

JOB REF: XXXX

SPECIFIC DEFECTS REPORT

Relating to identified Dampness

XXXX London. E17 XXX



Mr X

Prepared by:

XXXXXX

INDEPENDENT CHARTERED SURVEYORS

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0800 298 5424

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INTRODUCTION AND INSTRUCTION

We have been instructed by Mr X to prepare a report on XXX London. E17 XXX

We have carried out a visual inspection of the property on XXX

The weather was dull and raining at the time of the inspection.

We are Independent Chartered Building Surveyors. We are registered with the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors and are members of the Independent Surveyors Association.

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

SYNOPSIS

The house was purchased in XXX at the time it was in a poor condition and has had major (although in some areas uncompleted) refurbishment and also a vertical roof extension to add a bedroom and en suite shower room. Mr X advised us that there are three areas of dampness that she would like further advice on:-

1. Dampness within the cupboard to the front left hand side of the loft conversion (all directions given as you face the property from the front).
2. Dampness to the ceiling of the front bedroom adjacent to the left hand wall.
3. Dampness to the ceiling adjacent to the bathroom.

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CONSTRUCTION SUMMARY

External

Chimneys:	Brick chimney
Main Roof:	Pitched roof clad with man-made slates with roof lights, (noticed the roof window was side opening rather than top hung).
Roof Structure:	Not visible
Gutters and Downpipes:	Plastic
Soil and Vent Pipe:	Plastic
Walls:	Flemish bond (assumed) brickwork repointed in a cement mortar.
External Joinery:	Windows are plastic
Foundations:	Not inspected and known

Internal

Ceilings:	Original lath and plaster (assumed) replaced with plasterboard
Walls	Replastered with a modern gypsum plaster (assumed)
Floors: Ground Floor:	Kenwood have carried out damp proof work including replastering likely to be renovation plaster
First Floor:	Likely to be joist and floorboard embedded timbers (assumed)
Top Floor	Likely to be joist and floorboard sheets

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

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ACCOMMODATION AND FACILITIES

Rooms seen are:-

Ground Floor

Hallway

Kitchen giving access to the rear of the property



Front elevation

1st Floor

Bathroom

Landing

Front Bedroom

Top Floor

Bedroom and en suite shower room



Rear elevation

In addition to this we believe there are further rooms on the ground floor and further rooms on the first floor.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Executive summaries are always “dangerous” as they try and encapsulate relatively complex problems in a few precise and succinct words. Having said that here is our executive summary and recommendations:

Dampness

As with most damp problems we believe it is a combination of issues:-

Parapet Wall

The following addressing dampness to the front cupboard within the loft conversion and dampness within the front bedroom, we believe this to be a combination of issues.

1. We believe that rainwater is getting in through the parapet wall, this is in a variety of ways:-
 - i. Dampness from your neighbours side where there does not appear to be a flashing which certainly is not visible and in addition to this there looks to be a green layer of moss which indicates that there is dampness which we believe is the main cause of dampness coming through into the bedroom, possibly also affecting the other areas.



Dampness within top bedroom front left hand corner



Close up Parapet wall from your neighbours' side



Parapet wall left hand side



Parapet wall close up your side

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- ii. Residual water left in the parapet prior to the coping stones being rebedded.



Rebedded coping stones

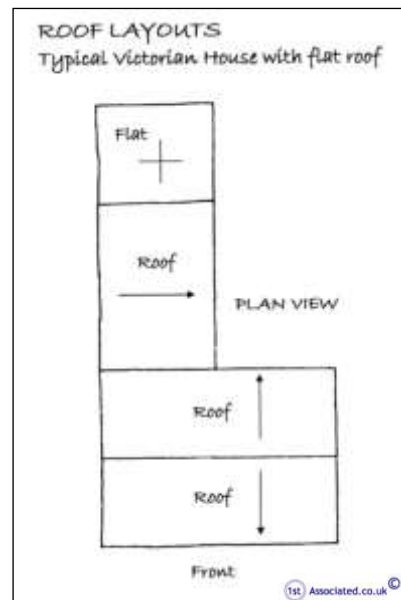
- 2. Dampness adjacent to the bedroom on the first floor. We believe this to relate to:-

- i. The parapet wall issues that we have already mentioned.
- ii. The shower waste pipes which we have carried out a dyed (Ribena water test) we are sure you will advise us if any red or pink colour comes through on the ceiling.



