BUILDING SURVEY REPORT ON:

PREPARED FOR:

Date of inspection 2005

A glossary of the most common used terms
is at the rear of the report

GENERAL

DESCRIPTION

The property comprises a two storey semi detached house. The main walls appear to be of a cavity brickwork construction, part rendered externally, under a pitched double lap clay tiled roof, the floors being of a timber suspended design.

SITUATION AND AMENITIES

(removed for confidentiality)

ACCOMMODATION

Front door leads to hallway with two intercommunicating reception rooms and kitchen. Stairs to first floor and landing with three bedrooms, bathroom and separate WC.

A garage with own drive can be found, the property having a wide frontage, albeit this tapers to the rear, the property enjoying a wedge shaped plot. Having regard to the adjoining footpath, the gardens are slightly overlooked.

OPINION AND ADVICE

The property was generally in a poor condition, and many works of repair, improvement and refurbishment were found to be necessary. The works required have been given in detail within the main body of my report, and I would refer you to this for a full detailed analysis. The defects have, however, been itemised in brief below for your attention.

Structurally, only slight signs of distortion could be seen to the premises, with minor hairline fracturing being noted between and around the window openings, and internally the doors, frames, floors and partitions, more noticeably to the first floor, were out of true. It should be noted that the distortion seen is entirely consistent with buildings of this age, style and calibre within the locality, and there were no indications to suggest that the fracturing is of a recent or active nature.

You should bear in mind that The British Research Establishment has indicated, as a guideline, that cracking up to 4 mm wide within clay soils is generally acceptable on level sites, on sloping sites the variance is less. It should be noted that London Clay is susceptible to seasonal movement and whilst modern buildings are designed to cater for this, at times of excessive seasonal variations, cracking tends to occur to the structure, particularly at the

weaker points between the openings and depending upon the site conditions and size of the fractures, will depend upon the severity and classification of damage. All of the fracturing seen was well within this parameter.

The works which were found to be necessary include the general and periodic overhaul of the roof. It should be noted that general wear could be seen to the tiles, to the external face and underside. You would be advised to anticipate the renewal of the roof in the medium term. Distortion could be found to the roof frame, and wear was also noted to the hip and ridge tile pointing. Ideally, the central valley to the front should be renewed, and you would be advised to renew the flat roof surfaces to the left hand side face and rear bay. The gable timbers and original external woodwork required partial renewal. Minor signs of wear and deterioration could be seen to the chimney stack pointing. Ideally the flashings and soakers should be stripped and renewed. It may be prudent to upgrade the flashing/abutment detail to the front cat walk roof, as this is also a likely area for water penetration. Ideally, the cast iron gutters and downpipes should be replaced. Having regard to the relatively shallow drain run, this should be checked, for the shallower the run the more vulnerable it is to ground fluctuations and distortion. Only upon completion of the test will it be possible to confirm the full layout of the drainage, and as to whether any defects are in fact evident. Ideally, all of the older soil and leaded waste pipes should be upgraded.

Areas of defective rendering could be found to the main walls, and ideally the subfloor ventilation should be improved. You should bear in mind that where restricted ventilation occurs then this will increase the likelihood of wood beetle infestation, rot and decay.

Whilst the windows had been upgraded in the past, the majority were of an aluminium nature, albeit to the front some newer uPVC could be seen. Again you would be advised to anticipate the further upgrading of the aluminium windows and doors. After the main walls have been made good, then general redecoration will be required to the rendering.

The boundaries required attention, noticeably to the front low rise brickwork, but particularly to the left hand side concrete boundary with the footpath, albeit this may well be the liability of the Local Authority, and this should be clarified. This required attention adjacent to the front garden area as this was noticeably out of true. The replacement of the boundary will be necessary in the near future. I would also refer you to my later comments with regard to your proposed work. In this respect I understand that all of the existing outbuildings and garage structures are to be demolished. The boundary almost certainly will have to be renewed.

Internally, the majority of the ceilings and walls had been stripped, and making good of the plaster cracking could be found. However, further stripping is required, and you would be

advised to anticipate further and general areas of replastering. Large hollow areas of wall plaster could be found, and whilst firm, ultimately this will require replacement.

The doors were generally of a poor quality, some were not well fitting and required adjustment. Slight deflection could also be found to the floors, more noticeably to the first floor. The partitions, again more evidently to the first floor, were slightly out of true.

The chimney breasts were both of an open and sealed nature and where sealed appeared to have been ventilated, which is good practice. The kitchen and bathroom facilities required general gutting and modernisation, and internal redecoration and retiling will be necessary. Again you should bear in mind that large areas of replastering will almost certainly be required within the bathroom area. This should be undertaken in sand and cement.

