

Condition Report

Benchmarked to Level 1 RICS Home Survey Standard June 2020

Property address: Property

Photo

Client: Client (see Copyright Notice on page 5)
Surveyor: John Brownlow MRICS FISVA
Date of inspection: 29th November 2023
Date of report: 30th November 2023
Report reference: JB/AH 23/*****



Repair



Maintain



Protect

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Condition Ratings and Symbols

To help describe the condition of the property we use a “RAG” (Red, Amber, Green) system to give Condition Ratings to the main parts (the ‘elements’) of the building, garage and external areas. Some elements can be made up of several different parts.

In the Element Sections of parts F, G, H and I we usually describe the part that has the worst Condition Rating (CR) first and then outline the condition of the other parts. The Condition Ratings appear at the end of each Section and are described below. **A Summary of the Elements given a CR3 is given in Section C (Overall Opinion).**

CR3 – the Building Element requires repair that is considered to be serious and/or urgent and/or in respect of which further investigation is considered appropriate. **Important note: a CR3 does not necessarily mean that expensive repair is required, there may only be a minor maintenance issue (such as a loose chimney flashing letting water into the roof void) but it is applied if an Element requires urgent repair and/or further investigation. In relation to some of the Services Installations (Electricity, Gas and Heating – “services that can kill”) a CR3 will be applied by default if the Surveyor does not have sight of current test certificates and/or service records at the time of inspection or prior to the report being completed.**

CR2 – the Building Element requires repair but the works are not considered to be serious or urgent and can be undertaken as part of routine maintenance.

CR1 – the Building Element is considered to be in a satisfactory state of repair **taking into account the building materials and the age of the building** and no immediate or short-term maintenance is required.

Not inspected – it was not possible to inspect this building element on the day of the survey.



This symbol indicates that there is a Health and Safety issue even though the Building Element may not require repair in itself (**for example:** a door with a glass panel where the door opens and closes satisfactorily but the glazing is not of toughened glass).

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Appendices

- A. Terms of Engagement**
- B. Typical house diagram**
- C. Condensation**
- D. Asbestos**
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A. Introduction

The **Level 1 Condition Report** is produced by a member of RICS to provide an objective opinion about the condition of the property at the date of inspection. The report objectively describes the condition of the building, its services and the grounds. It highlights relevant legal issues and any obvious risks to the building, people or grounds. The report is succinct and provides an assessment of the relative importance of the defects and problems. Where the surveyor is unable to reach a conclusion with reasonable confidence, a recommendation for further investigation should be made. A Level 1 report does not include advice on how to carry out repairs or on ongoing maintenance and this, combined with the less extensive inspection, usually means it is better suited to conventionally built, modern dwellings apparently in satisfactory condition. It will not suit older or complex properties, or those in a neglected condition.

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B. The Inspection

Surveyor's name and RICS number

John Brownlow MRICS FISVA, Chartered Surveyor & RICS Registered Valuer - 0067901

Instructions

Further to your instructions and our confirmation e-mail (or letter) I have now inspected the subject property and my Report follows.

The agreed Terms of Engagement are at Appendix A.

Conflict of interest/disclosure

Having checked our database and made other reasonable enquiries we confirm that to the best of our knowledge and belief we have no conflict of interest in carrying out these instructions.

Date and extent of inspection

The property was inspected on 29th November 2023. My inspection was undertaken in accordance with the agreed **Terms of Engagement**.

Weather conditions

The weather at the time of my inspection was dry, sunny and cold but there had been very wet and windy weather over preceding weeks.

Occupation

The property was vacant and only partly furnished but all floor areas were close covered other than within the garage.

Handings

Unless otherwise stated, the terms “right, left, front and rear” apply throughout as if the property is viewed from the named road frontage.

Important note: We carry out only a visual inspection. This means that we do not take up carpets, floor coverings or floorboards, move furniture or remove the contents of cupboards. Also, we do not remove secured panels or undo electrical fittings.

We inspect roofs, chimneys and other surfaces on the outside of the building from ground level and, if necessary, from neighbouring public property and with the aid of binoculars and/or a camera on a telescopic pole. If necessary, inspection will be carried out from land in third party ownership if the owner's permission can be obtained.

We inspect the roof structure from inside the roof space if there is access (although we do not move or lift insulation material, stored goods or other contents). We examine floor surfaces

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and under-floor spaces so far as there is safe access to these (although we do not move or lift furniture, floor coverings or other contents). We are not able to assess the condition of the inside of any chimney, boiler or other flues.

We note in our report if we are not able to check any parts of the property that the inspection would normally cover. If we are concerned about these parts, the report will tell you about any further investigations that are needed.

We will make recommendations as to how defects may be repaired where we are able to do so but we do not report on the likely costs and you should obtain quotations and estimates (in some cases further investigations may be required) from appropriate contractors before you commit to purchase. Some maintenance and repairs we suggest may be expensive.

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C. Overall Opinion including a Summary of the Building Elements given a Condition Rating (CR) 3

The Surveyor will state his/her overall opinion of the property and will highlight any major repairing, legal or other issues that will be discussed in greater detail later in the report. Whilst you may find it informative to read this Section first it only provides a general “overview”. You should read and consider all parts of the report and so understand the Overall Opinion in the context of the property as a whole.

Overall Opinion

Property is considered to be a reasonable proposition for purchase, it comprising a modern semi-detached house with accommodation arranged over three floor levels and located on the fringe of a mixed residential estate developed on the cleared site of former industrial buildings. The property was built using typical modern materials and methods with a reasonable specification of fittings and finish and I found no particular issues with inadequate workmanship or lack of repair but there are one or two areas where the building does not appear to comply with the usual Building Regulations requirements and there are also some awkward design features particularly related to the method of rainwater disposal that could cause issues in the future if maintenance is neglected. You should ensure that there are up to date test and service certificates in place in respect of the electrical, gas and heating installations **prior to purchase**.

The following Building Elements have been given a CR3

H1 – Electricity

H2 – Gas

H4 and H5 – Heating and Hot water

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D. Summary of Health & Safety issues

This summarises the Sections of the Report within which I raise concerns over risks to the Health & Safety of occupiers of and visitors (including contractors who may undertake repair and other works) to the property.

F7 – Windows

G1 - Loft access

H1 – Electricity

H2 – Gas

H4 and H5 – Heating and Hot water

I also note the following potential risks (if any) to the building(s) and grounds.

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E. The Property

The property

Property

Description – type of property and intended use

A semi-detached house being purchased for owner occupation.

Approximate year built

2020. Your legal adviser should confirm that relevant planning and Building Regulations were obtained (Section L1) and that there have been no claims under the build warranty (Section L2).

Approximate year the property was extended and/or converted and/or altered (if applicable)

Not applicable.

Notes: Structures such as porches, conservatories and sun lounges are often insubstantial and may have poorer standards of design, construction and performance than the main building. They are, therefore, covered separately under Section F8 and/or Section I2. Your legal adviser should check that any works that are identified in this Section received relevant Local Authority planning consents and Building Regulations approvals and, if the property is held Leasehold, that the approval of the owner of the Freehold interest also issued consents if necessary. You should also note that the Council Tax banding of the property, on which annual rates payable to the Local Authority are based, can be revised on a change of ownership and you may wish to check with the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) whether any past extensions and alterations are included in the current Council Tax banding. If there are modern extensions, alterations or other building works you should ask the property owners if they can supply copies of construction drawings, plans etc as, whilst noting that construction on site may not always match that on the drawings, these can give useful information on hidden details (insulation, steelwork, drainage connections etc) and materials used.

Location

The property stands on the north side of Road, which is one of several private roads forming this estate and in respect of which your legal adviser will need to confirm maintenance liabilities (Section L3). I suspect that there is a liability to pay an annual service charge to some form of management company.

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Facilities

***** is a small settlement offering only limited amenities but the main ***** Road, which runs in an elevated position directly behind the house, allows for fairly easy access to larger towns.

Local environment

Surrounding development is predominantly mixed age and style residential but ***** is effectively surrounded by farmland/countryside. This is a former coal mining area with a history of industrial activity and your legal adviser should obtain Mining and Environmental Reports (Section L3).

Summary of construction

Elevations are mainly of cavity imitation stone and concrete block but the external walls to the top floor part of the building are of cavity concrete block with an external render finish. The roof is of timber truss construction covered in plain concrete or clay tiles. The ground floor is of solid concrete and the upper floors are of suspended timber.

Accommodation – brief summary

Ground floor: Entrance hall/staircase

Cloakroom/wc

Dining area

Open plan kitchen

First floor: Landing

Living room

Third bedroom

Bathroom/wc

Second floor: Master bedroom/ensuite shower/wc

Rear bedroom

Outside: The property stands on a very small plot. The front garden provides space for off-road parking and access to the integral single car garage and there is also an enclosed gravelled area. A shared side footpath leads to a storage recess beneath an external steel staircase rising from a small paved area behind the house and to a gate giving access from Bolton Road.

