

JOB REFERENCE: XXX

**TAILOR MADE  
RESIDENTIAL BUILDING SURVEY**

**XXX  
Notting Hill,  
London.  
W2 XXX**



**FOR  
Mr X**

Prepared by:  
**XXX**  
INDEPENDENT CHARTERED SURVEYORS



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## **INTRODUCTION**

Firstly, may we thank you for using our services once again and your kind instruction of XXX; we have now undertaken an independent Building Survey with additional requests and specific requirements of the aforementioned property. This Survey was carried out on XXX.

As you may recall the Building Survey takes the following format; there is an introductory section (which you are currently reading), which includes a synopsis of the building, and a summary of our findings.

We then go through a detailed examination of the property starting with the external areas working from the top of the property down, followed by the internal areas and the buildings services. We conclude with the section for your Legal Advisor and also attach some general information on the property market.

As we mentioned previously we are aware that a report of this size is somewhat daunting and almost off-putting to the reader because of this. Again we would stress that the purchase of a house is usually one of the largest financial outlays made (particularly when you consider the interest you pay as well).

As always we recommend that you set aside time to read the report in full, consider the comments, make notes of any areas that you wish to discuss further and phone us.

We obviously expect you to read the entire report but we would suggest that you initially look at the summary, which refers to various sections in the report which we recommend you read first so that you get a general feel for the way the report is written.

As part of our service we are more than happy to talk through the survey as many times as you wish until you are completely happy to make a decision. Ultimately, the decision to purchase the house is yours but we will do our best to offer advice to make the decision as easy as possible.

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# REPORT FORMAT

To help you understand our Report we utilise various techniques and different styles and types of text, these are as follows:

## **GENERAL/HISTORICAL INFORMATION**

*This has been given in the survey where it is considered it will aid understanding of the issues, or be of interest. This is shown in "italics" for clarity.*

## **TECHNICAL TERMS DEFINED**

Throughout the Report, we have endeavoured to define any technical terms used. This is shown in "Courier New" typeface for clarity.

## **A PICTURE IS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS**



We utilise photographs and sketches to illustrate issues or features. In some photographs a pencil, pen, circle or arrow has been used to highlight a specific area. The sketches are not 100% technically accurate; we certainly would not expect you to carry out work based upon the sketches alone.

## **ORIENTATION**

Any reference to left or right is taken from the front of the property, including observations to the rear, which you may not be able to physically see from the front of the property.

## **ACTION REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

We have used the term **ACTION REQUIRED** where we believe that there are items that you should carry out action upon or negotiate upon prior to purchasing the property.

Where a problem is identified, we will do our best to offer a solution. However, with most building issues, there are usually many ways to resolve them dependent upon cost, time available and the length of time you wish the repair/replacement to last.

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## **SYNOPSIS**

### **SITUATION AND DESCRIPTION**

This is a three storey detached property with a lower ground floor and terraces to the front and rear. The property has been altered and amended over the years to form independently accessed apartments on each floor.

Parking is on a permit basis or paid for at the roadside on a first come first serve basis.

Currently development is taking place to the rear of the property. At the time of our survey the pile foundations were being exposed (we assume Local Authority approval and Party Wall notices etc. and Party Wall Surveyors are in place in relation to this).

We believe that the property was built in the Regency era. If the age of the property interests you your Legal Advisor may be able to find out more information from the Deeds.

Your Legal Advisor to check and confirm all of the above.

#### **Putting Life into Perspective!**

*Some of the things that were happening around the time the property was built:*

1783 Britain formerly recognised the independence of the United States of America.

1801 First Census in Great Britain shows the population as 10 million

1805 Lord Nelson defeats Napoleon at the Battle of Trafalgar.

1833 School days - government funds education for the poor.

1840 The first adhesive postage stamp the Penny Black is issued, worth much more than a penny today!

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## EXTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS



Front elevation



Front view – low level



Left side view



Right side view



Rear view



Rear garden



Street view

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## **ACCOMMODATION AND FACILITIES**

(All directions given as you face the front of the property)

There are two apartments that occupy the lower ground floor and the upper ground floor.

There is one apartment on the first floor and half landing, one apartment on the second floor and half landing and another apartment on the top floor and half landing (this apartment has access to the pitched roof).

All apartments from the first floor up have a Reception room, kitchen and three bedrooms with three bathrooms/en-suites.

The lower ground apartments have a Reception room, kitchen, four bedrooms and three en-suites/bathrooms/shower rooms.

There are terraces to the two lower ground floor apartments.



### **Apartment one - left**

The lower ground floor accommodation consists of:

- 1) Four Bedrooms
- 2) Three en-suites/ bathrooms/shower rooms

The upper ground floor accommodation consists of:

- 3) Reception room
- 4) Kitchen

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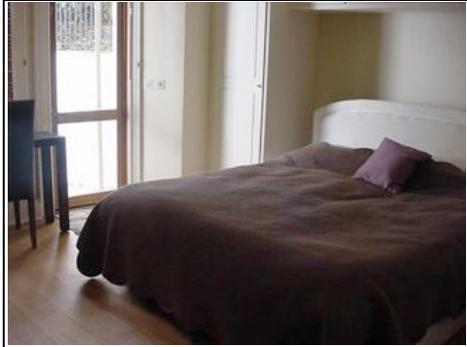
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**Apartment one photos**

(we have not necessarily taken photos of all rooms in all apartments)

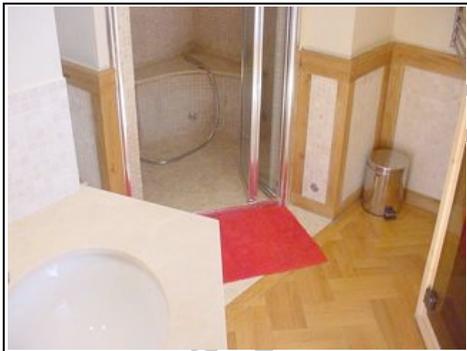
**Lower ground floor**



Bedroom



Bathroom



Shower room with sauna



Bedroom



Bedroom



Bathroom

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## Upper ground floor



Reception room



Dining area

## Apartment Two - right

The lower ground floor accommodation consists of:

- 1) Four Bedrooms
- 2) Three en-suites/bathrooms/shower rooms

The upper ground floor accommodation consists of:

- 3) Reception room
- 4) Kitchen

## Apartment two photos



Reception room



Kitchen



Stairs leading down to bedroom

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## Apartment Three

The first floor accommodation consists of:

- 1) Reception room
- 2) Kitchen
- 3) Three bedrooms
- 4) Three en-suites/ bathrooms/ shower rooms

### Apartment three Photos



Kitchen



Reception room



Corridor



Bedroom



Shower room

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Bathroom



Bedroom

### **Apartment Four**

The second floor accommodation consists of:

- 1) Reception room
- 2) Kitchen
- 3) Three bedrooms
- 4) Three en-suites/bathrooms/ shower rooms

### **Apartment four photos**



Kitchen



Reception room



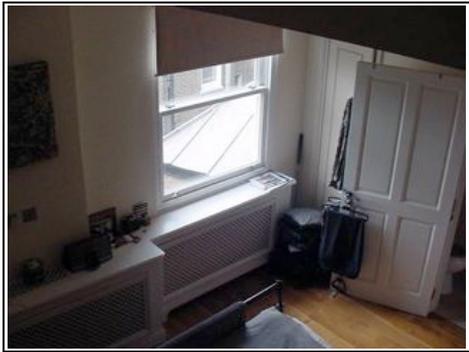
Lift hidden behind the bike and the box

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Bedroom



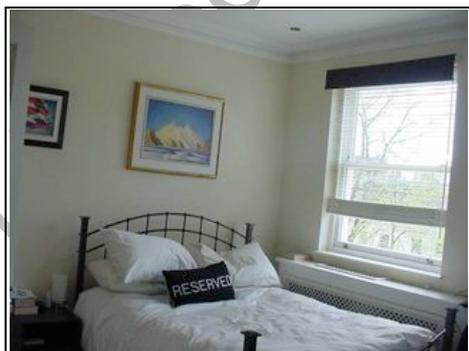
Bathroom



Shower room



Bedroom



Bedroom



Bathroom

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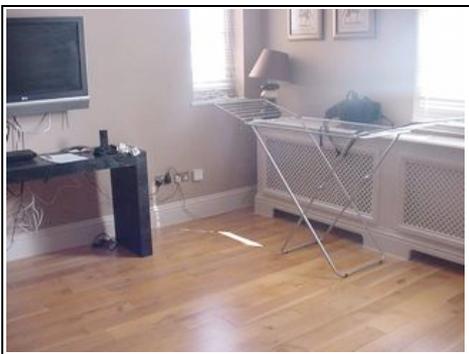


## Apartment Five

The top floor accommodation consists of:

- 1) Reception room
- 2) Kitchen
- 3) Three bedrooms
- 4) Three en-suites/bathrooms/shower rooms

### Apartment five photos



Reception room



Kitchen



Kitchen



Bedroom



Bedroom



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Steps down to the bedroom



Bedroom



Shower room



Bathroom



Bathroom

### **Shared main entrance**

The lifts within the property are also shared.



Entrance lobby



Staircase in entrance lobby

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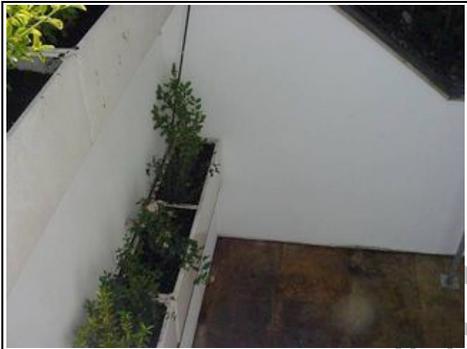




Shared entrance

### Outside areas

There are front and rear terraces.



Left terrace



Right terrace  
Scaffolding partially  
hiding it



Rear terrace

Finally, all these details need to be checked and confirmed by your Legal Advisor.

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## SUMMARY OF CONSTRUCTION

### External

Chimneys:	Two large chimneys; left and right. Substantial amount of chimney pots
Parapet Walls:	Brick, rendered to the front, sides and rear
Main Roof:	Double pitched, clad with slate Hidden valley gutters Box gutters
Main Roof Structure:	Cut timber frame structure with additions and support
Flat roofs: Right: Rear	Part Asphalt, part boarded (assumed) Asphalt (assumed)
Gutters and Downpipes:	Cast iron and plastic
Soil and Vent Pipe:	Cast iron and plastic
Walls:	Painted Stucco Render with corbelling and pediments Flemish Bond brickwork
Windows and Doors:	Painted timber sliding sash windows Plastic double glazed windows

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## Internal

Ceilings: Lath and plaster and plasterboard (assumed)

Walls: Mixture of solid and hollow (assumed)  
Dry lining/false wall

Floors: Lower Ground False floor  
All other Floors: Joist and floorboards with embedded timbers  
(assumed)

## Services

We believe that the property has a mains water supply, mains drainage, electricity and gas (all assumed).

Each apartment has its own Vaillant boiler.

The electric fuse boards are located near to the entrance of each apartment. The electric metres are in the main entrance lobby.

There are manholes to the front and rear of the property and also within the property.

We have identified the property as Grade II Listed on the [BritishListedBuildings.co.uk](http://BritishListedBuildings.co.uk) website. We have made enquiries on this website only, which may contain errors. Your legal adviser needs to check and confirm this. Please see the Listed Building reference in the appendices.

Please also see the limitation section as we have been advised by the agent who showed us round that you have received various information and details but they would not disclose it to us.

We have used the term 'assumed' as we have not opened up the structure. Finally, your Legal Advisor needs to check and confirm the above and advise us of anything they require further clarification on before legal commitment to purchase the property.

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Summaries are not ideal as they try to précis often quite complex subjects into a few paragraphs. This is particularly so in a summary about someone's future home when we are trying to second-guess what their priorities are, so it is important the Report is read in full.

It is inevitable with a report on a building of this nature that some of the issues we have focussed in on you may dismiss as irrelevant and some of the areas that we have decided are part of the 'character' of this property you may think are very important. We have taken in the region of 500 photographs during the course of this survey and many pages of notes, so if an issue has not been discussed that you are interested in or concerned about, please phone and talk to us before you purchase the property (or indeed commit to purchasing the property), as we will more than likely have noted it and be able to comment upon it; if we have not we will happily go back.

We have divided the Executive Summary into 'Plus Points', 'Medium Priority' and 'High Priority', to help distinguish what in our mind are the main issues.

Once you have read the report we would recommend that you revisit the property to review your thoughts on the building in light of the comments we have made in this survey.

### Plus points

*Survey reports often are full of only the faults and general 'doom and gloom', so we thought we would start with some positive comments on the property!*

We understand you are going to lease the property and as the property has previously been leased it should therefore have a full set of documentation in relation to:-

- 1.) The electrics and the space heating, for example, the gas heaters and the air conditioning.
- 2.) A good property management company would also have had a close circuit TV camera report of the drains.
- 3.) There should also be a planned maintenance plan in place.

If you have any of these we will be more than happy to comment on them or equally if you do not.

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## **Medium Priority**

*Problems / issues raised in the 'bad' section are usually solvable, but often need negotiation upon. However, a large number of them may sometimes put us off the property.*

### **1.0) Roof**

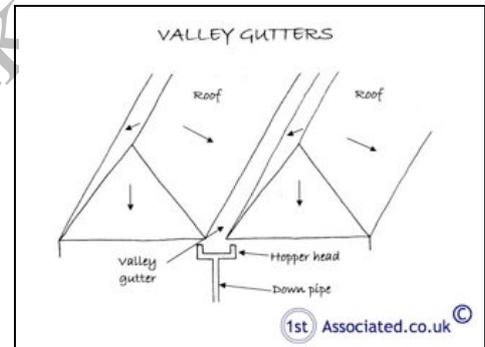
There are two main roofs to the property which are pitched (we will refer to these as the front and rear main roofs), these are in below average condition and have been poorly patched repaired over the years.



