



ISVA

Independent Surveyors & Valuers Association
PUTTING THE CLIENT FIRST

HomeSurvey

on

1, Example Street, London.



Name and Address of Client: Mr. & Mrs. Purchaser,

Date of Inspection: 6 November 2000

**Surveyor: David Carver BSc FRICS.
David Carver Associates Ltd,
16, Rodney Road,
New Malden,
Surrey,
KT3 5AB.**

1. INTRODUCTION

THIS REPORT IS A CONCISE FORM OF SURVEY CARRIED OUT BY A SUITABLY QUALIFIED SURVEYOR AND IS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE 'TERMS AND CONDITIONS', SIGNED BY THE CLIENT.

DESCRIPTION

The property comprises a three-storey, semi-detached house, constructed around 102-105 years ago. The original accommodation has been enlarged since construction and most recently, the front section of the roof space was converted to form an additional bedroom in 2005. Part of the second floor accommodation is original (bedroom five) although the second floor bathroom also appears to be an extension, formed by building up the flank wall to form a different roofline - but according to the plans shown to us, this work was undertaken prior to 2005 and its exact age is not known.

ACCOMMODATION

The accommodation comprises:

Ground Floor: Entrance hall, double reception room, kitchen/breakfast room.

Lower Ground Floor: Cellar/utility room.

First Floor: Landing, bedroom one (front), bedroom two (middle), bedroom three (rear), bathroom, separate WC.

Second Floor: Landing, bedroom five, inner landing, bathroom with WC with steps up to bedroom four.

Outside: Small front and medium sized rear gardens. No off street parking is provided and on-street parking is restricted to permit holders.

CONSTRUCTION

The property is traditionally constructed and for the most part, the external walls are built in solid brickwork of varying thickness between approx. 230mm and approx. 360mm. The roof is predominantly flat and where visible, it is covered with bituminous felt. A relatively small section of the original pitched roof remains at the front of the house and this is clad with synthetic slates in. Internally, the floors are mostly of suspended timber construction but those in the kitchen/breakfast room and cellar are of concrete.

LOCATION

The property is situated in a highly regarded and well established residential locality amongst similar age and style properties.

All usual local amenities are available within a short distance including rail and underground stations, comprehensive shopping facilities, bus services, schools etc. The River Thames is also close by and whilst the Putney Embankment is prone to tidal flooding, we are not aware of any more serious flooding in modern times. (You should rely on your solicitor's usual enquiries in this respect, however.)

Significant aircraft noise was noted at the time of our inspection and occasional railway noise, from the railway lines located behind the houses on the opposite side of Example Street.

2. CIRCUMSTANCES OF INSPECTION

At the time of our inspection the weather was dry and mild, with sunny spells.

The property was fully furnished, with fitted floor coverings in most areas (although the floors were uncovered in bedroom one and in bedroom five). In some other areas the floorboards have been painted. Externally, our inspection of the flat sections of the roof was restricted although a partial inspection was possible from photographs, taken at arm's length from one of the front facing roof lights in bedroom four. The lower level, rearmost section of the flat roof could not be seen, however.

The vendors were not at home at the time our visit.

The property is located on the northern side of Example Street and the rear garden faces approximately north-north east.

All directions in this report are taken as if facing the property from the street.

3. SURVEYOR'S OVERALL OPINION

Having regard to its type and age the property is in good condition overall and it appears to have been well maintained by the current owners. Properties of this age require regular, ongoing maintenance, however and in particular, the flat roof coverings will have a limited remaining life. Further repointing of brickwork will be required over the next 5 – 10 years but more immediately, the windows and other external joinery items, stonework, etc. must be overhauled and redecorated within the next 12 – 18 months or so.

The property has been affected by structural movement in the past - but we saw no evidence to suggest that any significant movement has occurred recently. The movement might indicate a defect within the underground drainage system, however and we recommend that you arrange for the drainage system to be tested before exchange of contracts.

See also Section 13: Summary of Condition and recommendations.

4. STRUCTURAL MOVEMENT

The property is located in an area where structural movement is not uncommonly found in properties of this age and type and this can be caused by a combination of factors including shallow foundations by today's standards, weak soil conditions, leaking drains, etc. 'Differential' movement is also common due to the variable depth of foundations in these houses, which tend to be deeper around the cellar and than elsewhere.

There is evidence of movement to the subject property and at the front, for example, minor cracking was noted between the arch over the entrance and the first floor window opening, above. We also identified minor, crudely repaired cracking within the bay, beneath the ground floor (left-hand) window.

More significant movement was noted on the right hand flank elevation, however with external cracking above and below the side facing rear reception room window (**see photo 3**). In parts, the cracks between the ground and first floor window openings have been repointed, at some stage and have re-opened slightly - although no sign of any recent/significant movement was found in this location. There is also a minor, corresponding crack within the internal plaster, behind the radiator in bedroom two (**see photo 4**).

Further cracking and crack repairs were noted within the rear elevation, between the arch over the kitchen French doors and the bedroom three window opening, above (**see photo 5**). At higher level, repointed brickwork between the first and second floor windows is likely to be an area where further crack repairs have been carried out (**see photo 6**) and these repairs have held.

Internally, a number of minor cracks were noted above doors, around window openings, within the party wall and at the junction between the party wall and the first floor landing ceiling. There is also a fairly obvious crack repair to the right hand flank wall in the first floor bathroom; towards the rear. We would reiterate, however that we found no evidence of any recent, significant movement attributable to subsidence, settlement or other undue movement of the foundations. In view of the age of the property, however and the likelihood that foundations are (mostly) shallow by today's standards, combined with the nature of the sand/gravel subsoil in this locality (which can be eroded/consolidated by the passage of water - including from leaking drains), it is important that your buildings insurance policy will provide normal and ongoing protection against subsidence, settlement and other usual perils. You should start to obtain quotations for insurance at this stage and your policy should take effect from exchange of contracts onwards.

It is possible, judging by the location and direction of cracking/distortion that the movement was associated with a defect in the underground drainage system, whereby leakage has caused the erosion/consolidation of fine particles of soil from beneath/around the foundations. In particular, any gapping around the kitchen waste gulley may enable the discharge of water into the soil. (See Section 12 'Drainage'.)

Prior to exchange of contracts therefore, you should arrange for the drains and gulleys to be tested by a reputable specialist contractor, to confirm their condition and to quantify the cost of any necessary repairs. Any such works must be regarded as urgent repairs.

