SAMPLE 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 received by email dated xxxx 2020 we can confirm that we have inspected the property, which is currently fully occupied, carpeted and furnished and consists of a detached house built around 1830 we believe. In this report on the structural and general condition of the property, prepared in the 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 freehold purchase of the house 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 dry and bright. 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. 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. Conditions may have existed within the building, which could allow dry rot to flourish and some limited infestations could be identified upon intrusive investigation although we recorded no evidence of these at the time of our inspection.

We have not instigated any disruptive or intrusive investigation such as excavation of trial pits, exposure of concealed timber structures or lifting of floorboards, which would have required the assistance of tradesmen and the approval of the vendor. We have however sought to assess the overall condition and structure of the building and report to you as outlined above. 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 building. 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 if left undisturbed 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. Given the age of the property the limited use of asbestos in its construction is to be anticipated although we recorded no significant evidence of the existence of asbestos based materials.

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 inquiries at the local or other authorities which are normally dealt with by your solicitor. Additionally, 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, which should include drainage investigations and reports.

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 in our view the risk of flooding or pollutants 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.

We are aware of significant shrinkable sub strata within the area which could increase the risk of subsidence and therefore findings from the solicitor's searches should also be considered in this respect. We would also refer you to our comments later in this report but in our view, there is no significant evidence of subsidence affecting the property.

4.00 TENURE.

We understand that you are acquiring the freehold interest in the property with vacant possession on completion.

5.00 PREMISES.

We assume that you are familiar with the premises, which effectively consist of a four-storey period terrace house likely to have been constructed around 1830. The house has been extended and altered since this time. The main roof to the house is of timber construction to form a pitched roof which is weathered by natural slate. Flat roofs exist to the rear additions and extension.

The main external are of solid brick construction although these are rendered externally in some areas and plastered internally and therefore, we cannot confirm our suspicions in this regard. The upper floors are of suspended timber construction with loads passed to the foundations via internal and external load bearing walls. Solid floor slabs are thought to exist at lower ground floor level.

6.00 SECURITY.

The premises have a modern burglar alarm and CCTV installations and, in this regard, we consider that the security provisions are acceptable. We would however recommend that the existing facilities be comprehensively reviewed in conjunction with your insurers to ascertain that their precise requirements are complied with. In particular, we would recommend that the various door locks be changed immediately on your occupation and thereafter window locks introduced. Servicing and resetting of the burglar alarm system should be instigated.

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 Building Regulations. The property appears to have been upgraded partly in compliance with these Acts and is considered to be acceptable although upgrading of the smoke alarm system to comply with current regulations is recommended. This essential system should be regularly maintained as this will provide an early warning in the event of the development of a fire.

8.00 THERMAL EFFICIENCY.

In view of the age and nature of the property it is anticipated that the thermal insulation to the external elements of the dwelling are far from compliant with current Building Regulations and therefore heat loss will be well in excess of current standards. At present we anticipate that there is thermal insulation to the main roof structure, however the external walls are uninsulated. Additionally the retention of single glazed windows facilitates much heat loss.

As a consequence, cold internal conditions are anticipated and we recorded evidence of condensation within the house, particularly to the single glazed windows. The listing of the house is likely to restrict the installation of double glazed windows however basic secondary glazing has been installed previously.

Where possible upgrading of thermal insulation levels and improvements to the energy efficiency of the house should be undertaken.

9.00 ELEMENTS OF CONSTRUCTION.

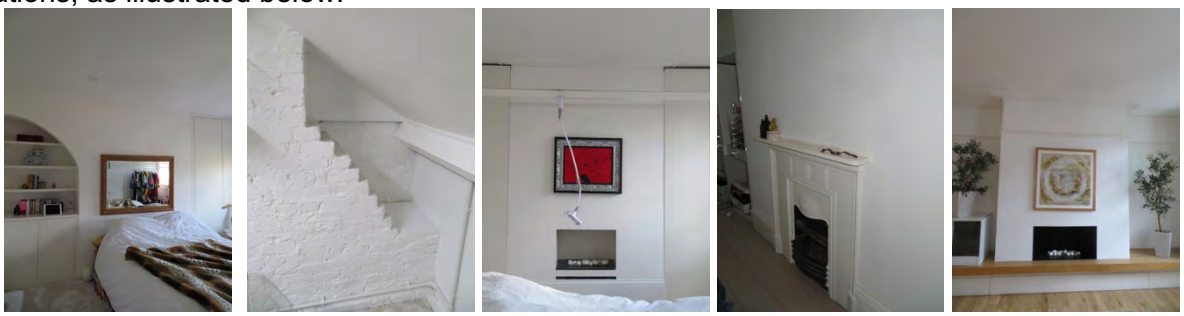
9.01 Chimney Stacks.

The property has a main chimney stack located to the right hand side and shared with the neighbouring property. Accordingly, we must advise that the chimney stack is a party structure and therefore if works of an extensive nature are instigated party wall procedures must be followed, as set down by the Party Wall etc. Act 1996. The chimney stack, as illustrated below, generally holds good alignment with little evidence of any undue movement or deflection and on this basis therefore we are satisfied that it remains structurally stable.

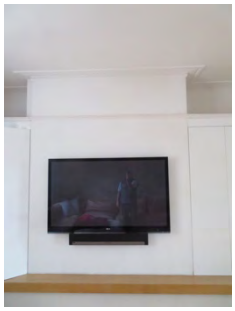
The overall condition of the chimney stack is fair, however there is evidence of deterioration and loose and recessed mortar pointing in various areas as illustrated below.

Repointing of the stack is required and in addition the flaunching or weathering to the top section of the stack appears deteriorated and this has resulted to the failure of the pointing, as illustrated below. Reflaunching of the stack is therefore to be anticipated and required in the relatively near term.

It is evident that the majority of the flues to the stack are sealed and vented, although we anticipate some are utilised for internal fireplaces and various cowls for gas fires are evident in the previous photographs. Internally within the property the chimney breasts are generally retained in all locations, as illustrated below.

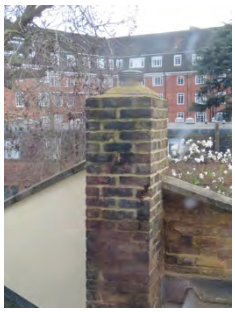


Within various areas, particularly the kitchen, the main living room and master bedroom, inset modern fires have been formed which we believe are gas powered. It was not possible to gain sight of the chimney flue, as these appear to have been sealed with plates, as illustrated by reference to the following photographs. The workmanship and condition of the opening within the fireplace is poor, in our opinion, and we are not satisfied that the installation of the fireplaces is adequate and that these remain in safe, serviceable condition.




In our opinion testing of all the fires by a Gas Safe registered engineer and additionally servicing and testing of the flues by a HETAS engineer are strongly recommended to ensure that the installations remain in a safe, serviceable condition. Remedial works may wells be required to rectify matters in due course.

To the rear a small separate chimney stack is evident above the lower rear addition roof levels, as illustrated below. The chimney stack generally holds good alignment with little evidence of any undue movement or deflection and we are satisfied that it remains structurally stable. Once again, the condition of the brick structure is a little weathered and repointing, whilst not essential at this time, is recommended and should be undertaken in the foreseeable future. Similarly, reflaunching of the upper sections should be contemplated as part of regular maintenance of chimney stack structures.

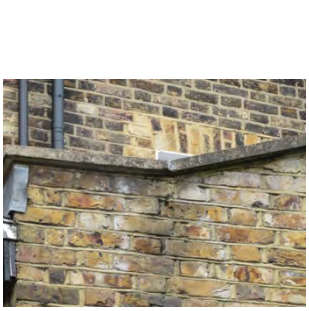

It is clear by reference to the following photograph that the flaunching is cracked as shown below.

The flashings which weather the junctions of the various chimney stacks and roofs are adequate but not of the highest quality, particularly to the front of the main stack as illustrated previously. Whilst it is not essential reformation of the lead flashings may well be required in conjunction with repairs and repointing and works of this nature should be undertaken in conjunction with future external repairs and redecorations to the property.

9.02 Parapet Walls.

There are no parapet structures to the main roof of the building, however to the rear addition a solid 9 inch brick parapet wall is raised above roof level, as illustrated below. In general the parapet wall holds good alignment with little evidence of any undue movement or deflection and on this basis therefore we are satisfied that it remains structurally stable.

The parapet is weathered by means of concrete coping stones which slope downwards. As often happens with details of this nature rainwater run off is not adequately discharged where the sloping section meets the flat section of the parapet and also due to poor pointing of the joints saturation is occurring of the brickwork beneath, as illustrated by reference to the following photographs.

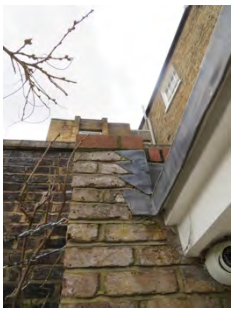


This is unlikely to cause any significant water penetration internally, however repointing of the coping stone joints is recommended. The coping stones appear not to incorporate a suitable drip, which is allowing the water to saturate the brickwork beneath. Replacement of the coping stones, whilst not essential, is however strongly recommended with once weathered twice throated stones being introduced. These should be of a suitable size to prevent saturation of the brickwork beneath. Failure to carry out the works could result in dampness developing internally, although we recorded no evidence of it.

