

## **Building Survey Report**

**Benchmarked to Level 3 – RICS Home Survey Standards 2020**

on

**Property**

**PHOTO**

Name of client: **Client**  
(see Copyright Notice on page 7)

Date of report: 17<sup>th</sup> October 2023

Report reference: JB/AH 23/\*\*\*\*

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*Ref: 23/\*\*\*\* Date of report: 17<sup>th</sup> October 2023*

## **CONTENTS PAGE**

### **1.0 CONTENTS**

### **2.0 INTRODUCTION**

2.1 Name and address of client

2.2 Source and confirmation of instructions

2.3 Conflict of interest/disclosure

2.4 Client's concerns and proposals for repair/renovation works (if known)

2.5 Extent of instructions, limitations and exclusions

### **3.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

*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.*

### **4.0 VALUATIONS (if applicable)**

### **5.0 REINSTATEMENT COST FOR INSURANCE PURPOSES (if applicable)**

### **6.0 GENERAL MATTERS**

6.1 Circumstances of the inspection

6.2 Date

6.3 Weather conditions

6.4 Property occupation

6.5 Handings and measurements

6.6 Photographs

### **7.0 THE PROPERTY**

7.1 General description

7.2 Approximate age

7.3 Extensions and alterations inc. porches, conservatories and sun lounges

7.4 Floor area

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**Property: Property**

**Client: Client (see Copyright Notice on page 7)**

**Ref: 23/\*\*\*\* Date of report: 17<sup>th</sup> October 2023**

7.5 Summary of construction

*The Surveyor will outline the construction of the main parts of the building, including the structural frameworks, and will highlight any issues that may have compromised the structural performance of the building.*

7.6 Summary of accommodation

7.7 Summary of services (see Section 12)

7.8 The site and parking provision

7.9 Outbuildings

**8.0 THE LOCATION**

8.1 Orientation, surroundings and amenities

8.2 Adverse influences on or adjacent to the site

8.3 Environmental issues inc. mining, flooding, land contamination and environmental risks

**9.0 EXTERNAL CONDITION**

9.1 Chimney stacks and flashings (see also Section 10.5 – Chimney breasts, fires and flues; and Section 12.5 – Heating)

9.2 Pitched roofs - design, construction and coverings

9.3 Flat roofs - design, construction and coverings

9.4 Dormer structures and other roof features

9.5 Rain and waste water disposal (see also Section 12.7 – Drainage)

9.6 Main walls

9.7 Damp proof course and sub-floor ventilation

9.8 Decorative finishes

9.9 Doors

9.10 Windows

9.11 Additional fenestration (if any)

9.12 Roof perimeter joinery

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**Property: Property**

**Client: Client (see Copyright Notice on page 7)**

**Ref: 23/\*\*\*\* Date of report: 17<sup>th</sup> October 2023**

9.13 Other joinery features

9.14 Porches, conservatories and sun lounges

## **10.0 INTERNAL CONDITION**

10.1 Roof spaces

10.2 Ceilings

10.3 Walls and partitions

10.4 Chimney breasts, fires and flues

10.5 Floors

10.6 Cellars and basements

10.7 Dampness – plumbing leakage, penetrating damp, rising damp, condensation

10.8 Rot and other timber defects

10.9 Joinery items including doors and staircases

10.10 Kitchen and utility areas

10.11 Sanitary areas

10.12 Other internal fixtures

10.13 Decorations

10.14 Insulation and energy efficiency

## **11.0 EXTERNAL AREAS**

11.1 Grounds

11.2 Boundaries

11.3 Garage

11.4 Other outbuildings

## **12.0 SERVICES**

12.1 Introduction

12.2 Electricity

12.3 Gas

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**Property: Property**

**Client: Client (see Copyright Notice on page 7)**

**Ref: 23/\*\*\*\* Date of report: 17<sup>th</sup> October 2023**

12.4 Water supply and cold water storage

12.5 Space heating

12.6 Hot water supply and storage

12.7 Drainage

12.8 Other services (if any)

### **13.0 LEGAL MATTERS**

13.1 Tenure

13.2 Easements, restrictions and rights of way

13.3 Roads and highways

13.4 Planning and associated issues

13.5 Guarantees, service contracts and certificates

### **14.0 SUMMARY OF REPAIRS**

14.1 Areas requiring further investigation and/or specialist advice

14.2 Immediate repairs

14.3 Short term

14.4 Medium/longer term/ongoing maintenance and/or items likely to require renewal

14.5 Areas requiring monitoring

14.6 Risks to the building and grounds

14.7 Health and safety issues

### **APPENDICES – sent by digital file transfer**

APPENDIX A: HOUSE DIAGRAM

APPENDIX B: LEASEHOLD INFORMATION

APPENDIX C: REFERENCE SHEETS

APPENDIX D: CONDITIONS OF ENGAGEMENT

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***Ref: 23/\*\*\*\* Date of report: 17<sup>th</sup> October 2023***

#### APPENDIX E: GLOSSARY

*A unique reference resource with definitions of over 500 building, surveying and architectural terms.*

#### APPENDIX F: MAINTENANCE NOTES

*A guide on how to keep your property in good repair.*

#### APPENDIX G: CONDENSATION INFORMATION

#### APPENDIX H: FIRE SAFETY IN THE HOME

#### APPENDIX I: DEFRA GUIDANCE ON LEAD PAINT REMOVAL

#### APPENDIX J: DCLG PARTY WALL ACT EXPLANATORY BOOKLET

*Property: Property*

*Client: Client (see Copyright Notice on page 7)*

*Ref: 23/\*\*\*\* Date of report: 17<sup>th</sup> October 2023*

## Section Title

- 1.0 CONTENTS
- 2.0 INTRODUCTION
- 2.1 Name and address of client

\*\*\*\*\*

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### 2.2 Source and confirmation of instructions

E-mail instructions issued by the client on 16<sup>th</sup> September 2023 and confirmed by e-mail on 19<sup>th</sup> September.

### 2.3 Conflict of interest/disclosure

Having checked our database we confirm that to the best of our knowledge and belief we have no conflict of interest in carrying out these instructions. **It is noted that the signatory to this report has lived close to the subject property, and in a similar style of house, for over 25 years but does not know the vendors.**

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**Ref: 23/\*\*\*\* Date of report: 17<sup>th</sup> October 2023**

## **2.4 Client's concerns and/or proposals (if known)**

None known.

### **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](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 (Section 13.1) 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.*

## **2.5 Extent of instructions, inclusions, limitations and exclusions**

This Report should be read in conjunction with the Terms of Engagement provided to you with our confirmation e-mail and the Contract Letter accompanies this report by way of electronic transfer. The Terms of Engagement form an integral part of the



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**Ref: 23/\*\*\*\* Date of report: 17<sup>th</sup> October 2023**

Report and set out the basis upon which our inspection of the property was undertaken and this Report has been prepared.

This Report is confidential to the Client and the Client's legal and immediate professional advisers. We accept responsibility to the Client alone and extend no liability to third parties. Any such parties who rely upon this Report do so at their own risk.

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**Note:** This paragraph is only applicable to Reports that include a valuation. This Report accords with the requirements of the Practice Statements in the RICS Valuation Standards and the signatory to the Report is an Independent Valuer who

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**Ref: 23/\*\*\*\* Date of report: 17<sup>th</sup> October 2023**

conforms to the requirements of the Practice Statements and has the relevant experience and expertise to undertake the valuation.

### **3.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

*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 Executive Summary in the context of the property as a whole.*

**Property** is considered to be a reasonable proposition for purchase, it comprising a well-proportioned semi-detached house built around 100 years ago and located in a popular residential part of Town but with easy access to most everyday amenities. Overall, the property is in average condition for one of its age and type and it certainly offers scope for further modernisation particularly in early replacement of windows and external doors, which are all old single glazed timber components with many being in poor condition. There are also some immediate and short-term repair works for which you will need to budget and 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**. In this regard, however, I suspect that at least an upgrade of the dated electrical installation will be required.

### **4.0 VALUATIONS (if applicable)**

Not applicable - I have not been instructed to provide valuation advice at this stage.

### **5.0 REINSTATEMENT COST FOR INSURANCE PURPOSES (if applicable)**

Not applicable - I have not been asked to provide a reinstatement cost at this stage.

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*Ref: 23/\*\*\*\* Date of report: 17<sup>th</sup> October 2023*

## **6.0 GENERAL MATTERS**

### **6.1 Circumstances of the inspection**

#### **6.2 Date**

10<sup>th</sup> October 2023

#### **6.3 Weather conditions**

The weather at the time of my inspection was dull but dry and becoming sunny. However, there had been periods of heavy rainfall over preceding days.

#### **6.4 Property occupation**

The property was owner occupied and fully furnished but not all floor areas were close covered. The vendors advised that they have owned and occupied the property for around 30 years.

#### **6.5 Handings and measurements**

The terms “right, left, front and rear” apply throughout as if the property is being viewed from the named road frontage. Measurements are for guidance only and should not be relied upon for absolute accuracy. Internally measurements parallel to the front elevation appear first.

#### **6.6 Photographs**

Throughout this report bold numbers in brackets are references to photographs on the accompanying disc or sent by electronic file transfer. Some photographs **(85-102)** were taken using a GoPro camera on a telescopic pole. *Note:* I do not necessarily refer to all photographs and I may refer to some more than once.

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**Client: Client (see Copyright Notice on page 7)**

**Ref: 23/\*\*\*\* Date of report: 17<sup>th</sup> October 2023**

## **7.0 THE PROPERTY**

### **7.1 General description**

**Property (1 & 2)** comprises the left-hand unit of a pair of semi-detached houses of fairly typical post-war style and construction for this locality. The front elevation is relieved by a single-storey bay window.

