BUILDING SURVEY REPORT

In Respect Of

XXXX

On Behalf Of

XXXX

ADM
March 2020

Barn 1 The Chequers The Green Gazeley Newmarket Suffolk CB8 8RF
Tel: 01638 750019 Email: contact@bsinitiative.co.uk
Company No.6633912

Directors
Andrew Moulsdale BSc FRICS & Oliver Goodson BSc (Hons) MRICS

1.00 INSTRUCTIONS.

In response to your instructions confirmed via email dated xxxx we can confirm that we have inspected the property, which is currently occupied and consists of a flat located in the upper parts of a period converted property. In this report on the structural and general condition of the property, prepared in context of the type and age of the premises, we have endeavoured to identify the defects found during our inspection and draw your attention to those items which, in our opinion, are likely to give rise to exceptional expenditure in the future. This report, which may not be copied without our authority, is presented strictly for your own use in conjunction with the proposed leasehold purchase of the flat and for no other purpose.

2.00 INSPECTION.

Our survey was carried out on a single visit on xxxx at which time the weather was overcast. In order to discover evidence of present or potential defects to enable us to report as outlined above, our inspection extended to all areas accessible to both the interior and exterior of the premises without carrying out damaging exposure works or the use of long ladders.

There are, of course, in any building many elements which remain concealed or inaccessible after initial construction and cannot therefore be effectively inspected subsequently. We are bound to point out therefore, that we have not inspected woodwork, steelwork, concrete or other parts of the structure and fabric of the premises which were covered, unexposed or inaccessible and we cannot therefore report that such parts of the property were free from rot, corrosion or other defects etc. In particular there was no access to other flats within the building and therefore we cannot report on areas of the property that were inaccessible. Where water ingress has occurred the risk of the development of rot is much increased. If it develops, dry rot can spread quickly through timber sections of a property and infect brickwork thus resulting in significant damage and extensive and costly repair works. Dry rot can also spread from an initial source of water ingress and affect other timber structures in close proximity. In our opinion, circumstances exist whereby the development of dry rot could have occurred within the property, although this is considered unlikely.

We were unable to gain access to the other flats within the building and equally could not access the rear garden or see the rear elevation other than from vantage points within flat B. Our report and comments on the rear of the building is limited by this restriction.

We have not carried out any intrusive investigation or excavation of trial pits, which would have required consent from the freeholder and also permission from the vendor. Similarly, we have not lifted floor coverings or floorboards and therefore we cannot report on sections of the property that were concealed at the time of our inspection. In addition, we would also confirm that we have not tested hermetic seals to double glazed windows and cannot confirm the condition of these components.

Asbestos is often contained in many components of buildings but is often concealed in the structure and fabric of the property. Where material is evident and could possibly contain asbestos we have highlighted recommended remedial works. Most asbestos cement and boarded surfaces do not pose any prejudicial risk to health but where material is potentially dangerous this has been detailed. We have not however carried out testing of any material to confirm if asbestos exists within its construction. We recorded no significant visible evidence of asbestos within the flat although some minor asbestos content is to be expected.

In accordance with your instructions, we have not tested any of the service installations, incoming mains, wastes, drains or other such elements of the property and accordingly therefore we cannot report on their safety, adequacy and standard of installation. We have however reported our findings

in outline later in this report to assist your instructions to specialist contractors if further information is required.

3.00 ENQUIRIES.

We would confirm that we have not checked the details contained in any agents' particulars nor made enquiries with the local or other authorities, which are normally dealt with by your solicitor. At the time of our inspection we were unable to determine whether the purchase of the flat includes a share of the freehold, which in this instance is considered likely. Your solicitor should therefore clarify matters in this regard and determine your service charge liabilities pertaining to the upkeep of the shared elements of the property in which the flat is located.

Your solicitor should identify if sections of the building, such as the roof above flat B are demised to individual lessees given the alterations that have been undertaken to the property historically.

Copies of all planning consents and building control approvals for alterations undertaken to the property should be obtained so that these can provide comfort that the works have been undertaken appropriately and with consent. Party wall documentation regarding works should also be obtained.

We have not sought to identify ownership of the various boundary fences and hedges or establish what easements may affect the dwelling and accordingly your solicitor should advise on these points and other environmental issues covered in their standard searches.

It may also be prudent to assess the risk of flooding and the possible existence of Radon and other gas based pollutants on or nearby the site however again in our view the risk of such issues is no greater than average. We have not undertaken a desktop contamination assessment and cannot rule out the possibility of old industrial workings or former uses of the site, which could increase the risk of landslips or contamination. Given the location of the house these risks are considered to be no greater than average although further studies may be considered prudent.

The area is known to suffer from subsidence and the building may well be constructed on shrinkable clay sub strata. Carefully considerations regarding ground searches is required and we would refer you to our comments later within this report.

4.00 TENURE.

We understand that you are acquiring the long leasehold interest in the property with vacant possession, which obviously gives rise to a shared responsibility to the overall maintenance of the building. Your solicitor should therefore clarify your precise liabilities in respect of the service charge covenants within the lease and also the possible existence of a sinking fund collection. We are unaware if the purchase of the flat includes a share of the freehold although we anticipate that this may be the case. Your solicitor should confirm matters.

The communal areas of the building for which a service charge liability arises are covered within Part A of this report whilst Part B assesses the condition of the flat which is presumed to be the responsibility solely of the lessee. Your solicitor should ascertain whether the roof coverings and windows are the responsibility of individual lessees or if these form part of the communal elements of the building, which is assumed for the purpose of this report.

5.00 PREMISES.

We assume that you are familiar with the premises, which effectively consist of a flat within the upper parts of a property thought to have been constructed around 1880. The building is weathered predominately by means of a timber structured pitched roof converted to form a roof terrace with a front mansard structure and rear dormer. Loads are passed from the roofs to the solid brick walls,

which provide the main load bearing structure of the property and also the internal load bearing partitions. The walls also support the suspended timber floors of the building.
The building at lower levels has been extended to the rear. We anticipate that responsibility for the extended area rests with the lower ground floor flat however your solicitor should confirm matters and responsibilities for repair and maintenance.

6.00 SECURITY.

The flat accessed from a small common parts to the front of the house. Adequate security is provided however we would recommend that the existing facilities be comprehensively reviewed in conjunction with your insurers on purchase of the flat to ascertain that their precise requirements are complied with. In addition, we would recommend that the main flat door locks be changed immediately on your purchase of the property and perhaps that the burglar alarm system is installed within the flat.

7.00 MEANS OF ESCAPE/ FIRE PRECAUTIONS.

The means of escape and fire precautions appertaining to buildings of this age and nature are covered by various statutes and the current Building Regulations. The property has not been fully upgraded in accordance with current building regulations and is therefore considered poor in terms of means of escape. Internally within the flat a smoke alarm installation exists but this should be tested and upgraded to ensure compliance with current regulations.

The fire separation to the ground floor common parts is not compliant standards and a minimum compartmentation of 30 minutes must be achieved and works should be undertaken immediately.

8.00 ENERGY EFFICIENCY.

The flat is considered to be of adequate energy efficiency given the limited levels of thermal insulation to the main roof void. The retention of solid external walls and the type and age of the property is such that heat loss is expected to be in excess of current standards. Heat loss may well affect the internal environment within the flat and evidence although no significant levels of condensation were recorded.

Improvement to the level of thermal insulation are strongly recommended as are the introduction of suitable mechanical extract fans. Careful control of moisture laden air coupled with suitable background heating and ventilation will be necessary to minimise the risk of condensation within the flat.