To the rear addition roof there is a small section of parapet wall which appears to be shared with the neighbouring property and as such is a party structure. The parapet wall, as illustrated below, has coping stones fitted to it, however these are of similar form to those to the rear parapet and ideally replacement is recommended. In the near term repointing of the coping stone joints is required.

As part of the ground floor extension the flank wall is raised above roof level to create a parapet structure which is weathered with red engineering bricks, as illustrated by reference to the following photograph. The parapet wall generally holds good alignment with little evidence of any undue movement or deflection and we are satisfied therefore that it remains structurally stable.

The pointing to the engineering bricks is poor and there is no adequate drip to the parapet and as a consequence saturation of the brickwork beneath the parapet, particularly to the rear garden area is evident, as illustrated below. We recorded no evidence of dampness internally, however this could develop over time. Replacement of the capping to the rear or the introduction of a creasing tile drip is strongly recommended to prevent saturation. Rainwater run-off from the parapets will result in failure of the pointing. The brick on edge capping's should be repointed and ideally replaced with a coping stone of suitable size, which should be once weathered and twice throated as detailed previously.



The lead flashings at the junction of the new party wall are generally well formed and remain in good condition. The flashing details to the other parapets are also serviceable and watertight, in our view, and we recorded no evidence of deterioration internally as a consequence of this detailing. It may be prudent, however, in due course to replace the flashings in conjunction with recovering of the various flat roofs which abut the parapet walls.

9.03 Roofs.

As part of the rear extension a timber structured flat roof has been formed and a large glass roof light set within it, as illustrated below. It is possible that steelwork has been formed within the structure to create the opening, however this was concealed from view and therefore we cannot confirm our suspicions in this regard.

The opening internally is well aligned, as illustrated below.

The roof externally is weathered by means of lead coverings with suitable flashing details evident by reference to the following photograph. The works appear to be of good standard and we are satisfied that the roof remains in sound watertight condition.

We were unable to gain sight of the structure and cannot confirm that this is free from rot, worm and beetle infestation as we anticipate. The levels of thermal insulation within the rear extension are believed to be compliant with current Regulations, however again we cannot confirm our suspicions in this regard. Ventilation appears to be provided to soffit details and accordingly we anticipate that the rear extension has been constructed to a good standard in compliance with current Building Regulations. Copies of the Building Regulations Consent for the extension should however be provided to offer further comfort in this respect.

The aluminium and powder coated roof light remains in fair condition but there is some evidence of deterioration and moss growth to mastic seals, as illustrated below. We recorded no evidence of water ingress of defects to the lantern light at this time, however maintenance is to be expected within the foreseeable future which may well incorporate replacement of mastic seals to return it to a sound watertight condition.

To the rear addition a timber structured flat roof has been formed and is weathered with mastic asphalt, as illustrated below.

We were unable to gain access to the roof, however it is well aligned and on this basis we are satisfied that it remains structurally stable.

The waterproof material covering the roof is believed to be asphalt however this has been overcoated with a liquid applied waterproof membrane, suggesting that the roof has leaked historically, although we recorded no evidence of water penetration at the time of our survey. Water ingress clearly much increases the risk of rot, worm and beetle infestation to the roof structure and there is evidence of rippled asphalt and depressions which can indicate rot in the structure beneath as shown below. We cannot rule out the possibility of the development of wet and dry rot in the timber roof structure, although this is considered unlikely.


In our view the roof is of an age and condition whereby stripping and recovering in entirety is strongly recommended and should be undertaken in the near term. This would offer the opportunity of establishing if any rot exists and carrying out appropriate repair works as necessary.

There appears to be no adequate thermal insulation in the roof structure, although it is difficult to confirm and this was concealed from view. In conjunction with stripping and recovering of the flat roof the incorporation of modern levels of thermal insulation are strongly recommended, so that the insulation values is upgraded to comply with current Regulations.

The lead flashings which weather the junction of the building and the various parapet walls in this area are poor and have been repaired previously, as illustrated below. Replacement of the lead flashings in conjunction with recovering of the roof is therefore essential, in our view, and should be undertaken in the near term.

The main roof to the house is of timber construction with load bearing rafters spanning from external wall plates to a central ridge in the main hip. Externally the ridge and hips are well aligned, as illustrated below.

Access was obtained to the loft, although the main loft hatch was sealed shut. A basic conversion of the loft has been undertaken to provide a play area accessible only via a hatch in the rear bedroom.

Much of the timber structure was concealed from view as a consequence by plasterboard linings; however, the hips and purlins which support the roof structure are evident, as illustrated below. Similarly bracing struts provide support at the midpoint to the purlins and transpose load to the internal structures of the building.



The timbers generally remain in good condition in keeping with buildings of this age and nature. It is likely that some worm and beetle infestation may exist within the older timbers, although these were concealed from view and therefore, we cannot confirm our suspicions in this regard.

Timbers cupboards have been built into the extremities of the roof in a fairly crude manner, as illustrated below. These timber cupboards could potentially transpose load onto the ceiling beneath for which it was not originally designed; however, we recorded no evidence of deflection or movement in this regard and on this basis, we are satisfied that the roof structure remains stable and in good condition.

We recorded no evidence of thermal insulation within the roof, although it is possible that this is concealed beneath the carpet and within the ceiling void of the top floor. It could also be located between the rafters of the roof. Heat loss from the property may therefore be in excess of that currently considered appropriate. Intrusive investigation to establish the levels of thermal insulation within the loft are strongly recommended. Modern Celotex of 110mm in thickness would provide adequate thermal insulation if it is incorporated between the ceiling tiles or within the roof structure between the rafters. Clearly this would require some ventilation, although externally in the roof covering, we recorded no evidence of this.

The main pitched roof appears to be covered by slates which have perhaps been replaced relatively recently. In general, the slating remains in good condition, as illustrated below.

We recorded occasional broken and slipped slates within the roof covering, as shown by reference to the following photographs.


Replacement of broken and slipped slates should therefore be carried out but significant remedial works are not anticipated in the near term.

The ridge and hips are weathered by means of concrete tiles which appear to be bedded on a thick mortar base, possibly to take out undulations and misalignment within the roof structure, as illustrated below. Repointing and rebedding of the tiles may well be required in due course as part of normal maintenance; however, at present we are satisfied that the roof remains in sound watertight condition.


Improvements to the flashings to the main chimney stack and repointing of the ridge and hip tiles together with occasional replacement of broken slates will be required as part of regular normal maintenance for a building of this type, age and nature.

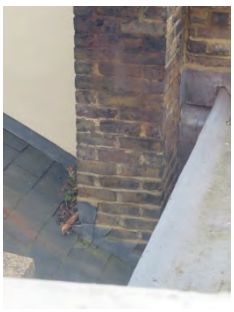
To the front of the building there is an entrance porch with a canopy roof which runs into the main balcony area, as shown by reference to the following photograph.

There is no suitable weathering to the balcony and the canopy roof, in our opinion, and the balcony is largely finished by means of a concrete material shown by reference to the following photograph.

In our opinion, a liquid applied waterproof coating should be introduced to the balcony and the terrace roof to upgrade its integrity to a level whereby it is suitable to prevent water ingress. We recorded no particular evidence of penetration through the underside of the balcony which is supported by means of corbelled brackets, as shown by reference to the following photograph.

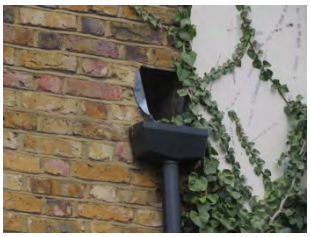
We are satisfied therefore that the balcony remains in sound structurally stable condition but deterioration can occur if water penetration occurs. In our view, some water penetration may well develop within the relatively near term and the introduction of a waterproof coating would be adviseable to conserve the integrity of the property.

To the rear of the roof there is a small unusual detail at which point sections of the sloping roof and presumably a box type gutter shared with the neighbouring property. We would advise that we had only limited sight of this area, which is shown by reference to the following photograph and could not inspect the gutter detail.



We recorded no evidence of water ingress as a consequence of the detailing, which is a little unusual. In our view this area represents a potentially high risk location for water penetration and an inspection of this area is strongly recommended. Regular maintenance and cleaning of the box gutter area will be necessary and there is some evidence of debris building up to the flashings of the chimney stack which could allow flooding and water penetration to occur.

Rainwater from this box gutter discharges to an unusually located hopper to the rear of the building close to the junction with the neighbouring house, as shown below. The lead forming the weir outlet appears appropriate although this could only be inspected from distant ground floor vantage points.



9.04 Rainwater Goods.

To the perimeter of the main roof, timber fascia details are retained upon which the guttering is attached in a traditional manner for buildings of this age and nature. The uPVC guttering appears to remain in fair serviceable condition and significant remedial works are not anticipated in the near term. Regular cleaning and maintenance of gutters and sealing of leaking joints are to be anticipated but beyond this remaining life expectancy does exist to the uPVC gutters.

