

Building Survey

Subject of report:

Address 1

Address 2

Town

Post code

Prepared for:

CLIENT



CHARTERED SURVEYORS & VALUERS

4 Castle Street

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Surveyor

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Report Date

Ref: V-0000



Property Address

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A) INTRODUCTION

1. Instructions

This survey and report was produced in accordance with the Terms and Conditions of Engagement sent to you. This report is for your own private and confidential use and should not be reproduced in whole or part or relied upon by third parties for any use without my express written authority.

In accordance with our Conditions of Engagement, we have not at this stage arranged for any specialist tests or reports on the service installations but comments on the need for specialist tests are included.

2. Property Address

Address

3. Name and Address of Client

Client name

4. Inspected By

The property was inspected by N D Hanson FRICS.

5. Date of Inspection

The property was inspected on

6. Weather

During the inspection the weather was dry and bright after a short rainstorm. The weather in previous weeks has been varied although the Met office has confirmed that this autumn was the second warmest on record.

7. Limitation of inspection

Access was limited during the inspection and it is not possible to confirm that unseen areas were free from defect. The property was unoccupied but some floor coverings remained which prevented a full inspection.

No ladders were raised for close inspection of the upper parts of the building. Our inspection was made entirely at ground level.

This report is for the private and confidential use of the client for whom the report has been prepared and for the use of the professional advisers. It should not be produced in whole or part or relied upon by third parties for any purpose other than that having the express written authority of the Surveyor.

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. Binoculars were used to inspect external items such as roof tiles and chimneystacks. A damp test meter was used internally.

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

As far as the service installations (gas, electricity, hot and cold water, space heating and drainage) are concerned, our inspection was a superficial one. In the absence of specific tests we cannot give warranty as to their condition, design or efficiency or suitability. The suitability of the main supplies and acceptability of installations connected to them is something on which the water and electricity companies have the final word. Underground pipes from rainwater downpipes or gulleys were not traced or tested.

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

Calculation of the load bearing capacity of floors, or structural timberwork has not been carried out and we can give no opinion as to the strength or suitability for your purpose.

Mould growth is often associated with condensation and other forms of dampness, it has been recognised that moulds are toxic and can affect the health of occupants of the property. Identification and testing is outside the scope of this report.

No specific tests for the presence of hazardous material were carried out. However, all properties built before 2000 may contain asbestos in one or more of the components e.g. ceiling finishes and fittings. It is not possible to identify such matters without a test and this is beyond the scope of this inspection. If you have any concerns a specialist surveyor should be engaged. Asbestos is not harmful unless fibres are released into the air.

8 Information relied upon in report

The information with regard to this property was obtained via the selling agent, XXXXX and the Surveyor's local knowledge.

B) DESCRIPTION

1. Type & age

The property is a well located traditional two storey semi-detached house, with basement, believed to have been built around the turn of the last century and now in need of considerable care and attention.

The property is located within an average size plot with lawned gardens to its rear. We have not undertaken a measured survey of the attached land.

2. Accommodation

The main property is configured with the main entrance to the front of the property and accommodation on basement and two levels as follows:

GROUND:

Living room, Dining Room Kitchen, WC and utility area.

FIRST:

Three bedrooms and Bathroom

BASEMENT

Storage area.

The property does not have a garage or any parking facilities. A secluded lawned garden is situated to the rear of the property.



3 Tenure and Occupation

It is understood that the property is freehold and that full vacant possession will be granted upon completion, but your legal advisor must confirm. There was no evidence of any tenancy at the time of our inspection.

EXAMPLE

C) LOCATION

1. Location

The property is located on XXXXX Road, which is a popular residential street benefitting from close proximity to good local schools, Farnham railway station and the centre of the town. On street parking is restricted by a permit scheme details of which are administered by Farnham Town council and for which information can be found on:

http://www.waverley.gov.uk/info/200072/parking/808/residents_parking_scheme_in_farnham

You should familiarise yourself with the locality prior to purchase.

2. Orientation

The front elevation of the property faces roughly north. All directions given are as if facing the main entrance of the property.

3. Site & surrounding area

Important note: A comprehensive site investigation that considers all possible forms of contamination and other environmental hazards has NOT been carried out. Consequently, we are not able to give a detailed, property specific assessment. However, by using freely accessible internet sources and the surveyors own knowledge of the local area, a general overview of the issues that are likely to affect the neighbourhood can be outlined.

The property is located on an essentially rectangular plot. Boundaries are clearly marked. As far as we are aware there has been no flooding in recent years and we have no reason to believe that this should not continue to be the case although we draw your attention to the fact that it is evident that quite a dramatic climatic change has been experienced in the last few years which could alter this situation in the future.

The plot slopes from its rear to the front. Natural ground conditions appear reasonably good although path and driveway surfaces will inevitably suffer wear and deflection. At present they are serviceable, but future maintenance will be required and should be anticipated.

4. Local factors

The general condition of housing stock nearby appears to be of a good standard with most occupiers maintaining their properties and grounds well.

