

# PROPERTY REPORT

**Warehouse  
XXXX  
XXX Erith,  
Kent. DA8 XXX**



**FOR**

**Mr X**

**Prepared by:**

**XXXX**

**INDEPENDENT CHARTERED SURVEYORS**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

We have been instructed to inspect and prepare a Report and Schedule of Condition for XXXX, Erith, Kent. DA8 XXX

We visited the property on XXXX

This Report is to be read in conjunction with the Schedule of Condition.

We have not met you to discuss your exact requirements. We assume the property is being let on a standard Full Repairing and Insuring Lease.

The work has been carried out as per our standard Terms and Conditions of Contract which have been emailed to you as part of the confirmation of our instructions. If you would like further clarification please do not hesitate to contact us.

## **SYNOPSIS**

## **SITUATION AND DESCRIPTION**

This is a two storey industrial unit on a metal frame construction set within a small industrial area consisting of five units (a four unit block plus one independent unit) this unit being part of the four unit block. There is surrounding land and car parking with shared access.

At the time of our inspection there was fly tipping around the building and the property had been accessed and used as accommodation.

We believe the unit, although it is relatively modern looking externally, has been amended from an older structure from the Post War era.

If the age of the property interests you your Legal Advisor may be able to find out more information from the Deeds.

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## Location Plans



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## **SUMMARY OF CONSTRUCTION**

### **MAIN BUILDING**

#### **External**

Main Roof:	Difficult to view. Believed to be asbestos from the internal view.  The roof was too high to access from a ladder we are happy to return with a cherry picker to inspect the roof if you so wish to instruct us.
Gutters and Downpipes:	Metal and plastic
Soil and Vent Pipe:	Internal
Structural frame:	Structural metal frame.
Walls:	Metal sheeting at high level and Stretcher bond brickwork (assumed) at low level.
External Joinery:	Metal windows double glazed.

#### **Internal**

Ceilings:	Warehouse:	Underclad (assumed)
	Offices:	Suspended ceiling system
Walls		Underclad at high levels Brickwork partly painted at low levels (assumed)
Floors:	Ground Floor:	Concrete (assumed)
	First Floor:	Metal frame and joist and floorboard (assumed)

#### **Services**

We assume that the property has a mains water supply, drainage, electricity and gas. The electrics which were switched off at the time of our survey were located at the front left hand side.

We assume that the heating is not working and needs replacing.

The above terms are explained in full in the main body of the Report.

We have used the term 'assumed' as we have not opened up the structure.

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## EXTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS



Front view



Rear View



All four industrial units



Parking and fly tipping to the rear



Parking to the rear

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## **FACILITIES**

(All directions given as you face the property)

We have included a list of the facilities that we have viewed and there may be other areas. The following gives a general overview.

### **Warehouse Area**

#### **Ground Floor**

- 1.0) Warehouse
- 2.0) Male and Female toilets
- 3.0) Kitchenette internal
- 4.0) One office walk through
- 5.0) Second office

#### **First Floor**

- 4.0) Left hand side office
- 5.0) Right hand side office with toilet within it
- 6.0) Stairs and landing

### **Outside Areas**

Access roads and parking.

Your Legal Advisor needs to check and confirm what your legal rights are with regard to access and parking and permitted hours of work.

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## **REPORT FORMAT AND INFORMATION**

To help you understand our Report we utilise various techniques and different styles and types of text, these are as follows:

### **PHOTOGRAPHS**



We utilise photographs and sketches to illustrate issues or features. In some photographs a pencil has been used to highlight a specific area.

### **ACTION REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

We have used the term **ACTION REQUIRED** where we believe that there are items that you should carry out action upon or negotiate upon prior to purchasing the Lease.

Where a problem is identified, we will do our best to offer a solution. However, with most building issues, there are usually many ways to resolve them dependent upon cost, time available and the length of time you wish the repair/replacement to last.

### **MARKET VALUE**

We have not been asked to comment upon the market value in this instance. We have not seen copies of the trading figures or the accounts.

### **EVERY BUSINESS TRANSACTION HAS A RISK**

Every business transaction has a risk, only you can assess whether that risk is acceptable to you and your circumstances.

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**AGENT / BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT MANAGER – FRIEND OR FOE?**

It is important to remember that the agents are acting for their client and not the purchaser. We, as your employed Independent Chartered Surveyor, represent your interests only.

**SOLICITOR/LEGAL ADVISOR**

To carry out your legal work you can use a solicitor or a legal advisor. We have used both terms within the report.

**TERMS OF ENGAGEMENT/LIMITATIONS**

This report is being carried out under our terms of engagement, as agreed to and signed by you. If you have not seen and signed a copy of our terms of engagement please phone immediately.

**OUR AIM IS ONE HUNDRED PERCENT SATISFACTION**

Our aim is for you to be completely happy with the service we provide, and we will try and help you in whatever way possible - just phone us.

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Summaries are not ideal as they try to précis often quite complex subjects into a few paragraphs. This is particularly so in a summary about someone's future business when we are trying to second-guess what your priorities are, so it is important the Report is read in full.

It is inevitable with a report on a building of this nature that some of the issues we have focussed in on you may dismiss as irrelevant and some of the areas that we have decided are part of the 'character' of this property you may think are very important. We have taken in the region of 300 photographs (a CD copy of all photographs is enclosed) during the course of this survey and many pages of notes, so if an issue has not been discussed that you are interested in or concerned about, please phone and talk to us before you purchase the lease (or indeed commit to purchasing the lease), as we will more than likely have noted it and be able to comment upon it. If we have not we will happily go back. Having said all of that, here are our comments:

When purchasing the lease on a warehouse we believe there are three elements you need to consider, these are:

### **The Business**

Only you can decide upon the true potential of the business and its value to you; although we do recommend taking independent advice on the value of the business and property.

### **The Lease**

The quality of the lease needs to be discussed with your Legal Advisor and understood. You need to understand your rights, responsibilities and liabilities when you sign for a lease of this nature. We ask that your Legal Advisor brings any onerous or unusual clauses to our attention immediately. We assume this is a standard full repairing and insuring Lease.

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## **The Property**

There are many aspects to look at property-wise, both from its condition at the moment, to its condition in relation to the lease (or in this case a standard full repairing and insuring lease, as we have not seen the one specifically relating to this property).

You are currently reading the Property Report, which is intended to advise you on the property element of the purchase. We will also provide you with a Schedule of Condition, which will enable you to agree with the Landlord the condition of the property when you start to lease it.

We have divided the Executive Summary into 'Plus Points', 'Medium Priority' and 'High Priority', to allow you to clarify and focus on exactly what the issues are.

## **Plus Points**

*Survey reports often are full of only the faults and general 'doom and gloom', so we thought we would start with some positive comments on the property!*

- 1.0) The property has vacant possession.
- 2.0) The property has its own parking.
- 3.0) The area could be secured with consent from adjoining owners/landlords to limit the fly tipping which is a problem in the area.

We are sure you can think of other things to add to this list.