Similar gutters exist to the rear addition flat roof and rear extension roofs, as illustrated below. Rainwater from the main gutter is discharged initially via an outlet into a hopper, as illustrated below. A similar hopper exists to the rear addition flat roof box gutter, as described previously.

The gutters and downpipes remain generally in fair condition, although sealing of leaking joints to downpipes is now required, particularly where these have been poorly formed, as illustrated by reference to the following photograph.

The downpipes run to discharge directly into the underground drainage installation to the rear garden; however, much of this was concealed from view. An inspection chamber exists in this location; however it has been partially built over by a cooking area and the cover could not therefore be lifted, as shown by reference to the following photographs.

We recorded no evidence to indicate that the drainage remains in anything other than serviceable condition; however, we cannot confirm our suspicions in this regard.

Rainwater to the front elevation we believe discharges directly into the underground drainage installation which is a combined system with the foul water system.

To the front elevation there is a slightly unusual detail and overlap between the adjoining properties which share rainwater goods with rainwater discharging from a higher level into a lower level roof, as shown below. This appears to be a particular quirk of the design and construction of the terrace originally. The rainwater downpipes remain in fair order, although replacement perhaps would be beneficial within the foreseeable future.

Rainwater from the front canopy roof discharges via an outlet to a hopper which is of basic quality and installation but remains serviceable, as illustrated below. Some improvements are to be anticipated but at present the rainwater goods appear to function adequately.

9.05 Walls and Structure.

The walls to the external property are believed to be of solid brick construction, predominantly of 9" in thickness, although in sections $13^{1}/_{2}$ inch thick brick walls are to be anticipated. Many of the walls were plastered internally and could not be assessed in detail. The party wall in particular was largely concealed from view and could not be inspected; however, we have no reason to believe that this is constructed of anything other than solid 9" thick brickwork at upper levels probaby increasing to $13^{1}/_{2}$ thick brickwork at lower ground floor level. Some sections of the party wall were evident around the chimney breast within the roof area which would indicate, albeit not in detail, that the party wall is of solid 9" brick construction at this point.

We are satisfied, however, that the party wall held good alignment with little evidence of any undue movement or deflection and on this basis therefore we are satisfied that it remains structurally stable. The staircase runs adjacent to the party wall and it can result in some cracking and thermal expansion to the party wall structure, particularly given that the rear addition also exists to this area. Hairline cracking adjacent to the bearing of the staircase trimmer into the party wall often occurs, although we recorded no particular evidence of this. On this basis therefore we are satisfied that the party wall remains structurally stable.

The front wall to the property is rendered externally and again it is difficult to determine its nature of construction; however, we would normally anticipate the use of brickwork.

In general the front elevation held good alignment with little evidence of any undue movement or deflection; however, we did record some minor cracking within the renderwork beneath window cills, as illustrated by reference to the following photographs.


The foundations in buildings of this age and nature are generally relatively shallow and will be prone to changing ground moisture conditions. The area is known to consist of shrinkage clay sub-strata and movement and foundation instability, particularly during periods of drought or growth of trees in close proximity to the property is much increase. Movement can also occur as a result of drainage failure. Desiccation to shrinkable clay sub-strata can occur as a result of drought and growth of trees which offers less support to the foundations which settle downwards as a consequence. The window openings and the building generally is well aligned and we are satisfied that no significant evidence of subsidence has occurred; however, foundation instability is evident, albeit in our opinion this is well within normally anticipated parameters for a building of this type, age and nature.

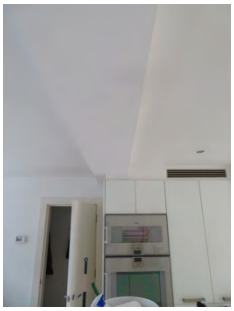
Similar movement appears to have occurred to the rear of the property historically, although again the window arches to the rear elevation are generally adequately aligned, as illustrated below.

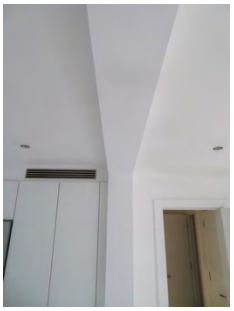

We cannot rule out the development of subsidence in the future and some foundation instability is, in our opinion, to be anticipated. It is imperative therefore that building insurance with appropriate levels of subsidence cover are placed immediately on your purchase of the house in the unlikely event of the development of this defect. Continued minor movement to the structure of a building of this type, age and nature is inevitable, in our opinion; however, we have not identified any circumstances which, in our opinion, would result in a significant increase in the extent of movement recorded.

Minor cracking and movement to window arches to the rear have been made good previously, as illustrated below.

Minor cracking is evident internally beneath window cills to both the front and rear elevations, although this is difficult to record photographically but is evident below. Repairs to plaster surfaces and filling of cracking is to be anticipated over time.

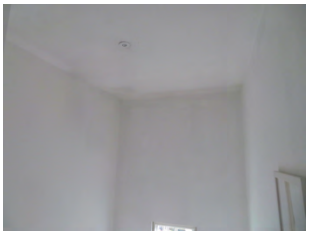
The main load bearing structure of the house is provided by the solid external and party walls and additionally internal partitions form part of the load bearing structure and transfer floor and roof loads down through the building to the foundations. Clearly many alterations have been undertaken to the property and a number of load bearing walls have been removed to create open plan areas. Downstand beams appear to have been introduced, although these were concealed by plasterboard linings. Where visible, the downstand beams held good alignment and are illustrated below.





It is likely, in our opinion, that the downstand beams have improved the overall structural integrity of the building and we recorded no evidence which would indicate failure or defects in the works utilised in the implementation of these works. Copies of Building Regulations Approval for the structural alterations would however provide comfort that these have been carried out appropriate, as we anticipate to be the case.

To the rear addition we recorded evidence of cracking at the junction of the party wall and the rear addition wall, particularly within the staircase well area, as illustrated by reference to the following photographs.



Movement in this area is not uncommon in buildings of this age and nature, particularly due to the lack of tie given the stairwell. Bonding between party walls and rear addition walls can often be limited in buildings of this age and nature, resulting in the vertical cracking which is evident. Cracking is also evident at the junction of the ceilings and the rear wall, suggesting of some slight movement in this area. In our opinion, the extent of movement is within normally anticipated parameters and does not significantly undermine the overall structural integrity of the building; however, it may be necessary over time to incorporate concrete knee ties to provide a suitable bond between the party wall and the rear addition.

Where chimney breasts are retained in buildings the party wall structure is much enhanced and limited movement is likely to occur as a consequence.

The extensions to the property appear to utilise similar brickwork but it is likely that cavity construction may have been incorporated, although we cannot confirm our suspicions in this regard. The brick bond illustrates solid construction and a similar bond is evident also to the main rear sections of the house. We have no reason to believe that the more modern extensions to the property have been constructed in anything other than a suitable manner; however, copies of the Building Regulations Approval will provide comfort that these works have been carried out appropriately, as we anticipate to be the case.

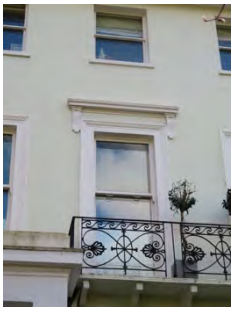
Cracking and movement above door openings in internal partitions is, to some extent, to be anticipated and we recorded some slight evidence of this, as shown below. A number of partitions are of masonry construction whilst some timber studwork is also apparent.

The layout of the first floor has been changed and an old doorway infilled which is likely to result in some minor cracking to the plaster finish. The extent of movement to the internal load bearing partitions is well within normally anticipated parameters, in our view, and we have no reason to believe that the structural stability of the property has been impaired or affected by movement to the building historically.

The external brickwork remains generally in fair condition, although we have reported of some saturation and damage from parapet defects. Repointing may well be required over time but beyond this significant remedial works are considered unlikely.

The render work to the front elevation remains generally in fair condition, although some cracked and blown sections may well be anticipated and some render repairs are likely over time.

To the centre of the building there is a pediment detail above and around the window, as shown by reference to the following photograph. Such pediment details can become saturated and deteriorate and it is imperative therefore that regular redecoration is carried out. In our opinion, the addition of a lead capping or flashing detail to weather the top of the parapet would be beneficial and conserve the pediment detail in its current order.



To the front entrance canopy vertical cracking was evident above the masonry column. This is likely to be as a consequence of thermal expansion but could also indicate corrosion of steel bearings and beams within the column structure. The entrance canopy generally held good alignment with little evidence of any undue movement or deflection and we are satisfied therefore that it remains structurally stable.

We are satisfied that the balcony remains structurally stable to the front of the building; however, we have reported previously that deterioration can occur, particularly as a result of water penetration. The incorporation of a new modern weathering to the balcony is strongly recommended to conserve its structural integrity. Significant water penetration can result in failure of the balcony if it is not adequately maintained.

