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Premium Building Survey

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Property Address

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Property Image:

Document Contents

Introduction

Scope Of Instructions

I refer to your instructions to carry out a Building Survey of the above mentioned property in connection with your proposed purchase. This report has been prepared in accordance with the conditions of engagement that you have already received.

Date Of Inspection 17 Jul 2012

Weather Sunny

Information Relied Upon In This Report

Brief information was provided by the selling agents and a copy of the sales particulars was obtained.

Limitations

My 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 floor spaces. I also inspected single storey flat roofs etc. up to a maximum of 3 metres.

Binoculars were used to inspect roof slopes, chimney stacks, etc. externally and an electronic damp meter was used internally where possible.

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

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

With regard to your proposal to construct to build above the existing extension, calculations of the load bearing capacity of floors have not been carried out and I can give no opinion to their strength or suitability for your purpose. Further investigations will need to be made.

This report is for the private and confidential use of the Client for whom the report is undertaken and for the use of their professional advisers and should not be reproduced in whole or in part or relied upon by third parties for any purpose without the expressed written authority of the surveyor.

Description Of The Property

Brief Description

Type

The property comprises a two storey, detached house built of traditional materials. A single storey extension has been constructed at the rear.

There is a lean to style garage built against the left flank wall of the building with access from a tarmac drive. Other outbuildings at the rear include a store and workshop. Construction is of brick and concrete block work with flat felt and corrugated asbestos cement roof coverings. The property occupies a reasonably regular shaped plot with garden areas to both front and rear.

Age

The property is believed to have been built in about 1930. The exact age of this extension is unknown however it is believed to be in the region of 30 years old.

Accomodation

Ground Floor: Entrance Hall, Living Room, Dining Room, Kitchen, Separate WC and Shower Room, Reception Room/ Bedroom Four.

First Floor: 3 Bedrooms, Bathroom.

Tenure & Occupation

The property is understood to be freehold.

It is assumed that vacant possession will be available upon completion although this will need to be verified by your legal adviser

Location, Site & Local Area

The property is situated within an established residential position on the western edge of Anytown approximately 1 mile from the town centre and mainline railway station. Access to the M25 motorway at junction 24 is within a few hundred yards. The front of the property faces south west and has an outlook across open fields.

The property occupies a generally level and regular shaped plot with a road frontage of approximately 17.5 metres and an overall depth of approximately 50 metres.

External Condition

Chimneys & Flues

Chimney Stacks

The property has two chimney stacks constructed of brickwork with a rendered cement finish. The chimney stack built above the left side wall of the building originally served a fireplace in the main bedroom and living room. The chimney stack built above the right side wall of the building has a gas cowl fitted and presumably served some form of gas boiler in the kitchen in the past.

Both chimney stacks are in poor general condition consistent with their age and exposed position. The cement rendering is weathered and is likely to be losing its adhesion to the surface beneath. Cracks in the rendering are evident and both the stacks are suffering from a degree of distortion. The render finishes have deteriorated significantly and renewal is now necessary. At the time of repair it would be wise to check the condition of the masonry beneath as well as undertaking a close examination of chimney pots and flashings.

Distortion can be caused by what is known as sulphate attack. This is where the products of combustion cause the mortar joints between brickwork to expand on the exposed northern side of the chimney stacks causing them to lean over. This can sometimes be severe resulting in the chimney stack having to be rebuilt although in this particular case the degree of distortion to the stacks is considered to be within acceptable limits. Deflection can also be indicative of the lack of an internal flue lining.

It is highly probable that some deterioration has also occurred to unseen flaunchings (the area at the base of chimney pots and flue terminals) and the need to undertake works should be anticipated.

The observed cement fillets (flashings) are in a condition consistent with their age but these will have become brittle and will need attention to prevent rainwater penetration. Their replacement in lead which is a far more durable material is recommended.

See picture 1

Main Roof Coverings

Main Roof Covering

The main roof is of a conventional pitched style with plain tiles. It is clear that the covering is now nearing the end of its useful life. A number of chipped and slipped roof tiles were observed and it appears that several patch repairs have been carried out to the covering in the recent past. An examination within the roof space revealed daylight in several places.

Cement mortar beneath the ridge and hip tiles is becoming brittle with age and is missing in several places. Although it should be possible to maintain the roof covering in watertight condition for a few more years, it should be appreciated that the cost of continual piecemeal repairs will be fairly high and I recommend that you obtain an estimate for re-roofing prior to exchange of contracts to enable you to budget for this expensive repair which will be needed in the not too distant future.

