



**Report on the Structure
And General Condition of**

**32 Frederick Street
Bristol**



Made for the Sole Purpose of

**Mr Happy
A Prospective Purchaser**

9th January 2006

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Scope of Instructions

In accordance with your instructions and in accordance with the signed Terms and Conditions of Engagement dated 16th December 2005 I have inspected this property to report its condition. A description of the scope of my inspection and report comprised part of my original correspondence and a copy is enclosed in Appendix 3 to this report for your further information. This is a general Building Survey of the property and not a Schedule of Condition listing every minor detail.

This report is for the private and confidential use of Mr Happy for whom the report is undertaken and should not be reproduced in whole or part or relied upon by third parties with the exception of advisers representing Mr Happy for any use without the express written authority of Allied Surveyors plc.

I have provided two copies of the report so that you can pass one to your Legal Adviser to consider any points that he may find relevant.

I cannot guarantee that any work carried out in the past complies with statutory or mandatory regulations or to competent manufacturers' recommendations. Standards tend to advance and almost all properties will fail to comply with some standards in some respects. I will only make reference to this when the matter is considered to be significant, usually where contravention has resulted in some particular damage or hazard.

1.2 Property Address

32 Frederick Street, Bristol.

1.3 Client's Name and Address

Mr Happy, Bristol.

1.4 Date of Survey

Monday 19th December 2005.

1.5 Weather

It was sunny and dry during my inspection.

1.6 Limitations of Inspection

I have not inspected parts of the structure which were covered, unexposed or inaccessible where to do so would have necessitated lifting fitted floor coverings, removing wall finishes, taking down wall or other linings or in any way causing damage to the property. Fitted carpets or alternative floor coverings are retained throughout.

The loose area of carpet in the boiler cupboard was moved to one side and single width of board raised to give limited access to the immediate void below; this area was opened up before I inspected the house and left open when I left. No other concealed areas were 'opened up'. Floorboards which may give access to the sub-floor void under the mat-well were jammed in place.

1.7 Information Relied Upon in this Report

No formal enquiries or investigations nor any informal local enquiries have been made unless specifically referred to below. Whenever I state that I am advised of a certain point, that advice is obtained from the vendor unless otherwise stated. The vendors were not at the property, but kindly completed a questionnaire. Wherever appropriate within this report I will refer to the advice obtained from that source.

2 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPERTY

Elements of the structure are described within this report to offer reference to my comments, but I cannot offer definitive advice regarding details of construction without opening up much of the property.

A glossary is enclosed at Appendix 2 of this report to help you with definitions of certain technical terms. If there is anything else you do not understand within the report, please ask me.

Any reference to 'left' or 'right' is made assuming the property is viewed from the front. Orientation is described in **Section 3.2** below.

2.1 Type and Age

The property comprises a late Victorian¹ mid-terrace house with modern single storey rear extension. The house is built in a traditional fashion with masonry walls and a pitched roof covered in tiles. The rear extension has a flat roof covered in felt.

2.2 Accommodation

Accommodation downstairs comprises hall, lounge, dining room and kitchen. The dining room and kitchen are extended at the rear. Upstairs there is a landing, bathroom with wc and two bedrooms.

Outside there is an enclosed forecourt and small rear garden.

2.3 Tenure and Occupation

I understand from the vendor that the property is for sale on a freehold basis with vacant possession.

¹ say 1890

2.4 Further Comments

As far as I could determine mains electricity, gas, water and drainage are connected.

3 SITUATION

3.1 Location

The property is located close to the head of a residential cul-de-sac; near a local playing field and scout hut and within reasonable reach of local amenities.

3.2 Orientation

The property faces approximately South-West.

3.3 The Site and Surrounding Areas

The ground slopes from the left to the right so that No 34 is set slightly higher than No 32, and No 32 is set slightly higher than No 30. The house may have been built on a shrinkable clay sub-soil; so care should be exercised when selecting plants in the garden and large shrubs or trees should be controlled accordingly.

3.4 Local Factors

The property is located close to the head of a cul-de-sac away from main roads although distant road noise is audible. The nearby scout hut and playing field suggest that this cul-de-sac may be busier at weekends and during the evenings, but I was not aware of any particular disturbance during my inspection.

3.5 Trees and Hedges

Trees and hedges on adjoining land are not significant.

4 SURVEYOR'S OVERALL ASSESSMENT

You may find it useful to read my overall assessment a few times to gain a general overview of the most significant points raised. It is however essential that the whole report is read and considered in detail prior to commitment to purchase and that all works and further investigations are fully considered.

4.1 Surveyor's Overall Opinion

This old property has not been modernised in recent years and maintenance has been neglected, so there is substantial scope for improvement and repair. Once repaired the cost of maintenance should prove normal for property of this type and age.

4.2 Areas of Concern

I summarise repairs in the next section, beyond aspects of condition there are no areas of particular concern regarding this property.

4.3 Summary of Repairs

- 4.3.1 Repair/replace decayed roof timbers. Please refer to **Section 5.3.1**.
- 4.3.2 Clear debris from the rainwater goods. Please refer to **Sections 5.3.4** and **5.4**.
- 4.3.3 Repair parapets. Please refer to **Section 5.3.6**.
- 4.3.4 Repair flashings. Please refer to **Section 5.3.7**.
- 4.3.5 Replace broken tiles on front bay. Please refer to **Section 5.4.1**.
- 4.3.6 Improve detailing around flat roof. Please refer to **Section 5.4.2**.
- 4.3.7 Make minor repairs to stacks and support disturbed masonry in loft. Please refer to **Section 5.5**.
- 4.3.8 Repair rendered walls, attend to localised re-pointing but allow ribbon pointing to fail. Please refer to **Section 5.6**.
- 4.3.9 Improve sub-floor ventilation. Please refer to **Section 5.8** and related topics.
- 4.3.10 Repair damaged plaster. Please refer to **Sections 5.1** and **5.0**.
- 4.3.11 Repair joinery items, including windows. Please refer to **Section 5.14**.
- 4.3.12 Upgrade and repair service installations to suit your requirements following specialist reports referred to in **Section 4.5**. Please refer to **Section 6**.

4.4 Cost Guidelines

I do not include detailed cost guidelines in Building Survey reports. Unless carefully considered in the context of your own requirements such figures can be misleading and I believe it is more appropriate to recommend that you consider your wider requirements and obtain quotes and estimates after some period of reflection and consideration. This can be demonstrated by considering a replacement kitchen which could reasonably cost £5,000 or £50,000 depending on what you want and how you get it. Any figures supplied at this stage would be subject to significant reservations.

You may prefer to undertake much of this work on a DIY basis, but as an approximate guide I estimate that if the property were refurbished by a speculative developer to a normal standard, that is to say with inexpensive fixtures and fittings and a focus on cosmetic improvements, I would expect the cost to lie in the order of £20,000.

4.5 Further Investigations

Any further advice should be sought prior to exchange of contracts so that you are fully advised before you are contractually obliged to purchase. Such further advice should include all specialist investigation and estimates for works recommended within the main body of this report. Once you are contractually obliged to purchase it would be difficult for you to renegotiate the purchase price if additional work or costs are uncovered by specialist investigation. If you would like assistance when selecting specialists and/or contractors, please ask.

