

JOB REF: xxxxxxxxxxxxxx

# SPECIFIC DEFECTS REPORT

Relating to main roof problems,  
xxxxxxxxxxxx,  
Islington, N7 xxx



FOR

**Mr xxxxxxxx**

Prepared by:

xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

INDEPENDENT CHARTERED SURVEYORS

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## **INTRODUCTION AND INSTRUCTION**

We have been instructed by xxxxxxx to prepare an independent report on the problems with the dampness from the roof.

We have carried out a visual inspection (non-evasive) of the property on xxxxxxx

The weather was mild at the time of the inspection.

We are Independent Chartered Building Surveyors and professional members of:-

The Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS)  
and  
The Independent Surveyors and Valuers Association (ISVA).

Report prepared by:

xxxxxxx  
BSc MSc FBEEng MRICS, MCIQB  
Chartered Building Surveyor

The work has been carried out as per our standard Terms and Conditions of Contract which have been emailed to you as part of the confirmation of our instructions. If you would like further clarification please do not hesitate to contact us.

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## **SYNOPSIS**

We are advised by xxxxxxx that problems have arisen during the winter of 2011 after work was carried out to the roof in the summer of 2011. We have been asked to comment on the condition of the main roof and the dampness and also to make recommendations associated with this. We would advise that we have spoken to the owner of xxxxxxxxxx but not the occupants and we have not spoken to the owners or occupants of the neighbouring properties.

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## EXTERNAL PHOTOS



Front of the property



Rear of the property



Flat view -front



General view

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Summaries are not ideal as they try to précis often quite complex subjects into a few paragraphs. Here we give a summary of the problem and our various suggestions on how to solve it and all costs it relates to.

### 1.0) Roof

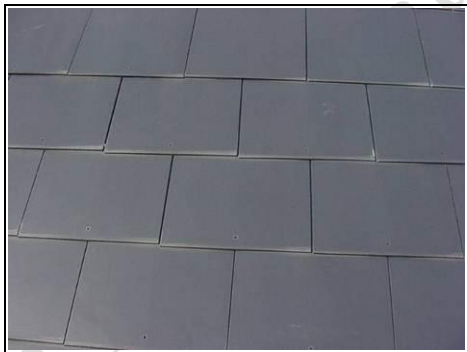
The main roof is pitched and clad with a manmade slate with a parapet wall to the front and small parapet walls to either side within the valley gutter.



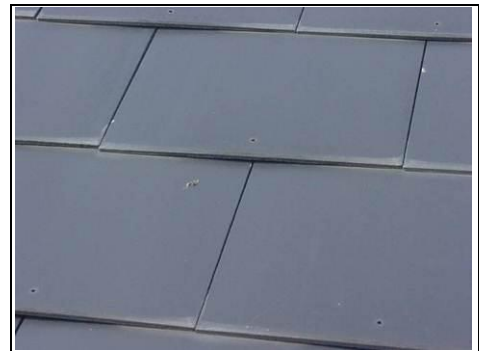
#### 1.1) Manmade slates not fixed properly.

The manmade slates are not fixed properly to the rear of the property and they look to have been masticed into place. The life of this area is limited as they should be mechanically fixed with metal pins as they are to the front of the roof.

The slates on the main roof look to have been masticed in place



Close up of slates with no metal pins holding them on



Close up of slates

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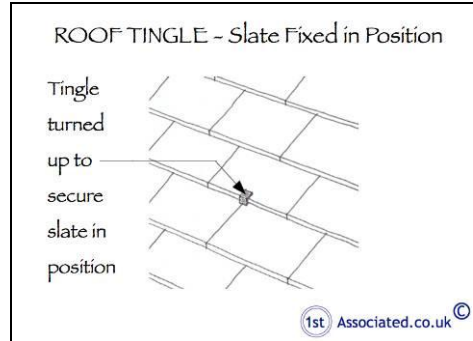
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We do not believe the main problem is due to the slates being wrongly put on the roof but we do believe in the long term that they will become unsecured. This will allow rainwater in.



How the slates should be fixed with a nail(or tingle) as they are to the front.

Tingle

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**2.0) Valley Gutters and parapet walls.**

**2.1) Valley gutter/box gutter - left hand side**

This has a mineral felt finish which is not ideal. There is ponding indicating that the water does not run towards the outlet.



Valley gutter to the left hand side (all directions given as you face the property). Ponding is visible on it.



Flashband repairs to the rear of the left hand valley gutter have come away

**2.2) Valley gutter - right hand side**

This has a mineral felt finish and we can see that the flashing has come away completely to the rear section.