Cracking within the external walls should be repaired by cutting out broken/cracked bricks, 'stitching-in' new bricks where necessary, with stainless steel helical ties set into the horizontal mortar joints to restore structural integrity. Generally speaking this is a task for a specialist contractor and could perhaps be undertaken when the external brickwork is repointed – say within the next 5 years or so.

5. DAMPNES , CONDENSATION & VENTILATION

DAMP PROOF COURSE

The damp proof course (dpc) is an impervious membrane, built into the walls at ground floor level, to prevent moisture rising into the structure from the ground. The dpc is concealed within the main walls but in a building of this age, it is likely to be of slate. By now, however, it is likely that this will have broken down and become ineffective and we have been shown a 20-year guarantee relating to damp-proofing works undertaken by Renlon, in 1992. We do not know which parts of the property were treated, however and your solicitor should make further enquiries of the vendor in this respect. Renlon's original report, work schedules and guarantee should be checked, to ascertain the exact nature and extent of works, the validity of guarantee, etc. The paperwork should also confirm whether the chemical injection and replastering elements of any treatment were both undertaken by Renlon. (Disputes can arise in the event that the system fails, particularly if replastering was undertaken by a third party builder, without the required salt retardant and water proofing additives, etc.)

It is possible that the damp proof course within the external walls is 'bridged' by a high-level render plinth, applied at the base of the external walls (**see photo 7**). Old/porous rendering can soak-up moisture from the ground, and allow it to 'bridge' into the walls above the level of the damp proof course. In order to prevent this, rendering beneath damp proof course level should be removed and the remaining render terminated horizontally, using a stainless steel "bell-cast" drip detail. Brickwork revealed by the removal of rendering at the base of the wall might need to be re-pointed, in order to provide a neat and tidy finish.

The walls within the cellar are, of course, beneath ground level and would have been built in brick, without any means of preventing rising and penetrating dampness. Subsequently, however, waterproof rendering has been applied to (most of) the internal wall surfaces and this is known as 'tanking'. This particular type of tanking is not the most effective, however and has a limited lifespan, which is not usually guaranteed by the installer for any longer than 10 years. Again, any available documentation relating to tanking work should be passed on to you, to establish the nature and extent of any previous work undertaken and the validity of any guarantee.

DAMPNESS

We measured the moisture content of the accessible walls within the ground floor accommodation but this part of our inspection was restricted by the presence of the kitchen fittings, appliances, radiators, filled cupboards, furniture, etc. For the mostpart, the walls were found to be free from significant moisture levels and in these areas, the damp proofing system appears to be operating satisfactorily. We cannot give any warranty as to its future performance however and it is important to confirm that specialists' reports and valid guarantees are available in respect of any previous treatment. However, we did record a high reading from the front column of the chimney breast in the front reception area and

we suspect that dampness is rising up through the wall/foundation (or possibly the hearth) in this location. Whilst there is no particular urgency, further treatment will be required in this location before too long; perhaps before the next redecoration is undertaken.

Treatment by chemical damp proof course injection and specialist replastering will probably be suggested by specialist contractors; in conjunction with measures to prevent bridging of the DPC, as described above. Differences of opinion exist as to whether chemical DPC injection is able to provide long-term protection against rising damp and in our experience, a 'physical' DPC is more likely to remain effective in the longer term. The installation of a modern, plastic DPC is more difficult, time consuming and expensive, however and is often over-looked by specialist companies, in favour of their preferred option of chemical treatment. Whichever method is chosen, the treatment must be undertaken by a well-established, reputable contractor with the benefit of a long term, insurance backed guarantee. If existing guarantees cover affected areas, the guarantor should be recalled to comment prior to exchange of contracts and undertake re-treatment.

We also undertook moisture meter testing of wall surfaces within the cellar but the majority of the front wall could not be checked, due to stored articles on shelving, paper, peg-boarding etc. (**see photo 8**). In most areas, the moisture content of the render tanking was found to be satisfactory but high readings were recorded on the right hand flank wall, where the tanking is breaking down and has clearly failed in a number of areas (**see photo 9**). These areas will need to be re-treated within the next few years and this is likely to involve hacking off and replacement of the existing tanking and if this is to be undertaken thoroughly, some of the central heating pipework would have to be removed, temporarily (**see photo 10**). At some stage, however, you may wish to consider the installation of better quality tanking; perhaps in the form of a 'cavity membrane' system, which if correctly installed, would have a much longer life expectancy. Systems of this type are expensive, however and you might like to seek further advice and quotations from a reputable specialist contractor, prior to exchange of contracts,

Penetrating damp was noted underneath the window openings in bedrooms three and five, where the internal decorative finishes are stained (**see photo 11**). This appears to be the result of rainwater penetration through neglected window frames/sills – although the condition of the stone subsills may well be a contributory factor. Repairs and redecoration should be undertaken when the weather conditions permit but as the subsills are likely to be porous, these may need to be broken out and recast in concrete at some stage.

Water staining of external brickwork was noted in two locations:

- On the left hand face of the front bay, where the rainwater pipe has leaked in the past (**see photo 12**).
- On the main right hand flank elevation where the guttering appears to have leaked, at the rear of the lean-to (**see photo 13**). This particular area has clearly been saturated and dead moss remains on the external brickwork. It is also possible, however that water emanated from the high level overflow pipes, above.

In each of the areas, the internal wall surfaces adjacent were found to be acceptably 'dry' and we suspect that the causes of the problems have been rectified. It was not raining at the time of our inspection, however and the water-tightness of the rainwater fittings could not be checked.

CONDENSATION & VENTILATION

In the second floor rear bedroom (bedroom five) dampness was recorded at high level on the rear elevation, particularly towards the right hand side. This appears to be caused by rainwater penetration down through the high level parapet wall that spans across the back of the building. There is also the possibility of a defective junction/flashing, however, at the point at which the flat roof adjoins this parapet and these possibilities will require further investigation from long ladders. The necessary works should be specified and completed as soon as possible. Please see Section 8: 'Main Walls' and Section 8: 'Roofs'.

No significant signs of condensation were found within the property at the time of our inspection but it will be important to maintain adequate levels of ventilation and regular heating, particularly in the kitchen and bathrooms, to help prevent such problems. We would recommend that extractor fans are installed in the bathrooms, to provide reliable/effective air-exchange.