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Floor area(s)

Without having undertaken a detailed measured survey of the property I calculate the Gross External Floor Area of the living accommodation to be 129 square metres or thereabouts. This excludes the garage.

Services

All mains services (electricity, gas, water and drainage) are connected to the property.

Non-mains services (if any)

Not applicable.

Heating

The property has a gas central heating system and this provides direct hot water by way of a combination boiler.

Other services or energy sources including renewables

None.

Notes:

If you have proposals to extend or alter the property you may need Local Authority approvals and guidance on planning and Building Regulations matters can be found here <https://www.planningportal.co.uk/> and here <https://www.labc.co.uk/homeowners/do-i-need-building-regs-application>

If you are intending to let the property to tenants you will need to ensure that you comply with all statutory liabilities (<https://www.gov.uk/renting-out-a-property>) and you should consult with an experienced letting agent (<https://www.arla.co.uk/>) in this regard.

Since 2010 Building Regulations may be necessary if major works are undertaken to a “thermal element” – such as a roof, external wall or floor – and this will cover, for example, replacement of a roof covering even if you re-use the existing slates; the roof is a “thermal element” https://www.planningportal.co.uk/info/200130/common_projects/47/roof/6

Additional planning controls will apply if the property is a “listed” building and/or in a Conservation Area or National Park.

If the property is held Leasehold then your legal adviser will need to check the Lease terms and whether any Freeholder’s consents (for which a fee may be payable) are required for extensions and alterations.

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F. External Elements

Limitations to inspection

None although some of the high-level parts of the building had to be inspected using a GoPro camera on a telescopic pole.

F1 Chimneys and vertical flues

None.

F2 Pitched roofs – structure and coverings

The roof is pitched from front to rear with the eaves areas partly accommodating flat roofs over the top floor windows (Section F3) and there are lead flashings providing a weatherproofing detail where the roof meets a raised parapet wall along the top of the gable. Roof slopes are free from any undue sagging or undulation. The concrete or clay tile covering is in satisfactory condition. The lead flashings and concrete copings to the parapet area appear to be secure and weathertight at present (see Section F4). **CR1**

F3 Flat roofs

The flat roof areas are of timber covered in what appears to be fibreglass. I noted no evidence of any damp penetration but the roof areas clearly hold water and will need to be kept clear of moss, leaves and other debris. **CR1**



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F4 Rain and waste water disposal (above ground – see Section H6 for underground drainage)

It did not rain during my inspection. Rainwater goods are mainly of plastic and should function satisfactorily so long as gutters are regularly cleaned of leaves and other debris. There is evidence, however, that rainwater running of the flashings to the gable parapet (Section F2) is not being adequately diverted to the eaves guttering with resultant staining of the rendered walls below.



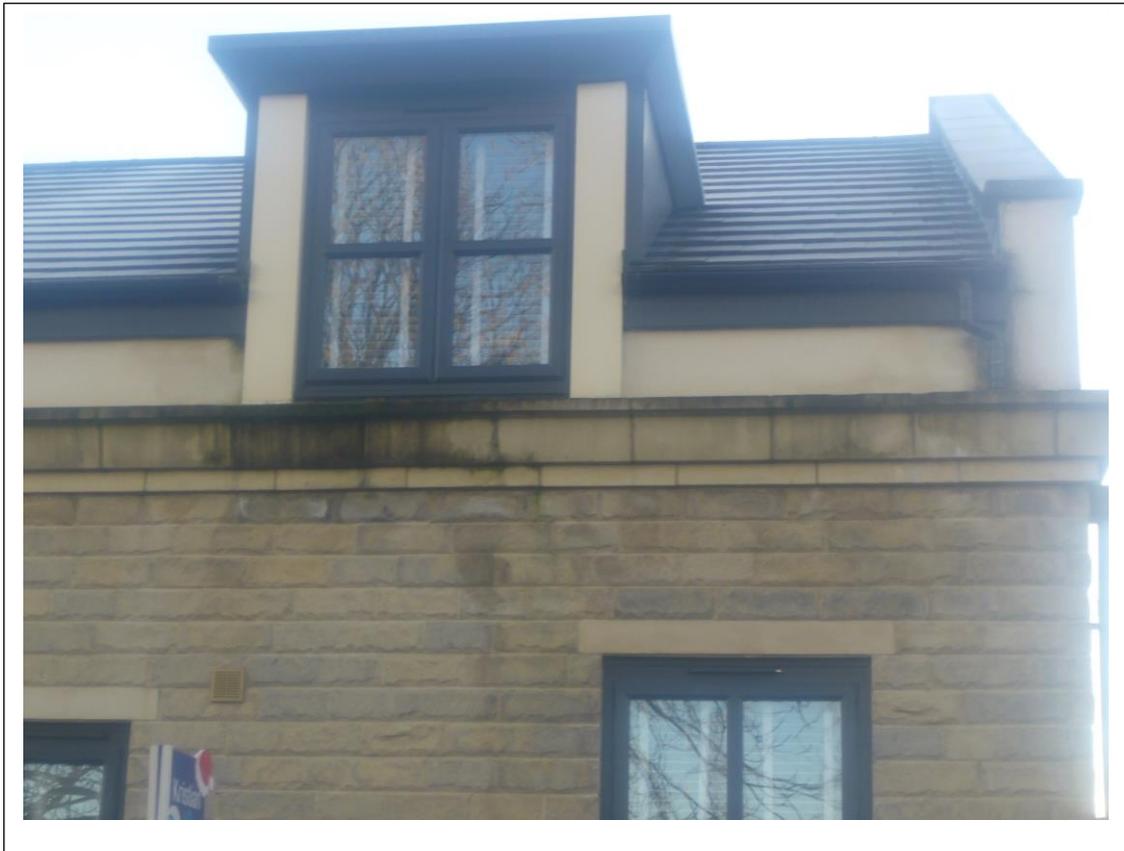
Furthermore, there is a rather unusual detail in that the short downspouts from the gutters to the pitched roof discharge into a horizontal perimeter gutter at second floor level. This gutter is formed using sections of imitation stone lined in fibreglass or similar. There are areas of weather staining (see photo below) indicating that rainwater may over-spill in very wet weather and you will need to ensure this guttering is adequately maintained. Downspouts at lower level run to open gulleys and there is similar to a plastic waste pipe from the kitchen. Soil stacks serving the sanitary fittings run within the building where they are concealed from inspection.

CR1

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F5 Main walls – including damp proof course (dpc) and, if applicable, sub-floor ventilation

Elevations are mainly of cavity imitation stone and concrete block but the external faces of the walls to the upper floor level have a silicon-based render finish. There are galvanised steel lintels supporting loads over door and window openings. There is no significant cracking or distortion and no doubt foundations were designed and approved to meet local site conditions. Masonry, pointing and rendering are in satisfactory condition at present but there are areas of damp and weather-staining as noted under Section F4. The plastic strip damp proof course is difficult to locate but is actually in a mortar bed at ground level along the base of the gable. Building Regulations normally require a damp proof course to be at least 150mm above finished ground levels and I cannot explain why this has not been complied with. There will be an increased risk of damp penetration across the base of the wall but I noted nothing to indicate that this has occurred in the garage to date. The internal face of the wall in the kitchen is concealed by fittings. **CR1**

F6 Doors

The ground floor doors are of an insulated composition type with double glazed insets and hung in timber frames. The doors operated satisfactorily but one of the glazing units to the front door appears to have failed or to have a manufacturing fault as there is a ‘bloom’ between the

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panes of glass. There are double glazed upvc double doors with side screens at first floor level to the front living room and there is a secure external steel guard rail. The doors require adjustment as they are difficult to close and stick together along their top parts. Your legal adviser should check whether any of the double glazing (see Section F7) carries Building Regulations certification (Section L1) and whether there are any guarantees (Section L2). **CR2**

F7 Windows (including skylights)

These are double glazed upvc components and no particular defects were noted, opening lights operating satisfactorily, but the window to the first-floor bedroom does not comply with Building Regulations in terms of allowing for emergency escape in the event of fire. I assume this was permitted by Building Control but it does mean that escape from this bedroom has to be by way of the internal staircases, which do have adequate fire protection as there are smoke detectors and fire-rated doors (Section G8). **CR1**

F8 Conservatories and porches

None.

F9 Other joinery items and decorative finishes

Upvc boarding to the eaves gutters appears to be in satisfactory condition. **CR1**

F10 Other items

None.

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G. Internal Elements

Limitations to inspection

Only a very limited ‘head and shoulders’ inspection of the roof void was possible due to storage piled up around the access hatch. No inspection of floor surfaces could be undertaken, other than in the garage (Section I1), due to fitted carpets and other coverings including rigid materials in some rooms.

