

Building Survey

**A Nice House
Great Woods Road
Somewhere ME32 8YF**

**On behalf of
Mr C Lient**

The Collier Stevens Practice
68 High Street
Chislehurst,
BR7 5AQ

020 8295 1200

our ref *****

INTRODUCTION

Instructions were received from ***** to carry out a Building Survey at ***** . The survey was carried out in accordance with our Standard Terms and Conditions which had previously been forwarded to ***** and a further copy is appended to this report.

The property was inspected on ***** 2012, the weather at the time of our inspection was extremely wet with heavy rain at the time of inspection. The property was occupied at the time of our inspection. Directions and room locations stated are given when facing the front elevation of the property from the outside.

THE PROPERTY

This property is a two storey farmhouse constructed of solid brick outer walls with a pitched, timber roof clad with roofing tiles. The property has been extended to the right hand side within the last 15 years and the extension is of cavity brickwork with a pitched timber roof. This in turn links to outbuildings with a timber and glazed conservatory.

Superficially, the property is in a good state of repair. It is situated in a rural setting and the precise nature of surrounding commercial and agricultural property, working hours and possible inconvenience or nuisance caused to the property should be ascertained by enquiries, by way of your solicitor and the vendor, including any possible change of use to which such property may be put to under the terms of existing planning permission, permitted change of use and use changes within the context of any local or borough plan. In particular we noted substantive farm buildings to the rear left of the house.

The property is a drive away from shopping and leisure facilities.

There is a good sized off-street parking area and a double garage.

Tenure

It was assumed that the Freehold interest in the property was for sale with vacant possession, but this must be verified by our client before contracts for sale are exchanged. Our client should also verify that there are no unduly onerous covenants attaching or affecting the land and that easements, rights of way, passage of drainage, etc, are all available for current and proposed usage of the property and gardens, before contracts are exchanged.

Accommodation

The accommodation to this property comprises:-

- Ground floor** - Study, reception room one, dining area, utility space, kitchen, WC.
- First floor** - Bedroom one, bedroom two, bedroom three, master bedroom with dressing area and en suite bathroom, family bathroom.

In addition there is an annex accessed from the sun room comprising a sitting room, guest bedroom and bathroom.

The accommodation as a whole extends to some 330 sq m.

THE ROOF

There are two distinct roof spaces to this property; that above the original or left hand portion of the building and that above the extended right hand portion of the building.

Access into the original section of roof is via a hatch on the landing, whilst to the new section there is a hatch in the small store room at first floor level. There are no retractable loft ladders.

The original roof is of pitched timber construction clad with tiles laid on sawn softwood battens. There was an underlay beneath the tile covering of bituminous roofing felt.

Within the roof space it could be seen that the main roof to this structure was constructed conventionally in sawn softwood

The roof construction was arranged traditionally with rafters and ceiling joists spanning from front to back of the building. These in turn were supported at the centre of the span where there is a valley gutter that spans from left to right.

The roof structure has clearly been the subject of quite considerable structural alteration. The inner lower rafter ends are now supported on a pair of 8" x 5" steel sections which span from left to right. These are supported on the original outer walls of the building and take intermediate support from the partition between the bathroom and landing at first floor level - this partition is key to the structural support of the roof.

The box gutter between the pitches has been constructed between struts sitting on top of the steels and the steels also support the ceiling joist ends of the rooms below. In the case of the left hand rooms, these are actually suspended from a series of metal rods or steel rods.

The arrangement is, perhaps, a little unconventional but all indications are that the installation has been professionally designed and installed. One would anticipate that this work would have received the approval of the local authority Building Inspector and we would expect it to have been undertaken within the last 10-15 years and almost certainly when the extension was added.

We do recommend that you obtain copies of relevant Building Regulation Completion Certificates as well as confirmation that the appropriate Listed Building Consent was obtained.

The structural arrangement has clearly been introduced to maintain as many of the original timbers within this structure as possible. This is a standard conservation procedure.

As is then perhaps to be expected, many of these timbers are showing signs of historic deterioration and infestation with wood boring insects but there were no indications of any ongoing deterioration at the time of inspection to visible and accessible timbers.

Additional rafters and joists have been provided to compensate for structural deterioration in the original structure and there is a series of new collars or horizontal ties that assist in effectively triangulating the roof.

Should the opportunity occur to expose further timbers within the roof space, it would be prudent to inspect these for attack by woodboring insect and fungal decay; and should there be any doubt whatever, a survey by a timber care specialist should be commissioned.

It was apparent that there were some longitudinal splits in the structural timbers. These splits were not thought to be structurally significant at this stage.

There was some discoloration to the roof timbers due to what appeared to be previous water ingress and condensation occurring.

There was no form of cross ventilation to this roof space. Although not required at the time of construction, cross ventilation is now considered a requirement under the building regulations as it assists in preventing build-up of condensation with its associated timber rot problems. Our client should note that this is not a defect and we would not expect to find cross-ventilation on a roof of this age, although cross-ventilation could be usefully provided at some point in the future.

There is approx 150 mm of fibreglass insulation laid over the first floor bedroom ceilings and this is required to help prevent heat loss. However, the thickness of this insulation does not conform to current standards and we would recommend that the insulation be upgraded to a minimum of 250 mm thickness.

This can be made by laying additional insulation over the existing but when laying new insulation it is important to ensure that any recessed lights or electric cables are not covered and that the eaves are not blocked as this is where natural ventilation can occur.

We recommend that the loft hatch is insulated.

The chimney stack passes through the roof structure and is finished in fair faced brick and was in visually satisfactory condition. We noted that the steel beams had been built into this and this may compromise the possibility of future use.

Roof boarding has been laid across a number of the joists and this was in visually fair order.

To the newer section of roof above the extended area, the roof structure has been completed in prefabricated timber roof trusses. These are in visually fair order and are very much as we would expect for a structure of this age.

They appear to incorporate effective wind bracing and lateral restraints as we would expect. Within this roof space, one can see that the gable end has been finished in concrete blockwork to the inner leaf.

The timbers to the roof trusses are of course preservative treated and there were no indications of any structural deterioration.