- It is generally recommended that electrical installations are tested every five to ten years by an NICEIC electrician or equivalent and I recommend that a test should be commissioned at this stage to ensure that all is safe and to seek advice with regard to any necessary improvements. Please refer to **Section 6.1**.
- It is generally recommended that heating systems are tested and serviced annually and I recommend that you obtain advice at this time. A CORGI registered heating engineer should be retained. Please refer to **Section 6.5**.
- I recommend extending the checking and testing of the heating system to include the whole plumbing installation. Much is dated and improvements may be cost effective in conjunction with alterations to the heating. Please refer to **Section 6.3**.
- I could only see the drainage visible within the manhole at the rear, so if fuller assurance is required regarding the hidden pipework a video survey should be commissioned. Please refer to **Section 6.6**.
- I recommend that rainwater goods referred to in **Sections 5.3** and **5.4** and surface water drainage referred to in **Section 8.1** should be checked during or immediately after heavy rain to establish whether any leakage, blockage or overflow requires attention.

5 CONSTRUCTION AND CONDITION – STRUCTURAL FRAME, EXTERIOR AND INTERIOR

5.1 Constructional Principles

The property was built in a conventional manner typical of its type and age with load carried to the ground via masonry walls. The load-bearing walls include those internally, so alterations should not be made to the internal masonry walls without seeking specialist advice.

Although the property has not been altered recently earlier 'modernisation' has occurred which affects the function of the building as a whole. In particular the use of cement renders, floor finishes and pointing will have altered the way the walls behave and this may account for some of the damp related damage seen.

I recommend you take as much time as you can to research the qualities of a building of this type and age as you will need to make decisions during the day-to-day maintenance of the property that will depend on an understanding of the virtues of lime mortar and other materials that are largely forgotten in the modern world. The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings would be a useful starting point and they may be able to supply you with some useful literature. I recommend in particular you obtain a copy of SPAB Information Sheet No 4: The Need for Old Buildings to 'Breathe', by Philip Hughes, from Spring 1986. I suggest you try contacting SPAB by telephoning 020-7377-1644 or e-mailing info@spab.org.uk (www.spab.org.uk).

5.2 Structural Frame

The simple roof structure and suspended timber floor structures effectively comprise individual structural frames, but this is not a timber frame building in the normal sense.

5.3 Main Roof

5.3.1 Structure

The first floor ceiling is not designed to carry substantial load. A loft ladder is installed and some loose fitting boards are laid in places, but access to the loft could prove to be hazardous and is likely to disturb the underlying ceilings. Access should therefore only be gained for periodic inspection, maintenance and repair.

The covering is supported on sloping timbers (rafters) which span from the top of the roof (ridge) to the base of the roof (eaves). These are supported at approximately mid-span by more substantial horizontal timbers (purlins) which are supported by the masonry walls dividing the houses (party walls) and at a central point by a timber prop bearing onto the internal wall. The structure is not as substantial as that found in equivalent modern roofs as standards have progressed. It is therefore not surprising to find slight distortion, especially in the front purlin. This slight distortion probably occurred soon after the house was built and there is no justification for improving the main elements.

The lower ends of the rafters are set on a timber board above the beams at ceiling level (ceiling joists). This is an unusual detail; but I saw no evidence of any horizontal displacement so no justification for alteration.

Earlier decay has damaged rafters in the front left corner and the rear right corner and some new sections of timber have been set in as patch repairs. Decay appears more recent and is current at the rear left corner. The condition of the timbers will need to be carefully reviewed when the roof covering and adjacent parapet are properly repaired to establish whether further general repairs are required. The rafter closest to the chimney at the left side is rotten and too weak to carry any significant load, so should be replaced.

Fundamental improvement is not therefore required, only repair of decayed areas. The extent and scope of that repair should be fully reviewed when repairing the other areas referred to in this section as better access can be gained at that stage. It may, for example, be preferable to make a more substantial repair where short lengths of timber have previously been replaced.

5.3.2 Coverings

The main roof is covered with clay double-Roman tiles beneath clay ridge tiles. A few are slightly ill-fitting or out of alignment, especially at the front, and when access is gained to the roof for other repairs these should be carefully adjusted and re-set. Generally however no significant defects are evident.

A secondary covering is provided below the tiles and known as sarking felt. This sarking felt is relatively recent and mostly in good order although there is substantial failure around the rear chimney stack which has been poorly patched and repaired. Sarking felt repair in this area will involve stripping the tiles locally.² Sarking felt is most inclined to fail immediately behind the gutter and these areas should be checked while refurbishing the facias, clearing out gutters and adjusting adjacent tiles.

There is no justification for stripping the entire roof, but several areas will need to be opened up during the course of repairs suggested in **Section 5.3** and this will offer a good opportunity to both improve the sarking felt and introduce a modern standard of loft ventilation.³

There is some evidence that birds have been nesting in the loft and the risk of further nesting should be reduced once the sarking felt is improved.

5.3.3 Valley Gutters

A short hidden gutter is formed where the concealed face of the rear chimney intersects the roof plane. This area could not be inspected and I cannot therefore comment on the adequacy of any detailing. Such gutters are, however, particularly vulnerable to significant roof leaks and must therefore be maintained in a good condition. This area should be inspected during the course of any future roof repairs to ensure all is in good order.

5.3.4 Rainwater Goods

Grey plastic rainwater goods are provided at the front and rear. The gutter at the front discharges to the neighbouring gutter, a pattern common in the road, but one I recommend you discuss with your Solicitor as there may be issues your Solicitor will want to clarify in this regard. Poor detailing associated with the rainwater pipe at the rear has caused a leak above the kitchen, but I will discuss this more fully in **Sections 5.4** and **5.16**. Otherwise no significant defects were evident on a dry day. Please refer to **Section 4.5**.

It is not clear what has caused the roof leak at the rear left corner, so access needs to be gained to the roof at that point to allow a closer inspection. It is however evident from a safe vantage point that render has fallen from the parapet and collected in the gutter. These large sheets of debris may be channelling water back into the roof and should be cleared as a priority.

² Similar repair may be justified beside the parapets discussed in **Section 5.3.6**

³ I will discuss ventilation further in **Section 7.3**

5.3.5 Facias, Soffits and Bargeboards

The gutters are fixed to vertical timbers (facias) which, given the state of decorations, appear to be in surprisingly good condition. Further neglect of maintenance and decoration will lead to decay and failure so the facias should be checked as soon as access is gained to the roof to see if any repairs are justified at that time. They need to be fully re-decorated.

5.3.6 Parapets

The party walls rise up through the loft and above the roof covering. The parts of the wall located above the roof are known as parapets. These parapets are rendered and finished with clay copings. Given their exposed position parapets, in common with chimneys, must be maintained in good condition to minimise damp ingress and associated decay. Even in the very best condition it is likely that some occasional damp penetration will occur through these external features as the exposed masonry lies close to the internal rooms at the front and rear. I make fuller comments regarding dampness in **Section 5.16**, but it is evident that the render has failed in several areas; and at the front left side, where the render has been repaired or replaced, the groove (drip) cut in the underside of the coping and designed to shed water away from the masonry has been obstructed. The copings therefore require repair.

5.3.7 Flashings

The junction between the parapet and the roof tiles is vulnerable and needs to be protected. In this case lead is used and this lead comprises the flashing. There are areas, especially at the front right side and the rear left side, where the flashing has lifted, fallen away or slipped out of position. These areas will be especially vulnerable to leaks. When repairing the parapets flashings should generally be checked and improved as necessary.

5.3.8 Insulation and Ventilation

Please refer to **Section 7**.