G1 Roof voids

The access hatch is rather dangerously located adjacent to a stairwell. Very little inspection was possible due to stored items and fibreglass insulation but the roof is of typical modern prefabricated timber truss construction and no particular defects were noted. I could see no evidence of any rainwater ingress although I suspect that the insulated void may suffer from condensation (see *Appendix C*) during cold weather and particularly to the rear (north-facing) slope. **CR1**

G2 Ceilings

These are of plasterboard and they are generally level and even and free from any particular defect. **CR1**

G3 Internal walls and partitions

All walls are finished in plasterboard either as dry linings to masonry or fixed to timber-framed partitions. No particular defects were noted and I found no evidence of any dampness issues having developed to date. **CR1**

G4 Fireplaces, chimney breasts and flues (see also Section H4 – Heating)

None.

G5 Floors

No inspection of floor surfaces within the living accommodation was possible but the timber upper floors were found to be generally level and firm underfoot and the solid concrete ground floor was also noted to be level. **CR1 – limited inspection**

G6 Kitchen and utility fittings (note: integrated cooking and other appliances are noted but not tested)

The kitchen is fitted with a stainless steel sink and mixer tap to a cut out in granite worktops and there is a reasonable range of modest quality timber panel door wall and units in satisfactory condition. There are various integrated electric appliances. **CR1**

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G7 Sanitary fittings

The white sanitary fittings all appeared to be in serviceable condition with no evidence of leakage but operation of shower units was not tested. **CR1**

G8 Internal joinery items including doors and staircases (note: many older properties will have joinery items decorated with lead-based paint; see Government advice at [lead paint](#))

Painted timber skirting boards, door frames and window sills are in satisfactory condition. The veneer-faced timber doors were also found to operate satisfactorily and most are of a fire-rated type as required under Building Regulations where living accommodation is arranged over three floor levels. The open plan staircases are reasonably easy to use and have secure handrails and timber balustrades. **CR1**

G9 Other built-in fixtures (such as wardrobes)

None.

G10 Other items

None.

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H. Services Installations

*Notes: We are not plumbers, electricians or gas engineers and we are not qualified to test service installations or to report on their condition. **Remember – electricity and gas in particular are “services that can kill”** and it is essential that your legal adviser ensures that electrical and gas installations and appliances have up to date inspection documentation from appropriately qualified contractors; if not these installations should be inspected by competent persons (<https://www.competentperson.co.uk/>) **prior to purchase**. If you are purchasing the property as an investment to be let to tenants, there is specific legislation that will apply to the service installations and your legal adviser and/or letting/managing agent should be able to advise on what you will need to provide to your tenants. **It must be noted that many parts of service installations, such as pipes and cables, are concealed within the building or below ground and cannot be inspected.** The following Sections are for information only but the Surveyor will note if any specialist advice is considered appropriate. **Please note also that the electrical, gas (or oil) and heating installations will be given a CR3 by default if the Surveyor does not have sight of current test certificates or servicing records at the time of inspection or prior to the Report being issued.***

Limitations to inspection

I was unable to open most of the drainage inspection chambers.

H1 Electricity

Please note the following, particularly if the Surveyor advises that you should have the electrical installation tested prior to purchase:

<http://www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk/find-an-electrician/periodic-inspection-explained/>

You should also note that even minor electrical works are now covered by Building Regulations and must be carried out by a competent electrician who will be able to issue the relevant certification. You may wish to check that the property has an adequate number of electrical sockets etc. to meet your likely requirements.

There is a mains electricity supply with the meter located in an external cabinet. The circuit breaker consumer unit is in the hallway and there is a date sticker indicating that the installation was certified as compliant with Building Regulations in 2020. Your legal adviser should obtain the documentation (Section L1). Assuming the vendors can then confirm that there have been no alterations to the electrical installation, no further action is considered necessary but if there have been alterations these should also be covered by Building Regulations certification. **CR3 – subject to documentation**

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H2 Gas (or oil if applicable)

Please note that it is illegal under the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1994 for unqualified persons to test or work on any part of a gas installation or a gas appliance and all qualified gas engineers must be on the Gas Safe Register <http://www.gassaferegister.co.uk/>

There is a mains gas service with the meter located in an external cabinet and pipework serves only the central heating boiler (Section H4). You should ensure that there is a Gas Safety Certificate in place **prior to purchase**. **CR3**

H3 Water

There is a mains water supply with the supply pipe entering beneath the kitchen sink where the stop tap and meter are located. Internal pipework is largely concealed but is of copper where visible. There are no water storage tanks. **CR1 – limited inspection**

H4 Heating

There is gas central heating system with a combination condensing boiler located in a cupboard to the kitchen and serving radiators mainly fitted with thermostatic valves. The boiler was operating at the time of my inspection and I have no reason to suspect any particular defects but your legal adviser should obtain the installation and servicing records (Section L2). If there is no current service certificate, or if it is short-dated, you should have the installation checked by a Gas Safe registered engineer prior to purchase. **CR3 – subject to documentation**

H5 Hot water

Hot water is provided direct by the central heating boiler. **CR3 – subject to documentation**

H6 Drainage

General note

In most cases the drainage system to a property is below ground and largely inaccessible. The Surveyor will, where possible, open any accessible drainage chambers and, if water is available at the property, run water through them to check the flow and for any signs of blockage, backing up or other issues BUT no specialist drainage tests will be carried out. The Surveyor will advise if no inspection chambers are located or if there are any that could not be opened with an explanation as to why. If there are reasons to suspect drainage problems then further specialist advice will be recommended.

Your legal adviser will normally recommend that you obtain a Drainage and Water Search (known as a CON29DW) and this will cover:

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- *charging basis for services*
- *contact details for sewerage and water billing company*
- *meter location (if applicable)*
- *adoption agreements*
- *consultation on build over*
- *sewers within the boundaries and 100 feet thereof*
- *low water pressure*
- *internal flooding from overloaded public sewers*
- *nearest public sewage treatment works*
- *water quality*

The following link should help you understand which of the drains within the boundaries of the property may be your responsibility and which may be maintained by the Water and Sewerage Company (e.g. United Utilities) under The Water Act 2011: <https://www.unitedutilities.com/help-and-support/wastewater-services/sewers-and-drains-explained/> and your legal adviser should be able to confirm.

The property will connect to the public sewer. Most of the covers to the inspection chambers along the side of the house was screwed firmly shut but I was able to open the chamber closest to the road to reveal a foul drain through which a free flow of water was obtained with no signs of backing up or blockage. Rainwater is probably discharged separately. **CR1 – limited inspection**

H7 Non-mains services (if any)

Please note we do not test or comment on specialist non-mains service installations such as:

- *Smoke detectors and fire alarms*
- *Carbon monoxide alarms*
- *Sprinkler systems*
- *Security alarms and CCTV equipment*
- *Telephone and computer cabling and equipment*
- *Multi-media installations, home cinema and sound systems etc*

None.

H8 Other services or energy sources including renewables

None.

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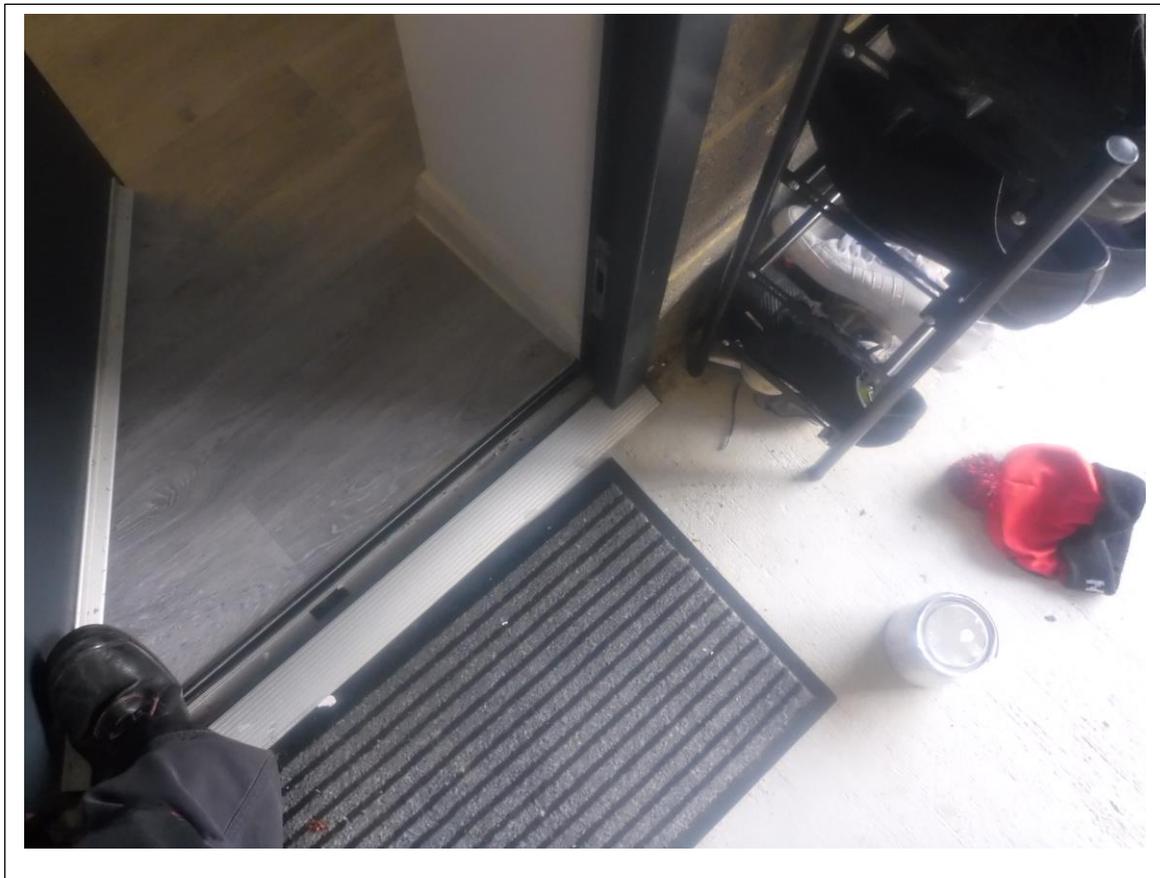
I. Grounds, boundaries and outbuildings