Repairs which need to be carried out urgently include re-pointing of the ridge and hip tiles, replacing damaged and missing tiles and ensuring the areas around the chimney stacks are watertight by repairing or renewing the flashings.

A close examination of the valleys which are the areas at the front of the property where two roof slopes at right angles to each other meet should be made as these are parts of the roof covering that are particularly prone to rainwater penetration.

Main Roof Structure

Where seen from ground level, the main roof is fairly even and well formed with no signs of excessive undulation or distortion

See picture 2

Other Roof Coverings

Ancillary Roofs

The single storey extension which is believed to have been built in about 1983 has a flat roof covered with mineral felt. The current roof covering has obviously been replaced in more recent years and appears to be in watertight condition at the present time.

No reflective chippings have been provided to the covering to minimise movement during hot weather conditions. It should be appreciated that such a large area of felt will expand and contract during changes of temperature and eventually splits will develop. You should appreciate that felt roofs of this type have a normal life expectancy of some 10 to 15 years before replacement is usually necessary.

No sign of any visual failure was observed at the time of inspection however flat roofs do have a tendency to leak suddenly without prior warning and which is often only evidenced internally as a result of water staining to ceilings fixed below flat roofs

See picture 3

Rainwater Fittings

Gutters and downpipes are largely of a fairly modern PVC variety. As it was not raining at the time of inspection it was not possible to confirm that gutter joints are completely watertight however there is no evidence to suggest that significant leakage is occurring. PVC guttering will expand and contract during changes of temperature and this will place stress on the gutter joints. Repairs are likely to be required from time to time to ensure that the guttering remains completely watertight.

PVC downpipes serving the main roof covering are reasonably well supported. A PVC downpipe at the side of the building discharges into a foul drainage gully at the base of the side wall and this is now contrary to water authority regulations although at the time the property was built it would have been an acceptable arrangement.

It is not possible to confirm the existence of effective surface water drainage system below ground. There are inspection chambers in the rear garden which may be connected to an original surface water drainage system although this cannot be confirmed. It may be necessary to provide new soakaways or some other method of surface water drainage if the existing arrangements are found to be inadequate.

External Joinery

External Joinery

The front door is of a hardwood panelled style with small glazed panel. This is in weathered condition and stained internally indicating the possibility of some rainwater penetration around the door frame. Although this front door is suffering from general wear and tear it should be capable of renovation.

The rear door to the kitchen is of a lightweight timber style with glazed panels. This is in fairly poor general condition and offers little security it is likely that you will wish to fit a more substantial rear door as part of your renovation of the property

Other External Joinery

External joinery includes fascia and soffits boarding at the eaves. These areas could not be closely examined due to their height however it is clear that the timber work is in fairly poor condition with flaking paintwork evident and the likelihood of decay present.

Soffit boarding which is the flat area of joinery beneath the fascia boarding is also in neglected general condition and requires urgent decoration to prevent decay developing. The flat boarding beneath the projecting square bay areas at first floor level is in particularly poor condition and requires urgent redecoration.

See picture 6

Fascia boarding to the single-storey extension has been replaced in PVC and the recent past. This should be relatively maintenance free.

As previously mentioned, the external joinery is in rather neglected general condition with paint work flaking from the older window frames and other external joinery.

Although was not possible to make a close examination of the fascia and soffits boarding at the eaves, paintwork is in fairly poor condition and it is suspected that there may be some decay in these areas particularly behind guttering.

There will be a need to undertake general repairs to older window frames and other joinery prior to redecoration.

Windows

Windows are largely of the original timber framed, casement style with single glazing. There is a small metal frame window in the separate WC/wet room on the ground floor. The kitchen window is of a more modern timber frame type with single glazing. There is a recently fitted UPVC window with double glazing in the reception room/fourth bedroom and UPVC patio style doors with double glazing in the living room.

The older windows are in poor general condition and several are very stiff to open and close. Paintwork is flaking from most of the frames and there is decay evident in places. Glazing putty is in poor condition and becoming cracked and loose. Timber window sills are suffering from decay and are also in very poor condition.

See picture 5

Although it may be possible to preserve a few of the window frames in an acceptable condition for a few more years, this is likely to be uneconomic and general replacement is now considered appropriate. Replacing the older windows will be costly and you are recommended to obtain an estimate for the cost of this work prior to exchanging contracts.

The replacement UPVC windows and doors at the rear of the building appear to be in a reasonably good condition although there is some localised deterioration to glazing seals.

The provision of a replacement double glazing has required building regulation consent since 2002 and your legal adviser should confirm that the necessary local authority consent or FENSA certification was obtained for this improvement if the windows and doors were installed after this date.