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## **Medium Priority**

*Problems / issues raised in the 'medium priority' section are usually solvable, but often need negotiation upon. However, a large number of them may sometimes put us off the property.*

### **1.0) Asbestos roof**

The asbestos roof has been overclad, this type of re-roofing is relatively common. It always lead us to wonder what other areas of asbestos have been clad over?

#### **ACTION REQUIRED:** You

need to exclude the asbestos

from your lease and/or you need the landlord to produce an asbestos report and confirm that the asbestos is safe. We can see areas where the asbestos is exposed and is being deteriorated due to the defects in the roof detailing.



Asbestos roof taken from internally



Close up of asbestos sheet on roof

Please note we are not asbestos surveyors. You do need specialists to carry out this type of work.

Please see the Roof Section of this Report.

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## 2.0) Blown and cracked plaster

Due to the movement that is occurring there is an above average number of areas where the plaster is cracking or blown (lost its bond). We can see that the problems are long term and that previous repairs have been carried out.

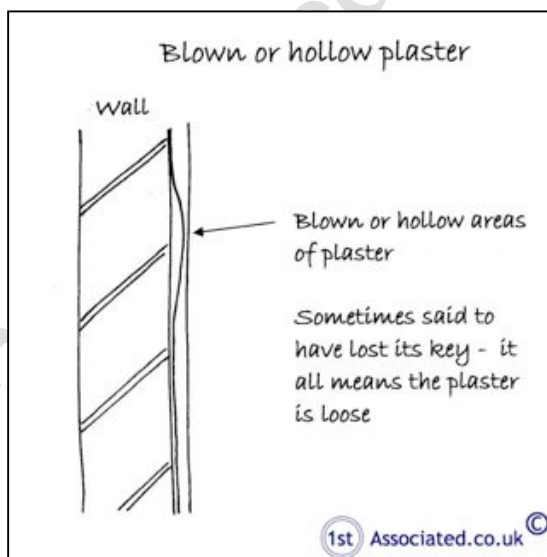


Internal cracking in toilets

**ACTION REQUIRED:** You need to exclude the damage that exists in the property via a Schedule of Condition. We would also recommend that the landlord redecorates before you access the property which would be the normal way things are carried out with the last lease holder having the responsibility to redecorate.



Cracking between wall and ceiling in hallway



Blown or hollow plaster



Repair to cracking in hallway

Please see the Walls Section of this Report.

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### 3.0) Metal frame structure

Please see our comments within the High Priority section of this report. Due to the roof leaking there has been deterioration to the metal frame structure and we could see where the structural columns are encased there is cracking to this indicating that there may be rust behind it to the metal frame.

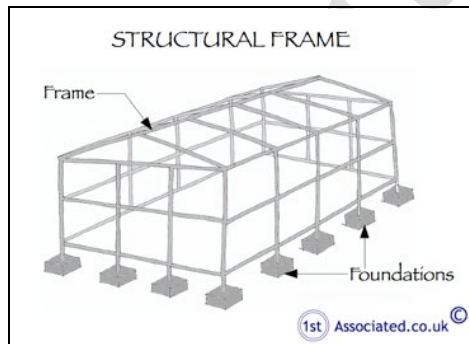


Cracking in warehouse

**ACTION REQUIRED:** This needs to be excluded from the lease.



Cracking around columns in warehouse



Metal frame warehouse industrial unit  
Four bay example

Please see the Walls Section of this Report.

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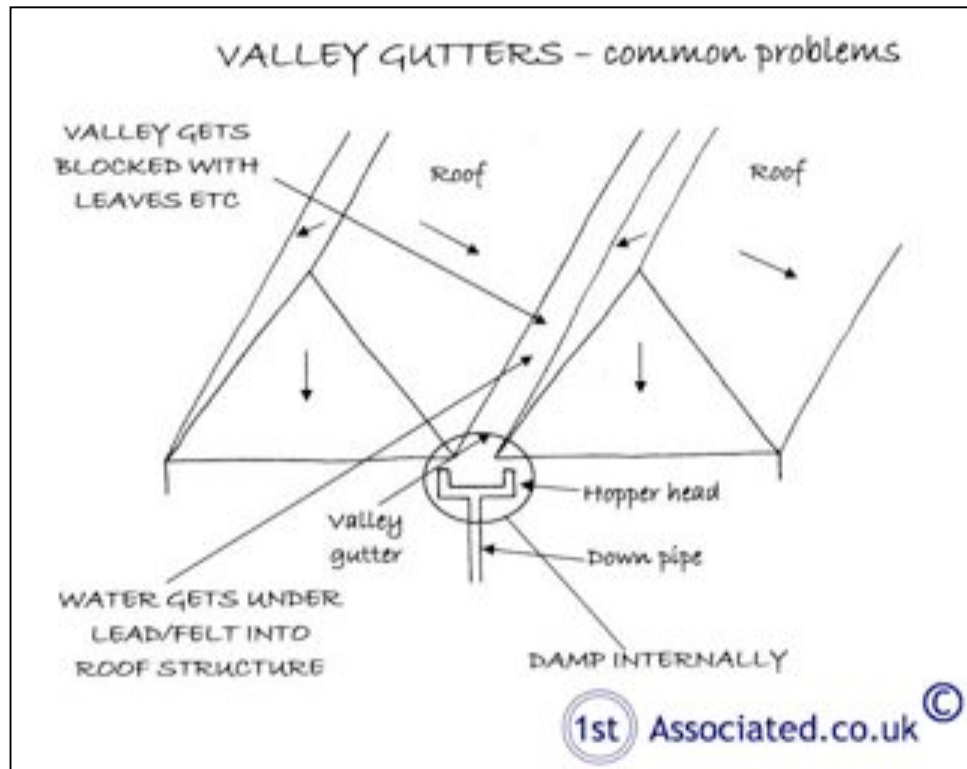
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#### 4.0) Valley gutters leaking

There looks to have been longterm problems with the valley gutters



Valley gutters common problems

leaking both at roof level and also with the downpipes.

There also looks to have been problems with the parapet walls allowing water in as we can see that one has been capped. Having said that both parapet walls are weathered and require re-pointing as well as one of them needing a metal capping to be added.



