

Attachment C

**Inspection Report
547-549 Crown Street, Surry Hills**



Figure 1: 547-549 Crown Street, Surry Hills, viewed from the east



Figure 2: 547-549 Crown Street, Surry Hills

Council Investigation Officer Inspection and Recommendation Report; Clause 17(2) Part 8 of Schedule 5 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (the Act)

Officer: Muhammad Hassan

Date: 4 September 2025

Premises: 547-549 Crown Street, Surry Hills

Executive Summary

1. The City of Sydney (the City) received correspondence from the Commissioner of Fire and Rescue NSW (FRNSW) in relation to the subject premises dated 3 July 2025 with respect to matters of fire safety.
2. The subject premises consists of three blocks of residential apartments (39 in total) located above two ground floor car parks and a commercial tenancy. Access to the main entry of the building is from Crown Street, and access to both car parks is from the rear laneway named Cleveland Avenue. Blocks 1 and 3 both have a rise in storeys of three and contains 8 and 21 apartments respectively. Block 2 has a rise in storeys of two and contains 10 apartments. Each residential block is of masonry and concrete slab construction.
3. The City inspected the premises on 30 June, 23 July 2025, and 28 August accompanied by the owner's fire safety consultants. This inspection identified deficiencies in fire safety. To address this, a fire safety order (order) is recommended to be issued under the Act.

Chronology

Date	Event
3 July 2025	FRNSW correspondence received
30 June 2025	<p>The City inspected the premises with the owner's representatives. The inspection revealed the following fire safety deficiencies:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The entry door to the apartment that was previously engulfed in a fire was defective.2. There was a lack of portable fire extinguishers in the common areas of the building.3. There was a lack of exit signs in open egress paths that would help occupants locate the building exit.

Date	Event
	<p>4. The AFSS was not displayed in the main foyer of the building.</p> <p>5. buildings fire safety schedule contained incorrect standards of performance for several fire safety measures. There were also fire safety measures in the building that were not listed on the buildings fire safety schedule.</p> <p>6. The main foyer of the building lacked signage that would assist Fire and Rescue NSW locate the fire alarm panel, sprinkler control valves and fire hydrant booster.</p>
23 July 2025	<p>The City inspected the premises with the owner's representatives. The inspection revealed the following fire safety deficiencies:</p> <p>1. There were several PVC pipes passing through the car park ceiling that were not protected by suitable fire collars.</p> <p>2. The distance from the attack fire hydrant to the furthest unit entry door was greater than 70m.</p> <p>3. The sprinkler and hydrant booster signage at the rear of the building does lacked signage required by Australian Standard 2419.1-1994.</p> <p>4. The doors leading to the sprinkler control valve room in the car park were not fitted with a lock compatible with Fire and Rescue NSW access key.</p> <p>5. Buildings located above the car park also contained a sounder at the top floor level of the common area. During the inspection it was not known if the if the sounder was connected to the car park occupant warning system.</p>
28 August 2025	<p>The City inspected the premises with the owner's representatives. The inspection revealed the following fire safety deficiencies:</p> <p>1. A smoke detector located on the top floor ceiling of block 3 was not interconnected to the remaining smoke alarms in the common area.</p> <p>2. The final exit door serving block 3 (opposite the attack fire hydrant) was not provided with a single-handed downward action latching device.</p> <p>3. The final exit doors serving all blocks and the final exit door serving the car park were fitted with a locking device.</p> <p>4. The fire exit stair within block 1 contained defective balustrades.</p> <p>5. The stair located at the rear of the commercial tenancy lacked handrails.</p>

Date	Event
	<p>6. The stair treads of the existing fire escape stairs serving block 2 lacked a slip resistant finish.</p> <p>7. Block 3 contained combustible items in and around egress paths.</p> <p>8. The door located between the commercial tenancy and the car park did not appear to be constructed of suitable fire resistive construction that would prevent the spread of fire between the car park and the commercial tenancy;</p>
4 September 2025	A Notice of Intention to issue an order was issued on the owners of the building

