

BUILDING SURVEY

**Property
Address**

on the instructions of

Client

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INTRODUCTION

INSTRUCTIONS

An initial enquiry was received by way of a telephone conversation on [date], which was confirmed by my letter dated [date]. Your instructions to undertake a Building Survey were confirmed by the signed 'Confirmation of Instruction' Form received on [date].

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to provide you, the client, with relevant information about the structural condition and state of repair of the property so that decisions can be made relating to its proposed purchase or sale, and/or if further investigation is considered necessary for any particular concern(s).

LIMITATIONS

The inspection carried out has been of the visible elements of the property which were accessible and readily available for examination from ground and floor levels and adjacent public areas without risk of causing damage to the Property or injury to the Surveyor. Due care has therefore been exercised throughout the Inspection regarding safety, practicability and the constraints of being a visitor to the Property. In conducting the survey and completing the report, certain assumptions and restrictions as to the scope and application of the report have been made. These are set out in the Terms and Conditions, included at the end of this report, which are based on the example Terms and Conditions in the RICS guidance note: Building Surveys of Residential Property (2nd edition).

The report is not an inventory of every single defect, its intention is to outline the general condition of the structure and fabric of the property, highlighting the main points of disrepair and concern that are considered necessary for you to make a reasoned and informed judgment on whether or not to proceed with purchasing the property, and the basis on which to do so.

CONFIDENTIALITY

I would draw your attention to Clause 3b of the Terms and Conditions which advises that the report is confidential and should not be disclosed to any third party, other than your professional advisers, unless my written permission is obtained.

DATE AND CIRCUMSTANCES OF INSPECTION

The inspection was carried out on [date] when the weather was cloudy but bright and dry.

At the time of inspection the property was unoccupied and unfurnished with the majority of floors covered with fixed coverings (the exception being flooring in the understairs cupboard). Insulation materials also hindered the inspection of certain elements of the property, such as in the roof space where floor boarding was also a restricting factor. Externally the flat roof of the rear bay could not be inspected without raising long ladders. Nevertheless, I inspected as much of the structure and fabric as it was possible to so do and have reported to you accordingly.

THE PROPERTY

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

The property comprises a typical 1930's two-storey end-terraced house on a corner plot.

ACCOMMODATION

The accommodation is arranged on two floors and comprises:

Ground Floor:

Hall
Open plan Living Room, Dining Area and Kitchen.

First Floor:

Landing
Three Bedrooms
Bathroom with WC

Outside:

Gardens to front, side and rear

TENURE AND OCCUPATION

Assumed to be Freehold however normal enquiries should be made by your legal adviser prior to legal commitment to purchase to confirm that good title can be shown. If any onerous covenants or restrictions should come to light, the matter should be referred back with the full details for consideration of the effect upon value, if any, and any further advice.

LOCATION

Situated in an established residential locality of similar character terraced and semi-detached housing, the property occupies a corner plot fronting a roundabout and is within reasonable access of most amenities including local shopping, schooling, leisure and transport facilities.

ORIENTATION

For the purpose of description in this report all directions are given as facing the front of the property from outside unless otherwise stated.

The front elevation of the house faces east.

THE SURVEY

1. MOVEMENT

1.A. MAIN PROPERTY

When properties are refurbished, signs of movement, cracks and other defects to the structure are usually made good but sometimes they are covered up/concealed without first being properly resolved and can resurface after time. Therefore from the single inspection without the benefit of multiple visits over a period of time it is difficult to judge whether certain defects, such as visible cracks, are likely to reoccur or not, but taking all the signs of cracking and distortion into context, I do not believe the property has suffered significant settlement or subsidence related movement for which further investigation or major repair works are necessary. The cracks and distortions identified are typically associated with properties of this type and age, particularly in this area where London Clay is the predominant subsoil and some degree of movement is common.

- 1.A.1. Cracks have been patched at the join of the first floor section of the front bay to the main wall. This is at the junction of 225mm solid brickwork forming the main wall and slender 110mm brickwork of the bay, being relative weak points in the structure which have a tendency to fracture through loadings applied on the bay from the roof and windows, particularly when original windows are replaced with heavier double glazed units. The patching has recently been painted over obscuring whether the patching itself is recent or some years old and decorated over.
- 1.A.2. Similar cracks have been made good to the first floor section of the rear bay where it meets the main rear wall, and the bay has also suffered slight distortion.
- 1.A.3. Either directly or through your Legal Adviser enquiries should be made of the vendor as to whether they are aware of any past underpinning or other major structural repair work having been carried out to the property, either during or prior to their ownership.

1.B. GARAGE/OUTBUILDINGS

Not applicable.

2. EXTERIOR

2.A. CHIMNEY STACKS

There is a single shared brick chimney stack with four flues serving the subject property but these have been made redundant through the removal of the chimney breasts.

- 2.A.1. Brickwork was in satisfactory condition but mortar joints are weathering with mortar having fallen away in places. Repointing is required, using mortar to match existing.
- 2.A.2. Disused flues should be suitably capped to prevent entry by rain, birds and debris while maintaining ventilation.
- 2.A.3. Due to the height and position of chimney and flashings, repair and maintenance works will require the use of safety equipment such as scaffolding. This will significantly increase repair costs and full quotations should therefore be obtained where appropriate.