Parapet wall which is weathered and looks to have had a repair to the flashing and needs new flashing and coping stone

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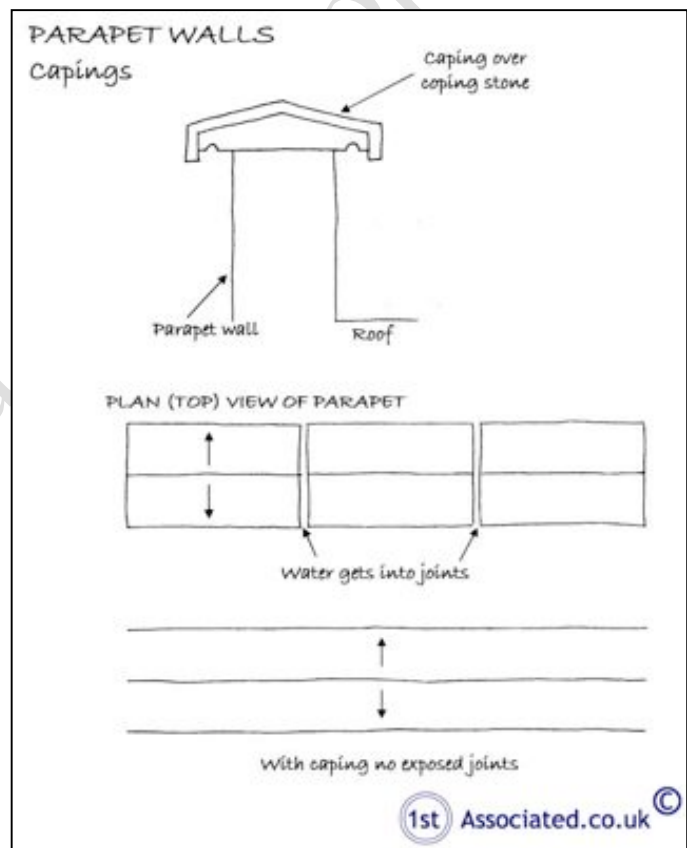
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If you look at the walls carefully  
you can see the staining to the walls



Parapet wall that has a capping  
added that still looks to be leaking.



Parapet walls capings

Please see the Gutters and Downpipes Section of this Report.

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## 5.0) Services

### 5.1) Electrics

At the time of our inspection the electrics were not switched on however they looked dated.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** We would recommend an Institute of Electricals Engineers (IEE) test and report carried out by a NICEIC registered and approved electrical contractor or equivalent.

**ANTICIPATED COST:** In the region of £500 - £1000 (five hundred to one thousand pounds) plus any recommendations; please obtain quotations. We noted that quite a lot of the wiring had been ripped out and/or amended so there may be major costs and we would ask that the Freeholder/managing agents reinstall the electrics as these are likely to be part vandalised when the property has been occupied as accommodation as in this case.



Electrics



Electric cupboard

Please see the Services Section of this Report.

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## **High Priority**

*We normally put here things that we feel will be difficult to resolve and will need serious consideration.*

### **1.0) Movement**

There is some movement to the left hand side Post office building (all directions given as you face the property) although nothing like the magnitude within this property.

#### **ACTION REQUIRED:**

If you were looking to purchase this property we would be saying to buy another property. This certainly needs to be excluded from your lease and we would also only advise taking on the property if the landlord can offer a programme of repairs to the floor.

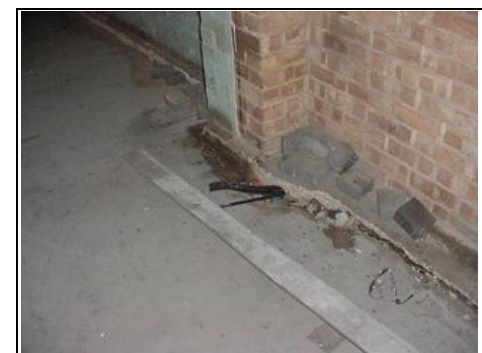
Unfortunately from our one off inspection we are not able to be conclusive as to what the problem relates to and we suspect it may relate to the retaining wall to the front of the property and the heavier weight within this property due to the lifting equipment 3.2 tonnes device.



Floor subsidence to the front toilets



Post Office warehouse subsidence to the rear



Floor subsidence to the rear of the warehouse

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Floor subsidence to the rear of the warehouse



Retaining wall indicates that built up land has been used in this area

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## **Other Items**

Moving on to more general information.

## **Maintenance**

This type of property is relatively modern (i.e., less than one hundred years old) but nevertheless still requires ongoing maintenance and repair. A budget for such work must be allowed to ensure it is maintained in a good condition. This will prevent undue and unnecessary deterioration.

## **Services**

Whilst we have carried out a visual inspection of the services within the property we also need to advise you of the following:

## **Heating**

We have not switched on the heating. We would recommend that the system be tested and overhauled before exchange of contracts and that a regular maintenance contract be placed with an approved heating engineer.

## **Lighting**

Dependent upon how you utilise the building this will dictate the type of lighting you will need. Due to Health and Safety high level lighting can be costly to even replace light bulbs.

## **Drainage**

We would recommend a closed circuit TV camera report as it may be that the drains are leaking in relation to the problems of subsidence that are occurring in this property.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** We would always recommend with regard to all services that you have an independent check by a specialist contractor.

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## **Estimates of Costs**

Where we have offered an estimate of building costs please remember we are not experts in this area. We always recommend you obtain quotations for the large jobs before purchasing the property (preferably three quotes). The cost of building work has many variables such as the cost of labour and estimates can of course vary from area to area when giving a general indication of costs. For unskilled labour we currently use between £75 and £100 per day (the higher costs in the city areas) and for tradesmen we use between £100 and £200 per day for an accredited, qualified, skilled tradesman. Other variations include the quality of materials used and how the work is carried out, for example off ladders or from scaffold.

If you obtain builders estimates that vary widely, we would advise the work is probably difficult or open to various interpretations and we would recommend a specification is prepared. It would usually be best to have work supervised if it is complex, both of which we can do if so required.

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## **SUMMARY UPON REFLECTION**

The Summary Upon Reflection is a second summary so to speak, which is carried out when we are doing the second or third draft a few days after the initial survey when we have had time to reflect upon our thoughts on the property. We would add the following in this instance:

Ideally this should be an Internally Only Repairing Lease as there are some many items here of a far greater liability than we would normally expect on this age, type and style of property.

The price should be discounted as the property has not been left in the sort of condition that an outgoing should leave it in.

As a general comment for any work required we would always recommend that you obtain at least three quotations for any work from a qualified, time served tradesperson or a competent registered building contractor prior to legal completion.

We would ask that you read this Property Report and the Schedule of Condition and contact us on any issues that you require further clarification on.

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**THE DETAILED PART OF THE REPORT  
FOLLOWS, WORKING FROM THE TOP  
OF THE PROPERTY DOWNWARDS**



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## **EXTERNAL**

### **ROOF COVERINGS AND UNDERLAYERS**

*The Roof Coverings and Underlayers section considers the condition of the outer covering of the roof. Such coverings usually endure the extremes of climate and temperatures. They are susceptible to deterioration, which ultimately leads to water penetration.*

*Dependent upon the age of your property and the type of construction it may or may not be present, please read on:*

The roofs have been viewed from ground level, we recommend that they are viewed via a cherry picker or similar lifting device which we would be happy to do upon your instruction. However from what we can see from ground level we would comment that the roofs are asbestos, they have been underclad internally and they are leaking both to the sides and to the front and rear.

Products containing asbestos have, until recent years, been widely used in domestic construction and the mere presence of asbestos does not, in itself, necessarily constitute a health hazard. Removing undamaged material may release more dust than leaving it in place and it is only when asbestos materials are in a damaged or friable condition, or during installation, modification, removal or demolition, that there is likely to be a significant health risk.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** We recommend that the roof is excluded from the lease. We are not asbestos surveyors. A specialist report is recommended. Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

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## **PARAPET WALLS AND ROOF WINDOWS**

### **Parapet Walls**

*Parapet walls are usually walls that are above roof level and often sit on the boundary of the property.*

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary. The left hand side parapet wall (all directions given as you face the property) looks to be in poorer condition than the right hand side parapet wall but from what we can see both are leaking.



