

RESIDENTIAL BUILDING SURVEY

OF

Weybridge, Surrey KT13



FOR

Mr P

Prepared by:

INDEPENDENT CHARTERED SURVEYORS

Marketing by:

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INTRODUCTION

Firstly, may we thank you for your instructions; we have now undertaken a Building Survey (formerly known as a Structural Survey) of the aforementioned property.

The Building Survey takes the following format; there is an introductory section (which you are currently reading), which includes a synopsis of the building, and a summary of our findings.

We then go through a detailed examination of the property starting with the external areas working from the top of the property down, followed by the internal areas and the buildings services. We conclude with the section for your Legal Advisor and also attach some general information on the property market.

We are aware that a report of this size is somewhat daunting and almost off-putting to the reader because of this. We would stress that the purchase of a property is usually one of the largest financial outlays made (particularly when you consider the interest you pay as well).

We recommend that you set aside time to read the report in full, consider the comments, make notes of any areas which you wish to discuss further and phone us.

We obviously expect you to read the entire report but we would suggest that you initially look at the summary, which refers to various sections in the report, which we recommend you read first so that you get a general feel for the way the report is written.

As part of our service we are more than happy to talk through the survey as many times as you wish until you are completely happy to make a decision. Ultimately, the decision to purchase the property is yours but we will do our best to offer advice to make the decision as easy as possible.

REPORT FORMAT

To help you understand our Report we utilise various techniques and different styles and types of text, these are as follows:

GENERAL/HISTORICAL INFORMATION

This has been given in the survey where it is considered it will aid understanding of the issues, or be of interest. This is shown in "italics" for clarity.

TECHNICAL TERMS DEFINED

Throughout the Report, we have endeavoured to define any technical terms used. This is shown in "Courier New" typeface for clarity.

A PICTURE IS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS



We utilise photographs and sketches to illustrate issues or features. In some photographs a pencil has been used to highlight a specific area. The sketches are not 100% technically accurate; we certainly would not expect you to carry out work based upon the sketches alone.

ORIENTATION

Any reference to left or right is taken from the front of the property, including observations to the rear, which you may not be able to physically see from the front of the property.

ACTION REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

We have used the term **ACTION REQUIRED** where we believe that there are items that you should carry out action upon or negotiate upon prior to purchasing the property.

Where a problem is identified, we will do our best to offer a solution. However, with most building issues, there are usually many ways to resolve them dependent upon cost, time available and the length of time you wish the repair/replacement to last.

SYNOPSIS

SITUATION AND DESCRIPTION

This is a two-storey much extended and altered end of terrace property.

There is a yard area to the front and a good sized walled garden to the rear with mature trees.

We believe that the property was originally built in the late Georgian / early Victorian era. If the exact age of the property interests you your Legal Advisor may be able to find out more information from the Deeds.

Putting Life into Perspective!

Some of the things that were happening around the time the property was built:

1851	First World Exhibition held in London
1854	Florence Nightingale pioneers modern nursing in the Crimea
1859	Charles Darwin proposes the Theory of Evolution
1863	The Opening of London Underground
1878	Electric Street Lights are installed in London
1896	First modern Olympic Games (Athens)

EXTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS



Front Elevation



Right Hand View



Rear Elevation

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ACCOMMODATION AND FACILITIES

Ground Floor

The ground floor accommodation consists of:

- Through Lounge
- Study Area
- Kitchen with Breakfast Area
- Second Reception Room to the Rear

First Floor

The first floor accommodation consists of:

- Front Bedroom
- Rear Bedroom
- Bathroom
- Rear Bedroom with En Suite Shower Room

Outside Areas

From what we could see in the area we believe parking is limited. Everyone appears to park on the double yellow lines. We spoke to the owners about this and were advised that this was normal practice and there had been discussions about the double yellow lines being taken away.

INTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS

The following photos are of the internal of the property to help you recall what it looked like and the general ambience (or lack of). We have not necessarily taken photographs of each and every room.

Ground Floor



Lounge looking towards the Front



Lounge looking towards the Rear



Kitchen



Rear Reception Room



Study



Utility Room and Cloakroom

First Floor



Rear Left Hand Bedroom



Bathroom



Rear Right Hand Bedroom



Shower Room



Front Main Bedroom

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SUMMARY OF CONSTRUCTION

EXTERNAL

Chimneys:	Two brick chimneys
Roofs:	A pitched main roof, clad with Roman tiles. A high level and low level flat roof
Gutters and Downpipes:	Plastic
Soil and Vent Pipe:	Cast Iron and Plastic
Walls:	Predominantly to the front of the property brickwork in a Flemish bond construction and painted render to the side and rear (assumed)
External Joinery:	A mixture of casement and sliding sash painted timber single glazed windows and painted fascia and soffit boards

INTERNAL

Ceilings:	Lath and plaster, although some may have been replaced with plasterboard during the alterations (assumed)
Walls:	A mixture of studwork and boarding walls (assumed)
Floors:	Ground Floor: A suspended timber floor (assumed). First Floor: Joist and floorboards (assumed)

SERVICES

We are advised (by the owner) that the property has a mains water supply, mains drainage, electricity and gas (assumed).

The above terms are explained in full in the main body of the Report. We have used the term 'assumed' as we have not opened up the structure.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Summaries are dangerous as they try to précis often quite complex subjects into a few paragraphs. This is particularly so in a summary about someone's future home when we are trying to second-guess what their priorities are, so it is important the Report is read in full.

It is inevitable with a report on a building of this nature that some of the issues we have focussed in on you may dismiss as irrelevant and some of the areas that we have decided are part of the 'character' of this property you may think are very important. We have taken in the region of 50 plus photographs during the course of this survey and many pages of notes, so if an issue has not been discussed that you are interested in/concerned about, please phone and talk to us before you purchase the property (or indeed commit to purchasing the property), as we will more than likely have noted it and be able to comment upon it. If we have not we will happily go back.

Generally we found the property to be in average condition considering its age, type and style. We have divided the Executive Summary into 'The Good', 'The Bad' and 'The Ugly', to help distinguish what in our mind are the main issues.

The Good

Survey reports often are full of only the faults and general 'doom and gloom', so we thought we would start with some positive comments on the property!

- Generally we find that where a house has been extended and altered the layout is often poor, however in this case we feel the layout works well, all things considered.
- The property has a good sized rear garden.
- The property has good natural light, for example in the kitchen where a roof window has been used very well.
- The property is nicely presented – it will look very different once the existing furniture and fittings are removed.

We are sure you can think of other things to add to this list.

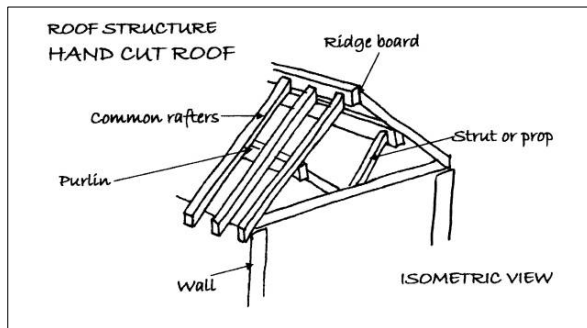
The Bad

Problems / issues raised in the 'bad' section are usually solvable, but often need negotiation upon. However, a large number of them may sometimes put us off the property.

We suggest that the first five items below are carried out immediately, before the baby arrives and before you fill the Roof Space / Attic:

1) Roof Space / Attic

The roof space requires ventilation and the purlin close to the firewall needs additional support.



Close up of the purlin to the front of the property that needs a prop.

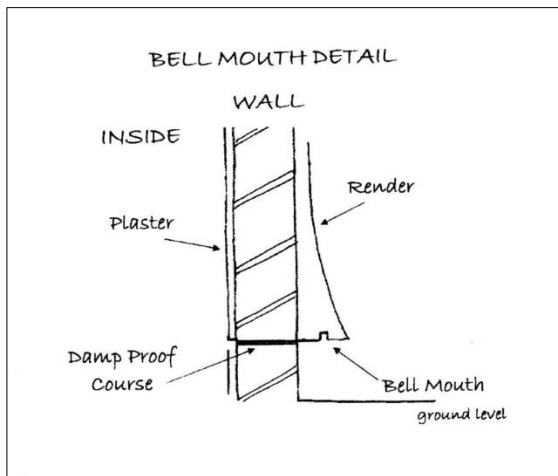
ACTION REQUIRED: You should take the opportunity whilst the roof is empty to add vents to help reduce the condensation in the roof. You should also add props to the purlins close to the firewall to ensure these are safely positioned.

ANTICIPATED COST: £250 - £1,000. We would also take the opportunity whilst the roof is empty to lift some of the insulation and carry out a further check for active woodworm.

Please see the Roof Structure Section of this Report.

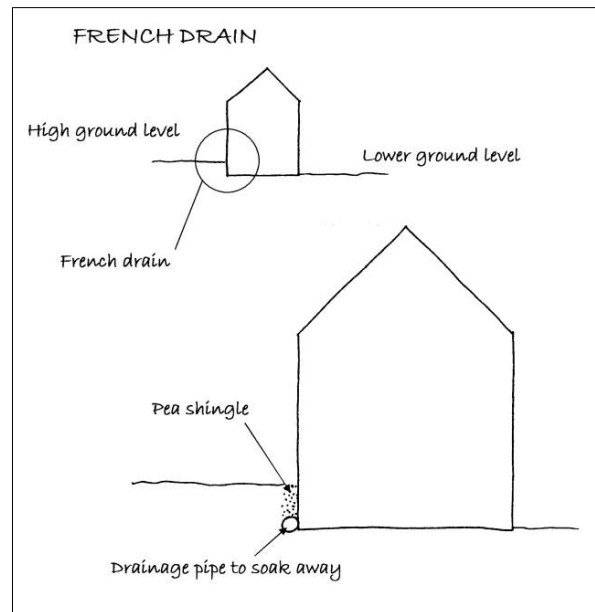
2) Dampness

Dampness was found in the property; generally we would classify this as 'minor', however to the rear reception roof that faces the garden we feel it is unacceptably high. We believe that it is damp for a combination of reasons, which includes the poor quality of rendering without a bell-mouth and also ideally there should be a French gulley running around the perimeter of the property.



Bell-Mouths Defined

A bell-mouth is a curve at the base of a wall which throws the water away from the structure therefore preventing dampness.



ACTION REQUIRED: We recommend that a BWPDA (British Wood Preserving and Damp Proofing Association) approved contractor offers a quotation for the damp proofing work. They will nearly always recommend inserting a damp proof course but you do need to insist that they need to quote for the French gulley and the bell-mouth to the render in the first instance. We recommend that they carry out a full quote on the entire house as it may be more economical to get the entire house carried out and thereby having a guarantee for future years when you come to sell the property.

