



Marwood *Surveyors*

21 March 2014

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Building Survey

In accordance with your instructions in respect of the above mentioned property, set out below are our terms, details of the inspection, survey of the property and market valuation as requested.

Instructions Received

Instructions were received from:

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Purpose of Report

Building survey and valuation

Subject Property

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Tenure

Assumed to be freehold – legal confirmation required.

Property Type

The property is a three storey traditional semi-detached house built around 1890.

It has been extended to the rear with a conservatory and your legal adviser should find out when this was carried out. You should check whether Local Authority Permission for the work has been obtained and in this respect, we refer you to our comments later in the report.

The front of the building faces approximately south and all directions in this report are given as if viewing the property from Station Road. The main entrance is on the side of the property.

Extent of Inspection

Internal and external. The survey was carried out on 20 March 2014.

At the time of our inspection it was dry, but with intermittent light showers and this was preceded by a period of mainly dry weather.

The property was occupied and furnished, together with fully fitted floor coverings in all of the rooms. This property has been refurbished in the past and as a result much of the original fabric has been covered up.

The large amounts of furniture, stored items and personal effects throughout the accommodation severely limited our investigation.

The roof spaces could not be fully inspected as there was no access hatch serving the rear roof slope. Also, the access hatch serving the front elevation roof void was filled to capacity with stored items and personal effects and therefore our findings are severely restricted.

The property was inspected without the attendance of the property owner. We have completed our report without the benefit of any consultation or any information regarding recent or historic works of alteration, repair or improvement.

As understood, the property is currently tenanted. Your legal adviser should confirm this is held on an assured shorthold tenancy and that you will be given vacant possession on completion.

Status of the Surveyor / Valuer

John Roberts BSc MRICS Registered Valuer

Location

The property is in a semi-rural location with limited facilities within the locality. There is a wide range of shops and other services in Kidderminster town centre which is approximately 5.3 miles away and a range of limited facilities in Stourport on Severn which is 3.1 miles away.

The property is located near to Hartlebury Mainline Railway Station providing regular commuter links into Birmingham City Centre.

The property is on a relatively flat site and our inspection did not reveal any surface features of the land to lead us to suspect any particular instability as far as ground conditions are concerned.

The proximity of the railway and public house may be a nuisance. We refer you to our comments later in this report.

Construction

The external walls are of traditional solid construction (approximately 225mm thick) with brick elevations.

The main roof is pitched and covered with natural slates.

Internally, the floors are mainly of timber construction, with the exception of the kitchen and utility/bathroom which are solid.

The single storey extension is constructed in cavity brickwork and is provided with a shallow pitched roof surfaced in natural slate.

Accommodation

The following dimensions have been taken from the agents particulars and have not been checked for accuracy.

The accommodation is arranged on three floors briefly comprising:

Basement

Ground Floor

Lounge (4.68m x 4.20m), kitchen (4.13m x 3.92m), conservatory/dining (2.41m x 2.71m), utility (3.79m x 2.59m), bathroom (3.98m x 1.63m), separate toilet, entrance hall with staircase to first floor.

First Floor

Bedroom one (front – 4.01m x 3.88m), bedroom two (rear – 4.00m x 3.89m), landing with staircase to second floor.

Second Floor

Bedroom three (rear – 4.27m x 3.97m) and bedroom four (front – 4.26m x 2.88m).

Externally

There is no garage with the property.

There is a conservatory which is attached to the rear elevation of the property.

Off-street parking is available, although this is limited to one vehicular space. There is no parking restriction on Station Road.

The property has front and rear gardens. The front garden area is surfaced in gravel for off-street parking. A dropped kerb is provided allowing vehicles to access the property.

The rear garden area is private and enclosed. However, there is a pedestrian gate connecting the rear garden to the adjoining property and confirmation should be obtained if there are any pedestrian rights of way.

Overall Opinion

The general condition of the property appears consistent with its age and type of construction, but some works of repair and maintenance are required.

We recommend that you treat the following matters – all discussed later in the report – as urgent which should be undertaken and concluded before you exchange contracts. Additional repairs/improvements may be necessary following the results of these investigations. As soon as you receive any reports we would be pleased to advise whether or not they would cause us to change the advice or valuation which we give in this report. Should you decide to exchange contracts without obtaining this information, you would have to accept the risk that adverse factors might come to light in the future:

1. *Services*: Inspect the electrical installation and the electric shower by an NICEIC registered electrical engineer.
2. *Heating*: If servicing has not been undertaken in the last twelve months then a full service should be carried out on the central heating system by a qualified heating engineer.