9.00 PART A – ELEMENTS OF CONSTRUCTION FOR WHICH WE BELIEVE RESPONSIBILITY IS SHARED BETWEEN THE VARIOUS FLAT OWNERS WITH COSTS RECOVERED THROUGH THE SERVICE CHARGE PROVISIONS OF THE LEASE.

9.01 Chimney Stacks.

The property has a number of chimney stacks located at roof level to the right hand side of the building, as viewed from the front elevation. The stacks located to the left hand side serve the adjacent property and are not therefore covered in this report. The chimney stacks do however appear to form part of the party wall structure to either side of the building and therefore if works of an extensive nature are instigated party wall procedures must be followed as set down in the Party Wall etc. Act 1996.

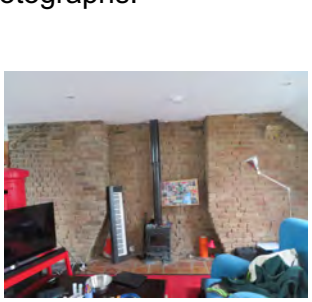
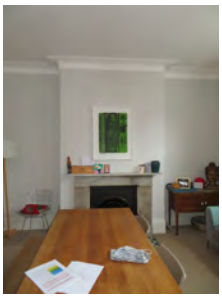
The party chimney stacks to the right hand side are of fairly standard brick constructed raised above roof level, although these are largely concealed at roof level on the terrace to the flat by timber claddings. Externally where visible the chimney stacks, as illustrated below, hold good alignment with little evidence of any undue movement or deflection and on this basis therefore we are satisfied that they remain structurally stable.

The pointing to the chimney stacks is a little loose and recessed and some repointing is to be anticipated. To the top sections of the various chimney stacks the majority of flues are capped, sealed and vented and are not therefore suitable for use. The overall condition of the flaunching and upper sections of the stacks to both the front and rear part of the building are poor, as illustrated below.



There have been no adequate maintenance of the stacks in recent times, particularly the cappings, and some water penetration may well occur. Replacement of the flaunchings and appropriate sealing of the flues is strongly recommended.

Internally within the property chimney breasts were recorded generally in all salient locations and within the top floor the exposed brickwork to the flue structure was evident and is illustrated by reference to the following photographs.

Within the various rooms at lower levels the chimney breasts are retained, although in most instances fireplaces and insets have been removed. Where retained it is clear that the flue lining is significantly deteriorated with dust and debris falling onto the fire back, as illustrated below. In their current condition the fireplaces are unusable and remedial works would be required, particularly cleaning and lining of the flues, to comply with current Regulations.

The retention of the chimney stacks aids the overall structural support and integrity to the party walls and these remain in good condition.

Where hearths are retained these are of tiled formation in keeping with the original installation, as illustrated below.

The hearths appear to remain stable, however we have had experience of failure of hearths, particularly the nail fixings which support battens which in turn support the concrete structure of the hearth. Some cracking was evident to tiles, but this would not suggest failure of the hearth as illustrated below. In our opinion, removal of the hearth, particularly if the fire is not to be utilised, is strongly recommended and this should be in-filled with timber.

The flashings at the junctions of the chimney stacks and the main walls were generally concealed from view at the time of our inspection but appear to be of lead formation. We recorded no evidence of water penetration internally, however improvements to the flashings and junctions with the roof coverings are to be anticipated in the near term.

9.02 Parapet Walls.

The property has solid 9" brick parapet walls constructed between the various chimney breasts and evident to the front of the property by reference to the following photographs. In general the parapet walls hold good alignment with little evidence of any undue movement or deflection and on this basis we are satisfied that they remain structurally stable.




The parapet walls are shared with the neighbouring properties and therefore if works of an extensive nature are to be instigated party wall procedures must be followed as set down by the Party Wall etc. 1996.

The condition of the parapets is deteriorated and the various coping stones, be they concrete or angular clay cappings, would benefit from repointing of the joints, as illustrated below.

Rendered and brick on edge capping details are badly weathered with cracked and blown mortar evident and additionally the stone embellishments to the front of the building are badly weathered, as illustrated below.


In our opinion the parapet walls at upper levels would benefit from repair and maintenance, although this is generally in keeping with what we would normally anticipate in buildings of this age and nature. The parapet walls generally appear to be structurally stable but failure to maintain and carry out regular repairs will potentially undermine their integrity and works of this nature are therefore essential.

Lead capping details appear to have been incorporated to the main front parapet walls, as part of the loft conversion work as illustrated below. The leadwork is not of the highest order but is considered beneficial and remains generally in good condition. Repointing of the coping stones at lower levels is necessary as part of ongoing normal maintenance, but beyond this significant remedial works are not anticipated.

Similar 9" brick parapet walls are formed at lower levels and weathered generally by concrete coping stones, although lead capping details are also evident as illustrated below.

At the lowest levels of the building it would appear that a rear extension has been constructed and brick parapets have been formed which are 13 ½" in thickness, as illustrated below. The detailing of the capping's to the rear is such that they are likely to result in saturation and dampness internally with no adequate protection to weathering being provided. The introduction of lead capping's or suitably sized once weathered twice throated pre-cast concrete coping stones is considered essential, in our view.

We cannot confirm if the responsibility for repair and maintenance of these parapets and this rear extension rests with the owner of the lower ground floor flat, or whether this forms part of the communal service charge and your solicitor should advise in this regard. Similarly, the upper sections of the property may be the responsibility of the Lessee of 178B Hammersmith Grove to repair and maintain, given the works which have been undertaken to convert the area historically. Determination of the precise responsibilities under the service charge provisions within Lease are essential and will establish potential future maintenance costs.

The lead flashings to the rear appear to be adequately formed, although not strictly in accordance with best practice and improvements or perhaps replacement of the flashings may well be required.

The lead flashings which have been utilised in the formation of the main upper sections are adequate but not of the most appropriate form, in our view, and internally we recorded evidence of slight staining or dampness internally which may well be indicative of defects to flashings to the chimney stack and parapets, illustrated particularly by reference to the following photograph.

Minor water damage in various locations was recorded to the top floor and in our view remedial works are to be anticipated to prevent water ingress and these works should be undertaken in the near term. Obviously this source of water ingress much increases the risk of the development of wet and dry rot and intrusive investigation is recommended to establish the condition of affected timbers and determine remedial works. We recorded no evidence of wet or dry rot but cannot confirm our suspicions in this regard.

To the front of the property there is a small parapet to the bay, which is of ornate formation with rendered masonry on top of a projecting stone cornice, as illustrated below.

The parapet is deteriorated and rainwater run-off is saturating sections of the cornice, particularly as illustrated below.

Such deterioration frequently causes damage to the masonry, particularly of the cornice. The parapet wall itself is of relatively flimsy, slender construction and regular repair, maintenance and possibly reconstruction of the parapet must be anticipated over time. It is imperative that repairs are carried out and the introduction of lead capping's and flashing details to prevent saturation of the masonry cornices, in particular, is strongly recommended.

9.03 Roofs.

The property has many roofs of various levels and the upper most flat roof is of relatively recent structural formation and has been adapted to allow the formation of a terrace, as illustrated below.

We were unable to gain sight of the roof weathering material, as the terrace has synthetic grass as a finish which is laid onto a timber decking, below which we anticipate the roof material is retained. We recorded no particular evidence internally to suggest that the roof covering is leaking, however we have advised that the flashings and upstand details of the parapets are defective and water ingress is occurring at this time. In our opinion stripping up and recovering of the flat roof to the upper levels is to be anticipated within the near term and at least an inspection following removal of the decking will be required.

The upper areas have clearly been poorly neglected and timber decking and areas around the extremities of the roof terrace and rotten and generally in poor condition, as illustrated below. Significant refurbishment of the upper areas is necessary, in our opinion.