This roof space has been insulated and ventilated as we would expect in a structure of this age, the insulation could be enhanced

There is a small loft hatch giving access into the roof above the ground floor WC. This roof is constructed of timber joists and rafters spanning from left to right and has not been insulated. We strongly recommend that insulation is introduced into this roof structure.

Roof Coverings

The roofs to the property are covered in clay tiles. They are in visually fair order and obviously to undertake the extensive structural works within the roof structure they would have been removed and re-laid. Consequently they have been subject to significant attention within the last 20 years or so.

As is much to be expected, some deterioration of the mortar beneath the ridge and hip tiles have occurred and there is also some deterioration to the verges or edges of the roof pitches. Some localised repointing and rebedding may become necessary when high level access is next gained but this is not currently an urgent item.

The newer roof over the extension has been finished in similar tiles and these are weathered to the left hand abutment to the flank wall of the original building with a lead soaker type flashing which was in good order as far as could be established.

The extension roof has a flat section at high level. This is finished in lead. The leadwork could not be seen owing to its elevation but from a ground based binocular inspection, the edge detailing and lead rolls appear to be in good order and there were no indications of any internal dampness within the roof structure.

To the main roof, the covering to the rear pitch is in rather poorer order than we would expect, there is some visible slight misalignment and hogging in the roof structure might be anticipated given the slight misalignments that have developed in the original roof timbers and which cannot be fully overcome by the structural work undertaken.

The tiles to the rear are showing some signs of deterioration, particularly on the left hand side, where there are a number of deteriorated, cracked and otherwise friable tiles. These will require attention and when high level access is gained, more extensive analysis of the condition of the tiles will be determined.

We believe that at least partial replacement of tiles to the rear roof pitch will become necessary. Given the condition of these tiles, we cannot rule out similar work being necessary to the hidden pitches leading to the internal box gutter or to the front elevation. That said, the front elevation tiles are in markedly better order when viewed from ground level.

The central valley gutter could not be seen but would appear from inspection below and externally from the ends to have been constructed in leadwork. There were no indications of leakage beneath and given its age, one could reasonably assume that it is in fair order.

The other lead detailing within the building is well formed and this also gives a degree of confidence that although hidden the gutter is likely to be in fair condition. We do recommend, however, that it is inspected on a regular, say, annual basis and any blockage cleared. It may be that the installation of an access trap from the roof space onto the valley gutter will prove the most effective means of achieving this.

The gutter discharges to a downpipe at the left hand end. The rainwater goods themselves are of cast iron guttering supported on fixed metal gutter brackets. The left hand gutter cap is missing to the front elevation and this should be replaced. There are some signs of deterioration to the downpipes and these do require redecoration.

The extension has uPVC guttering, again supported on metal brackets, and this discharges to a uPVC downpipe at the right hand end. On the rear elevation it could be seen that the gutter serving the small pitch at the right hand side of the extended area discharges over the roof pitches; this is not the best detail and ideally water should discharge directly into the lower gutters.

The rear gutters are similarly formed. Quite often uPVC rainwater goods are not acceptable to the conservation officer and you may wish to verify this.

To the rear of the property there is a small low level roof over the WC. This is of duo-pitched construction and in visually fair order. There is a tiled fillet at the abutment with the rear elevation and we would rather see a lead flashing in this location. Lead has been used to form a flashing with the soil vent pipe which passes through but this is rather crude.

The gutters are of uPVC construction; we noted that the downpipe had become disconnected from the gutter and this requires urgent attention. As with the main building, the guttering is fixed with metal brackets to the oversailing ends of the rafters.

Debris in gutters required clearing out – in particular there is growth in the gutters to the rear. The rainwater goods to the property generally were observed in heavy rain. No significant leakage was noted but several of the downpipe joints were weeping slightly.

Rising above the main roof pitches are chimney stacks. The right hand chimney stack appears to be of later construction whilst the left hand chimney stack appears to have been partially reconstructed or repaired. The weathering between the chimney stacks and the roof pitches was visually fair.

Within the roof space there are a number of substantial wasps' nests; it is not clear whether these are redundant.

MAIN WALLS

The walls were of solid brick construction found to be approximately 230 to 270mm mm in thickness to the original portion of the building. To the extension the walls are of brick and block cavity construction. They have been constructed with 'snapped headers' on the outer leaf to give the appearance of solid brickwork to match in with the original building. No doubt this was a Planning requirement.

To the front elevation there is some slight misalignment to the brickwork around the window heads. The windows sills are either of timber or to the left hand ground floor have been replaced with tiles. Some partial reconstruction has been undertaken to masonry around the upper right hand window and this appears to have been adequately undertaken.

The central section around the windows has been repointed but elsewhere pointing is in deteriorating order. The soil level is of increased height to the right hand side and this may bridge any damp proof course that may be present.

The extended area is in visually fair order; we noted that weep holes have been provided around lintels as we would expect.

The right hand gable end with the conservatory link was in visually fair order and the conservatory roof has been weathered to this with a lead soaker type flashing.

To the left flank the ground level drops away markedly and access into the cellar is possible at the rear. As a result, the front and part of the left wall of the cellar acts as a retaining structure. The wall is somewhat damp as is much to be expected but as this is ancillary accommodation this is not a particular cause for concern. The window sill is rotten to the cellar window.

At high level on the flank wall, there is some plant growth; it is important that this is removed. At higher level, the pointing is in deteriorating order and requires raking out and repair. This should be undertaken in a correctly mixed lime mortar rather than sand and cement.

Whilst high level access is gained to undertake this work, there is some localised brick deterioration on the chimney stack and we recommend cutting out and replacing deteriorated and friable bricks.

On the rear elevation, the extension to form the WC is also of cavity construction and of a later build. It was in visually fair order with a plastic damp proof course at low level, although this appeared to have been partially bridged by the external steps.

On the main rear elevation one can see that the repair of metal tie buttons to the left and right hand sides. There may be a further button concealed within the roof void of the shower room. This suggests that some tying in of the rear wall has been necessary and we expect the buttons to have extended on a metal rod through a number of joists internally. The brickwork was in generally fair order although there was some slight misalignment particularly over the rear door from the utility space.

When viewed by eye the walls are slightly out of plumb at approximately two thirds height and we believe some partial reconstruction has occurred in the past around the rear side windows. There is also some partial reconstruction around the office window and window above but otherwise walls were considered to be in fair order.