Whilst wood beetle infestation was not readily evident to the internal timbers, you should bear in mind that this is a common occurrence, and upon full exposure this is likely to be found. No adverse moisture readings could be found to the walls at low level, however extensive signs of condensation could be seen to the original windows. Insufficient permanent fixed ventilation could be found to the habitable rooms, and inadequate insulation was noted within the roof void, and this should all be upgraded.

You should bear in mind that condensation can occur as a result of certain climatic conditions outside the property, as a result of lack of ventilation or insulation, or inadequate heating in a property, or as a result of defective construction, design or habits of its occupants. There are special paints with anti-condensation and fungicidal properties available for use on the internal wall surfaces prone to mould growth. A control of condensation is of vital importance and the following matters should be implemented.

To fully ventilate rooms to the outside during and immediately after cooking, washing or bathing, whenever the windows show signs of misting. To restrict the drying of washing indoors only to rooms with open windows and closed internal doors, and to avoid the use of flueless oil and gas heaters or tumble dryers not ventilated to the outside.

Adequate heating will help prevent surface condensation, internal wall and ceiling surfaces should be made as air-tight as possible to reduce the passage of water vapour into the walls and roof spaces. Adequate insulation should be provided to help prevent the occurrence of condensation in cold internal surfaces such as at the junction of external walls and internal walls.

Within the roof void, the hip boards to the front had been spliced together, and this almost certainly would account for the movement to the roof frame. The central heating header tank

should be resupported. You would be advised to generally anticipate replumbing and upgrading of the cold water facilities. A new heating and hot water system is also required.

The electrical installations were of a mixed standard, and having regard to this you would be advised to anticipate general rewiring.

You should bear in mind that the proposed extension is extensive having regard to the size of the property. The building is not particularly well sited, being adjacent to a pathway. Prior to proceeding with the works in this respect you would be advised to clarify any agreements and/or licences that may have to be entered into with the Local Authority, as it would appear that the works are to be taken up to the line of the boundary, and this may well have the effect that the concrete boundary will have to be taken down to facilitate this, and if taken down in part it is likely that larger substantial areas will also fail, and this should be borne in mind by you. The garage size also appears small from the drawings.

It may also be necessary to serve Party Wall Notices having regard to the proposed foundations of the newer construction and the siting of adjoining properties. You should bear in mind that any Party Wall Awards and consents from the Local Authority will cause disruption and delay in relation to the proposed works. It has been assumed that full Planning Permission has been obtained, and you will no doubt clarify as to whether Building Regulation approvals were also obtained or as to whether it was the intention of the building owner to have the works carried out under a Building Notice.

On the basis that the above works of repair and improvement are put in hand by you, then it is likely that your outgoings will at least be of the order of £12,000 - £15,000. It should be noted that the above figures have been provided purely for guidance purposes, and should not exclusively be relied upon, for should firm estimates be required then building contractors should specifically be asked to tender in this respect. You would be advised to obtain prices prior to exchange of contracts. As previously indicated the above figures do not include any cost for the renewal of the roof or indeed the replacement of the window openings, or any cost in relation to the left hand side boundary adjacent to the footpath. No costs have been allowed for in relation to the proposed extensions, and indeed the cost generally in relation to the modernisation of the kitchen and bathroom facilities, and complete internal redecoration has also been excluded as this will generally depend upon your own taste and requirements. The above sum also exclude VAT.

On the basis that all of the above factors have been borne in mind, and you feel that these have been adequately reflected in the acquisition price, then I would confirm that there would appear to be no further reasons as to why the acquisition of the above should not proceed.

I hope that the above has been of assistance to you, however, should you require any further clarification either with regard to the above, or with the main body of the report which follows, then please do not hesitate to contact me.

For your general assistance a glossary of the most commonly used terms has been incorporated to the rear of the report.

GENERAL STRUCTURE AND CONDITION

EXTERNAL

ROOF

The main roof surface is of a double lap clay tiled nature. To the front elevation, general signs of wear could be seen to the roof tiles. Unevenness was noted adjacent to the hip, indicating distortion of the roof frame. The front left hand side hip iron was missing, and wear and deterioration could be found to the hip tile pointing, with slight cracks noted to the hip tiles. The front left hand side corner of the roof had dropped slightly. Non-matching tiles could be seen indicating that the roof has been subject to overhaul in the past. The front central section was difficult to inspect due to the gables and location of the party chimney stack. Valley tiles were noted at the abutment with the front gable. Again a number of replacement tiles were noted to the internal right hand side gable slope, and slight weakness could be seen to the front verge tile pointing. I would refer you to my later comments concerning the central valley, as this is generally a problematic area and does require periodic cleaning and attention. To the front left hand side of the gable, again weakness could be seen to the verge tile pointing. Further overlaying of tiles was noted to the beam to the right of the main entrance door, and this is unlikely to be an original feature. A cement fillet could be seen and modern tiles were noted to this. Slight signs of wear could be found to the left hand side slope to the front gable area. Slight slippage was noted and again signs of patch repair could be seen. I would refer you to my later comments in relation to the abutment detail to the front main wall, as signs of separation were evident.