5.4 Other Roofs

5.4.1 Front Bay

There is a single storey front bay and this has a simple pitched roof covered with clay plain tiles below lead flashings and lead strips at the roof junctions (hips). The structure of the bay is entirely hidden, but I saw no evidence of significant deflection nor significant stains or deterioration internally, so no reason to suppose the structure is inadequate. I could not see any sarking felt, but there is some corroded metal lining evident around the edge of the roof, possibly zinc (under-clanking). The roof appears effective, but there are four broken tiles and these should be replaced. Great care will need to be exercised and I recommend using similar clay tiles.

This simple roof has a softwood fascia which appears serviceable. The lack of gutter is not likely to prove significant for this small roof, but drainage from the roof should be reviewed along with the other rainwater drainage. Please refer to **Section 4.5**.

5.4.2 Flat Roof over Rear Extension

Most of the felt covering above the flat roof is hidden by a good thickness of stone chippings. It is possible to see the felt at the edge where the material is provided with an integral finish. The edge tends to be the most vulnerable part and I saw no evidence of any significant failure in the felt. This covering is already likely to be at least 10 years old, but flat roofs are known to have a limited life. The durability of any flat roof is, to a large extent, determined by the materials used and the standard of original construction. It is difficult to analyse these matters from an external inspection so as a rule of thumb a life of ten years is suggested. Felt roofs are often found that are twice that age, but this covering should be checked regularly.

Lead flashings dressed around the flat roof appear generally serviceable, but the detail around the rainwater pipe and waste pipes is ill-considered and not effectively finished. This area requires immediate attention as leaks are damaging the ceiling below.

The felt is not provided with a flashing at the left side beside the parapet, but instead turns up over the parapet. The adhesion is not complete and there is a small gap between the copings, so this is a vulnerable spot which should be improved to reduce the risk of damp ingress occurring.

Plant growth on the roof should be discouraged to improve free drainage; and the structure should be checked around the leak by removing the ceiling below to establish whether any substantial decay has occurred in the hidden timbers.

The roof drains gently towards a grey plastic gutter at the rear. Some of the gravel from the roof has collected in the gutter and needs to be removed and re-distributed on the flat roof. This gutter will need to be checked and cleared periodically.

When the roof is next re-covered or upgraded it may be cost effective to make the roof-fall steeper, introduce insulation and ventilation to better accord with current standards and take the opportunity to fully check all hidden elements of structure.

5.5 Chimneys

A brick stack is retained above the left side party wall and passes through the ridge in that area. This brick stack appears in serviceable condition from ground level although a small number of the bricks appear to be loose. I recommend checking this stack from roof level while repairing the parapets; to secure and re-point any loose bricks and check that the hidden finishes across the top surface of the stack are in good order. It appears that the stack has been capped with ridge tiles to allow some measure of ventilation, but this detail should all be checked and improved as necessary when access permits. The adequacy of the flue terminal above the gas fire should be considered carefully as this may have been modified inappropriately. Please refer to **Section 5.10**.

Similarly the hidden rear face of the rear stack and top surface of that stack should be checked and upgraded as necessary as soon as the opportunity arises.

The main stack is largely supported by the party wall, but the flues below are contained by brick ducts that protrude into the loft. These flues approximately follow the line of an arch, but were carelessly made without bonding the brickwork together and the different bands of brick have parted. This may have occurred many years ago, perhaps soon after the house was built. The lowest band in the front arch is particularly poorly supported and any slight movement in the house or additional loading on the stack could lead to some failure. I suspect the risk of failure occurring is small, but I cannot quantify the risk and the consequences could be highly significant, so I recommend making some repair. Removing or re-building elements of the flue would seem excessive and the simplest measure may be to re-instate the original shuttering, effectively bracing the masonry by a prop onto the load-bearing wall nearby. This repair will need to be carefully executed and properly specified to avoid causing disturbance.

5.6 External Walls

The front elevation is faced in rubble stone with terracotta detailing.

The terracotta is mostly in good order although there is some minor damage and a small localised repair evident beside the doorway. Most of the fine fissures and distortion evident in the material probably occurred during the manufacture of the terracotta.

The stone has weathered and in several areas it is possible to discern a loose outer skin of approximately 5mm of stone. Such weathering will continue, but is not especially disfiguring and does not justify any intervention or repair at present.

Cement has been added over the mortar joints (pointing), it appears that this later pointing was provided after any significant erosion had occurred to the masonry. The style of hard cement pointing is called ribbon pointing and is now widely considered inappropriate for masonry of this type. Given the past weathering in the stone it seems likely that cement mortar will be stronger than the stones; this forces more water to evaporate through the stone blocks than through the mortar. The style of pointing will also trap water at the margin of the stone. These factors will in time accelerate the rate of decay and deterioration of the stonework. Some of the pointing is loose and in one or two areas it has already fallen away.

Where the ribbon pointing has fallen away it can be seen that it was simply applied over the earlier joint without proper preparation. This is an advantage as it means the pointing will not last very long. The removal of pointing can cause more harm than good and I recommend at this stage leaving the pointing to fail and fall away, but review the matter in two or three years time and then regularly thereafter to see if there is justification for hastening such failure. If you should wish to remove the ribbon pointing for aesthetic reasons in the meantime I recommend you take great care to avoid disturbing the stonework and terracotta.

The small area that is exposed where the pointing has failed does not need re-pointing, but a few other areas, especially at low level, do; as there is excessive weed growth in the forecourt. When re-pointing I recommend you select a suitable mortar, ideally one that matches the original mortar found elsewhere at the front.

The walls are rendered at the rear and this is a modern cement finish. This finish appears thin and is brittle. Across the first floor elevation, above the flat roof, it appears to have been applied across an earlier render finish. Several areas are hollow and isolated areas have failed, especially beside the chimney breast. There is some fine cracking and normal weak areas, especially above the back door. Patch repairs are possible, but tend to be disfiguring. In time you may want to entirely renew the render finishes at the rear, but deterioration does not appear to be contributing to damp ingress or decay at present and you may at this stage prefer to make isolated cosmetic improvements by filling fine cracks and making localised repair. The render requires most urgent repair around the service pipes passing through the rear wall.

The original walls are likely to comprise “solid” masonry below the stone and render finishes, so the walls will need to be maintained in good order to minimise damp ingress and deterioration. The wall at the front is especially exposed to prevailing wind and rain and this may have been offered as justification for the introduction of the cement ribbon pointing although it will do nothing to keep rain out and only encourage damp ingress internally. I saw no evidence of any significant damp ingress associated with driven rain through the front wall and therefore no immediate need to improve pointing in that respect.

I have already referred to the parapets in **Section 5.3** and these areas require repair as a priority. Apart from the repair to the chimney flues suggested in **Section 5.5** I saw no justification for improving the party walls in the loft.

The foundations and embedded timbers, especially those serving as beams or lintels above the window and door openings, are all hidden; but there is no evidence of any significant distortion or movement in the property so no reason to suppose that there is any significant inadequacy in these hidden elements. Decay found elsewhere does not appear to pose any significant threat to embedded timbers, but if the opportunity should ever arise to uncover lintels their condition should be checked at that time.

The rear extension walls are likely to comprise modern cavity construction, probably relying on concrete blocks below the render and plaster finishes. Although the structure is entirely hidden I saw no evidence of any significant defects.

