

RESIDENTIAL BUILDING SURVEY

Wormley, Surrey,
GU8



FOR

Mrs W

Prepared by:

INDEPENDENT CHARTERED SURVEYORS

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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 single storey character building that is still part of a larger adjoining Manor House although it has now been sub divided (we have not viewed the Manor House).

It is accessed via an unmade shared driveway which we assume you have a legal obligation to repair and liability for. There is parking to the front with surrounding garden including a large retaining wall and woodland area with lots of trees.

The date plaque states 1893. If the 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:

1863	The Opening of London Underground
1878	Electric Street Lights are installed in London
1896	First modern Olympic Games (Athens)
1899-1902	Boer War between Britain and Boers in Southern Africa
1901	Queen Victoria Died
1903	First flight by Wright Brothers
1903-1928	The Campaign for Women's Suffrage
1902	Boer War ends
1903	Edward VII is proclaimed as Emperor of India

EXTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS



Front view



Left hand view



Rear view



Right hand view



Rear garden

ACCOMMODATION AND FACILITIES

These need to be checked and confirmed by your Legal Advisor.

Ground Floor

The ground floor accommodation consists of:

- 1) Entrance hallway
- 2) Kitchen area/ Breakfast room/Dining room
- 3) Lounge
- 4) Master bedroom
- 5) Jack and Jill Bathroom
- 6) Second bedroom
- 7) Cloakroom

Outside Areas

As mentioned there is an unmade road leading to the property which appears to be shared. We are advised that you are on a private sewerage system. For both these your legal advisor needs to check and confirm.

You have a retaining wall surrounding the property which from the number of weep holes in it looks like there is a substantial amount of water coming down through it when it rains heavily. As you are probably aware the woodland area surrounding the retaining wall will in part hold it in place.



Red terracotta weep holes

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.



Lounge



Conservatory



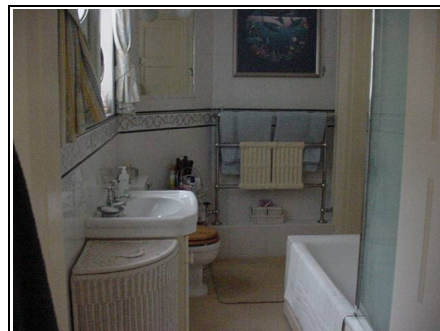
Kitchen/Breakfast Room



Breakfast Room/Dining Room



Master Bedroom



Bathroom



Second Bedroom



Cloakroom

Roof Space

The Lantern



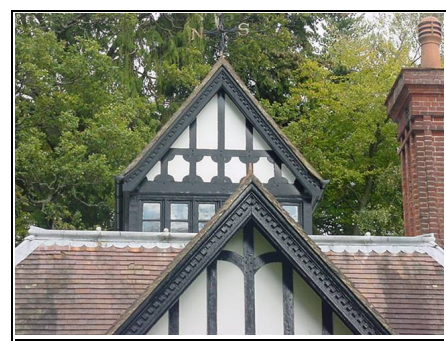
Moulded plaster ceiling



Mass of stored items which when emptied out will make the area feel much bigger



View to the garden from the Lantern



Exterior of Lantern

SUMMARY OF CONSTRUCTION

External

Chimneys:	Two large brick chimneys
Main Roof:	Pitched, clad with clay nibbed tile
Flat Roof:	Lead finished
Gutters and Downpipes:	Cast iron and plastic
Soil and Vent Pipe:	Internal (assumed)
Walls:	Flemish Bond brickwork
Fascias and Soffits:	Painted timber
Windows and Doors:	Painted Timber single glazed some with lead light glazing

Internal

Ceilings:	Lath and plaster (assumed) where we have seen them
Walls:	Solid (assumed)
Floors:	Ground Floor: Suspended timber floor and concrete floor to the (assumed).
	First Floor: Joist and floorboards within the lantern area are likely to be ceiling joists which will need replacing for floor joists for a local authority approved first floor.

Services

We are advised by the owner that the property has a mains water supply, mains drainage, electricity and gas. The boiler is a Potterton boiler not vented to an external area. The electrics are in the kitchen and dated.

Although we are advised this isn't a listed building. We also checked to find a listing for the building on BritishListedBuildings.co.uk to confirm this and could not find it. Nevertheless we recommend your legal advisor carries out a check to see if the property is listed or in a conservation area.

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 not ideal 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 400 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 or 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.

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!

- 1.0) The property has most of the original features left, which add to the overall character of the property from the large entrance door to the lead work on the roofs.
- 2.0) The property has good natural light due to the large windows and the decorative stained glass work which we think is very appealing.
- 3.0) As with many older properties they have more space than newer properties, both in the actual size of the rooms and the height of the rooms. Obviously this is applicable to the lounge and the main bedroom but also to the entrance hallway

- 4.0) The property comes with a woodland (which we are sure you know more about than we do). Albeit that you have a retaining wall and will have to do maintenance work to the trees on the property.
- 5.0) The property has potential which we will be happy to discuss further once you have moved into the property.

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

The Bad

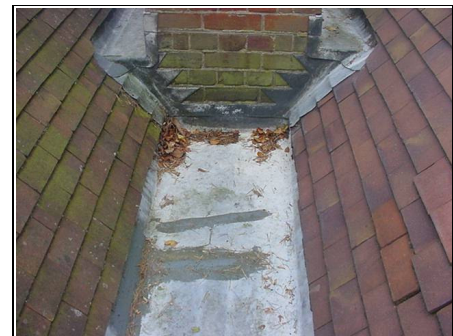
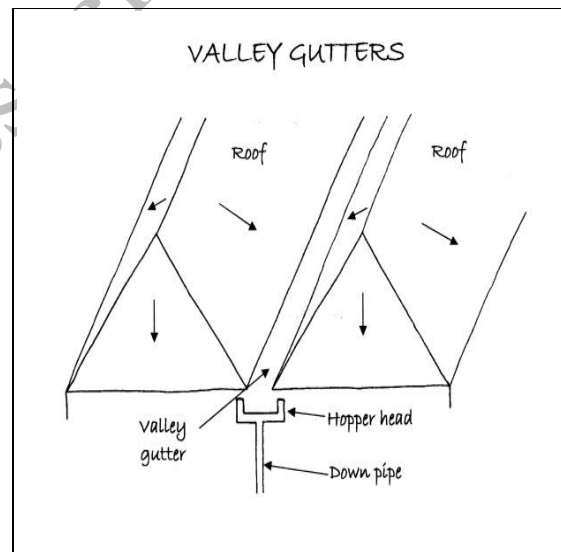
Problems / issues raised in the 'bad' section are usually solvable, but often need negotiation upon. However, a large number of them may sometimes put us off the property.