To the main roof, to the left hand side face, this was of a similar style. More noticeable unevenness could be seen to the tiles adjacent to the front and rear hips, suggesting that slightly greater deflection has occurred to this elevation to the roof frame. A number of the hip tiles were more noticeably worn and weathered. The pointing, particularly to the rear hip, required renewal.

To the rear left hand side section, a flat what appeared to be zinc roof surface was noted. This had been patch repaired and almost certainly this now requires stripping off and

replacement. I would also refer you to my later comments in relation to the boiler chimney stack.

To the rear elevation, again general signs of wear and deterioration could be seen. More noticeable moss growth could be found adjacent to the rear chimney stack area and party wall. Again deflection was noted to the roof frame, and a number of the rear hip tiles had flaked and worn and should be renewed. The hip iron was again missing. The eaves tiles had been set at a slightly shallower pitch, which almost certainly has brought about their greater wear and deterioration.

To the rear bay, again what appears to be a zinc roof surface was noted. This had been painted in bitumen, indicating that this has worn and perished, and you would be advised to anticipate renewal.

CHIMNEY STACKS AND FLASHINGS

To the rear, a party chimney stack could be seen. Early signs of wear and deterioration could be found to the brickwork pointing, and some localised repair and renewal is necessary. Moss growth could also be seen to the flaunching which should be overhauled. Metallic extended and stepped cover flashings were noted which appear to be of a lead nature. Soakers could also be seen. You should bear in mind that if these are the original, then these will be nearing the end of their expected life span, and it may be prudent to anticipate the upgrading of these when works are being undertaken at high level.

To the left hand side, a boiler stack was noted. The shoulders of the chimney to the head of the ground floor had been retiled, and a newer cement fillet provided to its top edge. This had split and worn. You should bear in mind that cement fillets by their very nature are prone to crack and split and will allow water penetration to take place. It was not possible to see as to whether any soaker details were noted at the abutment with the flue and rendered over. This is a common occurrence, albeit if these have simply been rendered over, then again water penetration is likely. General discolouration could be seen to the flue, indicating that this has retained water in the past. At high level, the brickwork had been significantly taken down and the stack capped, suggesting of course that this is no longer in active use. The brickwork remaining, however, required overhaul and the flashings where this ran through the flat roof will require replacement, and I would refer you to my earlier comments concerning the flat roof.

At the abutment of the cat walk roof over the entrance canopy area and front main wall, gaps could be seen, and again it was not possible to establish as to whether soakers had been provided and rendered over. Again, this can be a problematic detail, and when carrying out

repairs it would again be prudent to anticipate upgrading. To the internal timber, a simple cement fillet was noted where additional tiles had been provided, and whilst this is likely to provide a weathered finish, the detailing was generally poor.

To the front, a further party chimney stack could be seen, and again signs of wear and deterioration could be found. Metallic flashings were again noted to the base of the chimney which had also discoloured and stained, and I would refer you to my comments made in relation to the rear, as similar comments apply.

EAVES GUTTERS AND RAINWATER PIPES

To the front, a central valley gutter can be found between the gables of the demise and the adjoining property No 109. No overflow point was noted to the valley, and this is now a common detail, for should the outlet points block, then this would allow for running over to occur, rather than for water penetration to take place within. The rainwater downpipe was of a cast iron nature and jointly used. Your solicitor will no doubt be able to clarify as to when the valley was last replaced, and any joint repairing liabilities or obligations that appertain in this respect. The downpipe had heavily corroded and you would be advised to renew this. If the central valley has not recently been attended to then again you would be advised to allow for its replacement.

PVC equipment could be found to the left hand side. This form of guttering is relatively maintenance free, but suffers from thermal movement and expansion in the summer heat, and contracts in the winter cold, causing the joints to open up and leak. It is therefore common that over a period of time that leakage will occur, particularly from the corners, which can be seen by white salt staining to the undersides. The joint should then be opened up, mastic filled and re-clipped.