The walls were inspected as to evidence of significant structural movements and there were no indications of significant structural movements or settlements to the main walls at salient points.

Some local stressing was occurring in the brickwork, manifesting itself at the corner of window openings or between window openings. Cracking was due to normal expansion and contraction due to thermal or moisture movement in the brickwork.

Such cracks tend to open up and move with temperature and moisture changes in the structure.

With any property that has shown movement in the past there is always the possibility that further movement can take place. We do not, however, consider this to be an exceptional risk. It is relevant that the damage described above has taken some 200 years to develop. It is normal for such movement to be visually monitored, that is examined periodically.

The risk of further movement was thought likely to be slight or occurring over an extended period and on a gradual basis.

The general arrangement in properties of this type and age is that timber lintels are incorporated above the windows. Unfortunately without works of exposure, we are unable to confirm whether such lintels are present.

We have seen instances where timber lintels set into solid brick walls of this age have decayed as a result of penetrating dampness through the obviously thinner depth of brickwork externally. Once again, unfortunately without works of exposure it is not possible to confirm absolutely whether timber lintels have deteriorated but we saw no evidence to suggest that such deterioration has occurred.

At low level there is evidence that a chemical damp proof course has been inserted into at least parts of the original building. There is a visible plastic damp proof course to the newer sections of the building.

In several areas of the original building there was no visible evidence that a horizontal damp proof course (dpc) had been installed in the external wall construction. A horizontal dpc is required to prevent excessive moisture rising up from the ground into the fabric of the building due to capillary attraction. A horizontal dpc is normally situated approximately 150 mm above ground level but, as the rendering extends down to ground level, this covers the position where a dpc would be expected.

Internally, where accessible, and not obscured by furnishings, kitchen units, wall hangings and the like, walls were tested selectively with a moisture meter and were found to be free from significant levels of rising dampness.

Many of the internal walls have been dry lined; that is their surfaces have been finished with plasterboard. Consequently, we were unable to take damp readings directly on the structural surface of the wall.

We expect that, should dry lining be removed, some dampness will be present on the structural walls. This is perhaps much to be expected in any building of this age. That said, there were no indications of deterioration arising as a result of dampness nor any particular 'musty' smell.

Solid walls of this property's type are no longer permitted for residential construction for reasons of inadequate thermal insulation and poor resistance against water penetration. Having said this, it will be appreciated that if our client is interested in purchasing a house of this age, solid wall construction will be the rule rather than the exception.

Partitions and Internal Walls

Generally there was a conventional loading pattern within this structure in that ceiling and floor joists were distributed on a front to back basis within the building, and this hence loaded a central cross partition, which also would have carried significant loading from the roof.

The partitions at ground level are a combination of lightweight and stud partitions. They were in visually fair order although some slight shrinkage cracking was present. Some shrinkage cracking was evident in the kitchen to the outer walls where they were constructed of blockwork. The cracking is manifesting itself as hairline vertical fractures and this arises out of normal shrinkage and should be made good at the next decoration.

There are some sections of original timber framing to the building, particularly to the left hand side; this is evident at ground and first floor levels. In both cases, we believe the timber framing sections retained are now largely aesthetic rather than structural, the structure having been replaced with the main structural wall in the stair and hallway supporting many of the roof and floor loads.

Within the kitchen to the ground floor in the extension, there is a pair of brick piers and think we think these support a steel beam that in turn provides main structural support to the upper floors and partitions in this area.

If available the original structural drawings would be useful to verify this but given it was constructed some 15 or so years ago it is unlikely that these are available.

At first floor level, the partitions are a combination of masonry and lightweight construction particularly when non-load bearing. They were in visually fair order although there were minor shrinkage cracks occurring at intersections between materials.

The condition of the plaster internally appeared generally satisfactory, although pockets of loose plaster were detected when walls and/or partitions were tapped. Care should be taken to avoid dislodging plaster when the wallpaper is stripped. In properties of this age it is common for plaster to pull away from the wall when wallpaper is stripped and this can loosen further areas of plaster.

In places the pockets were larger and in all older properties some element of re-plastering can be anticipated following removal of decorations. You will appreciate that we were unable to hammer test every area of every wall.

Many of the walls have been dry lined as noted earlier and we were unable to inspect the surface of the structural walls.

The internal arrangement has been altered and it is important to verify that this obtained the appropriate Listed Building Consent and also that where Building Regulation Approval was necessary, that the necessary Completion Certificates have been provided.

The chimney breasts have generally been retained to the building. To reception room two, it is open; the vendors advise that the flue may be used for an open fire but without having the chimney flue inspected by a qualified chimney sweep, we cannot advise this is the case. If you wish to use this with an open fire we do recommend that you have the chimneys inspected and swept and a certificate of chimney sweeping obtained. There does not appear to be a flue liner.

The brick hearth is a little too short in the main reception room. A substantial wood burning stove has been provided in the main reception room. This is in visually fair order and does appear to incorporate a flue liner. At first floor level, the chimney breasts are redundant.

FLOORS

Floors within this property were of suspended timber joists covered with softwood floor boarding. The first floor joists spanned between walls and/or partitions, whilst the ground floor joists were no doubt upon a system of fender walls which reduced the distance of span, and consequently joist depth.

There are sections of solid work at ground level in addition.

When tested for vibration the floors in several of the rooms vibrated somewhat, and it was noted that several rooms had a floor which sagged slightly, and this indicated that joists of insufficient depth had originally been used, but it is unlikely that the situation will worsen.

Owing to carpet and other floor covering throughout the property, floorboards and joists could not be inspected.

It was possible to pull back corners of carpets in several of the bedrooms and when this was done the surface of the floorboarding was seen to be in fair order. That said, in any building of this age some evidence of wood boring insect is inevitable in older timbers, much in the way that this can be seen in the roof structure.

Should the opportunity to expose floorboards, perhaps when carpets are being renewed, floorboards should be lifted and timbers inspected for woodworm or fungal attack. Should there be any doubt whatsoever a survey by a timber care specialist should be carried out.

Where carpets had been provided these were in fair condition although no doubt our client has formed an opinion as to whether to replace or not.