ANTICIPATED COST: Quotations will be required but we would expect in the many thousands of pounds as they usually recommend that the property is re-plastered. We would budget for £5,000 - £10,000.

Please see the Dampness Section of this Report.

3) Two Large Flat Roofs

Having given this due thought and consideration it is probably also worth carrying out re-roofing work to the high and low level flat roofs and then these jobs can be completely forgotten about.

The lower roof, which was the only one that was accessed, has some areas of blistering and the high level roof has an awkward central valley drainage gutter.



Close up of the blistering to the felt to the lower level rear flat roof.



High Level Flat Roof
Awkward central drainage valley

ACTION REQUIRED: Renew the roofs with a high performance felt. We would also recommend an insulation cut to falls to ensure better thermal efficiency on the roof and a fall towards the gutters!

We would also add that there is awkward access presently to the flat roofs and you could improve this using a roof window that can be opened within the shower room to gain access to the top flat roof.

ANTICIPATED COST: In the region of £7,000 - £12,000.

Please see the Roof Coverings Section of this Report.

4) Roof Windows / Skylights

We would also take the opportunity of changing the roof windows / skylights. We could not see a British Standard Kite mark on the glass, indicating that it is not safety glass (it looks to be normal double glazing that is used in windows) and therefore if a tile comes off the roof it is likely to go through the glass.



ACTION REQUIRED: You may wish to replace these windows with safety glass.

ANTICIPATED COST: In the region of £1,000 - £2,000, quotations required.

Please see the Roof Windows Section of this Report.

5) Electrics

The electrics are from circa 1960s and are dated. We recommend a new fuse board (as small fingers can get into the socket points). We also noted some DIY-type wiring.



ACTION REQUIRED: Have the fuse board replaced by an NICEIC (or similar) registered and approved electrical contractor.

As the property is changing occupancy the Institute of Electrical Engineers (IEE) recommend an NICEIC (or similar) registered and approved electrical contractor carry out an inspection, test and report.

ANTICIPATED COST: £400 - £600.

Please see the Electrics Section of this Report.

6) **External Right Hand Wall**

We noted that the external right hand wall has been using what is known as a rat-trap bond; this is where the bricks are laid on edge. In some instances this can be less stable than a traditionally built wall. This was used around the war years period to economise on the use of bricks.

ACTION REQUIRED: As with all boundary walls, periodic inspection is needed as often the foundations are not as good as they should be.

Please see the Walls Section of this Report.

7) **Right of Way**

There is a gate at the end of the garden which appears to be a Right of Way; although during our question and answer session with the owners they advised that it wasn't.

ACTION REQUIRED: Your Legal Advisor needs to check to see if this is a Right of Way and then if it is they should check your liabilities, maintenance responsibilities and risks associated with it.

Please see the External Areas Section of this Report.

8) **Planes**

In case you are not aware, there are planes passing over the property fairly regularly.

ACTION REQUIRED: You need to ensure you are happy to live with this.



9) **Boiler**

During our question and answer session with the owners they advised that the boiler is approximately ten years old. We would advise that assuming they are regularly maintained these boilers typically last 20-30 years, at the most.

Please see the Plumbing and Heating Section of this Report.

The Ugly

We normally put here things that we feel will be difficult to resolve and will need serious consideration.

There are no items that we feel should fall within this category.

Specific Questions

Woodworm

We did not note any what we would term as 'significant' areas of active woodworm within the roof. There are signs of old woodworm but this is not what we would term as 'significant' i.e. causing structural damage.

Roof Structure

You have a hipped roof that is prone to movement. This roof has moved in the past, however from viewing the roof tiles there were not any obvious visual signs of recent movement, i.e. things like new mortar, gaps in the tiles etc.

Other Items

Moving on to more general information.

Maintenance

It should be appreciated that defects which would normally be highlighted in a modern property, effectively form part of the property's overall character and style. Such defects are considered acceptable and may not have been specifically referred to as defects within the context of this Report.

This type of property will require ongoing maintenance and repair and a budget for such work must be allowed to ensure it is maintained in good condition. This will prevent undue and unnecessary deterioration.

DIY/Handyman Type Work

There are numerous other items that we would class as DIY or handyman type work such as organising the work mentioned above and redecorating to your own personal taste and style. We have detailed these and other issues within the main body of the report.

Purchase Price

We have not been asked to comment upon the purchase price in this instance, we have however referred you to sources of general information on the housing market within the Information on the Property Market Section, which can be found in the Appendices at the end of the Report.

Every Business Transaction has a Risk

Every business transaction has a risk, only you can assess whether that risk is acceptable to you and your circumstances. You should now read the main body of the Report paying particular attention to any “**ACTION REQUIRED**” points.

Estimates of 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 before purchasing the property (preferably three quotes). The cost of building work has many variables such as the cost of labour. 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 probably be best to supervise the work if it is complex, both of which we can do if so required.

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:

There are no further issues. We strongly recommend that you do carry out the work as soon as possible before other events take over your life!

As a general comment for any work required we would always recommend that you obtain at least three quotations for any work from a qualified, time served tradesperson or a competent registered building contractor prior to legal completion.

We would ask that you read the Report and contact us on any issues that you require further clarification on.

MORE ABOUT THE REPORT FORMAT

Just a few more comments about the Report format before you read the actual main body of the Report.

TENURE – FREEHOLD (OR AS GOOD AS)

We have assumed that the property is to be sold Freehold or Long leasehold, with no unusual or onerous clauses and that vacant possession will be available on completion. Your Legal Advisor should confirm that this is the case.

ESTATE AGENTS – FRIEND OR FOE?

It is important to remember that the estate agents are acting for the seller (usually known as the vendor) and not the purchaser and are therefore eager to sell the property (no sale – no fee!). We as your employed Independent Chartered Surveyor represent your interests only.

SOLICITOR/LEGAL ADVISOR

To carry out your legal work you can use a solicitor or a legal advisor. We have used both terms within the report.

TERMS OF ENGAGEMENT/LIMITATIONS

This report is being carried out under our terms of engagement for Residential Building Surveys, as agreed to and signed by yourselves. If you have not seen and signed a copy of our terms of engagement please phone immediately.

OUR AIM IS ONE HUNDRED PERCENT SATISFACTION

Our aim is for you to be completely happy with the service we provide, and we will try and help you in whatever way possible with your property purchase - just phone us.

**THE DETAILED PART OF THE REPORT
FOLLOWS, WORKING FROM THE TOP
OF THE PROPERTY DOWNWARDS**



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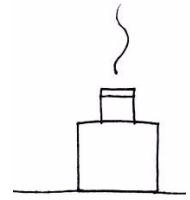
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EXTERNAL

CHIMNEY STACKS AND ROOF WINDOWS



Chimney Stacks

Chimneys developed originally from open fires placed within buildings. From this, the chimney has developed to its present day format where it is used as an aesthetic feature and focal point rather than purely just to heat the room.

This property has two chimneys, which are located one to the front and one to the rear.

Chimney One – Front Chimney

This chimney is brick finished with two chimney pots with a metal flashing that we believe to be lead. From what we could see the chimney looks in average condition. Unfortunately we were unable to see the top of the chimney known as the flaunchings we therefore cannot comment upon them.



Front Chimney



Close up of top

Chimney Two – Rear Chimney

This chimney is brick finished with a tile on edge flashing and two chimney pots. The chimney has been re-pointed over the years and is in average condition.



Rear Chimney



Base of chimney with a tile on edge flashing

ACTION REQUIRED: The tile on edge flashing should be replaced with a lead flashing as these keep a much better watertight seal as they are more pliable.

Tile on Edge Defined

A tile sitting sideways, bedded in cement mortar which has been utilised as a flashing. Due to the cement mortar it is bedded in being brittle and prone to cracking, this is not an ideal material. We would always recommend the use of lead flashings.

Flaunchings Defined

A low, wide cement mortar fillet surrounding the flue terminal on top of the chimneystack to throw off rainwater.

Flashings Defined

Flashings prevent dampness from entering the property, usually at junctions where materials change. Such a junction is the one between the chimney and the roof.

Roof Windows / Skylights

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary. Ideally the roof windows should be replaced and we also recommend that the high level one within the shower room is made openable. Both the current roof windows are purpose made, so it may actually be difficult to buy off-the-shelf. We would always recommend the bubble-type of roof window for a flat roof, i.e. this means that the water cannot sit on it. Having said all of that it seems inevitable with roof windows that they will sooner or later leak. If this doesn't occur then they seem prone to condensation. Keep a cloth handy!



High Level Roof Window above Shower Room



Low Level Roof Window

Party Wall

The chimneys sit on the party wall, here is a bit more information about them:

Party Structures Defined - Party Wall Act Etc. 1996

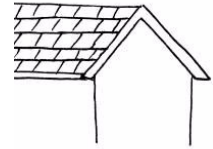
A structure that both parties enjoy the use of or benefit from. An example of this would be where both parties gain support from a wall or utilise a chimney or chimneys.

Any work to party structures, such as party walls or party chimney stacks, require agreement under the Party Wall Act. We would be more than happy to offer you help and advice in this matter.

Finally, we have made our best assumptions on the overall condition of the chimney stacks and roof windows from the parts we could see. The inspection was made from ground level within the boundaries of the property (unless otherwise stated) using a x16 zoom lens on a digital camera. A closer inspection may reveal latent defects.

Please also see Chimney Breasts, Flues and Fireplaces Section of this Report.

ROOF COVERINGS AND UNDERLAYERS



The Roof Coverings and Underlayers section considers the condition of the outer covering of the roof. Such coverings usually endure the extremes of climate and temperatures. They are susceptible to deterioration, which ultimately leads to water penetration.

The underlayer's function is to minimise wind and water damage. Dependent upon the age of your property this may or may not be present, please read on:

Main Roof

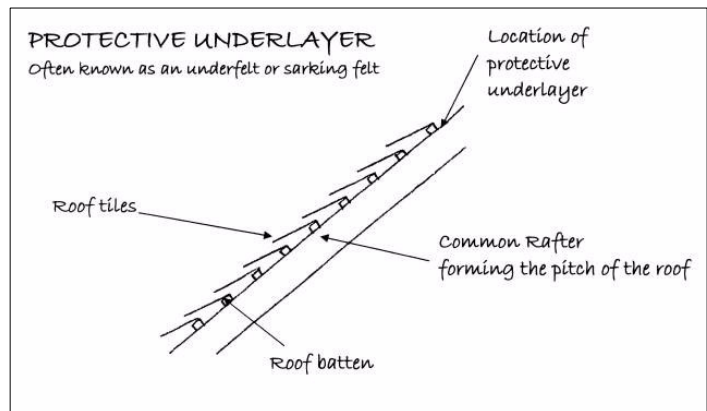
The main roof is pitched and clad with concrete tiles, known as a Roman tiles; from ground level this looks in reasonable condition. With this age of roof there will usually be a few missing, displaced or cracked tiles, this is nothing unusual.