Condensation can also form within roof structures if these are incorrectly specified/constructed and this poses the risk of damp problems and rot within the supporting/framing timbers. The plans relating to the loft conversion that were shown to us are not detailed although they do show that the flat section of the roof was to be a 'cold' roof (i.e. with the insulation beneath the roof deck) and this form of construction requires the incorporation of a ventilated air space, between the insulation and the underside of the deck, to control condensation. The plans do not specify whether or how airflow is to be achieved and we cannot confirm whether the design is adequate in this respect. On the information available, we cannot confirm how the roof was actually constructed but from photographs taken at arm's length there appear to be no means of ventilation within the roof surface or at the upstands, as far as we are able to ascertain.

Nowadays, it is more usual and straightforward to use 'warm' roof construction, where the insulation is placed on top of the roof deck, as this removes the need for a ventilated airspace.

In relation to the pitched roof at the front, the plans shown to us specify the installation of slate vents but these have not, in fact been installed. If 'cold' roof design principles have been followed and ventilation is inadequate, there is a risk of condensation. Sometimes, however a vapour-permeable felt is used beneath the slates, to help reduce the risk of condensation but on its own, this may not be sufficient to remove the risk altogether. If more detailed plans and specifications relating to the roof are available these should be passed on to you by the vendor. On the presumption that the design and construction of the loft conversion was approved by a Local Authority Building Control surveyor in 2005, however, there should not be any significant inadequacy in the design – although we are unable to guarantee this. No evidence of damp penetration was noted on the top floor ceilings at the time of our inspection.

6. INSULATION

The plans shown to us indicate that foil backed foam insulation boarding of 120mm thickness was to be installed within the flat roof of the loft conversion. We do not know the type or adequacy of insulation provided within the sloping section of the roof, however or within the rearmost, pre-existing flat section above second floor bathroom and bedroom five. Please see our further comments in Section 8: 'Roofs'.

Most of the windows and all of the doors in this property are single glazed and the sliding sash windows in particular will be prone to draughts. A scheme of draught proofing should be installed within the near future; perhaps in conjunction with window repairs and preparation, prior to redecoration. The window and roof lights in bedroom four (the loft conversion) are double glazed, however and these will provide better standards of insulation and draught proofing (although the sash windows on the second floor inner landing are not draught-proofed). The cellar door may also be draughty and you may wish to address this at the same time.

No insulation is provided on the cold water storage tank or on the associated plumbing but on the basis that the roof is adequately insulated, this should not be necessary. The hot water cylinder has a factory sprayed foam lagging jacket, which appears satisfactory.

7. TIMBER DEFECTS

Except in bedroom one and bedroom five, the floors were concealed by fitted carpets and other floor coverings and these prevented any examination of the floor surfaces. The ground floor timbers could not be seen from the cellar, beneath, due to the presence of a plastered ceiling, throughout and staircases were also concealed by carpets and by plastered soffits, on their undersides. In a number of other areas floorboards were painted, including in bedroom one. The floorboards were not lifted and we cannot confirm the condition of the floor/subfloor timbers, etc. We would caution, however that wood boring insect infestation is very common in properties of this age and any timbers in contact with damp (or previously damp) walls, subfloor sleeper walls etc. may be affected by rot, particularly in areas where ventilation is poor.

Wood boring insect infestation was seen within some of the exposed floorboards, particularly in bedroom five (**see photo 14**) and we also noted signs of infestation within the horizontal timber at the base of the glazed/timber panelling that separates the cellar entrance from the hallway (**see photo 15**). In these areas we did not see any evidence of active infestation although inactivity may only be confirmed for certain by exposing the affected timbers on all sides to check for signs of spoil dust ('frass'), in and around the insects' flight holes. It is likely that other timbers, in concealed areas will be similarly affected. It is notable that the Renlon guarantee does not refer to woodworm treatment and further enquiries should be made of the vendor, to establish whether this form of treatment has been undertaken – and whether it is guaranteed.

The 20 year guarantee issued by Renlon in 1992 refers to damp proofing work and also to dry rot treatment. Unfortunately, however the guarantee is not accompanied by the contractor's original report and work schedule, specifying the areas that were affected and the works that were actually undertaken. We would caution, however that dry rot is a very serious form of timber decay which flourishes in damp, dark, poorly ventilated locations and which can spread rapidly and result in serious weakening and damage to structural timbers. You should ask your solicitor to make further enquiries of the vendor, therefore and all available documentation should be copied to you, in order to confirm the location and extent of the dry rot outbreak and the remedial works that were undertaken.

It is possible, however, that dry rot occurred within the front bay or on the right side of the reception room, as a result of saturation caused by leaking rainwater fittings, as mentioned

in Section 5, above. Exposed timbers (skirting boards and floorboards etc.) were checked carefully in these areas and no evidence of rot was found – although we did not lift floorboards, to expose the concealed, under-floor timbers. The terms of the guarantee should also be checked – and specifically any assignment conditions attached to it.

Another location where timber decay can occur is in floors beneath sanitary fittings, as a result of leaks through mastic sealants, tiling or from defective plumbing, etc. The sealants around the shower and bath in the first floor bathroom appear suspect and these should be renewed – although we were unable to check the condition of the floor timbers beneath these fittings.

If you wish to be better assured as to the condition of the concealed timbers, we would recommend that you commission a further investigation by a reputable damp and timber treatment specialist, prior to exchange of contracts. This should include floorboards, sub-floor timbers and other structural timbers, where accessible, to confirm their condition and to determine the cost and extent of any necessary treatments and/or repairs. Any works found to be necessary should be carried out with the benefit of a long term, insurance backed guarantee. The vendors' consent to lift floor coverings/boards will need to be obtained, by prior arrangement. You should be aware, however that no pre-purchase inspection will enable the checking of every timber and when buying any property of this age, therefore, purchasers must accept the risk that defects might be uncovered at a later date.