Front main roof



Where front roof and rear roof meet with a valley gutter



Valley gutter

The main issues that we will draw your attention to are as follows:-

### **1.1) Damaged slates**

Damaged slates and poorly detailed slates have been allowing water into the property which in turn has caused deterioration to the roof timbers over the years. The full extent of this cannot be identified unless we have the roof fully lit as we have only viewed it by torchlight.



Damaged slate – felt repairs

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The usual result of dampness coming in between the box gutters/pitched roofs and the valley gutters /pitched roofs is for timber rot to occur. This is what we believe has occurred in this instance.

During the course of our investigation we were able to see two examples of this.

1.1.1) Replacement timbers to the right hand side of the roof



Replacement timber

1.1.2) To the left hand side we can see that props have been added and we believe there is a bow in the roof. We also noted a split timber. There are also back to back timbers visible which are used to add strength to the timbers where problems have occurred.



We believe there is a bow in the roof



Props added



Split central rafter



Back to back timbers

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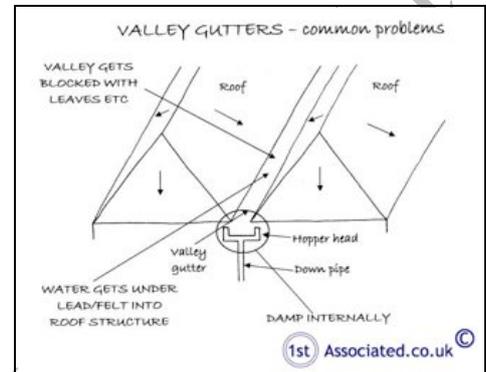
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This is a traditional cut timber roof and given the era of the property it is probably originally over designed and therefore there is extra strength in it. The issues are repairable but the extent of them is difficult to ascertain without properly lighting the roof. Therefore we will give best educated estimates on these.

### 1.2) Valley gutter

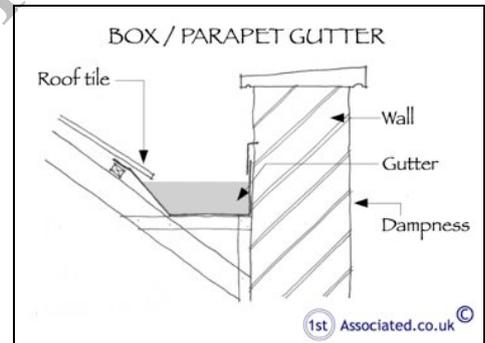
A valley gutter is where two roofs meet as shown in the adjoining sketch and they are renowned for being problem areas. This one looks to have been leaking over time.



Problems with valley gutters

### 1.3) Box gutter detail

There are box gutter details to both the front and the rear of the roof. Where these are incorrectly formed there can be leaks which can cause the common rafter feet to rot.



Box gutter

#### Common Rafters Defined

The rafters are the timbers, which form the slope to which the battens are secured and in turn the roof covering is also secured too.

#### **ACTION REQUIRED: Roof problems**

- 1.) The felt repairs to the slate roof to be replaced with slates.
- 2.) Where the valley gutter meets the slate roof and where the box gutter meets the slate roof, these areas need to be stripped back to approximately 2ft and a timber decking put in.

A protective underlayer should then be added before the slates are re-laid, this is to protect against water and snow build up.

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- 3.) Before all of the above are carried out the common rafters need to be checked to see which ones need replacing. This can be done by lighting the roof void or when the slates etc. are stripped back.
- 4.) We would also take the opportunity to vent the roof, which is now a Building Regulation requirement, and generally bring it up to modern day standards.
- 5.) We would also take the opportunity to add a man safe access.

**ANTICIPATED COST:** In the region of £20,000 to £40,000 plus the cost of access scaffolding.

A better more detailed estimate to be obtained if the roof was fully lit and a close inspection carried out. We feel the top end of the spend would be in the region of £60,000 but a lot of this cost will relate to scaffolding. We would like to see a scaffolding which roofs over the top of the main roof to protect the apartments from water damage.

Please see the Roof Section of this Report.

## 2.0) Chimneys

The flaunching seems to be deteriorating to the right hand chimney, which we were able to inspect properly, including a missing chimney pot which we believe is causing dampness within the chimney breast but is not visible due to the dry lining to the walls.



Right hand chimney



Missing chimney pot

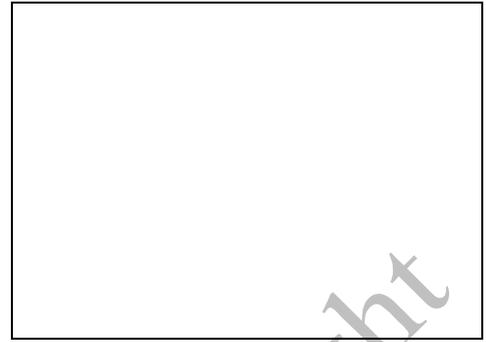
Flaunching

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There is also general cracking and deterioration around the chimneys particularly to the top where the flaunching is.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Carry out repairs to the chimneys.

**ANTICIPATED COST:** £1,000 to £5,000 assuming no scaffolding is required; please obtain quotations.



Cracking to the top

Please see the Chimney Section of this Report.

### 3.0) Parapet Walls

Parapet walls surround the roof to the front, sides and rear. Where we can see the parapet walls they are deteriorating and the render is coming away. In many areas they have simply been felted over, we assume to make them watertight and prevent rainwater getting in.



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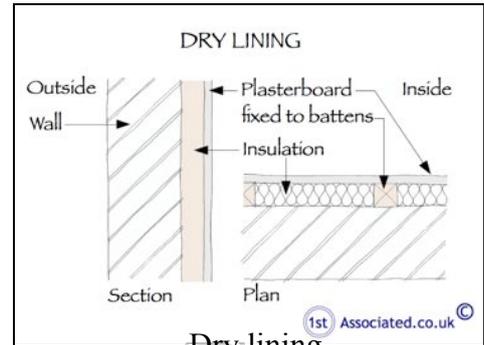


The felting over of parapet walls is usually carried out to stop dampness getting into the property. In this case we cannot see if dampness is getting in due to the dry lining.

Parapet wall – felt covered

Dry Lining Defined (Old Properties)

This technique is usually used on solid walls particularly where dampness is occurring. In older properties, where the internal wall is not flush, battens would be added and then lath and plaster. In more modern properties, the walls may be lined with plasterboard on battens or plaster dabs.



Dry lining



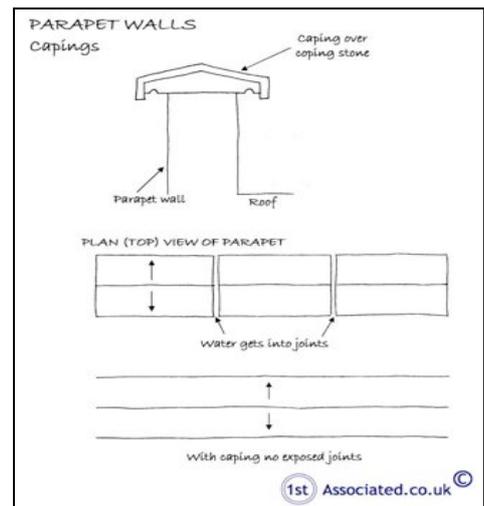
Old repair to top of parapet



Deteriorating render

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Strip back the felt, check the condition of the parapet walls, re-render the parapet walls and possibly add cappings to them.

**ANTICIPATED COST:** £10,000 to £15,000 plus any access scaffolding costs; please obtain quotations.



Cappings to parapet wall

Please see the Parapet Wall Section of this

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Report.

#### 4.0) Cracking and movement to the left hand gable

We can see there has been some cracking and movement in the left hand gable. This generally occurs where the gable ends are not bonded in to the main structure of the building.

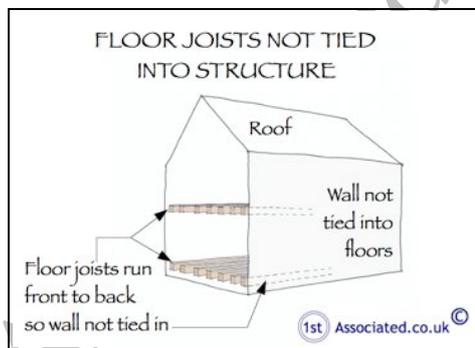


Cracking to left gable wall

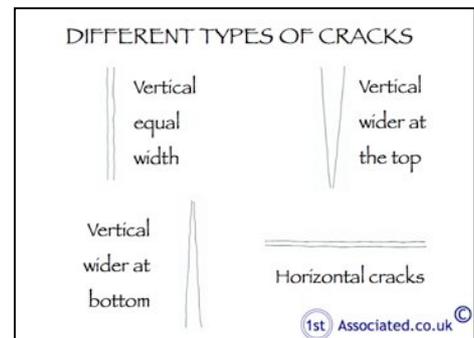
We would expect a similar thing to be happening to the right hand gable wall, however, this has had an extension to incorporate the lift and the en-suites which in turn will also act as a buttress.

#### Buttress defined

A buttress is traditionally an old, retaining, lean to wall, which was a way of dealing with movement in years gone by.



Wall not tied in



Cracking

We would add that due to the location of the crack we cannot establish what type of crack it is from ground level.

#### Other things that make us think there may be problems with this area.

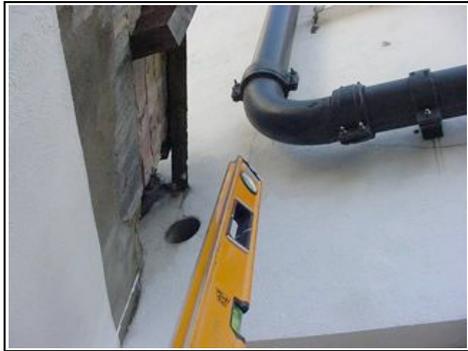
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We can see vertical cracks to the render even though it has been painted over in many areas. We can also see what appears to be dampness getting into the kitchen of one of the apartments, this requires further investigation on the left gable rear.



Vertical cracking to rear of the property



More vertical cracking to rear of property

We would also draw your attention to the piling being carried out to the rear of the property which can initiate this type of gable end problem.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** It is generally recommended to monitor any cracks for a year. Obviously within the short time scale that you have available to you this is not possible but we would be happy to discuss this further with regards to the risk of this matter.

The most common solution we have for this issue is for the existing owners to place an insurance claim, which you will then need to legally take over. This needs to be confirmed and agreed by your Legal Advisor that this can be transferred. This will then, if carried out correctly by your Legal Advisor, limit your future liability to any premium with the remainder being paid by the insurance company.

Our view has been limited as we have viewed the property from ground level and there is dry lining within the property which is effectively a false wall hiding any movement internally. We cannot view the gable end properly due to the close proximity of the neighbouring buildings.

Your Legal Advisor to also check with Insurance companies if any previous insurance claims have been made in relation to this property.

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Finally please see our comments further on in the report with regards to work that has been carried out to the rear of the property where deep piling looks to have taken place.

Piling defined

This is where piles go down through the London clay to find a firm bed of rock to sit on. This can cause disturbance.

**ANTICIPATED COST:** If your Legal Advisor correctly draws up an agreement with the existing owners on an insurance claim this should be held to whatever the premium is; please obtain quotations.

Please see the Walls Section of this Report.

**5.0) Dampness**

We found the damp readings to the lower ground floor to be over and above what we would expect in this standard of property.

We noted under the stairs that the floors have been raised. This could be:-

- 1.) To hide dampness
- 2.) For the addition of a new style of floor and underfloor heating.
- 3.) Or both!



Dampness readings



Dampness



Dampness

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Dampness on the rear left side lower ground floor



Checking dampness to floor on rear lower ground floor right side under the stairs

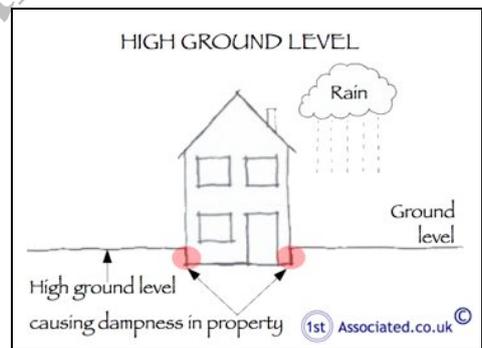
### 5.1) High ground levels

To the sides of the property we believe that the ground level may be high and higher than the internal level. Also where the paving has been added is also a high ground level area.

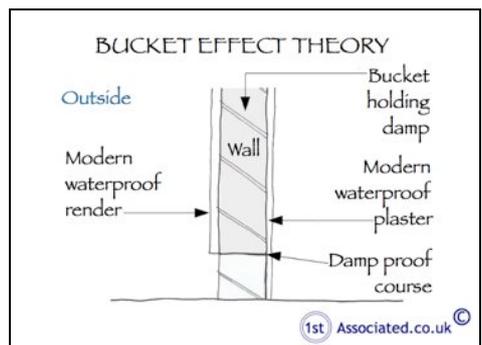
**ACTION REQUIRED:** Further investigation needs to be carried out as how best to resolve the dampness. We can see that running gullies have been put in to both the front and the rear of the property, which look relatively new and this could alleviate the problem.

However to the gable ends we feel in addition to this there may be a lack of sunlight and air movement.

The ground floor apartments look to be



High ground level



Bucket effect

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unoccupied which will also contribute to the increased damp readings.

We would advise on this age, type and style of property we recommend that you avoid using specialist damp proof companies that add chemicals and waterproof layers to resolve damp problems which can cause what is known as the “bucket effect” or “bucket theory”.

Please see the Dampness Section of this Report.

### 6.0) Possible drainage problems

We feel there may be drainage problems as we can see some drainage rods on the ground to the left hand side of the property. Also some of the manholes have been either covered over or are difficult to access which is very unusual as normally Building Control, when looking at any new works such as drainage, will ensure that proper access is available to the drainage points.



Covered over rodding eye



Wall over manhole

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**ACTION REQUIRED:** Your Legal Advisor to check and confirm that Building Regulation Approval has been obtained for drainage alterations etc.

Please see the Drainage Section of this Report.

### 7.0) Development work to the rear

The development to the rear of the property has involved piling. We assume this has recently been carried out and they were literally exposing the pile end caps whilst the survey was taking place.