Dampness within main bedroom left hand wall

- iii. Condensation on the water supply pipe
- iv. Possibly a poor joint between the main roof and the rear roof
- v. A parapet wall that is allowing dampness in, please see answers to point 1.



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3. Dampness to the ceiling adjacent to the bathroom. As you are aware in this instance we have inspected in the roof. Sorry to repeat our earlier comments but we believe that;

- i. This relates to the parapet wall, in this case it is likely to be the rear parapet wall.



Close up of common rafters checking rear detail



Damaged coping stone that has been put back



This is where the parapet wall starts to the left hand side of this photo

- ii. It could be defective piping you will recall we did the test with the coloured water (Ribena) from the shower to see if anything has come through, you will no doubt advise us if the area starts to have a pink tinge to it.

- iii. As in the previous section it could be the junction between the main building is defective



Defective junction

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Other general issues that we would note about the property.

We would like to make the following comments:-

We do not feel the standard of work is best of quality generally but would need to have a look literally at the property as a whole and comment further.

We did note things such as:-

1. Gutters and downpipes are not falling towards the outlet.
2. The render detailing
3. Elements of unfinished work.
4. The way the roof structure is held in place



Gutter full of water at rear discharging against property, this is the best view we had of the junction between the main building and the rear building unfortunately all we could see was a gutter full of water!



Example of poor workmanship, the packing underneath the joist within the roof

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Time Line – A brief history of the structure

This has been based upon a discussion with Sue George also during the course of our discussions we were advised that the main contractor and associated contractors were no longer trading.

DATE	DESCRIPTION
1880s-1900	Property built
1920-2006	Owned by one family and passed down through the generations
2007	Ms George purchased property
2008	Roof conversion signed off by Building Control
2008	Refurbishment - changed doors, windows and render to right hand side by Kenwood. Kenwood also treated dry and wet rot and DPC work to front elevation same company
2008	Builders closed down complaint of some kind made to trading standards
October 2008	Ms George occupied property as previously non habitable electrics poor etc
December 2009	Dampness noted first floor front bedroom ceiling, builders repaired valley gutter to front splay bay window only for the dampness to return
Unsure of exact date	First floor and hallway dampness noted

Sue George needs to confirm that this is correct.

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INSPECTION

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

Visual Inspection

Our inspection has taken the format of a visual inspection:

1. External of the property of the
 - i. front
 - ii. rear
 - iii. side

We have had the benefit of a x16 zoom lens on a digital camera

2. Internal of the property

We have viewed:

- i. Loft conversion
- ii. Front bedroom
- iii. Hallway adjacent to the bathroom on the first floor

3. Surrounding areas

- i. Front area, the neighbouring property parapet wall detail did not appear to have a flashing. The parapet wall is brick with a clay coping stone, your side of the property has a lead flashing with a cement mortar.
- ii. Rear area, there is no drip detailing over the windows. We noted that the gutter to the rear pitched roof was discharging away from the downpipe against the rendered wall and also noted that the soil and vent pipe has not been finished correctly and that some of the drainage pipes had been left unfinished.
- iii. Side view, cement render has been used on an old property which we would much prefer to see a lime mortar. (However, please note the focus of our report is on dampness).
- iv. Overview of area

4. We have utilised a resistance meter for measuring dampness Gann Meter typical readings for this type of construction we would expect

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on a solid wall to be in the region of 40-60 and on a studwork wall to be in the region of 15-30.

5. A thermal imaging camera, manufactured by Flir, was used to see if we could see any differentials in the buildings thermal efficiency and thereby identifying any dampness however it was raining at the time of the survey and therefore the use of the thermal imaging camera was unsuccessful.