### **7.2 Approximate age**

The vendors advised that they believe the property was built in 1923. This is consistent with historic Ordnance Survey mapping of the area as this property and its immediate neighbours are first shown on a map dating from 1927.



**MAP**

### **7.3 Extensions and alterations inc. porches, conservatories and sun lounges**

*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 9.14. 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 (Section 13.4). You should also note that the Council Tax banding of the property, on which annual rates payable to the Local*

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**Ref: 23/\*\*\*\* Date of report: 17<sup>th</sup> October 2023**

*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.*

The vendors advised that all extensions to the building were undertaken by previous owners and, therefore, there is unlikely to be any record of planning or Building Regulations approvals (Section 13.4). An original open front entrance vestibule has been enclosed, the small bay window to the rear of the kitchen appears to have been slightly enlarged to its right-hand side, there is a rear single-storey extension to the dining room and also a side extension (**28**) to the kitchen although this is a lightweight glazed timber structure with a polycarbonate roof and, therefore, is little more than a side porch/large bay window. It is also 'open plan' to the kitchen and this will contribute to excess heat loss and is also something of a fire risk. This extension is best considered to be a structure with a limited remaining serviceable life and you may wish to budget for its early replacement with something of better quality and built to Building Regulations standards.

#### **7.4 Floor area**

I calculate the gross external floor area of the property to be 195.7 square metres or thereabouts. However, this excludes the side sun lounge extension as this is an old glazed timber structure and whilst it is used as an addition to the kitchen area, from which it has open plan access, and has utility space, it is not really suitable as such on a long-term basis and is considered to be a temporary structure and little more than a glorified porch (Section 9.14).

## **7.5 Summary of construction**

*The Surveyor will outline the construction of the main parts of the building, including the structural frameworks, and will highlight any issues that may have compromised the structural and other performance characteristics of the building.*

Elevations are of cavity brick, largely finished with cement-based rendering. The main roof area is framed in timber and covered in grey slate. There are 6 single-storey flat roof areas with those to the rear being of timber covered in mineral felt and the others being covered in lead. Floors are mainly of suspended timber joist and board construction but the ground floor is of solid construction in the entrance vestibule, the kitchen and the rear dining room extension.

## **7.6 Summary of accommodation**

**Ground floor:** Entrance vestibule (originally open)  
Inner hallway/staircase  
Front living room  
Extended rear dining room  
Morning room  
Kitchen (including the side sun lounge extension)

**First floor:** Landing  
Four bedrooms  
Bathroom/wc (originally two separate rooms)

## **7.7 Summary of services (see Section 12)**

All mains services are connected. There is a gas central heating system and this provides hot water by way of a storage cylinder. There is a gas fire in the living room, an open grate solid fuel fire in the dining room and a wood-burning stove in the morning room.

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*Ref: 23/\*\*\*\* Date of report: 17<sup>th</sup> October 2023*

## **7.8 The site and parking provision**

The property stands on a modest size but reasonably level plot. The front garden provides space for off-road parking on a gravelled driveway and this runs along side of the house to an old timber garage but this is used as a store/workshop.

## **7.9 Outbuildings**

**The following outbuildings are covered under Sections 11.3 & 11.4**

The garage.

**The following outbuildings are considered to be insubstantial and/or of nominal value and attract no further comment:**

Garden pergolas.

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*Client: Client (see Copyright Notice on page 7)*

*Ref: 23/\*\*\*\* Date of report: 17<sup>th</sup> October 2023*

## **8.0 THE LOCATION**

### **8.1 Orientation, surrounds and amenities**

*You can find useful information about the area in which the property is located, including crime statistics, broadband speeds etc, on the internet (e.g. <https://www.streetcheck.co.uk/>) and school performance tables are available at <https://www.gov.uk/school-performance-tables>*



**MAP**

The property stands on the north side of Road and within a mixed residential part of the district of Heaton and only a short distance to the west of the town centre. The surrounding built up area offers a reasonable range of everyday amenities and there are also good transport connections including easy access to the town centre by car or by regular local bus service. There is also nearby access to the motorway and rail networks.

### **8.2 Adverse influences on or adjacent to the site**

The property stands in slightly undulating surroundings but there are no significant changes of ground level within the immediate vicinity and there are no nearby major watercourses. There is a pleasant wooded outlook across the road to the front where mature trees are far enough away from the house to be of no particular risk (see

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enclosed *Trees and Buildings Reference Sheet*) but there are some substantial conifer and other trees within the front garden and close enough to be a potential risk, including to the underground drainage system (Section 12.7). You will, therefore, need to maintain full buildings insurance cover.

### **8.3 Environmental issues incl. mining, flooding, land contamination and environmental risks**

*In this Section 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 this report includes valuation advice, this is given on the assumption that you can obtain full buildings insurance cover on normal terms. We commonly refer to the following weblinks in this Section:*

*British Geological Survey*

<http://www.bgs.ac.uk/data/mapViewers/home.html>

*The Coal Authority*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/the-coal-authority>

*Public Health England UK Radon*

<http://www.ukradon.org/information/ukmaps>

*The Environment Agency*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/environment-agency>

*Old Maps (Ordnance Survey)*

[www.old-maps.co.uk](http://www.old-maps.co.uk)

*and*

<http://www.plantracker.org.uk/> *This website provides mapping information on recorded growths of a number of non-native invasive species (NNIS) such as Japanese Knotweed, Himalayan Balsam etc. However, not all such growths have been officially recorded. We are not horticulturalists but we will advise if we identify, or have reason to suspect, the presence of NNIS within or close to the boundaries to the property.*

The British Geological Survey Maps of the area show the immediate underlying subsoil to be of glacial deposits above rock. There are some coal reserves in the area

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**Ref: 23/\*\*\*\* Date of report: 17<sup>th</sup> October 2023**

and The Coal Authority's website indicates a number of abandoned mine workings in the surrounding area.

## Coal Authority map

Your legal adviser should obtain a Coal Mining Report (Section 13.4) but there has been no coal extraction around Bolton for many years and any associated ground movement should long since have ceased.

The UK Radon Map indicates that the property is not in an area considered to be at significant risk of radon gas emissions although the risk is higher than in some adjacent areas, falling in an area where Public Health England considers there to be between a 3 and 5 percent chance of a house having a radon concentration at or above the defined 'Action Level' (<https://tinyurl.com/yyamfynw>).

The Flood Risk Maps available on the Environment Agency website indicate that the property is not considered to be at significant risk of flooding.

I have no reason to believe that the site on which the subject property stands or any immediately adjacent land, may have been contaminated by past industrial or other

activity but your legal adviser should obtain a desktop Environmental Report (Section 13.4).

## **9.0 EXTERNAL CONDITION**

General note

*External parts of the building are inspected from ground level and, where possible, other nearby vantage points such as raised areas of ground and accessible flat roofs, skylights and dormer windows etc. BUT it should be noted that many high level parts of buildings, such as roof areas, chimneys and leadwork, can be difficult to see clearly from ground level and may, particularly on older buildings, be found to be in poorer condition when they can be closely accessed than they appear from ground level.*

### **9.1 Chimney stacks and flashings (see also Section 10.4 – Chimney breasts, fires and flues; and Section 12.5 – Heating)**

General note

*Chimneys are often substantial structures in exposed positions and can be difficult and expensive to access for inspection, maintenance and repair. Many chimneys, particularly on older buildings, were not built with a horizontal damp proof course (dpc) making them more vulnerable to damp penetration through the masonry, even if lead or other flashings at roof level are well maintained, and this increases the risks of rot to roof and other internal timbers and of water damage to wall and ceiling plaster, decorative finishes etc. Damp penetration through chimneys that have been used to serve fossil fuel fires often results in contamination of internal masonry and plaster by salts and these are often the reason for brown or yellow discolouration to internal areas around chimneys. The salts are hygroscopic meaning that they will attract moisture from the air (a problem known as “salt damp”) and it is common to find that damp patches around chimney areas do not fully dry out even if rainwater ingress is eradicated. It is also important to note that chimneys can deteriorate from the inside whether they are still in use or not (see Section 10.4 – Chimney breasts, fires and flues).*

A shared brick chimney with a render finish rises above the main roof ridge (**34 & 90**). The rendering appears to remain in generally sound condition but there is heavy weather-staining and some moss growth. I was unable to access the chimney area in the roof void (Section 10.1) but I would be surprised if there is not some damp penetration through the chimney and whilst this may be difficult to completely eradicate, your roofing contractor (Section 9.2) should access the chimney so that the rendering can be cleaned off any required repairs undertaken. The render largely conceals the lead flashings providing a weatherproofing detail at roof level. For some reason, the stack is fitted with four clay pots, one of which has a metal cowl, but there appear to be only three usable internal flues (Section 10.4).

There would originally have been a chimney rising over the right-hand side of the roof to the rear outrigger (above the rear most bedroom) but this stack has been taken down at some time and replaced with what appears to be an asbestos cement flue (see enclosed *Asbestos Reference Sheet* fitted with a metal terminal (**33 & 39**) and having a lead collar flashing at roof level (**100**). This flue serves the wood-burning stove in the morning room (Section 10.4) and it appears to be in satisfactory condition at present but your heating engineer (Section 12.5) will need to confirm that the flue is satisfactory if the appliance is to be retained and, of course, should the flue need to be removed this will need to be undertaken correctly if it is, as suspected, of a type containing asbestos fibres.