ACTION REQUIRED: Carry out periodic inspections and maintenance of the roof, as required.

Protective Underlayer (Often known as the sarking felt or underfelt)

From the 1940s onwards felts were used underneath tiles/slates to stop wind damage and water penetration, these in more recent years have been replaced with plastic equivalents. These are commonly known as underfelts but now the name is not really appropriate, as felt is not the only material used.



When we inspected the loft space we found a Hessian base Bitumen membrane. This type of membrane has been used since the 1960s. We generally found it to be in average condition, although it is damaged in a few places but this is not unusual considering its age.



This photo shows the common rafters (the ones that form the pitch of the roof) and the dark area between is the underlayer.

Flat Roofs

Whilst these roofs are called "flat", present building regulations and good building practice presently requires a minimum fall of 12 degrees.

Flat roofs are formed in a variety of materials. Difficulties can arise when the water is not discharged from the roof but sits upon it, as this can soon lead to deterioration which flat roofs are renowned for.

There are two flat roofs to the rear of the property; one at low level over the kitchen and one at high level to the rear right hand side that forms the extension.

Low Level Flat Roof

The low level flat roof is over the kitchen area. This flat roof has a mineral felt finish with small stones, these are to resist frost attack and reduce the degrading effect caused by the sun. Care should be taken when walking on this type of roof as you can cause damage to it very easily.

Where the roof meets the main building there is a felt flashing. We would much prefer to see a lead flashing; we recommend that this is added when you renew the roof.



Low level flat roof



Felt flashing meeting main property

ACTION REQUIRED: Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

High Level Flat Roof

The high level flat roof is over the rear bedroom and shower room. This roof has a felt finish with pea-shingle over it. This type of roof finish has not been in general use for the past twenty-odd years, although we do occasionally come across it. It has a very awkward central valley gutter detail and the flashings around the edge are in felt and look to be starting to deteriorate. We did not access this roof but viewed it off a ladder.



General View of high level flat roof. The roof window in this photo is the one that gives light to the shower room.



Flashing deteriorating

ACTION REQUIRED: Please see our comments in the Executive Summary. We would recommend that this roof is re-felted and insulation is added.

Although we believe that you could carry on for some time with both flat roofs, by carrying out repairs etc., we do feel that if you have a new baby on the way and you wish to carry out work with a view to freeing up time later then this is one of the tasks that we would add to the list of things to do in the near future.

We would also add that the latest Building Regulations require flat roofs to be ventilated. Building Regulations are not retrospective but the reason for the requirement is to make sure that any moisture that enters the roof construction is dispelled by way of ventilation. We would suggest that if the opportunity arises ventilation should be provided. This will stop the possibility of fungal growth above the ceiling in the flat roof area.

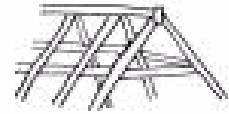
Also it could not be established if there is insulation within the roof or a vapour barrier, without the vapour barrier and combined with inadequate ventilation there will be an increase in the risk of wet or dry rot.

Finally, all the roofs were inspected from ground level with the aid of a x16 zoom lens on a digital camera. Flat roofs have been inspected from upper floor windows and/or ground level.

Unfortunately we were only able to see approximately 75 percent of the main roof from ground level via our ladder or via any other vantage point that we managed to gain. We have made our best conclusions based upon what we could see; however a closer inspection may reveal other defects.

For further comments with regard to ventilation please see the Roof Structure and Loft Section.

ROOF STRUCTURE AND LOFT



(ALSO KNOWN AS ROOF SPACE OR ATTIC SPACE)

The roof structure or framework must be built in a manner which is able to give adequate strength to carry its own weight together with that of the roof covering discussed in the previous section and any superimposed loads such as snow, wind, foot traffic etc.

Main Roof

Roof Access

The main roof is accessed via the loft hatch located in the left hand bedroom. There is no loft ladder, roof light or secured floorboards. We recommend that these be added, as it will make the loft space safer and easier to use. The loft has been viewed by torchlight, which has limited our viewing slightly.

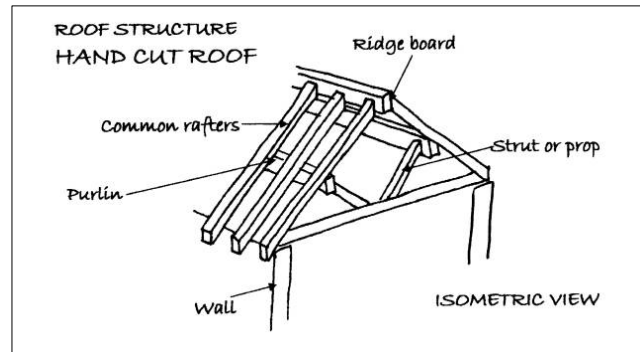


General view

The dark areas on the timber are from condensation occurring.

Roof Structure

This type of roof structure has, what is known as, a cut timber roof, which is a roof that is purpose made and hand built on site. It is not in line with what we typically see. We could however see some movement in it. Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.



Roof Timbers

We found the roof timbers generally in below average condition considering their age. We have inspected the roof structure for:

- Serious active woodworm
- Structurally significant defects to the timbers
- Dry rot
- Wet rot



General view of the hip, showing some movement – we would term this as old and established.

We found condensation in the roof in the form of darker areas in the timber, indicating dampness. The roof therefore needs to be vented. We also believe it needs more props. There has also been movement in the roof and these defects have in turn caused deterioration to the timbers.

We would add that our examination was limited by the general configuration of the roof, the insulation and stored items.

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

Fire Walls

Firewalls help prevent the spread of fire through roofs and are a relatively recent Building Regulation requirement. In this instance the fire wall is built in blockwork, which means they have probably been added since 1950 onwards.



Ventilation

We did not see any vents to the roof to help prevent condensation. There is some minor condensation and dampness in the roof space.

ACTION REQUIRED: Ideally add ventilation.

Insulation

Please see the Thermal Efficiency Section of this Report.

Electrical Cables

We can often identify the age of an electrical installation by the age of wiring found in the roof. In this case the amount of stored items and insulation prevented us from getting a proper view of the electrics so we are unable to comment.

Please see our further comments in the Services Section of this Report.

Finally, we would ask you to note that this is a general inspection of the roof, i.e. we have not examined every single piece of timber. We have offered a general overview of the condition and structural integrity of the area.

GUTTERS AND DOWNPIPES



The function of the gutters and downpipes is to carry rainwater from the roof to the ground keeping the main structure as dry as possible.

Defective gutters and downpipes are a common cause of dampness that can, in turn, lead to the development of rot in timbers. Regular inspection and adequate maintenance are therefore essential if serious problems are to be avoided.

Gutters and Downpipes

From ground level the gutters and downpipes looked to be plastic and appeared in average condition. The plastic used is the older style with is affected by sunlight, loses its colour slightly and does become brittle over the years.

We noted Flashband (trade name) repairs to the guttering, which is not ideal.



Gutter – repaired with Flashband

Flashband Defined

Flashband is a sticky backed felt which is best used for temporary repairs only.

There may be a few more Flashband repairs, but we feel that most people would be happy to live with these or carry out day to day repairs.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would always recommend that the gutters and downpipes are cleaned out, the joints are checked and the alignment checked to ensure that the gutters fall towards the downpipes.

Soil and Vent Pipe

The soil and vent pipes are a mix of cast iron and plastic, they appear to be satisfactory where a surface inspection was possible.

Cast Iron of this age will require regular maintenance.

We noted an external air inlet valve; these are normally seen internally. We believe that under the current Building Regulations that they should discharge above roof level; we assume that the builder did this to avoid the difficulty of running the soil and vent pipe up to the roof.

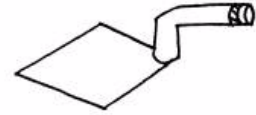
ACTION REQUIRED: You need to decided to either maintain the cast iron or replace with plastic.



External air inlet valve.

Finally, gutters and downpipes and soil and vent pipes have been inspected from ground level. As it was not raining at the time of the inspection it is not possible to confirm 100 per cent that the rainwater installation is free from blockage, leakage etc. or that it is capable of coping with long periods of heavy rainfall. Our comments have therefore been based on our best assumptions.

WALLS



External walls need to perform a variety of functions. These include supporting upper floors and the roof structure, resisting dampness, providing adequate thermal and sound insulation, offering resistance to fire and being aesthetically presentable.

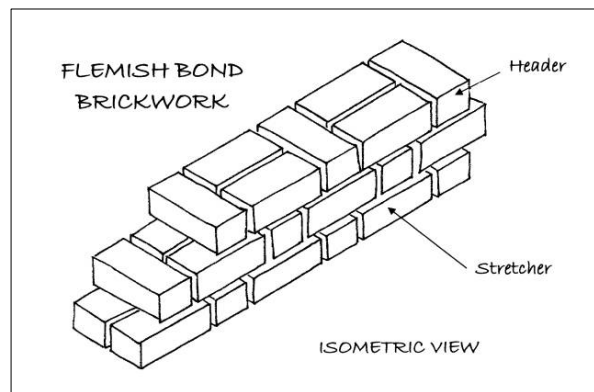
We will consider the walls in two areas; the Brickwork and the Render.

Brickwork

The property is brick built in a yellow London stock brick in what is known as Flemish bond brickwork. Originally the bricks were set in a lime mortar which has since been repointed in a cement mortar.



The term Flemish Bond relates to the way the bricks are bonded together and have a pattern visible from the outside of the property that shows the end of the brick (header), then the side of the brick (stretcher), then the end of the brick, then the side of the brick, and this pattern repeats course after course, i.e. header-stretcher, header-stretcher.