Developments such as these would normally be covered by Local Authority Approvals and Party Wall Agreements.

In our experience, a Schedule of Condition is usually carried out to the external of the property, when development work like this is being carried out. This is done by the Party Wall Surveyor who you may have had appointed on your behalf.

We will be more than happy to liaise with the Party Wall Surveyor if you advise of us their contact details before legally committing to purchase this property.

We were advised by XXX that she has details on this and that they are building within seven metres of the property. We have not seen this information.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Your Legal



Rear garden



Path to rear on left side has been exposed

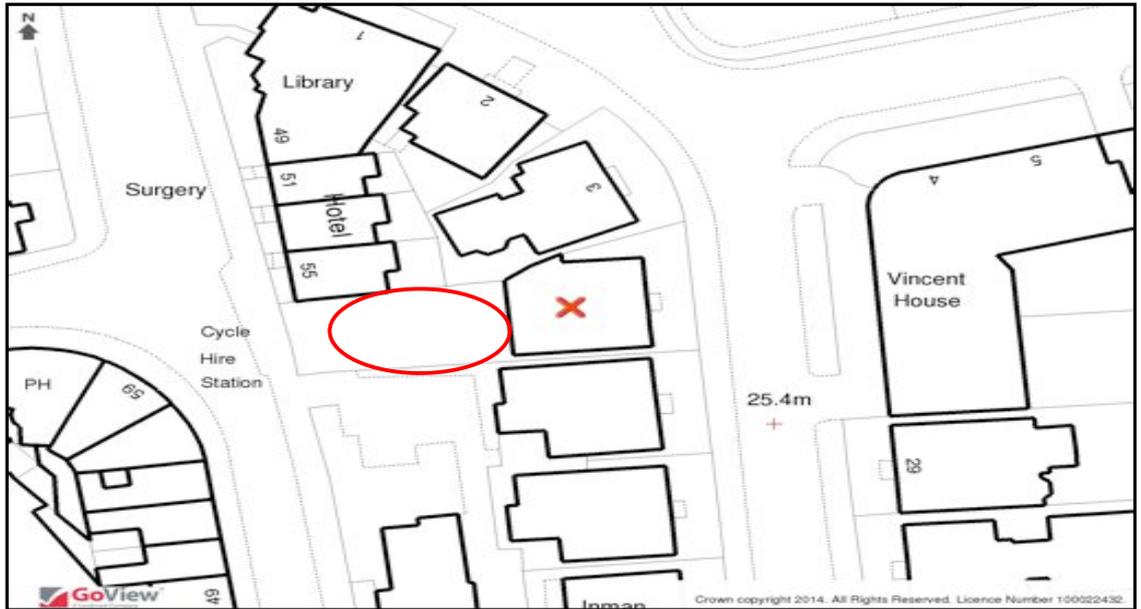
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Advisor should carry out full investigations with regards to the Party Wall Act and the Party Wall Surveyors to make sure this procedure is taking place correctly.



**8.0) Raised area of Area being developed the floor**

We can see that there are slightly raised areas where the floor is settled onto the structure of the building which are hidden by the floor covering, nevertheless you can still feel a slight rise in the floor in each of the apartments.



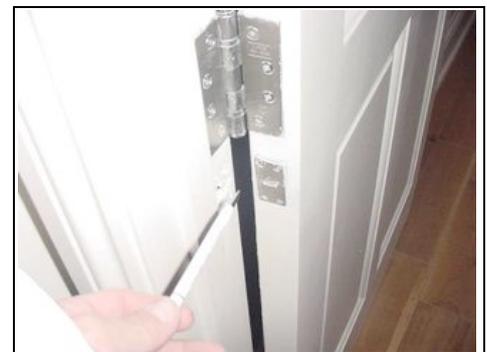
Floor raised area

**9.0) Services**

**9.1) Fire Regulations**

Some of the door closers are missing to the fire doors within the property.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Full check on Fire Safety of the building is required. We have not carried out any tests in relation to safety measures.



Door closer missing

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Please see the Services Section of this Report.

## **High Priority**

*We normally put here things that we feel will be difficult to resolve and will need serious consideration.*

There is nothing which we feel falls within this section providing you are happy with the characteristics and associated costs of the property which we have mentioned throughout the report and that you are happy to carry out the work and the investigations that we have recommended.

## **Other Items**

Moving on to more general information.

## **Maintenance**

We have had discussions with XXX, your representative, with regards to the maintenance and have been advised that you are looking to refurbish the properties in the next few years and as such we have not highlighted maintenance in the usual way.

Furthermore XXX has advised us that relatively small costs (compared to the value of the property) in the tens of thousands should be excluded from the Executive Summary. We therefore emphasise that you do need to read the main body of the report.

As we always advise this age, type and style of property will require ongoing maintenance and repair.

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In this case there has been a lack of maintenance externally, for example the walls, the parapet walls, the render, the windows and the external joinery and it would appear that most of the money has been spent on the internal finish.

## Services

Whilst we have carried out a visual inspection only of the services within the property and we would always recommend you have your own specific testing for each of the services. We also need to advise you of the following:

## Electrics

An Institute of Electrical Engineers (IEE) test and report should have been carried out as these properties have been rented out. These should be carried out by an NICEIC registered and approved electrical contractor or equivalent.

## Heating

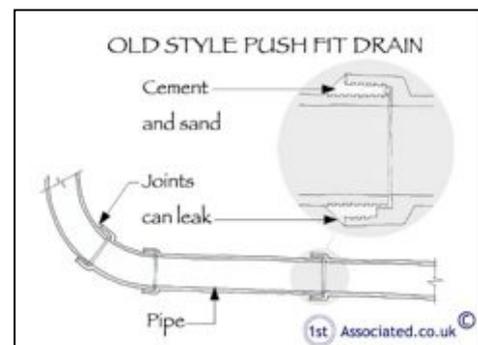
Again as the property has been rented out there should have been servicing every year and should have boiler certificates for every year.

We would recommend that the system be tested and overhauled before exchange of contracts and that a regular maintenance contract be placed with an approved heating engineer.

## Drainage

Please see our earlier comments regarding drainage.

In older properties, such as this, drainage was often push fitted together rather than bonded together which means that they may leak over the years. Whilst we ran the tap for 15 minutes without any build up or blockages the only way to be 100% certain of the condition of the drains is to have a closed circuit TV camera report.



Push fit drain

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## **Water Supply**

There is danger in older properties of having a lead water supply; we would recommend that you speak to the water company to ask them if they have carried out such replacement, as you will be re-piping much of the water used in the building it gives an ideal opportunity to also check for any remaining lead pipes.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** We would reiterate that we recommend with regard to all services that you have an independent check by a specialist contractor.

## **Purchase Price**

We have not been asked to comment upon the purchase price in this instance, we have however referred you to sources of general information on the housing market within the Information on the Property Market Section, which can be found in the Appendices at the end of the Report.

## **Every Business Transaction has a Risk**

Every business transaction has a risk, only you can assess whether that risk is acceptable to you and your circumstances. You should now read the main body of the Report paying particular attention to any “**ACTION REQUIRED**” points.

## **Estimates of Building Costs**

Where we have offered an estimate of building costs please remember we are not experts in this area. We always recommend you obtain quotations for the large jobs before purchasing the property (preferably three quotes). The cost of building work has many variables such as the cost of labour and estimates can of course vary from area to area when giving a general indication of costs. For unskilled labour we currently use between £75 and £125 per day (the higher costs in the city areas) and for tradesmen we use between £100 and £200 per day for an accredited, qualified, skilled tradesman. Other variations

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include the quality of materials used and how the work is carried out, for example off ladders or from scaffold.

If you obtain builders estimates that vary widely, we would advise the work is probably difficult or open to various interpretations and we would recommend a specification is prepared. It would usually be best to have work supervised if it is complex, both of which we can do if so required.

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## SUMMARY UPON REFLECTION



The Summary Upon Reflection is a second summary so to speak, which is carried out when we are doing the second or third draft a few days after the initial survey when we have had time to reflect upon our thoughts on the property. We would add the following in this instance:

We would refer you to our comments in the Executive Summary, 'Plus points', 'Medium Priority' and 'High Priority' Section and ask that you re-read these.

As a general comment for any work required we would always recommend that you obtain at least three quotations for any work from a qualified, time served tradesperson or a competent registered building contractor prior to legal completion.

We would ask that you read the Report in full and contact us on any issues that you require further clarification on.

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## **MORE ABOUT THE REPORT FORMAT**

Just a few more comments about the Report format before you read the actual main body of the Report.

### **TENURE – FREEHOLD (OR AS GOOD AS)**

We have assumed that the property is to be sold Freehold or Long leasehold, with no unusual or onerous clauses and that vacant possession will be available on completion. Your Legal Advisor should confirm that this is the case.

### **ESTATE AGENTS – FRIEND OR FOE?**

It is important to remember that the estate agents are acting for the seller (usually known as the vendor) and not the purchaser and are therefore eager to sell the property (no sale – no fee!). Equally selling and buying agents have a vested interest. We are employed as Independent Chartered Surveyors and offer an independent point of view.

### **SOLICITOR/LEGAL ADVISOR**

To carry out your legal work you can use a solicitor or a legal advisor. We have used both terms within the report.

### **TERMS OF ENGAGEMENT/LIMITATIONS**

This report is being carried out under our terms of engagement for Building Surveys, as agreed to and signed by yourselves. If you have not seen or are not happy with the terms of engagement please phone immediately 0800 298 5424 or email the secretary from which this survey came from.

### **OUR AIM IS ONE HUNDRED PERCENT SATISFACTION**

Our aim is for you to be completely happy with the service we provide, and we will try and help you in whatever way possible with your property purchase - just phone us.

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# THE DETAILED PART OF THE REPORT FOLLOWS, WORKING FROM THE TOP OF THE PROPERTY DOWNWARDS

From our investigations the property is Grade II Listed (your Legal Advisor should confirm this and make their own enquiries) and as such it will require various permissions to be obtained before work is carried out, over and above that normally required and possibly the use of appropriate materials for the age, type and style of property.



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## EXTERNAL

# CHIMNEY STACKS AND PARAPET WALLS



### Chimney Stacks

*Chimneys developed originally from open fires placed within buildings. From this, the chimney has developed to its present day format where it is used as an aesthetic feature and focal point rather than purely just to heat the room.*

There are two brick chimneys to this property they are located to the left and the right (all directions given as you face the property).

### Chimney One - right

This chimney is brick finished with several chimney pots. It looked in below average condition considering its age, type and style. We could see that the chimney has been re-pointed where we could see dampness has been getting in and one chimney pot is completely missing. We also noted cracking in the flaunching.



Chimney -right

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Please see our comments within the Executive Summary.



Flaunchings

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## Chimney Two - left

We did not have a close view of the back of the chimney. From what we could see from within the roof it looked to be allowing dampness in.

We noted that there appears to have been some patch repair work including a new flashing which may have resolved this dampness.



Chimney -left

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Double Check the pointing, flaunching and chimney pots. Please see our comments within the Executive Summary

**ANTICIPATED COST:** A few hundred pounds to £1,000; Please obtain quotations.



Patch repair and new flashing

### Flashings Defined

Flashings prevent dampness from entering the property, usually at junctions where materials change. Such a junction is the one between the chimney and the roof.

### Flaunchings Defined

A low, wide cement mortar fillet surrounding the flue terminal on top of the chimneystack to throw off rainwater.

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## Parapet Walls

*Parapet walls are usually walls that are above roof level and often sit on the boundary of the property.*

In this case there are parapet walls to the front, sides and rear of the property originally brick built, now with a render finish. We can comment that generally they are in poor condition, some have been felted over completely and others are left in a deteriorating condition.



**ACTION REQUIRED:** Please see our comments within the Executive Summary.

Felt covered parapet wall

### Render Defined

A sand and cement external coating applied in two or three coats or layers.

Finally, we were only able to see approximately sixty percent of the parapet wall, therefore we have made our best assumptions based upon what we could see. A closer inspection may reveal more.

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**Roof Windows (Also known as roof lights or Velux windows which is the trade or generic name)**

The property has a roof light to the front of the property to the lower ground floor. The glass in the window appears to be broken. We could not see the window very well because of the scaffolding surrounding it.



Roof window

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Repair roof window and consider adding security in the form of bars or video camera system.

Finally, we have made our best assumptions on the overall condition of the chimney stacks, parapet walls and roof window from the parts we could see we could see above roof level. The inspection was made from ground level within the boundaries of the property (unless otherwise stated) using a x16 zoom lens on a digital camera. A closer inspection may reveal latent defects.

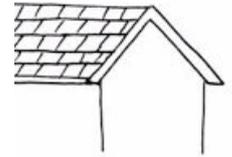
Please also see Chimney Breasts, Flues and Fireplaces Section of this Report.

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## ROOF COVERINGS AND UNDERLAYERS

*The Roof Coverings and Underlayers section considers the condition of the outer covering of the roof. Such coverings usually endure the extremes of climate and temperatures. They are susceptible to deterioration, which ultimately leads to water penetration.*

*Dependent upon the age of your property and the type of construction it may or may not be present, please read on:*

We will consider the roofs in three areas:-

- 1.) Main roof
- 2.) Rear flat roof
- 3.) Right flat roof

### Main Roof

The main roof is pitched and clad with slate and is divided into the front and rear roof. We have viewed the roof from the roof itself and this looks in below average condition considering the roofs age type and style.



Slate roof

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Please see our comments within the Executive Summary.