External Walls

Foundations

As advised previously in this report we believe that the property was built in about 1930 and it is considered likely that if the foundations or footings were to be exposed and inspected then they would be found to be of inadequate depth when compared with the requirements as set out in the latest Building Regulations.

There is no current evidence to suggest that the property has been affected by problems which could be attributed to serious ground movement, foundation failure or subsidence damage.

It would be prudent on your part to make formal enquiries via your legal advisers of your proposed building insurers prior to making any legal commitment to purchase the property, to obtain confirmation that the property will be insured on an "all risks" basis during the period of your ownership and therefore if future problems with ground movement, subsidence, settlement or foundation failure were ever encountered then such would be a fully insured peril subject to the payment of any policy excess.

Main Walls

The main walls of the original building are of solid brickwork, approximately 225 mm thick with cement rendering externally. There are two projecting rectangular bay sections to the front elevation at first floor level. These are cantilevered out from the front wall and appear to be of a more lightweight construction, probably timber stud work with tile hanging externally and have an approximate thickness of 150 mm.

The external rendering is in fairly poor general condition particularly close to ground level where it is missing in several places. There are numerous cracks and damaged areas. The rendering appears hollow in a number of places and will eventually lose its adhesion to the wall surface beneath. Tile hanging to the rectangular bays is damaged in places and

tiles will need to be re-aligned and re-placed as necessary.

See picture 4

Extension Walls

The single-storey extension appears to be of cavity brick and concrete block construction, some 260 mm thick and has been largely rendered to match the original building. Visible brickwork at the base of the extension Walls is suffering from some weathering consistent with its age. Cement rendering is in fairly poor condition and has lost its adhesion to the wall surface in places particularly below the kitchen window. General repairs to the rendering and now required.

Damp Proof Course

The damp proof course to the original building cannot be seen clearly however in a property of this age it is likely to be of either slate or felt. The damp proof course to the extension is of felt and is visible just below the protruding bell mouth drip detailing at the base of the cement rendering.

Sub-Floor Ventilation

There are a number of air bricks visible at the base of the main walls to the original building and to the extension. These are intended to provide ventilation beneath the suspended timber ground floor. A lack of ventilation can cause decay in sub floor joinery particularly where external walls are suffering from dampness and for this reason it is important that the air bricks are kept clear at all times.

Interior Condition

Fireplaces & Chimney Breasts

Fireplaces

Original fireplaces in the living room and bedroom above have been removed in the past and the flues sealed. The position of the original fireplace in the living room was concealed by a fitted bookcase at the time of inspection.

The disused flues should be properly capped and ventilated to reduce the possibility of condensation in the flues and the likelihood of dampness and damaged plasterwork in the vicinity of chimney breasts.

Chimney Breasts

The chimney breasts are external (they project outwards from the external walls) and do not appear to have been the subject of any alteration. The chimney breasts are rendered and are suffering from similar deterioration to that of the main walls.

Boiler Flues

The gas boiler which is located in the cupboard in the dining room has a power boiler flue which passes through the external wall and is fitted with a standard terminal.

Partition Walls

Structure

The internal faces of the main external walls are plastered. The two projecting rectangular bays at first floor level which are of timber construction are lined internally with a type of plasterboard.

Internal partition walls are largely of solid masonry construction and plastered. Wall surfaces are suffering from discolouration and superficial damage in a number of areas. The property has not been redecorated the some years and there is also a degree of general plaster cracking visible in a number of rooms.

Internally the property has suffered from a degree of partition settlement which has resulted in distortion to door frames and a number of plaster cracks above. A degree of partition settlement in older houses is not particularly unusual. The cracking is unsightly although it is judged to be quite long standing as no redecoration internally has been carried out for many years.

Finishes

Plasterwork is hollow in places and you should anticipate the need to undertake a certain amount of re-plastering as part of your renovation of the property.

Ceilings

Ceilings within the older part of the property are of an original plasterboard variety with various finishes. The ceiling surfaces are suffering from some sagging and shrinkage cracking in places particularly along the line of the individual plasterboard sheets. This is fairly common and it appears that the property has not been redecorated the many years so the cracking has been allowed to remain unrepaired and is particularly unsightly in a number of rooms.

There is a suspended ceiling in the bathroom. This is a fairly poor quality addition and no doubt you wish to remove this as part of your renovation of the property.