Limitations to inspection

The garage was partly full of storage.

I1 Garage

The garage is integral to the house and, therefore, has largely been covered elsewhere. It is in satisfactory condition for its purpose. The automated roller shutter vehicular door operated satisfactorily and there is a fire-rated pedestrian door giving access to the house. However, there is effectively no change of floor level at the door opening as is normally a Building Regulations requirement.



I assume the design was approved for Building Regulations purposes (Section L1).

I2 Other outbuildings

None.

I3 Grounds – note these are **NOT** given a Condition Rating

External areas are mainly laid to hard paving and gravel.

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I4 Boundaries

Boundary features comprise timber fencing around the gravelled garden area to the front and a substantial imitation stone retaining wall to the elevated public highway at the rear. The boundaries are in satisfactory condition.

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J. Energy Performance

I have not prepared the Energy Performance Certificate (EPC). If an EPC has been lodged at <https://find-energy-certificate.digital.communities.gov.uk/> then the current rating is noted below. I have not checked the rating and so cannot confirm its accuracy.

Energy-efficiency rating

84B

Whilst I am not a qualified Domestic Energy Assessor my observations on the current rating and the recommended measures to improve energy performance as noted in the EPC are as follows:

The current rating is good and fairly typical of a modern house. The EPC identifies areas where energy performance could be improved although the measures will be expensive and require Building Regulations approvals.

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K. Comments regarding Fire Safety

My observations on fire safety at this property are:

This property was built under a modern system of building control and there are generally good fire protection and safety measures although I have noted that the window to the first floor bedroom does not allow for emergency escape and also that there is no change of floor level at the pedestrian door opening into the garage.

Useful guides on fire safety in the home can be downloaded here:

[Fire Safety in the Home](#) (Government)

[RICS Guide to Fire Safety](#)

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L. Matters for your Legal Adviser

*Your legal adviser is responsible for following the “paper trail” in respect of a property transaction. The Surveyor is NOT a legal adviser but will act as the legal adviser’s “eyes and ears” in relation to the property and this Section will outline any legal issues the Surveyor considers require clarification. **You should note that the Surveyor’s advice, including any such relating to the value of the property, may be affected by the outcome of your legal adviser’s enquiries and any discrepancies should be referred back to the Surveyor.***

Boundaries

In a physical, rather than legal, sense and noting that I have not seen any deed or other title plans or undertaken any detailed measurements on site, boundaries appeared to be well defined and in an adequate state of repair unless noted under Section I4.

Easements and rights of way

Unless otherwise stated I noted nothing to indicate that the property may be subject to any onerous or unusual easements or restrictions.

Roads

Unless otherwise stated access to the property is by way of made-up highways that are believed to be adopted for maintenance at public expense. **Your legal adviser will confirm.**

L1 Regulations and approvals

Legal advisers should confirm that planning and Building Regulations approvals were obtained at the time of construction and should obtain any available Building Regulations certification in respect of the following:

F6 and F7 – Double glazing

H1 – The electrical installation

L2 Guarantees etc

Your legal adviser should confirm that no claims have been made under the build warranty and should obtain any available guarantees or other documentation in respect of the following:

F6 and F7 – Double glazing

H2 and H4 – A current Gas Safety Certificate and a current Service Certificate for the central heating boiler

L3 Any other matters

Your legal adviser should make particular enquires in respect of the following:

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- The private estate roads and nay management company/service charge arrangements
- The coal mining and environmental histories of the locality

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M. What to do next

Getting quotations

The cost of repairs may influence the amount you are prepared to pay for the property (if applicable). Before you make a legal commitment to buy the property, you should get reports and quotations for all the repairs and further investigations the surveyor may have identified.

You should get at least two quotations from experienced contractors who are properly insured. You should also:

- ask them for references from people they have worked for;
- describe in writing exactly what you will want them to do; and
- get the contractors to put the quotations in writing.

Some repairs will need contractors with specialist skills and who are members of regulated organisations (for example, electricians, gas engineers, plumbers and so on). Some work may also need you to get Building Regulations approvals or planning permission from the relevant Local Authority.

Further investigations

If the surveyor is concerned about the condition of a hidden part of the building, could only see part of a defect or does not have the specialist knowledge to assess part of the property fully, he/she may have recommended that further investigations should be carried out to discover the true extent of the problem.

Who you should use for these further investigations

You should ask an appropriately qualified person. Specialists belonging to different types of organisations will be able to do this. For example, qualified electricians can belong to five different Government-approved schemes. If you want further advice, please contact the surveyor.

What the further investigations will involve

This will depend on the type of problem but parts of the building may have to be disturbed and so you should discuss this matter with the current owner, via the estate agent if applicable. In some cases, the cost of investigation may be high.

When to do the work

The Condition Ratings help describe the urgency of the repair and replacement work. The following summary may help you decide when to do the work.

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CR2 – repairs should be done soon. Exactly when will depend on the type of problem, but it usually does not have to be done right away. Many repairs could wait weeks or months, giving you time to organise suitable reports and quotations.

CR3 – repairs should be done as soon as possible. The speed of your response will depend on the nature of the problem. For example, repairs to a badly leaking roof or a dangerous gas boiler need to be carried out within a matter of hours, while other less important critical repairs could wait for a few days.

Warning

Although repairs of elements with a **CR2** are not considered urgent, if they are not addressed they may develop into defects needing more serious repairs. Flat roofs and gutters are typical examples. These can quickly get worse without warning and result in serious leaks. Accordingly, you should regularly check elements with a **CR2** to make sure they are not getting worse.

Why the bee?



This is the Manchester Bee and it was adopted as a symbol of the City after the tragic terrorist bombing at the Manchester Arena in 2017. As a business working in Greater Manchester, we aim to embody the Mancunian spirit of industry and fairness whilst retaining a "northern" sense of pride, perspective and good humour! The words on the bee's body are "Hope", "Strength" and "Peace".

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N. Surveyor's declaration

I confirm that I personally inspected this property and have prepared this report. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Surveyor's name: John Brownlow MRICS FISVA,
Chartered Surveyor & RICS Registered Valuer

RICS number: 0067901

Signature:



For and on behalf of

Edwards Genesis (Chartered Surveyors)

***42 Church Street, LEIGH WN7 1AZ (this Office is un-manned, please send correspondence to
82 New Hall Lane, Heaton, BOLTON BL1 5HQ)***

Tel: 01942 608608 (office hours, Monday-Friday; out-of-hours messaging service)

e-mail: edwardssurveyors@gmail.com

web: www.edwardsgenesis.co.uk

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/EdwardsGenesisSurvey/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/egsurvey>

You Tube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCB2q431nHmxYFxy1UsgpGuw>

This report has been prepared by the surveyor solely in his or her capacity as an employee or agent of the named Company. The report is the product of the Company, not of the individual surveyor. All of the statements and opinions contained in this report are expressed entirely on behalf of The Company, which accepts sole responsibility for them. For his or her part, the individual surveyor assumes no personal financial responsibility or liability in respect of the report and no reliance or inference to the contrary should be drawn.

Edwards Genesis is the trading name of Miller Edwards Ltd. and also incorporates Brownlow Associates (Consultant Surveyors and Valuers) and the Valuation Department of Millers (Chartered Surveyors).