## **9.2 Pitched roofs – design, construction and coverings**

The high-level roof (**89-102**) is pitched from front to rear over the main body of the house with a half hip running down to the side elevation. The front slope has lead lined valley gutters at its intersection with a hipped roof over the main front bedroom and the right-hand valley runs to an awkward shared horizontal section at the party wall (**91**). The front slope also runs down almost vertically as a mansard-style area over the front entrance vestibule where there is a small dormer window to the left-hand front bedroom (**16**). The rear slope has lead lined valley gutters at its intersection with a hipped roof on the outrigger where the rearmost bedroom is located.

Roof slopes are free from any undue sagging or undulation.

The slate covering dates from original construction and whilst it remains in fair condition for its age some immediate repairs are required in replacement of broken and loose slates and it is clear that fairly regular maintenance in this regard has been required in recent years as a number of slates, including some to the mansard area, have been re-fixed using metal hooks and copper wires known as tingles. It is inevitable with a roof of this age that increasing maintenance works will be required as the slating nails and timber battens will weaken due to the ongoing effects of dampness. There is no secondary weatherproofing membrane beneath the slates (see Section 10.1). Accordingly, any required repairs should be undertaken as soon as possible to reduce the risk of rainwater ingress causing damage to the interior. I recommend, in fact, that you begin to budget for stripping and re-slating of the roof to be undertaken as a future repairing liability.

Your roofing contractor should carefully check the valley gutter areas removing any leaves and other accumulated debris, and this will need to be a regular maintenance operation with particular regard to the horizontal valley as this could easily become blocked by leaves given the proximity of trees, and repair or replace any split or otherwise damaged sections of leadwork. Valley gutters are potential weak points where lack of adequate maintenance can easily result in rainwater ingress. Your contractor should also lift and re-bed the clay ridge tiles along the roof apex areas where some of the pointing is broken or eroded.

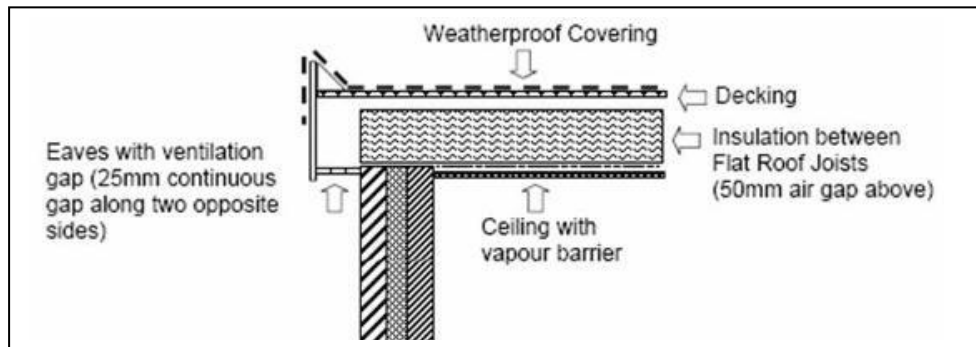
### **9.3 Flat roofs – design, construction and coverings**

There are various areas of flat roof as noted below but it is first of all appropriate to consider some general principles relating to the design and construction of flat roof areas:

## **General Principles**

Flat roof areas can be a source of persistent maintenance problems if they are poorly designed and/or inadequately maintained. Without going into great technical detail, the following are important principles when considering whether flat roofs will function satisfactorily, whether covered in mineral felt or more durable materials:

- Roofs should be laid to generous and even falls so that rainwater is properly discharged into correctly designed and well-maintained rainwater disposal systems along their lower edges. Adequate falls will prevent rainwater ponding on roof surfaces.
- The covering material must be correctly laid and well detailed, especially at joints and edges and where roofs meet adjacent walls or other structures. Failure to observe this principle is likely to result in early failure of the covering as flat roof areas are particularly prone to dimensional changes induced by daily and seasonal moisture and thermal movements in the roof structures.
- Soe flat roof coverings, but particularly mineral felt, should be provided with a protective covering or coating to reduce solar gain and the degrading effects of ultra violet light.
- Appropriate thermal insulation should be provided within flat roof structures (other than to unheated areas such as garages and outbuildings) at the time of construction – it is difficult to introduce insulation at a later date without effectively reconstructing the roof. In this case, it is highly unlikely that the flat roofs incorporate much, if anything, by way of thermal insulation given their apparent age. However, consideration also needs to be given to provision of ventilation within an insulated flat roof structure. Most flat roofs are constructed on a ‘cold deck’ principle whereby the insulation is incorporated between the roof joists (i.e., above the ceilings but below the timber deck).



One of the problems with this method of construction is that moisture vapour from the internal accommodation can permeate through the ceilings, which are generally of plasterboard and, particularly if the ceilings do not incorporate any form of vapour barrier, can then condense on the underside of the roof deck, which will be extremely cold in the winter. This can then cause the joists and other timbers to become wet, particularly if insulation is saturated by the condensation, with a resultant risk of decay. Good design and construction will ensure provision of a ventilated gap between the insulation and the underside of the roof deck.

The flat roof areas are as follows:

1. The rear dining room extension has a roof (35-38) of timber covered in mineral felt or similar although the covering is largely concealed by a thick dressing of limestone chippings provided to protect the covering from the deteriorating effects of ultra-violet light. The roof incorporates a double-glazed alloy or similar lantern skylight and I noted no evidence of lack of weathertightness around this glazed feature (53). The roof appears to have a limited fall but it is in satisfactory condition at present and the vendors advised, in fact, that the covering and decking were replaced, with new insulation being provided, less than 12 months ago. This work should, technically, have received Building Regulations approvals ([Building work, replacements and repairs to your home - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/building-work-replacements-and-repairs-to-your-home)) and your legal adviser should check whether there is any documentation, including any guarantee, relating to the works (Section 13.5). However, the roof is in satisfactory condition at present.

2. The roof to the kitchen bay window is also covered in felt (40). This is many years old and is in poor condition being perished at the right-hand outside corner (41). I noted no evidence of any damp penetration internally but it will only be a matter of time before this occurs and you should have the roof replaced as soon as you are in occupation. This could be undertaken using a more durable material such as fibreglass or a rubberised membrane and your contractor should provide adequate thermal insulation.
3. Front (85) and side (88) bay windows, cloakroom area (87) and dormer window (86). These small roof areas are all of timber covered in old lead probably dating largely from original construction and whilst I noted no evidence of any damp penetration internally, it is inevitable that everyday thermal and moisture movements in the timber roof decks will eventually cause the leadwork to split and fail. In fact, there is clearly an issue in this regard with the lead on the small dormer area. This lead does appear to have been replaced at some time but it has holes at the front outside corner of the roof where a section of rubberised membrane or similar has been slipped into place. Rainwater also clearly ponds on the uneven surface to this roof. For the time being, the roof should be cleared of all debris and patch repairs undertaken as necessary using Flashband or similar but early replacement of the coverings is likely to be the best option.

#### **9.4 Dormer structures and other roof features**

The dormer structure is little more than a glazed timber window (Section 9.10) with a small area of flat roof as noted under Section 9.3. I have noted the modern double glazed lantern skylight to the dining room extension flat roof under Section 9.3.

#### **9.5 Rain and waste water disposal (see also Section 12.7 - Drainage)**

It did not rain during my inspection but rainwater goods are of mixed age plastic with some sections being painted. For the most part, there is nothing to indicate that the gutters and downspouts will not function satisfactorily so long as gutters are kept clear of leaves, noting the proximity of trees, and other debris but there is evidence of leakage at some of the gutter joints (11) and you should ask your roofing contractor to clean out the gutters and seal joints where necessary although this can be difficult



**Property: Property**

**Client: Client (see Copyright Notice on page 7)**

**Ref: 23/\*\*\*\* Date of report: 17<sup>th</sup> October 2023**

to achieve with older plastic components once the rubberised gaskets have perished and you may find that early replacement of some sections of guttering is required.

The shared horizontal valley gutter area (Section 9.2) drains to a hopper head (17) and downspout, the lower section of which appears to have been propped up on bricks (10) and then to run uphill to discharge into the garden along with the downspout from the flat roof on the living room bay window (Section 9.3). Quite why this arrangement may be necessary is not clear as I would be very surprised if there is not a rainwater gulley dating from original construction in this area although access was somewhat restricted by thick shrubbery. The position should be checked and the downspouts re-routed to the gulley as necessary. The downspout to the mansard roof area runs to an old back inlet gulley with plastic and metal gratings. The downspout to the cloakroom flat roof appears to discharge on to the ground although there may be a gulley concealed beneath gravel in this area (12). The downspout to the side bay window runs to an old open gulley along with the downspout to the sun lounge extension and a plastic waste pipe from a utility area therein and the downspout from the main roof to the side of the rear outrigger with this downspout having a hopper head serving plastic and lead waste pipes from the bathroom (13). The downspout at the party wall position to the rear has a connection to the gutter on the flat roof to the dining room extension and then runs to an open gulley but this is awkward to access for maintenance due to the position of a boundary wall (7) and the proximity of an extension at the adjoining house.

Plastic waste pipes from the kitchen run to an old open gulley.

The plastic soil stack serving the toilet is in reasonable condition although the section rising above the roof eaves, where there is a lead collar flashing (99), may be of old cast iron. There is a rubber bung to the stack just above ground level (9) indicating that it has been necessary to introduce drainage rods or similar in the past to deal with a blockage in the underground drainage system to which there appears to be no other means of access (Section 12.7). The vendors advised that they have not had any issues with the drainage system.

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## **9.6 Main walls**

The foundations and footings have not been exposed for inspection as this would require expensive excavations. Accordingly, I cannot confirm the stability of the building from its underground support but there is no significant cracking or distortion to indicate foundation problems or ground movement and the underlying structure is considered to be stable at present.