5. Trees & Hedges

Ground shrinkage can be increased by the presence of tree roots. Services below ground may also be affected and in this regard. Generally the surrounding vegetation is not considered to represent a significant risk although the well rooted tree located close to the front wall concerns us. Although we do not profess to have a specialist knowledge of tree and shrub types we believe the tree to be some form

of laurel shrub (*prunus lusitanica*) which has a growth rate in the region of 40 cm per annum.



While we noted no evidence of damage to the basement and foundations of the house we are a view that it is only a matter of time until damage is noted. In such circumstances specialist advice should be sought and remedial action, if so advised, prior to your entering into a legal commitment to purchase.

D) OVERALL ASSESSMENT

1. Overall opinion

This is a fine old building which has seen off two world wars, a century, or thereabouts, of change and can probably tell a story or two!

Nevertheless the property has been neglected in the recent past and, to say the least, the purchase of this property should be seen as a “project” as a lot of repair and upgrading will be needed, which will be costly and disruptive. That being said the resultant improved and modernised property should prove to be very desirable and, bearing in mind its location, should provide a very pleasant family house.

Considering the present condition of the property I list the following major matters to bring to your attention as follows. Each item is described in more detail within the body of the report:

- Extensive rising and penetrating dampness was found in the basement and all structural walls of the property and particularly on the rear wall of the front structure close to its junction with the rear spur where dampness and water damage was noted at first floor too.
- Dampness was also noted in the chimney breast structures indicating that flashings and damp proofing measures are not working properly.
- Works of varying degree are required to roof coverings/structures
- Replastering of a number of internal areas will be required after water damaged surfaces are repaired.
- Detailed condition of the underground drainage and water supply systems needs to be established;
- Inadequacies of the electrical installations need to be rectified;
- Sash window joinery requires overhaul, replacement may be more economical
- Overhaul/renewal of rainwater goods and eaves joinery is required.
- The central heating system requires full inspection, overhaul and possible upgrading. At the very least the servicing record for the central heating system needs to be established.
- Hot water storage in inadequate and requires replacement and upgrading
- External decoration and repairs to the eaves joinery is needed
- Wall climbing foliage should be cut down
- As already highlighted removal of the laurel tree located on the front elevation of the property is advisable.

Notwithstanding our specific comments regarding this property, maintenance costs will be higher than more modern properties and should be born in mind in your purchasing consideration.

In accordance with the terms and conditions of engagement, we have not costed likely repairs.

2. Further investigations

Although we have tried to identify the likely extent of most of the repairs, the following further inspections will be required:

- electrical installation
- drainage inspection

- damp proofing and general contractors inspection
- full roofing contractors inspection
- arbculturalist inspection
- central heating boiler and system inspection

We would strongly recommend that you arrange for any specialist's reports, estimates or tests before you legally commit to purchasing the property so that you are fully aware of costs. Care must be exercised when choosing specialists or contractors to ensure they are sufficiently competent, and membership of relevant trade associations should offer some general reassurance.

EXAMPLE

E) CONSTRUCTION & CONDITION: OUTSIDE & INSIDE

Introduction

In this section, we will describe the construction of the property and:

- identify any defects or deficiencies;
- outline what could happen if these problems are not resolved;
- describe, in broad terms, what needs to be done to resolve the problem and when, and;
- whether further investigations are required and if so, what type of investigation should be carried out by who.

Although we will outline the nature of work that needs to be done, this will not be a specification of works. Instead, it will help you understand the extent of the problem. You should then obtain further advice from appropriately qualified and experienced consultants and/or contractors. We will also indicate what we see as an appropriate timescale associated with the matter.

These are summarised below:

before you commit to purchase – these are matters that may affect your decision to purchase and so you should establish their true extent before you enter into a contractual arrangement;

before you occupy the property – although this may also affect the price you pay for the property, you should carry these out before you occupy the dwelling. This could be because of a threat to health and safety (e.g. dangerous or poorly maintained gas boiler, lack of safety glass at low level, etc.) or the repair work is so disruptive; living in the property will be very inconvenient (e.g. extensive damp proofing work, timber repairs requiring chemical treatment, etc.);

work carried in the immediate future – this work will typically include problems that could get worse if they are not resolved quickly (e.g. leaking gutters, extensive rising dampness, etc.). Although the precise time scale will vary with the nature of the problem, the work should be carried out within a few weeks or months of occupying the property.

work carried out in the medium/long term – this type of repair and/or improvement is not urgent and although the problem may gradually get worse, it can usually fit into a maintenance programme. You may have to carry out temporary repairs in the short term but works that are more substantial can usually wait. Typical examples may include a roof covering that is approaching the end of its useful life, windows that require increasing levels of timber repairs or an older boiler (although not dangerous) that will have a limited life. I will use these standard descriptions in the report in an effort to help you prioritise any repairs.

1. Constructional principles

The property is a traditionally constructed property and consists of the following structural components:

- the roof is of pitched timber frame construction with the weight of the roof being transmitted to wall plates on the front side and rear of the property.

The structure is also tied into the dividing party wall giving additional lateral structural support

- the main external walls and some internal partitions transfer the weight of the building down to the foundations.
- where openings such as doors and windows occur, lintels have been installed. The roof truss and first floor structure also acts as a lateral support.

