RamsDocs

Working at height (general) — Method Statement & Risk Assessment

General · Working at height (general) · Document ref RAMS-WAH-GENERAL-V1 · Rev Rev A · Issued 13 Jul 2026 · Library reviewed 6 Jun 2026

Sample document — example site details

This is a finished RamsDocs working-at-height RAMS for a fictional job, so you can see the output before you start. Build yours free at **ramsdocs.co.uk/builder** — fill in your site, answer the risk questions and download the PDF.

Project control details

SITE ADDRESS *
Unit 4, Brookfield Industrial Estate, Leeds LS12 6BD

PRINCIPAL CONTRACTOR / CLIENT *
Brookfield Construction Ltd

YOUR COMPANY (CONTRACTOR) *
Whelan Roofing & Access Ltd

COMPANY CONTACT (PHONE / EMAIL)
0113 496 0000 / office@whelanaccess.example

SITE CONTACT
D. Carter (site manager) — 07700 900000

WORK LOCATION ON SITE *
Warehouse roof, east elevation gutter line and Units 4–5 valley

ACCESS RESTRICTIONS
Deliveries via Gate 2 only; forklift route along east elevation closed off during works

NEARBY TRADES / PUBLIC INTERFACE
Cladding contractor at ground level on west elevation; no public access inside hoarding

START DATE *
14 Jul 2026

NORMAL WORKING HOURS
08:00–16:30 Mon–Fri

FIRST AIDER (NAME) *
J. Whelan

EMERGENCY ASSEMBLY POINT *
Car park muster point opposite Gate 2

NEAREST A&E
Leeds General Infirmary, Great George St, Leeds LS1 3EX

WELFARE ARRANGEMENTS
Shared site cabin with WC, water and drying room by Gate 1

NUMBER OF WORKERS
4

PREPARED BY *
J. Whelan

SITE SUPERVISOR / COMPETENT PERSON *
J. Whelan (CISRS, SMSTS)

OPERATIVES (NAME — ROLE — CARD/TICKET TYPE & NUMBER — EXPIRY; INCLUDE FACE-FIT/MEDICAL WHERE RELEVANT)
J. Whelan — supervisor — CISRS A/S 1234567 exp 03/2028; M. Price — roofer — CSCS 7654321 exp 11/2027; plus 2 operatives (harness-trained, records held)

REVIEW DATE *
21 Jul 2026

REVISION
Rev A

Scope of works

General work carried out at height on a construction or maintenance site, covering selection and justification of an access method, prevention of falls of people and objects, and management of the work zone below. This is a generic baseline applying the Work at Height Regulations 2005 hierarchy; task-specific access RAMS (scaffold, tower, MEWP, fragile roof) carry their own controls.

Work location: Warehouse roof, east elevation gutter line and Units 4–5 valley, Unit 4, Brookfield Industrial Estate, Leeds LS12 6BD

Risk rating matrix & tolerability

LIKELIHOOD ↓ · SEVERITY →	Negligible	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic
Almost certain	MEDIUM	HIGH	HIGH	VERY HIGH	VERY HIGH
Likely	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH	VERY HIGH	VERY HIGH
Possible	LOW	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	HIGH	HIGH
Unlikely	LOW	LOW	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	HIGH
Rare	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	MEDIUM

1–4 Low	5–9 Medium	10–15 High	16–25 Very high
Proceed where the stated controls are implemented and briefed.	Proceed after supervisor verification of the controls.	Hold work until additional controls are agreed and verified by the competent person.	Do not start. Re-plan the task to eliminate or substitute the hazard.

Risk assessment

HAZARD	INITIAL	RESIDUAL
Fall from height during installation or work at height	20	5
Access method unsuited to the task duration or working surface	12	4
Falling objects from working at height	12	4
Work at height in adverse weather or high wind	12	4
Ladder instability or unsafe access equipment	16	4
Contact with overhead electric lines or cables	10	5

Risk score = likelihood (1–5) × severity (1–5). Bands: 1–4 low · 5–9 medium · 10–15 high · 16–25 very high. Residual assumes the stated controls are in place.