2.B. MAIN ROOF COVERING

The pitched roof is surfaced with clay tiles to the front and side slopes and concrete tiles to the rear slope.

- 2.B.1. The roof tiles display long-term weathering consistent with their age. A number of tiles are broken or have slipped out of position and cement beddings to ridge, hip and verge tiles are

loose or have fallen out in places. Attention is required to ensure the covering remains watertight.

- 2.B.2. The roof covering is capable of overhaul in the short term however replacement will be required in due course, and you are advised to budget for this if you intend owning the property for, say, 5 years or more. Maintenance will be an ongoing and increasingly more frequent responsibility until complete renewal is undertaken.

2.C. SECONDARY ROOF COVERING(S)

Surmounting the rear bay is a flat roof surfaced with lead or zinc. Due to the height of the roof the covering could not be inspected although the edges were visible from ground level.

- 2.C.1. The edges of the covering show the lead/zinc to be ageing but intact and satisfactory, and there were no signs of water penetration internally to indicate the roof is defective. Without the benefit of a proper inspection the possibility of failure should not be ignored and I advise the covering be checked when the main roof is overhauled.

2.D. FLASHINGS

A lead flashing has been applied at the base of the chimney stack. There are no other flashings.

- 2.D.1. The flashing is intact but of poor appearance and some daylight can be seen penetrating around the chimney stack in the roof space. I recommended it be renewed when the roof covering is overhauled.
- 2.D.2. It is vital that flashings are well maintained to prevent dampness penetrating into the fabric of the building.

2.E. RAINWATER FITTINGS

Rainwater from the roof drains into plastic guttering connecting to plastic downpipes carrying the water into the foulwater drainage system at the rear while the front downpipe extends to and drains open-ended on to the front garden.

- 2.E.1. It was not raining at the time of the inspection and any leaks, blockages, overflowing or other defects that may exist would not necessarily have been apparent but water staining to some of the gutter joints indicates possible leakage. A check during rainfall or by filling the gutters with water from a hose is recommended to confirm watertightness and efficiency.
- 2.E.2. Gutters should be checked for build-up of leaf mulch and general debris and cleaned out as required.
- 2.E.3. Valley gutters can be a source of damp penetration and need periodic maintenance, repair and replacement. These were satisfactory at the time of the inspection.

2.F. MAIN WALLS

The thickness of the external walls suggest they are of 225mm solid brick construction, with slender 110mm brickwork to the first floor sections of the bays, with a painted pebbledashed render.

The party wall was seen in the roof space to be of 225mm solid brickwork.

- 2.F.1. The rendering has been patched in places, mainly where old doorways and windows have been bricked up, but also at the base of the rear bay and to make good the previously mentioned cracking where the first floor sections of the bays meet the main walls of the house. It is difficult to achieve a blended finish when patching of rendering is carried out but the patching is particularly noticeable.
- 2.F.2. The rendering was of sound adhesion where tapped apart from a localised patch to the rear wall near the corner of the house. No immediate action is necessary but repair should be anticipated in due course (when cracking appears).

- 2.F.3. There is a horizontal crack to the face of the front bay gable. This is at the point where the wall incorporates a timber plate and has occurred through shrinkage and/or minor movement. No major repairs are required; the crack can be made good although is likely to reappear unless metal mesh is applied beneath the rendered finish to allow for movement.
- 2.F.4. The cement plinth at the front of the base of the flank wall has been partly removed. For appearance purposes the exposed brickwork should be rendered to match the existing plinth.
- 2.F.5. The slender brick first floor sections of the bays will be prone to occasional cracking at the joins to the main walls and will have inferior thermal and weatherproofing performance.
- 2.F.6. Where replacement windows and doors are installed, it is not possible to confirm that adequate lintels have been provided above the openings to support the loads carried as these were concealed.

2.G. DAMP PROOF COURSE

The damp proof course was not visible due to the rendered finish and plinth at the base of the walls but in this age of property is likely to be of bituminous felt.

- 2.G.1. External ground levels should be at least 150mm below the damp proof course to avoid the risk of ground moisture bridging the damp proof course and causing rising dampness.
- 2.G.2. Ground levels to all elevations appear to be at an acceptable height below the estimated position of the damp proof course in the walls however the steps built against the rear bay rise up to just under the door sill and are likely to be above, or close to, the damp proof course potentially allowing ground moisture and surface water from the steps to bridge the damp proof course and seep into the wall. I recommend a small gap be cut between the bay and at least the top two courses of brickwork forming the steps. Alternatively, given the amateurish and unattractive finish of the steps, consideration should be given to rebuilding the entire step structure leaving a suitable gap between it and the bay or incorporating a vertical damp proof membrane between them.

2.H. EXTERIOR JOINERY (EXCLUDING WINDOWS AND DOORS)

External joinery comprises timber soffits, fascias and cladding to the front bay gable.

- 2.H.1. Woodwork was in sound condition.
- 2.H.2. Soffits are formed with timber boards. There are gaps between some of the boards which should be sealed up to prevent birds and insects gaining entry into the eaves/roof space and nesting.
- 2.H.3. Removal of existing decorative finishes may reveal rot or other defects to timberwork, which should be repaired as necessary.