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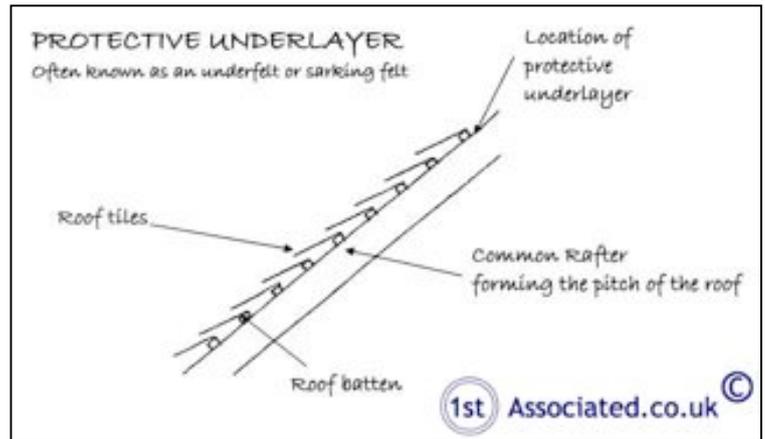
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## **Protective Underlayer (Often known as the sarking felt or underfelt)**

*From the 1940s onwards felts were used underneath tiles/slates to stop wind damage and water penetration, these in more recent years have been replaced with plastic equivalents. These are commonly known as underfelts but now the name is not really appropriate, as felt is not the only material used.*



Protective Underlayer

When we inspected the loft space we found a Hessian base Bitumen membrane. This type of membrane has been used since the 1960s. We generally found it to be in average condition, with damage in some areas which is what we typically find.



This photo shows the common rafters (the ones that form the pitch of the roof) and the dark area between is the underlayer.

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## **Flat Roofs**

*Whilst these roofs are called "flat", present building regulations and good building practice presently requires a minimum fall of 12 degrees.*

*Flat roofs are formed in a variety of materials. Difficulties can arise when the water is not discharged from the roof but sits upon it, as this can soon lead to deterioration which flat roofs are renowned for.*

### **Flat roof - rear**

The flat Asphalt roof to the rear looks to have been patched and repaired. We could also see areas of ponding to the roof.

Ponding defined

Where water sits or ponds on the roof



Flat roof - rear  
Ponding visible

### **Flat roof - right**

This roof is part Asphalt with, unusually, a section of timber boarding.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Ad hoc repairs to both flat roofs

**ANTICIPATED COST:** Set aside a sum of £1,000 to £2,000 for repair work.



Flat roof -right

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## **Further information on flat roofs**

### **Ventilation**

Building Regulations require flat roofs to be ventilated. Building Regulations are not retrospective but the reason for the requirement is to make sure that any moisture that enters the roof construction is dispelled by way of ventilation. We would suggest that if the opportunity arises ventilation should be provided.

### **Insulation**

We feel it is unlikely that there is insulation within the roof or a vapour barrier, without the vapour barrier and combined with inadequate ventilation there will be an increase in the risk of wet or dry rot.

Insulation could be added when the roofs are replaced.

All the roofs were inspected from ground level with the aid of a x16 zoom lens on a digital camera. Flat roofs have been inspected from the main roof, they have not been accessed due to safety reasons.

Finally, we were only able to see approximately seventy percent of the main roof from ground level, or via any other vantage point that we managed to gain. We have made our best conclusions based upon what we could see, however a closer inspection may reveal other defects.

For further comments with regard to ventilation please see the Roof Structure and Loft Section.

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## ROOF STRUCTURE AND LOFT

### (ALSO KNOWN AS ROOF SPACE OR ATTIC SPACE)

*The roof structure or framework must be built in a manner which is able to give adequate strength to carry its own weight together with that of the roof covering discussed in the previous section and any superimposed loads such as snow, wind, foot traffic etc.*

#### Main Roof – (no access to rear pitched roof)

##### Roof Access

The main roof is accessed via the loft hatch located on the landing of the top floor apartment. We have not been able to access the rear of the main roof.

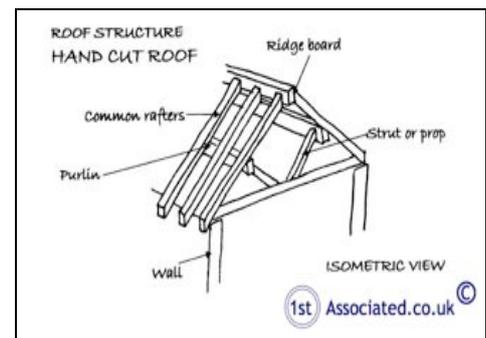
There is a loft ladder but no electric light or secured floorboards. We recommend that these be added, as it will make the loft space safer and easier to use.

The insulation is over the joists so you need to take extra care when in the roof.

The whole of this loft has been viewed by torch light, which has limited our viewing slightly. There is also an access onto the main roof to the front section of the roof area.

##### Roof Structure

This type of roof structure has what is known as a cut timber roof. This is a roof that is purpose made and hand built on site. Without the original design details we cannot categorically confirm that there are no defects in the design, however it is in line with what we typically see although the condition is below average.



Hand cut roof

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## Roof Timbers – no access to rear roof

We have inspected the roof structure for:

- 1) Serious active woodworm
- 2) Structurally significant defects to the timbers
- 3) Structurally significant dry rot
- 4) Structurally significant wet rot

Our examination was limited by the general configuration of the roof, the insulation and general items. What we could see was generally found to be in below average condition considering its age. We believe there are problems with the rafter feet and there is also some bowing to some of the timbers.

It is also feasible that there are problems in the roof that are hidden.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** The only way to be 100 per cent certain is to have the roof cleared and checked. Please see our comments within the Executive Summary.

## Water Tanks

We could see old disused water tanks within the roof space both plastic and cast iron.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Remove old water tanks.



General view of inside of roof



Props added to left hand timbers



Replacement timber – right hand timbers



Old water tank

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## **Ventilation**

There is no ventilation in the roof, we would recommend this is added.

## **Insulation**

Please see the Thermal Efficiency Section of this Report.

## **Electrical Cables**

We can often identify the age of an electrical installation by the age of wiring found in the roof. In this case we could not see it due to the mass of insulation.

Please see our further comments in the Services Section of this Report.

Finally, we would ask you to note that this is a general inspection of the roof, i.e. we have not examined every single piece of timber. We have offered a general overview of the condition and structural integrity of the area.

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## GUTTERS AND DOWNPIPES



*The function of the gutters and downpipes is to carry rainwater from the roof to the ground keeping the main structure as dry as possible.*

*Defective gutters and downpipes are a common cause of dampness that can, in turn, lead to the development of rot in timbers. Regular inspection and adequate maintenance are therefore essential if serious problems are to be avoided.*

### Hopper Heads and Downpipes

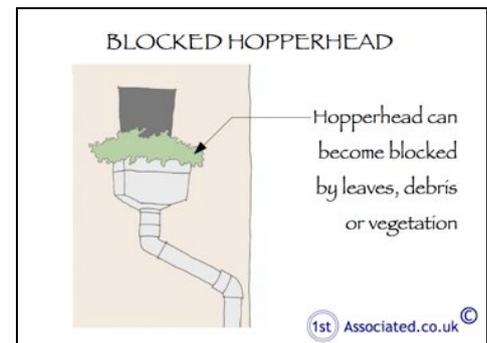
The property has a combination of the original cast and plastic iron hopper heads and downpipes. They are in average condition for their age, type and style. Any cast iron of this age will need maintenance but if regularly maintained it can last longer than plastic, in our experience.

Often where cast iron and plastic mix they do not fit properly as cast iron was originally in imperial measurements whereas plastic is often in metric.

Unfortunately in this case the property has been recently painted and as such this hides any rainwater pattern staining but from what we could see the hopper heads are modern plastic hopper heads and tend to be smaller than the original hopper heads and can overflow.



Hopper head



Typical problems with hopper heads

**ACTION REQUIRED:** We would recommend that the property is inspected next time it rains heavily to see how the rainwater is cleared from the property.

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## Valley gutter

The downpipe opening in the valley gutter is relatively small. We often come across this and it can block and cause back-ups in the valley gutter.

The junction between the valley gutter and the roof is important and this appears to be letting water in.



Valley gutter



Small opening in valley gutter downpipe

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Please see our comments within the Executive Summary.

## Soil and Vent Pipe

The property has both cast iron and plastic soil and vent pipes to the rear of the property.

There are problems with the rodding eyes at the base of the soil and vent pipes where the paving has been positioned too high.



Rodding eye blocked off at base of soil and vent pipe



Soil and vent pipe

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**ACTION REQUIRED:** Adjust to allow rodding eye to be used.

Finally, hopper heads and downpipes and soil and vent pipes have been inspected from ground level. As it was not raining at the time of the inspection it is not possible to confirm 100 per cent that the rainwater installation is free from blockage, leakage etc. or that it is capable of coping with long periods of heavy rainfall. Our comments have therefore been based on our best assumptions.

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## WALLS



*External walls need to perform a variety of functions. These include supporting upper floors and the roof structure, resisting dampness, providing adequate thermal and sound insulation, offering resistance to fire and being aesthetically presentable.*

The walls are finished in painted Stucco render to the front and parts of the sides and the rear. Brickwork is also visible to the rear and sides.

### Render

The external walls are finished in a Stucco painted render. This is an original feature of this type and style of building with lower areas having a stone-look to imitate the grander properties.



Stucco render

### Detailing

In this case we can see corbelling, columns, pediments and ledges.



Ledges



Columns



Render detailing

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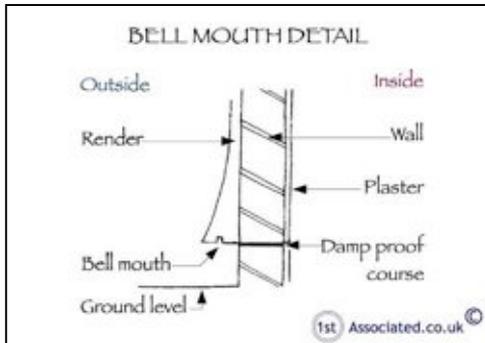
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### Bell mouth to base of property

To the base of the render we could not see a bell mouth detail which can lead to dampness of the perimeter. However this could be hidden by the paving slabs to the rear. We were pleased to see a running gully.



Bell mouth



No bell mouth

### Hollow areas

We were unable to carry out our usual tap test (hitting the wall with the back of a hammer) due to the workmen and scaffolding on site.

### Painted render/painted walls

Do not underestimate the amount of time/cost it will take to repaint the property particularly as there is high level work which is likely to need scaffolding which can be expensive.

### Painted render

The property has been painted which has effectively covered up areas, such as cracks etc. we would usually be able to inspect. To the rear part painting has taken place and we can still see cracks.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Please see



Painted render

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our comments within the Executive Summary.

## Cracking

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Please see our comments within the Executive Summary.

## Brickwork

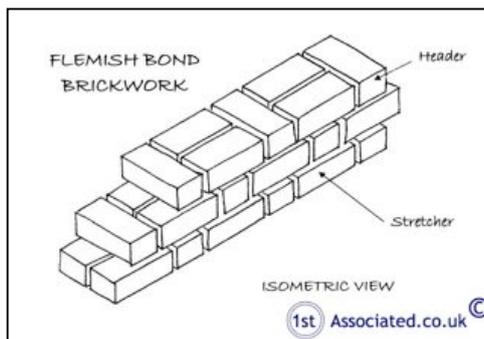
The property is built in a brick originally in a lime mortar in what is known as Flemish bond brickwork.

### Flemish Bond

The term Flemish Bond relates to the way the bricks are bonded together and have a pattern visible from the outside of the property that shows the end of the brick (header), then the side of the brick (stretcher), then the end of the brick, then the side of the brick, and this pattern repeats course after course, i.e. header-stretcher, header-stretcher.



Flemish bond



Flemish bond brickwork

### Timber lintels and bonding timbers

Before the 19th Century, the practice of building timbers into external walls was almost universal. These were known as bonding timbers. They are of course prone to rot as solid walls allow dampness through. Unfortunately, without opening up the structure, we are unable to confirm if this is the case.

### Penetrating dampness

Generally Flemish Bond brickwork is liable to penetrating dampness internally, dependent upon the condition of the brickwork and the exposure to the weather. In this case it is essential that external faces be kept in good condition.

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### **Ad hoc repointing**

Ad –hoc repointing is needed to the brickwork particularly to the sides where dampness is coming in.

### **Cracking to left hand gable wall**

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Please see our comments within the Executive Summary.

Finally, the external walls have been inspected visually from ground level and/or randomly via a ladder. Where the window and door lintels are concealed by render / brickwork / plasterwork we cannot comment on their construction or condition. In buildings of this age timber lintels, concrete lintels, rubbed brick lintels or metal lintels are common, which can be susceptible to deterioration that is unseen, particularly if in contact with dampness.

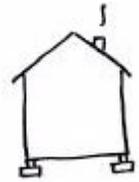
Our comments have been based upon how the render / brickwork / plasterwork has been finished. We have made various assumptions based upon what we could see and how we think the render / brickwork / plasterwork would be if it were opened up for this age, style and type of construction. We are however aware that all is not always as it seems in the building industry and often short cuts are taken. Without opening up the structure we have no way of establishing this.

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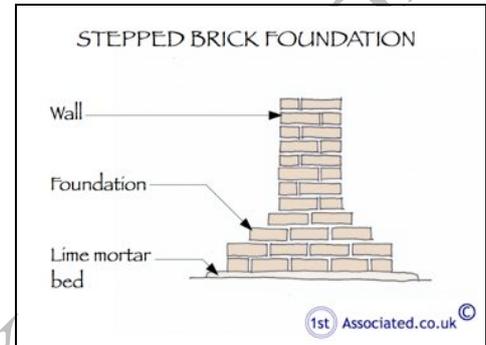


## FOUNDATIONS

*The foundations function is, if suitably designed and constructed, to transfer the weight of the property through the soil. As a general comment, many properties prior to the 19th Century have little or no foundations, as we think of them today, and typically a two-storey property would have one metre deep foundations.*

### Foundations

Given the age of the property you may find different depths of foundations. We would expect to find a stepped brick foundation possibly with a bedding of lime mortar and possibly a concrete foundation for the new extension, for example to the right hand side for the lift shaft.



Stepped brick foundation

### London Clay

As with most properties in the London area, this property stands on London Clay. It is therefore more susceptible than most should drains leak or trees be allowed to overgrow etc. It is not unusual to have some settlement in London properties.

### Piling

Deep piling has taken place to the rear of the property which can sometimes disturb nearby buildings and as such there would usually be a Party Wall Award with Party Wall Surveyors representing each of the adjoining buildings.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** XXX has advised that your Legal Advisors will look into this. We are happy to copy further if you so wish, ideally before legal completion.

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## **Building Insurance Policy**

You should ensure that the Building Insurance Policy contains adequate provision against any possibility of damage arising through subsidence, landslip, heave etc.

