



Randall Surveying Associates

BUILDING SURVEY

Property :-

Client:-

Inspected on:- 10 January, 2017

Inspected by:- Adrian Randall MRICS



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A. GENERAL INFORMATION

A1 NAME AND ADDRESS OF CLIENT

A2 ADDRESS OF PROPERTY

A3 DATE OF INSPECTION

Tuesday, 10th January, 2017

A4 CIRCUMSTANCES OF INSPECTION

Weather conditions were overcast and dry following a period of mixed conditions.

We can confirm that we have no known conflict of interest in supplying this report to you. We have no record of having undertaken work with regard to the vendor, client or to the property in the past.

A5 TENURE

We understand that you propose to purchase the property by way of the freehold interest with vacant possession upon completion and we assume for the purposes of this report that there are no restrictive covenants or other encumbrances affecting the property.

A6 ROADS

The roads and footpaths are made up and are assumed to be adopted by the Local Authority, although this should be confirmed by your legal adviser.

There is residents permit parking between 11.30am until 12.30pm Monday to Friday. We recommend you ascertain the cost and availability of permits from the Local Authority if required.

A7 SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The property appears to be subject to a number of inherent defects, each on their own being considered not too serious but taken together give the impression that the property may be something of a maintenance liability in the future.

We generally found the structure of the building to be in reasonable condition for its age, although there are a number of defects and items of disrepair requiring attention which have been highlighted in the body of this report. We strongly recommend that the suggested works are undertaken as the consequences of delayed maintenance in an old property of this type are invariably more serious than were the building to be of modern construction.

You should treat the following matters, all of them significant items referred to earlier in this report, as urgent repairs to be investigated fully before purchase. You must obtain competitive quotations from reputable contractors before you commit yourself to purchase.

- C2 Chimney Stacks – damp penetration and overhaul
- C3 Roofs – works to the rear of roof required
- C4 Rainwater Goods – blocked gulley
- C5 Main Walls – confirmation of past movement issue required
- C9 Outbuildings - overhaul or replacement recommended
- D1 Roof Space – improve ventilation
- D2 Ceilings – anticipate some replacement works
- D3 Interior Walls – significant areas of re-plastering required
- D6 Damp – specialist investigation and quote for remedial action recommended
- D7 Internal Joinery – general overhaul required
- E1 Electricity – test recommendation
- E2 Gas – test recommendation
- Services in general – significant replacement works and the introduction of heating and hot water systems will be required. Therefore, quotes for these items should be obtained prior to a legal commitment to purchase.

As soon as you receive the quotations and reports for the work specified above, and also the responses from your legal adviser, the surveyor will be pleased to advise whether or not these change the advice or valuation given in this report. Only when you have all this information should you decide, whether or not to proceed with the purchase. We recommend you remain in control of obtaining quotes rather than rely on those provided by others.

You will note that we have referred to a number of other defects within our report, all of which will require attention either now or in the foreseeable future. It is recommended that you obtain estimates and reports, as appropriate, prior to exchange of contracts in order that you can budget for future expenditure.

You are advised, however, that if you should decide to legally commit yourself to the purchase without obtaining the above information, you will have to accept the risk that adverse factors might come to light in the future.

Although this report refers to a number of other matters requiring attention, these are not considered to pose an immediate threat to the property and can be dealt with as part of a general programme of maintenance. You are, however, recommended to obtain formal builders and other estimates for such items before you legally commit to purchasing the property.

**A8 ENVIRONMENTAL & ENERGY
RATINGS**

Environmental (CO2) Impact Rating: TBC

Energy Efficiency Rating: TBC

(The figures above have been obtained from the Report information from the selling agent. We cannot confirm the accuracy of such information.)

B. DESCRIPTION

B1 DESCRIPTION

The property was originally a detached house although now it is attached to a rear single storey, right-hand extension, to the adjacent property extension. The building is over three floors and is of individual design with a staggered rear section. There is a three storey bay to the front. The extension is likely to have been undertaken over ten years ago and the original construction of the building is likely to have been between 1880 and 1900. The property is generally dated internally and warrants complete refurbishment and modernisation.

The building is of traditional construction with a pitched replacement tile roof over solid brick part rendered walls and solid and majority timber floors. Windows are majority replacement PVCu double-glazing.

B2 LOCATION/AMENITIES

The property is located between and, in south-west London. The road outside the home is residential in nature.

The property is situated in an established residential area with properties of similar character and age, convenient for all local amenities and transport facilities. The garden is south facing.

There is off-street parking to the front; however, there was an old van situated on the drive at the time of my inspection and you should be aware of this issue. Confirmation that this is to be cleared is required.

B3 ACCOMODATION

Ground Floor: 2 Living rooms, kitchen, bedroom, bathroom, WC

First Floor: 3 Bedrooms, shower room

Second Floor: 3 Bedrooms

B4 OUTBUILDINGS, PARKING AND SITE

There is a detached store shed to the rear of the garden. The property has front and rear gardens with front-to-rear shared side access. There is off-street parking to the front.