2.I. WINDOWS AND EXTERNAL DOORS

Windows and doors to front and rear are modern replacement PVCu units believed to have been installed in 2008.

- 2.I.1. Windows and doors were functional where opened however the entrance door binds when closed and the left-hand door of the rear bay hits the foot of the frame when closed. This is poor considering the recent installation of the doors. They should be adjusted to fit correctly but if simple adjustment does not rectify the defects, the surrounding doorframes may be at fault and need replacing. This should be under warranty and the installing company should be asked to revisit and resolve the issues.
- 2.I.2. All replacement glazing installations from April 2002 must comply with building regulations requirements and either be issued a local authority certificate or have been carried out by a FENSA registered company. This should be checked.

2.J. EXTERIOR DECORATIONS

The decorated parts include exposed woodwork and the rendered finish.

2.J.1. External finishes were in fair condition overall.

2.J.2. Redecoration will be a periodic responsibility to protect wood and metalwork from weathering and deterioration.

3. INTERIOR

3.A. MAIN ROOF SPACE

The roof space is approached through a removable trap in the landing ceiling. Boarding has been laid throughout the roof space and electric lighting is installed with the switch positioned on one of the uprights by the trap.

The roof structure comprises rafters braced by purlins supported by vertical struts bearing down on double timber beams spanning the flank and party walls. The purlins and struts replace the original purlins and angled struts. This has been undertaken as part of an unfinished plan to convert the roof space into a loft room or possibly living space. Joists run front to rear.

- 3.A.1. Floor boarding has been laid on newly installed joists hung from the double timber beams spanning the flank and party walls.
- 3.A.2. There were no signs of significant overstressing or distortion noted affecting the roof framework. The flooring and roof support appear satisfactory but the works should have been approved by the local authority for building regulations compliance prior to being undertaken with subsequent inspections carried out at key stages for formal approval to be granted upon completion. Enquiries should be made of the local authority to check if this was the case.
- 3.A.3. If the works have been carried out without local authority involvement the building control department should be informed so they can put matters in hand to issue a regularisation certificate.
- 3.A.4. There is no lining felt under the roof tiles and therefore defects to the covering may allow water penetration to affect roof timbers, ceilings and other elements of the property, particularly in severe weather conditions. Renewing the roof covering would provide a dedicated liner as a secondary barrier (or existing tiles can be stripped off and then re-laid on the lining, but this would be false economy).
- 3.A.5. There are no specific means for ventilating the roof space although air will enter between the tiles. Ventilation is required to prevent the occurrence of condensation to roof timbers or the undersides of the roof tiles or lining, which in turn can result in decay to structural timbers. Ventilation can be provided by inserting purpose made tile vents or forming gridded vents in the soffits (insulation must not obstruct airflow in the eaves).

3.B. SECONDARY ROOF/EAVES SPACE(S)

Not applicable.

3.C. CEILINGS

Ceilings seen in the roof space are formed with plasterboard with plaster finish. It is suspected all the ceilings in the property are formed with plasterboard, renewed during the refurbishment.

- 3.C.1. Ceilings were intact, flat and satisfactory viewing from underneath.
- 3.C.2. Plasterboard ceilings occasionally develop minor cracks along the line of the plasterboard joints. This is usually the result of expansion and contraction following changes in temperature and moisture content. Cracking of this type is normally only cosmetic and can usually be made good during the normal course of redecoration.

3.D. INTERNAL WALLS AND PARTITIONS

Internal divisions are formed with suspected concrete blockwork with directly applied plastering.

- 3.D.1. The ground floor cross wall and wall between the original kitchen and dining room have been removed to form an open plan living, dining and kitchen area. Means of support over the openings were concealed but there were no signs of fracturing or deflection to warrant further investigation. Such work should have been carried out with building regulations approval; refer to **6.B.**
- 3.D.2. In conjunction with this work, the original door way between the hall and kitchen has been blocked up.
- 3.D.3. No significant defects were identified to the internal walls and plaster finishes were smooth and firm where tapped.

3.E. CHIMNEY BREASTS AND FIREPLACES

All chimney breasts have been removed up to roof space level.

- 3.E.1. Chimney breast brickwork remaining in the roof space is supported on two bolted timber beams resting on the newly formed floor of the loft. This is not satisfactory and the support requires upgrading. Chimney breast removal works require local authority approval for building regulations compliance and it will be necessary to involve the local authority in carrying out works to upgrade the support to their satisfaction for building regulations approval to be granted.

3.F. FLOORS

Floors throughout the property are formed by timber boarding on joists, with joists running front to rear to both ground and first floors. The ground floor has been surfaced with hardwood flooring while carpeting has been laid to the staircase and in most rooms of the first floor, the exception being the bathroom where ceramic tiles have been laid.