Access onto the terrace is provided by the manually operated roof hatch, which appears to remain serviceable at this time.

The structure of the flat roof appears to be of timber formation, however again we cannot confirm our suspicions in this regard. The roof generally appears well aligned and presumably Building Regulations Approval Certification with regards to the loft conversion and creation of the terrace can be provided, which would offer comfort that the works were carried out appropriately, as we believe to be the case.

To the front of the property the original roof slope is retained and is weathered by means of man-made Eternit slates. The roof externally generally holds good alignment with little evidence of any undue movement or deflection, as illustrated by reference to the following photograph. On this basis therefore we are satisfied that it remains structurally stable and significant remedial works are therefore considered unlikely.

The recovering of the roof appears to have been undertaken some time historically and a number of vents are incorporated, presumably to alleviate the possible development of condensation within the roof structure, as illustrated below. Modern breathable membranes are now utilised rather than the BS747 sarking felt, which is anticipated to exist beneath the slates.

During the course of our survey we were unable to gain sight of the timber roof structure and therefore cannot confirm its nature and condition. We recorded no particular evidence which would suggest the existence of significant rotten timbers, however these were concealed from view and therefore we cannot confirm our suspicions in this regard.

The Eternit slates remain in fair condition, considering their age and nature, but the quality of workmanship in their original installation was not of the highest order. Moss growth is beginning to develop between the joints of the slates and occasional units are faded, which is the first indicator that the tiles are coming towards the beginning of the end of their useful life.

The rear mansard which has been formed, presumably as part of the loft conversation, we anticipate is also of timber construction and utilises similar man-made slates and again ventilating tiles are incorporated, as illustrated below.


Again, deterioration to the Eternit slates is evident and whilst these remain in sound serviceable condition at this time replacement within the foreseeable future, perhaps the next 10 years or so, must be anticipated.

Timber dormer structures have been installed to the rear and are lead weathered, as illustrated by reference to the following photographs. The quality of workmanship appears not to be of the highest order, but we recorded no ongoing water penetration at this time. Reformation of the lead weathering to the dormers is to be anticipated in conjunction with recovering of the roofs in due course.


During the course of our survey we were unable to gain sight of any thermal insulation within the roof, but we presume that insulation in compliance with Building Regulations in force at the time the works were carried out was incorporated. It is unlikely that the levels of thermal insulation are compliant with current Building Regulations and in conjunction with recovering of the roof in due course the incorporation of modern levels of thermal insulation is strongly recommended. The incorporation of a breathable membrane is also necessary.

As detailed, we were unable to gain sight of any of the timber roof structure and cannot confirm its overall condition, although we recorded no evidence to suggest that this is in anything other than serviceable order. It is possible that rot could have developed, although we cannot confirm our suspicions in this regard it is considered unlikely.

Velux windows have been incorporated to the front roof slope, as illustrated by reference to the following photograph. These are a little aged and are approaching the end of their useful life, but generally remain serviceable at present. Failure of the sealed double glazed units is to be anticipated in the relatively near term.

At lower levels to the property there are a number of flat roofs, which we believe are timber structured, although in all instances access was not possible. Lead covered roofs were recorded, as illustrated below.

High performance felt roof coverings were also identified, as illustrated by reference to the following photograph.

The detail of the felt roof covering, and particularly its lap with the adjacent neighbour's roof, is of particular poor quality as illustrated below.

We recorded no evidence of water penetration at the time of our survey and therefore the coverings remain in fair order. Significant remedial works to the lead covered roof is not anticipated in the near term, but replacement of the felt flat roof membrane may well be expected in due course, particularly as the quality of workmanship appears somewhat limited.

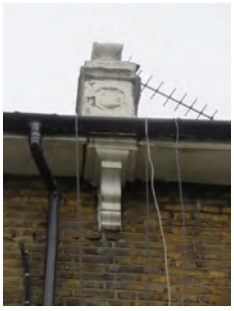
At the lowest level, as part of the rear extension to the lower ground floor, a further flat roof has been formed which incorporated roof lights and is weathered with a liquid plastic membrane, as shown below.

We anticipate that the responsibility for repair and maintenance of this lower roof rests with the owner of the lower ground floor flat, but your solicitor should clarify matters in this regard. Regular maintenance is necessary to flat roof coverings and in general these are strewn with debris, particularly to the lower roof, which will potentially foreshorten their life expectancy. Regular maintenance of the flat roofs and improvement to the quality of the flashings is strongly recommended.

During the course of our survey we were unable to gain sight of the insulation levels or structure to the various flat roofs and therefore cannot comment in this regard. We recorded no evidence which would indicate an increased risk of rot and deterioration to any timber structures, however without intrusive investigation it is impossible to confirm matters further.

The levels of thermal insulation within the various flat roof coverings is unlikely to be compliant with current Building Regulations and improvements in this regard, whilst not essential, are strongly recommended. In our view given the likely limited levels of thermal insulation to the loft conversion solar gain during the summer months and cold conditions internally during the winter are likely to be experienced. Improvements to the levels of thermal insulation to upgrade the loft conversion so it is compliant with current Regulars are strongly recommended.

To the front of the building a timber fascia and soffit is retained to the roof, which are supported by means of corbel brackets which are possibly timber or masonry in construction, as illustrated below.



The supporting bracket beneath the corbelled parapet masonry detail is missing to the left hand side, in comparison with that detailed to the right hand side as shown in the previous photograph, as illustrated overleaf. It is unlikely that this has any structural implication but reinstatement of the missing corbel is recommended.

The timber fascia and soffit details appear to remain in fair serviceable order but regular repair and redecoration is required. Replacement of the fascia and soffit details with modern vented uPVC components would be of benefit.

Similar fascia details we believe exist to the rear of the building, although we had no access to the rear garden area and our sight and survey of the rear elevation was taken from vantage points to windows and at roof level generally.

9.04 Rainwater Goods.

Rainwater from the various roof coverings is discharged generally to perimeter guttering, which is largely of uPVC formation. To the front elevation gutters of this type were recorded and discharged to communal downpipes shared with the neighbouring properties, as illustrated below.

The gutters appear to be choked with debris and are of poor quality and overhauling, cleaning and ultimately replacement of these sections are recommended.

The downpipes discharge and run to serve hoppers and it is clear that flooding and leaks do occur from the hoppers, presumably as they are choked with debris. This is causing saturation of the brickwork in various levels, as illustrated below. The dampness appears, at this time, more likely to affect the lower ground floor flat than flat B, however immediate improvements are strongly recommended. Such saturation of masonry can lead to the development of dampness internally and wet and dry rot to timbers.

To the front of the building there is a small flat roof over the bay which serves the ground floor flat. We were unable to gain sight or access onto the roof and cannot comment on this, however it would appear that the roof covering is aged and in poor condition. Stripping and recovering of the roof must be anticipated in the near term.

To the rear mansard roof similar uPVC gutters have been formed and again these have been poorly maintained and there is evidence of significant ponding water and debris within the gutters, as illustrated below.

Weed growth was also evident in other gutters at lower levels, as illustrated by reference to the following photograph.

The rainwater goods as they descend down the building run to serve hoppers and it is clear that these again have been poorly maintained and there was evidence of leaks, flooding and relatively crude repairs being carried out previously, as illustrated below.

In overall terms the rainwater goods are in poor condition. Cleaning, overhauling and maintenance will extend their life expectancy but in our opinion complete replacement of the rainwater goods is to be anticipated and should be carried out in the relatively near term.

The rainwater goods generally run to the lower ground floor level and are collected in drainage gullies. We had no access to the rear of the property during the course of our survey and cannot comment on the suitability of rainwater collection to the rear of the house.