5.7 Damp Proof Courses

The house was probably built with a damp proof course although this was not seen. Damp proof courses in that period were often set at or below ground level and therefore out of sight. There is a trace of a plastic damp proof course next to the rear door and it appears likely the rear extension would have been built with a modern damp proof course set at a higher level, although it is impossible to comment on the extent or quality of that installation.

The pattern of finishes and decorations in the extended dining room and evidence of recent plastering in the front bay suggests that some injected damp proof courses have been provided in the past. These may have some effect at the rear, but less effect at the front and evidence in the dining room suggests that the new plaster finishes have simply forced damp to emerge higher in the wall. I would not therefore recommend providing further injected damp proof courses.

5.8 Floor Ventilation

Although the floor structures are mostly hidden it seems likely the rear extension and whole of the kitchen floor comprise concrete while the rest of the floor downstairs is framed in timber above an open void. The void below the timber floor should be ventilated to reduce the risk of decay occurring. There are however no airbricks at the front at low level and only one was seen at the rear. The vent at the rear lies beyond the kitchen, so to have any effect it would need to be ducted through at least two solid floors and such ducting is often omitted. There may be a second vent hidden behind the metal container in the back garden, but this too would need to be ducted through the floor to have any effect. It is unusual to find that no ventilation was installed at the front when the house was built and therefore possible that vents may have been obscured by raising the path and paving level at the front.

Improved sub-floor ventilation is essential, but will need to be carefully considered to avoid disturbing the masonry at the front and may involve breaking up the floors at the rear. Given the dampness and the manner in which the ground floors have been sealed below laminate flooring there is a substantial risk of decay otherwise. I refer to these matters further in **Sections 5.16, 5.17 and 7.3.**

5.9 Internal Walls and Partitions

Some internal walls upstairs are likely to be framed in timber and finished in plaster, probably lath and plaster. These areas are especially vulnerable to damage and there is, for example, evidence of some blistering and disturbance to the finish to the right side of the rear bedroom. The old finishes comprise part of the character and interest of the property and should be retained as long as possible and if necessary carefully repaired when stripping decorations. It would not however be uncommon to find that you will prefer to re-plaster damaged areas, especially if extensive re-wiring and alterations to plumbing are required, as the disturbance then would be widespread.

Most of the walls comprise masonry with a plaster finish and these bear no evidence of significant distortion or irregularity. The hollow sounding area of wall, probably finished in plasterboard, close to the roof leak in the kitchen may conceal service pipes.

Much of the plaster is damaged by damp. You will need to consider whether to continue the past policy of replacing the original finish with modern finishes and run the risk of causing damp to emerge elsewhere, or restoring the breathable finishes and attempting other means to address persistent dampness. It is not usually practical to reverse earlier modifications and the provision of the extension will substantially complicate matters at the rear, but this is a complicated issue and needs to be considered with care during any specification of repairs and improvements. Please refer to **Section 5.1.**

5.10 Fireplaces and Chimney Breasts

Fireplaces have been removed throughout the property. A modern concrete brick and slab (reconstituted stone) fire surround and hearth is installed in the sitting room although the associated fire has been removed. The gas fire in the dining room may require a fixed ventilation supply and improved flue, so should be checked and tested before use. This item should be included within the specialist reports referred to in **Section 4.5.**

Most of the flues are provided with vents in the rooms, except the blocked flue in the rear bedroom. It is normally recommended that redundant flues should be ventilated although I saw no immediate justification for improvement in this respect.

The flues could not be inspected and it is therefore impossible to comment on the condition or existence of any flue lining.

5.11 Basements/Cellars

I found no evidence of any cellar or vault and I was advised that no cellar or vault is concealed.

5.12 Floors

Floors are generally obscured by fitted carpets or alternative floor coverings preventing a thorough inspection.

The kitchen and extension floors appear to be solid. Elsewhere the floors are likely to comprise suspended timber joists with timber boards. Suspended floors feel sound under-foot and solid floors are generally level.

As sub-floor ventilation is minimal I recommend that you lift floorboards downstairs at the earliest opportunity to establish whether damp- or timber-related defects including rot or woodboring beetle attack are manifest in the concealed void. Once access is available to the sub-floor void it would be prudent to seek further specialist advice. Please refer to **Sections 5.8, 5.16 and 5.17.**

The joists have been substantially cut to accommodate services in the small area that was revealed by raised boards in the upstairs boiler cupboard. This does not however appear to have led to any discernible weakness in the floor, so improvement in that area is not justified. It appears that there is intended access below the mat-well, but the boards hidden under the door-mat are jammed in position and should be eased to allow access to any stoptap.

5.13 Ceilings

Ceilings are finished in plaster, likely to be mostly the original finish where the plaster is pressed through strips of timber (laths). The ceilings in the extension are likely to comprise plasterboard possibly behind a skim of plaster. There is some more elaborate plasterwork in the lounge with a cornice around the perimeter of the room, but otherwise the plasterwork is plain.

There is fine cracking in places; a crack across the rear right corner of the lounge ceiling slightly damages the cornice. Elsewhere the ceilings bear evidence of earlier distortion and irregularity that is masked by later finishes and decorations. The ceilings appear generally sound at present, but will need to be periodically checked. I recommend retaining the original lath and plaster ceilings as long as possible as they comprise part of the character of the house, but ultimately, if checking reveals any risk of hazardous failure, they may need to be replaced or repaired.

Ceilings therefore require some isolated cosmetic repair at present and periodic checking.

5.14 Windows, Doors and Joinery

5.14.1 Windows

Windows are of mixed styles and ages and framed with a mix of aluminium, timber and hardwood. Timber items at the rear contain advanced rot despite earlier repair; and generally the windows fail to comply with several current standards including important safety standards relating to escape provision and the risk of falling against non-safety glass. The windows are not original and spoil the appearance of the property, so for both aesthetic and safety reasons their replacement is justified. Renewal will also allow the provision of improved background ventilation and reduce heat loss through the use of double glazing. Repairs should be carefully specified and considered in conjunction with a full refurbishment of the property. Related matters are discussed in **Section 7**.

5.14.2 Doors

Although serviceable the back door jams on the floor and the front door is damaged, so a full refurbishment is likely to include repair or renewal of the doors. Some of the internal doors jam and require adjustment. This does not appear to be related to any significant distortion in the structure.

5.14.3 Stairs

The staircase is serviceable, but there is no handrail towards the top of the main flight and you may want to make some improvements in this regard to improve safety.

5.14.4 Skirting Boards and Architraves

These are not consistent throughout the property, some are damaged and disturbed. Electrical sockets and switches are mounted on the skirtings in places, which is no longer recommended and during the course of any re-wire or alteration to the electrical installation further damage will occur. So far as possible original items should be retained but repair and renewal is likely to be necessary as part of a full refurbishment.

5.14.5 Kitchen Cupboards and Other Cupboards

The kitchen is of modest though typical standard. Some adjustment and repair will be required if the kitchen is retained. Other cupboards are of mixed standards and you may require improvements and alterations to suit your tastes.

5.15 Finishes and Decorations

I refer to the condition of plaster finishes on ceilings and walls in **Sections 5.9** and **5.13**. The extent and scope of repair will depend on your own tastes and requirements, but may prove to be widespread, especially if you want to achieve a consistent standard of finish after repairing service installations and decayed areas. The decision will largely depend on whether you want to retain the character associated with the original plaster finishes or achieve something more modern. The entire property will require re-decoration.