Left hand side parapet wall



Right hand side parapet wall

### **Roof Windows (also known as roof lights)**

The property has corrugated glass reinforced plastic (GRP) roof lights (as best we can see from viewed from ground level). The roof lights look not to have been cleaned for many years.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** We would normally expect the roof lights to have been cleaned. We could also see some staining to the concrete below indicating that they are leaking.



GRP roof light in need of cleaning

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## **Party Wall**

The Party Wall Act Etc relates to shared items, such as the parapet walls. If you do any work on these you will need to deal with the Party Wall Act. Here is a brief explanation of it.

Party Structures Defined - Party Wall Act Etc. 1996

A structure that both parties enjoy the use of or benefit from. An example of this would be where both parties gain support from a wall or utilise a chimney or chimneys.

*Any work to party structures, such as party walls or party chimney stacks, require agreement under the Party Wall Act. We would be more than happy to offer you help and advice in this matter.*

Finally, we have made our best assumptions on the overall condition of the parapet walls and roof windows from the parts we would see above roof level. The inspection was made from ground level within the boundaries of the property (unless otherwise stated) using a x16 zoom lens on a digital camera. A closer inspection may reveal latent defects.

All the roofs were inspected from ground level with the aid of a x16 zoom lens on a digital camera.

Unfortunately we were only able to see approximately five percent of the main roof as we viewed from within the property. We have made our best conclusions based upon what we could see, however a closer inspection may reveal other defects.

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## **ROOF STRUCTURE**

*The roof structure or framework must be built in a manner which is able to give adequate strength to carry its own weight together with that of the roof covering discussed in the previous section and any superimposed loads such as snow, wind, foot traffic etc.*

### **Main Roof**

### **Warehouse area**

### **Roof Access**

This has been viewed from ground level and we could see that it has been underclad and this undercladding is coming away revealing the asbestos behind it.

### **Offices**

### **Roof Access**

We opened up the suspended ceilings in the right and left offices and unfortunately we were unable to see the made ceiling but we were only able to see previous suspended ceiling tiles. We did however note leaks in the office areas shown by staining to the tiles.



Ceiling tiles in place, note the water damage around the suspended ceiling units

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View in the right hand roof



Staining to ceiling tiles



Ceiling opened up



Looking at old suspension ceiling

### **Roof Structure**

Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

### **Fire Walls**

There should be fire barriers between various offices to stop the spread of fire from one office to the next. In this instance we were not able to see these.

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## **Water Tanks**

There is a high level unit adjacent to the offices, this may relate to being a water tank or may have been equipment in relation to the lifting device.

If there are water tanks in the building we would always recommend that water tanks be drained down and cleared of any debris etc. (we have seen dead birds and other unmentionable things in these tanks).



High level unit

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### **Ventilation**

Within the roof over the office it can suffer from condensation and this then can be seen in the form of dampness in the ceiling tiles which may be the case in this instance as there is a large roof void.

### **Insulation**

Please see the Thermal Efficiency Section of this Report.

### **Electrical Cables**

We can often identify the age of an electrical installation by the age of wiring found in the roof space. In this case there was insufficient quantity to comment upon however please see our other comments with regard to the electrics.

Please see our further comments in the Services Section of this Report.

Finally, we would ask you to note that this is a general inspection of the roof, i.e. we have not examined every single piece of timber. We have offered a general overview of the condition and structural integrity of the area.

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## **GUTTERS AND DOWNPIPES**

*The function of the gutters and downpipes is to carry rainwater from the roof to the ground keeping the main structure as dry as possible.*

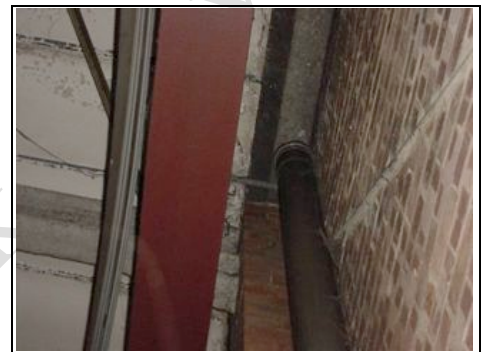
*Defective gutters and downpipes are a common cause of dampness that can, in turn, lead to the development of rot in timbers. Regular inspection and adequate maintenance are therefore essential if serious problems are to be avoided.*

The property's gutters and downpipes are in very poor condition and we feel you should think about replacement.

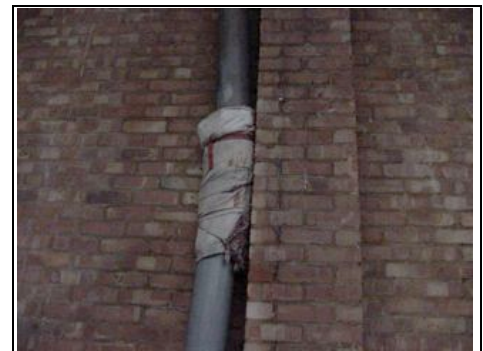
There is cracking visible to some of the brick around the metal frame to the property where we believe dampness has got in and may be causing deterioration to the metal frame.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** The valley gutters and the downpipes need to be made water tight and the piers need to be opened up to check that there is no rusting to the metal frame.

We would always recommend that the gutters and downpipes are cleaned out, the joints are checked and the alignment checked to ensure that the gutters fall towards the downpipes.



Looking up at metal valley gutter and black plastic downpipe



DIY repair to downpipe

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### **Soil and Vent Pipe**

The property has internal soil and vent pipes set within the toilets. Some of the soil and vent pipes have been damaged, as mentioned the property looks to have been occupied and used as accommodation and has been left in a poor condition.



Ladies toilets internal soil and vent pipe



Drainpipe not connected

Finally, gutters and downpipes and soil and vent pipes have been inspected from ground level. As it was not raining at the time of the inspection it is not possible to confirm 100 per cent that the rainwater installation is free from blockage, leakage etc. or that it is capable of coping with long periods of heavy rainfall. Our comments have therefore been based on our best assumptions.

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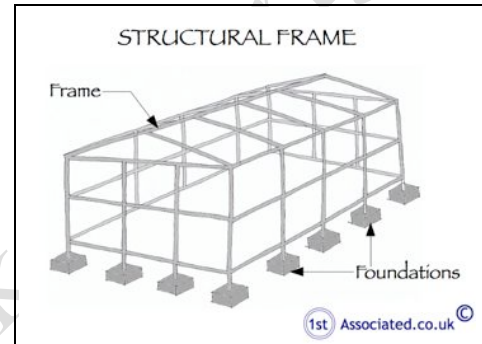
## WALLS

*External walls need to perform a variety of functions. These include supporting upper floors and the roof structure, resisting dampness, providing adequate thermal and sound insulation, offering resistance to fire and being aesthetically presentable.*

The walls are constructed of metal structural frame, brickwork and cladding.