References

1stAssociated.co.uk – see articles on damp

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SURVEY FINDINGS

1. From our visual external inspection we noted:

i. roofs - we noted that the original roof has been replaced with a manmade slate



Manmade roof slates

ii. walls – we noted the walls have been finished in a modern cement render which may not be appropriate for this age of property in addition to this we noticed the detailing was poor around the windows and also the damp proof course (DPC) has been inserted



Wall showing holes where DPC has been inserted

iii. windows – the windows have been replaced with modern plastic windows, whilst these have trickle vents they do have a reduced airflow around the property compared with a traditional sliding sash window which is what these would originally have had.



Plastic replacement window

XXXXXXX

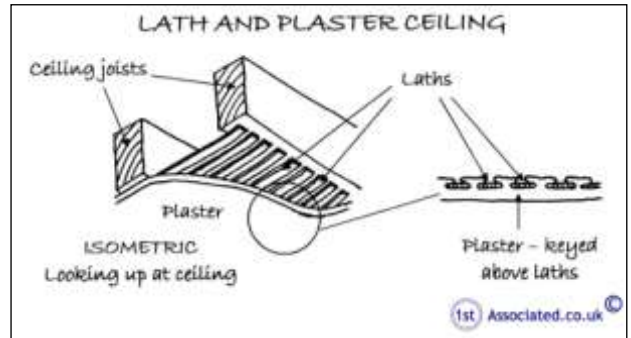
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2. From our visual internal inspection we noted

- i. ceilings – we believe there is a mixture of lath and plaster and plasterboard.
- ii. walls – we believe these are a mixture of the original lime plaster and a more modern gypsum plaster together with



Lath and plaster

what is typical with a damp proofing company which is what is known as a renovating plaster or a waterproof plaster which is much harder, their argument being that this protects the property from rising damp. We would refer to the research that has been carried out by Jeff Howell, see the book *The Damp Proof Myth*, available on Amazon, we much prefer a wall that breathes rather than one that uses this raincoat type principle.



Dampness in old buildings

Note; we have not moved furniture or fixtures and fittings.

Note; the full areas inspected are identified within the inspection part of the report and this should show anything in this section. The focus of our report has been on the three areas of dampness identified.

3. Gann Resistance Damp Meter Readings

Room	Readings Obtained	Typical Readings
Roof conversion	90s	40-60
Front Bedroom	No readings taken, gypsum plaster visually deteriorating	
Ceiling and adjacent bathroom wall	40-80 range, plaster blown	40-60

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4. From our visual inspection within the roof we noted that there was wall plates sitting on top of and into the parapet wall with signs of dampness, we noted poorly supported new timbers and we noted what looked to be a breathable felt that has been used on the underside which we feel is good practice. Our view was limited by stored items in the roof and our view was carried out via torchlight.



Inside the roof

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SUMMARY UPON REFLECTION

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

Leaks like these are very difficult to resolve, we do think you need to start with discussions with your neighbour which is what we refer to as cups of tea meetings, we think from memory you advised that the property was rented which sometimes makes this an easier discussion and sometimes it can make it a more difficult discussion (known as absentee landlords).

We would also suggest that you not using the shower eliminates this area from the equation, unfortunately old buildings absorb dampness very much like blotting paper and take a long time for it to dry out, typically one month for every inch (2.5centimeters) of wall/dampness.

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

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LIMITATIONS

Specific Defects Report

1. Conditions of Engagement

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

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

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

2. The Inspection

a) Accessibility and Voids

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

b) Floors

We have not opened up the floor structure. We have only carried out a visual inspection and any conclusions will be based upon our best assumptions. We can open up the floor if so required at an extra fee.

c) Roofs

The Surveyor did inspect the roofs in this instance but our comments are limited to that relating to damp.

d) Boundaries, Grounds and Outbuildings

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

e) Services

No services inspected.

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f) Areas not inspected

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

g) Specific Defects Report

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

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

3. Deleterious and Hazardous materials

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

4. Contamination

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

5. Consents, Approvals and Searches

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

Drawings and specifications will not be inspected by the Surveyor. It is the Clients responsibility to forward any drawings and specifications that he has or knows the

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whereabouts of to us to include information in our report. If these are not forthcoming we will make our best assumptions based upon the information available.

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

6. Fees and Expenses

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

7. Restrictions on Disclosures

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

8. Safe Working Practices

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

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