It is your responsibility to check out prior to commitment to purchase that insurance is available on the property on the basis of the things we have reported in the survey. Much as we would like to we are unable to keep up with the changing insurance market and give you advice with regard to this.

## **Cracks**

Please remember to talk about any cracks identified within the property. Often insurers will refer to progressive and non-progressive cracking. Unfortunately this is something we are unable to comment upon from a one-off inspection; the Building Research Establishment recommends a year of monitoring of any cracking.

We would refer you to our comments with regard to building insurance throughout this report.

Finally, we have not excavated the foundations but we have drawn conclusions from our inspection and our general knowledge of this type, age and style of property.

We would always recommend that you remain with the existing insurance company of the property.

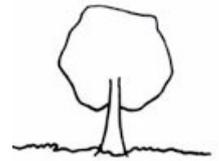
As no excavation has been carried out we cannot be 100 percent certain as to how the foundation has been constructed and we can only offer our best assumptions and an educated guess, which we have duly done.

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# TREES

*Trees within influencing distance of a property can affect the foundations by affecting the moisture content of the soil.*

There are trees within what we would term as influencing distance you do need to speak to your insurance company as they may have a different interpretation for insurance reasons.

There is a Pollarded tree to the front of the property.

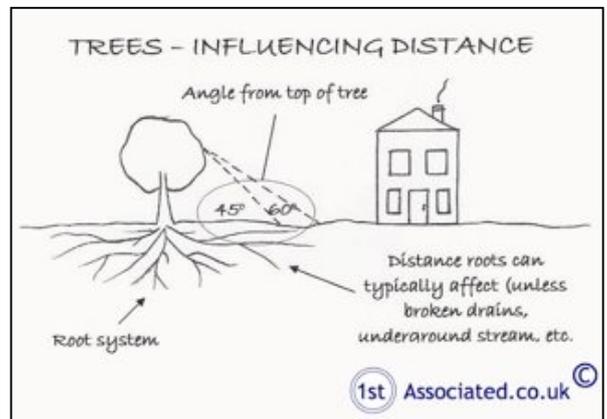
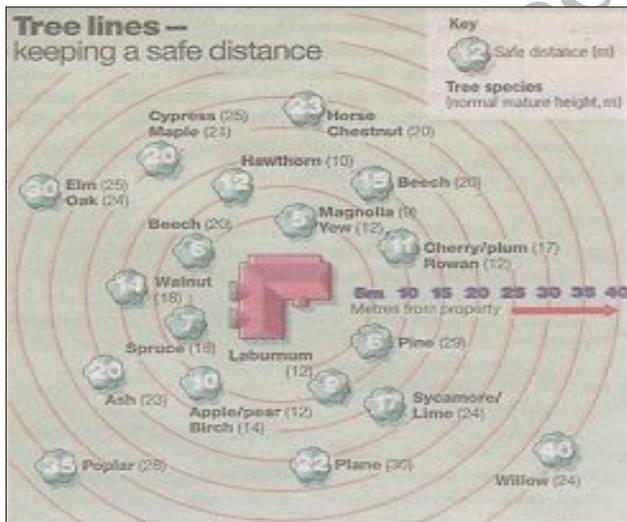


Pollarded tree

## Pollarded Tree defined

These tend to have a thicker trunk due to the repeated pollarding, cutting/pruning of the branches and also an expansive root system which can affect property.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Most insurance companies would expect you to advise them of this.



Influencing distance of trees to a property

## Influencing Distance Defined

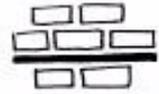
This is the distance in which a tree may be able to cause damage to the subject property. It is not quite as simple as our sketch; it depends on the tree, its maturity, the soil type etc., etc.

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## **DAMP PROOF COURSE**

Please also refer to the External Areas Section.

*The Building Act of 1878 required a damp proof course to be added to all newly built properties within the London area. It also required various other basic standards. These requirements were gradually taken up (or should that be grudgingly taken up) throughout London and then the country as a whole, although this took many years for it to become standard practice.*

In properties of this age it is unlikely that a damp proof course would have been built in originally. Generally it is now considered inappropriate to add a chemical damp proof course into an older property. We would comment as follows: In this case we cannot see a DPC because of the render but we suspect because of the age of the property there is not an original DPC.

Your attention is drawn to the section of the report specifically dealing with dampness.

Finally, sometimes it is difficult for us to identify if there is a damp proof course in a property. We have made our best assumptions based upon our general knowledge of the age, type and style of this property.

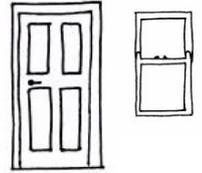
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## FASCIAS AND SOFFITS AND WINDOWS AND DOORS



*This section covers fascias, soffits and bargeboards and windows and doors, and any detailing such as brick corbelling etc.*

*Fascias and soffits offer protection to the rafter feet and also allow the securing of the guttering. Windows primary functions are to admit light and air, but they also have thermal and sound properties. The doors allow access and egress within the property.*

### Fascias and Soffits

Typically there are no fascias and soffits in this type of property.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Please see the parapet walls section of the report.

### Windows and Doors

The property has a combination of painted timber single glazed sliding sash windows to the front with plastic double glazed windows to the rear.

The timber windows would benefit from redecoration.



Sliding sash windows

#### General Information on Sliding Sash Windows

If you have not lived in a property with sliding sash windows previously, you should be aware that typically they are draughty and rattle. There is no easy way to eliminate this problem. In our experience, a general ease and adjustment of the windows and the addition of a plastic tube draught sealer (available from most DIY stores) and regular redecoration is the best option to minimise the draughtiness of the windows in this case.

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## **Plastic windows**

There are paint marks etc. to some of the plastic windows which will benefit from cleaning. The window ledges will benefit from redecoration.

### **Limited life of double glazing**

We would draw your attention to the fact that sealed double glazed units can fail, particularly as a result of poor workmanship during installation. Failure of the seal leads to condensation between the two panes of glass and simply replacing the affected units may not provide a satisfactory long-term solution.



Plastic double glazed windows

### **Transferable Guarantees**

Enquiries should be made as to the existence of any transferable guarantees by your legal advisor. Generally it is considered that double glazed units have a life of about ten years.



Window ledge viewed from top floor apartment needs painting

Finally, we have carried out a general and random inspection of the external joinery. In the case of the fascias and soffits it is typically a visual inspection from ground level. With the windows and doors we have usually opened a random selection of these during the course of the survey. In this section we are aiming to give a general overview of the condition of the external joinery. Please also see the Internal Joinery section.

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## EXTERNAL DECORATIONS

*The external decorations act as a protective coat for the building from the elements. Where this protective covering has failed, such as with flaking paintwork, the elements will infiltrate the structure. This is of particular concern as water is one of the major factors in damage to any structure.*

There is a lot of render to paint. It has been painted fairly recently to the front of the property and at low level to the rear. Do not underestimate the amount of time/cost it will take to repaint the property particularly as there is high level work which is likely to need scaffolding which can be expensive.

Finally, ideally external redecoration is recommended every four to five years dependent upon the original age of the paint, its exposure to the elements and the materials properties. Where painting takes place outside this maintenance cycle repairs should be expected. Ideally redecoration should be carried out during the better weather between XXX and XXX.

Please see our comments in the External Joinery section.

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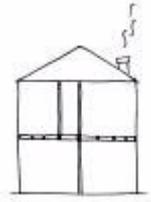
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## INTERNAL

# CEILINGS, WALLS, PARTITIONS AND FINISHES

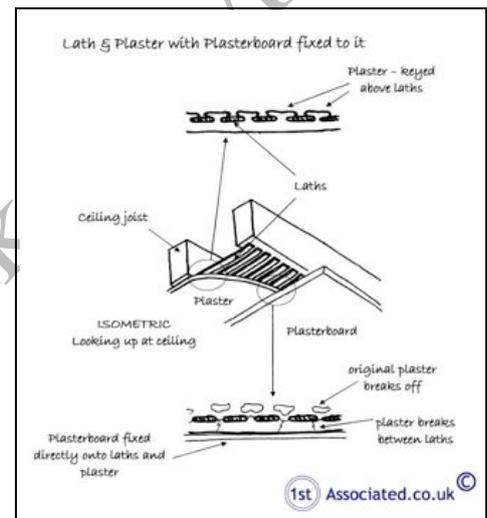


*In this section we look at the finish applied to the structural elements such as the plasterwork applied to the ceiling joists, walls or partitions, together with the construction of the internal walls and partitions.*

### Ceilings

From our visual inspection of the ceilings and our general knowledge of this age and type of construction we believe that the ceilings are likely to be a mixture of lath and plaster (possibly skim coated with a Gypsum plaster) and plasterboard to the new areas.

There is also the possibility that the lath and plaster could have been overlaid with plasterboard.



#### Lath and Plaster Defined

Laths are thin strips of timbers which are fixed to the structure. Wet plaster is applied to the laths, usually in several layers. The plaster forms a key as it is forced between the laths. This plaster, once dry, is given further coats and often a decorative finish.

#### Plasterboard Defined

The usual name for Gypsum plasterboard which is building board with a core of aerated gypsum, usually enclosed between two sheets of heavy paper, used as a dry lining.

Lath and plaster ceiling with plasterboard cladding

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Close up of moulding in ground floor apartment



Ceiling with mouldings in ground floor apartment

## **Internal Walls and Partitions**

These are, we believe a mixture of solid and studwork construction. It is of course impossible to determine the construction without opening up the walls and we have therefore taken an educated guess.

### **Air vents**

There are vents within some of the studwork which need to be investigated further. We assume they are part of an air movement system within the property. We have not had any details of this.



Wall vent

### **Perimeter Walls**

Originally these would have been constructed with a wet plaster, possibly a lime plaster. We now believe this has been replaced with a Gypsum plaster finish and dry lining.



Hairline crack between bathroom and bedroom in top floor apartment – possible sign of movement to the gable end walls.

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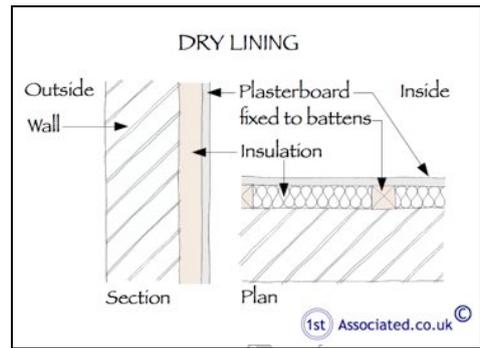
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### Dry lining/ false walling

The problem with dry lining for us is that it limits us viewing any cracks within the property and effectively hides them as it does any wet rot, dry rot and woodworm.

We would advise that we cannot be 100% certain of the wall construction without opening them up which goes beyond the scope of this report.



Dry lining

### Above average blown areas

Considering the general standard of the property we thought the number of blown areas of plaster internally was above average.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Please see our comments within the Executive Summary.

Finally, ceilings, walls and partitions have been inspected from floor level and no opening up has been undertaken (unless permission has been obtained by yourselves). In some cases the materials employed cannot be ascertained without samples being taken and damage being caused.

We cannot comment upon the condition of the structure hidden behind plaster, dry lining, other applied finishes, heavy furniture, fittings and kitchen units with fitted back panels.

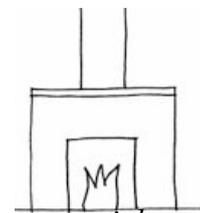
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## CHIMNEY BREASTS, FLUES AND FIREPLACES



*With the advent of central heating fireplaces tend to be more a feature than an essential function in most properties.*

The chimney breasts are located to the left hand and right hand side (all directions given as you face the front of the property).

At the time of the survey no chimneys were in use. Any chimneys that you do not propose to use should be capped and ventilated to prevent dampness. Note for



Fireplace upper ground floor apartment

example the missing chimney pot on the right hand side which needs capping and venting correctly.

Due to the dry lining and general reconfiguration of the property we were not able to establish if the chimney breasts were still in place throughout the property. We could only literally see them on the upper ground floor and at roof level.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Please see our comments with regards to the roofs in general.

Finally, we will comment on the condition of the chimney breast where we can see the chimney breast. If we can see a chimney breast has been removed we will inspect for signs of movement and advise. However, often the chimney breasts are hidden so we cannot comment. Also additional support can be concealed very well when chimney breasts are hidden particularly when plastered over.

Your Legal Advisor needs to specifically check with the Local Authority for removed chimneys and associated chimney breasts and Building Regulations Approvals and advise by e-mail immediately if chimney breasts are found to have been removed. We would recommend opening up the structure to check the condition. If we are not advised we will assume the relevant Building Regulations Approval has been obtained. It is strongly recommended that flues be cleaned and checked for obstructions prior to use to minimise the risk of hazardous fumes entering the building.

Please also see the Chimney Stacks, Flues and Parapet Walls section of this Report.

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# FLOORS



*Functionally floors should be capable of withstanding appropriate loading, preventing dampness, have thermal properties and durability. In addition to this upper floors should offer support for ceilings, resistance to fire and resistance to sound transfer.*

## Lower Ground Floor

The lower ground floor has a false floor system. This is also because of the under floor heating.

## Upper Floors

We have assumed that the ground, first, second and third floor construction is joist and floorboards with embedded timbers as this is typical in this age of property.



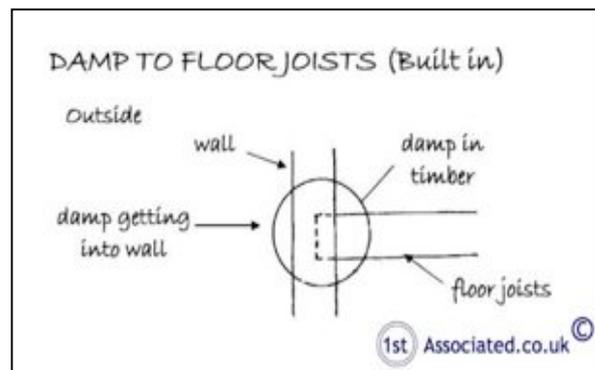
Stair and landing leading from lounge to kitchen upper ground



Wooden floor, lounge, upper ground floor

## Embedded timbers

It is very important in this age of property that you understand the concept and implication of embedded timbers. In this era of property timber was still considered one of the best building materials structurally and was used in theory to add strength, however, in practice this sometimes did not occur, for example, in lintels that rot.