There are a number of significant matters which although not urgent require attention. The following should be carried out soon after occupation. You should obtain quotations for the work before you exchange contracts so that your full financial liability is known before you commit to purchasing the property:

1. Renew the main roof slate coverings.
2. Overhaul and repair the rear elevation rainwater fittings.
3. Improve ventilation to the cellar and sub floor areas.

You should check on the condition of the flue serving the solid fuel stove within the living room soon after you take up occupation.

We recommend that you treat the following as significant which could affect future saleability:

1. The proximity of the railway and the public house and the effect on noise levels for any future purchasers.
2. The inconvenient location of the ground floor bathroom in relation to the first and second floor bedrooms which may deter some purchasers and affect future marketability.
3. Substandard means of escape from the second floor accommodation in the event of fire which may deter some purchasers and also affect future marketability.

Your legal adviser should check whether Local Authority notifications and approvals for the conservatory have been obtained, if needed, and that all statutory inspections have been made. If regulations have been breached or work carried out without the necessary approvals and inspections, then extensive and costly alteration works may well be needed to ensure compliance.

You should check whether the conservatory was built to full residential standards of thermal insulation. If not, thermal separation will be needed to avoid excessive heat loss and high energy consumption.

Your legal adviser should also check whether there are any rights of way in respect of the rear of the property.

Your legal adviser should check for the existence, validity and transferability of guarantees and certificates for any timber infestation treatment which may have been carried out in the past, the double glazing installations, the conservatory and the gas installations and appliances in this property which should be assigned to you as a new owner.

Your legal adviser should also establish in the pre-contract enquiries the existence and validity of any service agreements or engineer's certificates for the central heating system in this property. The date of the original installation, the name of the service company and when testing/servicing was last carried out should also be determined.

Your legal adviser should also confirm the ownership and obligations for maintenance, extent and position of the property boundaries.

Your legal adviser should confirm that vacant possession will be granted on completion.

External Observations

Front Elevation

The brick party wall chimney stack appears to be in reasonable structural condition for the age of the property with no evidence of significant disrepair. Also, the brick pointing appears to be in serviceable condition for age.

The base of the chimney stack is fitted with lead flashings (weather-proofing strips) and these are becoming in poor condition and will require replacement.

The main roof is pitched and surfaced with natural slate. A number of slates are held in place with tingles (metal retaining strips). This is indicative that the roof coverings are coming to the end of their serviceable life. Whilst expensive and comprehensive re-covering may not necessarily be justified, maintenance costs will be significantly higher than normal.

The cement pointing to the roof verge (roof edges) is badly deteriorated and requires replacement. This is necessary to prevent birds and insects accessing the roof void areas.

The plastic rainwater fittings to the front elevation appear to be in serviceable condition with no evidence of significant disrepair.

It should be noted that the rainwater downpipes discharge directly into the underground drains without any proper access. Whilst this form of connection is common, proper cleaning will be difficult when blockages occur. However, to alter this arrangement would be expensive and disruptive and is not essential at this stage.

The main walls appear to be in reasonable structural condition for age.

The brickwork finishes (mortar pointing) are in fair condition, although are showing some signs of weathering which is consistent with age. The condition is not considered excessive at the moment, although localised repointing will be required to soft areas of mortar to the underside of the bay window as soon as circumstances permit.

The base of the main wall incorporates a damp proof course. It is properly positioned with adequate clearance above external ground levels.

The windows to the front elevation are plastic framed incorporating double glazing. These appear to be relatively modern and in good serviceable order. As guarantees may exist for this work, we refer you to our earlier comments.

The double glazing panes are in good condition. It should be noted that double glazing seals can vary in quality and can be prone to disrepair and misting.

The roof above the ground floor bay is surfaced in slate and this appears to be in serviceable order with no evidence of significant shortcomings.

Side Elevation

The main wall appears to be in reasonable structural condition for age. We found no evidence of structural movement or significant lateral (sideways) displacement of the main wall. Also, the brickwork finishes appear to be in fair order for the age of the property. Typically, some deterioration is apparent in the mortar pointing to the upper section of the elevation, but this is considered to be within acceptable tolerances for a property of this age.

The roof above the front entrance door is pitched and surface in slate. This appears to be in good serviceable condition with no evidence of disrepair.