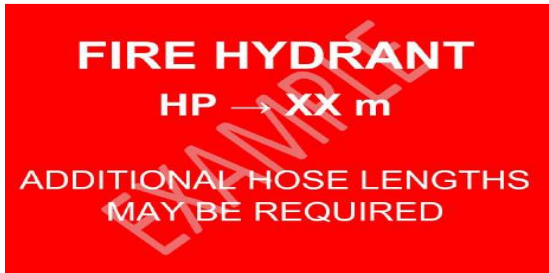
Fire and Rescue NSW Report

4. Fire and Rescue NSW conducted an inspection of the subject premises on 27 June 2024.

Issues

5. The report from Fire and Rescue NSW detailed issues as shown in the table below.

Ref.	Issue	City response
A	Provisions for Fire Safety	
A1	Fire Hydrant System	
1.	The combined fire hydrant and sprinkler booster assembly was not provided with a fade resistant engraved sign stating the 'WORKING PRESSURE' and 'SYSTEM TESTED to' in kPa, contrary to the requirements of Clause 5.6.7 of Australian Standard (AS) 2419.1-1994.	<p>The City's inspection on 23 July 2025 found that the booster assembly lacked a sign stating the working pressure and system tested pressure.</p> <p>In response to this, the City issued a Proposed Fire Safety Order on 4 September 2025 requiring the required signage to be installed.</p>
2.	FRNSW observed hose lay coverage greater than the requirements of AS 2419.1-1994 to the northern unit blocks from the single attack fire hydrant on the podium level. The attack fire hydrant is located in a position remote from the two northern residential unit blocks and is not visible to firefighters responding to a fire	<p>The City's inspection on 23 July 2025 found that the hose lay coverage was greater than the requirement of AS 2419.1-1994</p> <p>In response to this, the City issued a Proposed Fire Safety Order on 4 September 2025 requiring an additional attack fire hydrant to be</p>

Ref.	Issue	City response
	when entering the property from Crown Street.	installed and certification to be provided.
3.	Due to the constraints of access and size of the site, FRNSW is of the opinion that an additional external attack hydrant in the central part of the podium between the entrance from Crown Street and Cleveland Avenue (Image 1) would be beneficial to firefighters in the case of a fire emergency at the premises.	As per comments above.
4.	<p>FRNSW recommend an additional site plan in a prominent position in the central part of the podium between the entrance from Crown Street and Cleveland Avenue, facing the Crown Street entrance. This will assist firefighters in locating the fire safety measure in the case of a fire emergency at the premises. The site plan is to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. The layout of the buildings on the site with unit numbers. ii. The external fire hydrants at the premises. iii. The nearest street hydrant to the premises located in Crown Street and Cleveland Avenue. iv. The location of the booster assembly. 	<p>The City's inspection on 23 July 2025 found that the building lacked a site plan and fire hydrant signage that would assist firefighters in locating the fire safety measure in the case of a fire emergency at the premises.</p> <p>In response to this, the City issued a Proposed Fire Safety Order on 4 September 2025 requiring a suitable site plan and fire hydrant signage to be installed.</p>
5.	<p>FRNSW recommend adjacent to the site plan is two signs indicating the direction and distance to the external fire hydrant at the premises (See Figure 2).</p> <p>One sign is to face the Crown Street entrance with the other sign facing the Cleveland Avenue entrance.</p> 	<p>The City's inspection on 23 July 2025 found that the building lacked a site plan and fire hydrant signage that would assist firefighters in locating the fire safety measure in the case of a fire emergency at the premises.</p> <p>In response to this, the City issued a Proposed Fire Safety Order on 4 September 2025 requiring a suitable site plan and fire hydrant signage to be installed.</p>