- 3.F.1. The floors were covered which restricted the inspection but felt reasonably firm and level with no significant defects identified as seen (many parts were covered, unexposed or inaccessible). No floorboards could be raised as they were covered with fixed coverings except under the stairs but these could not be lifted without taking up the hardwood flooring in the hall or by cutting the floorboards. Therefore no part of the subfloor void has been inspected.
- 3.F.2. Subfloor ventilation is provided by four 225 x 75mm air bricks to the front elevation and a single 225 x 75mm vent to the rear. Although satisfactory at the front, a single vent at the rear is insufficient to ensure adequate air circulation to the entire subfloor area, particularly in the area of the hall and kitchen. Additional air vents should be inserted along the rear (at least two) and flank (at least three) walls. It is essential to have good subfloor ventilation to avoid decay affecting floor timbers.
- 3.F.3. Coverings were generally in good condition however the hardwood flooring has risen slightly in the hallway and dining area forming small voids between the hardwood and main floor boarding. The hardwood in these areas requires taking up and relaying allowing for expansion. Carpeting would also benefit from cleaning.

3.G. JOINERY & FITTINGS

Joinery and fittings include doors, frames, architraves and skirtings, together with built-in fittings in the kitchen. The staircase is built with timber (much of which was covered/concealed).

- 3.G.1. Internal joinery and fittings were in reasonable and satisfactory condition, with many components having been replaced with modern units.
- 3.G.2. The door to the understairs cupboard is unfixed and will not stay in place.

3.H. FINISHES AND DECORATIONS

Decorated finishes comprise painted and tiled applications.

- 3.H.1. Decorations were generally good having been renewed and modernised as part of the refurbishment.

3.I. CELLARS

The property does not have a cellar.

3.J. DAMPNES (INCLUDING CONDENSATION)

Readings were taken with a moisture meter at selected accessible positions to the main walls at ground and first floor levels, including around and under windows. Fitted units restricted a check of the walls in the kitchen and no assurance can be given that they are damp-free without fully exposing them.

- 3.J.1. Moisture meter readings were within acceptable limits where tested and no significant visible dampness was identified.

- 3.J.2. Borderline readings were registered to the bay of the rear bedroom. As stated previously, due to the slender thickness of the wall at this point thermal and weatherproofing performance will be substandard and slight dampness is not unexpected. The wall can be lined internally to improve thermal performance – refer to **6.F THERMAL INSULATION**.

- 3.J.3. There were no obvious signs of abnormal condensation problems noted in the property at the time of the inspection but this can vary depending on the time of year or even day. Condensation, the occurrence of which is dependent on a number of factors including occupancy, usage of the property and seasonal/climatic variations, can be a serious building problem. It is essential that all rooms be adequately and regularly heated and ventilated, more especially the kitchen and bathroom.

3.K. TIMBER DEFECTS

Random inspections were made of exposed and accessible timbers in the roof, under the stairs and to flooring where exposed but many timbers were covered, unexposed or inaccessible and it has not been possible to inspect these without intrusive investigation.

- 3.K.1. There was no evidence of woodworm, dry rot or other timber defects to inspected timbers.

- 3.K.2. There is always a risk of timber infestation in properties of this age and no assurance can be given that those timbers not inspected are free from woodworm or other defect. A detailed specialist check can be made but would need to involve the cooperation and permission of the vendor to expose and make accessible all timbers where possible, but in the first instance they should be asked if they are aware of any treatment having been carried out either as part of the refurbishment or previously.

4. SERVICES

IMPORTANT NOTE: The efficiency, compliance with regulations, adequacy of design and safety of services can only be assessed by detailed tests conducted by suitably qualified specialists. Where possible, drainage inspection chambers are examined (except in the case of flats), but drains are not tested during the Inspection. Any comments on services in this report are made by way of general observation of the visible parts only.

4.A. ELECTRICITY

The property is connected to the mains electrical supply with the meter and consumer unit located under the stairs. The installation comprises PVC wiring and modern miniature circuit breaker consumer unit.

- 4.A.1. The electrical installation includes many modern/new components suggesting it has been upgraded in the recent past however there is no notice on the consumer unit stating when the installation was upgraded/tested as is common practice. All electrical installation works undertaken after 1st January 2005 should be identified by an Electrical Installation certificate.
- 4.A.2. Although the installation looks to have been modernised, wiring providing lighting in the roof space is poor, with the cable connected to a socket outlet by the use of plug pins. This may have been a temporary measure to provide lighting in the roof space while it was being converted but is dangerous and unsatisfactory.
- 4.A.3. The vendor should be asked to provide the certificate issued upon completion of wiring works confirming compliance with regulations. If not available, a test and report on the whole installation should be carried out by a registered electrician (preferably NICEIC or ECA), although the wiring defect in the roof space will still require rectifying.
- 4.A.4. Guidance from the Institute of Electrical Engineers recommends that electrical installations should be tested at least every 10 years and on every change of occupancy.

4.B. GAS

The property is connected to the mains gas supply with the meter located externally in the porch.

- 4.B.1. No obvious gaseous smells were noted in the property however acceptability in terms of condition, performance and safety of the boiler can only be confirmed by professional testing. Carbon monoxide gas can be given off by poorly ventilated appliances. This is colourless and odourless and can be fatal to human health.
- 4.B.2. Gas appliances should be in store by and periodically checked by a GAS SAFE registered specialist to ensure they are adequately ventilated, safe, fully serviceable and efficient – see **4.C. HEATING**.
- 4.B.3. The installation of carbon monoxide detectors is recommended.