Valley gutter to the right hand side (all directions given as you face the property). This was difficult to view.



Ponding visible



Felt flashing that is coming away. Lead should have been used.

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Lack of any decent flashing at all to the middle and front of the right hand valley gutter



Flashing not fitted correctly to the front right hand side

### 2.3) Left hand valley gutter - neighbours side



This could affect you as it is in poor condition with the felt becoming un-bonded



Bitumen paint used



Many slates have been damaged



Bitumen repair.  
Also note the parapet wall is letting in water which is why the plants are growing from it

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## 2.4) Front parapet wall

The flashings appear defective as they are letting in water



Flashing to the front that's not bedded properly



The felt does not lap underneath the slates correctly. We would expect this to lap by at least two slates which is typically half a metre. In this case it is barely 100mm.

## 2.5) Parapet walls (left and right hand side)

These need to be sealed as the soft red brick that forms the walls draws in water similar to that of a sponge or blotting paper.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** We would recommend that the detailing, where the roof meets the parapet walls to the front and side, is carried out in lead.

We would also recommend lifting the manmade slate to check the protective underlayer has been carried out in three courses. We often find this has not been carried out and when a backup of water or snow occurs then water will get underneath it (we can see staining on the rafter feet from within the roof indicating this is the case).



The parapet wall that is allowing water in. This explains the plant growing out of it. This needs to be made watertight

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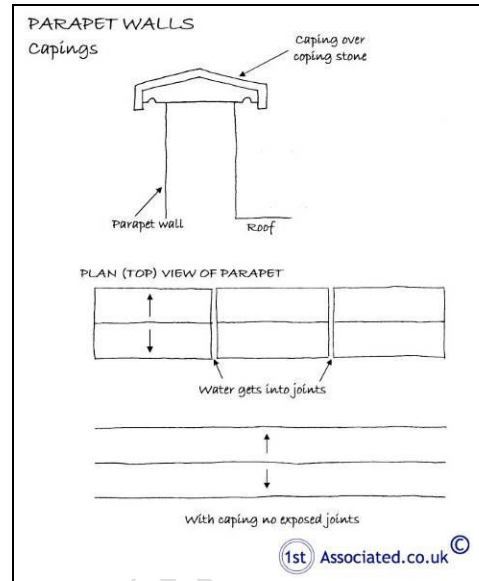
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## 2.6) Parapet wall capping

We feel for a long term water tight building then you need to look at capping the parapet walls or alternatively regularly tarring them as has been carried out in the past.



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### 3.0) Access hatch

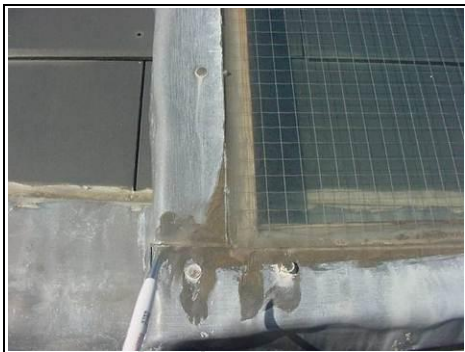
The access hatch is formed in lead and is purpose made as opposed to manufactured. We noted that there was no stop to hold and guide the roof light in place. It is literally held on by the lead.



Split lead to the access area



Damage to the lead



Mastic sealing to access area



There is a lack of a stop on it.  
This means the weight rests on the lead

**ACTION REQUIRED:** We would recommend replacement of the roof light with a purpose made double glazed unit.

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#### 4.0) Chimneys

You need to check the flashings to the base of the chimney as the right hand chimney looks to have felt flashing repairs.

Please note we did not get onto the right hand side as we were not happy to walk on the slates as we thought we may break them.



The chimney has felt flashing around it



Felt on top of felt around the chimney



Chimney has been removed with a felt capping in place rather than a paving slab or concrete.

As discussed we recommend that if you do want to sell the flat then this is something that you negotiate a discount on as to carry out the work is very awkward as it's high level and may even require scaffolding.

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### 5.0) Gable End

To the rear of the property is the gable end. We are concerned that wind driven rain may get underneath this. We would be happier for it to be filled in cement and also for it to have a lead detail.



Gable end showing that there should be mortar or an end cap to the roof



Close up of flashing put on incorrectly



This is how it should be detailed. Plastic versions are also available



Vegetation growing from the top of the gable

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## 6.0) Internal Dampness

Internally we obtained damp meter readings over and above those we would typically find. Once the cause has been resolved, please see the roof section, you then need to deal with the effect which is the dampness and the staining. At present we believe this will just involve re-painting. If the staining gets worse then deterioration of the plaster may also occur.