Textured ceiling finishes are used throughout much of the property of differing styles and thicknesses and you may require the removal of several of these finishes as part of a full refurbishment and modernisation. Please refer to **Section 7.7**.

The laminate floor finish in the dining room has lifted and needs repair. You are likely to require the renewal of floor finishes following repair of the house.

5.16 Dampness

There is more dampness in the property than normal and this can be directly attributed to a recent lack of maintenance.

It is normal to find some damp penetration through stacks and parapets and the masonry in the loft bears evidence of streaks and staining associated with long term occasional leaks. This is normal and difficult to stop, but it should be possible to control damp ingress at a tolerable level by insuring that parapets, flashings, chimneys and adjacent roof areas are properly maintained. Stains and slight disturbance in the front external corners upstairs are dry, but there has not been any significant rain for several days and it is likely at times these areas will be damp.

The area at the rear left corner of the rear bedroom is saturated and the decorations in this area are more substantially disturbed. The timbers in the roof space above appear damp and are beginning to decay. There is no obvious reason externally for this area to be so much worse than the other corners, except that sheets of render fallen from the parapet have collected in the gutter and these may, through some fluke, be channelling water back into the roof space at that corner. While making roof level repairs this area should be dealt with as a priority, thoroughly checked and repaired as necessary.

There is a small dry stain on the bathroom ceiling close to the airing cupboard. There is no sign of a significant roof leak and this stain is probably associated with earlier problems with the plumbing above.

Mould growth around the front bedroom window is likely to be associated with occasional condensation rather than damp ingress, but the reveal will be vulnerable to damp ingress and the detail should be checked and carefully addressed if replacing the window.

The localised damage to the kitchen ceiling contains a hole which was dripping slowly during my inspection. There may have been a minor shower of rain during the night, but this persistent drip suggests that rainwater goods were leaking into the ceiling. During rain I would expect water to penetrate between the flat roof and adjacent ductwork, and this area clearly requires immediate attention.

Attempts have been made to combat damp problems in the dining room, but it is possible to see from the pattern of decoration that these alterations have been made since the extension was provided. The extension and associated alterations may have denied scope for water to evaporate from the rear wall and adjacent ground, and this may have significantly increased rising damp in that area. Where it appears new plaster has been provided, in the rear right corner of the dining room, the earlier finishes are now disturbed at a height of approximately 1.1m to 1.3m.

Disturbance at the left side is set lower down where it seems less likely that damp proof course injection and associated re-plastering has occurred. Careful attention to this damp problem will require careful consideration, but an effective treatment at this stage is unlikely to be straightforward.

The disturbed areas in the bay at the front of the sitting room were found to be dry, but there is a risk of further damp problems developing in this area as there is no evidence of substantial repair.

5.17 Timber Defects

Rot has occurred to roof timbers referred to in **Section 5.3.1** and these should be repaired or replaced as found necessary during repair to adjacent areas. The ground floor and flat roof structure are likely, given the adjacent damp and poor ventilation, to decay through rot, so hidden elements should be opened up and checked at a preliminary stage of any refurbishment. There may be rot in the bay skirting board which should be removed and checked; and decay in the external joinery items needs attention if those items are retained.

Earlier woodboring beetle attack evident in the loft does not appear to have developed recently and I saw no justification for treatment of timbers in the loft. Active woodboring beetle attack may well be hidden in the floors or flat roof structure.

5.18 Structural Movement

The cracking and weaknesses found in the chimney breast in the loft can be attributed to poor construction. I did not find evidence of any significant structural movement associated with ground movement or the alterations that have occurred.

6 SERVICES

The services have not been tested by me and the following comments are the result of a visual observation only.

6.1 Electrics

The electricity meter, fuse-box and three trip switches are located behind a panel at high level in the hall. This provision is of mixed ages and installed in an untidy fashion. The trip switch unit for example is loosely fitted. The wiring may date from several periods, but none is especially recent and the system will not comply with current standards. You may find the provision of sockets to be minimal and there may be safety implications, so I recommend you seek the further specialist advice of an electrician to ensure that all is safe and to advise with regard to any necessary improvements. Information and testing of electrical systems should be obtained from a qualified member of the NICEIC, telephone 0207-582-7746 or the ECA, telephone 0207-229-126.

6.2 Gas

A gas meter is located behind some ill-fitting panels in the hall. Gas installations were not tested and I cannot comment on their safety or serviceability. Lead pipework below the floor in the boiler cupboard may once have served gas lighting, but the plumber referred to below should check that the pipework is redundant.

6.3 Water Supply and Plumbing

I am advised the stoptap is located below the mat-well although I was unable to inspect this area. It would not be unusual to find lead pipework retained in this location and I recommend that the boards are forcibly raised to check this detail. Lead pipework is no longer used to supply water in modern properties for health reasons. It is particularly inconvenient to replace the pipework between the stop-cock and the Water Company supply as this pipework is generally buried. However it would be prudent to replace lead pipework elsewhere within the property.

So far as seen all visible supply pipework is formed in copper, and soil and waste pipes are formed in plastic. No significant defects were evident and the installation is likely to prove to be serviceable. There is a section of galvanised steel pipe running vertically through the airing cupboard. I could not see a connection with the overflow, but the overflow from the loft tanks may be connected to this pipe. The overflow arrangement is unusual and unnecessarily complicated so I recommend that this is simplified by passing an overflow directly through the loft to the rear.

Two plastic cold water storage tanks are installed in the loft, the larger tank is likely to serve the main domestic supply, whilst the smaller tank is likely to act as the header and expansion tank for the central heating system. The installation does not accord with prevailing standards, I especially recommend that a suitable close-fitting lid is installed to maintain the potable quality of the water. The tank is not fully supported so I cannot quantify the risk that slight distortion in the tank may ultimately lead to splits and failure.

Sanitaryware in the bathroom appears relatively recent and serviceable, but the electric shower should not be used unless thoroughly checked and repaired; the cover is loose, so there would otherwise be a risk of electrocution.

Plumbing installations therefore require some improvement and repair which should be considered within the context of a fuller refurbishment. It may well be cost effective at this time to renew much of the system, especially if upgrading the heating system, to reduce the risk of problems occurring in the future and reduce maintenance costs. Please refer to **Section 4.5**.

6.4 Private Water Supplies

None found.

6.5 Hot Water Installations, Boilers, Control Equipment, Space Heating etc

Domestic hot water is contained in a cylinder in the bathroom and appears to be warmed by a spur from the boiler. The cylinder is not recent and the insulation jacket is damaged. A system of this age could fail at any time, so I recommend considering improvements during discussions with the heating engineer. Please refer to **Section 4.5**.

The boiler is located in the cupboard beside the front bedroom. The cupboard may need to be ventilated and this matter should be considered by the specialists testing the heating system. The boiler is likely to serve radiators throughout the house and provide the primary heat source for domestic hot water stored in the bathroom airing cupboard. The radiators and adjacent fittings are corroded in places, some are falling from the wall and generally the installation appears dated. The system was not operating during my inspection and the owner was not at home, so I did not start the boiler. Please refer to **Section 4.5**.

6.6 Drains

A cast iron cover was raised at the rear to reveal a simple brick chamber collecting waste from the house and discharging towards the rear. No significant defects were evident within the chamber, but please refer to **Section 4.5**.

6.7 Foul and Surface Water

At least to some extent the surface water and mains drainage are shared, although part of the surface water drainage may run to a separate hidden system.