4.C. HEATING

Central heating is provided by a wall-mounted gas-fired combination condensing boiler with rooms heated by panel radiators.

- 4.C.1. The system was not seen operating and I am therefore unable to comment whether the heating system is in working order.
- 4.C.2. The boiler is a modern condensing unit but there was no plastic tube projecting from the boiler to discharge condensate to the drainage system. Gas boilers must be fitted by a Gas Safe (formerly CORGI) registered engineer. The vendor should be asked to produce the certificate confirming the boiler was installed in accordance with the relevant regulations, however in view of not being able to see the system operating and the lack of condensate

pipe, I recommend you have the boiler and entire heating system independently checked by a Gas Safe registered heating specialist.

4.D. WATER SYSTEM (HOT AND COLD)

The property is connected to and fed directly from the mains water supply. Visible plumbing is in copper and plastic.

Hot water is provided by the gas boiler on demand.

- 4.D.1. Despite the property being empty the rising mains stop valve could not be located and may be concealed under the ground floor. The vendor should be asked to confirm its location and whether the original lead main has been replaced. If not already provided, a stop valve should be installed.
- 4.D.2. Lead plumbing, if it remains, must be regarded as approaching the end of its useful life and susceptible to leakage. There are also possible health concerns. Replacement work is disruptive and can be costly.
- 4.D.3. The visible parts of the installation were in satisfactory condition and water pressures were found to be adequate when taps were operated and toilets flushed. No significant defects were identified through the cursory inspection however the waste pipe from the kitchen sink leaks at the external joint where the pipe projects through the wall, this needs rectifying.
- 4.D.4. There was no running hot water during the inspection as the boiler was not firing up. Refer to the previous heading (**HEATING**) regarding the boiler.
- 4.D.5. Adequacy and serviceability of the plumbing system can only be fully assessed by specialist inspection.

4.E. SANITARY FITTINGS

Sanitary fittings in the bathroom are newly installed modern units. The kitchen sink is a new stainless steel single drainer inset unit.

- 4.E.1. All fittings were in satisfactory and serviceable condition as seen.
- 4.E.2. Baths fitted with showers can be susceptible to water seepage/leakage if surrounding seals and tile grouting are not properly maintained, which can result in damage to floor timbers, ceilings and other elements of the property, sometimes going unseen. It is important that all seals and tile grouting be maintained in good watertight condition to all fittings.

4.F. DRAINAGE

Foul water drainage is assumed to connect to the main sewer but enquiries of the local authority or water board should confirm the arrangements.

The drains are shared, running from the soil and vent pipe at the side of the house to the inspection chamber off the rear-left corner and on towards the rear of the adjacent property.

- 4.F.1. The cover of the inspection chamber was raised revealing a build-up of dirt in the channel fallen from around the frame. The dirt was restricting the flow of water and will cause a blockage when the drains carry waste. Urgent action is required to clear the drains and leave them free-flowing.
- 4.F.2. There is slight root growth in the chamber which should be removed, and this may be a periodic responsibility.
- 4.F.3. The only effective way of confirming the true condition of the complete below-ground drainage arrangements is by means of a specialist survey utilising CCTV technology and this is recommended as prudent action, particularly for a property of this age and to ensure the drains are clear of debris, particularly builders' debris from the recent refurbishment works.

4.G. OTHER

- 4.G.1. An extractor fan has been fitted in the bathroom, operated in conjunction with the light. This was functional.

5. OUTBUILDINGS AND SITE

5.A. GARAGE(S)

There is no garage but there is the base of a previous garage in the rear garden, with access from [road name]

- 5.A.1. Subject to confirming the adequacy of foundations to the concrete base, it may be possible to use this to support a new garage structure, although the dimensions may be too small for many modern day cars.

5.B. OUTBUILDINGS

There are no outbuildings to report on.

5.C. EXTERNAL AREAS/GARDENS

The property occupies an irregular shaped corner site with moderate slope down from front/left to the rear-right. There are garden areas to the front, side and rear of the house.

- 5.C.1. Garden and paved areas are poor and require maintenance and landscaping.
- 5.C.2. The steps from the dining room doors to the garden are of amateur build and finish and would benefit from rebuilding, incorporating the advice given in **2.G. DAMP PROOF COURSE**.

5.D. TREES

There are no trees growing on site or in close proximity to the house however numerous stumps just inside the left-hand boundary indicated the felling/removal of trees in the recent past.

- 5.D.1. The removal of trees where subsoils have clay content can result in ground heave which is where the ground swells with the accumulation of water which is no longer being drawn out by the trees. Heave can cause damage to building structures and underground services, although there were no obvious signs of such disturbance as seen. As the ground where the trees stood is a meter or so above the ground surrounding the house any occurrence of heave should have minimal effect on the stability of the house.

5.E. BOUNDARIES

Boundaries are delineated by brick walls and timber fencing.