### Structural frame

The property has a metal structural frame which gives an open span and is subdivided into bays. Onto this frame we have cladding in the form of metal profile sheet cladding at high level and brickwork at low level and we also have internally a hoist system that has been added.



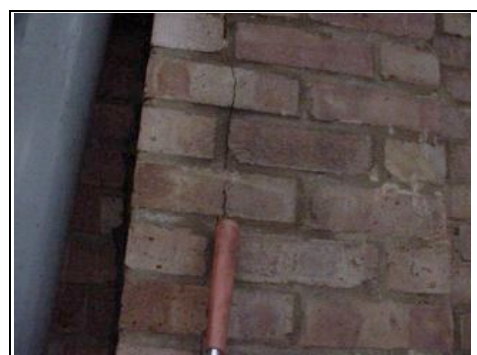
Metal frame warehouse industrial unit  
Four bay example

### Metal frame system

Our concern is that the roofs have been leaking and that rusting is starting to occur to the steel frame. We can see that cracking is occurring to some of the internal piers.



The hammer handle indicates where the cracked line is to the pier



Hammer handle again indicating where the cracked line is

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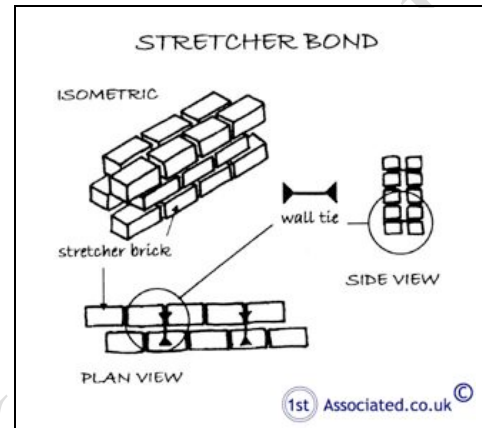
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This type of thing needs investigation because there is something very wrong with this property where the floors are subsiding in this manner.

## **Brickwork**

The brickwork is Stretcher Bond at low level.

The term "Stretcher Bond" means that from the outside of the property, you can see a row of the sides of the bricks (known as "stretchers") followed by a course above of the same stretch of bricks set off so the joint is centrally above the "stretcher". This pattern would repeat throughout.



Stretcher bond brickwork

There are numerous cracks to the brickwork, far beyond what we would normally expect to see.



There is cracking to brickwork



Cracking to brickwork

## **Concrete Lintels**

The property has concrete lintels. These may cause cold bridging.

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Cold Bridging Defined

Cold bridging is caused by a colder element in the structure allowing coldness to pass through the structure much quicker when warm moist air is present in the property, often caused by things like having a shower or a bath, cooking or washing, particularly if you are drying washing on the radiators. This is also caused by the general climate which results in condensation on the element.

**Cladding**

At high level there is metal profile cladding which we noted that the fixing bolts are starting to rust. In addition we noted that in some areas the face of the profile sheeting has been impact damaged. Furthermore in some areas the profile sheeting has been scuffed.



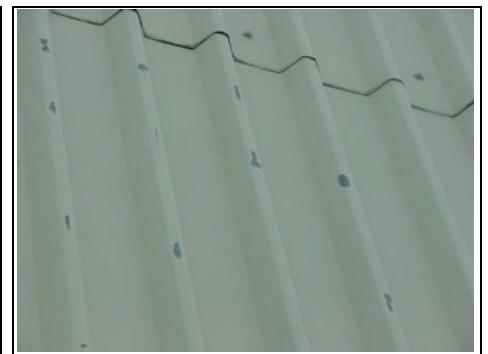
Cladding at high level



Rusting fixing bolts



Impact damaged profile sheeting



Scuffed metal profile sheeting

We generally find with profile metal sheeting such as this that it deteriorates where it has been cut badly and not sealed. We could not see any areas of this in this instance to the faces that we were able to view.

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Finally, the external walls have been inspected visually from ground level and/or randomly via a ladder. Where the window and door lintels are concealed by brickwork / over cladding / structural frame / under cladding we cannot comment on their construction or condition. In buildings of this age concrete lintels or metal lintels are common, which can be susceptible to deterioration that is unseen, particularly if in contact with dampness.

Our comments have been based upon how the brickwork / over cladding / structural frame / under cladding has been finished. We have made various assumptions based upon what we could see and how we think the brickwork / over cladding / structural frame / under cladding would be if it were opened up for this age, style and type of construction. We are however aware that all is not always as it seems in the building industry and often short cuts are taken. Without opening up the structure we have no way of establishing this.

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## **FOUNDATIONS**

*The foundations function is, if suitably designed and constructed, to transfer the weight of the property through the soil. As a general comment, many properties prior to the 19th Century have little or no foundations, as we think of them today, and typically a two-storey property would have one metre deep foundations.*

### **Foundations**

Given the age of the property it is likely to have concrete foundations in the form of either pad foundations or raft foundations.

### **Clay/Built up ground**

We believe the property sits on either clay or built up ground. It is, therefore, more susceptible than most should drains leak or trees be allowed to overgrow, etc. It is not unusual to have some settlement in this type of area however from our inspection this is nothing unusual.

### **Building Insurance Policy**

You should ensure that the Building Insurance Policy contains adequate provision against any possibility of damage arising through subsidence, landslip, heave etc.

It is your responsibility to check out prior to commitment to purchase that insurance is available on the property on the basis of the things we have reported in the survey. Much as we would like to we are unable to keep up with the changing insurance market and give you advice with regard to this. Please remember to talk about any cracks identified within the property. Often insurers will refer to progressive and non-progressive cracking. Unfortunately this is something we are unable to comment upon from a one-off inspection - the Building Research Establishment recommend a year of monitoring of any cracking.

We would always recommend that you remain with the existing insurance company of the property.

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We would refer you to our comments with regard to building insurance throughout this report.

Finally, we have not excavated the foundations but we have drawn conclusions from our inspection and our general knowledge of this type, age and style of property.

As no excavation has been carried out we cannot be 100 percent certain as to how the foundation has been constructed and we can only offer our best assumptions and an educated guess, which we have duly done.

