REFERENCE: xxxxxxxxxxxxxx

RESIDENTIAL BUILDING SURVEY

xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx,
xxxxxxxxxxxx,
London W7 xxx

Georgian
Grade II
Listed Building

FOR

XXXXXXXXXX

Prepared by:
xxxxxxxxxxxxx
INDEPENDENT CHARTERED SURVEYORS

Marketing by:
www.1stAssociated.co.uk
0800 298 5424

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INTRODUCTION

Firstly, may we thank you for your instructions of xxxxxxxxxxxxx; we have now undertaken a Building Survey (formerly known as a Structural Survey) of the aforementioned property. This Survey was carried out on xxxxxxxxxx

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.

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REPORT FORMAT

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

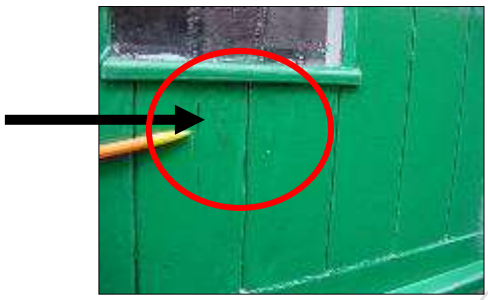
GENERAL/HISTORICAL INFORMATION

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, pen, circle or arrow 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.

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SYNOPSIS

SITUATION AND DESCRIPTION

This is a five storey mid-terraced property with lower ground floor and a loft conversion.

The property has been sub-divided into apartments on each floor and we are advised it was also occupied by the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust.

The front of the property sits directly onto the pavement. To the rear lower ground floor there are two courtyards, with a further courtyard to the front of the property and two vaults that go under the road.

We believe the property is from the Regency / early Victorian Era and is a Grade II Listed building. The Listing states it was built in 1857.

Putting Life into Perspective!

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

1840 The first adhesive postage stamp the Penny Black is issued, worth much more than a penny today!

1851 More than 25,000 people attend opening day of first World Exhibition in London, a great day out!

1857 It's a girl! Queen Victoria gives birth to her daughter Princess Beatrice

1859 Charles Darwin proposes the Theory of Evolution

1860 The first ever fish and chip restaurant is opened, now they're a national institution!

1863 The Opening of the London Underground, mind the doors!

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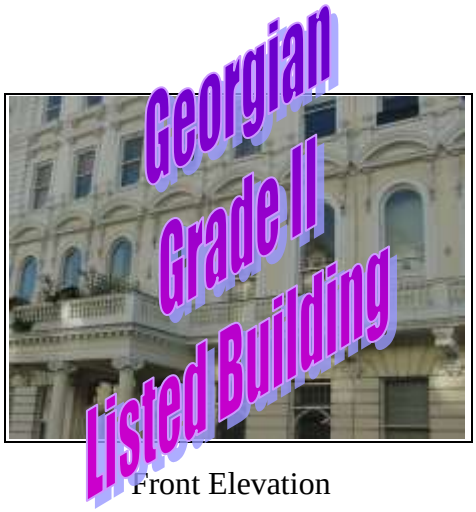
EXTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS



Front Elevation

Rear of property from middle void

Top of front elevation

Top two floors

[illegible] fourth floors

First and second floors

Front balcony upwards

[illegible] view

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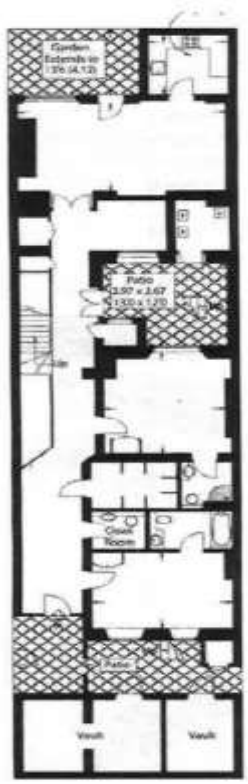
ACCOMMODATION AND FACILITIES

(All directions given as you face the front of the property)

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.

Lower Ground Floor



The lower ground floor accommodation consists of:

1) Bedroom to front with en-suite bathroom

2) Middle bedroom with en-suite bathroom

3) Bathroom

4) Study to rear

5) Lounge and dining area to rear

6) Kitchen to rear

7) There are vaults to the front of the property

Lower Ground Floor Photographs

Entrance hallway

Bedroom

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En-suite bathroom

Bathroom

Middle bedroom

En-suite shower room

Utilities cupboard

Study

Lounge

Dining area

Kitchen

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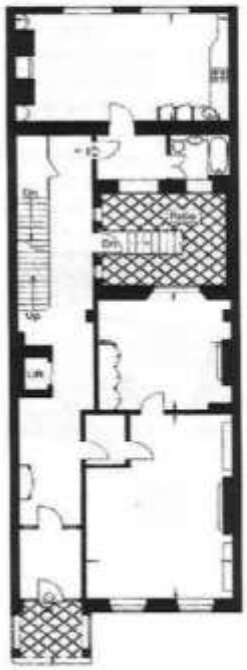
Ground Floor



The ground floor accommodation consists of:

8) Lounge

9) Kitchen

10) Bedroom

11) Bathroom

Ground Floor Photographs

Entrance hallway

Lobby and lounge

Lounge front

Lounge rear

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Rear lobby leading to bathroom

Bathroom

Bed in bedsit area

Lounge in bedsit area

Kitchen in bedsit area

Cupboard on left hand side
with an old staircase in

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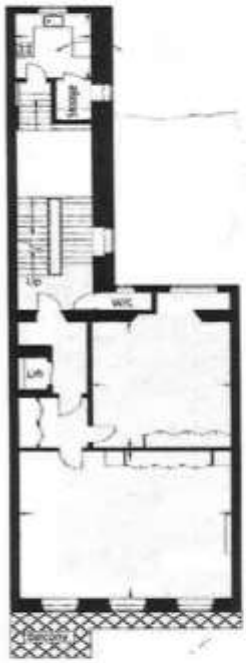
First Floor



The first floor accommodation consists of:

12) Lounge to front, leading onto balcony

13) Kitchen to rear

14) Bedroom

15) Bathroom

First Floor Photographs

Lounge, with French doors leading on to balcony

Balcony

Bedroom

Bathroom

Kitchen

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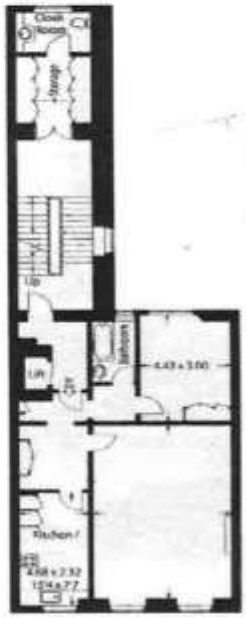
Second Floor



The second floor accommodation consists of:

16) Lounge / dining area front right

17) Kitchen front left

18) Bedroom to rear

19) Bathroom

Second Floor Photographs

Lounge

Dining area to rear of lounge

Kitchen

Bedroom

Bathroom

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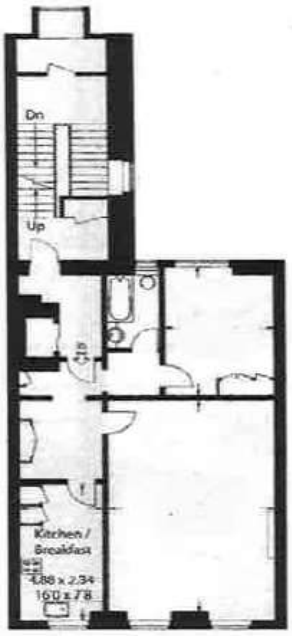
Third Floor



The third floor accommodation consists of:

20) Lounge

21) Kitchen to front left

22) Bedroom to rear

23) Bathroom to rear

Third Floor Photographs

Kitchen

Lounge

Bedroom

Bathroom

Fourth Floor

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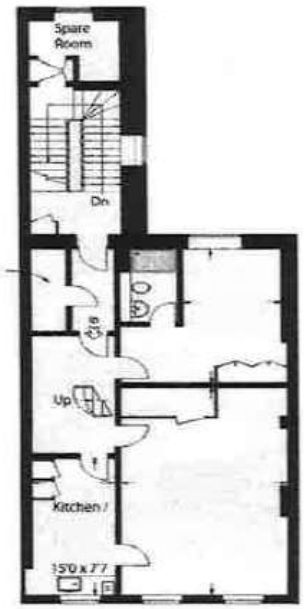
The fourth floor accommodation consists of:

24) Kitchen to left

25) Lounge to front

26) Internal shower room

27) Bedroom to rear



Fourth Floor Photographs

Lounge to front

Dining area to rear of lounge

Kitchen

Bedroom

Internal shower room

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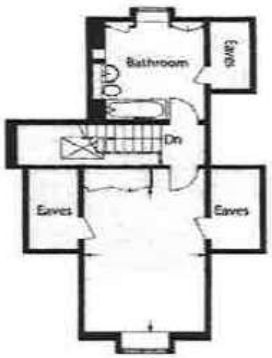
Fifth Floor

The fifth floor accommodation consists of:

28) Bedroom to front

29) Bathroom to rear



Fifth Floor Photographs

Bedroom

Bathroom looking towards wash hand basin

Bathroom looking towards bath and shower

Outside Areas

There are vaults to the front of the property underneath the road area and there are two voids to the middle and rear of the property, all accessible from the lower ground floor.

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Communal Areas if converted to flats

Shared front entrance door

Lift

Shared entrance hall and staircase

Shared stairway / fire escape

Finally, all these details need to be checked and confirmed by your Legal Advisor.

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SUMMARY OF CONSTRUCTION

External

Chimneys:	Three large brick/rendered chimneys
Main Roof:	Pitched, clad with manmade slates, With leaded box gutter running around it
Main Roof Structure:	Amended cut timber roof to accommodate a loft conversion
Main Rear Roof:	Single pitched clad with concrete tiles, with a box gutter
Rear Lower Level Roofs:	Double pitched slate covered roof and Single pitched slate covered roof
Hopper heads, Gutters and Downpipes:	Cast iron and plastic
Soil and Vent Pipes:	Cast iron and plastic
Walls:	Painted render with Stucco detailing at ground floor level Brickwork to rear
Windows and Doors:	Timber sliding sash single glazed windows and French Doors at first floor level Decorative mouldings around windows and doors

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Internal

Ceilings:		Lath and plaster and/or plasterboard (assumed)
Walls:		Mixture of solid and studwork (assumed)
Floors:	Lower Ground Floor:	Concrete (assumed)
	Ground Floor, Second Floor, Third Floor, Fourth Floor Fifth Floor:	Joist and floorboards with embedded timbers (all assumed)

Services

We believe that the property has a mains water supply, mains drainage, electricity and gas (all assumed). The electrics were not accessed; we were advised they were in a cupboard in the lower ground floor left hand side. There was communal heating in the boiler room on the lower ground floor via a dual boiler system; both are Potterton Kingfisher II's.