The elevation includes plastic framed windows incorporating double glazing. Generally, the windows appear to be in fair condition with no evidence of significant disrepair. Also, the double glazing panes appear to be in fair condition with no significant defects. However, some misting was noted in the glazing to the window serving the second floor rear bedroom and these will require repair.

The vendor should be asked to provide details of the all the double glazing installations. Your legal adviser should also check on the availability of any guarantees. If none exist, then glazing seals should be considered suspect.

Rear Elevation

The brick party wall chimney stack appears to be in reasonable structural condition with no evidence of significant disrepair. Some minor cracking is apparent to the upper courses of brickwork, but this is not considered significant.

The base of the stack is fitted with lead flashings (weather-proofing strips) and these appear to form part of the original construction. They appear to be in serviceable condition, although they will have a limited but further useful life.

The main roof is pitched and surfaced with natural slate. We believe the roof coverings are original and we refer you to our earlier comments in this respect. Nonetheless, the roof slope is reasonably even and level with no evidence of structural deformation.

The plastic rainwater fittings are becoming in poor order. There is evidence that the gutters are silted and choked with debris and these will be prone to surcharging in times of heavy rainfall. Repairs should be undertaken as soon as circumstances permit. Due to the proximity of the conservatory and utility room roof access to the gutters will be difficult.

The main walls appear to be in reasonable structural condition for age. There is evidence of some minor distortion to the constructional opening (window) to the first floor, but in the absence of any recent cracking we conclude the movement is longstanding and is not a cause for concern.

The brickwork finishes (mortar pointing) appear to be in serviceable condition for age. Some weathering and deterioration is apparent, but this is not considered excessive at this stage.

The roof to the single storey outrigger (bathroom) extension is surfaced in natural slate. The roof covering appears to be in serviceable condition with no evidence of significant disrepair. However, the roof slope is relatively shallow for this type of roofing material and under severe weather conditions the roof covering could leak, although we found no signs of water ingress or dampness at the time of our inspection.

We found no evidence of any significant shortcomings in the condition of the external walls. However, our inspection of the side elevation of the outrigger was restricted due to the close proximity of the boundary and our findings are therefore limited.

The base of the wall is fitted with a damp proof course and this is clear and above adjacent ground levels.

The rainwater gutters to the sides of the conservatory are formed in lead and these appear to be in good serviceable order with no evidence of any leakage. It should be noted that this type of gutter is often neglected and is more susceptible to disrepair and blockage. Therefore, regular checks should be made of the guttering to prevent blockage and leakage into the property.

Some minor timber decay is apparent in the gable framing to the conservatory. It should be noted that conservatory structures of this type usually have a limited life and will therefore be prone to disrepair and leakage.

In accordance with our earlier comments, the first floor window has been replaced in recent times and this appears to be in good serviceable condition. Elsewhere, the plastic window frames are generally aged and we refer you to our earlier comments regarding the potential for misting in the double glazing panes.

Internal Overview

Movement

In a property of this age, it is commonly found that the foundations are less substantial than would now be required in accordance with the provisions of the Building Regulations. However, in this case, the foundations will have been taken down to a good depth in order to form the cellar. However, the cellar extends under only part of the building and the practice of forming foundations for different parts of the building at different depths can, in itself, lead to differential movement.

Some movement has occurred affecting the front right corner of the property which we believe has been caused by old building movement. However, this is not considered significant and being longstanding, no remedial work is necessary.

We also noted internally that some of the door frames were out of square and the ceilings within the second floor accommodation have sloped significantly. Again, we believe this is due to old building movement and as this appears to have occurred some time ago, it is not considered significant.

There are a number of shrinkage cracks internally in the plaster finishes. These are not of a structural nature and only filling and decoration is needed.

Timber

We found no evidence of any significant timber decay in this property.

There are however signs of slight infestation by woodboring insects to the side stair timbers within the cellar area. However, this appears to be inactive and longstanding. It is possible that timbers have already been treated and a guarantee may be available. We therefore refer you to our earlier comments in respect of such guarantees.

It should be noted that older properties such as this one are very susceptible to attack and other areas of infestation may well be discovered when the property is completely emptied.

Damp / Condensation

Where accessible, moisture readings were taken internally and we found no sign of significant rising damp in this property. The readings recorded tended to confirm that the damp proof course is substantially effective, although a few readings suggested some minor and localised inefficiencies. However, none are considered cause for concern or excessive for this type and age of property.