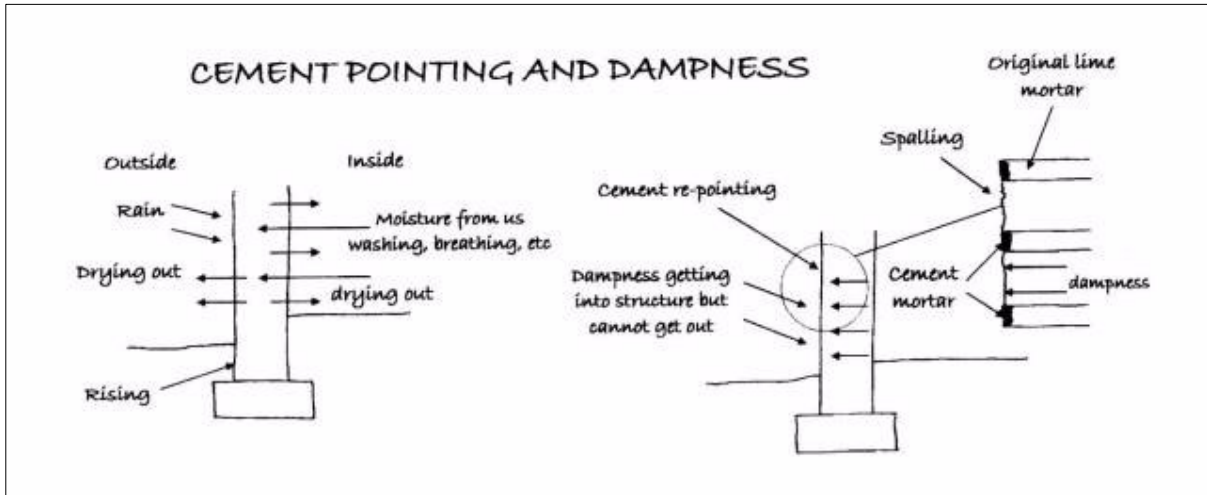


Before the 19th Century, the practice of building timbers into external walls was almost universal. These were known as bonding timbers. They are of course prone to rot as solid walls allow dampness through. Unfortunately, without opening up the structure, we are unable to confirm if this is the case.

Generally Flemish Bond brickwork is liable to penetrating dampness internally, dependent upon the condition of the brickwork and the exposure to the weather. In this case we feel they are in average condition. It is essential that external faces be kept in good condition.

Unfortunately the re-pointing, whilst well meaning, is not appropriate for this type of construction. A cement mortar has been used rather than a lime based mortar. We recommend you use lime mortar in any future repairs regardless of

what the builders say! Using lime mortar will limit further damage to the brickwork, which is almost impossible to repair successfully. However, we would add that many, if not most, of the properties that are re-pointed are re-pointed wrongly; it is only in recent years that we have discovered the problems that can occur from it.



ACTION REQUIRED: When re-pointing is carried out we recommend a lime mortar be used.

Render

The side and rear walls to this property are finished in a smooth faced painted render. We have carried out a tap test to the render at low level (literally hitting the render with the back of a hammer) to try to establish if there are any hollow areas. We have found some areas but this is typical for this age of property.



Render Defined

A sand and cement external coating applied in two or three coats or layers.

Render Detailing

Over the years we have found that a good way of telling the quality of the render is by the quality of the render detailing above the windows and to the base of the property.

Render Detailing to the Windows

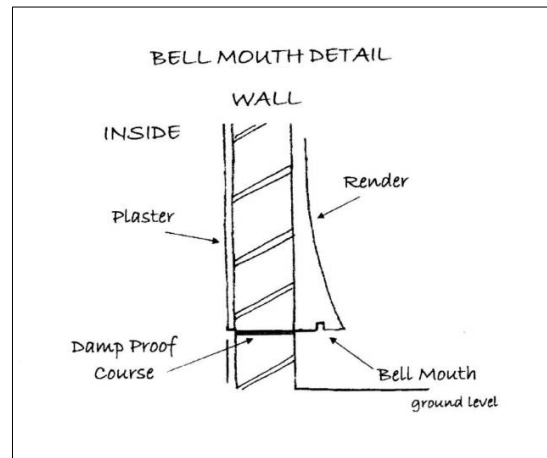
There is a drip detail above the windows, which we were pleased to see.



Render Detailing to the Base of the Wall

The render to the base in this instance goes down to the ground; unfortunately this will help dampness get into the structure.

ACTION REQUIRED: Form a bell-mouth to the base of the render. We would also recommend a French gully.



Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

Bell-Mouths Defined

A bell-mouth is a curve at the base of a wall which throws the water away from the structure therefore preventing dampness.

Cracking

We noted vertical and horizontal hairline cracking to the render, which needs sealing.

ACTION REQUIRED: Seal the hairline cracks.

Finally, the external walls have been inspected visually from ground level and/or randomly via a ladder. Where the window and door lintels are concealed by brickwork / render / plasterwork we cannot comment on their construction or condition. In buildings of this age timber lintels, concrete lintels, stone lintels or metal lintels are common, which can be susceptible to deterioration that is unseen, particularly if in contact with dampness.

Our comments have been based upon how the brickwork / render / plaster has been finished. We have made various assumptions based upon what we could see and how we think the brickwork / render / plaster would be if it were opened up for this age, style and type of construction. We are however aware that all is not always as it seems in the building industry and often short cuts are taken. Without opening up the structure we have no way of establishing this.

FOUNDATIONS



The foundations function is, if suitably designed and constructed, to transfer the weight of the property through the soil. As a general comment, many properties prior to the 19th Century have little or no foundations, as we think of them today, and typically a two-storey property would have one metre deep foundations.

Foundations

In a property such as this it is likely to have a mixture of foundations, due to the property being extended and/or altered over the years. We would expect this to include shallow foundations to the older part of the property and concrete foundations to newer part.

It is not unusual to have differential movement where the newer extension settles slightly differently to the original property.

Also, this property stands on London Clay, as with the majority of properties in London. It is, therefore, more susceptible than most should drains leak or trees be allowed to overgrow, etc. It is not unusual to have some settlement in London properties.

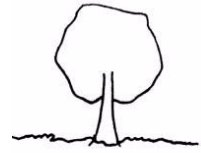
Building Insurance Policy

You should ensure that the Building Insurance Policy contains adequate provision against any possibility of damage arising through subsidence, landslip, heave etc.

Finally, we have not excavated the foundations but we have drawn conclusions from our inspection and our general knowledge of this type, age and style of property.

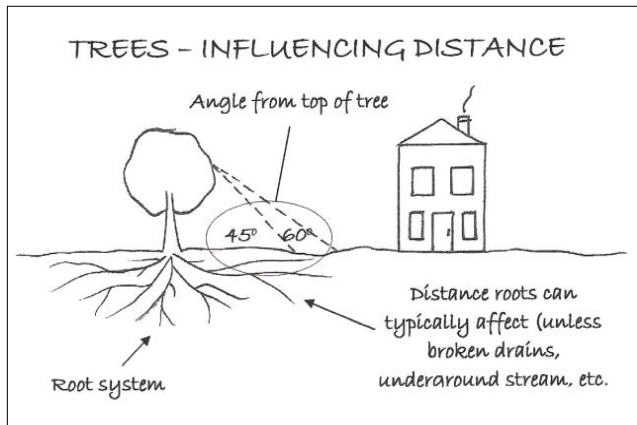
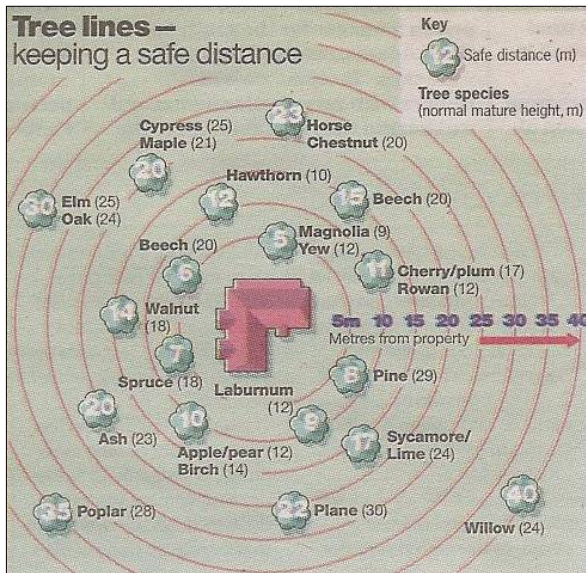
As no excavation has been carried out we cannot be 100 percent certain as to how the foundation has been constructed and we can only offer our best assumptions and an educated guess, which we have duly done.

TREES



Trees within influencing distance of a property can affect the foundations by affecting the moisture content of the soil.

There are some trees surrounding the property. It should be remembered that trees need professional maintenance on a regular basis, particularly when they are of this height. We could see that the trees have been pollarded in the past.



Influencing Distance Defined

This is the distance in which a tree may be able to cause damage to the subject property. It is not quite as simple as our sketch; it depends on the tree, its maturity, the soil type etc., etc.

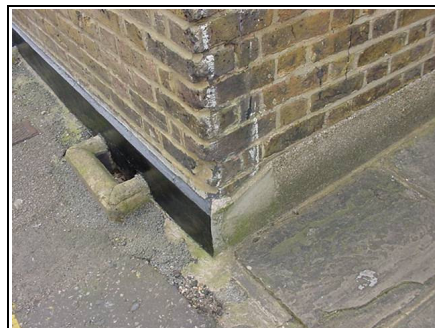
Please also refer to the External Areas Section.

DAMP PROOF COURSE



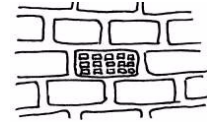
The Building Act of 1878 required a damp proof course to be added to all newly built properties within the London area. It also required various other basic standards. These requirements were gradually taken up (or should that be grudgingly taken up) throughout London and then the country as a whole, although this took many years for it to become standard practice.

Unfortunately we could not see a damp proof course (DPC) because of the render plinth. It is possible that there is a slate damp proof course behind the render and in the newer construction we believe that there is probably a damp proof course built in. What is happening is that the render is bypassing the damp proof course, almost like blotting paper, and the dampness is drawn into the property.



Finally, sometimes it is difficult for us to identify if there is a damp proof course in a property. We have made our best assumptions based upon our general knowledge of the age, type and style of this property.

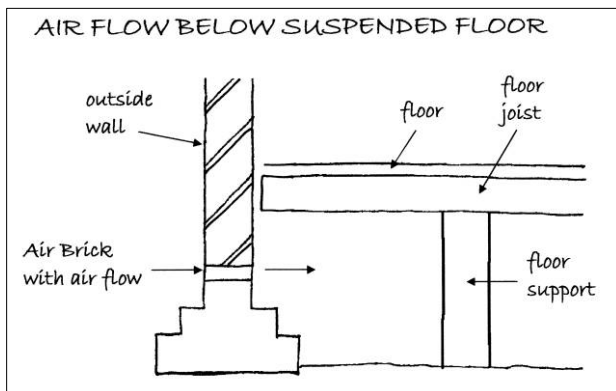
AIRBRICKS



In properties with suspended floors you need to have an airflow beneath to stop deterioration. The air is allowed to pass under the property by the use of airbricks. Generally the rule of thumb is that airbricks are spaced every metre and a half approximately, but this depends upon the specific circumstances of the property.