- 5.E.1. Recent works have been carried out to build the front wall and erect fencing to the left-hand and right-hand boundaries. Workmanship is poor, particularly to the fencing. Slats to the closeboarded fencing do not overlap, possibly to reduce costs. Despite the recent works to the left-hand fence, attention remains necessary to replace a missing slat and repair timber posts and arris rails where weathering and defective. Ideally the closeboarded fences should be rebuilt in their proper form.
- 5.E.2. The timber fence along the rear boundary is in very poor condition and requires substantial rebuilding.

6. STATUTORY, ENVIRONMENTAL & OTHER MATTERS

IMPORTANT NOTE: Comments can only be made on what is visible or suspected. The omission of comments in this section does not mean that the property or property owner is free from outstanding legal obligations. Only your solicitor can confirm this.

6.A. PLANNING

No enquiries have been made of the Local Authority in connection with Planning matters.

There are no proposed planning schemes known which are likely to directly adversely affect the premises as far as I am aware, however, all usual searches and enquiries should be made by your legal adviser for confirmation.

There is scope to extend the property to the side and/or rear subject to obtaining all necessary consents from the local authority.

6.B. BUILDING REGULATIONS

No enquiries have been made of the Local Authority in connection with Building Regulation matters.

The following extensions, alterations and/or improvements were noted and your legal adviser should obtain confirmation that the relevant consents have been obtained, or regulations complied with, as necessary:

- 6.B.1. Unfinished loft conversion/roof structure alterations.
- 6.B.2. Opening through of the ground floor cross wall and wall between the kitchen and dining area.
- 6.B.3. Chimney breast removal.
- 6.B.4. Window/door replacement.
- 6.B.5. Electrical rewiring.
- 6.B.6. Gas boiler installation.

6.C. PARTY WALL ETC. ACT 1996

This will apply to works and structural alterations (insertion of beams, etc.) to party walls and the Act would be applicable in the event of any such works being planned, and would have applied to the removal of the chimney breasts and insertion of the timber beams supporting the roof struts and loft room floor where supported by the party wall.

The 'etc.' part of the Act relates to excavation at certain depths and distances below the foundations of adjoining properties and, here again, the Act would be relevant in the event of extensions, etc.

6.D. HEALTH AND SAFETY

- 6.D.1. Smoke alarms have been fixed to the hall and landing ceilings. They were not tested.
- 6.D.2. The installation of carbon monoxide and smoke detectors is advised.
- 6.D.3. Although I found no obvious evidence of asbestos in the property, the use of asbestos in building materials during the 20th century, and especially post-World War II to the mid-1980s, was widespread and can be found in one form or another (such as fireproof boarding, water tanks, pipe lagging, textured ceiling applications, floor tiles, etc) in many properties during this period although is not always easily identifiable, and without specialist investigation it is not possible to determine whether the property is free from asbestos.

6.E. SECURITY

- 6.E.1. There are modern standard fitted locks to windows and doors.
- 6.E.2. Present security arrangements are considered generally minimal and I would recommend that you give consideration to the installation of additional window and door locks, external PIR lighting and a burglar alarm and improving boundary fencing.
- 6.E.3. It would be prudent seeking advice from your local crime prevention officer.

6.F. THERMAL INSULATION

An energy performance certificate (EPC), which provides information on the overall energy efficiency of the property as well as insulation, should have been produced as part of the Home Information Pack for marketing this property and you are advised to request sight of this if one is available and you have not already viewed it.

Thermal insulation recommendations and requirements are becoming increasingly more stringent to improve the energy efficiency of the country's housing stock, and there is scope to improve insulation measures in the property.

- 6.F.1. Modern mineral quilted roof insulation has been laid beneath the loft floor boarding to a 200mm thickness. Latest recommendations provide for a minimum of 270mm laid between and across ceiling joists however the additional 70mm is unlikely to have a significant bearing on heat loss and reducing heating bills.
- 6.F.2. Solid walls of older properties are thermally substandard to modern day construction methods. They can be lined internally to reduce heat loss but care must be taken with older solid walls not to lock in dampness by doing so; breathable materials must be used. External insulation can also be applied but this tends to be expensive and also alters the appearance of the property.
- 6.F.3. Walls to the first floor sections of the bays are of slender 110mm thickness which will be substandard in terms of thermal performance and prone to greater heat loss. Suitable linings and finishes can be applied as in the previous paragraph.
- 6.F.4. Windows and external doors are double glazed and adequate for insulation purposes subject to being maintained in airtight condition.

6.G. ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS

- 6.G.1. There are no proposed environmental schemes known which are likely to directly adversely affect the premises as far as I am aware, however all usual searches and enquiries should be made by your legal adviser for confirmation.
- 6.G.2. According to the Environment Agency, the property lies in an area which falls outside the extent of extreme flooding, and this generally means that the chance of flooding each year from rivers or the sea is 0.1% (1 in 1000) or less.

6.H. ROADS

Bordering roads are made up and assumed adopted by the Local Highways Authority.

- 6.H.1. You should ask your legal adviser to check on the maintenance responsibility for confirmation.

6.I. RIGHTS OF WAY

None noted.

6.J. GUARANTEES/WARRANTIES

Any guarantees/certificates that may be available for past servicing, improvements or individual items should be obtained and assigned over should you proceed with purchasing this property, including:

- 6.J.1. Double glazing installation.
- 6.J.2. Electrical rewiring/upgrading.
- 6.J.3. Central heating/Gas boiler installation.
- 6.J.4. Any specialist timber and damp treatments carried out.