We found no evidence of significant condensation affecting this property. Changes in temperature or moisture content can cause condensation to occur. Areas mainly at risk in homes of conventional construction are kitchens, utility rooms and bathrooms, together with areas of external walls (particularly north and east facing) to which ventilation is restricted by large items of furniture. It should be noted that properties with main walls of solid construction (such as this one) are more prone to troubles of this kind than modern cavity walls since they are generally of lower insulation value.

Air circulation beneath the suspended timber floor in the living room is inadequate as there are not enough vents in the external walls and as this can lead to decay, sub-floor ventilation needs to be improved. This should include improvements to the ventilation within the cellar.

Some of the fireplace openings have been removed, but no provision has been made to vent any redundant flues. Although there were no signs of associated damp problems it would be prudent to check for through-ventilation and introduce vents, if necessary, shortly after occupation.

The ceilings in the attic rooms may contain minimal insulation which may increase the likelihood of condensation. In addition they may be prone to excessive heat gain/loss depending on seasonal weather conditions. When the roof is recovered, its insulation should be checked and improved as necessary.

We have not seen the Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) on this property which is a report that will have been produced prior to the marketing process. The Certificate will contain recommendations and advice with regard to upgrading thermal insulation and improving the energy performance criteria within this property.

You should obtain a copy of the EPC and you may wish to consider implementing the recommendations in order to improve thermal insulation standards and reduce energy costs.

Internal Observations

Ground Floor

Living Room

The lath and plaster ceiling is lined in paper and this appears to be in fair condition for age. Some signs of cracking are apparent indicating that the lath and plaster may be approaching the end of its serviceable life. It should be noted that as plaster deteriorates it becomes particularly susceptible to vibration and disturbance. Therefore, some substantial replastering may become necessary if the paper finishes are removed.

The walls have received a direct plaster finish and are lined with paper. These appear to be in serviceable condition with no evidence of significant cracking or structural deformation.

The suspended timber floor is overlaid with fully fitted carpeting which restricted our inspection. The floor slopes towards the front right-hand corner of the property suggesting old building movement and we refer you to our earlier comments in this respect.

The fireplace opening has been adapted with the installation of a wood burning stove. We are not in a position to report on its serviceability or condition. We therefore recommend that the stove is checked by a reputable heating engineer specialising in solid fuel appliances. In addition, the flue should be swept clear prior to use.

Internal joinery appears to be to a serviceable standard with no evidence of significant wear and tear.

We note that some of the electrical socket outlets are surface mounted onto the fitted cabinetry (to the right-hand side of the fireplace) and we refer you to our comments elsewhere in this respect.

Kitchen / Conservatory

The ceiling is formed in modern plasterboard and this appears to be in serviceable condition with no evidence of significant cracking or disrepair.

The walls are predominantly formed in plasterboard linings and these appear to be in serviceable condition.

The solid floor is overlaid with stone tiling. The floor appears to be reasonably even and level with no evidence of structural deformation.

We are not in a position to report on the nature or condition of the hardcore fill on which the solid floor is based and must emphasise that, without exposure, we cannot verify the absence of deleterious elements in the sub-floor fill material. Waste products, such as shales, have been used fairly commonly in this area in the past and this can have disastrous consequences on the concrete and brickwork in floors and foundations. However, there is nothing to indicate that such a problem exists in this case.

The kitchen incorporates a range of base units and wall cabinets. These appear to be in serviceable condition with no evidence of excessive wear and tear. The kitchen cabinetry incorporates a number of integrated appliances and we are not in a position to report on their safety or condition. We refer you to our recommendations and the advice you should follow elsewhere in this report.

The conservatory is predominantly timber framed incorporating double glazing to the roofing panes. These appear to be in serviceable order with no evidence of any leakage internally.

The walls are finished in fair faced brickwork and these appear to be in serviceable order with no evidence of cracking or structural deformation.

The solid floor is finished with stone tiling and these were noted to be in serviceable condition.

The timber doors connecting the conservatory with the rear garden area are double glazed and they were noted to be in acceptable condition.

Rear Lobby / Side Porch

The ceiling is formed in plasterboard which is fitted directly to the underside of the constructional roof timbers. The plasterboarding appears to be in serviceable order. The ceiling incorporates a timber framed double glazed roof window. This would appear to be in serviceable condition with no evidence of leakage internally.

The wall finishes are a mixture of solid plaster and plasterboard linings. Our inspection was severely restricted due to the high volume of stored goods and effects. However, we found no evidence of any significant cracking or structural deformation.

