BUILDING SURVEY

OF

8 SHELLEY CLOSE
ITCHEN ABBAS
HAMPSHIRE

FOR AND ON BEHALF OF

MRS MARJORIE SMYTHE

CONTENTS

1. Introduction

1.1 Instructions

I was instructed by Mrs Marjorie Smythe of 8 Shelley Close, Itchen, Abbas, Hampshire to inspect 8 Shelley Close, Itchen, Abbas, Hampshire, and report on its general state of repair and condition.

A'full' survey such as this is as described in my scope of service for building survey reports, a copy of which you have read and is attached in appendix B of this report.

You will have noted from the scope of service that all surveys are necessarily limited and restricted and, whilst I do not propose to go into the details of this within the body of this report, I must reiterate that I cannot comment upon the condition of any of those parts of the building which were concealed, hidden or inaccessible and I am not in a position to state that these areas are free from defect.

1.2 Limitations

This report is based on a visual inspection of the readily accessible areas of the property only. No steps were taken to expose elements of the structure otherwise concealed, or to remove surface finishes for examination of the underlying element.

I was not instructed to make arrangements for specialist surveys of the electrics, gas, drainage installations, water distribution or for these to be tested by a specialist. I have however made recommendations where I believe tests should be carried out.

This report has been prepared for the sole use of Mrs Marjorie Smythe

1.3 Information provided

Prior to my inspection, I was provided with the address of the property.

1.4 Date of inspection

My inspection was undertaken on 28th April 2010.

1.5 Orientation

For the purposes of this report, I have assumed the main entrance faces north and all directional references follow this orientation. However, where references are made to 'left' and 'right' of a specific element, these directions are taken as assuming the reader is standing in the front garden, facing the front entrance door to the property.

1.6 Situation

The house is located in the village of Itchen Abbas. The village has a local pub but no further amenities. The nearest small town is Alresford which lies to the East and has amenities including individual shops, convenience stores, pubs and restaurants as well as the civic amenity site. Approximately 6 Miles to the West of Itchen Abbas is the city of Winchester which offers all the facilities that would be expected of a city and also provides major transport links to destinations throughout the country and beyond.

1.7 Weather conditions

At the time of my inspection, the weather was dry and warm but overcast.

1.8 General description

The house is of 1960's construction with fair faced brickwork external elevations together with a concrete tile covered roof. The retained windows to the house are original to the construction and are of metal Crittal design and are single glazed.

The house is set within a large plot in a cul-de-sac of similarly constructed houses which are all likely to have been built at a broadly similar time. The house has large gardens to both the front and rear with views towards the river Itchen to the rear of the house.

The house is constructed over two floors. The ground floor accommodation comprises an entrance hall, WC, Kitchen, study and large open plan sitting/dining room. The first floor accommodation includes a family bathroom, a single bedroom and three double bedrooms, one of which is en-suite.

1.9 General, legal and contractual matters

The boundary fences to the garden of the house appear to be a shared boundary line with the adjoining neighbours. I suspect that the fences are shared with each party jointly responsible for repair and maintenance although your solicitor should be asked to check the exact location of your boundaries and any responsibility you may have for their upkeep and that of any shared boundaries. It should however be noted that the fence to the rear of the garden backs onto a public footpath. It is assumed that the fence in this location is the sole responsibility of the subject house however you may like to check.

The house is of relatively recent construction and therefore it is possible that plans exist for the premises and are held by the current owner. You should ask your solicitor to enquire as to the existence of any plans and whether they can be passed onto you. Equally, you should ask for a copy of the planning approval granted when the house was constructed. The perceived age of the house would indicate that it may have been constructed before the Building Regulations came into force. In this regard a Building Regulation completion certificate confirming that the property was constructed in accordance with the relevant legislation at the time may not be available. It would not however hurt to ask, just in case the construction did fall under any regulations.

This particular area of Hampshire is not known for its mining, however isolated pockets do exist. Your solicitors should be asked to establish whether any mining or any other subterranean activities have taken place under or near the building and whether any contamination of the site has been identified and satisfactorily treated.

2. Structure

2.1 Sub-structure

I have no information on below ground condition, however I can confirm that there was no evidence of significant structural distortion or movement in the superstructure, to suggest any deficiencies with the sub-structure or foundations.

To establish the exact size and form of the sub-structure, trial holes would need to be dug. I do not consider this necessary, based upon the findings of my inspection.

3. External surfaces

3.1 Roof

The property incorporates a double pitched roof, sloping from front to rear with a central ridge and gable ends to either end of the house. The roof is covered with square profile concrete

interlocking tiles together with concrete ridge tiles. At the verge to each gable end the exposed tile edge is filled with sand and cement mortar to weatherproof the open joint.

The main roof generally appears to be in sound order. I can confirm that I saw no evidence of distortion or defect to indicate that the roof timbers have deflected or become damaged in any way. The roof is original to the construction of the building and I suspect that the roof timbers were designed to accommodate the weight of the concrete tiles.

The concrete tiles themselves could not be seen in detail due to the shallow pitch of the roof however a vantage point from the front garden at an elevated level did provide an adequate view to assess the general condition. The tiles generally appear to be well fixed and do not show signs of any significant slippage, nor do they show signs of any significant cracking or damage, although there is a significant amount of moss and algae growth on the roof which prevented a detailed inspection of large parts of the tiles. It is likely to be the case that there will be some tiles that have become damaged and cracked over the years but I suspect that this number of tiles will be few and generally as long as the tiles are cleaned down they should be seen to be in reasonable order.

The moss and algae growth to the tiles should not cause any particular problem to the concrete however significant growth will potentially reduce the water runoff from the roof and possibly allow moisture to be trapped on the roof where it may freeze during the winter months and potentially cause some damage to the surface of the tiles in the long term. I can confirm that I saw no evidence of damage to the surface of the tiles however I would recommend that from time to time the roof is cleaned down and any moss and algae growth removed.

The ridge tiles to the roof could not be seen in any detail due to the significant amount of algae growth which is greater than that on the main roof slopes. I can confirm that the ridge appears level and sound and I suspect that the majority of ridge tiles are in reasonable order beneath the algae and similar to the condition of the main tiles, however I reiterate that the tiles could not be seen in detail. Normally in such locations the tiles are joined with a cement mortar pointing to weatherproof these junctions. Once again the pointing could not be seen however it is usual for this pointing to crack up over time and I suspect that you will find that some minor hairline cracking is present to the mortar pointing. I can however confirm that from an internal inspection of the roof it is apparent that no water ingress is present which would indicate that the ridge tiles and main roof is functioning satisfactorily and serving its purpose.

At the verge to the roof the cement fillet is generally intact and in reasonable order. As is common in these areas the cement does show signs of cracking through general thermal movement and exposure to the elements and this cracking should be made good in order to prevent any significant water ingress through the joints. I reiterate that this cracking is highly common with this sort of detail and I can confirm that I saw no evidence of water ingress within the roof void to indicate that the cracking is currently causing any problems however I would recommend that the mortar is made good at the same time as cleaning the roof to prevent any problems in the future. Even after being repaired, the cracking is likely to reoccur and repair should be regarded as an ongoing maintenance issue.

The underside to this detail has been boarded using what appears to be a fibre cement board sheet in order to have a fixing in which the mortar fillet can be bedded. This boarding is generally discoloured and the exact nature of the material could not be seen in detail from ground level but it was common for boarding of this nature and application to consist of a fibrous cement material. It was also often the case with material of this nature, particular in a house of this age and type that the material contained traces of asbestos. The true nature of the material cannot however be determined from a visual inspection.

There is a possibility the boarding may be asbestos cement sheeting but, equally, it is possible the boarding is of a material which does not contain asbestos. Unfortunately, I am unable to comment as to whether the sheeting has an asbestos content, however, if you are concerned, I can put you in touch with organisations that would be able to give you the

appropriate advice. What I can however say is that the boarding is at high level, out of harms way and generally appears to be in good order and free from cracking or deterioration. Ultimately, even if the boarding does contain asbestos, it is unlikely to be disturbed and, therefore, the recommendation is likely to be that the material is not removed, but it should be noted that the boarding contains asbestos, so when any work is carried out to the roof, contractors can be made aware of its presence. It is often worse to disturb an area of asbestos as part of removal, rather than leave it in place where it is currently doing no harm.

I raise the issue, because it is something you should be made aware of, rather than wishing to raise any alarm and would suggest you give me a call if you have any concerns regarding my comments above. I reiterate that if you have any concerns you should seek specialist advice.

The property also has a flat roof which extends over the car port and garage area. This roof is felt covered with a layer of surface chippings to protect the felt beneath.

The felt to the roof is generally dated, old and cracked although there are no signs, either within the garage, or the car port that the roof is leaking in any way. I would anticipate that the felt is original to the building and has never been replaced and as such it has performed beyond its anticipated lifespan and replacement is likely to be required in the near future. There are signs of splitting and cracking to the felt which has become brittle in areas and although the roof could be nursed through with patch repairs in the short term, I would envisage that full replacement of the felt will be necessary in the relatively near future.

Despite these comments the felt seems to be performing adequately at present and the chippings to the roof covering are relatively well dispersed to protect the felt beneath. The roof, like the main roof of the house, does suffer from moss growth however this could easily be cleaned off and is not of detriment to the roof itself.

The edges to the roof in particular are exposed to a greater degree and it is in these areas where the greatest amount of defect shows, although even in these locations I can confirm that the felt does not show any signs of any significant ripping or tearing and despite being dated and showing surface crazed cracking it appears sound at present. I reiterate however that it is nearing the end of its natural life.

The junction between the car port and the main house has been protected using a lead cover flashing which has been dressed over the felt roof and chased into the main flank wall of the house. This lead is dated and discoloured and shows signs of cracking through which water could penetrate. The mastic seal that seals the junction into which the lead is chased into the flank wall of the house is poorly applied and is generally hard and brittle rather than being flexible as intended. These lead flashings will need to be replaced in order to prevent the possibility of water ingress through the junction. I can however confirm that at present there are no signs of damp within the house as a result of the cracking although it is likely to only be a matter of time and the flashings should be replaced. When these flashings are replaced it is important that they are replaced with new flashings that are installed in accordance with the guidance of The Lead Sheet Association which provides information as to appropriate design and lengths in which the lead can be laid to prolong its lifespan and prevent the possibility of premature cracking occurring in the future. Lead does suffer from a high coefficient of expansion and thus it is important that the lead is installed in short lengths to prevent significant cracking occurring.

3.2 **Chimneys**

The property is provided with a chimneystack to the left hand side which serves the fireplace within the sitting roof. This chimneybreast stands proud of the gable wall of the house as opposed to standing proud of the internal wall to provide an internal chimneybreast as is more traditionally the case. It is unclear as to how many flues are present within the chimneystack because I could not get a clear vantage point; however I suspect that it accommodates a single flue for the one fireplace in the house within the sitting room.

The main bulk of the exposed chimneystack to the flank wall is generally in good order. The chimneystack is constructed of brickwork to its entirety and the bricks generally appear to be in good sound order and free from significant cracking or defect. The mortar pointing to the bricks also appears to be in good order and free from any significant defect.

At roof level a lead chimney apron can clearly be seen above which the raised chimneystack is located and this chimneystack extends above roof level by approximately one metre. Once again this part of the chimneystack is of brick construction to match the remainder although the bricks are in much poorer condition than the remaining brickwork to the chimneybreast and house and also appear to be of a slightly different colour. The brickwork has become damaged in areas and the top surface has broken away to show the more friable surface beneath. It is likely to be the case that weather erosion will cause these exposed bricks to deteriorate at a faster rate than the remaining brickwork and you may find that replacement of individual bricks may be necessary over time in order to retain the structural stability of the chimneystack; however on the whole the stack appears level and sound and does not show the signs of any significant movement or distortion.

The remaining brickwork to the stack generally appears to be in sound order and free from significant cracking or deterioration. The stack itself does suffer significantly from moss and algae growth and I would recommend that the brickwork is cleaned down at the same time as the roof is cleaned in order to expose the fairfaced surface of the bricks beneath. The mortar pointing to the bricks generally appears to be in reasonable order and free from significant cracking or defect. I suspect that some minor hairline cracking is present which may require some re-pointing but this is highly common and on the whole the condition is reasonable.

The head of the chimney could not be seen due to its height however I can confirm that no chimneypots are present at high level. This does not mean to say that there is not an open flue through the chimneystack and it may well be that the chimneypot is either a dwarf pot or merely a pot inserted within the flue itself which does not project beyond the head of the chimneystack. In the same way I cannot confirm how the surface to the head of the chimneystack has been treated and whether this is merely the top edge of the bricks together with pointing or whether some form of cement flaunching has been used in this location. What I can however confirm is that I saw no evidence of damp ingress internally to indicate that water ingress through the chimney is an issue.