To the front of the property downpipes discharge into a slot drain, however the drain is choked with debris as illustrated below. Clearly the drains have not been maintained on a regular basis and flooding of the lower ground floor area could occur. Clearly this will not affect the upper levels of the building but maintenance is necessary and should be carried out in the near term.


Cleaning and maintenance will extend the life expectancy of the rainwater goods however replacement and reconfiguration are recommended.

9.05 Walls.

The main party walls to the house appear to be of solid brick construction, possibly being 18" in thickness at lower ground floor level reducing in steps to 13½" and perhaps 9" in thickness at upper levels. A change in the wall thickness was recorded as part of the loft conversion with a ledge illustrating this, as shown by reference to the following photograph.

In general the party walls within the property held good alignment with little evidence of any undue movement or deflection and on this basis therefore we are satisfied that these remain structurally stable. Significant remedial works are considered unlikely. Thermal expansion cracking could perhaps develop at the junction of the rear additions and party walls to the main house, although we recorded no particular evidence of this at the time of our survey.

The external walls to the original parts of the building are generally of solid brickwork, predominantly 13½" in thickness reducing to 9" at upper levels. In-fill panels between windows are of reduced thickness at upper levels to the flat and are possibly of 9" in thickness at this time.

The brick bond to the original sections of the property is illustrated below. The pointing is serviceable but cracked and loose sections were recorded and additionally water damage is likely to result in failure of the pointing and dampness internally.

Sections to the upper parts of the front elevation appear perhaps to have been rebuilt historically, although we cannot confirm our suspicions in this regard. Sections of the rear addition have clearly been altered, extended and new construction incorporated, as shown by reference to the following photograph.

Externally the brickwork is generally adequately aligned but is not entirely plumb or perpendicular in nature.

We recorded some evidence of slight misalignment in the brickwork above the large window openings to the front elevation, as illustrated below. The extent of deflection is limited and is possibly due to the nature of construction and perhaps deflection to a timber bressummer concealed beneath the stone facings or to the opening over the bay structure on the floor below. It is possible that the bressummer could have become rotten over time, although we recorded no evidence which would indicate this.

Sight of the rear elevation of the building was restricted due to internal vantage points and from roof level. Where visible the brickwork remained in fair condition and largely, it would appear, in a condition commensurate with the front elevation. Repointing, repairs and maintenance are necessary and alleviation of saturation and leaks from gutters and downpipes is essential to prevent further deterioration to the brickwork occurring.

To the front elevation cracking was evident to the entrance porch running vertically at the junction of the stone pilasters, as illustrated below. This, in our opinion, indicates slight movement and inadequate tie between the stonework and the brickwork to the rear. The extent of movement, in our opinion, is well within normally anticipated parameters and is of no significant structural concern. Repairs however are recommended.

Vertical cracking was evident at the junction of the front bay and the main walls of the house and a large pointed joint has been incorporated previously, as illustrated below.

Differential movement between the bay structures of the house and the main walls of the property are typical in buildings of this age and nature. The foundations to bays are often far shallower than those of the main walls of the house and this coupled with differential movement, thermal expansion and lack of tie between the bay and the main walls of the house results in the movement which is evident. The extent of movement is well within normally anticipated parameters and in our opinion is of no significant structural concern. Repairs and repointing may well however be required over time. Movement to the bay is unlikely to significantly affect the upper flats, however repairs would be anticipated as part of the communal service charge expenditure.

Minor cracking was evident to the front elevation above the entrance door, as illustrated below. This, in our opinion, is likely to be as a result of minor movement to the arch coupled with thermal expansion. The extent of movement is well within normally anticipated parameters and is of no significant concern.

Internally within the property we recorded evidence of cracking at the junction of the rear addition and the main walls of the house in various locations, as illustrated below.

Differential movement often occurs in this location and in addition the extensions and further loading may well have caused some initial bedding down and movement between the main section and the rear additions. In our opinion, the extent of movement is slightly in excess of what we would normally anticipate. Removal of the plaster and assessment of the fractures should be carried out and perhaps some minor structural improvements undertaken with the introduction of Helifix bars if necessary. We cannot rule out the possibility of further movement in this area and to some extent continued minor differential movement is to be anticipated.

Internally within the property minor hairline cracking was evident above window openings to both the front and rear elevations, as illustrated below. This is indicative of minor foundation instability, perhaps coupled with slight thermal expansion. The extent of movement is, in our opinion, well within normally anticipated parameters and is not indicative of any significant concern.

Internally within the property the main load bearing structure is provided by the spine partition which separates the front and rear sections of the main building. The spine partition within the property is generally of timber construction. Clearly much alteration to the building has occurred and the structural dynamics of how load is transposed through the building have changed. Evidence of cracking within the spine partition and deflection of door openings is evident although this, in our opinion, is largely in accordance with what we would anticipate in a building of this age and nature. Movement generally occurs above door openings, which represents the weakest point of the spine partition. Continued deflection and minor movement is to be anticipated due to the limitations of the original construction.

Loads from the building are transposed down to the foundations of the property. It is likely that the foundations are of relatively shallow formation, although the existence of the lower ground floor minimises the risk of the development of subsidence in the future.

The house is likely to be constructed on shrinkable clay sub-strata and the risk of subsidence is much increased as a consequence. The existence of the lower ground floor is such that the depth of foundations in some parts of the house are likely to be at a level whereby they are unaffected by changes in ground moisture conditions.

To the front of the property there is a large tree which has been pollarded recently, as illustrated below. Uncontrolled growth of the tree would much increase the risk of subsidence developing within the house. Clearly the Council is aware of this and appear to be maintaining trees along the road in a suitable manner.

In our opinion, we recorded no evidence of significant historic or progressive subsidence affecting the property. The foundations and the nature of the sub-strata upon which the property is constructed is such however that we cannot rule out the development of subsidence in the future. It is imperative therefore that the freeholder provides suitable buildings insurance which incorporates appropriate levels of subsidence cover in the unlikely event of the development of this defect. In our opinion continued minor movement to the house must be anticipated, although we do not foresee significant further movement in the near term, provided that drains are maintained in serviceable condition and trees and shrubs in close proximity are adequately pollarded and maintained.

Openings to the front elevation are generally provided by means of masonry lintels, possibly with timber back lintels. We have advised of some deflection to the larger opening above the bay, which may also be as a consequence of deterioration to the timber bressummer. The stonework generally remains in fair condition but projecting ledges would be prone to saturation and treatment with lead cappings is strongly recommended.

To the front entrance porch a stone cornice is evident, which is clearly deflected to the left hand side, possibly indicating historic movement to the building as illustrated below.

Plant growth is beginning to develop within the masonry suggesting that the capping is deteriorating. Repairs and maintenance to the stonework of the building is essential. The introduction of lead cappings and weatherings is strongly recommended to minimise further deterioration. Failure to carry out suitable maintenance will much increase the necessity for reconstruction and reformation of masonry cornices and details.

9.06 Ceilings.

The ceilings throughout the building vary. We were unable to gain sight of those which form part of the lower flats within the building. Our comments with respect to the ceilings within flat B are contained within Part B of this report.

9.07 Floors.

The majority of floors throughout the building are believed to be of timber construction with load bearing floor joists spanning between internal and external load bearing walls. We had no access to inspect the floors at lower levels within the building, however we would refer you to our comments contained within Appendix B with regards to the floors serving flat 178B Hammersmith Grove.

9.08 Joinery.

The windows to the building appear to be the responsibility of the individual Lessees and are presumably demised to the flat owners. This should be confirmed by your solicitor. Our comments with regards to the windows therefore in respect of flat 178B are contained with Part B of this report. The windows to the lower ground floor level, certainly to the front elevation where these could be inspected, appear to remain serviceable but would benefit from repair, maintenance and redecoration in due course.