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

Building Listing

The property is Grade II Listed, as found in BritishListedBuildings.co.uk. See Appendices.

Finally, your Legal Advisor needs to check and confirm the above and advise us of anything they require further clarification on before legal commitment to purchase the property.

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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 700 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.

This report has had to be carried out quicker than we would normally do it, therefore we have not been able to put our normal checking process in place.

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.

Once you have read the report we would recommend that you revisit the property to review your thoughts on the building in light of the comments we have made in this survey.

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 is available freehold as one entire unit.

2.0) We consider the location of the property to be good.

3.0) Older properties with older layouts have the opportunity to increase space in most cases.

4.0) The property has many of the original features left, which add to the overall character of the property, however the property is Listed.

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

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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) Chimneys

The property has three substantial chimneys. We can see repair work is required as dampness will be getting into them.

ACTION REQUIRED: Ad hoc repair work to chimneys.

ANTICIPATED COST: In the region of £2,500 to £7,500, assuming scaffolding is not required. Please obtain quotations.

Chimney to front right hand side

Please see the Chimneys Section of this Report.

2.0) Slate roofs deteriorating

You have three slate roofs:

1. Manmade slate roof over loft conversion.

Surprisingly we noted lead tingles to the manmade slate roof over the loft conversation. We say surprisingly as we believe this to be a relatively new loft conversion (in building terms we mean the last 50 years).

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The light coloured clips are the lead tingles to loft conversion roof on the right hand side

Left hand view of roof; far too many lead tingles and slates completely slipped

Rear left hand corner – more lead tingles and also ponding within the box gutter

2. Rear double and rear single pitched slate roofs.

We can also see tingles to the rear roofs where you are proposing to carry out extension work, and in addition to this on the single pitched roof we can see there are lead flashing problems.

Lead tingles on double pitched lead roof to rear

Lead flashing coming away on rear single pitched roof to your side

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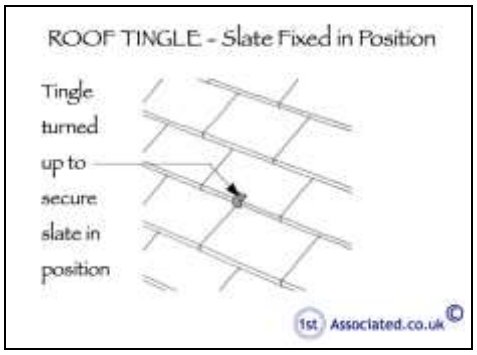
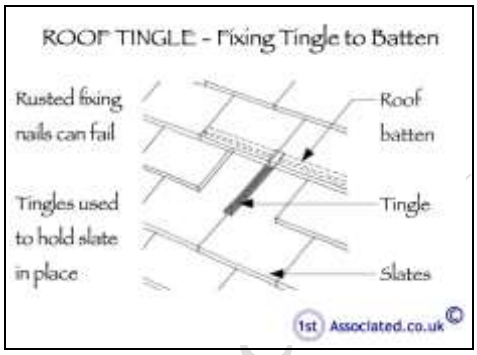
Lead Tingles or Lead Slaps Defined

These are strips of lead usually about 25mm wide which are used to secure slates where they have slipped.



Sketch of lead tingles



How the tingles fix on to the tiles

ACTION REQUIRED: We would normally discuss the repair of the main loft conversion roof, the rear double pitched roof and the rear single pitched roof, but you have advised us that you proposed to carry out extension works in these areas in which case the roofs will be replaced.

Depending upon how long before this work commences we would suggest some repair work be carried out. We believe you are not intending changing the main roof/loft conversion roof and therefore we feel it best to remove a portion of the slates, particularly to the left hand side, to check that they have been fixed correctly, as it is very unusual to have lead tingles being used on such a relatively new roof.

We would recommend that the flashing to the rear single slate roof is replaced/repaired.

ANTICIPATED COST: For the loft conversion roof we would expect to spend between £5,000 to £10,000 for re-roofing work, assuming that the entirety does not need re-roofing and assuming that scaffolding is not required.

At the same time you also need to look at the box guttering as there is problems with ponding to the rear left hand side of the roof. Please obtain quotations for all works.

Please see the Roofs Section of this Report.

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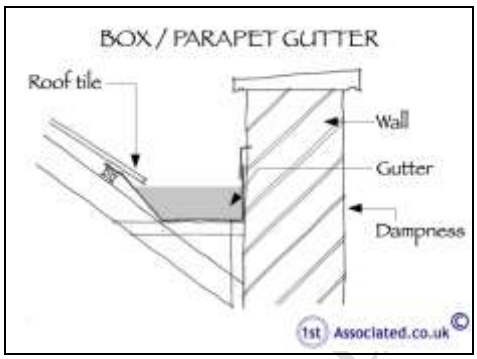
3.0) Box Gutters



Box gutter meets a pitched roof

Box gutters are the details where the pitched roof meets the parapet wall, and was typical in this age type and style of building: see sketch.

We have mentioned that rainwater is sitting in the box gutter of the loft conversion roof and there is therefore the risk of water getting into the property.

We also believe there are problems with the double pitched slate roof to the rear due to the staining we can see on the box gutter. This is the roof you are looking to extend upwards, so again it depends upon how quickly this work can be carried out as to whether repairs are necessary.

Box gutter to front

Problem with box gutter over this section which consists of lounge and boiler room

The problem with leaving box gutters is that unless detailed very well they will sooner or later let in rainwater. We will be able to advise you better when we know how quickly you wish to carry out extensions and refurbishments to the property. We would say they could be left in the medium term but not in the long term, i.e. more than a year.

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4.0) Parapets, balustrades, fringes, ledges and mouldings and high level dampness

An area where dampness is common in this Era of property, and there are no exceptions in this case, is to the parapets, balustrades, fringes, ledges and mouldings

Balustrade and ledges

On the property we can see that there have been problems in the past and some work has been carried out in, for example in the form of a lead covering to the top of the parapet/balustrade. However, we can see in other areas there are still problems.

Balustrade/parapet to front with its own capping

The difficulty with carrying out this work is that you are likely to need high level scaffolding and it will have to be considered carefully, particularly if you are looking to sell the properties on relatively quickly.

We can see specific examples of problem areas that will no doubt need work, but there is also more general maintenance that you need to consider.

Dampness to the mouldings around the window and the keystone where there is a ledge

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Two particular areas where there are definitely problems are to the front parapets/balustrades where dampness was found coming in on the fourth floor, and also to the rear parapets/balustrades where we could literally see plants growing from it.

Damp meter readings indicate dampness is coming into the fourth floor via the front parapet wall

Rear parapet wall/balustrade without box gutter detail. Plants growing from it indicate that dampness is getting in to it

ACTION REQUIRED: Check box gutters and make watertight.

The first parapet/balustrade area is one that needs dealing with, the second area a tactical decision needs to take place as this is also an area you are looking at extending.

ANTICIPATED COST: The front of this is high level work and is likely to require the lifting of the existing lead box gutter, as well as a close examination of the exterior of the property with a cherry picker and the difficulty of resolving this type of problem we would expects costs of between £5,000 to £20,000, depending upon what is found when high level viewing is carried out. Please obtain quotations.

Example of a cherry picker

Please see our comments in the Roof Section of the report.

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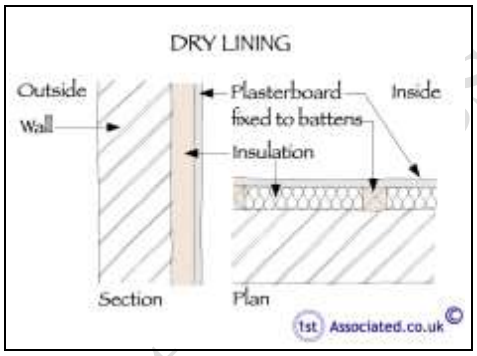
5.0) Lower ground floor

5.1) Low level dampness

As is relatively common in this age, type and style of property we found dampness at lower ground floor level. We think it is worse than is apparent when first looking around the lower ground floor as we believe it is hidden by dry lining, also known as a false walling.

Mould around outside of walls in void area indicating

We can see from the change in the render on the outside of the walls that there looks to have been long term problems in this area and previous work has been carried out to try and rectify it.



Dry lining/false walling sketch

Re-rendering has taken place to the front of the property

It may be that the work is under guarantee and we would suggest that the contractors come back to fix the problem, however in our experience it is very difficult to get good quality work carried out under guarantees and we think in this case it may well be the wrong solution.

Although further investigation is required we would recommend a French drain or re-rendering and re-plastering in a breathable lime based render/plaster as being a better solution.

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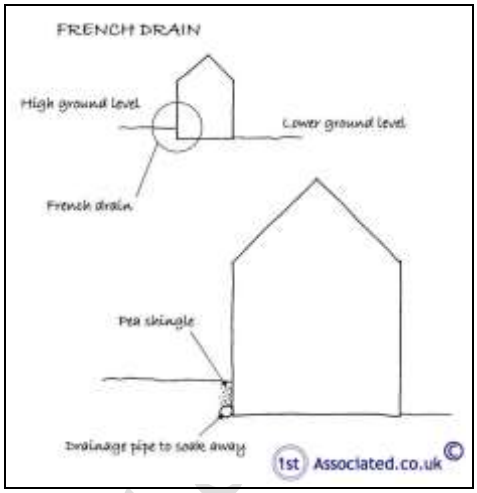
ACTION REQUIRED: Further investigation recommend, but from our initial findings we would feel that the adding of a French drain to give the rainwater a path away would be the best option.

ANTICIPATED COST: Costs in the region of £15,000 to £30,000, particularly if the French drain leads into the drainage system. Please obtain quotations.



French drain

5.2) Lower ground floor – vaults under the road

There are vaults to the front of the property under the road. This is a very good area to gain extra space, but they do have problems with dampness getting in them but they can be used as non-habitable spaces, such as shower areas, utility areas and kitchens at a push.

Vault under road

5.3) Lower ground floor – dampness coming through ceilings

We could see some areas where dampness is coming through the ceilings. We believe this relates to leaks from wash hand basins, toilets and showers above.

ACTION REQUIRED: This is simply a matter of resolving any plumbing problems.

Please see our comments in the Dampness Section of the report.

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6.0) Hairline cracking and ad hoc repointing

We can see hairline cracking within the plaster in various areas in the building, particularly to the rear area. This we believe to be for a number of reasons:

1) As already mentioned, dampness getting into the structure via the roofs and parapet walls/balustrades and box gutters.
2) Dampness getting into the structure via the rear brickwork where pointing is needed.
3) Dampness getting in via the render; also known as Stucco.
4) The age of the plaster.

Render to front of property where hairline cracks can lead to dampness coming in

Flemish Bond brickwork at high level

ACTION REQUIRED: We feel the main problem relates to the brickwork where ad hoc repointing in appropriate like for like mortar is required mortar is required to minimise dampness coming in.

ANTICIPATED COST: As scaffolding will be required for this work we expect costs in the region of £10,000 to £30,000. Please obtain quotations.