1.0) High Maintenance

The roofs, surrounding gutters, hopper heads and valley gutters to this property are particularly high maintenance due to the surrounding trees. They will need to be regularly cleared.

From what we have seen the main problem area will be the valley gutters although the gutters themselves will be a continual maintenance task.

Whilst this area can be accessed via a ladder (as we did as part of the survey) it is slightly tricky and there may well come a time when health and safety requirements mean that builders won't be able to/want to (for insurance reasons) access the roof without scaffolding.



Valley gutter

ACTION REQUIRED: We therefore recommend you buy your own tower

scaffold for easier access to higher areas. It can then literally be wheeled around to clear the gutters and the valley gutters. We are sure trades people will much prefer safer access. You will have to carry out very regular maintenance with regard to clearing leaves and other debris from the trees or else you will get water into this property. We would also advise that if the hopper heads, gutters and valley gutters aren't cleaned regularly then dampness will get into the property.



Access to valley gutter



Tower scaffolding

Please see the Roof section of this Report.

2.0) Roof repairs

The property has a pitched clay tiled covered roof and a flat lead roof. Both have suffered from poor quality repairs rather than being repaired properly. We often find this where roofers think that as the repair is out of sight they can almost do what they like.



Poor repairs to roof tiles

ACTION REQUIRED: Have a roofer experienced in lead work spend one to three days on the roof to repair all the temporary repairs particularly to properly finish the lead work. You can see in the photo slates have not been replaced instead they have been painted over with a waterproof agent. We would much rather see slates in place. We would also recommend you get a good collection of slates.



Poor repair to lead

Valley gutters such as these can suffer particularly during snow, or if blocked they can allow water into the structure which in turn can damage the rafter feet. Unfortunately in this instance we have not been able to check the condition of the rafter feet.

Rafter feet defined

The rafter feet are the base of the timbers that make up the structural pitch of the roof and need to be kept in good condition. Unfortunately in this instance we have not been able to check the condition of the rafter feet.

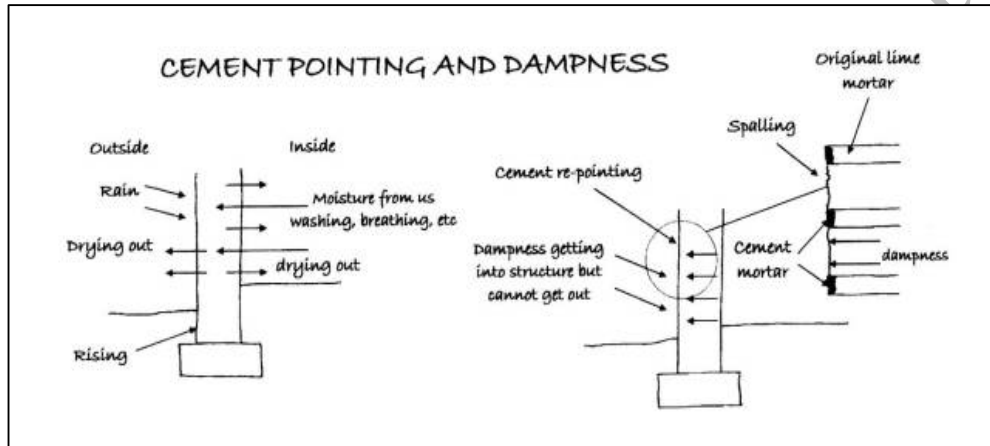
As we know you are fairly happy using ladders. When the roof work is being carried out we would recommend you go on to the roof to check the work if you do not want to employ someone like us to do it for you.

ANTICIPATED COST: In the region of £1000-£3000 (One thousand pounds to three thousand pounds); Please obtain quotations.

Please see the Roofs section of this Report.

3.0) Brickwork repaired and re-pointing

As discussed the original soft red bricks would have been pointed with a soft lime mortar. This has been replaced with a harder cement mortar which effectively stops it from breathing (if you recall we described how you require a gortex type structure rather than a raincoat or cagoule type structure). Fortunately the cement mortar does fall out fairly quickly and then you can re-point with the lime mortar.



Chimneys and repairs

We would draw your attention to the main chimneys which will benefit from re-pointing where the mortar has been worn away. If they are not re-pointed then dampness will get into the property.



Weathering to chimney



Poor repairs carried out to cement mortar



Cement mortar coming away to reveal original lime beneath

ACTION REQUIRED: You need to have a time served qualified brick layer who likes working with lime mortar, you do need to insist upon this, who will carry out regular visits to the property to gradually remove the cement mortar.

ANTICIPATED COST: A few hundred pounds over many years due to the gradual re-pointing of the lime mortar.

Please see the Chimneys Section of this Report.

4.0) Air Bricks

The property has a number of air bricks which we believe are under a suspended timber floor. Unfortunately we could not gain access to the suspended timber floor due to the woodblock flooring. However this type of floor requires air ventilation.

ACTION REQUIRED: We recommend before the summer of 2012 that this part of the floor is opened up to check its condition.

5.0) Tree roots in the manholes

As discussed we found some roots in the foul water drain system and from discussions with the owner they also advised that there have been roots in the rain water drainage. This is a problem we feel will keep reoccurring and you need to ensure that the manholes are checked every three to six months to ensure there aren't any roots growing into them as this will very quickly block the drains up.



We've heard about problems with roots in the past, you still have them!

ACTION REQUIRED: This is a problem we feel will keep reoccurring. We would recommend a close camera TV report to establish the condition of the drains to check the conditions of the drains.

ANTICIPATED COSTS: In the region of £100-£300 – one hundred to three hundred pounds; please obtain quotations.

Please see the Main Drains Section of this Report.

6.0) Asbestos to the garaging

We noted that the garage had an asbestos roof. Generally asbestos is considered a hazardous material. You have to be a licensed contractor to remove the asbestos. The perception of problems with asbestos puts many people off buying these properties.



Asbestos roof on garage

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend the asbestos is removed as quickly as possible.

ANTICIPATED COST: We are forever surprised with the variety of costs that are given for removing the asbestos. There seems to be no reason or logic to it.

We would expect the cost to be £1000-£2000- one to two thousand pounds- but would not be surprised if it was much more or much less. Quotations are required (also note that the downpipe on the garage is not connected properly).

7.0) Next door's property

We suspect there is a lot of history between the owner of this property and the adjoining neighbours, particularly in relation to the extension and blocked up windows which have been blocked up in a different colour brick. You should be aware that the adjoining owners could be waiting for a change of occupant to put a window in. We also noticed the high level chimney to next door which has not been maintained for some time. We recommend you mention this to them.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend a cup of tea meeting with the neighbours before you commit to legally purchase the property to ensure you are not buying into any problems and ask your legal advisor to check that there isn't a long running dispute between these two properties.