Airbricks are visible to this property, which is usually seen when suspended timber floors have been used and that would be our thoughts in this case. However, without opening up the structure we cannot be certain of the structure or its condition.

We were pleased to see airbricks that are guarded from allowing rain water in, as if this was not the case it can lead to deterioration in the floor structure.



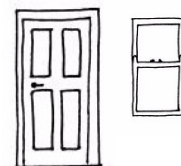
The edging around the airbrick stops rain water getting in

Suspended Timber Floor Construction Defined

A suspended timber floor usually consists of timbers spanning the ground floor, supported on piers (usually brickwork), vented via air bricks within the walls.

Finally, we have made our best assumptions based upon our visual inspection of the outside of the property and our general knowledge of this age, type and style of construction. We have not opened up the floor, unless we have specifically stated so in this section.

EXTERNAL JOINERY



The external joinery part of this section covers fascias, soffits and bargeboards, windows and doors, and any detailing such as brick corbelling etc.

Fascias and soffits offer protection to the rafter feet and also allow the securing of the guttering. Windows primary functions are to admit light and air, but they also have thermal and sound properties. The doors allow access and egress within the property.

Fascia Board

The majority of the property just has a fascia board which is hidden by the guttering.



Windows and Doors

The property predominantly has painted timber sliding sash windows with some more modern casement windows, which are single glazed. Generally we consider the windows to be in slightly below average condition.

ACTION REQUIRED: Maintenance required in the form of redecoration.



Sliding sash window to front

Finally, we have carried out a general and random inspection of the external joinery. In the case of the fascias and soffits it is typically a visual inspection from ground level. With the windows and doors we have usually opened a random selection of these during the course of the survey. In this section we are aiming to give a general overview of the condition of the external joinery. Please also see the Internal Joinery section.

EXTERNAL DECORATIONS



The external decorations act as a protective coat for the building from the elements. Where this protective covering has failed, such as with flaking paintwork, the elements will infiltrate the structure. This is of particular concern as water is one of the major factors in damage to any structure.

The property will need redecorating in the next few years; the longer it is left the more deterioration that will occur to the windows etc.

Finally, ideally external redecoration is recommended every four to five years dependent upon the original age of the paint, its exposure to the elements and the materials properties. Where painting takes place outside this maintenance cycle repairs should be expected. Ideally redecoration should be carried out during the better weather between mid-April and mid-September.

Please see our comments in the External Joinery section.

INTERNAL



CEILING, WALLS, PARTITIONS AND FINISHES

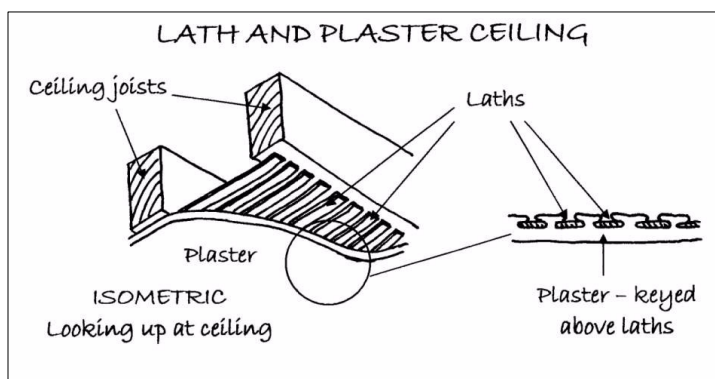
In this section we look at the finish applied to the structural elements such as the plasterwork applied to the ceiling joists, walls or partitions, together with the construction of the internal walls and partitions. The concept of internal finishes is relatively modern. Partitioning developed originally to separate the livestock from the human occupants. Finishes have developed from this very functional beginning to their decorative nature of today.

Ceilings

As should be expected with a building of this age, the ceilings have been finished in a variety of ways, from the original lath and plaster to more modern plasterboard and are generally in average condition considering their age.

Lath and Plaster Defined

Laths are thin strips of timbers which are fixed to the structure. Wet plaster is applied to the laths, usually in several layers. The plaster forms a key as it is forced between the laths. This plaster, once dry, is given further coats and often a decorative finish.



Plasterboard Defined

The usual name for Gypsum plasterboard, which is building board with a core of aerated gypsum, usually enclosed between two sheets of heavy paper, used as a dry lining.

Internal Walls and Partitions

The property has some older style timber boarding partitions; these are very thin walls usually 10mm to 15mm, the thickness of an average table! Noise will pass through them very easily. You may wish to make them thicker or accept them as part of the original character of the property.



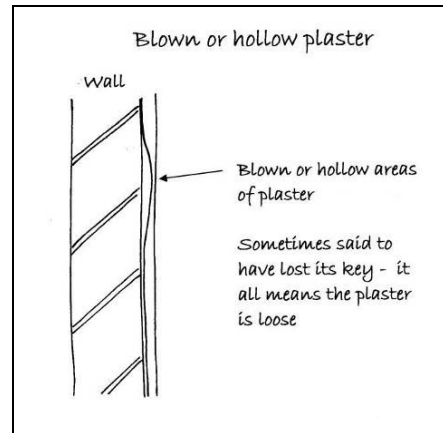
Where the wall has been removed on the ground floor this should, in theory, have had Building Regulations Approval, but we do tend to find in older properties that this is rarely the case. However, in this instance, there was extensive refurbishment carried out and records may be available.

There are various beams internally, where walls have been removed over the years.

We would also add the general comment that the main door opens directly into the lounge, which is not ideal in the winter months.

Perimeter Walls

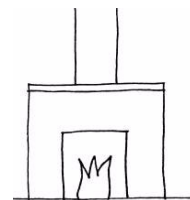
To the perimeter we found some areas of blown plaster, which is not uncommon in properties of this age, particularly around the window and door openings and around the chimney area. We would also specifically mention the damp rear reception room where the plaster is hollow. When redecorating you may have to do some re-plastering or use lining paper.



Finally, ceilings, walls and partitions have been inspected from floor level and no opening up has been undertaken (unless permission has been obtained by yourselves). In some cases the materials employed cannot be ascertained without samples being taken and damage being caused.

We cannot comment upon the condition of the structure hidden behind plaster, dry lining, other applied finishes, heavy furniture, fittings and kitchen units with fitted back panels.

CHIMNEY BREASTS, FLUES AND FIREPLACES



With the advent of central heating fireplaces tend to be more a feature than an essential function in most properties.

The chimneybreasts are located on the left hand side (all directions given as you face the front of the property).

From what we could see the chimneybreasts run from roof level to ground floor and the front chimney is presently open.

At the time of the survey no chimneys were in use. Any chimneys that you do not propose to use should be capped and ventilated to prevent dampness.

Finally, it is strongly recommended that flues be cleaned and checked for obstruction prior to use to minimise the risk of hazardous fumes entering the building.

Please also see the Chimney Stacks, Flues and Parapet Walls section of this Report.

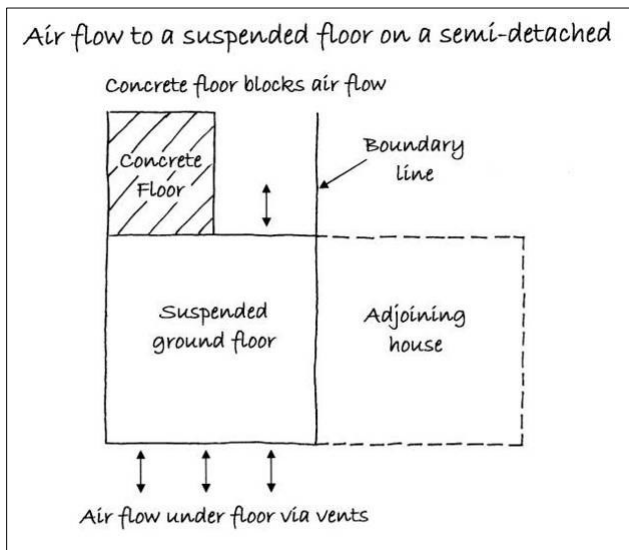
FLOORS



Functionally floors should be capable of withstanding appropriate loading, preventing dampness, have thermal properties and durability. In addition to this upper floors should offer support for ceilings, resistance to fire and resistance to sound transfer.

Ground Floor

The ground floor is suspended timber to the front part of the property and solid under foot to the rear part of the property, assumed to be concrete. This type of floor needs air circulation underneath it to reduce deterioration from wet rot and dry rot; please see our comments in these sections and also the sketch to see how the rear extension effectively blocks the ventilation of the floor.



Suspended Timber Floor Construction Defined

A suspended timber floor usually consists of timbers spanning the ground floor, supported on piers (usually brickwork), vented via air bricks within the walls.

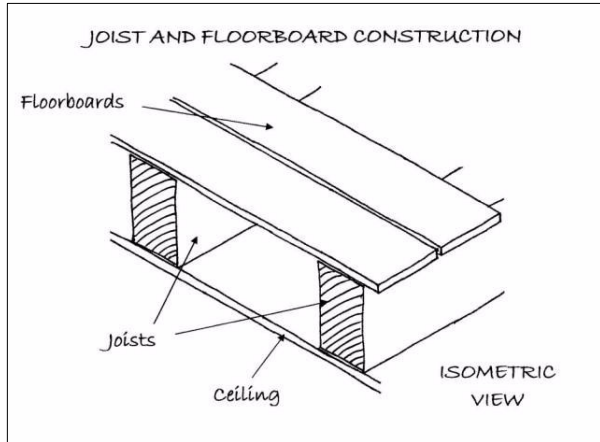
ACTION REQUIRED: We would add in air vents to the skirting area to the floor.

First Floor

We have assumed that the first floor construction is joist and floorboards as this is typical in this age of property; although in the new extension it could be floorboard sheets.

Joist and Floorboard Construction Defined

These are usually at first floor level consisting of a joist supported from the external walls, either built in or, in more modern times, sitting upon joist hangers, sometimes taking additional support from internal walls, with floorboards fixed down upon it.



Finally, we have not been able to view all the actual floors themselves due to some of them being covered with fitted carpets and floor coverings, although much of the floor has been taken back to the timber. The comments we have made are based upon our experience and knowledge of this type of construction. We would emphasise that we have not opened up the floors in any way or lifted any floorboards.

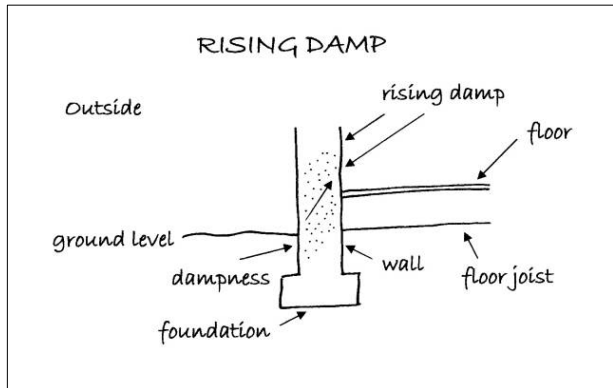
DAMPNESS



In this section we look at any problems that are being caused by dampness. It is therefore essential to diagnose the source of the dampness and to treat the actual cause and not the effect of the dampness.