### 6.1) Paint

The painting of this type of property needs to be carried out with a non-plastic/ acrylic paint i.e. an emulsion that is water based and allows the property to breathe and dry out.

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## **Recommendations**

As we understand from our discussions you feel there is little hope of the original contractors returning and also difficulties in discussing the work with the adjoining neighbour who organised the contractors.

We would say that if you want a relatively quick resolution and sale of the flat (subject of course to market forces) then we would recommend this work is carried out as soon as possible and particularly before the winter when most good roofers would not want to be working on this type of roof.

We would recommend renewing all of the flashings, ensuring that they are lead and checking that they work. We would also recommend ideally lining the valley gutter with lead. However if you do wish to sell, in the short term, another coat of mineral felt (high performance felt with elastomeric) would help the situation as long as it is suitably lapped underneath the slates. Note some contractors will give an insurance backed guarantee on this type of work.

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# PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD OF THE INTERNAL DAMPNES

## Lounge/kitchen area

### Right hand wall



Right hand wall



Gann meter reading of 32



Reading of 29



Hairline crack with reading of 28

### Front wall



Reading of 44



Reading of 32

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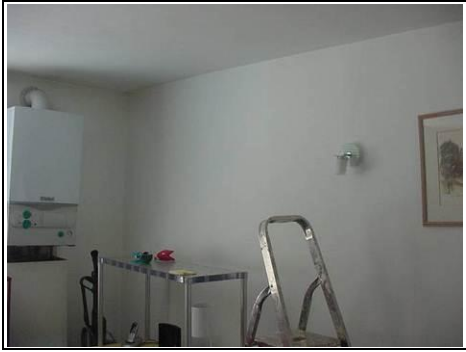
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**Left hand wall**



Left hand wall



Left hand wall



Reading of 70



Reading of 59



Reading of 79



Reading of 82

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## Rear bedroom

### Right hand wall



Rear bedroom



Dampness in the corner of the rear bedroom



Damp meter reading of 77



More typical reading of 32



The staining looks to be dependent upon the weather as the reading is currently 25 in some areas meaning that it is drying out



Meter reading of 98

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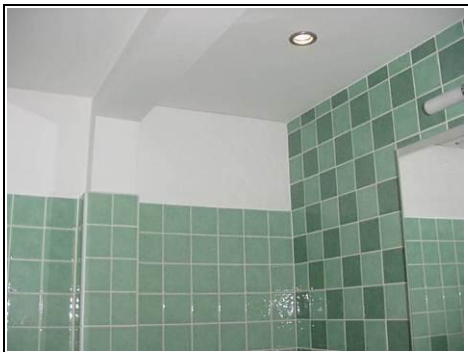
## Bathroom



Internal bathroom



No problems at high level



No staining



Reading of 33 on the Gann meter.  
This is acceptable but the hairline  
cracking does suggest something  
has occurred



Reading of 33 on the Gann meter



Taking readings

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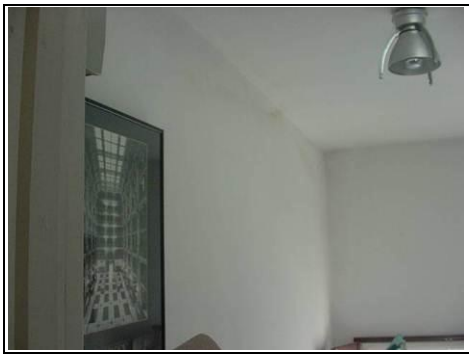
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## Landing



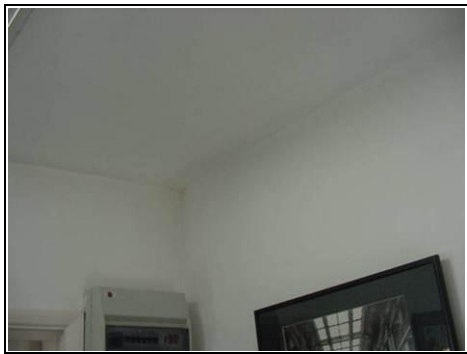
General view of the landing



Access onto the roof



Reading of 85 – left hand wall



Dampness in the landing



Crack above door

## Roof space



Staining on the timber that is typical from what you see from a leaking valley gutter



General view of the roof



Dampness promotes woodworm. There looks to be old woodworm

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## SURVEY FINDINGS

A brief summary of what was found.