It is convenient to deal with the original house and the rear extension separately as follows:

### **Original/main house**

This is largely the original footprint of the building although the kitchen bay window to the rear does appear to have been slightly altered. Elevations are of cavity brick but mainly finished with an old painted roughcast render. Cavity construction comprises two separate leaves of masonry laid parallel with a narrow gap (cavity) between them. Ideally, a cavity should be at least 50mm wide but is often found to be rather narrow in older housing. There is no evidence of cavity wall insulation ever having been installed. Lintels supporting loads over door and window openings are largely concealed from inspection and should be exposed and checked whenever any doors and windows are replaced (see Sections 9.9 and 9.10) with new lintels being installed if necessary. There is nothing to indicate any major deficiency in the provision of lintels but I suspect that there may be an angle iron or similar lintel over the large front bedroom window and a steel beam spanning the bay window opening below. This is suggested by the fact that there are some minor cracks in a different type of rendering at the window heads to the front of the adjoining house (17). Corrosion and expansion of steel lintels and similar often results in cracks developing in masonry around the lintel ends and if steel lintels are revealed when any new window frames are installed and/or if the flat roof to the bay is replaced (Section 9.3), they should be wire-brushed and treated with a rust-inhibiting paint unless they are found to be so badly corroded as to be in need of replacement. There are painted brick-on-edge lintels and sills to most of the windows on the side elevation (20). The small first floor window close to

**Property: Property**

**Client: Client (see Copyright Notice on page 7)**

**Ref: 23/\*\*\*\* Date of report: 17<sup>th</sup> October 2023**

the front corner of the house has lead dressed over a timber head moulding (21) and this may be part of the window frame.

Selective testing of the render in areas that were readily accessible revealed it to be in generally sound condition. It has been rather untidily repaired over the window to the side of the vestibule (18) and I am unable to confirm whether the concealed beam in this area is of timber, as was probably the case when the house was first built, or may be of steel. The vestibule was originally open to the elements and has been enclosed by fitting of glazed doors and windows (Sections 9.9 and 9.10) and there is infill brickwork on painted brick footings beneath the side window (19).

Exposed areas of brickwork, some of which has been painted, are also in reasonable condition although pointing is of mixed age and rather variable with some sections being worn, particularly to the rear of the outrigger and to the front bay window (23). It is clear in these areas that the property was built with a black ash aggregate mortar (22) and this is known to be aggressive to the metal wall ties used to connect the two leaves of brick in cavity construction (see enclosed *Cavity Wall Tie Reference Sheet*). I have in the past been able to inspect some of the wall ties at my own house located nearby and they are of a 'butterfly' twist wire type and whilst they were rather few in number relative to modern standards, they did not show any evidence of weakening due to excess corrosion. However, it would be prudent to budget for installation of remedial wall ties to be undertaken by a specialist contractor ([www.property-care.org](http://www.property-care.org)) within the next few years as this will ensure that the two leaves of brick are firmly bonded together. You should also budget for repointing of brickwork where necessary as this will improve appearance and will also protect brickwork from frost damage, which can develop if rainwater lodges in eroded joints and then freezes and expands.

### **Rear extension**

The rear face of this structure is largely occupied by glazed timber doors and surrounds (Section 9.9) but there is rendering to what appears to be a cavity brick wall at the right-hand end and then forming the return wall where there are some courses of exposed brickwork at ground level. This side of the extension is rather awkward to

access for inspection and maintenance. The rendering was found to be a little uneven but in generally sound condition.

### **9.7 Damp-proof course (dpc) and sub-floor ventilation**

The damp proof course is difficult to identify but appears to be of a bitumen-type, as I have identified at my own house, in a mortar bed just above ground level to the front bay and, therefore, probably only just above ground level around all of the house. This is not ideal as a damp-proof course should generally be at least 150mm (two brick courses) above finished ground level to reduce the risk of rainwater splash saturating the brickwork above. The position will really have to be accepted but any future landscaping works could usefully include relaying of paving at a lower level. Further comments regarding dampness are made under Section 10.7. There also appears to be a bitumen-type damp proof course at the base of the rendering along the right-hand side of the dining room extension.

Ventilation to voids beneath the timber parts of the ground floor is provided by a number of air bricks and these must be kept clear of obstruction as adequate ventilation will reduce the risk of any moisture present beneath the floors causing rot to develop. Some of the air bricks along the side of the house, where I suspect that others may be concealed by stored items, have been covered by wire mesh (15), probably to prevent entry by insects. One of the air bricks to the rear has been partly obstructed by the return wall to the extension (14). The air bricks do date from original construction and the ventilation ducts are probably partly obstructed by dirt and other debris that has accumulated over the years. If you can gain access to the sub-floor voids (Section 10.5), the air bricks can be cleaned out from the interior but, otherwise, it would be worthwhile having them replaced with modern units that will provide a better air flow.

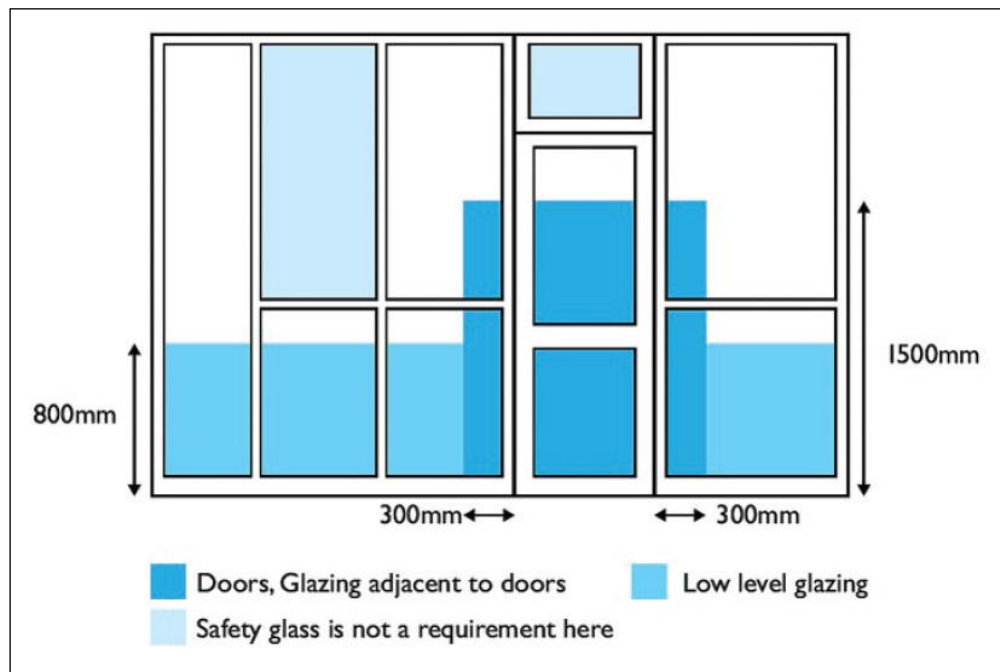
### **9.8 Decorative finishes**

The external decorative condition is generally satisfactory although heavily-applied paintwork does not conceal considerable deterioration of old joinery items (see comments below) and there is some flaking paintwork to fascia boards to the front

hipped roof area above the larger bedroom. This can be attended to as part of routine maintenance once you are in occupation and weather conditions permit.

## 9.9 Doors

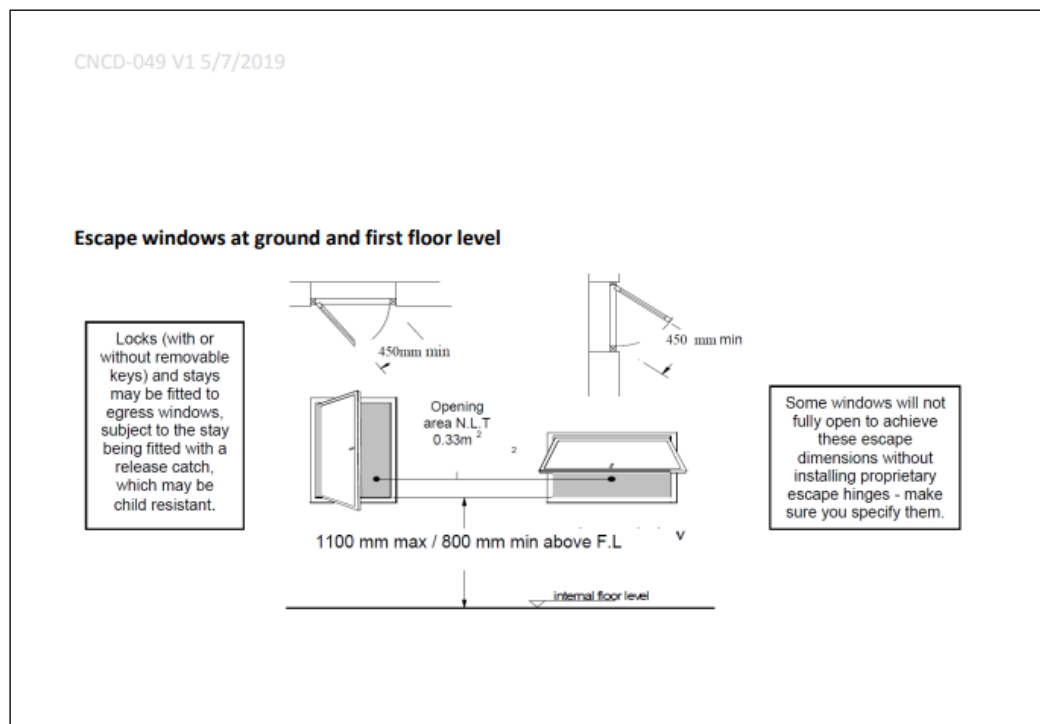
Entry to the front vestibule is by way of timber double doors with large single glazed panels and hung in a matching surround. The components are in reasonable condition although the doors are not the tightest of fits when closed and the single glazing is likely to be prone to internal condensation (see enclosed **Condensation Reference Sheet**) as it will act as a dehumidifier. You should also note that the glazing is not of a safety type as would now be required.