Access to the main common parts of the property is gained via a timber door, which may well be the original installation set within a timber frame with fanlight above, as illustrated below.

The door remains in fair condition considering its age and nature and significant remedial works are not anticipated in the near term. The security offered by the door is acceptable but improvements could be made if required.

9.09 Decorations.

Externally the decoration to the building is beginning to deteriorate, particularly to timber and masonry surfaces. Failure of paintwork to window cills in particular was evident, as illustrated below.

Previously painted rendered surfaces are also cracked with failed paintwork apparent, as shown below.

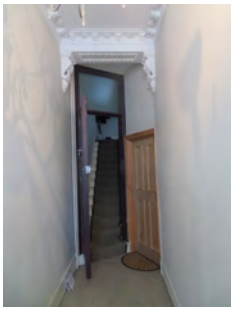
We have reported also that water run-off from parapets and cornicing is causing deterioration. In our opinion complete external redecoration of the property is to be anticipated and should be carried out within the next 12 to 18 months. Failure to carry out repairs and maintenance of a building of this type age and nature, particularly redecoration, can facilitate rot to timber surfaces and failure of masonry and ferrous components. Given the size and nature of the building external repairs and redecorations are likely to represent potentially significant expenditure and your solicitor should therefore advise of the service charge obligations and contributions necessary to meet the cost of carrying out such works.

External decorations must be considered as being cyclical in nature. Accordingly, external repairs and redecorations should be carried out every 5 years to conserve the integrity of various components. Failure to redecorate the property will lead to deterioration in its condition.

Internal decorations are necessary, in our opinion, to the common parts although these are relatively small in nature.

9.10 Common Parts.

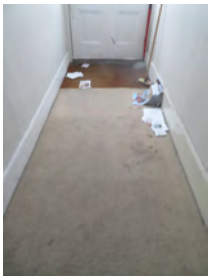
The common parts to the building consist of a small hallway which remains largely in its original formation, although alterations have been carried out to facilitate the sub-division of the building as illustrated below.



The original lath and plaster ceiling and ornate cornice is retained; however this remains in fair condition considering its age and nature. We have however known cornicing and lath and plaster ceilings of this age and nature fail suddenly and collapse without warning. Repair, maintenance and regular inspection of the ceiling to ascertain its serviceability will be required.

The plastering to the walls is generally aged with cracked, blown and uneven surfaces evident as shown below. Improvements, repair, maintenance and replastering may well be considered prudent.

The floor at ground floor level is of timber construction and is a little uneven in nature, as illustrated below.



Where possible lifting of mats and carpets revealed cracked, blown and poorly fitted floorboards generally, as illustrated below.

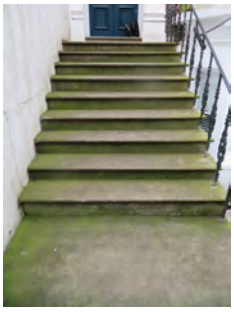
Overhauling of the floor may well be required and in due course recovering of the carpet may well be necessary. In overall terms the communal parts remain in fair condition but would benefit from some decoration and improvement works.

The damp proof course to a property of this type, age and nature is likely to be slate in formation, however we were unable to gain sight of this at the time of our survey due to rendered sections externally. Random moisture meter readings were taken in the only accessible ground floor areas to the common parts, which did not reveal any high moisture content, which would suggest that the damp proof course remains serviceable. We cannot however confirm our suspicions in this regard and it is not uncommon for dampness to develop within ground floor flats. We cannot confirm if the repair and maintenance or the injection of a new chemical damp proof course would rest with the freeholder and thus form part of the service charge expenditure, or whether this would be the responsibility of the lower ground floor flat. Failure of the damp proof course will not generally affect the flat in the upper parts of the building, although some expenditure through the service charge provisions may be anticipated.

9.11 Gardens, Boundaries and Path.

To the rear it would appear that the garden area is demised to the lower ground floor flat and given that we have no access to this we cannot comment on this, other than it appears to be well maintained.

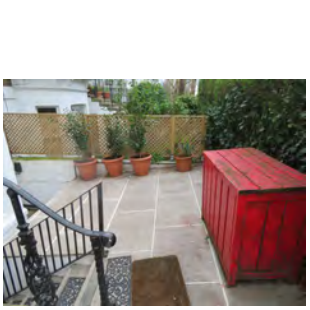
Access to the front of the property is obtained via stone pavings which lead to stone steps to the front entrance, which are of relatively recent origin and remain generally in good condition, as illustrated below. Cleaning and maintenance of the stonework is necessary and the waterproof membrane beneath may also require replacement from time to time to prevent dampness into the lower ground floor flat. At present the steps remain in good condition.



Renderwork which has been applied up to the walls at lower ground floor level appears to remain in fair serviceable condition and significant remedial works are not anticipated.

The boundary wall to the left hand side is of masonry construction and is rendered. This is generally in poor order with cracked and blown sections of renderwork evident below.

Similar walls exist to the right hand side, although a boundary fence has been raised on top of this, as illustrated below. The failure to adequately protect the top section of the surface is leading to saturation of the render work, which may cause deterioration in the future.



The front area of the property has been renovated and laid to falls with paving slabs evident previously. The overall condition of the front area is in good order. This may well be demised to one of the lower ground floor flats and your solicitor should therefore clarify responsibility for repair and nature of this aspect in the future.

The front boundary wall is of solid masonry construction and a privet hedge has been formed internally. Repair and maintenance of the boundary wall will be required and regular pollarding and maintenance of the privet hedge will be necessary, but beyond this significant remedial works are considered unlikely.

10.00 PART B – ELEMENTS OF CONSTRUCTION FOR WHICH WE HAVE PRESUMED THAT RESPONSIBILITY RESTS SOLELY WITH THE FLAT OWNER.

10.01 Ceilings.

Within the loft conversion the ceilings are of relatively modern form and consist of plasterboard attached to the otherside of the timber structure. In general the ceilings held good alignment with little evidence of any undue movement or deflection and on this basis we are satisfied that they remain structurally stable. We recorded slight cracking and movement at board joints and around openings within the ceiling, but in general it remains in fair order. Isolated areas of water ingress were also recorded and minor making good is therefore necessary.

Occasional ceilings at lower levels within the unit have also been replaced with plasterboard, particularly within the small front bedroom on the floor beneath. The ceiling has been damaged by water penetration around lights and as a result cracking to board joints were evident, as shown below. It is possible, in our opinion, that the roof hatch was left open during heavy rainfall which caused the damage. Repairs and making good of the ceiling are required.

Loose fixings to plasterboard ceilings were also recorded in some areas, as illustrated below. Making good of the damage as part of redecoration is anticipated, but significant remedial works are considered unlikely.

The majority of ceilings within the flats, particularly to the larger rooms, are of lath and plaster formation. In general the ceilings hold fair alignment, however cracked, blown and uneven plasterwork was evident in many rooms, as illustrated below.

In a number of rooms original cornicing is retained which is also cracked, aged and damaged in many areas, as illustrated below. The retention of the cornicing and the old lath and plaster ceilings adds to the historic amenity of the building; however the ceilings and cornicing are in poor condition and have been badly maintained previously.

We must also advise that ceilings of this nature have been known to fail and collapse without warning. We recorded no evidence of the imminent likelihood of such failure, however we cannot rule it out. Repairs, maintenance and overhauling of the ceilings and cornices will improve their overall integrity and condition, however replacement in conjunction with renovation and refurbishment of the flat may well be considered prudent and indeed is recommended. The introduction of modern ½ hour fire resistant plasterboard ceilings would improve the overall condition, particularly if replacement cornices to match the existing were formed.