Again, a view needs to be taken as to whether this work should be carried out, bearing in mind the extension/refurbishment work that will take place.

Painted brickwork at low level

Please see the Walls Section of this Report.

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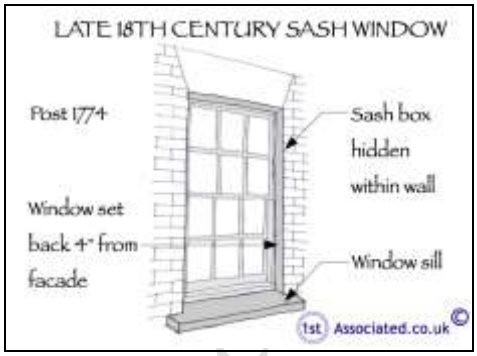
7.0) External joinery



Sliding sash window

The windows are timber sliding sash windows. In many cases they are in need of complete redecoration and in most of these cases they are in need of not only redecoration but cutting in and splicing in of new timbers.

This can be difficult work as it has to be carried out from the inside out unless the building is scaffolded which can be very expensive. At some point a decision needs to be made as to whether to scaffold this building.

Rotting timbers

Timbers deteriorating

Window sills and ledges allow water to sit on them

ACTION REQUIRED: Splice in new timbers, make general repairs and repair, prepare and redecorate.

ANTICIPATED COST: In the region of £10,000 to £20,000, as this is a Grade II Listed building and as such the standards required as usually higher than non-listed buildings. Please obtain quotations.

Please see the Windows Section of this Report.

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8.0) Leaks from apartments above

We have already mentioned the leaks within the lower ground floor. There are also various leaks throughout the property which can be seen coming from the plumbing in the areas above.

Staining in second floor bedroom from bathroom above

Staining in second floor bathroom from apartment above

ACTION REQUIRED: The plumbing needs sorting out generally. We would also add that we can within the roof space there was a mixture of copper and plastic pipes had been used which we are not keen on and much prefer to see all copper as this has stood the test of time.

ANTICIPATED COST: This would be included as part of the refurbishment of the bathrooms costs and would be nominal compared with the cost of the bathrooms. Please obtain quotations.

Please see the Ceilings Section of this Report.

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9.0) Services

9.1) Heating

You have a fairly dated communal system of heating in the property. It is rare that we come across this now. In most cases individual heating to each apartment is the way properties are heated.

We did note that the top floor does have its own wall mounted profile boiler.

ACTION REQUIRED: Change to independent boilers in each apartment.

ANTICPATED COST: In the region of £50,000 to £70,000; obtain quotations.

9.2) Electrics

Where refurbishment work is being carried out, even on a basic level,

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend that the electrics are re-wired and an Institute of Electrical Engineers (IEE) tests and reports are carried out by an NICEIC approved electrician or equivalent.

ANTICIPATED COST: For new electrics throughout the property we would estimate costs at £50,000 to £70,000, depending upon the level of sophistication.

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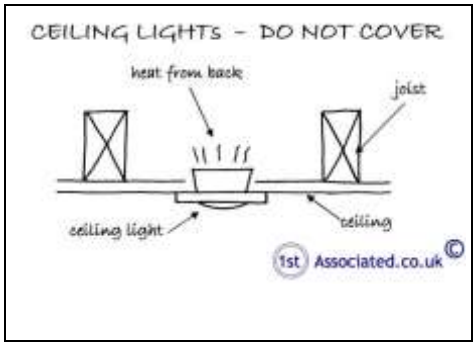
9.3) Ceiling Lights

Some of the ceiling lights are an older style which may overheat and are therefore a fire hazard. We recently carried out a survey on a property that where there had been a fire due to overheating of ceiling lights.



Ceiling lights sketch

Ceiling light in lower ground floor apartment

ACTION REQUIRED: As mentioned previously, you need to have an IEE test and report carried out on all the electrics by an NICEIC electrician or equivalent.

9.4) Asbestos warning

We find that properties of this Era that have been modernised it is common to find asbestos. In this case we noted asbestos flues to the main/loft conversion roof and to the rear roof.

Asbestos flue to main/loft conversion roof on left hand side

Asbestos flue to rear

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Asbestos was used post war until it was banned only in the UK in the last ten years or so. It is rumoured that it was still used after this point in time where products were imported from countries where it is not banned.

We are Building Surveyors and not Asbestos Surveyors and as such the only way to be a hundred per cent certain with regards to Asbestos in a property is to have an Asbestos report carried out.

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

10.0)**Assumptions Made**

We have made assumptions when carrying out this survey that you will be completely refurbishing the property, including new kitchens and bathrooms. If this is not the case please advise us.

The Ugly

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

We have found typical problems for this age, type and style of building. Providing you are happy with the characteristics and associated costs of the property repairs we have mentioned throughout the report we would advise that we do not feel that anything falls into the Ugly category.

We would however draw your attention to the following:

1. We were surprised about the condition of slates to the relatively new loft conversion roof and the fact that they were being held in place using lead tingles.

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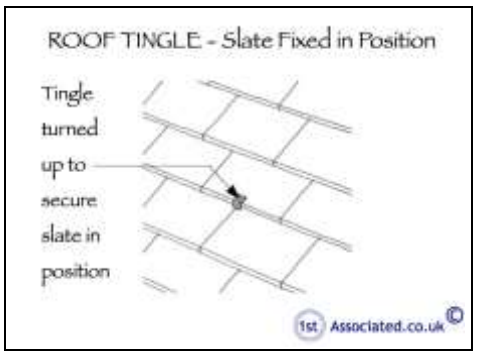


Lead tingles

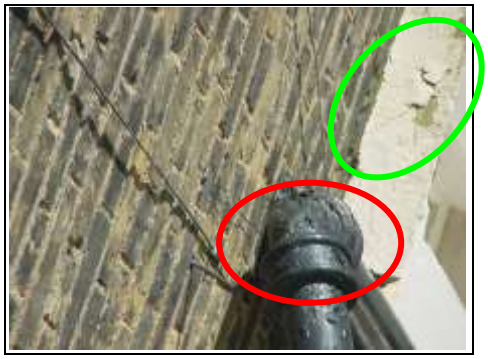
Lead tingles to manmade slate loft conversion roof

2. We would also comment on the dampness that we have mentioned. It can be very difficult to resolve completely in a property of this age and if you do wish to resolve it completely it will take considerable effort, time and money.

3. Also as a general comment, we would say that the standard of repair is below average and cheaper materials have been used. A good example is the small rear roof at first floor level. To the right side is next door's lead finished flat roof, to the left side is your patched mineral felt flat roof.

Your patched mineral felt roof to left hand side is in poor condition compared with next door's lead finished roof to the right

There is also the general need for redecoration. The adjacent photo shows a cast iron pipe and moulding around the window in need of redecoration.



Cast iron pipe (red circle) and moulding (green circle) in need of redecoration

Independent Chartered Surveyors

——— **Marketing by:** ———

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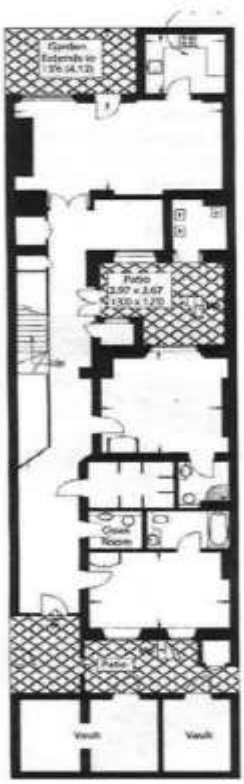
Design Alterations and Improvements

Introduction



We have spoken about the potential that the property has and here are our thoughts on design alterations that could increase the square footage/square meterage of the property:

Lower Ground Floor

We believe there is potential to reorganise the lower ground floor and improve the space and probably make it into a bigger property. This of course depends upon your budget and how much work you wish to carry out and the time you have available.

Middle Void

You could cover over the middle void in a similar manner to that which has been carried out next door.

Middle void that could be covered over

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Boiler Room

We also believe there is the opportunity to use the boiler room but this would mean the communal heating system would have to be changed to individual systems.

The individual systems could either be a gas supplied boiler and radiators, of if you with to have high specifications you could add air conditioning throughout.

Boiler room

Vaults under the road

The vaults under the road are currently used for bin storage and building material storage. They could be added into the design, although we would suggest due to the dampness in these areas that they are used for non-habitable rooms.

Left hand vault

Right hand vault

ACTION REQUIRED: Your solicitor needs to specifically request if there are details with regard to taking or waterproofing to the lower ground floor level as this can add considerably to costs.

ANTICIPATED COST: To refurbish the lower ground floor we would expect costs in the region of £250,000 to £350,000. Please obtain quotes.

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Drains

There are risks with carrying out works to the lower ground floor that is in relation to the drains, as you will be covering over the drainage system, which you need to have access to.

ACTION REQUIRED: Have a closed circuit TV camera report to check on the drainage system and establish its condition and repair as necessary.

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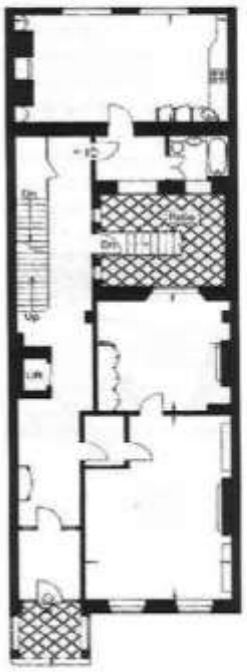
Ground Floor



There are various options available on the ground floor. These range from the re-arrangement of how the floor space is used.

Basic rearrangement

This can be carried out utilising the existing structural walls, taking out such areas as cupboard and adding in a wall next to the staircase to take up the current access corridor.

Alterations that will need negotiation and approval

You could look at such possibilities of adding in a mezzanine floor which you may just have the room height to do. You would have to establish if any other properties in the road have carried out similar alterations before advising you further on this matter.

This will all be subject to Local Authority Planning Permission and may not possible.

Ground floor front room; floor to ceiling height may allow a mezzanine floor

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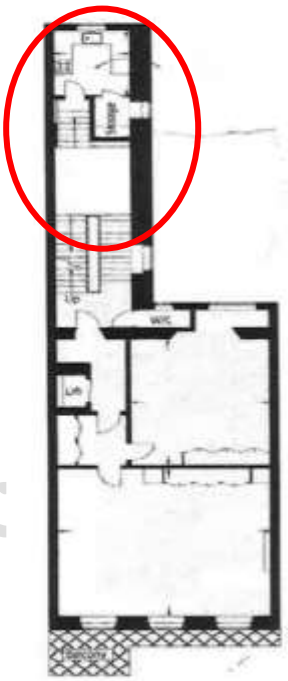

First Floor

Extend upwards adding an additional floor to the rear right hand side to give extra square footage. This will be quite an awkward vertical extension. We say awkward because to construct in this restricted area will add cost, however given the cost of property in the area it is more than likely to be cost efficient; next door has used roof lights.

There may be an option to have an outside sitting area, accessed via steps from within the extension. We are very keen on outside sitting areas where you can get them, even if the only light is from above.