2. Structural frame

The frame of the structure functions well and we noticed no sign of movement or defect indicating that the dead weight of the building is effectively being transmitted to the foundations which would indicate, in turn, that the property has been constructed on a reasonable quality natural foundation.

3. Roof

Roof structure

As described above, the roof structure is of timber framed pitched construction. In general the frame shows no sign of distortion or deflection.

Other roof space issues

Thermal insulation

Observed roof spaces have good levels of thermal insulation but these will not comply with modern requirements which took effect after completion of this property. A slightly higher than average rate of heat loss will be expected from this dwelling. This will result in slightly higher fuel bills and could contribute to condensation because of low surface temperatures. The desired standard for thermal insulation within roof space is equivalent to approximately 250mm thickness of mineral wool.

Ventilation to the roof space

Roof spaces are vulnerable to dampness caused by condensation as warm, moist air can seep into the cold roof space and condense on adjacent timbers. In the worst cases, this can lead to wood rot. To prevent this from occurring, these spaces have to be well ventilated from the outside. This roof has a secondary waterproof barrier below the tiles and condensation may therefore occur.

Roof coverings

The main roof is covered with double lap tiles. These appeared in reasonable order although some mould growth was noted. Moss growth was noted on some roof slopes. This will impede the run off of rainwater and lead to gutter blockage. Ideally moss growth should be cleared off roof surfaces by a suitably qualified contractor. You should be aware that because the roof covering is linked into the neighbouring properties, you will need the agreement of your neighbours through a 'party wall agreement' should any work be needed on the roof surface close to their property in the future.



Valley gutters are included in the structure of the roof. These are areas of weakness and damp ingress can occur if valley gutters are not cleaned out regularly and their lining maintained. At present these are in a satisfactory condition but regular inspection will be required and additional expense can be expected.

We noted damp ingress at a point above the rear wall of the front part of the property which is contributing to the water damage found below this area. A detailed inspection will be required by any contractor engaged to undertake remedial repair work and this should be highlighted within any schedule of work to do with such repairs.

Rainwater goods

Rainwater goods are dated and are a mix of metal and uPVC type and are in a poor state of repair. A large part of the damp ingress reported on the rear wall of the property is due to faulty/leaking rainwater goods and hence a detailed inspection by a reputable contractor to ascertain the extent of repairs required, and cost estimates, is required prior to your entering into a legal commitment to purchase. Such cost implications should be taken into account in your purchasing decision.

Fascias and soffits

Eaves joinery is of timber construction. Observed timbers appear serviceable condition, but regular maintenance will be essential and it is highly likely that replacement and repair will be required, particularly on the rear defective wall.



Elsewhere previous rot repairs were evident in the timberwork and may require further attention when decorating in the future. Joinery at upper levels tends to be less carefully maintained making the need for repairs in these areas more likely.

4. Chimney Stacks, Flashings and Soakers

The property has a single brick built chimney stacks located above the centre of the property. The flashings are of cement mortar type and should now be replaced with ones of metal type to stop damp infiltration noted on inspection.



Because of their location chimneystacks are particularly exposed. They must be regularly maintained to ensure their safety, stability and weather tightness. From ground level no significant defect could be seen on the elevations inspected. The

unseen flaunchings should, however, be inspected as it is very likely that repairs are required.

5. External Walls and Elevations

Main walls are believed to be of early cavity wall construction type with a thickness of approximately 275 mm. Cavities are formed by two skins, usually of block and brick, which are tied together by metal ties. Problems have arisen in the past where ties have broken and caused structural problems in the outer wall. No evidence of this defect was noted at the time of inspection. There is some evidence of previous brick repairs which appear to have been undertaken satisfactorily. Some repointing of mortar jointing will be required.



The front elevation has a painted finish while the rear wall finishes are rendered. These finishes conceal the true identity of the wall beneath. They may even have been applied to mask previous defects such as surface deterioration or worn pointing.



It is particularly important that render and painted surfaces be kept waterproof otherwise inevitable surface cracking will allow damp penetration. Regular application of a good quality masonry paint will be required.

Cracking of render surfaces were noted indicating that such attention will be required soon. Given the envisaged repair work needed elsewhere, to counter water damage, It may be that large amounts of the rear wall render finish will need to be hacked off to provide access and to allow evaporation of trapped water vapour.

6. Damp Proof Course

Given the level of dampness found in most external walls we doubt a damp proof course is in place or, if it is, It is now no longer effective. As highlighted under "dampness" below remedial damp works are required and specialist contractors should be engaged.



7. Floor Ventilation

The ground floor is of part timber suspended and part solid construction, with the upper floor being of suspended timber construction. To prevent wood rot and other related defects in a timber ground floor, it is important to properly ventilate the space below the floor. The timber element of the ground floor is adequately ventilated by the basement.

8. Internal Walls and Partitions

The internal walls and partitions are of solid wall construction with plaster finish to all elevations. Some walls have a structural function carrying the weight of the roof down to the foundations. In this respect, they are performing satisfactorily. The plaster finish to internal walls is fair although where water damaged has occurred such finishes have degraded and complete repair and re-plastering will be needed, after damp proofing repairs are effected, which will be extensive.