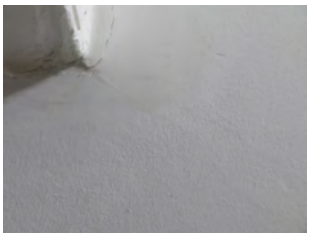
10.02 Walls.

The external walls to the property are generally plastered, although as part of the loft conversion dry lining appears to have been incorporated with plasterboard. The modern plasterboard installations generally remain in fair condition and we are satisfied that these remain structurally stable. Some opening of board joints and minor movement was recorded, however this is well within normally anticipated parameters.

The wall plaster to the external and party walls generally remains in fair condition, although we have advised of cracked and blown sections and some repairs may well be required. A number of sections of loose and friable plaster were also recorded and the introduction of physical fixings may prove difficult as a consequence.

The solid external walls are uninsulated and heat loss therefore will be significantly in excess of that considered appropriate or compliant with current Building Regulations. Cold external walls also much increase the risk of the development of condensation, although we recorded no particular evidence of this defect at the time of our inspection. There is however no retrospective requirement to upgrade thermal insulation to external walls, although in our view it is recommended. The introduction of modern insulated plasterboard linings would much improve the overall energy efficiency of the property and reduce the risk of condensation. Such works, however, do reduce room sizes and impact on existing cornicing and skirting and can only realistically be undertaken cost effectively in conjunction with a significant renovation and refurbishment of the property.

Some minor cracking was evident to the party walls at the junction of the stair strings and trimmers within it, as illustrated by reference to the following photograph. The extent of movement is, in our opinion, however well within normally anticipated parameters.



The internal partitions within the property vary and some internal masonry walls are plastered and decorated, which remain in fair condition. We have reported cracked and blown plaster as a consequence of movement to the building and some plaster repairs are to be anticipated, although not significantly in extent.

The majority of the partitions appear to be lined with the original lath and plasterwork, which is in good condition considering its age and nature, but areas of cracked, blown and debonded plasterwork were evident. The plaster is also likely to contain horse hair and allergies can result as a consequence. Whilst this is not essential in the near term replacement of the lath and plaster linings with modern plasterboard to create suitable ½ fire resistance is strongly recommended.

The cracked, blown and minor disturbance to lath and plaster linings are evident particularly above door openings as a result of movement in the property previously.

10.03 Floors.

The floors to the property are generally of timber construction with load bearing floor joists spanning between internal and external load bearing walls. To the loft conversion it is possible that the floors are supported on steel beams spanning between party walls, although we cannot confirm our suspicions in this regard.

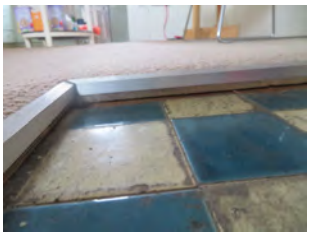
The majority of floors in other areas consist of floor joists spanning between internal and external load bearing walls. Flexural movement or bounce was recorded on the application of load to many of the floors, particularly to the original sections of the property in larger rooms. This is in keeping with buildings of this age and nature and results predominantly from the limitations of the original construction. The floor joists were often undersized or span greater widths than ideal and the movement occurs as a consequence. Movement and the limitations of the timber stud partitions upon which the floors are constructed has also contributed to the movement.

As a consequence many of the floors are misaligned and uneven, particularly around the staircase opening, which is not uncommon due to limitations of the trimming of the staircase. It is difficult to record photographically misalignment, however it is evident, in our opinion, by reference to the following photograph.

In our opinion the floors have limited strength, however these are in keeping with buildings of this age and nature. We are satisfied that the floors are cable of supporting normally anticipated domestic loadings, however in conjunction with any renovation or refurbishment upgrading and strengthening of the floors may well be required.

Many of the floorboard surfaces are uneven and we recorded evidence of cracked, blown and damaged floorboards, which are largely concealed by carpeting. Within the living room, in particular, close to the junction with the kitchen unevenness to the floor was recorded, as illustrated below. Extensive overhauling and refurbishment of the floorboards are to be anticipated.

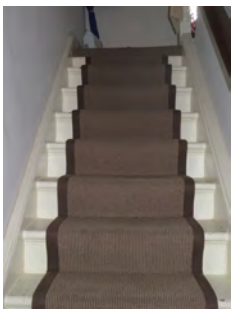
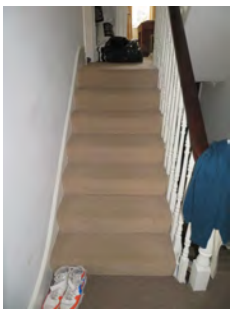
Within the living room it appears that new lining or boards have been placed in sections over the original timbers creating a gap or step downwards to the hearth, as illustrated below. The floor condition in this room however remains poor and further improvements are strongly recommended.



In many areas exposed floorboards were evident which revealed these to be aged and in poor condition with evidence of historic worm and beetle infestation identified, as illustrated below.

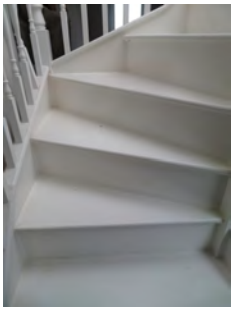
Much of the worm and beetle infestation is likely to be aged and deceased, however some live worm and beetle infestation may be identified within floor joists, particularly at lower levels within the building. The installation of modern central heating systems generally creates environments whereby worm and beetle infestation cannot flourish. Treatment of any live infestations may well be required.

Access between the various floors of the flat is gained via staircases, ½ landings and small sections of steps as illustrated below. A new staircase has been installed to provide access to the roof terrace. In general the staircases held good alignment with little evidence of any undue movement or deflection and we are satisfied that they remain structurally stable. Significant remedial works are considered unlikely.

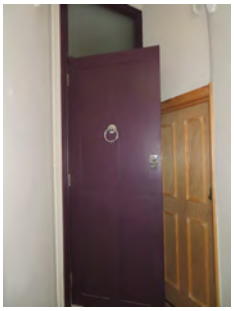
Minor movement of the staircase string against the party walls was recorded with cracking evident at the junction, as illustrated below. In our opinion the movement is to be anticipated in buildings of this age and nature and is well within normally anticipated parameters. Regular filling and making good in conjunction with redecoration are recommended.

The staircase leading to the loft conversion is of modern origin and generally holds good alignment with little evidence of any undue movement or deflection, as illustrated below. Significant remedial works are considered unlikely.

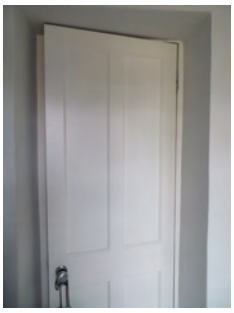
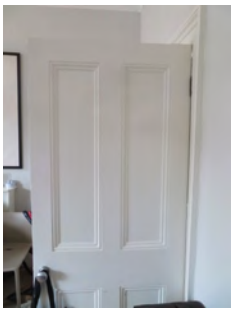
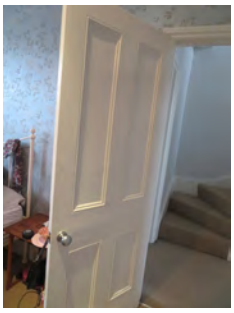


10.04 Joinery.

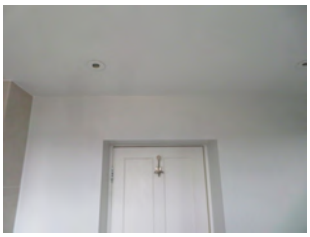
Access to the flat is gained via a large timber door set within a frame, as illustrated below. The door remains in good condition; however we must advise that it is not fully compliant with current Regulations and does not provide adequate ½ hour fire resistance. Similar concerns must also be expressed with regards to the adjacent flat entrance door, which could potentially undermine the fire precaution and means of escape from within the building. Upgrading of the various doors with the incorporation of intumescent strips and smoke seals is strongly recommended and the glazed panel above the door to flat B should be replaced with ½ hour fire resistant material.