ANTICPATED COST: We would anticipate costs on a very basic level to upgrade and extend of approximately £200,000 to £300,000, depending upon the quality of finishes required and the problems with getting the planning application through. Again it would make sense to carry out a copy of what next door have carried out.

Flat roof extension to next door (red oval)
and the pitched roof of your property (green oval)

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Second Floor

There is an extension possible to the rear of the property, as shown in the photograph in a similar manner to the adjacent property. We feel the best way would be to gain access to next door. As you will read later on in this report we did gain access but not to this area of the property.

This area could be a roof terrace area or a room in itself. This gives the benefit of utilising the rear rooms.

You may also be able to reduce the landing sizes to gain cupboard space, etc to the end room.

Re-arranging the space

As with every floor, there is the option to re-arrange the space by moving structural walls, but this would take time to negotiate with the planning authorities and may be of much cost benefit given the time it may take; it really depends upon your long term plans for the property.

Next door's slatted roof (red circle)
and your pitched roof (green oval)

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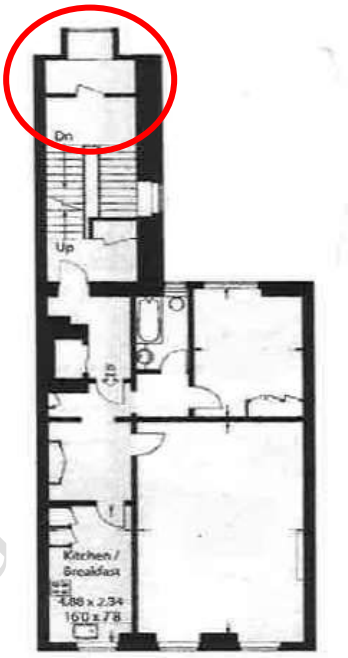
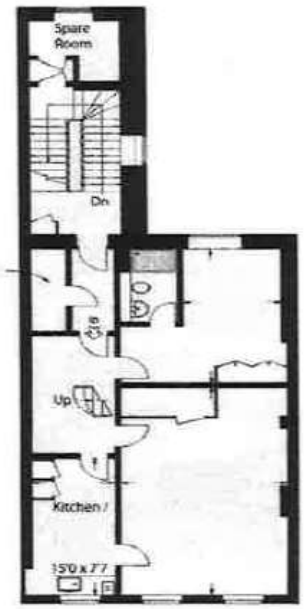
Third Floor

This floor could utilise a rear extension to the rear single pitched roof in the form a roof terrace to the rear single pitch roof. Again, there are options available depending upon the alterations you propose to the rear of the building and also whether you wish to carry out internal alterations.



Fourth Floor

No amendments to this floor.



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Fifth Floor

Alterations can be made to the front bedroom to give access on to the roof, or alternatively in the rear bathroom to give access and a sitting out area which can add value.

Outside space

We are keen on getting outside space wherever possible. You could look at reducing the bedroom size to provide steps and a small sitting out area to the front of the property.

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Adjoining property's conversion of lower ground floor

Glass covering of void

Looking up at glass roof

Lounge

Middle room

Bedroom to rear

Bedroom to rear right

Kitchen

Bathroom (fully tiled)

Megaflow boiler

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General upgrade of facilities

It probably goes without saying that we recommend you consider a general upgrade of the facilities:

1) Upgrade to air conditioning throughout with state of the art controls. This will also free up the boiler room area on the lower ground floor and will mean you will have more habitable space.

2) Adding video entry system and general state of the art controls.

3) Improving the fire alarm system with a state of the art fire alarm system so that it identifies where problems are in a worst case scenario of a fire.

4) Increase sound insulation between apartments as this era of apartment is renowned for noise transfer.

5) Lighting. We feel that considerable improvement can be made with the lighting as it currently looks dated.

6) Secondary glazing may also be a consideration.

Upgrading of the bathrooms and kitchens

Another idea would be to give anyone buying the apartments the choice of their own specifications with regard to kitchens and bathrooms.

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Other Items

Moving on to more general information.

Services

Whilst we have carried out a visual inspection of the services within the property we also need to advise you of the following:

Heating

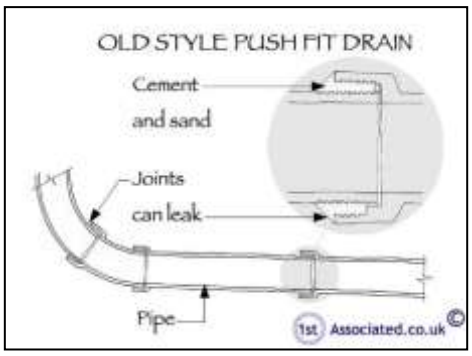
Please see our comments with regarding the removal of the boiler and improving the standard of heating throughout the property.

Electrics

Please see our comments with regard to upgrading the electrics.

Drainage

You should be aware that some of the lower ground floor sits over manholes and additional manholes will be covered if the building work goes over the voids.



Push fit drain

We would also advise that in older properties, such as this, drainage was often push fitted together rather than bonded together which means that they may leak over the years. Whilst we ran the tap for 15 minutes without any build up or blockages the only way to be 100% certain of the condition of the drains is to have a closed circuit TV camera report.

ACTION REQUIRED: We recommend a closed circuit TV camera report.

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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.

> **ACTION REQUIRED - SERVICES:** We would reiterate that we recommend with regard to all services that you have an independent check by a specialist contractor

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.

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Estimates of Building Costs

Where we have offered an estimate of building costs please remember we are not experts in this area. We always recommend you obtain quotations for the large jobs 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 £100 and £200 per day (the higher costs in the city areas) and for tradesmen we use between £150 and £300 per day for an accredited, qualified, skilled tradesman. Other variations include the quality of materials used and how the work is carried out, for example off ladders or from scaffold.

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

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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:

This property does offer potential, but it does of course depend upon what price you are purchasing at and potential planning issues with carrying out any work, although having said that next door has carried out these alterations already.

You should be aware that with this age of property it is not unusual to have a large contingency sum for items that cannot be identified at the start of a project. This can be such things as:

1. Timber lintels which may have rotted over the years, as may bonding timbers.
2. Roof leaks that are hidden by ceiling panels, etc.

A normal contingency sum would be 10% but it is not unusual for it to be double at 20% on this age type and style of property.

You need to investigate all previous planning permissions that have been obtained on this property to see if these are any use to you and you need to also check that you have full residential use of the entire property before you commit to purchase the property.

Estimates are only estimates at this stage

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 £100 and £200 per day (the higher costs in the city areas) and for tradesmen we use between £150 and £300 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.

Be aware of widely varying estimates

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

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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 are employed as Independent Chartered Surveyors and offer an independent point of view.

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 Building Surveys, as agreed to and signed by yourselves. If you have not seen or are not happy with the terms of engagement please phone immediately 0800 298 5424 or email the secretary from which this survey came from.

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.

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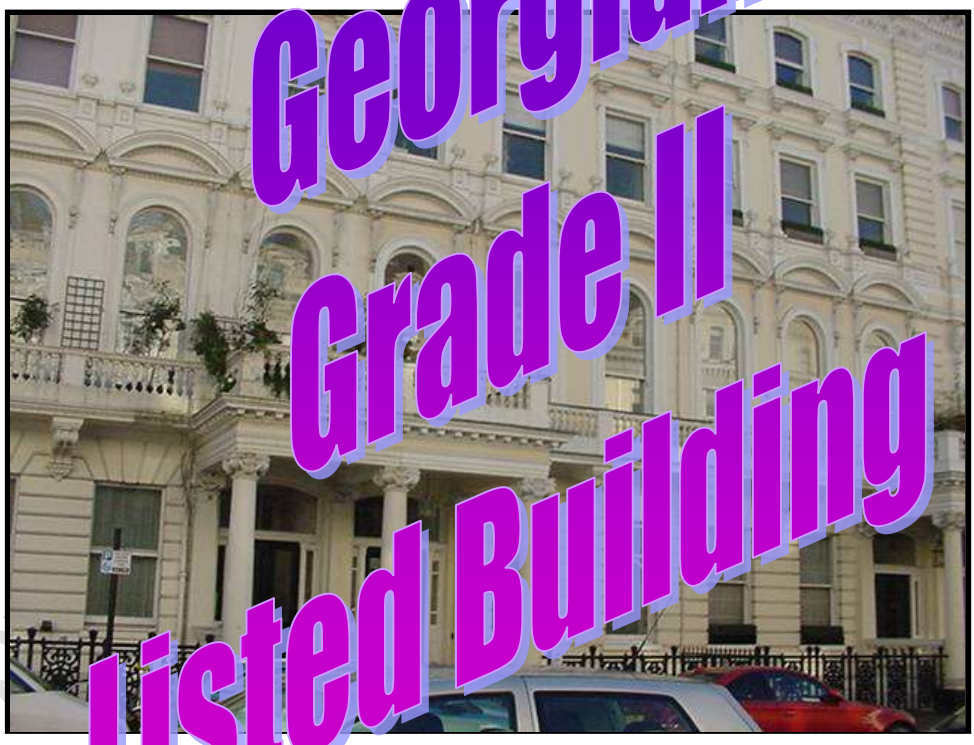
THE DETAILED PART OF THE REPORT FOLLOWS, WORKING FROM THE TOP OF THE PROPERTY DOWNWARDS

From our investigations the property is Grade II Listed
(your Legal Advisor should confirm this and make their own enquiries)
and as such it will require various permissions
to be obtained before work is carried out, over and above that
normally required and possibly the use of appropriate materials
for the age, type and style of [illegible]



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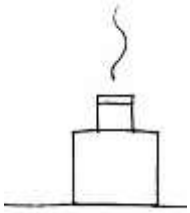
EXTERNAL



CHIMNEY STACKS AND FLUES AND PARAPET WALLS

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 three main chimneys, located to the front left, front right and rear left (all directions given as you face the property).

Chimney to front left side

Chimney to front right

Chimney to rear left side

The chimneys are weathered and there are areas of hairline cracking, therefore we suspect dampness is getting into the structure, although we cannot physically see this and have no evidence, however it is a typical problem relating to this age, type and style of property.

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

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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.

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

Parapet Walls/Balustrades

Parapet walls/balustrades are usually walls that are above roof level and often sit on the boundary of the property.

In this case there are parapet walls/balustrades to the front elevation of the property and to the rear. We believe they are allowing water into the structure. To the front we can see the balustrade has had a lead capping added but we obtained readings internally in the apartment below indicating dampness.

Lead capping to front balustrade

To the rear we could literally see that the lead flashing has been displaced and there are plants growing from the parapet wall/balustrade.

Parapet wall on rear pitched roof

Plant growing out of parapet wall

ACTION REQUIRED: With regard to the rear issues it depends upon the length of time before you are carrying out the major works to the property. Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

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Area between main roof and rear roof

We noted this parapet wall has a bitumen covering, indicating that dampness has been getting into it over the years.

ACTION REQUIRED: We recommend a lead coping is added.