Embedded timbers

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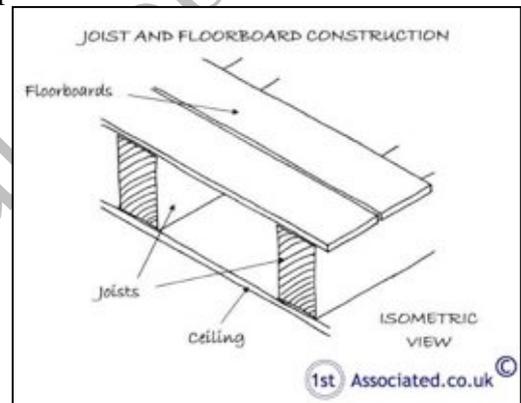


Where any timber is within a solid wall such as this there will be damp to some extent as these walls are meant to be partly damp and are often known as breathing walls which absorb moisture walls and then dissipate it, please see the sketch below. However during the course of this it does mean that the joists ends become damp which in turn can lead them to rot.



This is an example of embedded timbers from a building adjacent to yours

This is often why you have undulations within an older style floor. In this particular case all of the floors have had another floor applied over the original floor hiding it from us. Without opening up the floor, which we do not have permission to do, we are limited in what we can advise on.



Joist and floorboards

#### Joist and Floorboard Construction Defined

These are usually at first floor level consisting of a joist supported from the external walls, either built in or, in more modern times, sitting upon joist hangers, sometimes taking additional support from internal walls, with floorboards fixed down upon it.

#### Raised area settled onto structural walls

We can however see that there are slightly raised areas where the floor is settled onto the structure of the building which are hidden by the floor covering, nevertheless you can still feel a slight rise in the floor in each of the apartments.



Floor covering

Finally, we have not been able to view the actual floors themselves due to them being

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covered with fitted carpets, floor coverings, laminated flooring tiles, etc. The comments we have made are based upon our experience and knowledge of this type of construction. We would emphasise that we have not opened up the floors in any way or lifted any floorboards.

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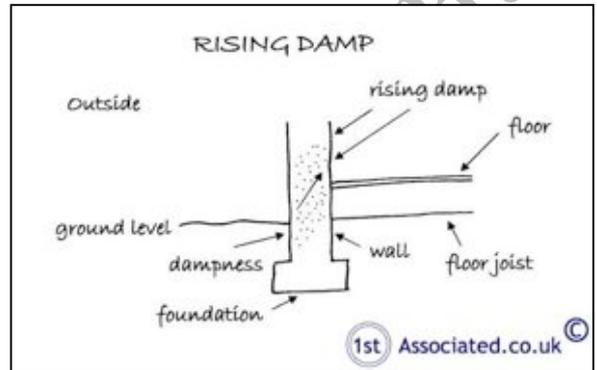


# DAMPNESS

*In this section we look at any problems that are being caused by dampness. It is therefore essential to diagnose the source of the dampness and to treat the actual cause and not the effect of the dampness.*

## Rising Damp

*Rising damp depends upon various components including the porosity of the structure, the supply of water and the rate of evaporation of the material, amongst other things. Rising damp can come from the ground, drawn by capillary action, to varying degrees of intensity and height into the materials above. Much evidence points towards there being true rising damp in only very rare cases.*



Rising damp

A random visual inspection and tests with a moisture meter have been taken to the perimeter walls. In this particular case we have found dampness higher than expected to lower ground floor.

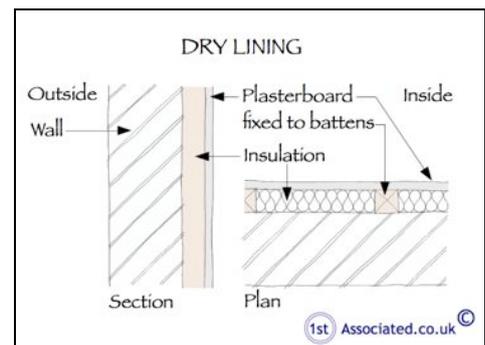
We were very limited in our inspection due to the dry lining and the false ground floor which is effectively hiding the area beneath. In some areas however, dampness can be seen to be coming through, for example to the rear bedroom.

We believe that the ground levels are high and that the bell mouth level is low as the pavement has been laid over the existing ground level.



Testing for rising damp

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Please see the Executive Summary.



Dry lining

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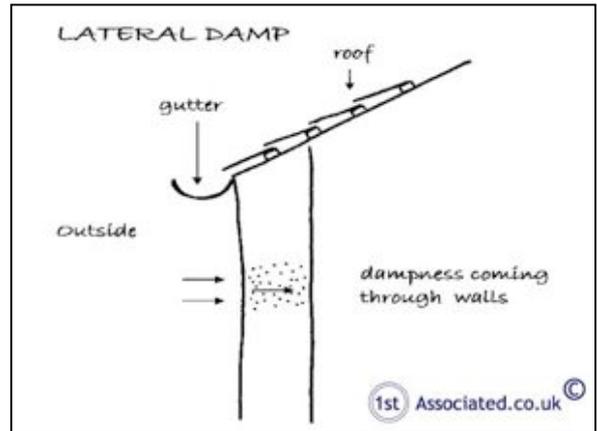
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## Lateral or Penetrating Dampness

*This is where water ingress occurs through the walls. This can be for various reasons such as poor pointing or wall materials or inadequate gutters and downpipes, such as poorly jointed gutters.*

We used a resistance meter on the external walls. We have not found significant dampness but we did find some dampness particularly to the left hand side.



Lateral dampness

We think the dampness may be due to adhoc re-pointing which is required and also in this particular case to the left hand side of the building a lack of sunlight and air movement means that the dampness remains for considerable periods of time.



Dampness in the kitchen –  
left hand wall

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

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## **Condensation**

*This is where the humidity held within the air meets a cold surface causing condensation.*

At the time of the inspection there were no obvious signs of condensation.

## **Additional bathrooms and showers**

As usual we would advise that it does depend upon how you utilise the building. In our experience this era of building does not cope particularly well with the many en-suite bathrooms and showers that have been added to it.

## **Washing and drying internally**

We also find that in this type of building where there are no external areas washing and drying is carried out inside, often without opening windows and doors and often drying clothes on radiators which in turn causes condensation.

A building of this age, type and style acts almost like a sponge and common sense is needed with a balance between heating, cooling and ventilation of properties and opening windows to air the property regularly.

## **Extract fans in kitchens, bathrooms and drying areas**

A way of helping to reduce condensation is to have good large extract fans with humidity controlled thermostats within the kitchens, bathrooms and shower rooms and also in any areas used to dry clothes which are moisture generating areas.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** We would recommend large humidity controlled extract fans are added to kitchens, bathrooms, shower rooms and drying areas.

Finally, effective testing was prevented in areas concealed by heavy furniture, fixtures such as kitchen fittings with backboards, wall tiles and wall panelling. We have not carried out tests to BRE Digest 245, but only carried out a visual inspection.

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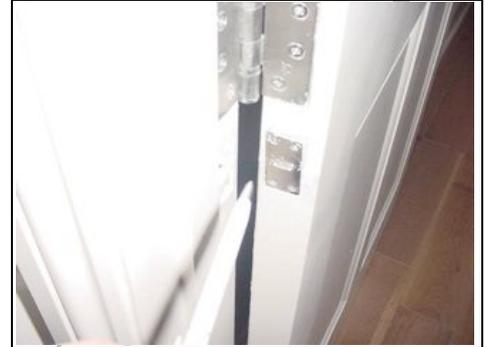
## INTERNAL JOINERY



*This section looks at the doors, the stairway, the skirting boards and the kitchen to give a general overview of the internal joinery's condition.*

### Doors

We noted that some of the fire doors did not have working door closers which we were surprised about as we were advised by the management company/selling agents that they had dealt with the management of the property. Contact details in appendices.



Door closer

### Staircase

There is a central main staircase that looks to be original. We did note that the stairs look to have been overclad and in some areas this has been poorly carried out.

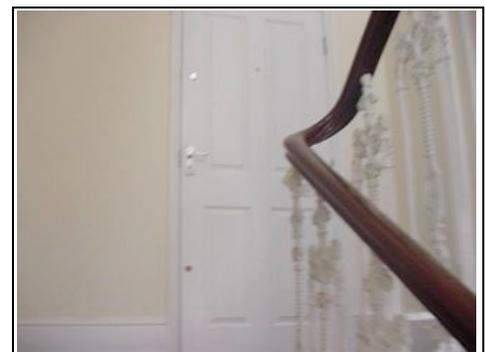
We were advised by the maintenance company that they had carried out maintenance on the property on the staircases but when questioned we were advised that this was only the re-polishing of the hand rail.



Stairs look to have been overclad and have a poor fit

### Staircases within the apartments

There are staircases within the apartments leading up and down to various rooms. These, in most cases also offer a secondary escape route should there be a fire.



Handrail recently re-polished

**ACTION REQUIRED:** You need to

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consult a specialist with regards to fire regulations in this size of property particularly to how people can access escape routes with the new building that is being built.

## **Kitchens**

The kitchens are located to the front left hand side in the upper floor kitchens and to the rear in the ground floor apartments. All kitchens are generally in good condition. We have not tested any of the kitchen appliances.

Finally, it should be noted that not all joinery has been inspected. We have viewed a random sample and visually inspected these to give a general overview of the condition. Please also see the External Joinery/Detailing section.

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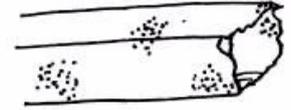
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## TIMBER DEFECTS



*This section considers dry rot, wet rot and woodworm. Wet and Dry rot are species of fungi, both need moisture to develop and both can be very expensive to correct. We would also add that in our experience they are also often wrongly diagnosed.*

### Dry Rot

*Dry rot is also sometimes known by its Latin name *Serpula lacrymans*. Dry rot requires constant dampness together with a warmish atmosphere and can lead to extensive decay in timber.*

We have not visually seen any significant dry rot during the course of our inspection. We would advise that we have not opened up the floors and we had a limited view of the roofs including no view of the rear pitched roof.

### Wet Rot

*Wet rot, also known by its Latin name *Contiophora puteana*, is far more common than dry rot. Wet rot darkens and softens the wood and is most commonly seen in window and doorframes, where it can relatively easily be remedied. Where wet rot affects the structural timbers in a property, which are those in the roof and the floor areas, it is more serious.*

We noted wet rot visible within the roof and there has clearly been wet rot in years gone by which has resulted in timbers being replaced and the propping of timbers. There may also be some wet rot under the lower ground floor.

Please note we have not been able to access the rear pitched roof.

Please see our comments about the roof structure.

Again, we would advise that we have not opened up the floors and have had a limited view of the roofs with no access to the rear pitched roof.

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## Woodworm

*Active woodworm can cause significant damage to timber. There are a variety of woodworm that cause different levels of damage with probably the worst of the most well known being the Death Watch Beetle. Many older properties have woodworm that is no longer active, this can often be considered as part of the overall character of the property.*

Please note we have not been able to access the rear pitched roof.

The roof is the main area that we look for woodworm. Within the front roof (no access to the rear pitched roof) we found no obvious visual signs of significant woodworm activity or indeed past signs of significant woodworm activity that has caused what we would term 'structurally significant' damage. In many properties there is an element of woodworm that is not active. Our inspection was restricted by the insulation covering some of the timbers and water tanks within the roof.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** If you wish to be 100 per cent certain that there is no woodworm the only way would be to check the property when is emptied of fixtures and fittings etc.

Finally, when you move into the property, floor surfaces should be carefully examined for any signs of insect infestation when furniture and floor coverings are removed together with stored goods. Any signs that are found should be treated to prevent it spreading. However, you need to be aware that many damp and woodworm treatment companies have a vested interest in selling their products and therefore have fairly cleverly worded quotations where they do not state if the woodworm they have found is 'active'. You should ask them specifically if the woodworm is active or not.

We would also comment that any work carried out should have an insurance backed guarantee to ensure that if the company does not exist, or for whatever reason, the guarantee is still valid. More importantly it is essential to ensure that any work carried out is carried out correctly.

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## INTERNAL DECORATIONS



*With paints it should be remembered that up to 1992 lead could be used within paint and prior to this most textured paints (commonly known as Artex) contained an element of asbestos up to 1984, so care should be taken if the paintwork looks old and dated.*

Internal decorations are in average condition although this may not be to personal taste. There may be pattern staining when pictures etc. are removed.

It is very difficult to advise on how frequently redecoration should take place. This very much depends upon the use and abuse the decoration gets, for example, within hallways this tends to be greater than for example within a spare bedroom.

Finally, we would draw your attention to the fact that removal of existing decorative finishes may cause damage to the underlying plasterwork necessitating repairs and making good prior to redecoration.

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## THERMAL EFFICIENCY



*Up until the mid 1940s we did not really consider insulation in properties, for example it was only in the 1960s that we started putting insulation in the roof and then it was about 50mm, in the 1970s this was upgraded to 100mm. Then we started to think about double glazing and cavity wall insulation. Since then insulation standards have increased considerably and today we are looking at typically using insulation not only in the roof but also in the walls, floors and windows and more recently considerable work has been carried out on how efficient boilers are within properties. Care has to be taken that properties are not insulated disproportionately to the ventilation as this can cause condensation and you should be aware that you need to ventilate any property that is insulated.*

### Roofs

Some roof insulation was present although not to current Building Regulations requirements of 300mm. In this instance we noted approximately 200mm.

### Flat roofs

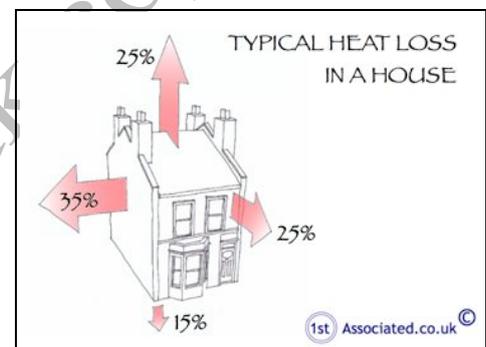
Given the age of these, based upon the materials used such as the Asphalt, we doubt if there will be any insulation.