To the rear, again PVC and cast iron could be found. Ideally the original cast iron goods at high level should be replaced. Continuous gutter runs were again noted. The downpipe to the rear left hand side corner had been combined with the soil waste, and no doubt you will clarify and confirm that the combination of the soil and surface water system is with full Local Authority and Water Board consents and approvals as necessary. The hopper head and downpipe had corroded and again it would be prudent to renew.

Signs of weepage could be seen to the joints at high level, and splashing back appears to have regularly occurred to the walls.

MAIN WALLS

These would appear to be of a cavity brickwork nature, having been rendered to the first floor, together with sections of the left hand side and rear. It should be noted that it is not uncommon for both cavity and solid brickwork designs to be found within the same property. Unless otherwise expressly stated in making the report, it is assumed that no deleterious or hazardous materials or techniques have been used, and that there are no serious defects in the state of any concealed ties or fixings, particularly with regard to cavity wall ties.

To the front elevation, general signs of crazing could be seen to the rendering, particularly to the upper gable, and it is likely that hollow areas will be found at high level and around the window openings and adjacent to the rainwater downpipe, and you would be advised to anticipate renewal. Signs of running over could be seen to the brickwork, and slight wear was noted to the brickwork pointing. The subfloor ventilation points were partially restricted and these should be cleared. It may be prudent to provide further and additional subfloor ventilation. You should bear in mind that if dampness occurs within, coupled with restricted ventilation, then this will encourage the onset of wood beetle infestation, wet and dry rot, and this must of course be avoided where at all possible.

To the right hand side of the ground floor window opening, fractured brickwork could be seen, and fracturing was also noted below the window opening, which had been made good, albeit not to a particularly high standard. Slight hairline reopening could be seen. Crazing and slight hollowness was noted to the plinth. Splashing back was noted at low level, and indications of water retention were noted. Slight signs of fracturing could be seen through the first floor window cill, and as previously indicated, signs of running over were noted to the brickwork, which had caused some discolouration. The ground level having regard to the entrance steps had been raised. Assuming the damp proof course is on line with the top of the plinth, then this should not bridge the damp proof course work. Slight distortion was noted around the doorway at low level. General crazing could be seen to the rendering below the corner window to the first floor to the left hand side, and it is likely that the majority of the render in this area will have perished and should be renewed. When upgrading, it would also be prudent to upgrade the flashing abutment with the tiled roof surface. Slight signs of fracturing could be seen at the junction of the porch brickwork and front main wall, indicating that this has dropped and pulled forward slightly. This is, however, an extremely common occurrence.

To the left hand side flank face, slight weakness could be seen to the brickwork pointing. Signs of crazing were noted to the rendering to the first floor, and again general running over could be seen, almost certainly this being of an historic nature in part due to previous leaks from the original guttering. Moss growth was noted at low level. Only a single subfloor vent

could be found. It may be prudent to provide a further ventilation point. Discolouration and staining could be found to the render adjacent to the soil vent pipe close to the side doorway, and again it is likely that some weakness will be found. Further minor fracturing could be seen to the hallway window opening to the first floor in front of this, and slight fracturing was also noted between the openings. Further and general crazing could be found to the rendering to the chimney area, and I would refer you to my earlier comments.

To the rear, again slight signs of crazing could be seen between and around the window openings and at low level. Further moss growth and splashing back could be seen. Again I would refer you to my comments concerning the guttering. Signs of patch repair could be seen to the rear main wall. Two subfloor ventilation points were noted, and again it may have been prudent to have provided a further to the rear bay. A large step could be found to the bay, and this will be close to bridging the damp proof course work. Ideally a gap should have been left between the step and plinth to ensure that bridging did not occur. Hollow pockets of render could be found, and further localised repair will be necessary. You should bear in mind that after the walls have been made good that redecoration to the rendering will be required.

The window and door openings were slightly out of true, dropping to the left hand side.

WOODWORK AND DECORATIONS

To the rear, aluminium double glazing could be found. This had generally worn and weathered. To the first floor bay this had been laid within a hardwood framework. Fixed permanent ventilation had not been provided to all of the rooms through the masonry and this ideally should be undertaken to help minimise the possibility of condensation occurring within. You should bear in mind that aluminium framework is a good conductor of heat and is therefore prone to condensation and also allows heat to escape the property through the frame.

Original timbers could be seen to the right and left hand side of the ground floor bay. Due to the running over from the gutters rot and decay could be found. Deterioration was also noted to a number of the original cills. To the first floor, open joints could be found. Moss growth was also noted to the hardwood frame.

The line of the window openings to the rear bay had distorted. Having regard to the condition of the gutters it is likely that running over has occurred to the gutter boards and soffits, and it may be prudent when carrying out works at high level to anticipate some repairs in this vicinity. Almost certainly, signs of patch repair could be seen, as some of the soffits did not appear to be original.