Bitumen covered parapet wall

Rear parapet wall

The very rear parapet wall has had problems and we can see a mineral felt has been added.

ACTION REQUIRED: Again, we prefer to see a lead capping is added as well.

Mineral felt to rear parapet wall

Finally, we were only able to see approximately 50% percent of the parapet wall, therefore we have made our best assumptions based upon what we could see. A closer inspection may reveal more.

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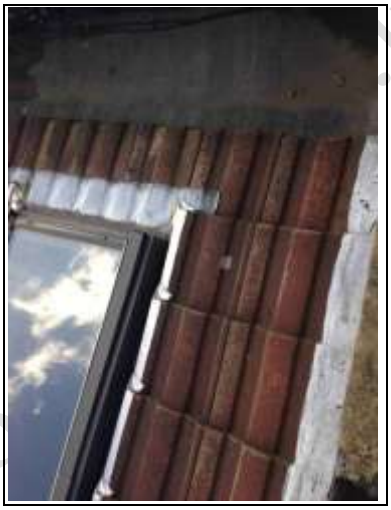
Roof Windows
(Also known as roof lights or Velux windows which is the trade or generic name)

The property has roof windows to the fifth floor. Flashband repairs around the rear window indicate there have been problems with the roof window.

Roof window to front left hand side



Roof window to rear left hand side with Flashband repair, which we always consider to be a temporary repair

ACTION REQUIRED: We consider Flashband to be a temporary repair and a proper flashing should be added to make it watertight.

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Dormer Windows

The property has a dormer window on the manmade slate roof. It is lead covered and looked in reasonable condition, with the exception of the timber window that needs repair and redecoration.

Dormer window

Timber window is deteriorating

ACTION REQUIRED: Repair and redecorate timber window.

ANTICIPATED COST: A few hundred pounds; obtain quotes.

Party Walls

The party wall relates to shared items, such as the chimneys, the parapet walls/balustrades and if the properties are divided up they can also be the ceilings, floors and 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, flues, parapet walls 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.

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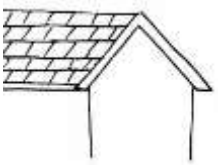

ROOF COVERINGS AND UNDERLAYERS

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, the rear roof and the low level roofs.

Main roof over loft conversion

The main roof is pitched and clad with a manmade slates and from roof level this looks in below average condition considering the roofs age type and style.

We assume this to be a relatively modern roof (last 50 or so years) due to the loft conversion and as such we were surprised to see the excessive number of lead tingles and some displaced slates.

Main roof to left hand side

ACTION REQUIRED: If you are carrying out major refurbishments throughout the entire property then this roof needs to be reviewed. We would suggest a section of the slates are taken off on the left hand side and depending upon the results you may well have to re-roof this area.

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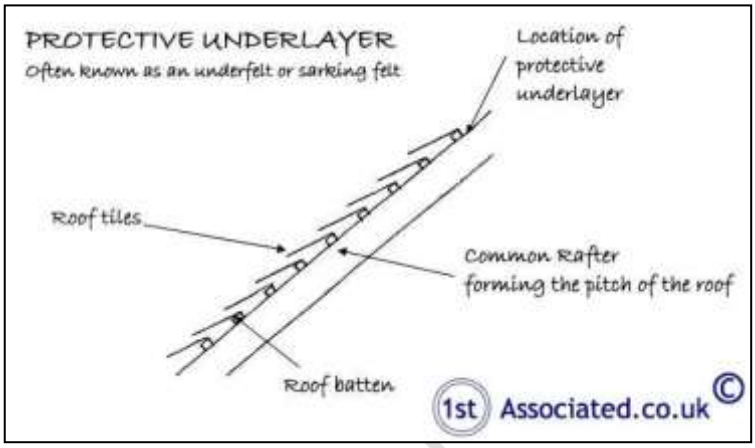
Protective Underlayer (Often known as the sarking felt or underfelt)

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.



Protective Underlayer

We had a very limited view of the underside of the roof. Where we could see it was lined unusually with vertical boarding in some areas. We could see into the roof in small areas both to the left and right hand side of the bedroom.

We believe we could see some dampness within the left hand side which relates to the ponding seen on the box gutter to the left hand side.

Vertical close boarding, we normally see this horizontally

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Rear Roof

Single pitched concrete tiled roof

There is a single pitched roof to the rear of the property. It is covered with concrete tiles and a box gutter. There is some slight deterioration to the surface of the concrete tiles. We are finding this on several of our surveys and the jury is still out as to what problem this will cause and we simply do not have long enough experience of concrete tiles.

We feel/feel that it may mean that the concrete tiles will absorb more moisture in which case this will mean a heavier roof which modern building regulations have resolved by adding extra strength to accommodate to heavier concrete tiles, however in years gone by additional timbers were not added.

ACTION REQUIRED: Your legal adviser to check and confirm whether permission has been given for this rear roof to have a concrete tile and if so whether additional timbers have been added.

ANTICIPATED COST: If this is not the case you will need to allow the sum of £2,000 to £5,000 for additional timbers within this area.

Low level roofs

There are two low level roofs; one with a double pitch and one with a single pitch. These are to areas that you are considering re-roofing. They are both slate covered with tingles indicating that work is required.

ACTION REQUIRED: We would leave them if you do anticipate carrying out work in the near future otherwise we would recommend re-roofing work is carried out. In the short term you do need to re-bed the lead flashings to the rear single pitched roof.

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

All the roofs were inspected from ground level with the aid of a x16 zoom lens on a digital camera.

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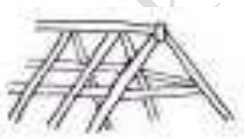
Finally, we were only able to see approximately 70% percent of the main roof from ground level via our ladder or via any other vantage point that we managed to gain. We have made our best conclusions based upon what we could see, however a closer inspection may reveal other defects.

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



ROOF STRUCTURE AND LOFT

(ALSO KNOWN AS ROOF SPACE OR ATTIC SPACE)

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

Main Roof

Roof Access

Access is very limited into the left and right hand side of the main/loft conversion roof and the view is predominantly the board lining.

Access hatch in bathroom

Access to loft conversion roof on right hand side (as you face property)

We have not been able to gain any access to the rear roof due to its sheer height. We would be more than happy to return to inspect if suitable safe access can be ensured and provided.

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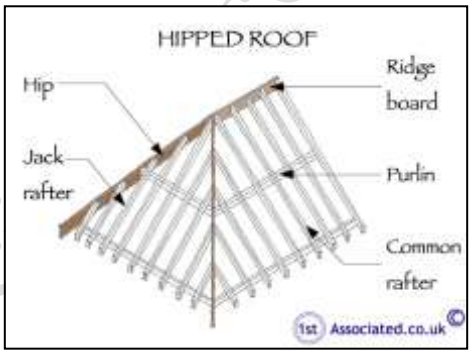
Also, the loft hatch on the lower ground floor was painted shut. Again, if this can be opened we would be more than happy to return and review.

Loft hatch painted shut on lower ground floor

Roof Structure

We have to take an educated guess with regard to the roof structure and believe it to be a cut timber roof without strut or prop support. In this case it is a hipped roof.



Hipped roof

It is likely additional timbers have been added to the purlins or even possible steels, although we have not seen any.

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.

Roof Timbers

We would normally check the roof structure for:

1) Serious active woodworm

2) Structurally significant defects to the timbers

3) Structurally significant dry rot

4) Structurally significant wet rot

Small bit of roof we could see to the left hand side

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In this case we simply cannot see enough of the roof structure to comment, either to the main/loft conversion roof or the rear roof.

Fire Walls

A firewall will be relevant within the rear left hand roof but we have not been able to gain access to this due to its height. It would be viewable through the rear roof access but please see our comments earlier.

Fire Walls Defined

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

Ventilation

We were pleased to see ventilation to the main/loft conversion roof, which is why we believe it is relatively modern roof (last 50 years).

Vent on main/loft conversion roof

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 of wiring to comment.

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

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

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BOX GUTTERS, HOPPER HEADS, 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.

Box Gutters

The main roof/loft conversion roof and rear roof are both drained via box gutters. We were pleased to see that in many areas these were lead. The lead looks to have a fall on it with steps in it (although you can only truly be sure if you are literally standing on the roof when it is raining) and they also have rubber expansion joints in the lead, which we particularly like, although you do need to check them to ensure they do not perish.

Stepped box gutter to right hand side of main/loft conversion roof

Hopper Heads, Gutters and Downpipes

There is a mixture of the original cast iron and some plastic. Generally you need to be aware that you will be asked to remove any plastic gutters and downpipes, hopper heads etc if you do carry out work to the property as this is a Listed building.

The hopper heads, gutters and downpipes that we can see are in need of redecoration and there may be some minor leaks.

Cast iron hopper head

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ACTION REQUIRED: We would always recommend redecoration in the summer of 2014 or incorporating this work within the redevelopment work of the property.

We have not seen the property whilst it was raining and we would always recommend you stand outside the property next time it rains heavily and see how well the drains cope with the rainwater particularly looking at the guttering and the joints.

We would also 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

There are various soil and vent pipes, they are in cast iron and plastic. Cast iron of this age often needs repair and redecoration, which we would recommend in the summer of 2014.

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 rendered predominantly to the front and to the rear they are brickwork with some painted areas.

Render

There is render/Stucco to the front of the property with decorative friezes and mouldings around the windows.

Render to front

High level box gutters, parapet walls/balustrades, ledges, friezes, sills

We believe the ledge on the frieze and the box gutter above is allowing dampness into the front wall.

High level render

Dampness internally caused by box guttering to front wall

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ACTION REQUIRED: Please see our comments in the Executive Summary with regard to minimising dampness.

However, it should be noted on a close inspection from a scaffold or cherry picker that there may be other problems in this area.

We would be more than happy to check the front of the property with a cherry picker if suitable permissions are obtained.

Render to base of the property

We would particularly draw your attention to the Stucco style render to the base of the property. If cracks, etc, appear in this they need to be sealed immediately as they can allow water in.

We note at lower ground floor level that repairs have been carried out to the render. These are typically carried out to try and resolve dampness problems, normally with the replacement of the render with a waterproof based render.

Stucco style render to base of property

Re-rendering at lower ground floor level

ACTION REQUIRED: You need to make enquires with the existing owners to check and confirm what information they have in relation to the re-rendering work.

Please see our comments with regard to the render within the Executive Summary.

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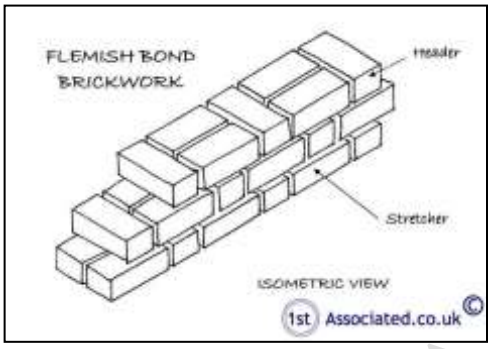
Painted render/painted walls

As a general comment, it should be noted that the paint offers a waterproof protection to the render and the brickwork and as such needs to be kept in good condition. Do not underestimate the amount of time/cost it will take to repaint the property particularly as there is high level work which is likely to need scaffolding which can be expensive.

