gowers SURVEYORS

# HISTORIC BUILDING SURVEY

Seas End Hall
Moulton Seas End
Spalding
Lincolnshire
PE12 6LB

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# *PART ONE: THE INSPECTION AND REPORT*

# 1 - THE SURVEY AND INSPECTION

## 1.1 Instructions

I have been instructed to carry out a Historic Building Survey of the property and provide a tailored Survey Report for the Client, Matthew Jarrett. This service is delivered in accordance with the Home Survey Standard (1st Edition) RICS professional statement and is equivalent to Level 3, with additional agreed services. These include additional detailed advice relating to:

- the age and type of property
- how old buildings work and how to look after them
- listed buildings and conservation areas
- legal and planning issues
- cost of reinstatement for insurance purposes

## 1.2 The Inspection

The inspection was carried out by Paul Gowers on 21st February 2024. Access was arranged via the estate agent. I inspected as much of the property as was possible, accessible and visible but my inspection was limited in some areas.

My instructions and the general limitations of the inspection to be carried out were confirmed in writing in the Conditions of Engagement. These were signed by the Client to confirm agreement with these instructions based upon the limitations therein. A copy of the signed Conditions of Engagement is attached at the end of this Section.

My external inspection was limited to the areas which were visible from within the grounds of the property and from publicly accessible areas as well as where appropriate from my three-metre ladder.

It was raining at the time of the inspection, with a temperature of approximately 9°C. The inspection followed a period of rain.

# 1 - THE SURVEY AND INSPECTION

The property was unoccupied although partly furnished at the time of the inspection. Fixtures, fittings, furniture and other stored items as well as internal coverings to ceiling, wall and floor surfaces restricted my internal inspection in some areas. In addition, a large proportion of the piping, plumbing and the wiring was hidden from view and my inspection of services was not fully comprehensive. No tests were undertaken of the service installations and my comments in this regard are general only.

My internal inspection was limited to the elements and areas which were visible without forcing or opening up the fabric of the building; taking up fitted carpets, fitted floor coverings or floorboards; moving heavy furniture; removing the contents of cupboards, roof spaces, etc.; or removing secured panels and/or hatches.

Any inspection of service installations is always very limited, as the majority of the electrical wiring, pipework and underground drains etc. is hidden from view. Their condition can only really be ascertained through proper testing which will need to be done periodically by a suitably competent specialist.

## 1.3 The Report

This Report is designed to:

- help you make a reasoned and informed decision as to whether to go ahead with buying the property
- help you plan for repairs, maintenance and upgrading of the property
- provide detailed advice as to current condition
- describe the identifiable risk of potential or hidden defects
- propose the most probable cause(s) of any defects, based on the inspection
- provide advice as to health and safety and how, where possible, to mitigate the risks

# 1 - THE SURVEY AND INSPECTION

- make recommendations as to any further actions to take or advice that needs to be obtained before committing to the purchase
- assist you and your legal advisers regarding legal matters and documents that may need to be obtained for previous alterations
- help you understand how to look after a property of this age and type

Part Three of this Report describes each element of the property and outlines its condition as far as could be ascertained within the limits of the inspection. It also highlights any immediate health and safety concerns which require attention. General Health and Safety advice is outlined in Part Four and you must appreciate that some health and safety issues cannot be realistically fully addressed, especially if the property is listed. Also, although you need to be aware of some health and safety concerns they do not necessarily need to be addressed immediately. Risks and implications, including where some areas of the property are vulnerable to deterioration and/or where some repairs and maintenance will prove difficult (especially if they require scaffolding or access onto neighbouring land) are included at the end of each Section.

A summary of the overall condition of the property and advice as to what you should do next is included at the end of the Report, along with a Schedule of Repairs and a summary of legal matters which need to be discussed with your conveyancer.

# 1 - THE SURVEY AND INSPECTION

To help you assess how urgent an issue is, this Report attaches Red, Yellow and Green flags to the main elements of the property. Some elements are made up of more than one part and the flag highlighted for each Section reflects the most urgent given to the elements therein. These flags are described as follows:

**Red Flags:**
These elements have issues that need to be addressed as soon as possible. Failure to do so could risk serious safety issues or severe long-term damage to your property. These are either:
- **Defects** - elements which require repair or replacement as soon as possible
- **Risks** - elements which present a serious and immediate risk to health and safety
- **Further Investigations** - where the surveyor was not able to properly assess this element but suspects there may be a defect or risk to safety. This requires further investigation by a suitably qualified and competent person before you exchange contracts.

**Yellow Flags:**
These elements have either:
- defects which require repair or replacement, but this is not considered to be urgent; or
- issues which will require significant expenditure in the future and for which you will need to budget accordingly

**Green Flags:**
Only minor or cosmetic repairs or no repairs at all are currently needed. These elements must be maintained in the normal way.

# 1 - THE SURVEY AND INSPECTION

I the undersigned am the Surveyor who carried out the inspection and wrote this Report. If you have any queries regarding the content of this Report I will be happy to advise.

SIGNED 

Paul Gowers BSc (Hons) DipHI FRICS CBuildE FCABE FFB MFPWS MPTS

DATE 1st March 2024

# HISTORIC BUILDING SURVEY - CONDITIONS OF ENGAGEMENT

Seas End Hall, Hall Lane, Moulton Seas End, Spalding PE12 6LB

Client: Mr M P Jarrett

The terms on which the Surveyor will undertake the Building Survey are set out below. References to 'you' in these Conditions of Engagement refer to the Client named above. References to 'the Client' will mean 'the Clients' if more than one person has signed these Conditions of Engagement. These terms are subject to amendment and/or additions only when expressly agreed in writing between Gowers Surveyors Limited and the Client named above and who has signed these Conditions of Engagement. Please sign and return one copy of these Conditions of Engagement to indicate acceptance of the content. If you have any objection to any of the following content you should inform us within seven days and prior to the inspection. If you wish to cancel the instruction this must be done prior to the date of inspection otherwise the agreed fee must be paid in full. If we do not hear from you within fourteen days of the date on the letter accompanying these Conditions of Engagement you are deemed to have accepted the terms herein.

These Conditions of Engagement, once signed by or on behalf of the above-named Client, shall form a contract between the Client and Gowers Surveyors Limited. The contract shall be governed and construed in accordance with English Law. The Report is for the private and confidential use of the Client and should not be reproduced in whole or in part or relied upon by any third party for any use without the express written authority of Gowers Surveyors Limited.

### *The Property*

Based on information gained so far we assume the property is a single residential dwelling and that your intentions are to occupy the property as a single residential dwelling for your own use. If you have other intentions, such as purchasing the property as a 'buy to let' you should let us know before the inspection. You should also let us know of any plans, extensions, alterations etc. you propose to undertake before the Surveyor carries out the inspection in order that he can tailor the inspection and Report accordingly.

### *The Surveyor*

The Surveyor carrying out the inspection and providing the Report will be Paul Gowers, a Chartered Surveyor, Chartered Building Engineer and RICS Registered Valuer. The Report provided will give the opinion of the Surveyor as to the condition and state of repair of the property based upon an inspection of visible areas.

Based on information gained so far we confirm the Surveyor has sufficient knowledge, skills and understanding to undertake this service. If upon arrival at the Property the Surveyor finds that the Property, its means of construction or other unusual factors mean it is outside his knowledge and skill level the Surveyor must decline the instruction.

Gowers Surveyors Limited and the Surveyor are unaware of any conflicts of interest in providing this service. We do not pay a referral fee or equivalent to any party which may have recommended us to or introduced us to any Client.

### *The Inspection and Level of Service*

This service is delivered in accordance with the Home Survey Standard (1st Edition) RICS professional statement and is equivalent to Level 3. The Report will not include an assessment of Market Value but this can be added for an additional fee. Additional services which have been agreed include advice on the following:

- the age and type of property
- how old buildings work and how to look after them
- listed buildings and conservation areas
- legal and planning issues

The Client's contact details, the agreed fee, the likely inspection date and anticipated date the Report will be provided are as indicated in the letter accompanying these Conditions of Engagement and which forms part of these Conditions of Engagement.

The Surveyor will inspect as much of the surface area of the Property as is practicable but will not be able inspect any areas which are covered, concealed, unexposed or not reasonably accessible and will not, therefore, be able to report upon the condition of these areas or confirm that they are free from defect. The Surveyor will report on as much as he can but will need to leave the property in the same condition as he found it. Where the property is occupied and/or furnished, the presence of fixtures, fittings, furniture and stored items as well as internal coverings to ceiling, wall and floor surfaces will limit the extent of the inspection. The Surveyor will carry out as detailed an inspection as is possible without causing damage to furnishings, decorations etc. or compromising his own safety or that of others.

The Surveyor will inspect roof spaces if there are available access hatches. The Surveyor will have a ladder of sufficient height to gain access into normal access hatches which are not in areas which would cause a hazard to attempt to reach. The ladder will be of three metres height and the Surveyor will not be able to carry out a detailed examination of areas of the building above this height other than from the extent of the ladder or from ground level. Pitched roof slopes, chimney stacks etc. above this level will be examined as far as is possible with binoculars. Foundations will not be exposed during the inspection and the Surveyor will be unable to comment upon their type or condition.

The Client must appreciate that the examination of inaccessible parts of the building will necessarily be incomplete and the Surveyor will be unable to report as comprehensively or authoritatively as would otherwise be the case. The Surveyor will make comment in the Report as to inaccessible areas although will not provide a detailed account of every area he has been unable to inspect. If you would like us to revisit the property once all areas have been made accessible as far as possible in order to comment on any areas we were originally unable to inspect we will be happy to do so for an additional fee.

The Surveyor will carry out a visual inspection of the service installations where accessible. Covers to inspection chambers will be lifted wherever possible and practicable. No formal tests will be carried out of any of the service installations (electrical, plumbing, heating), rainwater fittings, water softeners etc. Any comments relating to services and their condition and operation will be based upon this preliminary inspection. The Surveyor will report if he considers the services should be tested by appropriate specialists prior to exchange of contracts.

# *HISTORIC BUILDING SURVEY - CONDITIONS OF ENGAGEMENT*

Seas End Hall, Hall Lane, Moulton Seas End, Spalding PE12 6LB

Client: Mr M P Jarrett

Unless otherwise expressly stated in the Report, the Surveyor will assume that no deleterious or hazardous materials or techniques have been used in the construction of the property and that no such materials exist. The service does not include an asbestos inspection and it falls outside The Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012. Unless expressly stated the Surveyor will assume there is no Japanese Knotweed or other invasive vegetation on or near the property as it is not always visible or identifiable, including at certain times of year or if it has been recently cut back.

The Surveyor will not comment upon the existence of contamination as this can only be established by appropriate specialists. However, where from his local knowledge or the inspection he considers contamination may be a concern he will advise that an appropriate specialist's report should be obtained.

*Source(s) of Information*

We will rely upon information provided by the Client and/or the Client's legal or other professional advisers and/or the vendor and/or the estate agent selling the property (as applicable) relating to tenure, previous alterations and other relevant matters.

*Format of the Report*

The Report will be posted to the Client as well as where possible being delivered by email in Portable Document Format (pdf).

In accordance with the mandatory requirements of the RICS Home Survey Standard the Surveyor is unable to provide any advice such as the written Report, an initial summary or verbal advice relating to the findings of the inspection until these signed Conditions of Engagement have been received by Gowers Surveyors Limited. Once they have been received the Surveyor can be contacted during normal working hours at the offices detailed in the accompanying letter. The Surveyor is willing to discuss any aspect of the Survey with the Client at any point after the Conditions of Engagement have been received.

*Fees and Expenses*

The Client will pay Gowers Surveyors Limited the agreed fee for the Report as well as Value Added Tax and any expressly agreed disbursements in addition within fourteen days of the date of the inspection. The Report will not be released until these signed Conditions of Engagement and full payment is received. The money received will not be treated as Client Money and will not therefore be subject to the protection of the RICS Client Money Protection Scheme.

*Limitations on Liability*

Gowers Surveyors Limited does not seek to unfairly limit our liability to the Client. The Limitation on our Liability to the Client will be the agreed purchase price. Our aggregate liability arising out of or in connection with this service, whether arising from negligence, breach of contract or any other cause whatsoever, shall in no event exceed the agreed purchase price of the property.

*Data Protection*

We will retain personal information relating to this survey (names, addresses, telephone numbers, email addresses etc.) and keep it secure indefinitely but will not share this information with anyone else or use it for any marketing purposes or to contact you in the future for any unconnected reason. However, as a RICS regulated firm our files are subject to monitoring and will need to be provided to RICS upon request.

*Complaints Handling Procedure*

A copy of the company's Complaints Handling Procedure is available upon request.

I/We agree to the terms detailed in these Conditions of Engagement.

*SIGNED*

.....

.....

*PRINT NAME(S)*

Mathew Jarrett

.....

*DATED*

6/2/2024

# *PART TWO: THE PROPERTY AND LOCATION*

# 2 - THE PROPERTY

## 2.1 Description

The property comprises a substantial Georgian country house built over two-storeys and with an additional single-storey structure to the left-hand side. It is of a traditional construction, with solid external walls built in brick beneath pitched roofs covered with slates and also some flat roofs. There is also a cellar beneath the main house.

The house occupies grounds extending to around twenty four acres according to the estate agent's details. These grounds include formal grounds and paddocks along with a ménage a stable block and other outbuildings. Behind the main house there is also a large two-storey former coach house which offers considerable potential for conversion into further accommodation. To the front the property also has a cricket pitch with a cricket pavilion and the estate agent tells me this is currently leased to Spalding Town Cricket Club.

Mains electricity and water are connected and foul drainage is to a private septic tank. The property has an oil-fired central heating system.

The front elevation of the property faces approximately south. Indications of left, right, front and rear are given as if one is standing facing this front elevation.

# 2 - THE PROPERTY

## 2.2 Accommodation

The property has the following accommodation:

| | |
|---|---|
| Ground Floor: | Reception hall with access to the cellar; living room; dining room; study; playroom; snug; kitchen, utility room; scullery; rear hallway; boot room; two separate WCs |
| First Floor: | Landing; master bedroom suite with dressing room and bathroom; two other bedrooms with en-suite bathrooms; five further bedrooms; two separate bathrooms; additional shower room |

The photographs included overleaf are general photographs of the property as it appeared at the time of my inspection. Additional photographs are given later in the Report within the relevant Sections, including photographs providing detail of areas of interest or concern.

# 2 - THE PROPERTY

Front of Main House

Rear of Main House

# 2 - THE PROPERTY

Coach House

Stable Block

# 2 - THE PROPERTY

Formal Gardens

Cricket Pitch

# 2 - THE PROPERTY

## 2.3 A Brief History

The property is early Georgian, dating back to the first half of the 19th century.

George I took the throne in 1714 and George IV was succeeded in 1830, but in architectural terms the Georgian era continued until around 1840 when it was replaced with the Victorian era. The Georgian period was one of immense social change, with the Industrial Revolution causing large-scale movement of people from the countryside into towns and cities; the beginnings of formal planning legislation; and the increased use of engineers and architects. It is a period famous for its elegant symmetrical facades on uniform terraces squares and crescents, but more vernacular buildings were common in more rural areas. Baroque design in the early Georgian era gave way to Palladian, neo-Classical and Regency styles later.

Artificial lighting and other services were sparse - gas lighting and mains water supplies started to become available in London at the end of the 18th century but then only for the wealthy and did not become widespread outside the capital until some years later.

Georgian houses have solid external walls, usually either brick or stone or often a mixture of both. A Georgian property really can have a character of its own and be much more interesting and pleasurable to live in than a stale and uniform modern house. However, owning an old house is not for everyone. Quite often people dream of owning a period 'character' property but then want it to perform to the same standards as a modern property. In buying an old house you will need to be prepared for a few 'imperfections'. You will have to accept that there are limits to the extent these types of buildings can be insulated. It won't comply with modern safety standards and you will almost certainly find that it costs more to repair and to run than a modern house. You may also find, once you start uncovering things, that further costly repair issues are discovered. By now, Georgian houses often

require essential repair as the materials used have reached the end of their useful life.

As it is listed you will find there are limits to what you can even do to your own property. However, if you are able and happy to take on the imperfections and additional costs, owning an old house can be well worth the extra effort.

## 2.4 How Old Buildings 'Work'

Old buildings work in a very different way to modern buildings. They are designed to be much more flexible and accommodating of movement than modern buildings and are also designed to 'breathe' rather than keeping all the moisture out.

Solid external walls are designed to carry the loads of the roof structures, joists and beams etc. while also providing protection against the weather. As detailed below these solid walls were originally designed to 'breathe', absorbing rainwater in wet weather and letting it evaporate when the sun comes out, while also allowing water vapour from inside the building to discharge through them into the outside air. The use of a weak lime mortar allowed this breathability and would also allow some flexibility for seasonal movement.

Cavity walls on the other hand involve two panels, or leaves, of masonry with a cavity between them. The two leaves of masonry are held together by wall ties. The inner leaf of masonry carries the loads and the external face weatherproofs and protects the building. The cavity is designed to act as an internal gutter, preventing rainwater penetration by ensuring dampness in the outer leaf is not able to transfer to the inner leaf.