9. Fireplaces, Flues and Chimneys

The property has two fire places located in the main reception rooms. A gas fire was in place in the living room while the rear fireplace has been boarded up. We believe a joint flue is in place and that it will be possible to use both as working fire places. However, we have not been able to make a full inspection and cannot give any warranty as to their condition. If you intend to use them then a full inspection and cleaning of the flues will be required prior to first use. Please note our advice regarding the inspection of gas appliances outlined below.



10. Cellar/Basements

The property has a basement. Being subterranean basements are notorious for dampness and damp ingress. It is possible to avoid this by a number of measures involving the installation of a damp proof membrane, generally known as “tanking”. Experience dictates that whatever type of damp proofing is installed such provisions will have a limited life with further attention being required from time to time.



Such a finish has been installed in this property but has now failed. We noted high levels of dampness in both the internal walls and the floor slab. In its present condition the basement cannot be safely used for any other use than storage. Renewal of “tanking” finishes is expensive with a wide variety of types available; with a similar variety of cost and effectiveness. Specialist advice should be sought.

11. Floors

The ground floor is of part timber suspended and part solid construction, with the upper floor being of suspended timber construction. Most floors were covered with floor coverings or carpet. To prevent wood rot and other related defects in a timber ground floor, it is important to properly ventilate the space below the floor which is done, in this case, by the basement.

The suspended part of the ground floor is of timber-boarding and is supported by timber joists (small beams) over the floor void. In both this area and the upper floor ‘heel drop’ tests were undertaken to the timber floors and found to be stable.

Extensive water staining was found on the uncovered areas of the solid part of the ground floor. We believe these have been caused by overspill leakage from, now removed, kitchen appliances, however, we cannot discount the possibility that such staining may be caused by the lack of a damp proof membrane in the floor slab. As part of the further assessment of remedial works for damp repairs a specialist contractor should be engaged to assess whether works to the floor slab are required.



12. Ceilings

Ceilings are of plaster construction and are in a reasonable state of repair. Water damage was noted in the middle first floor bedroom and repairs will be needed as part of general remedial action. Cost implications of repair should be taken into account in your purchasing decision.



We would point out that it is possible that an element of Asbestos may be contained in the ceiling finishes. No specific tests for the presence of such hazardous material were carried out. It is not possible to identify matters without a test, which is beyond the scope of this inspection. If you have any concerns, a specialist surveyor should be engaged. Asbestos is not harmful unless fibres are released into the air.

13. Windows, Doors & Joinery

Window joinery is of timber construction and many are of sash fitting which have not been properly maintained. Complete overhaul of all units are required, indeed, replacement with new thermally efficient fittings, including double glazed panels may be sensible, although extremely expensive.



It is recommended that weatherproof seals be maintained between door and window frames and adjacent walls in order to minimise the risk of damp penetration internally. The external doors are of timber construction. The main entrance door is function while the rear requires replacement, presently, being a security hazard.



Internally a random selection of accessible doors and windows were checked to establish the ease with which they may be opened and shut. Those that were checked are serviceable but maintenance will be required. Other items of internal joinery are in a poor condition.

Kitchen joinery is in a poor state of repair and is considered inadequate by modern standards.



14. Internal Finishes & Decorations

These are poor, especially where water damage has occurred. We expect that you fully intend to decorate of the property and upgrade internal finishes.

15. Dampness

This section is a summary of the dampness defects affecting the property, which are considerable. They have been referred to elsewhere in regard to the elements that they affect they are listed here so you can get a full understanding of how dampness affects this property.

There are several different types of dampness:

Condensation

Condensation is caused when warm moist air meets a cold surface. Because colder air is less able to support water vapour, moisture is deposited on the cold surface in the form of small microscopic droplets or 'condensation'. Where this happens regularly, green and black mould can occur.

We noticed no incidence of this defect.

Rising and Penetrating dampness

Random checks for dampness were made wherever possible using an electronic damp meter and high readings, indicating areas of dampness, were found in the following locations:

1. All walls and floor of the basement
2. All external walls of the kitchen element

3. The rear and side wall of the dining room
4. The rear wall of the middle first floor bedroom, where extensive interior damage has occurred.
5. The bathroom wall, situated close to the toilet, where plaster is badly affected.



In our opinion this dampness has two causes.

1. Dampness found in areas 1 and 2 are caused by rising dampness. A full investigation by a specialist damp proofing contractor is required to ascertain the extent of repair works and their cost. The investigation should include tests on the kitchen floor.
2. Dampness found in areas 3-5 have been caused by an amalgamation of leaks in the roof, faulty rainwater goods/stack pipe combined with waterlogging of the wall structure which, in turn, has led to degrading of both the interior and exterior surface. Repair of this area will require hacking away of all internal and external surfaces, rainwater goods, roof elements and timberwork, isolation of the precise cause, drying out of all water affected items and making good of all internal and external finishes. This will be a costly exercise and will cause considerable inconvenience so should be undertaken prior to your occupying the property.