Brickwork

There is an area of Flemish Bond brickwork to the rear of the property.



Flemish Bond brickwork

Looking up at the brickwork

Rear brickwork where ad hoc repointing is needed

Painted brickwork to rear with areas of mould to the base

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

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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.

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

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

> **ACTION REQUIRED:** Ad hoc repointing is required in a like for like mortar with a matching dried colour.

Waterproof render

From the marks that we can see to the front of the property it looks like a waterproof render has been used. This can sometimes cause more harm than good as it effectively seals the property. Further investigation is needed with the existing owners to establish what work has been carried out

> **ACTION REQUIRED:** Your legal adviser needs to specifically ask the existing owners what work has been carried out to the front of the property and damp proofing in general.

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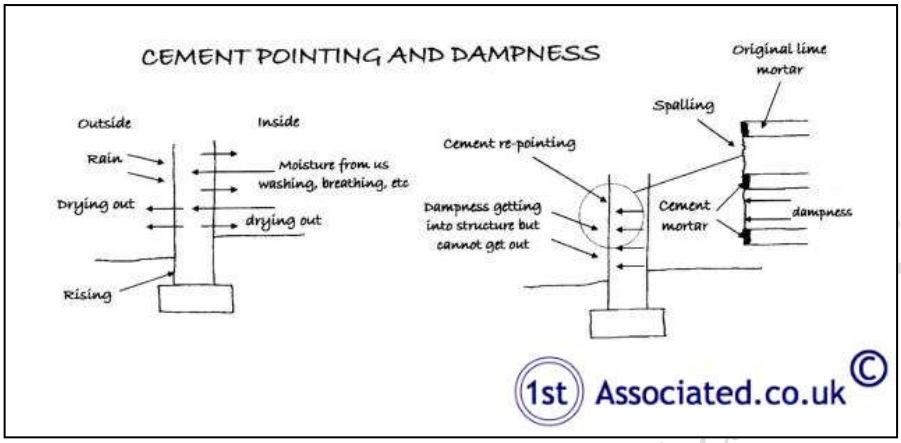
How to walls like this work? They breathe

It is important to ensure the right mortar is used as cement mortar can suffocate buildings such as this, as can the wrong type of paint. These type of walls need to breathe as they take in dampness but they also dissipate it.



Use lime mortar every time instead of cement mortar

Mouldings around the windows

A feature of this era of property is the mouldings around the windows and doors. Equally they can give ledges that water can sit on, for example the keystone to the top of the arch over the window in the adjacent photo.

ACTION REQUIRED: You do need to ensure that when the repointing has been completed that you also redecorate all the mouldings. Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

Keystone on arch of window

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General cracking

There may well be cracking visible, both to the render and to the brick walls upon close inspection. There are no obvious signs of this from ground level, nevertheless we found on other surveys that upon a close inspection via a cherry picker there have been problems.

We are more than happy to re-inspect the property from a cherry picker if you wish to organise it, along with the relevant permissions.

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 painted render / painted and unpainted 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 painted render / painted and unpainted / plaster has been finished. We have made various assumptions based upon what we could see and how we think the painted render / painted and unpainted / 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 at it seems in the building industry and often short cuts are taken. Without opening up the structure we have no way of establishing this.

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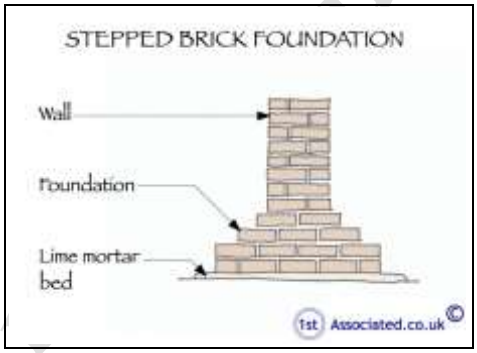
FOUNDATIONS

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. It is very difficult to know without opening up the structure.



Stepped brick foundation

We would add that in properties of this age the foundations tend to be more shallow than they are today and they tend to be affected by the water table level as this ahs risen over the years in the London area.

London Clay

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

Building Insurance Policy

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

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.

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Cracks

Please remember to talk about any cracks identified within the property, either as part of this survey or as part of further investigation. 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 noted cracks particularly to the rear in the plasterwork.

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.

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

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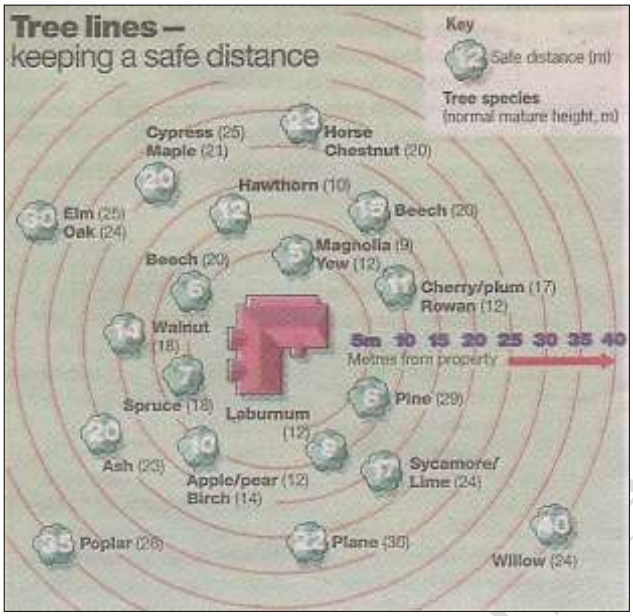
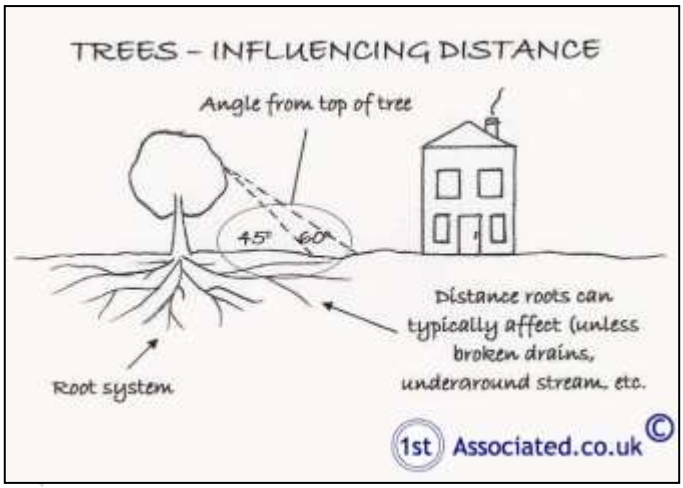
TREES

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

There are no trees within what insurance companies would term as influencing distance of the property.





Influencing distance of trees to a property

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.

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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 cannot see a DPC due to the render and it is unlikely to have one in this era of property, as it was only reluctantly adopted after the Building Act of 1878.

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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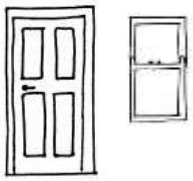
WINDOWS AND DOORS



This section covers windows and doors, and any detailing such as brick corbelling etc.

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.

Windows and Doors

The property has single glazed timber sliding sash windows. We would specifically comment the timber is in below average condition and will need repair. We would expect new timbers to be spliced in.

Single glazed windows

Windows generally need repair

ACTION REQUIRED: Please see our comments in the Executive Summary. Also note our comments with regard to the mouldings around the windows as these will also need to be made watertight.

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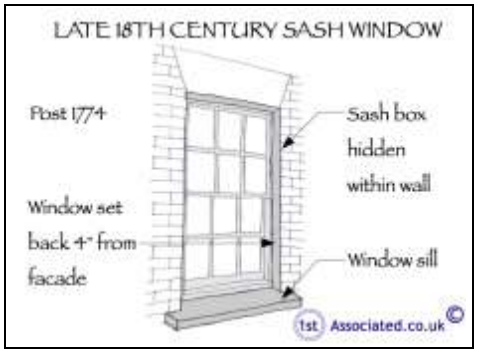
We noted some of the windows have leaded lights. As the building is Listed these will have to remain unless permission is obtained.

Leaded window

Leaded glass

General Information on Sliding Sash Windows

If you have not lived in a property with sliding sash windows previously, you should be aware that typically they are draughty and rattle. There is no easy way to eliminate this problem. In our experience, a general ease and adjustment of the windows and the addition of a plastic tube draught sealer (available from most DIY stores) and regular redecoration is the best option to minimise the draughtiness of the windows in this case. Horizontal Sliding Sash Windows (sometimes known as York Windows).



Sliding sash window

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.

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EXTERNAL DECORATIONS

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

The painted exterior of the property has a waterproof coat on it and as such needs to be kept in good condition. The redecoration work will need scaffolding to give safe access and will be costly and is normally required every three to give years.

Finally, ideally external redecoration is recommended every three 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.

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INTERNAL

CEILINGS, WALLS, PARTITIONS AND FINISHES

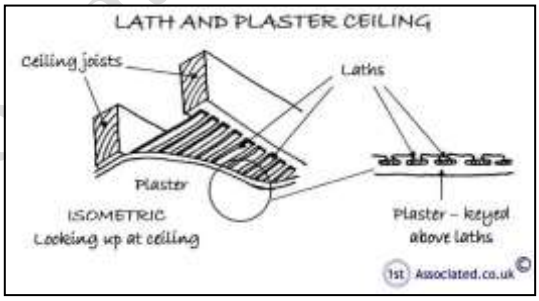
In this section we look at the finish applied to the structural elements such as the plasterwork applied to the ceiling joists, walls or partitions, together with the construction of the internal walls and partitions.

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 have originally been lath and plaster, possibly with replacement plasterboard in place.

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.



Lath and plaster ceiling

Plasterboard Defined

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

Gap between ceilings and floors

In this age, type and style of property sometimes there are gaps between the floors and ceilings (as opposed to the floorboards sitting on the floor joists) and the ceilings being fixed to the floor joists. There are in addition ceiling joists. This space may be utilised within a development.

ACTION REQUIRED: Open up a section of the ceiling to check its construction.

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Over painting

There are mouldings throughout the property. These have been over painted and have lost their detail.

Over painted moulding on ground floor

Staining to ceilings

In various areas there is staining to the ceilings. This we were advised has been caused by leaks to the plumbing areas above. There are several areas of staining in the lower ground floor flat which we feel may be coming from the ground floor areas.

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

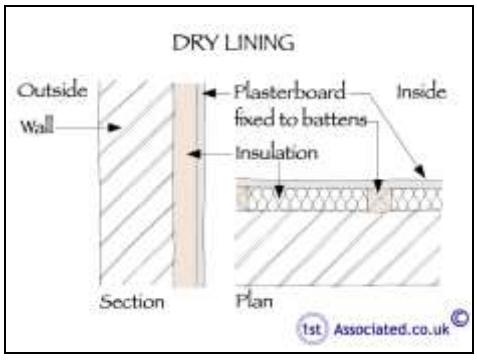
Internal Walls and Partitions

These are, we believe a mixture of solid and studwork construction. It is of course impossible to determine the construction without opening up the walls and we have therefore taken an educated guess.