SUMMARY

CONCLUSION

The property is typical of its era in terms of appearance, construction and materials. Recent alterations have been carried out to open up the ground floor accommodation and form a single living area, which may not appeal to all prospective purchasers. It has also been the subject of major refurbishment to provide modernised living accommodation however some of the works have been carried out to a budget and poor standard of the finish. There is also a need for further works as indicated within the body of the report, with the salient items reiterated below.

Assuming that the various matters to which I have made reference within this report are satisfactorily resolved, I found no significant structural cause to advise you against your proposed purchase.

SERIOUS STRUCTURAL DEFECTS

1. Upgrade chimney breast support to local authority satisfaction.

ESSENTIAL REPAIRS

Some essential repairs requiring early attention have been noted and these are:

1. Overhaul the tiled roof covering.
2. Improve subfloor ventilation.
3. Electrical repair(s).
4. Clear the drainage system.

FURTHER INVESTIGATION

There are some matters that require further investigation and these are:

1. Checking the condition and acceptability of the electrical installation.
2. Checking the condition and acceptability of the gas boiler and heating system.
3. Checking if roof alterations and loft floor have received local authority approval.

In all cases where further investigation and specialist advice has been recommended in this report, you are strongly advised to obtain reports and competitive quotations from reputable contractors before you exchange contracts.

As soon as you have these, as well as the responses from your Legal Advisers, I will be pleased to advise you whether or not they would cause me to change the advice given in this Report. Only when you have all this information will you be fully equipped to make an informed judgment on whether or not to proceed.

If you should decide to exchange contracts without obtaining this information, you might have to accept the risk that some adverse factors may come to light after you are committed to the purchase.

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

Normal ongoing maintenance such as redecoration and occasional repair and renewal will be necessary but the following items should be given priority attention:

1. Repoint chimney stack and renew the flashing.
2. Overhaul or renew boundary fencing.
3. Improve garden areas.

MATTERS FOR ATTENTION BY YOUR LEGAL ADVISER

4. All items in Section 6.
5. Boundary positions and responsibilities.
6. Shared drainage rights and liabilities.

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PETER COLLINS BSc MRICS

PCCS

TERMS & CONDITIONS

1. INTRODUCTION

- a) The following sets out the contractual terms upon which the Surveyor will advise the Client by means of a written report as to his or her opinion of the visible condition and state of repair of the Property.
- b) The individual carrying out the inspection and providing advice will be a chartered Surveyor.
- c) The Surveyor will use all of the care and skill to be reasonably expected of an appropriately experienced chartered Surveyor.

2. CONTENT OF THE REPORT

In accordance with these terms the Surveyor will report upon:

- a) The main aspects of the Property including assessing the site/location, the design, structural framework, fabric and services;
- b) The grounds, boundaries and environmental aspects considered to affect the Property;
- c) Any requirements for further investigation arising from the inspection.

3. DELIVERY OF THE REPORT

- a) The Report is to be delivered by the date agreed (2-3 days following the inspection) or at such later date as is reasonable in the circumstances.
- b) The Surveyor will send the Report to the Client's address (or other agreed address) by first-class post for the sole use of the Client. The Client agrees to keep the report confidential disclosing its contents only to the Client's professional advisers. In particular (but without limit) the Client must not disclose the whole or any part of the report to any person (other than a professional adviser) who may intend to rely upon it for the purpose of any transaction.

4. PAYMENT OF FEES

- a) The Client will pay the Agreed Fee, any Additional Fees, any VAT and any agreed disbursements by the Payment Date.
- b) The Client will be liable for interest on any late payment at the rate of 8% p.a. above the Bank of England base rate current at the date of the relevant fee account.

5. ASSUMPTIONS

Unless otherwise expressly agreed the Surveyor while preparing the report will assume that:

- a) the Property (if for sale) is offered with vacant possession;
- b) the Property is connected to mains services with appropriate rights on a basis that is known and acceptable to the Client; and
- c) access to the Property is as of right upon terms known and acceptable to the Client.

6. SCOPE OF THE INSPECTION

- a) Generally
 - i) The Surveyor will consider his or her advice carefully but is not required to advise on any matter the significance of which in relation to the Property is not apparent at the time of inspection from the inspection itself.
 - ii) The Surveyor will inspect diligently but is not required to undertake any action which would risk damage to the Property or injury to him- or herself.
 - iii) The Surveyor will not undertake any structural or other calculations.
- b) Accessibility

The Surveyor will inspect as much of the internal and external surface area of the building as is practicable but will not inspect those areas which are covered, unexposed or not reasonably accessible from within the site, or adjacent public areas.