Further replacement windows could be found to the left hand side, again of an older aluminium nature. The kitchen door was of a lightweight glazed structure. It is unlikely that toughened glass has been used. You should anticipate further upgrading of a number of the windows and doors. Rot and decay could be found to the original framework to the ground floor hallway. To the front, the windows had been upgraded, as had the main entrance door and framework in uPVC. No trickle vents were noted, and again permanent fixed ventilation has not been provided to all of the rooms and this should be undertaken. You will no doubt clarify as to whether any guarantees are available with regard to the replacement windows and doors.

At high level, to the first floor, the aluminium framework had been set in a hardwood surround and this required redecoration. Poor detailing was noted to the window cills, the rainwater not projecting away adequately.

In part, flexible sealants could be seen, but not throughout, and these should be provided in order to avoid water penetration occurring, for if this is allowed to persist over a prolonged period of time this will encourage softness, rot and decay to set in, coupled with penetrating dampness internally, which in turn will lead to the deterioration of the plasterwork and decorative finishes and lead to the onset of wet and ultimately dry rot to internal adjacent timbers. This must of course be avoided where at all possible.

Where these had split and come away these should of course be raked out and renewed.

To the front face, signs of rot and decay could be seen to the gable and timbers to the gable area, and again these should be thoroughly checked. Rot and decay was noted to sections of the front barge board, and again some localised repairs were noted. This would tend to suggest that regular running over is occurring from the verge tiles.

SOIL PIPES AND GULLIES

To the front right hand side, what is likely to be a gully has been provided. This was full of vegetation and could not be seen. The adjoining bedding areas of the demise and adjoining property No 109 had created a recessed area and this should be cleared. Within the driveway, a further gully could be found. This was blocked and again should be cleared. To the left hand side, to the front corner, a rainwater gully was noted. The grille was partially blocked and corroded. To the left hand side face, the main soil vent pipe could be found, which was primarily in cast iron. A newer section was noted at low level, which would tend to imply that problems have occurred with the main drain run. It may be prudent to clarify the history in this respect. I would refer you to my previous comments in relation to the flat roof which this runs through, and you should ensure that the flashing is upgraded when works are undertaken. What is likely to be a lead soil pipe was noted from the first floor, and general

upgrading will be necessary. A modern flue could be seen running externally to the main flue from the boiler. At low level this may well be in an asbestos cement material. You should of course have regard to general health concerns and considerations when upgrading is being undertaken. To the rear, a further gully was noted accepting the soil and surface water systems. The grille was blocked and should be cleared. It would be prudent to rod the main drain run through. To the rear main wall, an external tap could be found. This was not over a gully which is poor practice. The pipework should also be insulated. To the first floor, both lead and what appears to be steel barrelled pipework could be seen, together with some PVC, and general upgrading and renewal is necessary.

Within the rear garden, a sole inspection chamber was noted. The cover and rim had generally corroded. The invert level was approximately half a metre below ground level, which means that the drain run from the main soil pipe is extremely shallow having regard to the slope and pitch of the groundwork. Deterioration could be seen to the rendering within the chamber, which should be made good. A build-up of soil matter could be found on the shoulders which should be hosed down, and silting was also evident. Fractures could be seen through the drainage work and it may be prudent to anticipate further repairs and improvements. This appears to run through to the adjoining property to the right hand side, albeit no inspection chambers were noted within the adjoining rear garden. It may be prudent to clarify the siting of the drainage system.

FENCES, BOUNDARIES AND PAVED AREAS

To the rear right hand side, the majority of the boundary was of a plasticised wire mesh nature set upon concrete posts. This may well be the liability of the adjoining unit. What appears to be metal sheet panelling was noted adjacent to the rear main wall, providing a complete screen. To the rear of the house, a small concreted terrace area could be found. This was generally uneven and broken up and will require relaying. A crazy paved path was completely overgrown. The garden narrows down to a point to the rear, the rear boundary being of a timber nature. The adjoining garden appears to have provided in part a further wire mesh section, albeit the rear boundary was incomplete. To the rear left hand side, a concrete boundary could be seen, being laid in slats upon concrete posts and rails. General signs of corrosion could be seen, as the reinforcing rods to both the slats and posts were now noticeably worn. The boundary was adjacent to a general footpath, and it would be prudent to clarify as to whether this is your liability or that of the Local Authority. The outside face of the boundary had been subject to works of repair and stability. You should, however, anticipate noticeable additional works in the near future. The height of the boundary was also relatively low, and this has led to an element of overlooking within the garden.