The cheapest option for the time being will be to apply self-adhesive safety film but you may wish to budget for early installation of replacement components fitted with double glazing and complying with current Building Regulations in terms of safety and thermal performance. Similar comments apply in respect of the similar doors to the rear extension where the glazing is even more dangerous as it extends almost down to internal floor level. These doors are in fair condition but show wear and tear commensurate with age and some rotten sections have been repaired using filling compound. One of the doors has a cracked glass panel.

## 9.10 Windows

These are old, mainly original, single glazed timber frames in variable but generally poor condition and whilst I understand you had no immediate plans for their replacement with more energy-efficient double-glazed components, you should really budget for such to be undertaken before too long as the windows are really at the ends of their serviceable lives. The windows will clearly be draughty, and prone to excess heat loss and condensation. They also fall a long way short of current Building Regulations standards in terms of thermal performance and lack safety glazing in the critical locations (see diagram under Section 9.9). None of the opening lights to the ground floor windows presently opens and whilst some of the lights to the first-floor windows will open to allow for ventilation, others are stuck and/or painted shut including the two lights that should provide a means of escape from the larger front bedroom (75) in the event of fire. Neither of the windows to the smaller front bedroom meets current Building Regulations standards in terms of emergency escape (see diagram below). Furthermore, the low-level sill to the landing window adjacent to the staircase (72) could easily be accessed by young children.



**Property: Property**

**Client: Client (see Copyright Notice on page 7)**

**Ref: 23/\*\*\*\* Date of report: 17<sup>th</sup> October 2023**

The timber frames have varying degrees of rot that is not concealed by paintwork and there have been numerous past attempts of repair by splicing of new sections of timber and use of filling compound (25-27).

**9.11 Additional fenestration (if any)**

None.

**9.12 Roof perimeter joinery**

Upvc fascia boarding has been provided to the feet of the projecting rafters behind the gutters to the main roof and also to the flat roofs to the small dormer window and to the rear dining room extension. Other timber boarding to the roof perimeters is of mixed age showing some weathering and rot (24) and repairs should be undertaken as necessary once you are in occupation.

**9.13 Other joinery features**

None.

**9.14 Porches, conservatories and sun lounges**

I have noted elsewhere that the side breakfast and utility area extension (28) enlarging the kitchen is a lightweight structure of considerable age and likely to have a limited remaining life even if it is well-maintained. It is 'open plan' from the kitchen area and this will make it prone to excess heat loss. There is almost certainly a steel beam spanning the internal opening (57). The structure comprises a painted timber framework with the lower parts being boarded externally and the upper parts being only single glazed including to an external door. There is a hipped roof framework fitted with a lightweight polycarbonate (plastic) sheets, which will simply melt in the event of a fire within the kitchen. I suspect there is little or no insulation to the boarded lower part of the framework and around which the external ground level rises so it is well above internal floor level at the door opening (29) and this will increase the risk of rainwater ingress. There are patches of rot and past repairs have been carried out using filler (30 & 31). The opening windows have been painted shut and will clearly be prone to internal condensation (see enclosed *Condensation Reference Sheet*). The

**Property: Property**

**Client: Client (see Copyright Notice on page 7)**

**Ref: 23/\*\*\*\* Date of report: 17<sup>th</sup> October 2023**

roof appears to be weathertight and there are lead flashings where it meets the main house. The flashings appear to be secure. Rainwater runs to a plastic perimeter gutter but this is sagged at the rear corner (32) where it is a long way from the downspout and the gutter clearly holds water and is likely to over-spill during periods of heavy rain.

You may, of course, wish to retain this extension for the time being but you will have to be prepared to accept its shortcomings. In my view, it is best considered to have a limited remaining life and you should, therefore, begin to make budget provision for its eventual replacement with something built to a better standard and complying with current Building Regulations.

## **10.0 INTERNAL CONDITION**

### **10.1 Roof spaces**

The small loft hatch is in the bathroom ceiling but was very difficult to access at the time of my inspection due to a fixed shelving unit on the wall beneath (79). A larger hatch should really be provided in a more convenient position. My inspection was restricted to a limited 'head and shoulders' view (80-83) from the hatch.

There are only limited levels of fibreglass insulation and better provision should be made (see Section 10.14) once there is better access.

The roof is framed in timber in a conventional manner using large section horizontal beams, known as purlins, spanning between load bearing walls and supporting the rafters forming the angled roof slopes with the rafters then carrying the battens and slates. There is nothing to indicate that the timbers are not adequately sized and supported for the loading they carry and I could see no evidence of rot, disease or beetle infestation although there are some small wasp's nests and any ongoing issues with wasps should be referred to the Local Authority's Environmental Health Department.

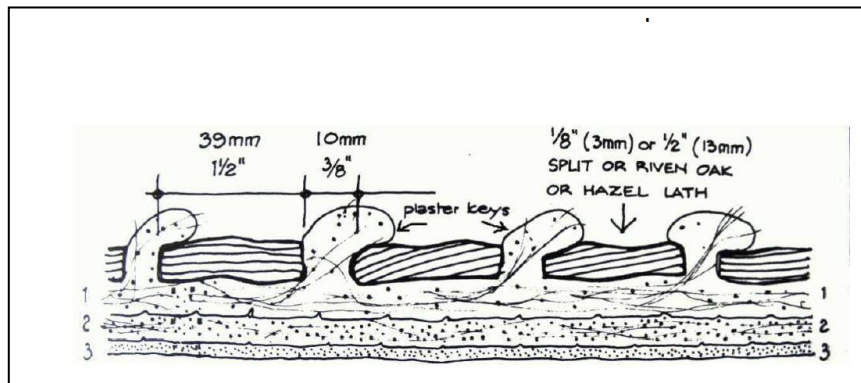


There is no felt or similar to provide a secondary weatherproofing barrier beneath the slates although much of the original backfill mortar, known as torching, applied behind the slates and battens at the time of construction as a crude form of weatherproofing remains intact (**84**). I could see nothing to indicate that the roof covering is not adequately weathertight although I could not access the chimney area on the party wall or the front valley gutters and you will note my recommendations under Sections 9.1 and 9.2 regarding repair works to the chimney, roof and associated areas.

## **10.2 Ceilings**

These are mainly of the original plaster on lath (see below) construction. Ground floor ceilings are reasonably level although there are some minor cracks to the plaster, particularly in the living room (**52**) where there is evidence that rainwater may have penetrated through the flat roof to the bay window (Section 9.3) at some time. First floor ceilings are rather more uneven and more extensively cracked. This is not surprising as these ceilings are fixed to relatively small-section joists forming part of the roof framework and the joists are likely to have deflected slightly under the weight. Cracks can be repaired as necessary as individual rooms are refurbished but you may wish to have suspended plasterboard ceilings provided to the first-floor accommodation.

Plaster on lath was the traditional method of providing ceiling structures in housing of this period and it comprises thin timber strips (laths), which were usually of willow, oak or hazel, nailed to the undersides of floor and ceiling joists. A wet plaster mix, sometimes reinforced using horse hair or similar, was then trowelled over the laths in layers with the first coat of plaster squeezing through narrow gaps to form a key between the plaster and the lath backing as the wet mix dried to a smooth and sound finish.



Plaster on lath ceilings are generally long lasting but they do tend to develop minor cracks due to differential thermal and moisture movements between the ceilings and the timber structures to which they are fixed and, over a long period of time, the cyclical nature of such movements can result in plaster detaching from the laths. Such damage can also occur due to vibrations within the building structure and plaster on lath ceilings also deteriorate fairly quickly if they become wet due to damp penetration or plumbing leakage. Any large areas of cracked or loose plaster should be repaired as soon as possible as falling plaster from old ceilings can be dangerous!

The ceiling in the dining room extension is of plasterboard and is a little uneven but not to an excessive degree.

There is a painted timber board ceiling in the kitchen. This is not ideal as it represents a fire risk in the part of a house where an outbreak of fire is most likely to occur and you should really have it under-boarded in fire-rated plasterboard.

### **10.3 Walls and partitions**

There are areas of bare brickwork and painted rendering to the walls in the vestibule and the side extension. Other walls are mainly of plastered brick and selective testing revealed plaster to be in generally sound condition but there are some hollow areas and you will probably find some repair or replacement of plaster to be required as individual rooms are refurbished in the future. Some of the first floor walls are built directly off the floor structure and their weight has caused the floor to deflect slightly with consequent distortion of door frames and this is particularly evident along the

rear part of the landing. However, this is a common design feature in housing of this age and type and the movement will have occurred early in the life of the building. There is plasterboard infill to an original door opening into the bathroom.