The solid floor construction is overlaid with ceramic tiling. This appears to be reasonably even and level with no evidence of structural deformation. Also, the tiles appear to be in serviceable condition for age.

Our inspection of the fitted cabinetry/utility sink was restricted due to the high volume of stored goods and effects. However, these appear to be to a basic standard and may be approaching the end of their serviceable life.

The external door (to the front side pathway) is timber framed incorporating single glazing. It appears to be in serviceable condition, but it is poorly fitting and will be prone to draughts and excessive heat loss.

The side exit door (leading to the garden area) is also timber framed incorporating double glazing. It was noted to be in serviceable condition, although it was noted to be loose fitting and may be prone to draughts and excessive heat loss.

Bathroom

The plasterboard ceiling is fixed directly to the underside of the constructional roof timbers. We found no evidence of any significant cracking or structural deformation. The ceiling incorporates a timber framed double glazed roof window which was noted to be in serviceable condition with no evidence of leakage or disrepair.

The walls are a mixture of plasterboard linings and solid plaster finishes. These appear to be in serviceable order with no evidence of significant disrepair, some minor wear and tear being apparent, but this is not considered significant. Also, the ceramic wall tiling was noted to be in serviceable order.

The solid floor is overlaid with ceramic tiling which appears to be in fair condition. However, the tiles are showing some degree of wear and the floor slopes slightly towards the shower area. However, we do not consider this is significant or a matter for concern.

The sanitary appliances appear to be relatively modern, but are also showing signs of some wear and tear. In addition, the shower seal is defective and should be renewed shortly after occupation.

The electric shower appears to be relatively modern, but it appears to be in hard worn condition and should be thoroughly tested before use.

We found no evidence of any significant shortcomings within the separate WC area.

However, the sanitary appliances are showing a degree of wear and tear and will require maintenance and overhaul.

Entrance Hall

The lath and plaster ceiling appears to be in serviceable condition for the age of the property. We refer you to our earlier comments regarding ageing in the lath and plaster finishes and the possibility of repairs or improvements.

The walls have received a direct plaster finish and are lined with paper. These were noted to be in serviceable order with no evidence of significant disrepair.

The suspended timber floor is overlaid with fully fitted carpeting. The floor slopes slightly towards the front section of the property which we believe is due to old building movement. However, in the absence of any significant recent movement, we conclude the matter is longstanding and no structural works are required.

The main staircase was fully carpeted which restricted our inspection, but it appears to be in serviceable order and was firm underfoot. Also, the balustrading appears to be in serviceable order. The balustrades (spindles) are unevenly spaced. No gaps should exceed 100mm and therefore these openings should be blocked or narrowed, to prevent any possible accidents. It should be noted that the staircase is relatively steep and should be used with care.

The front entrance door is timber framed incorporating single glazing. This was locked at the time of our inspection and therefore we cannot comment upon serviceability or condition.

First Floor

Landing

The lath and plaster ceiling appears to be in serviceable condition for the age of the property. We found no evidence of any significant cracking or structural movement.

The walls have received a direct plaster finish and are lined with paper. Some hollowing and loosening of the plaster was noted which forms part of the natural ageing process. It should be noted that when the walls are fully exposed for redecoration, some areas of replastering may be required.

The suspended timber floor is overlaid with fully fitted carpeting. This appears reasonably even and level with no evidence of structural deformation.

The staircase connecting the first floor to the attic rooms was fully carpeted which restricted our inspection. However, it appears to be in serviceable order and was firm underfoot.

It should be noted that the stairs are steep and hazardous and should be used with care. In addition, there is no handrail and one should be provided for safety reasons.

Front Bedroom (Sitting Room)

The ceiling has been lined with plasterboard and this appears to be in serviceable condition.

The walls have received a direct plaster finish and have been supplemented by plasterboard linings to the side elevation. The plaster finishes appear to be in serviceable order with no evidence of significant cracking or disrepair. It should be noted that the plasterboard linings may conceal damaged or defective plaster finishes.

The suspended timber floor is finished with the original floorboarding. The floor was not precisely level and true, but is within acceptable building tolerances. The floor slopes towards the front right-hand corner of the property which we believe is due to old building movement.

Our inspection of the floorboards was restricted, but where visible, the floorboards were noted to be in serviceable order for age.

The former fireplace opening has been sealed, but due to the presence of furniture we cannot confirm if the redundant flue is ventilated. We refer you to our comments regarding condensation and damp in this respect.