### Walls

The walls to this property are solid. It is very difficult to improve thermal efficiency in solid wall construction without major alterations. These will usually affect the external appearance or reduce the internal space – best left alone.

### Windows

The windows are a combination of single glazed windows and plastic double glazed windows and therefore will have poor thermal properties.



Heat loss from a house

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## Services

Service records should be obtained. It is essential for the services to be regularly maintained to run efficiently.

## Summary

Assuming the above is correct, this property is average compared with what we typically see.

Further information can be obtained with regard to energy saving via the Internet on the following pages:

*HTTP//www.est.org.uk, which is by the Energy Saving Trust and includes a section on grant aid.*

*or alternatively www.cat.org.uk*

*or Sustainable Energy Without the Hot Air by David J C MacKay  
HTTP//www.withouthotair.com/Videos.html to download for free or buy a paper copy as we did.*

*It is worth watching the video How Many Light Bulbs? by David J C MacKay  
HTTP//www.youtube.com/watch?v=UR8wRSp21Xs*

## HIPs

We understand that HIPs were suspended from XXX. Energy Performance Certificates are required before a sale completes.

Finally, we would comment that energy we feel will become a major consideration in years to come, particularly with the greater focus in modern buildings on energy efficiency.

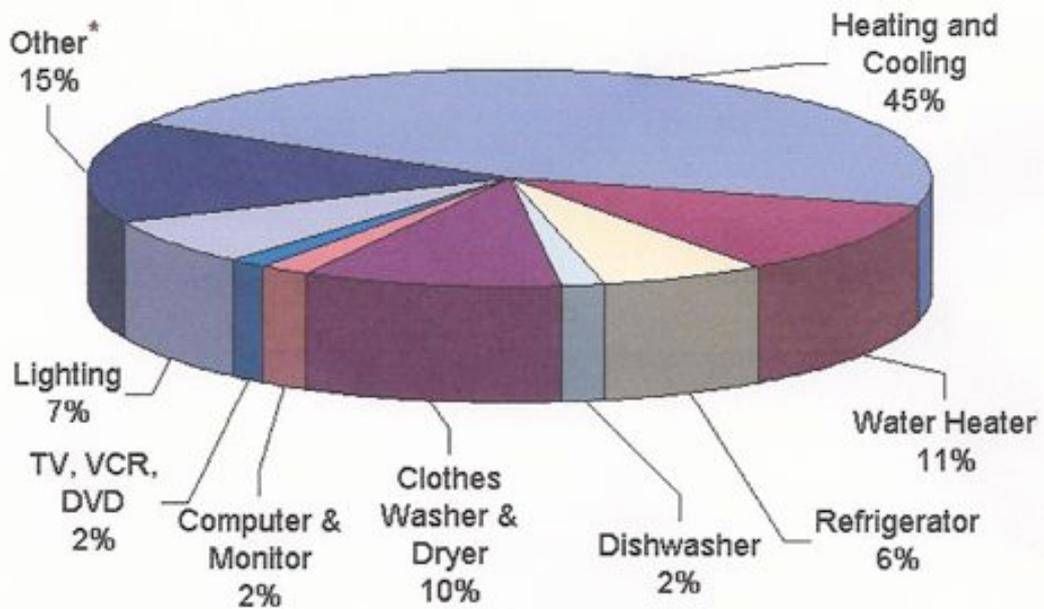
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### What does my energy bill pay for?



\* "Other" represents an array of household products, including stoves, ovens, microwaves, and small appliances. Individually, these products account for no more than about 2% of a household's energy bills.

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## OTHER MATTERS

*In this section we put any other matters that do not fit under our usual headings.*

### Security

A security system was noted. A good alarm system should not only help reduce break-ins but also your insurance. We are not experts in this field and therefore cannot comment further.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Further information should be obtained from the vendor, the installer and security experts.

### Fire / Smoke Alarms

From what we could see there seemed to be smoke detectors throughout which looked to be hardwired. The current Building Regulations require that they be wired into the main power supply.

### Interconnecting fire/smoke alarms

We would always recommend interconnecting fire/smoke alarm systems are installed so that if a fire does occur within the building it identifies where the fire is occurring enabling occupants to use the safest way to exit the property.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** We would speak to the management company about when they last tested the building with regards to fire requirements.

### Main Staircase

Our main concern is the staircase area which effectively acts as a chimney. This needs to have fire doors and also a continuation of walls to prevent fire travelling in a worst case scenario.

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## **Insurance**

We would always recommend staying with the existing insurance company, and then if there are any problems you should not have the difficulty of negotiating with two insurance companies passing the blame between each other.

We would refer you to our comments with regard to building insurance throughout this report.

## **Asbestos**

In a property of this age there may well be some asbestos. In this case we have not noted asbestos.

Asbestos was commonly used post war until it was banned only in the UK in the last ten years or so. It is rumoured that it was still used after this point in time where products were imported from countries where it is not banned.

Our insurance company requires us to advise that we are not asbestos surveyors.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** If you wish to confirm you are 100 percent free of asbestos you need to have an asbestos survey carried out.

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## SERVICES

This survey does not include any specialist reports on the electricity supply and circuits, heating or drainage, as they were not requested. The comments that follow are based upon a visual inspection carried out as part of the overall Building Survey.

Services and specialist installations have been visually inspected. It is impossible to examine every detail of these installations without partially dismantling the structure. Tests have not been applied. Conclusive tests can only be undertaken by suitably qualified contractors. The vendor/seller should be requested to provide copies of any service records, test certificates and, ideally, the names and addresses of the installing contractors.

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# ELECTRICITY



*It is strange to think that electricity only started to be used in domestic properties at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century with gas lighting still being the norm for a good many years after.*

Periodic inspections and testing of electrical installations is important to protect your property from damage and to ensure the safety of the occupants. Guidance published by the Institute of Electrical Engineers (IEE) recommends that inspections and testing are undertaken at least every 10 years (we recommend every five years) and on change of occupancy. All electrical installation works undertaken after XXX should be identified by an Electrical Installation Certificate.

## Fuse Board

Each apartment had its own fuse board. These were dated circa XXX. There are metres in the entrance lobby area.

These are old-ish fuse boards and far better are now available.



Electric metres in entrance lobby



Electric fuse board,  
top floor flat

**ACTION REQUIRED:** We would recommend an upgrade as well a full Institute of Electrical Engineers test and report.

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## **Earth Test**

As we have been advised the properties have been rented they should have electric certificates. We were advised by the selling agent, when we asked about them, that these have been passed onto XXX.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** As the property is changing occupancy an Institute of Electrical Engineers test and report (IEE) should be carried out by a NICEIC registered and approved electrical contractor or equivalent.

In addition to this your Legal Advisor is required to make full enquires with the owners to establish if any electrical installation work has been carried out and to provide suitable certification for any works carried out after XXX. Any comments made within this report or verbally do not change this requirement.

For basic general information on this matter please see the appendices at the end of this report.

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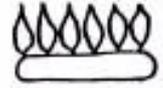
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## GAS



*There is very little we can check for in a gas installation, we do inspect to make sure there is one and that it has a consumer unit and that the boilers are vented. Ideally you should have a service inspection carried out by an independent Gas Safe registered plumber.*

We are advised that the property has mains gas.

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

**ACTION REQUIRED:** As a matter of course it is recommended that the entire gas installation is inspected and made good, as necessary, by a Gas Safe registered contractor. Thereafter the installation should be serviced annually.

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## PLUMBING AND HEATING



*In this section we do our best from a visual inspection to look at how the water is supplied to the property, how the supply is distributed around the property, how it is used to heat the property and how it is discharged from the property.*

### Water Supply

We assume there are controlling stop cocks for each apartment, these have not been identified. We would recommend that isolators are added to each bathroom/ en-suite/shower room to enable for them to be turned off for maintenance.

It is important that its presence is established in case of bursts or leaks. The stopcock and other controlling valves have not been inspected or tested for operational effectiveness.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Ask the owners or property managers to advise where they are in writing.

### Plumbing

We literally could not see the plumbing as it is concealed. Often in properties with dry lining, the plumbing is hidden behind the dry lining. No significant leakage was noted on the surface.

### Heating

Each apartment has its own Vaillant boiler. The boilers are located in the kitchen in the upper floor apartments. The ground floor apartment right hand side apartment has the boiler under the stairs and the left hand side apartment boiler is located in the utility cupboard.

Our limited inspection of the hot water and central heating system revealed no evidence to suggest any serious defects but we would nevertheless recommend that the system be tested and overhauled before exchange of

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contracts and that a regular maintenance contract be placed with an approved heating engineer.

### **Ten Minute Heating Test**

The test was not carried out but the occupied apartments were pleasantly warm during the course of the survey.

Finally, it should be noted that the supply pipe from the Water Company stopcock to the internal stop tap is the responsibility of the property owner.

We cannot comment on the condition of the water service pipe to the building. It should be appreciated that leaks can occur for some time before signs are apparent on the surface.

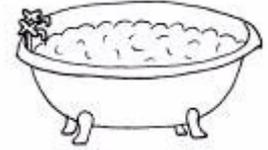
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## **BATHROOM**

*In this section we consider the overall condition of the sanitary fittings such as the bathroom, the kitchen, the utility room and the cloakroom.*

### **Bathrooms, en-suites and shower rooms**

As is usually the way in properties of this age, type and style bathrooms and shower rooms have been added over the years. These have all been refurbished fairly recently from what we could see and are all in average condition.

#### **Leaking showers etc.**

We generally find that the showers within this properties leak from time to time due to a combination of poor workmanship, mistreatment by occupants and minor movements within the building.

More frequently we come across problems caused by the mixing of metal/ copper and plastic pipework. We consider these problems to be characteristics of this type of property.

#### **Left ground floor apartment/ stairs/vaulted area**

There is an area underneath the stairs or road vaults accessible in the left hand apartment that includes a sauna etc. Our concern in this area is generally dampness comes in via the stairs and the walls. We were unable to access this as it is dry lined but would warn that in the past we have found that dampness comes through as these are effectively rooms below ground level. We feel that these will be prone to dampness as the water table level rises and falls.

The general process would be to have tanking carried out to reduce any chance of dampness coming through. We cannot advise if this has been carried out in this instance.

Finally, although we may have already mentioned it above we would reiterate that it is important to ensure that seals are properly made and maintained at

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the junctions between wall surfaces and baths and showers etc. We normally recommend that it is one of the first jobs that you carry out as part of your DIY on the property, as water getting behind sanitary fittings can lead to unseen deterioration that can be costly, inconvenient and difficult to repair.

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## MAIN DRAINS

*The sanitary system, as we know it now, came into being some 100 years ago during the Victorian era and works so successfully today it is often taken for granted. It is only in recent years that re-investment has taken place to upgrade the original drainage systems.*

It is assumed that the foul drains from the property discharge into a public sewer; this should be confirmed by your Legal Advisor prior to exchange of contracts, who should also provide information in respect of any common or shared drains including liability for the maintenance and upkeep of the same.

### Inspection Chambers / Manholes

*For your information, inspection chambers / manholes are required to be provided in the current Building Regulations at each change of direction or where drainage runs join the main run.*

We have identified four inspection chambers / manholes.

#### Manholes Defined

Access areas which usually fit a man (or woman) into them and are put in where the drains change direction.

### Inspection Chamber / Manhole One- front terrace

We have not lifted the manhole cover.



Manhole – front terrace

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**Inspection Chamber / Manhole Two – rear left**

We have not lifted the manhole cover.



Manhole under the wall - rear

**Inspection Chamber / Manhole Three rear right**

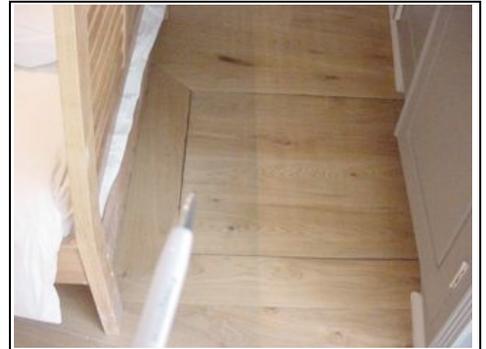
We have not lifted the manhole cover.



Manhole – rear right

**Inspection Chamber / Manhole Four - internal**

We have not lifted the manhole cover.



Manhole under flooring in bedroom

**Other manholes**

We are expecting there to be other manholes but assume these are hidden within the property.

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**ACTION REQUIRED:** We would recommend that a closed circuit TV camera report of the drains is carried out. Please see the Executive Summary regarding drainage

**ANTICIPATED COST:** A few hundred pounds.



We found drain rods-  
never a good sign



Manhole cover only – left hand side  
There may be a covered up manhole

### Rodding eyes



Rodding eye- not blocked



Rodding eye - blocked

### Rodding Eye Defined

This is a small access hatch that is used for rodding the drains should they block.

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Finally, it must be emphasised that the condition of the property's foul drains can only be ascertained by the carrying out of a test; such a test has not been undertaken. Should there be leaks in the vicinity of the building then problems could occur, particularly with respect to the stability of the building's foundations. Drainage repairs are inevitably costly and may result in damage being caused to those areas of the property beneath, or adjacent to, which the drains have been run.

### **Rainwater/Surface Water Drainage**

*Whilst very innocent looking rainwater downpipes can cause lots of problems. If they discharge directly onto the ground they can affect the foundations and even if they are taken away to soak-aways they can attract nearby tree roots or again affect foundations.*

*Some rainwater drains are taken into the main drainage system, which is now illegal (as we simply do not have the capacity to cope with it), and can cause blockages to the main drains! Here we have done our best from a visual inspection to advise of any particular problems.*

We have been unable to determine the ultimate means of rain/surface water disposal.

In this age of property it is likely to be into shared/combined drains. These can be a problem during heavy rainfall and peak periods, such as the 9 o'clock rush to work.

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

Please also see our comments within the Gutters and Downpipes section.

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## OUTSIDE AREAS

The main focus of this report has been on the main building. We have taken a cursory inspection of the outbuilding and would be happy to return and carry out a survey of so required.