Window blocked by garden next door



Next doors chimney

8.0) Sunlight and Shade

See Summary Upon Reflection.

The Ugly

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

Many people would be put off by this property as it is unusual and disproportionate in some ways what with having such a large lounge and only two bedrooms. It does however have the potential with the lantern area above the lounge and of course it has the possibility of being extended in a variety of ways. You do however need to make sure you are happy with this type of building and its limitations and that the building can be amended to suit your requirements.

We would finally recommend that you go on S.P.A.B(Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings) weekend course for looking after older properties. You can find them via SPAB.org. There are also other places that do similar courses such as the Weald and Downland Museum (we haven't been on this one) that also have the display of innovative properties that may also be of interest to you.

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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.

Services

Whilst we have carried out a visual inspection of the services within the property we would reiterate that no tests have been carried out.

Electrics

Whilst we have carried out a visual inspection of the electrics (this is commented upon in the Electrics Section of the report) we also need to advise you of the following:

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

Heating

We would 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.

Drainage

See Executive Summary of report.

Water Supply

There is danger in older properties of having a lead water supply; we would recommend that you speak to the water company to ask them if they have carried out such replacement, as you will be re-piping much of the water used in the building it gives an ideal opportunity to also check for any remaining lead pipes.

DIY/Handyman Type Work

There are numerous other items that we would class as DIY or handyman type work such as redecorating to turn the property into your home. 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 and estimates can of course vary from area to area when giving a general indication of costs. For unskilled labour we currently use between £75 and £100 per day (the higher costs in the city areas) and for tradesmen we use between £100 and £200 per day for an accredited, qualified, skilled tradesman. Other variations include the quality of materials used and how the work is carried out, for example off ladders or from scaffold.

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

Extending and altering the property

Further to our discussions, as we left the property we felt that there were at least a dozen different design options that may suit you! We feel that putting down the strategy on how to decide on an extension is probably best.

1. We would suggest you rank the top five reasons why you want the extension in order separately and also mark each reason out of ten to give it a weighting i.e. the top reason could be to provide a new room for your children and the rating out of ten could be ten.
2. You then need to decide whether you want a traditional extension that utilises the existing features of the building or something that contrasts with the existing features of the building.

Extensions to consider

From our chat with you most of these are your ideas!

1. Extension to the garage areas would enclose the parking section in the courtyard. It would also mean that you could link into the garage but it would also mean that you would have to put a corridor in to gain access through the main bedroom.
2. Extension to the right hand end which could be a bathroom or a further bedroom but you would have to walk through the master bedroom or form a corridor.
3. Some type of future staircase in the lounge possibly a contrasting and contemporary staircase. You could lose a bit of the lounge and add an enclosed staircase.
4. We also feel there may be a possibility to extend into the garden end and give direct access into the woodland.
5. You could extend to the front or extend to the rear in a more traditional style opposite the dining room area, you could move the kitchen into this space and have a breakfast room that you step down into and then convert the kitchen into an additional bedroom. You could then have patio doors opening from this section.

There really are a number of options available to you.

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:

What keeps reoccurring to us is that the owner said that the property has been on the market for some two years although they did equally say that the price now is less than it has been before (they used the term it has been lowered in price but we would always comment that it would have sold at the original price if the price was correct). We do therefore feel that you have to really dot your I's and cross your T's and check that there isn't future liability for such things as shared drains and the shared access road or a major dispute between the neighbours.

With regards to the age of the property you really do need to understand fully the responsibility and liabilities associated with taking on an older property. We would be more than happy to talk to you about this as much as you wish and would suggest you negotiate a discount based upon the items we have found. We would add there is an element of dampness in the structure but nothing worse than we would expect for this age of property.

We recommend that you have another look at the building and think about the sunlight and shadow that you will get from both the adjoining building and the surrounding trees. We are making this comment because there is more than a usual amount of moss and greening of the gutters, brickwork and tiles which lead us to believe you may be in the shade far more than usual.

We would refer you to our comments in the Executive Summary, 'Good', 'Bad' and 'Ugly' Section and ask that you re-read these.

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.

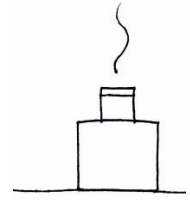
**THE DETAILED PART OF THE REPORT
FOLLOWS, WORKING FROM THE TOP
OF THE PROPERTY DOWNWARDS**



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EXTERNAL

CHIMNEY STACKS



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.

There are two chimneys to this property they are located to the right hand side of the property and approximately the middle (all directions given as you face the property).

Chimney One - Middle

This chimney is brick finished with a lead flashing and one chimney pot. From what we could see from ground level it looked in slightly below average condition considering its age, type and style. Unfortunately we were unable to see the flaunching, we therefore cannot comment upon them.



Chimney one

ACTION REQUIRED: Please see our comments in the Executive Summary about re-pointing it.



Close up of chimney that needs re-pointing

Chimney Two – Right hand side

This chimney was built in a similar manner to the first chimney with one chimney pot. From what we could see from ground level it looked in slightly below average condition considering its age, type and style.



Chimney two

ACTION REQUIRED: You will need to double check the pointing when the middle chimney is being re-pointed. We would reiterate it needs to be re-pointed in appropriate lime mortar.

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.

Flaunchings Defined

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

Party Wall

You will have a party wall where you adjoin the next door property. When we were in the roof there should have been a firewall dividing the two properties. We did not see this. A firewall is in place to stop fire spreading from one property to the next. We may not have gone far enough into the chimney.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend that the roof void is re-checked for a fire wall.

ANTICIPATED COST: As this is an awkward job it will be in the region of about one thousand pounds and it would be a party wall structure.

Here is a bit more information on party walls.

If you do any work on these you will need to deal with the Party Wall Act. Here is a brief explanation of it.

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.

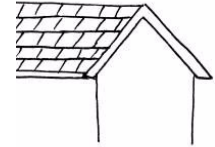
Any work to party structures, such as party walls or party chimney stacks, require agreement under the Party Wall Act. We would be more than happy to offer you help and advice in this matter.

Finally, we have made our best assumptions on the overall condition of the chimney stacks from the parts we would see above roof level. 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.

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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.

Dependent upon the age of your property and the type of construction it may or may not be present, please read on:

We will consider the roofs in three areas, the main roof, lead roofs and conservatory roof.