The concreted paths and areas to the left hand side of the house were in a dilapidated condition. Similarly, to the front, the driveway had broken up and the front crazy paving was generally uneven with vegetation and moss growth being noted.

A low rise brick boundary wall was noted to the front. The iron gates appear to have been subject to more recent decorative finishes. To the front right hand side, a high rise brick and inlaid iron railing boundary wall could be found, which is almost certainly within the ownership of the adjoining premises. It should be noted that running through the gardens generally, railings were noted, indicating that the occupants at some point in time have been noticeably physically impaired. Sections of the low rise boundary to the front left hand side had now perished, and the front left hand side boundary with the walkway was leaning inwards considerably, and this may well fail in the near future.

TREES AND OUTBUILDINGS

A number of small stumps could be seen to the front left hand side area, where low rise vegetation has been cut back. No significant trees could be found within the grounds.

To adjoining properties, particularly to the left hand side, more noticeable vegetation was evident, albeit this should be a sufficient distance away as not to prove problematic. Within any foundation design, the size of the fir trees to the front left hand side will no doubt have to be given consideration in relation to your extension proposals.

You should bear in mind that the area, being predominantly of London Clay is highly susceptible to ground fluctuations caused by prolonged hot, dry and/or cold periods, particularly when exacerbated by vegetation growth. Below average rainfall occurred during the 1990s and this led to many claims for subsidence, particularly where adjoining vegetation was found. It is of the utmost importance to ensure therefore that the vegetation is adequately managed to minimise the risk of any future subsidence occurring. It is common practice for buildings within the area to be insured for subsidence, albeit subject to a policy excess, and you will no doubt ensure that suitable and adequate insurance is available.

The possibility of future movement cannot be ruled out. Should plaster cracking internally or fracturing externally be noted, then the situation will of course have to be reassessed, however on the basis that the vegetation is attended to then the risks involved which would apply to the demise are those which would generally prevail within the area, and this is well known to the majority of insurance companies. You should bear in mind that having regard to the history of movement within the recent past, a number of building insurers are also insisting that as part of the policy that there is a positive obligation to attend to local vegetation, otherwise this could render the policy void.

To the left hand side of the property, a garage can be found which was in a run-down condition, together with brick shed. I understand it is your intention to demolish the sheds and structures generally. It would be prudent to salvage as many tiles as possible from the garage roof for the main development. Signs of fracturing and distortion could be seen to the masonry. The internal floor levels were also inconsistent.

INTERNAL

Front door leads to hallway with radiator and understairs area, together with entryphone facility. Floor carpeted, ceiling and walls stripped being bare plaster. Signs of weakness could be seen to the left hand side window opening. Condensation was also found. The hallway was full of debris. Plaster cracking could be found to the ceiling, and making good was noted to the walls where plaster cracking had occurred. Large areas of hollow wall plaster could be found, and ultimately this will require renewal. Modern electric switches were noted. The radiator was of an older style and design. The floor was out of true, and loose and creaking floorboards could be found. Within the understairs area, the electric meter and consumer board could be found, and two meters were noted. The gas meter was also sited in this vicinity. You should bear in mind that wood beetle infestation is an extremely common occurrence in buildings of this age and style within the locality, and it is likely that upon full exposure this will be evident. Some of the blocks to the stairs had come away slightly, and resecuring in part is likely to be necessary. A limited oversite could be seen, and debris was generally noted. Deterioration could be found to sections of the brickwork pointing at low level, which is only to be expected.

Reception room 1 front, with chimney breast with fireplace surround, doors to rear reception room. Floor carpeted, ceiling bubble papered and painted, walls papered and painted. The door and frame were slightly out of true. The door was of a lightweight nature. Unevenness and plaster cracking could be seen through the ceiling and cornice. Slight tensioning was also noted at the junction of the walls to the paper. Surface laid wiring and skirting mounted sockets were noted. No source of heat could be found to the room. Hollow wall plaster and defective plaster to the window reveals was noted, and it is likely upon stripping of the walls that areas of replastering will become evident. Plaster cracking could also be seen to the centre of the window opening at low level, consistent with the fracturing externally.

Reception room 2 with fireplace and surround, and sliding door to rear. Floor carpeted, ceiling bubble papered and painted, walls papered and painted. The door was of a lightweight nature. Poor quality door furniture could be found. Again no central heating was noted, albeit to the fireplace what appears to be a gas fire was noted, a free-standing electric heater being found to the front reception area. You should of course have regard to Gas Board recommendations and advice having regard to the pipework to the heaters, the style of

ignition and permanent fixed ventilation which should be provided. Signs of distortion could be seen to the fireplace surround. Unevenness and plaster cracking was again noted to the ceiling and cornicing. Skirting laid sockets were found. Secondary glazing could be seen to the original side panels to the bay, general condensation being noted to the windows. Signs of condensation could be found within the presealed glazed panels to the sliding doors, indicating that the seals have perished.