# 2 - THE PROPERTY

## *Structure*

Old buildings are also designed to be far more flexible than modern brittle buildings, to allow a little movement and work with the ground and surroundings, restricting cracking and failure in masonry. In fact, one of the key reasons why old buildings have lasted this long is because they can accommodate movement. One of the key materials for this was lime. Lime is a wonderful and versatile material which was traditionally used in mortar and render; plasters and lime-ash floors and limewash paint both internally and externally. However, since the Second World War cement has been almost universally used instead of lime. This change was partly in response to the impermeable nature of cavity walls, which were then becoming the norm, and also because it is cheaper to use, can be mixed mechanically and could be reliably used in large volumes for modern concrete strip foundations. Unlike highly frost-sensitive lime, cement could also be used in very cold weather and was guaranteed to cure within a few days.

However, when repairing and working on an old solid wall building it is essential that lime is used instead of modern cement for a number of reasons. Its breathable qualities mean that moisture will be allowed to evaporate rather than getting trapped and it can also accommodate seasonal shifts and minor settlement without cracking, allowing the building to be flexible. Small cracks can also be 'healed' with a coating of limewash.

It is essential that lime and other traditional materials and methods are employed, not only to preserve the character of the building but also to ensure it can move and breathe in the way it was originally intended. Using cement instead may be cheaper and easier initially but will cost more in the long run as it will result in more cracking and more dampness - see also comments below. Lime is however caustic and hazardous and like all traditional materials will need to be handled by a specialist, hence it is always wise to seek out specialists in traditional materials, be it lime, old windows, old roof coverings etc. when working on an old house.

# 2 - THE PROPERTY

## *Dampness and Timber Decay*

Again, buildings with solid walls work in a completely different way to buildings with cavity walls. Before the days of modern cavity walls, which are designed to keep all the rain out, solid walls built of naturally porous materials, such as stone or brick bonded together with relatively weak lime mortars, would allow a certain amount of moisture to be absorbed into the external surface which would then be free to evaporate away again once the rain stopped, helped by the drying effects of the sun and wind. This natural cycle is known as 'breathing'. Internally, similar materials were used such as breathable lime plasters and renders decorated with compatible natural paints. Naturally porous and permeable floor finishes also allowed water vapour which built up internally to be swiftly dispersed thanks to effective air circulation helped by draughts and open fires. Otherwise it would be temporarily absorbed into the porous wall surfaces to then later evaporate again or discharge through the wall materials to the open air externally.

Modern buildings on the other hand are designed to form an impermeable external fabric which allows no moisture absorption, with cavity walls forming an internal gutter to keep the internal plastered finish clear of the cold and damp external masonry. This new design began to become widespread after the Second World War as part of the mass rebuilding programme at that time, along with the advent of cement mortars and renders which were quicker and easier to use and began to quickly replace traditional breathable lime-based materials.

Using incompatible modern materials on old buildings can cause real problems, typically replastering using non-breathable modern plasters; redecorating using non-breathable vinyl paints; using cement renders and repointing in brittle cementitious mortar. This will all restrict the building's ability to 'breathe' and prevents the internal water vapour from being able to escape through the masonry. Cement mortar will shrink and allow rainwater ingress and then trap the moisture within the thickness of the wall. The vapour condenses within the colder masonry within the wall and is forced back into the building where it

causes damage to internal finishes. Attempting to improve energy efficiency by restricting ventilation can also have similar detrimental effects.

These attempts to change the way a traditional breathing building performs can cause real problems but are often done with the best of intentions, usually by contractors who just don't understand how old buildings work. They will use the modern materials they always use and this may well conceal the symptoms for a while, but problems eventually reappear or appear somewhere else.

Few older buildings have escaped these modern materials and all too often, instead of addressing the real cause, people have injected chemical damp proof courses into buildings, often at the insistence of the mortgage lender, in an attempt to help address the damp. This is almost never the right solution. It is a far better solution to allow the building to breathe in the way it was originally intended by using breathable lime mortars, lime plasters and mineral paints. It is also essential to make sure air bricks remain clear. Adequate overall ventilation will make sure the water vapour which is generated through normal occupation of the building and exacerbated by washing, cooking, bathing etc. is dispersed and does not condense on 'cold spots' within the building. These cold spots can be whole external wall areas during the winter months when the internal surface temperature falls below the 'dew point' at which water vapour turns back into a liquid, so adequate and consistent background heating of the whole property is also essential.

Prolonged dampness within a building can also result in deterioration, rot, decay and infestation of timberwork, including structural timberwork such as roof timbers, floor joists and supporting beams. Woodboring insect infestation occurs in damp timberwork as these insects can only consume sufficiently damp wood. Woodboring insect infestation occurs in both softwoods and hardwoods and can create significant deterioration and failure of timberwork.

# 2 - THE PROPERTY

Proper maintenance, heating and ventilation is essential to keep the timberwork relatively dry and the risk of infestation to a minimum. It is quite common for timberwork within a property to be treated with chemicals against such infestation once evidence of infestation becomes apparent, however it is my experience that this is rarely necessary and carrying out proper maintenance as well as ensuring that the overall moisture content of the timberwork within the building is kept low through suitable ventilation and the maintenance of a consistent and adequate level of heating will reduce the chances of timberwork within the property from becoming sufficiently damp to be edible to insects.

## *Repairing and Looking after your Property*

Conservation is key and you should aim to 'repair' rather than 'renovate' or 'restore', which includes retaining original materials, styles and methods. Once an original timber sash window is removed and replaced with a modern double-glazed window the character of the building is reduced forever.

It is essential when repairing and maintaining old buildings with solid walls or timber frames that traditional flexible and breathable materials are used and the work is undertaken by specialists who are sympathetic to and experienced in the particular requirements of old buildings. Lime is the key ingredient in repairing and maintaining old buildings as it has qualities that help solid wall and timber buildings accommodate movement and moisture in a very different way to modern cavity wall buildings. A good building professional will help you resolve problems while maintaining the integrity of the building. If the property is listed and/or in a conservation area you and your specialists will need to liaise with the local conservation officer to make sure proposed works are acceptable.

Check that your contractors are familiar with these traditional materials and methods and make sure they will use proper sympathetic techniques and methods to ensure the building is able to continue to

# 2 - THE PROPERTY

function as it was originally intended. Make sure they will use lime mixes without any cement.

After purchase you will need to carry out regular overall inspections and periodic maintenance in order to maintain the fabric and efficiency of the building.

You must appreciate and accept that this survey and the advice given in this Report are based on the inspection on the date of my visit and as such are based on a 'snapshot' of the condition of the property at that time. It is inevitable that further maintenance and repair will become necessary in the months and years following the inspection which were not apparent or necessary at the time of my visit. Every property requires ongoing maintenance, with some types of property requiring much more maintenance and ongoing expenditure than others.

The only practical way to avoid significant and costly repairs in the future wherever possible is to establish a proper planned maintenance programme to ensure all areas of the building are examined on a regular basis and maintained so that any areas of deterioration are resolved before they become more significant and expensive problems. All too often properties suffer from general neglect which results in the need to carry out major repairs which could have been prevented through a planned maintenance programme. Looking after the property and addressing areas of disrepair before they become major problems will take more time but will save a considerable amount of money.

# 2 - THE PROPERTY

## 2.5 Energy Efficiency

The property does not have an Energy Performance Certificate as listed buildings are now exempt from the need to produce one when the property is listed for sale.

The thermal efficiency of buildings varies enormously due to different construction methods, the provision of different types of insulation and the way the building is occupied and managed. Older properties are often less thermally efficient than modern properties as energy efficiency and the need to reduce energy costs has taken more precedence in recent decades and especially within the last few years. Modern building methods and Building Regulations take great care to ensure energy efficiency is kept as high as possible and in many cases the thermal efficiency of a building can be increased through provision of additional means of insulation. New buildings can be built to be extremely thermally efficient but it must be accepted that an older building with solid walls simply cannot be retrofitted to perform in the same way. Older buildings will always be relatively expensive to heat and will produce more energy waste than would a modern building.

Some improvements can be made, as detailed below, but the best approach is to concentrate on the quick and easy fixes first of all such as increasing loft insulation, updating an old boiler and swapping old light bulbs for energy efficient light bulbs. Draught proofing will also help, but the key element to be aware of, as detailed above, is the building's ability to 'breathe'. Increasing insulation has to be coupled with increasing ventilation. This may seem contradictory and counter-productive but the way buildings with solid walls work means that cladding walls with non-breathable insulation will shift the 'dew point' within the building and can often cause 'interstitial condensation' within the fabric of the building. Insulating external walls internally will mean the masonry remains relatively cold so the interior of the house will no longer benefit from this. It also means the masonry is more likely to become damp.

# 2 - THE PROPERTY

Also, some recommended ways of increasing thermal efficiency would not be appropriate in old buildings, especially listed buildings as they would alter the fabric and appearance of the building. As an extreme example, external wall insulation could turn a beautiful old house into a white box and would certainly not be allowed as the building is listed.

Even many acceptable and recommended measures would not prove cost-efficient and will only pay for themselves after many years.

However, buildings with solid walls are often more thermally efficient than is often thought. Solid brick walls though are reasonably efficient *if they are dry*. The most important thing to remember is that a wet wall is a cold wall, as water conducts heat much more quickly than dry masonry. Insulating, shifting the dew point and not ventilating properly could cause the walls to become damp and therefore cold, meaning it can become less thermally efficient than before the work was started.

Old building loses most of their heat through air leakage, often through gaps in walls and around windows and doors etc. where warm air escapes and cold air (draughts) can penetrate; and also heat loss through the building fabric itself through thermal conductivity. Heat loss through draughts is much faster than through conductivity and therefore draught-proofing is more crucial than insulation. This will need to be coupled with proper managed ventilation. Ventilation is different to draughts as it is allowing warm moist air out rather than allowing cold air in and does not cool the house in the same way.

However, insulation when done properly can be a very cost-effective method of reducing heat loss. As heat rises, increasing loft insulation material can greatly reduce heat loss, but you need to make sure the now colder roof space is more adequately ventilated so as to prevent dampness. Natural insulating materials such as sheep's wool and hemp fibre are far better for older buildings than non-breathable materials such as foam or fibreglass because they allow water vapour to evaporate.

Ongoing and simple maintenance will also increase efficiency and save money, such as regularly 'bleeding' radiators and fitting rolls of reflector strips behind radiators. These can be purchased from DIY stores and building merchants and can make a big difference: a radiator can lose up to 40% of its heat through the wall behind it.

Setting the temperature in your home efficiently and effectively and keeping the water temperature in the hot water cylinder at 60% will also help (this is the optimal temperature for being energy efficient and preventing the growth of bacteria such as those associated with Legionnaire's disease). Turning the room thermostat down by just 1% could cut heating bills by up to 10%. Constantly heating the whole house at the lowest temperature at which you don't feel cold coupled with proper ventilation will help enormously.

## 2.6 Insurance

The property should be insured against fire and other related perils on a Day One basis for not less than the following sum to provide for the full demolition and reinstatement together with associated fees.

**£2,845,000**
**(Two Million, Eight Hundred and Forty Five Thousand Pounds)**

Insurance should be on an index linked basis and should in any event be revised professionally every three years to protect your interests.

The figure given has been calculated using appropriate costings although is intended only as a guide for insurance purposes and does not take into account inflation and excludes VAT and loss of rent and/or cost of alternative accommodation for the reinstatement period. For a more detailed and accurate assessment you should consult a Quantity Surveyor.

# 2 - THE PROPERTY

You should provide your insurance company with full details regarding the pertinent points relating to insurance in order that, should the worst happen, you will not be in a position where they suggest areas of risk were not brought to their attention. This includes, in particular, previous structural movement and structural repairs; proximity of trees and proximity to areas at risk of flooding. You should also inform them before you carry out any significant alterations, especially structural alterations or removal of any nearby trees.

I strongly recommend you obtain confirmation from an insurance company as soon as possible that you will be able to obtain suitable insurance on your property as soon as you complete the purchase. Insurance is becoming more difficult to achieve in some cases, especially for high risk properties such as those with previous movement or evidence of cracking and also for properties in high risk areas, such as those close to a floodplain. You should obtain the insurance as soon as you have decided to proceed with the purchase and prior to exchange of contracts, making sure it starts on the proposed day of completion.

# 3 - THE LOCATION

## 3.1 Location

The property is situated within a rural location on the outskirts of the small village of Moulton Seas End. The village has a local public house and is around six miles from the town of Spalding.

I know of no significantly noisy or disturbing uses nearby. You must appreciate that my comments are based upon a single site visit and it may be that once you move in you experience noise and disturbance from neighbours etc. which was not apparent at the time of my visit. It is not possible to ascertain the amount of noise or other disturbance likely to be experienced without occupying the property for a reasonable period of time.

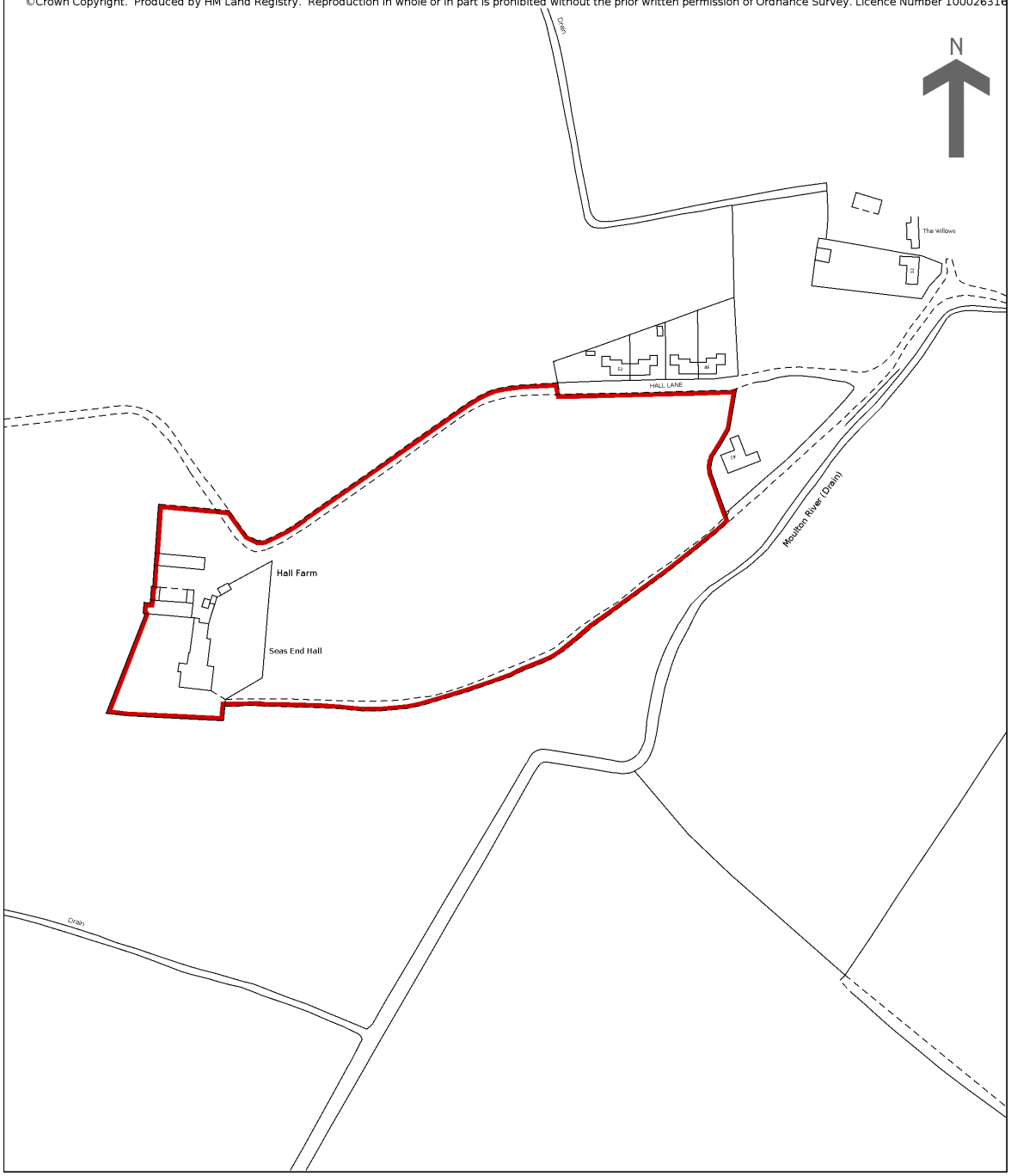
## 3.2 Extent of the Property

Your legal adviser should establish all details regarding the full extent of the property you are purchasing and the correct positions of boundaries as well as ownership, maintenance liabilities etc. regarding boundary definitions prior to exchange of contracts. A copy of the Land Registry Title Plan is included overleaf.

# HM Land Registry
## Current title plan

Title number **LL211571**
Ordnance Survey map reference **TF3127SE**
Scale **1:2500**
Administrative area **Lincolnshire : South Holland**






**This is a copy of the title plan on 6 FEB 2024 at 10:01:08. This copy does not take account of any application made after that time even if still pending in HM Land Registry when this copy was issued.**

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**This title is dealt with by HM Land Registry, Kingston upon Hull Office.**

# 3 - THE LOCATION

## 3.3 Access and Adjoining Properties

Access is via a private driveway.

The cricket pitch and pavilion to the front are leased to Spalding Town Cricket Club and I am told that the club are currently responsible for all repairs and maintenance. This point should be checked.