Main Roof

The roof is pitched and clad with a small nibbed clay tile and, from ground level, this looks in average/slightly below average condition considering the roofs age type and style. With this age of roof there will usually be a few missing or displaced tiles, this is nothing unusual.



Roof Tiles

ACTION REQUIRED: There are specific repairs that need to be carried out to the tiles as you can see in the executive summary. Also you need to carry out periodic inspections maintenance of the property particularly to the valley gutter.

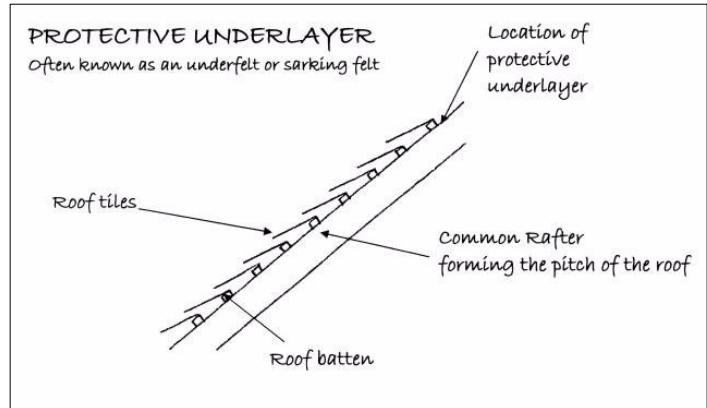
Valley gutter to the tiled area

The valley gutter to the tiled area may not have a suitable return on the central valley gutter. This therefore may allow water in when it snows heavily or rains heavily. Unfortunately the only way to find this out for certain is when it does snow or rain and you should be aware of this.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend once the lantern area is cleared that the roof is opened up where the valley gutter is and the ends of the rafters are checked.

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.



In this instance there is no protective underlayer. There is however close boarding to the roof. This is where timbers adjoin each other which we mentioned to you when we were in the roof. This is a very strong type of roof construction.



This photo shows the common rafters and also the close boarding them.

Lead 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.

The property has an excellent flat lead roof on it. Lead for us is the Rolls Royce material for flat roofs. However this has suffered over time with some what we would term as sticking plaster repairs using the produce known as Flashband which is effectively we feel a temporary repair.



Lead work –roll joint



Lead roof with temporary sticking plaster Flashband repair

ACTION REQUIRED: please see our comments in the Executive Summary regarding having proper lead roof repairs.

Conservatory Roof

We were pleased to see the conservatory has a glass roof. It is frosted/opaque to the neighbours side. You would normally only find this where there has been some planning requirement needed.



Conservatory roof

ACTION REQUIRED: This is why we believe that it would be best to go and have a cup of tea meeting with the neighbours before you legally commit to purchase this property and just to make absolutely sure that what has gone on in the past with regard to planning permission, building regulations and local authority approvals doesn't lead to you having disputes.



Opaque glass to left hand side and clear glass to right hand side

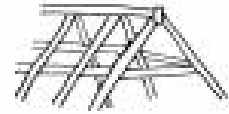
All the roofs were inspected from ground level with the aid of a x16 zoom lens on a digital camera. The conservatory and lead roofs were also viewed from the lead roof itself and from windows in the lantern.

Finally, we were only able to see approximately eighty percent of the roofs 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.

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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 in two areas. The lantern is accessed via the lounge and the left hand side roof is accessed via an access hatch within the hallway entrance.

Lantern Roof

The lantern roof is lined and also is being used as a storage area so there is a very limited view in this area. We were able to find an opening in the lining and were pleased to see close boarding behind it although it was only a small opening as you can see in the photo.

The concern with this area is that dampness is getting in via the valley gutter which we have recommended elsewhere in this report needs to be opened up and the ends of the rafters checked.

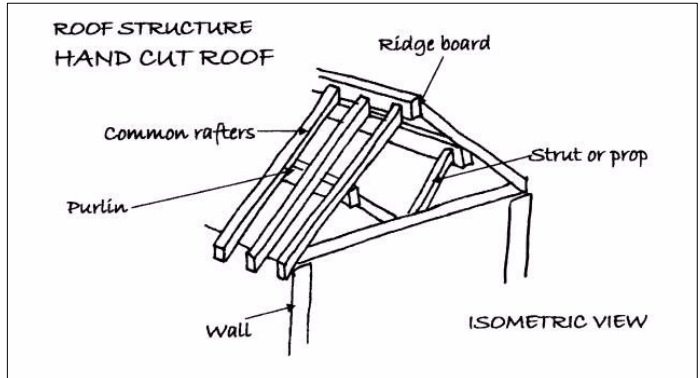
The rest of this section deals with the left hand roof that you accompanied me on inspection.



Small hole in lining with close boarding behind it

Roof Structure

This type of roof structure has what is known as a cut timber roof. This is a roof that is purpose made and hand built on site. Without the original design details we cannot categorically confirm that there are no defects; however it is in line with what we typically see. In addition to what we show in the sketch this roof of course is close boarded which makes it a strong roof.



Roof Timbers

We have inspected the roof structure for:

- Serious active woodworm
- Structurally significant defects to the timbers
- Structurally significant dry rot
- Structurally significant wet rot



Left hand side of roof (hard to get in)

Our examination was limited by the general configuration of the roof and the insulation. What we could see was generally found to be in average condition (although we would have preferred to have seen some venting at the gables). With modern day heating requirements this type of roof can suffer from condensation which in turn can lead to it being a very pleasant environment for woodworm.



Close boarding

ACTION REQUIRED: The only way to be 100 per cent certain is to have the roof cleared and checked.



Close up

Fire Walls

As mentioned elsewhere in this report we are not certain and there needs to be a re-check in regards to the firewall.

Fire Walls Defined

Fire walls help prevent the spread of fire through roofs and are a relatively recent Building Regulation requirement.

Ventilation

As mentioned we would prefer to see this type of roof have ventilation. Please see our earlier comments about condensation.

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 there was insufficient quantity to comment although we did notice a surprising amount of pipe work in the roof.

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.

The property has both cast iron and plastic gutters and downpipes

The property has the original cast iron and plastic gutters and downpipes and also some replacement plastic gutters and downpipes which are fairly typical of what we see. They are in average condition. Cast iron of this age will need maintenance. If regularly maintained it can last longer than plastic, in our experience.

There are leaf guards in the gutter which indicate to us that this gets a lot of leaf and tree debris.

There are bound to be some minor leaks but most people would be happy to live with these.