In any event I was pleased to see that the lead apron has been provided to the chimneystack just above roof level and this lead should ensure that any water that penetrates the brickwork at the head of the stack does not enter the building at high level. The condition of this lead could not be seen in detail however the areas that could be seen generally appeared sound and free from significant cracking or deterioration. Many chimneystacks are not provided with such lead aprons therefore the presence alone indicates that the house was constructed taking into account modern construction techniques at the time.

In conjunction with the lead apron, lead saddle flashings and stepped cover flashings have also been provided to weatherproof the junction between the roof and the chimneystack. These flashings could only be inspected through binoculars and generally the lead appears discoloured and dated although appears functional. This lead is installed as an individual section that has been cut with stepped flashings as opposed to a series of individual lead sections and as such will be more prone to cracking through expansion and contraction. I was unable to see any cracking to the lead through my binoculars however I suspect that the lead does show some signs of minor cracking and replacement may be warranted in the near future as the lead breaks down further. I can confirm that at present I saw no evidence of water ingress through the roof in this area however I would recommend that the lead flashings are assessed at the same time as the roof is cleaned down.

It would appear that the flue(s) within the chimney stack is open although this will need to be checked if you propose to use the fireplace within the sitting room as an open fire. It is also important where chimneybreasts and flues are not used and are capped off that ventilation is maintained to stop the build up of stagnant air and the potential for condensation within the

chimneybreasts. The chimneybreast follows the line of the external left hand wall and in older properties a fireplace would also have been incorporated in the first floor bedroom on the corresponding wall. Without further investigation it is impossible to confirm at this stage but based upon the age of the house and presence of the original central heating I would suspect that the chimney and flue merely serves the fireplace in the sitting room and no fireplace was ever in place within the bedroom. If however it turn out that a fireplace has been blocked up in this room then it should be ventilated. I am pleased to confirm that the fireplace within the sitting room has not been adapted from the original and therefore a good through flow of ventilation should be present as long as the flue is open at the head. I can confirm that I saw no evidence of condensation within the chimneybreast to indicate that it is currently an issue.

It should also be noted that an old aerial fixing is still in place to the chimneybreast. This fixing is corroded and I would advise that it is removed before it causes any issues to the chimney.

3.3 Gutters and downpipes

The house is provided with half round PVC gutters and round PVC downpipes located at each corner of the building which discharge the rainwater into the below ground drainage system. These downpipes discharge directly into the ground at the foot of the front and rear walls as opposed to discharging into a rainwater gulley.

The gutters and downpipes generally appear to be in sound order and free from significant defect. The gutters are dirty and discoloured through solar degradation however on the whole they appear well fixed and sound and generally appear to be aligned to allow adequate falls towards the perimeter downpipes. The downpipes are in slightly better order than the PVC gutters and require less cleaning however once again they generally appear to be sound and in good order and well fixed. Some of the screw fixings to brackets etc have started to corrode and you may find that deterioration, as it continues causes the fixings to break and the brackets to come away from the wall, however at present all the downpipes are secure and appear to be functioning well. The PVC is likely to be original to the house and as such is reaching the end of its design life. The components still appear to be in good functional order and may last for some considerable time yet, but deterioration is likely to continue and full replacement may be necessary in the medium term.

A further gutter and downpipe has been provided to the perimeter of the garage and car port. This gutter is located to the rear of the roof to this area with a downpipe once again discharging into the below ground drainage system. The gutter in this location is of a condition commensurate with that of the main house although the gutter has cracked to its top edge immediately adjacent to the house and this section would warrant repair. Once again the downpipe appears well fixed and in reasonable order.

The gutters are fixed to timber fascia boards which in turn are fixed to the overhanging edge of the roof rafters. The corresponding bottom edge between the feet of the rafters and the head of external front and rear walls has been in-filled using a soffit board. Both these elements have been decorated and certainly the fascia appears to be of timber construction although the nature of the material used for the soffit is unclear. In conjunction, timber barge boards and corresponding soffits have been provided to the gable at each end of the house.

The timber fascia generally appears to be in poor order. The decoration has broken down and the exposed timber beneath has started to rot in areas. Although some areas may be able to be salvaged I suspect that the entire rear fascia will require replacement as too will the front fascia although the gable ends are in slightly better order and repair may be an option in these locations as opposed to replacement. However on the whole the fascias are in poor order and full replacement should be budgeted for.

The underlying soffit board to the perimeter of the house is generally in reasonably sound order although the decoration once again is poor and the boarding does show signs of significant staining and dirt collection. Due to the presence of dirt it is unclear as to whether the soffit boarding has suffered from damp and staining however I suspect that some

dampness has penetrated into the boarding where the fascia boards have failed above. In this regard the full deterioration can only be determined by a close inspection however from my ground floor vantage point the boarding generally appeared to be relatively sound, albeit cracking between the junctions of the joints was present and full decoration and minor repair is required as a minimum. I suspect that some replacement in part will also be necessary.

I reiterate that due to the condition of the boards the full make up could not be determined. With soffit boarding of this nature in a house of this age and type it may well be the case that the boarding is of a fibrous cement material that potentially contains asbestos. In this regard if you propose to repair or disturb this material in any way I would advise that it is tested beforehand to determine whether it does indeed contain asbestos. More details on asbestos are given later within the report and in the roof section above. Of course, if the boarding is of timber then no such testing will be required.

3.4 External walls

The external walls to the property consist of fairfaced brickwork together with some PVC cladding sections installed for decorative effect. It is unclear as to whether these cladding sections are backed with brickwork or whether they replace the outer skin as a structural component in their own right.

The brickwork to the house generally appears to be in good sound order and free from significant cracking or defect. The brickwork does show signs of previous ivy growth and some algae growth however on the whole the walls are clearly visible and generally in sound order. In areas where ivy has been allowed to grow up the house it has previously been removed and an attempt has been made to remove the dead ivy. This is only in isolated areas and should not cause any problems however you may wish to attempt to remove the residue to bring back the fairface of the brickwork. The walls generally appear to be sound and true and I can confirm that I saw no evidence of significant bowing or distortion to the walls to indicate that any form of outward movement has taken place. Equally I can confirm that I saw no evidence of significant cracking within the bricks or pointing to indicate that the property has suffered from significant structural movement in the past. There is some minor stepped cracking beneath the dining room window to the rear elevation, however this is likely to be as a result of thermal movement and defect to the window and surround rather than indicative of any significant form of structural problem. Cracking does not appear to be present in any other area which indicates that the building has not suffered from any significant settlement or subsidence in the past.

The pointing to the brickwork also generally appears to be in good order. The type of pointing used appears to be struck pointing which will ensure that water runoff from the brickwork is maintained and no water collection takes place on the top surface of the bricks which might allow frost action and delamination of the surface. Often in houses of this age recessed pointing was used which exposed the top surface of the bricks and allowed such frost action to take place where water collected on the top edge. I was pleased to see that no such pointing technique has been used and generally the bricks have benefited as a result and are generally in good condition.

The pointing generally appears to be free from any significant cracking or deterioration. There are signs of some minor hairline cracking which is usual and as is equally usual, there are signs of minor hairline cracking within the bricks although this is likely to be as a result of fissures created during the firing process as opposed to being indicative of any defect within the structure and is quite common. The pointing on the whole is sound and although minor patch repairs may be necessary from time to time on the whole I would not envisage the need to carry out any significant works to the majority of the house.

The pointing to the rear of the house is in worse condition than that to the front, probably as a result of it being exposed to the prevailing weather. This pointing particularly adjacent to windows does show signs of some erosion and deterioration and gaps within the pointing are now visible. The exact cause of these holes and gaps is unclear however there is a possibility that they could be created by mortar bees which eat into the mortar and create

such holes. In this regard I would recommend that the area is inspected by a specialist to confirm whether this indeed is the case and what remedial action may be necessary. If, further to these inspections it is determined that that the pointing is damaged merely through erosion, then I would recommend that the affected areas are re-pointed in order to make good the mortar. If mortar bees are present then some treatment may be necessary prior to re-pointing.

There are signs of efflorescence to the brickwork upon the rear elevation. Normally such efflorescence only manifests itself in new brickwork where the salts leech from the bricks at times of dampness and rainfall. In this particular property it is unclear as to why such efflorescence is now present after this length of time however it is an indication that the bricks have become wet and caused the salting to take place. This salting is not necessarily an indication of any significant defect and it should be possible to clean the bricks in the affected locations to remove the salting although even after cleaning you may find that it reoccurs and further periodic cleaning may be necessary. I can confirm that I tested the walls internally for dampness behind the badly affected areas and registered no unduly high levels of dampness in these locations which would indicate that the salting relates to an external defect only and does not manifest itself internally. Indeed much of the salting does appear beneath windowsills and may be as a result of water runoff from the concrete sills as well as possibly some water ingress as a result of the poorly weatherproofed windows as detailed below. Of course, the walls are of cavity construction therefore I cannot completely rule out the possibility that some moisture is penetrating the external wall but I can confirm that if it is, it is not currently causing any problems and the cavity is performing one of its tasks as intended..

The property has been provided with a damp proof course which was installed at the time of construction. This damp proof course is clearly visible to the rear right hand corner of the property and appears to be a bitumen applied DPC located at internal ground level approximately three courses of brickwork up from the external ground level to the rear of the building. I can confirm that I registered no unduly high levels of dampness within the walls internally to indicate that the damp proof course had broken down in any way. Of course the weather had been dry for a significant period of time before my inspection however I have no reason to believe that the damp proofing within the house is not functioning satisfactorily.

It is clear that 2 no airbricks have been installed at the house one to the rear and one to the front elevations. These airbricks are located to the left hand side of the property at the front and centrally to the rear. It is unclear as to why airbricks have been installed because the ground floor within the house is of concrete construction and therefore ventilation should not be necessary however the vent bricks are in reasonable order and should not cause any harm.

The walls to the property are approximately 290 – 300mm thick which would indicate that they are of cavity construction although the majority of both the internal and external faces of the masonry are hidden by render and plaster. Therefore it is impossible to confirm the exact make up without carrying out exploratory investigations.

The walls are likely to be constructed of an internal leaf probably of brick or clay block, tied to the external brickwork using galvanised cavity wall ties.

Cavity wall construction in early properties of this age often did not contain insulation, or if it did it was minimal therefore, although I was unable to view the cavity I suspect that no insulation exists. It is possible to install insulation retrospectively and grants are often available to do so. There is no evidence externally to suggest that the current owners have had insulation installed however you may wish to ask the question and if they have, you should enquire as to whether any guarantees exist. The energy assessment on the property may also shed some light on this aspect.

In cavity wall construction the inner and outer leafs of masonry are connected using cavity wall ties. These ties are metal and have a tendency to corrode over time and subsequently fail. I was unable to view the cavity to confirm that ties are even present or that they are in

sound order, however I can confirm that I saw no cracking or bowing to the walls which would be indicative of wall tie failure.

The cladded walls to front and rear generally appear to be in reasonable order. I reiterate that I do not know what background supports the cladding or whether the cladding fulfils any structural capacity however I suspect that it does not and is for decorative purposes only. The cladding is of PVC and although dirty and stained in areas generally appears to be well fixed and in reasonable order. There is evidence of vertical strips to the cladding on the front elevation and I suspect that this is a cover detail where the strips were laid in lengths which required jointing, as opposed to lengths which covered the entire length of the front elevation. Some of these strips are discoloured and slightly dislodged and distorted however on the whole they appear satisfactory and free from significant defect. The cladding on the whole appears functional and I would not envisage the need to carry out any fundamental repairs to this element.

3.5 Windows

The windows throughout the premises are the original windows installed at the time of construction, these windows are of the metal crittal type with a combination of opening casements and top hung fan lights. The metal crittal windows are installed within a timber frame and in the case of the rear sitting room window have also been provided with a boarded panel at low level.

On the whole the windows are still functional and although the decoration is extremely poor it would appear that the majority do not show signs of significant corrosion as a result of the bare metal beneath showing through. It will however only be a matter of time before corrosion does set in and therefore if you propose to retain the existing windows then immediate redecoration is required in order to prevent the onset of corrosion to the metal frames.

The timber frames in which the windows are set also generally appear to be sound and free from significant rot or deterioration despite the poor quality of paintwork. There are signs to individual windows, particularly on the rear elevation that some rot has occurred and indeed, in particular to the dining room window it is apparent that previous repairs have subsequently broken down and further rot is present. The windows to the rear elevation where they face the prevailing weather are in significantly worse order than those elsewhere and if the windows are to be retained then some replacement of the timber surrounds will be necessary as well as patch repairs and of course complete redecoration. It has to be said however despite the poor visual appearance of the windows they are not all beyond repair and if desired they could be salvaged, albeit in a modern house these windows are now significantly outdated and the benefits in repairing and redecorating them must be considered limited as opposed to opting for complete replacement as has been done to the majority of surrounding houses.