Perimeter Walls

We believe these are a mixture of hollow and stud walls and are likely to be lath and plaster, in some cases with a lime finish. Dry lining has been used in some areas.

Again, we cannot be 100% certain of the wall construction without opening them up which goes beyond the scope of this report.



Dry lining sketch

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Cracking to the walls

There are various examples of cracking, particularly to the rear of this property, both to the surface and hidden within the cupboards, which we believe relates to minor differential movement and also dampness getting into the structure.

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

Crack in wall

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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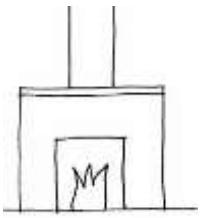
CHIMNEY BREASTS, FLUES AND FIREPLACES



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

The chimney breasts are located to the right hand side (all directions given as you face the front of the property). In this era of property all rooms would have had a chimney breast/fire. Some of the fires are original and we believe some of them are not. They nevertheless make a lovely feature within the rooms.

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Fireplace right hand side in lounge on ground floor

Marble fireplace on third floor

At the time of the survey no chimneys were in use. If you do wish to use the chimneys it is strongly recommend flues be cleaned and checked for obstructions prior to use to minimise the risk of hazardous fumes entering the building.

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 so we cannot comment. Also additional support can be concealed very well when chimney breasts are hidden 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.

Please also see the Chimney Stacks, Flues Section

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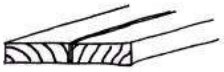
FLOORS



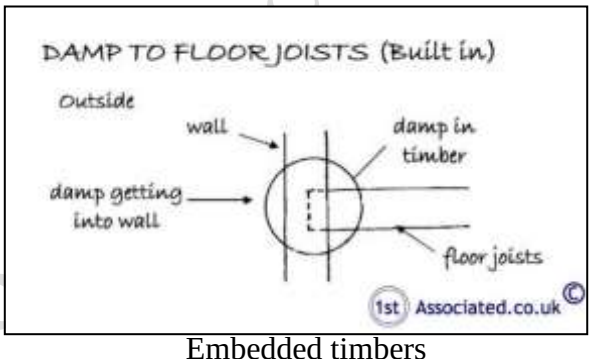
Functionally floors should be capable of withstanding appropriate loading, preventing dampness, have thermal properties and durability. In addition to this upper floors should offer support for ceilings, resistance to fire and resistance to sound transfer.

Lower Ground Floor

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

Ground floor through to fifth floor

We have assumed that the ground floor though to fifth floor construction is joist and floorboards with embedded timbers, as this is typical in this age of property.

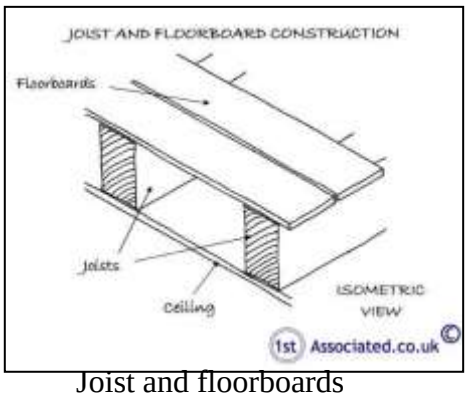


Embedded timbers

We would highlight that we have found in older properties such as this that there can be outbreaks of woodworm. We have no way of checking this without literally lifting the entirety of the floors. This would of course need permission and goes beyond the scope of this unevasive survey.

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.



Joist and floorboards

Finally, we have not been able to view the actual floors themselves due to them being covered with fitted carpets, floor coverings, etc. 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.

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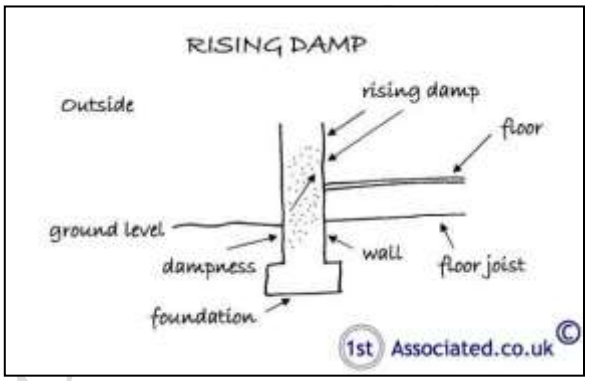
DAMPNESS

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. Much evidence points towards there being true rising damp in only very rare cases.



Rising damp

A random visual inspection and tests with a moisture meter have been taken to the perimeter walls. In this particular case we have found dampness.

ACTION REQUIRED: Please see the Executive Summary

Testing for rising damp

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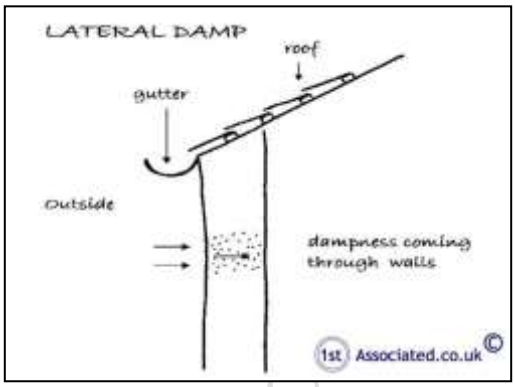
Lateral or Penetrating Dampness

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 found lateral dampness.



Lateral dampness

Testing for lateral dampness

Dampness on fourth floor from box gutters above

Dampness getting into roof on fifth floor

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Condensation

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

At the time of the inspection there were obvious signs of condensation. However, there was staining in the utilities cupboard on the lower ground floor which could relate to leaks above or to condensation.

Staining on ceiling in utilities room on lower ground floor

Condensation, particularly in this age, type and style of property, depends on how you use it. If occupants do their 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, cooling and ventilation of properties and opening windows to air the property regularly.

Extract fans in kitchens, bathrooms and drying areas

A way of helping to reduce condensation is to have good large extract fans with humidity controlled thermostats within the kitchens and bathrooms and also in any areas where you intend to dry clothes which are moisture generating areas

Extract fan on lower ground floor

ACTION REQUIRED: We would recommend humidity controlled extract fans be added to kitchens, bathrooms and drying areas, however care needs to be taken as this is a Listed building.

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.

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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

The doors are painted panel doors with Perco door closers which are good in cases of fire.

Panel door

Perco door closer

Staircases

We were unable to examine the underside of the stair timbers due to it being lined, which precluded our inspection, so we cannot comment further upon the stair structure. We can, however, say that the lining gives a resistance to the spread of fire if such circumstances were to occur.

Corridor stairs

One of the half landings in the property

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Fire escape stairs

If this staircase remains with the new plans it will need redecorating and a rust stop agent used.

Fire escape stairs

Close up of rusting stairs

ACTION REQUIRED: Use a wire brush to remove rust and add rust agent and redecorate.

Kitchens

There are a variety of kitchens to a variety of standards. Generally they are not to the high standard that we would expect in this type of property. You could carry out complete refurbishment or upgrading. With kitchens you really can spend as much or as little as you wish (similarly with bathroom).

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 over-view of the condition. Please also see the External Joinery/Detailing section.

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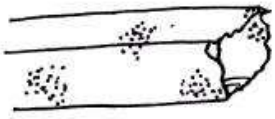
TIMBER DEFECTS



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 inspection of the roofs.

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.

We have seen signs of wet rot within the main/loft conversion and we have not had access to the rear roof but we suspect there will also be wet rot within there. Most of this relates to roof issues and box gutters.

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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 / floor is the main area that we look for woodworm. Unfortunately we have only been able to see approximately 10% of the main/loft conversion roof and had limited view of the floor.

Warning on woodworm

We find that in most old properties, particularly of this size, there is an element of woodworm, however we generally find it is not what we would term as 'structurally significant', i.e. liable to cause structural problems. We would normally note this by excessive deflection in the floors and this was noted, however we would advise that there is likely to be some woodworm on older properties.

> **ACTION REQUIRED:** We are more than happy to re-visit the property when you have the structure exposed and advice further.

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.

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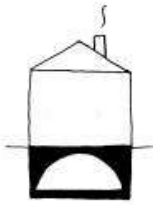
INTERNAL DECORATIONS

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 to below condition. As part of the refurbishment as assume that you will be redecorating throughout.

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.



VAULTS

Vaults tend to be found in older properties and offer a useful space, although usually they are damp, unless some treatment has taken place such as the tanking of the walls, which is a lining process, or an external damp proofing membrane of some type has been added, or if internally the walls have been lined, therefore hiding the damp. These areas are often susceptible to flooding from excessive rain, rising water table levels or even blocked drains.

There are three vaults under the road, coming off the lower ground floor. These spaces could be better utilised.

Tiled steps coming down to lower ground floor

Underside of steps showing water getting through

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Vault, which leads on to another vault

Vault under road currently being used as a bin store

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

Finally, we have made a visual inspection of the cellar/vault only and have no way of knowing what the construction is without opening up the structure.

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THERMAL EFFICIENCY

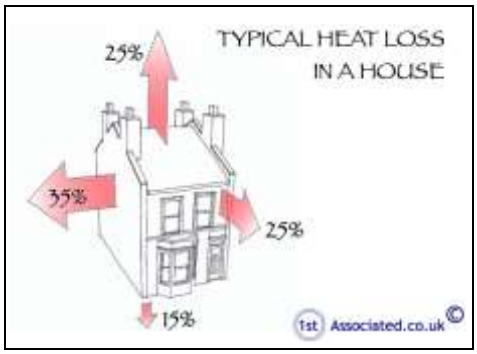
Up until the mid 1940s we did not really consider insulation in properties, for example it was only in the 1960s that we started putting insulation in the roof and then it was about 50mm, in the 1970s this was upgraded to 100mm. Then we started to think about double glazing and cavity wall insulation. 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 we have not had proper access to the main/loft conversion roof. The fact that it is vented indicate to us that it is fairly new (last 50 years) and as such will have some insulation. If it does not loft conversion rooms that are not properly constructed with insulation etc are renowned for being too hot in the summer (solar gain) and too cold in the winter.



Heat loss from a house

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, However, unfortunately it is generally very difficult to improve the insulation without affecting the external or the internal appearance of the property, particularly as this is a Grade II Listed building there is very little you can do to improve this.

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Windows

The windows are single glazed and therefore will have poor thermal properties. You may be able to utilise secondary glazing but this would be after discussions with the Listed Building Officers.

Services

You have a communal service with two boilers on the lower ground floor which is unusual. If you do intend to carry on using these (please see our comments with regard to an alternative way of heating) service records should be obtained. It is essential for the services to be regularly maintained to run efficiently. We assume that as the property was managed that the boilers have been kept serviced but they are dated and will not be as efficient as a modern boiler.