16. Timber Decay and Infestation

A representative sample of exposed timber was examined and whilst all reasonable care was taken, given the level of dampness found in this property, the possibility of conceal defects cannot be entirely ruled out. The extent of timber surfaces available for inspection was limited.

17. Structural Movement

The structural envelope of the property appears to be functioning well.

F) SERVICES

PLEASE NOTE THAT ONLY GENERAL INSPECTION OF SERVICES HAS BEEN MADE. SUPPLIES AND SERVICE INSTALLATIONS HAVE NOT BEEN TESTED.

1. Gas

Mains gas is connected. We recommend you instruct a specialist inspection of the heating system and all gas installations by a GAS SAFE registered engineer prior to your entering into a legal commitment to purchase and act on any recommendations given.

2. Electricity

Mains electricity is connected. Observed wiring and fittings appear dated. **Ideally electrical installations should be inspected on a quinquennial basis therefore we recommend that a specialist inspection by a competent electrician (preferably NICEIC registered) is undertaken prior to your purchase and any recommendations be implemented.**



As of 1st January 2005, changes to the Building Regulations affected domestic electrical installations in **England** and **Wales**. You do not need to be a qualified electrician to make changes to your home's electrical system, but the work must be carried out in accordance with the standards in the Regulations.

You do not need to notify your Local Authority if you do minor electrical work, such as:-

- Replacing or repairing a socket, light or cable in any room
- Adding extra spurs, sockets or lights to an existing circuit (except in a kitchen, bathroom or outdoors)
- Adding lights to an outdoor wall on an existing circuit (provided there are no exposed outdoor connections, and the circuit is not extended from a kitchen/bathroom)

However, the work must be carried out to the standards in the Wiring Regulations and you should consider having the work checked by a competent electrician to make sure it is safe.

Before you start other electrical work, such as:-

- Adding new circuits to your existing installation
- Any work (other than repairs/replacements) in a room where there is water (e.g. kitchen, bathroom etc.)
- Any work (other than repairs/replacements) outdoors (e.g. installing outdoor sockets or non pre-wired garden lighting etc.)

You must notify your Local Authority Building Control Department, which has responsibility for ensuring the work is inspected and tested.

Where you have any work carried out by an electrician who is a member of a competent person self-certification scheme, the electrician will be able to certify the work complies with the Regulations and you do not need to notify your Local Authority.

We recommend that you make yourself aware of the Regulations before you undertake any work and if you require any clarification you should contact your Local Authority Building Control Department.

3. Water supply & plumbing

Your legal advisor should ensure that mains water is available, as it appears to be. The observed internal supply is run in a mixture of copper and plastic pipework. There is no evidence of significant leakage works or repair that may be required. All plumbing should be inspected by a reputable plumber prior to your entering into a legal commitment to purchase.

4. Hot Water supply & equipment

Hot water is provided by the central heating system. Please see our comments regarding the space heating below. In our opinion hot water storage facilities are inadequate and need to be redesigned and replaced. Cost implication need to be considered in your purchase decision.

5. Space heating

Hot water and central heating is provided by a recently installed gas fired boiler located in the rear first floor bedroom. Hot water is provided whilst room heating is from panel radiators within principal rooms. Such systems require regular maintenance and are incapable of providing hot water should the main electricity supply be terminated temporarily.



Even though the boiler was recently installed you are recommended to establish the details of the service history for the boiler/details of any guarantee prior to commitment to purchase as only regular servicing by a competent person can ensure efficiency and safety. If these enquiries suggest that previous maintenance has been inadequate, the whole system should be checked by a competent person prior to purchase.

6. Sanitary Fittings

These are dated but usable. Flexible sealants should be maintained at the junction between sanitary appliances (particularly around baths) and surrounding wall surfaces to minimise the risk of water penetration to areas beneath. Regular checks and occasional renewal should be undertaken.



7. Drainage

Your legal advisor should ensure that mains drainage is connected and since this appears to be shared with adjoining owners, the clarification of responsibilities for repair and maintenance is recommended.

No sign of recent blockage or significant damage was identified. The serviceability of the underground drainage system for a building of this age cannot be predicted and the need for future repair or even renewal must be anticipated. It is recommended that a specialist drainage contractor be asked to inspect and test the drainage system prior to your legal commitment to purchase.

Arrangements for surface water drainage appear satisfactory but have not been tested and the existence of adequate underground drainage cannot be confirmed.

EXAMPLE

G) ENVIRONMENTAL & OTHER ISSUES

1. Orientation & Exposure

The property faces roughly north and hence will have a good level of natural light throughout the day. We are not of the view that the property will have any particularly excessive level of exposure due to prevailing weather conditions.

2. Thermal Insulation

The property will not meet current standards in respect of thermal efficiency. Nevertheless, a number of measures can be taken to improve matters. Advice from a specialist engineer is recommended

3. Ventilation

Ventilation to a dwelling is required to remove smells, moisture and other possible harmful contaminants. There are a number of different types of ventilation and these are considered in turn:

Rapid ventilation – it is important to remove moisture from the dwelling as quickly as possible to reduce dampness problems.