The windows are single glazed. You will probably find that the single glazed windows do suffer from condensation and it will be necessary to wipe down the frames and timber window cills from time to time to remove any moisture and mildew however they should prove serviceable. I can confirm that I saw no evidence of rot or mildew to the windows internally at the time of my inspection, which would indicate that condensation does not appear to be a significant problem, although at this time of year condensation would be minimal in any event.

The sills to the windows comprise concrete tiled sills where the windows are located within the brickwork envelope of the building and timber sills to the cladded sections. The timber sills are in a condition commensurate with that of the frames to the windows and the same comments apply as detailed above regarding the pros and cons of replacement or repair.

The tiled sills consist of a double layer of plain Broseley tiles inserted within the external leaf of the building envelope on top of which sits the timber window frame and subsequently the metal crittal window. These tiles have been laid at an angle to allow water runoff from the sill. On the whole the tiles generally appear to be sound and in reasonable order and free from

cracking. Not all the tiles could be inspected in detail however those that could be inspected were sound and in adequate order. Once again, as with the tiles on the roof, they do suffer from some moss and algae growth which could be cleaned off however this is minimal and generally the condition is good. The mortar pointing between the individual tiles and to the bed between the two layers that make up the cill is generally sound and in reasonable order and free from significant cracking or defect. There are signs of some hairline cracking and some opening up of the junctions through thermal expansion which will require minor re-pointing in order to fully weatherproof the joint however the pointing is generally sound and in reasonable order. In any event the tiles are staggered and in theory any moisture that does penetrate through open joints in the pointing should be caught by the tile beneath and thus discharged externally along the incline of the sill. Indeed I can confirm that I registered no unduly high levels of dampness internally beneath the windows to indicate that the cills are not performing adequately

If you do propose to replace the windows then you may also consider removing the sills in their entirety and installing new window units which themselves incorporate an integrated sill detail. Alternatively it should be possible to retain and carry out minor repairs to the sills and for them to be perfectly serviceable with modern windows.

The junction between the windows and adjacent masonry has not been sealed and in many areas an open joint is present. This joint could potentially allow moisture ingress although I can confirm that I saw no evidence of ingress at the time of my inspection. Nevertheless if you propose to retain the windows I recommend that the junction is sealed using a proprietary mastic sealant to prevent the potential for water ingress in the future.

The window furniture internally is again original to the windows of the house. This furniture is basic but functional. There are a number of loose handles and stays and some running repairs will be necessary where components have become damaged but on the whole the condition is dated but adequate. It is unlikely that you will find replacements for this furniture if they are defective or if breakages occur due to the age of the windows, however on the whole the furniture is adequate and functional. Clearly if you propose to change the windows then this will not be of significance to you in any event.

It would appear that the house has been installed with steel lintels above the ground floor windows at least and it is hoped that these incorporate a cavity tray as would usually be the case, to allow any water which may penetrate the cavity to be expelled externally. There are however no external weep holes to allow water to escape and therefore I would recommend that weep holes be inserted above the window heads to allow any moisture penetration to be discharged externally. I can however confirm that with the exception of the efflorescence externally I saw no evidence of damp ingress internally or at the head of windows to indicate that damp ingress is currently a problem in these locations. Of course, in this regard if dampness is not penetrating the cavity in the first place then the lack of weep holes will not cause any issues, nevertheless as part of best practice such weep holes should have been installed and you may wish to install some retrospectively.

It should be noted that the boarded section beneath the rear sitting room window has also been boarded internally and the radiator affixed to this boarding. It was often the case in properties of this type and age that boarding in such areas did contain asbestos and therefore I refer you to my previous comments and those within the deleterious materials section of this report if you propose to replace or repair this boarding at any time.

3.6 Doors

The property is provided with a series of doors including a main door to the front of the house, a side door beneath the car port and a set of French doors into the rear garden

The front door is of timber construction with tongue and grooved panels. The door is inserted within a timber frame with glazed panels to the right hand side. The door generally appears to be sound and solid and in functional order. The timber varnish and treatment has broken down to such an extent that the bare timber beneath is visible however I can confirm that the

door does not appear to be rotten in any way and therefore reapplication of the varnish should suffice to keep the door in good functional order. The door furniture is original to the house and consists of a knocker, pull handle and a Yale lock. This furniture has been decorated and redecoration will be warranted however the furniture is functional and in keeping with the house. The timber surround to the door is generally in fair order although at low level and also adjacent to the letterbox it does show signs of rot and deterioration to the timber beneath the decorative surface. Once again the decoration is also poor and full redecoration will be warranted. I suspect that the timber frame can be salvaged and repair and some splicing in of timber will be necessary but I would not anticipate the need to completely replace the door and surround unless you wish to do so. I reiterate that full redecoration will however be required as a minimum together with some timber repair.

The side entrance door is a timber flush door incorporating a glazed obscure vision panel. The door is provided with a mortis lock and the original knob handle. The door itself opens and closes satisfactorily and is in good functional order. The door and timber surround have been decorated and the decoration, particularly to the surround is beginning to break down and full redecoration will be warranted. However I can confirm that neither the door nor the surround show any signs of rot and are generally in satisfactory order. The door furniture is basic in quality and I suspect that if you wish to retain this door that you would endeavour to change the door furniture.

The rear French doors leading into the garden are metal crittal to match the windows elsewhere on the elevation. The doors are of a condition commensurate to that of the windows and are interconnected with the rear sitting room windows and therefore the same comments apply.

3.7 Gardens and boundaries

The gardens at the house are extensive and extend around the entire perimeter of the house itself, although the largest expanse is to the rear.

The majority of the garden is lawned although the lawns are broken up with flower borders and shrubs together with some mature trees. The gardens are bounded to the left, right and rear by mature hedges although fences are also present in some areas which separate the subject house from those to either side. At the rear of the garden the boundary behind the hedge consists of a timber post and rail fence whereas the fence to the left hand side is of a metal mesh type in areas where it is visible. The boundary to the front of the garden is open to the adjacent road and pavement although a dwarf timber post and rail fence has been installed.

The garden has a patio area to the rear which has been paved using stone paving slabs, in conjunction there are areas of concrete paving slabs to the car port and the path along the rear of the house. There is also a gravel path with extends along the rear of the garden and up the right hand side which ties into the stone paved path leading from the patio.

A tarmacaddam drive extends from the road at the front of the house down to the garage and car port area where it incorporates a turning head.

The gardens throughout have been well tended and looked after and are generally in good order. Continued pruning of shrubs and trees will be necessary but on the whole the gardens, including the hedges are in good healthy order. A large proportion of the hedges along the boundary lines are thick and mature therefore although the original fences remain they cannot be clearly seen and the boundaries are now in effect demarked by the hedgerows. Indeed the fences are generally in poor order because there has not been a need to maintain them. Where the fences still serve a purpose they are in better order but all are in need of repair and maintenance.

The timber post and rail fence to the front boundary is in mixed condition. In many areas it has become rotten and fence rails have become dislodged as a consequence. Some running

repairs and replacement of individual timber sections will be required to these fences to put them back into sound order.

The tarmacadam drive is generally in good sound order. The tarmac does show signs of undulation and some wear but on the whole it is free from any signs of significant cracking or defect. Minor repairs will be necessary to fill pot holes but the condition is generally adequate and should prove serviceable over the short to medium term.

The patio, paths and concrete paved areas are all in reasonable order although over the years there has clearly been some movement of the slabs which now show signs of significant undulation. This movement has caused the edges of individual slabs to become raised and as such trip hazards have been created and the surfaces are uneven. This is highly common for areas paved in this way and is to be expected over an extensive period of time. The mortar pointing between the slabs has cracked up extensively in many areas and weed growth is present. Once again this cracking is common and running repairs will be necessary to repoint the joints and reinstate the mortar if desired, although this should not detract from the functionality. The areas are generally serviceable and should suffice. The slabs are predominantly free from significant cracking. There are signs of some minor hairline cracking and general wear and deterioration but the majority should prove satisfactory. You may wish to re-bed and realign some of the worst areas of movement and repair some areas of minor cracking but generally the areas should prove perfectly functional as garden seating and circulation areas.

The brick walls which form part of the retaining structures for the paths and patio are also in sound order. Once again they are dated and show signs of some minor cracking and moss growth but they are functional and should prove perfectly satisfactory. Running repairs and maintenance will be required but they should prove adequate.

3.8 Outbuildings

The house is provided with a garage and car port area to the right hand side. This structure is constructed of fair faced brickwork with a steel beam supporting the timber rafters to the flat roof over the structure. The garage also incorporates a steel painted up and over door and a further timber panelled personnel door.

The main structure of the garage appears sound and free from any signs of significant cracking or defect. The brickwork is in a condition commensurate with that elsewhere on the house as too is the pointing and generally appears to be in good order.

The steel beam supporting the roof is in sound structural order and free from any signs of deflection or deterioration. The beam is supported to either end off brick piers which themselves are sound and free from signs of significant distortion or cracking.

The timber joists to the roof are in sound structural order. They show no signs of significant deflection or deterioration and also appear dry and free from any signs of water staining or rot which would be indicative of any roof leaks. The timbers are of relatively large dimensions and appear adequate for the roof span. It can be seen from beneath the roof that the decking comprises of both chipboard and plywood. This may be original to the construction but may equally be an indication that the decking in part has been replaced in the past. I can however confirm that both types of boarding generally appeared to be in good sound order and free from any signs of significant defect. The condition of the felt roof covering has of course already been discussed.

The timber fascias and under board to the car port are in a condition commensurate with the corresponding elements on the main roof of the house. The same comments apply to the under board as to the boarded soffit on the main house.

The up and over door to the garage is in functional order. Some easing and adjusting will be necessary from time to time but it is in adequate order. The decoration is a little dated but predominantly intact and the door is free from any signs of significant corrosion or damage.

The personnel door to the garage is also in sound functional order. The furniture is in a similar condition to that of the door opposite which leads into the house but is perfectly functional. The door itself is predominantly free from rot and in functional order for a garage although decoration and some minor timber repairs will be necessary.

The concrete floor to the garage is in good order. It is relatively level and true and is free from any signs of significant cracking or distortion. The surface of the concrete is slightly ridged and wear to these ridges can clearly be seen due to general use but the concrete is in good sound order.

The window to the rear of the garage is again functional but is in a condition commensurate with those on the main house and will require attention.

On the whole, the garage is in good sound functional order for a building of this nature. Maintenance and repair will be necessary but the structure should prove adequate for storage of cars and garden goods.

4. Internally

4.1 Roof void

The property has a significant roof void which can be accessed via the loft hatch and integrated ladder on the first floor landing.

The roof void consists of the entire area to the full length of the house beneath the roof covering and above the first floor ceilings.

Much of the roof void cannot be seen due to household storage however a large proportion was visible and a comprehensive inspection was available. The main structure of the roof consists of a cut timber roof incorporating a series of roof trusses which have been manufactured and bolted together on site as opposed to having been factory made as would be the case in modern construction. The rafters have also been supported with intermediate purlins incorporating diagonal struts bolted to the timber trusses and roof rafters as well as a central ridge spanning the full width of the roof. Both the ridge and purlins are bedded into the gable walls of the house at either end to provide a degree of lateral support, Where the length of the timber is such that it cannot run for the entire length of the house junctions between individual sections of timber have necessarily been formed. These junctions are spliced above timber struts for additional support. Further timber binders have been installed at ceiling level which provide additional lateral support alongside the purlins and ridge.

The manufactured timber trusses span from the front to rear supporting walls with a base timber tie and are then triangulated with the roof rafter to either side securely fixed in place to the end of the timber truss. Diagonal supports are then provided to prevent any deflection of the truss. These timber trusses form the main support to the roof and in total 5 no trusses have been installed along the roof span. In between the main supporting trusses, timber rafters have been installed which themselves extend from eaves level up to the supporting ridge plate. The rafters should be skew nailed in place at the ridge board and birds mouthed over the timber wall plate which in turn should be fixed to the internal load bearing wall of the house. The fixings of the rafters to the ridge and where they are birds mouthed could not be seen however I can confirm that I saw no sign of any outward movement to the roof or indeed roof spread which would indicate that both the wall plate and the rafters are adequately fixed at eaves level. I can also confirm that I saw that the timber trusses have been bolted together using coach bolts to provide a more secure fixing to these elements which take the majority of the weight from the roof above.

A number of the coach bolts fixing the structural members of the timber trusses do show signs of minor corrosion through age. None of the fixings appear to be in a position where the corrosion has caused detriment to the trusses or has broken however I would recommend

that the position is monitored and should any further deterioration take place then it may be necessary to replace the individual nuts and bolts with stainless steel bolts.