Internal joinery appears to be to a serviceable standard for the age of the property. The door would appear to be original and is ill-fitting. In addition, the door opening is marginally out of square and we refer you to our comments elsewhere in this respect.

The fitted cabinetry (wardrobes) appears to be in serviceable condition with no evidence of significant disrepair.

Rear Bedroom

The lath and plaster ceiling has been finished with a textured coating. No evidence of significant cracking or structural deformation is apparent. However, it should be noted that older textured coatings in properties of this age can contain asbestos. Therefore, care should be taken when working with this material.

The walls have received a direct plaster finish and these were noted to be in serviceable condition with no evidence of significant shortcomings.

The suspended timber floor is overlaid with fully fitted carpeting. In addition, our inspection was severely restricted due to the abnormally high volume of stored goods and effects. Our findings are therefore limited. However, the floor appears to be reasonably sound and was firm underfoot.

The former fireplace opening has been retained as an ornamental feature as the constructional hearth has been covered over.

Internal joinery, where visible, appears to be to a serviceable standard for the age of the property. Some structural deformation is apparent in the internal door opening and we refer you to our comment elsewhere in this respect.

The fitted cabinetry is to a particularly basic/amateurish standard and you may wish to upgrade them. The right-hand wardrobe incorporates the boiler and hot water cylinder, and we refer you to our comments elsewhere in this respect.

Second Floor

Landing

The ceiling and walls are finished in modern plasterboard and these appear to be in serviceable condition with no evidence of cracking or disrepair.

Front Bedroom

The plasterboard ceiling is fitted direct to the underside of the roof timbers. This appears to be in serviceable order with no evidence of significant disrepair.

The wall finishes are a mixture of plasterboard linings and solid plaster finishes. These are in fair condition for the age of the property. The direct plaster finishes to the side elevation are hollow and loose and some replastering may become necessary.

Our inspection of the suspended timber floor was severely restricted due to the high volume of stored goods and effects and our findings are therefore limited. However, the floor appears to be reasonably firm with no evidence of deflection or undue movement.

The internal joinery is to a basic but serviceable standard.

The door connecting with the landing area is to a basic but serviceable standard.

Rear Bedroom

The plasterboard ceiling finishes are fitted direct to the underside of the constructional roof timbers. The horizontal ceiling linings have bowed significantly. We believe this is due to sagging in the original ceiling timbers, but in the absence of any recent cracking we conclude this is longstanding and is not a cause for concern.

Our inspection of the wall surfaces was severely restricted due to the high volume of stored goods and effects and our findings are therefore limited. However, we found no evidence of any significant shortcomings.

The timber framed roof window is double glazed. There was evidence of leakage occurring and the roof window could be approaching the end of its serviceable life and may well be due for replacement.

Our inspection of the floor was severely restricted due to the high volume of stored goods and effects. However, the floor appears to be reasonably sound and was firm underfoot.

Internal joinery appears to be to a particularly basic standard of finish.

Roof Void

Our inspection of the roof void was restricted to a single access hatch to the front elevation roof slope. In addition, our inspection of the roof void area was severely restricted due to the abnormally high volume of stored goods and effects and our findings are limited.

As far as we can tell, plasterboarding and waterproof sheeting have been fixed to the underside of the rafters. This lining does not fully protect the structural timbers from leakage through the roof coverings. Its presence also increases the risk of condensation and decay. As the lining has probably

been introduced following rainwater penetration, this would indicate that the main roof coverings have reached the end of their serviceable life and require renewal. When the main roof covering is renewed, a suitable lining should be introduced when this work is carried out.

Other Matters

In addition to the asbestos mentioned elsewhere in this report, properties of this age and type are likely to contain other asbestos based materials in one form or another. According to the Institute for Environment and Health the presence of asbestos would not normally constitute a health hazard unless the material which contains the asbestos is disturbed, drilled or substantially damaged. When maintenance work, building improvements or alterations are undertaken, you should therefore be mindful of the possibility of asbestos. If found, a licensed contractor will need to be employed for its removal and disposal.

Based on our inspection of the property, we believe that the second floor accommodation forms part of the original construction. In such circumstances, it is useful to assess the suitability of the accommodation for habitable purposes on the basis of the current Building Regulation standards.

Modern regulations require that the doors serving the ground and first floor habitable rooms are to an appropriate self-closing fire resisting standard. Also, the roof window needs to be within 1.5 metres of the floor to facilitate escape. The doors would not appear to be to an appropriate fire resisting standard but the roof window is considered adequate for escape purposes.

