photo also. (Pictures – 2025)



Rear Elevation – Web like cracks can be seen on the elevation in the above photo. (Pictures – Left: 2021, Right: 2025)



Rear Elevation – Example of flaking paint present on the external wall. (Pictures – Top: 2021, Bottom: 2025)



Rear Elevation – Cracking present above and below the window in the above photo. (Pictures – Left: 2021, Right: 2025)



Rear Elevation – Cracking present throughout (Picture – 2025)



Rear Elevation – Pattern like cracks can be seen on the elevation in the above photo. (Pictures – Left: 2021, Right: 2025)



LHS Elevation – Web like cracks present near the window heads. (Pictures – Left: 2021, Right: 2025)



LHS Elevation – Vertical crack present near below the window cill in the above photo. (Pictures – Left: 2021, Right: 2025)

Many of the crack patterns observed externally were similar to those mentioned in IS 465:2018+A1:2020.

4.3 Summary of Internal Inspection

Generally, the internal walls were in good condition with some cracks present. The ground floor is currently under renovation and no access was provided on the day of the inspection. The internal walls were recently painted with some cracks previously filled. Some of the internal cracks noted during the visual inspections can be seen below:



Second Floor – Cracking is present vertically on the wall and continues across the ceiling (2025)



Second Floor – Cracking is present on the wall and ceiling in the above photo. (2025)



First Floor – Cracking is present at the head of the window in the games room. (2025)



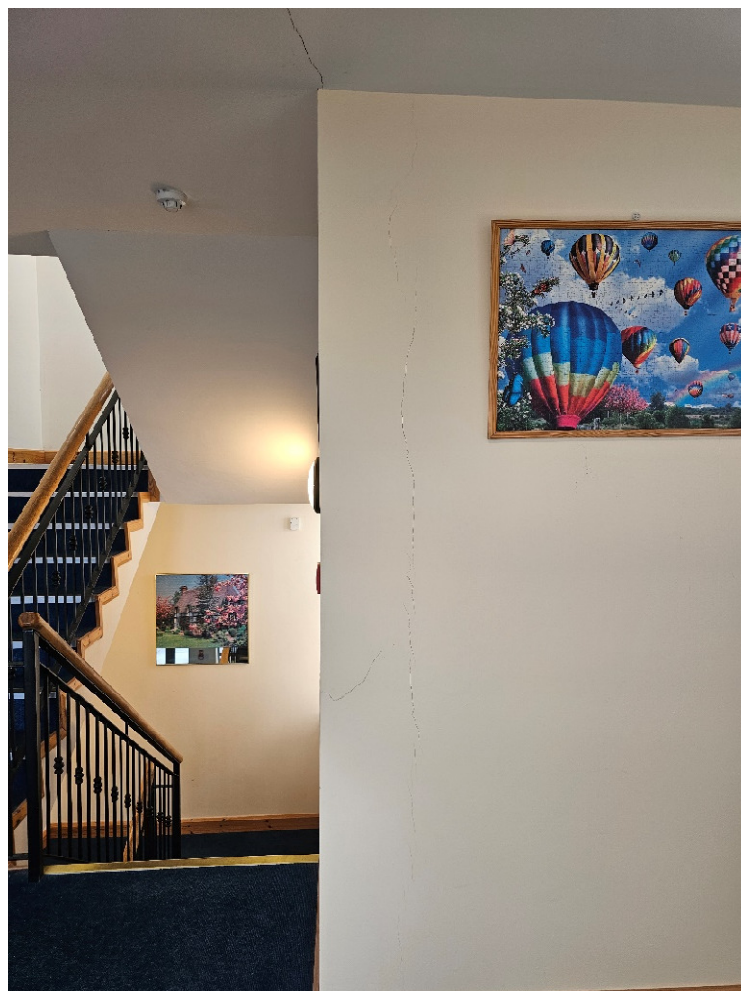
First Floor – Large vertical crack can be seen outside the games room with multiple ceiling cracks throughout. (2025)



First Floor – Large vertical crack can be seen outside the games room. (2025)



First Floor – Ceiling cracks can be seen throughout. (2025)



First Floor – Vertical crack can be seen on the wall beside the stairwell. (2025)