Passive or natural ventilation – all habitable rooms should have a small but reasonable level of background ventilation and airbricks through the wall or ventilators that have been incorporated within the window frames usually achieve this. This property has neither of these and you should consider installing an appropriate level of background ventilation in the medium term.

4. Noise & Disturbance

The property is located within an established residential area. Adjoining occupiers are private owners and the general impression of the area and its surrounds are that it is normally a peaceful location although some noise will be encountered from passing traffic on Alfred Road at most times of the day.

5. Means of escape

Means of escape for this property is satisfactory.

6. Other Health & Safety concerns

The inspected property is fit for human habitation. We are not aware of any other obvious matters within the property which may impose a health or safety hazard.

7. Health and safety concerns

None to raise.

H) OUTBUILDINGS, GROUNDS & BOUNDARIES

1. Garage & Grounds

The property does not have a garage. Attached grounds are in reasonable order.

2. Substantial Outbuildings

A brick built outbuilding is located in the rear garden. This was not inspected.

3. Boundaries

Your maintenance and repairing responsibilities in respect of the boundaries and fences should be established. Your conveyancer should also ensure the adequate definition of the boundaries within the deeds.

EXAMPLE

I) REINSTATEMENT COST

1. Definition

This is an indication for insurance purposes of the current reinstatement cost of the building in its present form. In recommending this figure we have considered the property in relation to the RICS/BCIS Guidance Notes on Re-Building Costs on a “day one” basis assuming the policy will make allowance for this. A replacement cost, where appropriate, is intended to mean providing a replacement building of similar size, general appearance and quality to that as existing but not necessarily constructed with the same materials as the original structure.

Allowances have been made for site clearance and demolition and 20% VAT on fees. However, a detailed elemental cost analysis has not been made and neither have we been able to make investigations as to site conditions and, therefore, we have assumed there would be no abnormal costs. Accordingly, this figure is for guidance purposes only and if a more accurate figure is required a Specialist Surveyor’s report should be commissioned.

Our opinion has been assessed as at the date of our inspection.

The report reflects our opinion of reinstatement cost as at this date. Property construction costs are subject to fluctuation over time as market conditions may change.

2. Opinion

We are of the opinion that the reinstatement cost of this property as at the date of this report and in line with the definition of calculation specified lies in the region of **£ XXXX**

J) MATTERS FOR LEGAL ATTENTION

1. Statutory

We advise you to raise the following matters with your conveyancer and seek sufficient clarification prior to entering any legally binding contract:

- The information concerning title requires confirmation.
- Any rights of way should be investigated fully and the implications considered.
- Your conveyancer should ensure that there are no outstanding statutory, public health or legal notices affecting the property.
- You should ensure that there are no outstanding debts in respect of credit agreements with the property, fittings or contents remaining.

Any adverse discovery may have serious effect on the resale potential of the property and have possible detrimental effect on its value. It may therefore be important for you to refer any such matter back to us before you proceed to a legal commitment to purchase the property.

You should immediately forward a copy of this report to your conveyancer with the request that they check all legal matters.

2. Wayleaves, Easements and Rights of Way

There do not appear to be any adverse easements, servitudes or way leaves that affect the property but your conveyancer should be asked to verify the situation.

3. Boundaries

The boundaries and responsibility for maintenance thereof should be confirmed.

4. Environmental

The property is not believed to be adversely affected by highway or development proposals but your conveyancer should check in the normal pre-contract inquiries. There are no other known local factors believed to adversely affect the property although your conveyancer should also verify this.

EXAMPLE

CERTIFICATION PANEL

- This report is provided in accordance with the terms of description of the Building Survey service previously supplied, subject to any agreed addition noted below. (An additional copy of the Description is attached).
- The Report is solely for your use and your professional advisers', no liability to any one else is accepted. Should you not act upon specific, reasonable advice contained in the Report, no responsibility is accepted for the consequences.
- I hereby certify that the Property has been inspected by me and that I have prepared this report.

