



IDENTIFYING A HIGH-RISE / HIGHER-RISK BUILDING



What is a high-rise / higher-risk building?

The Building Safety Act (BSA) defines a 'higher-risk building' as a multi-occupancy residential building, that is:

- At least 18m in height; or
- 7 storeys.

Subsequent legislation and guidance has since been introduced to clearly define what is considered a storey, the specific points from which the building's height should be measured to and from, and the criteria for what constitutes a 'building' under the BSA regulations.

Definition of a building

Under the Building Safety Act a building can be either a single structure or multiple structures that are connected. Where multiple structures are connected, they may be considered independent sections from one another if:

1. It has its own entrance and exit

And either:

2. Has no access to another section
3. Has access only to another section that does not contain a residential unit

Each independent section would be classed as its own building.

Visit the [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) website here for more information about the criteria.

The information included in this document does not represent advice; rather, it is a summary of our understanding as at the time of publication.

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Definition of a storey

When determining if a building is 7 storeys, it is important to refer to the latest legislation to understand what is considered a storey.

- Storeys below ground level are disregarded

A storey is considered below ground level if any part of its ceiling is below the ground immediately adjacent to that part of the building.

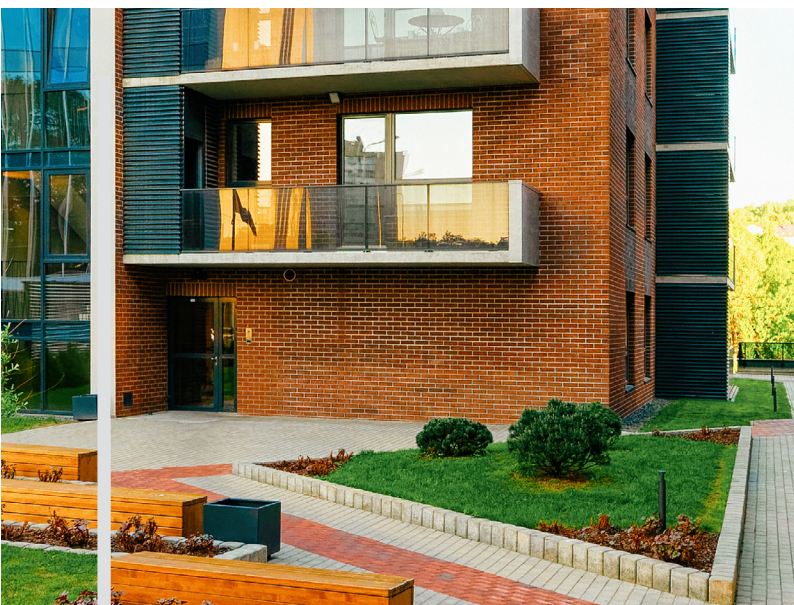
- Any rooftop storey that simply houses plant or machinery (such as a lift motor room) is disregarded
- Any mezzanine or gallery floor that is smaller than half the size of the largest storey in the building is disregarded

Measuring the height of the building

For the purpose of building safety, when determining if a building is above or below 18m in height, a specific way of calculating the height is provided under the Building Safety Act.

The measurement needs to be taken from ground level. This is either:

- The level of the ground immediately adjacent to the building
- If the ground level is not uniform, the measurement needs to be taken from the lowest level



It is unlikely that small spaces adjacent to the building, such as basement lightwells, would be regarded as the ground level from which to take measurements.

The measurement is taken up to the floor surface of the top most habitable floor of the building, again disregarding any potential rooftop plant or machinery rooms that may be at this level.

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