6.8 Private Drainage Systems

None found.

6.9 Other Services

Smoke Detectors

Smoke detectors are installed and I recommend you ensure these are periodically checked and properly maintained.

7 ENVIRONMENTAL AND OTHER ISSUES

7.1 Orientation and Exposure

The property faces South-West, so the front is especially exposed to prevailing wind and rain.

7.2 Thermal Insulation and Energy Efficiency

Standards of insulation have increased considerably in recent years and the house is likely to be more expensive to heat than a new equivalent home. Should you decide to improve standards of insulation it would be prudent to improve ventilation levels simultaneously, particularly within the roof void. Circa 100mm of glasswool quilt is installed above the ceilings in the loft. A typical modern standard lies closer to 300mm of glasswool quilt and improvements are likely to be cost effective if carried out in conjunction with improved loft ventilation.

The windows are single glazed and double glazing would reduce heat loss, although this is only likely to be cost effective as part of a more general repair.

The floors are unlikely to be insulated, neither are the external walls, but improvements in these areas are less likely to be cost effective. The matter should nonetheless be reviewed when specifying a full refurbishment and repair.

Lagging around the cold water storage tanks, hot water cylinder and pipework should be improved if the existing installation is retained.

7.3 Ventilation

Some of the windows and doors are likely to be ill-fitting and draughty, but there is no deliberate provision of ventilation in the property and the use of some of the high level vents in windows may be awkward given their height. Natural ventilation to the building should therefore be improved during the course of other alterations.

I recommend improving ventilation to the roof space; this will prove relatively straightforward in the main loft, but more awkward in the flat roof. Ventilation of the flat roof is likely to be delayed until the covering is next renewed, but this will marginally increase the risk of decay occurring in the meantime.

Sub-floor ventilation needs to be improved to achieve a draught through the floor void and reduce the risk of decay in that area.

7.4 Noise and Disturbance

I was not aware of any particular noise or odour during my inspection.

7.5 Means of Escape

Means of escape via the main staircase is normal, but the removal of the original sash windows has reduced prospects of escape through the windows and this should be addressed as part of general upgrading and improvement.

7.6 Other Health and Safety Concerns

Low level glazing in several areas presents a hazard and the glass should be replaced with toughened or safety glazing.

There are occasional trip-up hazards, especially in the back garden where some of the paving is irregular and needs to be re-set.

7.7 Hazardous Materials

Asbestos was commonly used in building materials up to the end of the 20th Century, by which time it became a banned substance. Asbestos is not usually harmful unless the fibres can be released into the air by it becoming damaged or showing signs of wear. It is not possible to identify whether asbestos fibres are contained in a building material without a specialist test. Because asbestos was used in such a wide diversity of materials it is impossible to identify all the materials that may contain asbestos and it is beyond the scope of this report to test for asbestos. There is a small piece of distorted and slightly damaged material hidden behind the fireplace surround in the lounge that is likely to contain asbestos. There are also various textured ceiling finishes of differing styles and ages in the property which may contain asbestos fibres. A specialist test should be carried out before disturbing any areas that may contain asbestos then I recommend that any damaged material should be removed.

There is some mould around the front bedroom window. Mould growth is often associated with condensation and other forms of dampness. It has been recognised that some moulds are toxic and can affect the health of the occupants of the property. Identification and testing of such mould is beyond the scope of this report, however if you are concerned about such issues then please contact Fugenex, one of our associated companies, on 0800 789 5000.

7.8 Security

The door lock at the front is damaged and there is scope generally to improve security. I recommend you consider your own requirements in this regard and obtain quotes accordingly.

8 OUTBUILDINGS, GROUNDS AND BOUNDARIES

The inspection and report concentrate upon the main building. General comments are made relating to the condition of fences and paths and reference will be made to major defects only. External areas often require considerable routine and periodic attention to ensure that such areas are properly maintained.

8.1 Gardens and Grounds

The simple forecourt needs weeding and some repair to the damaged paving to reduce further weed growth.

The gulley collecting surface water drainage at the rear is blocked and should be cleared and periodically checked. Water collecting beside the back door may otherwise build up to a level where it increases damp problems or floods the kitchen. The paving is not in best condition as there are some irregular levels that could cause people to trip, so some re-setting of paving slabs is recommended.

The dense planting around the perimeter will require control and I would not recommend allowing plants to grow beyond their current size.

8.2 Garages

None found.

8.3 Conservatories

None found.

8.4 Other Outbuildings

None found.

8.5 Boundaries

The garden at the rear is contained by a brick wall which is almost entirely hidden. The part visible at the left side is relatively high and the render finish here needs to be replaced.

8.6 Retaining Walls

None found.

8.7 Shared Areas

None found. There is a pedestrian path at the rear, but no direct access from the subject property.

9 MATTERS FOR LEGAL ADVISER'S ATTENTION

The property is thought to be freehold although this could not be confirmed. Your Solicitor should confirm details of tenure and provide advice relating to this item.

9.1 Statutory

I am advised by the local authority that the property is neither listed nor located in a conservation area.

9.2 Rights of Way, Easements and Shared Services

None found.

9.3 Boundaries

Your Solicitor may be able to establish the ownership of boundaries. There may be particular implications regarding the repair and maintenance of the parapet walls above the rear extension, these are likely to comprise party walls, but if your Solicitor can obtain any clarification at this time that may help with future maintenance and alterations.

9.4 Environmental

I am not aware of there being any particular environmental problems in the area, but have not seen any environmental audit. I recommend your Solicitor follows normal practice in this regard and I would be happy to comment on any specific matters raised by an environmental report as and when that becomes available.

9.5 Guarantees/Warranties

It is unlikely there are any valid guarantees relating to this property, but there may be documentation relating to earlier damp proof course injection, timber treatment and similar associated works. Documentation should be checked by your Solicitor, and any valid documentation should be transferred to your benefit and kept in a safe place.

Signed	
Name & Qualifications	Robin Mewes BSc (Hons) MSc MRICS MEWI
Office Address	1 Pembroke Road Clifton Bristol BS8 3AU
Telephone Number	01934-712826
Fax Number	01934-710139
Date of Report	9 th January 2006





GENERAL TERMS

1. Introduction

1.1 This document sets out the contractual terms upon which the Surveyor will advise the client by means of a written report as to his or her opinion of the visible condition and state of repair of the property.

1.2 The individual carrying out the inspection and providing advice will be a Chartered Surveyor.

1.3 The Surveyor will use all of the care and skill to be reasonably expected of an appropriately experienced Chartered Surveyor.

2. Content of the Report

In accordance with these terms the Surveyor will report upon:

2.1 The main aspects of the property including assessing the site/location, the design, structural framework, fabric and services.

2.2 The grounds, boundaries and environmental aspects considered to affect the property.

2.3 Any requirements for further investigation arising from the inspection.

3. Delivery of the Report

3.1 The report is to be delivered by the date agreed or a reasonable later date.

3.2 The Surveyor will send the report to the client's address (or other agreed address) by first class post for the sole use of the client. The client agrees to keep the report confidential disclosing its contents only to the client's professional advisers. In particular, but without limit, the client must not disclose the whole or any part of the report to any person (other than a professional advisor) who may intend to rely upon it for the purpose of any transaction.

4. Payment of Fees

The client will pay the agreed fee, any additional fees, any VAT and any agreed disbursements prior to the issue of the report.