ALARP JUSTIFICATION

Controls follow the hierarchy of control (eliminate, substitute, engineering controls, safe systems of work, then PPE). For Fall from height during installation or work at height; Access method unsuited to the task duration or working surface; Falling objects from working at height; Work at height in adverse weather or high wind; Ladder instability or unsafe access equipment; Contact with overhead electric lines or cables — the severity of the worst credible outcome cannot be reduced by on-site controls, so the stated controls reduce the likelihood of that outcome instead; residual risk is as low as is reasonably practicable (ALARP). Per the tolerability table, work on any hazard whose residual risk remains High or Very high must not start until additional controls are agreed and verified by the competent person.

Hazards & control measures

Fall from height during installation or work at height

20 Very high → 5 Medium

Who is at risk: Operatives, Other trades on site

- Avoid the work at height where the task can reasonably be done from ground level; record the avoidance decision before selecting an access method.
- Provide a working platform with double guardrail and toe board as the primary fall-prevention control. Use personal fall protection only where collective protection is not reasonably practicable.
- A competent person inspects the access equipment and edge protection at the start of each shift and after any event affecting stability. Prohibit access until edge protection is verified in place.
- Supervise the work and brief operatives on the protected working zone and the no-go areas at the open edge.

Basis: Work at Height Regulations 2005

Access method unsuited to the task duration or working surface

12 High → 4 Low

Who is at risk: Operatives

- Assess height, duration and the ground/surface condition before choosing the access equipment, working through the WAHR hierarchy.
- Record the justification for the method selected and why higher-order collective measures were or were not used.
- Have a competent person sign off the access selection before work starts; reselect if site conditions change.

Basis: Work at Height Regulations 2005

Falling objects from working at height

12 High → 4 Low

Who is at risk: Operatives, Other trades on site, Members of the public

- Establish and barrier an exclusion zone beneath the work area; position signage and keep people clear of the drop zone.
- Fit toe boards, brick guards or netting and contain loose materials on the platform.
- Tether hand tools and lower materials in a controlled way rather than dropping or throwing them.

Basis: Work at Height Regulations 2005

Work at height in adverse weather or high wind

12 High → 4 Low

Who is at risk: Operatives, Other trades on site

- Set a wind-speed stop limit appropriate to the access equipment in use and monitor the forecast before and during the shift.
- Stand work down and leave the platform safe when the wind, rain, ice or visibility limit is exceeded.
- Do not handle large boards, sheets or panels that act as sails in gusty conditions.

Ladder instability or unsafe access equipment

16 Very high → 4 Low

Who is at risk: Operatives

- Use ladders only where a risk assessment justifies them as low-risk, short-duration work with no reasonable platform alternative.
- Use EN 131 Professional / Class 1 equipment, set a leaning ladder at the 1:4 (75 degree) angle on firm level ground and secure it against slipping.
- Pre-use inspect the ladder; withdraw any with bent stiles, worn feet or damaged rungs.

Basis: Work at Height Regulations 2005

Contact with overhead electric lines or cables

10 High → 5 Medium

Who is at risk: Operatives

- Survey for overhead power lines before positioning access equipment and agree exclusion distances with the network operator where lines are present.
- Set physical goal posts or barriers to limit the reach of equipment toward the lines.
- Brief operatives on the minimum approach distance for the line voltage and keep conductive equipment clear.

Basis: Electricity at Work Regulations 1989

Method statement — sequence of works

1. HOLD POINT — before any permit-controlled operation starts: obtain the required permit(s) (Daily work-at-height access permit (equipment inspected, weather acceptable)) from the issuer named in this document, display the live permit at the workface and brief its conditions to the operatives. Work covered by a permit does not begin or resume without a live permit.
2. Plan and brief: confirm the work-at-height element cannot reasonably be avoided or done from the ground, and record the avoidance decision. Appoint a competent person to oversee access. Brief all operatives by toolbox talk on this method statement, the daily access permit, the weather stop limits and the stop-work trigger.
3. Apply the WAHR 2005 hierarchy when selecting equipment: avoid the work at height; then prevent falls with collective measures (working platforms, guardrails, toe boards); then mitigate with personal protection only where collective measures are not reasonably practicable. Record the justification for the chosen method against duration, height and the surface being worked.
4. Set up the access equipment designated for this task on the site plan — for roof and external elevation work: tower scaffold or MEWP (the equipment-specific pre-use checks in this document apply); ladders only for short-duration, light-work access per the ladder justification. The separate equipment task RAMS applies to erection of scaffolds.
5. Establish and barrier an exclusion zone beneath the work area. Position signage and keep other trades and the public clear of the drop zone.