The solid external walls to the building are uninsulated and therefore heat loss will be significantly in excess of that currently considered appropriate or compliant with current Building Regulations. Heat loss is likely to be in keeping with period buildings of this age and nature. There is no retrospective requirement to upgrade the levels of thermal insulation to solid external walls; however, in conjunction with any extensive renovation or refurbishment the provision of insulated plasterboard linings could be contemplated. This, however, reduces room sizes and also would interfere with original cornice details and may not therefore be practical or cost effective; however, such works would improve the overall energy efficiency. It is unlikely that such work would be permitted given the listing of the house.

The 13½" thick brick walls have, it would appear, recessed pockets beneath windows at which point the brickwork is likely to be of 9" in thickness in keeping with much of the rest of the property.

Vertical cracking was recorded in occasional areas, particularly at junctions of masonry and timber claddings to shutter boxes, as illustrated below. This occurs, in our opinion, as a consequence of differential movement. Similar differential movement may occur between other masonry and timber sections, particularly during warmer summer months.

The plasterwork internally to solid walls remains in fair condition but cracked, blown, hollow and uneven surfaces were recorded; however, in our opinion the extent of this is generally as you would anticipate in buildings of this age and nature. Significant replastering is not necessary at this time but may form part of any extensive renovation and refurbishment works likely in the future.

Externally at lower ground floor level sections of the render appear to have been hacked off, suggesting that works have been carried out to limit rising dampness and damp penetration, as shown by reference to the following photograph. We are uncertain if this work will be of benefit, although in our view it is unlikely that this will be the case.

Within the original parts of the property we anticipate that a slate damp proof course may have been formed; however, this was concealed by rendered applications and therefore we cannot confirm our suspicions in this respect. Rising dampness within buildings of this type, age and nature can frequently occur at lower ground floor level. Moisture meter readings were taken generally throughout the property which did reveal some slightly raised moisture content in isolated areas, as shown by reference to the following photographs.



We recorded no visual evidence of rising dampness or failure of the damp proof course; however, minor readings of this type perhaps indicate the early deterioration of the damp proof course or perhaps the beginning of failure of older specialist tanking and damp proofing works. It is likely that the lower ground flloor area has been tanked previously; however, copies of any guarantees should be obtained in respect of works carried out in this way.

As part of the extensions it is likely the modern visqueen damp proof courses have been introduced. Again these were generally concealed from view and therefore we cannot confirm our suspicions in this regard; however, externally we recorded some evidence of the formation of damp proof courses of this type, as shown below.

Failure of these damp proof courses is considered unlikely; however, the location of the damp proof course is close to external ground level which is not strictly compliant with current standards and recommended detailing which would normally require the damp proof course to be 150mm above external ground level. Where water has splashed down from upper parts, saturation of the masonry above damp proof course level has occurred and could result in dampness internally, as shown below.

In view of the plasterboard linings located internally within this area we cannot confirm if dampness is occurring as a result of breaching of the damp proof course, although this is considered unlikely in our opinion. Monitoring of the position should be ascertained and improvements may well be required over time.

The levels of thermal insulation to the walls of the rear extension ought to have been constructed to comply with current Building Regulations. The flank wall appears to be dry lined and the likely blockwork formation to the rear is concealed by plasterboard which may well be insulated; however, we cannot confirm our suspicions in this regard.

Despite the likely heat loss in various locations we recorded no evidence of condensation internally within the property. It is however imperative to minimise moisture laden air within the house and continued use of mechanical extract fans is therefore considered essential. Similarly maintenance of regular background heating and ventilation would also control condensation within the property.

A number of the partitions internally have perhaps been renovated and modern plasterboard linings incorporated. These generally remain in fair condition but some cracking at board joints is to be anticipated.

Many lath and plaster linings are retained however to older partitions which remain in fair condition considering their age and nature; however, cracked and blown sections were evident together with poor quality repairs as illustrated below. Where lath and plaster linings are retained it may be prudent to replace these in due course in conjunction with extensive renovation and refurbishment of the house. Modern fire resistant plasterboard construction would be of particular benefit.

Much of the original plaster to the house may well contain horse hair. People can be allergic to the horse hair within plaster and, if such circumstances do develop, replastering of the house in entirety may be recommended. Gradual replacement of lath and plaster linings are likely to be required, in our opinion.

9.06 Ceilings.

To certain sections of the property replacement plasterboard ceilings are likely to have been introduced, particularly as part of the modern extension and alterations at lower ground floor level. Many of the ceilings were high and it is difficult to inspect these to confirm our suspicions in this respect. The plasterboard ceilings, where these have been introduced, generally appear to hold good alignment with little evidence of any undue movement or deflection and we are satisfied therefore that they remain structurally stable. Plasterboard linings have been formed in the relatively crude loft conversion. The quality of workmanship is not of the highest order; however, the ceilings remain stable and of suitable formation.

The majority of ceilings within the property remain the original lath and plaster sections. It is possible that some ceilings have been over-skimmed and we recorded evidence of cracking to the top floor which perhaps indicates this, as shown by reference to the following photograph.

The lath and plaster ceilings exhibit significant areas of cracked and blown sections, particularly to the larger rooms within the house, as illustrated by reference to the following photographs.




Cracking was also evident at junctions of lath and plaster ceilings and walls, particularly to the rear staircase area as a consquence of movement of the building historically, as illustrated by reference to the following photograph.

A number of original cornices are also retained and again cracked and deteriorated plasterwork was evident, as shown by reference to the following photographs.

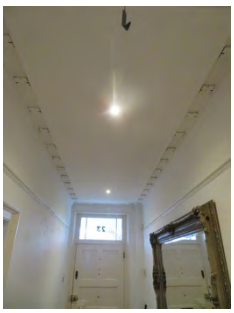



In overall terms the lath and plaster ceilings and the cornicing remains in fair condition commensurate with its age and nature; however, we have known large ceilings of this type, age and nature to collapse and fail suddenly without warning. We cannot rule out the possibility of this occurrence in the future, although it is considered unlikely. Relatively crude repairs and making good of fractures within lath and plaster ceilings have been undertaken; however, these are unlikely to be of particular long term benefit. In our view, careful specialist restoration of lath and plaster ceilings and cornicing may extend their life expectancy and improve their overall condition.

Replacement of lath and plaster ceilings could be contemplated to upgrade the building so it is fully compliant with modern standards; however, given the listing and the age of the building, this may not be possible. Restoration of cornicing and ceilings are therefore recommended to conserve their integrity.

The soffits to the staircase are of lath and plaster formation and remain in fair condition but again cracked and blown plaster was recorded in these areas, as illustrated by reference to the following photograph. Similar repair and restoration of these lath and plaster details will also be required.

The original ornate cornicing and lath and plaster ceiling is retained to the entrance hall of the house which provides a particular feature, as shown by reference to the following photograph.



9.07 Floors.

At upper levels the floors are of timber construction with load bearing floor joists spanning between internal and external load bearing walls. The floors are a little uneven and misaligned and sloping sections were clearly evident, particularly around the stair well, as shown by reference to the following photograph. In our opinion, the extent of movement and misalignment of floors is well within normally anticipated parameters for buildings of this age and nature.

Flexural movement or bounce was recorded to the floors, particularly the larger upper sections. Movement is generally as a result of under-sizing of the original timbers and a large span is introduced which is in keeping with buildings of this age and nature. The extent of movement, in our opinion, is well within normally anticipated parameters and does not undermine the overall structural integrity of the property.

Sloping and misaligned floor sections were evident at upper ground floor level, perhaps where openings have been formed in load bearing walls. The original floor detail may not have been entirely level and the sloping misaligned sections occur in this area.

The timber floor structures in all instances were concealed from view and could not be inspected in detail. It is likely in the older floor timbers that some worm and beetle infestation may exist, although it is unlikely that this is now active given the modern central heating systems which are evident within the property.

We cannot confirm if any wet or dry rot exists within the floor structures and it is possible that historic sources of water ingress may have led to some deterioration; however, without full intrusive investigation we cannot confirm our suspicions in this respect. In our view it is unlikely that any significant wet or dry rot exists within the floor structures; however, we cannot confirm matters in this respect.

At ground floor level, solid floor slabs exist and many are likely to be of recent origin. In general the floor slabs held good alignment with little evidence of any undue movement or deflection, although we did record some minor sloping and unevenness, particularly within the extension. It is likely that this may be as a consequence of some minor bedding down or poor quality of construction; however, we are satisfied that the lower ground floor slab holds good alignment with little evidence of any undue movement or deflection.

Moisture meter readings were taken to the ground floor slab and we did record some evidence of higher moisture content within the slab than we would normally anticipate, as shown by reference to the following photographs. The dampness is not visible and it is possible that the moisture meter is picking up dampness which exists below a damp proof membrane.