Company Registration no: 6702718

Directors: John Brownlow MRICS FISVA, Simon Miller FRICS FISVA

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APPENDICES

A. Survey Report - Terms of Engagement

Introduction

Edwards Genesis are committed to providing the Client with sound, cost effective, independent and professional advice to help you make the correct decisions in respect of the property you are proposing to purchase. As part of this service, our Surveyor will endeavour to submit a readily readable Report, avoiding technical jargon wherever possibly but fully explaining technical terms where these are used. The Report will identify major defects and serious items of disrepair, with recommendations as to repair, including carrying out further investigation or obtaining specialist advice where necessary, taking into account the age and type of property and any specific requirements identified by the Client.

“Benchmarking” of Survey Reports – RICS Home Survey Standard June 2020

"Benchmarking" of all levels of Survey Report became mandatory for all RICS members carrying out surveys on residential properties under the Home Survey Standard (HSS) from 1st March 2021.

These are the minimum standards each survey level should achieve. Where possible we will exceed the minimum standards in the areas **highlighted.**

*Notes – any of the Survey Levels can be provided as a standalone Report OR, at an additional cost, with a Valuation Appendix that will meet the requirements of **RICS Valuation – Global Standards 2022**.*

The HSS does not require reports to include photos – all our reports will include photographs and may also include diagrams, weblinks, reference sheets, maps etc

Survey Level 1 - Condition Report

This service is designed for clients (buyers, sellers and owners) seeking a professional and objective report on the condition of the property at an economic price. As a result, it is less comprehensive than Survey Level 2 and Survey Level 3. This level of service includes a visual inspection that is less extensive than for the other Survey Levels. No tests of the building fabric or services are undertaken. **(We will, where possible, observe services in normal operation as under a Survey Level 2 and this will include lifting of covers to drainage inspection chambers. Roof voids are inspected on a “head and shoulders” basis)**. The report objectively describes the condition of the building, its services and the grounds. It highlights relevant legal issues and any obvious risks to the building, people or grounds. The report is succinct and provides an assessment of the relative importance of the defects and problems. Where the surveyor is unable to reach a conclusion with reasonable confidence, a recommendation for further investigation should be made. A Survey Level 1 report does not include advice on how to carry

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out repairs or on ongoing maintenance and this, combined with the less extensive inspection, usually means it is better suited to * conventionally built, modern dwellings in satisfactory condition. It will not suit older or complex properties, or those in a neglected condition.

*Notes – *as a guide, but each case to be judged on its merits, houses built since 1990 and not greatly extended or altered (except perhaps by addition of a small conservatory or porch), of conventional style (typically on an estate rather than being a “one-off”) with upto 3 floor levels above ground.*

Survey Level 2 - Home Buyer Survey

This level of service is for clients who are seeking a professional opinion at an economic price. It is, therefore, less comprehensive than a Level 3 service. The focus is on assessing the general condition of the main elements of a property. This intermediate level of service includes a more extensive visual inspection of the building, its services and grounds, but still without tests (we will, where possible, turn on taps, flush toilets and run water through drainage chambers). Concealed areas normally opened or used by the occupiers are inspected if it is safe to do so (typical examples include roof spaces, basements and cellars). (We will, where possible, inspect sub-floor voids although physical entry will only be undertaken if the surveyor judges it to be safe). The report objectively describes the condition of the different elements and provides an assessment of the relative importance of the defects/problems. At this level, although it is concise, the report does include advice about repairs and any ongoing maintenance issues. Where the surveyor is unable to reach a conclusion with reasonable confidence, a recommendation for further investigations should be made. This level of service suits a broader range of conventionally built properties, although the age and type will depend on the knowledge and experience of the RICS member. This level of service is unlikely to suit:

- complex buildings, for example those that have been extensively extended and altered
- unique or older historic properties – although Survey Level 2 services may be appropriate for some older buildings, the decision will depend on the RICS member’s proven competence and knowledge and the nature of the building itself. For example, a Survey Level 2 report on homes with traditional timber frames or those built much before 1850 is likely to be inconclusive and be of little use to the client or
- properties in neglected condition.

Survey Level 3 - Building Survey

This level of service is for clients who are seeking a professional opinion based on a detailed assessment of the property. The service consists of a detailed visual inspection of the building, its services and the grounds and is more extensive than a Survey Level 2. Concealed areas normally opened or used by the occupiers are inspected if it is safe to do so (typical examples include roof spaces, basements and cellars). Although the services are not tested, they are observed in normal operation – in other words, they are switched on or off and/or operated

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where the occupier has given permission and it is safe to do so. The report objectively describes the form of construction and materials used for different parts of the property. It describes the condition and provides an assessment of the relative importance of the defects/problems. Additionally, it should:

- describe the identifiable risk of potential or hidden defects in areas not inspected
- propose the most probable cause(s) of the defects based on the inspection
- outline the likely scope of any appropriate remedial work and explain the likely consequences of non-repair
- make general recommendations in respect of the priority and likely timescale for necessary work

Where an RICS member feels unable to reach the necessary conclusions with reasonable confidence, they should refer the matter for further investigations. **However, at Survey Level 3 such referrals should be the exception rather than the rule.** A Survey Level 3 report should aim to provide the client with all the information they need to make a decision. This level of service will suit any domestic residential property in any condition depending on the competence and experience of the RICS member.

Purpose of Report & Extent of Inspection

1. The Surveyor will advise the Client, by way of written Report, as to his/her opinion of the state of repair and condition of the property's structure and fabric in the context of its age, type and quality of construction but not as an inventory of every individual defect.
2. Other than as set out below, the Surveyor will carry out such work as is reasonable, in his/her professional judgement, and possible having regard to the Surveyor's personal safety so as to enable him/her to meet the requirements of Item 1 above, bearing in mind the practical limitations imposed by the individual circumstances of the property at the time of the inspection, and always bearing in mind that the Surveyor is a visitor to the property.
3. The Surveyor will inspect as much of the internal and external parts of the property as is practicable in order to meet the above requirement. Where accessible, loose floorboards, trap doors, unsecured hatches and covers will be lifted or opened as applicable but the Surveyor will not be under any obligation to lift fitted floor coverings, move stored items or furniture, or remove fixtures and fittings to facilitate inspection.
4. Any areas of the structure, including woodwork, which are covered, unexposed or inaccessible will not be inspected, and no parts of the building will be opened up in any way which may cause damage without the prior written consent of the Vendor or Owner (or their authorised Agents) being obtained. The Report will not purport to express an opinion, implied or otherwise, on the condition of un-inspected parts of the property.

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However, if the Surveyor has valid reason to suspect that there is a material risk of defects in any parts where inspection has not been possible, recommendations will be made as to what practical steps, if any, should be undertaken to determine the condition of those parts.

5. The property will be inspected from ground level and available vantage points (with the aid of binoculars and a camera mounted on a telescopic pole where necessary) within the curtilage and/or from adjacent public areas. Where necessary and possible the Surveyor will inspect from an adjoining owner's land if the permission of said party can be obtained in advance or at the time of inspection. Flat roofs and other upper parts of the structure will be inspected more closely by use of the Surveyor's 3 metre ladder, having due regard to the safety of the Surveyor and others, and/or by use of a camera mounted on a telescopic pole. If the Client requests in advance, and the nature of the particular property so requires, the Surveyor will arrange for longer ladders or other access equipment to be brought to site **at the Client's expense.**
6. Where parts of the exterior are impossible to inspect, or where inspection is restricted due to, for example, trees or nearby structures, the Surveyor will comment on this fact in the Report and will make appropriate recommendations if it is felt that closer inspection is required.
7. Roof voids will be physically inspected where suitable access hatches of adequate size are present and can be safely opened without causing damage or any risk of injury to the Surveyor or others. It is noted that modern levels of thermal insulation often restrict a Surveyor's ability to move safely within roof voids but our Surveyors carry high-power torches that facilitate better inspection from access hatches and other safe vantage points.
8. Sub-floor areas of reasonable depth (generally a minimum of 450mm) and not flooded or excessively wet will be inspected, again with due regard to the safety of the Surveyor and with particular regard to the presence of electrical equipment (cables and connections), gas service pipes and plumbing and/or heating pipework, where a suitable trap door or other access point, of adequate size, is located and accessible at the time of the Surveyor's visit. **Note:** Clients purchasing properties with suspended timber ground floors are advised to ask Vendors whether such traps are known to exist.
9. No comment can be made as to the condition of chimney flues or the practicality of using the same.
10. The building structure and fabric will be examined for evidence of foundation problems or ground movement, and the Surveyor will comment on any potential destabilising influences, but it is impractical during the course of a routine Survey to excavate and expose foundations.