The general arrangement with floors such as this is that the upper floor joists span into the front and rear walls of the property. The joist ends are normally in direct contact with the wall and as a result can be subject to high levels of dampness.

Quite often some timber deterioration can occur to the joist ends and, whilst none was detected during our inspection, without complete exposure of each joist end timber decay in these areas cannot be absolutely ruled out. Typically this decay takes the form of wet rot although in some circumstances dry rot has been known to develop.

Sections of the kitchen floor were of solid, presumed concrete, construction and in visually acceptable condition. Floors such as this should incorporate a damp proof membrane to limit or prevent rising or penetrating dampness but, unfortunately, one cannot confirm whether one is present without destructive examination.

Random readings with an electronic moisture meter were taken across the surface of the floor and no significantly high levels of dampness were recorded suggesting that any damp proof membrane present is performing effectively.

It was not possible to lift carpets and confirm whether any shrinkage cracking or other deterioration had occurred to the surface of the concrete flooring.

Unfortunately we are unable to confirm the manner of construction of this floor or any underlying fill without works of destructive examination.

CEILINGS

The ceilings to this property have in the main have been replaced with plasterboard.

As is common with plasterboard ceilings, some longitudinal cracking was occurring between board joints. This is quite usual and should be filled and made good at the next decoration.

A number of the ceilings incorporate recessed downlighters.

Some slight damage and deterioration is evident to the soffits particularly at the stairs but this should be made good in the usual manner at the next decoration.

DECORATIONS

The external decorations to this property were in satisfactory condition, indicating that redecoration had occurred within the last three to five years.

It is usual to find some areas of soft timber which require appropriate attention at redecoration. Internally the decorations were in fair condition and no doubt our client has inspected these and has formed an opinion as to whether to redecorate or not in the short term.

JOINERY

Staircases

There is a pair of staircases to the property; one to the left hand side and one to the right hand side. Both rise from ground to first floor level.

That to the right hand side is constructed within the extension and is of recent provision. It is firm underfoot and has adequate head height and handrail and balustrading to the length of its flight.

To the left side, the staircase appears to replace an original unit. It is not clear whether this is the original location but, on balance, we believe it is. The unit is constructed of carpentered softwood secured with glued and wedged joints and other recognised methods of construction. Again it is of adequate head height with satisfactory handrail and balustrade.

In both cases, staircase construction would have fallen within the provisions of the Building Regulations.

Built-in Cupboards

There is a large dressing cupboard to the main bedroom, as well as built-in wardrobes to the space. Built-in storage is also present to bedrooms three, four and five and there is a boiler cupboard at ground level.

Kitchen

The kitchen is fitted with an extensive range of high and low level units and associated work surface. There is an electric hob and oven as well as an oil fired Aga stove. The flue to this exits vertically through the chimney flue. We recommend that you have the Aga installation and flue inspected by an appropriately qualified engineer and undertake any recommended remedial works.

There is a good sized utility space incorporating a butler style sink and washing machine as well as further work surface and units.

Skirtings, Picture Rails, Architraves and other Timber Trims

(Some of these elements may not be present in the subject property.)

These were inspected and seen to be in visually satisfactory order where accessible, although our client should note that sections were concealed behind fixtures and furnishings.

Doors

The front door to this property is of timber construction. It is double glazed with a rather narrow void between the glazed panels. It is secured with a 5-lever mortise lock and an additional surface lock.

The doors leading into the conservatory are of timber framed double glazed construction. Again there is a narrow void typical of the age of the doors and these doors are secured with 5-lever mortise locks only. Most insurers require two key operated locks to all final exit doors.

Finally, the kitchen door is of glazed finish secured with a 5-lever mortise lock. It appears to have been glazed in toughened glass.

A back door leads from the utility space but there was no key to operate this at the time of inspection. It is of glazed timber construction secured with a 5-lever mortise lock and Chubb security bolts.

Internally, the doors are of a lightweight panel construction in a style typical to a building of this type. They were found to perform effectively although some slight easing and adjusting will almost certainly be appropriate.

Windows

Within the original section of the building, the windows are of replacement timber framed casement construction. They are single glazed and were found to perform effectively.

The vendor advises that these replaced previous metal Crittall windows. Window replacement of this type does require Listed Building Approval and the vendor advises that appropriate consent was obtained but we do recommend you obtain documentary evidence to support this.

In the extended area, the windows are of timber construction with a combination of casement and sash design. They were in visually fair order and operated effectively when randomly checked. Several of the locks and latches were missing and some minor attention to the windows will be required.

Oddly, the glazing to the second reception room window is manifested as toughened even though toughened glass is not required in this location. This window appears to be of older provision.

SERVICES

Electrics

The property was connected to mains electricity. The incoming main was a 60 amp single phase service terminating in the utility space, with a meter and distribution panel adjacent. The installation appears to date from 1997 and the distribution panels are fitted with circuit breakers with each individual circuit being appropriately identified. Earth cross bonding is visible.

No tests were undertaken on the installation and we are not appropriately qualified to undertake any technical test in examination. In the course of our survey, where parts of the electrical installation were used, such as the lights, they seemed to perform normally.

Cable distribution is in PVC twin and earth type cabling.

It may well be that electrical test certification is available for this installation but in any event the Institute of Electrical Engineers (IEE) gives its recommendation that all domestic wiring systems should be inspected and tested at intervals no less frequently than 10 years or on exchange of occupancy, whichever occurs soonest.

We, therefore, recommend that a 'Period Inspection Report' (PIR) be completed and the documents supplied must not only include the Certificate but also the 'Schedule of Tests' which have been carried out and a 'Schedule of Test Results'. This PIR will provide a concise overview and indicate whether upgrading is required as well as dealing with principle faults, if any, for attention. This PIR must be obtained from a certified electrician and obtained prior to exchange of contracts.

Gas

The property does not have a gas supply.

Oil

The main heating fuel to this building is oil. This is stored in a plastic oil tank to the right hand side of the garages.

The tank appears of recent provision presumably some 15 years or so of age and may be banded.

Although the tank was in visually fair order, we noted that the wooden fence was within 300mm of the tank; we understand that fences and the like should be at least 600mm away from an oil tank. It was not possible to inspect the service pipework as this was buried. We recommend you have the installation inspected by a suitably qualified oil heating engineer.