Effective ventilation through the voids beneath the ground floor is essential to control condensation and damp conditions, as these are conducive to rot attack. Airflow is introduced into the sub-floor voids by means of airbricks, set into the external walls at low level. These should be cleared of dirt/debris periodically, to enable them to fulfil their intended function. The size and spacing of the airbricks would appear satisfactory overall, but we have not lifted floorboards and have been unable to confirm whether airflow through the subfloor voids is uninterrupted. We would strongly recommend, however that additional airbricks are added at high level through the front wall in the cellar, to promote better ventilation through the cellar itself and through the adjoining subfloor voids. The floor in the kitchen/breakfast room is of concrete construction and this does not require subfloor ventilation. The concrete floor in the entrance hall is probably a 'suspended' concrete floor (on timber joists) and this being the case, the voids beneath should be ventilated as best as possible.

ROOFS

8. THE EXTERIOR

The remaining section of the pitched roof has been reclad with synthetic slates and we believe this work was completed in 2000 – and that the 10 year guarantee has now expired. The slating remains in satisfactory condition and the valley gutters on each side of the gable (lined in zinc sheet) are also satisfactory. We did note, however that the contractor has used cut/half slates at the edges ('verges') of the roof and this is not best practice (**see photo 16**). Wider, 1½ width slates should have been used here, as the cut slates are not fixed with a copper rivet along the bottom edge and this leaves them more vulnerable to wind damage. One of these cut slates was found to have lifted slightly at the verge (**see photo 16**) although this would not appear to be a problem at this stage. Careful monitoring is advised, however and maintenance may be required at some stage, due to the contractor's failure to follow the manufacturer's instructions.

Lead flashings are provided where the pitched roof adjoins the chimney stack on the right hand flank and these have not been installed correctly. At the rear of the stack in particular, the lead has been nailed against the brickwork, rather than cut into it and secured with lead wedges (**see photo 17**). This is amateur workmanship and this section, known as the 'back gutter' will need to be replaced within the not too distant future. There was, however, no evidence of rainwater penetration through to the adjoining internal areas at the time of our visit.

Lead flashings are also provided on the opposite edge of the front roof slope, at the junction with the party parapet wall (**see photo 18**). These have been fixed behind a metal render bead, as is a common roofing contractors' short-cut. Often, with this detail, the lead is not cut into the brickwork and if the render falls into disrepair, rainwater may be able to penetrate behind the flashing and through to the interior. Careful monitoring is recommended and maintenance may be required in due course.

The roof over the side mansard (forming the loft conversion) is flat. We were only able to undertake a limited inspection of this roof, from photographs held at arm's length from one of the front facing roof lights (**see photos 19 & 20**). From these photographs, we see that the flat roof is covered with bituminous felt, with lead flashings at the upstands. The felt appears to be in satisfactory condition as far as we are able to ascertain - but the lead flashing across the front edge of this flat roof does not appear to be correctly installed. We would recommend, therefore, that you commission a more detailed examination by a reputable roofing specialist, using long ladders.

There is a lower section of flat roof at the rear of the loft conversion, over the first floor landing, bedroom five and over the bathroom, adjacent. No inspection of this roof was possible within the limitations of our survey and we cannot confirm its condition. The vendor may be able to confirm when the covering was last replaced and to give an indication of the specification that was adopted – although again, it would be advisable to have it independently checked from long ladders; particularly if its covering is not covered by a valid guarantee. The junction with the parapet wall, across the rear should be checked carefully, in view of the damp penetration noted with the rear wall at high level in bedroom 5.

It should be noted that the flat roof coverings of this type pose maintenance problems and have limited life expectancy from new; often further reduced by poor quality workmanship, materials and design. Your solicitor should confirm, by enquiry of the vendor, whether a guarantee is available in respect of either of the flat roof coverings.

When recovering flat roofs, a contingency sum should always be allowed in case previous leakage (or improper design/construction - resulting in condensation) has caused decay to supporting timber joists/decking. The condition of these elements will not be known until such time as the roof covering has been stripped off.

When re-covering an existing roof it is also necessary to upgrade/improve the design, with particular reference to the level/adequacy of thermal insulation, ventilation, etc; and the completed work must comply with Part L1B of the Building Regulations 2010. Contractors might need to be reminded of this legal requirement and the need to serve a 'Building Notice' on the local authority - although responsibility for compliance rests with the person or organisation that commissions the work. On completion, the contractor must provide you with a Building Control Completion Certificate, issued by the local authority, to confirm compliance with the Regulations.

Over the low level front porch there is a monopitched roof, covered with old/original clay tiles and at present, these are in satisfactory condition. They will have limited remaining life, however and you should anticipate the need for ongoing maintenance. Weatherproofing at the junctions with brickwork is formed with cement fillets, which are a cheaper and less long lasting alternative to lead flashings. In parts, these appear to be of relatively recent origin and have already cracked on the right hand side. The provision of new lead flashings would be advisable at these abutments.

CHIMNEYS

We were able to see two chimney stacks within the limitations of our inspection although originally, there would have been at least three and we cannot confirm whether the central chimney stack (corresponding with fireplaces in the rear reception room and bedroom two) is still in place (at a reduced height) or whether it has been removed and roofed over. It should be possible to confirm this during your roofing contractor's further investigations in relation to the flat roofs.

Of the two other stacks, one is located on the right hand flank elevation, at the front end and this has been built up to a higher level, as part of the loft conversion. It is built in original and reclaimed stock brickwork, with red brick ornamentation and contains two flues, fitted with clay pots and cowl. The condition of the mortar joints was found to vary but some sections are weathered and further repointing will be necessary within the next five years or so. In addition, however the ornamental red brick features are softer and these are decaying as a result of rainwater penetration and frost attack (**see photo 21**). Damaged bricks will need to be cut out and replaced therefore, at the same time. This work will require the use of scaffolding, which will increase the cost.

The other stack is located adjacent to the left hand party wall, towards the rear and corresponds with the fireplaces in the kitchen, bedroom three and bedroom five. We were only able to see the upper section of this stack in a photograph, taken at arm's length from one of the front facing roof lights (**see photo 22**). The stack is constructed in stock brick, again with red brick ornamentation and contains three flues, fitted with clay pots and cowl. The brickwork is weathered, at least in parts and again, the decayed red brickwork

GUTTERS & DOWNPIPES

will need to be cut out and replaced within the next few years, as part of routine maintenance. The flashings between the chimney stack and the adjacent flat roof could not be seen but there were no signs of damp penetration around the top of the chimney breast and ceiling in bedroom five, beneath.

Where chimney flues are redundant it would be advisable to fit clay bonnets, to prevent unwanted rainwater entry into the flues.