Some of the ceilings are covered with polystyrene tiles preventing an inspection of the underlying surfaces. Should a fire occur there is a serious risk that this material will melt and burn giving off poisonous fumes and possibly spreading the fire. Such tiles are often used to provide additional insulation and/or to mask poor ceilings. The tiles should be removed but it may be necessary to re-surface the ceiling to achieve a satisfactory finish.

Roof Space

Access to the roof space is via a hatch above the first floor landing. The roof timbers are not of a particularly substantial nature although they not suffering from significant distortion. It should be appreciated that the roof framework is likely to require strengthening if heavier type of roof covering is provided in the near future.

The roof slopes are lined and as previously mentioned in this report, daylight is visible in a number of places where roof tiles have either slipped or are missing. The tile nibs (the small projections on the underside of tiles which hold them in position over timber battens) are beginning to deteriorate and staining to the underside of the tiles indicates that they are becoming porous.

There is evidence of beetle infestation (commonly referred to as woodworm) within this area. This is fairly heavy particularly in an area close to the access hatch. The infestation appears to be active as there is an accumulation of fresh dust on the ceiling joists.

Beetle infestation is fairly common in houses of this age however in most cases it is found to have died out and does not require treatment however in this particular case the infestation is fairly heavy and you will need to arrange for timbers to be sprayed with insecticide. There are several reputable timber preservation companies who will be able to provide an estimate for this work.

In view of the extent of the infestation within the roof space it would be sensible to ensure that other timbers within the property are properly examined and treated as necessary this will include floor boards and sub floor timbers.

Insulation within the roof space is fairly poor. A layer of polystyrene granules has been provided between the ceiling joists however this is only approximately 50 mm in depth and this is well below the current recommended minimum depth of insulation. At least 270 mm to 300 mm of fibreglass quilt or similar insulation should be provided between the ceiling joists to prevent excessive heat loss through the roof covering.

Sanitary Fittings

Sanitary fittings on the first floor comprise a metal bath, wash hand basin and WC. These fittings are now suffering from a degree of wear and tear this and are rather dated and appearance. It is assumed that you will property wish to upgrade the sanitary fittings as part of your refurbishment of the property.

A modern washbasin within a fitted cupboard has been provided in the third reception room on the ground floor. This is in good condition. There is also a shower room with WC (wet room) off the kitchen. This is fully tiled and fittings here are also in good condition.

There is a self-contained plastic shower cubicle in the main bedroom. This is a dated fitting and in fairly poor general condition. It is assumed that you will wish to remove this during your renovation of the building.

Fixtures & Fittings

Kitchen & Fitted Cupboards

The kitchen which is partly located within the extension has been the subject of some modernisation in the recent past. A reasonably comprehensive range of wall cupboards and base units incorporating worktop surfaces has been provided. These fittings are of a fairly basic quality and are suffering from slight wear and tear in places.

Internal Decorations

Internal decorations are rather discoloured in most areas and general repairs will be required to cracked and hollow plasterwork plaster work and internal joinery prior to complete redecoration of the property.

Internal Joinery (Doors, Skirting Boards, Stair Parts, Etc.)

General

Internal joinery comprises doors, frames, architraves, skirting boards and stair parts. Joinery within the older part of the property is largely the original and suffering from a degree of wear and tear. Joinery within the new extension is largely satisfactory.

Glazing has been provided to some of the internal doors on the ground floor. It is imperative that all internal glass in these locations should be safety glass to ensure that there is no risk of danger to occupants. I could find no evidence of a BS Kite mark on the glazing to indicate that it was safety glass and would therefore recommend that it should be inspected by a specialist glazing contractor and replaced/protected if it is subsequently confirmed that the glass in this location is not safety glass.

Accessible doors and windows were checked to establish the ease with which they may be opened and shut. Older window frames which are in poor general condition are particularly stiff to operate and following discussion it is understood that you will probably be replacing these as part of your renovation of the property. The more recently fitted PVC Windows and doors at the rear of the building opened and closed reasonably easily.

The door to the wet room off the kitchen is of a timber variety. In using the shower area, this door is likely to get wet and will deteriorate quickly.

Staircase

The stairs are of traditional timber construction although they are steeper than current standards and headroom is restricted. This is commonly the case in older properties. The staircase treads are rather spongy due to shrinkage and will need to be strengthened.

Floors

The presence of fitted floor coverings restricted the inspection of floor surfaces. It was possible to pull back the corners of carpets in places and form a general impression of the condition of the flooring beneath. Floors are largely of suspended timber boarding although there are some solid concrete areas on the ground floor.