Metal gutter and plastic downpipe



Double hopper head



Leaves and debris

ACTION REQUIRED: The main problem you have here is the constant removal of leaves and other tree debris. Do not underestimate this task. 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

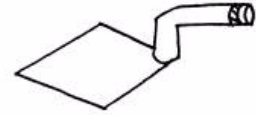
We have reviewed our notes and also our photographs and we can't see any soil or vent pipes externally which means they must be internal. Having said that, we couldn't see any at roof level either. We assume modern air inlet valves are being utilised.

ACTION REQUIRED: You need to specifically ask the owners where the soil and vent pipes are.

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.

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WALLS

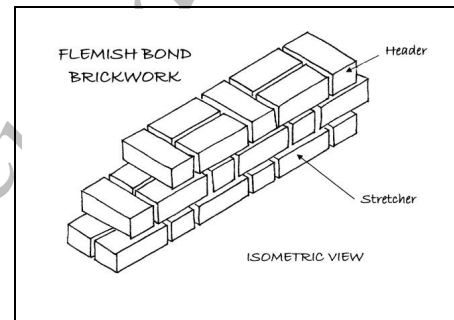


External walls need to perform a variety of functions. These include supporting upper floors and the roof structure, resisting dampness, providing adequate thermal and sound insulation, offering resistance to fire and being aesthetically presentable.

The walls are constructed in Flemish Bond brickwork, bedded originally in a lime mortar that has been re-pointed with cement mortar.

Brickwork

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.



The solid external walls may be liable to penetrating dampness internally, dependent upon their condition and their exposure to the weather. External faces should be kept in good condition.



Repair to rubbed brick

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.



Cement causing spalling to the brickwork makes it more vulnerable to dampness

Conservatory

Being a glass built conservatory extension to the rear of the property will mean it can get very warm.



Conservatory

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 / plasterwork we cannot comment on their construction or condition. In buildings of this age timber lintels, concrete lintels, rubbed brick 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 / plaster has been finished. We have made various assumptions based upon what we could see and how we think the brickwork / 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

Given the age of the property you may find different depths of foundations. We would expect to find a stepped brick foundation possibly with a bedding of lime mortar and possibly a concrete foundation for the more recent work such as the conservatory.

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.

It is your responsibility to check out prior to commitment to purchase that insurance is available on the property on the basis of the things we have reported in the survey. Much as we would like to we are unable to keep up with the changing insurance market and give you advice with regard to this. Please remember to talk about any cracks identified within the property. Often insurers will refer to progressive and non-progressive cracking. Unfortunately this is something we are unable to comment upon from a one-off inspection - the Building Research Establishment recommend a year of monitoring of any cracking.

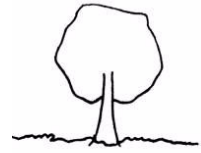
We would always recommend that you remain with the existing insurance company of the property.

We would refer you to our comments with regard to building insurance throughout this report.

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.

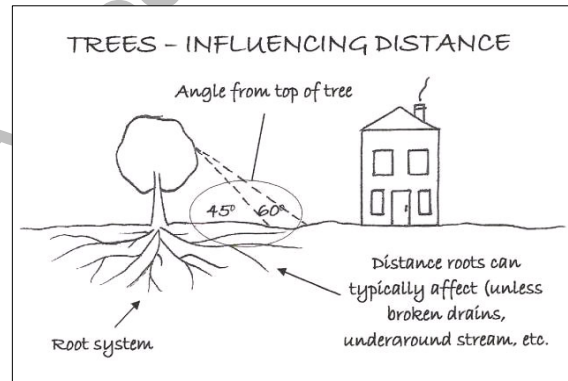
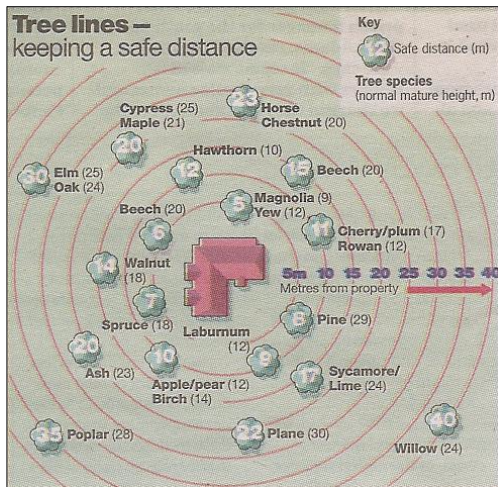
There are trees within what we would term as influencing distance of the property.

As explained at the time you came to meet us we found tree roots within the drains. Please see our comments in the executive summary.

The owner advised that they had found tree roots in the rainwater drains previously. These will need removing before they block the drain.



Trees nearby



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.

Finally, insurance requirements with regard to trees have varied over the years and in our opinion have got ever more onerous. We have seen the notifiable distance of a tree away from a property to have been reduced over the years and we reiterate our comments elsewhere within this report that you need to make enquiries with regard to the insurability of your property in relation to trees and other features when you purchase the property.

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.

All modern properties should incorporate a damp proof course (DPC) and good building practice dictates that a differential of 150mm (6 inches) should be maintained between the damp proof course and ground levels.

In this case we could see a thickening of the mortar indicating a slate damp proof course.



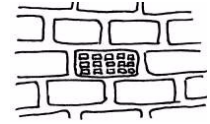
Damp proof course

Your attention is drawn to the section of the report specifically dealing with dampness.

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.

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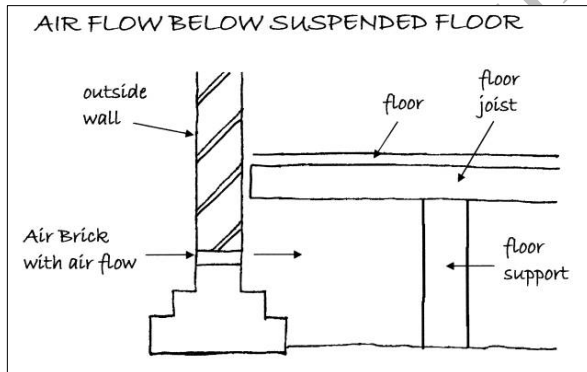
AIRBRICKS



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.

Air Bricks

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.



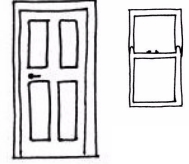
Air brick



Wood block flooring over suspended timber floor

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.

FASCIAS AND SOFFITS AND WINDOWS AND DOORS



This section covers fascias, soffits and bargeboards and 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.

Fascias and Soffits

The property has decorative fascias and soffits which are painted black. We would comment they are in reasonable condition for their age, type and style. We would however comment that black painted timber does tend to deteriorate fairly quickly as it absorbs the heat.