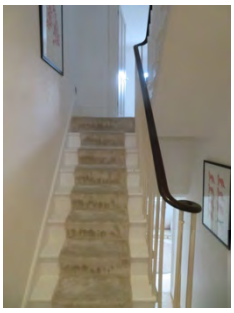
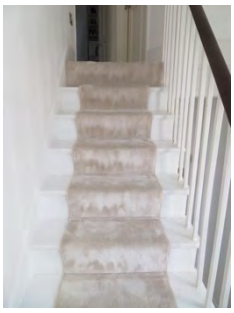
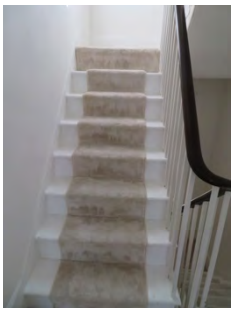
Where the concrete slab was evident beneath the entrace steps similar or perhaps higher damp readings were attained, as shown by reference to the following photograph. It is possible therefore that an older concrete slab is retained within the kitchen which may not incorporate a damp proof membrane and certainly would not incorporate thermal insulation. Condensation would lead to similar readings on the damp proof meter.

It is unlikely that dampness will occur due to failure of the damp proof course and become visible; however, monitoring of the slab within the basement to both the new and the kitchen will be required. If dampness does become apparent and the extent of this increases beyond that evident at the time of our survey, further intrusive investigation will be required and remedial works undertaken. The introduction of a liquid applied damp proof membrane in conjunction with any renovation of the kitchen, particularly where the floor tiles are replaced, would be considered prudent.

The absence of thermal insulation is likely to result in condensation and cold conditions, although largely obviated by the underfloor heating system.

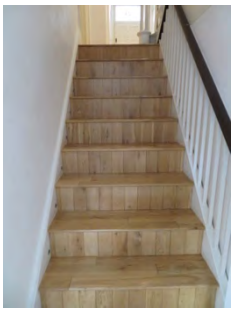
It is possible also that minor leaks to the underfloor central heating system result in the higher readings which we obtained and it may be prudent to carry out testing of the underfloor heating system to ensure that this is entirely watertight. The quality of installation of the underfloor heating system based on the very limited extent of that which could be seen suggests to us that this was not of the highest order, although we cannot confirm our suspicions in this respect.

Access between the various levels of the property is gained via a timber staircase with the original staircase maintained to much of the upper parts, as shown by reference to the following photographs.

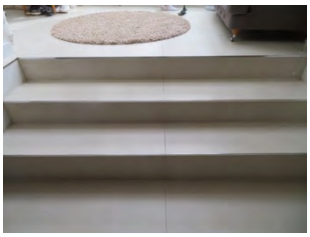
The staircase generally holds good alignment with little evidence of any undue movement or deflection and we are satisfied that it remains structurally stable. Some slight movement was evident at the junction of the string and the party wall; however, this is well within normally anticipated parameters and of no significant concern in our view. We were however unable to gain sight of the timber structure to the staircase and cannot confirm that this is in sound condition, free from rot, worm and beetle infestation. Some historic worm and beetle infestation may well be anticipated in a staircase and property of this type, age and nature.

A new staircase has been formed leading down to the lower extension area which again is of timber construction. The staircase holds good alignment with little evidence of any undue movement or deflection and we are satisfied that it remains structurally stable; however, the staircase is unduly steep in our view, as shown below, although it is likely to be compliant with current Building Regulations.



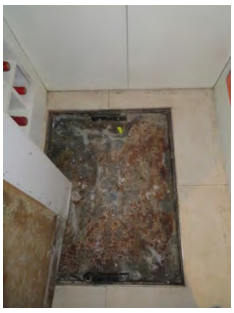
Once again we were unable to gain sight of the staircase structure which was concealed from view by plasterboard linings within the utility and cloakroom area; however, we have no reason to believe that this remains in anything other than sound structurally stable condition.

Masonry steps lead down between the extension to the lower kitchen area, as illustrated below. The staircase generally holds good alignment with little evidence of any undue movement or deflection and we are satisfied therefore that these remain stable and in good order.



The tiled floor finishes throughout the lower ground floor area remain in fair condition, although occasional slightly uneven tile junctions were recorded. The extent of this is well within normally anticipated parameters and of no significant concern in our view.

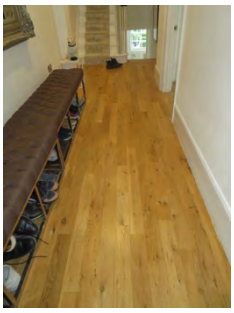
Within the understair area no recessed lid has been fitted within the inspection chamber, as shown by reference to the following photograph. Improvements in this regard are strongly recommended.



The board which is located above the drains illustrates significant deterioration due to condensation and dampness from within, as shown by reference to the following photograph.

The floor coverings throughout the rest of the property vary. Carpets at upper levels are of good quality and appear to be of relatively recent installation and remain generally in good condition. Trims have been introduced at the junction of various timber floor coverings to door entrances and again the detail appears acceptable, as illustrated below.

Engineered timber flooring exists in many areas, as illustrated generally by reference to the following photograph.



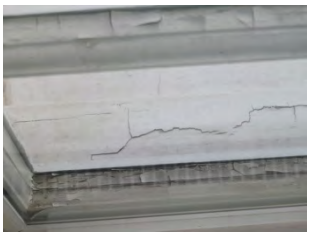
The quality of installation is not of the highest order and a number of the board joints are poorly adhered and working loose, as shown below. Repairs will overhaul and improve the overall condition of the floors; however, some older sections are of a type, age and condition whereby replacement in due course may well be considered prudent.



9.08 Joinery.

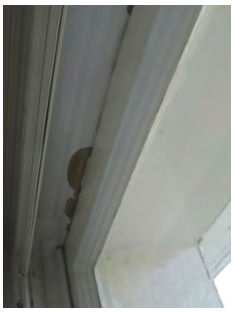
The windows to the property generally are timber double hung sash units which are of single glazed formation, as illustrated below.


The windows remain in fair condition considering their age and nature; however, there is some evidence of deterioration to window cills which perhaps suggests poor decoration in recent times as well as also basic making good of rotten timber cills, as shown by reference to the following photograph. Overhauling, maintenance and decoration of the single glazed double hung sash windows will improve their overall condition.



A number of broken panes of glass were evident within the windows, as illustrated by reference to the following photograph. Replacement of broken sections will be necessary as part of the overall repair and maintenance of the windows.

The single glazed double hung sash windows have been eased and adjusted and some damage to the paintwork and framework has occurred historically, as shown by reference to the following photograph. Despite the easing and adjusting, many of the windows will be ill-fitting, draughty and single glazing is clearly prone to condensation. Secondary glazing has been fitted to many of the windows and much of the installation is of fairly poor quality and does not readily facilitate opening or ventilation internally within the bedrooms, although some sliding mechanisms do exist.



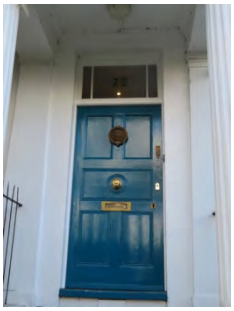
Given difficulties in accessing windows, much deterioration to the windows internally is evident, as shown by reference to the following photograph. Despite the secondary glazing it is likely that the windows are prone to condensation which will contribute to the deterioration to the inner sections. In the short term the secondary glazing is of benefit in terms of minimising heat loss; however, in our view replacement of the existing secondary glazed windows and the installation of new good quality sliding secondary glazing would be of particular benefit.

Where secondary glazing does not exist, evidence of condensation to single glazed windows is evident internally, as shown by reference to the following photograph. Condensation is inevitable on single glazed windows. The listing of the building may preclude the introduction of modern double glazing in this instance.

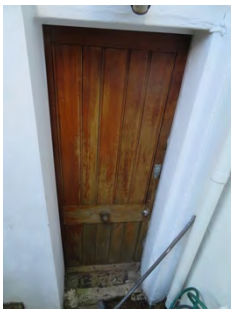
To the larger principal room's shutters have been retained, possibly being part of the original build of the house. The shutters remain in fair condition considering their age and nature; however, they are ill-fitting with paint bound hinges and split panels evident in many areas, as shown by reference to the following photographs. Further restoration will improve the overall condition of the shutters and return these to sound condition.

Modern French windows have been incorporated to the rear which are sliding, folding installations across the full width of the house, as shown by reference to the following photograph. These French windows incorporate basic double glazing which has some limited insulation value. The doors remain in fair condition but regular easing and adjusting and maintenance of such units is necessary to conserve their integrity.

Access to the front of the property is gained predominantly by a timber door set below a fan light which may well be the original installation, as illustrated below. The door provides adequate security, although this clearly could be improved.

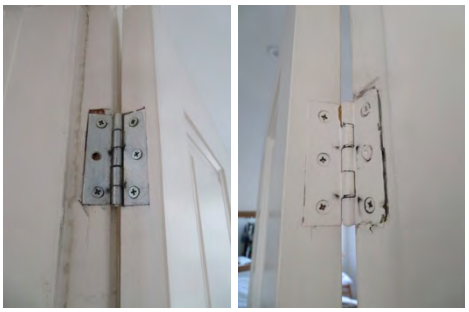


A badly weathered door provides access to lower ground floor level which is not used by the current occupants. The door, as illustrated below, would benefit from decoration and repair to improve its overall condition.