#### **10.4 Chimney breasts, fires and flues**

General note

*It is not possible to test gas, solid fuel or other heating appliances served by chimney breasts or other flues or to inspect and report on the adequacy of the flues and any linings thereto. The Surveyor will enquire of the property owner or occupier where possible if there are any known installation and service records for such appliances (see Section 13.5) but if no current service documentation is produced by the vendor such appliances should always be checked and serviced as necessary by an appropriately qualified contractor before they are used.*

*It should also be noted that chimney flues may contain asbestos and care should be taken and specialist advice obtained if the presence of asbestos is suspected whenever any maintenance or alteration of chimney structures and flues is undertaken.*

**Safety note** – *heating appliances become very hot and can be particularly dangerous for young children and the elderly if the appliances are left “unguarded” when in use. This is particularly the case in respect of open grate solid fuel fires, open-fronted living flame gas fires and wood-burning/multi-fuel stoves.*

Further comments regarding heating appliances are made under Section 12.3. The living flame gas fire has a metal surround, what appears to be a painted slate mantle and a tiled hearth to the chimney breast in the front living room (45). The chimney breast then passes through the bedroom above where an old cast iron fireplace with a modern tiled hearth provide a display feature (74). The open grate solid fuel fire is set into a brick recess to the chimney breast in the dining room where there is a low-level old tiled hearth with a wood trim surround (46). This chimney breast then passes through the bedroom above as a single flue structure. The wood-burning stove in the morning room is set into a recess to a brick corner chimney breast where there is a

**Property: Property**

**Client: Client (see Copyright Notice on page 7)**

**Ref: 23/\*\*\*\* Date of report: 17<sup>th</sup> October 2023**

projecting clay tile hearth (47) although this is almost level with the floor and your heating engineer (Section 12.5) should confirm whether the hearth meets current Building Regulations requirements ([Fireplace Hearths A Guide To Building Regulations -](#)). This chimney breast then passes through the corner of the rearmost bedroom.

## **10.5 Floors**

The first floor is of suspended timber joist and board construction. Floors to the individual rooms were found to be generally level and firm underfoot with no undue slope, spring or bounce. The exposed floorboards in two of the bedrooms were found to be in reasonable condition with no evidence of rot, disease or beetle infestation.

Similar comments apply in respect of the majority of the ground floor. Moisture content in the board surfaces was generally recorded at a reasonable level (68-71) but slightly high readings were recorded close to the kitchen doorway at the rear of the morning room. I have not been able to access voids beneath the timber floors to confirm that these are dry and adequately ventilated (see Section 9.7) with timbers free from excess dampness and risk of rot. Damp, and even wet, sub-floor voids are fairly common in older housing in this part of Bolton and the risks will have to be accepted unless you can arrange for a sub-floor inspection to be undertaken **prior to purchase**. The vendors advised that there is a small trap door but this is now covered by floor tiling in the cloakroom.

The solid floor to the entrance vestibule has a modern tiled finish in satisfactory condition. The floor is deliberately laid with a slight fall towards the front of the house as the vestibule was originally open to the elements. There is also a solid floor in the extended kitchen. This floor is reasonably level and is finished with imitation stone tiles. The solid floor in the dining room extension is of concrete overlaid with timber boarding in satisfactory condition.

## **10.6 Cellars and basements**

None.

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## **10.7 Dampness – plumbing leakage, penetrating damp, rising damp, condensation**

*(Note: this Section may also comment on “salt-damp” if appropriate – this is a damp problem specifically caused by salt contamination of masonry and plaster usually due to previous issues with penetrating and/or rising damp, which may or may not have been eradicated by repair works).*

### **Plumbing Leakage**

I found no evidence of leakage from plumbing and heating pipework, kitchen and sanitary fittings.

### **Penetrating Damp**

I noted nothing to indicate that the building is not generally weathertight at present but I was unable to access the chimney area and the front valley gutters in the roof void (Section 10.1) and some routine high-level maintenance is required to ensure that the roof and associated areas are weathertight. There is some old damp staining around the top of the corner chimney breast in the rearmost bedroom (76). Any rainwater ingress should have been eradicated as the chimney stack has been removed and replaced with a flue pipe (Section 9.1) but the brickwork and plaster will be contaminated by salts and these will be attracting moisture from the air. This is an issue known as salt damp.

### ***Salt damp***

Any passage of water into a building brings with it soluble salts, some of which are carried in the atmosphere but most are dissolved from the building materials. In the case of chimneys, these salts are principally ammonium sulphate and various chlorides nitrites and nitrates. As the moisture evaporates internally, the salts contaminate the plasterwork. Some of the salts are efflorescent (i.e., they crystallise as the solution in which they are carried evaporates) and these salts can cause plasterwork to degrade and, as they crystallise on evaporation, can produce a ‘crusty’ appearance on wall surfaces. However, many of the salts are not efflorescent and will remain in solution

**Property: Property**

**Client: Client (see Copyright Notice on page 7)**

**Ref: 23/\*\*\*\* Date of report: 17<sup>th</sup> October 2023**

as long as there is still dampness in the building structure (i.e., where moisture has not evaporated and/or where there is an ongoing problem with damp penetration). All of these salts are hygroscopic meaning that they will attract moisture from the air and it is often this effect that causes the typical yellowy-brown discolouration of plasterwork in areas where there has been damp penetration through/around chimneys. The discolouration will often become worse when weather conditions are humid or, for example, where there are high levels of relative humidity internally, particularly where chimneys are close to parts of the house where moisture vapour is produced (such as kitchens and bathrooms) but also in bedrooms where the levels of relative humidity rise during the night as air temperature cools. It is for this reason that patches of discolouration appear to spread but then recede; the salt-contaminated plaster absorbs moisture from the air where humidity levels are high but the discolouration will then recede as humidity falls (or the temperature rises) and the plasterwork dries out. Unfortunately, this problem can be rather difficult to eradicate. Even if the source of any rainwater ingress has been dealt with, the brickwork and plaster can remain contaminated by salts and the discolouration never disappears. The best solution is, therefore, to cut away all the damp and discoloured plasterwork and, if possible, leave the exposed brickwork bare for some time and ensure adequate levels of heating and ventilation within the room so that damp brickwork and mortar can fully dry out. Efflorescent salts may then crystallise on the wall surfaces and be brushed away and the evaporation effect should ensure that non-efflorescent salts are dispersed into the atmosphere rather than remaining in solution within the brickwork. However, at some stage, the walls will have to be re-plastered and this should really be undertaken following application of a salt-stop solution or PVA or similar latex mixed with water and applied to the masonry. This reduces the suction effect of the masonry and, therefore, its ability to absorb moisture if any salt contamination remains, and also provides a better key on which a new plaster finish can be applied. This can be of a dense sand and cement backing coat incorporating a water retardant additive and then finished with a smooth plaster skim although where salt damp has been severe, say around the base of a chimney breast, the use of polypropylene membranes, such as Newlath, behind plasterboard can be considered or a renovating plaster system may be appropriate (<https://www.safeguardeurope.com/products/drybase/drybase-flex>).

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## **Rising Damp**

### General note

*Specifically, this is the vertical passage of ground moisture into a building by way of capillary action or diffusion through the building structure and fabric and due to lack of effective horizontal barriers (damp proof courses to the walls and damp proof membranes in solid floors). It is nowhere near as common as is believed but it is very common for other causes of dampness to be mis-diagnosed as “rising damp” and for unnecessary, expensive and disruptive treatment works to then be recommended only for the dampness problem to recur sometime later. As well as carrying out a visual inspection for evidence of damp problems (if there really is “rising damp” it’s usually visible!) the Surveyor will use the “search” and “probe” modes of an electric conductance meter (often mistakenly referred to as a “damp” meter) – and may also use other equipment such as thermal or humidity detectors. However, it should be noted that none of these can definitively confirm the presence or otherwise of genuine rising damp – the equipment can help identify areas where there may be damp issues but definitively establishing a dampness problem as being due to “rising damp” requires further investigation such as removal of skirting boards and plaster – the plaster may be damp for whatever reason but the wall behind may be found to be dry, core sampling of the wall and testing for the presence of the soluble salts (typically chlorides and nitrates) that are not usually present in building materials but can be introduced by water ingress and whose presence may help confirm a diagnosis of rising damp. Should the Surveyor find evidence that there may be rising damp then monitoring and/or further investigation may be recommended and this should be undertaken by a damp “analyst” using the methods prescribed in Building Research Establishment (BRE) Digest 245 “Rising Damp in Walls: Diagnosis and Treatment”, British Standard 6576 “Code of Practice for diagnosis of rising damp in walls and installation of a chemical damp proof course”, and BRE Good Repair Guide 6 “Treating Rising Damp in Houses”. Be wary of the many so-called damp proofing “specialists”, often offering free damp “surveys” – they will often diagnosis “rising damp” based on nothing more than some high readings recorded on a “damp” meter and then advise chemical treatments at some expense. All other possible causes of the*

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**Ref: 23/\*\*\*\* Date of report: 17<sup>th</sup> October 2023**

*damp problem should be considered and eliminated before such treatments are commissioned.*

I have noted the physical damp proof course under Section 9.7. Internally, random testing of accessible parts of the lower ground floor internal walls and skirting boards using an electric conductance meter (59-67) produced varying readings, normal for the most part but slightly high in a few localised areas, particularly to the right-hand corner of the front bay window and around the base of the chimney breast in the front living room. There is, as yet, no visible evidence of dampness or associated timber decay and, therefore, no further investigation or remedial works are considered necessary at this stage but the position will need to be monitored. The high readings around the base of the chimney breast are likely to be due to brickwork and plaster having been contaminated by salts generated during past use of a fossil fuel fire. Such salts are hygroscopic meaning that they tend to attract moisture from the air. You may find that the base of the chimney breast requires replastering at some stage in the future.

## **Condensation**

General note

*This is by far the most common cause of dampness in the modern domestic environment and the incidence of condensation has noticeably increased in recent years in parallel with the drive to improve energy efficiency, an unfortunate side-effect of which is that many houses are now over-insulated but lack adequate ventilation to ensure that internally generated moisture vapour is rapidly dispersed to the outside air. Condensation problems are very commonly mis-diagnosed as being due to “rising damp” (see above).*

Whilst I noted no evidence that the present occupiers experience any significant issues with condensation, this property does have poor thermal performance (see Section 10.14) and this will make it more prone to condensation in some areas and particularly to the single-glazed doors and windows (Sections 9.9 and 9.10) as these will act as dehumidifiers. You should seek to improve thermal performance and will also need

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to maintain good levels of heating and ventilation (see enclosed *Condensation Reference Sheet*).