Rising Damp

Rising damp depends upon various components including the porosity of the structure, the supply of water and the rate of evaporation of the material, amongst other things. Rising damp can come from the ground, drawn by capillary action, to varying degrees of intensity and height into the materials above.

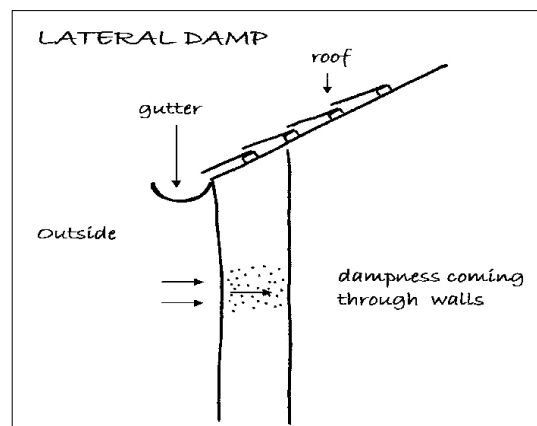


We did find dampness in the property and feel that it is unacceptably high in the rear reception room. We recommend that the entire property is re-checked.

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

Lateral or Penetrating Dampness

This is where water ingress occurs through the walls. This can be for various reasons such as poor pointing or wall materials or inadequate gutters and downpipes, such as poorly jointed gutters.



Tests were taken with a moisture meter at random points to internal walls, floors and other surfaces. No significant penetrating/lateral dampness was seen or detected.



Looking for lateral damp

Condensation

This is where the humidity held within the air meets a cold surface causing condensation.

We noted some dampness to the timbers in the roof space; this is why we have recommended adding ventilation to the roof. The property also has a relatively small bathroom and shower room and these do tend to promote condensation. You need to ensure that windows are open and fans switched on. This is also why we have recommended an opening roof window in the shower room to stop any condensation issues.

Condensation does depend upon how you utilise the building. If you do your washing and then dry it in a room without opening a window you will, of course, get condensation. Common sense is needed and a balance between heating and ventilation of properties.

ACTION REQUIRED: Add ventilation to the roof space area. Ideally add a new roof window / skylight to the shower room which opens. This will also allow the added benefit of being able to give you easier access to the high level flat roof.

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary and the Roof Structure Section of this Report.

Finally, effective testing was prevented in areas concealed by heavy furniture, fixtures such as kitchen fittings with backboards, wall tiles and wall panelling. We have not carried out tests to BRE Digest 245, but only carried out a visual inspection.

INTERNAL JOINERY



This section looks at the doors, the stairway, the skirting boards and the kitchen to give a general overview of the internal joinery's condition.

Doors

There are a mixture of doors from glazed doors to hollow core doors. We could also see how movement has occurred in the property over the years, but as explained older properties do tend to accept movement a lot more readily than new properties.

Hollow Core Doors Defined

This is a modern door which uses hardboard as its outer surface and a cardboard latticework as its inner surface. It is very common on modern properties and relatively cheap, but they do damage easily.



Glazed Door



Hollow core door



New doors fitted into old frame

Staircase

We noted that the underside of the staircase was exposed. It is more normal today to have a half hour fire barrier to stop fire spreading from the ground floor to the first floor in a worse case scenario. You may wish to take a view on whether you add this.

Kitchen

The kitchen is in average condition. We thought the way the designer had worked around the problem of always having the kitchen sink at the window worked well.

We have not tested any of the kitchen appliances.

Finally, it should be noted that not all joinery has been inspected. We have viewed a random sample and visually inspected these to give a general overview of the condition. Please also see the External Joinery/Detailing section.

TIMBER DEFECTS



This section considers dry rot, wet rot and woodworm. Wet and Dry rot are species of fungi, both need moisture to develop and both can be very expensive to correct. We would also add that in our experience they are also often wrongly diagnosed.

Dry Rot

*Dry rot is also sometimes known by its Latin name *Serpula lacrymans*. Dry rot requires constant dampness together with a warmish atmosphere and can lead to extensive decay in timber.*

In the areas inspected no evidence was found of any significant dry rot and we feel it is unlikely that it is occurring, given the conditions found. However, we would add that there is an outside chance that it could be under the floor; we were unable to inspect this area.

Wet Rot

*Wet rot, also known by its Latin name *Contiophora puteana*, is far more common than dry rot. Wet rot darkens and softens the wood and is most commonly seen in window and doorframes, where it can relatively easily be remedied. Where wet rot affects the structural timbers in a property, which are those in the roof and the floor areas, it is more serious.*

Generally no evidence was found of any wet rot, with the exception of to the rafters where we could see darker areas caused by minor condensation. It is possible also that there is wet rot underneath the floor; this is why we have recommended that the floor is vented.

ACTION REQUIRED: Add vents to the ground floor.

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary, the Roof Structure Section, the Dampness Section and the Floors Section.

Woodworm



Active woodworm can cause significant damage to timber. There are a variety of woodworm that cause different levels of damage with probably the worst of the most well known being the Death Watch Beetle. Many older properties have woodworm that is no longer active, this can often be considered as part of the overall character of the property.

Recent research has shown that many woodworm chemicals do not actually work and it should be remembered that the chemicals are poisons. Also, unless great care is taken, the people applying the treatment can cause significant damage. The woodworm can only really be seen in action during the breeding season, which runs from April to July. We have therefore tried to take a pragmatic view on this matter.

The roof is the main area that we look for woodworm. Within this roof we did not find any significant active woodworm, causing what we would term 'structurally significant' damage. However we did see some woodworm flight holes, which we believe to be old.

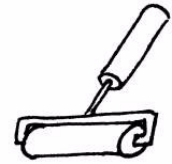
ACTION REQUIRED: Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

If you wish to be 100% certain of no future problems, you must get the roof sprayed properly.

Finally, when you move into the property, floor surfaces should be carefully examined for any signs of insect infestation when furniture and floor coverings are removed together with stored goods. Any signs that are found should be treated to prevent it spreading. However, you need to be aware that many damp and woodworm treatment companies have a vested interest in selling their products and therefore have fairly cleverly worded quotations where they do not state if the woodworm they have found is 'active'. You should ask them specifically if the woodworm is active or not.

We would also comment that any work carried out should have an insurance backed guarantee to ensure that if the company does not exist, or for whatever reason, the guarantee is still valid. More importantly it is essential to ensure that any work carried out is carried out correctly.

INTERNAL DECORATIONS



With paints it should be remembered that up to 1992 lead could be used within paint and prior to this most textured paints (commonly known as Artex) contained an element of asbestos up to 1984, so care should be taken if the paintwork looks old and dated.

The decoration is above average and the house is very well presented. It will look very different when the furnishings and fittings are removed.

The house was presented to sell, often known as 'dressed', for example there were lights where we could not find any socket points.



The house was presented to sell, often known as 'dressed', for example there were lights where we could not find any socket points!

Finally, we would draw your attention to the fact that removal of existing decorative finishes may cause damage to the underlying plasterwork necessitating repairs and making good prior to redecoration.

THERMAL EFFICIENCY



Up until the mid 1940s we did not really consider insulation in properties, for example it was only in the 1960s that we started putting insulation in the roof and then it was about 50mm, in the 1970s this was upgraded to 100mm. Then we started to think about double glazing and cavity wall insulation. Since then insulation standards have increased considerably and today we are looking at typically using insulation not only in the roof but also in the walls, floors and windows and more recently considerable work has been carried out on how efficient boilers are within properties. Care has to be taken that properties are not insulated disproportionately to the ventilation as this can cause condensation and you should be aware that you need to ventilate any property that is insulated.

Roof Insulation

Some roof insulation was present, although not to current Building Regulation requirements of 270mm. We would not be overly concerned about this as we typically find in roofs between 100mm – 150mm of insulation. In this instance you have approximately 100mm.

Walls

The original walls to this property are solid. It is very difficult to improve thermal efficiency in solid wall construction without major alterations. These will usually affect the external appearance or reduce the internal space.

The newer walls are likely to be cavity walls, assuming they are insulated they will have good thermal properties, we can't be certain if they are insulated without opening them up.

Windows

The windows are single glazed and so the thermal properties will not be that good.

Services

Service records should be obtained. It is essential for the services to be regularly maintained to run efficiently.

Summary

Overall, considering the properties age, type and style, it has average thermal properties.

Further information can be obtained with regard to energy saving via the Internet on the following pages:

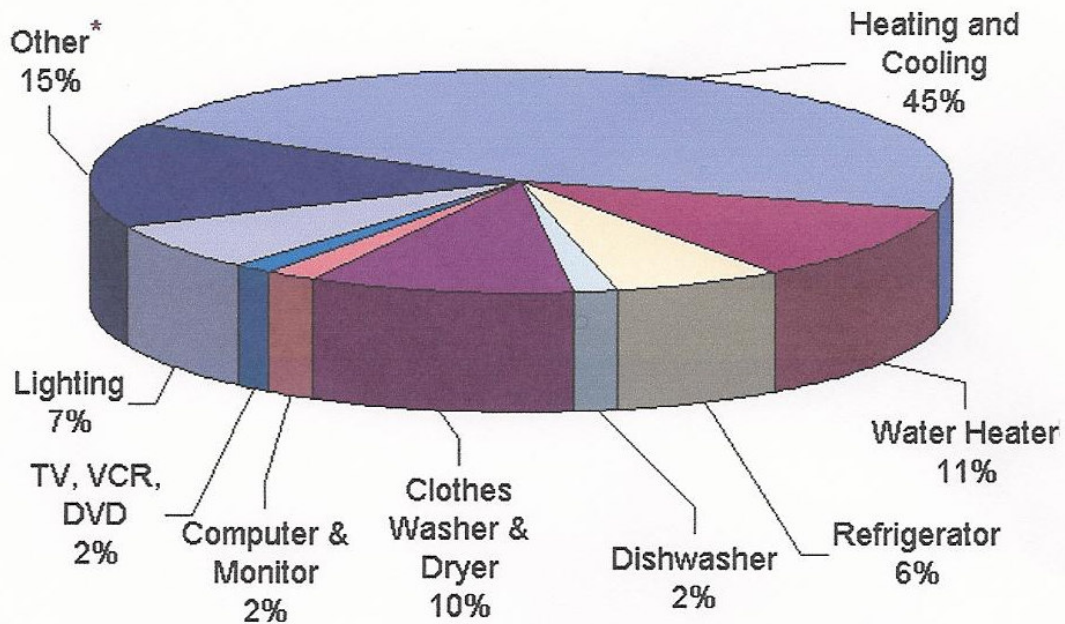
[HTTP//www.est.org.uk](http://www.est.org.uk), which is by the Energy Saving Trust and includes a section on grant aid

or alternatively www.cat.org.uk

or www.ecocentre.org.uk for an alternative technological view.