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11. Theoretical calculations to check sizes and/or adequacy of structural elements will not be undertaken.
12. In the case of a flat or maisonette (*note*: we offer a purpose-designed Flat Buyer Report), the inspection will cover such areas as are, or are believed to be, included in the sale (as advised by the Vendor, Owner and/or Agent where applicable) and will not extend in detail to other parts of the building/buildings or common parts although reference will be made to any areas of obvious concern. The Surveyor will be under no obligation to inspect the Lease and/or Management or Service Charge Agreement and Clients are advised of the need to obtain sound legal advice when purchasing flats and similar properties as Leases and other Agreements can impose onerous obligations in respect of parts of the building, communal areas etc. which may not be immediately related to the property being purchased.
13. The inspection and Report will include garden areas, outbuildings, boundaries etc. but comment on such features may be limited if the Surveyor finds only minor defects and/or considers that the condition of items such as outbuildings is of little concern in relation to the condition of (and, if applicable, the value of) the main building. Specialist installations such as swimming pools and similar leisure facilities, ornamental garden features etc. will normally fall outside the scope of a Survey Report other than at **Level 3**.

Service Installations and Specialist Fixtures and Fittings

1. *Edwards Genesis* are not plumbers, electricians or gas engineers and are not qualified to test service installations or to report on the condition thereof. Accordingly, no specialist tests of service installations (water, electricity, gas, heating & drainage) will be applied. Similarly, we cannot test or report on specialist fixtures and fittings such as lifts, security and fire alarms, built in cooking or other gas and electrical appliances etc. However, the Surveyor will inspect service installations where possible and will Report on any patent defects and/or will advise where further investigation or specialist tests are considered necessary. Everyday items such as taps, toilet fittings, etc. may be tested by normal operation if appropriate and the Surveyor will lift any drainage inspection covers within the curtilage of the property where such covers are intact and accessible, not stuck or secured shut, and can be lifted without specialist equipment. However, no drains test will be applied.
2. Where the Client requires specialist tests/reports on service installations etc. *Edwards Genesis* will be pleased to assist in arranging these, with the consent of the property Vendor/Owner or the Agent, but the Client will be responsible for agreeing Terms of Engagement with any specialist contractors employed and for meeting their charges direct.

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General Matters

1. Unless otherwise stated in the Report, The Surveyor will have made no direct enquiries of planning, local, highway or other statutory authorities, Government Departments or Agencies etc. in relation to tenure, covenants, rights of way, planning schemes, NHBC or Architects Certificates etc. but comment will be made if the Surveyor has reason to suspect problems in any such areas so the Client may bring these to the particular attention of his/her legal advisers and the Surveyor may refer to information known to him/her or discovered by pre- or post-inspection internet research or other enquiry.

2. In providing the Survey Report, the following assumptions will apply unless there is information to the contrary:
 - that no high alumina cement/concrete, calcium chloride additive, asbestos or other potentially deleterious, hazardous or toxic material or technique was used in the construction of the property or has been incorporated since (the report will fall outside *The Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012*), but the Surveyor will advise in his/her Report if he/she has any reason to suspect the presence of asbestos-containing materials,

 - that the site on which the property stands, or any immediately adjacent land, has not been contaminated (within the meaning of The Environmental Protection Act 1990 and subsequent legislation) by any past use but the Surveyor will advise on any known or suspected environmental issues, taking into account the location of the property, and will advise if any appropriate reports should be obtained by your legal adviser; if the report includes valuation advice, this will be given on the assumption that full buildings insurance cover will be available on normal terms,

 - that the property is not subject to any unusual or especially onerous easement, restrictions, encumbrances or outgoings, is unaffected by any matters which would be revealed by a local search and replies to the usual pre-contract enquiries, or by any Statutory Notice; and that neither the property, its condition or its use (or any intended use) is or will be unlawful,

 - that an inspection of those parts which have not been inspected would not reveal any material defects or, if applicable, cause the Surveyor to materially alter any valuation advice.

4. The Report will be provided for the sole and confidential use of the named Client and his/her professional advisers. It must not be made available, copied, sold or otherwise transferred to third parties without the express written consent of **Edwards Genesis** (for which consent a fee may be payable) and we will accept no liability to any

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such party unless such consent has been given. *Edwards Genesis* retain the copyright and intellectual property rights to the report and all associated material, including photographs and other images, and reserve the right to publish or otherwise use all of this material, or any part thereof, in any printed or electronic format, including web pages and social media, but in so doing we will take all reasonable precautions not to identify the property and/or the named client. Comments within the Report will be made in good faith **and on the strict understanding that they will not be quoted out of context to any third parties.**

5. Where requested, the Surveyor may provide the Client with a verbal précis of his findings, and/or a pre-report “bullet point” summary of his/her main findings and observations, and/or a draft copy of the Report, but the Client should not, under any circumstances, make any binding commitment to purchase the property or enter into any other contract relating to the proposed purchase before receiving the final Report, signed by the Surveyor or an authorised representative of *Edwards Genesis*. We can accept no responsibility for any loss in such circumstances. **Note: we can only provide pre-Report advice, verbally or in writing, once the Client has acknowledged agreement to the Terms of Engagement and made payment of the agreed fee.**
6. Any repair costs or other sums quoted will be for guidance only and it is incumbent on the Client to verify the likely costs of remedial and other works by obtaining contractors’ estimates/quotations before entering into a binding contract to purchase. It is also prudent to allow a contingency sum for extra or unforeseeable items.
7. Where it is agreed in advance that the Report is to include valuation advice, including completion of a mortgage lender’s standard Mortgage Valuation Report, such advice will be given in accordance with *Edwards Genesis*’ Terms of Engagement for Valuation Reports (attached if appropriate) in so far as they are not superseded by these Conditions of Engagement in terms of the level of inspection etc. Any valuation advice will be included in an **Appendix** to the Survey Report and will be provided in accordance with the **MANDATORY** requirements of *RICS Valuation - Global Standards 2022*.
8. Formal acknowledgement of the Client’s agreement to these Terms of Engagement is required and such acknowledgement must be received **as a condition of our Professional Indemnity Insurance before** the Report, or any précis or draft version thereof, can be issued (see Item 5 above).
9. The Client will pay to *Edwards Genesis* the agreed fee, as set out in the accompanying letter or e-mail, for preparation of the Report and, unless otherwise agreed in advance, the fee is due on the date of the accompanying letter or e-mail (see attached **Payment Terms** if advance payment of the agreed fee is requested). **Reports will not normally be released until payment has been received.** Where advance payment is not requested

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our Terms of Credit are payment within 28 days of the date of invoice and we reserve the right to charge statutory interest on overdue accounts.

10. In accordance with **RICS Regulations** we have a formal Complaints Handling Procedure. A copy is available on request.

TofESurvey/January 2020

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www.edwardsgenesis.co.uk

Additional Terms of Engagement for a Valuation Appendix

CUT AND PASTE FROM CONTRACT LETTER

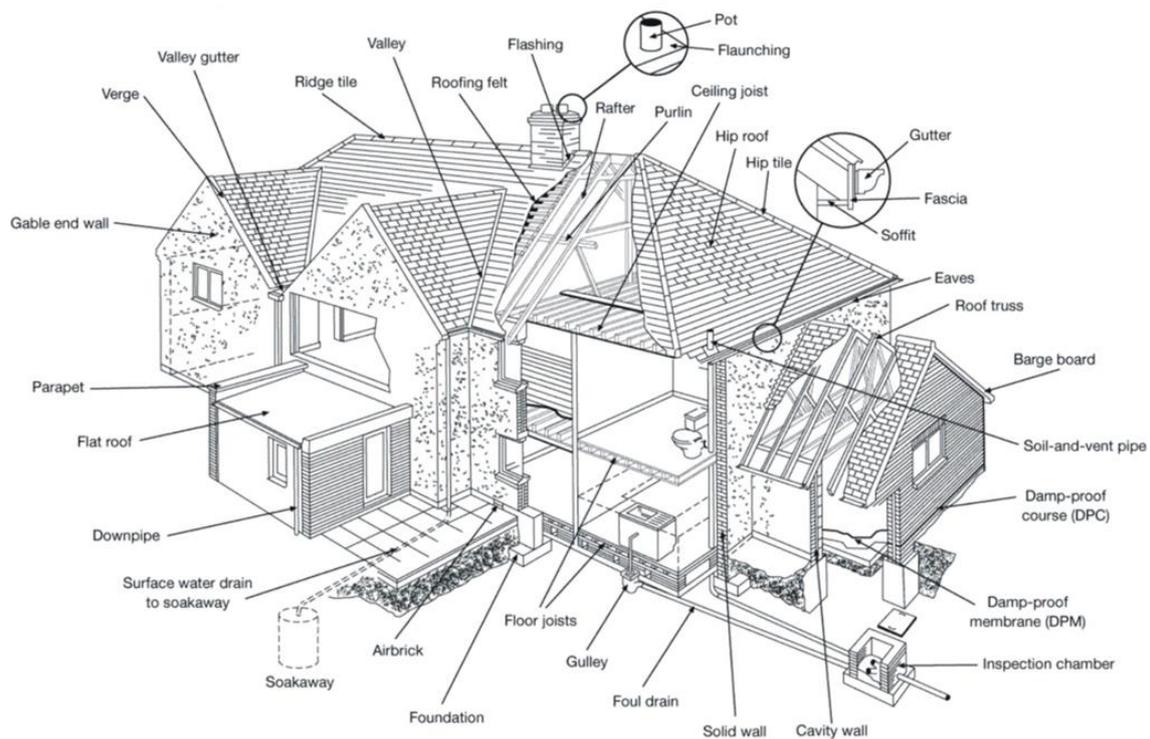
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B. Typical house diagram

This diagram illustrates where you may find some of the Building Elements referred to in the Report.