Ref.	Issue	City response
A2	Automatic Suppression System	
6.	The non-return valve within the sprinkler system valve assembly was not orientated to prevent reverse flow of water contrary to the requirements of Clause 3.1 and Clause 3.3.6 of AS 4794-2001. The valve will not close by gravity when under no-flow conditions.	<p>The City's inspection on 23 July 2025 found that the non-return valve within the sprinkler system valve assembly was not orientated to prevent reverse flow of water.</p> <p>The City's inspection on 28 August 2025 found that the nonreturn valve assembly had been rotated and now is orientated to prevent reverse flow of water.</p> <p>No further action is required.</p>
A3	Fire Hose Reels	
7.	Several hose reels in the carpark were not capable of immediate use as the nozzles were not stowed in the interlock device contrary to the requirements of Clause 2.2.7.2 of AS 1221 - 1997.	The City's inspection on 23 July 2025 found that all hose reels in the building contained nozzles that were stowed in the interlock device.
A4	Smoke Detection and Alarm System (SDAS)	
8.	FRNSW observed smoke alarms throughout the common areas of the premises, excluding the carparks. FRNSW officers tested a random selection of smoke alarms. The smoke alarms are not interconnected to activate a building occupant warning system, contrary to the requirements Specification S20C7 of the National Construction Code 2022, Volume 1 Building Code of Australia (NCC).	<p>The City's inspection on 28 August 2025 found that a smoke alarm located on the top floor level of block 3 was not connected to the remaining smoke alarms located within the common areas.</p> <p>In response to this, the City issued a Proposed Fire Safety Order on 4 September 2025 requiring a BCA code compliant smoke detection and alarm system to be installed throughout the premises and certification to be provided.</p>
9.	<p>FRNSW observed indicators of heat alarms within the ceiling space in some buildings. FRNSW are of the opinion that the heat alarms are not connected to Fire Detection and Control Indicating Equipment (FDCIE).</p> <p>The indicator light was illuminated in the corridor of Units 9-14 when inspected without alarms operating indicating that maintenance was not being conducted</p>	The City's inspection on 23 July 2025 found that there were heat alarms in the ceilings space in some buildings. The heat alarms are not required if the top floor ceilings provide a 60-minute resistance to the incipient spread of fire to the space above. The owners fire safety consultant advised that he believed that the ceilings were fire rated and provided a 60-minute resistance to

Ref.	Issue	City response
	contrary to the requirements of Section 81 of EPAR21.	the incipient spread of fire of the space above. In response to this, the City issued a Proposed Fire Safety Order on 4 September 2025 requiring the top floor ceilings of each block to have a 60-minutes resistance to the incipient spread of fire to the space above and certification to be provided.
10.	<p>A Smoke Detection and Alarm Systems (SDAS) is not provided to the enclosed basement carpark contrary to the requirements of Specification 20 of the NCC. FRNSW are of the opinion that the basement driveway should be considered an "other internal public space" and be provided with an SDAS in accordance with Specification 20 of the NCC.</p> <p>FRNSW notes that the Guide to the NCC provides commentary on the areas of buildings that are considered to be "other internal public spaces" in a residential building. These areas include "public foyers, reception areas and enclosed carparks".</p>	The City's inspection on 23 July 2025 found that the car park was sprinkler protected. A Smoke Detection and Alarm System is not required in a building that is sprinkler protected.
B	Access and Egress	
11.	The emergency lighting in several stairways was not operational and may not be receiving maintenance contrary to the requirements of to Section 81 of EPAR21.	The City's inspection on 23 July 2025 found that all emergency lighting located above stairways was operational.
12.	An exit sign in the western garage was facing the ground and not clearly visible contrary to the requirements of Clause E4D5 of the NCC.	<p>The City's inspection on 23 July 2025 found that there were several defective exit signs in the car park and that there was a lack of exit signs in the open spaces located between each block.</p> <p>In response to this, the City issued a Proposed Notice of Intention to issue a Fire Safety Order on 4 September 2025 requiring exit signs to be installed throughout the building in accordance with the BCA and certification to be provided.</p>

Ref.	Issue	City response
C	Fire Resistance	
C1	Compartmentation and Separation	
13.	The door from the garage to the podium level near Unit 28-33 was held open, prohibiting the door from self-closing contrary to the requirements of Clause C4D6 of the NCC.	The City's inspection on 23 July 2025 found that the door from the garage to the podium level near Units 28-33 was closed.
D	General	
14	In the western garage there is an extension lead from a power point in the common area that extends into an enclosed residents parking space. Due to privacy screening for the residents parking area, FRNSW could not determine the use of the power lead within the residents parking area.	The City's inspection on 23 July 2025 did not find any power leads in the common areas of the building.

FRNSW recommends that Council:

- (a) Review items 1 to 14 of this report and conduct an inspection.
- (b) An additional external attack hydrant in the central part of the podium between the entrance from Crown Street and Cleveland Avenue.
- (c) A site plan and additional signage be installed in the central area of the podium level.
- (d) Address any other deficiencies identified on "the premises".

Council Investigation Officer Recommendations

- 6. As a result of site inspections undertaken by the Council investigation officer a Notice of Intention (NOI) for a fire safety order under the Act was issued to address the identified fire safety deficiencies. [Click or tap to enter a date..](#) After the NOI's representation period and consideration of any responses, a fire safety order may be issued to ensure adequate fire safety systems are in place throughout the building.
- 7. It is recommended that the Commissioner of FRNSW be informed of the City's decision.