The doors internally within the flat are generally of timber formation with panelled units evident by reference to the following photographs.

The doors remain in fair condition, considering their age and nature, however a number are ill-fitting within the openings and many of the door frames and door heads are misaligned as a consequence of the movement within the building historically, as illustrated below. The extent of movement in this regard is well within normally anticipated parameters and is considered to be of no significant concern.



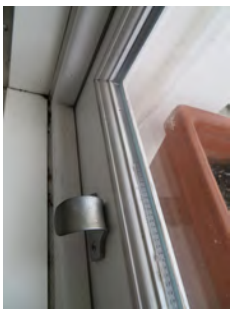
The fire resistance of the doors is limited and improvements in this respect could be considered.

The hinges and ironmongery to the doors are generally aged and in a deteriorated condition, as illustrated below. Upgrading of the hinges and ironmongery whilst not essential is recommended.

The windows to the flat are generally of replacement timber double hung sash units installed to match the original style, as illustrated below.


The windows are of relatively modern origin and sash cords internally remain generally in good condition, as illustrated below.

The sealed double glazed units within the windows are relatively slender in nature and do not offer the most energy efficiency, as illustrated below.

Condensation may develop on the windows during particular climatic weather conditions, however the energy efficiency of these slender double glazed units is greater than any single glazed units. Upgrading of the windows with modern energy efficient double glazing could be contemplated but is not considered cost effective at this time. The new windows generally remain in good condition and subject to regular repair, maintenance and cleaning have significant remaining life expectancy.

The secondary joinery components within the property remain in fair condition and a number of built in cupboards have been formed. The cupboards beneath stairs and in other locations are generally of fairly basic form and whilst these remain serviceable improvements and adjustments are necessary to return these to a serviceable condition, as illustrated below.


Skirtings, architraves and the like remain generally in fair condition commensurate with their age and nature.

10.05 Decoration.

The décor internally within the property remains in fair condition but we have advised of cracked, blown and water damaged sections of plasterwork to both ceilings and walls. Complete redecoration, we believe, will be required as part of the works necessary on occupation or prior to your occupation of the property to return them to a sound serviceable condition. Regular redecoration must also be anticipated thereafter.

11.00 SERVICES.

As stated in the preambles to this report we have not tested any of the services, waste, drains or incoming mains to the flat or the property and therefore cannot confirm their nature, condition, extent and adequacy. We have however reported our findings based on our visual observations under the specific headings below to assist your assessment of the installations and the necessity of obtaining further reports if required.

11.01 Electrics.

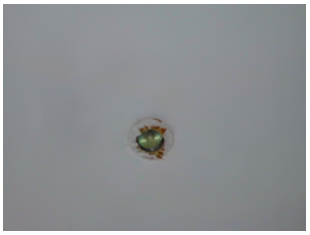
The electrical main enters the property, presumably close to the common parts and rises within a duct before serving the electrical installation cupboard and meter at first floor level, as illustrated below.

From the meter supplies run to a relatively modern miniature circuit breaker, as illustrated below. The circuit breaker is not strictly compliant with current standards but is of relatively modern origin. Upgrading of the installation with a metal cabinet based miniature circuit breaker is recommended and works of this nature should be undertaken in due course.

From the fuseboard PVC sheathed twin and earth cables run to serve the various lighting and power facilities located throughout the property, as illustrated below.

Alterations and additional electrical works have been carried out from time to time and in our view it is unlikely that the electrical installation is fully compliant with current NICEIC Regulations. The overall condition of the electrics is believed to be serviceable and complete rewiring is not anticipated but testing by a qualified electrician is recommended so that defects and limitations of the system can be identified and improvements undertaken is essential. Some works in this regard are strongly recommended.

The lighting within the property consists generally of aged recessed halogen based spotlights which are inefficient and in addition the units have no intumescent hood and effectively compromise the fire resistance provided by the ceilings, as illustrated below. The lighting units are aged and a number are inoperative. Replacement of the lighting units with modern LED units incorporating an intumescent hood is strongly recommended to upgrade the lighting so it is more compliant with current standards.

Basic power points were recorded throughout the property which vary in terms of their finish. In general these appear to be operational at the time of our survey, but testing by an NICEIC registered contractor is strongly recommended. Some improvements and additional sockets may well be required.

The upper parts have a smoke detector system which appears to be hardwired, as illustrated below and is of relatively modern origin and remains in good condition. A heat detector within the kitchen was also recorded. Testing of the system is essential to ensure that it is fully compliant with current Regulations. This system is essential to ensure that adequate means of escape facilities are provided.


Upgrading of the doors leading onto the common areas at ground level is also essential and improvements to the fire protection provided by the existing lath and plaster ceiling and partition linings should also be contemplated.

Mechanical extract fans are generally incorporated within the bathrooms and these appear to remain serviceable. Upgrading of the installations with more powerful units operated by a humidistat so that they operative automatically rather than on the lighting circuit is recommended so that moisture laden air can be expelled immediately upon generation. This would limit the risk of the development of condensation internally within the flat. The provision of an extract fan within the kitchen in this regard is strongly recommended.

Access to the property is secured by an entry phone system, however this was inoperational at the time of our inspection. Replacement of the entry phone system may well be necessary to return it to a serviceable condition.

11.02 Gas.

The gas main enters the property and runs in a similar manner, we believe, to serve the gas meter at first floor level within the service cupboard, as illustrated below.

Gas is distributed via copper pipework from the meter to the various gas supplied located throughout the property. In most instances the pipework was concealed from view and could not be inspected in detail. We recorded no evidence of gas smells or other particular defects at the time of our inspection and we believe therefore that the gas supply remains in safe condition. It is however imperative that all gas supplies and gas fired appliances are tested by a Gas Safe registered contractor prior to your occupation of the property to ensure that they do remain in safe condition.

A carbon monoxide meter is recorded within the property, however this should be replaced with a hardwired installation, in our view, to upgrade the installation so it is fully compliant with current Regulations.

11.03 Central Heating.

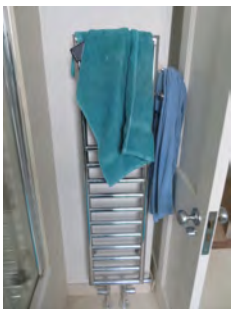
The property has a traditional central heating system powered by a Worcester combination boiler located in the utility room at first floor ½ land level, as illustrated below. The boiler is of relatively modern form and was in serviceable condition at the time of our inspection. Servicing of the boiler and testing by a Gas Safe registered contractor however is imperative and regular inspections will be required.

Hot water is distributed from the boiler via copper pipework to the various radiators located throughout the property. The majority of radiators were concealed by radiator covers and could not be inspected in detail, as illustrated below.

Where visible the radiators are of relatively modern form and some designer column type radiators were evident within the loft conversion area, as illustrated below.


The heat output of radiators generally is anticipated to be inadequate given potential heat loss and the existence of radiators covers. Cold conditions may then develop during winter months. Improvement to the central heating system is recommended and the introduction of modern thermostatic control valves may be considered prudent.
Testing and overhauling of the central heating system are strongly recommended to ensure that it continues to function adequately. The system is of relatively modern origin and complete replacement is considered unlikely.