In modern construction trussed rafter roofs are often used instead of traditional cut timber roofs, because they are quicker and easier to construct and can be fully or partially assembled off site, where weather conditions are constant. The biggest issue with trussed rafter roofs is that the members are designed for a particular property and to withstand the loads imposed upon them by the property design, therefore, if you wanted to convert the loft space of the building, it would be an extremely difficult task, which would almost certainly involve reroofing the property to install a full cut rafter roof, rather than a trussed roof. However, I suspect the accommodation available to you in the main house is sufficient and you have no wish to convert the loft, in which case the presence of a trussed rafter roof will have no impact on you. If however you may have proposals to convert the loft in the future you should be aware of the limitations created by the presence of the trussed roof. It should also be noted that In any event the head height in the loft space is limited and therefore if you propose to convert the loft space it would almost certainly involve a complete re-roofing of the house and significant structural alterations which I suspect which is why none of the adjacent houses have carried out any such work.

The underside of the rafters has been supported at intermediate level by timber purlins which run for the entire length of the roof. These purlins are inserted in relatively short lengths and have been joined at intervals with spliced joints which have then been supported to their underside with diagonal struts that in turn are bolted to the timber roof trusses in the traditional manner. These purlins have also been bedded into the gable walls at either end to restrain any lateral movement to the building. It is also noticeable that further timber ties have been bedded into the gable wall and extend across the tops of the ceiling joists for the entire width of the roof. These bearers have also been skew nailed to the ceiling joists for additional support. These bearers in conjunction with the ridge and purlins will help to prevent any outward movement of the gables and distortion to the roof and building as a whole. I can confirm that I saw no evidence of any distortion or outward movement to the gables which would indicate that the structure is sound and the supporting timbers are fulfilling their function admirably.

The roof timbers generally appear to be in good order and free from significant defect or distortion. The roof timbers do not show any signs of deflection through the weight imposed upon them and I would suspect that at the time of construction the roof was designed to engineer calculations to accommodate the weight of the tiles above together with the span and pitch of the roof designed. In any event the roof generally appears to be in good sound order and free from any signs of significant defect. I can also confirm that the roof generally appeared dry and free from the signs of any water ingress either historic or ongoing. There are some timbers which show signs of minor white staining but this is only to be expected in a house of this age and would appear to generally be down to age as opposed to any significant damp ingress or condensation in the past. On the whole I saw no evidence of any ongoing water ingress throughout the roof and the stained timbers when tested were dry. I cannot completely rule out the possibility that the staining is as a result of damp ingress but at present every indication is that it is not.

The roof is a warm roof in that it has been provided with some insulation to the outer surface, albeit of a very limited nature, as opposed to insulation above the ceiling as is normally the case. The insulation is adhered to the underside of the felt and adjacent to the timber roof rafters. In this regard the majority of the felt could not be seen due to the presence of the fibreglass insulation and therefore the quality and condition of the felt could not be assessed although what I can say is that felt is present and on the whole both the felt and insulation appear sound, dry, well fixed and free from significant defect. Some insulation has become dislodged and some has deteriorated but on the whole the condition appears reasonable. On this basis it would be reasonable to assume that the felt above is in reasonable condition and free from significant ripping or tearing.

The felt acts as a secondary barrier to the tiles to allow any water penetrating the tiles to run off into the perimeter gutters rather than come through the ceilings of the house. In this respect any minor tears or rips should not be of great significance however I can confirm that the felt at this property does generally appear to be in sound order.

Because insulation has been provided to the underside of the felt no insulation is present between the timbers of the ceiling joists. This is usual for a warm roof of this nature however based upon the particularly thin layer of insulation to the roof you are likely to find that heat loss through the building is significant and therefore I would recommend that further insulation is installed. Such minimal layers of insulation are common for buildings of this age and gives added weight to the prospect that the wall cavity also has limited or no insulation. By far the easiest way to upgrade the insulation would be to lay fibreglass quilt insulation between the ceiling joists as opposed to upgrading the thickness of insulation to the roof rafters, albeit you should take advice for upgrading the insulation to make sure that whichever route you follow you are not increasing the risk of condensation in the roof and the subsequent potential for rot deterioration. Under modern regulations it is advised that an insulation thickness of approximately 270mm be installed, therefore in this property, where the current insulation is approximately 25mm there is significant scope for improvement. Of course, in order to lay any new insulation it will be necessary to take up the boarding currently used for loft storage.

It is good practice to provide ventilation to a roof space, normally by way of soffit vents or vent tiles however in a pitched warm roof the risk of condensation is reduced and ventilation is often not a requirement of good building practice. Indeed in this particular roof, no roof ventilation has been provided. I can however confirm that the lack of ventilation is not of detriment to the timbers which generally appear to be in good order and free from any signs of rot. However if you propose to install additional insulation within the roof void the method chosen may affect the air flow and heat characteristics of the void to such an extent that ventilation may be desired in the future. The aspect of insulation must be viewed in conjunction with other elements and not in isolation therefore advice should be sought prior to upgrading. In cold roofs, where the insulation is at ceiling level, ventilation helps to reduce the build up of stagnant air and the possibility of rot to timber therefore if by installing new ventilation you create a cold roof arrangement then ventilation should also be installed.

The timber ceiling joists which were exposed within the loft also appear to be in good sound order. I can confirm that I saw no signs of significant distortion or deflection and generally the joists appear sound and free from significant defect. I can also confirm as with the roof rafters I saw no evidence of damp staining, rot or woodworm to give me cause for concern.

On the whole the roof generally appears to be in good structural order and free from significant defect and I suspect that you will encounter limited problems with the main roof structure.

4.2 Floor construction

The ground floors to the property are all of solid construction which is likely to be of concrete. The first floors are of suspended timber.

The entrance hall has timber parquet flooring on top of the concrete sub-structure. The remaining habitable rooms have carpet with the exception of the kitchen and family bathroom which have thermoplastic floor tiles and the en-suite bathroom which has a vinyl floor covering.

Unfortunately due to the presence of the parquet floor and floor coverings at ground floor level, the condition of the concrete beneath could not be assessed however I can confirm that the floors are relatively level and true and there is no sign of any significant undulation or defect within the parquet flooring, or other finishes to give me cause for concern. There is some minor undulation and changing levels at door thresholds, however this may well have something to do with the levels of the concrete within each usable area and installation of the parquet as opposed to being indicative of any structural movement.

The parquet flooring is generally in good sound order and free from significant defect or cracking. There are isolated blocks to the flooring which have become loose and dislodged and in some areas the junctions between the blocks have opened up to create a wide visible gap however on the whole the condition of the floor is good. There are some signs of wear and tear to the timber blocks however generally they are in good order and reasonably well varnished and looked after. The parquet will require ongoing maintenance to repair loose blocks and will require regular polishing and treatment but is in generally good condition.

It should be the case in concrete ground floors that a damp proof membrane has been installed beneath the concrete to prevent moisture penetration through the floor. I have no way of knowing in a house of this age if such a membrane has been installed. I can however confirm that I registered no unduly high levels of dampness within the floors which would indicate that damp ingress is not an issue, regardless of whether a damp proof membrane is present or not.

In modern construction the floor should also be insulated as a requirement of the building regulations but once again, in a house of this age there may or may not be any insulation present. You may therefore find them cold to walk upon during the winter months.

The timber first floors to the property appear sound and in reasonable order. There is some minimal deflection to the floors when walked upon, but this is considered satisfactory for a property of this age and type. They did not flex unduly when walked upon and from a structural perspective appear adequate. I can also confirm that there was no undue distortion or dropping to the floors which would indicate that they are all in satisfactory order. Unfortunately due to the presence of the carpets and vinyl floor throughout I was unable to assess the full make up of the floors, however they are likely to consist of a series of timber joists supported on the internal leaf of the external walls over which will be laid floorboards and the subsequent floor finishes. Floor joist ends can be vulnerable in some forms of construction as the floor joists will necessarily bed into external walls although here they will be protected by the cavity and so are better protected than in solid masonry construction. The risk of rot to the timbers is therefore reduced. I can confirm that the timber floors generally appeared sound and true and showed no sign of undue deflection or movement which would indicate that the timbers are of adequate size and have suffered no ill effects from rot. I can also confirm that there was no evidence in the secondary timbers to indicate that any rot was present in the house. I reiterate that the floor members were covered and inaccessible at the time of my inspection, therefore I cannot rule out the possibility of any hidden defects. However I did not see any defects in adjacent surfaces to give me cause for concern.

The carpet floor coverings throughout the house are worn marked and dated. The colours are fairly neutral but the carpets are beyond the end of their natural lifespan therefore I suspect that you will want to replace them as part of any overall refurbishment. Equally the thermoplastic floor tiles and vinyl are also dated and warrant full replacement**.** It should be noted that thermoplastic floor tiles in this age of house often contain traces of asbestos. In this regard, as part of any removal and replacement you should take appropriate advice and precautions.

4.3 **Staircase**

The full make up of the staircase could not be determined due to the presence of floor finishes however it appears to be a combination of metal and timber with the balustrading being of metal and the main staircase itself together with strings being of timber. The staircase is particularly sound and solid and generally in good order. I reiterate that I was unable to see the timber of the treads and risers but I saw no evidence of distortion or defect to give me cause for concern that the timber is not in good order beneath the finishes. In fact the staircase is more solid than many staircases in modern houses and is generally in good sound order. The metal balustrading is also in good order and well fixed. It has been provided with a varnished timber handrail which is also solid and in good order. The entire staircase and balustrading will require redecoration however from a functional perspective it is fully secure and in good order.

It is common for the underside of staircases to show signs of woodworm infestation however in this particular staircase the underside has been boarded using plasterboard sheeting and therefore the timber cannot be inspected. In this regard I cannot rule out the possibility that some woodworm is present, however the probability of significant infestation is limited by the presence of the boarding. I can also confirm that the staircase is solid and shows no outward signs of significant deterioration. In a property of this age and type it is unlikely that any form of recent timber treatment has been carried out however you may well wish to ask the vendors whether it has and whether any guarantees might be available.

4.4 Internal walls

The internal walls to the premises consist of a combination of solid masonry walls and timber stud walls. The masonry walls comprise predominantly of the main spine wall which runs through the house from side to side at both ground and first floor levels, a further masonry wall between the central bedroom and the master bedroom and the majority of the ground floor walls. The remaining walls, particularly those at first floor are of stud work.

The makeup of the masonry walls could not be determined due to the presence of plaster and decorative finishes however they are likely to be of brickwork or clay block. Indeed, it can clearly be seen within the roof void that the internal supporting leaf of the structure consists of a combination of clay blocks and bricks which would indicate that the hidden structural elements of the walls behind the brickwork façade also comprise of these elements. I can confirm that the majority of walls do show signs of some hairline cracking albeit due to the age of the property it is likely to be the case that this cracking is as a result of minor thermal expansion and contraction, together with some cracking through shrinkage and cyclical movement of the house. I can confirm that I saw no evidence of significant cracking or damage to the walls to indicate any form of significant structural movement to the house. This is reinforced by the lack of any structural cracking to the external envelope of the building which gives added weight to the fact that the house has not suffered any significant structural movement in the past. I can also confirm that where walls have been papered there are no signs of ripping or tearing to the paper to indicate that any cracks are present beneath the decorative finishes.

There is a relatively significant crack above the left hand head of the window to the rear central bedroom which extends through to the ceiling of this particular room. The cause for this crack is unknown however the corresponding crack on the other side of the window would indicate that some form of movement has taken place in this locality. It may well be the case that the lintel above this window has become defective and expanded through corrosion and caused the cracking to occur or it may just be cracking along a naturally weak point in the structure through thermal movement. I can however confirm that there is no evidence of defect in the adjacent surfaces and the cracking does not appear to be indicative of any form of significant or more widespread structural movement in this area of the house. It is likely to be as a result of a specific issue relating to the lintel and head of this particular window. In this regard I would recommend that as part of any repair the internal plaster is hacked off and the position beneath assessed in order to determine what form of structural components are present and the most appropriate method of repair. The cracking does not appear to be indicative of a significant structural problem nevertheless investigation will be required and repairs over and above simple filling of cracks may be necessary to make good the structure and eradicate any ongoing defects.

The plaster to the walls beneath the wallpaper appears to be in generally good order. Clearly it couldn't be seen and there are areas where it is a little hollow though age and shrinkage cracking, however, generally the condition appears sound albeit the true condition is masked somewhat by the finishes. You may well find that when you next come to redecorate any areas of damaged plaster will require repair prior to redecoration, however on the whole you should find that most of the plaster is in good order and simple filling is all that will be necessary. The preparation of the walls is likely to be more extensive where wallpaper is stripped off but even in these areas the majority of the plaster should hopefully prove

relatively sound and full re-plastering should not be necessary to produce an adequate background, unless of course you wish to re-skim the walls as a matter of aesthetic choice.