1. From our visual external inspection we noted:

i. Front Wall

Our dampness meter indicates that dampness is getting in the parapet detail and roof.

ii. Rear Wall

There are gaps in the verge between the tiles and the wall which will allow wind driven rain in. We recommend mortar filling these gaps or putting a lead detailing similar to the one on the adjoining left hand side property.

2. From our visual internal inspection we noted

i. Lounge / kitchen area - front

Staining to the right hand wall and minor deterioration to the plaster and paint.

ii. Internal Bathroom – right

No staining

iii. Bedroom - rear

Staining to the right hand wall

iv. Landing

Staining to the left hand side

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Note: we have not moved furniture or fixtures and fittings.  
The full areas inspected are identified within the inspection part of the report and this should show anything in this section

### 3. Resistance Damp Meter Readings

Room	Readings Obtained	Typical Readings
Lounge /kitchen area		We would expect readings in the 40 - 60's so this does show excessive water.
Right wall	20's – 70's	
Front wall	40's – 70's	
Left hand wall	60's – 80's	
Bathroom	30's – 40's	
Rear bedroom	Late 30's – 90's	
Stairs / landing area		
Left hand wall	50's – 80's	

4. From our visual inspection within the roof we noted staining to the rafter feet within the property indicating that dampness is coming in through the valley gutters. Our view was limited by being carried out by torchlight.

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## SUMMARY UPON REFLECTION

The Summary Upon Reflection is a second summary so to speak, which is carried out when we are doing the second or third draft a few days after the initial survey when we have had time to reflect upon our thoughts on the property. We would add the following in this instance:

From the information that you provided you clearly have a good case. Unfortunately the poor quality of work means that you have to start again in some instances such as the re-slating of the roof. In other areas we feel there are far better techniques available rather than the patching techniques that have been carried out.

Our long term view would be to put lead valley gutters in and a more short term view would be to use a high performance felt. Most importantly you do need to strip back to the basics and carry out the detailing properly.

If you would like any further advice on any of the issues discussed or indeed any that have not been discussed! Please do not hesitate to contact us on 0800 298 5424.

XXXXXXXXXXXX

BSc MSc FBEng Chartered Building Surveyor

For and on Behalf of

XXXXXXXXXXXX

Independent Chartered Surveyors

**This Report is dated: xxxxxxxxxxxx**

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## APPENDICES

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## CONSTRUCTION SUMMARY

### External

Chimneys:	Brick chimney
Main Roof:	Pitched, clad with manmade slate
Gutters and Downpipes:	Cast Iron and Plastic
Soil and Vent Pipe:	Cast Iron and Plastic (assumed)
Walls:	Flemish Bond brickwork(assumed)
External Detailing:	Combination of single and double glazed windows(assumed)
Foundations:	Not inspected



### Internal

Ceilings:	Lath and plaster / plasterboard (assumed).
Walls:	Predominantly solid( assumed)
Floors: Top floor:	Joist and floor boards (assumed)

We have used the term ‘assumed’ as we have not opened up the structure.

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**Time Line – A brief history of the structure**

DATE	DESCRIPTION
2006	Property Purchased
2007	Dampness first noted on the left hand interior wall (all directions given as you face the property) from the hallway to the lounge.
2008	Repairs carried out (tar).
2011 - Summer	Scaffolding put up. Roof work carried out
2011- Winter	Leaking from roof, right hand side of rear bedroom wall (all directions given as you face the property) and from the new skylight.
2012	Emergency repairs carried out

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## INSPECTION

Our inspection has been specifically related to the dampness issues detailed below:

### Visual Inspection

Our inspection has taken the format of a visual inspection:

1. External of the property of the
  - i. Front elevation
  - ii. Rear elevation (there are no side elevations as this is a mid-terraced property)
  - iii. On the roof



Front view

We have had the benefit of a x 16 lens on a digital camera

2. Internal of the property

We have viewed the:

- i. Lounge / kitchen area - front
  - ii. Internal bathroom - right
  - iii. Bedroom - rear
  - iv. Landing
3. Roof space, not inspected in detail.
  4. We have had the benefit of talking to the owner (albeit that they are no longer the occupier as the property is rented out).
  5. We have not had the benefit of talking to the occupiers.

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6. We have not had the benefit of talking to the owners or occupiers of the neighbouring properties.
7. We have utilised a Gann resistance meter to take resistance readings.