### PARKING

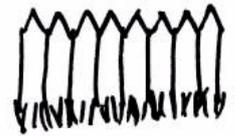


Parking is on a permit basis or paid for at the roadside on a first come first serve basis.

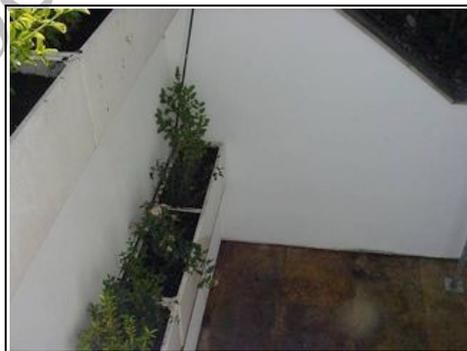
### EXTERNAL AREAS

#### Terraced areas

There are terraces to the front and rear.



Front terrace



Front terrace



Rear terrace

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## Rear Garden

We are advised from discussions with XXX that there is a seven metre rear garden, this was not clearly shown at the time of the survey.

### New buildings built close to old buildings.

The way a new building is built is completely different to how an older building was built, for example in this case there are piles used for the foundations. It is fairly well known that they can disturb any structure close by when they are put in. This is why there is usually a Schedule of Condition carried out before the work is carried out.



We have also identified the need for Party Wall Surveyors to be involved although in theory both the building you are purchasing and the land were owned by the same person, from what we understand from XXX. Therefore Party Wall Surveyors may not have been employed but we are sure the surrounding buildings will have Party Wall Surveyors that can help and advise you.

**Boundaries:** The left hand boundary (all directions given as you face the property) is usually the responsibility of the subject property. Finally, whilst we note the boundaries, these may not be the legal boundaries. Your Legal Advisor should make further enquiries on this point and advise you of your potential liability with regard to any shared structures, boundary walls and fences.

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## **POINTS FOR YOUR LEGAL ADVISOR**

If you wish to proceed with your purchase of the property a copy of this report should be forwarded to your Legal Advisor and the following points should be checked by him/her:

- a) Responsibility for boundaries.
- b) Rights for you to enter onto the adjacent property to maintain any structure situated near or on the boundary and any similar rights your neighbour may have to enter onto your property.
- c) Obtain any certificates, guarantees or approvals in relation to:
  - i) Timber treatments, wet or dry rot infestations.
  - ii) Rising damp treatments.
  - iii) Double glazing or replacement windows.
  - iv) Roof and similar renewals.
  - v) Central heating installation.
  - vi) Planning and Building Regulation Approvals.
  - vii) Removal of any chimneys in part or whole.
  - viii) Any other matters pertinent to the property.
  - ix) Investigations with regards to the development to the rear including Local Authority approvals and Party Wall approvals.
- d) Confirm that there are no defects in the legal Title in respect of the property and all rights associated therewith, e.g., access.
- e) Rights of Way e.g., access, easements and wayleaves.
- f) Liabilities in connection with shared services.
- g) Adjoining roads and services.
- h) Road Schemes/Road Widening.
- i) General development proposals in the locality.

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- j) Specific development at the rear of the property.
- k) Conservation Area, Listed Building, Tree Preservation Orders or any other Designated Planning Area.
- l) Confirm from enquiries that no underground tunnels, wells, sewers, gases, mining, minerals, site reclamation/contamination etc., exist, have existed or are likely to exist beneath the curtilage of the site upon which the property stands and which could affect the quiet enjoyment, safety or stability of the property, outbuildings or surrounding areas.
- m) Our Report assumes that the site has not been put to contaminative use and no investigations have been made in this respect.
- n) Any outstanding Party Wall Notice or the knowledge that any are about to be served.
- o) Most Legal advisors will recommend an Envirosearch or a similar product is used by you to establish whether the area falls within a flood plain, old landfill site, radon area etc. If your Legal Advisor is not aware of Envirosearch or similar please ensure that they contact us and we will advise them of it. Any general findings should be brought to their logical conclusion by using appropriate specialist advisers.

However, with regard to Envirosearch or similar general reports please see our article link on the [www.1stAssociated.co.uk](http://www.1stAssociated.co.uk) Home Page.

- p) Any other matters brought to your attention within this report.

## **LOCAL AUTHORITY ENQUIRIES**

Your Legal Advisor should carry out Local Authority searches to ascertain whether the property is a Listed Building and whether it is situated in a Conservation Area. They should also find out any information available with regard to Planning Applications and Building Control. We have not made any formal or informal Local Authority enquiries.

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Finally, your Legal Advisor should carry out any additional enquiries they feel necessary and if they find anything unusual or onerous then we ask that they contact us immediately for our further comments.

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It is our policy not to offer a conclusion to ensure that the Building Survey is read in full and the comments are taken in context.

If you would like any further advice on any of the issues discussed (or indeed any that have not been discussed!) then please do not hesitate to contact us on **0800 298 5424**.

For and on Behalf of  
XXX

**This Report is dated: XXX**

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## REFERENCES

The repair and maintenance of houses

*Published by Estates Gazette Limited*

Life expectancies of building components

*Published by Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors and  
Building Research Establishment*

Surveying buildings

*By Malcolm Hollis published by Royal Institution of  
Chartered Surveyors Books.*

House Builders Bible

*By Mark Brinkley, Published by Burlington Press*

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## **LIMITATIONS**

Our limitations are as the agreed Terms and Conditions of Engagement.

## **CONDITIONS OF ENGAGEMENT**

The report has been prepared in accordance with our Conditions of Engagement dated XXX and should be regarded as a comment on the overall condition of the property and the quality of its structure and not as an inventory of every single defect. It relates to those parts of the property that were reasonably and safely accessible at the time of the inspection, but you should be aware that defects can subsequently develop particularly if you do not follow the recommendations.

## **ENGLISH LAW**

We would remind you that this report should not be published or reproduced in any way without the surveyor's expressed permission and is governed by English Law and any dispute arising there from shall be adjudicated upon only by the English Courts.

## **SOLE USE**

This report is for the sole use of the named Client and is confidential to the Client and his professional advisors. Any other persons rely on the Report at their own risk.

## **ONLY HUMAN!**

Although we are pointing out the obvious, our Surveyors obviously can't see through walls, floors, heavy furniture, fixed kitchen units etc. they have therefore made their best assumptions in these areas.

As this is a one off inspection, we cannot guarantee that there are no other defects than those mentioned in the report and also that defects can subsequently develop.

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## **WEATHER**

It was dry, cold and sunny at the time of the inspection. The weather did not hamper the survey.

In recent times our weather seems to be moving towards the extremities from its usual relatively mid range. Extremes of weather can affect the property.

## **NOT LOCAL**

It should be noted the surveyors may not be local to this area and are carrying out the work without the benefits of local knowledge on such things as soil conditions, aeroplane flight paths, and common defects in materials used in the area etc..

## **OCCUPIED PROPERTY**

Some of the property was occupied at the time of our survey, which meant that there were various difficulties when carrying out the survey such as stored items within cupboards, the loft space and obviously day-to-day household goods throughout the property. We have, however, done our best to work around these.

## **INSPECTION LIMITED**

Unfortunately in this instance our inspection has been limited as:

- 1) We did not have full access to the roofs with no access at all to the rear pitched roof.
- 2) We have not opened up any floors.
- 3) We did not have the benefit of talking to the owners or have them answer our usual questions and answers.

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- 4) We did not have the benefit of talking to the owners or them answering our usual question and answers.
- 5) Some apartments were occupied at the time of the survey.
- 6) The selling agent/ property manager XXX who showed us round was not forth coming with information and in fact advised us that it was her job to be difficult.
- 7) Our time in the property was limited by the selling agent/ property manager.
- 8) We have not had a measured survey set of plans for the property and therefore have not been able to confirm if the walls sit upon themselves. We have assumed that they do for the purpose of this report as this would be common for this type of structure. However the alterations that have taken place within the property may not have adhered to the walls sitting upon each other.
- 9) Draft copies have been sent to XXX for her comments. We have duly produced a separate negotiation document as requested by XXX. XXX has also advised us on what items she would like in the Executive Summary upon seeing the original Executive Summary.

## **BUILDING INSURANCE**

We do not advise with regard to building insurance. You need to make your own enquiries. Some areas may have a premium, some buildings may have a premium and some insurers may be unwilling to insure at all in certain areas. You need to make your own enquires prior to committing to purchase the property. Please be aware the fact a building is currently insured does not mean it can be re insured.

We would comment that non-insurability of a building we feel will affect value. It is therefore essential to make your own enquiries with regard to insurance before committing to purchase the property and incurring fees.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** You need to contact an insurance company today to make enquiries with regard to insurance on this property.

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## TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Our computer system sends two copies of our Terms and Conditions to the email address given to us when booking the survey; one has the terms attached and the other has links to the Terms and Conditions on our website (for a limited time). If you have not received these please phone your contact immediately.

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# APPENDICES

- 1.) The electrical regulations – Part P of the Building Regulations
- 2.) Information on the Property Market
- 3.) Email to XXX
- 4.) Contact Information
- 5.) Listed Building reference

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## **THE ELECTRICAL REGULATIONS – PART P OF THE BUILDING REGULATIONS**

Here is our quick guide to the Regulations, but please take further advice from a qualified and experienced electrician.

From XXX, people carrying out electrical work in homes and gardens in England and Wales must follow new rules in the building regulations. All significant electrical work carried out in the home will have to be undertaken by a registered installer or be approved and certified by the local authority's building control department. Failure to do so will be a legal offence and could result in a fine. Non-certified work could also put your household insurance policy at risk.

If you can't provide evidence that any electrical installation work complies with the new regulations, you could have problems when it comes to selling the property.

There will be two ways in which to prove compliance:

1. A certificate showing the work has been done by a Government-approved electrical installer - NICEIC Electrical Contractor or equivalent trades body.
2. A certificate from the local authority saying that the installation has approval under the building regulations.

Homeowners will still be able to do some minor electrical jobs themselves. To help you, we've put together this brief list of dos and don'ts.

### **Work You Cannot do Yourself**

- Complete new or rewiring jobs.
- Fuse box changes.
- Adding lighting points to an existing circuit in a 'special location' like the kitchen, bathroom or garden.
- Installing electrical earth connections to pipework and metalwork.
- Adding a new circuit.

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## INFORMATION ON THE PROPERTY MARKET

We used to include within our reports articles on the property market that we thought would be of interest and informative to you, however we were concerned that in some cases these did not offer the latest information. We have therefore decided to recommend various websites to you, however it is important to realise the vested interest the parties may have and the limits to the information.

[www.landreg.org.uk](http://www.landreg.org.uk)

This records the ownership of interests in registered land in England and Wales and issues a residential property price report quarterly, which is free of charge. The Land Registry is a Government body and records all transactions as far as we are aware, although critics of it would argue that the information is often many months out of date.

[www.rics.org.uk](http://www.rics.org.uk)

The Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors offer quarterly reports via their members. Although this has been criticised as being subjective and also limited, historically their predictions have been found to be reasonably accurate.

[www.halifax.co.uk](http://www.halifax.co.uk) and [www.nationwide.co.uk](http://www.nationwide.co.uk)

Surveys have been carried out by these two companies, one now a bank and the other a building society for many years. Information from these surveys is often carried in the national press. It should be remembered that the surveys only relate to mortgaged properties, of which it is generally considered represents only 75% of the market. It should also be remembered that the national coverage of the two companies differs and that they may be offering various incentives on different mortgages, which may taint the quality of information offered. That said they do try to adjust for this, the success or otherwise of this is hard to establish.

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[www.hometrack.co.uk](http://www.hometrack.co.uk)

This gives information with regard to house sale and purchase prices.

[www.motleyfool.co.uk](http://www.motleyfool.co.uk)

We also like the Motley Fool website which is a general financial site and although it is selling financial services and other services they do tend to give a very readable view of the housing market.

[www.rightmove.co.uk](http://www.rightmove.co.uk)

This is probably the largest Internet search engine for estate agency sales and also has useful information with regard to prices of property (but it is not the same as having a chartered surveyor value it).

[www.zoopla.co.uk](http://www.zoopla.co.uk)

This is a good website for seeing the prices of properties for sale in a certain postcode area.

[www.britishlistedbuildings.co.uk](http://www.britishlistedbuildings.co.uk)

This is a good website for establishing if the property is Listed and general information on British Listed buildings.

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**Email to XXX – XXX**

Dear XXX

As per your phone call at XXX on the XXX after a discussion with XXX we have duly removed the items you asked for from the Executive Summary of the Building Survey and produced a negotiation document for you for XXX, Notting Hill, London, W2 XXX with the three key points you identified, the roof, the crack to the left hand side and the drainage.

As requested the document is in Word format.

Kind Regards

XXX

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**CONTACTS PAGE**

**Selling Agent**

XXX

**Buying Agent – client representative**

XXX

We have not spoken with our client Mr X

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## Listed Building Reference

### XXX W2, Kensington and Chelsea

**DESCRIPTION:** XXX W2

**GRADE:** II

**DATE LISTED:** 8 August 1974

**ENGLISH HERITAGE BUILDING ID:** XXX

**OS GRID REFERENCE:** XXX

**OS GRID COORDINATES:** XXX

**LATITUDE/LONGITUDE:** XXX

**LOCATION:** XXX, Kensington, Greater London W2 XXX

**LOCALITY:** [Kensington and Chelsea](#)

**LOCAL AUTHORITY:** Kensington and Chelsea Borough Council

**COUNTY:** [Greater London](#)

**COUNTRY:** [England](#)

**POSTCODE:** W2 XXX

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### Listing Text

XXX W2

20/30 (west side)

XXX No XX

GV

II

Detached house. Mid C19. Stucco. Three storeys, three windows wide. Rustication to ground floor. Central Doric porch. Pediments to first floor windows. Good garden walls and gatepiers.

Part of unified scheme with Nos XXX and XXX

Listing NGR: XXX

*This text is a legacy record and has not been updated since the building was originally listed. Details of the building may have changed in the intervening time. You should not rely on this listing as an accurate description of the building.*

*Source: English Heritage*

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