5. Assumptions

While preparing the report, and unless otherwise specifically agreed, the Surveyor will assume that:

5.1 The property (if for sale) is offered with vacant possession.

5.2 The property is connected to mains services with appropriate rights on a basis that is known and acceptable to the client.

5.3 Access to the property is as of right upon terms known and acceptable to the client.

6. Scope of the Inspection

6.1 Generally

6.1.1 The Surveyor will consider his or her advice carefully, but is not required to advise on any matter whose significance in relation to the property is not apparent at the time of inspection from the inspection itself.

6.1.2 The Surveyor will inspect diligently, but is not required to undertake any action which could risk damage to the property or injury to him- or herself.

6.1.3 The Surveyor will not undertake any structural or other calculations.

6.2 Accessibility

6.2.1 The Surveyor will inspect as much of the internal and external surface area of the building as is practical, but will not inspect those areas which are covered, unexposed or not reasonably accessible from within the site, or adjacent public areas.

6.2.2 The Surveyor is not required to move any obstruction to inspection including, but not limited to, furniture and floor coverings.

6.3 Floors

6.3.1 The Surveyor will lift accessible sample loose floorboards and trap doors, if any, which are not covered by heavy furniture, ply or hardboard, fitted carpets or other fixed floor coverings. The Surveyor will not attempt to cut or lift fixed floorboards without the express permission of the owner.

6.4 Fixed Covers or Housings

6.4.1 The Surveyor will not attempt to remove securely fixed covers or housings without the express permission of the owner.

6.5 Roofs

6.5.1 The Surveyor will inspect the roof spaces if there are available hatches which are not more than three metres above the adjacent floor or ground. Where no reasonable access is available, the roof spaces will not be inspected. Similarly, outer surfaces of the roof or adjacent areas will be inspected using binoculars, but will be excluded if they cannot be seen.

- 6.6 Boundaries, Grounds and Outbuildings
 - 6.6.1 The inspection will include boundaries, grounds and permanent outbuildings, but will not include constructions or equipment with a specific leisure purpose including swimming pools or tennis courts.
- 6.7 Services
 - 6.7.1 The Surveyor will carry out a visual inspection of the service installations where accessible. Drainage inspection covers will be lifted when they are accessible and it is safe and practicable to do so. No tests of the service installations will be carried out unless previously agreed, although general overall comments will be made where possible and practicable. The Surveyor will report if it is considered that tests are advisable.
- 6.8 Areas Not Inspected
 - 6.8.1 The Surveyor will identify any areas which would normally be inspected, but which he or she was unable to inspect.
- 6.9 Flats or Maisonettes
 - 6.9.1 Unless otherwise agreed, the Surveyor will inspect only the subject flat and garage (if any), the related internal and external common parts and the structure of the building or particular block in which the subject flat is situated. Other flats will not be inspected. The Surveyor will state in the report the limits of access and/or visibility in relation to the common parts and structure. The Surveyor will state whether he or she has seen a copy of the lease and, if not, the assumptions as to repairing obligations on which he or she is working.
- 6.10 Environmental and Other Issues
 - 6.10.1 Particular noise and disturbance affecting the property will only be noted if it is significant at the time of the inspection or if specific investigation has been agreed between the Surveyor and the client, and confirmed in writing.
 - 6.10.2 The Surveyor will report on any obvious health and safety hazards to the extent that they are apparent from elements of the property considered as part of the inspection.
- 7. Hazardous Materials**
 - 7.1 Unless otherwise specifically stated in the report, the Surveyor will assume that no deleterious or hazardous materials or techniques have been used in the construction of the property. However, the Surveyor will advise in the report if, in his or her view, there is a likelihood that deleterious material has been used in the construction and whether specific enquiries should be made or tests carried out by a specialist.
 - 7.2 Subject to clause 6.2 the Surveyor, based upon a limited visual inspection, will note and advise upon the presence of lead water supply pipes.

- 7.3 The Surveyor will advise in the report if the property is in an area where, based on information published by the National Radiological Protection Board, there is a risk of radon. In such cases the Surveyor will advise that tests should be carried out to establish the radon level.
- 7.4 The Surveyor will advise if there are transformer stations or overhead power lines which might give rise to an electro-magnetic field, either over the subject property or visible immediately adjacent to the property. The Surveyor is not required to assess any possible effect on health or to report on any underground cables.
- 7.5 Asbestos was commonly used in building materials up to the end of the 20th Century, by which time it became a banned substance. Asbestos is not usually harmful unless fibres can be released into the air by it becoming damaged or showing signs of wear. It is not possible to identify whether asbestos fibres are contained in a building material without a specialist test. Because asbestos was used in such a wide diversity of materials it is impossible to identify all the materials that may contain asbestos and it is beyond the scope of this report to test for asbestos. If you are concerned then you should commission a test for asbestos, which can be arranged on your behalf.
- 7.6 The report will **not** identify moulds that could be harmful to health. If mould is present at the time of inspection then it will be recorded, but you will need to commission a specialist test to obtain fuller details.

8. Ground Conditions

- 8.1 The Surveyor will not be required to comment upon the possible existence of noxious substances, landfill or mineral extraction, or other forms of contamination.

9. Consents, Approvals and Searches

- 9.1 The Surveyor will be entitled to assume that the property is not subject to any unusual or onerous restrictions, obligations or covenants which apply to the property or affect the reasonable enjoyment of the property.
- 9.2 The Surveyor will be entitled to assume that all planning, Building Regulations and other consents required in relation to the property have been obtained. The Surveyor will not verify whether such consents have been obtained. Any enquiries should be made by the client or the client's legal advisers. Drawings and specifications will not be inspected by the Surveyor unless otherwise previously agreed.
- 9.3 The Surveyor will be entitled to assume that the property is unaffected by any matters which would be revealed by a local search and replies to the usual enquiries, or by a statutory notice, and that neither the property nor its condition, its use or its intended use is or will be unlawful.

10. Insurance Rebuilding Cost Assessment

- 10.1 The Surveyor will provide an insurance rebuilding cost assessment only if this is agreed at the time of taking instructions. Building insurance cost assessments will be calculated using the current edition of the BCIS *Guide to Housing Rebuilding Costs*.

11. Additional Services

- 11.1 The Surveyor will provide, for an additional fee, such additional services as may be specified in the specific Terms or are agreed between the Surveyor and the client and confirmed by the Surveyor in writing.

12. Miscellaneous

- 12.1 In the event of a conflict between the General Terms and the Specific Terms, the Specific Terms prevail.

- 12.2 Unless expressly provided, no term in the agreement between the Surveyor and the client is enforceable under the Contracts (Rights of Third Parties) Act 1999 by any person other than the Surveyor or the client.

- 12.3 Where the client has instructed the Surveyor to make investigations which cause damage to the property on the basis that the client has obtained the owner's consent, the client will indemnify the Surveyor against any loss or cost arising.

12.4 Dispute Resolution

In the event that the client has a complaint regarding the standard of service he or she has received a formal complaints handling procedure will be followed. A copy of the Surveyor's complaints handling procedure is available upon request. Using the Surveyor's complaints handling procedure will not affect the client's legal rights.

- 12.5 The client may only rely upon the Surveyor's advice and report for purposes described in the particulars or communicated to the Surveyor in writing prior to the agreement of the fee and if the client wishes to rely upon such advice and report for any other purposes he or she may only do so with the written consent of the Surveyor.