Rainwater discharges from the various roof surfaces into a system of replacement half round PVC guttering and, for the most part, to PVC downpipes. At the front, however the downpipe on the left hand side of the bay incorporates original cast iron and other aluminium sections. At the front of the property it is notable that the guttering is continuous across onto No.72 adjacent and the guttering and downpipe on the subject property therefore receive rainwater from the neighbouring property. Your solicitor should advise in relation to maintenance liability in these circumstances.

It was not raining at the time of our inspection, therefore the watertightness of the rainwater system could not be confirmed and it should be carefully monitored during heavy rainfall and any defective sections resealed, realigned or renewed as necessary. Guttering should also be checked from time to time (particularly during the autumn and early winter months) and cleared of leaves/debris as necessary.

On the porch at the front, the rainwater pipe discharges onto the ground, adjacent to the bay (**see photo 7**). This is not acceptable, as the concentrated flow of water into the soil could cause localised softening or erosion/consolidation of the soil in this location – which could destabilize the foundations. In the circumstances, the downpipe should be extended round into the porch area, to discharge over the gulley in this location.

As indicated previously, there is evidence of leakage from the rainwater system on the left hand side of the front bay and on the main right hand flank elevation (**see photos 12 & 13**). We suspect that problems in these areas might now have been rectified but as it was not raining at the time of our visit, we could not confirm this definitively. Any original cast iron fittings will have limited remaining life.

Waste from most of the first and second floor sanitary fittings is discharged into a 'soil and vent' pipe on the right hand flank elevation, which takes waste directly into the underground drainage system. The bottom section of this pipe is of the original cast iron and due to the effects of corrosion this may have limited remaining life. Leakage was noted from one of the waste pipes serving the first floor bathroom and this should be rectified as soon as possible.

Some of the waste pipes from the first floor bathroom are dealt with separately, by means of a PVC hopperhead and downpipe, which discharges over a gulley. Hopperheads of this type are prone to blockage and overflowing and it would be better, at some stage, to redirect these waste pipes into the soil and vent pipe.

MAIN WALLS

The condition of the external brickwork was found to vary and whilst some areas have been repointed in the past, mortar joints were found to be loose and crumbling in places and further repointing will be necessary within the next five - ten years or so (**see photo 23**). Our inspection of the right hand flank was restricted (particularly at the upper level), due to

the close confines of the site. Repointing is labour intensive work, requiring the use of scaffolding and it tends to be relatively expensive, therefore.

The rear elevation is topped-off by a parapet wall at high level and the adjacent flat roof is constructed up against this. The parapet appears to have a rendered coping with a 'drip' detail just beneath, to help discharge rainwater clear. As indicated previously, however, there is evidence of rainwater penetration through the rear elevation in bedroom five, at high level and this may be associated with porous/defective brickwork, detailing or the coping, along the top. This should be investigated within the near future by a reputable builder or roofing specialist and any repairs undertaken as necessary. It may be necessary to provide new, concrete coping stones, over a damp proof course, to help throw rainwater clear of the underlying brickwork.

The left hand party wall is built up above the pitched roof at the front to form a 'party parapet wall' (**see photo 18**). The side face of the parapet has a render finish, in reasonable condition but there are signs of weathering, hairline cracking and frost damage. Maintenance will be necessary within the next few years. The parapet wall has a brick-on-edge coping, which is affected by frost damage and in part, growth of moss and other vegetation (**see photo 18**). Again, repairs will be required within the next few years, therefore and these would be likely to include the provision of a new coping or, perhaps, lead cappings. Because the party parapet wall is a shared structure, it will be necessary to liaise with the adjoining owner with a view to the cost of repair or replacement of the coping. The condition of the other sections of the party parapet wall (towards the rear; adjoining the flat roofs) will need to be further investigated when the roofs are checked.

Some of the stone subsills beneath window openings were found to be perished; particularly that beneath the ground floor window, within the front bay (**see photo 24**). Many of the others are chipped/damaged and general restoration will be required prior to redecoration. In the worst instances, however subsills may need to be broken out and recast in concrete.

On the right hand flank elevation the original wall has been built up to a higher level to form the brick sided mansard that encloses the loft conversion. This was found to be satisfactory as far as we could ascertain although we note that precast concrete lintels are provided over the window openings, rather than red brick arches, as would have been preferable from an aesthetic point of view – particularly as the property is located in a Conservation Area (**see photo 25**). Your solicitor should confirm that this does not contravene any of the conditions on the Planning Permission.

Other alterations have been undertaken within the external walls including the installation and re-sizing of window openings at the rear of the kitchen, in the first floor bathroom, etc. No indications of failure were apparent but it should be confirmed that these alterations received Local Authority Building Control approval and where necessary, Planning Permission.

Many of the windows are of the original softwood single glazed sliding sash type although some are of single glazed side hung casement type and in the first floor WC a fixed picture window is installed, incorporating a high level fanlight. In most instances, external joinery was found to be weathered and a general overhaul will be required prior to redecoration within the next 12 months or so. Works will include quality (2-pack) filler repairs,

replacement of cracked/defective putties, easing and adjustment and, in some instances, replacement of old/fraying sash cords (**see photo 26**). As indicated above, we would also recommend that draught proofing is improved. In places, the condition of the external joinery and the weatherproofing up against the adjacent brickwork may be responsible for rainwater penetration beneath some of the window openings.

The French doors and side lights at the rear of the kitchen are in similar condition and slight splitting/softening was noted at the base (**see photo 27**).

The front door is original and incorporates coloured/leaded glazing, which remains in satisfactory condition. The side door in the kitchen appears to be painted shut, however.

In many areas, the external paintwork was found to be weathered (**see photo 26**) and historically, preparation prior to redecoration has been inadequate (**see photo 28**). Redecoration will be required on completion of joinery and stonework repairs, when the weather conditions permit next year.

Bearing in mind the age of the property, lead based paints have probably been used on internal/external joinery/stonework surfaces over previous years. Preparation (i.e. burning off or sanding) can result in the release/inhalation of vapours/dust which contain traces of lead. This can constitute a significant health hazard, particularly to pregnant women and children and all possible health/safety precautions should therefore be observed.

OTHER

Not applicable.