Towel rails supplement the heating within bathrooms, as illustrated below.




Electric underfloor heating systems also exist to the main bathroom. These appeared not to be in use at the time of our inspection and we cannot confirm if these remain serviceable. Upgrading of the heating system is required.

11.04 Hot Water.

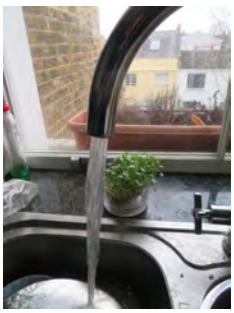
Hot water is produced by the boiler and distributed on demand to the various sanitary facilities located throughout the property. At the time of our survey hot water was available to the various plumbing and sanitary facilities under adequate pressure and we are satisfied that the hot water distribution infrastructure remains serviceable. The majority of the pipework was concealed from view and could not be inspected in detail. Close to the boiler relatively modern copper pipework was evident, as illustrated below.



We recorded no evidence of leaks to pipework at the time of our survey and significant remedial works are not anticipated in the near term. Regular maintenance and inspection of the pipework will be necessary and from time to time some remedial works may well be necessary.

11.05 Cold Water.

The precise point of entry of the cold water could not be determined but is believed to run within the main service cupboard before serving the various plumbing and sanitary facilities. Any original cold water storage capacity has since been replaced and all sanitary facilities are now believed to be supplied directly from the main. Adequate cold water pressure was evident to the kitchen and utility sinks, as illustrated generally by reference to the following photograph.



The majority of the copper pipework was concealed from view and could not be inspected in detail, but where visible this remained in fair condition with copper pipework evident behind sink units, as illustrated below. Some plastic sections of pipework were also identified.

In general we are satisfied that the cold water supply and distribution pipework remains in serviceable condition. We recorded no particular evidence of leaks or other major defects. Replacement of hot and cold pipework however may well be necessary in conjunction with replacement of the kitchen and refurbishment of the bathrooms over time.

We recorded no evidence of an in-line descaler serving the cold water supply to the property. Given the hard water nature of London limescale build-up may well cause damage to the boiler and sanitary facilities and foreshorten their life expectancy. The introduction of an in-line descaler on the cold water supply serving the boiler is considered essential in this regard and it may be prudent also to incorporate or replumb sections of the property to incorporate a water softener, particularly to the non-pottable supplies.

11.06 Sanitary Facilities.

The property has a main bathroom to the half landing level, as illustrated by reference to the following photograph.

This remains generally in fair condition considering its age and nature but it is not considered to be of the most modern origin. The sanitary facilities generally remained in serviceable condition and toilets and sinks were generally free flowing, suggesting that the drainage pipework remains in good order. Cleaning, maintenance, servicing and upgrading of the bathroom facility are to be anticipated over time.

The shower screen in particular is poor and some leaks have occurred historically around the edges, possibly suggesting that the mastic seals would benefit from replacement. Minor improvements in this regard are therefore recommended.

Additional shower room facilities are provided within the property and again these are of serviceable form, albeit relatively small in nature. Waterflow from the shower was generally in good order, as illustrated below.

The sliding glass door within the shower facility however is poorly installed and difficult to operate and repairs, or replacement, of this may well be required.

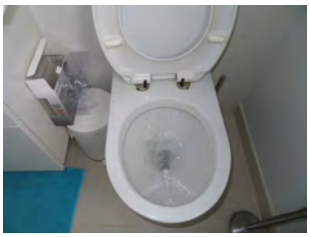
The kitchen to the property is considered adequate and is of a handmade formed installation, as illustrated by reference to the following photograph.

In our opinion the kitchen remains serviceable but its original quality was not of the highest order and it has generally begun to deteriorate given its age. Repairs, maintenance and possibly redecoration in the short term will enhance its amenity, however we anticipate that in due course complete replacement of the kitchen will be required. This will necessitate alterations to the electrics, plumbing and waste supplies.

11.07 Drainage.

Drainage from the various plumbing and sanitary facilities is generally run via uPVC pipework with bottle traps evident beneath sinks and wash hand basins, as illustrated below.

The pipework is not of the highest order but remains serviceable at this time. The varous toilets were tested and were generally free flowing, as illustrated below.



The pipework runs generally to serve the main soil stack, which runs to the rear of the building we believe. Sight of the pipework was restricted due to limited vantage points of the rear elevation, however where visible the main drainage pipework appears to be in poor condition with evidence of leaks to joints and poorly repaired or altered waste pipework runs, as illustrated below.

Repairs to the main soil stacks are recommended in the near term, but in conjunction with any significiant external repairs and redecorations of the property replacement of the pipework may well be considered appropriate.

The soil stacks, we believe, discharge directly into the underground drainage installation, however we did not record any inspection chambers at the time of our survey. These are likely to be located and lower ground floor level. We recorded no evidence to suggest that the underground drainage installation remains in anything other than a serviceable condition, however it has clearly not been maintained adequately in recdnt times. Jet wash cleaning and thereafter a CCTV survey of the underground drainage installation is strongly recommended. Such a survey may well identify a build-up of limescale and identify radial fractures, misplaced joints and other defects within the drainage system, which would be typical of buildings of this age and nature. At present the drainage system appears to function adequately, however repairs and cleaning are to be anticipated and would ensure that blockage does not occur reguararly in the future.

12.00 SUMMARY.

xxxx offers the opportunity of acquiring a large flat to the upper parts of a period property with a converted roof terrace. The flat internally generally remains in fair condition but further improvements and renovations are recommended over time. Upgrading of sanitary facilities and mechanical and electrical installations are required and works to enhance or replace aged lath and plaster ceilings and associated cornices should also be considered.

Improvements to the overall condition of the floors may also be required over time.

Externally the condition of the building has somewhat been neglected in recent times and external repairs and redecorations are now necessary. Minor evidence of leaks and failure of gutters and downpipes has caused water ingress into the building which must increases the risk of rot and deterioration to timbers which become saturated as a consequence. Complete external repairs and redecorations are required imminently, in our view.

Your solicitor should clarify responsibility for implementation of the works and apportionment of the service charges. Given the alterations and extensions which have been undertaken it is possible that responsibility for repair and maintenance of the roof terrace and main upper roof areas are now vested with flat B and presumable also the flat roofs to the extension at lower ground floor level will be the responsibility of that particular long Lessee to repair and maintain. It is possible however that all costs would be recoverable through the service charge and your solicitor should advise fully in this respect.

Copies of Building Regulations Approval and Planning Consent for the alterations which have been carried out, particularly to flat 178B should be obtained to provide comfort that these works were carried out appropriately.

The flat roof and terrace area are in poor condition and water ingress is now occurring and improvements and remedial works are therefore essential.

The building generally holds good alignment with little evidence of any undue movement or deflection and we are satisfied that it remains structurally stable. We have advised of some movement and deterioration to the building generally, however this is well within normally anticipated parameters and we are satisfied that the property remains structurally stable.

The building is likely to have been constructed on shrinkable clay sub-strata and the risk of subsidence is much increased as a consequence. There are a number of large trees in close proximity to the property to the front of the building, although these have been pollarded recently by the Local Authority. It is imperative that the freeholder maintains buildings insurance in respect of the building, which should incorporate appropriate levels of subsidence cover in the unlikely event of the development of this defect.

We trust therefore that this provides the information which you require to consider the leasehold purchase of the property which may well incorporate a share of the freehold. If however we can be of any further assistance, or you wish to discuss the content of this report, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.

This report was prepared by Andrew Moulsdale BSc FRICS, Director of BS Initiative Limited.

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