Some unevenness was detected in places and several loose boards beneath the fitted carpets will need to be re-secured to the joists beneath. There is superficial damage to vinyl flooring in the kitchen and squeaky sloping floors in the rectangular bays at first floor level. The floor in the external corner of the dining room is spongy. This may be indicative of decay in sub floor joinery. Floorboards will need to be lifted and an examination of the sub floor joinery carried out.

Ancillary Spaces

Not applicable.

Structural Movement, Dampness & Timber Defects

Structural Movement

The property has suffered from a degree of structural movement in the form of settlement to internal walls resulting in distortion to door frames mainly on the first floor. Partition settlement in older houses is not particularly unusual and it appears that cracking is historic and has been left un-repaired for many years.

The lightweight, rectangular bays at first floor level have also suffered from a degree of distortion resulting in plaster cracking internally. The design of the projecting rectangular bays means that they cantilever out from the main front wall and will therefore be prone to some distortion over the years due to a lack of direct support. The degree of distortion is considered to be within acceptable limits.

There appears to have been some differential movement between the original structure and extension. Vertical cracking was observed in places notably within the living room and to cement rendering externally. Slight differential movement between structures built at different times and with different foundation depths is also a fairly common and in this particular case the movement is considered to be within an acceptable tolerance. Again the cracking which has occurred appears to have been left unrepaired for a number of years.

There is horizontal cracking to plasterwork above the patio style doors in the living room. It is not possible to confirm how much support is incorporated within the PVC patio style door frame however although unsightly, the cracking above the opening appears to be fairly old.

Dampness

Rising Damp

As described elsewhere in this report access was limited by furniture and fittings.

Random checks for damp were made wherever possible using an electronic damp meter. High damp readings were detected in the base of the main walls in places notably in the external corner of the dining room where plasterwork is in particularly perished condition.

Older houses with solid brick walls will be particularly prone to damp penetration and as previously mentioned in this report, the original damp proof course is concealed by external rendering which has been allowed to bridge the damp proof course.

The external rendering at the base of the older main walls is in poor condition. The rendering should be removed below the damp proof course and finished in a bell mouth drip detail just above the damp proof course, similar to that which has been provided to rendering at the rear of the property. This repair may allow the damp proof course to function satisfactorily and allow plasterwork to be repaired internally. If there has been some breakdown in the damp proof course then it may be necessary to carry out further treatment in places which may include the provision of and injected chemical damp proof course. External ground level should be lowered to a point at least 150 mm (two courses of brickwork) beneath the damp proof course.

Penetrating Damp

It is important that rainwater fittings are maintained in watertight condition to prevent leakage and overflow which could lead to damage to the fabric of the building. The older window frames may allow some damp penetration as these are now in poor condition and suffering from decay. The tiled roof covering will require either repair or replacement to prevent the possibility of significant rainwater ingress.

Other Dampness (eg: Plumbing Leaks etc.)

Water pipework is stained in places indicating some previous leakage however no serious problems were observed at the time of inspection. In view of the likely age of the plumbing installation and the condition of the property it would be sensible to arrange for a proper examination prior to exchange of contracts.

Timber Defects

Rot

The older window frames are suffering from decay and it is assumed that you will be replacing these as part of your renovation of the property. Paintwork is flaking from other areas including boarding beneath the rectangular bays and also fascia and soffits boarding at the eaves. Further decay is likely to be discovered in these areas particularly at the rear of guttering as this is often an area neglected when redecoration is carried out.

Beetle Infestation

There is evidence of beetle infestation within the roof space and this appears to be active. You are therefore recommended to obtain a full report and estimate for remedial treatment and repairs from a specialist Property Care Association (PCA) registered contractor covering all timbers in the property. If you are advised that guarantees exist for previous remedial treatments you should establish their validity and the extent of the work.

Services

Gas

A mains gas supply is connected via a meter is located within a cupboard in the dining room.

The supply serves a combination boiler, also in the dining room and a hob in the kitchen. The supply pipework may be comparatively dated and so future serviceability cannot be predicted. As a consequence, an inspection of the entire installation and equipment by a Gas Safe registered gas installer is recommended prior to your commitment to purchase the property.

Flue and ventilation requirements for gas burning appliances require special consideration. It is recommended that all flues/chimneys/vents serving such appliances are inspected and tested by a Gas Safe registered specialist engineer prior to making any legally binding commitment to purchase the property.

Electricity

A mains electricity supply is connected. The electricity meter is located within a small under stairs cupboard in the hall. The consumer unit is located within a cupboard in the third reception room on the ground floor.

The observed wiring and fittings appear to be of an older design. Consequently, the installation is likely to require upgrading or even renewal and, therefore, I recommend that you instruct a specialist inspection by a competent electrician (preferably NICEIC registered) prior to your purchase and ensure that any recommended improvements and repairs are carried out.