Your legal adviser should establish all details regarding any rights of way, covenants and easements etc. as well as any financial or maintenance liabilities affecting the property prior to exchange of contracts.

### *Access Onto Neighbouring Land*

The Access to Neighbouring Land Act 1992 allows access onto neighbouring land by persons who desire to carry out works which are reasonably necessary for the preservation of that land. If consent is not granted you are entitled to seek an access order from the Court which will be granted if the Court is satisfied that:

1) the works are reasonably necessary for preservation of the whole or part of the land
2) the works are substantially more difficult to carry out without entry onto neighbouring land
3) the works will cause no unreasonable interference or disturbance with enjoyment or hardship

Basic preservation works include:

1) maintenance, repair or renewal of a building or structure
2) clearance, repair or renewal of a drain, sewer or pipe
3) treatment, cutting back, felling, removal or replacement of a hedge, tree or shrub where damaged, diseased, dangerous etc.

4) filling in or clearance of a ditch
5) access for survey and inspection

The works do not include new building or alterations/improvements to existing building.

The effect of the access order is that you can enter the neighbouring land for the purpose of carrying out the specified work, bring and leave materials, plant, equipment etc. and bring (but not leave) waste, without the consent of the neighbour. However, this is not an automatic right to trespass; it requires a Court Order so it is always best to try to agree an amicable arrangement first.

### 3.4 Local Environmental Issues

*Flooding:*

According to the Environment Agency the property is not in an area at risk of flooding. However, it is in a very low-lying area and the property could still be at real risk of flooding in the future as a result of changing climatic conditions. You should ask your legal advisers about this and check with your insurer to make sure they will cover a property in this location. If not it may affect the saleability of the property. You may well find that if insurance is available the cost of insurance is increased. See related comments in Section 6.3. Further information is available from www.environment-agency.gov.uk and I also recommend you check the property details at watermaps.environment-agency.gov.uk.

# 3 - THE LOCATION

*Proposed Developments or Alterations Nearby:*

I am unaware of any proposed developments or other works nearby which could have a direct effect on the property although your legal advisers should make all appropriate enquiries in this regard.

Your legal adviser should also ascertain whether there are any contamination issues within the boundaries of the property or nearby relating to previous uses or groundwater contamination etc. caused by misuse. I have not carried out an environmental assessment of the site or adjoining land, and am unaware of any contaminated land either directly or indirectly affecting the property, but should any such contamination and/or resultant pollution exist, the value of the property would be adversely affected, and you could, as owner of the property, be liable for the cost of removing any contamination from the land, as well as for the cost of remedying any resultant pollution.

I also saw no obvious evidence of archaeological remains on site and know of no important archaeological material or sites of special scientific interest etc. within the boundaries of the property. Protection or investigation of such remains is sometimes requested by the relevant Authorities however, which can result in major expenditure, inconvenience and delay and can have a significant effect on the value of a property. I suggest your legal adviser makes a formal enquiry of the Local Authority prior to exchange of contracts in order to protect your interests.

# 4 - PLANNING ISSUES AND ALTERATIONS

## 4.1 Planning Issues and Alterations

I understand you intend to refurbish the main house and potentially convert the Coach House into further accommodation as well as extend it. I understand you also intend to convert the stable block into garaging and install a tennis court in place of the ménage.

My own investigations suggest that the property is Grade II listed. This will impose restrictions on any works you may wish to carry out including the types of materials you can use, often increasing costs where more traditional materials and methods are required. Listed buildings do not have any permitted development rights, so any alterations you intend to carry out will require listed building consent.

Listed buildings are those recognised as being of 'special architectural or historic interest'. Listing however imposes significant restrictions; if you want to carry out alterations that affect the building's character you must apply for Listed Building Consent. Failure to do so and carrying out unauthorised work or instructing someone else to do it for you is a criminal offence and planning authorities have considerable enforcement powers including unlimited fines or a prison sentence of up to twelve months. The authorities may also require that a building is put back to its former state.

Of particular importance at this stage is the fact that there is no time limit for enforcement notices to be served to remedy illegal works, which means that you as the new owner could be liable for rectifying illegal alterations carried out in the past. It is essential therefore that your legal adviser checks that suitable consent has been obtained for all previous works undertaken.

It is a common misconception that Grade II listed buildings are protected on the outside but not on the inside, meaning you can undertake works internally without applying for consent. This is not the case. Everything is listed, internally and externally and any works that might affect the building's character would require consent.

# 4 - PLANNING ISSUES AND ALTERATIONS

Providing it does not affect the character of the building improvements such as replacing recent kitchen or bathroom fittings etc. may not require consent, but if it involves alterations such as removing internal partitions, chimney breasts etc. or even knocking through to install an extractor fan, consent would be required.

Another common misconception is that only the old parts of the property will be listed. Again, this is not true. Even demolishing a modern extension or removing uPVC windows in order to reinstate old sash windows will require consent.

A fundamental distinction is whether the work constitutes a repair or an alteration. Consent is not normally required for repairs carried out on a 'like-for-like' basis providing they do not cause a loss of fabric or alter the character of the building. But there are grey areas when it comes to deciding at what point a repair becomes an alteration so it is always best to assume that permission is required for all but the most straightforward changes, both inside and out. Some apparently innocuous changes like installing satellite dishes, alarms, meter boxes or repainting externally in a different colour may need consent where they affect the character of the building.

The listing can also extend to structures outside the house but within the 'curtilage', such as outbuildings and garden walls. Usually any buildings or other structures (including statues, fountains, tennis courts etc.) will also be listed if they date from before 1st July 1948. So for example any old stables, storerooms and garages are likely to also be protected. Another factor to consider is that the curtilage can sometimes refer to the land which originally belonged with the house, even if some of it has since been sold off, meaning it can impact on neighbouring properties or 'land that has had a close and contiguous relationship with the Listed building over many years'.

Most significant alterations also need to be notified to Building Control and approved as being compliant with Building Regulations, even those which do not require planning or listed building consent. This

# 4 - PLANNING ISSUES AND ALTERATIONS

includes construction, extension and structural alterations, but also includes other alterations such as:

- Electrical work
- Installation or alteration to a heating system
- Installing a bathroom that will involve plumbing

This approval is granted by a Building Control Body (either your local authority Building Control or a private Approved Inspector) unless it is carried out by installers registered with the Competent Person Scheme who can self-certify that their work is compliant.

Many projects therefore require both listed building consent and Building Regulations approval. Any significant works you intend to carry out should only be undertaken with full and relevant approval. Where consent is needed from the local planning authority and/or Building Control I would recommend at least eight weeks is allowed for for this to be obtained and this should be time-programmed into the work schedule accordingly. Once authorised, consent is usually valid for five years.

Further advice can be found at www.gov.uk/planning-permission-england-wales and www.gov.uk/building-regulations-approval.
There is also good advice to be found at www.planningportal.co.uk

### *Additional information for landlords*

If you are planning to let the property, either straight away or potentially in the future, there are a number of landlord's obligations with which you will also need to comply. You should first check whether you need a 'landlord's licence' from the local authority (this depends on the area) and then obtain consent from anyone else with a legal interest in the property as well as your mortgage company and insurers. You will need to comply with current rules relating to data protection, tax, 'right to rent' immigration checks etc. and in relation to tenants' money and deposits. You will need to ensure the property's

# 4 - PLANNING ISSUES AND ALTERATIONS

energy efficiency rating meets the minimum standards (these are changing soon to become much more stringent) and provide an up to date Energy Performance Certificate to each new tenant.

You will then need to ensure the property is and remains in good repair and is deemed fit for human habitation.

An Electrical Installation Condition Report should be commissioned and complied with every five years, rather than ten, in relation to fixed wiring etc. Electrical appliances to be provided will need to be regularly checked to make sure they are safe.

You will need to make sure you are doing what you can to minimise the risk of Legionnaire's disease. See the following video:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7DToeLibLG0&t=7s

Fire safety standards should be complied with. Along with fire safety advice given previously as well as provision of adequate and working smoke and carbon monoxide alarms, you should ensure any supplied furniture and furnishings are safe.

There are a number of documents and websites which will help you understand your obligations and these should be carefully studied before you consider letting your property.

# 4 - PLANNING ISSUES AND ALTERATIONS

## 4.2 Previous Alterations

The following are previous alterations that are likely to have required listed building consent:

- Strengthening of roofs and replacement of roof coverings
- Provision of steel supports to chimney stacks
- Installation of replacement rainwater fittings
- Installation of some replacement windows
- Internal alterations including installation of underfloor heating and replacement of ceilings
- Creation of cricket pitch and erection of cricket pavilion

The following are previous alterations that are likely to have required a completion certificate to show they were professionally checked and signed off as complying with Building Regulations:

- Strengthening of roofs and replacement of roof coverings
- Provision of steel supports to chimney stacks
- Installation of some replacement windows
- Internal alterations including installation of underfloor heating and replacement of ceilings
- Erection of cricket pavilion
- New electrical work
- New heating, plumbing and drainage installations

Your legal adviser should establish prior to exchange of contracts that all works previously carried out at the property have been completed in accordance with relevant consent and Building Regulations and that a completion certificate has been issued as necessary.

Your legal adviser should also obtain all existing guarantees and warranties for any such work and all elements of the property prior to exchange of contracts. Up-to-date servicing records and certificates

# 4 - PLANNING ISSUES AND ALTERATIONS

relating to any inspections undertaken of the services etc. should also be obtained. These documents should be checked and verified by your legal adviser and you should then retain these documents in order to protect your interests. You should also ensure that you will be covered by any existing guarantees, warranties, insurance etc. upon completion of the purchase.

# *PART THREE: ASSESSMENT OF CONDITION*

# 5 - ROOFS AND CHIMNEYS

## 5.1 Pitched Roof Structures

### *Description*

The three main two-storey structures which make up the main house each have their own separate pitched roofs. The front structure has a pitched and hipped roof forming slopes above all external walls and the two structures behind have separate conventional pitched roofs which span from left to right. The two-storey right-hand additional housing the right-hand entrance porch has a monopitched roof sloping downwards towards the right-hand side.

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### *Roof Spaces and Access*

A staircase leading up from the first floor landing gives access into the roof space above the central structure and this roof space area has been boarded for access and storage. From here a doorway leads into the roof space above the front structure although access into and around this roof space area was restricted as thick quilts of loft insulation material have been laid across the ceiling joists, concealing areas of safe passage.

Access into the roof space above the rear structure is via a conventional ceiling hatch to the rear of the main first floor landing. Access into and around this roof space area was not possible due to the nature of

# 5 - ROOFS AND CHIMNEYS

construction and the size of the roof space. An inspection of this roof was undertaken from the area around the access hatch.

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### *Structural Condition*

These main pitched roofs are all of a traditional timber-framed construction, with cut timber rafters forming the diagonal slopes of the roof. These are supported at eaves level by the loadbearing walls beneath and midspan support to these rafters is provided by traditional horizontal timber purlins. Within the hipped roof above the front structure these purlins derive their own support from the larger hip rafters to the corners of the roof and in the rear structures the purlins derive their support from the internal walls and gable walls along with additional support from the same hip rafters to the rear of the roof above the front structure. Additional support to these purlins is provided by traditional horizontal timber collar beams which run across the roof space areas.

Significant strengthening work has been undertaken to the roof structures above the front and central structures and I understand this was carried out by the current owner in recent years. Many of the rafters have been replaced although within the roof above the front structure most of the roof timbers are original. The supporting purlins and collar beams are all original. The roof above the rear structure has not been strengthened and all of these roof timbers are original.

# 5 - ROOFS AND CHIMNEYS

The roof above the front structure shows no signs of significant deflection, weakness or structural disrepair. The strengthening work appears to have been carried out to a satisfactory standard.

The roof above the central structure has also had most of its rafters replaced although the original purlins remain and towards the rear these purlins have come apart at a splice joint, although large metal bolts have been driven through these splice joints to help keep them together and provide further support. This arrangement is currently satisfactory although will need to be monitored for evidence of further movement in the future. Some of the collar beams have deflected although this appears to be historic and this roof is also currently structurally stable.

The roof above the rear structure also shows no signs of significant structural weakness or disrepair. No further strengthening is required at this stage.

---

### *Dampness*

Most of the original roof timbers which have not been replaced are registering as being very damp, some with visible fungal growth.

Dampness in roof timbers can lead to rot as well as woodboring insect infestation so it is essential that they are kept sufficiently dry. There are two main causes:

# 5 - ROOFS AND CHIMNEYS

- *Rainwater ingress* - where defective roof coverings, fillets, valleys etc. lead to leaking of rainwater through the external fabric and into the supporting timbers beneath.

- *Absorption of Vapour* - where the roof timbers absorb the moisture from the air. Water vapour is generated through normal activity in the building and increased through activities such as bathing, cooking, washing etc. The warm moist air will rise up into the colder roof space if it is not expelled through proper ventilation of the building. Wood is 'hygroscopic', meaning the roof timbers will soak up this moisture and become damp. This is made worse if the roof space is not sufficiently ventilated.

To the junction at eaves level between the rear left-hand corner of the front structure and the front left-hand corner of the central structure the roof timbers around this roof valley, chimney and flat roof are very damp and this appears to be due to ongoing rainwater ingress. Repairs are needed as detailed in Section 5.2 and as part of these works some repair may also be needed to these defective roof timbers.


The chimney to the rear of the central structure is leaking and causing dampness to roof timbers. See comments in Section 5.5. Elsewhere, the dampness within the roof timbers may be as a result of previous rainwater ingress before the roof coverings were

# 5 - ROOFS AND CHIMNEYS

replaced but much of the dampness is caused by the absorption of water vapour from the building beneath. The larger rafters within the roof above the central structure which supports the horizontal collar beams are particularly damp with widespread fungal growth on these timbers.

The roof coverings have been replaced and a breathable sarking membrane has been installed beneath but overall ventilation of the property does need to be improved as detailed in Section 6.3. The replacement slates will not be breathable and I do recommend permanent ventilation is provided to the roof space above the central structure. I would recommend air bricks are formed within the rear gable wall or the glazed window in this rear wall is replaced with a mesh to allow a through-flow of air and help these supporting timbers dry out. There is widespread woodboring insect infestation within these timbers and as they are damp this may well be ongoing but I do not recommend it is necessary or appropriate to treat these timbers with chemicals to help prevent ongoing woodboring insect infestation.

To the rear left-hand corner of the roof space above the front structure there is a pipe from an extractor fan in the en-suite bathroom to the master bedroom which is discharging water vapour into the roof space rather than externally. This is a poor arrangement and will increase the moisture content of the roof timbers above and I recommend this pipe is extended through a vertical pipe which should run through the roof slope above to discharge this water vapour externally. This work however would require listed building consent as it would alter the outward appearance of the building.

# 5 - ROOFS AND CHIMNEYS

## *Immediate Repair Needed*

Suitably competent and qualified specialists should be commissioned to undertake the following repairs as soon as possible:

- Ventilate the roof space above the central structure to help the roof timbers dry out
- Extend the extraction pipe serving the fan in the en-suite bathroom to the master bedroom to discharge externally

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## *Other Repair Issues*

No other repair is currently needed.

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## *Maintenance Needed*

The following should be undertaken as part of normal ongoing maintenance:

- Carry out a visual inspection of the roof structures from within the roof spaces every month.
- Check for signs of dampness including rainwater ingress or damage to roof timbers etc.
- Check for signs of rodent infestation, wasps and bees etc.
- Improve the insulation of the roof spaces and ensure there is insulation and draught proofing to the access hatches.

# 5 - ROOFS AND CHIMNEYS

### *Risks and Implications*

Significant dampness within a timber roof structure can lead to rot and woodboring insect infestation. This can be either through leaking roof coverings or through inadequate ventilation of the roof space. An undersized or deteriorating roof structure can fail, especially during periods of heavy lain snow.

Care should be taken when entering into roof spaces not to apply any undue pressure onto fragile ceilings and these areas should be used for very light storage only, with the weight of all stored items being distributed evenly across ceiling joists and preferably confined to boarded areas.

Previous strengthening and repair will have required a completion certificate or certificate of compliance to show it was done in accordance with Building Regulations and by a suitably competent person. You should ask your legal adviser to check this. See comments in the Summary of Legal Matters at the end of this Report.

I understand the property is listed, meaning the previous work will also have required consent from the local authority. You should ask your legal adviser to check this. See comments in Section 4.1.

# 5 - ROOFS AND CHIMNEYS

## 5.2 Pitched Roof Coverings

### *Description*

The main pitched roofs are covered externally with natural slates along with sheets of a breathable sarking membrane beneath the slates and their supporting battens where visible. The valleys formed where the roofs meet are lined and lead flashings are in place to protect the vulnerable junctions where these slates meet overlying masonry, including where the various structures meet and around the bases of the chimney stacks.

The estate agent tells me that the roof coverings were completely replaced by the current owner within the last few years and evidence on site appears to confirm this.

My inspection was restricted to what is visible from ground level.

# 5 - ROOFS AND CHIMNEYS

### *Condition*

As detailed in Section 5.1 there is evidence of rainwater ingress at the junction between the rear left-hand corner of the roof above the front structure and the front left-hand corner of the roof above the central structure. This point is directly above the flat roof of the two-storey left-hand addition and around a chimney stack it may be that these roof coverings are leaking at this point or that drainage in this area of the flat roof is poor.