Finally, we would advise that an energy rating is likely to be required for future house sales.

What does my energy bill pay for?



* "Other" represents an array of household products, including stoves, ovens, microwaves, and small appliances. Individually, these products account for no more than about 2% of a household's energy bills.

OTHER MATTERS



In this section we put any other matters that do not fit under our usual headings.

Security System

We noted an alarm box on the outside of the property. A good alarm system should not only help reduce break-ins but also your insurance. We are not experts in this field and therefore cannot comment further. Further information should be obtained from the vendor and the installer at a later date.

Fire / Smoke Alarm

Some battery operated smoke detectors were noted. The current Building Regulations require that they be wired into the main power supply (which means you no longer have to remember to change the batteries). Obviously in a property of this age this is difficult, as it would mean having surface mounted wires or cutting wiring into the plaster.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend, for your own safety, that smoke detectors be installed. We have seen recently a smoke detector that fits within a light fitting (although we have not used these personally), which is charged when the light is switched on (providing it is switched on a certain number of times a year). We feel this is an excellent idea as it alleviates the problems of batteries running out. We also like the radio activated fire/smoke alarms. We would also advise that if you wish to have any general advice the local Fire Authority are usually happy to help.

Insurance

We would always recommend staying with the existing insurance company, and then if there are any problems you should not have the difficulty of negotiating with two insurance companies passing the blame between each other.

Asbestos

In a property of this age there may well be some asbestos. This was commonly used post war until it was banned only in the last ten or so years, although it is rumoured that it was still used after this point in time. We are not asbestos surveyors.

ACTION REQUIRED: If you wish to confirm you are 100 percent free of asbestos you need to have an asbestos survey carried out.

SERVICES

This survey does not include any specialist reports on the electricity supply and circuits, heating or drainage, as they were not requested. The comments that follow are based upon a visual inspection carried out as part of the overall Building Survey.

Services and specialist installations have been visually inspected. It is impossible to examine every detail of these installations without partially dismantling the structure. Tests have not been applied. Conclusive tests can only be undertaken by suitably qualified contractors. The vendor/seller should be requested to provide copies of any service records, test certificates and, ideally, the names and addresses of the installing contractors.

ELECTRICITY



It is strange to think that electricity only started to be used in domestic properties at the turn of the 19th century with gas lighting still being the norm for a good many years after.

Periodic inspections and testing of electrical installations is important to protect your property from damage and to ensure the safety of the occupants. Guidance published by the Institute of Electrical Engineers (IEE) recommends that inspections and testing are undertaken at least every 10 years (we recommend every five years) and on change of occupancy. All electrical installation works undertaken after 1st January 2005 should be identified by an Electrical Installation Certificate.

Fuse Board

The electric fuses and consumer units were located in the lounge to the left hand side. We would date the fuse board as being from the 1960s. Rewireable fuses are now superseded. Far better fuse boards are now available.



Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

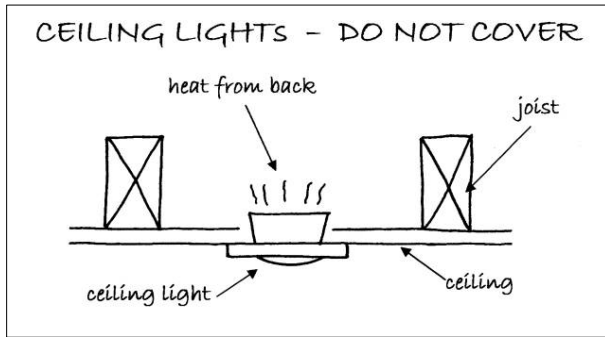
Earth Test

We carried out an earth test in the kitchen area to the socket point that is normally used for the kettle and this proved satisfactory.



Ceiling Lights

The property has electric inset lights to the ceiling. In some instances these can cause problems as the heat given off has in some cases lead to outbreaks of fire; these tend to be in the older type of ceiling lights and we recommend that where ceiling lights are used that the rear of the light is not covered; this is particularly the case in rooms with a loft space above it where stored items are placed in it.



Inset ceiling light

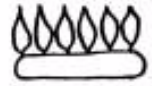
ACTION REQUIRED: Replace the fuse board.

As the property is changing occupancy an IEE report should be carried out by a NICEIC registered and approved electrical contractor.

In addition to this your Legal Advisor is required to make full enquires with the owners to establish if any electrical installation work has been carried out and to provide suitable certification for any works carried out after 1st January 2005. Any comments made within this report or verbally do not change this requirement.

For basic general information on this matter please see the appendices at the end of this report.

GAS



There is very little we can check for in a gas installation, we do inspect to make sure there is one and that it has a consumer unit and that the boilers are vented. Ideally you should have a service inspection carried out by an independent CORGI registered plumber.

The gas metre cupboard is located so it can be read from the outside.

All gas appliances, pipework and flues should be the subject of an annual service by a competent engineer, i.e., a member of CORGI (the Council of Registered Gas Installers); works to gas appliances etc., by unqualified personnel is illegal. Unless evidence can be provided to confirm that there has been annual servicing we would recommend that you commission such a service prior to use to ensure safe and efficient operation.

ACTION REQUIRED: As a matter of course it is recommended that the entire gas installation is inspected and made good, as necessary, by a CORGI registered contractor. Thereafter the installation should be serviced annually.

PLUMBING AND HEATING



In this section we do our best from a visual inspection to look at how the water is supplied to the property, how the supply is distributed around the property, how it is used to heat the property and how it is discharged from the property.

Water Supply

We were advised that the controlling stopcock is located under the stairs. It is important that its presence is established in case of bursts or leaks. The stopcock and other controlling valves have not been inspected or tested for operational effectiveness.

Water Pressure

When the taps were run to carry out the drainage tests we checked the pressure, literally by putting a finger over the tap, and the pressure seemed typical of what we find. The Water Board have to guarantee a certain pressure of water to ensure that things like boilers, particularly the instantaneous ones, have a constant supply of pressured water (they would blow up if they didn't!).

Cold Water Cistern

We have not found a water tank. We can only assume that the water is directly fed to the taps. The original idea behind a water tank was to help water pressure and to give an emergency supply of water.

Plumbing

The plumbing, where visible, comprises copper pipework. No significant leakage was noted on the surface, although most of the pipework is concealed in ducts and floors.

Heating

The boiler is wall mounted, pressurised and made by Halstead Quatto, which is a fairly commonly found make. It is located in the rear bedroom. This is not an ideal location due to the noise they make when you are trying to get to sleep and also the possibility of carbon monoxide poisoning.

Ten Minute Heating Test

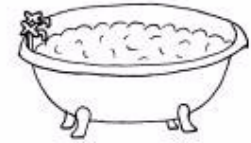
We asked the owner to turn the heating on for approximately ten minutes, we then checked the hall way radiators (ground floor and first floor) and found them to be warm.

Our limited inspection of the hot water and central heating system revealed no unusual visual signs. We would therefore recommend that the system be tested and overhauled before exchange of contracts and that a regular maintenance contract be placed with an approved heating engineer.

Finally, it should be noted that the supply pipe from the Water Company stopcock to the internal stop tap is the responsibility of the property owner.

We cannot comment on the condition of the water service pipe to the building. It should be appreciated that leaks can occur for some time before signs are apparent on the surface.

BATHROOM



In this section we consider the overall condition of the sanitary fittings such as the bathroom, the kitchen, the utility room and the cloakroom.

The bathroom suite looks in average condition, however it is small, and therefore could be prone to condensation.

We were pleased to see that the shower tray was solid. These do not tend to leak as much as various other sorts that 'give' when people stand in them.

The en suite looks in average condition and consists of a WC basin and shower.

Finally, although we may have already mentioned it above we would reiterate that it is important to ensure that seals are properly made and maintained at the junctions between wall surfaces and baths and showers etc. We normally recommend that it is one of the first jobs that you carry out as part of your DIY on the property, as water getting behind sanitary fittings can lead to unseen deterioration that can be costly, inconvenient and difficult to repair.

MAIN DRAINS



The sanitary system, as we know it now, came into being some 100 years ago during the Victorian era and works so successfully today it is often taken for granted. It is only in recent years that re-investment has taken place to upgrade the original drainage systems.

It is assumed that the property has the benefit of mains drainage and that the foul drains from the property discharge into a public sewer; this should be confirmed by your Legal Advisor prior to exchange of contracts, who should also provide information in respect of any common or shared drains including liability for the maintenance and upkeep of the same.

The cold taps have been run for approximately quarter of an hour in the bathroom and kitchen. No build up or back up was noted.

Inspection Chambers / Manholes

For your information, inspection chambers / manholes are required to be provided in the current Building Regulations at each change of direction or where drainage runs join the main run.

We have identified one inspection chamber / manhole to the front right hand side of the property; we were expecting to find others.

We duly lifted the manhole/ inspection chamber cover and found the drain to be free flowing and pre formed in plastic.



We have only undertaken a visual inspection of the property's foul drains by lifting covers and running water from the taps within the house.

Finally, it must be emphasised that the condition of the property's foul drains can only be ascertained by the carrying out of a test; such a test has not been undertaken. Should there be leaks in the vicinity of the building then problems could occur, particularly with respect to the stability of the building's foundations. Drainage repairs are inevitably costly and may result in damage being caused to those areas of the property beneath, or adjacent to, which the drains have been run.

Rainwater/Surface Water Drainage

Whilst very innocent looking rainwater downpipes can cause lots of problems. If they discharge directly onto the ground they can affect the foundations and even if they are taken away to soak-aways they can attract nearby tree roots or again affect foundations.

Some rainwater drains are taken into the main drainage system, which is now illegal (as we simply do not have the capacity to cope with it), and can cause blockages to the main drains! Here we have done our best from a visual inspection to advise of any particular problems.

We have been unable to determine the ultimate means of rain/surface water disposal; in this age of property it is likely to be into the main drains.

Finally, rain/surface water drains have not been tested and their condition or effectiveness is not known. Similarly, the adequacy of soak-aways has not been established although you are advised that they tend to silt up and become less effective with time.

Please also see our comments within the Gutters and Downpipes section.