There is an electrically heated shower in the main bedroom. It is not possible to confirm whether the installation is adequately protected, it is therefore recommended that the installation is tested by an NICEIC registered electrical engineer. You should obtain quotations for any repair or replacement works.

Water & Plumbing

A mains gas supply is connected via a meter is located within a cupboard in the dining room.

The supply serves a combination boiler, also in the dining room and a hob in the kitchen. The supply pipework may be comparatively dated and so future serviceability cannot be predicted. As a consequence, an inspection of the entire installation and equipment by a Gas Safe registered gas installer is recommended prior to your commitment to purchase the property.

Flue and ventilation requirements for gas burning appliances require special consideration. It is recommended that all flues/chimneys/vents serving such appliances are inspected and tested by a Gas Safe registered specialist engineer prior to making any legally binding commitment to purchase the property.

Heating & Hot Water

The Vokera, gas fired, combination boiler in the dining room provides central heating via radiators located throughout the accommodation. The central heating system was not in operation at the time of inspection. As previously mentioned, the gas boiler is a relatively modern appliance although as I have not seen this in operation, I cannot confirm that it is in safe working order.

I recommend that you establish the service history of the system prior to your commitment to purchase the property as only regular servicing by a competent person can ensure its future efficiency and safety. If your enquiries indicate that previous maintenance has been inadequate then the whole system should be checked by a competent engineer prior to purchase.

A Vokera, gas fired combination boiler within a cupboard in the dining room provides hot water. There is no hot water storage cylinder; hot water is provided directly to the various outlets upon demand.

The boiler is a relatively modern appliance but was not in operation at the time of inspection. This type of system requires more regular maintenance and is incapable of providing hot water should any of the mains supplies be terminated temporarily.

Drainage

Foul Water Drainage

The waste from the WC in the bathroom on the first floor is connected to a soil and vent pipe which is attached the rear wall of the original part of the building and passes through the boiler cupboard in the dining room on the ground floor.

Wastes from the bath and wash basin discharge into a cast iron hopper head and downpipe attached the side wall of the building. This downpipe then discharges into an open gully at the base of the side wall. A rainwater downpipe is also connected to this open gully. This arrangement is contrary to current water authority regulations but would have been acceptable in the past.

The waste from the kitchen sink, the waste from the shower in the wet room and the waste from the separate washbasin in the third reception room discharge into an open gully at the rear of the building. Plastic waste pipes are rather poorly supported and the gully has no proper surround and foul water is therefore likely to likely to splash over paving at the back of the building.

The shower cubicle in the main bedroom has a long plastic waste which is fixed at the side wall of the building and has been connected to a section of plastic guttering serving the roof of the extension. This is obviously a totally unacceptable method of discharging foul water from this fitting and if you wish to retain a shower within the main bedroom then a proper connection to the foul drainage system will need to be provided.

There are two foul drainage inspection chambers at the side and rear of the property. The side wall of the extension has been partly built over the metal cover of one of the chambers. The metal cover is badly rusted to its frame and could not be lifted. It was possible to lift the cover of a second drainage inspection chamber just beyond the rear corner of the building and view a section of the foul drain beneath.

The foul drain at this point was fairly shallow but clear at the time of inspection. Water from the WC and kitchen sink was seen to pass through the drain freely. It appears that the foul drain passes below boundary fencing and is likely to be shared with at least one neighbouring property. Your legal adviser will need to confirm this and your liability for maintenance. It should be appreciated that the drainage system is of considerable age and the need for future repairs should be anticipated.

Below Ground Surface Water Drainage

Rainwater downpipes serving guttering discharge into gullies at the perimeter of the building. As previously mentioned one of the downpipes is connected to the foul drainage gully at the side of the building.

There are two drainage inspection chambers in the rear garden which are not part of the foul drainage system however these were found to be blocked with earth at the time of inspection and it is not possible to confirm that they are connected to any current surface water drainage system

Arrangements for surface water drainage to not appear to be particularly satisfactory but no tests have been made and the adequacy of surface water drainage system cannot be confirmed.

Property of this age can have a combined surface water and foul drainage system. This means the surface water underground pipework flows into the same sewer as the foul water and increases the chances of localised flooding occurring from blockages in the system. Combined systems also require higher levels of repair and maintenance due to a combination of age, dated design and high usage.

Other Services

Smoke Alarms

Battery powered smoke detectors are fitted in the property, and will require continual maintenance. Replacement with mains powered smoke detectors is recommended.