B5 FLOOR AREA

We estimate the gross external floor area of the accommodation to be approximately 240 square metres.
(Agents' details will show floor areas as a gross internal area whereas the floor area for the purposes of this report and Buildings Insurance is calculated on a gross external area basis.)

C. CONDITION (OUTSIDE)

C1 MOVEMENT

There is evidence that the building has suffered from movement in the past and there is some distortion to the walls currently. There were also some old cracks noted. These items have been dealt with in more detail in C5 Main Walls. In our opinion there is no evidence of ongoing or current ground movement or subsidence issues.

The rear elevation, in particular, appears to have been partially or completely rebuilt and there is a steel cross to the left-hand main wall indicating lateral restraint to prevent the wall moving outwards.

This poses the question as to when the works were undertaken, why they were undertaken and whether underpinning has been carried out in the past. Specific enquiries should be made, with regard to building works undertaken to the property with reference to the main walls. This also includes replacement lintels to the rear and added support steel struts to the front lintels over windows.

C2 CHIMNEY STACKS AND BOILER FLUES

Brick stacks pass up through the building to roof level. Significant damp penetration issues were noted around the chimney stacks and remedial action will be required as a matter of urgency to prevent more rapid deterioration of the plaster, brickwork and attached timbers.

It is likely to be in the form of replacement flashings at the base of the stack, the introduction of a damp-proof course and attention to the brickwork and pointing and upper surfaces of the stacks. A competent building/roofing contractor should be instructed in this regard.

You will appreciate that as these structures are on the most exposed part of the building, they will be prone to heavier weathering. Good maintenance is therefore essential and a closer examination of chimneys may reveal more problems than from ground level.

The front right-hand stack has been reduced in height and the chimney is leaning slightly but not sufficiently to warrant any re-building at present.

The roof timbers around the stacks may well be damp affected due to the extent of the dampness coming through and the likely time scale of dampness coming through; therefore, part replacement of the ends of the timbers and fixings to the walls and stack is likely to be required when these areas are opened up, once works have been undertaken to prevent continued damp penetration.

Well-constructed stacks of this age should incorporate a damp proof course, but in this case, we could not see one. It is therefore highly likely that rain penetration through the stacks will extend below roof level into the void making any adjacent timbers damp.

C3 ROOFS

The main roofs are pitched and tile covered.

The main roof slopes were noted to be acceptably even and free from any undue distortion, deflection or distress which indicates that the roof frame is dealing adequately with the imposed load of the roof covering.

There is a noticeable slope to the rear left-hand roof slope when viewed from the rear right and front. This is in our opinion likely to be the construction type rather than any loss of structural integrity. The roof cover is heavier than original; however, there was no evidence to suggest any significant dipping to central areas or dislodgement of tiles because of distortion to the structure. The tiles themselves are worn although no serious issues were noted to the majority.

To the rear at the edges/verge of the roof the tiles are deteriorating and the verge beneath mortar joint has come away to the majority. Overhauling the edge of the roof to the roof slopes is required to prevent more rapid deterioration and damp penetration issues.

Over the rear single storey extension, there is a shallow pitched roof with roofing felt cover. This has obviously leaked in the past although there is no evidence of current continued leakage. The ceiling below has suffered from damp issues. The current roof cover was in a reasonable condition although assuming that the ceiling has not been repaired it is quite possible that the roof timbers are in a poor condition, particularly to the rear section. We cannot confirm the provision of insulation or adequate ventilation to this roof.

If the decking material is either of chipboard or strawboard, then its replacement will more likely be needed in the event of a damp problem, than if a better quality material, such as plywood has been used.

We could not see any provision for ventilation. Although we have no particular cause for concern, in this case you should be aware that certain types of flat roofs without ventilation can be expected to fail within a short life span. Such failure is usually evident by sagging of the decking supporting the covering.

You should anticipate overhauling this roof together with insulation, ventilation and, possibly, some of the timbers in the short term.

C4 RAINWATER GOODS

Rainwater goods comprise PVC gutters and downpipes, the alignment and general condition of which appear satisfactory from ground level. We would stress, however, that it was not raining at the time of our inspection and we cannot therefore comment as to whether the gutters and downpipes are free from leakage. We recommend that the fittings are checked during a period of rainfall in order to establish whether there are any defective joints or other defects requiring attention.

The gulley to the front right-hand side is part blocked and clearing is recommended.

Some of the downpipes discharge into the soil and vent pipe as the waste pipes. This is bad practice and though commonly done, is not advisable. Building Inspectors will not normally permit this to be done; some even where the drainage system is a combined one. In heavy weather the pipes may not be able to cope with the combined load of surface and ablutionary waste. This is in contravention of current regulations; however, we would state that the regulations are not retrospective and as such compliance cannot be enforced.

Defective rainwater goods are a common cause of dampness which can in turn lead to the development of rot in timbers. Regular inspection and adequate maintenance are therefore essential if serious problems are to be avoided.

C5 MAIN WALLS

Main walls are of solid brick construction and are brick facing with part render, particularly to the rear. In general terms, no serious issues were noted to the brickwork and pointing themselves. Minor worn areas can be covered, particularly around openings and outside corners which become more worn due to weathering and works can be undertaken as a matter of maintenance in the short to medium term.