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File Ref. No: FRN25/1736 - BFS25/3739 - 8000043065
TRIM Ref. No: D25/75104
Contact: Station Officer Kurt Ingle

3 July 2025

General Manager
City of Sydney
GPO Box 1591
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Email: council@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au

Attention: Manager Compliance/Fire Safety

Dear General Manager

**Re: INSPECTION REPORT
RESIDENTIAL DWELLINGS
547 CROWN STREET SURRY HILLS ("the premises")**

Fire and Rescue NSW (FRNSW) received correspondence on 6 June 2025 concerning the adequacy of the provision for fire safety in connection with 'the premises'.

The correspondence stated that:

- *no fire extinguishers or fire blankets within the complex (one small extinguisher locked away near bin room)*
- *common area foyers not interconnected and also not linked to fire control panel or a central building alarm system*
- *alarm system and detectors have failed to alert nearby residents to two active nearby unit fires on two occasions within the last 6 months*
- *fire control panel only services garage and heat detectors in roof*
- *anecdotally no fire break in roofs between units or within each block though heat detectors are present*
- *no hose reels covering podium level or units (only two hose reels on garage)*
- *only one attack hydrant on podium level of a large multi block complex that has almost no street frontage (well back from narrow Crown St and adjoins very*

Fire and Rescue NSW

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Community Safety Directorate
Fire Safety Compliance Unit

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Page 1 of 8

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narrow Cleveland Avenue) where town mains are known to FRNSW to be very low pressure

- *Adjoining dunny run/easement privately owned runs along the under-building garage - it has become overgrown, obstructed by fencing and vegetation and now features an illegally wired cool room that would obstruct critical FRNSW access and itself presents a fire hazard itself (noting bin fire in this easement mere meters away from where tenants store e-bikes in garages on 31 December 2024). This garage and dunny run were burnt to a crisp in an inferno in 2000 (before sprinklers were installed in the garage and dunny run cleared shortly afterwards)*
- *Recent City of Sydney records incorrectly state that the a sprinkler system covers the entire complex and that the entire complex is linked to the fire panel*
- *High levels of antisocial behaviour, mental health issues and drug activity from a small number of tenants and their guests add to the risk posed within this complex. Also contributes to hoarding and the repair of e-bikes in some garages and units.*
- *inadequate fire safety signage as to locations of existing infrastructure like the sole attack hydrant*
- *Firecorp and Land and Housing Corporation relying on certifying to minimal standards while overlooking the risk factors stated here and lived experience of tenants and FRNSW*
- *FRNSW lived experience of fighting recent fires in this complex*

Pursuant to Section 9.32(1) of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act), Authorised Fire Officers from the Fire Safety Compliance Unit of FRNSW inspected 'the premises' on 27 June 2025.

On behalf of the Commissioner of FRNSW, the comments in this report are provided under Section 9.32(4) and Schedule 5, Part 8, Section 17(1) of the EP&A Act.

The items listed in the comments of this report are based on the following limitations:

- A general overview of the building was obtained without using the development consent conditions or approved floor plans as a reference.
- Details of the Provisions for Fire Safety and Fire Fighting Equipment are limited to a visual inspection of the parts in the building accessed and the fire safety measures observed at the time.

COMMENTS

The following items were identified during the inspection:

Provisions for Fire Safety

Fire Hydrant System

1. The combined fire hydrant and sprinkler booster assembly was not provided with a fade resistant engraved sign stating the 'WORKING PRESSURE' and 'SYSTEM TESTED to' in kPa, contrary to the requirements of Clause 5.6.7 of Australian Standard (AS) 2419.1-1994.
2. FRNSW observed hose lay coverage greater than the requirements of AS 2419.1-1994 to the northern unit blocks from the single attack fire hydrant on the podium level. The attack fire hydrant is located in a position remote from the two northern residential unit blocks and is not visible to firefighters responding to a fire when entering the property from Crown Street.
3. Due to the constraints of access and size of the site, FRNSW is of the opinion that an additional external attack hydrant in the central part of the podium between the entrance from Crown Street and Cleveland Avenue (Image 1) would be beneficial to firefighters in the case of a fire emergency at the premises.