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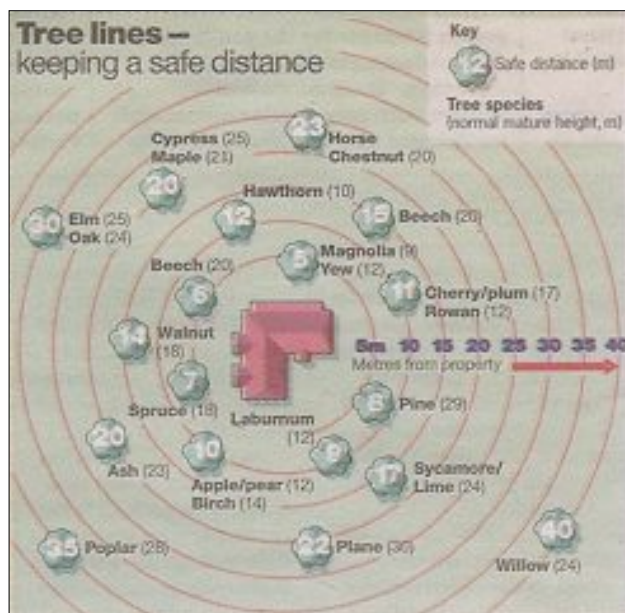
## TREES

*Trees within influencing distance of a property can affect the foundations by affecting the moisture content of the soil.*

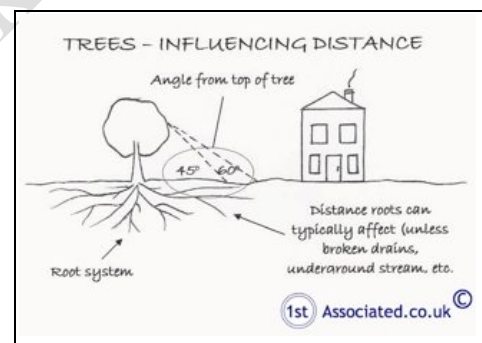
There are no trees within influencing distance of the property. There is however vegetation and bushes growing close to the property which is not ideal.



Vegetation



Influencing Distance Defined



Influencing distance

This is the distance in which a tree may be able to cause damage to the subject property. It is not quite as simple as our sketch; it depends on the tree, its maturity, the soil type etc., etc.

Finally, insurance requirements with regard to trees have varied over the years and in our opinion have got ever more onerous. We have seen the notifiable distance of a tree away from a property to have been reduced over the years and we reiterate our comments elsewhere within this report that you need to make enquiries with regard to the insurability of your property in relation to trees and other features when you purchase the property.

Please also refer to the External Areas Section.

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## DAMP PROOF COURSE

*The Building Act of 1878 required a damp proof course to be added to all newly built properties within the London area. It also required various other basic standards. These requirements were gradually taken up (or should that be grudgingly taken up) throughout London and then the country as a whole, although this took many years for it to become standard practice.*

All modern properties should incorporate a damp proof course (DPC) and good building practice dictates that a differential of 150mm (6 inches) should be maintained between the damp proof course and ground levels. In this case, we could see a thickening of the slab but we could not see a specific thickening of the joint; it may well be that it is on top of the slab.



The slab has been painted blue

Your attention is drawn to the section of the report specifically dealing with dampness.

Finally, sometimes it is difficult for us to identify if there is a damp proof course in a property. We have made our best assumptions based upon our general knowledge of the age, type and style of this property.

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## **WINDOWS AND DOORS**

*This section covers windows and doors, and any detailing such as brick corbelling etc.*

*Windows primary functions are to admit light and air, but they also have thermal and sound properties. The doors allow access and egress within the property.*

### **Windows and Doors**

The property has single glazed metal windows. We would specifically comment metal windows are often known as Crittall windows. Typically these windows warp and rust and become difficult to close which in turn makes them draughty. In this instance they do require repair work in the form of easing and adjusting.



Metal windows at high and low level

### **Metal roller shutter doors**

We have not tested the metal roller door delivery access. We would bring to your attention that security shutter box to the people entrance is damaged to the rear of the property.



Metal roller shutter doors

Finally, we have carried out a general and random inspection of the external joinery. In the case of the fascias and soffits it is typically a visual inspection from ground level. With the windows and doors we have usually opened a random selection of these during the course of the survey. In this section we are aiming to give a general overview of the condition of the external joinery. Please also see the Internal Joinery section.

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## **EXTERNAL DECORATIONS**

*The external decorations act as a protective coat for the building from the elements. Where this protective covering has failed, such as with flaking paintwork, the elements will infiltrate the structure. This is of particular concern as water is one of the major factors in damage to any structure.*

In this case the difficulty is the decorative finish to the external which is starting to fade. The lease terms may require you to paint this or bring into a good condition which is very difficult and can be very costly.

Finally, ideally external redecoration is recommended every four to five years dependent upon the original age of the paint, its exposure to the elements and the materials properties. Where painting takes place outside this maintenance cycle repairs should be expected. Ideally redecoration should be carried out during the better weather between mid-April and mid-September.

Please see our comments in the External Joinery section.

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## INTERNAL

### CEILING, WALLS, PARTITIONS AND FINISHES

*In this section we look at the finish applied to the structural elements such as the plasterwork applied to the ceiling joists, walls or partitions, together with the construction of the internal walls and partitions.*

#### Ceilings

The ceilings are a suspended rectangular ceiling system to the office areas and a square suspended ceiling system to the right hand office. Behind the ceiling tiles is an older rectangular system. We would comment that there is no insulation and as such therefore you will be heating up the entire warehouse in this area which is not ideal with rising fuel costs. We would also draw your attention to the fact that the stains to the ceiling tiles may relate to condensation.



Ceiling opened up



Dampness to ceiling tiles



Undercladding 44

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## **Internal Walls and Partitions**

This relates to the walls within the office area which are predominately studwork with the exception of the division wall at high level between the offices and the warehouse which is a block which has been broken through to form windows. The standard of workmanship to form these windows is very poor.

To the ground floor partitions there are structural cracks.



Partition dropping Kitchenette



Block broken through to form window not been made good



Cracks ground floor partition



Cracks ground floor partition

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## **Perimeter Walls (Warehouse)**

The perimeter walls to the warehouse are unfinished brickwork to the majority of the walls and there are some areas of painted brickwork. Typically a modern finish to a warehouse would have painted walls or finished walls.



Painted brickwork

Finally, ceilings, walls and partitions have been inspected from floor level and no opening up has been undertaken (unless permission has been obtained by yourselves). In some cases the materials employed cannot be ascertained without samples being taken and damage being caused.

We cannot comment upon the condition of the structure hidden behind plaster, dry lining, other applied finishes, heavy furniture, fittings and kitchen units with fitted back panels.

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## **FLOORS**

*Functionally floors should be capable of withstanding appropriate loading, preventing dampness, have thermal properties and durability. In addition to this upper floors should offer support for ceilings, resistance to fire and resistance to sound transfer.*

### **Ground Floor**

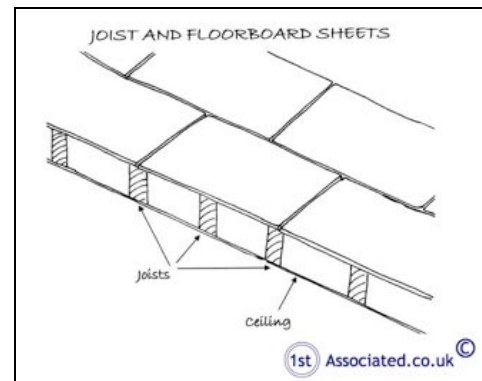
The floor is a concrete floor there is subsidence to the front and rear. Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

### **First Floor (to the front of the property only over office areas)**

We have assumed that the first floor construction is joist and floorboard sheets although we have not opened up the floor to check and confirm this.