4.4 Summary of Visual Inspection

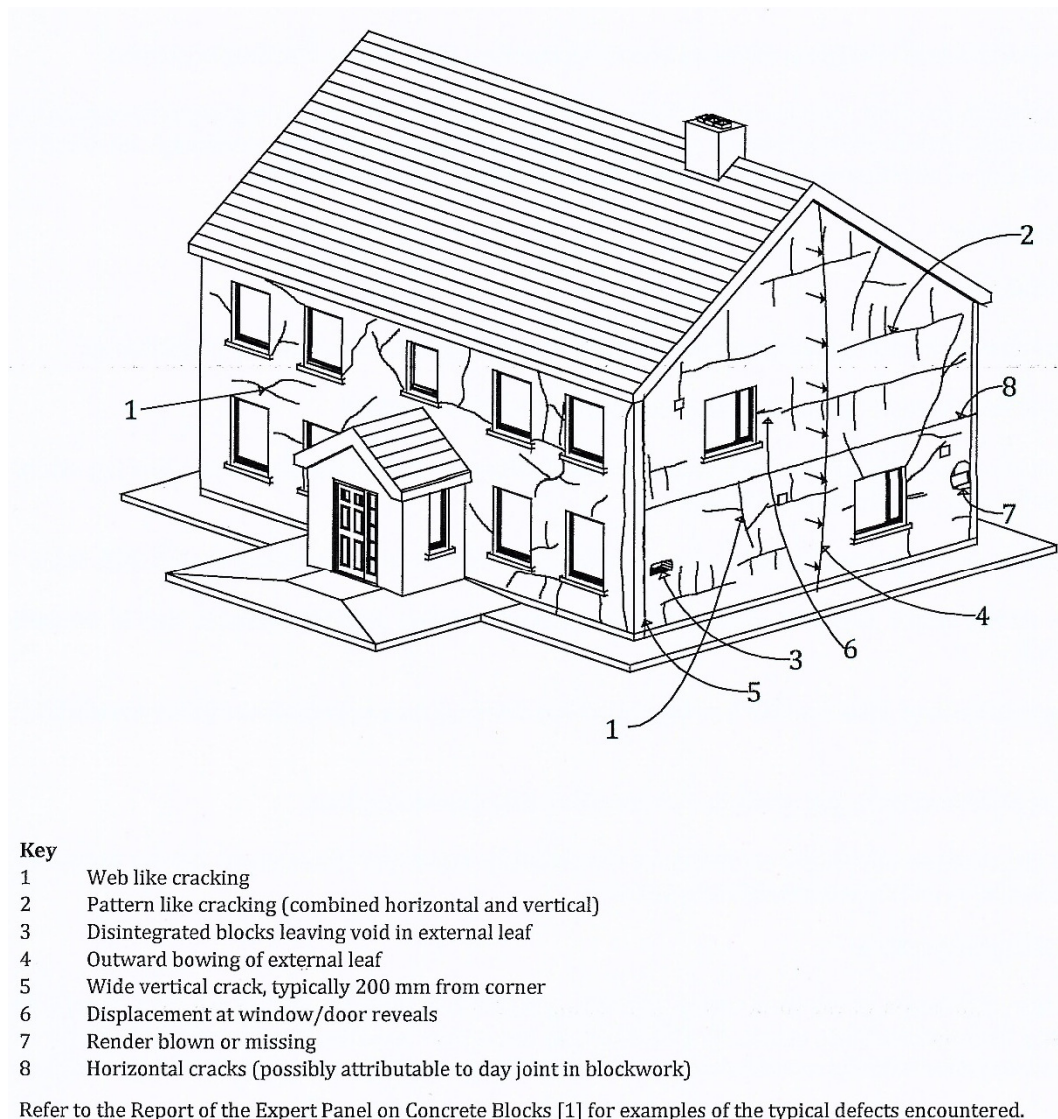


Figure 2 - Typical Defects (Extract from I.S 465:2018+A1:2020)

The property inspected showed similar crack patterns to those suggested in I.S. 465:2018+A1:2020 (See figure 2 for details on crack patterns).

Other potential causes of cracking were considered during the site inspections as per IS 465:2018+A1:2020 clause 4.3. However, suspect cracking associated with defective concrete blocks were noted. Circumstantial evidence was also considered i.e., location of dwelling, source of blocks, year of construction etc. The apartment is maintained by Respond.

Using the Building Assessment Scale below the apartment block was categorised. As noted on the scale, units categories 1 to 4 should be inspected and reviewed every 24 months to check for further deterioration, categories 5 to 7 should be inspected and reviewed every 12 months to check for further deterioration and units within categories 8 to 10 should be considered for remediation to stop or slow the rate of deterioration.

Building Assessment Scale Chart									
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Houses should be reviewed every 24 months to check for further deterioration.				Houses should be reviewed every 12 months to check for further deterioration.			Remedial options to be consider to repair affected houses		

The above apartment block should be placed in **category 7**.