The mortar pointing to the brickwork is in satisfactory condition with no immediate repairs required, although localised re-pointing may be required from time to time.

When any re-pointing is carried out it is essential that the joints are raked out sufficiently, usually to a depth not less than 12mm so that the new pointing is given sufficient key. Failure to do this can result in the new pointing simply cracking and falling out over a relatively short timescale. The pointing itself should not be stronger than the bricks to which it is applied. Too high a cement content can allow shrinkage cracking.

Contrary to good building practice, the rendering has been taken down to ground level in most areas. A property of this age and type is likely to incorporate a slate damp proof course (dpc) but with this method of construction, any dpc is effectively bridged by the rendering, which thereby provides a path for rising ground moisture to bypass the dpc and saturate the brickwork above. Ideally the rendering should be cut back to the level of the dpc and finished with a render bead. This applies to the rear.

Driving rain can penetrate cracked render. When this occurs the only way for the water to escape is through the inside face of the brickwork. In solid walls this may cause dampness internally.

Minor cracks were noted although these were not currently significant in nature. There were areas where dampness is likely to have got behind the render, possibly from ground dampness and patch re-rendering should be anticipated particularly to lower level. Please see further comments under D6 Damp.

Our inspection of the main walls revealed some signs of movement in the rebuilding to the rear, twisting to the rear right-hand side and vertical crack to the eaves loft front right-hand side. This appeared to be an established feature and on the basis of our single inspection, we consider that this type of defect is common in buildings of this age and locality, and that the extent of movement is within acceptable limits.

In this instance, we are of the opinion that none of the movement referred to in this report is of a serious nature, although it is stressed that it is not possible to give any categorical assurances that all movement has ceased without monitoring the building over a period of several months. Clearly, this is not practicable in the context of a survey for house purchase, and you may wish to take advice from a Chartered Structural Engineer before proceeding to exchange of contracts, to confirm our assessment.

We can form only an opinion based on one inspection, and regret cannot be certain without repeat inspections over periods of months or even years, a time scale that is not usually available when asked to advise.

We must emphasise that our advice is a reasoned opinion, but another surveyor might take a different view which could create difficulty on re-sale.

Wall tie rod has been inserted in the past to restrain structural movement. Although we do not know the form of anchorage this is apparently satisfactory and there are no signs of recent movement of the structure.

Specific enquiries of the seller and via the Buildings Insurance should confirm whether under pinning (strengthening of the foundations) has been carried out in the past and the full extent of works which have been undertaken in terms of the building, replacement lintels and lateral restraint wall tie rods.

To the front middle right-hand side where cracking was noted in the eaves storage, the external part has now been rendered and there was no evidence to suggest any continued cracking externally in this regard. We cannot confirm what works have been carried out; however, the crack in the eaves storage area appears to be long-standing in nature and not recent.

The lintels appear to have been replaced to the rear and additional steel support inserted to the front above the windows below the vertical brick course. This may well have been undertaken when the windows were replaced. This is not uncommon due to age as at the time of the original construction it was common practice to build the outer brickwork skin off the window frames and only install lintels over windows to support the inner load bearing skin. Any deterioration in the brickwork mortar combined with decay in a window frame resulted in the subsequent slight movement in the soldier course above.

No significant deflection above the window was noted at the time of inspection.

The sills were in a serviceable condition below the windows although where these are tiled with part render finishes they may well be susceptible to rainwater running back to the wall causing dampness internally under the window. No significant issues were noted at the time of inspection; however, attention to detail when next undertaking external works and decoration will be required to ensure that rainwater is thrown away from the walls.

Having regard to the age of the property, we believe that if the foundations were exposed, they would be found to be of an inadequate depth if compared to the current requirements of the Building Regulations. Whilst we are not suggesting that the Building Regulations could or should be applied retrospectively, we do recommend that confirmation should be obtained from your proposed building insurers that the property will be insured on an all risk basis and therefore if future problems with ground movement were ever encountered that this would be a fully insured peril.

Clay sub-soils are susceptible to relatively significant volume changes due to moisture variations caused for example by seasonal changes, drought and trees.

To avoid the possibility of a new insurer declining to accept liability for any movement that could be classed as being a continuation of movement that occurred prior to the taking out of the policy, we suggest you could continue the existing insurance (provided it gives sufficient cover).

Insurance companies are becoming increasingly cautious in accepting properties subject to cracking and even those that have been underpinned. This may affect saleability in the future. (N.B. It is common practice for insurance companies to decline new business involving underpinned property and this requires cover to continue with the existing insurers of a property).

**C6 DAMP PROOF COURSE/SUB FLOOR
VENTILATION**

The damp-proof course is covered by a plinth and assumed to be in place although it has been found to be defective to a number of areas. Please see comments under D6 Damp.

To the plinth area, particularly to the left-hand side at the base of the walls, the finishes and render are coming away and overhauling the finishes is recommended to prevent more rapid deterioration.