GLOSSARY

Term	Definition
Airbrick	Perforated brick used for ventilation, often found at low level in external walls to ventilate floors.
Asbestos	Fibrous mineral used in numerous products, particularly between the 1920s and 1970s, which can present a hazard to health.
Asbestos Cement	Cement with 10% to 15% asbestos fibre as reinforcement. See above.
Asphalt	Black tar-like substance, strongly adhesive and impervious to moisture.
Barge Board	Timber used as an edge detail to a roof in most exposed location, typically above a verge board. Plastic material now often used to reduce maintenance.
Balanced Flue	Flue serving gas fired appliances which allows air to be drawn to the appliance and the expulsion of fumes at the same time and through the same unit.
Beetle Infestation	Woodboring insects, most commonly woodworm, which tunnel into timber causing damage.
Benching	Smoothly contoured cement finishing beside drainage channel within an inspection chamber
Bitumen	Black, sticky material similar to asphalt, but used more widely in sealants, mineral felts and damp proof courses.
Cavity Wall	Standard modern method of constructing external walls with inner and outer leaf of blockwork or bricks separated by a gap of typically 50mm.
Cavity Wall Insulation	Insulation material inserted in the cavity wall to reduce heat loss.
Cavity Wall Tie	Device, usually metal, linking the inner and outer leaf of a cavity wall.
Cesspit	Simple holding tank collecting domestic waste drainage which requires frequent emptying.
Chipboard	Chips of wood compressed and glued into sheet form. A relatively inexpensive alternative to timber.
Collar	Horizontal timber, usually found in a roof space to restrain opposing roof slopes horizontally.
Combination Boiler	A 'Combi' boiler is a modern form of gas boiler usually running on mains pressure to provide central heating and instant domestic hot water.
Coping	Usually stone or concrete, sometimes fired clay, laid on top of a wall as a decorative finish and protection to reduce damp ingress.
Corbel	Projection of stone, brick, timber or other material jutting out from wall, often supporting a load.
Cornice	Usually ornamental moulded projection around the top of a building or internally around the top of a wall just below the ceiling.
Coving	Curved junction between the wall and ceiling.
Dado Rail	Moulding, usually timber, fixed horizontally to a wall typically one metre above the floor.
Damp Proof Course (DPC)	Impervious material incorporated into a wall, usually in a thin strip, to prevent dampness around windows, doors and at low level.
Death Watch Beetle (Xestobium Refovillosum)	Relatively uncommon, but serious woodboring beetle usually affecting old hardwood with fungal decay already present.
Dressed Stone	Carefully cut stone blocks forming a wall.
Dry Rot (Serpula Lacrymans)	Fungal attack, often with devastating results. Can flourish in moist, unventilated areas.
Eaves	The overhanging edge of a roof.
Efflorescence	Crystallised salts on the surface of a wall forming where moisture evaporates.
Engineering Brick	Strong relatively dense type of brick sometimes used as a damp proof course in older buildings.
Fibre Board	Relatively lightweight board material of little strength sometimes used in ceilings or as an insulating lining.

Term	Definition
Flashing	Material, usually metal, but quite commonly cement, felt or proprietary material used to form weatherproof joint at junction of roofs and walls.
Flaunching	Contoured cement used around the base of chimney pots.
Flue	Inner duct within a chimney or proprietary pipe serving a heat producing appliance.
Flue Lining	Tube within a flue, usually metal.
Foundations	In modern construction usually concrete and usually entirely concealed, these form the base of main walls and principal structures.
Gable	Upper section of a wall, usually an end wall, usually triangular in shape and formed at the end of a ridged roof.
Gulley	An opening into a drain placed to receive water.
Heave	Swelling of sub-soil, typically clay, due to absorption of moisture. Can cause disturbance of foundations and superstructure.
Hip	External junction between two intersecting roof slopes.
Inspection Chamber	Chamber within run of drainage to give access for maintenance and inspection, often called a 'manhole'.
Joist	Horizontal structural timber.
Landslip	Movement of unstable earth, clay, rock or similar materials downhill.
Lath	Thin strip of wood used in the fixing of roof tiles or slates, or as backing to plaster. Common reference being 'lath and plaster'.
Lintel	Horizontal structural beam placed over window or door openings.
Mortar	Material used to join stones or bricks typically a mixture of sand, cement, lime and water.
Mullion	Vertical bar separating glazed parts of window.
Newel	Stout post supporting a staircase handrail usually found at the top and bottom.
Oversite	Rough concrete laid above the ground below a suspended timber floor.
Parapet	Upper part of external wall protruding
Parapet Gutter	Gutter formed at junction of roof behind parapet usually almost horizontal, but should have fall towards outlet and requires careful detailing.
Pier	Vertical column, usually masonry, used to strengthen wall or support a weight.
Plasterboard	Common building material comprising plaster between coarse paper often found in modern ceilings and walls.
Pointing	Smooth outer edge of mortar joint used in masonry.
Purlin	Horizontal beam in roof usually supporting rafters.
Quoin	Bricks or stone blocks forming a feature at the corner of a building.
Rafter	Sloping roof beam, usually timber.
Rendering	Vertical covering to wall, traditionally referring to internal or external finishes, but now mostly reserved for external cement finish.
Reveals	Side faces of window or door openings.
Ridge	Roof apex.
Riser	Vertical part of step or stair.
Rising Damp	Moisture soaking up a wall through capillary action.
Roof Spread	Outward distortion of roof usually manifest at the top of the wall.
Rubble	Simply finished and roughly cut stone walling.
Screed	Final smooth finish of a solid floor.
Septic Tank	More sophisticated private drainage system usually with outflow to drainage field and therefore requiring less frequent emptying.
Settlement	General disturbance in a structure where there is some inadequacy in the support. Can result from major structural failure, but often of little current significance.
Soaker	Sheet of metal at a junction of a roof, particularly where slates are used and usually concealed by associated flashings.
Soffit	The under surface of eaves or other overhanging feature.

Term	Definition
Solid Fuel	Typically coal, timber or some other heating fuel.
Stud Partition	Lightweight, often non-load bearing, wall construction comprising a timber frame with plaster or other lightweight finishes.
Subsidence	Ground movement sometimes resulting from mining activities or shrinkage in clay soils.
Sub-Soil	Soil lying immediately below the topsoil usually relevant to the location and type of foundations.
Tie Bar	Metal bar pressing through a wall, floors or roof space to restrain structure and prevent spread or failure.
Torching	Mortar applied to the underside of roof tiles or slates to help prevent moisture penetration.
Transom	Horizontal feature dividing glazed areas of window. A term usually used in association with mullions.
Tread	The horizontal part of a step or stair.
Trussed Rafter	Modern roof construction using pre-fabricated frames in loft.
Underpinning	Method of increasing depth and therefore stability of weak foundations.
Valley Gutter	Horizontal or sloping gutter at the intersection of roof slopes.
Ventilation	Necessary in all buildings to disperse moisture.
Verge	The edge of a roof, especially of a gable.
Verge Board	Typically timber, but often now plastic, placed at the verge of a roof.
Wall Plate	Timber placed above top of wall to support roof structure.
Water Tabling	Form of sloping coping traditionally in stone and usually set above roof level at the gable wall.
Wet Rot (Coniophora Puteana)	Decay of timber due to damp conditions not generally perceived to be so serious as dry rot.
Woodworm	General term using for woodboring beetle or woodboring insect attack, but usually intended to mean common furniture beetle (Anobium Punctatum) the most commonly encountered woodboring insect.