Communications

The property was connected to a telephone service and there was a television aerial, although the alignment and serviceability of same was not checked. The property appeared to have the benefit of satellite television at the time of inspection and should our client wish to retain this, he is advised to make his own enquiries of the vendor.

The property had an alarm system which appeared to be in operable order. The property was fitted with mains operated smoke detectors.

Cold Water System

There was a traditional system incorporating water storage at high level feeding all sanitary accommodation except the kitchen sink, which was mains fed.

The cold water storage tank was a plastic unit located within the roof space. There was a support system for the tank which had a normal ball valve, overflow, and mains connection.

The tank was located in the new roof space and was in visually fair order.

The incoming main appeared to be located in the utility space and we would expect the main to be of plastic pipework. Cold water was supplied at the usual draw off points when these were individually operated but no tests were undertaken. Internal water distribution was by means of copper pipework which was in visually fair order where visible and accessible.

The general arrangement appeared serviceable.

Hot Water and Heating System

There was a combined system of hot water and central heating and this was quite traditional, in that the boiler fired a primary circuit which included calorifier within the indirect copper cylinder, and steel, water-filled radiators.

There was a plastic header tank at high level to provide water supply to this primary circuit which was suitably vented by expansion pipe. Hot water was from the secondary form of heating in the cylinder, and draw off points were provided at the normal locations.

The boiler was a Worcester floor standing unit located in the boiler cupboard. The flue appeared to exit vertically and through voids to exhaust above the roof pitch of the extended area.

From January 2013 it is necessary for boiler flues serving certain types of boiler and concealed within ceiling and other voids to be accessible for inspection when a boiler is serviced. Engineers need to be able to see the flue – which take fumes away from the boiler – as part of essential safety checks whenever the boiler is worked on.

A flue in poor condition, combined with a boiler that is not working properly could cause a danger from carbon monoxide poisoning. Inspection hatches 300mm x 300mm square need to be provided every 1500mm along the length of the flue. From our visual inspection we think that this boiler and flue installation may be affected and we were unable to identify appropriate inspection points. We recommend that you take the advice of an appropriate engineer now.

The system is controlled from a time clock adjacent to the boiler, whilst space heating is controlled by means of thermostats located on the ground floor wall.

The hot water cylinder is located in the main bedroom in the airing cupboard. It was in visually fair order and is of copper construction with a foam casing.

The radiators are a combination of modern cast iron and pressed steel panel design. They are in visually fair order. We noted that much of the service pipework, particularly to the older portion of the house, was by micro bore pipework.

This is a small bore pipe and much of the routing of this was surface mounted or in box casing. These should route back to at least one manifold from where hot water for the radiators is distributed. Care needs to be taken as these pipes are susceptible to impact damage which reduces their cross section and hence effectiveness.

We were unable to identify the location of the manifolds and suspect these may be located in a space above the boiler. There would appear to be three heating circuits, each individually controlled by motorised valves in the boiler cupboard.

No tests were undertaken but hot water was felt when the taps were individually opened. Our client is advised to ascertain details of the service history of the installation from the vendors. If the installation has not been regularly serviced a test should be carried out by the Gas Safe heating engineer.

We recommend that the installation is inspected by an appropriately qualified heating engineer and any recommended remedial works undertaken.

Sanitary Facilities

The main bathroom is fitted with a bath with shower over, a WC and vanity basin. It was of relatively recent provision and performed effectively.

The en suite facility to the main bedroom comprised a shower cubicle, WC and pedestal basin and again this was of relatively recent provision and appeared to perform effectively. No doubt you have inspected this and formed a view as to whether it meets your requirements or otherwise.

There is a WC at ground level, incorporating a WC and wash basin, and again in satisfactory order.

The bathroom to the guest accommodation is of similar recent provision and no doubt you have inspected this and formed a view as to whether it meets your requirements or otherwise.

Plumbing

The first floor WCs appear to discharge to plastic soil stacks at the right hand side or concealed internal box casings. Where visible they were satisfactory and these in turn discharge to a subterranean drainage system which ran to a septic tank. The ground floor WC discharges directly to the sub soil drainage system.

The internal hot water distribution was generally of copper pipework. This was in visually satisfactory order with neatly formed bends and joints where visible and accessible. We are unable to report upon sections of pipework and joints that may be concealed within walls and floors.

Drainage

The system of drains, as far as could be ascertained, was a separate one. This is where surface waste and foul water discharges to separate sub soil disposal systems

The foul water discharged to a septic tank at the end of the garden. The septic tank was not inspected although the vendor advises this has recently been cleared but we do recommend you have this checked by an appropriate drainage contractor.

Rainwater appears to discharge to soakaways, the location of which could not be identified as these are buried.

It was possible to lift inspection chambers on the rear path and when this was done the appliances were flushed or discharged and a positive flow of the water was seen to pass through the system adequately

Cellar

To the rear left hand side of the original portion of the building there is a cellar area. This is of masonry construction and accessed from external door on the left hand side of the building. The walls to this are as we would perhaps expect a little damp but as the area is used for storage only, this is not a particular cause for concern. There is some deterioration to the window sill that requires attention.

Conservatory

The conservatory link is of timber construction and in visually fair order. It has a solid floor which again appeared to be in satisfactory condition. The conservatory link allows access into the habitable outbuilding.

Habitable Outbuildings

To the right hand side of the property there is a single storey outhouse, a brief inspection of this area was carried out as it is ancillary to the main accommodation, it was probably converted when the extension was added and you should obtain copies of building regulation completion certificates and other relevant statutory consents.

This is constructed of solid brickwork with a pitched timber roof clad with roofing tiles. The roof has a number of broken tiles which should be replaced and some repair is necessary to the mortar and ridge.

Four heritage style roof lights are set into the roof pitches and these are in satisfactory order. The roof structure is triangulated by means of collars spanning from left to right which are exposed in the reception room. The underside of the rafters is lined to form the ceilings and we presume incorporates insulation.

The main walls are of masonry construction with ragstone work at low level. There was some recent construction to the right hand side around the garages and the walls are in generally fair order.