Since the property has suspended timber flooring to the ground floor accommodation, air bricks are inserted at the base of the walls in order to provide ventilation to the underside of the flooring. These need to be kept free from obstructions in order to maintain a through flow of air. This air flow restricts the build-up of condensation beneath the floor, which could result in fungal decay occurring in the timbers in the property.

It is important to maintain a flow of air in the void beneath the ground floor, in order to prevent dampness and the development of rot. There is insufficient ventilation at present and additional air bricks should be built into the external walls to provide through-ventilation.

There should always be at least one brick course between the ground level and the air bricks, to prevent water being blown into the under-floor void by the prevailing wind as this can lead to timber infestation.

Minor works close to the walls to ensure that this occurs are recommended close to the walls when carrying out works around the patio and driveway areas.

A partially blocked air brick is of limited value. If it is at ground floor level water will get in. Air bricks close to the ground are also likely to admit water penetration.

Water will penetrate into a well of an air brick through the brick and under the floor.

C7 EXTERNAL JOINERY

Windows are replacement PVCu double-glazed units. The quality of double glazing units can vary. Whilst the units in the property appear sound at present, no comments can be made about long term durability. Installation certification and guarantees should be in place and confirmed and this includes the double-glazed doors.

To the rear living room there are timber single-glazed windows and doors. These were in a poor condition and particularly poor for insulation purposes. Overhauling or replacement is recommended.

Eaves level fascia and soffit boarding appeared satisfactory but a closer inspection may reveal areas of wet rot behind guttering.

C8 EXTERNAL DECORATION

The external decorations are generally satisfactory but with some minor flaking and blistering of paintwork. Affected areas should be rubbed down and painted.

Before re-decorating, repairs are needed to the external joinery as already described. In addition, repairs of woodwork and re-puttying of glazing will be needed.

All exterior timber work should be carefully checked for decay when re-decoration is carried out and repairs undertaken as found to be necessary. The external paintwork should be maintained to a good standard to reduce the dangers of timber decay.

The paintwork to the cement rendering is worn. It is important to remember that the paint film plays a part in covering cracks which could let in water.

C9 GARAGE/OUTBUILDINGS

There is a concrete built storage shed to the rear with a roof which is believed to be a concrete type material although this may have asbestos content. This should not be removed or worked upon until tested by a competent approved contractor in asbestos. The building itself is generally worn in terms of finishes and many buyers would wish to replace or removed it. You should be aware of potential costs in this regard.

The driveway to the front has uneven finishes as do the steps up to the house and overhauling is recommended. No other particular issues were noted to the driveway.

C10 THE SITE

Damage to foundations and underground services can be caused by trees and shrubs. There are a number of these in the vicinity of the building. Although there were no signs of structural damage attributable to trees at the time of the inspection the possibility of future problems cannot be ruled out. Trees and shrubs should not be allowed to overgrow the property though total removal of trees or pruning should not be undertaken without specialist advice as this could also result in damage.

There is a larger tree to the rear right-hand side of the garden which abuts and encroaches over the boundary. Enquiries of the seller and neighbour should confirm there have been no disputes in this regard. The trees are of a height, age and distance from boundaries and buildings where ongoing management will be required.

Geological survey maps indicate that the sub-soil is generally of a clay nature. We have not carried out tests of the sub-soil but properties built on clay sub-soil can be affected by future subsidence and settlement of the foundations and you must ensure that the property is fully insured against such risks before you exchange contracts.

The boundary fences are deteriorating; loose and damaged sections should be repaired. Wooden fences would benefit from treatment with preservative. The left-hand fence is particularly poor and complete replacement will be required.

The wall abutting the house to the rear left-hand side is coming away from the house and is therefore vulnerable to collapse. Tying in is required to the main building. Part rebuilding should be anticipated in this regard.

To the front right-hand side the wall is deteriorating and overhauling and part re-fixing of the blocks will be required.

Legal enquiries should confirm rights of access and use of the front-to-rear side access. This is part overgrown. The gardens to the left-hand side are also part overgrown. These were not inspected in detail. We cannot confirm whether there is any Japanese Knotweed although none was readily visible from a limited inspection.

A visual inspection of the grounds was carried out during the course of our inspection. At the time of inspection, no evidence of any invasive plants, such as Japanese Knotweed and Hogweed, was seen. However, the presence of such vegetation can be difficult to identify during its early growth cycle or during the winter months when such plants die back. Furthermore, where the plants are concealed in dense vegetation or deliberately concealed by property owners, the vegetation may not be visible during the inspection. No inspection was carried out on adjoining land.

Ownership of the boundaries should be ascertained by your legal adviser, in order that you may be aware of your liabilities in this respect.

Repairs to outbuildings, boundary walls and paths can be expensive even though the defects are minor in relative terms to the property as a whole.

C11 DRAINAGE

There is a drainage cover to the rear, which was lifted and the chamber was relatively shallow. This can lead to easy blockage. The drainage appears to run under the main building.