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C. Condensation

This Appendix is included as standard in the final report.

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Client: Client (see Copyright Notice on page 5)

Report reference: 23/****

D. Asbestos

This Appendix is included as standard in the final report.

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E. The Party Wall Act

Source: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/party-wall-etc-act-1996-guidance#introduction>

The [Party Wall etc Act 1996](#) provides a framework for preventing and resolving disputes in relation to party walls, boundary walls and excavations near neighbouring buildings.

A building owner proposing to start work covered by the Act must give adjoining owners notice of their intentions in the way set down in the Act. Adjoining owners can agree or disagree with what is proposed. Where they disagree, the Act provides a mechanism for resolving disputes.

The Act is separate from obtaining planning permission or Building Regulations approval.

What is a party wall?

The main types of party walls are:

- a wall that stands on the lands of 2 (or more) owners and forms part of a building - this wall can be part of one building only or separate buildings belonging to different owners
- a wall that stands on the lands of 2 owners but does not form part of a building, such as a garden wall but not including timber fences
- a wall that is on one owner's land but is used by 2 (or more) owners to separate their buildings

The Act also uses the expression 'party structure'. This could be a wall or floor partition or other structure separating buildings or parts of buildings in different ownership, such as in flats.

What the Act covers

The Act covers:

- new building on or at the boundary of 2 properties
- work to an existing party wall or party structure
- excavation near to and below the foundation level of neighbouring buildings

This may include:

- building a new wall on or at the boundary of 2 properties
- cutting into a party wall
- making a party wall taller, shorter or deeper

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- removing chimney breasts from a party wall
- knocking down and rebuilding a party wall
- digging below the foundation level of a neighbour's property

Explanatory booklet (download free <https://tinyurl.com/yxm9w97a>)

This provides detailed guidance on the Party Wall etc. Act 1996. The guidance explains how the Act may affect a building owner who wishes to carry out work covered by the Act or an adjoining building owner who receives notification under the Act of proposed work.

The guidance has been further updated in May 2016 to take account of amendments to the Act to allow the electronic transmission of notices and other documents, required under the Act, where both the giver and receiver of the notices and documents agree.

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F. Useful weblinks

[The Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors \(RICS\)](#)

RICS is the world's leading professional body for qualifications and standards in land, property and construction.

[The Independent Surveyors Association](#)

An association of independent surveying and valuation practices with members throughout England and Wales

[Environment Agency](#)

Government advice on flooding and other environmental issues.

[National Housebuilders Registration Council \(NHBC\)](#)

For advice on new housing.

[The Health Protection Agency \(HPA\)](#)

Government advice on radon, electromagnetic fields, radio masts etc.

[Powerwatch](#)

An "outside" view on electromagnetic fields, radiation and associated issues.

[The Coal Authority](#)

For advice on coal mining issues.

[Planning Portal](#)

A very useful UK Government "interactive" guide as to when Planning Permission and Building Regulations approvals are required for alterations, extensions etc.

[Competent Persons Register](#)

Competent Person Schemes (CPS) were introduced by the UK Government to allow individuals and enterprises to self-certify that their work complies with the Building Regulations as an alternative to submitting a building notice or using an approved inspector. A Competent Person must be registered with a scheme that has been approved by The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG). Schemes authorised by the DCLG are listed on its website at <http://www.communities.gov.uk>

[The Property Care Association](#)

The PCA is the trade association representing structural repair, timber, damp and waterproofing specialists across the United Kingdom. Members of the PCA can be trusted to rectify problems with affected buildings, by employing industry certified surveyors and technicians to uphold challenging standards.

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G. Glossary

We try to avoid using technical building jargon in our Survey Reports, at least without an explanation as to what a term may mean, but if there is something you don't understand you may find it here:

https://www.edwardsgenesis.co.uk/attachments/Common_Building_Terms.pdf

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H. Maintenance notes

General Matters

We have prepared these notes as a guide to help you plan for routine maintenance and also to enable you to inspect your new home from time to time so that you can identify areas where expenditure may be required on repair works. You should remember that all building materials deteriorate with time and even the most modern property will require repair in the future. Regular maintenance inspections will help identify repair liabilities at an early stage so that they can be dealt with before they become serious or result in additional defects requiring more expensive and disruptive remedial works. Furthermore, a well-maintained house can be expected to preserve its value and saleability whereas a neglected property could prove difficult to sell.

The list of items to be checked is not intended to be exhaustive but our aim is to highlight some of the more common areas where domestic buildings (although the same principles apply to many commercial buildings) may require periodic maintenance. Some of the inspection and repair works can be carried out on a DIY basis but you should never compromise your own safety in attempting to undertake repairs and a competent building contractor should be employed if you are in any doubt. If you notice any apparently serious items of disrepair – such as cracking, timber decay or severe dampness – professional advice should be sought immediately from a Chartered Surveyor, and we would be pleased to assist.

The Local Environment

The orientation of a property (i.e. the way it faces) and its resultant exposure to wind, rain, frost and sunlight can result in some parts of the building weathering and deteriorating in a different way due to different climatic conditions; or the same materials will deteriorate at different rates depending upon their position on the building and their exposure to the elements. For example, the prevailing winds in the British Isles are generally from the south west and tend to be relatively warm and wet. These winds are more likely to result in south and west facing parts of a building being facing wind-blown rain over long periods to the extent that they will generally weather more quickly and can become saturated with resultant risks of damp penetration and timber decay. South facing elevations in particular can suffer damage due to prolonged exposure to sunlight, which can accelerate deterioration of paintwork, joinery and plastic materials, and high temperatures during the summer can cause thermal stresses and cracks in masonry. Winter winds are often from the north and east and tend to be relatively dry but very cold making building elements exposed to these winds more prone to frost damage. The internal areas on the north and east sides of a building will also be more prone to condensation problems. North and east facing parts of a building also tend to become more weather-stained, and moss and lichen growth can flourish on walls and roof areas.

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Local environmental factors can also cause particular problems. Slightly acidic rainfall in industrial areas can accelerate deterioration of some parts of a building fabric, such as pointing to brickwork and some more porous types of sandstone, and properties in coastal areas will be exposed to salt-laden winds, which will tend to accelerate corrosion of any metallic components such as steel lintels. Properties on busy roads may suffer from vehicle splash and this can cause damage to boundary walls and fences, or to lower walls where houses are built flush to the pavement, especially during the winter when roads are “gritted” during freezing weather. Nearby trees and other vegetation will increase routine maintenance liabilities as leaves will block gutters and gulleys, and there is also the possibility of falling branches causing damage, or underground roots damaging drains and foundations.

Older Buildings

It must be appreciated that the structure and fabric of older buildings are unlikely to perform as they would in modern structures. Building Regulations and construction standards are regularly updated and improved and even buildings that are little more than 10 years old will fall below current specifications. If you are purchasing an older property you should be aware that there is likely to have been some deterioration due to weathering of the external parts and everyday occupation of the interior, and that older buildings will generally require more regular maintenance and be less energy efficient so that annual maintenance and running costs will be higher than on a more modern property of similar size. A Building Survey report will consider the condition and performance of a building in relation to its peers but will also note areas where it may be reasonably possible to improve the building’s performance.

Extensions and Alterations

If you are proposing to extend or alter your new home you should ensure that any necessary Local Authority planning permission and/or Building Regulations approvals or other statutory consents are obtained. Not all works will require such approvals, but a failure to obtain appropriate consents may cause you problems if you wish to sell the property in the future or want to raise mortgage finance using the property as security.

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk> is a useful way to check whether the works you are planning may require approvals, and the Local Authority will also offer advice.

Hazardous Materials

If you discover suspected hazardous or toxic materials, such as asbestos, during extension, alteration or other building works you should seek appropriate specialist advice.