You may well notice that there is some cracking at the junction between the timber stud walls and adjacent masonry walls and this also includes the ceilings. This cracking is highly common and occurs due to a difference in expansion rates between the masonry and timber and unfortunately cannot be fully remedied. It will be necessary to fill and redecorate cracks from time to time however they will reoccur and will continually need to be made good. This is a highly common form of cracking and is not indicative of any form of structural movement to the building.

At ground floor level the dining and sitting room are created as an open plan area and thus the solid masonry wall separating the master bedroom from the central bedroom above is supported at high level by a beam that is boxed in at ground floor level. The exact nature of the beam could not be determined however I suspect that it comprises either concrete or steel spanning from the rear wall of the house to the central spine wall. I can however confirm that I saw no evidence of cracking or deflection to the beam to indicate that it suffers from any structural deficiency, nor indeed could I see any evidence of significant cracking to the masonry wall that it supports at first floor level, which would indicate that the beam above is functioning well. You may however like to ask you solicitor to investigate whether the original construction plans for the house are available to confirm the dimensions of the beam for future reference.

4.5 Ceilings

The ceilings throughout are of plasterboard with sheets affixed to the underside of the ceiling joists at ground and first floor level. The majority of the ceilings have been decorated using lining paper which has subsequently been decorated. In many areas the ceilings have also been provided with a perimeter cornice which is of a polystyrene or plaster material that has been decorated.

On the whole the ceilings are generally sound and in reasonable order. They do show signs of cracking beneath the lining paper and this cracking is particularly pronounced to the head of the staircase and landing. This cracking is common and probably due to initial shrinkage of the ceilings shortly after construction as well as general household movement such as walking on floors and slamming doors etc. I saw nothing to indicate that the cracking is as a result of any form of significant structural movement at the house.

In the majority of areas it will be necessary to strip the lining paper and redecorate the ceilings and you may well find that due to the age of the background material, relining of the ceilings will be necessary in order to provide an adequate finish on which to decorate, where the plaster has cracked, become friable and distorted to a greater degree. It may however be the case that simple filling and repair of the cracks followed by direct decoration using an emulsion paint may provide an adequate finish, however I reiterate that I suspect the boarding will need the lining paper to mask any minor defects and blemishes that cannot be completely hidden. Although you could equally apply a new skim coat to the underside of the ceilings in order to provide a fresh new finish to the board onto which paint could be directly applied.

Where the cracking is particularly pronounced to the head of the staircase and within the central rear bedroom it is likely to be necessary to fully skim the ceilings in these areas or possibly replace the boarding in its entirety, in order to provide an adequate finish. It may also be necessary to provide additional fixings to the existing board to prevent any future movement and provide greater support to the existing ceiling structure.

On the whole however the ceilings are in reasonable order despite the cracking and repair followed by redecoration should suffice rather than any requirement to completely replace them. The position is different from room to room but on the whole the condition of the decoration makes the ceilings look worse than they appear to be on closer inspection.

The ceiling within the sitting room does show signs of water staining from the ensuite bathroom above. This would indicate that there has been, or still is a leak within the ensuite bathroom which will require rectification.

The cornices to the perimeter of many rooms at first floor level appear to be of polystyrene. The cornices themselves show signs of some cracking and deterioration however on the whole they are reasonable and minor filling and subsequent redecoration should suffice to enhance their appearance. These comments also apply to the plaster cornice at ground floor level which is in fact in better order than the polystyrene cornice at first floor level. However you should be aware of the potential dangers of polystyrene in the event of a fire. Polystyrene, particularly where installed during the period in which this house was constructed did often contain properties which could be regarded as hazardous to health if burnt. The full make up cannot be determined without testing and in fact many modern polystyrene materials are harmless, but you should be aware of the potential issues if they are of an older polystyrene that may be hazardous. In this regard you may well wish to remove and dispose of the cornicing when you redecorate or certainly investigate the properties to determine whether it is of a nature that would be classed as hazardous or harmless.

Due to the age of the house and the lack of decoration for some considerable time the ceilings look worse than they actually are from a structural perspective. They are not without defect or cracking, however many of the cracks are along board junction lines and as a result of general movement within the house as well as some thermal expansion and contraction which has not affected their stability or their adequacy to perform their task. Such cracking is highly common and is present in most older houses to a greater or lesser degree. The visual deterioration is exacerbated by the fact that many lining sheets are coming away from the ceiling and thus giving the impression that the ceilings are themselves coming away from their fixings, which on the whole they are not. As part of any redecoration there will be repairs necessary and these may include filling of cracks and the provision of a greater number of fixings to the boards, but the existing ceilings should nevertheless prove adequate unless you wish to carry out a more significant overhaul as part of an extensive refurbishment.

In any event even after repair and redecoration, it is likely to be the case that through general usage of the house and movement within the building such as slamming doors and walking on floors etc that existing cracks within the ceilings will begin to open up again over time; however as part of a decorative cycle of a house, as long as these cracks are made good then it would be unusual for the ceilings to require complete replacement.

4.6 Doors and woodwork

The doors throughout the house consist of hollow core flush timber doors which have been painted at first floor level and are varnished at ground floor level. The doors are original to the house and retain the original door handles and latches.

The doors are generally in sound order and free from significant damage or defect. The majority of doors open and close satisfactorily however the door to the right hand rear bedroom does bind a little on the door frame. It is unclear as to why this door binds as none of the others do, however minor easing, adjusting and shaving of the door should ensure that it opens and closes satisfactorily in the future. I can however confirm that there is no sign of significant distortion or movement to the door head in this location to indicate that any form of structural movement has occurred to the house. Equally I can confirm that I saw no evidence of distortion to any other door heads within the house giving further weight to the assumption that the house itself has not suffered from any subsidence.

The doors are particularly flimsy and light weight and you will almost certainly find that when windows are opened they slam shut however they are nevertheless original to the house, functional and free from any signs of significant damage or defect. Some re-varnishing and

decorative repairs will be required to make good minor scratches and wear and tear etc but they should prove adequate.

The door furniture is basic in quality and predominantly consists of a door latch with lever handles which again are original to the house. All handles generally appear to be in reasonable order and function satisfactorily. They are worn and marked but on the whole are in good functional order. Some locks to doors are a little temperamental but all appear to work.

A single set of glazed timber doors is provided to the lobby between the main front door and the hall. These doors consist of a set of double rebated doors with a series of four obscure vision panels to each door, together with pull handles to either side. These doors are again original to the house and perfectly useable, functional and generally in good sound order. The pull handles are once again basic in quality but sound and functional.

The remaining timberwork throughout the house consists of timber skirtings, architraves and window boards. On the whole the timberwork is in good order and free from significant damage or deterioration through impact or general household use. There are signs of some cracking to mitred joints of skirtings and architraves however the timber does not show signs of any significant defect through any form of structural distortion and predominantly the cracking is as a result of thermal movement and general movement within the house from slamming doors etc. As with the remainder of the house the timberwork will require redecoration but it is considered to be sound and the majority of the features are original to the construction of the house and fully in keeping with a property of this age and type. Any cracking should merely be appropriately filled prior to redecoration and this should provide an adequate finish.

The window boards do show signs of cracking particularly where they abut the window frames and once again this cracking is likely to be as a result of thermal movement between the differing materials. This cracking has been exacerbated in areas due to some distortion of the timber, probably as a result of condensation from the windows and in the case of the rear first floor bedrooms, this condensation has caused some moderate damage to the timber which will require repair. However on the whole the thermal expansion is moderate and simple filling prior to redecoration should rectify the defect, although the cracking is likely to reoccur over time. In the isolated areas where the condensation has caused the window board and bull nose strip to rot and deteriorate, this strip will require replacement with new. Of course if you propose to replace the windows entirely then more significant works are likely to be required to the window boards as a result and these issues can be addressed at that time.

4.7 Decorations

The property has not been fully decorated for some considerable time. There are individual rooms where more recent decoration has taken place however on the whole it is considered that the entire property warrants redecorating before you move in. That is not to say that you could not move into the house as it stands at present. The condition is not such that it is hazardous to health or dangerous in any way however I would anticipate that due to the condition of the decorations, where wallpaper is coming adrift from both walls and ceilings that you would like to immediately enhance the appearance and implement a cycle of redecoration with a view to redecorating the entire house over as short a cycle as possible. The easiest way to do this is to carry out complete decoration whilst the house is empty.

In conjunction with the redecoration you may well find that when walls are stripped of paper the plasterwork behind has suffered from shrinkage cracking or may have deteriorated through the application of the paper and paste. Thus it may not be possible to prepare the walls to such an extent that emulsion paint can be applied directly to the plaster surface. In this regard it may be necessary to repaper the walls prior to redecorating with either a lining paper or decorative wallpaper. Alternatively you may well wish to skim the walls in order to provide a blemish free surface on which to apply paint directly.

I have no reason to believe that the walls beneath the decorative finishes are in such an order that simple filling and rubbing would not suffice prior to redecorating however in older buildings it is commonly the case that lining paper is essential in order to mask any blemishes to the plaster beneath and therefore I would suspect that this is likely to be the case at this particular property. Of course, personal standards differ and you will only be able to judge the condition for yourselves when the wallpaper has been stripped and the walls beneath exposed.

It should also be noted that a large number of the radiators within the house have been decorated and these will also require redecoration if they are to be retained. I would recommend that an appropriate radiator enamel finish be applied to these radiators in order to ensure that the decoration lasts, if indeed the existing paint can be adequately removed and the radiators salvaged, rather than needing to be replaced and the task is not more difficult and costly than replacing the radiators in their entirety. It may well be the case that, when decoration is removed, it damages the radiators beyond repair and they will therefore need replacement or you may well wish to replace them in order to achieve a standard factory applied enamel finish in any event.

5. Services

5.1 Heating

The property is heated by way of a hot water filled radiator system which is served by the boiler located in the kitchen. This boiler is located on the external wall and vented externally with a flue penetrating through the rear wall of the house. This boiler then, heats up water from the gravity fed system and provides it to the radiators throughout the premises. The system also has an expansion tank within the loft which tops up the water in the heating circuit where evaporation takes place to ensure that the pressure is maintained. The main incoming gas supply is located within the cupboard beneath the stairs where the meter is also housed.

The boiler will heat up the hot water which is then passed through the radiators within the property. In modern construction, such systems consist of a two pipe system with a flow and return pipe connecting to the boiler and passing through each radiator in the property. The boiler heats the incoming water and passes it through the flow pipe into each radiator which then subsequently heats up. As the water cools down in the radiator it is passed back through the system using the return pipe which returns to the boiler and is then reheated and passed round the circuit again. This is a particularly common system and in this way it ensures that all radiators receive hot water at the same temperature for optimum efficiency. In older systems a single pipe system was often used where no separate flow and return pipes are installed, but a single pipe is installed which 'daisychains' through each individual radiator in turn. In such a system the water tends to cool down by the time it reaches the final radiator and as such the first radiator in the system gets particularly hot but the latter radiators do not benefit so much from this heat. Such a system is particularly inefficient and would now be regarded as obsolete to today's standards. It is unclear to see from this layout whether it is a one pipe system or a flow and return. Based upon the age of construction I have my suspicions that it might be a single pipe system but it will need to be inspected by a plumber to confirm the full extent and layout of the system if it is of concern to you.

I can confirm that at the time of my inspection the heating was tested at the house and the majority of the radiators heated up and provided sufficient heat to the rooms in question. There were however some radiators that did not heat up particularly well. I suspect this is a case of air blocks in the system or valves being stuck as opposed to the system not functioning because the majority of the radiators did heat up which is a general indication that the system is functioning satisfactorily. I would anticipate that the current system provides sufficient heat in normally cold conditions.

The boiler is particularly old and inefficient and although the heating was tested at the time of my inspection and the boiler clearly works, it is reaching the end of its design life. The boiler along with the remainder of the heating system would appear to be original to the construction of the house and may now be some 40 years old and I would anticipate that replacement will be required in the near future. The boiler is likely to be particularly inefficient in comparison to modern boilers and therefore you may well consider replacing the system with a more modern fuel efficient combination boiler as part of any refurbishment work which may be carried out at the house.

Despite it's age, the heating is relatively flexible in that the boiler has been provided with a basic programmable timer to allow the system to be switched on and off at particular intervals and a room thermostat has also been installed within the hallway to allow the heating to trip in and out when the set temperature is reached or the temperature falls below what has been set. In this regard it will be possible to leave the heating on fully and at a set temperature and the house will maintain this temperature based upon the readings of the thermostat. This will ensure that the system is kept relatively efficient despite the age of the boiler.