From the extent of our inspection, no sign of any leakage or damage was noted within the accessible/visible parts of the foul drainage system. However, having regard to the location of the drainage system below ground level, the vast majority of the drainage system could not be inspected and no flow test was undertaken. The only way of telling the true condition of the drainage system is by a full specialist test utilising CCTV cameras.

It would be worthwhile enquiring of the seller whether they have any knowledge as to the upgrading of the drainage system in more recent years.

In a property of this age, there is a likelihood that drain defects will have developed. It should be appreciated that an inspection of the accessible manholes cannot conclusively confirm that other hidden areas are free from defect. This can only be ascertained by a detailed drains test.

The grates and gullies around the property were noted to have debris and vegetation growth in them. This may indicate a blockage in the surface water drain and should be further checked when cleared.

The rainwater downpipe discharges into the foul drainage system which contravenes modern water authority by-laws. However, combined drainage of this type is acceptable bearing in mind the age of the property.

The waste pipes and soil stack appear to be satisfactory where a surface inspection is possible, although for the most part they run in ducts and cannot be inspected.

Surface water drains have not been tested and their condition or effectiveness is not known. Similarly, the adequacy of soakaways has not been established, although you are advised that they tend to silt up and become less effective with time.

D. CONDITION (INSIDE)

D1 ROOF SPACE

The main roof space has been built into forming part of the accommodation with apex loft space only and eaves storage areas. The apex loft was accessed via a hatch in the bedroom. This is a relatively small area running from front to rear. The underside of the roof is lined and the lining was in a satisfactory condition. No serious issues were noted to the visible timbers from a roof hatch inspection. The roof space is full of insulating material covering the joists which does limit inspection.

Certain sections of the roof structure could not be examined in detail, such as the lower ends of the rafters and the wall plates. If these timbers have been in contact with dampness for some time it is possible that decay may have occurred.

A general inspection of the roof timbers has been made but we have not examined all surfaces of every length of timber because of the style of construction and restricted access.

Our inspection did not include a roof load calculation as this would be within the realm of a Structural Engineer.

Due to the nature of flat roof construction there are no accessible roof voids. We cannot therefore comment on the construction of the flat roof, the condition of supporting timbers, standards of ventilation, levels of insulation or the presence of a vapour check.

Although there is no obvious deflection, the replacement of the old covering with probably heavier tiles has meant the existing frame will be under greater loads. It would be prudent to incorporate extra timbers by way of reinforcement.

A general inspection was made for any evidence of woodworm or similar defects, and as far as we could determine the timbers are without major failure.

Within the eaves storage right-hand side a vertical crack was noted to the front section, close to where the side joins the main building. Please see comments under C1 Movement and C5 Main Walls in this regard.

There is evidence of a build-up of condensation within the loft spaces with white mould beginning to be contracted to the timbers. Introducing through ventilation, in particular to the main loft space to the rear, is recommended. Ventilation is in place to the front. This will help to prevent any issues in this regard. Over long periods of time, condensation can affect roof timbers.

D2 CEILINGS

Ceilings are a majority of lath and plaster. The ceiling to the rear bedroom ground floor requires replacement. This has been damp affected in the past.

The undersides of the ceilings have been tested by applying light pressure to see if there is any loss of key in the lath and plaster ceilings.

Where the ceilings are of lath and plaster construction and generally cracked, we must remind you that their condition can quickly deteriorate if alterations are carried out which involve vibration to the structure.

Minor irregularities and undulations were noted although these are not considered unusual in the type and age of property.

More significant cracking and distortion was noted to the front living room and repair or replacement may well be required. When undertaking works within the building, other areas may well require replacement due to the age of the lath and plaster.

Over a period of years, fractures occur in the plaster where it passes between the laths. The ceiling plaster surface can become separated from the lath construction. When this happens, there is a risk of collapse which can cause damage to the furniture and fittings within the room and the risk of injury to anyone who may be in the area when failure occurs. The normal useful life of this type of construction varies between 40 to 70 years. The addition of central heating to a property tends to cause failures and may vary this anticipated life span.

As the surfaces are covered with lining paper the extent of any failure cannot be readily ascertained. It is possible therefore that sections beneath the paper are loose and these will eventually have to be taken down and the ceiling renewed.

A textured finish possibly Artex has been used, within the first floor, front bedroom. This is a textured plaster which was provided usually as a skim coat to the plasterboard. This material tends to contain a relatively small quantity of asbestos fibre as a binder. On the basis of the likely age of the textured finish it is therefore recommended that the finish is not worked or sanded in any way which could release fibres. If it is desired to remove this material, then specialist advice needs to be sought.

Polystyrene has been used to cover the kitchen ceiling and this is a potential fire hazard. Removal is recommended and on removal some making good of the ceiling should be anticipated.

To the loft areas the ceilings are stained and generally undulating and uneven. The staining may well be due to condensation issues caused from above. These were not damp at the time of inspection. You should anticipate some replacement of these ceilings.

D3 INTERIOR WALLS/PARTITIONS

Internal walls are a majority of solid specification. The walls appear structurally sound with no obvious evidence of internal structural movement. Both the walls and the various doorways and window sills were tested with a spirit level and found to be plumb. Minor blemishes may be dealt with on routine re-decoration.