Security

External locks to doors should be checked to ensure they meet your conditions or insurance.

Environmental & Other Issues

Thermal Insulation

The thermal efficiency and potential of the property will be indicated in the Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) which has been provided upon marketing. The Energy Efficiency Rating of the property is 47 and the Environmental Impact Rating.

The thermal insulation quality of standard solid brick walls falls well below that currently required. This can be improved but the cost and inconvenience of doing so usually makes this uneconomic.

The thermal efficiency of the rectangular timber bay windows at first floor level is unknown. Given the presence of linings to these walls it has not been possible to positively confirm that thermal insulation has been incorporated into the structure. This can only be ascertained by physically opening up the structure.

Ceiling insulation in the loft space is inadequate and should be upgraded to current standards. Care should be taken to ensure that ventilation provisions are not compromised and that wiring and electrical fittings are not unduly covered.

All exposed pipework in roof spaces and under floor voids should be properly insulated to prevent freezing during cold weather.

The older windows are only single glazed and it is assumed that you will probably wish to install new double glazing as part of your renovation of the property.

Other Matters

Flood Risk

The property is not thought to pose any special risk of flooding under normal conditions.

Development Proposals

The property is not believed to be adversely affected by highway or development proposals but your Legal Adviser should check in the normal pre-contract enquiries.

Other

Connection to mains drainage should be established via enquiries before purchase and your Legal Adviser should verify the maintenance and repairing responsibilities in respect of any shared drains/sewers.

Health and Safety

Some elements of construction contain asbestos products. Asbestos is considered a health hazard in certain circumstances and although commonly used in building in the past, its use is now restricted. Asbestos cement products are not considered hazardous if the products are left undisturbed. Workmen, including decorators, who carry out repairs and renovations, should be advised of its presence so that they can take the appropriate safety precautions. Similarly, safety precautions should also be taken when carrying out any DIY work. Further advice on working with asbestos based materials can be obtained from your local council environment health officer.

Normally, removal of asbestos products from buildings should be carried out by licensed contractors who work to stringent safety standards, although, this can be very costly. Small quantities of asbestos cement product, however, may be removed without specialists, provided adequate safety precautions are used to control the creation of dust, spread and inhalation of dust by persons in the property and disposal of material to an appropriately licensed tip.

Asbestos cement products used for roof coverings are fragile and should not be walked upon without appropriate safety precautions and the provision of adequately crawler boards, properly supported.

Outside

Gardens & Grounds

Gardens

The property occupies a large, fairly regular shaped plot with garden areas to both front and rear. The rear garden is predominantly of lawn with a few mature trees close to the rear boundary. The front garden is also mainly of lawn with hedgerow and evergreen trees forming the front boundary.

Patio

There is an area of crazy paved patio to the rear of the main building. This is uneven and in poor condition. Several loose paving stones were detected. These will be a trip hazard and will need attention. There is also an area of old concrete which is assumed to have been the base of a lean to structure sometime in the past. You will no doubt wish to replace the patio with your own garden design following renovation of the property.

Driveways

The tarmac driveway leading to the property is in quite badly weathered condition and is now need of proper resurfacing. Other areas of concrete paving are in poor general condition.

Garages

The property has an attached single garage. Construction is a mixture of brick and timber with a corrugated asbestos cement roof and concrete floor. The main access doors are of timber.

The garage is in poor general condition with general deterioration to joinery and the old corrugated asbestos cement roof covering. Electrical wiring within this area is particularly and tidy and could be dangerous.

It is assumed that you will probably wish to remove the structure and provide a new garage as part of your renovation of the property. You will no doubt appreciate that the roof covering will contain asbestos fibres and this material will need to be carefully disposed of. Information on the disposal of asbestos waste can be obtained from the environmental health officer at the local authority.

Other Outbuildings

The workshop/store has been constructed at the rear of the garage. Construction is largely of concrete block with tile hanging externally and the flat felt roof. This structure which is of poor quality is in semi-dilapidated general condition and not capable of economic repair. You will no doubt wish to demolish this structure as part of your renovation of the property.

There is a small metal frame greenhouse in the rear garden.

Boundaries

Boundaries are clearly defined and principally of timber fencing, stone wall and hedgerow. Timber fencing and walling is in reasonably good condition and appears stable. Your legal adviser should confirm your ownership of boundary fencing etc. and confirm your liability for maintenance.

It was noted that the right-hand side boundary is not straight and that a metal cage serving a boiler belonging to the adjoining house appears to overhang this boundary slightly.