### **10.8 Rot and other timber defects**

Unfortunately, only a limited inspection of the roof timbers was possible but I have no reason to suspect that there may be any issues with rot, disease or beetle infestation and I found no evidence of such to the accessible floor timbers but I have not been able to inspect voids beneath the timbers parts of the ground floor.

### **10.9 Joinery items including doors and staircases**

There are mixed age, but mainly old, gloss painted timber skirting boards, door frames, window sills and linings in reasonable condition but with everyday scuffs and scrapes to paintwork. Care will be required when redecorating any of the older painted items as the paint could be of a lead-based type (see enclosed *DEFRA Guidance on Lead Paint Removal*). Similar comments apply in respect of the old timber panel doors, some of which are not the best of fits in their frames. The large glazed upper panel to the door between the vestibule and the hallway is not of toughened glass as would now be required in this location (see Section 9.9). The cheapest option for the time being will be to apply self-adhesive safety film. The door to the kitchen has been removed and there is something of a trip hazard where there is a slight step at a change of floor level at the opening (58). Doors to the sanitary areas have slide bolt privacy locks and these should really be replaced with locks that can be opened from the outside of the rooms in the event of an emergency.

The part open plan staircase is reasonably easy to use but a little steep by modern standards so increasing the risk of accidental falls and the gaps to the spindle balustrade on the landing (73) are wider than the 100mm maximum now permitted under Building Regulations and, therefore, potentially dangerous for young children in particular. Timber panelling forms a small storage cupboard beneath the lower part of the staircase flight. The cupboard was full of stored items (44) at the time of my inspection but I noted what appears to be an old linoleum floor covering (51) and care

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**Ref: 23/\*\*\*\* Date of report: 17<sup>th</sup> October 2023**

should be taken if this is removed as some types of linoleum were manufactured using asbestos fibres (see enclosed *Asbestos Reference Sheet*).

#### **10.10 Kitchen and utility areas**

The kitchen (55) is fitted with a twin bowl ceramic sink unit and a chrome mixer tap to a cut out in a solid wood worktop with a grooved draining board. There are some gaps under the overhanging edges of the worktop (56) where new sealant should be applied. There is a reasonable range of good quality hand made timber units with tiled worktops and splashbacks and these fittings are in satisfactory condition.

#### **10.11 Sanitary areas**

The white sanitary fittings are some years old but testing by normal operation (running of taps and flushing of toilet) revealed them to be in serviceable condition with no evidence of leakage but operation of the mixer shower over the bath was not tested. The opening light to the window to the cloakroom is inoperative at present and there is no extractor fan to provide ventilation to the outside air.

#### **10.12 Other internal fixtures**

None.

#### **10.13 Decorations**

These are a matter of personal taste but I think it fair to state that this property is decorated to a neutral standard. You will probably find areas of fading, damage and discolouration when furniture and wall hangings are removed and no doubt you have your own proposals.

#### **10.14 Insulation and energy efficiency**

Current legislation requires provision of an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) where any property is marketed for sale. The EPC provides information regarding energy efficiency and advice on how this may be improved to reduce heating costs and environmental damage. EPCs should be lodged on the Government's EPC Register at <https://www.epcregister.com/> **Note:** under current legislation an EPC is

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**Client: Client (see Copyright Notice on page 7)**

**Ref: 23/\*\*\*\* Date of report: 17<sup>th</sup> October 2023**

valid for 10 years but an older Certificate will no longer be accurate if a house has been extended or altered and/or if there have been other changes such as replacement of windows, installation of cavity wall insulation or replacement of a boiler.

I am not a qualified Energy Assessor but the EPC (weblink) records a current energy rating of 38(F), which is extremely low even for a house of this age and type. The EPC is unlikely to be correct as it does not reflect recent replacement of the boiler but the low rating is indicative of poor thermal performance in other respects, particularly limited insulation in the roof void, no insulation to the external walls and only singly glazed doors and windows. The Certificate identifies numerous areas where energy performance could be improved to achieve a maximum rating of 81(B) but most of the measures will be expensive and require Building Regulations approvals.

Further advice on energy efficiency is available at [www.energysavingtrust.org.uk](http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk) and you may wish to ask the property owner for copies of recent utilities bills, especially if you are buying a large, old property that may have poor energy efficiency.

## **11.0 EXTERNAL AREAS**

### **11.1 Grounds**

The front garden rises slightly from the road and comprises a gravelled driveway winding between well-stocked raised planting beds built in stone. Slightly uneven sandstone paving runs across the front of the house. The gravel runs through rotting timber gates and then along the side and rear of the house where stone steps then rise through a low stone wall in front of a slightly raised area of lawn with planted borders and there is a small stone paved patio area with unguarded access to a small pond/water feature (5), which will be a danger for young children. There are various trip and fall hazards at changes of level.

### **11.2 Boundaries**

General note

*We do not carry out a “measured site survey” and we do not usually have access to plans and other title documentation at the time of a survey inspection. We will note*

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**Ref: 23/\*\*\*\* Date of report: 17<sup>th</sup> October 2023**

*any suspected discrepancies or unusual features so that your legal adviser can seek further information as appropriate.*

In a physical rather than legal sense and unless otherwise stated, all boundaries appeared to be adequately defined on site. I have no reason to believe that there may have been any disputes as to the definition of the boundaries in the past but your legal adviser should confirm and may also be able to confirm ownership of boundaries and consequent maintenance liabilities.

Many of the boundaries are concealed by or defined by, thick shrubbery. The roadside boundary comprises old brick and concrete coping walls that have been partly rebuilt to widen the vehicular entrance where there is a timber gate showing a minor amount of rot (3). The walls are in reasonable condition but there are sections of broken pointing requiring patch repair and there is also a vertical crack at the party boundary position with number 40 (4). This crack is almost certainly due to pressure exerted by roots from a tree in the garden (see Section 8.2). There is no evidence of instability. To the rear, there is a section of rotting timber fencing adjacent to the patio area (6) behind the garage and timber post and panel fencing runs along the top of an old brick wall, to which there is some poor pointing, adjacent to the rear extension (7).

### **11.3 Garage (8)**

The 'garage' is a very old timber and felt structure presently used as a workshop and store. It is built off an uneven concrete slab and is clearly not weathertight. Realistically, this structure will have a limited life expectancy and you may wish to budget for its early replacement with something more substantial.

### **11.4 Other outbuildings**

None.

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*Ref: 23/\*\*\*\* Date of report: 17<sup>th</sup> October 2023*

## **12.0 SERVICES**

### **12.1 Introduction (see also Section 14.7)**

*Note: 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 advise if any specialist advice is considered appropriate.*

### **12.2 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 and old fuse box (43) located beneath the stairs. The property has been rewired at some time using pvc insulated cable but the vendors advised that this work was undertaken by previous owners and, therefore, over 30 years ago. The installation will certainly not meet current standards

and you should commission an Electrical Condition Report prior to purchase and implement any recommendations.

### **12.3 Gas**

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 supply pipe entering at the rear of the house where the meter is in the cupboard beneath the kitchen sink. Copper pipework runs to a cooker point in the kitchen and the gas heating appliances (Section 12.5). You should ensure that there is a Gas Safety Certificate in place **prior to purchase**.

### **12.4 Water supply and cold water storage**

There is a mains water supply but I was unable to inspect the incoming supply pipe and the stop tap. The vendors advised that these are within a bench seat built into the bay window in the morning room (50) but the lift-up seat panel has been painted shut! The pipe and stop tap should be inspected as soon as possible to check for any signs of leakage and for ease of operation of the stop valve. The vendors advised that the original lead supply pipe has been replaced in alkathene (heavy duty plastic). Internal pipework is in copper where visible. The water storage tanks are in an old linen cupboard (77 & 78) to the bathroom. The top door to the rear section of the cupboard has become stuck in its frame and will need to be freed. I believe this is where the main cold water storage tank is located and you should ensure that this is of a modern plastic type and not of old galvanised steel and also that the tank has a secure and dust proof lid to prevent contamination of the stored water supply, and also that it is connected to an overflow pipe running to the outside of the building. There appears to be a second boxed in tank in the front part of the cupboard and this is probably the header tank for the central heating boiler (Section 12.5).

## **12.5 Space heating**

Operation of the various room heating appliances (Section 10.4) was not tested. The vendor advised that the gas fire is not in regular use and has no recent service history. You should, therefore, have it checked **prior to purchase** by a Gas Safe registered engineer if you wish to retain it. Similarly, I understand the flue to the solid fuel fire was last swept around 12 months ago and as you will probably wish to light the fire during the coming winter you should have the flue swept by a qualified contractor ([Find Local Chimney Sweep Services: HETAS Approved - HETAS](#)) before it is put back into use. The vendors advised that the wood-burning stove in the morning room was installed over 20 years ago and is not in regular use. You must have this appliance checked by a qualified engineer ([www.hetas.co.uk](http://www.hetas.co.uk)) before any attempt is made to use it.

The main heating system is by way of a condensing gas boiler (48) located in a cupboard to the kitchen. The vendors advised that the boiler has only just been installed and there should, therefore, be Building Regulations certification and a manufacturer's warranty (Section 13.5). I understand, however, that the engineer is to re-visit to fit a vertical riser to the external flue outlet. You should ensure that this is undertaken **prior to purchase**.

## **12.6 Hot water supply and storage**

Hot water is provided by the central heating boiler and is stored in an old lagged copper cylinder partly concealed within the cupboard to the bathroom (77) noted under Section 12.4. The back-up electric immersion heater has been disconnected. I was unable to determine whether the cylinder has a safety thermostat but the Energy Performance Certificate (Section 10.14) indicates that it does not, and this matter should be checked as soon as you are in occupation and a suitable thermostat fitted if necessary to avoid the risk of over-heating of the stored water supply.