Tapping the walls generally throughout the property, hollow soundings were evident. In practical terms this does not necessarily mean the plaster will fall away when stripping off old decorative coverings but the risk of this occurring must be accepted.

There is some general cracking and distortion which is quite common in all property, particularly at the margins of the ceilings and around the doors and windows. This is caused by shrinkage and other normal building movement. This is not a matter that should cause you undue concern being largely cosmetic.

The plaster finishes to the internal walls and partitions are severely deteriorated in some areas, particularly those which are damp-affected and a substantial amount of re-plastering will be needed.

Some initial shrinkage cracking is likely to occur to recently plastered areas. Filling will be required prior to re-decoration.

The partitions have settled in the past, causing some cracking and distortion of the door openings. This appears to be an established feature and is not considered unusual in buildings of this type. We consider the extent of movement to be within acceptable limits.

There was a vertical crack to the central area, front bay ground floor; however, there was no corresponding crack externally. This is not, in our opinion, due to an ongoing significant movement issue and minor remedial action, with regard to the plasterwork and brickwork will be required in this regard only. This is relatively minor in terms of the building as a whole, although, works are recommended prior to the next decoration.

In overall terms, significant areas of re-plastering should be anticipated and also making good to the brickwork and pointing.

D4 FIREPLACES, FLUES & CHIMNEY BREASTS

The majority of the fireplaces are blocked and no particular issues were noted in this regard.

There is a particularly old gas fire to the living room and this should not be used. Removal should be undertaken by a competent Gas Safe registered engineer.

D5 FLOORS

The floors are a majority of suspended timber construction and there are a number of areas where the timbers have been replaced with boarding. The boarding is not of a particularly good quality. Significant curvature, slope and some minor spring underfoot were noted, particularly to the lower floor but this also applies to the upper floors.

As the property will be completely refurbished, it would be worthwhile removing some of the floorboards to ascertain the condition of the joists beneath and, at the same time, try to level the floors. The extent of the curvature is appreciable enough to limit demand on re-sale. Without lifting the floorboards, the full extent of works cannot be ascertained; however, when obtaining quotes for works to the floors, levelling the floor should be considered as part of the pricing. You should anticipate some associated works to the joists, particularly to those which may be damp-affected where they abut damp walls.

It is likely that some of the floors have been affected by wet rot and also, by timber infestation issues. As noted, a number of boards have already been replaced and this is the likely cause.

The solid floor the rear ground floor was free from serious defect although it is covered throughout, limiting my inspection.

D6 DAMP

Tests were made at regular intervals to the base of the walls internally where fixtures and fittings allowed together with specimen tests of the floors through the floor coverings adjoining plumbing installations to establish whether the property as a whole, is subject to significant rising or penetrating dampness or plumbing leakage.

Significant areas of dampness were noted around the ground floor. You are advised to instruct a specialist British Wood Preservation and Damp Proofing Association registered contractor to make a full examination of walls and timbers adjoining dampness including under floor areas and provide a report and quotation.

Plaster on walls affected by rising damp contains salts from the soil which are hygroscopic and attract moisture from the air. Until such contaminated plaster is removed and replaced with a special plaster, the walls will remain damp. It is normally necessary to remove the plaster from the affected walls up to a height of 1 metre above the floor and re-plaster. The damp proofing contractors guarantee may not be fully effective until such re-plastering has been carried out.

Cost estimates for remedial action should be obtained prior to a legal commitment to purchase. This is the only way to understand the full extent of the cost implications in this regard.

D7 INTERNAL JOINERY

The internal joinery is generally dated and worn.

The internal doors have suffered some wear and tear. They do not fit perfectly but otherwise they appear to be satisfactory for their purpose. These are of a poor quality to the majority.

There are also doors with glass panels and full-length glass panels which are not safety glass and this is a potential hazard for those who fall against them. Replacement is recommended.

The current Building Regulations for dwellings having three or more storeys require that doors between habitable rooms and the circulation area (hall, stairs and landings) are of half-an-hour fire resistant, self-closing type.

The introduction of a smoke alarm system and appropriate doors is recommended.

The staircases have worn finishes although no significant issues were noted. The introduction of a banister rail from the ground floor to first floor is recommended as a matter of safety.

Kitchen fittings are of a poor quality and buyers would wish to replace these. You should be aware of the potential costs in this regard. The built-in cupboards are also dated and worn.

D8 INTERNAL DECORATION

Internal decorations are marked and deteriorating in some areas. A fair amount of preparation and making good will be necessary before re-decorating. Please see comments above in D2 Ceilings, D3 Interior Walls and D7 Internal Joinery. Works will be required prior to decoration.

D9 CELLARS/BASEMENTS

There is a cellar, accessed by lifting one of the boards, within the hallway. Steps to the cellar are rotten and should be removed. These are a safety hazard and infestation could spread to other timbers.

The sub floor structure to the hallway has been replaced with block work pillars and steel beams, with the boarding above. See comments under Flooring, with regard to the boarding. The structure itself is satisfactory and is likely to have been introduced to replace rotten and damp and defective pillars and joists.