Fascias and soffits painted black

ACTION REQUIRED: Double check the fascia and soffits when carrying out work to the gutters, hopper heads and downpipes.

Windows and Doors

The property has painted single glazed timber casement windows. They have beautiful leaded lights to the upper section in some cases. They also add a terrific amount of natural daylight to the property.

We carried out a knife test and they are in reasonable condition. We note that the lead has been used to form window sills in many cases. This we assume is to stop the deterioration of the soft red brick.



Window in Master bedroom



Leaded light window



Knife test



Lead window sill

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.

There is a fair amount of external decoration with the decorative woodwork. It looks in average condition at the moment but you should expect it to need redecorating. Check in the summer of 2012 to redecorate in the summer of 2013 depending upon condition.



Decorative woodwork

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.

Ceilings

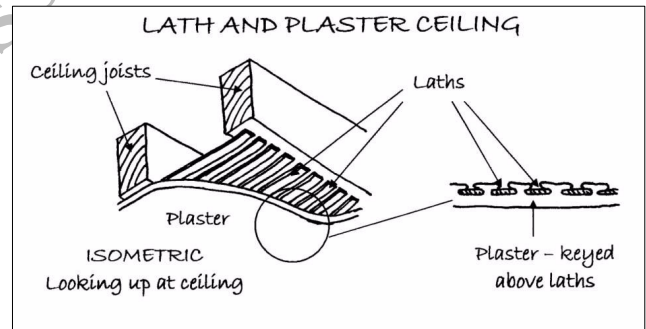
From our visual inspection of the ceilings and our general knowledge of this age and type of construction we believe that the ceilings are likely to be lath and plaster.



Lath and plaster ceiling

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.



Internal Walls and Partitions

The walls are predominantly solid in and likely to be brickwork in construction. It is of course impossible to determine the construction without opening up the walls and have therefore taken an educated guess.

Perimeter Walls

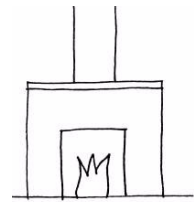
We believe these to be finished with a lime based render although they do look rather smooth so they may have had a skim coat of modern gypsum plaster in recent years. It's impossible to tell without opening them up properly. We don't think the present owner would have agreed to that!

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.

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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.

There is a chimney breast to either side of the lounge. One has been partly closed up, as you can see in the photo, and one is being used for the flue of the gas boiler.



Fire in lounge partly closed

Incidentally we need to remind you (we believe you have already been advised) that the gas boiler isn't strictly to standard as it's not vented to external air.

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, we will comment on the condition of the chimney breast where we can see the chimney breast. If we can see a chimney breast has been removed we will inspect for signs of movement and advise. However, often the chimney breasts are hidden and we do not comment as modern techniques for adding support can concealed very well particularly when plastered over.

Your Legal Advisor needs to specifically check with the Local Authority for removed chimneys and associated chimney breasts and Building Regulations Approvals and advise by e-mail immediately if chimney breasts are found to have been removed. We would recommend opening up the structure to check the condition. If we are not advised we will assume the relevant Building Regulations Approval has been obtained.

It is strongly recommended that flues be cleaned and checked for obstructions prior to use to minimise the risk of hazardous fumes entering the building.

Please also see the Chimney Stacks, Flues

FLOORS



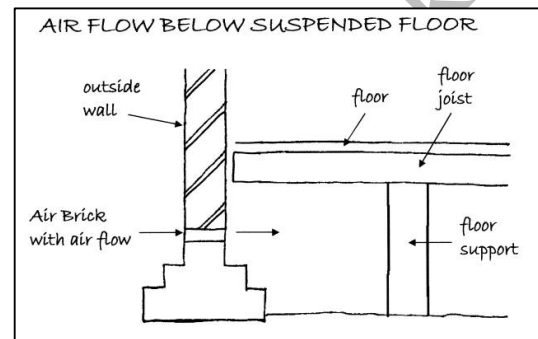
Functionally floors should be capable of withstanding appropriate loading, preventing dampness, have thermal properties and durability. In addition to this upper floors should offer support for ceilings, resistance to fire and resistance to sound transfer.

Ground Floor

Suspended Timber Floor

The ground floor we believe is a mixture of solid and suspended timber floors. We were unable to see the suspended timber floor due to the blocks.

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary about looking at part of the floor. It may be the case that it is all solid we cannot be certain until you try to open up a section of it.



Flooring blocks covering the floor were opening up slightly

Solid Floor

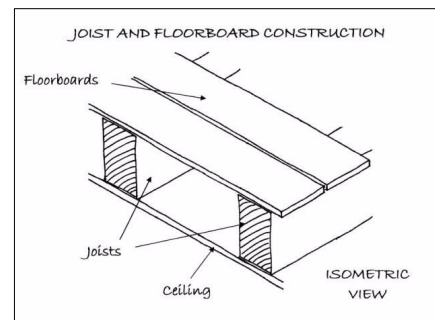
The floors felt solid under foot so we have assumed that they are constructed in concrete

First Floor Lantern

We would advise that it is likely to have ceiling joists in place rather than floor joists so to make this into a local authority approved first floor you will need to replace these joists with floor joists. This does need to be checked and confirmed.

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.



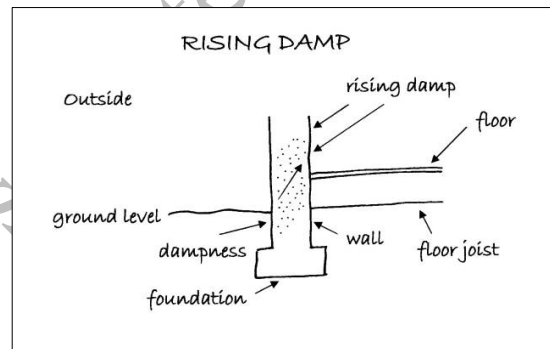
Finally, we have not been able to view the actual floors themselves due to them being covered with fitted carpets and wood block flooring. The comments we have made are based upon our experience and knowledge of this type of construction. We would emphasise that we have not opened up the floors in any 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.



A random visual inspection and tests with a moisture meter have been taken to the perimeter walls and some internal walls. In this particular case we have found no rising damp.

ACTION REQUIRED: Please see the Executive Summary.



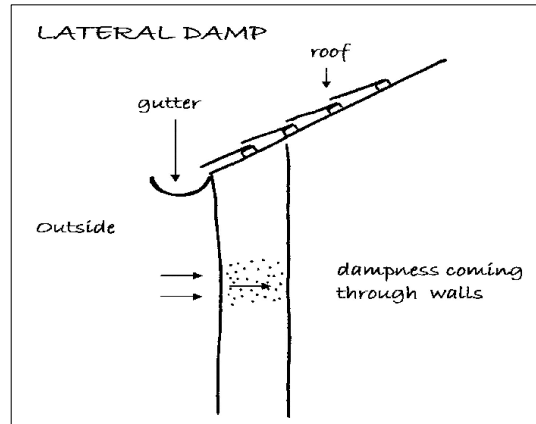
Testing for rising damp

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.