6. Inspect access equipment, edge protection and the platform at the start of each shift and after any event that could affect stability. Record the inspection. Prohibit access until edge protection is verified in place.
7. Carry out the work with materials secured against falling, hand tools tethered or contained, and loads lowered rather than dropped or thrown where there is anyone below.
8. Monitor the weather: check the forecast and conditions before and during the shift. Stand the job down and leave the platform safe on the supervisor's instruction when the wind-speed or weather stop limit is reached.
9. At the end of the shift leave the platform safe, materials secured against wind and the exclusion zone reinstated where work is incomplete.
10. Debrief and record: complete inspection and permit records, report near-misses or dropped-object events, and update the risk assessment and method statement if conditions changed during the works.

Personal protective equipment

- Safety helmet with chin strap (EN 397)
- Class 2/3 hi-vis clothing where there is plant or traffic movement
- Non-slip safety footwear (EN ISO 20345)
- Gloves appropriate to the materials being handled

Permits, substances & competence

Permits required: Daily work-at-height access permit (equipment inspected, weather acceptable)

Substances (COSHH): No hazardous substances are used or generated by this task as planned. If any substance is introduced (adhesives, sealants, fuels, significant dust), work on the affected activity stops until a COSHH assessment for that substance is completed and briefed.

- Operatives briefed on the WAHR 2005 hierarchy and this method statement
- Nominated competent person to select and inspect the access equipment
- Supervisor with authority to stop work in adverse weather

Operative competence record: J. Whelan — supervisor — CISRS A/S 1234567 exp 03/2028; M. Price — roofer — CSCS 7654321 exp 11/2027; plus 2 operatives (harness-trained, records held)

Emergency & rescue arrangements

EMERGENCY SERVICES
999 — Fire / Police / Ambulance

ADDRESS TO GIVE 999
Unit 4, Brookfield Industrial Estate, Leeds LS12 6BD

FIRST AIDER
J. Whelan

ASSEMBLY POINT
Car park muster point opposite Gate 2

NEAREST A&E
Leeds General Infirmary, Great George St, Leeds LS1 3EX

Rescue plan: for harness/fall-arrest scenarios, rescue is planned before work starts and never relies on the fire service as the primary method. The kit on site is a pre-rigged rescue/descent device (e.g. retrievable-type rescue kit) kept at the access point, and the supervisor named in this document is trained in its use and present whenever harness work is underway.

Method: raise the alarm, the trained rescuer attaches the rescue device to the casualty's harness from a safe position, lowers (or raises) the casualty to a safe level, and first aid is given immediately on recovery — target recovery inside 10 minutes to limit suspension intolerance. If the casualty is conscious they are instructed to move their legs against the leg loops while suspended. After any fall arrest, the harness, lanyard and anchor are quarantined and not reused until inspected by a competent person.

Fall from height: do not move a fallen casualty unless they are in further danger. Call 999, give first aid, keep them warm and reassured. Preserve the scene and report.

Person suspended in a harness: implement the rescue plan immediately to relieve suspension before trauma sets in; do not wait for the emergency services.

Dropped-object strike: stop work above, attend to the casualty, call 999 if needed and barrier the area until the cause is made safe.

Overhead line contact: keep clear of the equipment and anyone in contact with it, call 999 and the network operator emergency line, and keep a 15 m exclusion until the operator confirms isolation.

First aid and reporting: a named first aider attends; record all incidents and report RIDDOR-reportable injuries and dangerous occurrences to the HSE without delay.