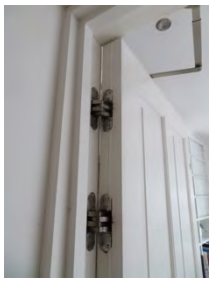


The doors internally within the property vary but in general these are timber panelled units possibly in keeping with the original installation within the house, as illustrated below. The doors do not provide any recognised fire resistance but, subject to maintenance of a suitable fire alarm system, remedial works or replacement is not essential in our view.

The doors remain in fair condition; however, the quality of hinges is generally basic and missing screws also compromise matters in this regard, as illustrated by reference to the following photograph. Improvements to the ironmongery and furniture to the doors is recommended but beyond this significant remedial works are considered unlikely.



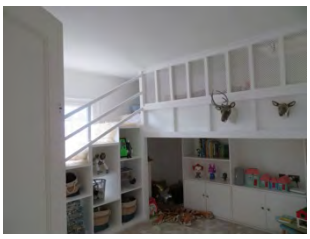
A secure strong door appears to have been formed, possibly for security purposes, to the lower ground floor area of the property. This door provides one-hour's fire resistance and is secured on heavy duty security hinges, as shown by reference to the following photograph.



Secondary joinery components within the property remain in fair condition; however, the built in cupboards are in some instances of basic form, ill-fitting and there is evidence of deterioration at the junctions with plasterboard linings, as shown below.

The cupboards beneath the ground floor staircase could not be opened and additionally the panel in front of the boiler is taped in position, suggesting that it can fall loose in some instances.

To the top floor children's bedroom, a timber raised bed and staircase has been incorporated, as shown by reference to the following photograph. This provides access to the loft. The structure remains serviceable but we anticipate you may wish to remove this upon or prior to your occupation of the property.



9.09 Decoration.

Externally the decoration to the property remains generally in fair condition; however, we have advised of some deterioration to paintwork to window cills in particular. It is imperative in buildings of this age and nature that regular redecoration occurs to conserve the integrity of all timber and ferrous components in particular. Complete redecoration is not required immediately but we would recommend that this is undertaken within the next 12 months or so.

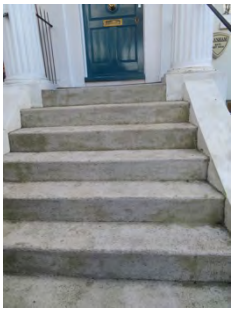
External decorations should ideally be carried out every 3 years or so to conserve the integrity of a property of this type, age and nature. In this respect external decorations must represent cyclical expenditure which should be suitably budgeted for.

Internally the décor within the house remains in fair condition but some basic making good attempts, particularly to lath and plaster ceilings, are of poor quality and are clearly visible. Immediate redecoration of the property is not essential but we anticipate that works of this nature may well be carried out on completion of the purchase or prior to your occupation of the house.

9.10 Gardens, Boundaries and Paths.

Access to the house is gained via a long walkway from the street, retaining older stone flags. The path remains generally in fair condition but the joints between slabs could be repointed.

Entrance to the front of the house is gained via stone steps leading to the front door, as shown by reference to the following photograph.

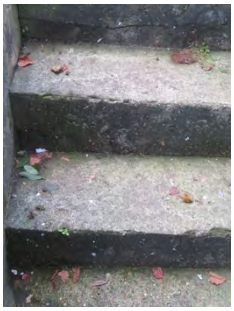


The underside of this area and the vault appears to have been tanked and rendered to prevent water ingress and it would appear that this has largely been effective; however, condensation and possible water penetration is evident, as shown by reference to the following photographs.


Failure of waterproof tanking and indeed the structure of such steps is not unusual in buildings of this age and nature. Condensation is clearly evident on the various pipes within the under stair area and the introduction of thermal insulation to these is strongly recommended. It may well be necessary to tank the underside area in due course if dampness continues, although in our view the area is predominantly dry bar substantial levels of condensation which have developed.

Areas of crazy paving exist to the front garden area closest to the house which remain serviceable but not in perfect condition, as shown by reference to the following photograph. Improvements may well be required over time.

Masonry steps lead down to a lower well area close to the house, as shown below. The steps would benefit from improvement but remain serviceable.



A concrete surface has been provided to the lower well area. This remains generally serviceable, although its overall condition could be improved.

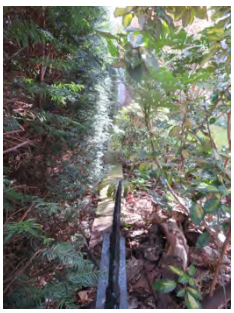
The front garden area consists of shrubbery and a flower bed area centrally either side of what appears to be yew tree hedges forming the boundary of the property, as shown below.



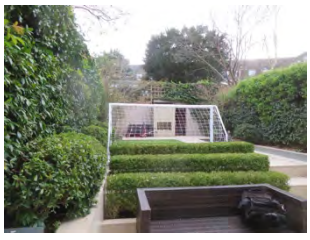
The hedges are well maintained and an irrigation system serves the front garden area. This has led to overgrowth and weeds developing within the shingle bed, as shown by reference to the following photograph. Improved cultivation would enhance the beneficial amenity of the garden.

The boundary to the front is provided by means of a metal rail fence set within a masonry base, as shown by reference to the following photographs. This remains in serviceable condition.


The boundary fence returns towards the right hand side of the property at which point a low level wall denotes the boundary, although this is largely concealed by the yew tree hedge, as shown by reference to the following photograph. We anticipate that a similar boundary detail exists to the adjacent side; however, this could not be clearly seen and therefore we cannot confirm matters in this respect.



To the rear of the property the boundaries are again largely concealed by shrubbery. In the main it would appear that the boundaries are formed by means of solid 9” brick walls. These remain in fair condition but there is evidence of deterioration, creeper growth and loose and recessed mortar pointing in various areas, as shown below.

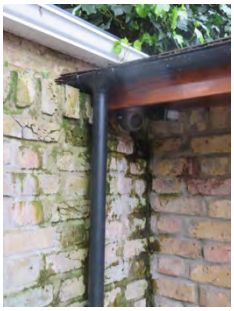


Raking out and repointing of much of the boundary walls may well be necessary as part of normally anticipated maintenance and careful pruning and cultivation of shrubs and removal of ivy may also benefit matters over time.

To the rear, storage sheds and an outdoor fire have been constructed, as shown by reference to the following photograph.

The storage sheds are formed by means of masonry and basic roofing above which is timber structured, as shown by reference to the following photographs. The roof to the rear is largely flat but is weathered by means of slate tiling which is inappropriate. Dampness was evident internally to the underfelt and leaks are likely to occur. Replacement of the roof with a flat roof structure is strongly recommended to enhance the beneficial amenity of the sheds. The storage sheds generally remain serviceable at this time.

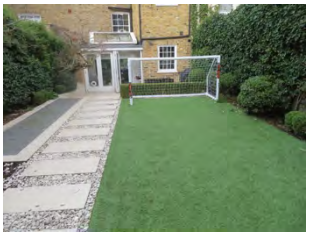
The detailing of the rear garden sheds is poor and water is over spilling from gutters and downpipes causing saturation of wall sections, as shown by reference to the following photograph. Repairs and improved maintenance are therefore required.



To the rear the masonry boundary walls and trellis above are evident with a hard standing provided as shown by reference to the following photograph.

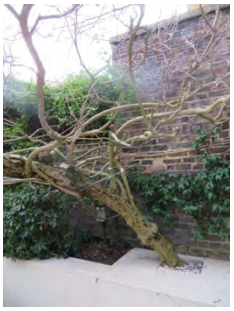
Access to the rear was gained via a road which is shown by reference to the following photograph. Your solicitor should clarify any rights, easements and responsibilities with regards to the rear service road which may potentially introduce costs for maintenance in due course. The security to the rear is adequate but could be improved with locks to the entrance doors as necessary.

The garden area has been landscaped and designed and incorporates an area of synthetic grass bounded by paved walkways and a water feature, as shown by reference to the following photographs.

The garden area remains generally in good condition, although there is some deterioration to the external fire area, as shown by reference to the following photograph.

A number of mature trees and shrubs exist within the rear garden area and the demise of the building, as shown below. Regular maintenance and pollarding of the trees will be required. Growth of the trees could potentially undermine the structural integrity of the property.

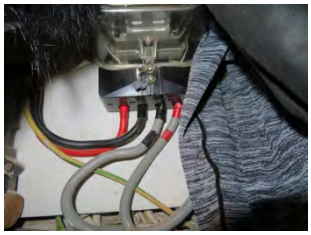
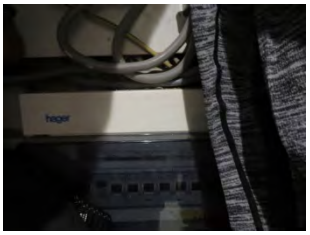



10.00 SERVICES.

As stated in the preambles to this report, we have not tested any of the service installations, incoming mains, wastes or, drainage facilities. We have however reported our findings following our visual inspection of the property under the various headings below; so that you may gain an understanding of the nature, extent, condition, and adequacy of the installations to which the premises benefits.