To the right-hand side of the chimney to the rear of the central structure water is leaking through the sarking membrane and dripping onto the floor beneath. Some tape has been put across this sarking membrane but it was actively leaking at the time of my visit. This could be due to a defective flashing around this chimney and this also requires repair or replacement.

These areas require further investigation and high level repair. A suitable roofing contractor should gain high level access and inspect the condition of these roof coverings and carry out any necessary repairs to ensure all rainwater is properly discharged away from the building. It may be that the flat roof needs to be altered or replaced and you are referred to comments in Section 5.3 below. This work should be carried out as soon as possible to prevent ongoing dampness and deterioration including rot to supporting roof timbers.

In other areas, where visible, these roof coverings are in a satisfactory condition and show no obvious evidence of disrepair.

# 5 - ROOFS AND CHIMNEYS

### *Immediate Repair Needed*

Suitably competent and qualified specialists should be commissioned to undertake the following repairs as soon as possible:

- Carry out high level repairs to the roof coverings around the chimney above the two-storey flat roof and around the chimney to the rear of the central structure

---

### *Maintenance Needed*

The following should be undertaken as part of normal ongoing maintenance:

- Carry out a visual inspection of the roof coverings every week and especially after periods of high winds and ensure any loose coverings are repaired or renewed as appropriate and pointing to fillets, verges, valleys etc. is properly maintained.
- Check concealed areas and ensure they do not deteriorate or become blocked.
- Regularly check ceilings beneath for signs of leaks.

# 5 - ROOFS AND CHIMNEYS

### *Risks and Implications*

In order to carry out these repairs you will require the erection of scaffolding which will increase the costs involved.

Roof coverings need to be properly maintained as a leaking roof can concentrate a lot of water into a small area of the building, causing dampness and damage.

The area around the two-storey flat roof is a particularly vulnerable area because it is difficult to see and get to, so could be neglected. This means you will need to arrange access for it to be periodically inspected as part of routine maintenance.

Previous replacement of roof coverings will have required listed building consent as well as a completion certificate to show it was done in accordance with Building Regulations and by a suitably competent person. You should ask your legal adviser to check this. See comments in Section 4.1 as well as in the Summary of Legal Matters at the end of this Report.

## 5.3 Flat Roofs

### *Description*

Attached to the left-hand side of the main building there are two structures with flat roofs. The two-storey structure has a flat roof which cannot be inspected from ground level although appears to be covered with a modern fibreglass material. The single-storey adjacent structure has a flat roof covered with lead sheeting. This could be inspected from my ladder.

# 5 - ROOFS AND CHIMNEYS

### *Condition*

The covering to the flat roof above the two-storey left-hand structure appears to be fairly modern and was probably laid as part of the current owner's recent repair works. However, as detailed in Section 5.2 there is evidence of rainwater ingress at the junction between this flat roof and the roofs above which may be ongoing and it could be that the fall of this flat roof needs to be altered.

The lead sheeting covering the flat roof above the single-storey structure shows no obvious evidence of disrepair. However, there is slight damp staining to the ceiling beneath in the rear snug and future maintenance and repair work to this leadwork may become necessary if this progresses.

---

### *Immediate Repair Needed*

Suitably competent and qualified specialists should be commissioned to undertake the following repairs as soon as possible:

- Check the condition of the flat roof covering above the two-storey left-hand structure as well as the adequacy of the fall and discharge from this roof into the guttering and repair or replace as necessary

# 5 - ROOFS AND CHIMNEYS

### *Other Repair Issues*

No other repair is currently needed but future repair may be needed to the lead sheeting above the single-storey left-hand structure.

---

### *Maintenance Needed*

The following should be undertaken as part of normal ongoing maintenance:

- Check concealed areas and ensure they do not deteriorate or become blocked.
- Regularly check ceilings beneath for signs of leaks.
- Carry out a visual inspection of flat roofs every two months and remove moss, debris etc. Standing water on a flat roof will shorten its lifespan and is an indication that remedial work is required. You should not walk on a flat roof.

---

### *Risks and Implications*

Roof coverings need to be properly maintained as a leaking roof can concentrate a lot of water into a small area of the building, causing dampness and damage.

The flat roof above the two-storey structure is a particularly vulnerable area because it is difficult to see and get to, so could be neglected. This means you will need to arrange access for it to be periodically inspected as part of routine maintenance.

# 5 - ROOFS AND CHIMNEYS

Previous replacement of roof coverings will have required listed building consent as well as a completion certificate to show it was done in accordance with Building Regulations and by a suitably competent person. You should ask your legal adviser to check this. See comments in the Summary of Legal Matters at the end of this Report.

## 5.4 Rainwater Fittings

### *Description*

The roofs discharge rainwater into basic replacement PVC gutters which then discharge into older cast iron and modern replacement metal downpipes.

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### *Condition*

In most areas these rainwater fittings show no obvious evidence of disrepair or leaking.

However, the gutter to the rear right-hand corner of the hipped roof above the main front structure is badly blocked and leaking.

# 5 - ROOFS AND CHIMNEYS

The gutter serving the right-hand roof slope above central structure is also leaking to both the front and rear as the gutter has been poorly laid, with gaps formed where the sections of gutter overlap. At the time of my visit these were leaking badly and causing dampness to this right-hand wall.

A suitable contractor should replace the guttering beneath the right-hand roof slope above the central structure and clear all fittings of blockage to ensure all rainwater is adequately collected and discharged away from the building. This should be done as soon as possible to prevent ongoing dampness and deterioration.

---

### *Immediate Repair Needed*

Suitably competent and qualified specialists should be commissioned to undertake the following repairs as soon as possible:

- Replace the guttering beneath the right-hand roof slope above the central structure
- Clear all rainwater fittings of blockage

---

### *Other Repair Issues*

No other repair is currently needed.

# 5 - ROOFS AND CHIMNEYS

### *Maintenance Needed*

The following should be undertaken as part of normal ongoing maintenance:

- Undertake an initial inspection of all rainwater fittings, valleys, gulleys etc. during a period of heavy rain and carry out any repairs where leaking, blockage or overflowing is evident.
- Regularly clear all rainwater fittings of debris and blockage, particularly in autumn, including gutters, downpipes, hoppers and gullies.
- Check the junctions between sections of guttering and sections of downpipes for signs of leaks, particularly during or immediately after a period of heavy rainfall. Check also for signs of blockage and overflowing. Similar checks should be carried out to open gullies.

---

### *Risks and Implications*

The rainwater fittings should collect all water and dispose of it a sufficient distance from the building so that it does not come into contact with any part of the structure. The fittings need to be sound and large enough to cope with the amount of water running through them in storm conditions.

Rainwater fittings need to be regularly checked and maintained. Blocked and leaking rainwater fittings can concentrate a huge amount of water into a small area of the building, quickly causing serious dampness and deterioration.

I understand the property is listed, meaning the previous replacement of the traditional rainwater fittings with these PVC fittings will have required consent from the local authority. You should ask your legal adviser to check this. See comments in Section 4.1.

# 5 - ROOFS AND CHIMNEYS

## 5.5 Chimneys

### *Description*

The property is served by six separate brick-build chimneys and these rise into large brick-built chimney stacks above roof level. There are two chimney stacks within the rear roof slope of the front structure and these contain three flues each. There is a single flue chimney stack to the front left-hand corner of the central structure and a two flue stack to the rear right-hand corner. There is also a two flue stack above the rear gable of the central structure. The rear structure has a five flue chimney stack rising through the centre. My inspection was limited to an external inspection from ground level and from within accessible areas. I was unable to properly check the mortar flaunchings to the tops of the chimney stacks.

There are high top cowls to the chimney pots above the front structure and vent caps to the chimneys to the rear right-hand corner of the central structure and to the rear structure. The chimney to the rear gable of the central structure has hooded caps as does the chimney to the front left-hand corner of the central structure. The chimney to the rear structure has one pot with a hooded cap whereas the others are louvred pots.

At ground floor level the chimneys to the rear of the front structure serve open fireplaces in the main living rooms. The chimney to the rear gable of the central structure serves an Aga range cooker in the kitchen. The chimney in the rear structure serves fireplace openings in the rear hallway and boot room although the flue openings are blocked.

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The chimney to the front left-hand corner of the central structure is disused at ground floor level, possibly with the archway simply supporting the chimney breast above. The chimney to the rear right-hand corner of the central structure is not visible at ground floor level and only used at first floor level.

At first floor level the chimneys to the rear of the front structure are blocked up and disused, with the left-hand one having a vent grill. The chimney to the front left-hand corner of the central structure has a blocked chimney breast at first floor level which now houses a safe. The chimney to the rear right-hand corner of the central structure houses a fire grate in Bedroom 8 (as detailed on the estate agents' floorplan) and a blocked fireplace in the en-suite bathroom to Bedroom 4 beneath. The chimney to the rear gable of the central structure has a blocked chimney breast at first floor level. The chimney within the rear structure supports back-to-back fire grates within Bedrooms 5 and 7.

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## *Condition*

The chimney stacks appear structurally stable where visible from ground level. However, some are leaking.

Within the roof space above the front structure it is clear that the chimneys to the rear of this front structure have had considerable structural work done to them. The front faces of the chimney breasts remain but the vast majority of these chimney breasts have a slight void beneath them and above ceiling joist level and these are supported with concrete and steel lintels. The chimney breasts

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remain beneath and it is unclear as to why this has been done as the fireplaces at ground floor level are still being used. A check should be made to establish whether the flues serving the ground floor fireplaces in the front reception rooms are still connected to the chimney pots and useable. Clarification of this work and the reason for it should be obtained from the vendor.

The chimney to the front left-hand corner of the central structure is partly visible in the roof space where it is adjacent to the very damp rafters and valley timbers at the junction between this corner and the flat roof. Poor detailing around this chimney could be a significant cause of this dampness.

The chimney to the rear gable of the central structure is visible in the accessible roof space and this brickwork has been rendered in cement along with the rest of this rear gable. There is evidence of ongoing rainwater ingress to the top of this chimney with water streaking and this chimney also requires high level repair.

The chimney stack above the rear structure is also leaking with visible dampness to the masonry in the roof space which is also causing some dampness to the surrounding timbers. The mortar flaunchings surrounding the chimney pots to the tops of these stacks appear to have weathered and perished, with further damage

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and dampness to the brickwork beneath. These chimney stacks require high level repair. The mortar flaunchings should be repaired or removed and replaced with new lime mortar flaunchings and the chimney pot set into these new flaunchings. The brickwork beneath should be repaired and repointed using a suitable lime mortar. This and other high level repair will require the erection of scaffolding and it would be a wise precaution to have the tops of the other chimney stacks checked at the same time to see if they were properly repaired as part of previous works.

The fireplace in the two front reception rooms have been used and both fireplaces were very full of ash at the time of my inspection. These fireplaces discharge into unlined brick flues and there is a lot of soot and tar staining to the brickwork. I would recommend these flues are checked and swept prior to reuse and then adequately lined. The lining is best done from above so this should be incorporated into the high level repair works.

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### *Immediate Repair Needed*

Suitably competent and qualified specialists should be commissioned to undertake the following repairs as soon as possible:

- Check the weatherproof detailing around the base of the chimney stack above the flat roof as part of works detailed previously

# 5 - ROOFS AND CHIMNEYS

- Check the tops of the chimney stacks from high level and replace perished and leaking mortar flaunchings with new lime mortar flaunchings
- Repair and repoint the chimney stacks using a suitable lime mortar to ensure all chimney stacks are stable and weatherproof
- Check and sweep the flues serving the open fireplaces and line as necessary

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### *Maintenance Needed*

The following should be undertaken as part of normal ongoing maintenance:

- Check the stacks, chimney pots and aerials etc. from ground level every week and in particular after a period of high winds to establish whether they have become loose or insecure. They should then be checked more closely every time the stack is maintained from high level.
- Check and repair the mortar flaunchings surrounding the chimney pots to the top of the stack every few years along with pointing and fillets. These tend to weather over time and leak which can cause water ingress and erosion, leading eventually to instability.
- The open chimney pots are vulnerable to rainwater ingress as well as blockage by nesting birds. Chimney pots serving working flues should be fitted with a rain guard or high top cowl, while chimney pots serving disused flues should be fitted with vent caps.
- Capped flues should be ventilated externally to prevent internal dampness.
- Check chimney breasts for signs of leaking chimney stacks or a build up of internal condensation.
- Flues in regular use should be checked and swept at least once a year.

# 5 - ROOFS AND CHIMNEYS

### *Risks and Implications*

Chimney stacks are heavy masonry structures positioned at high level and usually supported only from beneath. They are however very exposed and vulnerable to wind and weather. Unfortunately, because they are difficult to get to they are often neglected. They do require periodic maintenance and repair to keep them stable and weathertight, but this may well require the use of scaffolding which will increase the costs involved.

If chimney pots become loose or a chimney stack becomes unstable this could present a serious risk to safety. If they weather and start to leak this could cause dampness and damage to the adjacent walls and roof timbers. Television aerials etc. attached to chimney stacks can also become loose over time and present a risk to safety if they fall off.

Fireplaces and flues can, if not regularly checked and swept, become damp internally.

Previous strengthening work will have required a completion certificate or certificate of compliance to show it was done in accordance with Building Regulations and by a suitably competent person. You should ask your legal adviser to check this. See comments in the Summary of Legal Matters at the end of this Report.

I understand the property is listed, meaning this previous work will also have required consent from the local authority. You should ask your legal adviser to check this. See comments in Section 4.1.

# 6 - WALLS AND PARTITIONS

## 6.1 Type of Construction

The various structures making up the main house are all of a traditional construction with solid external walls built in brick. The external walls of the three main structures are of one and a half brick thickness (340mm) although the rear gable wall of the central structure reduces the single-brick thickness (225mm) at roof space level and is rendered internally. The external walls of the additional structures to the left- and right-hand sides, being the two-storey and single-storey additions to the left-hand side and the two-storey structure housing the porch and bathroom above to the right-hand side have external walls of single-brick thickness (225mm). The brickwork is largely exposed externally although part of the rear wall of the rear structure has been clad externally in a cement render application at ground floor level. Internally, these external walls have been plastered and decorated. The rear gable wall of the rear structure has been partly rebuilt at ground floor level suggesting that there was previously an adjoining structure which has now been removed.

The internal walls are a combination of solid construction and stud partitions. The solid walls are built in similar brickwork and have been similarly plastered and decorated. The original internal stud partitions comprise timber frames clad with thin timber laths to provide a key for a similar plaster application and more modern partitions are clad with sheets of plasterboard which have been skimmed and decorated.

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The property also has a long and narrow cellar occupying the space beneath the rear part of the front structure, beneath the rear hallway housing the main staircase and running the full width of this structure also occupying the space beneath the adjacent WC to the left-hand side and the study to the right-hand side. Access into this cellar is via a staircase beneath the main staircase and the brick walls of this cellar are exposed. This cellar has a stone floor.

## 6.2 Structural Assessment

I have assessed as much of the visible and accessible areas of the property as possible for evidence of movement, cracking, bulging and structural disrepair.

The main causes of structural damage are:

- *Lateral Movement* - where the loadbearing walls are not adequately restrained or tied together and buckle or distort under loads or are pushed outwards under lateral pressure

- *Inadequate Support* - where beams, joists or lintels bend or fracture because they are not strong enough to support the loads imposed upon them

- *Foundation or Ground Movement* - where below-ground movement such as subsidence or settlement causes the foundations to move and the walls above to crack or deflect -

# 6 - WALLS AND PARTITIONS

- *Subsidence* occurs when the ground beneath the foundations shrinks, usually occurring in shrinkable soils such as clay or peat which shrinks and expands due to varying moisture content, often caused by nearby trees drawing moisture out of the soil beneath the foundations

- *Settlement* is not caused by the ground beneath the building moving independently, but rather compaction of the ground caused by the weight of the building itself

## *How the Property is Built*

The external walls of the front structure are all loadbearing, supporting the hipped roof above. The main loadbearing walls to the central and rear structures are the left- and right-hand external walls as these support the loads of the pitched roofs which span front left to right. The external walls of the two-storey and single-storey left-hand structures carry the relatively light loads of the flat roofs above and the right-hand wall of the two-storey right-hand structure housing the porch and bathroom above carries the majority of the loads of the roof slope above.

Most of the internal walls are also performing loadbearing duties, providing support to floor joists and partitions above.

It is essential that these main loadbearing walls are adequately tied into the rest of the building to help prevent them from buckling and bulging under the weight of these imposed loads. This lateral restraint to tie the structure together is normally provided by ceiling and floor joists with lateral restraint at eaves level being particularly important to prevent the tops of these walls from being pushed outwards under diagonal pressure from the roof slopes. These joists normally run in the same direction as the roof slopes and bear into these loadbearing walls to tie them together and prevent outward movement. The solid internal walls also provide internal buttressing support to these main loadbearing walls to help tie the structure together and help prevent lateral

movement which can result in buckling and bulging to the loadbearing walls. These internal walls are sometimes themselves loadbearing, providing support to the ceiling and floor joists above as well as to upper floor partitions etc.

The loads above the voids formed by openings (including doors and windows as well as openings in internal walls) are supported by lintels and beams positioned above the openings. First floor partitions etc. are often supported by timber floor joists and additional support to structural joists is often provided by larger beams beneath. If these are inadequate, undersized or having to cope with excessive loads over too wide a span they can deflect, resulting in movement of the element they are supporting. Timber also deflects naturally over a long period of time and especially under the weight of partitions, furniture and people etc. and this can result in cracking and distortion, often most notable around door frames.