Figure 1

4. FRNSW recommend an additional site plan in a prominent position in the central part of the podium between the entrance from Crown Street and Cleveland Avenue, facing the Crown Street entrance. This will assist firefighters in locating the fire safety measure in the case of a fire emergency at the premises. The site plan is to include:
 - i. The layout of the buildings on the site with unit numbers.
 - ii. The external fire hydrants at the premises.
 - iii. The nearest street hydrant to the premises located in Crown Street and Cleveland Avenue.
 - iv. The location of the booster assembly.

5. FRNSW recommend adjacent to the site plan is two signs indicating the direction and distance to the external fire hydrant at the premises (See Figure 2).

One sign is to face the Crown Street entrance with the other sign facing the Cleveland Avenue entrance.



Figure 2

Automatic Fire Suppression System

6. The non-return valve within the sprinkler system valve assembly was not orientated to prevent reverse flow of water contrary to the requirements of Clause 3.1 and Clause 3.3.6 of AS 4794-2001. The valve will not close by gravity when under no-flow conditions.

Fire Hose Reels

7. Several hose reels in the carpark were not capable of immediate use as the nozzles were not stowed in the interlock device contrary to the requirements of Clause 2.2.7.2 of AS 1221 - 1997.

Smoke Detection and Alarm System (SDAS)

8. FRNSW observed smoke alarms throughout the common areas of the premises, excluding the carparks. FRNSW officers tested a random selection of smoke alarms. The smoke alarms are not interconnected to activate a building occupant warning system, contrary to the requirements Specification S20C7 of the National Construction Code 2022, Volume 1 Building Code of Australia (NCC).
9. FRNSW observed indicators of heat alarms within the ceiling space in some buildings. FRNSW are of the opinion that the heat alarms are not connected to Fire Detection and Control Indicating Equipment (FDCIE).

The indicator light was illuminated in the corridor of Units 9-14 when inspected without alarms operating indicating that maintenance was not being conducted contrary to the requirements of Section 81 of EPAR21.

10. A Smoke Detection and Alarm Systems (SDAS) is not provided to the enclosed basement carpark contrary to the requirements of Specification 20 of the NCC. FRNSW are of the opinion that the basement driveway should be considered an "other internal public space" and be provided with an SDAS in accordance with Specification 20 of the NCC.

FRNSW notes that the Guide to the NCC provides commentary on the areas of buildings that are considered to be "other internal public spaces" in a residential building. These areas include "public foyers, reception areas and enclosed carparks".

Access and Egress

11. The emergency lighting in several stairways was not operational and may not be receiving maintenance contrary to the requirements of to Section 81 of EPAR21.
12. An exit sign in the western garage was facing the ground and not clearly visible contrary to the requirements of Clause E4D5 of the NCC.

Fire Resistance

Compartmentation and Separation

13. The door from the garage to the podium level near Unit 28-33 was held open, prohibiting the door from self-closing contrary to the requirements of Clause C4D6 of the NCC.

General

14. In the western garage there is an extension lead from a power point in the common area that extends into an enclosed residents parking space. Due to privacy screening for the residents parking area, FRNSW could not determine the use of the power lead within the residents parking area.

FRNSW believes that there are inadequate provisions for fire safety within the building.

RECOMMENDATIONS

FRNSW recommends that Council:

- a. Review items 1 to 14 of this report and conduct an inspection.
- b. An additional external attack hydrant in the central part of the podium between the entrance from Crown Street and Cleveland Avenue.
- c. A site plan and additional signage in the central area of the podium level.
- d. Address any other deficiencies identified on "the premises".

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Please be advised that Schedule 5, Part 8, Section 17(2) requires any report or recommendation from the Commissioner of FRNSW to be tabled at a Council meeting. This matter is referred to Council as the appropriate regulatory authority. FRNSW awaits the Council's advice regarding its determination under Schedule 5, Part 8, Section 17 (4) of the EP&A Act.

Please do not hesitate to contact Station Officer Kurt Ingle of FRNSW's Fire Safety Compliance Unit at FireSafety@fire.nsw.gov.au or call (02) 9742 7434 if there are any questions or concerns about the above matters. Please refer to file reference FRN25/1736 - BFS25/3739 - 8000043065 regarding any correspondence concerning this matter.

Yours faithfully



Paul Scott
Team Leader
Fire Safety Compliance Unit

CC: Building Services - Fire Safety Maintenance
Homes NSW

By E-mail