Internally there were no indications as to significant dampness occurring but the rear and left hand walls are of partially retaining construction and some dampness in these areas cannot be ruled out.

To the left hand end of the building, the wall is partially glazed and the timber sub-frame is deteriorating along with the mastic and putties. Over time this will continue to deteriorate and attention will be necessary to the timberwork, as well as the double glazed units which may well lose their integrity and develop condensation.

Internally the area is arranged with a living area and bedroom at ground level and a bathroom at upper level. The staircase is a little steep and head height is compromised but given its limited requirement for access, this is unlikely to prove a problem.

There is a substantial wood burning stove in the ground floor area, the hearth to this is too small.

The electrical installation appears to have been run as an extension from the main building with its own distribution panel.

Hot water is electrically provided from a Megaflo hot water vessel located in the bathroom area. The arrangement appeared to be satisfactory.

EXTERNAL AREAS

To the right hand side of the outbuilding there is a double garage; this is in generally fair order and currently used for storage. There is a pair of traditional garage doors to the front elevation. Adjacent to this there is a timber shed store adjacent to the oil tank which is accessed by means of a hardstanding which is enclosed with a masonry wall and incorporates a water feature.

To the right hand side of the property as one accesses the building, there is a granary. A brief inspection of this was undertaken; it appears to be of timber construction raised on stone plinths. It has a pitched timber roof and the building as a whole is best described as serviceable. It will require ongoing maintenance and the steps up to the front door are deteriorating and a little slippery.

To the rear of the main house there is a large hardstanding area and this in turn accesses the main gardens which are a combination of lawn and bedding. No doubt you have inspected the grounds and formed a view as to whether they are appropriate or otherwise.

The boundaries appear to be in adequate order but you should verify the extent of these with your legal adviser. To the right hand side of the plot there appears to be a public right of way although this is outside of the demised area.

MATTERS FOR YOUR SOLICITOR

You should ensure that your Solicitor advises you of the following matters:

- (a) Which boundaries and fences you are responsible for maintaining.
- (b) Obtain copies of Building Regulation Completion Certificates in respect of the extension and structural works undertaken at the property.
- (c) Obtain copies of Listed Building and other Planning Consents relating to extension and alteration works to the building
- (d) Establish whether there is a appropriate test certificates for the boiler and central heating.
- (e) Establish whether there is a current oil safety certificate.
- (f) Establish whether there is a current electrical test certificate.
- (g) Establish whether there is any guarantee for previous damp proofing work or timber treatment.
- (h) Establish whether the windows were installed after April 2002, and if so whether a FENSA certificate was issued or whether building regulations consent was obtained.
- (i) Your solicitor is to make the usual enquiries before contract with regards to the possibilities of any neighbour disputes.

STATUTORY PERMISSIONS

This property appeared to be located in a residential district, but our client is advised to ascertain from searches or other source that the property does lie within an area which is allocated for residential purposes, or that existing use rights or planning permission for same exist. Our client is also recommended to consult the Local Planning Authority personally concerning redevelopment or other proposals which may affect that property indirectly by changing the character of the locality, and which would not necessarily be revealed on an official search.

It was apparent that Planning Permission and Building Regulation approval were necessary for the alteration work carried out to these premises, and our client is advised to ensure that the necessary approvals have been obtained, and the conditions thereof complied with.

The property is a Grade II listed building, situated this means that it is considered to be of special architectural or historic interest and the listing protects the whole of the building, both inside and outside – this includes the ancillary accommodation and extension.

If you wish to demolish, extend or alter your building in any way which affects the character or setting you must first contact the conservation area at the local district council for listed building consent (LBC). Failing to obtain consent for any alterations of a listed building may result in a fine or imprisonment.

Local authorities can, at any time, serve an enforcement notice in respect of unauthorised work requiring owners to restore the building to its former state. There is no deemed consent for these matters after the passage of time. These notices can also be enforced for works carried out by previous owners.

This means that all of the building, both inside and outside, as well as the area surrounding the building is protected. Listed building consent is very important and it is essential that, before exchanging contracts, you check that any works carried out by the previous owners have been approved, that consent was granted and that the works were carried out in accordance with that approval.

Whilst a new owner cannot be prosecuted for any previous unauthorised works, they can be forced to rectify them at their own expense.

LIMITATIONS OF SURVEY

The property was occupied and fully furnished with fitted carpets and other secured floor finishes which limited the inspection of the interior of the rooms to some degree. For this reason, and due to the concealed nature of the construction, it was not possible to inspect every piece of timber and therefore it cannot be guaranteed that an insect or fungal attack is not present somewhere in the property. Where necessary, comments are made based upon the structure visible and any other indications.

All inspections of the exterior of the building were from ground level.

There was no available access to inspect the roof space of the back addition roof.

There was no available access to inspect structures of flat roofs. Consequently we were unable to report that such structures are free from attack by wood boring insect or fungal attack. Our client should be aware that fungal attack in particular can occur following previous leakage and this may not be visible. If a flat roof has leaked prior to recovering, it is probable that some element of decking and structure will require replacement concurrently with the covering.

This report is for the private and confidential use of the client for whom it is undertaken, and shall not be reproduced in whole or in part, or relied upon by third parties, except our client's legal representative, strictly in connection with the purchase of the property.

This report does not constitute a Schedule of Decorative Condition and Minor Defects, but is based on the main structural condition of the property.

It was assumed that several fixtures and fittings, including soft furnishings, would be included within the sale of this property and therefore pass with the purchase to our client; however, our client should verify this fact and have a schedule of such items precisely worded and included within the contract or covering letter. These items do not of course form part of the structure and have therefore not been referred to within the report.

We have assumed that the property is erected on suitable land that has not been designated as contaminated. No investigation of surrounding ground has been undertaken.

The report reflects the condition of various parts of the property at the date of inspection. It must be expected that defects can arise between the date of the inspection and your taking occupation of the property.

No special tests have been made at this stage on cements and concretes used in the construction and accordingly we are unable to report that concretes are of a suitable strength and free from the presence of high alumina cement, chlorides, sulphates or other deleterious materials. As regards concretes below ground, we cannot confirm these suitable for ground conditions if the sub-soils contain sulphates or other damaging constituents.