The main loadbearing walls then transfer the loads into the ground beneath which bears the overall weight of the building. These loads are usually transferred via foundations to distribute the loads into the ground and provide overall support but older buildings almost always have relatively shallow foundations compared with modern standards, being either stepped or corbelled masonry footings or sometimes just shallow rubble or no proper foundations at all, meaning load distribution can be uneven and this can result in differential movement and cracking. Foundation-related movement usually results in diagonal or stepped cracking in walls.

### *Evidence of Movement*

#### *Lateral Movement:*

Lateral restraint to these main loadbearing walls is provided by ceiling joists at eaves level and at floor joists at mid-height. Within the front structure the floor joists run predominantly from front to rear and within the main rear structures the floor joists run from left to right to

# 6 - WALLS AND PARTITIONS

bear into the main loadbearing walls and help tie them together. Further internal buttressing support to these external walls is provided by the solid internal spinal walls running both from front to rear and from left to right and these help tie the main external walls together and provide lateral support.

The lateral restraint within the property appears satisfactory and no significant lateral movement was noted.

*Support from Lintels and Joists:*

The visible lintels and joists positioned above openings in walls appear to be of adequate dimensions to withstand current loads and are themselves suitably supported.

*Foundation or Ground Movement:*

The foundations are of course concealed below ground, but a property of this age and type would usually have either no foundations at all or shallow rubble footings at best. If it does have foundations these will be of a relatively shallow depth when compared with modern standards.

The British Geological Survey Map for England and Wales shows this area as consisting of silty clay.

When clay soil contains more moisture it expands and when it dries out it shrinks. If it shrinks beneath the foundations it takes the structure with it, usually resulting in cracking as some parts of the structure move more than others. This can be seasonal, with cracks opening up during dry periods and closing again during wetter periods. This cyclical movement is acceptable in many cases, although the cracks could increase in width year on year as debris enters the crack therefore not allowing it to fully close later in the year.

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The most common cause of significant subsidence in shrinkable clay soils is the presence of trees too close to buildings and drains. Trees draw moisture from the shrinkable soil in order to survive and if they are positioned too close to buildings the subsequent shrinkage in the soil can result in serious subsidence. There are a number of large trees which are close to the main house, notably to the front left-hand corner and also to the right-hand side and these should be managed and maintained.

In most areas, the property shows no signs of structural movement other than minor historic settlement in some areas. Some external and internal cracking is evident but this is of no significant concern.

The one area of more significant structural movement is to the two-storey right-hand addition which houses the right-hand entrance porch and the bathroom above. More significant cracking and distortion is visible above and around the archway leading into this porch, indicating some subsidence to the rear right-hand corner. This corner is adjacent to an underground drain and a leaking drain could be the cause of this movement. This movement may be progressive as I suspect the drains could be leaking as detailed above. This structure is currently stable although should be monitored for further movement in the future. No structural repair is required at this stage but could be required over the next few years if this movement progresses.

# 6 - WALLS AND PARTITIONS

### *Structural Repair Needed*

No structural repair is currently needed.

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### *Maintenance Needed*

The following should be undertaken as part of normal ongoing maintenance:

- Manage and maintain trees and vegetation close to the buildings and drains to avoid excessive growth and possible damage.
- If you are concerned about cracks appearing in walls, let me know.

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### *Risks and Implications*

The property is in an area of shrinkable soil, which increases the chances of subsidence and foundation movement. The risks are greatly increased during periods of dry weather and climate change could mean that such risks increase over time. Trees close to buildings and underground drains should be managed to avoid excessive growth and I do not recommend further trees or extensive vegetation is planted close to the foundations of your buildings or neighbouring buildings. If a tree on your land is found to be causing structural damage to a neighbouring building you could be held liable.

# 6 - WALLS AND PARTITIONS

## 6.3 Dampness

The property is suffering from significant levels of dampness in some areas, with the areas of most concern being the cellar and the void beneath the floor of the main front structure. There are also areas of significant dampness elsewhere and this is due to a combination of factors including groundwater ingress, rainwater ingress, potentially leaking pipework and also condensation.

The main causes of dampness are:

- *Groundwater ingress* - where moisture from the ground enters into the building, usually when external ground levels are higher than internal floor levels and moisture from the subsoil migrates laterally under pressure through the walls. Groundwater ingress is very common in below-ground cellars and basements that have no protective barrier. It is essential to ensure that wherever possible external ground levels are kept below internal floor levels.

- *Flooding and surface water ingress* - including blocked drains backing up and overflowing; river flooding, where rivers burst their banks; and surface water flooding, which can be due to drains and sewers becoming unable to cope during periods of prolonged intense rainfall as well as locally due to inadequate surface water drainage. This is often exacerbated by hard surfaces on the ground surrounding the property (concrete, tarmac, block paving etc.) and especially where hard surfaces slope down into the building without suitable surface water drains in place.

- *Rainwater ingress* - where wind-driven rain penetrates through the external fabric of the building. Rainwater ingress can occur through poorly maintained walls and mortar joints; defective window sills; poorly maintained sealant around door and window frames; and other areas where gaps are formed. It is essential that the external

fabric of the building is regularly checked and properly maintained to prevent dampness entering and causing internal damage.

- *Leaking pipework* - rainwater fittings, leaking gulleys and drainage pipework can can concentrate significant amounts of water into localised areas of the building, resulting in dampness and damage. Internal pipework also conducts a huge amount of water and any holes, cracks or damage can also cause high levels of dampness in the surrounding areas.

- *Condensation* - although often misunderstood and dismissed this is the most common cause of dampness within many buildings. Water vapour which builds up within a building, caused by normal occupation, will condense into a liquid when it comes into contact with a sufficiently cold surface, which can be whole wall areas in buildings with solid external walls. Timberwork will also soak up water vapour which can lead to rot and woodboring insect infestation. See related comments and advice in Section 2.4.

### *Evidence of Dampness*

I have assessed as much of the visible and accessible areas of the property as possible for evidence of dampness as well as resulting damage and deterioration of the structure and timberwork as well as plasterwork and finishes.

The walls and floor of the cellar are very damp. This is to be expected to some degree as it is a subterranean space and there is no barrier to prevent ground moisture from the surrounding subsoil from migrating laterally through the walls of this cellar but towards the left-hand side the stone floor is excessively damp and has partially sunk. The problem of dampness in this cellar is being exacerbated by a lack of any means of ventilation other than an ineffective passive vent in the window facing into the left-hand lightwell. As detailed below there is also severe dampness beneath the floor in front of this basement and all of the

moisture in this basement is rising into the timber floor above as it is not being properly expelled. The timber floor joists supporting the floor above are visible in most areas within the cellar and these are registering as being extremely damp with some supporting joists having suffered significant deterioration, rot and woodboring insect infestation - see Section 7.1. This includes the central supporting joist which is badly deteriorated and the joist ends to the floor joists to the left-hand side are rotten where they bear into the wall. These supporting joist ends could fail if the problem is left unattended.

This cellar requires permanent mechanical ventilation to draw the moisture out of the walls and prevent it from rising into the timber floor above and causing further deterioration. Permanent mechanical ventilation should be installed within or instead of the window facing into the left-hand light well and this work should be carried out by a suitable contractor.

The external and internal walls to the main front structure in front of this cellar are also extremely damp with the plasterwork just above ground floor level being saturated. Severe levels of dampness were found within the two main reception rooms as well as within the playroom to the left-hand side, with the latter being above the cellar. The floors in this structure are raised well above external ground level and the problem does not appear to be simply a case of groundwater ingress but very high levels of moisture are rising up these walls. There are suspended timber floors within these three reception rooms and the void beneath these floors appear to be extremely damp. As detailed in Section 7.1 the floor in the dining room to the front right-hand corner has a spot towards the centre which is

saturated and the amount of dampness in these floors and these walls is very unusual, particularly within the internal walls.

The cause of this dampness cannot be ascertained without lifting the floors but the most likely cause is either leaking drains or leaking pipework running beneath these floors. There is a lot of pipework attached to the rear of this wall visible in the cellar behind with some of this pipework running beneath the floors and further heating pipework serving the radiators in the reception rooms. The amount of dampness in these walls and floors in this front structure is so high that I would anticipate leaking pipework could be flooding the void beneath these suspended timber floors. There are two air bricks ventilating the dining room floor but elsewhere there is no adequate ventilation to these sub-floor voids.

In order to assess and address the cause of this severe dampness it will be necessary to remove the floors in both the main living room and the dining room to the front of the main house and also remove the floor in the playroom to the rear left-hand corner. Further investigation can then be undertaken to assess the cause of this excessive dampness and any leaking pipework will need to be replaced. Once the cause of the problem has been resolved new floors will need to be laid with suitable air bricks to ventilate the sub-floor areas and you are referred to related comments in Section 7.1.

Elsewhere within the main house there are areas of excessive dampness which have caused damage to internal plasterwork, timberwork and decorative finishes. The leaking gutter to the right-hand side of the central structure is causing dampness and damage notably within the scullery to the rear right-hand corner of the kitchen

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and there is also excessive dampness to the bases of the chimneys to the rear of the central structure and within the rear structure, most probably caused by rainwater ingress from above. This water will have soaked through the masonry of these leaking chimneys over the years and settled at the bases causing dampness to the chimneys and surrounding walls. The rear wall in the boot room is also very damp at the base and this is mainly due to the vegetation attached on the other side of this wall which is preventing the wall from breathing and expelling water vapour and also causing some moisture ingress.

There is also a patch of dampness higher up the wall to the left-hand side of the kitchen and this is in line with a foul drainage pipe and external soil stack. Leaking from this pipework is also a likely cause of this dampness and again repairs will be needed. You are referred to related comments in Section 11.2.

At high level there is evidence of dampness caused by blocked and leaking rainwater fittings and rainwater ingress through and around the chimneys and internal repairs will be needed when the external fabric of the building is properly repaired and made weatherproof. There is also significant dampness at high level beneath the ceilings to the rear of the rear structure. There is no obvious area for water ingress although it has been fairly poorly repointed in this area.

There are also areas of the property that are suffering from dampness as a result of condensation, including interstitial condensation where water vapour is condensing within the brickwork of the external walls. This is in part due to inadequate ventilation in some areas with most of the bathrooms and shower rooms not having proper extractor fans to

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dispel the excessive amount of water vapour generated within these rooms. There is an extractor fan above the shower cubicle within the en-suite bathroom to the master bedroom although another fan really needs to be installed to serve the rest of this room. There are no extractor fans within the main bathroom or the right-hand bathroom and no extractor fans within the en-suite bathrooms to Bedrooms 3 and 4.

Another cause of interstitial condensation is the use of inappropriate non-breathable materials both externally and internally to the external walls. At some point in the past and possibly as part of the current owner's refurbishment works the external brickwork has been largely repointed using an inappropriate cement mortar rather than a breathable lime mortar. These walls will originally have been constructed with the bricks laid in a lime mortar which is designed not only to be flexible but also to allow water vapour to diffuse as a gas through these external walls and escape externally. Repointing them in cement only diverts the moisture into the surrounding brickwork where it can be forced back internally and this has been coupled with internal replastering using a modern non-breathable gypsum plaster rather than a lime plaster, trapping this moisture within the brickwork. Also, parts of the rear walls of the rear structure have been clad externally in a cement render and this will also trap moisture in the brickwork and force it

internally, causing dampness. The rear wall of the central structure is also clad in a non-breathable cement render within the roof space and this is a primary cause of dampness to this wall.

Permanent mechanical ventilation should be provided within the bathrooms and shower rooms and also preferably within the kitchen and utility areas. The cement mortar should be raked out from the external brickwork and the property then repointed using a lime mortar and the cement render attached to the rear should be removed and the brickwork either made good or re-rendered using a breathable lime render.

Widespread internal replastering will then be needed although it is not necessary at this stage to remove all internal plasterwork and replace it with a lime plaster. The damp and damaged areas should be replastered using a lime plaster although the remaining gypsum plaster can remain in place where it is sound providing the property is weatherproof, adequately ventilated and allowed to breathe in the way it was originally intended. I do however recommend that the plasterwork attached to the external walls is removed and replaced with a lime plaster and breathable decorative finishes up to one metre height above ground floor level to allow these walls to breathe.

This work will prove expensive and time consuming and will need to be done by a specialist who understands the needs of old buildings. I can put you in touch with a suitable contractor and I would recommend quotes for all this work are obtained prior to exchange of contracts in order that you can budget accordingly.

# 6 - WALLS AND PARTITIONS

### *Health and Safety Concerns*

Mould and fungal growth on surfaces as well as spores within the air are common in damp or poorly ventilated buildings and can have serious health implications.

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### *Further Investigation Needed*

Suitably competent and qualified specialists should be commissioned to carry out the following further investigations before you proceed and provide you with advice prior to exchange of contracts:

- Remove the suspended timber floors at ground floor level and assess the causes of excessive dampness beneath

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### *Immediate Repair Needed*

Suitably competent and qualified specialists should be commissioned to undertake the following repairs as soon as possible:

- Permanent mechanical ventilation should be installed within the cellar
- Undertake all necessary repairs beneath the ground floors
- Rake out all the external cement mortar and repoint the external walls using a suitable lime mortar
- Remove the cement render from the rear of the property and internally within the roof space above the central structure and make good or re-render in a breathable lime render

# 6 - WALLS AND PARTITIONS

- Remove all plasterwork to the external walls at ground floor level up to one metre height and replaster using a suitable lime plaster and breathable decorative finishes
- Remove damp and damaged plasterwork elsewhere and replaster in lime with breathable decorative finishes
- Install suitable humidity control extractor fans in the bathrooms and shower rooms as well as in the kitchen and utility areas

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## *Maintenance Needed*

The following should be undertaken as part of normal ongoing maintenance:

- Make sure that wherever possible all external ground levels are situated at least 150mm below internal ground floor levels in all areas, including flower beds, patios etc.
- Carry out a regular visual inspection of masonry and check for brittle or crumbling mortar joints and repoint or repair as necessary. Ensure mortar around waste pipes etc. is in good condition.
- Regularly check the condition of any external render applications and replace any areas where render is loose, hollow or cracked. When decorations become poor, redecorate with a suitable external masonry paint.
- Check for damp staining to the external walls after periods of rain.
- If plasterwork becomes coarse it may be damp.
- Ensure every room in the property is provided with adequate and consistent background heating to prevent cold spots.
- Make sure extractor fans in bathrooms and shower rooms are working properly and regularly clear of dust and debris.
- Keep trickle vents to windows open as much as possible.
- Carry out regular inspections for signs of rot and repair as necessary.

# 6 - WALLS AND PARTITIONS

## *Risks and Implications*

Significant dampness within a building can cause damage to plasterwork, timberwork and decorations as well as to external masonry and mortar. It can affect structural timberwork including joists and lintels and allow suitable conditions for rot and woodboring insect infestation.

Traditional solid walls should be repaired and maintained using traditional materials and techniques, including lime mortar and lime plaster as well as breathable decorative finishes, to help prevent dampness. Such work should only be undertaken by a specialist contractor who is experienced in working on older buildings.

# 7 - FLOORS AND CEILINGS

## 7.1 Floors

### *Description*

The cellar has a solid floor laid to stone. The ground floors within the front structure are of a suspended timber construction, including the flagstone floor above the basement. There are also suspended timber ground floors within the playroom and snug to the left-hand additions.

Within the central and rear structures there are solid floors and in some areas these have been provided with underfloor heating. The first floors are of a conventional suspended timber construction.

Fitted carpets, tiles and other floor coverings laid throughout the property prevented any detailed inspection of finished floor surfaces and my inspection was also restricted in some areas by fixtures and fittings as well as furniture and stored items.

Suspended timber ground floors require adequate sub-floor ventilation to prevent rot and woodboring insect infestation to the supporting joists concealed beneath the floorboards.

# 7 - FLOORS AND CEILINGS

### *Condition*

The cellar floor is very damp close to the window and has partially sunk. This could be due to groundwater but the floor is currently relatively stable.

As detailed in Section 6.3 the suspended timber floors within the front structure are extremely damp in some areas and there is a possibility of flooding beneath. There is an area in the centre of the front right-hand reception room where the floor is saturated, indicating a possible leak from the pipework beneath. These floors will need to be lifted and replaced and when they are replaced suitable air bricks should be provided within the adjoining external walls to allow adequate ventilation of these sub-floor voids.

The exposed floorboards and floor joists visible above the cellar are very damp and suffering from rot and some of these joists will need to be removed and replaced.

The solid ground floors behind are generally fairly firm and level and show no signs of significant disrepair. The first floors are also reasonably firm and stable and require no immediate attention.

# 7 - FLOORS AND CEILINGS

### *Immediate Repair Needed*

Suitably competent and qualified specialists should be commissioned to undertake the following repairs as soon as possible:

- Remove and replace the suspended timber floors in the reception rooms
- Install suitable airbricks to adequately ventilate the sub-floor areas
- Replace rotten and defective floor joists and other timberwork above the cellar

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### *Maintenance Needed*

The following should be undertaken as part of normal ongoing maintenance:

- Carry out periodic inspections of finished floor surfaces by lifting fitted floor coverings and moving heavy items of furniture to inspect areas which are not normally visible.
- Take care not to overload timber floors.
- Carry out regular checks for signs of unevenness, distortion, cracking or dampness. Timber floors in particular can distort over time under the weight of fixtures, furniture, partitions and stored items.
- Ensure airbricks are free from obstruction or blockage.