Maintenance Inspection Notes

A. External

1. Roofs and other high-level areas

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A periodic check should be made to ensure that all tiles and slates are in sound condition, particularly after periods of high wind or heavy snow. Any cracked, damaged, missing or dislodged slates/tiles should be replaced by a competent contractor. Ridge and hip tiles will require periodic lifting and re-bedding and the verge pointing to roof edges should be checked and kept in sound condition.

On flat roofs, any reflective limestone chippings should be kept evenly laid with additional chippings applied from time to time to replace those washed away. Alternatively, roof surfaces should be treated periodically with a proprietary solar reflecting paint. Flat roof areas should be regularly cleaned of leaves, moss and other debris. The most common flat roof covering in domestic construction is mineral felt which does have a limited life, rarely much in excess of 10/15 years. Minor splits and blisters can usually be patch repaired but more serious areas of damage, probably allowing rainwater penetration, will mean that the roof will require stripping and recovering immediately.

Masonry and pointing to chimney stacks should be kept in sound condition to reduce the risk of damp penetration. Chimney pots, cowls or terminals should be checked from time to time to ensure that they are securely fixed. Leadwork and flashings, including those to valley/parapet gutters etc., will also need to be checked as part of routine maintenance and repaired/replaced if any damage or perforation is evident. Any high-level areas that cannot easily be seen from ground level will need to be safely accessed from time to time so that they can be checked for early signs of disrepair and repaired as necessary to ensure weathertightness.

2. Rainwater Goods and Wastepipes

Gutters should be kept to an even fall and will require regular cleaning of leaves, silt, moss and other debris; and any leaking joints should be sealed. Gullies should also be kept clear of obstruction. Failure to ensure efficient disposal of rainwater over a long period can result in damp staining and deterioration to external parts of the building, and damp penetration to the interior with resultant damage to decorations, failure of plasterwork and the potential for outbreaks of wet or dry rot. Some rain and waste water components can be regularly painted to protect them from the elements but many of the materials used particularly cast iron, asbestos, cement and timber, do have a limited life and such components will require replacement from time to time. Any rain and waste water gullies noted to be cracked should be replaced immediately.

3. Main Walls

The outside walls should be inspected from time to time. Any evidence of significant cracking, leaning or distortion of the elevations should be referred immediately to a Chartered Surveyor. Brickwork, stonework and pointing etc. should all be maintained in good condition. Badly perished or weathered individual bricks or stones will require cutting out and replacing. The cement mortar to brick and stone joints (pointing) must be kept in sound condition with any

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heavily weathered, perished and broken areas raked out and renewed. Inadequately maintained pointing can result in a rapid deterioration of brickwork and stonework and can also allow damp penetration. However, care should be taken when repointing walls to ensure that the correct type of mortar mix is used – many walls are repointed with a hard sand and cement mortar which offers little flexibility and this can result in cracks developing due to thermal and moisture movements in the masonry. Hard mortars also restrict the ability of a wall to “breathe” and the masonry may remain saturated for longer than should be the case with resultant deterioration of the brick or stonework and an increased risk of damp penetration and/or internal condensation problems on solid walls.

Where walls are rendered, the rendering should be checked periodically to ensure that it is sound and not breaking away from the surface behind. Any badly hollow, loose or cracked areas will require cutting out and replacing. Cement renders should be regularly brushed and then repainted to maintain them in good condition and to improve their appearance but care is required in the selection of decorative finishes for older types of render as the inappropriate use of modern “plastic” paints as opposed to traditional porous lime washes will prevent the render “breathing” (see above).

The joints between window and door frames and surrounding masonry should be kept watertight with cracked or perished mastic sealants or rotten timber beadings replaced when necessary. Similarly, the areas around wastepipes outlets should be kept watertight using cement.

Paving, flower beds etc. should be kept at least 150mm (6”) below the line of the damp proof course and paving should, where possible, be laid to drain water away from the bases of walls. Where the elevations incorporate sub-floor air bricks, these should be kept in good condition and should not be allowed to become obstructed by raised paving, flowerbeds, overgrown shrubbery etc; otherwise lack of air circulation beneath the floors may result in rot developing.

4. External Joinery and Glazed Areas

All external joinery should be kept in good decorative order to reduce the risk of early deterioration and also to preserve the appearance of your house. Joinery in exposed positions (for example on dormer structures and around roof perimeters) will require periodical close examination with any deteriorating sections being cut out and replaced. Window and door frames etc. should also be checked from time to time and probed with a sharp implement, such as a penknife, to check for the early stages of softening and decay. Such areas should be cut out and filled or spliced with new, preservative treated sections.

The operation of doors and window lights should be checked regularly. Any components found to be stiff or sticking should be eased by a competent joiner. Poorly fitting doors or window sashes should be re-hung and adequate draught-proofing provided. If there are old sash

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windows to the property, worn sash cords will require replacement from time to time. Window catches and locks should be kept in sound and secure condition. Any broken or cracked panes of glass and defective sealed double glazed units should be replaced.

5. Garden Areas and Outbuildings

All boundary walls, fences, gates etc. should be kept in sound condition bearing in mind that the householder will have legal liabilities if boundary walls are allowed to collapse onto public highways or third party land, or cause damage to property or injury to pedestrians or vehicles. Trees should be pruned on a regular basis by a suitable specialist contractor and climbing plants should not be allowed to grow too vigorously up outside walls. **Trees may be subject to Preservation Orders, in which case it is a criminal offence to undertake virtually any type of pruning etc. without Local Authority consent.**

Paths and driveways should be checked from time to time with any deteriorated areas broken up and re-laid as necessary. Outbuildings should be inspected and maintained as for the main house.

B. Internal

1. Roof Spaces

If you are able to do safely, an inspection of the loft areas should be made on at least an annual basis with a check made for any evidence of damp penetration through the roof covering or around chimneys etc. Any required repairs should be undertaken immediately as persistent rainwater ingress will lead to timber decay and damage to first floor ceilings etc. The roof timbers should be examined to check that they have not split and also for any evidence of beetle infestation (woodworm). If you are in any doubt, consult a Chartered Surveyor or a firm of timber specialists.

The brickwork to chimney breasts within the roof void should be checked with any cracked or loose areas made good by a competent builder.

Insulation should be kept evenly dressed over the ceiling areas and you should avoid covering electrical cable and fittings to avoid the risk of overheating and fire. If you find evidence of condensation and/or mould growth in the loft space during cold weather you will need to have the area provided with appropriate ventilation.

If any water storage tanks are located in the loft, check these for signs of leakage and ensure that they are adequately lagged. Make sure that overflow pipes have not worked loose.

2. Walls and Ceilings

Wall and ceiling surfaces should be redecorated on a regular basis. As part of these works, any loose or cracked areas of plasterwork found should be cut out and made good. If you notice

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any cracks showing through wallpaper decorations or any damp patches developing to walls and ceilings, consult a Chartered Surveyor.

3. Internal Joinery

Internal doors etc. should be kept in sound operative order with any which stick within their frames being eased. Hinges and handles should be lubricated from time to time. All skirting boards and door casings should be kept in good decorative condition. If you notice any decay to internal joinery, consult a Chartered Surveyor or a firm of timber specialists. Stair treads, handrails and balustrades should be kept in good condition so that they are safe to use.

4. Floors

Whenever carpets are lifted floor areas, particularly those of timber construction, should be checked. If there is any evidence of cracking or dampness in solid floors, or dampness, decay or beetle infestation in timber floors, consult a Chartered Surveyor or a firm of timber specialists immediately. If your house has a suspended timber ground floor and there is a means of access to the underside, the sub-floor void should be inspected on at least a biennial basis to ensure that the floor remains in sound condition and free from dampness, decay or beetle infestation. If there is no means of access but refurbishment or redecoration present an opportunity to lift some boards to timber ground floors then this should be done so that conditions in the sub-floor void can be checked. Sub-floor air vents can be cleaned of dust and dirt whenever there is access beneath the floors.

5. Services Installations

Plumbing pipework should be kept in good condition with any leaking joints sealed. Waste traps to baths, sinks and wash basins should be cleaned out from time to time. Dripping taps should be repaired by replacing perished washers.

The central heating boiler and gas appliances should be regularly serviced by a Gas Safe registered contractor.

The electrical installation should be tested by an NICEIC or similarly qualified electrician at least every 5 years as cables and fittings will deteriorate with age. In the event of any short circuits occurring or if electric shocks are received when operating light switches or sockets etc. specialist advice should be sought immediately.

If reasonably possible you should lift any drainage manhole covers within the garden areas from time to time to check that rain and waste water flow freely through the drainage systems. Any debris within the drainage chambers should be cleaned out with the chambers disinfected as necessary. Manhole covers should be kept in good order with any cracked, poorly fitting or badly rusted components replaced. Where drainage is to a septic tank, this should be emptied

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every 12-24 months to allow for the sludge which forms at the bottom of the tank to be removed.