I viewed other areas of the sub floor area from the gaps within walls. This view was limited. Standard construction for the period was noted, with brick pillars and timber beams resting upon them to support floors. There is a likelihood that some, or all, of the damp proof courses to these pillars, have deteriorated, which will then affect supporting timbers. When removing floor boards, the timber joists should be inspected in detail and damp proof coursing added to sub floor area supporting pillars.

Through ventilation to the cellar should be improved, as walls were damp. It's not unusual. If you wish to use the cellar for dry storage, then a damp proofing/tanking system should be introduced via a competent specialist contractor. Through ventilation would help to reduce damp.

It is clear that, as with other parts of the building, remedial action has been undertaken to stabilise the property and in this instance the floor area and staircase, by introducing blockwork steel beams. Enquiries with the vendor should confirm whether they have any further information or documentation in this regard and whether works were specified and signed off by a structural engineer.

D10 TIMBER DEFECTS

No obvious sign of significant rot or wood beetle infestation was found to exposed timbers at the time of this inspection. Whilst a representative sample of timber has been inspected the possibility of concealed defects being present cannot be entirely ruled out.

Wood boring insect infestation is quite common in older properties and may be present in timbers for a considerable period before being apparent on the surface. Our inspection of the property was limited as described elsewhere in the report and we are unable to confirm that such parts as were covered, unexposed or inaccessible are free from defect. Floor surfaces should be carefully examined for any signs of insect infestation when furniture and floor coverings are eventually moved. If found it should be treated to prevent its spread.

As the property was vacant, the timbers accessible and you may be able to lift the floorboards, you are advised to obtain a report and quotation from a specialist British Wood Preservation and Damp Proofing Association registered firm who should make a full examination of all timbers including under floor areas to ascertain the extent of timber defects and any treatment works necessary.

In a property of this age it is always likely that some infestation has occurred or may be occurring. See subfloor timbers in cellar and floors.

There was no visible evidence of a dry rot outbreak at the time of our inspection. However, dry rot can live unseen behind plaster or in brickwork and whilst we have taken all reasonable care in our investigations, hidden dry rot could be present in areas we were unable to inspect.

D 11 CONDENSATION

No indications of any problems with condensation were noted. However, condensation may be a problem for one occupier where it was not for the previous one. It can often be controlled by careful management of heating and ventilation rather than by physical works.

Please see comments under D1 Roof Space and cellar, with regard to the condensation issues therein.

D12 THERMAL INSULATION

Some insulation is visible in the loft spaces and eaves areas and this was satisfactory. There was also some polystyrene insulation between the rafters which is a potential fire hazard and removal is recommended.

To the roof slopes the insulation was unseen. When accessing via the replacement of the ceilings, the level of insulation can be viewed. Replacement with modern format solid insulation which allows for ventilation is recommended as condensation can affect the roof timbers and ceilings. This may well have been occurring in the past, as noted above in D2 Ceilings.

Additional information regarding the energy efficiency of the property will be found in the Energy Report.

E. SERVICES

The Main service installations within this property have been the subject of a purely visual inspection only and have not been formally traced or tested by us in any way. The information provided within this part of the report is purely for your initial advice and consideration only. Should you wish formal service tests to be undertaken we would be pleased to arrange this on your behalf and upon receipt of your formal instructions. However, we do make the following initial observations at this time.

E1 ELECTRICITY

The consumer board is located in the cellar and is dated. Replacement is recommended.

There is also a consumer board located in the eaves storage area of the upper landing. This is of some age as is the visible wiring, which is of black and red type. There are sockets on skirting boards which is a fire safety hazard. The wiring and fittings are of an age where they are a potential safety hazard.

The installation is dated and could be dangerous. Complete replacement is likely to be required and this should be carried out by the electricity company or an approved electrician (preferably NICEIC registered). Consolidation of the system is recommended.

In view of our findings it is recommended that a competent electrical contractor, preferably one registered with the NICEIC, be engaged to carry out a thorough inspection and test together with an assessment of the cost of works required to ensure compliance with current IEE standards. You are strongly advised to implement any recommended works.

E2 GAS

No test of the gas installation has been made but there was no noticeable smell of gas within the property to indicate the presence of significant leakage. You should note that all alterations or installations of pipework or appliances must be carried out by Gas Safe registered installers.

The system was not in operation at the time of inspection and should not be turned on without a prior inspection by a Gas Safe registered engineer.

All gas appliances, pipework and flues should be the subject of an annual service by a competent engineer i.e. Gas Safe registered. Works to gas appliances etc by unqualified personnel is illegal. Unless evidence can be provided to confirm that there has been annual servicing we would recommend that you commission such a service prior to use to ensure safe and efficient operation.

E3 PLUMBING/SANITARY FITTINGS

The bathroom fittings are in a poor condition and are not adequate for modern day living in a property of this size and type. You should be aware of the potential costs of bathroom installations.

It is important to ensure that the tiling and seals are properly made and maintained at the junction between wall surfaces and baths, showers etc., as damp penetration can lead to the development of fungal decay in concealed areas. This may not become apparent until a major attack has developed necessitating extensive and costly repairs.