All property owners are advised to ensure that the property is insured from the moment of exchange of contract for a sufficient sum against all usual perils including fire, impact, explosion, storm, tempest, fire, flood, burst pipes and tanks, subsidence, land slip, ground heave and public liability.

Walls were inspected for dampness with a hand held electrical resistance type meter. In carrying out this part of the inspection no furnishings, wall hangings and the like were moved, nor areas exposed. Consequently we are unable to offer a firm warranty that no dampness exists in these areas. Should you require a more comprehensive inspection, please arrange with the vendors to remove all wall hangings and to move all furnishings away from the wall to allow us full access.

We have not undertaken an energy efficiency assessment of this property but our client should be aware that older properties of this type are not as energy efficient as more modern properties and properties constructed with newer materials and insulation.

We have not specifically considered the impact on this property of external environmental issues including aircraft and traffic noise, odour from neighbouring and proximate property, disturbances arising from the usage of neighbouring and proximate property, noise transmitted to the subject property from neighbours or regular excessive parking and traffic not evident at the time of inspection. You are advised, if concerned in these regards, to visit the property and locality at varying times to ascertain whether these adversely influence the property in any way.

No tests have been undertaken of the services installations and our report is based on a visual inspection only. Our client may consider it prudent to commission tests and reports by specialised electrical, gas and plumbing engineers to confirm absolutely the condition and performance of these installations.

We have not specifically inspected this property for the presence of asbestos or other deleterious materials. Where we have reason to believe that due to the normal course of our inspection that an asbestos based product may have been used, we have drawn this to your attention. A more detailed and dedicated asbestos inspection may identify asbestos based products over and above that identified in this report. Asbestos based products do require specialist removal. Our client is advised to ensure that, should any asbestos be identified, specialist arrangements for its removal are made.

SUMMARY

This is a substantial period building. It is in a generally good state of repair and has been well extended and improved by both the vendors and their predecessors. The vendors advise that they were responsible for refurbishing much of the original portion of the building (but not the structural work to the roof) whilst their predecessors undertook the major structural and extension works.

Some attention is necessary now to the building, particularly to the rear roof pitches and brickwork at high level. These works will inevitably require high level scaffold access and we recommend that you maximise the use of the scaffold to carry out any other repairwork that may become appropriate.

The service installations are in generally fair order but as is quite usual, we recommend you have the safety and serviceability of these verified by an appropriately qualified engineer.

All property requires ongoing maintenance on both a reactive and preventative basis and this is no exception. The extent of this was not considered unduly onerous, given the age and style of the property.

Other than the key defects noted in this report there are, as you would expect, a number of other more minor issues which have not been individually discussed. For instance, slight deterioration of external joinery and general wear and tear on internal joinery and other components. It is inevitable that owning a property such as this will require items such as this to be maintained and renewed over time.

We confirm that this property was inspected by ***** BSc MRICS, Chartered Building Surveyor and the report was prepared by him. We also confirm that we have no direct or indirect interest in this property or this transaction.

Should our client have any queries regarding the contents of this report, please contact us on our usual number – 01303 239000.

***** BSc MRICS
Chartered Building surveyor

**STANDARD TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR
BUILDING SURVEYS**

1. The report on the subject property will be addressed to our clients or the individual who commissioned the survey and will be confidential. Any liability arising out of the reports contents will be specifically limited to our client. The report should not be relied upon by third parties without our express written consent.
2. Whilst every reasonable effort will be made to carry out the inspection at the date/time advised, we cannot be held liable for any losses caused by matters outside our control, including, but not exclusively:- surveyor illness, traffic/vehicle delay/breakdown, extreme weather conditions or vendor unavailability.
3. It is not our policy to make any verbal report as to our findings prior to the sending of our written report. Our client should await our full written report prior to entering into any agreements regarding the subject property. Our client must not rely upon any summary report which may be provided at your request.
4. Our inspection of the premises will cover all visible, exposed and accessible areas and elements of construction in order to report on their construction and any defects adversely affecting their performance either individually or in their constructional context, defects which may give rise to expenditure or affect the usual use of the property will be reported upon.
5. The construction and fabric of the building will be reported upon giving due consideration to the age and type of property and its usual use. Comment will be made in this context as to the need for repair or special maintenance. The structural integrity will be considered in the context of the property's usual use.
6. Our report is not a guarantee that the property is free from defects other than those mentioned in the report, nor is it an insurance policy against present, future, and inherent defects.
7. Our report will not include a market valuation.
8. Where possible cellars and roof voids will be inspected, loose laid floor coverings will where possible be lifted but loose and fixed furniture and other effects will not be moved to facilitate exposure of flooring, walls or other elements of construction. Where the property is empty floor boards may be lifted where considered appropriate.
9. Works of exposure - for instance removal of plaster patches - will not be carried out unless we have received written permission from the subject property's current owners prior to our inspection commencing, should we consider such exposure necessary we will make a note to that effect in our report. Our client will be responsible for all attendant costs that may arise following agreed works of exposure.

We may lift corners of fixed or fitted carpets but it is a condition of our survey that our client indemnifies us against any costs incurred for relaying floor coverings. If our client does not wish us to lift floor coverings we must be advised prior to commencement of survey.

10. Our report will specifically exclude all covered, concealed, unexposed or buried elements of construction such as foundations, footings, lintels and supporting steels. Furnishings including wall hangings will not be moved to facilitate inspection of elements of the structure.
11. External areas will be inspected from best vantage points or standard 3 metre surveyors ladder where access is not available. High level areas will be inspected by binoculars from ground level or best vantage points but there may be sections that cannot be seen or reported upon. We shall survey within the guidelines of the RICS publication "Surveying Safely".
12. Flat roofs, box gutters and other concealed roof finishes and high level elements will only be inspected where safe to do so, unless they are visible from windows or other safe vantage points. Access will only be gained where it is safe to do so from a standard 3 metre surveyor's ladder. Should additional high level access be required then our client must advise us before the inspection, specialist high access equipment such as cherry pickers will be charged additionally.
13. Our inspection will include external areas within the property's demesne including garden walls, sheds and garages which will be briefly inspected and a summary report provided. Swimming pools are specifically excluded.
14. We shall not report upon or identify the type or species of any plant within the grounds except for noting trees where these may affect the stability of the main structure. If our client is concerned about the presence of invasive or controlled plant types and species then a specialist horticultural survey should be additionally arranged.
15. Service installations including electricity, gas, water, heating and waste services will be visually inspected and the type and visual quality of the installations reported upon. The services will not be tested although we will check where possible the usual operation of same. Where considered appropriate our report will recommend an additional specialised test. It will be assumed that subterranean services are correctly connected to the appropriate underground mains service, including mains water, electricity, gas, foul and surface water drainage.
16. We shall not advise upon the condition and type of solar panels, wind turbines, feed in tariff arrangements or other alternative power sources.