#### Joist and Floorboard Construction Defined

These are usually at first floor level consisting of a joist supported from the external walls, either built in or, in more modern times, sitting upon joist hangers, sometimes taking additional support from internal walls, with floorboards fixed down upon it.



Joist and floorboard sheets

Finally, we have not been able to view the actual floors themselves due to them being covered with carpet tiles, floor coverings etc. The comments we have made are based upon our experience and knowledge of this type of construction. We would emphasise that we have not opened up the floors in any way or lifted any floorboards.

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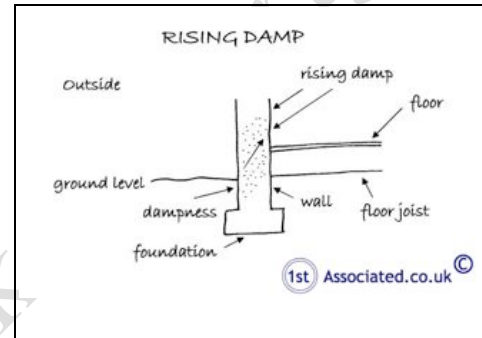
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## DAMPNESS

*In this section we look at any problems that are being caused by dampness. It is therefore essential to diagnose the source of the dampness and to treat the actual cause and not the effect of the dampness.*

### Rising Damp

*Rising damp depends upon various components including the porosity of the structure, the supply of water and the rate of evaporation of the material, amongst other things. Rising damp can come from the ground, drawn by capillary action, to varying degrees of intensity and height into the materials above.*



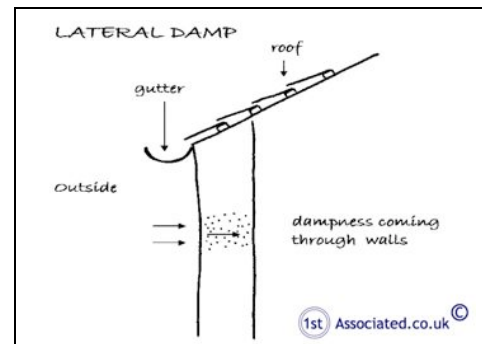
Rising Damp

A random visual inspection and tests with a moisture meter have been taken to the perimeter walls and some internal walls. In this particular case we have found no rising damp.

### Lateral or Penetrating Dampness

*This is where water ingress occurs through the walls. This can be for various reasons such as poor pointing or wall materials or inadequate gutters and downpipes, such as poorly jointed gutters.*

We used a damp meter on the external walls. We have not found dampness but would expect to find dampness to come through the hairline cracking in the walls and also to the windows if they are not repaired soon.



Lateral damp

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Please see our comments in the Executive Summary.

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Checking for dampness

## **Condensation**

*This is where the humidity held within the air meets a cold surface causing condensation.*

At the time of the inspection there were no obvious signs of condensation.

However you have metal windows and often these can cause condensation, it depends upon how you utilise the building. Common sense is needed and a balance between heating and ventilation of properties.

## **Extract fans in kitchenette and toilets**

We would recommend extract fans are added to the kitchenette and toilets.

Finally, effective testing was prevented in areas concealed by heavy furniture, fixtures such as kitchen fittings with backboards, wall tiles and wall panelling. We have not carried out tests to BRE Digest 245, but only carried out a visual inspection.

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## **TIMBER DEFECTS**

*This section considers dry rot, wet rot and woodworm. Wet and Dry rot are species of fungi, both need moisture to develop and both can be very expensive to correct. We would also add that in our experience they are also often wrongly diagnosed.*

### **Dry Rot**

*Dry rot is also sometimes known by its Latin name *Serpula lacrymans*. Dry rot requires constant dampness together with a warmish atmosphere and can lead to extensive decay in timber.*

In a property with this type of structure it will rarely have dry rot and we would confirm that we have not visually seen any during the course of our inspection.

We would advise that we have not opened up the floors and we have not inspected the roof.

### **Wet Rot**

*Wet rot, also known by its Latin name *Contiophora puteana*, is far more common than dry rot. Wet rot darkens and softens the wood and is most commonly seen in window and doorframes, where it can relatively easily be remedied. Where wet rot affects the structural timbers in a property, which are those in the roof and the floor areas, it is more serious.*

Again in this type of construction it would rarely have wet rot and we can confirm that we have not visually seen any wet rot during the course of our inspection.

We would advise that we have not opened up the floors and we have not viewed the roof.

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## **Woodworm**



*Active woodworm can cause significant damage to timber. There are a variety of woodworm that cause different levels of damage with probably the worst of the most well known being the Death Watch Beetle. Many older properties have woodworm that is no longer active, this can often be considered as part of the overall character of the property.*

The roof is the main area that we look for woodworm we have not had access to the roof, in this type of construction we would rarely find woodworm.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** If you wish to be 100 per cent certain that there is no woodworm the only way would be to check the property when is emptied of fixtures and fittings etc.

Finally, we would also comment that any work carried out should have an insurance backed guarantee to ensure that if the company does not exist, or for whatever reason, the guarantee is still valid. More importantly it is essential to ensure that any work carried out is carried out correctly.

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## **OTHER MATTERS**

### **SERVICES**

This survey does not include any specialist reports on the electricity supply and circuits, heating or drainage, as they were not requested. The comments that follow are based upon a visual inspection carried out as part of the overall Survey.

Services and specialist installations have been visually inspected. It is impossible to examine every detail of these installations without partially dismantling the structure. Tests have not been applied. Conclusive tests can only be undertaken by suitably qualified contractors. The vendor/seller should be requested to provide copies of any service records, test certificates and, ideally, the names and addresses of the installing contractors.

### **Electrics**

The electrics are likely to require complete renewal however we would recommend in the first instance an Institute of Electrical Engineers (IEE) test carried out by an NICEIC approved electrician or equivalent.

### **Heating**

The heating system has not been inspected or tested.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** You need to have the heating tested and inspected by a specialist.

### **Fuel – Gas**

We have assumed that the property has a gas supply. The respective safety standards to be applied and most full repairing and insuring leases require a test certificate. All services to Gas Safe Standard or equivalent.

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## **Lighting**

You need to make sure the appropriate lighting level is present for the work that you are proposing to carry out in the premises.

## **Most Leases Require**

Most leases require test certificates on all services. This is a requirement on taking on the lease and at the end of the lease.

## **Fire Regulations**

Normally it is a requirement of any Lease or Tenancy agreement that current fire regulations are adhered to and that a service contract is in place. This is how the property should be left.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** You should have a suitable Fire Safety Notice from the outgoing tenant/landlord.

## **Disability Discrimination Act**

You should be aware that it is now a requirement to give reasonable access to the disabled and make reasonable amendments to the property as is necessary to accommodate them. It is a condition of all the leases that we have seen to meet this requirement. In this case we could see that there is a toilet for the less able/disabled on the ground floor and we assume that there are associated areas that are thought through but this does need to be checked.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** You should ask to see if a report has been carried out in line with the Disabilities Act highlighting areas that can be improved or have been improved.