The Surveyor is not required to move any obstruction to inspection including, but not limited to, furniture and floor coverings.
- c) Floors

The Surveyor will lift accessible sample loose floorboards and trap doors, if any, which are not covered by heavy furniture, ply or hardboard, fitted carpets or other fixed floor coverings. The Surveyor will not attempt to cut or lift fixed floorboards without express permission of the owner.
- d) Fixed covers or housings

The Surveyor will not attempt to remove securely fixed covers or housings without the express permission of the owner.
- e) Roofs

The Surveyor will inspect the roof spaces if there are available hatches which are not more than three metres above the adjacent floor or ground. Where no reasonable access is available, the roof spaces will not be inspected. Similarly, outer surfaces of the roof or adjacent areas will be inspected using binoculars, but will be excluded if they cannot be seen.
- f) Boundaries, grounds and outbuildings

The inspection will include boundaries, grounds and permanent outbuildings but will not include constructions or equipment with a specific leisure purpose including, without limit, swimming pools or tennis courts.
- g) Services

The Surveyor will carry out a visual inspection of the service installations where accessible. Drainage inspection covers will be lifted where they are accessible and it is safe and practicable to do so. No tests of the service installations will be carried out, although general overall comments will be made where possible and practicable. The Surveyor will report if it is considered that tests are advisable.
- h) Areas not inspected

The Surveyor will identify any areas which would normally be inspected but which he or she was unable to inspect.

- i) Flats or maisonettes

Unless otherwise agreed, the Surveyor will inspect only the subject flat and garage (if any), the related internal and external common parts and the structure of the building or particular block in which the subject flat is situated. Other flats will not be inspected. The Surveyor will state in the report the limits of access and/or visibility in relation to the common parts and structure. The Surveyor will state whether he or she has seen a copy of the lease and, if not, the assumptions as to preparing obligations on which he or she is working.
- j) Environmental and other issues
 - i) Particular noise and disturbance affecting the Property will only be noted if it is significant at the time of the inspection or if specific investigation has been agreed between the Surveyor and the Client and confirmed in writing.
 - ii) The Surveyor will report on any obvious health and safety hazards to the extent that they are apparent from elements of the Property considered as part of the inspection.

7. 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 or her view, there is a likelihood that deleterious material has been used in the construction or specific inquiries should be made or tests should be carried out by a specialist.
- b) Subject to clause 6b the Surveyor, based upon a limited visual inspection, will note and advise upon the presence of lead water supply pipes and asbestos.
- c) The Surveyor will advise in the report if the Property is in an area where, based on information published by the National Radiological Protection Board, there is a risk of radon. In such cases the Surveyor will advise that tests should be carried out to establish the radon level.
- d) The Surveyor will advise if there are transformer stations or overhead power lines which might give rise to an electromagnetic field, either over the subject Property or visible immediately adjacent to the Property. The Surveyor is not required to assess any possible effect on health or to report on any underground cables.

8. GROUND CONDITIONS

The Surveyor will not be required to comment upon the possible existence of noxious substances, landfill or mineral extraction, or other forms of contamination.

9. CONSENTS, APPROVALS AND SEARCHES

- a) The Surveyor will be entitled to assume that the Property is not subject to any unusual or onerous restrictions, obligations or covenants which apply to the Property or affect the reasonable enjoyment of the Property.
- b) The Surveyor will be entitled to assume that all planning, building regulations and other consents required in relation to the Property have been obtained. The Surveyor will not verify whether such consents have been obtained. Any enquiries should be made by the Client or the Client's legal advisers. Drawings and specifications will not be inspected by the Surveyor unless otherwise previously agreed.
- c) The Surveyor will be entitled to 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 its intended use, is or will be unlawful.

10. ADDITIONAL SERVICES

The Surveyor will provide, for an additional fee, such additional services as may be specified in the Specific Terms or are agreed between the Surveyor and the Client and confirmed by the Surveyor in writing.

11. INSURANCE REBUILDING COST ASSESSMENT

The Surveyor will provide an insurance rebuilding cost assessment only if this is agreed at the time of taking instructions. Building insurance cost assessments will be calculated using the current edition of the BCIS *Guide to House Rebuilding Costs*.

12. DEFINITION OF MARKET VALUE

The estimated amount for which a property should exchange on the date of valuation between a willing buyer and a willing seller in an arm's-length transaction after proper marketing wherein the parties had each acted knowledgeably, prudently and without compulsion.

13. MISCELLANEOUS

- a) Unless expressly provided, no term in the agreement between the Surveyor and the Client is enforceable under the Contracts (Rights of Third Parties) Act 1999 by any person other than the Surveyor or the Client.
- b) Where the Client has instructed the Surveyor to make investigations which cause damage to the Property on the basis that the Client has obtained the owner's consent, the Client will indemnify the Surveyor against any loss or costs arising.
- c) **Dispute resolution** In the event that the Client has a complaint regarding the standard of service he or she has received, a formal complaint handling procedure will be followed. A copy of the Surveyor's complaint handling procedure is available upon request. Using the Surveyor's complaints handling procedure will not affect the Client's legal rights.
- d) The Client may only rely upon the Surveyor's advice and report for purposes described in the Particulars or communicated to the Surveyor in writing prior to the agreement of the Fee and if the Client wishes to rely upon such advice and report for any other purpose he or she may only do so with the written consent of the Surveyor.

These Terms and Conditions are based on the model Terms and Conditions of Engagement contained in the RICS guidance note 'Building Surveys of Residential Property (2nd edition)'.