Legislation & guidance

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015
- Work at Height Regulations 2005
- Electricity at Work Regulations 1989

Site plan sketch

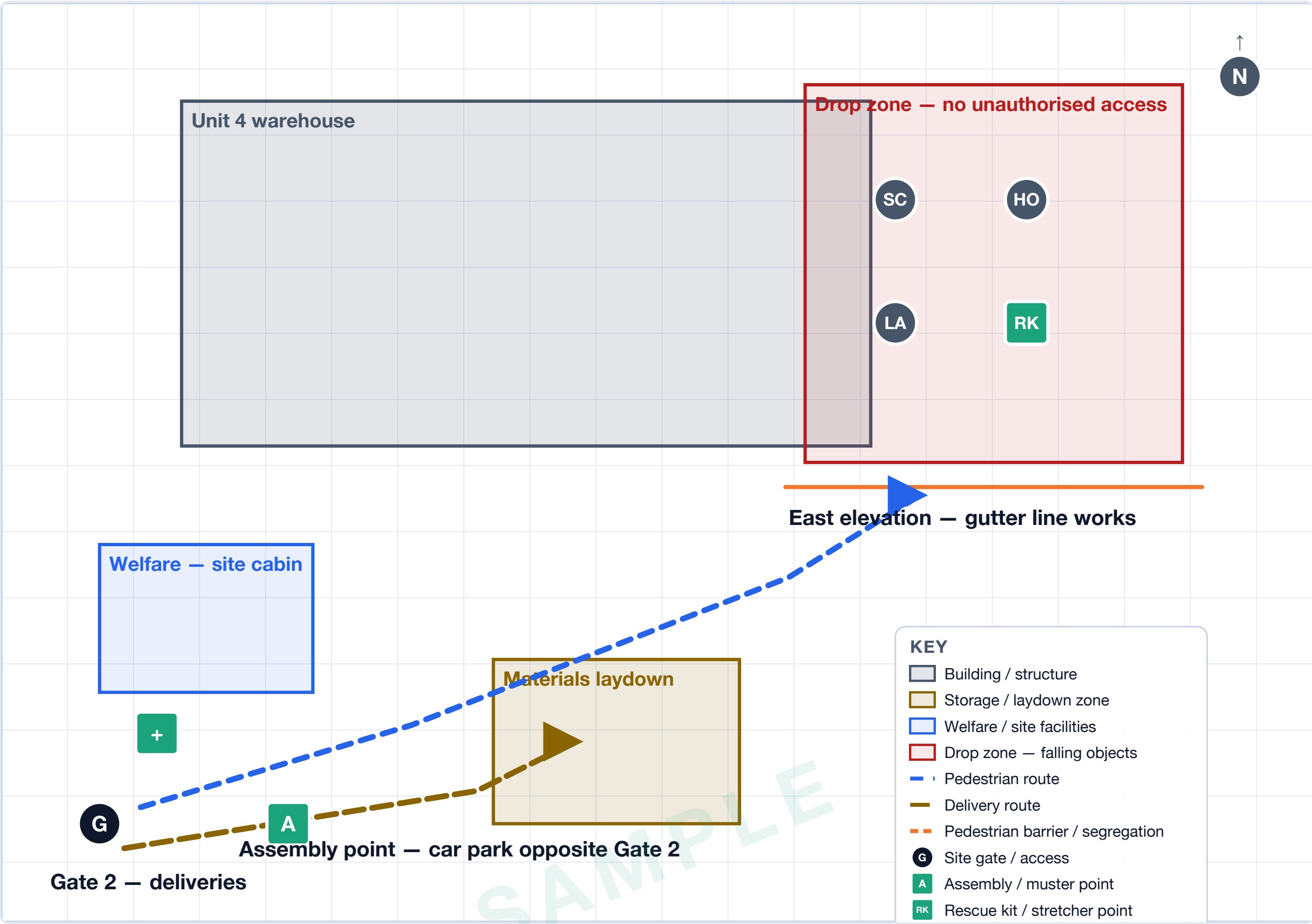

Diagram only — not to scale. Verify locations on site before relying on this plan.

Briefing & sign-off

PREPARED BY
J. Whelan
Signature: ____________________

SITE SUPERVISOR / COMPETENT PERSON
J. Whelan (CISRS, SMSTS)
Signature: ____________________

REVIEW DATE
21 Jul 2026
Signature: ____________________

All operatives must be briefed on this RAMS before work starts and sign below to confirm they understand it. Anyone joining the task later is briefed and signs before starting work; the supervisor re-briefs the team if the method, conditions or this document change.

NAME	SIGNATURE	DATE
J. Whelan		
M. Price		
plus 2 operatives		