17. We shall in all usual cases allow sufficient time to complete our inspection. In certain cases, primarily properties offered to auction where there may be limited or restricted viewing times available. In such instances we shall prioritise our inspection such that matters affecting the structure of the property are inspected within the time available, other less important issues may not be reported upon and these will be drawn to the attention of our client.
18. Where the subject property is a flat or apartment, within a larger converted unit or purpose built block our inspection will be limited to the interior of the subject property only and will not cover the whole of the property in which the subject property is situated. No access will be made unless specifically requested in writing prior to our inspection commencing to adjoining properties within the larger unit. Any additional inspection to neighbouring properties will be subject to additional charge.
19. It is assumed when arranging and undertaking an inspection that all areas are accessible and keys available. Should we be unable to inspect areas because they are secured and access has not been provided then we shall exclude these from our survey. Should we need to revisit to inspect these areas then we shall charge additionally for this at our standard hourly rate.
20. In the case of new properties or new conversions our survey will consider the condition of the property at the time of inspection. Our building survey will not be a "snagging" list. Should you wish us to prepare a snagging list of minor unfinished or poorly finished items you should contact us prior to completion. The preparation of such a report will be subject to additional charge. For newly completed properties we shall not provide, as part of our survey, confirmation that completed elements comply with the building regulation approvals and planning consents, nor identify any outstanding obligations thereunder. Our client is advised to personally consult the planning department and building control department of the relevant local authority in this regard.
21. If required to comment on lease provisions for freeholders maintenance arrangements or lessees repairing obligations we shall require a copy of previous maintenance charge statements and the details of the management company to be provided by our client. We shall additionally need a copy of the lease to be provided at least 48 hours before our inspection. Any notices served under The Commonhold and Leasehold Reform Act 2002 or Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 should also be provided.
22. Where building works are in progress or incomplete we shall not provide as part of our survey confirmation that completed elements comply with building regulation approvals or the advice of the building inspector under building notice or planning consents. Our client is advised to personally consult the planning department and building control department of the relevant local authority in this regard.

23. If our client wishes us to report upon building works that are in progress or planned then a copy of all drawings and specifications of work must be made available prior to our survey. An additional fee may be incurred.
24. We will not comment upon lease arrangements or other title documents as we will assume that your Solicitor will be giving advice in this regard. We will not identify any easements or rights of way and assume that this will form part of your solicitor's advice. We will not provide detailed advice regarding apparent boundary errors or inconsistencies.
25. If requested in advance of the inspection being undertaken and where appropriate, we will give an indication of the probable cost of rectifying defects and recommended maintenance items. These costs will be derived from historic tender data or the Building Maintenance Cost Information Service Building Maintenance Price Book. We will not, unless specifically requested, comment upon the costs of extending or converting the property. Any cost given will be for guidance only and our client must understand that they are subject to a degree of variance.
26. We try very hard to ensure that problems do not arise. In accordance with RICS requirements we have a Complaints Handling procedure. Should you wish to make a complaint you should in the first instance contact the practice principal who will make a copy of the Complaints Procedure available to you.
27. If we are found to be negligent in providing any of the services under this contract, the measure of damages for and limit of any liability will be diminution of property value as at the date of the report.
28. Our quoted fee is inclusive of all travelling expenses and other charges and is for a Building Survey only, and allows for a single visit to the subject property only. Unless otherwise noted our fees are quoted exclusive of VAT at the prevailing rate. Additional visits to a property at your request will be charged at our standard hourly rate.
29. Unless otherwise agreed, fees for further investigations, follow-up advice and/or other Surveying services are charged at the current rate per hour plus expenses and VAT and will be subject to a further invoice which shall be payable within 14 days of date on invoice.
30. Our invoices may be settled by BACS or online bank transfer. If making payment by this method please use Collier Stevens - NatWest Acct No. 12501042, Sort Code 60 07 37
31. Where fees are paid in advance of work being completed they will be deposited in the firm's general bank account and accounted for in accordance with RICS Guidelines. Such deposits will not be protected by the RICS Clients' Money Protection Scheme.

32. Client funds deposited by agreement in Collier Stevens designated Client Account will be accounted for and managed in accordance with RICS Guidelines and will be protected by the RICS Clients' Money Protection Scheme. Interest will not usually accrue on those deposits unless otherwise agreed in writing. Neither Collier Stevens nor the RICS Clients' Money Protection Scheme will be liable to repay lost money through bank failure. Claims for compensation arising from bank failures should be to the FSCS if the claimant is eligible but RICS and Collier Stevens can give no guarantee as to the success or amount of any claim.
33. A copy of the report will be sent to our client as a pdf by email unless our client specifically requests a hard copy. Where payment is due against invoice our standard terms of payment are within 14 days of invoice. All payments not received within 42 days of invoice will attract a one off administrative surcharge of 15% of the outstanding amount. Interest will be charge at 2% above the National Westminster Bank lending rate for all overdue accounts. Where payment is due prior to release of report, the report will NOT be issued until payment in full has been received. In instances where an advance summary report has been requested this also will not be issued until payment in full has been received.
34. Where the property to be inspected is substantially different either in size or value to that quoted for we reserve the right to charge an additional fee on a pro rata basis.
35. Prior to carrying out our inspection our client must return in the stamped addressed envelope provided their second copy of this these terms and conditions and our letter of appointment suitably signed as acceptance of same.
36. We reserve the right to charge the agreed fee for surveys cancelled less than 24 hours before the pre arranged time of inspection.

The Collier Stevens Practice
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HOUSE COMPONENTS