5 CONCLUSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

The apartment block exhibits some of the crack patterns noted within IS465:2018+A1:2020. When considering the age of the apartment and the geographical location defective blocks may have been used during construction however, the only way to confirm this was to take a number 100mm core samples from the property and test them at an accredited laboratory in accordance with IS465:2018+A1:2020.

Eight samples were taken to allow for additional testing where required. The following is a list of where samples were taken – at least two samples were taken from the rising wall below ground level (one for compressive strength test);

- one sample from each main elevation between ground and first floor level; and
- at least two samples taken from the inner leaf in the case of cavity wall construction (one for compressive strength test).
- Other samples were taken where considered necessary by the Chartered Engineer.

Sampling was carried out by a competent person and in accordance with the requirements of IS465:2018+A1:2020. The testing followed the flow path shown below:

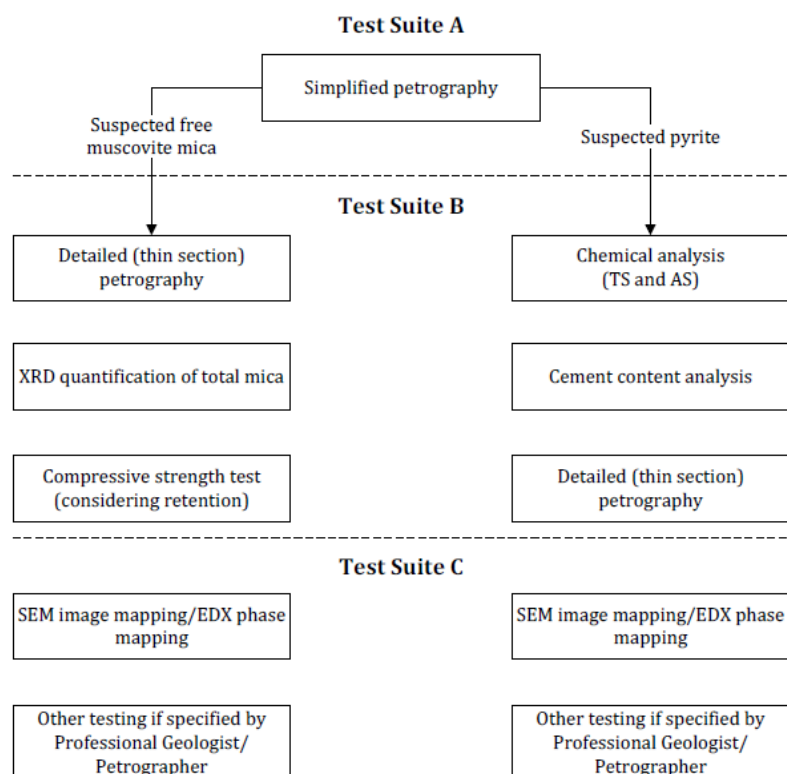


Figure 3 — Sample assessment overview

Please see below conclusion from the Blockwork Assessment Report.

“The laboratory analysis has confirmed that within the 8 samples collected, there is one types of concrete. The concretes contained aggregates consisting of white quartzite, micaceous quartzite, mica schist and dolerite, diorite, granodiorite, granite.

Based on Suite A testing the labs concluded that the concrete core samples 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 & 8 were unclassified; and that, classification by Suite B was required because of uncertainty regarding the abundance of potentially problematic lithologies / minerals (pyritiferous black limestone/calcareous mudstone).

Based on Suite B analysis the labs concluded that the concrete in this sample remains sound, however the abundance of problematic lithologies (micaceous quartzite, rare free mica) and condition of the binder means the concrete should be considered as displaying Low/Medium susceptibility to deterioration from potential freeze-thaw damage. A freeze-thaw test could be undertaken to further assess the performance of the concrete and its susceptibility to freeze-thaw degradation.”

I see 3 possible options going forward in relation to this building:

Option 1

The cracks in the apartment block appear to have deteriorated since 2021. To determine the rate of deterioration, we recommend fitting wall mounted crack monitor gauges in multiple locations with periodic inspections.

Option 2

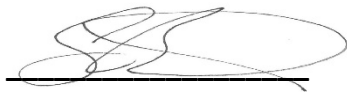
Apply an external weatherproofing product to the exterior of the building to assist in protection against further deterioration. I would suggest Sika Sikagard 700S Aquastop primer followed by Sikagard 680S Betoncolor. This application will fill all current cracks and give a new timeline for monitoring any further cracking.

Option 3

Replace the external leaf of blockwork on the building.

Based on the current status I would recommend Option 2.

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