9. THE INTERIOR

ROOF SPACE

The main roof space has been converted to form habitable space. This will have involved a number of structural alterations including the redistribution of roof loadings, the construction of the new floor and the addition of the mansard, at the side. Most of the structural elements are concealed beneath flooring, behind ceilings, etc and these could not be seen or assessed within the limitations of our survey, therefore. We were able to see a steel beam within the tank cupboard, however and were surprised to see that this is not properly painted with red oxide primer (to protect against surface corrosion) and is not fireproofed (**see photo 29**).

The rooflines and floor, etc. were found to be free from undue distortion or deflection and on this basis, the structure appears able to satisfactorily carry the loadings placed upon it. Your solicitor should make further enquiries prior to exchange of contracts however, to confirm that local authority Building Control approval was obtained and that a Completion Certificate is available to pass on to you. See Section 12: *'Regulations'*.

Please see our earlier comments in Section 5: *'Condensation and Ventilation'*, with regard to the design of the pitched and flat roofs.

CEILINGS

Most of the ceilings are of the original lath and plaster construction and many retain the original cornices, centre roses etc. and the kitchen ceiling is particularly ornate. Some of the ceilings are of plasterboard, however including in the first floor bathroom and in the second floor extensions and reproduction cornices are provided in a number of instances. On the right hand side of the kitchen ceiling the level steps down and the surface is clad with timber boarding, which has been painted.

Overall, the ceilings were found to be in good condition and some of the older lath and plaster may have been re-skimmed with plaster, to improve its appearance. Old lath and plaster ceilings are prone to gradual loss of adhesion with age, however and further maintenance (or even taking down and replacement) may be necessary in the fullness of time. Minor cracking was noted in some instances, including in bedroom one.

INTERNAL WALLS & PARTITIONS

Internal walls appear to be built in a combination of brickwork and timber studwork, with plasterboard/lath and plaster finishes. Plaster finishes were found to be in fair condition, but unkeyed/uneven areas were noted in places and general making good and patching will be required prior to redecoration, as is to be expected in a building of this age.

A number of structural alterations have been undertaken within the property and in particular, part of a load bearing wall has been removed to create a through-reception room and the large kitchen/breakfast room has also been formed by the removal of an original wall, running front to back. We have not exposed the means of support to structures above these areas and cannot confirm adequacy, except to say that we saw no indications of failure. Please see Section E2: *'Regulations'*.

**CHIMNEY
BREASTS,
FLUES &
FIREPLACES**

Chimney breasts remain in their original positions as far as we were able to ascertain and many of the original cast iron fireplaces also remain insitu. None of the fireplaces or flues was tested as part of our survey, however. Where they are redundant, flues should be capped at chimney pot level, to prevent rainwater entry.

FLOORS

Most of the floors were concealed at the time of our inspection, by fitted carpets and other floor coverings including ceramic tiles, wood strip flooring and paint finishes, applied to the floorboards. The floorboards have been stripped and varnished in bedrooms one and five, however and these are rather worn, with a number of gaps, holes etc. also apparent. Overall, however the floors were found to be acceptably level and firm underfoot.

In the kitchen/breakfast room, the floor is of concrete construction with a ceramic tiled finish. We could not confirm whether this flooring incorporates an effective damp proof membrane or insulation, in accordance with current standards. (Older, un-insulated concrete floors tend to be cold underfoot, during the winter months). The floor in the cellar is also of concrete and again we do not know whether this incorporates an effective damp proof membrane. The floor has a tiled finish, in satisfactory condition, however and a similar finish is applied on the steps leading down.

In the entrance hall, the floor is also of concrete construction, with a tessellated tile finish, in good condition. We would assume that this is a suspended concrete floor, bearing onto timber boards and joists.

JOINERY

Internal joinery comprises moulded skirting boards, architraves and panelled doors etc, in good condition overall. Fitted wardrobes are provided in the bedrooms and these appear to be serviceable and generally satisfactory.

Staircases are of timber construction and were found to be firm underfoot although some of the balustrades were found to be a little loose. Attention may be required.

Plantation shutters are fitted in some of the rooms and these are of good quality.

The kitchen fittings are of relatively basic quality, with cottage style, brick-sided cupboards, tiled and pine work surfaces and an enamelled sink. There is scope for upgrading at some stage, if required. We do not know whether the Aga is included within the sale and this should be clarified by your reference to your solicitor's enquiries.

DECORATIONS

The internal decorations are in good condition overall, but partial redecoration is likely to be required, following the removal of the vendor's furniture and effects. Please be aware of our comments in Section 8: "*Windows, External Joinery & Decorations*", with regard to the likelihood that lead paints have been used in the property; noting the need for care during preparation work, prior to re-painting.

OTHER

Not applicable.

10. THE SERVICES

ELECTRICITY

Mains electricity is supplied to the property and the meter and consumer unit are located in the cellar. The consumer unit is fitted with miniature circuit breakers; a safer and more convenient alternative to old-fashioned re-wireable fuses. Some of the higher rated circuits are protected by an RCD (safety cut-off), as an additional safety measure.

Visible wiring was found to be in PVC covered cable but concealed wiring has been neither traced nor tested. Overall, however, the installation appears modern and no areas of serious concern were apparent from our superficial inspection. Safety and compliance with current standards may only be confirmed by an electrician's test, however, which was not undertaken as part of this survey. According to a sticker on the consumer unit, the last inspection was carried out in 2006 the next inspection will be due in 2016 or upon the next change of ownership, if this occurs before that date.

We noted that the electricity provider's seals are missing from the service fuses and this should be reported to the provider, in order that the seals may be reinstated as soon as possible.

Many domestic electrical works are now required to comply with the Building Regulations and on completion of any qualifying works, a compliance Certificate must be obtained from the installer.

GAS

Mains gas is supplied to the property and the meter is located in the cellar. We did not smell gas during our inspection but gas tightness of pipework and other fittings may only be confirmed by a specialists test. The Gas Safe Register recommends that gas appliances (boilers, fires, hobs, cookers etc) should be tested upon change of ownership and a Gas Safety Certificate obtained. Poorly maintained or improperly installed gas appliances can cause carbon monoxide poisoning and you would be wise to seek specialist advice prior to exchange of contracts, therefore. See also Section 10: "Heating".

**WATER
(including
Sanitary Fittings)**

Mains water is connected to the property and the stop cock is located in the public footpath at the front. A long-handled key will probably be required to operate this, but no testing was undertaken as part of our survey. The internal stopcock is located in the cellar, according to our Vendor Questionnaire.