Having said that, unfortunately the radiators have not been provided with thermostatically controlled valves to allow regulation of the temperature to each individual radiator which will offset some of the benefits of having a room thermostat. I would recommend that thermostatic controls be installed to the radiators, whether you propose to replace the radiators or not, in order to conserve energy by only using heat where it is absolutely necessary. The valves will enable you to have some rooms warmer than others depending upon their use. It should prove relatively easy to install the valves retrospectively if you do retain the radiators, although it may be necessary to adapt the pipe work to accommodate them. If the radiators are changed then the valves should be changed with them and indeed on a modern system I would expect thermostats to be installed as a matter of course. It should be noted that these valves are prone to sticking therefore if you do install them you should regularly turn them to ensure that they do not seize up.

The existing valves to many of the radiators are damaged and the screw heads have been removed and therefore it will be necessary to replace many of the valves in order to allow the radiators to be turned on and off.

The radiators throughout the premises are original to the building and consist of both single fin and double fin metal radiators. These radiators are now old fashioned and although they heat up and work sufficiently well, compared to modern radiators they are particularly large and once again inefficient. In this regard you may well wish to replace the existing radiators with newer radiators of a more efficient nature and newer design, however if you wish to retain the current radiators then I can confirm that they all appear to be in reasonable order and functioning satisfactorily. The radiators have been decorated previously and the decoration is starting to discolour and yellow and redecoration will be required as part of the full redecoration of the house, however I saw no particular defect in the radiators to indicate that they would all require replacement for purely functional reasons. I refer you to the points raised earlier, regarding the decorations and the possible need to replace radiators for aesthetic reasons if an adequate finish cannot be achieved in the future.

The boiler appeared functional with no evidence of any defects. Older systems can however be prone to more frequent break downs through worn parts or general age. In this regard the system should be serviced regularly to prolong its life but ongoing, possibly costly, repairs should be anticipated. The system is generally old and I would envisage that you may need to replace the boiler in the short to medium term, although if it has been well serviced it may be in better condition than it looks. I would advise that you investigate whether the boiler has been regularly serviced and whether records are available.

The current heating system appears perfectly adequate and functions satisfactorily despite its obvious old age. In this regard there is no specific reason why it cannot be maintained in its current useable condition and perform adequately for some years to come. Equally however it could prove problematic from day one. Unfortunately with systems of this age it is impossible

to give a definitive time line. You may well feel that it is more cost effective and hassle free for you to replace the system in its entirety including boiler and radiators to introduce a newer more efficient system with which you can have surety that repair and maintenance will be minimal in the medium to long term. In this regard if you propose to change the heating to a more modern system it is likely to require adaptation of the pipe work and as such although much of the hidden pipe work beneath floors supplying the radiators may possibly be reused you will need to get guidance from your plumber as to the condition of the existing pipe work and how much adaptation or replacement will be necessary to accommodate the additional pressure of a new boiler. There will also be considerable upheaval whilst floor boards are raised etc for the pipes to be laid and adapted. In this regard, the timing of the works will need to be carefully considered if you choose to go down this route.

5.2 Electrics

The main incoming electrical supply to the house is located within the ground floor lobby beneath the stairs. It can clearly be seen that the electrics have been upgraded in the past with the installation of a consumer unit with miniature circuit breakers all of which appeared to be in reasonable order. The presence of miniature circuit breakers will ensure that if an electrical fault occurs then the electrics will "trip" out rather than blow a fuse. This is a modern standard and has the added benefit of both being safer and enabling the breaker to be "tripped" back to an on position without the need to replace any fuses, as would have been the case on the original circuit. I have no way of knowing when this upgrade took place but I would hope that at the time of installation an electrical test certificate was produced. You should ask your solicitor to obtain a copy of this certificate, if it is available, to provide you with added assurances over the quality and safety of the electrical systems at the house.

Although the consumer unit has been replaced the evidence suggests that the main electrical switches and circuits throughout the premises are likely to be original to the construction of the house. The wiring on the whole is therefore likely to be circa 40-50 years old and the will not comply with current regulations. I was pleased to see that the new distribution board and miniature circuit breakers have been installed and this will increase the safety of the original system however the quality of hidden wiring is impossible to determine. I have no reason to believe that the wiring is unsafe in any way and certainly I would anticipate that when the distribution board was installed a full electrical test would have been carried out on the system but if no such test was carried out then I would suggest that you have your own test commissioned so that you understand any shortcomings in the electrics.

The sockets and light switches do look dated compared to modern electrical installations however they are predominantly undamaged and generally appear to be functional and in working order.

I was pleased to see that power sockets had been provided at regular intervals within the habitable rooms, although the number of sockets is limited in some rooms and therefore I would suspect that you may want to upgrade the system to provide additional power to accommodate modern day living. If for any reason you do wish to add to the electrical system, you should employ the services of a suitably qualified electrician to test the capacity of the existing cables, to ensure there is no risk of overloading the ring main by adding new sockets. In any event, DIY electrical work is now prohibited and any work to electrics should be carried out by a suitably qualified electrician under the Building Regulations. At present the extent of the system seems adequate for the current owner, although there are signs that extension leads and additional socket banks are used to power equipment where the current installation is inadequate. I suspect that you will have the same problem in certain rooms and will either have to follow the same principle or see if additional sockets can be installed.

Obviously, you will need to get a qualified electrician to carry out any work and they will be able to guide you as to any additional work that may be necessary. From looking at the quality of some of the fittings I would anticipate that some upgrading work may also be required to the ring main and other wiring to bring the house up to standard. In this regard I cannot rule

out the possibility for the need to rewire parts of the house in order to accommodate any new sockets. It is unfortunately the case that electrical regulations are retrospective therefore if significant work is undertaken to a system the whole system will need to comply with the latest regulations and not merely that part which is being adapted. In this regard you may find that the older components, although being functional, do not comply and will need replacement. Based upon the age and condition of the electrics you may like to get the opinions of an electrician before you exchange contracts or budget for a complete rewire of the house, particularly bearing in mind the further comments above and below.

I can confirm that at the time of my inspection the electrical systems were not tested however, the occupants of the house were using televisions and kettles etc, therefore the systems do work and I suspect they are in functional order albeit I reiterate that you should ask your solicitor to confirm if any electrical test certification is available and if so whether you can obtain a copy to confirm that the system is also safe.

I can confirm that the lights were tested at the time of my inspection and they all appeared to function satisfactorily although clearly bulbs will need to be changed from time to time.

Of course you may well wish to complete a full wholesale refurbishment of the property before you move in, in which case it would be sensible at that time to upgrade the electrics to modern standards whilst the building is in a state of upheaval. If such a programme of works is anticipated then I would envisage that, other than the main distribution board and circuit breakers, the remainder of the wiring, switches and sockets will need to be stripped out and replaced in order for the electrician to put a test certificate on the system. I do however reiterate that the system is currently in functional order and I have no reason to believe that it is not safe and could not be kept, if you did not want to upgrade the electrics at this stage.

5.3 Fittings

The property is provided with an ensuite bathroom to the master bedroom incorporating a bath, WC and wash hand basin. There is a further family bathroom at first floor level incorporating the same number of fittings but with an additional shower above the bath. A WC is provided at ground floor level together with a wash hand basin.

The kitchen at ground level is provided with a stainless steel kitchen sink and drainer together with a small number of original kitchen units. The kitchen also incorporates a freestanding gas oven and washing machine as well as the floor mounted boiler.

The kitchen, WC and bathrooms within the house are all original to the construction and are therefore considerably dated. The WC and bathrooms are generally in good sound order and the fittings are all functional, therefore there is no specific reason to replace any of the fittings; however they are dated and in particular the ensuite bathroom is of a colour which may not be to your liking. I would anticipate that you would have a plan to completely overhaul the facilities within the property with new more modern fittings, although it is not essential that this is done immediately because the fittings are generally in useable and clean condition.

The fittings within the family bathroom and the ground floor WC are white in colour and as such are of much more neutral taste than the fittings within the ensuite. They are sound and functional but as with all components of that age are now showing signs of general wear. The taps and fittings to the facilities are again all original to the construction and although being functional and in satisfactory order will require repair from time to time to replace washers and small parts etc. It was also noted that although appearing to be original, the taps to the hand basins do not match those of the baths. It should also be noted that the shower in the family bathroom is connected to the taps of the bath and is not thermostatically controlled. The shower is perfectly functional but is not as user friendly as a mixer shower would be, therefore you may consider installing a new shower. The shower also has a curtain as opposed to a screen or enclosure.

There is a degree of tiling to the baths and splash backs for the hand basins. This tiling is predominantly white in colour and in satisfactory order. The tiles and grout are a little

discoloured but they are generally free from cracking. The extent of tiling is minimal and the majority of the walls in each room have been papered. Although the tiling could be retained I suspect that as part of any redecoration or overhaul to the bathrooms you will also replace the tiling to suit your own requirements.

Equally the kitchen is very basic and dated and I would envisage that you would desire to replace the kitchen in its entirety with a new modern fitted kitchen, perhaps more so than the bathrooms. There is nothing fundamentally wrong with what is in place but the extent of units is limited by today's expectations and the facility is basic. I did not test the gas cooker but you may like to ask whether it is working and forms part of the sale. Equally you may like to ask whether any of the white goods are to be left in the house.

There is also scope to carry out some form of extension / alteration to the kitchen in order to provide a larger, more family friendly space which is more suited to modern living. Indeed many adjacent houses have incorporated part of the car port to provide greater useable space.

All the fittings are in functional order and satisfactory and could be retained, however there are signs of some leaking to the ensuite bathroom within the ceiling of the sitting room. Therefore if the proposal is to retain the fittings in this area then some investigation and remedial action will be necessary. It can be seen that a joint to the WC in the ensuite has been taped up which is presumably the cause of the leak in the sitting room.

5.4 Plumbing

The plumbing to the house consists of pipe work throughout that is copper and wastes and overflows which are of PVC. The pipe work supplies and discharges from the relevant fittings in the bathrooms, WC and kitchen, from where it connects into the soil and waste pipe located internally to the front of the house and then into the below ground drainage system.

Coldwater is supplied via the mains and is fed through the supply pipe and into the coldwater storage tanks located within the loft space, these tanks also feed the hot water cylinder located in the first floor airing cupboard, which is heated via an electrical immersion and the boiler located within the kitchen. The location of the incoming supply and stopcock could not be determined but is likely to either come into the front of the house and extend up through the bathrooms or come into the kitchen to be distributed to the boiler and water storage tanks. Over flow pipes have been provided to the WCs in the family bathroom and ground floor WC and discharge externally through the front wall of the house. No such overflow is present to the WC in the en-suite however there is an indication that the overflow may connect into that of the family bathroom. These overflows will ensure that if the ballcock fails within the WC's any water discharges into the drainage or externally rather than leaking internally. Where an overflow is not provided as may be the case with the WC in the en-suite it will be the case that if a ball cock gets stuck the WC cistern is liable to overflowing. Such an occurrence is uncommon but nevertheless a possibility where an overflow is not provided.

Hot water is supplied to the fittings from the hot water storage cylinder within the airing cupboard. This cylinder is factory insulated and appears to be in sound functional order. The immersion to the cylinder was not tested at the time of my inspection. The hot taps were tested in the main bathroom and I can confirm that hot water was available when desired. It should be noted however in a system of this nature that hot water is stored within the cylinder and will only be available at certain times of the day when the hot water system is activated by use of the boiler or immersion or if the stored hot water has retained its temperature. In this regard the system will be less efficient than a modern system where a combination boiler will provide instantaneous hot water on demand at any time of the day or night, rather than storing water even when it is not going to be used. Each system has it's benefits and drawbacks but it tends to be that most modern systems now work on an instantaneous basis rather than hot water storage, but ultimately it comes down to choice. The main benefit of storage however, is that you maintain an airing cupboard. Of course, if at any stage you do need to change the boiler you could change the functionality of the system at the same time.

The system is complimented with header and expansion tanks within the loft. These tanks are of plastic and appear to be in sound order and free from cracking. The lid to the cold water storage tank is damaged and requires replacement in order to prevent contamination of the water. It would appear that much of the pipe work within the roof void has been lagged, although this lagging is dated and not to modern standards therefore some upgrading should be considered. The content of the material used is unknown however it has been known for lagging in buildings of this age to contain asbestos, therefore the same comments apply regarding removal of this element as with the floor tiles etc. The tanks themselves have not been lagged and once again I would recommend that lagging be considered to prevent freezing.

I was pleased to see that there is an overflow pipe to the storage tanks leading out of the eaves to the rear of the building. The tanks contain ball cocks similar to those on the WC's therefore the same comments apply. I can confirm that at the time of my inspection the ball cocks were in sound functioning order.