# 7 - FLOORS AND CEILINGS

### *Risks and Implications*

Once the property has been cleared of fitted furniture and floor coverings some damage, dampness and deterioration may become apparent which was hidden at the time of the inspection. If so, let me know and I can give appropriate advice.

## 7.2 Ceilings

### *Description*

The property will originally have been constructed with traditional ceilings of a lath and plaster construction although where visible most if not all of these ceilings have been replaced with modern plasterboard ceilings. This may well have been done by the current owner as part of recent refurbishment work but this work will have required listed building consent and your legal adviser will need to obtain confirmation that this was granted. If not there is the possibility that the local authority will require them to be replaced with traditional lath and plaster ceilings which would prove extremely expensive.

Older ceilings are often of a lath and plaster construction. This involved nailing a large number of willow laths (long strips of wood) at right angles to the undersides of ceiling joists and applying a lime based plaster to the undersides. The plaster forms the visible ceiling surface to which the laths provided support.

# 7 - FLOORS AND CEILINGS

### *Condition*

These replacement ceilings are in a generally satisfactory condition and show no signs of significant disrepair. There are a few areas of damp staining and hairline cracks but no significant damage. No repair is currently needed other than cosmetic improvements.

---

### *Immediate Repair Needed*

No urgent repair is needed.

---

### *Other Repair Issues*

No other repair is currently needed.

---

### *Maintenance Needed*

The following should be undertaken as part of normal ongoing maintenance:

- The first sign of a leaking roof is often damp staining to the ceiling beneath.
- Regularly check ceiling finishes for signs of dampness, progressive cracking or deterioration of plasterwork.

# 7 - FLOORS AND CEILINGS

### *Risks and Implications*

I understand the property is listed, meaning previous replacement of traditional ceilings with modern plasterboard will have required consent from the local authority. You should ask your legal adviser to check this. See comments in Section 4.1.

# 8 - DOORS, WINDOWS AND TIMBERWORK

## 8.1 External Doors, Windows and Timberwork

### *Description*

The external doors to the front and right-hand side of the front structure are traditional timber panelled doors and probably original. The external doors within the central and rear structures are modern softwood panelled and glazed doors.

The windows are single-glazed in timber casements and these are mainly traditional vertically sliding sash windows although with a standard casement window serving the roof space above the central structure and the skylight window above the adjacent stairwell.

There is an attractive decorative cornice at eaves level to the front structure and elsewhere there are conventional timber fasciaboards to which guttering is attached.

---

### *Condition*

The external doors are in a generally satisfactory condition, although there is some wet rot in the central panel of the front door. The door to the right-hand side of the kitchen was sticking in its frame at the time of my inspection and will require some easing and adjustment.

A number of the windows require overhaul. None of them open very easily and some will not open at all and they need to be removed from their casements, eased and adjusted to make sure they operate properly. Within the front and central structures most of these windows are original although elsewhere a number have been replaced.

# 8 - DOORS, WINDOWS AND TIMBERWORK

Some of the older windows are also suffering from significant wet rot, most notably the window serving the front left-hand bedroom. The timberwork at eaves level is generally sound.

A suitable contractor will need to be employed to carry out widespread overhaul of the windows. Rotten sections will need to be cut out and replaced but most of these windows could be saved as long as they are eased and adjusted and the supporting sash cords and pulleys properly oiled and maintained.

---

### *Health and Safety Concerns*

Most of the older windows present a risk as they do not comprise toughened safety glass and are located too close to internal floor level to comply with current safety standards, meaning they could break if anyone were to fall into them. Current Building Regulations state that glazing situated at this low level should be of toughened safety glass. You should consider having the glazing replaced or protected when they are overhauled. See comments in Part Four of this Report.

---

### *Immediate Repair Needed*

No urgent repair is needed.

# 8 - DOORS, WINDOWS AND TIMBERWORK

## *Other Repair Issues*

The following repairs are also needed but are not considered to be urgent:

- Cut out and replace rotten sections of timberwork
- Remove, ease and adjust windows

---

## *Maintenance Needed*

The following should be undertaken as part of normal ongoing maintenance:

- Regularly check timber doors and windows for signs of rot and deterioration.
- Check sash windows once a year, including ensuring the sash cords and pulleys operate easily.
- Redecorate timber doors and windows at least every three years if painted and ideally once a year if stained to help preserve condition and prevent rot. Ideally vinyl paints should be burned off and timberwork redecorated using a linseed paint. This is then only likely to require redecoration every ten years or so but should be protected with a linseed oil every five years.
- Regularly check the sealant around door and window openings.
- Check all window latches, catches and locks on a regular basis.
- Redecorate external timberwork every three years to help preserve condition and prevent rot.
- Regularly check for signs of damp staining or deterioration.

# 8 - DOORS, WINDOWS AND TIMBERWORK

### *Risks and Implications*

Keys to doors and lockable windows should be kept in a known place for ease of escape in the event of a fire.

External timberwork will deteriorate over time unless properly maintained.

The sealant around door and window openings can let rainwater into the building if allowed to deteriorate.

Previous replacement of doors and windows will have required listed building consent as well as a completion certificate or certificate of compliance to show it was done in accordance with Building Regulations and by a suitably competent person. You should ask your legal adviser to check this. See comments in Section 4.1.

## 8.2 Internal Doors and Timberwork

### *Description*

Visible internal timberwork includes internal doors and door frames, skirting boards and window sills. It also includes the staircases and internal timber shutters.

The property has conventional internal timber panelled doors. The main staircase is an attractive original timber staircase with a sweeping balustrade handrail and the rear staircase is more basic timber staircase but also served by an adequate handrail. The steps leading down into the cellar are brick with timber nosings.

# 8 - DOORS, WINDOWS AND TIMBERWORK

### *Condition*

In most areas, visible internal timberwork is in a reasonable condition although skirting boards and other timberwork attached to damp plasterwork will need to be removed and replaced as part of the works detailed in Section 6.3.

The timber shutters inside the windows are not working properly in some areas and there are loose and unattached shutters within the main living room.

The door leading into the cellar does not shut properly as it catches on its locking mechanism.

---

### *Health and Safety Concerns*

The staircase leading down into the cellar does not have a proper handrail and this is a risk to safety. A suitable handrail should be attached.

The glazing between the study and the top of the cellar steps presents a risk as it is not toughened and could break if anyone were to fall into it. Current Building Regulations state that glazing situated at this low level should be of toughened safety glass. You should consider having it replaced or protected. See comments in Part Four of this Report.

---

### *Immediate Repair Needed*

No urgent repair is needed.

# 8 - DOORS, WINDOWS AND TIMBERWORK

### *Other Repair Issues*

The following repairs are also needed but are not considered to be urgent:

- Replace damp and damaged internal timberwork
- Repair internal timber shutters

---

### *Maintenance Needed*

The following should be undertaken as part of normal ongoing maintenance:

- Check doors periodically for signs of movement or sticking in their frames.
- Carry out regular inspections for signs of rot and repair as necessary.

## 8.3 Cosmetic Fixtures, Fittings and Decorations

### *Description*

The property has a good-sized kitchen although with limited and dated fittings. The property has standard bathroom, shower room and sanitary fittings.

# 8 - DOORS, WINDOWS AND TIMBERWORK

### *Condition*

and I would anticipate you will want to replace these. It includes an Aga range cooker which will need to be checked and serviced by the OFTEC registered engineer detailed in Section 10.

The bathroom, shower room and sanitary fittings are dated but serviceable although I would anticipate you will want to replace these. In the meantime they will require some maintenance including to the sealant around the units and there is a broken toilet seat in the main bathroom.

Once repair works and replastering has been undertaken the property will require extensive redecoration and you will need to budget for cosmetic improvements as part of the purchase.

---

### *Immediate Repair Needed*

No urgent repair is needed.

# 8 - DOORS, WINDOWS AND TIMBERWORK

## *Other Repair Issues*

The following repairs are also needed but are not considered to be urgent:

- Replace defective sealant around fittings and replace where damaged
- Carry out overall redecoration of the property once replastering has been completed

---

## *Maintenance Needed*

The following should be undertaken as part of normal ongoing maintenance:

- Regular check and clean the sealant around the kitchen worktops etc. and renew as soon as it becomes mouldy or defective.
- Regularly check for signs of leaking to pipework.
- Regular check and clean the sealant and grouting around the baths, wash hand basins and shower trays etc. and renew as soon as it becomes mouldy or defective.

---

## *Risks and Implications*

Defective sealant around shower trays, baths and wash hand basins can leak and cause dampness to concealed areas beneath. Defective grouting around tiles can also cause dampness and damage to plasterwork behind. Mould growth can be a risk to health.

# 9 - ELECTRICAL INSTALLATIONS

## *Description*

Mains electricity is connected. The mains switch gear and consumer units are located in the boot room to the rear and there is a secondary consumer unit within the cloakroom to the left-hand side of the hallway.

I carried out a visual inspection of the visible elements of the installation only. The electrical installation can only ascertained through proper testing and should be checked by a suitably competent electrician before you take ownership unless there is an Electrical Installation Condition Report from within the last twelve months showing that the whole installation has been safety checked and found to be safe and satisfactory. This test should include the whole installation, including within the grounds and any garages and outbuildings.

---

## *Condition*

The electrical installation is fairly modern and is likely to have been renewed as part of the current owner's refurbishment works. However, I have not seen an Electrical Installation Certificate or a more recent Electrical Installation Condition Report to show that the installation has been tested so I cannot confirm it is safe. Also, some of the wiring is chased into very damp plasterwork.

# 9 - ELECTRICAL INSTALLATIONS

## *Health and Safety Concerns*

Faulty electrical installations can cause electrical shocks and are a major cause of fire in domestic properties. Sometimes previous occupiers have carried out DIY repairs in concealed areas which may be unsafe.

Do not make any alterations to the electrical installations yourself; all such work should be carried out in accordance with Part P of the Building Regulations by a qualified electrician. Overloading sockets can cause them to overheat. I recommend you read the guidance at www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk

---

## *Further Investigation Needed*

Suitably competent and qualified specialists should be commissioned to carry out the following further investigations before you proceed and provide you with advice prior to exchange of contracts:

- Your legal adviser should obtain a copy of a recent test certificate (if there is one) and confirm that all works considered necessary by the electrician who last inspected the installation were carried out in full by a suitably qualified person. If no such certificate is available, you should instruct a registered electrician to inspect the whole property (including the grounds and any garages and outbuildings) and provide you with an Electrical Installation Condition Report outlining all necessary improvements to ensure the electrical installation is safe. All work should then be carried out in full.

# 9 - ELECTRICAL INSTALLATIONS

### *Maintenance Needed*

As a precaution the electrical wiring and installations should be checked by a Part P registered electrician as follows:

- Every ten years, or less if recommended by the last electrician;
- Upon change of occupancy;
- If fuses blow or circuit breakers operate for no apparent reason;
- If a shock is received from a socket or light fitting;
- If any of the sockets or light fittings get hot in use or show any signs of discolouration;
- If any of the cabling is unsecured or if sockets or light fittings are insecure;
- If you intend to replace plastic fittings with metal fittings on a system which is over ten years old

---

### *Risks and Implications*

Previous electrical work will have required a completion certificate or certificate of compliance to show it was done in accordance with Building Regulations and by a suitably competent person. You should ask your legal adviser to check this. See comments in the Summary of Legal Matters at the end of this Report.

Electrical Safety First recommends that you should get a registered electrician to carry out a periodic inspection at least every ten years, or on change of occupancy. The electrician will then issue you with an Electrical Installation Condition Report. All electrical installation work carried out since 1st January 2005 should have appropriate certification. It is also recommended that you instruct a competent person to undertake a Visual Condition Report annually. Further advice can be found at www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk

# 10 - HEATING

## *Central Heating*

The property has an oil-fired central heating system with conventional radiators in most areas although with underfloor heating in the kitchen and utility areas. The manifolds for this underfloor heating are visible in the scullery to the rear right-hand corner of the kitchen.

The boiler is located within an outbuilding attached to the right-hand side of the Coach House and this discharges via an open metal flue. This is fuelled by plastic oil tanks positioned externally to the rear, although the rear tank appears to connect to a fuel pipe which is hanging on the wall of the timber structure behind the Coach House and this may be full of diesel fuel. There is also an oil-fired range cooker in the kitchen.

Attached to the rear right-hand corner of the coach house there are four LPG bottles.

I carried out a visual inspection of the visible elements of the heating installation only. As detailed previously the condition of the heating installation can only ascertained by a suitably competent heating services engineer who will need to safety check and service the whole installation.

# 10 - HEATING

### *Condition*

The boiler is dated and of an age where replacement should be anticipated in the next few years. It will be inefficient by modern standards and I have not seen any evidence that it has been checked and serviced by a specialist within the last twelve months.

The fuel storage tanks are positioned far too close to the adjacent timber structure and do not comply with current safety regulations.

---

### *Health and Safety Concerns*

Oil is highly flammable and it is essential that oil tanks are positioned a suitable distance away from potential sources of ignition. Oil tanks need to be property supported and can also split and leak as they get older or if they were not manufactured properly. They normally have a working life of no more than twenty years but the older they get the more the risks increase. If oil leaks from a tank it can cause serious damage to nearby buildings and can contaminate the ground, water table and drainage system. Most home insurance policies will cover the costs of repairing any damage caused to the fabric of your home but not the environmental investigation and clean-up costs you could face if your own land, or the surface or groundwater within it, is polluted. Additionally, if the oil spill pollutes neighbouring land, water or property, the third-party liability cover provided by a home insurance policy often contains restrictions.

# 10 - HEATING

## *Further Investigation Needed*

Suitably competent and qualified specialists should be commissioned to carry out the following further investigations before you proceed and provide you with advice prior to exchange of contracts:

- Your legal adviser should obtain copies of all certificates of compliance covering heating installations and alterations
- Your legal adviser should obtain a copy of the service record confirming the installations have been safety checked and serviced within the last nine months
- If no such confirmation is available you should instruct a suitably qualified OFTEC registered engineer to undertake an inspection and assessment of the fuel tanks, boiler, heating pipework etc. and provide costed advice as to necessary repairs or improvements to make sure they are safe and compliant. The boiler should also be checked and serviced.

---

## *Maintenance Needed*

The following should be undertaken as part of normal ongoing maintenance:

- Instruct an OFTEC registered contractor to check and service the oil tank and boiler along with associated pipework at least once a year
- You should also carry out regular checks of radiators to ensure any air in the system is discharged. This can be done by bleeding radiators if some parts of the radiator surface are colder than others.
- Your boiler and heating system should be regularly checked by a specialist as part of a service agreement. These checks should be at least once a year and more frequently for older systems.
- You should also carry out regular checks of radiators to ensure any air in the system is discharged. This can be done by bleeding radiators if some parts of the radiator surface are colder than others.

# 10 - HEATING

*Risks and Implications*

Previous alterations will have required a completion certificate or certificate of compliance to show it was done in accordance with Building Regulations and by a suitably competent person. You should ask your legal adviser to check this. See comments in the Summary of Legal Matters at the end of this Report.

# 11 - PLUMBING AND DRAINAGE

## 11.1 Plumbing

### *Description*

Mains water is connected.

I carried out a visual inspection of the visible elements of the plumbing installation but the majority of it is hidden from view. As detailed previously the condition of the plumbing installation can only ascertained by a suitably competent plumber who will need to check the whole installation.

---

### *Condition*

As mentioned previously, the excessive dampness within the property could be as a result of leaking pipework beneath the floors.

---

### *Health and Safety Concerns*

Before 1970 many water supply pipes were made of lead and small quantities can pass into the water supply, presenting a risk to health. Further information can be found at http://www.anglianwater.co.uk/household/water-quality/lead.aspx

Legionnaire's disease can develop in water with a temperature of 20°C-50°C. See relevant advice under 'Maintenance' below.

# 11 - PLUMBING AND DRAINAGE

### *Further Investigation Needed*

Suitably competent and qualified specialists should be commissioned to carry out the following further investigations before you proceed and provide you with advice prior to exchange of contracts:

- Instruct a plumber to check and assess internal plumbing and pipework once it is all exposed and provide advice as to necessary repairs or improvements.

---

### *Maintenance Needed*

The following should be undertaken as part of normal ongoing maintenance:

- Internal plumbing and pipework should be checked and pressure-tested annually to establish whether it is leaking.
- Visible pipework should be checked regularly for signs of leaks, although leaks to concealed pipework can go unnoticed for many months, in particular under solid floors, causing damage in unseen areas.
- Pipework in the roof space and other unheated areas should be properly insulated.
- Keep an eye on water bills if your system is metered for signs of excessive increases for no apparent reason. This could also be due to leaks.
- Carry out regular checks to minimise the risks of Legionnaire's disease. Buy a digital thermometer and ensure the hot water is above 50°C and the cold water is below 20°C within one minute of running. Flush toilets that are not in regular use every week to keep the water in the property from becoming stagnant. Disinfect shower heads and run water through showers on a regular basis.

# 11 - PLUMBING AND DRAINAGE

### *Risks and Implications*

Leaking pipework can cause significant damage to a building, often going unnoticed for a long time, especially pipes buried in a floor screed.