## **Asbestos Register**

In a property of this age there may well be some asbestos as we have indicated to the roofs. This was commonly used post war until it was banned only in the last ten or so years, although it is rumoured that it was still used after this point in time.

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It is now a requirement for any public building to have an asbestos register, indicating whether there is or is not asbestos and if so where it is.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** An Asbestos Register should be provided by the outgoing tenant/landlord.

You should note that work involving products containing asbestos is covered by Health and Safety legislation and you are recommended to seek the advice of the Local Authority Environmental Health Officer before proceeding with any such work.

We are not asbestos surveyors.

### **Drains**

We have not carried out a drainage test. We would recommend that a closed circuit TV camera report is carried out in relation to the problems with the drains.

### **Service Pipes**

We have not checked the service pipes.

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## **POINTS FOR YOUR LEGAL ADVISOR**

If you wish to proceed with your purchase of the property a copy of this report should be forwarded to your Legal Advisor and the following points should be checked by him/her:

- a) Responsibility for boundaries.
- b) Rights for you to enter onto the adjacent property to maintain any structure situated near or on the boundary and any similar rights your neighbour may have to enter onto your property.
- c) Obtain any certificates, guarantees or approvals in relation to:
  - i) Timber treatments, wet or dry rot infestations.
  - ii) Rising damp treatments.
  - iii) Cavity wall insulation and cavity wall tie repairs.
  - iv) Double glazing or replacement windows.
  - v) Roof and similar renewals.
  - vi) Central heating installation.
  - vii) Planning and Building Regulation Approvals.
  - viii) Any other matters pertinent to the property.
  - ix) Removal of walls and chimneys and supporting documentation
- d) Confirm that there are no defects in the legal Title in respect of the property and all rights associated therewith, e.g., access.
- e) Rights of Way e.g., access, easements and wayleaves.
- f) Liabilities in connection with shared services.
- g) Adjoining roads and services.

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- h) Road Schemes/Road Widening.
- i) General development proposals in the locality.
- j) Conservation Area, Listed Building, Tree Preservation Orders or any other Designated Planning Area.
- k) Confirm from enquiries that no underground tunnels, wells, sewers, gases, mining, minerals, site reclamation/contamination etc., exist, have existed or are likely to exist beneath the curtilage of the site upon which the property stands and which could affect the quiet enjoyment, safety or stability of the property, outbuildings or surrounding areas.
- l) Our Report assumes that the site has not been put to contaminative use and no investigations have been made in this respect.
- m) Any outstanding Party Wall Notice or the knowledge that any are about to be served.
- n) Most Legal advisors will recommend an Envirosearch or a similar product is used by you to establish whether the area falls within a flood plain, old landfill site, radon area etc. If your Legal Advisor is not aware of Envirosearch or similar please ensure that they contact us and we will advise them of it. Any general findings should be brought to their logical conclusion by using appropriate specialist advisers.

However, with regard to Envirosearch or similar general reports please see our article link on the [www.1stAssociated.co.uk](http://www.1stAssociated.co.uk) Home Page.

- o) Any other matters brought to your attention within this report.

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## **LOCAL AUTHORITY ENQUIRIES**

Your Legal Advisor should carry out Local Authority searches to ascertain whether the property is a Listed Building and whether it is situated in a Conservation Area. They should also find out any information available with regard to Planning Applications and Building Control. We have not made any formal or informal Local Authority enquiries.

Finally, your Legal Advisor should carry out any additional enquiries they feel necessary and if they find anything unusual or onerous then we ask that they contact us immediately for our further comments.

If you would like any further advice on any of the issues discussed (or indeed any that have not been discussed!) then please do not hesitate to contact us on

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# APPENDICES

## **LIMITATIONS**

### **CONDITIONS OF ENGAGEMENT**

The report has been prepared in accordance with our Conditions of Engagement dated XXXX and should be regarded as a comment on the overall condition of the property and the quality of its structure and not as an inventory of every single defect. It relates to those parts of the property that were reasonably and safely accessible at the time of the inspection, but you should be aware that defects can subsequently develop particularly if you do not follow the recommendations.

### **ENGLISH LAW**

We would remind you that this report should not be published or reproduced in any way without the surveyor's expressed permission and is governed by English Law and any dispute arising there from shall be adjudicated upon only by the English Courts.

### **SOLE USE**

This report is for the sole use of the named Client and is confidential to the Client and his professional advisors. Any other persons rely on the Report at their own risk.

### **ONLY HUMAN!**

Although we are pointing out the obvious, our Surveyors obviously can't see through walls, floors, heavy furniture, fixed kitchen units etc. they have therefore made their best assumptions in these areas.

As this is a one off inspection, we cannot guarantee that there are no other defects than those mentioned in the report and also that defects can subsequently develop.

**XXXX**

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## **WEATHER**

It was an average end of summer's day at the time of the inspection. The weather did not hamper the survey.

Our weather seems to be moving towards the extremities from relatively mid range. A few interesting facts in Britain over the years have been:

2000	Wettest year on record at the time
2003	Driest year on record at the time
2004	Wettest August on record at the time
2004	Boscastle was the worst flash flood on record at the time
2005	Third driest year on record at the time
2006	Warmest year recorded on record at the time
July 2006	Hottest July on record at the time
2006	Hottest autumn on record at the time
2007	Warmest spring on record at the time
2007	Wettest June on record at the time
April '06-April '07	Hottest 12 months on record at the time
2008	
2009	Third wettest August since 1956
2010	Heaviest snowfall in march since 1991
	Britain faces one of the coldest winters for 100 years

References      BBC News [www.bbc.co.uk](http://www.bbc.co.uk)

## **NOT LOCAL**

It should be noted that we are not local surveyors to this area and are carrying out the work without the benefits of local knowledge on such things as soil conditions, aeroplane flight paths, and common defects in materials used in the area etc.

## **EMPTY PROPERTY**

The property was empty at the time of our survey, we were therefore not able to carry out our usual question and answer session or have our questionnaire filled out.

**XXXX**

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## **INSPECTION LIMITED**

Unfortunately in this instance our inspection has been very limited due to the benefit of opening up the structure or viewing the roof.

## **BUILDING INSURANCE**

We do not advise with regard to building insurance. You need to make your own enquiries. Some areas may have a premium, some buildings may have a premium and some insurers may be unwilling to insure at all in certain areas. You need to make your own enquires prior to committing to purchase the property. Please be aware the fact a building is currently insured does not mean it can be re insured.

We would comment that non-insurability of a building we feel will affect value. It is therefore essential to make your own enquiries with regard to insurance before committing to purchase the property and incurring fees.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** You need to contact an insurance company today to make enquiries with regard to insurance on this property.

## **TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

Our computer system sends two copies of our Terms and Conditions to the email address given to us when booking the survey; one has the terms attached and the other has links to the Terms and Conditions on our website (for a limited time). If you have not received these please phone your contact immediately.

**XXXX**

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