It is likely that the opening between the reception rooms is an original feature, albeit it should be noted that there were no signs of stress or distress adjacent to the head of the opening, and it is therefore assumed that adequate support has been provided. Again your solicitor will no doubt be able to clarify this. The floor was creaking in part and I would generally refer you to my comments concerning the possibility of timber defects being found having regard to the limited ventilation.

Kitchen with double drainer stainless steel sink, range of wall and base units, albeit these mainly being original. A walk-in larder, door to side and double radiator could be found. Floor lino covered, walls part painted part tiled and part finished in Melamine. General signs of condensation could be seen to the windows and I would refer you to my general comments. The kitchen required complete and thorough modernisation. Deterioration could be found to the tiles. Older style pipework could be found to the services, and leaks were noted around the radiator. Within the kitchen, the heating and hot water timer was noted. An older style Ideal Vulcan boiler was noted. The flue to the boiler was of the older asbestos cement style. You would be advised to anticipate the replacement and upgrading of the boiler and pipework. I would refer you to my comments concerning the side door. The floor gave the impression of being primarily of a suspended nature, and again I would refer you to my external comments. Plaster cracking could be found to the head of the door opening, and within the larder cupboard, and also around the opening to the left hand side. The door to the hallway was primarily glazed, albeit the glass was not safety glass. The lino to the floor had been stuck down.

Stairs to first floor and landing. Relatively high risers were noted to the stairs. The floors and stairs had been carpeted, the ceiling and walls stripped and being bare plaster. Signs of making good of the plaster could be found, and general preparation works were noted. However, hollow plaster could still be found. Signs of condensation were noted to the hallway window. To the head of the stairs, an electric storage heater was found.

Bedroom 1 front, left hand side. Floor carpeted, ceiling and walls stripped. Again a lightweight door and poor quality door furniture could be found. Plaster cracking could be found to the ceiling and cornice. The cornice to the left hand side had not been provided. General making good and filling could be found to the walls, albeit hollow plaster was still

noted in part. Skirting laid sockets could be seen. No heat source was noted to the room. Extensive condensation could be found to the windows and frames.

Bedroom 2 front, right hand side, with chimney breast. Floor carpeted, ceiling and walls stripped. The door and frame were out of true. The door required easing and adjusting, not closing well or evenly. Plaster cracking could be found to the ceiling and walls which had been made good. Cornicing was noted to the front section of the room, but not to the front bay area. Creaking and loose floorboards were noted. Skirting laid sockets could be seen, and surface laid wiring was also noted in part. The chimney had been ventilated at high level which is good practice. I would refer you to my previous comments concerning the lack of permanent fixed ventilation to the room generally. Signs of condensation could be seen to the window reveals, particularly to the head of the window opening. The floor flexed slightly.

Bedroom 3 rear right hand side, with chimney breast and pedestal wash hand basin. Floor mainly carpeted, ceiling and walls stripped. The door and frame were out of true. The door required easing and adjusting, not fitting well or evenly. Again a lightweight door and poor quality door furniture could be found. Plaster cracking was noted to the ceiling and walls, and hollow plaster was again evident. The cornicing to the right hand side party wall was incomplete. The chimney had been panelled at low level. A tiled hearth could be found. The plasterwork had generally crazed to the chimney and was more noticeably hollow. The pedestal wash hand basin was of an older style as was the plumbing and taps. The plumbing installations should be renewed. Extensive condensation could be seen to the windows and framework and again I would refer you to my external comments. Fixed permanent ventilation could not be seen to the room. The floor was slightly uneven and flexed.

Bathroom with panelled bath, pedestal wash hand basin, airing cupboard and heated towel rail. Floor lino covered, walls half tiled half papered, ceiling papered and painted. The door and frame were warped and the door was not well fitting. The bathroom required modernisation. The tiles were generally hollow, and some had come away. Older lead pipework could be found. The lagged copper hot water cylinder was noted, which appears to be fitted with an immersion facility. Unevenness and plaster cracking was noted through the ceiling and wall finishes. General signs of condensation were evident to the window and framework.

Separate WC with medium height cistern. Older lead pipework was noted. Again, a similar lightweight door and older style door furniture could be found. Minor unevenness was evident to the ceiling and walls which were of a papered and part painted nature. Again, repair, refurbishment and modernisation is necessary.

ROOF VOID

Tiles on featheredge boards on rafters and purlins, strutted to the central load bearing area. Plasterboard ceilings could be found together with fibreglass insulation. The insulation was insufficient to comply with current recommended practice and this should be upgraded.