Poorly insulated pipework and tanks can freeze in cold weather, causing leaks.

## 11.2 Drainage

### *Description*

Foul drainage is to a private septic tank. These systems are designed to process the foul water before it flows into the ground or a local water course and require regular maintenance, inspection and emptying.

The vast majority of the underground drain run is hidden from view and the condition can only be properly ascertained by a specialist with the aid of a CCTV camera scan. The internal drainage pipework is also mainly concealed.

---

### *Condition*

As mentioned previously there is the possibility of leaking to internal drainage pipework. The drains adjacent to the right-hand porch could be leaking and causing visible subsidence and the old cast iron soil stack attached to the rear left-hand corner of the central structure and serving the en-suite bathroom above could be leaking as the plasterwork beneath is very damp.

# 11 - PLUMBING AND DRAINAGE

My inspection was very restricted and I recommend the drainage pipework beneath the building is exposed and thoroughly checked by a drainage specialist. The specialist should also check drainage pipework attached externally along with the underground drains and septic tank with a CCTV camera scan. If the quality of the outflow does not conform to national regulations the owner could be fined and held responsible for pollution damage. If surface water drains are connected to the system they could overwhelm the septic tank during storm conditions, resulting in localised pollution. Certain products including strong detergents, bleach and other chemicals should not be used in such systems.

---

### *Health and Safety Concerns*

Blocked and leaking drains and pipework can be a serious risk to health.

---

### *Further Investigation Needed*

Suitably competent and qualified specialists should be commissioned to carry out the following further investigations before you proceed and provide you with advice prior to exchange of contracts:

- Instruct a drainage contractor to carry out a detailed inspection of drainage pipework once it is exposed along with other above-ground and below-ground drainage pipework with the aid of a CCTV camera and provide advice as to necessary repairs or improvements.

# 11 - PLUMBING AND DRAINAGE

- Your drainage contractor must also provide full details as to compliance with the general binding rules for small sewage discharges; whether you need to apply for a permit; and whether the system needs to be upgraded or replaced to comply.

---

### *Maintenance Needed*

The following should be undertaken as part of normal ongoing maintenance:

- Manhole covers should be kept airtight and in good condition. Lift covers every few weeks to inspect the inspection chambers for signs of blockage and waste accumulation and have the system cleaned out if necessary by a specialist drainage contractor.
- Instruct a drainage contractor to carry out a thorough inspection with a CCTV camera once a year.
- Keep trees and shrubs away from drainage runs as roots can cause damage to drainage pipes and cause leaks. This can in turn cause damage to buildings if they are close by.
- Septic tanks need emptying by a specialist at least annually.

---

### *Risks and Implications*

Leaking drains can cause damp and damage and can also cause structural movement if close to or underneath buildings.

If the quality of the outflow from the septic tank does not conform to national regulations the owner could be fined and held responsible for pollution damage. If surface water drains are connected to the system

they could overwhelm the septic tank during storm conditions, resulting in localised pollution. Certain products including strong detergents, bleach and other chemicals should not be used in such systems.

# 12 - SITE AND GROUNDS

## 12.1 The Site

### *The Grounds*

The property occupies grounds extending to around 24 acres according to the estate agent's details. These include formal gardens, paddocks and fields, areas of hardstanding and surfaced driveways and courtyards. It also includes a surfaced ménage surrounded by timber post and rail fencing and a cricket pitch to the front with its own pavilion leased to Spalding Town Cricket Club.

---

### *Boundaries*

The boundaries are largely defined by timber fences and hedges and there are some brick garden walls surrounding the courtyards behind the main house.

---

### *Condition*

These grounds and surfaced areas have been generally maintained to a reasonable standard although will require ongoing maintenance. Some repair is required to masonry walls and fencing.

The driveway leading to the house is narrow and poorly surfaced with lots of potholes. There is another separate driveway leading to the land behind.

# 12 - SITE AND GROUNDS

### *Immediate Repair Needed*

No urgent repair is needed.

### *Other Repair Issues*

The following repairs are also needed but are not considered to be urgent:

- Carry out repair and maintenance to the grounds, surfacing, walls and fencing

### *Maintenance Needed*

The following should be undertaken as part of normal ongoing maintenance:

- External areas should be adequately maintained to prevent disrepair. Check pathways and driveways for uneven areas or cracked and worn surfaces. This can create a trip hazard and can also be a sign of damage to underground drains etc.
- Trees close to buildings and underground drains should be properly managed to reduce the amount of moisture the take from the soil and to prevent damage. They should not however be automatically removed as they could cause its own problems and in any event some trees are protected. You should seek further advice from a tree

specialist if you are unsure as to whether any trees are a potential hazard.

- Check for loose branches, especially after a storm or high winds.
- The boundary definitions which belong to you should be properly maintained, in particular walls which will require periodic repointing and repair to damaged masonry. Any boundary definitions in disrepair which do not belong to you should be reported to the relevant owner or person responsible.
- Retaining walls should be adequately maintained as failure will be much more expensive to rectify and, depending on what is being retained, could cause significant damage to property or injury to people.

---

### *Risks and Implications*

Trees can cause damage to buildings, boundary walls and fences and underground drains.

# 12 - SITE AND GROUNDS

## 12.2 The Coach House

### *Description*

Behind the main house there is a substantial brick-built former coach house and stable building which has a pitched and hipped roof covered with fibre-cement tiles. At ground floor level there is a central room as well former stables to either side and above this there is first floor accommodation which is currently only accessible via an external door within the left-hand wall at high level which will require the erection of a temporary ladder or permanent external staircase. I could not gain safe access from my three metre ladder as this door was jammed shut so was therefore unable to inspect the first floor area of this structure or the roof structure and cannot comment upon their condition.

This roof covering has been in place for at least 30 years. Fibre-cement roof tiles normally have a limited lifespan of around 30 years before they need to be replaced.

# 12 - SITE AND GROUNDS

### *Condition*

This coach house building has suffered previous movement and some structural repair has been undertaken, including with the insertion of steel tie bars to tie the front and rear walls together. There is evidence of some lateral movement as well as some separation cracking to the front right-hand corner although this structure is currently structurally stable.

The roof tiles appear to be approaching the end of their useful life and you should budget for the likely need to have to replace them fairly soon. They may well contain asbestos fibres, so this would need to be done by a specialist taking appropriate precautions - see below.

The gutters are blocked and leaking to both the front and rear and some of the timberwork is rotten. Internally various repairs are needed and the ceiling panels within the ground floor central room are falling off and present a risk to safety.

---

### *Health and Safety Concerns*

The roof tiles appear to contain asbestos fibres. These asbestos containing materials pose no real risk to health due to their position, but when they are replaced this will need to be done by specialists taking appropriate precautions. You should not remove, repair or work on them yourself as this could cause the asbestos fibres to become loose and dangerous. See comments in Part Four of this Report.

# 12 - SITE AND GROUNDS

Loose ceiling panels present a risk to safety. A risk assessment should be undertaken before entering into the first floor accommodation.

---

### *Immediate Repair Needed*

No urgent repair is needed.

---

### *Other Repair Issues*

The following repairs are also needed but are not considered to be urgent:

- Replace the roof coverings
- Repair or replace the rainwater fittings
- Replace rotten timberwork
- Remove the loose ceiling panels

---

### *Maintenance Needed*

The following should be undertaken as part of normal ongoing maintenance:

- All outbuildings should be maintained in the same way as the various elements of the main property.

# 12 - SITE AND GROUNDS

### *Risks and Implications*

Garages and outbuildings are often neglected more than the main house. However, leaking roofs, blocked and leaking rainwater fittings etc. can result in the need to carry out significant repair if these buildings are not maintained in the same way.

## 12.3 Stable Block

### *Description*

Behind the coach house there is a detached brick-built stable block which has a pitched roof covered with natural slates. This is divided into four original loose boxes and a tack room to the right-hand side although the right-hand stable now has an internal shower incorporated and the adjacent tack room has an internal sink and is used as the gardener's office.

### *Condition*

This structure is in a generally reasonable condition. It is structurally stable and the roof appears to be in a reasonable condition. Some minor repair and maintenance is needed. This and the Coach House both provide ample opportunity for conversion.

# 12 - SITE AND GROUNDS

### *Immediate Repair Needed*

No urgent repair is needed.

---

### *Other Repair Issues*

No other repair is currently needed.

## 12.4 Other Outbuildings

### *Description*

Attached to the right-hand side of the Coach House there is a small single-storey structure housing the boiler and also housing the large stainless steel hot water cylinder. This is built in brick and has a sloping roof covered with natural slates.

To the right-hand side there is a small brick-built outbuilding which has a sloping roof covered with similar slates and this is built into the original garden wall.

Behind this there is a small brick structure with a flat concrete roof and this houses an outside toilet.

Attached to the rear of the Coach House there is an open timber store which has a sloping roof covered with corrugated metal sheeting.

To the front of the plot there is the cricket pitch which is leased to Spalding Town Cricket Club and this includes a wooden pavilion building which has a pitched roof covered with corrugated metal

# 12 - SITE AND GROUNDS

sheeting. The estate agent was not able to provide internal access into this building so my inspection was limited to an external inspection only.

---

### *Condition*

The boiler room structure has suffered some movement, notably to the front right-hand corner although the main structure is stable. However, the front wall terminates in a shaped parapet which is leaning backwards to the point where it is unstable and unsafe. This requires rebuilding as soon as possible.

The outbuildings to the right-hand side are generally stable although a lot of the brickwork is spalled and damaged.

The timber structure behind the Coach House provides reasonable dry open storage although some of the roof sheets have lifted and there is a gap between the roof sheets and the left-hand wall which will allow some water ingress.

The cricket pavilion is a basic structure although shows no obvious evidence of disrepair when viewed externally. I understand the cricket club are responsible for all repairs and maintenance although this point should be checked by your legal adviser.

# 12 - SITE AND GROUNDS

### *Health and Safety Concerns*

The shaped parapet on top of the front wall of the boiler room structure is at risk of collapse and presents an immediate risk to safety.

---

### *Immediate Repair Needed*

Suitably competent and qualified specialists should be commissioned to undertake the following repairs as soon as possible:

- Rebuild the parapet above the boiler room structure

---

### *Other Repair Issues*

The following repairs are also needed but are not considered to be urgent:

- Carry out general repairs and maintenance to the outbuildings

# PART FOUR: HEALTH AND SAFETY

# HEALTH AND SAFETY RISKS

Modern Building Regulations and other legislation have greatly improved health and safety issues in properties, but most older properties still have elements within them that do not comply with current standards, including materials which have since been banned from use due to their health and safety risks. These are often concealed from view within the fabric of the building and I cannot confirm their presence or absence without opening up and causing damage to the property, but where visible these are assessed below.

Also, you have to appreciate that it is often not possible to improve an area of the property that would be considered unsafe by modern standards without significantly reducing the character of the building, especially listed buildings where these old features need to be retained. In many cases you will just need to be aware of the issues and live with them accordingly. For example, asbestos containing materials often pose little risk unless disturbed. Also, it may not be possible to replace non-toughened low level glazing in a listed building or alter a steep staircase.

I have included overleaf a list of health and safety risks. Where an element presents an immediate risk and requires action to be taken as soon as possible, this is highlighted within the relevant Section of this Report.

# HEALTH AND SAFETY RISKS

## *Risks to Health:*

### *Asbestos*

Asbestos has been widely used in construction since the industrial revolution, but its use increased dramatically during the 20th century. It is light, durable, fire resistant and has excellent thermal insulation properties but is now widely recognised as having serious health implications if the fibres are inhaled. It is no longer legal to import or use asbestos in the UK but it was not entirely banned in all its forms until 1999, meaning a considerable number of homes still have asbestos containing materials within them, often hidden in insulation board, textured coverings, vinyl floor tiles, water tanks and black toilet cisterns, as well as in external soffit boards and roofing materials.

Asbestos becomes dangerous when the tiny needle-like fibres become loose and airborne as if inhaled they cannot be naturally broken down inside the body. Quite often, however, the fibres are encapsulated in cement or a similar bonding material making up the structure of the particular element and these are less dangerous. If left undisturbed they do not pose an immediate risk. However, you should not remove, cut into or otherwise work on any materials which contain asbestos or which you suspect may contain asbestos. Any such materials should be investigated further to establish whether they contain asbestos and advice should be obtained as to necessary removal and/or encapsulation of such materials. Any such work should then only be undertaken by specialists taking appropriate precautions and disposing of all such materials in the appropriate fashion. For related advice visit www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/

### *Glass-Fibre Insulation*

Most quilts of loft insulation used in this country are glass-fibre material. There have been concerns that this may be carcinogenic but this has not been proven. It does however cause serious irritation to skin and eyes as well as to lungs if inhaled. You should make sure that if you come into contact with it, such as going up into the loft, you wear a suitable face mask.

# HEALTH AND SAFETY RISKS

*Mould*

Mould, such as that caused by condensation, can cause allergies and respiratory problems and should be removed whenever it starts to develop.

*Pests*

Pests can have serious health risks as well as risks to the property. Mice can chew through plastic pipes and cause leaks and can also chew through electrical cables, potentially causing a fire. Unfortunately they can enter through the smallest gaps but if you suspect an infestation of mice or any pests, you should employ a pest control company.

*Lead*

Lead paint was widely used in properties up until the mid-1960s and in some cases later. If decorations are old it may still be present and elsewhere possibly beneath more recent decorations. If possible, seal it with an overcoating of modern paint. If you do need to remove it don't do this in a way which will create dust. Always use a face mask and wash down surfaces and vacuum afterwards.

There are thousands of houses in the UK, built up to 1970, that still contain lead pipes, including the mains water pipe for drinking water to the kitchen sink. There are measures you can take to reduce the lead levels in your water, although the only really safe way is to replace these pipes. Usually, if you tell your local water authority you are intending to replace the lead pipes within the boundaries of your property they are duty bound to replace their lead pipes leading up to your property. There are other measures you can also take to improve the water quality within your home, for further advice, follow the link www.anglianwater.co.uk/household/water-quality.

# HEALTH AND SAFETY RISKS

## *Risks to Safety:*

### *Barriers*

Current Building Regulations suggest that internal guard rails, for instance to landings above stairwells, should have a minimum height of 900mm, whereas external guard rails, for instance to balconies, should have a minimum height of 1100mm. Low guard rails, low handrails, open stair risers etc. should be approached with due care.

### *Head heights and trip hazards*

Older buildings often have low beams and low doorways as well as raised thresholds in doorways and differing floor levels. Staircases are often steeper than current regulations allow. These are usually difficult to resolve and the best advice is to be aware and approach these areas with due care.

### *Glazing*

Current Building Regulations state that panes of glass with a width exceeding 250mm and situated (wholly or in part) below a level of 800mm in windows (1500mm in doors and panels adjacent to doors) above either external ground level or internal floor level should be of toughened safety glass. Any glass within this property that falls under this category and does not have a kitemark indicating suitable strength should be properly replaced.

# HEALTH AND SAFETY RISKS

*Fire Risks*

Certain precautionary measures can be carried out to reduce the risk of fire and increase the chances of escape.

- Install smoke detectors on all floors at ceiling level, in particular in halls, landings and the kitchen. These should be regularly checked to ensure the batteries are adequate and ideally should be connected to the mains electricity supply with battery back-up.
- Regularly test and examine electrical and gas/oil installations and services, including fires, boilers etc. Make sure these are tested for adequacy as soon as you move in or preferably prior to exchange of contracts.
- Provide a fire extinguisher and fire blanket within the kitchen. Only carbon dioxide type fire extinguishers should be used on live electrical equipment or liquid fires. The fire blanket should be used on hob fires. Make sure you are competent at using these appliances before it becomes necessary.
- In properties with gas, carbon monoxide detectors or preferably alarms should be sited in the kitchen and near the gas meter. Detectors should also be attached to flues in which gas is discharged and to blocked flues in rooms above a gas-fired appliance. Regularly test alarms and change batteries.
- Provide fire extinguishers and smoke alarms within garages and permanent outbuildings.
- Ensure flues are annually swept, preferably just before winter, or more frequently if they are in more regular use.
- Consider installing self-closing mechanisms to internal doors, particularly around halls and landings.
- Think about the means of escape, particularly from upper floors. Keys to doors and lockable windows should be kept in a known and easy to access place. You should ensure you are able to get out of at least one first floor window (i.e. it will open wide enough for escape) and these escape windows should not be locked. If the property has three or more floors it would not be safe to escape through the window and instead the property should have a protected escape route from the top floors to a ground floor external door. Fire doors with self-closers should be fitted to all doors leading off the landings and hallways.

# HEALTH AND SAFETY RISKS

*Security Risks*

There are a number of measures which can be taken to reduce the chances of burglary. These are not infallible, although I strongly recommend the following guidelines be considered. Some home contents insurance policies require a minimum standard of security.

- Consider changing the locks as soon as possible after you move in. The previous owner should have left all their keys with the estate agent but it is common for other people (family members, neighbours, cleaners etc.) to have copies that may not have been included, meaning people you do not know may have keys to your house.
- Provide adequate locks to all external doors as well as additional security bolts and other devices.
- Make sure opening windows cannot be opened from outside.
- Avoid glazed panels close to door locks.
- Install a security chain to the front door.
- Install a spy-hole to the external doors where no alternative view of visitors is possible.
- Consider installing external security lights with movement detectors.
- Install a burglar alarm system.
- Do not leave ladders loose around the property, ideally chain them in position in a concealed area within a garage or outbuilding.