Signed

Surveyor

N D HANSON FRICS
Chartered Surveyor

Company

VOSPERS Chartered Surveyors
4 Castle Street
FARNHAM
Surrey
GU9 7HR

Date

DATE

Glossary of *Surveying Terms*

EXAMPLE

Aggregate	Pebbles, shingle, gravel etc. used in the manufacture of concrete, and in the construction of "soakaways".
Airbrick	Perforated brick used for ventilation, especially to floor voids (beneath timber floors) and roof spaces.
Architrave	Joinery moulding around a window or doorway.
Asbestos	Fibrous mineral used in the past for insulation. Can be a health hazard -- specialist advice should be sought if asbestos (especially blue asbestos) is found.
Asbestos cement	Cement with 1.0 -- 1.5% asbestos fibre as reinforcement. Fragile -- will not bear heavyweights, hazardous fibres may be released if cut or drilled.
Ashlar	Finely dressed natural stone: the best grade of masonry
Asphalt	Black, tar like substance, strongly adhesive and impervious to moisture. Used on flat roofs and floors.
Barge Board	See "Verge Board".
Balance flue	Common metal device normally serving gas appliances, which allow air to be drawn to, the appliance whilst also allowing fumes to escape.
Beetle Infestation	(Wood-boring insects: woodworm.) Larvae of various species of Beetle, which tunnel into timber causing damage. Specialist treatment normally required. Can also affect furniture.
Benching	Smoothly contour the red concrete slope beside drainage channel within an inspection chamber. Also known as "haunching".
Bitumen	Black, sticky substance, related to Asphalt. Used sealants, mineral felt and damp proof courses.
Breezeblock	Originally made from cinders ("breeze") -- the term now commonly used to refer to various types of concrete and cement building blocks.
Carbonation	A natural process affecting the outer layer of concrete. Metal reinforcement within that layer is liable to early corrosion, with consequent fracturing of the other concrete. Flue a
Cavity Wall	Standard modern method of building external walls of houses comprising two leaves of brick or blockwork separated by a gap ("cavity") of approximately 50 mm (2 Inches)
Cavity wall insulation	Filling of wall cavity by one of various forms of insulation material:

Beads: Polystyrene beads pumped into the cavities. These will easily fall out if the wall is broken open for any reason.

Foam: Urea Formaldehyde foam, mixed on-site, and pumped into cavity where it sets. Can lead to problems of dampness and make replacement of wall ties more difficult.

RockWool: inert mineral fibre pumped into cavity.

Cavity wall tie	Metal device entered into the inner and outer leaves of cavity walls to strengthen the wall. Failure by corrosion can result in the wall becoming unstable -- specialist replacement ties are then required.
Cesspool	A simple method of drain comprising a holding tank, which needs frequent emptying. Not to be confused with "septic tank"
Chipboard	Also referred to as "particle board". Chips of wood compressed and glued into sheet form. Cheaper method of decking to flat roofs, floors and (with Formica or melamine surface) furniture, especially kitchen units.
Collar	Horizontal timber member intended to restrain opposing roof slates. Absence, removal or weakening can lead to roof spread.
Combination boiler	Modern form of gas boiler, which activates on demand. With his formal boiler is no need for water storage tanks, hot water cylinder etc...
Coping/Coping Stone	Usually stone or concrete, laid on top of a wall as decorative finish or to stop rainwater water soaking into the wall.
Corbel	Projection of stone, brick, timber or metal jutting out from a wall to support a weight.
Cornice	Ornamental moulded projection around the top of the building will around the wall of a room just below the ceiling.
Coving	Curved junction between wall and ceiling or (rarely) between ceiling and floor.
Dado Rail	Wooden moulding fixed horizontally to a wall, about 1 m (3 feet 4 in) above the floor, originally intended to protect the wall against damage by chair backs
Damp Proof Course	Layer of impervious material (mineral felts, PVC etc.) incorporated into a wall to prevent dampness rising up the wall or lateral dampness around windows, doors etc. Various proprietary methods are available for improving existing walls including "electro-osmosis" and chemical injection.
Death Watch Beetle	(Xestobium Refovillosum.) Serious insect pest in structural timbers, usually affects old hardwoods with fungal decay already present.
Double glazing	Method of thermal insulation usually either: Sealed Units: Two panes of glass fixed and hermetically sealed together: or Secondary : in effect a second "window" placed inside the original window.
Dry rot	(Serpula Lacrymans) A fungus, which attacks structural and joinery timbers, often with devastating, results. Can flourish in moist and unventilated areas.
Eaves	The overhanging edge of a roof.
Efflorescence	Salts crystallised on the surface of a wall as a result of moisture evaporation.
Engineering brick	Particularly strong and dense type of brick, sometimes used as a damp proof course.

Fire Board	Cheaper, lightweight Board material of little strength, used in ceilings and in walls and as insulation to attics.
Flashing	Building technique used to prevent leakage at a roof joint. Normally metal (lead, tin, copper) that can be cement, felt or proprietary material.
Flaunching	Contoured cement around the base of a chimney pot, used to secure pot and to throw of rain
Flue	A smoke duct in a chimney, or a proprietary pipe serving a heat producing appliance such as a central heating boiler.
Flue lining	Metal (usually stainless steel) to within a flue: essential for high output gas appliances such as the boiler. May also be manufactured from clay and built into the flue.
Foundations	Normally concrete, laid underground as constructional base to a wall: or in holder buildings may be brick or stone.
Frog	A depression imprinted in the upper surface of brick, to save clay, reduce weight and increase the strength of the wall, bricks should always be laid frog uppermost.
Gable	Upper section of a wall, usually triangular in shape, either end of a ridged roof.
Ground Heave	Swelling of clay subsoil due to absorption of moisture: can cause an upward movement in foundations.
Gully	An opening into a drain, normally at ground level, faced to receive water etc. from downpipes and waste pipes.
Haunching	See "That's ". Also term used to describe the support to a drain underground.
Hip	The external junction between two intercepting roof slopes.
Inspection Chamber	Commonly called "manhole": access points to drain comprising a chamber (of brick, concrete or plastic) with the drainage channel at its base and a removable cover at ground level.
Jamb	Side part of a doorway or window.
Joist	Horizontal structural timber used in flat roof, ceiling and floor construction. Occasionally also metal.
Land slip	Downhill movement of unstable earth, clay, rock etc. often following prolonged heavy rain or coastal erosion, but sometimes due entirely to subsoil having little cohesive integrity.
Lath	Thin strip of wood used in the fixing of a roof tile or slate, or as a backing to plaster.
Lintel	Horizontal structural beam of timber, stone, steel or concrete placed over window or door openings.
Long Horn Beetle	(Hylotrupe Bajulus). A serious insect pest mainly confined to the extreme southeast of England, which can totally destroy the structural strength of wood.
LPG	Liquid Petroleum Gas or Propane. Available to serve gas appliances in areas without mains gas. Requires storage tanks.
Mortar	Mixture of sand, cement, lime and water, used to join stones or bricks.
Mullion	Upright member dividing individual lights in any window.