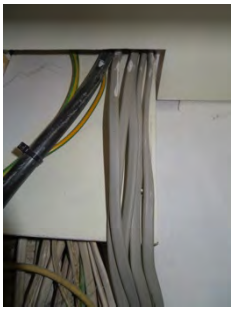
10.01 Electrics.

The electrical incoming main and meter etc were barely visible and were generally concealed by stored clothing and the like within the ground floor utility area; however, the incoming meter and fuse board are shown by reference to the following photographs.

The incoming electrical installations are earth bonded to adjacent water and gas pipework, as shown by reference to the following photograph. The electrical installations appear generally to be of relatively modern origin, although the fuse board is not now strictly compliant with current regulations. There is no immediate necessity to upgrade the fuse board; however, this perhaps should be contemplated in due course.

PVC sheathed twin and earth cables run generally from the fuse board to serve the various lighting and power facilities located throughout the house. Much of the cabling was concealed from view, although it is evident close to the fuse board, as shown below. The electrical installations appear to be of relatively modern origin and generally remain in good serviceable order.



Lighting facilities are provided and vary throughout the house, although recessed spotlights have been incorporated which generally utilise LED lighting bulbs, as shown by reference to the following photograph.

The lighting installations are therefore considered to be of relatively modern origin and of suitable form; however, testing of the systems by an NICEIC registered contractor is essential. It is possible that the recessed spotlights do not incorporate intumescent hoods and as a consequence the fire precautions of the ceilings may be compromised and if this is the case intumescent hoods or replacement of the fittings incorporating intumescent hoods may well be required.

Much lighting is provided by stand alone fittings and generally remains serviceable in our view.

Basic power facilities are provided generally throughout the property which have been installed generally in keeping with good codes of practice as illustrated below.

Significant upgrading or rewiring of the property is considered unlikely; however, testing of all lighting and power facilities should be undertaken by an NICEIC registered contractor. This may identify minor defects and shortcomings within the systems which should be upgraded over time so that the electrical installation can be maintained in a good safe serviceable condition.

The property has a smoke detection system with hard-wired detectors recorded in various levels and locations, as shown generally by reference to the following photographs. The system may not be fully compliant with current regulations but is generally considered adequate and, if maintained in a good serviceable condition, will provide early warning in the event of the development of a fire which should facilitate escape from the property. Significant improvements are not required; however, testing of the system and upgrading it so that it is fully compliant with current regulations is strongly recommended.



Mechanical extract fans exist to serve a number of bathrooms and shower rooms within the property. At present these are not all in use and the current occupiers have switched the fans off. In our view, it is essential to maintain the fans in kitchens and bathrooms during bathing and cooking so that moisture laden air is extracted upon generation. This will minimise the extent of condensation within the property. In our opinion, upgrading of the installations with the incorporation

of modern fans operated on a humidistat so that they activate immediately upon generation of moisture laden air is strongly recommended to ensure that condensation does not develop internally within the property.

10.02 Gas.

The gas main enters the building beneath the front entrance staircase with the supply then serving the meter, as illustrated by reference to the following photograph. The incoming mains supply and the gas supply pipework is not of the most modern origin but we believe remains serviceable. We recorded no evidence of gas smells at the time of our inspection and we believe that all gas supplies and gas-fired appliances function adequately; however, it is imperative that these are tested by a Gas Safe registered contractor prior to your occupation of the house to ensure that these do in fact remain in safe serviceable order, as we anticipate to be the case.

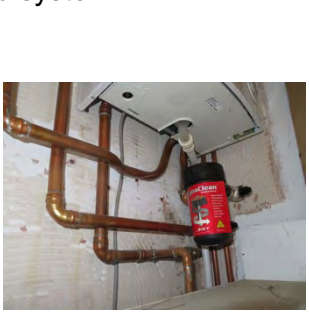
Gas is distributed generally via copper pipework we believe to serve various gas-fired appliances located throughout the house. The majority of pipework was concealed from view and could not be inspected in detail but, where this could be viewed, it appears to remain in serviceable order.

We are satisfied that the gas supplies remain in fair serviceable order; however, we did not record any evidence of a carbon monoxide meter in close proximity to the boiler. The introduction of a hard-wired carbon monoxide meter is strongly recommended to provide an early warning in the event of defects developing within the boiler itself.

10.03 Central Heating.

The boiler is located at lower ground floor level and concealed within a cupboard. In our opinion, the ventilation provided to the boiler is limited and improvements in this regard should be contemplated. The boiler is a relatively modern Worcester unit, as shown by reference to the following photograph.

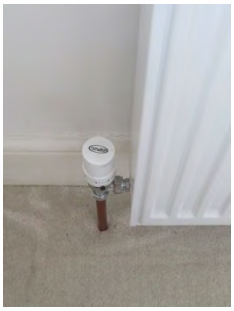
The boiler was in good and proper working order at the time of our inspection. The incoming cold water supply serving the boiler is fitted with a descaler in accordance with good codes of practice and the workmanship in the installation of the boiler and the associated pipework appears to be of good quality, as illustrated below. Regular servicing of the boiler will be necessary to conserve its integrity and maintain a good system.



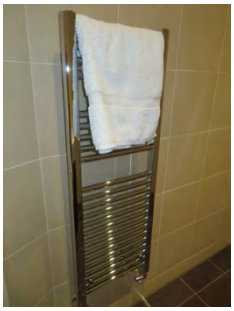

Copper pipework from the boiler runs to distribute hot water to the various radiators located throughout the property which are generally of good modern origin and illustrated by reference to the following photographs. A number of radiators are small in size and not located beneath windows which can reduce their efficiency and effectiveness.



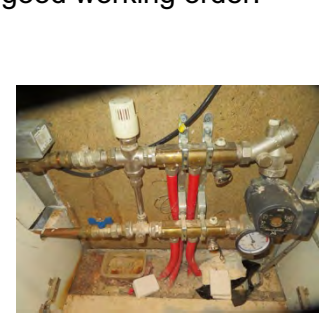
The energy efficiency of the radiators is assisted by modern thermostatic control valves which remain generally in good condition, as shown below. We have not carried out any heat loss calculations and cannot therefore confirm that the heat output from the central heating system is appropriate, as we believe to be the case. Some improvements to the level of output from the central heating system may well be required; however, at the time of our survey the house was very warm.



The central heating system is supplemented at upper levels by heated towel rails as illustrated below and at lower ground floor level by an underfloor heating system.



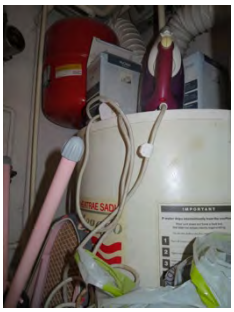
The pipework to the underfloor heating system was concealed from view and we have advised previously that damp readings within the floor structure could be attributable to leaks to the underfloor heating system, although we consider this unlikely. The underfloor heating manifold pump and pressure gauge etc, as illustrated below, suggested that the central heating system and the underfloor heating is in good working order.



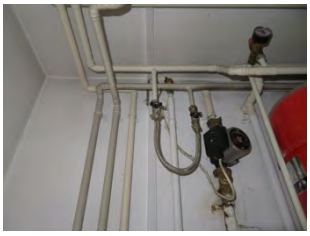

There is however evidence of a vessel to collect leaks from the plumbing previously, as shown by reference to the following photograph. We have advised that, in our opinion, the quality of installation is not of the highest order and some defects may become apparent. Testing and servicing of the underfloor heating system is therefore essential and leaks should be rectified as a matter of urgency.

10.04 Hot Water.

Hot water produced by the boiler is stored in a pressurised megaflow cylinder located in the utility area and shown by reference to the following photograph.



Copper pipework distributes hot water from the cylinder to the various plumbing and sanitary facilities located throughout the house. Where visible, the copper pipework, as shown below, is of relatively modern origin and remains in good condition.



Alterations and variations to the original pipework have been carried out and new push-fit compression fittings introduced to some hot water supplies, as shown below, although these mostly relate the Quooker hydroboil unit located beneath the kitchen sink.

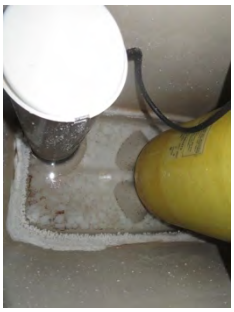
Most of the pipework was concealed from view and could not be inspected in detail; however, we recorded no evidence of leaks or other particular defects with the installation which appears to be of relatively modern origin. Hot water was provided under adequate pressure to the various sanitary facilities located internally within the house, as shown by reference to the following photographs.

Servicing and maintenance of the hot water system is to be anticipated but significant remedial works are considered unlikely in the near term.

10.05 Cold Water.

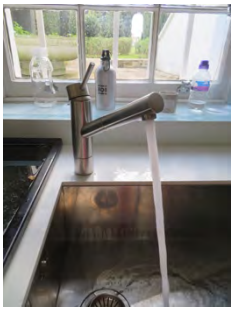
The cold water main enters the property we believe beneath the main underfloor steps and serves the utility room area at which point the plumbing runs via a water softening device, as shown below.