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## **Estimates of Building Costs**

Where we have offered an estimate of building costs please remember we are not experts in this area. We always recommend you obtain quotations for the large jobs (preferably three quotes). The cost of building work has many variables such as the cost of labour and estimates can of course vary from area to area when giving a general indication of costs. For unskilled labour we currently use between £75 and £100 per day (the higher costs in the city areas) and for tradesmen we use between £100 and £200 per day for an accredited, qualified, skilled tradesman. Other variations include the quality of materials used and how the work is carried out, for example off ladders or from scaffold.

If you obtain builders estimates that vary widely, we would advise the work is probably difficult or open to various interpretations and we would recommend a specification is prepared. It would usually be best to have work supervised if it is complex, both of which we can do if so required.

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# **LIMITATIONS**

## **Specific Defects Report**

### **1. Conditions of Engagement**

Please note: references to the masculine include, where appropriate, the feminine.

Subject to express agreement to the contrary (which in this particular case has been none) and any agreed amendments/additions (of which in this particular case there have been none), the terms on which the Surveyor will undertake the Specific Defects Report are set out below.

Based upon a visual inspection as defined below the Surveyor will advise the Client by means of a written report as to his opinion of the visible condition and state of repair of the specific problem or problems only. In this instance it relates to dampness in the roof area.

### **2. The Inspection**

#### **a) Accessibility and Voids**

The Surveyor will base this report on a visual inspection and accordingly its scope is limited. It does not include an inspection of those areas, which are covered, unexposed or inaccessible. Our visual inspection will relate to the specific defects shown to us only.

#### **b) Floors**

We have not opened up the floor structure.

#### **c) Roofs**

We have inspected the roof around the access area but we have not carried out a detailed inspection within the roof as this has not been the main cause of concern.

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d) Boundaries, Grounds and Outbuildings

The inspection will not include boundaries, grounds and outbuildings unless specifically stated (none stated).

e) Services

No services inspected.

f) Areas not inspected

The Surveyor will have only inspected those areas identified within the report. His report will be based upon possible or probable defects based upon what he has seen together with his knowledge of that type of structure. If you feel that any further areas need inspection then please advise us immediately.

g) Specific Defects Report

As this is a report upon a Specific Defect we do not offer any comment or guidance upon reactive maintenance and/or planned or routine maintenance items.

h) Whilst we have used reasonable skill and care in preparing this report, it should be appreciated that the Chartered Surveyors cannot offer any guarantee that the property will be free from future defects or that existing defects will not suffer from further deterioration;

**3. Deleterious and Hazardous materials**

a) Unless otherwise expressly stated in the Report, the Surveyor will assume that no deleterious or hazardous materials or techniques have been used in the construction of the property. However the Surveyor will advise in the report if in his view there is a likelihood that high alumina cement (HAC) concrete has been used in the construction and that in such cases specific enquiries should be made or tests carried out by a specialist.

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#### 4. Contamination

The Surveyor will not comment upon the existence of contamination as this can only be established by appropriate specialists. Where, from his local knowledge or the inspection he considers that contamination might be a problem he should advise as to the importance of obtaining a report from an appropriate specialist.

#### 5. Consents, Approvals and Searches

- a) The Surveyor will assume that the property is not subject to any unusual or especially onerous restrictions or covenants which apply to the structure or affect the reasonable enjoyment of the property.
- b) The Surveyor will assume that all bye-laws, Building Regulations and other consents required have been obtained. In the case of new buildings and alterations and extensions, which require statutory consents or approval the Surveyor will not verify whether, such consents have been obtained. Any enquiries should be made by the Client or his legal advisers.

Drawings and specifications will not be inspected by the Surveyor. It is the Clients responsibility to forward any drawings and specifications that he has or knows the whereabouts of to us to include information in our report. If these are not forthcoming we will make our best assumptions based upon the information available.

- c) The Surveyor will assume that the property is unaffected by any matters which would be revealed by a Local Search and replies to the usual enquiries or by a Statutory Notice and that neither the property nor its condition its use or intended use is or will be unlawful.

#### 6. Fees and Expenses

The Client will pay the Surveyor the agreed fee for the Report and any expressly agreed disbursements in addition.

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## 7. Restrictions on Disclosures

- a) This report is for the sole use of the Client in connection with the property and is limited to the current brief. No responsibility is accepted by the Chartered Surveyors if used outside these terms.
- b) Should any disputes arise they will be dealt with and settled under English law;
- c) This report does not fall under the Third Parties Rights Act.

## 8. Safe Working Practices

The Surveyor will follow the guidance given in Surveying Safely issued by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS).

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