The property is believed to benefit from a mains water supply. Prior to exchange of contracts we recommend that legal enquiries should be made of the vendor/the local water authority to determine whether the incoming water supply has been renewed in more recent years. If so, copies of any documentation should be obtained.

In the event that confirmation cannot be obtained on this point, then we advise that having regard to the age of the property it is likely that if the supply pipework from the mains supply to the property (and which is the responsibility of the individual property owner) were inspected it would be found to be currently ineffective and possibly leaking.

In addition, if a water meter is not currently fitted it is possible that the water authority may fit a water meter following completion of your purchase and which may then reveal leakage and the need to undertake repair. It is, therefore, important that further investigation on these points should be concluded in order that the extent of any future repairing liability can be determined.

The intake pipe is in lead to the front of the cellar. Lead pipework constitutes a health risk and is susceptible to leakage, therefore, replacement is recommended via the water authority from mains to stop valve. Other pipework is in copper where visible and the pipework should be insulated to prevent bursts or leaks in icy conditions.

E4 HEATING

There is no central heating to the property. We recommend you ascertain the potential costs of the introduction of central heating.

It would appear that there were some radiators within the property previously; however, none were apparent at the time of inspection and are likely to have been removed at some point in the recent past.

E5 HOT WATER

There is a hot water tank in the cellar. This is old, with poor insulation properties and will be inefficient, if it is working at all. Replacement system is recommended. Cost estimates should be obtained in this regard, via a competent plumbing contractor.

E6 COMMUNAL PARTS & SERVICES

There is a shared side access over which rights of access, use and repair and maintenance liability should be confirmed. This is currently overgrown.

F. ENVIRONMENT AND PLANNING

F1 LEGAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

We are unaware of any development or road widening proposals that are likely to affect the property directly. We recommend, however, that you instruct your legal adviser to make the usual searches in this regard.

Confirmation of all works to the building, including part-rebuilding to the rear, the replacement lintels and the added support to the windows and potentially underpinning in the past should all be confirmed, together with the replacement and added support beneath ground floor entrance.

Certification and guarantees for all double-glazing should be in place and confirmed.

There was no evidence of any deleterious or hazardous materials in the vicinity nor any significant environmental issues.

Building Regulations approval and Planning Permission for the rear extension should be in place and confirmed. This also applies to the adjacent property which abuts this property and therefore a Party Wall agreement should also be in place.

G1 SCOPE OF INSPECTION

The property was vacant at the time of inspection with the floors part covered.

The roofs were viewed from ground level and relevant window vantage points. Not all angles and elevations of the chimneys and roofs could be seen.

Our inspection of this property covered all those parts of the building that could be seen either from ground level externally or from the interior, including accessible roof spaces.

Many parts of a building such as foundations and sub-floor areas are concealed during construction and we do not disturb these. It follows, for practical reasons, that we have not inspected woodwork or other parts of the structure that are covered, unexposed or inaccessible, and we are, therefore unable to report that any such part of the property is free from defect.

At the time of our inspection the house was unoccupied and empty, but considerable floor coverings still remained.

As far as the service installations (gas, electricity, hot and cold water, space heating and drainage) are concerned, our inspection was a limited superficial one and in the absence of specific tests we cannot give any warranty as to their condition, design or efficiency.

The suitability of the main supplies and acceptability of the installations connected to them is something on which the gas, water and electricity authorities have the final word. This applies perhaps most particularly to the Gas Board who should be asked to inspect if you want to be completely assured on this.

Underground pipes from rainwater downpipes or gullies were not traced or tested.

We have not arranged for any investigations to be carried out to determine whether or not High Alumina cement concrete or calcium chloride additive or other deleterious materials have been used in the construction of this property and we are therefore unable to report that the property is free from risk in this respect.

Calculations of the load bearing capacity of floors, structural steelwork or pre-cast concrete framework have not been carried out and we can give no opinion as to their strength or suitability for your purposes.

In our report we refer to approximate time scales for repair work etc. and for your guidance, and the avoidance of doubt, our definition of these is as follows:

Short term	-	within 1-2 years
Medium term	-	2-10 years
Long term	-	10 plus years

In drafting this report we have limited comment to the more material matters and in particular have not listed individually such minor items as slightly loose door or window fittings or minor decorative blemishes which have no structural significance.

Any directions given in this report are taken from the main road frontage facing the front of the property.

We trust that within this report we provide the advice and information you require, obviously if we can be of any further assistance please do not hesitate to contact us.

Finally, may we confirm that our report has been prepared for your initial advice and consideration. We therefore can only accept responsibility to you as our client. We cannot accept responsibility to any third party who may become acquainted with its contents without our prior knowledge or consent in writing.

G2 INSURANCE VALUATION

In our opinion the current cost of reinstating the property in its present form is estimated for insurance purposes to be approximately £500,000 (Five hundred thousand pounds).

G3 SIGNATURE

Signed



Print Name

Adrian Randall

Qualifications

BSc. (Hons) MRICS

Date

11 January, 2017