The device was not in use and no salt crystals are present within the softener, as shown by reference to the following photograph.



The water in the area is likely to be of a hard nature and contain much limescale. Failure to use the water softener will allow limescale to build up within hot water storage cylinders, boilers and sanitary systems which can foreshorten the life expectancy of these components. A descaler is fitted to the boiler as detailed previously. Servicing of the water softener to return this to good and proper working order is strongly recommended.

During the course of our survey we recorded no evidence of cold water storage capacity within the house and all supplies we believe are run directly from the incoming main. Adequate pressure was provided to the kitchen sink from the cold water incoming main, as shown below.

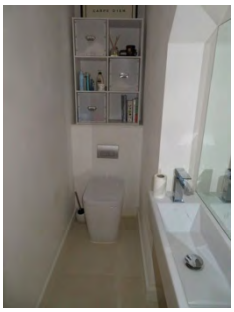
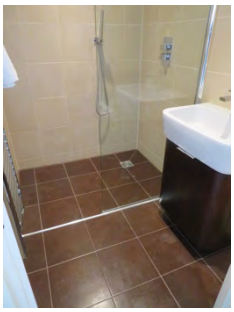
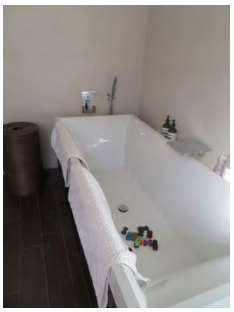
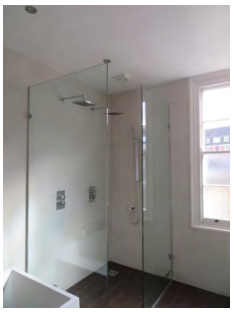


Similarly adequate water pressure was evident to all plumbing and sanitary facilities internally, as shown by reference to the following photograph.

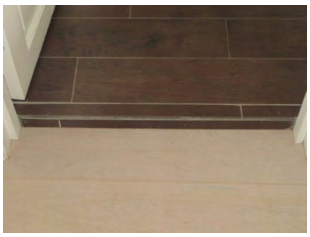
The cold water supply and distribution infrastructure appears to be of relatively modern origin with flexible hoses serving the sanitary facilities. The majority of the copper pipework was concealed from view but this is of modern origin in keeping with that serving the hot water systems. We recorded no evidence of leaks and significant remedial works are considered unlikely to the cold water supply infrastructure within the relatively near term.

10.06 Sanitary Facilities.

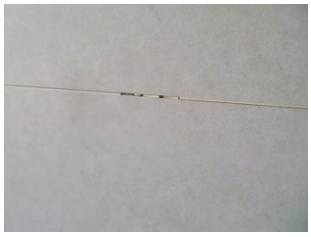
The property has a number of modern bathrooms and ensuite facilities, as shown by reference to the following photographs.

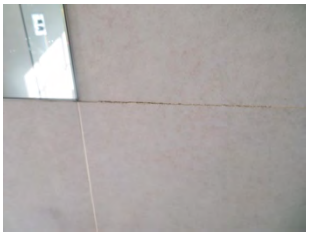





The installations are generally of good modern quality and generally remain in good condition. A number of wet rooms have been formed with tiled bases which can be prone to failure and allow leaks to occur into the structure and fabric of the building. We recorded no evidence of this at the time of our inspection; however, replacement of wet rooms, tiling and waterproof membranes is to be anticipated and leaks could occur in the future, in our view. The build up of floors to create wet rooms has resulted in steps, particularly to the master ensuite area, as shown by reference to the following photograph.



The quality of workmanship to the master bathroom is poor and there is evidence of loose tiles and poorly grouted sections, as shown by reference to the following photos. Repairs will be necessary together with cleaning and servicing to enhance the beneficial amenity of the bathrooms and conserve their integrity.





The kitchen to the house is a particular feature located at lower ground floor level, as illustrated below. The kitchen is of good quality and remains generally in good condition, although some recent works are not of the highest order. Significant improvement or upgrading of the kitchen could be contemplated but is not necessary in the near term, in our opinion.

We have not tested any of the equipment, white goods and the like which form part of the kitchen but assume that these remain in good working order and form part of the sale. Servicing and testing of all electrical goods, however, may well be necessary, particularly the large refrigerator unit.

A small basic utility area exists within the house which remains largely serviceable, although its quality of installation is less than that of the kitchen.

10.07 Drainage.

Drainage from the plumbing and sanitary facilities is generally run via uPVC pipework, which is evident beneath the kitchen sink, as shown below.

Similar drainage runs serve bathrooms facilities, although much of the pipework was concealed within ductwork and could not be inspected in detail.

The toilets and sanitary facilities are generally free flowing and in good condition, as shown below.

The main drainage pipe runs therefore we believe remain serviceable and run to serve the main external soil stack which is located to the rear of the building as illustrated below. The plastic uPVC soil stack generally remains free flowing and is in good condition, in our opinion. Rainwater has been linked into the stack which is not in accordance with best codes of practice but is considered acceptable.

The underground drainage installation we believe runs beneath the house and it is imperative therefore that this is maintained in good serviceable condition. Leaks to the underground drainage installation could cause the development of subsidence and it is imperative therefore that the underground drainage installation is jet wash cleaned and a CCTV survey carried out.

An inspection chamber is located beneath the main entrance steps within the basement; however, this is in poor condition and badly corroded, as shown previously, and a replacement lid is strongly recommended.

A further inspection chamber was located close to the front entrance gate to the property. We were able to lift this which revealed that the drains are potentially partially blocked and in poor condition, as shown by reference to the following photograph.

It is imperative therefore that the underground drainage installation is jet wash cleaned and a full CCTV survey carried out so that defects can be identified. In vitreous clay drainage systems of this type, radial fractures and misplaced joints can be anticipated which can cause defects within the building to occur and the contents of the drains to escape. Collapsed drains could also exist, although this is considered unlikely. Descaling of the drains and lining with a proprietary liner may improve the overall condition of the underground drainage installation and such works are recommended beneath the house to minimise the risk of drainage failure causing subsidence in the future.

Rainwater to the rear is collected in a slot drain close to the rear extension which we believe runs directly into the underground drainage chamber to the rear which could not be lifted at the time of our inspection. Removal of the catering facility to access the drains is strongly recommended. Cleaning of the slot drain and the underground drainage installation generally is required to conserve the overall integrity of the property.

11.00 SUMMARY.

xxxx is a period house which provides significant family accommodation. The property has been renovated and extended but maintains some period features. Copies of Building Regulations Approval, Planning Consent and any Party Wall Awards with respect to the structural alterations and extensions which have been undertaken should be provided so that comfort can be obtained that works have been carried out appropriately, as we anticipate being the case.

The building generally holds good alignment with little evidence of any undue movement or deflection and on this basis we are satisfied that it remains structurally stable. Given the foundation depths and the shrinkable clay sub-strata upon which the house was built, movement has occurred previously which is in keeping with foundation instability. The extent of this movement is well within normally anticipated parameters and does not undermine the structural integrity of the house. We recorded no significant evidence or history of subsidence, although we cannot rule out the development of this defect in the future. It is imperative therefore that building insurance is maintained on the property and provided immediately on your purchase of the house which should provide suitable cover in the unlikely event of the development of this defect. Continued minor movement from time to time is to be anticipated, particularly during periods of dry weather or if trees are allowed to grow in close proximity to the house. Maintenance of drains and shrubbery is therefore essential.

The house is set within appropriate garden areas which have been renovated and modernised and provide significant beneficial amenity to the property. Further cultivation and improvements to the external finishes may however be considered necessary over time.

Externally the maintenance to the house remains in good condition; however, some further remedial works are to be anticipated, particularly to chimney stacks, parapet walls and roof coverings. Replacement of the aged asphalt flat roof coverings are necessary in the relatively near future and the introduction of a suitable waterproof coating to the front balcony and entrance canopy area is strongly recommended.

The windows are single glazed and prone to heat loss; however, secondary glazing has been fitted. The quality of the secondary glazing is limited and improvements in this regard may well be contemplated over time.

Internally the condition of the property remains generally in good condition; however, we have advised that aged lath and plaster finishes are retained to ceilings and wall linings. The listed nature of the building may preclude replacement of ceilings and indeed, in our opinion, the retention and restoration of cornices, plaster details and ceilings generally is strongly recommended. Overhauling of the timber window shutters may also be required in a similar way.

The mechanical and electrical infrastructure internally within the house has generally been upgraded and, in our view, remain in good serviceable condition. Some improvements and servicing may well be required but wholesale replacement of the mechanical and electrical installations is considered unlikely. Testing of the underfloor heating system is however recommended.

Cleaning of the underground drainage installation is essential and should be undertaken in the near term.

We trust that the above provides the information which you require to consider the freehold purchase of the house; however, if 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.

Andrew Moulsdale BSc FRICS
Director
BS Initiative Limited