The party wall brickwork was incomplete at high level and this required attention to provide a complete fire stop between the units. Slight warping and twisting could be seen to the timbers and roof frame, which is only to be expected. Within the roof void a central heating header tank could be found. This had been particularly poorly supported, and the framework should be renewed. A PVC cold water and central heating header tank were noted, which had been covered and insulated.

The line of the ceiling rafters changed direction, running from front to back to the centre and side to side to the right hand side, and this tends to minimise deflection in the corners, albeit on this occasion you will note that deflection to the corner sections has in fact occurred. This, however, in part may be due to the fact that the lower section of the hip has either split or, as more likely appears the case, has been spliced together and inadequately supported. This has opened out. Gaps could now be found between the upper hip and rafters, again indicative of the distortion of the roof frame. The situation has now almost certainly stabilised.

Slight flaking could be seen on the existing insulation, noticeably to the front face, indicating that the undersides of the tiles are worn and finding the gaps between the featheredge boards and falling into the roof. I would refer you to my external comments concerning the overall condition of the tiles. Within the front gable area, discolouration and staining could be seen to the valley timbers and rafter ends, and you would be advised to have this area inspected externally and to allow for upgrading. It should also be noted that the front gable has been designed with the timbers being of a structural nature to the gable, and therefore it is important that externally these are fully and adequately maintained.

SERVICES

Gas. The premises appear to be connected to the Company's main supply. The meter can be found to the understairs area. You would be advised to anticipate general upgrading, re-running and modernisation of the gas facilities. Ideally, the meter should be resited externally. No tests were undertaken.

Electricity. The premises appear to be connected to the Company's main supply. The meters and consumer board can be found to the understairs area. Whilst some of the wiring was of a

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modern style and calibre, the majority was of an older nature and skirting laid, and you would be advised to anticipate rewiring and modernisation throughout. No tests were undertaken.

Water. The premises appear to be connected to the Company's main supply. Cold water storage facilities can be found within the main roof void. Hot water and heating is of a mixed nature. It would appear that the boiler may serve a number of the radiators, and possibly the hot water system. A lagged copper hot water cylinder could be found within the bathroom. You would be advised to anticipate the gutting of the existing system and modernisation of the property throughout. The header tank had also been poorly supported, and general upgrading should be undertaken in this respect. No tests were undertaken.

Drainage. The premises appear to be connected to the Company's main supply by what is likely to be a combined system. The feed and soil pipes were of a mixed style and calibre, and extensive use of lead could be seen, together with steel barrelled pipework. You should bear in mind that the combination of the system as it is with lead, copper and steel, will bring about a chemical reaction and deterioration, and it is therefore important to ensure that during modernisation this is all stripped and upgraded. You would be advised to confirm that the combination of the soil and surface water system is with full consents and approvals, and that having regard to the extremely shallow nature of the drainage system this has been taken into account in any alteration and modernisation scheme. It would also be prudent to clarify the exact siting of all of the drainage facilities, as these appear to run down the road to the right hand side. No tests were undertaken.

TENURE

I understand that you will be acquiring the freehold interest in the above, which I have assumed to be free from onerous restrictions and encumbrances.

Your solicitor should also advise you as to whether there are any highway developments, environmental or planning proposals which may materially affect, directly or indirectly, the property, whether any Tree Preservation Orders exist. Your solicitor will also no doubt advise you with regard to the ownership and maintenance of the perimeter boundaries, obtain any certificates of guarantees for damp-proof coursing or timber treatment, establish any boiler maintenance contracts or heating installation guarantees, advise you with regard to any mining or other subterranean activities if known to have taken place, or as to whether any flooding has occurred to the property, ascertain any contributions with regard to maintenance and upkeep of the front highway or other access ways and check as to whether there has any been any boundary disputes. It would also be prudent to establish that where applicable all works carried out to the property have been undertaken with full Planning Permission and/or Building Regulation consent.

EVALUATION

Many works of repair and improvement were found to be necessary. I would refer you to the main body of my report and original advice for a full detailed analysis. However, on the basis that all of these factors have been given full consideration by you and you feel that these have been adequately reflected in the purchase price, then I would confirm that there would appear to be no single reason as to why the acquisition of the above should not proceed.

It should be borne in mind that building defects are constantly evolving and can also arise from changing weather conditions between the date of our inspection and your taking occupation of the property. Vandalism has also been known to occur particularly when buildings are left vacant prior to occupation, and adequate security arrangements should be made or maintained where appropriate. This is a matter between you, the vendor, and the estate agents where applicable.

Russell Spiro FRICS