Summary

Assuming the above is correct, this property is average compared with this age, type, style and era of property.

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*
>
> *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.

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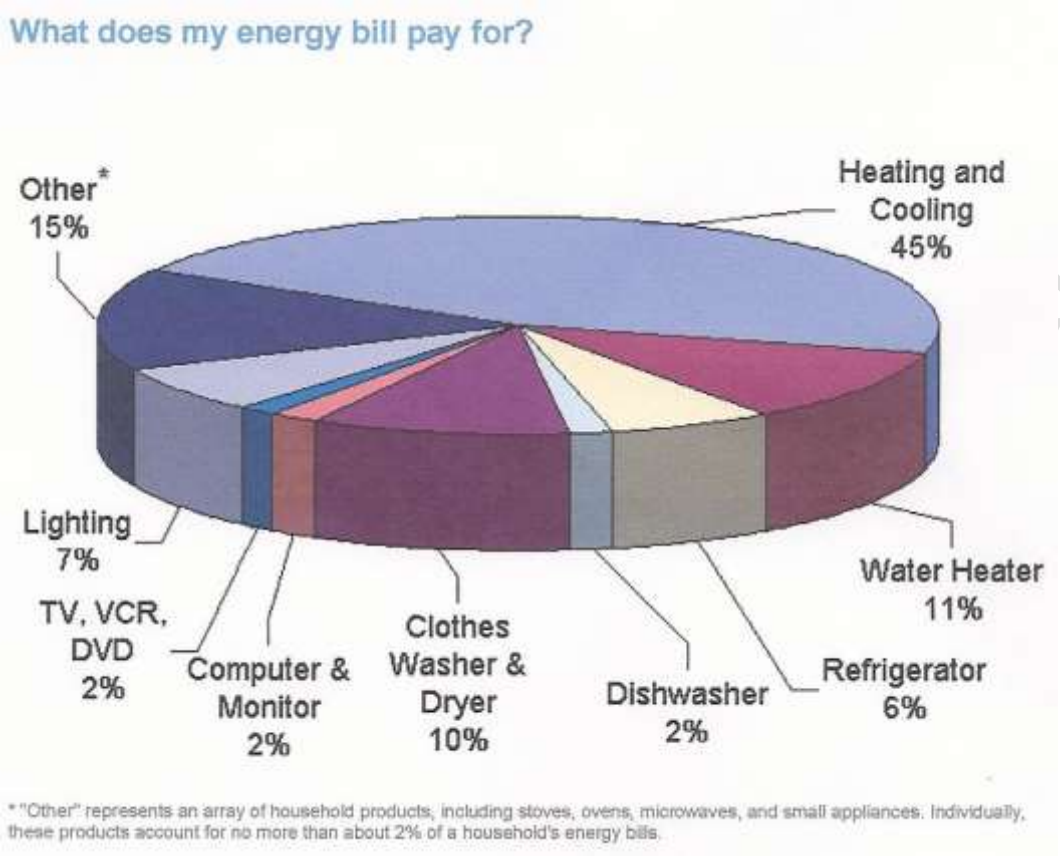

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OTHER MATTERS

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

Security

A security system has been installed. A good alarm system should not only help reduce break-ins but also your insurance. We are not experts in this field and therefore cannot comment further.

ACTION REQUIRED: Further information should be obtained from the vendor and the installer.

Door entry system

Lifts

The property has a small lift which services the ground, first, second and third floors only.

Lift

Lift sign

ACTION REQUIRED: Your solicitor should ensure that your lift is on a regular maintenance contract and that there are no anticipated future replacement costs.

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Fire Systems and Smoke Alarms

We would suggest that you contact the existing management company to get further details with regard to the fire alarm system and the escape procedures.

Fire exit to rear of ground floor

Multi-occupied property – Fire Alarms

When and if you convert the property we are a strong believer that where properties are multi occupied, i.e. there are more than one resident or tenancy, that the fire alarm system should be interconnected alerting any of the properties if there is a fire anywhere within the building.

ACTION REQUIRED: Your Legal Advisor to confirm whether this is the case.

We would recommend, for your own safety, that smoke detectors be installed. We would always recommend a hard wired fire alarm system and are also aware that some now work from a wireless signal which may be worth investigating. Whilst fire is relatively rare it is in a worst case scenario obviously devastating.

Zoning for fire alarm system which is what we always recommend

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.

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Asbestos

In a property of this age there may well be some asbestos. In this case we have noticed there is an old asbestos flue to the side of the building and also at roof level to the rear.

Asbestos flue to main/loft conversion roof on left hand side

Asbestos flue to rear

We are Building Surveyors and not Asbestos Surveyors and as such the only way to be a hundred per cent certain with regards to Asbestos in a property is to have an Asbestos report carried out.

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

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

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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.

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.

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Fuse Boards

The electric fuses and consumer units were located in the cupboard on the lower ground floor, also in a cupboard on the ground floor, in the boiler room and in some of the rear rooms. There may be other fuse boards elsewhere within the property. We did not have access to electrics in the cupboard to the lower ground floor as it was locked at the time of our inspection; we believe these to be the main electrics in the property.

As this property has been rented out we would expect to have yearly tests and reports to an Institute of Electrical Engineers standard by an NICEIC approved electrician or equivalent.

Electrics in cupboard on ground floor

Electrics in boiler room

ACTION REQUIRED: Your legal adviser to obtain any records and ensure that the electric system is up to standard.

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Earth Test

Earth test taken in ground floor kitchen

We carried out an earth test in a few of the kitchens and these have been satisfactory.

ACTION REQUIRED: As the property is changing occupancy an Institute of Electrical Engineers (IEE) test and report should be carried out by a NICEIC registered and approved electrical contractor or equivalent.

If the property is to be developed in the future then we would recommend fully re-wiring the property.

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

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.

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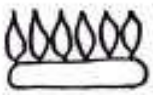
GAS



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.

We are advised that the property has mains gas and there is the gas boilers located to the lower ground floor. The floor has its own boiler.

We have not carried out any tests on these and 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.

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

We have not looked for stopcocks.

> **ACTION REQUIRED:** We recommend that as part of the refurbishment that stopcocks and isolation valves are used throughout the property. It is particularly important in a building of this size where a problem on one floor can cause problems on another floor and you need to be able to isolate the issues.

Water Pressure

We turned on various taps to check the pressure, literally by putting a finger over the tap and this has been acceptable throughout the property. However, this may not be the case when all taps are used and you do tend to have problems during peak times in this type of building, particularly when you are splitting it into separate uses.

> **ACTION REQUIRED:** You may have to look at the plumbing as a whole to ensure you have adequate water pressure.

Cold Water Cistern

We have not found any 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.

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Hot Water Cylinder

There is a factory insulated hot water cylinder located within the boiler room. This cylinder will therefore have a good thermal efficiency, although not as good as the more modern hot water cylinders.

Factory lagged hot water cylinder in middle void

We believe you need to look at the provision of hot water throughout the property again. We cannot believe this one hot water cylinder provides water for the various apartments (excluding the top floor which has a separate system).

Plumbing

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

Heating

There are two boilers located in the boiler room; both are wall mounted Potterton Kingfisher II and are dated.

Factory lagged hot water cylinder in middle void

Vent/flue coming from boiler room

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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.

Ten Minute Heating Test

The property was to a reasonably warm standard at the time of our survey but we could not carry out any specific heating test as the owners were not there to turn it on; just the estate agent.

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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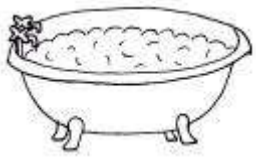
BATHROOMS



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

Bathrooms / En-Suites / Shower Rooms

The property has a mix of three piece bathrooms consisting of a bath, wash hand basin and WC, shower rooms and an internal shower room. They all look to be in average condition subject to some day-to-day wear and tear, as one would expect.

Again, we assume that bathrooms will be replaced as part of the refurbishment. As mentioned, you can spend as much or as little as you like on bathrooms.

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.

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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.

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 can see two manholes; there may be more.

Manhole in lower ground floor apartment

Manhole in middle void

ACTION REQUIRED: A closed circuit TV camera must be put down the drains to establish their condition, particularly as they are about to have an increased loading if you are going to split the property into several/many units. This can often be a weakness in refurbishment projects where the drains are not brought up to the standard required.

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

Rainwater/Surface Water Drainage

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

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

We have been unable to determine the ultimate means of rain/surface water disposal. In this age of property it is likely to be into shared drains. These can be a problem during heavy rainfall and peak periods, such as the 9 o'clock rush to work.

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.

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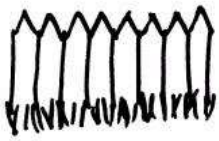
OUTSIDE AREAS

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.

OFF ROAD PARKING

Parking is available roadside parking on a first come first serve basis. There may be parking permits and there are many traffic wardens in the area!

EXTERNAL AREAS



There are two sitting out areas to the lower ground floor.

ACTION REQUIRED: Please see our comments within the Design Section about covering these over. You do however need to be aware of fire regulations requirements.

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Outside area to rear of lower ground floor

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Asphalt floor

Tiled floor with areas of mould

Wall only painted to bottom half

ACTION REQUIRED: Please see our comments with regard to dampness in the property in the Executive Summary and the Walls Section.

Boundaries

Your legal adviser needs to specifically advise which boundaries are yours, as there be responsibilities with regard to these.

Party Walls

If you are extending the roofs then Party Wall Notices will be required.

Neighbours

Left Hand Neighbours

No access.

Right Hand Neighbours

We spoke to the builders in the lower ground floor and have included photos in the Design Section of this report. Please treat them as confidential.

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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.
ix) Establish boundary walls

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.

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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.

p) Your lawyer needs to check certain things, one of which is planning permission.

Planning application notice

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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 on **0800 298 5424.**

For and on Behalf of
Independent Chartered Surveyors

This Report is dated: xxxxxxxxxxx

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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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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 dated xxxxxxxxxx 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.

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WEATHER

It was a dry, cold autumn day at the time of the inspection. The weather did not hamper the survey.

In recent times our weather seems to be moving towards the extremities from its usual relatively mid range. Extremes of weather can affect the property.

NOT LOCAL

It should be noted the surveyors may not be local 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 PROPERTIES

The property was partly occupied at the time of our survey but we did not meet any occupants. It did mean 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:

This was a time limited survey and therefore we have not been able to carry out our usual checking process.

We didn't have access to view the rear elevation properly and have had to make various assumptions based upon what we can see internally.

This is a visual only inspection and no opening up of the structure has been carried out.

We did not have access to some of the roofs as they were painted shut.

We were not able to open up ant if the floors.

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We did not have the benefit of talking to the owners or them answering our usual question and answers.

We didn't have the benefit of meeting you at the property to talk about your specific requirements.

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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APPENDICES

1. The Electrical Regulations – Part P of the Building Regulations
2. Information on the Property Market
3. British Listed Buildings Record

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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.

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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.

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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.

www.BritishListedBuildings.co.uk

This is a very good website for information on Listed Buildings.

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