Visible plumbing was found to be in copper pipework, but concealed pipework has been neither traced nor tested. As is still very common in properties of this age, the incoming/underground section may be of the original lead pipework, however and by now, this could be susceptible to pinhole leakage/splitting and may also pose a health hazard. Further investigation would be prudent and replacement in modern plastic pipework would be advisable, before long, if this has not already been undertaken. This tends to be expensive however, as it involves excavation of the front garden and the public footpath, as well as a charge for the new connection to the Water Authority's main in the street.

Cold water for domestic purposes is stored within a plastic tank, located within the tank cupboard at the back of the wardrobe in bedroom four (**see photo 30**). A fitted lid should be provided, to keep the water supply clean and hygienic. The small tank adjacent is the feed and expansion tank, which forms part of the central heating system. There has been a leakage from a pipe connection into the tank at low level and whilst there does not appear to be any serious, ongoing leakage or standing water at present, but we were unable to get close enough to apply a moisture meter test to the timber base (**see photo 31**). This should be checked by a plumber and any necessary repair undertaken. We noted an ongoing leak from one of the gate valves on a 'down' service from the cold water storage tank and this requires an immediate repair (**see photo 32**).

For the most part, the sanitary fittings are modern and were found to be serviceable where checked randomly – although they were not tested exhaustively. In the first floor bathroom we noted that the mastic and tiling around the bath and within the shower enclosure are in poor condition, however – although their watertightness was not tested (**see photo 33**). We would recommend that these areas are checked and mastic sealants etc. replaced by a plumber in the near future. . It is extremely important that these are watertight, however, as small leaks can give rise to serious rot within concealed floor timbers, beneath.

We also noted that in the shower enclosure, the temperature control appears to be seized and the showerhead requires de-scaling. This fitting therefore requires further investigation/repair therefore.

HEATING

Hot water for domestic and central heating purposes is provided by a Keston C40 gas fired boiler, located in the cellar. This is an energy-efficient condensing boiler and we see from our Vendor Questionnaire that it was installed four years ago. The 'Benchmark' Commissioning Checklist should be passed-on to you by the vendor, as this is the best means of confirming that the installation was made by a Gas Safe (then CORGI) Registered engineer, in accordance with Building Regulations.

From documentation shown to us we see that the boiler was serviced and the condensate pump replaced recently. We also note, however that the contractor's invoice does not show a Gas Safe logo and assurance should be obtained that the work was carried out by a Gas Safe registered engineer. The condensate pipe from the boiler discharges to a gully on the right hand side of the house and this is satisfactory – except that the pipe should be insulated, to comply with the Regulations.

Hot water for domestic purposes is stored within a conventional/vented copper cylinder, located within the tank cupboard at second floor level. The venting head adjacent was found to be badly scaled and this should be checked and de-scaled in the near future (**see photo 34**). The hot water cylinder incorporates an immersion heater (for use in the event of a boiler failure) and a thermostat, to regulate the temperature of the stored hot water supply.

The heating system was not tested as part of our survey although it appears relatively modern. Central heating and hot water production are controlled by a digital programmer, positioned adjacent to the boiler and a wireless thermostat is also fitted. Radiators are modern and are fitted with thermostatically controlled valves although there is no radiator in the first floor WC.

A gas Aga is installed in the kitchen and this was not tested. We have had sight of documentation showing that this was serviced (and a thermo-couple replaced) in May 2010, by Hoad & Taylor. Again, the invoice does not make any reference to Gas Safe registration and this should be checked.

DRAINAGE

The property is connected to the mains drainage system and it would appear that the drains are located beneath the side passageway. The drains appear to run from the rear to the front and out into a public sewer beneath the street. We would assume that this is a 'combined' system, carrying both foul and rainwater.

We found two inspection chambers within the site but one is largely concealed beneath a storage locker within the front garden and this could not be inspected, therefore (**see photo 35**). The second inspection chamber is within the side passageway and in this location, the drains were found to clear and flowing although there is some debris on the benching, at the sides and this should be cleared by high-pressure water jetting.

As indicated in Section 4: 'Movement' gapping around the waste gulley just to the rear of the side door to the kitchen could enable water-loss into the soil (**see photo 36**). Leaks from any part of the drainage system pose a risk of further structural movement and a repair around the gulley grating should be carried out as soon as possible.

Watertightness of the remainder of the system may only be confirmed by reference to specialist's test, which was not carried out as part of our survey. As leaks and other defects are not uncommon in systems of this age, (and particularly in view of structural movement within the building) you should commission a test, as a precautionary measure, prior to exchange of contracts. Any repairs found to be necessary should be regarded as urgent repairs.

OTHER

A burglar alarm system is installed but there was no power supply to the key pad, just inside the entrance and we suspect that this is unserviceable, therefore. The vendor should provide clarification.

Mains wired smoke alarms are installed in the cellar and on the first and second floor landings and we would assume that these are interconnected, in order that they will all sound if one detects smoke. This is a Building Regulations requirement but there should also be an interconnected alarm in the ground floor entrance hall and we would recommend that one is added by an electrician, as soon as possible.

A battery operated carbon monoxide alarm is provided in the cellar but this is not fixed to the building and we do not know whether it is included within the sale. Your solicitor should confirm - and if it is to be removed, you should replace it and perhaps install it closer to the cellar door where it is more likely to be heard, in the event the alarm is activated.

11. SITE & OUTBUILDINGS

The property is constructed upon a generally level, rectangular plot. Your solicitor should confirm liability in respect of the maintenance of boundary walls and fences. Where visible, boundary structures were found to be in reasonable condition overall but some are concealed by ivy and other creepers. The boundary wall on the right hand side has been partially rebuilt, towards the rear of the site but some sections, closer to the building and within the side passage are in poor condition (**see photo 37**). In part, the wall also leans away slightly to the right. Further repairs should be undertaken within the next year or so and the degree of the lean should be carefully monitored. If it worsens, the affected section(s) will have to be rebuilt.

There is a shed within the rear garden but this looks to be in fairly poor condition and has been propped, to help prevent it slumping sideways.

The original tessellated tile path remains in the front garden, leading up the entrance but this has suffered movement and is cracked.

12. COMMENTS FOR YOUR LEGAL ADVISER

TENURE

We understand that you are buying the freehold interest in the property. We assume that good title can be shown and that there are no abnormal restrictive covenants or other unusual outgoing which may adversely affect the value/saleability of the property. Your solicitor must verify this assumption.