The plumbing systems throughout generally appear to be satisfactory and I saw no evidence of any leaking to pipes. The systems were tested at the time of my inspection and all functioned well.

5.5 Drainage

The waste to the WCs all discharge into the internal soil stack which is boxed in within the first floor bathroom and ground floor WC. This soil stack then discharges into the below ground drainage system and into the inspection chamber located directly outside the front door of the house.

From this inspection chamber the waste discharges to the right hand side of the property and probably connects into the further inspection chamber on the driveway although the cover for this chamber could not be lifted and therefore I cannot categorically confirm whether the pipe passes through this chamber or not, although logic dictates that it should. I can however confirm that the pipe runs below ground in this direction towards the right hand side of the house and whether it connects into the chamber or not is likely to run towards the sceptic tank located in the rear garden. If you would like to understand the drainage in greater detail you should ask the vendor if they have any construction plans from when the building was built or alternatively you could carry out a drainage survey and plot the drains yourselves.

I can however confirm that I was able to view the inspection chamber to the front of the house adjacent to the front door and it is generally in good order. The metal cover is free from significant corrosion or defect and generally sits well in the frame. The internal aspects of the chamber are also in good order and free from significant cracking or defect as too are the clay pipes which on the whole appear sound and in functional order. I can also confirm that I saw no evidence of blockage or defects to the pipes which appeared free flowing when the WC's were flushed.

The sceptic tank was not inspected however I am led to believe that it is in sound functional order. A sceptic tank is a common way of dealing with 'off mains' sewage i.e. where a connection to a mains sewer is not available. It is highly common in rural or semi-rural locations for a system of this nature to be incorporated. The fully characteristics of such a system can be investigated in greater detail however in brief; A private onsite septic system is designed to be functional and sanitary. It basically receives all the water waste that is expelled through your home's plumbing and treats it to extract the useable water waste that can be absorbed by the soil on the property. In a nutshell, a septic tank separates solid waste from liquids. The solid waste is stored in the septic tank for removal at a later date. Solid waste exists in two forms - a top layer of grease referred to as scum, and a bottom layer of solids more commonly known as sludge. In a septic tank, the liquids that are separated from solid waste are called effluent and they are dispersed throughout the soil on the property by a soakaway system. The soakaway is a part of the septic system, which is often buried just a

few feet away from the septic tank and helps the effluent flow from the septic tank into the soil. The solid waste element is retained within the tank and needs to be emptied on regular basis. These intervals will depend on numerous factors including, size of tank and number of occupants but it would normally be expected that the tank should be emptied at least once a year in a household with average occupancy. You may like to ask the vendors when the tank was last emptied and get details of the company used for future reference. Although the tank was not inspected I can confirm that I saw no defect in the surrounding ground such as sodden soil or depressions in the surface to indicate that there are any problems with the tank.

The soil stack projects above roof level with a vent to discharge noxious fumes externally as is common practice. However as an internal stack, the full extent of the pipe could not be seen due to the boxing therefore I cannot comment on its condition. I can however confirm that I saw no defect within adjacent surfaces to indicate that the soil stack is not functioning satisfactorily.

The rainwater goods to the property discharge directly into the ground and from there it is unclear as to where they discharge. It may be the case that they connect into soak aways which disperse the water into the ground surrounding the building or it may be the case that the rainwater is also discharged into the below ground drainage system and then into the sceptic tank along with the waste water. I suspect the former but once again if you are particularly interested in the layout of the drainage you could have it inspected. However I saw no evidence of defect to surrounding areas to indicate that any such investigation would be warranted on the back of any structural deficiencies to the house.

6. Timber decay

A Number of the significant structural components within the property are of timber construction, namely the roof trusses and the suspended timber first floor. Consequently the risk to the building of any outbreak of timber decay would have serious consequences.

With regard to woodworm I would expect timber within a property of this age to have been suitably treated for woodworm infestation at the time of construction, or at least the timber components used should have been adequately treated at source. I can confirm that the individual timbers that I was able to inspect in the house showed no signs of woodworm infestation albeit this inspection was very limited. The floor timbers were concealed but, again I suspect that these are in good order. The floors felt solid when walked upon and were not too springy, indicating that they are sound and free from any form of infestation. The other areas of timber such as doors, skirting's and architraves etc have been painted and the likelihood of infestation has been reduced further as a consequence.

The insects lay eggs in splits or cracks in the timber and the larvae become active in the timber for some time before the flight holes appear. Their presence can therefore never be ruled out but I repeat the chances and probability of serious infestation are low indeed.

I would recommend that you ask your solicitor to enquire as to whether any timber treatment has been carried out. If you discover that treatments have already been carried out then you should check that the guarantees which exist are from companies which are in a position to back them up. If no such treatment has taken place then you may wish to carry out your own treatment prior to taking occupation.

In so far as rot is concerned the fungi which cause both wet and dry rot require a source of dampness. There is no evidence of dampness within the house adjacent to structural timbers in either the roof or at first floor level. On this basis, the likelihood of timber decay to the structural components is low. Indeed during my inspection of the accessible parts of the structure I saw no evidence of timber decay. I cannot rule out the possibility that some rot is present to inaccessible timbers but I saw no evidence of deterioration to adjacent timbers which would indicate that the likelihood of rot in the primary concealed timbers is limited.

The rot fungi thrive in warm, humid and stagnant atmospheres which are usually in enclosed spaces and so it goes without saying that rot can exist in areas which are concealed. In fact, the fungus can even be concealed by material that is contaminated. As a result the presence of wet or dry rot can never be ruled out but again I reiterate that in this particular house I feel the risks must be regarded as fairly low.

Timber skirting's are present throughout the accommodation and these could also be affected by any damp ingress but again, there is no evidence of rot to any of the timbers. You must appreciate that once again I cannot rule out the possibility completely, but the risk of either wet or dry rot is low. The timber at the building, such as doors, skirting's and architraves etc have been painted and the likelihood of infestation has been reduced as a consequence.

7. Deleterious materials

Since the early 1980's, the property and construction industry has evolved and adopted a list of materials, which, for one reason or another, have been labelled deleterious and/or hazardous to health and safety. Some of these materials only become deleterious and hazardous due to the particular circumstances of their use and are not inherently deleterious or hazardous in themselves.

Materials that have been branded "deleterious" have usually been so classed because they either:

a) Pose a direct risk to health and safety of persons occupying or visiting a particular property (e.g. asbestos) or

b) Can be detrimental to the structural performance of a building (e.g. High alumina Cement in concrete)

Some deleterious materials might fall into more than one of the foregoing categories. Few of the deleterious materials given below can be detected with the naked eye alone. Often sampling and testing of a component or element is required to confirm the presence or absence of a material. The materials marked with an asterix below are, in general, those materials that require sampling and testing to establish their existence with certainty. A list of common deleterious materials would be as follows;

- Nickel sulphide inclusions in toughened glazing
- High alumina cement (HAC) when used in load bearing concrete components and elements
- Composite cladding panels in roofs and walls
- Chloride additives when used in pre-cast or in-situ concrete*
- Calcium silicate bricks or tiles (also known as sand/lime or flint/lime bricks)
- Mundic blocks and mundic concrete
- Woodwool slabs when used as permanent shuttering to in-situ cast structural concrete
- Lead based paint used in locations that could result in ingestion, inhalation or absorbtion of the material*
- Lead used for drinking water pipework except when used as solder to pipe fittings
- Sea dredged aggregates or other aggregates used in reinforced concrete which do not comply with British Standards 882: 1992 and aggregates for use in

concrete which does not comply with the provisions of British Standards: Specification 8110: 1985*

- Asbestos in any raw form or asbestos based products
- Manmade mineral fibres in materials when these fibres are loose and have a diameter of 3 microns or less and a length of between 5 and 100 microns*
- Urea Formaldehyde foam in large quantities used, in particular, as cavity insulation (due to vapours released from the foam).

In a building of this type I would not expect to find any substances which may have been used as additives to concrete to facilitate or speed up the process. Consequently chemicals such as high alumina cement, calcium chloride etc. would almost certainly not have been used in a building like this, although it is never possible to rule out the possibility completely. There were certainly no signs of deterioration as a result.

The use of asbestos in construction materials was banned in the 1980's and their use had declined by the end of the 1970's when the Building Regulations came into force. It is not inconceivable that some asbestos containing materials have been used in newer refurbishments, where a stockpile of material was used up rather than wasted, although these circumstances would be classed as limited. New materials were introduced to take the place of those containing asbestos and unfortunately they often have the same visual characteristics, therefore the only way to be sure that they do not contain asbestos is to have them tested.

In this particular property, I cannot completely rule out the possibility that some asbestos is present within the property. Indeed there is a distinct possibility that over the lifespan of the building asbestos has been used in many areas but is hidden from view, although by the nature of them being concealed it would reduce any risks significantly. The risks in a property of this age would be regarded as moderate and indeed I have raised the possibility that the thermoplastic floor tiles, pipe lagging and roof soffits all may contain some asbestos..

If at any time you are concerned regarding asbestos then I would recommend that you appoint a suitably qualified asbestos consultant to carry out a detailed survey of the property and carry out any remedial work as recommended. Of course such a survey may already exist and you can certainly ask the question. You should not tamper with asbestos yourself.

Fibreglass insulation has been used in the roof space. This could be regarded as a harmful substance because it is sometimes a skin irritant. If you are concerned about this you should always wear protective clothing and possibly a mask when entering the roof space.

8. Fire protection

In a house of this nature there are no specific requirements for fire protection although you may well wish to incorporate your own as you desire. At present the property has no fire protection at all.

At the very least I would recommend that you install battery powered smoke detectors at the head of the staircase and also in the ground floor hallway. These smoke alarms should then be regularly tested and batteries frequently changed to ensure that they work satisfactorily. However a slightly better system would be to incorporate a mains linked fire smoke alarm system which will potentially require less maintenance and be more reliable, but will need to be professionally fitted. If you propose to adapt or update the electrics in the house then that would be an opportune moment to install smoke alarms. There are of course many other fire

safety measures that you could implement but these will come down to choice. At present with no systems in place any upgrade will improve the situation.

9. Security

The security measures at the house are currently poor. None of the windows are provided with window locks and they are all single glazed. The front door is only provided with a basic Yale lock and no mortis lock. Equally the side doors to the car port area and to the garage, although they have been provided with mortis locks, they are only three lever latches and would not be regarded as secure as, the more modern five or seven lever latches that are now recommended.

In this regard the security of the house is extremely poor, particularly bearing in mind its relatively secluded location. I would therefore recommend that new upgraded locks be installed on the doors and if the windows are to be retained, then locks retrospectively fitted to make the windows more secure. Of course if you plan to replace the windows and / or the doors these modern units are likely to come with preinstalled locks in any event.

The property also does not benefit from a burglar alarm and you may well wish to consider the installation of such an alarm as part of your occupation.

I would recommend that you obtain copies of all keys from the vendors and possibly consider changing the locks if the whereabouts of keys is uncertain.

10. Environmental hazards

I indicate below my findings and advice regarding certain issues of an environmental nature. The issues identified below should not be considered an exhaustive list of matters to be considered.

10.1 Land contamination

I have not prepared an environmental audit for the property. My findings are detailed below.

There is no evidence to suggest that the development has been constructed on land which in the past has been used for any purpose that may have resulted in contamination of the ground by the dumping of industrial or commercial waste. On this basis I believe that the risk is extremely low that any contamination exists at the property. But if you wish to make absolutely certain on this point then you should commission an environmental study.

10.2 Flooding risk

The area is elevated from river level and therefore the risk of flooding would be considered low, however predictions for changes in sea level may bring the property into the flood plain in the future. If you have any concerns then it would be possible for you to commission a flood risk assessment of the area. An assessment has not been commissioned as part of this report.

10.3 Trees proximity

The proximity of trees to a building can give rise to concern because structural damage can be caused by root systems growing around, under and sometimes through foundations, subterranean walls and drains. The risk of damage caused by tree roots depends on;

- The proximity of trees to the building or drains concerned

- The height, age and species of the tree.
- The design and depth of a building's foundations
- The type of sub-soil

There are no large trees in close proximity to the house, therefore the risk of damage through tree roots is limited. There are however a number of trees within the curtilage of the property which should be kept in check to ensure that they do not grow too large and cause problems in the future. At present no problems are apparent as a result of tree roots.

10.4 Radon risk

Radon is a natural radioactive gas. You cannot see, hear, feel or taste it. It comes from the minute amounts of uranium that occur naturally in all rocks and soils. Radon is present in all parts of the UK, although the gas disperses outdoors so levels are generally very low.