In order to improve the safety of the occupants of the second floor rooms we believe the provision of suitable fire doors would be an appropriate improvement. In addition, an electrically maintained interlinked fire alarm should be considered.

Cellars and Vaults

The cellar is in fair order, bearing in mind the age and character of the property. However, it is damp and poorly ventilated and would appear to be susceptible to flooding.

In the case of cellar walls, dampness will always penetrate through the internal surface of the brickwork which, if uncovered, will allow evaporation of the moisture from the inner surface where it can be vented to the outside air. Over time, a state of equilibrium is reached where equal volumes of moisture penetrate the structure and are then vented away.

At the time of our inspection relatively high levels of dampness were recorded in the exposed floor timbers indicating that improvements to the ventilation are required.

There are signs of slight infestation by woodboring insect attack in the timbers adjacent to the first floor staircase (visible from within the cellar). We refer you to our comments elsewhere and the advice and recommendations that you should follow.

It should be noted that with basements of this type there is always a risk of flooding from drain blockage, burst pipes and high ground water levels following heavy rain. Therefore, any storage of personal effects may be at risk from damage.

The steps serving the cellar area are in serviceable condition for the age of the property. However, there is no complete handrail fitted and one should be fitted for safety reasons.

The lath and plaster ceiling to the underside of the half-landing appears to form part of the original construction. It has approached the end of its serviceable life and will be in need of replacement. In

addition, we noted that significant cracking is apparent between the ceiling and the party wall. However, we found no evidence of any recent cracking internally (within the adjacent rooms) to indicate the movement is progressive. We refer you to our further comments regarding building movement elsewhere in this report.

Services

Electricity

The mains electric supply to this property is via overhead cabling. This type of supply can be more prone to power failure in adverse weather conditions.

The meter and consumer unit are located in a cupboard in the utility room. Where visible, the installation has been wired in plastic covered cable and the distribution board is fitted with circuit breakers.

The Institution of Electrical Engineers recommends that electrical systems should be inspected once every ten years. The Institution also suggests that a periodic inspection should be undertaken on any change of ownership.

We noted that one of the electrical sockets within the front living room has been surface mounted onto the cabinetry which may be regarded as non-compliance issue and a safety risk. Also the landing light switch appears to be original.

All electrical installation work undertaken after 1 January 2005 should have appropriate certification.

In the absence of such certification, we recommend that the installation is checked by an NICEIC registered electrical engineer prior to commitment to purchase.

It should also be noted that due to the age of the property there may be an insufficient number of power socket outlets distributed throughout the accommodation. Therefore, some additional sockets/upgrading may be required to suit modern day requirements.

You should arrange to have the installation checked and a quotation obtained for undertaking any necessary electrical repairs/improvements. We recommend this is carried out prior to commitment to purchase.

Gas

Gas is connected and the meter is located in the outside services box.

The gas installation appears to be in fair order, although we cannot comment upon its serviceability. As a precaution, it should be tested shortly after occupation for any fault or leakage.

Water

The property is connected to the mains water supply. The internal stopcock is located in the downstairs WC/cloakroom. It should be noted that if the mains water supply is original, it will be reaching the end of its serviceable life and may need renewal.

Where visible, the plumbing installation appears to be in serviceable condition with no evidence of significant defects.

Heating

Partial central heating is provided by the gas fired boiler in the rear first floor bedroom. The location of the boiler could be regarded as a noise nuisance and be disruptive to sleep.

The system was not operating at the time of inspection and therefore we cannot comment on its effectiveness. However, we found no signs of any significant disrepair or serious defect with the heating pipework, where it was visible.

It should be noted that some of the central heating pipes are concealed within the construction and repairs may be difficult should leakages occur.

Some additional heating is provided by the wood burning stove within the living room. This appears to be in fair order, although we cannot comment upon its serviceability. We refer you to our comments elsewhere regarding the advice and recommendations you should follow.

We are not aware of any service agreement for the central heating system and your legal adviser should check for any service records.

You should arrange for the central heating system to be inspected, if servicing has not been carried out within the last twelve months.

Hot Water

Hot water is provided by the central heating boiler and is stored within a cylinder in the airing cupboard in the rear first floor bedroom. An electric immersion heater is also incorporated into the cylinder.

The cylinder is covered by foam insulation which restricted our inspection. However, it appears to be in serviceable condition with no evidence of any leakage.