We used a damp meter on the external walls. We have not found dampness.

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



Condensation

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

At the time of the inspection there were no obvious signs of condensation. However, it depends 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. Normally opening windows first thing in the morning resolves most condensation issues.

Extract fans in kitchens and bathrooms

In older style properties depending on the number of people in them and the way it is used you can get condensation.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would normally recommend humidity controlled extract fans be added to kitchens and bathrooms but this seems unnecessary in a building with such high ceilings. Nevertheless if you do get condensation then we would recommend they are added.

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

You have some magnificent internal doors. The proportions are large.



Internal door

The glazed door may be a problem with young children as it is not toughened glass (we couldn't see the British Standard kite mark on it for safety glass). You may want to replace or guard the bottom panels.



Glazed door

Staircase

You haven't got a staircase but it does beg the question as to where you would put one if you do build up into the roof space. We are more than happy to discuss this along with the redesign of the property.

Skirtings

You have large decorative skirtings.



Skirting board

Kitchen

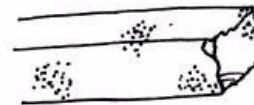
We found the kitchen in average condition and slightly dated. Of course it does depend on whether you like this style. The kitchen is subject of course to some wear and tear as one would expect.

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.

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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.*

We have not visually seen any dry rot during the course of our inspection.

We would advise that we have not opened up the floors and we had a limited view of the roof

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.*

There may be some wet rot under the valley gutter and may be to some of the fascia boards.

We would advise that we have not opened up the floors and we had a limited view of the roof.

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.

The roof is the main area that we look for woodworm.

Within the roof we found no obvious visual signs of woodworm activity or indeed signs of past woodworm activity that has caused what we would term 'structurally significant' damage. In many properties there is an element of woodworm that is not active. Our inspection is usually restricted by insulation covering some of the timbers and general stored items in the roof, as it is restricted throughout the property by general fixtures and fittings.

ACTION REQUIRED: If you wish to be 100 per cent certain that there is no woodworm the only way would be to check the property when is emptied of fixtures and fittings etc.

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.

Internal decorations are in average condition

You may wish to redecorate to your own personal taste.

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.

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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.

HIPs

We understand that HIPs were suspended from 20th May 2010. Energy Performance Certificates are required before a sale completes.

Roofs

Some roof insulation was present although not to current Building Regulations requirements of 300mm. In this instance it is approximately 100mm.

Walls

The walls to this property are solid in the sense that they do not have a cavity as a modern property would have. Also they are unlikely to have any substantial insulation. Unfortunately it is generally very difficult to improve the insulation without affecting the external or the internal appearance of the property.

Windows

The windows are single glazed and therefore will have poor thermal properties.

Services

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

Summary

Assuming the above is correct; this property is below average / compared with what we typically see.

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

HTTP//www.est.org.uk, which is by the Energy Saving Trust and includes a section on grant aid.

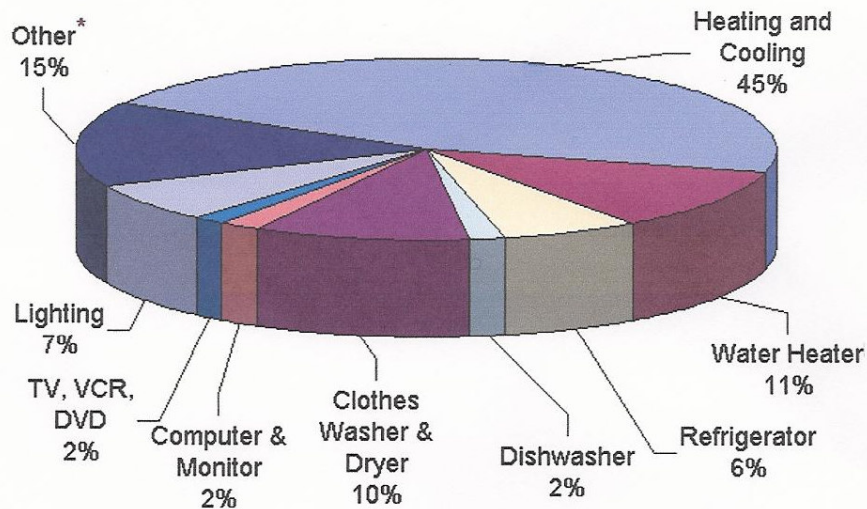
or alternatively www.cat.org.uk

*or Sustainable Energy Without the Hot Air by David J C MacKay
HTTP//www.withouthotair.com/Videos.html to download or buy like we did.*

*It is worth watching the video How Many Light Bulbs? by David J C MacKay
HTTP//www.youtube.com/watch?v=UR8wRSp21Xs*

Finally, we would comment that energy we feel will become a major consideration in years to come, particularly with the greater focus in modern buildings on energy efficiency

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

No security system was noted. It is a personal decision as to whether you feel one is necessary. We are not experts in this field and therefore cannot comment further. We suggest you contact a member of NACOSS (National Approval Council for Security Services), obtainable through directory enquiries, or your local Police Force for advice on a security system.

Fire / Smoke Alarms

With older properties it is particularly important to have a good fire / smoke alarm system, as often they are built from many burnable elements.

Some smoke detectors were noted. The current Building Regulations require that they be wired into the main power supply. 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 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.

We would refer you to our comments with regard to building insurance throughout this report.

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.

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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.

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ELECTRICITY

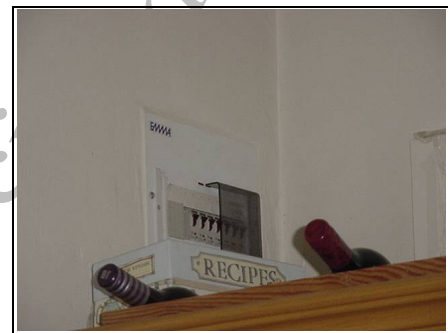


It is strange to think that electricity only started to be used in domestic properties at the turn of the 19th century with gas lighting still being the norm for a good many years after.