# *PART FIVE: SUMMARY*

# OVERALL SUMMARY

The property is a large house occupying extensive grounds and with outbuildings offering considerable scope for conversion. However, it is in need of significant and costly repair, including in respect of serious and widespread dampness. High level repairs are needed to the roofs, chimney stacks and rainwater fittings. These will prove expensive and time consuming and detailed quotes for all repairs should be obtained before you proceed so you are aware of the costs and implications involved. Some further investigations are needed before you proceed with the purchase.

These issues are all resolvable but you will need to take account of the likely costs and implications and budget accordingly. Providing the repairs are completed properly and all legal matters are resolved there is no reason not to proceed with the purchase and I cannot foresee any difficulties upon resale in normal market conditions.

### *What You Need to Do Next*

Once you have read the whole Report, please feel free to call me to discuss any issues you would like me to clarify or any areas of concern.

Your legal adviser (conveyancer or solicitor) will need to carry out all the usual and necessary searches and investigations to establish the extent of the property, easements, covenants and liabilities etc. as well as any potentially detrimental nearby uses or proposed uses. You should send a copy of this Report to your legal adviser as soon as possible so he/she can make sure any areas needing clarity or further investigation can be confirmed prior to exchange of contracts.

The following summary puts together the issues requiring further investigation along with issues requiring immediate attention as well as less urgent repairs that will be needed after you move in. This summary should not be read in isolation and it is important that you read the Report as a whole so that the nature and extent of these matters can be assessed in the context established in the main body of the Report and in the light of other issues reported. Ongoing maintenance will also be needed.

# OVERALL SUMMARY

You will then need to instruct relevant specialists to carry out any necessary further investigations before you exchange contracts. This will usually involve instructing specialists to carry out their own investigations and provide you with relevant advice. These specialists will, in most cases, need to be able to gain access into the property and they should be able to organise this through the estate agent or vendor. Once you have obtained their reports, conclusions and costings I will be happy to talk them through with you and help you decide the best course of action.

These are necessary to ensure the property is safe and compliant and to establish the cause and extent of problems where such investigations are outside the limits of my inspection or my areas of expertise. You should not proceed until these investigations have been carried out and detailed advice as to the costs and implications has been obtained and considered.

Throughout the Report I also have highlighted apparent health and safety risks. As detailed above, in some cases it might prove difficult or impossible to reduce these risks other than by approaching the area of concern with due care.

In order to establish the cost of attending to these and other items, precise figures should be obtained from at least three reputable and appropriately qualified local contractors who are properly insured. You should instruct these contractors to carry out their own inspection and provide detailed advice as to all necessary works and all costs involved. You should ensure all necessary repairs are quoted for and the quotes are obtained in writing. Sometimes, once an area is opened up for further examination further issues and the need for allied repairs are found.

I have included a list of useful websites and links which include professional bodies to whom suitable contractors may be affiliated. I strongly recommend you instruct reputable contractors who are members of appropriate bodies who have a policy of ensuring their firms are competent and promote best practice.

# OVERALL SUMMARY

Not all reputable professional bodies are listed, although this list is intended to assist you in finding a suitable specialist or contractor. I can if you wish suggest the name of a local contractor whom you may wish to approach, although I cannot of course accept any responsibility for prices or workmanship.

# SCHEDULE OF REPAIRS

**- Further Investigation Needed -**

The following require further investigation by specialists before you exchange contracts:

## *Dampness*

- Remove the suspended timber floors at ground floor level and assess the causes of excessive dampness beneath

## *Electrical Installations*

- Your legal adviser should obtain a copy of a recent test certificate (if there is one) and confirm that all works considered necessary by the electrician who last inspected the installation were carried out in full by a suitably qualified person. If no such certificate is available, you should instruct a registered electrician to inspect the whole property (including the grounds and any garages and outbuildings) and provide you with an Electrical Installation Condition Report outlining all necessary improvements to ensure the electrical installation is safe. All work should then be carried out in full.

## *Heating Installations*

- Your legal adviser should obtain copies of all certificates of compliance covering heating installations and alterations
- Your legal adviser should obtain a copy of the service record confirming the installations have been safety checked and serviced within the last nine months
- If no such confirmation is available you should instruct a suitably qualified OFTEC registered engineer to undertake an inspection and assessment of the fuel tanks, boiler, heating pipework etc. and provide costed advice as to necessary repairs or improvements to make sure they are safe and compliant. The boiler should also be checked and serviced.

# SCHEDULE OF REPAIRS

## Plumbing

- Instruct a plumber to check and assess internal plumbing and pipework once it is all exposed and provide advice as to necessary repairs or improvements.

## Drainage

- Instruct a drainage contractor to carry out a detailed inspection of drainage pipework once it is exposed along with other above-ground and below-ground drainage pipework with the aid of a CCTV camera and provide advice as to necessary repairs or improvements.
- Your drainage contractor must also provide full details as to compliance with the general binding rules for small sewage discharges; whether you need to apply for a permit; and whether the system needs to be upgraded or replaced to comply.

# SCHEDULE OF REPAIRS

**- Immediate Repair Needed -**

Suitably competent and qualified specialists should be commissioned to undertake the following repairs as soon as possible:

## *Roofs*

- Ventilate the roof space above the central structure to help the roof timbers dry out
- Extend the extraction pipe serving the fan in the en-suite bathroom to the master bedroom to discharge externally
- Carry out high level repairs to the roof coverings around the chimney above the two-storey flat roof and around the chimney to the rear of the central structure
- Check the condition of the flat roof covering above the two-storey left-hand structure as well as the adequacy of the fall and discharge from this roof into the guttering and repair or replace as necessary

## *Rainwater Fittings*

- Replace the guttering beneath the right-hand roof slope above the central structure
- Clear all rainwater fittings of blockage

## *Chimneys and Flues*

- Check the weatherproof detailing around the base of the chimney stack above the flat roof as part of works detailed previously
- Check the tops of the chimney stacks from high level and replace perished and leaking mortar flaunchings with new lime mortar flaunchings
- Repair and repoint the chimney stacks using a suitable lime mortar to ensure all chimney stacks are stable and weatherproof
- Check and sweep the flues serving the open fireplaces and line as necessary

# SCHEDULE OF REPAIRS

## Walls and Partitions

- Permanent mechanical ventilation should be installed within the cellar
- Undertake all necessary repairs beneath the ground floors
- Rake out all the external cement mortar and repoint the external walls using a suitable lime mortar
- Remove the cement render from the rear of the property and internally within the roof space above the central structure and make good or re-render in a breathable lime render
- Remove all plasterwork to the external walls at ground floor level up to one metre height and replaster using a suitable lime plaster and breathable decorative finishes
- Remove damp and damaged plasterwork elsewhere and replaster in lime with breathable decorative finishes
- Install suitable humidity control extractor fans in the bathrooms and shower rooms as well as in the kitchen and utility areas

## Floors and Ceilings

- Remove and replace the suspended timber floors in the reception rooms
- Install suitable airbricks to adequately ventilate the sub-floor areas
- Replace rotten and defective floor joists and other timberwork above the cellar

## Outbuildings

- Rebuild the parapet above the boiler room structure

# SCHEDULE OF REPAIRS

**- Other Repair Issues -**

The following repairs are also needed but are not considered to be urgent:

### *Doors, Windows and Timberwork*

- Cut out and replace rotten sections of timberwork
- Remove, ease and adjust windows
- Replace damp and damaged internal timberwork
- Repair internal timber shutters
- Replace defective sealant around fittings and replace where damaged
- Carry out overall redecoration of the property once replastering has been completed

### *Site and Grounds*

- Carry out repair and maintenance to the grounds, surfacing, walls and fencing

### *The Coach House*

- Replace the roof coverings
- Repair or replace the rainwater fittings
- Replace rotten timberwork
- Remove the loose ceiling panels

### *Other Outbuildings*

- Carry out general repairs and maintenance to the outbuildings

# SUMMARY OF LEGAL MATTERS

Your legal adviser (conveyancer or solicitor) will need to carry out all the usual and necessary searches and investigations to establish the extent of the property, easements, covenants and liabilities etc. as well as any potentially detrimental uses or proposed uses nearby. You should send a copy of this Report to your legal adviser as soon as possible so he/she can make sure any areas needing clarity or further investigation can be confirmed prior to exchange of contracts.

All this information will need to be established prior to exchange of contracts and the information below is aimed at assisting you and your legal adviser to make sure issues visible 'on the ground', which may not be obvious from a desktop study, are covered. In most cases, the issues will be clarified by your legal adviser anyway as part of their searches and investigations, but there are some issues of which your legal adviser may not be aware. They do not visit the property and issues such as previous alterations that may have required consent or the need to be able to gain access onto neighbouring land to carry out maintenance, for example, may not be obvious.

I have summarised the various legal issues below, including my assumptions which will need to be checked and verified by your legal adviser.

In addition, repair works you will need to undertake or alterations you intend to carry out will in many cases require consent and/or signing off to show they comply with Building Regulations. These are summarised throughout this Report.

# SUMMARY OF LEGAL MATTERS

## Legal Title

- I assume the property is being sold Freehold and with vacant possession. You should ask your legal adviser to confirm this and explain the implications. Your legal advisers should also confirm exactly what is included in the sale, including internal fixtures and fittings, outbuildings etc.
- I am not aware of the ownership of any of the boundary walls, fences and/or other definitions and this should be established.
- Your legal adviser should obtain all details regarding the correct positions of boundaries as well as ownership, maintenance liabilities etc. relating to boundary definitions prior to exchange of contracts. A properly drawn and fully dimensioned conveyance plan should ideally be included in the conveyance documents.

## Guarantees

- Your legal adviser should obtain all existing guarantees and warranties for all elements of the property prior to exchange of contracts. These documents should be checked and verified by your legal advisers and you should then retain these documents in order to protect your interests. You should also ensure that you will be covered by any existing guarantees, warranties, insurance etc. upon completion of the purchase.

## Access and Adjoining Properties

- There are no obvious rights of way affecting the property.
- The cricket pitch and pavilion are leased to a local cricket club.
- Your legal adviser should obtain all details regarding any rights of way, easements, covenants etc. affecting the property prior to exchange of contracts and confirm all your rights and obligations, including any financial liabilities for maintenance etc.
- Your legal adviser should check and advise on the implications of any nearby planning applications or possible detrimental uses. They should also check whether any issues exist in respect of contaminated land or archaeological remains either on or close to

the property as the value of the property could be adversely affected and you as owner of the property could be liable for the cost of removing and/or remedying any issues.

### *Planning Issues and Alterations*

- I understand the property is Grade II listed.
- I am unaware of any previous insurance claims.
- The following previous alterations are likely to have required listed building consent. All documents detailing consent should be obtained:
  - Strengthening of roofs and replacement of roof coverings
  - Provision of steel supports to chimney stacks
  - Installation of some replacement windows
  - Internal alterations including installation of underfloor heating and replacement of ceilings
  - Creation of cricket pitch and erection of cricket pavilion
- The following previous alterations will have required Building Control approval. All documents and completion certificates should be obtained:
  - Strengthening of roofs and replacement of roof coverings
  - Provision of steel supports to chimney stacks
  - Installation of replacement rainwater fittings
  - Installation of some replacement windows
  - Internal alterations including installation of underfloor heating and replacement of ceilings
  - Erection of cricket pavilion
  - New electrical work
  - New heating, plumbing and drainage installations
- Your legal adviser should obtain confirmation prior to exchange of contracts that all alterations have been undertaken in accordance with relevant consent and/or a certificate of compliance to show it was signed off as complying with Building Regulations.

## *Useful Websites and Links*

**Anglian Water**
www.anglianwater.co.uk

**Association of British Insurers**
www.abi.org.uk

**British Institute of Architectural Technologists**
www.ciat.org.uk

**Chartered Association of Building Engineers**
www.cbuilde.com

**Chartered Institute of Environmental Health**
www.cieh.org

**Chartered Institute of Building (CIOB)**
www.ciob.org.uk

**Chartered Institute of Building Services Engineers (CIBSE)**
www.cibse.org

**Electrical Safety First**
www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk

**The Environment Agency**
www.environment-agency.gov.uk

**The Faculty of Party Wall Surveyors**
www.fpws.org.uk

**Gas Safe Register**
www.gassaferegister.co.uk

**Glass and Glazing Federation (GGF)**
www.ggf.org.uk

**Health and Safety Executive (HSE)**
www.hse.gov.uk

**Institute of Civil Engineers (ICE)**
www.ice.org.uk

**Institute of Structural Engineers**
www.istructe.org

**National House Building Council (NHBC)**
www.nhbc.co.uk

**National Inspection Council for Electrical Installation Contracting**
www.niceic.com

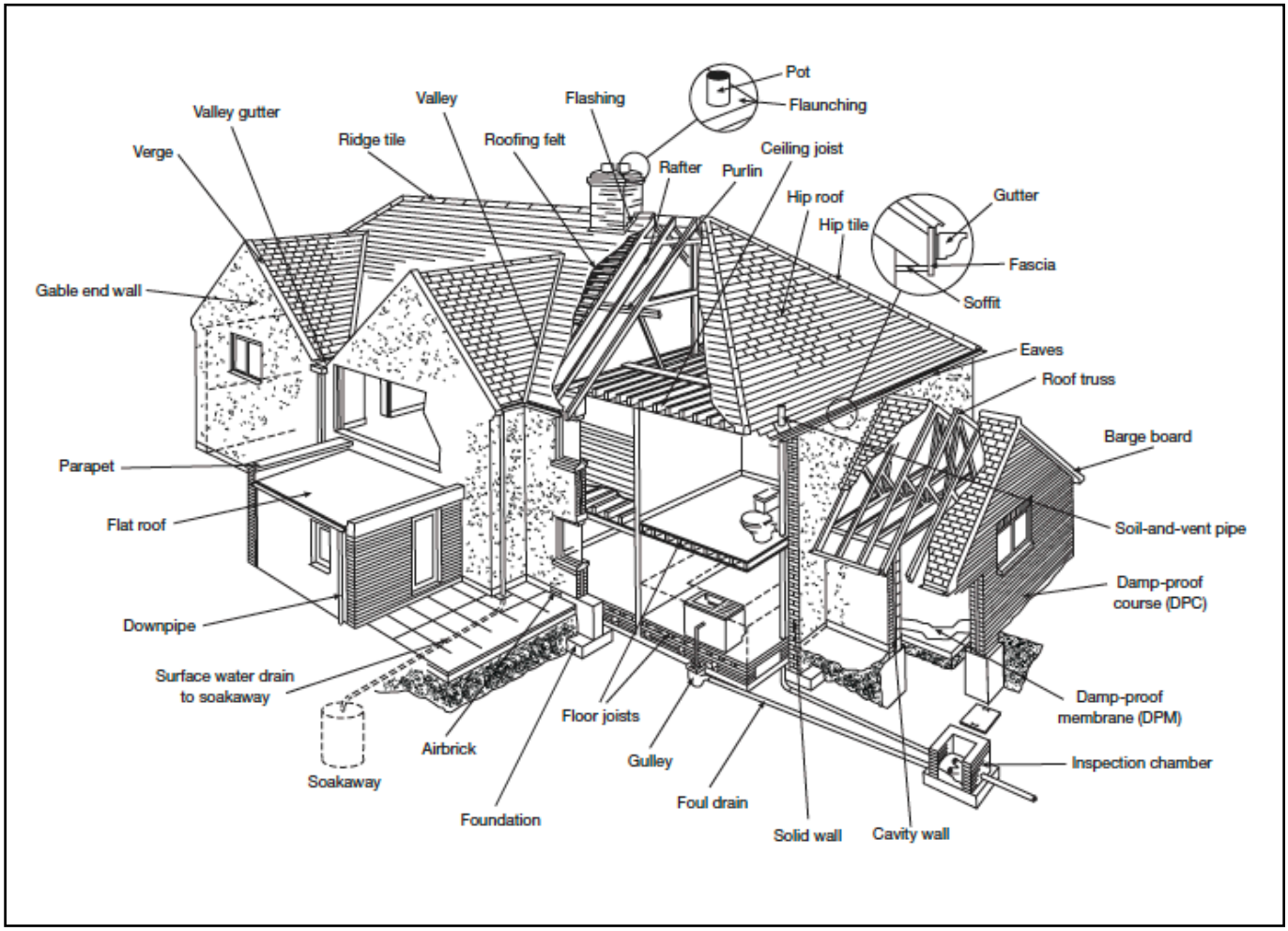
**The Oil-Firing Technical Association (OFTEC)**
www.oftec.co.uk

**Public Health England**
www.hpa.org.uk

**Royal Institute of British Architects**
www.architecture.com

**Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS)**
www.rics.org

**Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB)**
www.spab.org.uk


Pot
Flaunching
Valley
Flashing
Valley gutter
Ridge tile
Roofing felt
Verge
Ceiling joist
Rafter
Purlin
Hip roof
Hip tile
Gutter
Fascia
Soffit
Gable end wall
Eaves
Roof truss
Barge board
Parapet
Flat roof
Soil-and-vent pipe
Damp-proof course (DPC)
Downpipe
Surface water drain to soakaway
Damp-proof membrane (DPM)
Floor joists
Airbrick
Gulley
Inspection chamber
Soakaway
Foundation
Foul drain
Solid wall
Cavity wall