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**Client: Client (see Copyright Notice on page 7)**

**Ref: 23/\*\*\*\* Date of report: 17<sup>th</sup> October 2023**

## **12.7 Drainage (see also Section 9.5 – Rain and waste water disposal)**

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:*

- services to which the property is connected*
- 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 links 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:*

*<http://www.ccwater.org.uk/waterissues/currentkeywaterissues/privatesewersandlateraldrains/>*



**Property: Property**

**Client: Client (see Copyright Notice on page 7)**

**Ref: 23/\*\*\*\* Date of report: 17<sup>th</sup> October 2023**

*and*

<https://www.yorkshirewater.com/sites/default/files/downloads/Private%20Sewer%20Transfer%20Regulations.pdf>

*and your legal adviser should be able to confirm.*

The property will connect to the public sewer but, unless concealed beneath gravel at the front or side of the house, there is no drainage inspection chamber and the risk of hidden defects below ground will have to be accepted. You will note my comments under Section 9.5 regarding evidence of past breaking open of the base of the soil stack, presumably to allow for clearance of a blockage in the drainage system.

## **12.8 Other 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.

## **13.0 LEGAL MATTERS**

*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.***

### **13.1 Tenure**

*If this report includes valuation advice then, unless otherwise stated, the Surveyor will assume that the property is being sold with vacant possession. If the property is known or assumed to be held leasehold then reference is made to the information at Appendix B and you should consult your legal adviser on the terms of the Lease **including any provisions for increases in the ground rent.***

The vendors advised that the property is Freehold subject to an annual chief rent of £7 but that they are arranging for this liability to be extinguished so that there is an outright Freehold Title. Your legal adviser will confirm.

### **13.2 Easements, restrictions and rights of way**

Unless otherwise stated, it is assumed that there are no rights of way, or onerous or unusual easements or restrictions likely to adversely affect the value of the property or its quiet enjoyment but your legal adviser should confirm.

### **13.3 Roads and highways**

Road is a made-up highway adopted for maintenance at public expense.

### **13.4 Planning and associated issues**

I have made no enquiries of the Local Planning Authority but I am not aware of any adverse planning proposals and I have no reason to believe that the property may be subject to any outstanding Local Authority notices but your legal adviser should confirm. Your legal adviser should make particular enquiries in respect of the following:

1. Any record of planning and/or Building Regulations approvals having been obtained for extensions to the original building (Section 7.3).
2. The coal mining and environmental histories of the locality (Section 8.3).

### **13.5 Guarantees, service contracts and certificates**

*If building, alteration and repair works have been carried out in the past the surveyor will not usually be able to confirm that the works have been undertaken in accordance*

**Property: Property**

**Client: Client (see Copyright Notice on page 7)**

**Ref: 23/\*\*\*\* Date of report: 17<sup>th</sup> October 2023**

*with any relevant Local Authority approvals, British or European Standards, statutory Regulations, manufacturers' recommendation, Agrément (BBA) Certificates, industry Codes of Practice etc. Your legal adviser should follow the "paper trail" and request copies of any available documentation including guarantees/warranties, planning and Building Regulations certificates etc.*

Your legal adviser should obtain any available guarantees or other documentation respect of the following:

1. Recent replacement of the flat roof to the dining room extension (Section 9.3).
2. Installation of the new central heating boiler (Section 12.5).

#### **14.0 SUMMARY OF REPAIRS**

*In this Section the Surveyor summarises repair and other issues. Building works can be expensive, especially on larger and/or older or unusual properties! You are strongly advised to obtain competitive quotations from reputable contractors for the items under Sections 14.1-14.3. If major works, such as renewal of a roof covering, are noted under Section 14.4 you may wish to obtain estimates at today's prices so that you can make budget provision for the future.*

*It should be noted that it is possible that defects may develop between the date of the survey inspection and the date upon which you take occupation, particularly if there are adverse weather conditions and/or the property is vacant. If it is possible for you to do so, you should revisit the property before you enter a binding commitment to purchase and check that no obvious defects have developed.*

*You should also be aware that neighbouring owners may have statutory and common law rights over any shared parts of the building. In particular any repair or other works on a party wall (or any other "party structure" such as a floor/ceiling structure between flats) may require an agreement with the neighbouring owner under The Party Wall etc Act 1996 (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/party-wall-etc-act-1996-guidance>). If you are likely to need access onto neighbouring land or buildings to undertake repairs you may wish to ask your legal adviser about your rights of access*

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under *The Access to Neighbouring Land Act 1992* (<http://www.landlordsguild.com/the-access-to-neighbouring-land-act-1992/>). You should also note that many repair works are now covered by *Building Regulations* (<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/>).

#### **14.1 Areas requiring further investigation and/or specialist advice**

I recommend that you obtain specialist advice in respect of the following prior to purchase:

1. The dated electrical installation (Section 12.2).
2. The gas installation (Section 12.3) including the gas fire (Section 12.5) if this is to be retained.
3. The solid fuel heating appliances (Section 12.5).
4. The presence or otherwise of a safety thermostat to the hot water storage cylinder (Section 12.6).

#### **14.2 Immediate repairs**

In addition to any works arising from the further investigations recommended above, you should obtain estimates for the following essential repairs to be undertaken as soon as possible once you are in occupation noting that some of these will require provision of scaffolding or similar for safe access.:

1. Overhaul of the chimney stack (Section 9.1) and high-level roof areas (Section 9.2).
2. Replacement of the flat roof on the kitchen bay window (Section 9.3).
3. Overhaul of rainwater goods (Sections 9.5 and 9.14).

You should also check that there are no concealed issues with the plumbing installation (Section 12.4) as soon as you are in occupation.

#### **14.3 Short term**

The following maintenance works are not considered to be of immediate concern but should be undertaken within the near future:

1. Overhaul or replacement of lead coverings to flat roof areas (Section 9.3).

2. Repointing of brickwork to the external walls (Section 9.6).
3. Replacement of sub-floor air bricks (Section 9.7).
4. Overhaul and redecoration of, or replacement of, remaining roof perimeter timbers (Sections 9.8 and 9.12).
5. Re-sealing of the kitchen sink (Section 10.10).

I understand you have no immediate proposals for replacement of the external door and the old windows but, realistically, most of these items will require early replacement (Sections 9.9 and 9.10).

#### **14.4 Medium and longer term/ongoing maintenance and/or items likely to require renewal**

1. The main roof covering will give increasing cause for maintenance and the slates will eventually need to be lifted and re-nailed over a weather proofing underlay (Section 9.2).
2. You may find that some repair or replacement of lintels over door and window openings is required when the doors and window frames are replaced (Sections 9.6, 9.9 and 9.10).
3. I recommend that you budget for installation of remedial cavity wall ties as a future liability (Section 9.6).
4. The side extension to the kitchen should be considered to be a limited life structure (Section 9.14), as should the garage (Section 11.3).

#### **14.5 Areas requiring monitoring**

You should monitor ground floor internal walls and skirting boards for any evidence of developing dampness issues and obtain specialist advice as necessary (Section 10.7).

#### **14.6 Risks to the building and grounds**

Proximity of trees (Section 8.2).

## **14.7 Health and safety issues**

*This is a “bullet point” summary of any health and safety issues identified in the report and may include some matters also covered as repairing items.*

- Possible asbestos fibre content to a chimney flue (Section 9.1) and a linoleum floor covering (Section 10.9).
- Lack of safety glazing in many areas (Sections 9.9, 9.10, 9.14 and 10.9).
- Poor provision for emergency escape from the bedroom accommodation (Section 9.10).
- Fire risk arising from the use of a timber board ceiling in the kitchen (Section 10.2).
- Probable lead-based paint to old joinery items (Section 10.9).
- Trip and fall hazards internally (Section 10.9) and in the garden areas (Section 11.1) where there is also an uncovered water feature.

## **APPENDICES**

**Note: these are provided by digital file transfer.**

### **APPENDIX A: HOUSE DIAGRAM**

### **APPENDIX B: LEASEHOLD PROPERTY ADVICE SHEET**

### **APPENDIX C: REFERENCE SHEETS**

### **APPENDIX D: CONDITIONS OF ENGAGEMENT**

### **APPENDIX E: GLOSSARY**

*A unique reference resource with definitions of over 500 building, surveying and architectural terms.*

### **APPENDIX F: MAINTENANCE NOTES**

*A guide to maintaining your property.*

### **APPENDIX G: CONDENSATION INFORMATION**

### **APPENDIX H: FIRE SAFETY IN THE HOME**

### **APPENDIX I: DEFRA GUIDANCE ON LEAD PAINT REMOVAL**

### **APPENDIX J: DCLG PARTY WALL ACT EXPLANATORY BOOKLET**

**Property: Property**  
**Client: Client (see Copyright Notice on page 7)**  
**Ref: 23/\*\*\*\* Date of report: 17<sup>th</sup> October 2023**

THIS REPORT RELATES TO

## **Property**

AND, HAVING BEEN PREPARED BY THE SIGNATORY BELOW, IS HEREBY CERTIFIED AS THE ORIGINAL OR A TRUE COPY.

**SIGNATURE:**



**SURVEYOR'S NAME &  
PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS:**

**John Brownlow MRICS FISVA  
(RICS REGISTERED VALUER)**

**NAME & ADDRESS OF  
SURVEYOR'S ORGANISATION:**

**Edwards Genesis,  
82 New Hall Lane  
Heaton  
Bolton BL1 5HQ**

**DATE OF REPORT:**

**17<sup>th</sup> October 2023**

**REFERENCE:**

**JB.ML 23/\*\*\*\***