Newel	Stout post supporting a staircase handrail at the top and bottom. Also, the central pillar of a winding or spiral staircase.
Oversite	Rough concrete below timber ground floors: the level of the over the site should be the above external ground level.
Parapet	Low wall along the edge of a flat roof, balcony etc.
Pier	A vertical column of brickwork or other material, used to strengthen the wall to support a weight.
Plasterboard	Stiff " sandwich" of plaster between course paper. Now in widespread use for ceilings and walls.
Pointing	Smooth outer edge of mortar joints between bricks, stones etc.
Powder Post Beetle	(Bostrychidae or Lyctidae family of Beetles.) A relatively uncommon pest, which can, if untreated, cause widespread damage to structural timbers.
Purlin	Horizontal beam in a roof upon which rafters rest.
Quoin	The external angle of a building; or, specifically, bricks or stone blocks forming that angle.
Rafter	A sloping roof beam, usually timber, forming the carcass of a roof.
Random Rubble	Primitive method of stone wall construction with no attempt at bonding or coursing.
Rendering	Vertical covering of the wall either plaster (internally) or cement (externally), sometimes with pebble-dash, stucco or Tyrolean textured finish.
Reveals	The side faces of a window or door opening.
Ridge	The side faces of a window or door opening.
Riser	The vertical part of a step or stair.
Rising damp	Moisture soaking up a wall from below ground, capillary action causing rot in timbers, plaster decay, decoration failure etc.
Roof spread	Outward bowing of a wall caused by the thrust of a badly restrain roof carcass.
Screed	Final, smooth finish of a solid wall; usually using cement, concrete or Asphalt.
Septic tank	Drain installation whereby sewage decomposes through bacteriological action, which can be slowed down or stopped altogether by the use of chemicals such as bleach, biological washing powders etc.
Settlement	General disturbance in the structure showing as distortion in walls etc. possibly a result of major structural failure. Sometimes of little current significance.
Shakes	Naturally occurring cracks in timber; in building timbers, shakes can appear quite dramatic but strength is not always impaired.
Shingles	Small rectangular slabs of wood used on roofs instead of tiles, slates etc.
Soakaways	Arrangement for disposal of rainwater, utilising graded aggregate laid below ground.
Soffit	The under surface of the eaves, balcony, arch etc.

Solid fuel	Heating fuel, normally coal, coke or one of a variety of proprietary fuels.
Spandrel	Space above and to the sides of an arch; also the space below a staircase.
Stud partition	Lightweight, sometimes non-load bearing wall construction comprising a framework of timber faced with plaster, plasterboard or other finish.
Subsidence	Ground movement, generally downward, possibly a result of mining activities or clay shrinkage.
Subsoil	Soil lying immediately below the topsoil, upon which foundations usually bare.
Sulphate attack	Chemical reaction, activated by water, between tricalcium aluminate and soluble sulphates. Can cause deterioration in brick walls and concrete floors.
Tie bar	Heavy metal bar passing through a wall, or walls, to brace a structure suffering from structural instability.
Torthing	Mortar applied on the underside of a roof tile or slates to help prevent moisture penetration.
Transom	Horizontal bar of wood or stone across a window or top of door.
Tread	The horizontal part of a step or stair.
Trussed rafters	Method of roof construction utilising prefabricated triangular framework of timbers. Now widely used in domestic construction.
Underpinning	Method of strengthening weak foundations whereby a new, stronger foundation is placed beneath the original.
Valley gutter	Horizontal or sloping gutter, usually lead or tile lined at the internal intersection between two roof slopes.
Ventilation	Necessary in all buildings to disperse moisture resulting from bathing, cooking, breathing etc. and to assist in the prevention of condensation.
Verge	The edge of a roof, especially over a gable.
Verge Board	Timber, sometimes decorative, placed at the verge of a roof: also known as "barge board"
Wainscot	Wood panelling or boarding on the lower part of an internal wall.
Wall plate	Timber placed at the eaves of a roof, to take the weight of the roof timbers.
Wet rot	Decay of timber due to damp conditions. Not to be confused with the more serious dry rot.
Woodworm	Colloquial term for beetle infestation usually intended to mean the common furniture beetle, which is by far the most frequently encountered insect that attacks structural and joinery timbers.