REGULATIONS

The property is located in the Example Road Conservation Area. You should familiarise yourself with the restrictions imposed on external alterations, particularly if you are planning to extend or alter the property.

Your solicitor should confirm that the required statutory/local authority approvals we obtained and complied with in respect of:

- The loft conversion (noting the use of concrete lintels over the window openings at the side of the mansard and the absence of conservation-style rooflights to the front).
- The earlier extension, at the rear of the second floor accommodation.
- Internal structural alterations, involving the removal of walls in the reception room and kitchen.
- Formation of new window openings, including to the kitchen, first floor bathroom, etc.
- Any changes to the electrical installation undertaken on or after the 1st January 2005 (including the new installation in the loft conversion).
- Installation of any replacement windows fitted on or after the 1st April 2002.

Copies of all relevant documents should be obtained from the vendor, including Completion Certificates.

Many of the interior doors are of fire resisting quality and we assume that these were installed at the time of the loft conversion, to satisfy Building Regulations at the time. The kitchen door is not of this type, however and its replacement would be advisable, to provide half-hour fire protection. Many of the self closing devices have been disconnected from the other doors and it would be advisable to reconnect these throughout, as closed doors will help to slow the spread of smoke and fire in an emergency situation. As indicated previously an additional smoke alarm should be fitted in the entrance hall.

GUARANTEES

Your solicitor should check the existence/validity of any guarantees and certificates relating to the property, with particular reference to timber treatment, damp proofing, gas and electrical installations, flat roof coverings, etc. Where timber treatment and damp-proofing have been undertaken, the location and extent of the treatment should also be confirmed.

OTHER

As indicated previously, your solicitor should confirm ownership of the boundary structures and liability for maintenance.

You should immediately pass a copy of this report to your legal advisers with the request that, in addition to the necessary standard searches and enquiries, they check and confirm each and every one of the items referred to in this section, as well as all of the assumptions made in the agreed Terms and Conditions. Please let us know if any of this information is found to be inaccurate, as this might have an effect on the advice given in this report.

13. SUMMARY OF CONDITION & RECOMMENDATIONS

You are advised most strongly to obtain competitive quotations from reputable contractors/specialists on the matters listed below, prior to exchange of contracts. As soon as you receive the quotations and reports for the work specified and also the responses from your legal advisers, we will be pleased to advise whether or not these would cause us to change the advice which we give in the report. Only when you have all this information before you, will you be fully equipped to make a reasoned and informed judgement on whether or not to proceed with the purchase. We must advise you, however, that if you should decide to exchange contracts without obtaining this information, you would have to accept the risk that adverse factors might come to light in the future.

URGENT REPAIRS

We would recommend that you treat the following matters, all discussed earlier in this report, as matters to be remedied as soon as possible after you have completed the purchase of the property:

Section 10: 'Drainage'/Section 4: 'Movement': - Undertake a repair around the waste gully on the right hand flank, to prevent water leakage into the soil.

Section 8: 'Roofs': - Replace the defective lead flashing around the front/right chimney stack.

Section 8: 'Walls': - Commission a builder to check and repair the parapet wall across the rear of the building, as rainwater is penetrating through into bedroom five, adjacent.

Section 10: 'Water': - Commission a plumber to repair leaks within the tank cupboard and to replace mastic sealants around the bath and shower in the first floor bathroom.

Section 10: 'Other': - Commission an electrician to install an interconnected mains-wired smoke alarm in the entrance hall.

MATTERS REQUIRING FURTHER INVESTIGATION

We would recommend that you should treat the following matters, all discussed earlier in the report, as matters where further investigations are required prior to exchange of contracts.

Section 4: 'Movement'/Section 10 'Drainage': - Commission a precautionary test of the drainage system prior to exchange of contracts. Any necessary repairs to be regarded as urgent repairs.

Section 5: 'Ventilation and Condensation': - Check any available (detailed) building plans, with particular reference to aspects of the pitched/flat roof design - to ensure adequacy from the point of view of insulation and ventilation.

Section 7: 'Timber': - Obtain further information relating to the previous dry rot outbreak in

**MAINTENANCE
ISSUES**

terms of its location, the extent of the damage, etc.

Section 7: 'Timber Defects: - Commission a further investigation (as far as practicable) if you wish to be assured as to the condition of concealed timbers.

Section 8: 'Roofs: - Consider inspection of the high level flat roofs by a reputable roofing contractor prior to exchange of contracts, to confirm their condition and the standard of workmanship.

Ongoing general maintenance will be required to the property, as is to be expected in one of this age. This will include:

Section 4: 'Movement: - Repair of cracking within the walls, perhaps in conjunction with repointing in due course.

Section 5: 'Dampness: - Monitoring of the render tanking within the cellar, noting that this is failing in places and replacement will be required before long. Localised dampness on the front reception room chimney breast will also require attention.

Section 6: 'Insulation: - Provision of draught-proofing on windows and doors.

Section 8: 'Roofs: - Maintenance of the flat roof coverings in particular – noting that these tend to have limited life from new.

Section 8: 'Chimneys: - General repair of chimney stack brickwork within the next few years.

Section 8: 'Gutters and Downpipes: - Maintenance of the rainwater system as necessary, to ensure ongoing watertightness. To the front porch, the rainwater pipe should be redirected to the gulley within the porch itself.

Section 8: 'Walls: - Further repointing of external brickwork on all sides, say within the next five years or so and overhaul of the party parapet wall.

Section 8: 'Windows, External Joinery and Decorations: - Overhaul and redecoration of external joinery, stonework, etc within the next 12 months or so.

Section 10: 'Heating': - De-scaling or replacement of the vent adjacent to the hot water cylinder.

Section 12: 'Regulations: - Reinstatement of self closing devices on the doors and the fitting of a fire door to the kitchen.

14. BUILDINGS INSURANCE REINSTATEMENT COST

The current cost of reinstating the house in its present form is estimated for insurance purposes to be approximately **£460,000 (Four hundred and sixty thousand pounds)**.

SIGNATURE

SURVEYOR'S NAME AND
PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

David Carver BSc FRICS

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SURVEYOR'S ORGANISATION

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ISA MEMBERSHIP NUMBER

2580

DATE OF REPORT

6th November 2000