Trees

There are some mature trees close to the rear boundary. These are some considerable distance from the building and will not have any effect on the structure. There are some smaller shrubs and trees growing to the rear of the main building and garage. These are growing too close to the building and will need to be removed.

Legal

Regulation

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

Your Legal Adviser should confirm that all the necessary local authority consents were obtained for the single storey extension at the rear of the original building. In the event that their existence cannot be verified you are advised that the latest Building Regulations now provide for retrospective consent, which incorporates a scale of charges and powers to enforce the upgrading of substandard work

It is understood that you propose to construct another storey above this extension and it will therefore be important to confirm that the existing structure and foundations will be capable of supporting the weight of an additional floor.

The single-storey extension has not been built to a particularly high standard and it is suspected that additional foundation and other works may be needed depending on the type of construction proposed for the additional accommodation.

Guarantees

As mentioned earlier in this report there is evidence of dampness in wall surfaces and beetle infestation in timbers. Your legal adviser should investigate the existence of any guarantees in respect of any previous timber or damp treatment that may have been carried out in the recent past.

Other Matters

Your legal adviser should confirm that there is no road improvement or development proposals which would be detrimental to the property.

The information regarding tenure requires confirmation.

Shared Services

Drains may be shared with adjoining properties. Your legal adviser should confirm this and your liability for maintenance.

Boundaries

Your legal adviser should confirm your ownership of boundaries and establish your liability for maintenance.

Summary

Surveyors Overall Assesment

General

The property is in neglected general condition and now requires complete renovation. The single-storey extension at the rear is not of particularly high quality and is suffering from a degree of structural movement in the form of cracking to external rendering and plasterwork internally. Cracking above openings at the rear may indicate inadequate lintels although it appears that cracking to the structure is old and has been left unrepaired for a number of years.

You will need to establish that this part of the building was constructed with appropriate local authority approvals. This will be particularly important as you are considering building additional accommodation above. If it is found that there is no local authority approval for this structure you are liable to be asked to update it according to building regulations.

Essential Repairs & Matters For Further Investigation

The main roof covering is approaching end of its useful life. There are a number of slipped and damaged tiles evident and daylight is visible from within the roof space. Although it should be possible to preserve the covering in watertight condition for several more years with piecemeal repairs, it is likely to be more economical to consider complete replacement. This will be expensive repair and you are recommended to obtain an estimate prior to exchange of contracts.

Chimney stacks are in fairly poor condition with cracked and weathered rendering. Cement mortar flashings appear to be in fairly poor order and these parts of the structure can be repaired when the roof covering is renewed.

Rainwater fittings require some general overhaul. Any new construction will require the provision of additional guttering and downpipes and this will be a good opportunity to upgrade fittings and the surface water drainage installation.

External rendering is in poor condition in places with surface deterioration and general cracking observed. There is also a requirement to remove defective rendering at the base of the main walls to allow the damp proof course to function properly.

Older Windows are in poor condition and most will not be capable of economic repair. It is anticipated that you appreciate this and will be considering the provision of new double glazing as part of your renovation of the property.

There is evidence of beetle infestation within the roof space and this appears active. Further investigation by reputable timber preservation company is now recommended. Any treatment should include floor boards, joists and where possible sub floor timbers as these may also be affected.

The internal fabric of the property is showing signs of wear and tear and general renovation is now needed in most areas. Cracked and hollow plasterwork will need fairly major repair/renewal particularly where dampness in wall surfaces has affected the plaster finish.

Solid brickwork is particularly prone to damp penetration and it may be necessary to provide some additional damp treatment although the removal of external rendering below the original damp proof course should allow it to function properly. External ground level will also need to be lowered in places.

The electrical installation is dated and will need upgrading/rewiring in connection with your proposals for renovation and extension of the building.

The garage and outbuildings are in poor general condition and in view of this they have not been inspected in great detail as it is anticipated that you will be removing these as part of your renovation of the property.

Other Matters

Insurance

The property has a gross external floor area of approximately 225 sq metres and an estimate for building insurance purposes is £325,000 (Three Hundred and Twenty Five Thousand Pounds). This is the minimum sum recommended and the policy should be index linked. The gross external floor area of the property is 225 sq metres

Signature Field - Digital Lock

A Surveyor

Digitally signed by A Surveyor
DN: cn=A Surveyor, o=A Surveyor Ltd, ou=Survey Dept, email=asurveyor@yahoo.com, c=GB
Date: 2012.08.13 11:21:22 +01'00'

Picture 1

Picture 2

Picture 3

Picture 4

Picture 5

Picture 6

Less Images

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