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

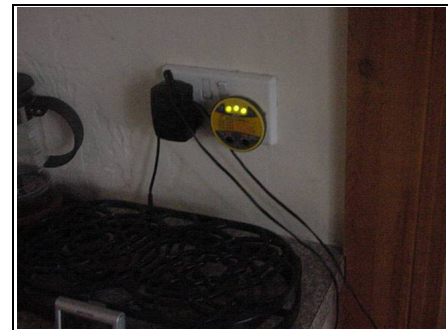
The fuse board looked dated. In an older property a defective fuse board can be particularly dangerous.



Dated fuseboard

Earth Test

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



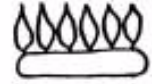
Earth Test

ACTION REQUIRED: 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 Gas Safe registered plumber.

The thing we would bring to your attention in regards to the gas is the size of the pipes we can see coming into the lantern roof.

All gas appliances, pipework and flues should be the subject of an annual service by a competent engineer, i.e., a member of Gas Safe; 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.



Gas Pipe

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

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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

The controlling stopcock was not located. 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.

ACTION REQUIRED: Ask the owners to show you where it is.

Water Pressure

When the taps were run to carry out the drainage test we checked the pressure literally by putting a finger over the tap and this seemed average. 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 piping. No significant leakage was noted on the surface, although most of the pipework is concealed in floors, walls and ducts.

Heating

The boiler was located adjacent to the entrance hallway, it is manufactured by Potterton.

Our limited inspection of the hot water and central heating system revealed no evidence to suggest any serious defects but we would nevertheless 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.



Potterton boiler



School style radiator

Ten Minute Heating Test

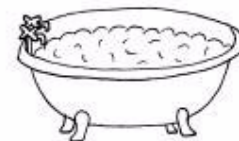
The owner at our request turned on the heating for approximately ten minutes and it all worked correctly.

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.

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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.

Bathroom

The property has a three piece bathroom suite in a Jack and Jill style i.e. it has two doors. It consists of a bath, wash hand basin and WC, which looks in average condition, subject to some day-to-day wear and tear, as one would expect. The high ceilings and leaded windows we feel help make this room.

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.

Cloakroom

Although it's small we find any cloakroom at all is a benefit and of course you have the wash hand basin in the second bedroom as well.

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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 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 two types of manholes. We have the ones leading to the septic tank for the sewerage and the concrete covered ones that are the rainwater ones that we believe lead to a ground drain or soak away.

Manhole covers with concrete

These are for the rainwater. We believe they have been added as it was understood the importance of keeping the water away from the nearby trees. As discussed the present owners have had to pull out roots from the trees previously and no doubt you will have to in the future.



Manhole not lifted

Sewerage Manhole

This one is to the front of the property and was duly lifted. It was clear at the time of our inspection of any blockages although it does have tree roots in it.

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



Drain at front with tree roots in it

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 instance as mentioned it goes into its own drainage system and we have no idea where this goes. The only way to find out would be a closed circuit TV camera report.

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.

The main focus of this report has been on the main building. If you wish us to do a specific report on the other buildings then you need to instruct us for this separately. We are offering here a brief overview.

OUTSIDE AREAS

PARKING

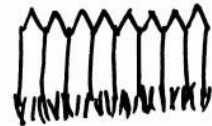


Parking to the front of the property but we also noted what looked to be parking to the rear of your garden. You need to check that you are happy with this layout.



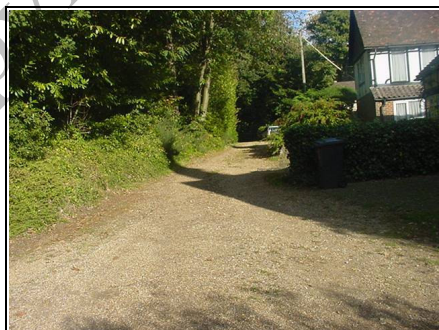
Garden with parking behind

EXTERNAL AREAS



Front Garden

The front garden as such is given over to parking. We are not sure where it starts and ends due to the way the road way leads into it. You also have a garage in this area.



Communal Shared Drive way



Front Garden/Parking

Rear Garden

This is laid mainly to lawn. As mentioned the car park is to one side of it and to some extent it is overlooked by your neighbours on the other side. However you do have the woodland.



Rear Garden

Surrounding Gardens

There is an area to some extent around the whole of the property. This is mainly bound by a large retaining wall with more terracotta weep holes than we've ever seen. This does seem to indicate that a lot of water does come out of this when it rains.



Retaining Wall

Woodland

You of course get a woodland with this property which will be of great benefit.

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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

Left Hand Neighbours

We didn't speak to the left hand neighbours but you recommend that you visit them before legally committing to purchase this property.

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POINTS FOR YOUR LEGAL ADVISOR

If you wish to proceed with your purchase of the property a copy of this report 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) Roof and similar renewals.
 - iv) Central heating installation.
 - v) Planning and Building Regulation Approvals.
 - vi) Removal of any walls in part or whole.
 - vii) Removal of any chimneys in part or whole.
 - viii) 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 see our article link on the www.1stAssociated.co.uk Home Page.

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

LOCAL AUTHORITY ENQUIRIES

Your Legal Advisor should carry out Local Authority searches to ascertain whether the property is a Listed Building and whether it is situated in a Conservation Area. They should also find out any information available with regard to Planning Applications and Building Control. We have not made any formal or informal Local Authority enquiries.

Finally, your Legal Advisor should carry out any additional enquiries they feel necessary and if they find anything unusual or onerous then we ask that they contact us immediately for our further comments.

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.

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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

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APPENDICES

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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 mild autumn day at the time of the inspection. The weather did not hamper the survey.

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 us not opening up the floors and due to us not having full access to the roof particularly in the Lantern area.

BUILDING INSURANCE

We do not advise with regard to building insurance. You need to make your own enquiries. Some areas may have a premium, some buildings may have a premium and some insurers may be unwilling to insure at all in certain areas. You need to make your own enquires prior to committing to purchase the property. Please be aware the fact a building is currently insured does not mean it can be re insured.

We would comment that non-insurability of a building we feel will affect value. It is therefore essential to make your own enquiries with regard to insurance before committing to purchase the property and incurring fees.

ACTION REQUIRED: You need to contact an insurance company today to make enquiries with regard to insurance on this property.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Our computer system sends two copies of our Terms and Conditions to the email address given to us when booking the survey; one has the terms attached and the other has links to the Terms and Conditions on our website (for a limited time). If you have not received these please phone your contact immediately.

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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

This gives information with regard to house sale and purchase prices.

www.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.

www.rightmove.co.uk

This is probably the largest Internet search engine for estate agency sales and also has useful information with regard to prices of property (but it is not the same as having a chartered surveyor value it).

www.zoopla.co.uk

This is a very good website for seeing the prices of properties for sale in a certain postcode area.

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