OUTSIDE AREAS

PARKING



Parking is on the road side. Everyone was parking on the double yellow lines. There is a small paved area to the front of the property; it might just be possible to get the smallest of cars in, although you wouldn't then be able to get through your front door! We assume that the study was once a garage.

There is a car park to the rear of the property; we are advised that this is for the Working Men's Club.

ACTION REQUIRED: Your Legal Advisor needs to check that there is no pending or future planning on this land.

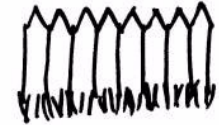


Double yellow lines on the road.



Car park to the rear of the property

EXTERNAL AREAS



Front Garden

The front of the property sits almost directly onto the road with a small paved area.

Rear Garden

The property has a mature rear garden, partly laid to lawn.



Playing Fields (Surrey Council)

Across the road are some playing fields.

ACTION REQUIRED: Your Legal Advisor needs to check there are no pending planning permissions on them.

Right of Way

We assume there is a Right of Way to the rear of the property. Please see the Executive Summary.

Electricity Sub-Station

There is an electricity sub station near the property. Concerns have been expressed with regard to health risks in connection with the above average electro-magnetic fields. Whilst health risks have not been proven some purchaser may be deterred.



Boundaries: The left hand boundary (all directions given as you face the property) is usually the responsibility of the subject property.

Finally, whilst we note the boundaries, these may not be the legal boundaries. Your Legal Advisor should make further enquiries on this point and advise you of your potential liability with regard to any shared structures, boundary walls and fences.

Neighbours

We knocked on the doors of both neighbours but neither were in at the time of our inspection.

POINTS FOR YOUR LEGAL ADVISOR

If you wish to proceed with your purchase of the property a copy of this should be forwarded to your Legal Advisor and the following points should be checked by him/her:

- a) Responsibility for boundaries.
- b) Rights for you to enter onto the adjacent property to maintain any structure situated near or on the boundary and any similar rights your neighbour may have to enter onto your property.
- c) Obtain any certificates, guarantees or approvals in relation to:
 - i) Timber treatments, wet or dry rot infestations.
 - ii) Rising damp treatments.
 - iii) Cavity wall insulation and cavity wall tie repairs.
 - iv) Roof and similar renewals.
 - v) Central heating installation.
 - vi) Planning and Building Regulation Approvals.
 - vii) Any other matters pertinent to the property.
- d) Confirm that there are no defects in the legal Title in respect of the property and all rights associated therewith, e.g., access.
- e) Rights of Way e.g., access, easements and wayleaves.
- f) Liabilities in connection with shared services.
- g) Adjoining roads and services.
- h) Road Schemes/Road Widening.
- i) General development proposals in the locality.
- j) Conservation Area, Listed Building, Tree Preservation Orders or any other Designated Planning Area.

- k) Confirm from enquiries that no underground tunnels, wells, sewers, gases, mining, minerals, site reclamation/contamination etc., exist, have existed or are likely to exist beneath the curtilage of the site upon which the property stands and which could affect the quiet enjoyment, safety or stability of the property, outbuildings or surrounding areas.
- l) Our Report assumes that the site has not been put to contaminative use and no investigations have been made in this respect.
- m) Any outstanding Party Wall Notice or the knowledge that any are about to be served.
- n) Most Legal advisors will recommend an Envirosearch or a similar product is used by you to establish whether the area falls within a flood plain, old landfill site, radon area etc. If your Legal Advisor is not aware of Envirosearch or similar please ensure that they contact us and we will advise them of it. Any general findings should be brought to their logical conclusion, by using appropriate specialist advisers.

However, with regard to Envirosearch or similar general reports please read: www.1stAssociated.co.uk/leaderboard.asp

- o) Any other matters brought to your attention within this report.

LOCAL AUTHORITY ENQUIRIES

When you booked this survey we asked you if you required us to carry out a verbal check on the status of the property with the Local Authority regarding whether it is a Listed Building, in a Conservation area and any history that is available over the phone with regard to Planning Applications and Building Control. In this instance you have not requested that we carry out this work.

Finally, your Solicitor should carry out Local Authority enquiries and any additional enquiries he/she feels necessary, advising us if they feel that we can have further input.

Finally, an extract from the book “Sold”!

“When you receive your full structural survey (now known as a Building Survey) or House Buyers Report, do remember that you have requested a list of the property’s faults so it is unlikely to make cheerful reading. Every property has its faults but what you are looking for are the serious ones. If your Report does reveal a serious problem that you had not anticipated when making your offer, the first thing to do is to decide whether you want to take on the repairs if an adjustment is made to the price. If you do, then get quotes for the work as quickly as possible and present your case in a fair manner. Most people are reasonable under such circumstances and will compromise but inevitably there are those who are sufficiently confident of their position to say take it or leave it. In a very active market, prices may have moved up sufficiently to cover the extra expenditure in theory and the vendor will not hasten to point this out but remember that he has probably got a vendor pressing him to proceed quickly and starting with a new purchaser will cause him delay”

It is our policy not to offer a conclusion to ensure that the Building Survey is read in full and the comments are taken in context.

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

REFERENCES

The repair and maintenance of houses
Published by Estates Gazette Limited

Life expectancies of building components
*Published by Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors and
Building Research Establishment*

Surveying buildings
*By Malcolm Hollis published by Royal Institution of
Chartered Surveyors Books.*

House Builders Bible
By Mark Brinkley, Published by Burlington Press

APPENDICES

Independent Chartered Surveyors

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www.1stAssociated.co.uk

0800 298 5424

LIMITATIONS

Our limitations are as the agreed Terms and Conditions of Engagement.

CONDITIONS OF ENGAGEMENT

The report has been prepared in accordance with our Conditions of Engagement and should be regarded as a comment on the overall condition of the property and the quality of its structure and not as an inventory of every single defect. It relates to those parts of the property that were reasonably and safely accessible at the time of the inspection, but you should be aware that defects can subsequently develop particularly if you do not follow the recommendations.

ENGLISH LAW

We would remind you that this report should not be published or reproduced in any way without the surveyor's expressed permission and is governed by English Law and any dispute arising there from shall be adjudicated upon only by the English Courts.

SOLE USE

This report is for the sole use of the named Client and is confidential to the Client and his professional advisors. Any other persons rely on the Report at their own risk.

ONLY HUMAN!

Although we are pointing out the obvious, our Surveyors obviously can't see through walls, floors, heavy furniture, fixed kitchen units etc. they have therefore made their best assumptions in these areas.

As this is a one off inspection, we cannot guarantee that there are no other defects than those mentioned in the report and also that defects can subsequently develop.

WEATHER

It was a bright sunny day at the time of the inspection. The weather did not hamper the survey.

We would add that some defects only become apparent upon physical occupation or are only present as a result of the extremes of weather (which are becoming a more frequent occurrence). As you may be aware 2006 was the warmest year in Britain since records began, we believe, in the 1700s; with July 2006 being the hottest July on record in Britain. 2005 was the third driest year on record in Britain with 2003 being the driest. The year 2000 was the wettest year on record and August 2004 was the wettest August on record in Britain. This may have adverse effects on lots of buildings in years to come.

NOT LOCAL

It should be noted that we are not local surveyors to this area and are carrying out the work without the benefits of local knowledge on such things as soil conditions, aeroplane flight paths, and common defects in materials used in the area etc.

OCCUPIED PROPERTY

The property was occupied at the time of our survey, which meant that there were various difficulties when carrying out the survey such as stored items within cupboards, the loft space and obviously day-to-day household goods throughout the property. We have, however, done our best to work around these.

INSPECTION LIMITED

Unfortunately in this instance our inspection has been very limited due to a large number of stored items within the roof space, which limited our view and also we were unable to gain access under the floor areas.



THE ELECTRICAL REGULATIONS – PART P OF THE BUILDING REGULATIONS

Here is our quick guide to the Regulations, but please take further advice from a qualified and experienced electrician.

From 1st January 2005, people carrying out electrical work in homes and gardens in England and Wales must follow new rules in the building regulations. All significant electrical work carried out in the home will have to be undertaken by a registered installer or be approved and certified by the local authority's building control department. Failure to do so will be a legal offence and could result in a fine. Non-certified work could also put your household insurance policy at risk.

If you can't provide evidence that any electrical installation work complies with the new regulations, you could have problems when it comes to selling the property.

There will be two ways in which to prove compliance:

1. A certificate showing the work has been done by a Government-approved electrical installer - British Gas or NICEIC Electrical Contractor.
2. A certificate from the local authority saying that the installation has approval under the building regulations.

Homeowners will still be able to do some minor electrical jobs themselves. To help you, we've put together this brief list of dos and don'ts.

Work You Cannot do Yourself

- Complete new or rewiring jobs.
- Fuse box changes.
- Adding lighting points to an existing circuit in a 'special location' like the kitchen, bathroom or garden.
- Installing electrical earth connections to pipework and metalwork.
- Adding a new circuit.

INFORMATION ON THE PROPERTY MARKET

We used to include within our reports articles on the property market that we thought would be of interest and informative to you, however we were concerned that in some cases these did not offer the latest information. We have therefore decided to recommend various websites to you, however it is important to realise the vested interest the parties may have and the limits to the information.

www.landreg.org.uk

This records the ownership of interests in registered land in England and Wales and issues a residential property price report quarterly, which is free of charge. The Land Registry is a Government body and records all transactions as far as we are aware, although critics of it would argue that the information is often many months out of date.

www.rics.org.uk

The Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors offer quarterly reports via their members. Although this has been criticised as being subjective and also limited, historically their predictions have been found to be reasonably accurate.

www.halifax.co.uk and www.nationwide.co.uk

Surveys have been carried out by these two companies, one now a bank and the other a building society for many years. Information from these surveys is often carried in the national press. It should be remembered that the surveys only relate to mortgaged properties, of which it is generally considered represents only 75% of the market. It should also be remembered that the national coverage of the two companies differs and that they may be offering various incentives on different mortgages, which may taint the quality of information offered. That said they do try to adjust for this, the success or otherwise of this is hard to establish.

www.hometrack.co.uk

From what we can see this is an internet based company who say they offer independent property research (in fact they say they are the only independent company), although they also advise that they are part of a property related group that has bought and sold over 60 million pounds worth of residential property, which indicates that they may have a vested interest. They do also comment that they have carried out their own independent surveys and they have at least two Hometrack recommended estate agents in each postcode area. We would refer you to the 'About us' section within their website to understand better where their information is coming from. We would comment that we have been pleasantly surprised with the quality of information provided by the company.

Motleyfool.co.uk

We also like the Motley Fool website which is a general financial site and although it is selling financial services and other services they do tend to give a very readable view of the housing market.

<http://www.nethouseprices.com/>

This website offers information on land registry recorded property sales, by postcode or address.