The hot water cylinder is located some distance from the bathroom taps and therefore hot water may be slow in delivery. This could result in some wastage of water.

In addition, you should arrange for a more detailed inspection of the electric shower prior to occupation.

Other

We cannot comment upon the satisfactory operation of the smoke alarms fitted. For safety reasons you must ensure that adequate alarms are installed and are fully operational prior to your occupation of the property.

In accordance with our earlier comments, we recommend that smoke alarms are electrically maintained and are interlinked for safety reasons.

Fire Precautions

In accordance with our earlier comments, we consider that the fire precautions in respect of the second floor rooms are inadequate and improvements are recommended.

Drainage

Without extensive exposure work we cannot confirm the type or layout of the underground drainage system.

The property is believed to be connected to a shared drainage system which then discharges into the main sewer. Your legal adviser should make the usual checks in respect of the drainage system and confirm any rights and liabilities in respect of shared ownership.

Our investigation of the underground system was restricted as the inspection cover within the rear garden area is a heavy duty type and could not be lifted.

Grounds and Boundaries

Front Garden

The front garden area has been surfaced in gravel for vehicular parking. Space is limited and will be restricted to one vehicle.

The wrought iron fencing to the party boundary would appear to be original. It is supported on brick piers. The central brick pier was noted to be unstable and this should be rebuilt, for safety reasons, as soon as circumstances permit.

Rear Garden

The rear garden area is private and enclosed. There is a gate connecting the rear garden to the adjoining property and your legal adviser should confirm if there is any established pedestrian right of way in this respect.

The paving at the rear of the property is in serviceable order with no evidence of significant disrepair.

The rear garden area incorporates an ornamental pond. Suitable protection should be provided to prevent young children and animals from falling in.

The supporting brick piers to the loggia can be prone to instability although we found no evidence to suggest any significant shortcomings in this respect. Nonetheless, their condition should be monitored on a regular basis for safety reasons.

The brick screen wall to the rear left-hand side appears to be in serviceable order with no evidence of disrepair or instability. The left-hand fencing is formed in timber close boarded panels supported on concrete posts and appears to be in serviceable condition for age.

The timber fencing to the right-hand side appears to be relatively new and in serviceable order. Elsewhere, the boundaries appear to be formed in privet hedging and your legal adviser should confirm the position and extent of the boundaries and we refer you to our comments elsewhere.

Also, we found no obvious signs of boundary encroachment.

The rear garden area incorporates two timber framed sheds and a child's play house. These are relatively aged and will have a further but limited useful life.

Environmental Matters

We believe there are current planning issues within the locality. The construction of an incinerator within the locality is understood to be scheduled for commencement. You should check on all necessary details concerning its construction and assess its likely impact on the property and the locality both during and post construction. As this may affect future marketability, your legal advisor should complete all necessary searches in this respect prior to contract.

As far as we are aware, the property is not detrimentally affected by any other significant planning or environmental matter. However, no enquiries have been made and your legal adviser should carry out all local searches prior to exchange of contracts and advise you fully in this respect.

Legal Matters

Your legal advisers are responsible to check all legal documents relating to the property as well as carrying out all standard searches and enquiries.

Other Legal Matters

Your legal advisers should undertake normal searches from the Local Authority and also obtain verification of the following:

Whether the property is affected by any road improvements or redevelopment schemes.

Whether the property is free from restrictive covenants and or easements.

Whether the property is affected by any rights of way.

The position of all boundaries to the site and responsibilities for maintenance.

Council tax banding.

An environmental search should be obtained.

Obtain a drainage search.

Check ownership and responsibilities relative to boundaries.

Check to ascertain if there are any certificates or guarantees in relation to the replacement gas central heating boiler, double glazing and any other significant works.

Establish if there are any outstanding credit agreements in relation to the replacement gas central heating boiler, double glazing and any other significant works.

It is recommended a copy of this report is passed to your legal adviser and a request to check and verify all of the above items.

Please ensure that if any of the information is found to be inaccurate or significant this is reported to the surveyor immediately. This could have an adverse effect on the valuation given.

Findings

As soon as you receive responses from your legal adviser and specialist contractors we would be happy to advise on whether the findings affect the valuation of the property.

If you have any queries in respect of the report or its findings please do not hesitate to contact me further.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script is partially visible above a thick black horizontal redaction bar.A thick black horizontal redaction bar covers several lines of text, likely contact information.