We all breathe it in throughout our lives - for most UK residents, radon accounts for half of their total annual radiation dosage.

However, geological conditions in certain areas can lead to higher than average levels. Some of the highest radon levels have been found in the southwest, but levels well above average have been found in some other parts of the UK. Exposure to particularly high levels of radon may increase the risk of developing lung cancer.

The Health Protection Agency (HPA) has advised that indoor radon above an Action Level of 200 becquerels per cubic metre should be reduced. Most homes in the UK have fairly low radon levels, with an average of about 20 becquerels per cubic metre.

Without testing a particular property it is impossible to determine the level of Radon present. It can be the case that two adjoining properties will have vastly different levels and thus the only way to rule out the possibility of high levels of Radon being present would be to carry out a test.

The HPA conducts radon surveys for government departments, local councils, other organizations, and private householders. Therefore if you are concerned about Radon you should consult this organization.

11. Generally

In accordance with our Conditions of Engagement, we have not inspected woodwork or other parts of the structure which are unexposed or inaccessible and we are therefore unable to report that any such part of the property is free from defect.

Despite a thorough investigation, minor defects and problems such as faulty tap washers, vibrating noisy pipes etc, are not always apparent until physical occupation has commenced. Also, defects sometimes appear as a result of extreme weather conditions which were not experienced at the time of our inspection. We cannot therefore guarantee that there are no defects other than those mentioned in the foregoing Report.

We have not been instructed to carry out tests, or to arrange for the carrying out of tests to establish the level of radon gas present within the building; to establish whether or not there are contaminates present in the soil or substrata; to establish whether the building contains high alumina cement, calcium chloride, asbestos, lead based paints or any other deleterious materials, extensive carbonation of concrete or insufficient depth of concrete cover to reinforcement. These tests and reports can be organised, upon receipt of your specific instructions.

This Report is provided for the sole use of the named Client and is confidential to the Client; any persons other than the Client relying on the contents of this Report do so at their own risk.

This Report must be read in full and extracts and lists must not be read or used in isolation.

12. Summary

Structurally the house is generally in good order and free from signs of significant defect. Indeed the main structure of the house appears to have been well constructed and shows no signs of major issues either historic or ongoing. There are signs of some damage to the pointing to the rear of the house potentially due to mortar bees and this will need to be resolved, together with some efflorescence to the brickwork but these aspects should be relatively easy to overcome.

The major defect externally is potentially the windows to the property which are original and now significantly outdated in comparison to windows installed in modern premises. The windows are nevertheless functional and although they show signs of some deterioration are not beyond repair. If you wish to retain them, as long as they are redecorated they should remain functional for a reasonable period of time. It is anticipated however that you would wish to replace these windows with new double glazed units as part of a potential wholesale refurbishment of the house.

On the whole the house retains all the original features from when it was first constructed and could be looked at in one of two ways. Either it is an authentic example of 1960s architecture with the features of that era maintained which are a particular draw to you, or as I suspect will be the case, the features and indeed many other aspects within the building are significantly dated and you will wish to upgrade the house entirely to fit in with modern living requirements.

Although aspects of the house such as the heating and the electrics are dated and once again, it is likely that you will want to at least upgrade the systems, if not replace them entirely, the systems that are in place are currently functional. In my view they should prove adequate in the short to medium term if you wanted to retain them, although it would need to be accepted that periodic repair would be required on a more frequent basis than if they were of newer condition. Of course if you propose to carry out significant redecoration and refurbishment to the building then it would make more sense to replace dated services such as the electrics and heating at the same time to prevent the need to disturb recently upgraded finishes at a later date should the services need to be repaired or replaced further down the line.

There is significant scope to upgrade, extend or redesign the house and there should be scope to upgrade the finishes and make a nice family home. The structure and fabric is good but the aesthetics need modernising and improving.

I would encourage you to give me a call if there are any aspects of the report that you are unclear about to ensure that you can make an informed decision based upon a clear understanding of the issues.

Signed: .....

Andrew J Hodge MRICS RMaPS
A J Hodge Associates

Date: .....

Appendix A

Photographs

Chimney

Front Elevation

Joints within PVC Cladding

Rear Elevation

Flaking Paint to Soffit and Fascia

Rot to Front Door Frame

General Condition of Windows

Flat Roof to Garage

Damp Staining to Ceiling in Sitting Room

Sitting Room

Master Bedroom

En-Suite

Appendix B

Scope of Service

SCOPE OF SERVICE

BUILDING SURVEYS

1.0 Scope of service

We will visually inspect the premises identified and prepare on behalf of the client a Building Survey detailing the condition and any significant defects in the premises. The building survey will be prepared with due regard to the Clients interest in the premises, as far as this has been communicated and all other information we are provided relating to the buildings condition of repair. The report will be prepared in a format suitable to assess any significant defects, establish their severity or if further specialist investigations are required. One copy of the Building Survey will normally be provided unless otherwise agreed.

The survey will be limited to accessible areas of the premises identified. The building survey will deal with the demised area of any leased premises. Brief comment may be made on common areas covered by service charges or management fees as identified in our Engagement Letter, but only in so far as these areas are accessible to us at the time of our inspection.

2.0 Documents

2.1 We will first inspect all documents provided by the Client that are relevant to the instruction. Late disclosure of documents may have cost implications in respect of our fees and acting on our advice.

3.0 Limitations of inspection

3.1 We will identify items during any site inspection that are relevant to the instruction, based on the examination of elements that can be seen without damaging the property, its decorations or contents or testing. We will use best endeavours to see relevant parts of the property including reasonably accessible roof spaces, ducts and traps. Without completely dismantling a building it is impossible to inspect everything. The following ensures that no misunderstandings occur between client and surveyor.

3.2 We will not inspect parts that are covered, unexposed or inaccessible. Fitted carpets or floorboards will not be lifted except at the client's request. Written permission is required from the vendor/lessor. Heavy furniture will not be moved unless the vendor/lessor agrees. Suitable assistance may be necessary. Manhole covers will not be lifted unless of light duty, easily accessible and in good condition. We will therefore be unable to report that such parts of the property are free from defect.

3.3 Services (ie drains, electrics, gas, water, heating etc.) will, where possible, be inspected and appropriate recommendations will be made. Testing can be arranged at extra cost. (services are not considered as part of a main elements survey).

3.4 Boroscopes or other fibre-optic probes may be used for specific problems notified before the survey. Additional costs will be involved. The written consent of the vendor/lessor will be needed beforehand.

3.5 Structural calculations are not undertaken as a matter of course but structural components will be examined where possible and suitable recommendations will be made if appropriate.

3.6 Comments are not made on the more superficial aspects of the building such as cracked glass, chipped plaster, etc. unless it is relevant to a more serious defect.

3.7 No inquiries will be made into the quality of the land to establish whether it is contaminated or affected by naturally occurring Radon gas.

3.8 Despite a thorough investigation, minor defects and problems such as faulty tap washers, vibrating noisy pipes etc, are not always apparent. Also, defects sometimes appear as a result of extreme weather conditions or time passing which were not present at the time of our inspection. We cannot therefore guarantee that defects of this type will be included in the building survey or that there are no defects other than those mentioned in our report.

3.9 Any parts of the building not accessible with a 3.2m surveyors ladder, buried underground, or hidden from view will not be closely inspected unless specifically requested and special arrangements made. Where high level (roof) access or inspection of concealed areas is required by the client this is to be agreed prior to our inspection. Contractors engaged to provide services such as provision of a cherry picker, lifting of manholes or testing of drain runs can be instructed by ourselves on behalf of the client; the payment of a contractors invoice will be the sole responsibility of the client.

3.10 High parts of the building (chimney stacks, gutters etc.) will be inspected from ground level usually through binoculars. Some defects may exist which are not visible from this position, so no comment can be made regarding these.

3.11 Unless otherwise stated the fee quoted is based on a single visit to the site/building. If, due to matters outside our control, we have made a second or subsequent visit to site due to full access not being available as informed, we reserve the right to charge additional fees for abortive time.

3.12 The inspection will be limited to the premises shown on documents provided. Where plans are not available, the surveyor will make assumptions as to the extent of the property.

4.0 Exclusions

4.1 It is rarely possible to inspect all parts of a building but advice will be given from the evidence available, although it may be necessary to incorporate some caveats or exclusions.

4.2 We cannot comment upon the condition of those parts of the structure which are concealed, hidden or inaccessible.

4.3 Timber decay: both wet and dry rot fungi and the larvae of woodboring insects can be active without there being any visible evidence. It is impossible to guarantee that these defects do not exist in a property. The level of risk will be assessed.

4.4 A general test cannot be applied to the plumbing installation to determine weak points or potential leaks. Only exposed pipework can be inspected.

4.5 Wall cavities cannot be inspected to determine the condition of metal ties or whether or not there are any obstructions which could give rise to penetrating dampness.

4.6 Damp proof courses should be provided above windows and external door openings and at window and external door reveals. Clearly these cannot be inspected.

4.7 Foundations cannot be inspected without excavation so guarantees cannot be given as to their condition or even their existence. Comments on the nature of the subsoil will be based only on knowledge, if any, of the area in which the property is located.

5.0 Testing and sampling

5.1 Unless specifically instructed we will not carry out or arrange for the carrying out, of any sampling or testing. No testing or investigation will be undertaken to determine the presence of radon gas, any contamination, high alumina cement, calcium chloride, carbonation, insufficient depth of concrete cover to reinforcement, lead based paint, deleterious materials etc. These tests and reports can be organised upon receipt of your specific instructions. We will charge an additional fee for organising these tests and payment of any contractor's or specialist's invoices will remain the sole responsibility of the client.

5.2 No testing or investigation will be undertaken in relation to toxic mould and asbestos. The client acknowledges that all risks and liabilities relating to toxic mould and asbestos, howsoever arising, remain with the client and the client shall take such steps as it deems necessary to insure against or otherwise address such risks and liabilities. We can however make suggestions for further investigation by the client where necessary based upon our professional opinion.

6.0 **Legal and Statutory**

6.1 We will not carry out or arrange for the carrying out, of any examination or assessment in respect of statutory, service provider, Local Authority searches or health and safety information or other legislative requirements as they are the function of your solicitor. We may comment on some of these elements however cannot be an expert in every area or be held liable for any omission. We can organise inspections to comment upon particular legislation following receipt of your specific instructions. We will charge an additional fee for organising these inspections and payment of any contractor's or specialist's invoices will remain the sole responsibility of the client.

6.2 We will not carry out or arrange for any examination or assessment of legal documents. We advise that your solicitors deal with such matters. Where relevant, we may comment on some legal matters however cannot be an expert in every area or be held liable for any omission.

6.3 Our Report is provided for the sole use of the named Client and is confidential to the Client and his professional advisers; any persons other than the Client relying on the contents of our Report do so at their own risk.

6.4 Our Report must be read in full and extracts and lists must not be read or used in isolation.

6.5 The Consultant shall have no liability to the Client in respect of breaches by the Consultant of its obligations hereunder relating to or in connection with asbestos howsoever arising provided always that the foregoing shall not apply to liability arising from claims in respect of death or personal injury which shall not be limited.

6.6 The Client acknowledges that all risks relating to asbestos howsoever arising remain with the Client and the Client shall take such steps as it deems necessary to insure against or otherwise address such risks.

7.0 Additional inspections and specialist services

7.1 All consultants, contractors and other professionals required during the course of the service will be instructed, with prior agreement, on behalf of the client who will be responsible for the direct payment of their fees, costs and expenses.

7.2 Unless specifically instructed we will not inspect mechanical, electrical or other service installations. We may make general comment on these items however no specialist examination or testing will be undertaken. These tests and reports can be organised upon receipt of your specific instructions. We will charge an additional fee for organising these tests and payment of any contractor's or specialist's invoices will remain the sole responsibility of the client.

8.0 Cost of Works

8.1 Cost of works figures where provided, unless expressly stated, are subject to our limitations upon budget estimates as follows:-

8.2 All estimates are current prices and no adjustments have been made for future inflation.

8.3 If elements of the work are undertaken individually the total cost may exceed the overall budget estimate.

8.4 All estimates are quoted as budget estimates only and are not to be thought of as a substitute for obtaining competitive quotations from reputable contractors. If exact costs are required they will need to be determined by inviting the submission of builders' estimates.

8.5 No costs have been included for any investigative works.

8.6 Estimates do not include VAT, professional fees or statutory charges.

8.7 No allowance has been made for out of hours working or any associated charges likely to be incurred e.g. security.

8.8 No costs have been included regarding above and below ground drainage or other services within the building including heating, ventilation, mechanical and electrical, plant and equipment.

8.9 We have not included costs associated with the discovery, removal or consequent delays to works in connection with asbestos or other deleterious materials.

Appendix C

Estate Agent Particulars